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ROBERT BURNS SOUVENIR NUMBER.

Written for the Banner of Light.

SCOTLAND'S THISTLE AND ROBERT BURNS.

The purple thistle holds within its flowers
A sweetness that can rival summer's rose;
Its thorny sheath repels these hands of ours,
But on its royal breast the bees repose.

So thou, weird son of Scotland's rugged heath,
Showed many a thorny and repellent part.
Thy life was wild and fitful, yet beneath
Lay the sweet honey of thy loyal heart.

The love of timid beast, and lowly flower,
And gentle maid, thy tender heart bespeak;
And thine was grace, and thine was faith and power,
And thine was hate of all things false and weak.

Our deeds are not ourselves, they fall so far
Of that bright vision which we strive to be.
Their aspirations show us what men are—
Their truer selves; thy songs alone are these!

In Scotland's thistle what rare beauty shows!
How for its honeyed heart the bold bee yearns!
Thorny and sweet its royal blossom glows.
Thus man and angel met in ROBERT BURNS.

EDITH WILLIS LINN.

Written for the Banner of Light.

Robert Burns.

BY GEORGE A. BACON.

CARLYLE, in his *Life of Burns*, said to be the best, on the whole, of the many lives written of the poet, says: "It may be doubted whether he has not, by his writings, exercised a greater power over the minds of men and the general system of life than has been exercised by any other modern poet."

Such, substantially, must be the verdict of every broad-minded person who is conversant with the unusual character of the man and his surroundings, the character of the times and the men of his day and generation, and the impress which he has left upon the world.

No ordinary mind can expect to say anything concerning this rare "child of Nature" that has not already been said by such gifted, virile pens as Scott, Carlyle, Lockhart, Dr. Currie, Allan Cunningham, Robert Chambers and other Edinburgh celebrities, who have thoroughly harvested this field, and whose golden grain has been garnered imperishably in the literature of the century.

It is not specially, however, as a poet that he is here under review. Neither his place as a poet nor the excellence of his verse can ever be questioned. These were long since settled. In the Pantheon of the Gods he has become an Immortal.

The centennial anniversary of his exit from the physical plane is an opportune moment to consider his relation to the present, his influence upon the Thought of this age.

Incidentally be it said, we well remember the centennial celebration of his birth, thirty-seven years ago, in Boston, at a dinner given in his memory at the Parker House, when one hundred orators, poets, philosophers, editors and other of the most notable men of the Commonwealth, sought to out rival each other in their eloquent periods over Scott's great bard; and how the press next morning heralded the affair as one of the grandest testimonials to his worth that was ever given to any man in this or any other country. Among the participants on this memorable occasion were such kindred spirits as Emerson, Longfellow, Lowell, Holmes, Whittier, and other bright minds only little less known to the great reading world. The eulogies and criticisms of these master minds, one in spirit with their poetic elder brother, confessedly made a lasting impression upon our mind. Similar services to this one in Boston were held in all the principal cities of America and Europe.

No man's life can be fairly understood or his influence properly gauged without a knowledge of his hereditary advantages or disadvantages; for, primarily, these are more potent factors in the development of character than those of education and subsequent study. That which first thoroughly enters into the warp and woof of man's being, has most to do with his after service and effect.

In justly estimating Burns, the character of Scotch Presbyterianism, the rigidity of its orthodoxy (under which he and his were reared), the struggles of the Cameronians, the controversies of the Reformed Church, the disputes of the clergy everywhere—one of the after-effects of the Reformation in Scotland previous to and during the life-time of Burns, must all be considered in the totality of his make-up.

Of sturdy uprightness of character and devoutly religious, Burns's father possessed good natural parts with much practical knowledge; while his mother had her full share of characteristically Scottish insight coupled with a large stock of uncanny stories, on which Bobby was early and liberally fed, and which afterwards, doubtless, furnished him with many a subject for his fanciful pictures and humorous lines.

As it is held (whether true or not) that a man's religious views are those which generally shape his character and most largely influence his fellow-men, we have here confined ourselves to a presentation of this side of his life as he has given it himself.

In the shallow age, says one of his biographers, where his days were cast, Religion was not discriminated from the New and Old Light

forms of Religion, and was, with these, becoming obsolete in the minds of men. His (Burns's) heart is, indeed, alive with a trembling adoration; but there is no temple in his understanding. He lives in darkness and in the shadow of doubt. His religion, at best, is an anxious wish—like that of Rabelais, "a great Perhaps."

To what extent this statement of his critic is true may be seen in the light of the quotations given from his own writings.

Really, his religious views, or the lack of them, were but the natural recoil and outburst of a liberal soul against that cast-iron system of theology which Parliament and the ecclesiastical courts had made the dominant law of the land. These views were not those of a deist, but apparently were more in unison with those voiced by Rev. Theodore Parker and other advanced Unitarians. He was distinctively a theist, not a deist, not an atheist, but at times somewhat agnostic.

The majority of our readers are doubtless familiar with his poems—more so, probably, than with his letters. While the former are largely the offspring of his imagination, the latter are in evidence as to his more serious reflections in prose. In order, therefore, to give a composite picture of his religious or anti-religious notions, we here present extracts gathered from his Letters, which show his varying moods, and the different forms of expression in which he declared his convictions.

He who in an earnest, sincere spirit, could invoke divine aid of "The Father of Mercies" in behalf of a friend; who could thus write to another: "I often look up to the Divine Dispenser of Events with an eye of gratitude for the blessing which I hope he intends to bestow on me"; and to another, "I am going to address myself to the Almighty Witness of my actions—sometime, perhaps very soon, my Almighty Judge"; he who, in a business letter (to Mr. Robert Aiken), could thus apostrophize: "Oh, thou great unknown Power! thou Almighty God! who has lighted up reason in my breast and blest me with immortality! I have frequently wandered from that order and regularity necessary for the perfection of thy works, yet Thou hast never left me nor forsaken me"; who in 1788, when in his thirtieth year on reviewing his life, which, he mournfully says, "reminded me of a ruined temple," he confesses that "I knelt down before the Father of Mercies and said, 'Father, I have sinned against Heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.' I rose, eased and strengthened"—we say, he who holds and feels to express such sentiments cannot truthfully be called an irreligious man.

"I am so convinced that an unshaken faith in the doctrines of religion is not only necessary, by making us better men, but also by making us happier men, that I should take every care that your little godson, and every little creature that shall call me father, shall be taught them."—*To Mr. Dunlop, Aug. 22, 1792.*

"That there is an incomprehensible Great Being, to whom I owe my existence, and that he must be intimately acquainted with the operations and progress of the internal machinery, and consequent outward deportment of this creature which he has made—these are, I think, self-evident propositions. That there is a real and eternal distinction between virtue and vice, and consequently that I am an accountable creature; that from the seeming nature of the human mind, as well as from the evident imperfection, nay, positive injustice, in the administration of affairs, both in the natural and moral worlds, there must be a retributive scene of existence beyond the grave—must, I think, be allowed by every one who will give himself a moment's reflection."—*CXCIV.*

"I will lay before you the outlines of my belief. He who is our Author and Preserver, and will one day be our Judge, must be (not for his sake in the way of duty, but from the native impulses of our hearts) the object of our reverential awe and grateful adoration. He is almighty and all-bounteous, we are weak and dependent; hence prayer and every other sort of devotion. . . . A mind pervaded, actuated and governed by purity, truth and charity, though it does not merit heaven, yet it is an absolutely necessary prerequisite, without which heaven can never be obtained nor enjoyed; and by divine promise such a mind shall never fail of attaining everlasting life! These are my tenets, and which I think cannot be well disputed."—*Letter XCII.*

"Religion, my honored madam, has not only been all my life my chief dependence, but my dearest enjoyment. I have indeed been the luckless victim of wayward follies, but alas! I have ever been 'more fool than knave.' A mathematician without religion is a probable character; an irreligious poet is a monster."—*CXLII.*

"You may perhaps think it an extravagant fancy, but it is a sentiment which strikes home to my very soul; though skeptical in some points of our current belief, yet I think I have every evidence for the reality of a life beyond the stunted bourne of our present existence."—*XCIII.*

"I have every possible reverence for the much-talked of world beyond the grave, and I wish that which pety believes and virtue deserves may be all matter of fact."—*CLIV.*

"All my fears and cares are of this world; if there is another, an honest man has nothing to fear from it. I hate a man that wishes to be a deist; but I fear every fair, unprejudiced inquirer must in some degree be a skeptic. . . . That we are to live forever seems too good news to be true."—*Letter to Allan Cunningham, 1790.*

"My idle reasonings sometimes make me a little skeptical, but the necessities of my heart always give the cold philosophizings the lie."—*CLII.*

"A strong persuasion in a future existence; a proposition so obviously probable that, setting revelation aside, every nation and people, so far as investigation has reached, for at least near four thousand years, have, in some mode or other, firmly believed it; in vain would we

reason and pretend to doubt. I have myself done so to a daring pitch; but when I reflected that I was opposing the most ardent wishes and the most darling hopes of good men, and flying in the face of all human belief, in all ages, I was shocked at my own conduct."—*CXCVIII.*

"Poor Ferguson! If there be a life beyond the grave, which I trust there is; and if there be a God presiding over all nature, which I am sure there is—thou art now enjoying existence in a glorious world where worth of the heart alone is distinction in the man."—*September, 1789.*

"As almost all my religious tenets originate from my heart, I am wonderfully pleased with the idea that I can still keep up a tender intercourse with the dearly-beloved friend or still more dearly-beloved sweetheart, who is gone to the world of spirits."—*To Dr. Moore in 1791.*

"If that part of us called mind does survive the apparent destruction of the man, . . . if conscious of having acted an honest part among his fellow-creatures—even granting that he may have been the sport, at times, of passions and instincts—he goes to a great unknown Being who would have no other end in giving him existence but to make him happy; who gave him those passions and instincts, and well knows their force.

"These are my ideas. . . . It becomes a man of sense to think for himself, particularly in a case where all men are equally interested, and where, indeed, all men are equally in the dark."—*To Mr. Robt. Muir, 17th March, 1788.*

"I congratulate myself on having had in early days religion strongly impressed on my mind. I have nothing to say to any one as to which sect he belongs to or what creed he believes; but I look on the man who is firmly persuaded of Infinite Wisdom and Goodness superintending and directing every circumstance that can happen in his lot—I felicitate such a man as having a solid foundation for his mental enjoyment, a firm prop and sure stay in the hour of difficulty, trouble and distress, and a never failing anchor of hope when he looks beyond the grave."—*Letter CCCXXVII.*

"In proportion as we are wrang with grief or distracted with anxiety, the ideas of a compassionate Deity, an Almighty Protector, are doubly dear."—*Letter C.I.*

These are quite enough. They show the writer to be a thousand leagues removed from that careless, thoughtless, reckless fellow which certain "unco guid" people try to make him out to be.

Offensive representatives of that class who are always ready to condone or minimize the faults of their own kind, yet strive to magnify those of others, may flourish for a season, but the sin of self-righteousness, it must be remembered, has been singled out as receiving the special disfavor of high heaven, while in popular estimation it justly belongs to the category of unpardonable offenses.

The following sentiments further show the real man, his frankness, independence, magnanimity and charitableness:

"I am no saint. I have a whole host of follies and sins to answer for; but if I could, and I believe I do as far as I can, I would wipe away all tears from all eyes. Even the knaves who have injured me I would oblige."

"If you have, on some suspicious evidence from some lying oracle, learned that I despise or ridicule so sacredly important a matter as real religion, you have much misconstrued your friend."

"The dignified consciousness of an honest man and the well-grounded trust in approving Heaven, are the two most substantial foundations of happiness."

"I hope and believe that there is a state of existence beyond the grave where the worthy of this life will renew their former intimacies, with this endearing addition—that 'we meet to part no more.'"

"Tell us, ye dead, Will none of you in pity disclose the secret What 'tis you are, and we must shortly be?"

"A thousand times have I made this apostrophe to the departed sons of men, but not one of them has ever thought fit to answer the question. 'Oh, that some courteous ghost would blab it out.'"—*CLVII.*

"What a strange mysterious faculty is that thing called imagination! We have no ideas almost at all of another world; but I have often amused myself with visionary schemes of what happiness might be enjoyed by small alterations. For instance, suppose you and I, just as we are at present, the same reasoning powers, sentiments and even desires, the same fond curiosity for knowledge and remarking observation in our minds, and imagine our bodies free from pain, and the necessary supplies for the wants of nature at all times and easily within our reach. Imagine further that we were set free from the laws of gravitation which bind us to this globe, and could at pleasure fly, without inconvenience, through all the yet unconnected bounds of creation, what a life of bliss should we lead in our mutual pursuit of virtue and knowledge, and our mutual enjoyment of friendship and love. . . . I am certain I should be a happy creature, beyond anything we call bliss here below."

"My definition of worth is short: truth and humanity respecting our fellow-creatures; reverence and humility in the presence of that Being, my Creator and Preserver, and who, I have every reason to believe, will one day be my Judge."

"Whatever mitigates the woes or increases the happiness of others—this is my criterion of goodness; whatever injures society at large, or any individual in it—this is my measure of iniquity."

"My creed is pretty nearly expressed in the last clause of Jamie Dean's grace: 'Lord, grant that we may lead a good life for a good life makes a good end—at least it helps well!'"

Thus much for his religious views, his intuitive and spiritualistic outcroppings.

Irrespective of the times in which he lived, who can add to their force, decry their reasonableness, or question their sincerity?

Narrow-minded churchmen, sectarians and bigots, have declared that the influence of Burns, as a man and a poet—his life and his verse—was bad; that he was a reprobate generally, a scoffer of religion, etc., but with how little truth the preceding extracts from his Letters fully show.



ROBERT BURNS,
RIGHT'S POET AND DEFENDER.

In this connection it should be remembered that in his day nothing like liberal thought in matters of religion, or independence in politics, as we know it to-day in this country, was tolerated in Scotland. The slightest heresy against the recognized ecclesiastical standard in the one case, or against the crown standard in the other, was sufficient to put the offending culprit in *limbo*. The native independence of Burns could ill brook these restrictions, and the pent-up fire of his genius naturally broke out into open rebellion. Defamation of Burns finds its motif in his poetic characterization expressive of his hatred of everything like hypocrisy, especially if it cloaked itself under the garb of religion; his hatred of all that savored of clerical pretense—not against the clergy per se, because of their profession, but because of the heinous character of this offense. Some of his finest stanzas are in praise of certain of his personal, reverend friends. See, for instance, his Epistle to the Rev. John M'Math, from which we quote:

"They take religion in their mouth,
They talk o' mercy, grace and truth,
For what? To gie their malice skouth
On some puir wight,
And hunt him down o'er right and ruth,
To ruin straight."

All hail Religion! maid divinest!
Pardon a Muse sae mean as mine,
Who in her rough, imperfect line,
Thus daurs to name thee;
To stigmatize false friends of thine
Can ne'er defame thee."

It was the bitter religious feuds that took place among the clergy of his day that first awoke his satire and inspired his pen; and because of this—such is his own testimony—he has not been forgiven. He says: "The first of my poetic offspring that saw the light was a burlesque lamentation on a quarrel between two reverend Calvinists. . . . Polemical divinity about this time was putting the country half mad; and I, ambitious of shining in conversation parties on Sundays, between sermons, at funerals, etc., used, a few years afterwards, to puzzle Calvinists with so much heat and indiscretion, that I raised a hue and cry of heresy against me, which has not ceased to this hour." In Letter CXIII, speaking of a contemptible specimen of a man who had injured another, he says: "The half-inch soul of an unfeeling, cold-blooded, pitiful Presbyterian bigot, cannot forgive anything above his dungeon-bosom and foggy head."

Only for fear of wearying the reader would we like to speak of the man in other relations. But the chief source of opposition to Burns is seen to be on account of his freedom of thought and expression in religious matters—the character of his theology. His poetic sensibility and philosophic insight, his unsurpassed humane and sympathetic nature, his great heart for oppressed humanity, his magnanimity, his universal love and charity—all count for nothing in the eyes of those blinded by prejudice.

Possessed of great strength and weakness, Burns was the tenderest of men. No woman could be more kind or gentle; no man ever manifested more innate feeling for beast and bird and flower. His nearness to Mother Nature is ever a constant charm and source of

solace. His name is a good one to conjure with. At its mention a troop of good-natured fairies appear—gleeful, sportive and happy.

"Poetry was the celestial element of his being and should have been the soul of his whole endeavors," but unfavorable circumstances alone prevented this application.

Carlyle says: "Through the fogs and darkness of that obscure region [the prosaic age in which he was born and the adverse conditions that surrounded his life] his eagle eye discovers the true relations of the world and human life; he grows into intellectual strength and trains himself into intellectual exactness. Impelled by the irrepressible movement of his inward spirit, he struggles forward into general view, and with haughty modesty lays down before us, as the fruit of his labor, a gift which Time has now pronounced imperishable. . . . We believe, with respect to Burns, that till the companions of his pilgrimage whom he had to do with shall have become invisible in the darkness of the past, or visible only by light borrowed from his juxtaposition, it will be difficult to measure him by any true standard or to estimate what he really was and did, in the eighteenth century, for his country and the world." We conclude as we began: "It may be doubted whether he has not, by his writings, exercised a greater power over the minds of men and the general system of life than has been exercised by any other modern poet."

With this grand and just estimate of Burns by his great countryman, Carlyle, we leave him with our readers.
Washington, D. C., July 1, 1896.

Robert Burns.

[On asking a young lady friend what she thought of Burns, we were equally surprised and pleased a day or two after by the following appreciative estimate of the man, which, by the way, she never dreamed would appear in print.—G. A. B.]

MANY have supposed that Burns's seemingly atheistical, but only unorthodox, doctrines had an injurious effect on the people, but such is not the case. The Scots are too intelligent to take things on the surface; they probe deeper.

In the depths of Burns's soul he was a sincere appreciator of true Christianity and a believer in religion. What he fought against was form worship and the "unco guid." He loved joy, happiness and the beautiful too much to conform to the sternness and strictness of the Puritans.

No doubt but that he leaned a little too far in the opposite direction, for his was a nature at times weak and yielding. The lettered men of his day were free and easy in their morals and religion, and these had a demoralizing effect upon him. For a time he thought himself a Deist. He rallied against the orthodox church and severely attacked the clergy, but never could get entirely rid of his religious instincts. He thought "he had every evidence for the reality of a life beyond the stunted bourne of our present existence."

Although he craved and enjoyed the society of the higher classes, he never forgot his humbler associates. He tells us "A man's a man

for a' that," and that "An honest, friendly, social man is the noblest work of God."

Burns was the idol of the people. His manners were winning, and his tenderness for animals and all humble things endeared him to the commoners.

Although Burns is called "a child of Nature," he is not one in the true sense of the word, his father being quite an intellectual man, and his mother, far above the average woman, contributed no little to his early education. Still his education was not authoritative enough; it was too desultory. He needed strong disciplining. Lack of it caused him to waste his brilliant intellect on many stray subjects instead of concentrating it. What he might have been had the lovely Mary Camp bell lived no one knows; we only know that he would have been a better and nobler man. He was a nature and guidance that he needed. His love for her was of the gentle, refining kind; not love born of passion. She was sweet yet strong. She called forth all his better self. He could never have been any other than good and pure under her influence. But she had lived to have been his companion, his audience, would we now have the grand and noble outbursts of song that he has given us? Would he not have been so satisfied with her companionship that he would not have wanted to sing to the world? We probably would never have heard him sing the beautiful song,

"Auld fiddie and then we sever,"

or never have known his grief in these lines:

"Who can say that Fortune grieves him
While the star of Hope she leaves him;
Me us cheerfu' twinkles lights me,
Dark despair around benights me."

While Jean Armour proved a faithful wife, she was not the one for him. She brought out the coarse grain of his nature; she was of the common clay. Her nature was vacillating; she could only minister to his physical wants. He had to turn to the world for intellectual companionship, and so he talked to us through his beautiful songs.

Naturally he was not mean or ignoble; he despised low things; he longed for the beautiful, but poverty and hard work blunted his fine imagination. The bitterness and resentment which he felt no doubt drove him to drink.

We who realize the extreme suffering which his sensitive and proud nature was subject to, can well afford to throw a mantle of charity over his weaknesses.

Whittier, in his beautiful lines on Burns, expresses much more clearly and forcibly what I have endeavored to say:

"Wild heather bells and Robert Burns!
The moorland flower and peasant!
How, at their mentlow, memory turns
Her pages old and pleasant!

O'er rank and pomp, as he had seen
I saw the man uprising;
No longer common or unequal,
The child of God's baptizing!

With clearer eyes I saw the worth
Of life among the lowly;
The Bible at the cotter's hearth
Had made my own more holy.

Let those who never erred forget
His worth, in vain bewallings;
Sweet soul of song! I own my debt
Uncancelled by his failings!

Give leetled power to teeth of Time,
So 'Bonnie Doon' but tarry;
Blot out the Epic's stately rhyme,
But spare his Highland Mary!

Sweet day, sweet songs! The golden hours
Grew brighter for that singing,
From brook and bird and meadow flowers
A dearer welcome bringing."

W.

Written for the Banner of Light.

Robert Burns, and Some of His Environments.

BY MOSES HULL.

"Ever the right comes uppermost,
And ever is justice done."

A CONTINUATION of life beyond the boundaries of mortal vision is needed to rectify the apparent inequalities of this.

Jesus said: "A prophet is not without honor save in his own country." He might in truth have added, save by the people of his own age. Good men, great men and women, are like good pictures—to be properly seen they must be looked at from a proper distance. The sediment they stir up must settle somewhat before they can be seen as they are.

It would not be inappropriate to call Robert Burns the Thomas Paine of Scotland. In some respects his was a harder fight than Thomas Paine had. He began his battle with the religion of his country—Calvinism—earlier in life than Thomas Paine did his. Though he died at the early age of thirty-seven years, he felt more of the obloquy and keen shafts of the enemy than Thomas Paine did. The attacks on Paine were for the most part made after his death. Not so with Burns. Double-distilled odium theologium was poured on his head from the time he was seventeen years old to the day of his death.

While Thomas Paine was a poet, Robert Burns far excelled him in that direction. In fact, Robert Burns was one of the most natural and versatile poets the world ever saw. Carlyle quotes Prof. Stewart as saying:

"Burns's poetry was not any particular faculty, but the general result of a naturally vigorous, original mind, expressing itself in that way. Burns's gifts, expressed in conversation, are the theme of all who ever heard him. All kinds of gifts—from the gracefullest utterances of courtesy to the highest fire of passionate speech; loud floods of mirth, soft wallings of affection, laconic emphasis, clear, piercing insight—all were in him. Witty duchesses celebrate him as a man whose speech led them off their feet."

Burns's poems are not read so much as those of many inferior authors, because the most of them were written for the Scotch people, and were to those for whom they were written what Carleton's "Farm Ballads" are to the most of the people in this country. They were dialect poems, and it is not every one that can read them. Though I read Burns—and in some respects I admire him more than any other poet—yet I have never attempted to read him, or to quote more than four lines from him, in public, simply because I know that I would spoil any of his poems that I would attempt to read aloud. I admire him too much to misrepresent him, as I would be compelled to do were I to try to get an audience to see the beauty of any of his dialect productions.

In Burns's day satire was needed, and he used it. His satirical poems contain the keenest and most pungent wit that pen and ink ever fastened on paper. There was something in these poems entirely unanswerable. An at-

tempt to answer them seemed much like holding up a candle to view the sun by. Every attempt advertised his poems, and caused the reader to note more readily the hits in his wittolisms. His laconic wit, common-sense and argument took with the common people, and did more than any other argument could to lift them out of the superstitions which had taken the place of religion. No wonder the church and the nabobs of society visited him with the vials of their wrath.

Robert Burns came just at the right time, and did just the right work. Carlyle said:

"It was a curious phenomenon, in the withered, unbelieved, second-hand eighteenth century, that of a hero starting up, among the artificial pastboard figures and productions, in the guise of Robert Burns—like a little well in the rocky, desert places; like a sudden splendor of heaven in the artificial Vauxhall.... Among those second-hand acting figures, mims for the most part, of the eighteenth century, once more a giant, original man—one of those men who reach down to perennial depths, who take rank with the heroic among men—and he was born in a poor Ayrshire hut. The largest soul of all the British lands came among us in the shape of a hard-handed Scotch peasant."

When I think of the poverty under which our hero was born and reared, which, in fact, clung to him all the days of his life—a poverty which endeared him to the common people and them to him—I wonder if poverty is not sometimes a blessing very thinly disguised. One of the sweetest poems Mr. Burns ever wrote was his "Cotter's Saturday Night." In this poem he describes the poor peasant—it is said his father was the "cotter" to whom he refers—he describes the peasant returning from his week of toil; the reception he gets from his wife and the smaller children; the still grander reception as the elder ones return from their weekly task, and each tells to each the news he or she has been able to pick up during the week; and, finally, the blushing daughter's beau, having finished his toils, also dropping in to see, and have a quiet talk with, his girl. After describing the blushing girl's recommendation of her beau to her mother, the evening meal, and evening worship, with all its et ceteras, as only Burns could do, he says:

"Oh, Scotia! my dear, my native soil,
For whom my warmest wish to heaven is sent;
Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
Be blest with health and peace and sweet content;
And oh! may heaven their simple lives prevent
From luxury's contagion, weak and vile;
Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,
A virtuous populace may rise the while,
And stand a wall of fire around their much-loved isle."

O Thou who poured the patriotic tide
That streamed through Wallace's undaunted heart;
Who dared to nobly stem the tyrant's pride
Or nobly die, the second glorious part,
(The patriot's God peculiarly thou art,
His friend, his inspirer, guardian and reward;)—
Oh, never, never Scotia's realm desert;
But still the patriot and the patriot bard
In bright succession raise her ornament and guard."

One would almost be willing to submit to the poverty which attached to young Robert, his parents and his brothers and sisters, for the ability to write such a poem as "The Cotter's Saturday Night."

Carlyle, in speaking of the poverty of Robert's father and of his effort to make his portion of what he could raise on seven acres of poor, rented ground support his family, and of his almost failure to do so, said:

"However, he was not lost; nothing is lost; Robert is there; the outcome of him—and indeed of many generations of such as him."

He further says:
"You would think it strange if I called Burns the most gifted British soul we had in all that century of his; and yet I believe the day is coming when there will be little danger in saying so. His writings, all that he did, under such obstructions, are only a poor fragment of him."

All this is true; Burns was one of the most versatile men that ever lived. Like all others, he committed some of the indiscretions of youth; but he was not the man to deny it, to dodge the consequences or to plead any palliating or mitigating circumstances; he owned up, and took all the results of his indiscretions.

The thing which looked more like an apology than anything I ever read from Burns was his "Unco' Guid." In that he says:

"Then gently scan your brother man,
Still gentler sister woman;
Though they may gang a kennin' wrang,
To step aside is human;
One point must still be greatly dark,
The moving, why they do it;
And just as lamely can ye mark
How far, perhaps, they rue it."

Who made the heart, 'tis He alone
Decidedly can try us;
He knows each chord—its various tone,
Each spring—its various bias;
Then at the balance let's be mute,
We never can adjust it;
What's done we partly may compute,
But know not what's resisted."

Burns in his young days became the father of an illegitimate daughter; but he loved and blessed the child, and, to legitimize it, married the mother. The parents of the child's mother would not allow her to live with him; yet he provided for his child, and taught her that he was her father. His poem written when he first saw his child concludes as follows:

"Gild grant that thou may aye inherit
Thy mither's person, grace and merit,
An' thy poor, worthless daddy's spirit,
Without his failings,
'T will please me more to hear and see it,
Than stockit mailens."

Permit me here to say "stockit mailens" means stocked farms.

If sincerity is religion, then Burns was one of the most religious men of his or any other age. No matter what he thought or how he felt, it was always honestly expressed in his poems. He hated canting hypocrisy; and when he saw it—in fact, whenever he saw wrong beat down the right, he came to the rescue with a satirical poem. His "Holy Willie's Prayer," which was probably the most caustic of all his satires, was put into the mouth of William Fisher, a kind of an Anthony Comstock of a fellow—an elder in the church—who persecuted one of Burns's neighbors for allowing a beggar to do some work for him on Sunday. He makes the holy hypocrite begin his prayer as follows:

"O Thou, who in the heavens dost dwell,
Wha, as it pleases best thyself,
Sends awe to heaven and ten to hell,
A' for thy glory,
And no for any guld or ill
They've done afore thee;

I bless and praise thy matchless might,
Whan thousands thou hast left in night,
That I am here, afore thy sight,
For gifts an' grace,
A burnin' an' a shinin' light
To a' this place."

There has, as is generally the case with such

holy saints, been a well-proved scandal about this "Holy Willie," and Burns does not forget to air it. It would require more space than I care to ask, to quote it.

In an investigation of Burns's poems and character, it should not be forgotten that he lived over a hundred years ago; that especially where he lived, the church, or the kirk as it was called, ruled with a domineering hand over everything and everybody. Robert Burns loved truth, freedom, justice and liberty; hence the severity of many of his sarcasms.

Burns was loved by the common people, inasmuch that the waiters and the ostlers at the inns where he stopped always, when they could, stood around the doors and windows, to try to catch every word that fell from his lips.

Now that a hundred years have passed since he went to the "land of the so-called dead," I am glad that there is a disposition to deal justly with his memory.

Written for the Banner of Light.

THE SWEET SINGER OF SCOTLAND—ROBERT BURNS.

Time's clock records a century's end,
Since song in thee sought joy on high,
Yet all the years have been thy friend;
Time's clock records a century's end,
To thee our earth doth greetings send,
We say, tho' dead, thou dost not die;
Time's clock records a century's end
Since song in thee sought joy on high!

The gowan by the plowshare torn,
And crushed to earth with broken sod,
By his sweet pity fresh was born,
And held as in the hand of God.

Dame Nature knows the kind of men
She fain would keep in fashion;
She chooses such by wisest ken—
To tell our varied passion;

She bids them live and know life's soul,
To find its deeper beauty
By fighting fate, to win control
Of fate and know love's duty;

She sent Will Shakespeare for his part—
To represent life's stages;
Gave Burns the language of the heart,
Which every ear engages;

She called him at the plow to be
The echo of her voices;
She taught him with her eyes to see
How time in love rejoices:

She gave him poverty and woe,
Life's bread and water merely,
So he our sorrow sure might know,
And tell its message clearly—

Tell all the wrong of haughty pride—
Which crushes noblest feeling;
Tell how the poor unsatisfied
For justice are appealing:

She gave him lover's heart divine,
And lover's mystic rapture;
She fed his soul on bread and wine,
That he her dream might capture:

She gave him prophet's burning speech,
To strike with death pretenses;
She made his faults and follies preach
Rebuke to the senses.

Therefore in verse as clear as rill,
And sweet as linnet's singing,
He doth his task of song fulfill,
And set soul-woodlands ringing.

He makes the empire of the earth,
Its joy and wealth and glory,
To consecrate all human worth,
And plead life's better story!

Out of my heart, like a bird from its nest,
In thinking of thee a prayer took its flight,
Sought thee with gladness and found thee at rest—
Safe from the shadows and darkness of night:
Ever I see thee arrayed in the glow
Of poetry pure from passion refined,
Sweet as the lily thy spirit doth show,
Rich as the South is the fruit of thy mind!

Oh! but the splendor of the auld lang syne,
Walking the hills in the light of the sun,
Conning a song for a musical hue,
Glad when the lyric the melody won!
Was it not winking to court in the shade
Of the even—with the stars looking down,
Telling the story that never has failed—
All of our life with its beauty to crown?

Out of our hearts like a rose from its bough,
Blushes in blessing remembrance we sing,
Canst thou behold us and hearken us now?
Knowest thou yet all the tributes we bring?
Then is thy spirit respondent as ours,
Seeing the sunshine that follows the strife,
Tasting reward to the minstrel borne
Out of the turmoil and clashing of life!

WILLIAM BRUNTON.

Written for the Banner of Light.

Scotia's Bard.

BY FRED. L. H. WILLIS.

"Oh, matchless Burns! that I'd been livin'
When the power o' sang to thee was given,
And seen, when misery mad had riven
Thy manly form,
Thy soul, the undying gift of Heaven,
Defy the storm!"

It seems a difficult, if not impossible task, to say aught original or of special interest of Scotland's idolized lyrical poet—Robert Burns.

The most brilliant minds, the most eminent authors of England, Scotland and America, have paid generous, enthusiastic and loving tributes to his memory. It would seem as if the power of language had been exhausted among English-speaking people in their efforts to immortalize the memory of the Plowman Poet of Ayrshire.

He was truly a representative Scotchman, combining in his personality perhaps more fully than any other individual known to fame, the national characteristics of his race. Born a peasant, his early life was a keen hand to hand struggle with poverty. Before he was fifteen years old, he was the principal laborer on his father's farm. He describes his early life in these terse words: "The cheerless gloom of a hermit, with the unceasing moil of a galley slave."

In his immortal poem, "The Cotter's Saturday Night," he graphically paints the picture of his weekly toil:

"November chill blows loud with angry sigh:
The short'ning winter-day is near a close;
The mither's beasting frae the plough;
The black'ning trams o' crows to their repose:
The toll-worn cotter frae his labor goes;
This night his weekly moil is at an end:
Collects his spades, his mattocks and his hoes,
Hoping the morn' ease and rest to spend,
And weary o'er the moor, his course does hame-ward bend."

Yet out of all this he developed the rarest, sweetest, tenderest traits of character—an intense sympathy with Nature in all its phases, an earnest love of country, a broad humanitarian spirit, and a sincerity and earnestness of nature that gave him an intense hatred of all shams and hypocritical pretenses, whether social, political or religious.

An absolute sincerity was, perhaps, his most

striking characteristic. This, and his intense love of freedom, made him one of the noblest champions of Free Thought and Free Religion the world has ever seen; and that, too, at a time when his fair country, which he loved with all the intense enthusiasm of a grandly patriotic soul, rested beneath the deadly pall of a theology that paralyzed the highest aspirations of the soul.

We of to-day can form but a very inadequate conception of the sternness and awful severity of the Scotch Presbyterianism that made lurid and deadly the atmosphere that surrounded the childhood of Robert Burns. With his earnest, tender, loving spirit, his sensitive nature, so keenly attuned that it vibrated to every breath of influence, he must have suffered intensely in that gloomy atmosphere of Calvinistic theology.

We can readily conceive that this was a powerful factor in bringing about those seasons of profound melancholy that assailed him from time to time, and perhaps drove him to seek relief in the flowing bowl.

Into the gloom of that Calvinistic atmosphere he launched his thunderbolts of satire, that stirred up a tempest of antagonism that must have raged with a fury unparalleled save by the one created in this country by our American hero and patriot—Thomas Paine—who, equally with Burns, was made a target for long years of vilification and abuse, heaped upon their memory by the religious fanatics and bigots of a hireling priesthood.

It is impossible to portray the effects of the scathing satires that Burns penned against some of the most cherished tenets of the theology of his day.

His "Address to the De'il," "Holy Willie's Prayer," "The Ordination," "The Holy Fair," are scathing arraignment of what he conceived to be the false pretenses and shams of religion and the shocking tenets of Calvinism; and they did a splendid work in softening and toning down the rigid dogmas of Scotch theology.

In the words of another: "The generous voice of Burns springs out of the iron-bound Calvinism of his day, like flowing water out of Horeb's rock."

For hisserenity in this direction, unmeasured abuse and condemnation have been heaped upon him. He has been called an Atheist and many other bad names. His faults have been viciously exaggerated, and his virtues belittled and denied. But the general tone of his writings is reverential, sweet and pure, and their tendency is to uplift the aspirations of the soul toward the high and true, toward that divine standard, that Supreme Power, in which it is evident he firmly believed: not as a despotic ruler or tyrannical law-giver, but as a beneficent providence that guided human destiny.

A true and broad manhood preeminently characterizes all his poems. He had singular power to exalt and dignify the meanest, lowliest objects in nature.

"His satire was the lightning's flash
Which purified our moral air;
His wars were the thunder's crash
Which stirred the lion in his lair."

And yet for tender pathos, sweetness and daintiness of style, he was unrivalled. Witness "To a Mountain Daisy," "To a Mouse," "To Mary in Heaven," "The Cotter's Saturday Night."

He was emphatically a great moralist, whatever may be said to the contrary, and as true as steel to the cardinal virtues of Justice, Charity and Brotherly Love. His grand old words, "A man's a man for a' that," ring with the spirit of true fraternity and equality. His "Epistle to Davie" is a grand sermon in epitome on the cheerful acceptance of whatever life may bring to us, and the faithful discharge of our duties therein.

In many of his poems he appeals to the highest motives that can impel or influence the human soul, and calls upon us to pursue the right path, not from fear or dread of any power mightier than ourselves, but from the high sense of personal honor, and, to quote his own words, "for the glorious privilege of being independent."

He has achieved a glorious immortality, not alone in the hearts of his countrymen, but wherever human hearts thrill to the matchless sweetness, the tender pathos, the lofty patriotism, the noble invective and scathing satire against hypocrisy and shams that characterize his songs.

"What heart hath ever matched his flame?
What spirit mat shed his fire?
Peace to the prince of Scottish song,
Lord of the bosom's lyre."

Written for the Banner of Light.

Robert Burns.

BY W. F. PECK.

THE poet is always and essentially a medium. The sensitive brain, which vibrates in harmony with the ideal side of Nature, is peculiarly subject to the thought-waves that sweep the spiritual atmosphere and impinge upon the objective and material worlds. To the average of mankind, buried and engrossed in the cares of the world and the struggle for existence, poetry is regarded as the froth and foam of life, and the poet is looked upon as merely a dreamer, a vague and impractical visionary, having no use save, perhaps, to tickle the fancy and afford a somewhat agreeable variety to the humdrum of existence.

The popular idea of poetry is a narrow and superficial one. The poetic instinct has a far deeper and more practical purpose than simply to amuse. Poetry is the recognition of the hidden and esoteric side of truth, and the true poet is he whose interior vision is sufficiently acute to perceive that relationship; hence, the poet is not only a medium and seer, but he is often a prophet as well, and many a truth has he intuitively perceived and boldly heralded to the world, long years before the matter-of-fact scientist had reached the same conclusion by the slow—if sure—process of reason and experience.

The poet, by virtue of his keen intuitions, is almost invariably an apostle of liberty and progress, and as such is more or less a rebel against time honored conventionalities and institutions, which have only age and custom to recommend them. While in a comparatively few cases the graphic powers of the poet have been prostituted to the service of the tyrant Superstition, it is a remarkable and suggestive fact that the large majority of our really great poets have been outspoken in denunciation of the views which the religious world generally regards as orthodox, and many of them have been stigmatized as infidels. It is worthy of note that of the great American poets not one was orthodox in religion.

A great poet must necessarily be a great

thinker, and profundity of thought and superstition cannot thrive together.

The poet, like unto other men, has not always the courage of his beliefs, and it is only now and then one is found who dares to express the profound convictions of his soul, defiant of the contumely and abuse of the dominant religion and regardless of ecclesiastical censure.

Robert Burns was such a man, and the world owes to him a greater debt of gratitude than it is generally aware of, and which it can only repay by putting in practice the lessons he inculcated in such rhythmic beauty.

In his day ecclesiasticalism masqueraded as religion to an even greater extent than now. Bigotry and intolerance passed for piety. Priestcraft was dominant everywhere, though clad in the garb of Presbyterianism instead of the papacy, and hatred for the unbeliever banished the sweet and tender ties of humanity in the breasts of a people who worshiped a God who damned men without justice and rewarded without reason. The clear vision of the poet saw through these shallow pretenses, and his keen satire stripped the mask from the "unco' guid," and exhibited with striking distinctness the difference between true religion and its beggarly counterfeit. The usual and inevitable result followed: Robert Burns was proclaimed a heretic, a blasphemer. Yet, as his poems plainly show, he was a devoutly religious nature. While he punctured with unsparing pen the hollow pretense of the religious hypocrite and pharisee of his time, in no single instance has he prostituted his muse to the ridicule and abuse of things really sacred and venerable. What tender appreciation of the unostentatious piety of the simple minded and lowly does he manifest in his "Cotter's Saturday Night"! What reverential devotion does he pour forth in rhythmic prayer to the "Great Being," the "All Good," the "Unknown Almighty Cause," expressions far more indicative of a reverential mind than the familiar address indulged in by those who deem themselves of the elect.

Robert Burns was deeply religious in the truest sense of the term; his affectional nature was as deep as the sea and as wide as the world. He loved everything in nature, from the modest flower up to the great source of all life. A daisy broken from its stem and a tiny field-mouse torn from its earthy bed by the plowshare inspired two of his sweetest poems, while his verses upon the wounded hare have touched a tender chord in the heart of many a person whose humanity revolts from the slaughter of harmless creatures in the name of "sport." Loving nature so devoutly, it is not surprising that he should also love his fellow-man. Though obliged, by the exigencies of life and fortune, to yield respect to the aristocracy of his day, at heart Burns was a born democrat; he believed in the political and social equality of man, and revered no aristocracy but that of intellect and virtue.

"The rank is but the guinea's stamp."

His sentiments were not the outgrowth of envy toward the favorites of birth and fortune, as is so often the case with those who spring from the lower orders, for, although but a farmer's son, and a plowman himself, his natural refinement and inherent gentility won from the crusty critic Carlyle the statement that Burns "was as true a gentleman as Europe contained." High praise indeed from such a source.

Though he had his weaknesses, as every body knows, no one realized them more keenly or regretted them more deeply than did Burns himself, and such was the innate honesty and candor of the man that he never attempted to hide or belittle his faults; he never pretended to be better than he was; he despised sham in others, and would none of it in himself. His loving and generous nature revolted against tyranny and injustice, whether in politics or religion, and his writings have been of vast service in forwarding the cause of human brotherhood.

The humanitarian of to-day, lifting his head above the injustice, tyranny and misrule that overshadows the world, looks forward with hopeful eyes toward that better time foretold in song and story when men will realize the eternal truth that selfishness is always its own executioner, and that the only way man can lift himself is in the effort to lift his fellows. Inspired by the same spirit that swayed the great Scottish poet, he may sing with Robert Burns:

"Then let us pray that come it may,
As come it will for a' that,
That sense and worth o'er all the earth
May bear the gree and a' that.
For a' that and a' that,
It's coming yet for a' that,
That man to man the world o'er
Shall brothers be and a' that."

St. Louis, Mo., June 21, 1896.

Written for the Banner of Light.

Sincerity of Burns.

BY MRS. LOVE M. WILLIS.

"Liberty's a glorious feast."

WE sometimes wonder why the whole world loves certain poets and writers. But we believe it to be because of the sincerity of their utterances. It is not merely their happy expression of feeling, but rather the fellowship with human nature, which makes all conditions express the soul which animates conditions. Burns's most scathing satires were directed against the false and pretentious, especially against the false pride of birth. The false in religion, as he saw it, received always his keen satirical reproach.

His own religion is clearly stated as trust in the Fatherhood of God, and expressed in his recognition of the brotherhood of man. The whole range of his writings is within the human heart. He touches its chords as one might touch a thousand-stringed lyre. He compares himself to an aeolian harp, strung to every wind of heaven. The most inferior object in nature is a worthy subject for his verse. His pity goes forth to the helpless creatures of the field, and in all objects he finds symbols to speak to humanity.

Is not this freedom of speech partly owing to the fact that he was not a paid writer? It is told of him that, being engaged to edit and supply the words to melodies for a collection, he contributed a hundred songs, and received in payment five pounds in money, a shawl for his wife and a picture! In what clime and under what conditions are those songs not sung at the present day? The whole world recognizes their sweetness and yields to their power. At the present time the writer that can give utterance to something new and strange, that can excite by fancy or by art, is heralded as one of wonderful promise; but Burns

[Continued on sixth page.]

LYCEUM AND HOME DEPARTMENT.

CONDUCTED BY MRS. J. S. SOPER.

SPECIAL REQUEST.

Will Conductors of Lyceums throughout the United States send to this Department an outline of their method of conducting their Lyceums, as applied to the younger Groups?

The Sunday School and the Lyceum.

BY ED. S. VARNER.

The Church is a great institution.

However much we, with our broader views, may differ from the creedal conceptions of the various churches, we must admit that there is not a single denomination, however so narrow or bigoted, but what is needed to minister to the spiritual necessities of those who in their mental unfoldment have not sufficiently expanded to intellectually assimilate anything better.

As fast as they progress they will seek higher, more rational ideas, but the primary school must come first.

The Sunday school is an important fixture in the body politic. To the young it is a social and a religious centre. There are many young people of both sexes who are not as self-reli-

ance; Temple—the body, or house in which the spirit lives; Liberty—what its name implies; Excelsior—onward, ever onward, etc. Among the names of the other groups were Stream, River, Lake, Sea, Ocean, Shore, Beacon, Star, Aurora, Mountain, Evangel, Valley, Carol, etc. The groups were arranged according to age.

My Lyceum teachers and mates of the olden time are scattered far and wide. Some are living, some are—no, all are living, and wherever they are, wherever sphere they inhabit, I reach out to them the arms of my soul and clasp them all in a long, lingering embrace.

Boston Spiritual Lyceum Picnic.

The first picnic of the Boston Spiritual Lyceum was held at Salem Willows, Saturday, June 20. The party, which included all the officers of the Boston Spiritual Lyceum, most

Mrs. Mary A. Lang, Mr. John Snow, Mr. A. J. Haynes, Mrs. E. J. Armstrong, Mrs. H. Trumble, Mrs. G. H. Williams, Mr. J. H. Lewis, Auditor, Mrs. Carrie L. Hatch, Dr. J. R. Root. The election of an instructor, Entertainment Committee, and Leaders for the Adult Groups, pending the adoption of important amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws, was laid over to an adjourned meeting to be held the second Tuesday in September.

A Woman's Hour.

"Please state to the court exactly what you did between eight and nine o'clock on Wednesday morning," said a lawyer to a delicate little woman on the witness stand.

"Well," she said, after a moment's reflection, "I washed my two children and got them ready for school, and sewed a button on Johnny's coat, and mended a rent in Nellie's dress. Then I tidied up my sitting-room and made two beds and watered my house plants and glanced over the morning paper. Then I dusted my parlor and set things to rights in it and washed some lamp chimneys and combed my baby's hair and sewed a button on one of her little shoes, and then I swept out my front entry and brushed and put away the children's Sunday clothes and wrote a note to Johnny's teacher asking her to excuse him for not being at school on Friday. Then I fed my canary bird and cleared off the breakfast table and swept off the back porch, and then I sat down and rested a few minutes before the clock struck nine. That's all."

"All?" said the lawyer. "Excuse me, judge; I must get my breath before I call the next witness."—*Detroit Free Press.*

Banner Correspondence.

Our friends in every part of the country are earnestly invited to forward brief letters, items of local news, etc., for use in this department.

Massachusetts.

GREENWICH.—Juliette Yeaw writes as follows concerning the Independent Liberal Church: "The Church closed its services for the season, June 28, with its observance of Children's Day."

The floral decorations were elaborate, profuse and beautiful; the audience crowded the church.

Lyceum Exercises—Organist, Miss Mattie M. Clark; pianists, Miss Bertha Chamberlin and Miss Flowerbell Witt. Instrumental (piano), Miss Bertha Chamberlin; Grand Banner March, Lyceum; Song, "America," Congregation; Responses, "The Two Angels," page 17, No. 31, "Star of Progress"; Responses, No. 211, "Star of Progress"; Recitation, "The Child and the Sea," Cora Jones; Recitation, "The Little Sunbeam," Master Willie Crawford; Recitation, Selection, Myra Hanson; Recitation, "Der Kaiserblumen," Irene Crawford; Song (original), Lena and Bessie Johnston, Mabel Nevins and Ida Moore; Recitation, "No Set in Heaven," Jessie Hanson; Recitation, "Entering In," Lena Johnston; Song, "Wait, Mr. Postman" (Miss Witt); Florence McNaughton; Reading, Selection, Walter Mudgett; Recitation, "Helping Mother," Mabel Nevins; Song, composed by Miss Flowerbell Witt, "Oh! Could I but 'wake,' Mr. Smith; Recitation, "Answer to Prayer," Bessie Johnston; Recitation, "The Deathless Heart," May Barr; Song, "The Fire at Sea" (Miss Witt); Miss Florence McNaughton; Recitation, "Little Tim's Prayer," Edith Thrasher; Recitation, Selection, Miss Mayme Southworth; Remarks, Mrs. Yeaw; Benediction.

In addition to the above numbers Mrs. Grace Belle

Kurth read "After Death in Arabia" by Edwin Arnold. Dr. Wyman closed the services with some well-chosen and valuable remarks, and as, one by one, the friends passed by the altar, taking up their part in the choir, the service was a most profitable and inspiring one. It was noticeable that no tears were shed, no heart-rending scenes of pain and separation taking place, whilst the good sister lay reading daily among her dear ones.

Now that our sister's work is done, many regret the beautiful manifestations that are lost to the remaining ones; and no doubt the question is, or will be, asked, on whom will the spirit and that controlled her be willing to copy the outcome power, so that the good work may continue, seed be sown, and light be brought to those who are reaching out for honest mediumship? ELIZABETH F. KURTH. Brooklyn, N. Y., July 8, 1896.

For Heavy, Sluggish Feeling, Use Horsford's Acid Phosphate.

It produces healthy activity of weak or disordered stomachs that need stimulating, and acts as a tonic on nerves and brain.

Passed to Spirit-Life.

From his home, No. 89 Orient Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y., July 3, Mr. N. A. CONKLIN, a long time and faithful worker here.

He was fifty-six years of age, held a responsible position in the fine factory founded by Peter Cooper, and was captain of one of the active regiments during the war, of which sixty-four men only remain of the thirteen hundred who left this city. His health failed during the past two years, preventing him from doing much active work; but those four interested in the mediumship of him as an earnest advocate of our Philosophy and Facts.

The funeral services were held Monday evening at his home, July 8. The employees of the factory attended in a body, each wearing a badge with the words "We mourn our loss" strapped thereon. Many spiritualists, as well as others not yet in a knowledge of the truth, were present; and it could only be regretted, in deference to those left behind, that no word was given from an instrument of the Cause regarding the beauty and certainty of the life beyond. W. J. C.

From Coldbrook, Mass., June 30, HORACE W. WOODS, aged 68 years.

Mr. Woods investigated Spiritualism in the early days of the movement, consequently had been a believer for many years. The family that he leaves behind are comforted by the knowledge of spirit communion.

The funeral services were held at the residence of his son, H. S. Woods, 14 Oak Avenue, Worcester, and were conducted by the writer. GEO. A. FULLER, M. D. 42 Alvarado Avenue, Worcester, Mass., July 3, 1896.

From Onset, Mass., July 2, after a distressing illness, most patiently borne, Mrs. ELLA STEVENS.

A lady possessed of uncommon intellectual powers, sweet in spirit, and tender and true as a friend, her loss is an irreparable one; but the knowledge that our loss is her gain, helps us to bow in submission.

Her visible presence is no longer with us, but she will still be near to aid and comfort. This slight tribute of love is tendered by one to whom she was as dear as a daughter, and our great consolation is that we shall soon be united in that brighter and better world where all sorrow and troubles cease. M. G. W.

From Alabama, Erie Co., N. Y., July 1, BRO. LEVI FISK, aged 92 years.

Bro. Fisk was one of the old time Spiritualists, and in all his ninety-two years never failed to advocate the cause of Spiritualism or to proclaim the fact of a continuous life. Peace be to his worn-out body, and joy to his immortal soul forever.

Bro. J. W. Dennis of Buffalo, N. Y., officiated at the funeral, which was largely attended, not only by a house full but by the door-savvy and lawn full, for he was loved and respected by all who knew him.

From Boston, July 8, Mrs. LAURA A. MCKENZIE, aged 70 years and 7 months.

Having been a Spiritualist for many years, she crossed the river with the confidence born of knowledge. Services of an appropriate nature were conducted at her late residence at 81 N. by Dr. J. Milton White. The body was taken to Vermont for interment.

Obituary Notices not over twenty lines in length are published gratuitously. When exceeding that number, twenty cents for each additional line will be charged. Ten words on an average make a line. No poetry admitted under the above heading.

To make your business pay, good health is a prime factor. To secure good health, the blood should be kept pure and vigorous by the use of Ayer's Sarsaparilla. When the vital fluid is impure and sluggish, there can be neither health, strength nor ambition.

Sin may be clasped so close we cannot see its face.—*Trench.*

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BOSTON SPIRITUAL LYCEUM PICNIC AT SALEM WILLOWS.

ant as those who are morally stronger. These weaker ones are apt to be unduly swayed or influenced by their associations. These associations are not always pure. By joining the Sunday school they have been, many of them, morally strengthened by the pleasant, virtuous surroundings, and friendships therein found. And in the lessons taught, though restricted in their nature and erroneous in their theological interpretations, there is much of moral worth inculcated that cannot prove otherwise than helpful.

As the Sunday school is the nursery for the training of future church members, so is the Lyceum, or so should it be, the preparatory school for the making of Spiritualists.

In what respect, perhaps some one may ask, is the Lyceum superior to the Sunday school? I will tell you. Both teach good morals, but while the Sunday school confines itself to a single volume, called the Bible, the Lyceum has the unlimited field of nature for its textbook.

While the Sunday school runs in a certain groove or rut, thus necessarily contracting its influence for good, the Lyceum is broad and ample in the sphere of its useful activities.

It knows no creed, but following Truth's beacon-light it is always on the lookout for "light, more light." In its researches its circumference takes in all human experience, all human sorrow, all human aspiration. And with its divine touch of heavenly fire it fuses them all in the great object of human upliftment, of human comforting.

In the Lyceum exercises there is variety, which relieves that monotony so wearisome in the Sunday school.

Years ago, in our old-time peerless Lyceum in Lowell, in addition to the Banner March and calisthenics, each group had its special question to consider.

After each scholar had expressed an idea on the subject, the teacher would weave the varied ideas into an instructive little talk.

Once a month we had what we called "Convention Sunday," when the whole Lyceum united in furnishing an entertaining program of songs, readings, piano music, dialogues, recitations, etc.

Occasionally we would have on some weekday evening one of our unexcelled, if not unequalled exhibitions, consisting of dramas, comedies, declamations, music, tableaux, etc. In our tableaux we used to depict most beautifully our angel philosophy.

In that never-to-be-forgotten Lyceum of long ago the naming of the groups was significant. Banner Group—the pure white flag of our religion; Fountain—purity, freshness and inno-

of the members and others—among whom were noticed Mr. J. B. Hatch, Sr. (one of the oldest Lyceum conductors in the country) and wife, Mr. Hebron Libby (Treasurer of Berkeley Spiritual Temple), Mr. J. H. Lewis (one of the Directors) and wife, Mrs. W. H. Banks, wife of the President of the Berkeley Spiritual Temple and Miss Grace Warren—assembled at Scollay's Square, with picnic baskets filled with good things, and took the electric at nine o'clock.

The weather seemed cloudy and ominous at that hour, but later developed into a bright, warm day, as a BANNER representative can testify when riding on the train at the noon hour to join the picnicers; but the cooling breezes of Salem Willows and the cheerful welcome soon dispelled all tired and warm feelings.

A jollier or more harmonious gathering could not have been found; each one seemed bound to enjoy the time; the flying horses were kept in action, the ice cream soda counter was well patronized, and the children improved the opportunity to dig in the sand, and were happy for the nonce. The ride home was at close of the day, and was most enjoyable.

A picnic would not be complete without the usual picnic picture, and the result of this picnic picture was so fine it was decided to give it a place in this report, as will be seen above. Many of the old workers will see a familiar face, no doubt.

The Boston Spiritual Lyceum is in a very prosperous condition, and most fortunate in having as patron the Boston Spiritual Temple Society, from whom they have the free use of Berkeley Temple to hold the Lyceum sessions.

The annual report of their Treasurer showed a working balance of \$18.80, and no unpaid bills. They will open again in October, and invite all Spiritualists and Lyceum workers to join with them in working for the Cause by educating the children in the truths of Spiritualism.

The officers of the Lyceum Association—as elected at last meeting—for the coming year are as follows:

President, George S. Lang; Vice-President, Elmer B. Packard; Treasurer, Mr. J. H. Lewis; Recording Secretary, Mrs. Lottie M. Carr; Financial Secretary, Mrs. S. A. Frost; Conductor, Mr. J. B. Hatch, Jr.; Assistant Conductor, Dr. J. R. Root; Guardian, Mrs. Carrie L. Hatch; Assistant Guardian, Miss L. Alberta Felton; Chief Guard, Elmer B. Packard; Assistant Guards, Edward W. Hatch, Albion R. Waitt, Mrs. Erminie C. Armstrong; Clerk, A. Clarence Armstrong; Leaders, Mrs. S. A. Frost, Mrs. Alice B. Pool, Mrs. Alice L. Root, Mrs. Lottie M. Carr, Mrs. Medora L. Felton,

THE CREED TO BE.

Our thoughts are molding unseen spheres,
And like a blessing or a curse
They thunder down the formless years
And ring throughout the universe.
We build our futures by the shape
Of our desires, and not by acts.
There is no pathway of escape.
No priest-made creed can alter facts.
Salvation is not bought or lost;
Too long this selfish hope sufficed;
Too long man reeked with lawless thought
And leaned upon a tortured Christ.
Like shivered leaves these worn-out creeds
Are dropping from religion's tree.
The world begins to know its needs,
And souls are crying to be free.
Free from the load of fear and grief
Man fashioned in an ignorant age;
Free from the ache of unbelief
He fled to in rebellious race.
No church can blind him to the things
That feed the first crude souls evolved;
But, mounting up on daring wings,
He seeks its simple message out.
Above the chant of priests, above
The blatant tongue of braying doubt,
He hears the still small voice of Love,
Which sends its simple message out.
And deeper, sweeter, day by day,
His mandate comes from the skies;
"Go, roll the stone of self away,
And let the God within thee rise."
—*Ella Wheeler Wilcox, in The Arena.*

Ready for the Opportunity.

There are always opportunities enough in this world for those who are fitted to fill them and ready to work. But the boy who wants an easy place is not likely to get any, and the one who thinks he does not need any preparation for filling a useful position will probably never get far from the foot of the ladder. The President of one of our national banks tells this story:

A number of years ago a lad came into the bank and said to me: "Do you want a boy?" I said: "What can you do?" He said: "I will try to do whatever I am set to. I am just through school, and I want to earn my living."

I said: "Do you know shorthand?" He replied: "No, sir."

I said: "I think it would be a good plan for you to learn it."

About a year afterward he came to me again, and said: "Do you remember advising me to learn shorthand? Well, I have learned it."

I said: "Sit down and take this pencil and paper."

I dictated to him, and he read what he had taken down.

I said: "I think I can find a place for you." A few months ago this young man was appointed cashier.—*Exchange.*

Enigma.

I am composed of seventeen letters.
My 2, 6, 14, 11, 8, 7, means retreat.
My 12, 3, 10, 15, 12, 13, exciting love.
My 4, 5, 16, 17, 12, 13, morosely.
My 1, 9, 15, 5, 14, 11, to penetrate.
My whole is something that parents should become interested in.

BLY.

Lullow, Vt.

Dana of Boston and Miss Amanda Bailey of Salem rendered beautiful songs.

During intermission a bountiful lunch was served in the vestry.

Noticeable among the guests were Gen. William Lincoln Post, G. A. R. the Relief Corps and Sons of Veterans, all of whom seemed roused to enthusiasm by the "Grand Banner March" of the Lyceum and the patriotic song, "The Flag of the Free," as sung by Miss Bailey.

The auspicious ending of the season's work demonstrated indisputably the widespread influence that the Society is exerting, despite long-established conservatism.

PEMBROKE.—F. F. Harding, Chairman, writes: "There was a grove meeting held at Lake View Grove, Pembroke, Mass., at 3 P. M., July 8, to the great satisfaction of a good number present."

A. E. Tidale gave a fine lecture that was in touch with the opening meeting.

The rostrum was very tastefully decorated by Mrs. Washburn.

We hope that the good success of this meeting will be followed by others in the near future."

New York.

BROOKLYN.—Emily B. Ruggles writes: "The Advance Spiritual Conference held patriotic services appropriate to the day Saturday, July 4, Mr. Henry, organist, playing 'The Star Spangled Banner,' all the congregation joining. Mrs. Ruggles said Spiritualists of all people should celebrate this day. We comprehend the inspiring influence that led Columbus to discover America, that sent forth the Pilgrims and finally impelled our patriotic fathers to make the Declaration of Independence on that memorable 4th of July one hundred and twenty years ago."

Lawyer E. Benn made the oration of the evening, which contained much information in relation to the foundation of our government.

Mrs. Cutting followed, describing Horace Seaver, and giving messages. Other mediums gave way to control. Closed by singing "America."

Michigan.

LANSING.—C. M. Schooley writes: "The First Society of Spiritualists, of Lansing, has closed meetings till after the camps."

Mrs. Ella Payne Hopkins of Owosso, Mich., delivered the closing lecture, she having just completed a five months' engagement with our society. Mrs. Hopkins is a fine inspirational speaker, and has endeavored herself to all who have had the pleasure of listening to her able lectures, and we hope to have her with us again in the near future. Societies wishing to engage her for lectures can address her at Owosso, Mich."

In Memoriam.

Mrs. SUSAN UMBRE, of Brooklyn, N. Y., at sunset on Friday evening, June 19, after a long and painful illness, surrounded by members of her family, conscious almost to the last moment, passed into the higher life.

Although unknown to the outside public, Mrs. Umbre was a medium of great power, bringing into the fold, through her remarkable, varied and beautiful mental gifts, many learned and thoughtful minds, many earnest investigators, besides many persons of prominence, who to-day are able to look back into the darkness that surrounded them, and who certainly still thank Mrs. Umbre for the light into which they were brought, through her kind ministrations.

The funeral exercises took place at her home, 391 Van Buren street, on Sunday afternoon, June 21. Judge A. H. Bailey had charge of the services, and delivered a most beautiful, so-*i*-inspiring address, reciting one of Longfellow's appropriate poems, and closing with the poem "There is no Death," Mrs.

BANNER OF LIGHT BOOKSTORE.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

THE BANNER OF LIGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY, located at 9 Bowditch Street (formerly Montgomery Place), corner of Province Street, Boston, Mass., has for sale a complete assortment of spiritualist books, including "The Banner of Light," "The Passing of Burns a Century Ago," and "The Passing of Burns a Century Ago," and all other books published by the company. Any book published in England or America (not out of print) will be sent by mail or express.

Subscriptions to the BANNER OF LIGHT and orders for our publications can be sent through the Purchasing Department of the American Express Co. at any place where that company has an agency. Agents will give a money order receipt for the amount sent, and will forward the money order, attached to an order to have the paper sent for any stated time, free of charge, except the usual fee for issuing the order, which is 5 cents for any sum under \$5.00. This is the safest method to remit orders.

In quoting from THE BANNER care should be taken to distinguish between editorial articles and correspondence. Our columns are open for the expression of impersonal free thought, but we do not endorse the varied shades of opinion to which correspondents may give utterance. No attention is paid to anonymous communications. Name and address of writer is indispensable as a guaranty of good faith. We cannot undertake to preserve or return cancelled articles.

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

Banner of Light.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, JULY 18, 1896.

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"In things essential, UNITY; in things doubtful, LIBERTY; in all things, CHARITY."

Two Dollars Per Year.

The management of the BANNER OF LIGHT have decided, on due deliberation, to reduce the subscription price of the paper to **Two Dollars per year** (former price \$2.50)—beginning with the issue for **March 7**, which is No. 1 of Vol. 79.

We trust that Spiritualists all over the country will cooperate heartily with us in the step taken by THE BANNER in recognition of the demand of the times, which everywhere calls upon magazines, newspapers and current literature for some reduction of former prices.

Will the regular subscribers for THE BANNER make an effort to increase its circulation? It would be an excellent and practical plan if every one now on our subscription books would make it his or her business to obtain one new subscriber to this paper for 1896.

It is our desire to maintain the heretofore high standard of THE BANNER, and to add to the value of its contents and the practicality of its work, wherever opportunity shall be given us; and we hope the Spiritualists of the mundane world will work with us, to strengthen our hands for the service of that world of spirits, whose Cause this paper has so long defended.

BANNER OF LIGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY.

The Passing of Burns a Century Ago.

On Tuesday, the 18th of July, occurs the centenary of the death of Robert Burns. He was thirty-seven years old when he died. His last utterances were as familiar to all "Don't let that awkward squad fire over my grave." The passage of time, which softens all things in the mind's view and invests all memories alike with its ideal halo, has long ago disarmed his misconceiving squad of critics, mostly religious by the grace of their piety of profession, and put an end forever to the carping pharisaism shown in degrading his marvellous merit as a world-poet by condemning his conduct as a man. The pen and tongue that sojourned those warring with the prejudices and malignant utterances that issued from them in tumultuous freedom, have long ago become silent and still, and in their place is heard the loving voice of sweet charity for faults for which only hard conditions and a kindling temperament were really responsible at best.

Reams of writing could not suffice to convict Robert Burns of sins that the circumstances do not render venial. The day has gone by for noting his admitted mistakes and dwelling on his familiar errors. The human being that wrote "The Cotter's Saturday Night" never could have been bad. A base man could not instantly become the chosen poet of the people. The heart that could feel such pathetic tenderness for the unfortunate field-mouse whose humble home-nest was suddenly destroyed by the poet's cruel plowshare, could not beat otherwise than in happy harmony for all God's varied creation—human and animal alike. It was impossible for the spirit from which flowed the delightfully charming rhythmic utterances on behalf of the blue-eyed common daisy of the field, to conceive corrupting thoughts, or cushion itself in the habitual indulgence of impure images. All the alleged faults of his conduct, which his piously puritanic judges have collected with such patient labor, are in no true and real sense the belongings of his gifted character and his very self.

Any attempted defense of Burns as a man is entirely needless in the more illuminating light of what he was as a poet. We have done try to drag his peerless soul down within the mechanical confines of the special school of literature. His divinely-equipped nature

knew no rules of expression but its own. He borrowed nothing that was material from the scholastic past or the later affectations of propriety about him. He was original because he was inspired. In the very acid of his contemptuous satire and in the smothering sting of his compelled ridicule his large and lofty spirit had no room for cherishing the petty resentments of the diminutive beings on whom he looked down with cheerful disdain, and upon whose devoted heads he rained the matchless rhymes of his merry malice. His nature was too robustly healthy and wholesome and sweet to treasure animosities of feeling till they became sour in the hidden storehouse of his noble being. He was the poet of the common people because he was the poet of nature. There was no motion of life to which his pulses did not answer with a sympathetic throb.

For this sufficient reason, to which the whole human creation is instantly because instinctively sensible, he kindled in all hearts that beat quick responses to the mysterious impulses of his own. He became master only as he served his gift of inspiration, and his divine supremacy over men changed only to conform to the changing moods begotten of the influences he obeyed. While he threw off his recreative rhyme he was the fashioner of a world always familiar but ever unexpressed to those who listened in their newborn ecstasy of delighted satisfaction. The less we try to bring down the attributes of so rarely endowed a being to the status of a calculating analysis, the greater the freedom of our enjoyment of him in his singing achievements, and the more capacious the habit of discovering their real meaning. We love him for what he came to earth to utter in such marvelously responsive tones and voices—the secret experiences of all human hearts. More especially for his continuous apotheosis of love in the innumerable forms of its changeable expression. Burns forever sang the songs of love as it is imbedded in all human hearts.

It is not to wonder at his rare performance that the world of our time takes Robert Burns so close to its great heart. We do not pause even to deal out our petty personal praises on one to whom they could not reach at all as a worthless recompense for being what he was. We are lifted out of the marveling habit by the power of his verse. It is not so much Burns at last, as it is what Burns gave to the world he visited, himself all unknown to it and in silent rebellion against it, and of the soundless depths of a spirit whose secret motions were undiscoverable except in their varying interpretation by the felicities of his native tongue. None of the world's accepted poets ever wielded his wonderful power, increasing with the lapse of time continually, with the mere employment of a rude if not uncouth patois. None ever charmed into ideal dreams the hearts that before were unaccustomed to acknowledge the deep fact of universal sympathy and the universal rule of human love. If there was magic in his hasty rhymes, it was the simple magic by which all men are made kin. He only gave what was given him, but his gift was without stint or measure.

It is far too late to deplore the poet's early death at this day. Generations have come and gone between the date of his premature departure and this late time of ours. There can be no death for what is perennial. The years are but invisible grains of sand as we attempt to look backward to the period of his brief existence and make it one with our own. The most strident strains in which he wrote are the sweetest music to our souls now. We forget the harshness of his provoked arraignment of canting pharisaism in the murmuring beat of his sharpened thought and the melodious strains of his life-giving sympathy. His boundless nature was the dedicated abode of love for the creation of God around him. Without a thought of the subtle meaning of condition or environment, he kept on his rhyming way to the accompaniment of his own heart's inaudible melodies, and excited a world to new forms of laughter or alternately melted it to tears. But he was not entirely conscious of what he did. That was indeed above his merely human head and out of the reach of his deliberate design. A channel of inspiration that he was, like those about him he knew not wholly what he did.

Why enter upon the worn path of records that end only in fleeting personality at the most? What profit or pleasure can it be to pry inquisitively into the gaping crevices of a character conditioned so much like our own? It is the indwelling spirit, the royally endowed inner man, the invisible, unknown tenant of a virile mould, that gives such wonderful utterance to emotions palpitating for free expression, and experiences that go down with their roots to the depths of human life everywhere. If Burns depicted in the gleeful rondeaux of his verse the simple annals of the poor and unnoticed whom he knew, he was unconsciously speaking with a voice whose melody was lost in its meaning, and obediently reciting the wrongs and errors that everywhere plead for their needed correction. In multiplying praises of the poet we are but giving willing testimony to the omnipresent operation of the Power whom to obey is to find our chosen calling and to love is to feed on perpetual inspiration. In dealing his blows on the proud head of hypocritical falsity, Burns was but doing the will of Him who is supreme truth in the eyes of its worshippers. In this he was great—that he served the cause of his fellow-men without asking the why of his individual selection.

He was a mystery only as all life and being is mysterious to the sense, even when so quickly recognized by the spirit of men. To dwell inordinately on the brief appearance of such a being among us human creations, is to idolize the symbol rather than the thing signified, and to worship the expression more than the hidden meaning it seeks to convey. While paying all the honor due to his name and nature as the world of his time knew him, let us not mistake the changing appearance for the abiding substance, nor substitute the external for the reality it was fashioned to contain. He was human, as we all are, but he dropped from the enfolding heavens into the world of men to bring down to them the everlasting lesson they are so loath to learn. If he seemed out of his sphere and but a human apparition surcharged with human sympathy, it was because he was a messenger of tidings for us all to accept and bear. That, with his diviner endowments, he should have been clothed in the garment of imperfection, was but the insuperable condition all men assume when they make their appearance among their fellows.

We all love the poet Burns, and shall always love him, because he was so entirely and intensely human and of ourselves. There are poets, many who lift us to the elevation of the sublime, and hold us there long in ecstatic

worship of its indescribable glories; but when we would come close to nature and to man we must take the poet Burns, for none have equaled him in the simple power of laying open the secrets of the human breast. It was not for him to take flight to the higher realm of imagination to court the Muse to whom to pay his adoration; he had but to look within the tumultuous excitements of his own mainly breast, and then to release from their human confinement the fiercely sweet war of words accumulated there, to set free the conflicting elements that only awaited the occasion to make all mankind kindred and fraternal. Nature alone was the ruling power that taught him how to live; from Nature alone he learned the art of speech that became musical to all ears in the measures of his rhyme; and he had only the most pointed reproof for wrong in the language Nature taught.

Burns's humble birthplace was a small clay bignin. It was a frail and primitive structure at most, composed of only a hut and a ben, and built by the upright father of the future poet of the people. A portion of the gable of the frail abode fell in on a boisterous February morning when the precious babe had been but ten days in the world he was to adorn, and drove mother and child to the welcome hut of a kind neighbor for needed shelter. At school he was dull to the verge of stupidity, always wearing a sober expression, and a favorite with but few. But he possessed a memory that kept safe all that fell to its retentive grasp. He first felt the uneasy throbs of youthful ambition, and began to break forth in resistless rhyme while following the gleaming plowshare and sweeping the curved sickle among the blades of corn. His coming was spontaneous and without study or labor. A singing bird was nestled in his tender breast at birth. And so he began, and so he proceeded for the other half of his short and struggling life. His "Tam O'Shanter" was born the year he went to Dumfries, to spend there the sad remainder of his earthly existence. There he took his final leave of the world—a spirit garlanded with wreaths of song, that had taken flight into all hearts and lives.

"SPIRIT LAWS AND INFLUENCES," a discourse by Henry Kiddie (Boston: Banner of Light Publishing Co.), is a small pamphlet containing the essence of many thoughts and experiences. Written in a thoughtful tone, its reverence and spirituality make it very suitable for circulation among serious-minded people who might be repelled by more militant publications. The following extract illustrates what we mean:

"Nothing can be more certain than the truth—a truth pregnant with meaning—that, to build for spiritual life, we must build from within, and he who neglects to build may erect for himself, in this material life, the most sumptuous palace that the pride of man can plan, or his art construct; but, ere long, he will be obliged to quit it and take up his abode in perhaps the meanest hovel in the spirit-world. He may here revel in costly furniture, trading on luxurious carpets, lounging on silken cushions, and sleeping on a bed of down; but, ere long, he will find that his nourished toads and vipers in his spirit, he will find them, in the next life, crawling around him.

That is the way in which this life is related to the next. Truly do we reap what we sow, and nothing else. We may sow to the flesh, and, as the apostle said, 'we shall reap corruption'; we may sow to self, and we shall reap selfishness and barrenness of spirit. We may labor for the intellect exclusively, and we shall construct for ourselves perhaps a sphere as glittering as the purest crystal, but it will be as cold as an ice-berg; and there we may abide in solitary splendor, surrounded with the creations of our own thought, but shivering for the want of human sympathy and kind love.

On the other hand, we may sow to the spirit, and we shall reap the fruits of the spirit in love, joy, and peace, the memory of kind and loving deeds, charitable thoughts, and gentle words. These are far better materials of which to construct our spirit-homes than all the fine-spun theories and subtle reasonings which have ever emanated from the loftiest intellects that have ever enlivened the history of the race. It has been truly said that 'a person may know but little, but yet may approach much nearer the Divine than one who has more brain furniture with less of heart.'—*Light, London, Eng.*

The Harbinger of Light says that it learns from La Paix Universelle that M. Léon Denis, the most brilliant lecturer on Spiritualism in France, has been delivering a public discourse upon "Joan of Arc, her Voices and her Visions," to a crowded audience at Agen, in the south of France. The notabilities of the city were on the platform, and he was listened to with rapt attention as he illustrated the splendid gifts of mediumship possessed and exercised by the Maid of Orleans, and showed that no power on earth could prevent Spiritualism from becoming the religion of the future. A local journal, *La Dépêche du Centre*, observes: "We have rarely heard purer, richer, more vivid or more picturesque language than that of M. Denis pressed into the service of a cause which he defends with a sincerity and a conviction to which we pay homage. He really charmed the whole of his audience, and Saturday evening's discourse will linger in our memory as a literary treat of the highest kind."

Wm. Phillips, Clackamas, Ore., writes: "Spiritualism, or 'The Philosophy of Life,' seems to be gaining ground in this, the far West. Some half-dozen camp meetings for the promulgation of such thought will be held on this coast the present season. The New Era meeting, now under way, is well attended, and the thoughts expressed there from the rostrum are in full harmony with, and are part of those moving the world onward and upward to-day. Liberal thought, both religious and political, seems to be pushing itself forward to almost every nook and corner of our country, and, as a consequence, conservatism quakes and trembles. But such must learn to keep out of the way of the 'Rising Light,' or better still, fall in line, and help carry the world along to better conditions."

Dr. T. A. Bland's book, "How to Get Well and How to Keep Well," has been adopted as a text-book in the Illinois Medical and Health University of Chicago, and the President of that great institution, Prof. J. Armstrong, M. D., recommends it in the strongest terms. He says: "This is a book of great merit; indeed, I have never seen a book of its size and price which contained as much useful information." This valuable work is for sale at the Banner of Light bookstore, 9 Bowditch Street, Boston, for only \$1.

The California Psychic Society, incorporated Nov. 4, 1895: At present arrangements have been made for headquarters to be open from Monday to Friday, from 3 to 5 P. M., when Mr. J. J. Morse will be in attendance to receive members and impart all necessary information as to the work of the Society. Other information may be gained by addressing J. Dalzell Brown, Safe Deposit Building, San Francisco.

John W. Wray, of Texas, made us a pleasant call of late, from his residence at Onset. The emphasis between the two names was well and gleefully marked.

We are in receipt of a letter from Onset Bay, from W. H. Bach, which we shall print in our next issue.

Written for the Banner of Light.

A Man Among Men.

BY JOHN WILLIAM FLETCHER.

"Among some distressed experiences that I have experienced in life, I ever laid this down as my foundation of comfort—That he who has lived the life of an honest man has by no means lived in vain."—Burns.

It is well to stop on the road of life and look backward over the path our feet have passed, and contemplate the great and noble services that have been rendered mankind by those illumined souls who have been able to rise, even temporarily, above the turmoil and contention of earthly things and come into closer communion with the spirit of all good that pervades every form of life. We gain strength and courage by so doing. We seem to recognize that invisible kinship existing between our own hopes and past realities and achievements. And surely no life offers an opportunity for greater study or deeper thought, or was impregnated by a more infinite variety of impulses, than that of ROBERT BURNS.

Seen through the mist of the fast fleeting years, his life and his work, both as a poet and a man, stands forth with an unique distinctness that time can never dim, and a growing intelligence but tends to emphasize and accentuate. The world knows Robert Burns the poet, has read and sung his songs in many lands, has wept with him, smiled with him, journeyed with him through the various changes of his mood, and has always found in him the sweetness of the poet, the keen satire of the wit, and the undaunted courage of the true man. Whether it be in rollicking "Tam o' Shanter," or the stirring pathos of "The Cotter's Saturday Night," or the still deeper, softer feeling so eloquently expressed in the lines on "A Wounded Hare," we have a poet of deepest feeling, of highest sensibility, which was recognized even in his own time, and would have received the homage due great genius but for the uses to which it was turned.

For with all Burns's remarkable power, satire was without doubt his strongest weapon, and most thoroughly was it used; principally directed against the absurdities of theology, and with such deftness and imagery, that a saint could not but smile. There was scarcely a subject, no matter how sacred, that was not dealt with, in such a manner that every folio was laid bare. Naturally the clergy, whose only safeguard is in the awe and reverence they inspire, through and by presumptive authority in matters celestial, were lashed to fury, and would have enjoyed seeing Burns beheaded, with as much gusto as ever Calvin watched poor Servetus being led to his funeral pyre. This only added fresh fuel to the inspiration of the poet, who has bequeathed to mankind contributions in verse as pronounced, and, to priestly eyes, as profane as anything that ever flowed from the pen of America's greatest mind, Thomas Paine.

It is as a man, rather than as a poet, that I most wish to consider him, for his verse will be remembered, and repeated these many years after the man, his purposes, his struggles, have been forgotten. Few ever realize the deeper purpose of poetry, just as few indeed ever perceive the dignity and sublimity of true art in any direction; if the ear responds and the sentiment breathes of sweetness and rest, it is accepted with little if any thought. But good clear-out prose is quite another thing; it comes without any apology whatever, and is accepted for what it is worth. And it is in the prose writings, mostly letters of Burns's, that we get nearer the mind of the normal man—freed from those wild, overpowering emotional sweeps that are known to men of genius, and which they understand as little as do the rest of the world. It will be said that Burns was too promiscuous and immoral by nature to be a safe guide in any department of life; but it is the results of life that should count, and not the many intermediary steps that lead up to them.

His private life was his own—its failures and victories the world has nothing to do with; it should concern itself about the intellectual records of a great mind, and not swing through the gutter to find filth with which to besmeer it. Are the works of Burns, then, with their imaginative and poetically true to the highest standard of genius, because his happiness was not always found at his own fireside? Are the works of George Eliot less remarkable for their deep insight into human nature because she eschewed the prudish of society, or, indeed, are we less proud of the transcendence and sometimes erratic genius of Edgar Allan Poe, because never-wearying gossips have sought to shadow him with tales of a wild, unchecked life? We cannot get the greater and mightier results of genius without expecting that at times the pendulum will swing quite as far the other way; and shall we reject, throw away, discard altogether, the beautiful flowers in life's garden because at times the same soil will produce weeds? No man, however bad, is wholly lost because of his sins, and shame to those who have sought to dim the greatness of Robert Burns by hurling at his memory some misstep he may have committed, some indiscretion that he may have made.

Surely he has left enough that was good, grand and enduring to counteract half the sins in the calendar—if one was weighed against the other. All inspired souls—be they painters of pictures, workers in marble, singers of songs, or the simple channels through which the knowledge of eternal life is breathed out upon a darkened world—are sensitive in every sense and to every condition. They see more intensely, feel more deeply, and suffer more heroically than the rest of mankind, and if from the hilltops they catch the gleam of a heaven-lit city, the vision of a resurrected humanity, the echo of sublimest harmonies, so in the valley may they not at times be weighed down by shadows deeper and heavier than could ever be known by the common herd, who measure life and all there is in it by the way it affects them individually.

Sometimes the true wealth of the country will be estimated by the brains, the genius, the intelligence of the people, rather than by the lands and wealth with which propitious circumstance has endowed them. From the letters of Burns we learn more of him, of his rare and impassioned nature, warm heartedness, satire, wit and general life, than from his poetical effusions, which any casual reader can study for himself. He seemed to realize that there was a highly sensitive condition to which all minds were not equally susceptible to, or endowed with, as will be seen in the following paragraph:

"Do not you think that among the few favored of heaven in the structure of their minds, for such there certainly are, there may be a purity, a tenderness, a dignity and elegance of soul, which is of no use, in some degree, absolutely disqualify for the truly important business of making a man's way into life?"

Assuredly yes, the most obtuse will answer, if getting money, building a reputation on havoc and ruin, living only for one's self in one's time, being envied for houses and lands, feared for one's influence for good or bad, as self-interest may dictate, hated for winning in a race where no man has an equal chance, is the epitome of true greatness. The refined, sympathetic soul, with all its thousand tender emotions, will never feel anything else but bruised, torn and bleeding in an age that looks upon art in its highest aspect as but a pastime, an acquired taste, or possibly a folly, at which the world looks patronizingly—and rejects because it fails to comprehend. Burns was not fit to cope with the important question of getting it; he was too good-natured a man to be successful as a farmer, too anxious to make those in his employ happy to get much work out of them. He ought to have been so situated that his mind was free to act, to roam at will, and then—but who knows?

Perhaps the following expresses his view of life as well as any selection that can be made, and shows how deeply he thought at times upon the subject that has engrossed the attention of sage, scholar, and in fact all the thinking part of mankind:

"What strange beings we are! Since we have a portion of conscious existence, equally capable of enjoying pleasure, happiness and nature, or of suffering pain, wretchedness and misery, it is surely worthy of an inquiry, whether there be not such a thing as a

belong of life; whether method, economy and fertility of expedients be not applicable to enjoyment; and whether there be not a want of dexterity in pleasure, which renders our little squandering of happiness still less and a profounder satisfaction in bliss, which leads to anti-ty, dexterity and self-abhorrence. There is not a doubt that that health, friends, character, decent competency, respectable friends, are real substantial blessings, and yet do we not daily see those who enjoy many or all of these good things contrive, notwithstanding, to be as unhappy as others to whose lot few of these have fallen. I believe one great source of this mistake or misconduct is owing to a certain ambition, with us called ambition, which goes up the hill of life, but as we ascend other emulences, for the laudable curiosity of viewing an extended landscape, but rather for the dishonest pride of looking down on others of our fellow-creatures, seemingly diminutive in his humble stations."

In this "ambition," as he chooses to call it, he really strikes the keynote to the great chord of unrest that floats in and through nearly every form of human life. The clergy hated him, as I have said, just as they hate Thomas Paine, Theodore Parker, Robert Ingersoll, because his great brain made light of their assumed authority, and put to the test any claims they might have the audacity to make. Yet he was not an enemy to religion, pure and simple; he derided theology, which in nearly every instance is the antithesis of true religion. The free thinkers in every age, those who have lashed theologians and theology to a fever heat, have always had high ideas of right and wrong, good and evil, but they refused to accept the *ipse dixit* of a church founded upon error and conceived in superstition.

No wonder, then, that such words as the following should have brought upon his careless head approbrium and denunciation from those he so aptly characterizes:

"But of all nonsense, religious nonsense is the most nonsensical; so much, and more than enough of it. Only by the by, will you or can you tell me, my dear Cunningham, why a sectarian turn of mind has always a tendency to narrow and liberalize the heart? They are orderly; they may be just; nay, I have known them meritorious; but still your children of sanctity move among their fellow-creatures with a nostril-sniffing pretentiousness and a foot-spiriting fling—in short, with a condescending dignity that may lead to a good deal of your Scottish lordlings of seven centuries' standing display, when they accidentally mix among the many-aped sons of mechanical life."

Who has not seen an evidence everywhere shown by the would-be godly, and been shocked beyond expression at their oft-repeated statement that "God so loved them (the world) he sent his only begotten son to die in order to save them?" From whom?—Himself and his own judgment? Marvellous logic this, is it not? This is what Robert Burns says upon the subject of Religion:

"Religion, my honoured friend, is surely a simple business, as it equally concerns the ignorant and the learned, the poor and the rich. That there is an incomprehensible great Being, to whom I owe my existence, and that He must be intimately acquainted with the operations and progress of the internal machinery, and consequent outward deportment of this creature which He has made—these are axioms, and as such, propositions. That there is a real and eternal distinction between virtue and vice, and consequently, that I am an accountable creature; that, from the seeming nature of the human mind, as well as from the evident imperfection, nay, positive injustice, in the administration of affairs, both in the natural and moral worlds, there must be a real and eternal distinction between the good and the evil; that, from the nature of the human mind, as well as from the evident imperfection, nay, positive injustice, in the administration of affairs, both in the natural and moral worlds, there must be a real and eternal distinction between the good and the evil; that, from the nature of the human mind, as well as from the evident imperfection, nay, positive injustice, in the administration of affairs, both in the natural and moral worlds, there must be a real and eternal distinction between the good and the evil; that, from the nature of the human mind, as well as from the evident imperfection, nay, positive injustice, in the administration of affairs, both in the natural and moral worlds, there must be a real and eternal distinction between the good and the evil; 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SPIRIT Message Department.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

Questions propounded by inquirers—having practical bearing upon human life in its departments of thought or labor—should be forwarded to this office by mail or left at our counting-room for answer. It should also be distinctly understood in this connection 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 no 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 wish that those on the mundane sphere of life who recognize the published messages of their spirit-friends on this page, from time to time, will verify them by personally informing us of the fact.

JOHN W. DAY, Chairman.

SPIRIT-MESSAGES,

GIVEN THROUGH THE TRANCE MEDIUMSHIP OF



MRS. JENNIE K. D. CONANT.

Report of Séance held June 5, 1890.

Spirit Invocation.

Once more do we enter into this sanctuary of peace, beseeching the Great Spirit to teach us and to enlighten us, and to bring knowledge to us, that we may feel their strength and realize their teachings that may bring to us the strongest and most influential knowledge.

By faith we have sought them, by hope we have waited; but now we seek for the knowledge, we seek for facts, we seek to know their divine power. Give strength, oh spirit, this morning, to the weak and to those that are in darkness; bring sweet messages of love and consolation to those that are discouraged. Oh! we see so much in this great world of thought, and recognize how much they are reaching out, trying to grasp the threads of truth, seeking to demonstrate their work, seeking to demonstrate their continuation of life and the continuance of all things. Oh! be with us this morning—as thou seest we need, and seek for the elevation of mankind. We desire to bring light into the world and destroy the dark creed of death; to recognize that death is another new birth—to realize that to die is to live; it is only a change. May we feel that truly we are scattering seeds by the highways and byways, that we may reap a reward by-and-by. Be with us this morning; guide us and direct us, and bring encouragement and strength to those who are not yet able to perform the duties that are required of them. Bless us as we have met in our circle this morning; do not only give strength to the ones in earth-life, but also strengthen those who may operate, the ones who may send forth their thoughts and other communications; their loving greeting and kindness. Hear us, guide us and direct us. Amen.

INDIVIDUAL MESSAGES.

James Kent.

Good-morning, Mr. Chairman. It is with great pleasure that I approach you this morning with thankfulness in my heart for having the privilege of sending forth a few kind words and to extend some consolation to the ones in earth-life. I have lingered around this place so many, many times, and I have enjoyed it so much myself, that I could not resist the opportunity when the kind chairman on the spirit side gave me the privilege of entering to speak.

I have got a great deal I should like to say, but space will not admit it. I would like to call the attention of those in earth-life to the fact that I am still alive and doing well, because there are so many of my loved ones that think me dead. Dead in flesh, but alive in the spirit. Not being entirely familiar with your philosophy, although I have investigated it some, I could not comprehend the beauties as I can realize them to-day; and it is one reason why I should like to come in contact with the loved ones, as I have got them scattered all over the earth plane, especially in Arkansas. I should like this letter to reach my friends there.

I should like to say, also, I have got friends and I am interested in St. Louis, where there has been such an awful disaster, and I feel that they need some encouragement to help them through the trials of life. I want to reach Frank, and I want also to say to him that I am still with him; that "you have not been left alone, although seemingly alone in the body. There are many around that I see you are interested in, but they do not understand you, and that is one reason I think you feel things so deeply as you do."

I know this is no place to expose any one's private business or private life. I will merely say I have understood all the changes that have been going on since I passed from the body, and have been very anxious to make you understand there are other souls in sympathy with you, because mother and father are both on the spirit side with me, and also sister Mary. I would like them to know I was sorry at the steps that my daughter Iza has taken, but the experience will be beneficial afterwards.

Will say I have returned with love and a desire to help all, and would like you all to investigate more, so that you will not only think the spirit can communicate, but will know it. I have got so much that I would like to express, but cannot give it here. If any of my friends will open the door and give me the privilege to talk to them through some private medium, I will try and assist you, and prove that we do carry our identity beyond the grave.

You can say, also, that there is much I would like to put into print, but don't think it best, but hope that this will go on like the wings of life, and that it will sink deep down in their hearts, so that they may realize I am still as much interested in them as ever. You may put me down as James Kent, and my home was in Aberdeen, Ark.

Many thanks for your kindness, because truly this is a God-given opportunity, both for the spirit and the mortal. Good-morning.

Catherine Martin.

Good morning, Mr. President. I want to send a message out this morning, and hope that it will find a resting-place in some one's heart. I hope that some soul will not only be helped by it, but that it may bring them to inquire as

to the possibilities and probabilities of the life beyond. I feel this morning, as I come in, like one would in earth-life as a missionary spirit, because I am interested in so many people in various ways beside my own. When we have abided by our Father's bidding, and have been brought to a consciousness of his great divine life, all will be well. I have those left in earth-life who do not recognize the beauties that God has seen fit to plant there; I feel that I have those whom I would like to bring up higher, that they may be able to lead still more noble lives. May they seek and destroy selfishness, that we often see much of in earth-life.

May God and his good angels open up their hearts; may they feel that the spirit of the loved one has not gone; may they truly feel that while they have laid the material body aside, they have not killed mother's love; they have not killed mother's anxiousness—because I have followed them, and I always will, as I followed them in earth-life.

I would like that my dear boy David could realize more cautiously and carefully what he is about; I would say to him: "Don't get discouraged; don't think that all in earth-life is work, work, work; don't think that all the good you can get out of earth-life is the mighty dollar; remember, there are so many, many things that a dollar cannot bring you; so many things that you might even put that dollar to a better use."

Now I want also to encourage Annie, and I want her to feel that she must not worry over others too much; I would say, "Be firm and steadfast, and all will come out well." It seems sometimes so very, very hard for me, when I many times stand behind the chair of those I love and I cannot make them understand I am there. I want you to seek for the spirit communications. I want you to think of those that are gone. I know sometimes I am greatly missed; I can feel their hearts throb many times, and I wish I was there; yet I have others that I am interested in also, because there is so much that is not done that ought to be; so many things I see from the spirit-life that, if they could understand the spirit workings, they would do differently; and I know when they come over to the spirit side some of them will be disappointed and even more disheartened with their life conditions on earth while in the body.

I do not say this to criticize or to find fault; neither am I returning this morning with anything but love. I want you to feel for the welfare of yourself and the world, that your love is appreciated. I had an interest in whatever was for the elevation of man. I felt that every energy ought to be put forth, especially on the temperance question, because I realized what a terrible sin intemperance was to the mortal, and how much suffering it has caused; and I want them also to realize that it affects them even in their progress when they go to spirit-life. I would like to say, also, that God is good, God is love; and every one that seeketh and will only ask for strength it will be given them, because I have great faith in prayer; I did in earth-life, I know, and I know that my prayers were answered, and for that reason I return through this channel this morning, praying and hoping that the words will fall like pearls and be accepted, not be trampled upon.

You can say that my name is Catherine Martin, and my home was in New York City. Will be also recognized in Ohio, as those I desire to reach will be found in the West, but as I felt that I wanted to reach many, I have approached this public room this morning, knowing how valuable your beautiful paper is to bring the knowledge before the world at large. Thanking you this morning, may God and the angels ever bless you, is my prayer. Good morning.

Joseph Seavey.

I don't suppose I can talk with the eloquence that the spirit did that preceded me, but I can come just as serious, and with as much earnestness. Oh! there is so much I wish I had understood while in the body, but I have been gone a great many years, and when I lived in the body Spiritualism was not such a common thing as it is now, or in other words, I might say, was not spoken of.

I feel that I have got many friends, and many have joined me on the spirit side since I have passed over. There have been so many changes and conditions that it looks almost to me as if we were living in another plane from the one I left; but I have got those still near and dear to me in earth-life, and I feel I have them that have an interest in your BANNER.

I see they read it, and I see that there are many of my friends that have got an interest in Spiritualism since I passed on to the spirit side, and by that it has encouraged me to return. I have tried to manifest in various ways, and I have at various times made myself known to those that have given me an opportunity. This morning I have got the privilege of using this instrument, but not being familiar at handling another's brain I will have to do the best I can, and with that idea in view I am doing all I can.

Would like to say to Nellie that I am truly in sympathy with her in the changes and trials that have come to her, but would like to say that things will come out all well. Many times she may think that Uncle Joseph is gone, but I have not left her.

Daniel is with me in spirit, and oh! so many. I would like to reach others that do not take your paper, or that don't understand much about it, but I think that if I can send this letter out, it may reach both those I intend to reach and also those that have not been looking for it.

I have come this morning because I have heard Nellie say so many times, and in fact she has asked others if it was not possible that I could give her some light or encouragement through the BANNER OF LIGHT. I will merely say that my name is Joseph Seavey, and you can put me down for my home in Berwick, Me.

Eli Robinson.

Oh! it is such hard work for me to talk, because I suffered very much with my lungs previous to going out of the body—and my throat feels badly now, because I passed away with what your physicians call pneumonia. I feel somewhat affected by the old conditions as I return with this instrument this morning; but I would like to overcome that, and they tell me the more I can mingle with the earth-life conditions the better I shall be able to overcome that.

I have those that I am interested in in earth-life, and would like to say: Oh! I am so glad after all that the change came—although it came when I least expected it, and seemingly when I was in the condition to make the best advantage out of earth-life. I have learned

that it is when we think we are going to do the most—have the best conditions ahead for happiness and success—that we are oftentimes out off. I would like to say that I am more anxious for the ones that I left than the ones who have gone—for I see shadows around them.

I would like my dear companion to know that I am still near her, and trying to give her impressions and strength, so that she may feel that truly life is not all dark. I would like to say I left two little children, that I am anxious for their welfare; but would like to say, don't think because you have lost the body that you have lost papa, because I am with you every day, and hear you talk, and I try and draw close to you, because my home to me was my heaven, and my children were really my God. I might say that we oftentimes make mistakes in our worship, and I desire now for them not to worship ideals, nor be carried away with false conceptions: Truth is the best—then they will not be disappointed when they may return from the spirit-side.

I do want my companion to follow out what she has undertaken, as I see it will be best for her; although she may not like that idea, and it would not have been mine if I was in earth-life—yet as I look upon things from the spirit-side I can see wherein it is best.

I only want to send a short communication this morning; my wife has only lately become interested in Spiritualism, and I realize that she has somewhat of a mediumistic power, and feel that I shall be able to make her realize more fully—but not finding all that she desires, she is growing a little impatient, and I would say to her: "Don't grow impatient, because it takes time to develop—it takes time to grow. I have learned that you can learn Spiritualism as you do religion; you have to grow to the facts and learn it by faith."

I will say to you, my name is Eli Robinson, and you can put down Boston as my home, but Connecticut is where my friends are—they will understand, especially in Hartford. I have been out of the body some time.

Mary Wiley.

It seems to me this morning that there is always so much to be done, and so very little time to do it, that it is hard work for any one to bring themselves together so as to know what is best to say. I am anxious this morning to bring a sweeter communication to those in earth-life, and to report that all is well. I should like to say, also, that the manifestations that my friends have got from me in various parts of the country were from me; I tried to manifest the best I knew how, because I have one who is very close to me who travels both in the States and Canada, and he has gone to several mediums for manifestations; some he has been well pleased with, and others he has not been; and he has now requested me, if I have manifested at all, or if it is a possibility for me to manifest, to come and give him a few words through your valuable paper—because he gets your paper most all the time. He is not as yet really a Spiritualist, yet he is investigating, and he said: "If I would only come, if I did not say but four words, just to gratify his request." I would like to say to him, to make it still better, I have got my baby with me. Baby has passed away since I did. I will say that I am glad the baby is here with me, for I can take better care of it than he could, and he wants to be reconciled to both changes.

Will say that I am still interested in the welfare of both you and those I left behind; and I hope this will suit you more than anything else. I will try and go still further by-and-by, for I want you to be sure that death does not separate. I will say: "Don't get so worried in connection with earthly things." I see you worry over business matters, and can merely say I feel that things will work out better next spring than it will be this year; so that, if you will only be patient, follow your impressions and do not mix up with too many different conditions, I can impress you so that you will understand. Put me down as Mary Wiley, and my home was in Baltimore, Md.

Messages to be Published.

June 12.—Mary O'Reilly; William Knights; Lucinda Morrill; Emma Nickelson; Samuel Stowell; Henry Franklin Clark.
July 19.—Amos Atwood; Maria Jones; Caroline Whitcomb; John Kelley; George Adams; Mary Ann Hanson.
June 28.—Samuel Clark; Eben Gordon; Mary De Witt; Seth Whitman; Maria F. Wellington; Ritchie Wells.
July 4.—David Drew; Mary Chase; Abby Gordon; Daniel Flagg; William Henderson; Hannah Walcott; Fannie L. Whittemore.
July 10.—Bourne Sattlers; Alfred Smith; Mary Frances Howell; David Carr; Lucinda Milton Stowell; George Robinson.

A SIGH FOR THE LONG AGONE.

BY JULIAN E. JOHNSTONE.

The light is up in the morning, and the lark is up in the blue,
And his silvery notes float downward like musical drops of dew.
I stand at my lattice listening, and I would that I felt the joy
To see the sun and hear the song that I felt when a little boy;
For the light is soft and golden, and the music is golden too.
But somehow they fail to move me as they used to when life was new.

The breeze comes in from the garden, with the scent of the red rose,
And the buds of the scarlet balsams, that wake from their night repose.
The breeze comes in from the garden, and its breathing is sweet and cool.
For it dipped its wings in passing in the wave of a pebbly pool.
And it kisses my aching eyelids, and my throbbing heart.
But, ah me! for the old-time breezes, and the old, old-time delight!

The Beverly bells are ringing, and their sound is silvery clear,
And the rhyme and chime and the cadences fall soothingly on mine ear;
The robins are all astrid below, the jowler birds above,
And all is bright in the morning light, and as kind and sweet as love;
But the bells of Beverly ringing, the bobolinks chirring low,
Awake in my heart no music like the music of long ago.

Oh! what was the charm of the old time that everything then could please?
Was the old-time light a softer light, or greener the old-time trees?
Had the birds of boyhood sweeter songs, or the buds a brighter bloom,
Or the lavender and the lilac boughs a more divine perfume?
I know not; I cannot make answer, but down in my heart I know
That I miss in to-day the glory I felt in the long ago.
—Donahoe's Magazine.

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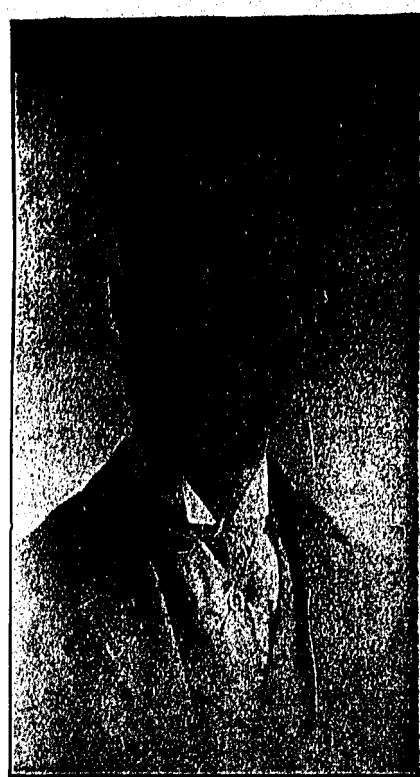
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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

GIVEN THROUGH THE MEDIUMSHIP OF



W. J. COLVILLE.

Q.—[By Fred. Swanwell, Sacramento, Cal.] What power is it that converts an unbeliever or skeptic to our beautiful religion—Spiritualism?

ANS.—The power which converts an unbeliever, or skeptic, must always be the force of conviction, and, as many people who are commonly called skeptics are very honest in their search for truth, it is not always difficult to convince them of any affirmative truth which can be positively demonstrated.

When persons attend séances or meetings of any kind because they are interested in psychology, or some phase of Spiritualism or Theosophy, it proves that they are open to conviction, and their skeptical attitude toward the evidences of immortality is usually one of simple uncertainty, which can be dispelled by whatever appeals to them as proof.

It is often the case that friends in spirit-life impel or impress their friends on earth with a desire to enter into communion with the spirit-world, and in that case the convincing of the previous skeptic is a very easy matter, if the nature of the phenomena presented is such as to appeal forcibly to the peculiar temperament of the inquirer.

The evidences of Spiritualism are varied, and, while our present questioner rightly emphasizes the beauty of the religion of Spiritualism, there are many Spiritualists who do not regard Spiritualism as a religion at all, but simply as a science and a philosophy.

As it is all three, whichever phase is most prominently emphasized serves to demonstrate the cast of mind possessed by the individual to whom a special phase of the subject appeals most strongly.

There are three distinct sets of evidences which carry conviction to different types of minds. First, the purely spiritual, which addresses themselves to the centre of all truly religious thought and feeling; these include the ethical or moral, and concern the interior improvement of humanity and the higher development of character.

Second, the philosophical, or purely rational evidences, which forcibly appeal to thinking and reflecting minds, carrying with them a suggestion of perfect reasonableness, and thus conveying satisfaction to the intellect as it dwells upon the rational truth and beauty of a superior philosophy to that with which it was formerly dissatisfied.

Third, the altogether phenomenal evidences which address themselves to the senses, and give hard-headed skeptics some pretty hard nuts to crack.

These phenomenal proofs of super-physical intelligence and its activity appeal specially to those who say "facts are stubborn things, and there is no doing away with them." All these classes of evidence are equally necessary, as well as simply useful, in the present state of society, and there will probably always become people to whom every sort of manifestation will make a specially appropriate appeal.

The power behind the outward scenes which brings conviction is, in all cases, the intelligent spirit seeking to prove the reality of spiritual beings; there is, therefore, but one primal source whence knowledge proceeds, as, in all cases, the soul is seeking to demonstrate its reality.

Q.—[By C. A. Davidson, Parkersburg, W. Va.] If any other planets are inhabited, does each planet have a spirit-sphere, with a dividing line between? or do spirits from our own and other spheres mingle together?

A.—Each planet is surrounded with spiritual spheres, circles or belts, which are increasingly luminous in the ratio of their distance from the physical atmosphere of the globe.

All that can be called the first sphere, purgatory, or *kama loca*, is within the earth's immediate atmosphere, and is, therefore, strictly confined to the subjective side of terrestrial existence. This first sphere is the state of the majority of those who, during an incarnation, have cared only for material things, neglecting the culture of the higher faculties. Such spirits know nothing whatever of any state beyond the semi-material one in which they are now dwelling, and though the descriptions they give of their homes and business may be perfectly accurate, it is useless to inquire of them concerning other planets, for they have no wish to visit them and no present means of inquiring into their condition.

Those who have taken great interest in astronomy and kindred sciences while on earth, are attracted to centres of observation from which they can and do obtain knowledge concerning other planets, and it is from these higher states of aspiration and attainment that information is procured concerning interplanetary conditions of life.

There are no dividing lines, like fences or barriers, set up in spirit-life to prevent excursions into territories beyond the spheres immediately surrounding this earth; but it is not possible for spirits to navigate interstellar ether unless they are sufficiently developed to stand its pressure upon their spiritual bodies.

Surrounding all planets are spheres which pertain to the respective planets immediately, but beyond these are angelic states in which messengers travel from world to world, and in which advanced intelligences from various globes commingle.

If you would receive knowledge concerning life on other worlds than your own, you must find a means of communicating with much more advanced intelligences than ordinarily present themselves to those who are yet on the threshold of spiritual inquiry. But as it is universally true that wherever there is strong desire for any sort of knowledge it is procurable, if you are very desirous of discovering truth concerning interplanetary life, you may well devote a little time to astronomical studies, and when you are most interested in contemplating the heavens quietly desire and confidently await such added information as only spiritual beings possessing it can supply.

Sincerity of Burns.

(Continued from second page.)

clothed his thoughts in simplest language, and this simplicity made him great; and his fame is undying because of his sincerity.

At the close of his life he seems to have felt little hope or inspiration. "He was rejected of men because of his revolutionary utterances." Could he have received in his last years but a small measure of the praise he received after death, what inspirations the world might have known, but would the world have received such a gospel of truth, charity and freedom?

Written for the Banner of Light.

Robert Burns, the Poet of Dear Auld Scotland.

BY WILLIAM BRUNTON.

ROBERT BURNS is a name expressive of all that is particularly pleasing to Scotchmen, because he has stirred their nature—as the springtide stirs the earth—by his utter manliness and noble independence; because he has uttered in sweetest song and finest verse what was close to the life of the people; he has made them known throughout the earth in their brave integrity; the scenery of their native land is instinct with beauty because of him and he has rescued their poverty and the hard ships of their lot from its obscurity by the richness of his genius and the wealth of his fancy; he has given them a poet of whom they may well be proud to the end of time. When he saw the mouse running, as his plowshare upturned its home, he said to a friend: "I will make it immortal," and he did. But he burned to make Scotland great among the nations, so that she might live in song as in the glory of her history, and he succeeded in this noble intention, therefore his countrymen gave him the admiration and affection of true patriots; he is their prophet and their poet.

But more than this—the whole English-speaking people are proud of him and claim him as their own. In the kingdom of poesy, as in the kingdom of souls, we all have rights and privileges, and are evermore welcome to the companionship of its great rulers. Therefore we are ready to do him honor with all the world as it rises up in glad recognition of his helpfulness to the race. We know the value of a downright sincere man; we know he dissipates the mists of superstition and brings us true refreshment of soul. We are proud of him, and would honor him as representative of the nobility of man.

It is a hundred years since Burns died in sickness and sorrow so pitiable, and the way that was so rough and thorny in his lifetime ever since has been strewn with the flowers of fairest praise. The centennial of his birth (January 25, 1890) was a grand occasion, and fitly celebrated as being the gift of a real man to the world; the centennial of the publication of his poems at Kilmarnock (June 1, 1886), was a jubilee of joy because of the contribution he had made to the impulse of the love of nature, the worth and rights of man, and of those songs that are evermore to be the memory of his praise. Now we come to the centennial of his death, and it is the time when the heart is all tender with regret that one of such true manliness might not in his own day have been better known, or more kindly treated, and we shall speak the words that would have been his saving, if he had only known of their possible utterance and governed himself accordingly.

I am not unaware that he did esteem himself to be a true poet—he had the vision of his own crowning—and he had attention and help, and all this ought to have saved him from his infirmity or sin; but think of the impress of a century growing as the summer grows with his praise. That is a lofty thought, and should have moved him to the sublime purpose of living. But let us be charitable—for every one of us might be moved to better doing if we thought of the judgment of time and not of the hour; however humble we are, we have need of a lofty ideal to guide us. I make no justification of his mistakes and sins—they are unworthy of him—and yet there is that larger something in him that stirs one to deep admiration of the poet and the man. It is only justice that prompts us to honor him, with the poverty of his days and circumstances to fight against, and the temptation to drink that besets the poor as their heritage from the evil ancestry, and which it is such a terrible fight for some to overcome even now. Beside the justice, there is the enjoyment of praising the good in such a one; the deed itself is bright, it is spontaneous, and blossoms on our hearts as naturally as the heather of his native hills, and sings itself like the brook, or the mavis at the brightening of the dawn!

We cannot complain of lack of recognition either in his lifetime or since. After the printing of his poems he received an ovation in Edinburgh that was satisfaction to the heart of the minstrel; it might have assured him of the place he would hold in the world of letters if he had been true to the voice that was in him; a king should have carried himself with royal dignity, but alas! his imagination did not reach out to the verdict of the centuries.

What can be more pleasing in our thought of him at this time than the knowledge of how many masters of sturdy prose have written afresh the story of his life, and how many poets have paid him the beautiful tribute of their praise; and while all has been said that might be said, as it would seem—still, each new heart, as it comes to its singing task, feels that it can have no better theme or worthier, and our own poets—Halleck, Holmes, Lowell, Longfellow, Whittier—have given us lines of infinite tenderness and grace on this subject of a soul battered in the purple of genius delving as a digger of the soil. So he is honored in history and song—albeit because he is so much of a man and so beloved by his people.

Now, why this will not be hard to tell, for it is on the face of the story of his life. He

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First size of a dime; next size of a dollar; then big as the palm of your hand. The end: entire baldness. Stop it.

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had the common lot of men to meet. Like Lincoln, he was of the people and with them, and ever proud of that brotherhood. There is a sense of fellowship in his very name; we can call him Bobby Burns, and feel no lessening of his dignity; there is too much manhood in him for that. He was a farmer's boy, of good stock—the father noble in his integrity, industry and desire of knowledge, full of common sense and real piety; and the mother must have been poetical and full of charms, or her eldest boy would not have had his minstrel mind and such a way with "the lassies O'". In good time there was a family of seven, and his brother Gilbert was thought to be the promise of them all; but Robert kept working his way to the fore, and the father had the intuition to see that something unusual would come of the lad.

The story of his struggles has been recounted many times, first by his own hand, and then by his appreciative biographers and essayists. It is a theme as fruitful as the Arthurian legends, because it touches the pathos and sorrow of human life; it is the modern drama of pity, that a soul freighted with such hopes and possibilities should find himself, by his poverty, cut off from their full manifestation.

It seems just like a Shakespearean play going on before our very eyes, to see this lad at fifteen touched with song because of Handsome Nell singing at his side, and then finding the divine power, and having eyes that must see Nature as she is in her background to human life, and look at man, as he does, with eyes of love and humor; and then for us to see that he is thwarted on every hand by the gloom and hardship of his lot—why, such a man as this is rare among all the millions, and we must regret that nothing better was done with him than at last to measure old wives' beer barrels; his time was all too brief for such common use, and he of too noble a mould to be kept at such ignoble task. We must remember that he was a discoverer by this of the real value of man—that the man is the gold and not the glitter of circumstance, which was not well seen in those days until he proclaimed it in his song of independence.

There was a saying, "It is no disgrace to be poor, but mighty inconvenient." It might be no disgrace in his case, but it deprived the lad of schooling, and kept him from the leisure necessary for the development of his genius. While he was admired by the nobility as a nine days' wonder in Edinburgh, it was, after all, a surprise that the plowman should be able thus to come before them. Burns could not but feel the injustice of wealth and rank looking down on capacity of soul—which is the title of the aristocracy of heaven.

But if a flower under culture develops hidden beauties, and has the difference of the five-petaled wild rose and the hundred petaled rose of the conservatory, I know not but what more poetry remains with the native-born—the child of the wild woods and the hedgerows. Here is really the charm of Burns; it is verse and song of nature's birth. He is out in the fields to turn over the daisy or frighten the mouse; he is by Ayre and Doon, and all those lovely scenes that he depicts. All his painting, as he tells us, is done while he is under the heavens looking at the soul of things, and not merely at their appearance.

Till he is twenty-three he goes on working hard and trying to improve his circumstances; he lives on thirty-five dollars a year. He tries to learn tailoring, and has to depend on his father for oatmeal to pursue it.

He pays the penalty of bad company; not the least part of it is the inability to be true even to his ideal, after he has once broken faith. He borrowed a horse of the devil for a little trip, and worse than Tam O'Shanter's mare, it ran away with him to his destruction. Nobody need try to make the evil of his life less uncanny and blameworthy because of his genius. He knew its condemnation and sorrow accordingly. It has been said that he should have lost much if he had not been what he was, and that the "Jolly Beggars" has even more life in it than "The Cotter's Saturday Night." I reply that what is congenial to our present life is the thing that we wish to hear in song; and while his studies are well enough as transcripts from society and nature, yet drinking and some other things are not the only inspiration that our life has to give.

I think we all make selections from his writings according to the cast of our mind; and while the lover will always find the loveliest songs of every variety and complexion of admiration and tenderness, the religious will find hymns and that wonderful picture of a pious home, though they may turn aside from his satires. But this is to be said of even them, that they are aimed at the very faults the Pharisees stood for; and it seems sad that one with scorpions, instead of cords, should drive us out of the temple we profane if we have not sympathy and forgiveness for the lowest when the tears of repentance course down the cheek. There was open affront to religion in Burns's conduct: he betrayed his own manhood; he outraged his own ideal of love; he put happiness far from him—it was a star and he a worm—but the professors of religion had forgotten the sentence: "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more!"

How near the ruin of his poetic life his unfaithfulness was, is seen in the preparation he had to make to go to the Indies—to be a factor on one of the sugar plantations. He had not the money to do it, and so must try to get it by the only means he had—his verse. This opened out the way to Edinburgh and fame. He was at once acknowledged for a poet of nature—a true voice for Scotland. Now he is twenty-eight years old, and he has more than met his expectations of success; he has a good start in life. He has the chance of seeing the country, but loose company, and again the sensual side, keep him in chains. But he goes back home with good intentions; helps his brother; marries Jean and settles at Ellensland; has fifty pounds a year as excise-man, a poor calling to be sure, but neither farming nor that will keep the frequenter of the tavern. I do not know what lesson these days of his teach, if it is not the need of mastery of self. He might gratify his cronies, and it might be excellent to have their worshipful admiration, such as it was; but here was one as in his vision showing he knew the function of the bard, and he had his own loved Milton to teach him that the life must be worthy of the song.

After this it is the pitiful tale of wasted powers on little things—the grand feelings of liberty touching his soul at the cry of the French Revolution—and his being snubbed by those in authority over him, and told not to think—and then his inability to be passing rich at Dumfries on seventy pounds a year. His cottage was a miserable affair, and in a centre ut-

(Continued on eighth page.)

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Robert Burns, the Poet of Dear Auld Scotland.

(Continued from seventh page.)

terly unpoetic; but here he worked on the production of his immortal songs—those sonnets of passion, melody and beauty which will charm as long as the skylark or nightingale can teach us how to woo.

Then cometh the end. Sickness works its way—quick consumption, as it would seem; in such strait, too, as to be in danger of imprisonment for a little debt—but relieved by Thomson, who paid nothing for his songs, only five pounds in the beginning, and now five at the end.

Then when dead—the news went like wild-fire—and the heart of the people was touched as if they had crucified him, and by their gathering at his grave they sought to wipe out the memory of his faults and their own glaring failure to protect the sweetest voice heaven ever sent to cheer the nation he so dearly loved.

Again the day, and a hundred years have vanished—the distance lends enchantment, because at this remove we see his just proportions as we can see a mountain from the vale. At this distance the close memory of the bitterness of his life is lost. The weaknesses and errors are withered leaves on the tree of his fame—they are like the old oak leaves that endure till spring—but now the new verdure comes out—and it is not the withered we see or whose rustling we hear—it is the strength we admire, the perennial bloom, the endurance of fame, yes, and the sweet voices of birds that proceed from the branches. Here, indeed, is the Bard of Scotland!

For the Banner of Light.

"AFTON WATER."

BY EMMA ROOD TUTTLE.

Flow gently, sweet Afton of song, through the world;
Thy bed with the rarest of thought-gems is pearls.
The bard of thy waters, whom genius was given,
Sends hall and good cheer from the highlands of heaven.

The high hills rise green from his Afton of song;
Their slopes are alive with a truth-seeking throng.
The bard of old Scotia sailed bold through the night,
And swung in the darkness his beacons of light.

What cared he for bigot, or priest, or their cries?
He worshiped the light in Truth's beautiful eyes!
He walked, like a winged god, in mild air alone,
And smote sin and shame with his sabre of song.

The Afton of song, oh! how sweetly it glides,
With our thoughts, to the country where Mary resides;
Where heather, and blue-bells, and asphodels bloom
In the regions of life beyond death and its gloom.

Berlin Heights, O., July 8, 1896.

Written for the Banner of Light.

1796--Robert Burns--Scotia's Pride and Freedom's Friend--1896.

BY J. J. MORSE.

"Wretched men are cradled into poetry by wrong;
They learn in suffering what they teach in song."
—Chelley.

HISTORY and Philosophy appeal to the student and the scholar. Science attracts the critical, and theology the sectary, but Poetry talks to all, for the muse poets in terse form, dressed in words that live, that which laborious writers spread upon the many pages of ponderous tomes. How much of history and philosophy the poet and the song-writer have made, and how much of such matters are living, flaming thoughts in the general mind to-day, because of the Muse-inspired ones of the past, is a question that need not be now discussed. But more know their Shakespeare, Homer, Byron, Shelley, Burns, Whitaker and Longfellow, than their Hume, Smollet, Spinoza, Mill, Spencer, Berkeley, and other great or lesser lights in history and philosophy; while still fewer care to read, let alone to study, the well-known forgotten works of the theologians of former times. The writers of the "Marseilles," "Rule Britannia" and "Yankee Doodle," did as much to "make history" for France, Great Britain, and these United States as the men who were inspired to do and dare by those immortal lyrics. So, then, it is fitting that a meed of praise be placed upon the altar of one of those poet-patriots whose departure to the higher life occurred just one hundred years ago.

But one needs to have been born and bred among "the heather" to do justice to the present theme, for the gentler Southern mind seems out of accord with the life and thought of the more robust and rugged North—a land where folk-lore, legend and weird tradition abundantly abound; a land famous in song and story for its preachers, seers, patriots and poets; a land which Sir Walter Scott apostrophizes as "Caledonia stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child."

Whose mountains, lochs and vales are a perpetual inspiration to all who dwell amongst them. If then, my tribute fails in due justice to its hero it must be because I was not born a Scotchman, not because I do not admire her Ayrshire son and bard.

The story of his life has been often told, and where a Carlyle, a John Stuart Blackie and a Principal Sharp have trod, it were presumption on my part to follow. So, just the merest word in such a connection. It seems that the family name was Burness, for so the father named it. William Burness is described as "a man of strict, even stubborn, integrity, and of a strong temper"; no doubt Robert inherited much of his father's disposition, but the waywardness that appears to be associated with the poetic temperament was without doubt the cause that influenced much of the life and character of the poet's career. A hard life at best was Robert's, from that 23th of January, 1759, when, as he says,

"A blast of January's win'
Blew hansom in on Robin,"

For a few days after his birth a storm blew down the gable end of the cottage in which his parents then lived. In later years he would often say: "No wonder that one ushered into the world amid such a tempest should be the victim of stormy passions." Of his visits to Edinburgh, his tours in the north and west of Scotland, his struggles as a farmer, his life as a "gauger," i. e., exciseman, his residence and death in Dumfries, what lover of Burns needs to be told? Are not such matters the common places treasured in the minds of Scotchmen wherever Caledonia's sons and daughters are to be found?

Just how old Burns was when the Muse first gained expression through his pen is in some doubt; probably he was about seventeen or eighteen at the time; but the poet's contempt for those who, "dressed in a little brief authority," abuse their positions, was well expressed in his poem, "The Two Dogs," wherein he castigates a certain Factor, or agent, who had caused the family much sorrow:

"I've noticed on our Laird's court day,
An' mony a time my heart's been day,
Poor tenant bodies, scant o' cash,
How they maun toot a factor's snash;
He'll stamp an' threaten, curse and swear,
He'll oppress them, pin their gear,
While they maun stan' wi' aspect humble,
An' hear a' an' an' fear and tremble."

Which poem, from so young a poet, excited no small stir at the time.

Time, which, like sleep, "soothes all hurts, heals all wounds," may well be allowed to let the defects of Burns, the man, sleep, and be forgotten in the silence of the shrine wherein the dust of his mortal parts is resting. All of us have our failings, the best and bravest their

weak spots, and one, whose words are still revered, advised us against casting the first stone. Scotland has had her heroes and warriors, her stern clansmen and her devoted Covenanters—but no sweeter songster before or since her plowman-poet. What though the shade of disappointment created clouds of error, placing some "bars sinister" on the record of his life, we must remember the nature of the times in which the poet lived. They were times of general conviviality, the use of ardent liquors was common, and a night's debauch was barely a matter of comment "when George the Third was King," and Scotland's national beverage is well known as much beloved to day as then! The "gentry" had their three bottle meals, the "small" under the yomany followed in the line of those who assumed to be their "betters." Let it be said of our poet, as in another case another poet said:

"Be to his virtues ever kind,
And to his faults a little blind."

For none can read the life of Burns without at once acknowledging he had many virtues amid his faults. Justice, tempered by loving mercy, is ever wisest in such cases, for, as was said to Shylock, "if justice was meted to us all, few in the course of justice would see heaven." In spite of all that may be urged by the nice precisian, Robert Burns will ever remain, as poet, the pride of Bonnie Scotland.

From a critical standpoint Burns may be judged by a threefold standard. Or, more correctly, some three sorts of people may essay to estimate his place as a man and as a poet. First, the "through thick and thin" supporters of religion and morals, in their most ultra forms of dogmatic rigidity. Too often such merit the poet's description of those around him when living at Ellisland, and of whom he said: "I am here on my farm, but for all the pleasurable part of life called social communication I am at the very elbow of existence. The only things to be found in perfection in this country are stupidity and canting."

When one remembers how the stern theology of Calvin and Knox dominated the Scottish mind at this time, and how it was too often undoubtedly a mere cloak for self-seeking hypocrisy, it can well be imagined that Burns' satires upon its professors stirred up unholy wrath against him. While as religious prejudices apparently live longer, and die harder than their political fellows, it is small wonder the "unco' guid" of even these times are still asserting Burns' example and poetry are detrimental to Christian thought and teaching. And why, forsooth? Because he wrote "The Holy Fair," the "Address to the De'il," "The Ordination," "The Two Herds," "Holy Willie's Prayer"? But never was satire wielded in better cause. It is not denied the scenes attending "the Sacrament" are overdrawn in "The Holy Fair," and it is likely the last line of the last verse in this biting criticism was "an owre true tale," hence its sting. While his "Address to the De'il" made such sport of Calvinism's great prop, what small wonder its ridicule was bitterly resented? But the poet's largeness of heart was well expressed in his concluding stanza:

"But fare ye weel, Auld Nickle-ben!
Ye wad ye tak' a thought and men!
Ye abillins might—'a' dunn ken—
I'm wae to think, up' ye den,
E'en for your sake!"

The bare idea of thinking that even Satan might yet reach heaven was too horrible to contemplate! While, in "The Ordination," runs such hearty contempt for the gruesome theology of the times that makes all the brighter his clear perception of nature and human happiness, that the prophets of woe must needs have seen another cause of evil in this excellent bit of work. In the "Two Herds," or the Holy Tuzlie," the picture of the two heroes in the quarrel, and the other participants, are sketched with a master's hand. But the withering exhortation of "Holy Willie's Prayer" must have indeed been a sore lashing at the hypocrisy and "religion" (?) it exposes. No wonder that the bigotry, which misleads itself religious zeal, should still consider Burns' poetry dangerous, and to discredit it strives to keep alive an old-day prejudice, born of the narrow theologies of two of the most dogmatic ecclesiastics of a superstitious period of Scottish religious history.

Every lover of religious truth, and hater of cant and humbug, owes Burns an eternal debt of gratitude for voicing sentiments that undoubtedly struck ringing and fatal blows against the existence, the brutal and persecuting preaching and preachers—not only of his times, but in all times, past, present and future as well. Scotland still enjoys a Heresy Hunt, but the sport has lost its ancient charm. Burns may not have killed it quite—that he wounded it to its death there is no question. Such critics as the class referred to quite naturally denounced the poet and his poetry; the man for his infirmities, the poetry for its alleged sacrilegiousness. This class of critics (?) still exist, still carry out their predecessors' tactics, and still assert his poetry is dangerous alike to religion and morals! But do they remember "The Cotter's Saturday Night"? one of the sweetest lyrics of any land; a poem breathing the spirit of purest piety and truest devotion; acknowledged, the world over, as a classic; a poem at once bearing the stamp of genius, and enforcing the noblest lessons to all mankind; every stanza breathing piety, patriotism, morality and truth; a poem which will live and be remembered when all the polemics of priestly partisans, with those who gave them unwise utterance, have been forgotten.

Another class of people who will judge the poet as such as those whose lives are larger and truer than a church's creed; who think that satire is a fitting scourge for superstition; who, knowing how hard was the iron grip of Calvinism on the Scottish mind, and how unlovely Presbyterianism was, rejoiced at the sturdy effort made to loosen the hold of the one, and dispel the unloveliness of the other. And even sturdier minds still, which, revolting against priestly dominance of all kind, will hail our poet as fit champion of spiritual freedom and as an evangel of liberty of thought and speech, to be ranked with Thomas Paine, the author-hero of the Revolution, wise scholar and gentle theist, of a time when theism was worse than atheism to-day. This class of his critics—admirers, shall it be written?—will also see in his political poetry expressions of sympathy with the spirit of liberty, whose inspirations in this land and in France stirred men's pulses to a newer music—inspirations that cost one king a country, and another his head, but which in the end gave the world two republics out of the errors of the times, the older one of which is today the wonder of Europe and the glory of the Western world.

What sturdy words are these Burns penned in that stirring poem, "The Tree of Liberty":

"Hear ye o' the tree o' France,
I wadna' what's the name o' it;
Around it a' the patriots dance;
Weel Europe kens the fame o' it;
It stands where aunc the Bastille stood,
A prison built by klugs, man,
When Superstition's hellish brood
Kept France in leading-strings, man.

Up' this tree there grows sic' fruit,
Its virtues a' can tell, man;
It raises man above the brute.
It mak's him ken himself, man.
Gif aunc the peasant taste a bit,
He's greater than a lord, man,
An' wi' the beggar shares a milt'
O' a' he can afford, man."

And that he paid a noble tribute to Thomas Paine this further verse will plainly show:

"My blessings ye attend the chief,
Wha pitied Gallia's slaves, man,
An' staved a branch, spite o' the de'il,
Frae yout the western waves, man.
Fair virtue watered it wi' care,
An' now she sees wi' pride, man,
How weel it buds and blossoms there,
Its branches spreading wide, man."

It is to be regretted space does not permit this stirring lyric to be quoted in full. Could it be, every citizen of this land would still more clearly see the debt of gratitude, for liberty's sake, they owe Scotia's wondrous bard. That kings, courtiers and prelates would like such poetry is scarcely to be expected, and that Burns was quietly warned to moderate his zeal, by his official superiors, was but to be expected in the natural order of events, for Britain was smarting at the loss of her American colo-

nies, and Europe was full of anxious fears as to what would be the outcome of the Reign of Terror. But it serves to show, does this poem, and a wonderfully bold (not the poet drank to one occasion), "Here's to the last chapter of the last book of Kings," how the doctrines of the Reformers had not only influenced his muse, but also how they had penetrated the out-of-the-way locality in which the poet lived and moved.

The last class of those who will judge the plowman-poet will be the great masses of the people—those who care not for crowns or crowlers, who know that preachers are but men, who feel, as says the Swan of Avon, that

"One touch of nature makes the whole world kin"; those who, like the miner, know that gold is ever found midst quartz and gravel, hence do not expect to find it free from dross in man or nature. To such, that Burns was as we are—many of us—as a man, is but to keep him human. God made him a poet, but his circumstances and surroundings darkened his life and made it what it was. New men and new men prevail to-day. That our hero was enmeshed in the manners of old times cannot be denied. Rather blame if blame we must, will say the masses, the manners of the times, than the man who lived amongst, but did not make, them. The heart of the masses still thrills responsive to his poetry, and ever will. That Burns knew his own weaknesses and failings is well-known—none deplored them more. For the masses, and for those who come to know our poet better than their strictures seem to imply is the case at present, Burns will ever be one of the world's sweet singers, whose music's fire has power to kindle our loftiest love of purity in religion, politics and love. Some of his utterances, like some of Shakespeare's, may be allowed to discreetly rest upon library shelves, but the twain wrote, literally, "not for an age, but for all time."

Alas! that one so ill fitted as the present writer should—and but timorously at that—attempt to place this all too poor tribute to Robbie's memory, on this the centenary of his departure from us. But Southern though he is, his blood is tinged, when, in Scotia's commercial capital, he has heard a "braw Scots lassie" sing "Scots wha' ha' wi' Wallace bled," as he has also been "moved to smiles and tears" in the reading of other songs of liberty and love. Go forth, then, this all imperfect tribute, from a lover of liberty, and from what is here expressed, let it be hoped that all will feel and see that, in truth, Robert Burns is Scotia's pride and freedom's friend. Though a hundred years have passed since he left us, in the middle of his earthly span, yet his spirit moves among us, and his work, like himself, is the immortal heritage of freedom's friends throughout the world.

Written for the Banner of Light.

BURNS.

BY HUDSON TUTTLE.

THERE have been greater poets than Burns, but there never has been one who more sweetly expressed the thoughts of common life. Born and reared surrounded by poverty, his extremely sensitive nature was keenly alive to the hardships which constantly met him. Like all who are thus strung to extreme tension, he oscillated between the exhilaration of joy and the extreme of melancholy. His sadness and disappointment he thus expressed:

"As for this world, I despair of ever making a figure in it. . . I foresee that poverty and obscurity probably await me, and I am in some measure prepared and daily preparing to meet them."

As the wine-press tears from the heart of the grape its precious wine, so the pressure of poverty and adversity brought forth from him his sweet consolation for his fellows and for all coming generations.

Poets are born, not made. No one can enter the Temple of the Muses by force. Education, wealth, the times and surroundings may assist; but they are useless unless they fall to the lot of the poet-born. They are garments which may clothe a gentleman or give a pseudo-respectability to a boor.

The poems of Burns are remarkable for their time. He was and is the poet of freedom. He saw through the shams of society and the falseness of church-dogmas, and directly by ridicule expressed his opinions relentlessly. In his boyhood he naively says: "I was a good deal noted for a retentive memory; a stubborn, sturdy something in my disposition and an enthusiastic idiot piety." Later he engaged in polemics and sharpened his wits by disputation, until his infidel utterances brought him into notice. He worked on a farm, and at the exacting labor was the equal in strength and endurance to his fellows, who toiled like the ox, and with no aspirations have left no name.

It was while pressed down by such surroundings that he wrote poems which he published in a little volume, which brought him £20. With this money he secured passage to the West Indies, seeking thereby to escape; for he says:

"Hungry ruin had me in the wind," and "I had been for some days skulking from covert to covert under all the terrors of a jail; as some ill-advised people had uncoupled the merciless pack of the law at my heels."

But the twenty pounds was a small part of his receipts. The city of Edinburgh at once saw that a new and fresh spirit had begun to sing. Even when

"The gloomy night was gathering fast," he was invited to the scholarly city, and as Burns brilliantly says:

"The baleful star that had so long shed its blasting influence in my zenith, for once made a revolution to the Nadir."

It was a two days' walk, and he received warm welcome by the friends his poems had made. He was at once introduced into the literary circle, and his appearance and manner exceeding expectations, became the lion of the day.

It is not strange that there were critics who were skeptical as to the authenticity of the poems. That a plowman could write such verse was contrary to reason, and a few of those who admitted the fact broke its force by saying that through its phraseology the underlying mind of the peasant was discernible. Whatever explanation has been made for genius, the possession of powers—by one in millions—which transcend all, has failed and always will fail, until the spiritual theory is admitted. Of the millions of Scotchmen, only one has embodied the nationality in his dialect, and made it immortal. Only one has, by his superior sensitiveness, reached upward, received and imparted the full tide of inspiration from a higher sphere.

His verse is immortal because it is direct from the heart and true to nature. The words are set to music and his songs sing themselves. Almost a century and a half have gone since he sang, and to-day, after these long years of progress, his thoughts are abreast of the times.

As preserved in his complete works there is much that would have better been lost. There are many poems which would be rejected by the magazines if sent by a poet of to-day, for the quality is uneven, as the force of his inspirations varied. His fame rests on a few poems and songs, which rise to the highest reach of our language in its felicity of expression, vividness of representation and flowing sweetness of sound. From these down to the doggerel rhyme, where, in the magical channel of verse, the slang of the peasant muddily flows, Tam O'Shanter represents the wit of the poet at its best. His "Address to the De'il," and "Holy Willie's Prayer," taking the times in which they were written in consideration, are daring satires on established beliefs.

The selfish cant of those who pray in public is expressed in:

"But, Lord, remember me and mine,
With mercies temporal and divine,
That for gear and gain may shine
Excused by name,
An' a' the glory shall be thine;
Amen, amen."

Nothing in our language exceeds the pathos

BUFFALO LITHIA WATER In Gout.

JOHN V. SHOEMAKER, A. M., M. D., Professor of Therapeutics and Materia Medica, and Clinical Professor of Skin and Venereal Diseases, in the Medical-Chirurgical College of Philadelphia, etc., etc., in an article published in the New York Medical Journal, reported the following case:

"Mrs. Q., aged 60 years, complained of pain and tenderness in her fingers and toes, which were much deformed by Gouty deposits. In this case the large joints were also stiff and painful on motion. Her general nutrition was poor, and she had some cardiac hypertrophy with increased arterial tension. The arteries showed atheromatous thickening, and there was a systolic murmur indicating aortic valvular disease, but without marked stenosis. She was ordered a suitable diet, and recommended to change her residence to a more appropriate climate, where she could spend much of her time in the fresh air. In the meantime she was to take 4 to 5 ounces of Buffalo Lithia Water daily, from five to six times a day. The latter treatment was attended with the best results: the pain disappeared from the joints and the swelling around them was materially lessened. She felt so much better that she could not be induced to take the other part of the prescription, which called for a change of climate, since she found herself so much benefited by the water that she did not consider it necessary to leave home."

This Water is for sale by druggists and grocers generally, or in cases of one dozen half-gallon bottles, \$5.00, f. o. b. at the Springs. Descriptive pamphlets sent free on application.

Springs open for guests from June 15th to Oct. 1st.

Proprietor, Buffalo Lithia Springs, Virginia, (On the Atlantic and Danville Railroad.)

of "Highland Mary," nor can the sweet, restful picture of "The Cotter's Saturday Night" be surpassed.

Glorious Poet, with immortal name won by his poetry! Shall we, falling into the common way of unstinted praise, hold back the word of reproach—the usual method—and exalt the man into a hero of excellence? If we did this, we should miss the object of all biography, for a life is a lesson, and to study that lesson it must be truthfully represented.

The truth is that Burns was dominated by uncurbed passions. He was afflicted as every sensitive, for the gifts which open wide the gates to impressions of the good and the true, if ungarded, admit with equal facility the degrading and evil. The harp attuned to vibrate the sweetest harmonies of the heart will also vibrate to the rude hand of passion.

It has been said that this terrible price must be paid for genius; that the heavenly light must be side by side with the abyss of hell. We think this conclusion erroneous, and that genius, when understood, will prove to be sensitiveness, which is capable of being controlled by spiritual laws. What Burns might have been had he been purified from the passions which constantly clutched at him, and at times dragged him down, we can infer from what he achieved while fettered by them in slavery.

His name and fame, which will be preserved as long as the English tongue is spoken, rest on a few poems, which shine with pure supernatural light—outside of and beyond the plowman, the melancholy peasant with his fierce attacks of lewdness and for drink. These were of the lower nature, of the flesh which perishes; and may we believe that his purified spirit, emancipated from these, was white enough to meet the pure "Mary" of his immortal song!

Written for the Banner of Light.

ROBERT BURNS.

He was the people's poet, he was of them,
He turned not from their humble cot away.
He never raised his poet-wings above them,
But close against their heart of hearts he lay.

There from his beat he learned his rhythm and rhyming,
His inspiration from its throb he drew;
The people's heart was to his music timing,
The people's wrongs inspired him through and through.

MILES MENANDER DAWSON.

Written for the Banner of Light.

Robert Burns, the Light-Bringer.

BY GILES B. STEBBINS.

BORN in a poor hut, child of a good father and a sainted mother, toiling on a poor farm, hurt by his own frailties and by the mistaken kindness of friends, admired by his peasant associates, a wonder among the gentility of Edinburgh, the prey of disappointment, the light and life of those around him, the lover of liberty, the child of genius, the writer of undying verse—without Burns and Walter Scott we should not know Scotland. What secret feeling in his "Cotter's Saturday Night," when the united family join in devotion?

"They chant their artless notes in simple guise;
They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim;
Perhaps Dundee's wild, warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive Martyrs, worthy of the name.
Or noble Elgin beats the heavenward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays;
Compared with these Italian trills are tame;
The tickled ears no heartfelt raptures raise,
Nae unison has they with our Creator's praise."

Keen is the ridicule he puts into his pen-picture of the bigoted preacher at the Holy Fair:

"Hear how he clears the points of faith
Wi' rattlin' an' w' thumpin'!"
Now meekly calm, now wild in wrath,
He's stamplin' an' he's jumpin'!
His lengthened chin, his turn'd up snout,
His eldritch squeal and gestures,
Oh, how they fire the heart devout,
Like cantabrian plasters,
On sic a day!"

Reading "Flow gently, sweet Afton," or "Ye banks and braes o' Bonnie Doon," the rippling stream's music is heard, the wild flowers along the banks are seen, the sweet air is breathed. From the valleys he lifts us up among the mountains:

"Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the North,
The birth-place of valor, the country of worth;
Farewell to the mountains, high covered with snow;
Farewell to the straths and green valleys below;
Farewell to the forests and wild-hanging woods;
Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring floods."

The lines to his "Highland Mary" breathe the heart's affection and tenderness, while his "Scots wha' hae wi' Wallace bled" stirs the blood like a bugle blast.

The world's real poets we must keep in remembrance. Drop them out and this would be a cold gray world. It is fit and wise to consecrate an issue of the BANNER OF LIGHT to the memory of Robert Burns—one of the light-bringers.

Dr. Peebles's Tribute to Burns.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

THE Highlands of Scotland, as well as the grand mountain summits of Greece, naturally inspire art and poetry. A strong, unique yet brilliant character was Robert Burns! And all English-speaking nations, especially that division with Scotch blood in their veins, delight to do homage at his shrine.

It was a long, rough thoroughfare of smiles and tears, of defeats and victories, from the day-dreaming lad on the banks of the Ayr and the Doon, from the rosy-cheeked yet chafing play-boy on the semi-barren moor, up to the poet of the people and to the apostle of liberty. But it revealed the law of evolution and showed the almost infinite possibilities engendered in human nature.

If "Parliament trembled when old John Knox prayed," all Scotland became more steady-nerved, cheery, thoughtful and broad-minded when they heard and read year after year the quickening, soul-inspiring poems of their fellow-countryman, Robert Burns.

Immortal on earth! this poet, a lover of the good, the beautiful and the true, was a hater of sham and prudery. He despised hypocrisy, loathed bigotry, shunned church hummeries, and absolutely abominated the Presbyterianism of Faith, with its elections and reprobation, its hell, and its denunciation of the non-elect.

"The rank is but the guinea stamp,
The man's the gold for a' that."

"For love's own strain to him was given,
To warble all its ecstasies
In Pythian words, unsought, unwill'd."

—Campbell.

"The tender father and the generous friend,
The playing heart that felt for human woe;
The dauntless heart that feared no human pride;
The friend man to man, to foe alone a foe.
For even his fallings leaned to virtue's side."

—Burns's Tribute to his Father.

Although it may be said that Burns possessed in an eminent degree both the faults and virtues of the Scotch character, he has nevertheless furnished the germs, the ideals and quickening impulse which have had an

immense influence not only in shaping the mental tendencies of the Scotch people, but likewise of all the English-speaking nations. He came so closely to the heart of both Mother Nature and human nature that his inspirations have largely dovetailed the subsequent teachers with materials which they have woven into our most productive literature.
San Diego, Cal. J. M. PEEBLES, M. D.

Southern California Camp-Meeting Association of Spiritualists.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

There has been some difficulty in obtaining satisfactory terms in regard to property, water rights, and other incidental things, but we now feel that all has been properly adjusted and we are in running order at last; and let me say right here that much of the work accomplished is due to the untiring efforts of our President, S. D. Dye.

The property is situated at Redondo, on the seacoast, and is accessible by two different railways. There is excellent bathing accommodation, and it is also noted for its fishing facilities. There is also a large wharf where steamers are constantly arriving and departing; but, as to camp ground, there are five acres, well hedged in, and almost in the center is a large octagon-shaped structure, built of stone and cement, well-lighted and ventilated, with a seating capacity of about three thousand.

The grounds will be laid off in lots, and sold to members of the Association, much after the Cassadaga Camp plan. There is also an abundance of shade trees, which are always inviting to campers, and with such talent as J. Morse, Harrison D. Barrett, W. J. Colville, Dr. J. M. Peebles, J. S. Loveland, W. C. Bowman, Mrs. M. T. Longley, and others, there seems to be no reason why we should not have a most pleasant and prosperous camp.

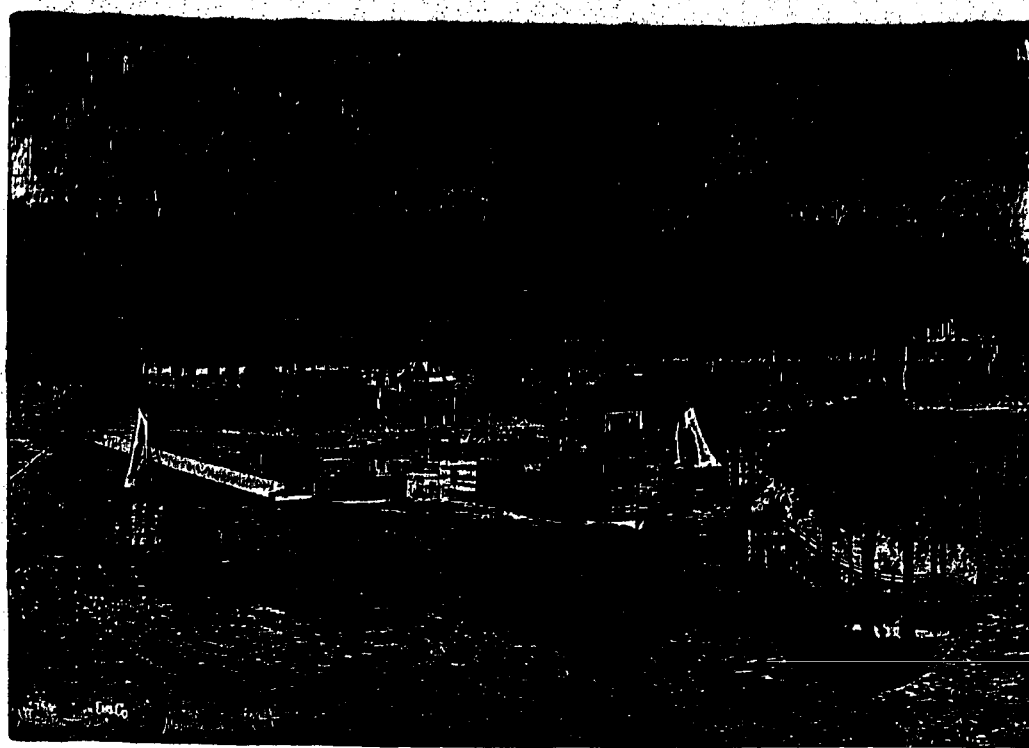
Among the mediums will be the veteran worker, Mrs. Hendee Rogers, who long ago passed through the fire of persecution, but always stood nobly by the Cause she espoused; and Mr. Edward K. Earle, so favorably known all over the coast as one of the grandest mediums on record, will be with us.

Through the efforts of Mrs. Schlusinger (formerly editress of "Carrier Dove"), and others, there will be quite a large number of people down from San Francisco, as they have been invited to the camp, a goodly number of tents. There will also be a large delegation from San Diego and other points in the State. Taking all things into consideration, we can safely reckon on a good time, and hope that, during the season, many will be brought into the light.

The following officers will serve this season: S. D. Dye, President; Mrs. E. Browning, Second Vice-President; Robert S. Ewing, Secretary; Mrs. Angie M. White, Financial Secretary; E. A. Humphrey, Treasurer; John Halzlip, Dr. K. D. Wise, Mrs. M. T. Longley, Trustees.

One day will be set apart, and delegates from all parts of the State will be invited to meet and elect officers for another year, from different localities, so that all California may be interested in a permanent camp.

A vote of thanks was tendered by our Board to THE BANNER OF LIGHT for its kind offer to write us up. We shall also be pleased to get subscribers for THE BANNER, and further its interest, wishing it all success possible. We would also extend its representative an invitation to come and be with us in August.



DEVIL'S LAKE, MICH.

Devil's Lake Spiritual Camp-Meeting

Will be held at Beardsell's Landing, Devil's Lake, (only eighty rods from Manitou Station, on C. J. & M. R. R.), from July 24 to August 10, inclusive.

PROGRAM.

Saturday, July 25.—Address of welcome by the Chairman, Dr. M. F. Hammond of Vermont, and Dr. P. T. Johnson of Battle Creek, Mich.

Sunday, 26.—Lectures by Dr. Johnson, with poetic improvisations on subjects from the audience.

Monday, 27.—Lecture by M. F. Hammond. Tuesday, 28.—10 A. M., Conference; 2 P. M., Lecture by Dr. P. T. Johnson.

Wednesday, 29.—10 A. M., Reading Circle; 2 P. M., Lecture by Dr. P. T. Johnson.

Thursday, 30.—10 A. M., Lecture by M. F. Hammond; 2 P. M., Lecture by Dr. P. T. Johnson.

Friday, 31.—10 A. M., Conference. Subject: "Patriotism." This day will be devoted entirely to the G. A. R., and all old soldiers will be welcomed with their families, and a local post of G. A. R. is expected to conduct the exercises of the day.

Saturday, Aug. 1.—10 A. M., Conference; 2 P. M., Lecture by Dr. P. T. Johnson.

Sunday, 2.—10 A. M., Lecture by Dr. P. T.

Johnson; 2 P. M., Lecture and platform tests by Julia Steelman Mitchell of Newport, Ky.

Monday, 3.—Lecture by Mrs. Mitchell. Tuesday, 4.—10 A. M., Lecture by M. F. Hammond; 2 P. M., Lecture and tests by Mrs. Mitchell.

Wednesday, 5.—10 A. M., Business meeting of Devil's Lake Spiritual Camp Association; 2 P. M., Lecture and tests by Mrs. Mitchell.

Thursday, 6.—10 A. M., Lecture by M. F. Hammond; 2 P. M., Lecture and tests by Mrs. Mitchell.

Friday, 7.—10 A. M., Public Circle for all mediums; 2 P. M., Lecture and tests by Mrs. Mitchell.

Saturday, 8.—Grand Temperance Rally. The whole day devoted to the cause. All cordially invited to participate. Many good speakers are expected this day.

Sunday, 9.—10 A. M., Lecture by Mrs. Mitchell; 2 P. M., Lecture and tests by Mrs. Mitchell.

Mediums.—James Riley's terms have been accepted, and he writes from his home at Marcellus, Mich., that he intends to be with us a goodly portion of the time. He is too well and favorably known as a materializing medium to need our comment; Mrs. Frances Riddick of Franklin, Ind., a reliable independent slate-writer, will be present throughout the camp-meeting; J. Knight Perkins of Kalamazoo, Mich., who receives the wonderful "flash" or instantaneous independent slate-writing, has promised to be present, while Dr. P. T. Johnson and M. F. Hammond and others will satisfy all in the different phases of the spiritual phenomena.

Music.—The music will be under the direction of Mrs. Florence Sanborn of Grand Rapids, Mich., a talented singer and pianist, who will be assisted by a choir, and no other camp will be able to boast of better music.

How to Reach the Camp.—The camp is located on Devil's Lake, within eighty rods of the Manitou Station, on the C. J. & M. R. R. All persons can take trains to connect with the C. J. & M., which road will give one fare for the round-trip from any of its stations, and on Sundays a reduced-rate excursion ticket. This road makes connections with the C. & W. M. at Allegan, the G. T. at Detroit, the G. T. and M. C. at Battle Creek, L. S. and M. S. at Homer, and all roads running eastward west, south of Lansing, Mich., and north of Cincinnati, Ohio, cross it—junctions being at Addison, Britton, Kalamazoo, Mich., and Alvordton, Ohio City, Ohio, and many other places, which are shown on the map of the C. J. & M. R. R. Ask for special-rate tickets for Devil's Lake Spiritual Camp, at Manitou Station, Mich.

Management.—Dr. M. F. Hammond, a trance medium of twenty years' experience, whose reputation as a lecturer in Michigan for the last two years is well established, has been secured to act as chairman this season, and all who are acquainted with him will testify to his ability to make all attending this camp feel at home and enjoy it at all times. Under his supervision we hope for the best camp this year that has ever been held here.

We bid all welcome, and assure all who attend that we will give you food for your soul, pleasure for the material and a general good time for all.

MISS D. P. HUGHES, Sec.,
Wheatland, Mich.

M. F. HAMMOND, Pres.

him the best possible results of personal greatness.

If, as Longfellow declares, "Lives of great men all remind us we can make our lives sublime," we may well ask how do they tell us this? for if Washington, Lincoln and other illustrious heroes hold first rank among America's great men, they certainly do not by their careers assure us that we can all become Presidents of these United States, or even members of Congress or of the House of Representatives.

If, then, we are to learn of all great men and women how to make glorious our own lives, it must be by means of studying the pathway they have trod in the direction of cultivating to the full the special qualities of their peculiar natures.

Such thoroughly well-disposed men as the Owens and other Communists have seen already the complete federation of society, but those who have rushed to the formation of communistic settlements have generally lacked in the much-needed direction of distinct individualization.

We need organizations more than aggregations, armies rather than mobs; and, though the warlike spirit is happily being set aside in favor of rational arbitration, military drill and discipline are as necessary to the success of an industrial as to that of a warlike organization.

Happily the old distinction between learned professions and illiterate trades is falling away, even in those European strongholds where it was once most firmly entrenched. We are now coming to realize that culture, in the broadest sense, is as desirable for the housewife or the shoemaker as it is for the lawyer or the author, though the technicalities of a special trade are only needed by those whose chosen and adapted vocation it is.

Whatever one can do best he loves to do most; inclination, therefore, should be cultivated and not thwarted. If all occupations conducive to the common weal were placed on a footing of absolute social equality, we should soon find a great increase in the general order which would prevail.

Idleness and disease are largely due to unfitness for the only spheres of action which appear open to the unfortunate and disgruntled ones whose sickness and inactivity proceed in large measure from incompatibility of temperament and taste as related to the avocations in question.

True education teaches every child at a tender age to rejoice not only in work in general, but in some special mode of activity, and to the end that all kinds of work may be well performed it is essential that work and play be so intermingled that there will remain no lessons disconnected from the thought of recreation.

Work and play are not properly divisible, for the play of our faculties is work, and the highest idea of work is the delightful exercise of our varied powers and gifts spontaneously.

What is sorely needed at present among reformers is a distinct plan of action, whereby the whole nature of the child may be brought into play during the course of education. The schoolroom and playground thus become one. Games should be supervised and arranged by competent instructors, so that the very lessons may be learned by means of pastimes which need to be incorporated in the educational curriculum.

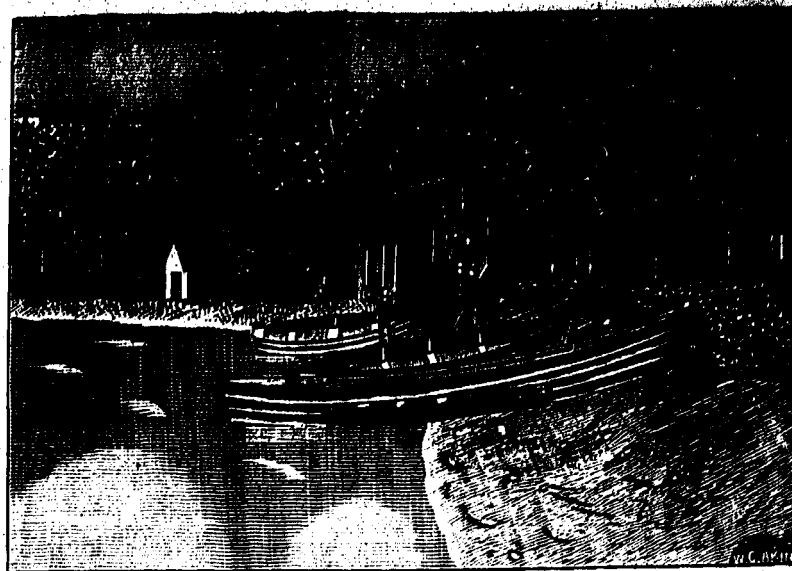
Such a theme is of course capable of endless amplification so far as practical detail is concerned, but if this thought permeate the minds and animate the wills of all educators in future, revision and enlargement of method will very soon be the order of the day. One thought must be ever present, and that is, that our nature is a unity within itself only expressible in diversity.

Thus the primal idea must ever be to unify, and from the centre of unity endless diversifications may logically and beautifully proceed.

To the Liberal-Minded.

As the "BANNER OF LIGHT Establishment" is now an incorporated institution, we give below the form in which a bequest should be worded in order to stand the test of law, should any one feel impressed to bequeath something to assist us in carrying on the good work in which we have for so many years been engaged: "I give, devise and bequeath unto the 'BANNER OF LIGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY,' of Boston, Massachusetts, or its successors [here insert the description of the property to be willed, and the manner in which the donor desires the same to be expended, which request will be faithfully carried out, strictly upon trust, that its officers shall appropriate and expend the same in such way and manner as they shall deem expedient and proper for the promulgation of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul and its eternal progression."

An English paper inveighs against the rubber stamp in this country on the ground that it will tend up the price of those necessities of life, "gums."



QUEEN CITY PARK, VT.

Queen City Park Spiritualist Camp-Meeting.

The Fifteenth Annual Assembly will convene at South Burlington, Vermont, July 25 to August 30.

Queen City Park.—This magnificent Park is situated on the eastern shore of Shelburne Bay, two miles south of Burlington, on the Rutland Railroad. Its location is accessible from all points, and can be reached by rail from every part of the State in a few hours. It has a suitable railroad station at its entrance, and a short walk through a delightful grove and past a spring of pure water leads the visitor to the centre of the grounds.

The scenery from the bluff which overlooks the bay and the broad lake beyond can scarcely be surpassed. Across the lake the Adirondack mountains stand out in bold relief, and offer to the eye a scene of never-ending beauty and grandeur.

The Park has a fine dock extending far into the bay, which gives ample accommodation to the largest steamers on the lake. The bottom of the bay is smooth, hard sand, and the descent from the shore so gradual that for bathing purposes it is unsurpassed. Nature could hardly do more than she has to make Queen City Park one of the most healthful and delightful retreats in the world.

Including its model and capacious hotel, it is now so well known that little need be said to induce people to attend its yearly meetings further than the announcement of dates and the giving of such general information as is required.

The speakers engaged for the season are well known to the public, and praise of them in advance would be superfluous. We expect good things from them—such a presentation of the facts and truths of Spiritualism as shall vindicate its divinity.

Mediums.—Mr. Joseph D. Stiles, the well-known and favorite test medium, will be at the Park from the 16th to the close, and Mrs. M. S. Pepper is also engaged. Mr. Lucius Colburn and many other mediums are expected to be present.

Music.—The Schubert Quartet of Boston has been engaged to sing for the entire season, and other musical talent it is hoped will take part in the exercises.

The Ladies' Aid Society, which has contributed so largely from the first toward building up the Park, will hold, as usual, its Annual Fair, the date of which is Saturday, August 15.

List of Speakers.—Saturday, July 25, Col. R. G. Ingersoll; Sunday, 26, Mrs. A. W. Crossett and Col. R. G. Ingersoll; Tuesday, 28, Lucius Colburn; Wednesday, 29, Alonzo F. Hubbard; Thursday, 30, and Friday, 31, Mrs. Helen L. Palmer; Saturday, Aug. 1, H. D. Barrett; Sunday, 2, H. D. Barrett and Mrs. Helen L. Palmer; Tuesday, 4, H. D. Barrett; Wednesday, 5, Mrs. Helen L. Palmer; Thursday, 6, Dr. George A. Fuller; Friday, 7, Mrs. Sarah A. Wiley; Saturday, 8, and Sunday, 9, Dr. George A. Fuller; Tuesday, 11, Children's Day; Wednesday, 12, Dr. George A. Fuller; Thursday, 13, and Friday, 14, Mrs. Ida P. A. Whitlock; Saturday, 15, Ladies' Fair; Sunday, 16, Dr. C. W. Hidden and Dr. George A. Fuller; Tuesday, 18, Dr. C. W. Hidden; Wednesday, 19, Dr. George A. Fuller; Thursday, 20, Dr. C. W. Hidden; Friday, 21, Mrs. Emma Paul; Saturday, 22, Sunday, 23, and Tuesday, 25, J. Clegg Wright; Wednesday, 26, Joseph D. Stiles; Thursday, 27, J. Clegg Wright; Friday, 28, —; Saturday, 29, Mrs. Helen Stuart-Richings; Sunday, 30, Mrs. Helen Stuart-Richings, and Col. R. G. Ingersoll expected.

Officers.—President, E. A. Smith, Brandon, Vt.; Vice-Presidents, S. N. Gould, A. F. Hubbard, Frank Eastwood; Treasurer, Janus Crossett; Secretary, Dr. E. A. Smith; Directors, E. A. Smith, S. N. Gould, J. D. Isham, Lucius Webb, B. F. Rugg, Frank Eastwood, A. F. Hubbard, John Eastwood, Janus Crossett, J. P. Williams.

Education Essential to Reform.

An Address given before the National Educational Association of Los Angeles, Cal.,
BY W. J. COLVILLE.

(Specially reported for the Banner of Light.)

WHILE all reformers are agreed that the education of the masses is the necessary step to be taken before we can reasonably hope to witness a peaceful and beautiful reconstruction of human society in accord with divine order and the highest human well-being, there are but few among us whose views on education are sufficiently explicit on moral and industrial lines united to enable the general public to gather from their utterances a clear and comprehensive idea of what it is necessary for us as communities to do in order to bring about speedily the great consummation we all so earnestly desire.

The word education when rightly defined is a very mealy one. It signifies the science and art of unfolding the entire nature of the to-be-educated individual, and is therefore impossible in anything like fullness unless all who undertake to act as educators are aware of the copious meaning rightfully attaching to the term they employ.

The beginning and end of sound human education must be anthropology, or the science of mankind.

Human nature is what we are seeking to unfold; therefore we must commence our endeavors with a rational, synthetic view of human nature in its entirety before we can logically and usefully proceed with the work of analysis.

Education must be, first, general; second, particular. General education must embrace what every human being needs to know and experience in order that he or she may live a normal, healthy, useful life.

Particular education deals with such specialties as make different individuals expert in distinct lines of technical achievement.

Under the heading "General Education," we must place in the first rank moral, ethical or spiritual culture. This does not by any means imply that any special type of theological training be given to the children in public schools or private seminaries; on the contrary, it indicates that such moral lessons be conveyed as prompt to unity of thought and action, and we are all painfully aware of the separating tendency of conflicting creedal dogmatisms.

The first class of lessons, then, to which we could call attention would be those which take into account the social instincts of human beings and the necessary gregariousness of our habits.

Children are more often found in families of brothers and sisters than alone with elders, therefore it is essential that at a very early age they begin to realize the illimitable importance of dwelling together in peace and harmony.

Two things are always requisite to this end, viz., right development of individuality and due regard for the rights of neighbors.

Without individualization education is impossible in any orderly manner, therefore with a view to securing the highest possible measure of collective welfare, individual traits and qualities must be respected and brought out.

All children are by nature social, reverent, endowed with a sense of equity, and disposed to work together for a common end.

Though it cannot be successfully denied that hereditary bias or tendency toward perversions does exist and manifest itself as a troublesome element in many cases, there is no scientific reason for assuming that hereditary weaknesses cannot be overcome. Some children require more careful training than others; that is all that can be said within the limits of strict conformity to ascertained facts regarding hereditary proclivities.

Whatever general moral influence is necessary for some is beneficial for all; the only difference between some and others being that some are positively in need of strong moral influences to keep them from falling into grievous errors, while others are strong enough in inherited character to stand upright without the props required by their weaker companions.

MORAL SUGGESTION is a term of great wealth and wide reaching application, as it includes whatever prompts to righteousness in any direction and through any agency of appeal to the moral sentiment.

By suggestion is intended nothing in the nature of coercion or command, but simply whatever savors of opportunity and invitation. Suggestions are made by parents and teachers far more by what they are than by what they determine to say or do at stated intervals.

Children are so very observing in their earliest years that they are perpetually engaged in watching what is going on around them; and being intensely sensitive to what they feel or apprehend psychically, as well as to what reaches them through any of the outward avenues of sensation, they are constantly imbibing or absorbing ideals and ideas from those around them.

The moral development of a teacher is, therefore, of superlative importance. By a moral man or woman we mean one who observes the entire moral law as it concerns general human welfare, not merely such portions of it as appeal most strongly to certain peculiar types of temperament.

All our great authors, notably Shakespeare, and a few others of world wide celebrity, have frequently descended upon the inner or esoteric more than upon the outer or exoteric meaning of a commandment of universal import. "He who steals my purse steals trash," is a very noteworthy sample of such high moral teaching concerning honesty as needs to be inculcated everywhere, for though at first reading it may appear that commercial or financial honesty is undervalued, a second scanning of the lines is sure to reveal to us the author's evident meaning, that in order to preserve honor in the world we must be actuated by motives and governed by feelings far profounder than those which are regarded as commonly necessary to carry on the merest secular transactions in a community.

One's good name is, in the estimation of the immortal Bard of Avon, immeasurably more valuable than a few coins in a pocket-book; therefore the dishonesty of filching from me my good name is far greater than though one purloined my purse or extracted therefrom a little gold and silver.

It scarcely needs arguing that when the sense of honor and of another's right is so keen in us that we would scorn to defraud a neighbor of a single iota of reputation which is of value to him, we shall assuredly be honorable enough in disposition to be safely trusted with the care of whatever is our neighbor's.

The greatest sin of this age is doubtless its covetousness, and this flagrant iniquity which menaces modern life was, without question, the crying wrong in days of old. Now covetousness can be remedied by a right system of education based upon the greatness versus the littleness of the individual. Covetousness arises frequently from utter failure to appreciate one's self at anything like one's true worth; it therefore follows that a rightful measure of self-esteem is the antidote to this hideous vice and fatal folly.

If every child is brought up to see that each one is necessary in the family as a whole; that no two are exactly alike in temperament or qualification, envy or jealousy of another's attainment falls far short of rightful appreciation of one's own individual merit.

The dignity and use of the individual must ever be insisted upon, and all tendency to self-depreciation discouraged everywhere. It is almost impossible to overestimate the extent of the evil which directly springs from self-undervaluation.

Among the more prominent evils springing manifestly from this prolific root may be mentioned sloth, avarice, despair, hatred, spite, pauperism and suicide, and the list might be indefinitely elongated without exaggeration.

A child should never be permitted to grow up with the thought that he is worthless, or nearly so, while his brother or sister may be of incalculable value to the race.

General moral teaching insists upon the value of the individual, and places all individuals, so far as rights are concerned, upon an equal footing.

The question of wealth is always an important one, and the query is ever raised, In what does wealth consist? Genuine capital is to be found within, not outside of the individual human being. My capital is what I inwardly possess far more than what I outwardly have; for whatever I have may be stolen from me, but what I am, and whatever inheres in me, is beyond the reach of the despoiler.

No reform is possible in the social order (at present disorder) until wealth is regarded as an innate possession rather than an extraneous acquisition.

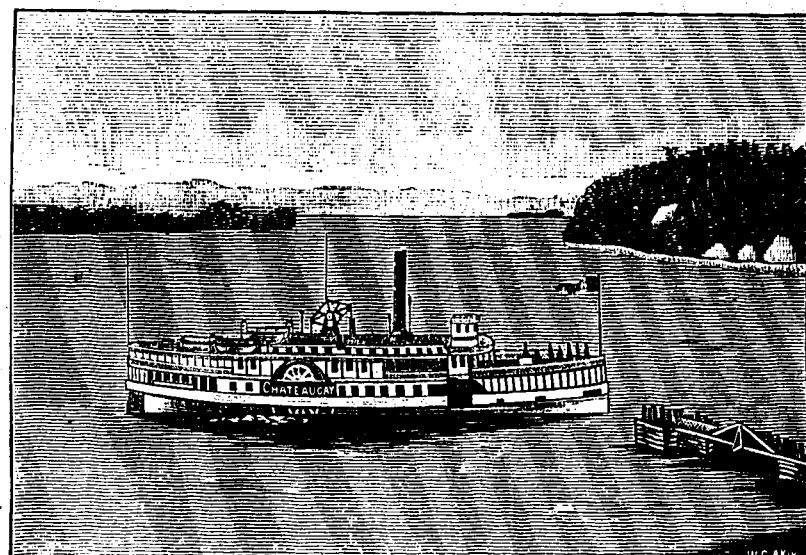
The educational reformer seeks, therefore, to impress upon every child that he or she is a container of wealth, and that this inward possession can be evolved through an educational process, and made available in uses on the external plane of social existence.

The second branch of necessary education, which is the particular, technical or specific, grows naturally out of the first, for it is involved in it, and therefore it can be evolved from it.

General education teaches all children to be cleanly, healthy and happy; regardful of each other's rights, and active members of a social order in which there are many divisions and departments.

Particular education comes in to classify and arrange these many and diversified children, so that they may be grouped in the manner most advantageous to all.

Now while all individuals require food, air, sunlight, exercise and many other universal blessings, we do not all require them in equal amounts; and to train an individual so as to make of him the most he is capable of becoming, is to teach him to so study the requirements of his particular nature, that he may judiciously conform himself to a course of procedure which will work out for him and in



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Banner of Light.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, JULY 18, 1896.

Northwestern Spiritualists' Camp-Meeting.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

Nearly two weeks ago the Northwestern Spiritualists' Association opened its annual camp-meeting at Hamilton, Minn., between St. Paul and Minneapolis, under very auspicious circumstances, the weather being almost perfect and the attendance very large.

The morning of June 21 the people commenced to come upon the ground early, and continued coming until nearly dark. The large pavilion was called in order in the large pavilion, and as the opening services were to commence by raising the stars and stripes to the head of the flagstaff, the audience joined heartily in singing the patriotic song "America."

The President of the Camp, Dr. N. A. Aspinwall of Minneapolis, then introduced Rev. E. Andrus Titus of Boston, who gave a soul-inspiring invocation that gave strength to the people. Dr. Aspinwall then made the opening address, outlining the work of the camp for the coming five weeks. He stated that the Association was out of debt, owed all of the tents and other property, and that its affairs were in a healthy condition, and that the outlook for this season's work was very encouraging indeed. He then introduced Mrs. Julia Stuchman Mitchell of Kentucky, Mrs. Zue F. Prior of Oregon, and Prof. H. D. Barrett, President of N. S. A., all of them making short addresses that were well received, and which the listeners an idea of what might be expected from them when each came to speak alone.

At 2:30 P. M. of that day Prof. Barrett gave his first inspirational address, and told of the different conceptions of God by all nations of people from the primitive ages of the past down to the present day. After his lecture Mrs. Mitchell gave a public test séance that set some of the skeptics to thinking.

On Monday a Lyceum was formed, with Mr. Prior as leader, and this lady is one of the best in this line of work it has been our pleasure to meet. She not only works in the esteem of those who have dealings with her, but she inspires confidence with all whom she comes in contact. A daily conference or school for mediums was also formed, with Brother Titus as Chairman. He has presided over a church congregation for many years, and is well qualified to lead this meeting. The interest in these meetings has grown from the start, and the lessons learned will surely bear good fruit in the labors of the future.

The second lecture by Prof. Barrett was upon the question: "Immortality from the Standpoint of a Spiritualist," during this lecture a severe rain storm came over the camp, and a tree close to the large tent was shattered by lightning, and the speaker was nearly knocked down by the shock. For a moment there was some excitement, but he soon rallied, and retaining possession of himself went on with his lecture, talking against the elements for nearly an hour. Mrs. Prior followed his lecture with platform tests, and carried the large audience along with her by her good work.

The third lecture, by Prof. Barrett, was given Friday, June 26, upon the theme, "Practical Application of Spiritualism," and he held his large audience from the opening to the close with rapid attention. It is to be regretted that the whole human family did not hear this masterly address; for if it had done so, there might have been fewer skeptics, and the speaker would have found that the world and suffering humanity would be better for their having lived in it.

After his lecture, Mrs. Isa Wilson Kayner, of Chicago, daughter of the old pioneer of Spiritualism, E. V. Wilson, gave platform tests in various ways, similar to that of her father. Every one was recognized, all persons being recognized. Prior also gave some tests that were also recognized.

Mrs. Mitchell gave three lectures and test séances during the week, and good attention was paid to her work. Sunday, June 28, was the red-letter day of the camp. Work started early, and there was some kind of manifestation from the unseen world, and in the evening the officers of the camp went about with smiling faces to see the large number of visitors that responded to the invitation to the feast.

The first important meeting of the day was at 10:00, when Mrs. Zue F. Prior gave a fine inspirational lecture upon the theme, "Heart-Hunger of the World," and beautifully prayed the prayer of the Spiritualists, that it would be necessary for them to go forth with the great light of truth, and blaze the way to eternal progression and unfoldment of the divine spark within man, giving assistance to the erring and fallen of the children of earth, and not like the priest and the Levite, to pass by on the other side. Her prayer that the erring and fallen of the world be brought back to the fold by the laws of the laws of pre-natal conditions, and shown the possibilities that the religion of Spiritualism presents to them to grow out of these conditions, and gradually unfold that divine spark which is imbedded within every human being, was very pathetic and touching. She also showed the heart-hunger of those who are aged, and are passing away the few days that are left in the alms-houses all over our broad land. A few kind words to them, teaching them that after a few more days they would certainly meet the loved ones gone before, would cost the visitor little, but would be of great value to the aged one, who was somebody's father or somebody's mother.

At 2:30 P. M. Prof. Barrett gave his farewell address upon the vital question of the time, "Needs of the Hour." For over an hour he spoke to an audience too large to get inside the pavilion. There was a large crowd surrounding the auditorium, standing in the lives of the medium of the early day. He called for that class of people from the audience to hold his hands while the manifestations were taking place. The phenomena consisted of written messages being thrown out, bell-ringing, lamp playing, pictures precipitated upon handkerchiefs, showing of hands, passing of coins between bolted plates, etc., which caused many people to stop and wonder what was the cause of it.

After his most able effort and the climax to his series of lectures, the remarkable medium for physical manifestations in broad daylight, Benjamin F. Foster, gave a séance in the pavilion, which was crowded with honest skeptics and investigators, who were looking for the truth of the manifestations, and thus establishing the lives of the immortal life beyond the veil. He called for that class of people from the audience to hold his hands while the manifestations were taking place. The phenomena consisted of written messages being thrown out, bell-ringing, lamp playing, pictures precipitated upon handkerchiefs, showing of hands, passing of coins between bolted plates, etc., which caused many people to stop and wonder what was the cause of it.

At 8 P. M. Mrs. Isa Wilson Kayner, of Chicago, gave the "Fire Test" under strict conditions, that made some of the people in the audience wonder for her. She held the hot lamp chimney against her cheek for two full minutes, and when removed, there was not a sign of burn about her face. She also gave a public test séance of chronic diseases to commence getting an equilibrium throughout the entire system, and placing the body and all its parts in natural, healthy action. She put a twenty dollar bill through the flame, and it was not even smoked. She also took a white silk tie and long and slowly passed it through the blaze of the lamp without smoking it. She placed her hands and wrists in the flame, and the fine hair on the back of the hand was not singed a particle. This simply demonstrates the power of the spirit over the elements, as illustrated by the case of the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace.

After this, Mrs. Prior gave some messages by independent slate writing, some of the signatures being recognized as fac-similes.

Mrs. Prior gave her farewell lecture on Tuesday, taking for her topic, "The Sunken Road." She brought in the lives of the medium of the early day that had passed away almost unnoticed, and thus filled up that gap in the road that some of us have walked over in the later days.

On July 1 Mr. E. Andrus Titus of Boston gave the first lecture of his series upon the subject, "Nobility of Character," and he gave one of the best lectures that we have heard in many days. He also gave another grand lecture on "The Brotherhood of Man," on the 3d last. He has made many friends by his friendly ways and kindly words here in the Northwest.

Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond came on the 4th and held a very celebrated séance. She will be with us a camp for about ten days, and there are many who will make a great effort to hear her.

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