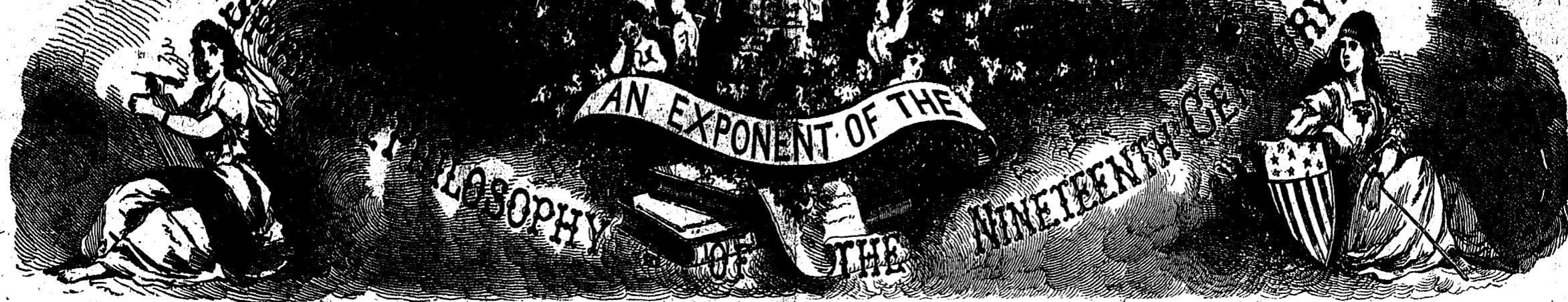


# BANNER OF LIGHT.



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Written for the Banner of Light.  
THE HOUR OF REST.

At last the hour of rest hath come for thee,  
O friend of many years,  
And we rejoice that thou at length art free,  
Yet cannot stay our tears.

A benediction was thy life all day;  
Who left it gentle away;  
Deeper the shadows on our path must fall  
Since thou art gone away.

Around thee, too, did clouds of sorrow lower—  
"The sera and yellow leaf."  
Bore witness of thee to thy latest hour,  
"Acquainted still with grief."

But, like a star that shines through gathering gloom,  
The sunlight of thy soul;  
With soft and tender radiance did illumine  
And glorify the whole.

Was it the reflex of a light divine,  
Of heavenly visions born;  
That we might see and mark the blessed sign  
The promise of the morn?

Oh! when life's darkling shadows flee away,  
May we who longing wait,  
Behold thee in the light of that new day  
Beyond the "Golden Gate."

S. E. C.

## Rally Round the Flag.

BY P. F. DE GOURNAY.

When his country is attacked, it is the duty of every man to enroll in its defense. He may deprecate war; he may be an alien and denied political rights; but it is his home, the sacredness of his fireside, he is called upon to defend; none but a coward will shirk that duty and leave it to others to fight for his protection. Greater still should be the obligation to defend one's right to believe and to worship according to one's convictions to assert, at all cost, his right to THINK. The framers of the Constitution recognized these natural rights of the individual; they secured to every man the free exercise of religious worship. In this they showed their wisdom and patriotic foresight: The unexampled growth and development of the American nation is due, more than to any other cause, to that guaranty of religious freedom. The independence of the human conscience is a basic factor of national prosperity. Where intolerance prevails, we see stagnation and poverty, even though the country be spared the horrors of religious wars. History bears testimony to this.

Spiritualism is assailed: While it is claimed that it is not a religion, it is the very essence of religion, since it establishes, directly, without the necessity of a formulated creed, the relation between the individual man and the cause of his being. Spiritualism does not rest on man-made dogmas; it does not make the human conscience subservient to the will or opinion of any man; it does not compel reason to accept upon faith any theory, any legendary compilation. It proves to man that he is a spirit, an immortal soul, and, by so doing, brings him in rapport with the source of all immortality—God. Not, perhaps, with the anthropomorphic God of the legend of Genesis, but with an unknowable, yet undeniable, INTELLIGENT CAUSE from whom he derives his being as a soul. For, since the physical body, constituted of earthly elements, disintegrates at death and becomes again "dust of the earth," the soul, whose survival is proved by spirit-communion, cannot have a material origin; where shall we seek that origin but in the Infinite? The knowledge of his immortality thus leads man, infallibly, to that supreme cause which he cannot define—it matters little what name he chooses as expressing best his conception of God—and religious aspiration fills his soul. The religion born of Spiritualism is one of love and hope.

The declaration of war issued by President H. J. Becker of the National Anti-Spiritualistic Association is, therefore, an unconstitutional document, an incendiary appeal to the worst passions, for religious persecution once inaugurated there is no telling where it will stop; this country may yet learn the horrors of a religious war. The purpose of the Association is in discord with modern civilization: its spirit is essentially un-American. The flimsy pretext of exposing fraudulent mediums (it would have been a blessing to purge Spiritualism of the vampires who live upon its fair name) is cast aside, the Association feels strong enough to avow its real purpose; it has the support of "ministers of denominational, Orthodox and Catholic churches"; "Spiritualism is to be met and fought in every section with a far greater army of workers than they can summon" . . . "We have got the one great essential for stamping out Spiritualism—national concerted action" . . . "We have plenty of funds" (something like the "Reptiles Fund" of Bismarck, wherewith to buy consciences; the times are hard, bribery and corruption are enlisted against truth).

Can anything be more plain than this insolent program so defiantly given publicity? Are not Mr. Becker and his followers p'edged to use all means to hunt to the death free American citizens because of their religious views? Those fanatics must be mad; or are they so ignorant as to have never heard that many of the greatest minds in this country and Europe, after careful, scientific investigation, bear testimony to the genuineness of our phenomena. Are they aware that Spiritualism has brought comfort to more sorrowful hearts during these past fifty years than all their churches put together? Or, is it not simply because those churches are honey-combed with Spiritualism, and their membership steadily diminishing, they propose to stamp out Spiritualism? They certainly have

some real grievance: Spiritualism has robbed death of its terrors; it has exploded the Christian hell, that trump in the preacher's hand, and taught that God is love, mankind a brotherhood, and, consequently, that we should love one another—by the way, the spirits in this have reiterated the precepts of the Teacher, whose memory we revere, and in whose name we are to be persecuted.

But what are the "Antis" going to do about it? Will they buy the whole American press and dictate to public opinion? Will they bribe the courts to shut up our halls and inscribe on their doors the burlesque edict a Parisian wag got up at the time of the persecution of the *convulsionnaires*—those undeveloped mediums:

*"De par le Roi, défense à Dieu  
De faire intrâce en ce lieu!"*

Suppose they banish, imprison or hang every public medium, will that do away with the phenomena? Will it rob the true Spiritualist of communion with his departed loved ones? Persecution cannot enter the sanctuary of the home, and there are few family circles which are not blessed with angel-visitors. Why, in my own home, this persecution was predicted, nearly a year ago, in my own home-circle—the medium used by the spirits being the only stranger present, and he a skeptic who had never attended a séance—we had, at every meeting during six weeks, the most remarkable phenomena, such as levitation and transportation of objects, slate-writing without contact, writing on the wall, which did not require a Daniel to expound it, messages replete with moral and religious teaching. If the devil—in whom we do not believe—chose to prove his existence by teaching us the love of God and our neighbor, we had no objection to listening to his preaching. What happened in my house has happened, and happens daily in thousands of other homes.

And we, Spiritualists, what are we going to do about it? Tremble at the thunderbolts of this Jupiter Tonans? hide our diminished heads? deny our master—Truth—as did Peter? prepare for the gibbet and the fagot, or flee our country, as did the Huguenots of France? Or shall we rally round our flag—the white banner of Truth—and, strong in the righteousness of our cause, defy persecution and appeal to the sense of justice of the American people?

The time and the hour are come when to shirk responsibility is a crime against conscience, an act of ingratitude toward our spiritual friends. It is to be hoped every avowed Spiritualist will do his duty; but the hundred thousands who enjoy the benefits of Spiritualism without sharing its charges, the immense multitude of private investigators who hold home circles, obtain convincing manifestations, and cherish at heart the cause which has made their lives happier and better, yet dare not confess themselves Spiritualists, what will be their attitude at this crucial crisis? Shall the fear of ridicule and social ostracism, of pulpit denunciation and financial loss be greater than the love of truth and the gratitude due their dear departed loved ones for the many blessings received? If these anonymous Spiritualists possess half the courage of the early Christians this is the time to show it. The willing cry: "I am a Christian!" secured glorious martyrdom in Pagan Rome; no such fate will reward the dignified avowal "I am a Spiritualist"; on the contrary, if the names of the millions of respectable men and women who are Spiritualists *in petto*, were published, it would cause a revulsion in public opinion which would render persecution impossible. Let authorized lists of names be published in every local paper, in the Union, showing the numerical strength of hitherto unknown believers in the spiritual revelation, and Mr. Becker and cohorts may discover that they have sowed the wind to reap the whirlwind.

## My Other Self.

BY J. J. MORSE.

Dreamers are usually considered a sort of "no account folk," in spite of the fact that many a dreamer has blessed the world with thoughts that burn and inventions that have blessed. Jesus and John were dreamers, as were a host of the world's reformers and teachers, to the men of their day. Stephenson and Wheatstone were dreamers to many, but the copper thread and the iron way now stretch far and wide across the world. To dream, then, may not be altogether a waste of time, nor the dreamer so useless, as your so-called practical person would have us believe.

So much as a preface, if not an apology, for a dream that may not be all a dream, and which may have a lesson enshrined in it, for such as may be able to extract it.

Weared with the toil and strife of living, I slept. A sense of utter helplessness had overpowered me, the good striven for seemed so far away, the ability to actualize in daily life so difficult. It was as if an eagle strove to mount to heaven, but whose clipped wings held him to earth. Strive no matter how determinedly, the effort was vain and fruitless.

I slept, and in that sleep awoke! At first, night, black as Erebus, enfolded me. A black and suffocating pall enshrouded me on all sides, and all the agony of being hemmed in by a boundless blackness oppressed me beyond words to tell. Speech I had none, neither was the power of motion mine. Fixed as in and by an indescribable power, poised as if in nothingness, I stood as if I and space were all, and that forevermore I was to be

companionless; and the immensity of the horror I felt was all the more acute that every pulse and emotion of my being thrilled with a sensitiveness never before deemed possible. At last a change in my sensations occurred. An impulse caused me to concentrate my gaze directly in front of myself, and presently a shape at first ill-defined presented itself to me, as if made out of the thick blackness enveloping me. I gazed at it, and a repugnance too deep for utterance came over me; I almost loathed the "thing" I saw. But dislike gave place to amazement beyond bounds, for, as the shape unfolded, behold, I looked upon myself!

As perfect as ever I had seen myself in a mirror, this thing stood before me. In a moment it commenced to change. The outlines became blurred and ragged. The features lost their comeliness, the eyes became dulled. The look of decision previously on the face vanished, and a wavering, uncertain sort of motion began to pervade the entire form. A voice, coming from I knew not where, bade me "Look!" I obeyed, gazing most intently, until I saw completely through and into the form before me, and then more marvels were disclosed: At first it was as if wild, swirling flames, dense mephitis smoke and vapors surged with, accompanied by deafening explosions, making a tumult of chaos horrible to contemplate.

It was as if the world was one huge volcano, and that volcano englued within the form, my gaze had penetrated! The fires paled and died, darkness blotting them out at last. But again the command came, "Look!" I obeyed, and the form was now filled with all creeping things of sea and land. Monster billows rolled within, rushing winds roared their harsh notes, as if primeval seas and storms contended in the form before me. Again darkness blotted out the awe-inspiring spectacle, and once more came the command, "Look!" This time the pictures were of strange trees, shrubs and fern-like things, and strange forms, monster and minute—too terrible to look upon—moved about, fighting, tearing and rending each other in a warfare that created in me a paralyzing dread, as I stood a spectator, with power to move or speak. Once more the blackness covered all, blotting the phantasms from my view. Again came the word "Look!" This time the pictures disclosed within the form constituted a long procession, which I feared would stretch on until the crack of doom, so interminable it appeared. Men! But, ye Gods! what travesties of men they were! Brutal, hairy, long armed, fearful-faced creatures that mocked humanity by seeming of it and yet not of it! What bestial things they were, and what a nameless dread overcame me as they passed before me! Their scarce articulate cries, their fierce actions to each other, the mad and beastly passions that stirred them to acts of ravening revolting, no pen could tell. If these were men, how hateful man must be! But the procession lengthened on, and its members altered in appearance, still retaining their cruel instincts, but living on a slightly higher plane, until at last the army ceased to march, but not until the past of man, in his days of brutality, cruelty, animalism and fiercest passions, had passed before me. Oh! how terrible was the impression from it all! But the merciful darkness came again, and though I was glad, yet also, I desired to see more!

Once again that singular voice, cold and impulsive as of a judge above all human weakness, sounded, and again I looked into this thing which was at once I, and not I. And this time what I saw was more remarkable still! The form had the appearance of being entirely hollow in every part! Filled with a black nothingness! Presently I saw some little tongues and flames of fire, tiny sparks of wondrous beauty—shafts of lightning, like unto tiny serpent tongues. These clouds, some darkly black, others ruddy and red, more sombre and grayly cold, while a few were ragged, fleecy and well-nigh bodiless. And as these came it was borne upon me that the history of the world was entering into the making of the thing that was I, and yet not I! That flame and flood, the lightning's blast and the thunder's shock, the brutishness and ruth of man's primeval ancestry, were all taking a place in the wondrous compound, and as they did so the outlines of the form gained in firmness and character, until at last it became more like myself, when strength was greatest and health was best. But the clouds arrested my attention again, and then it was as if my own ancestry and parentage made contributions to what had assembled, and as they did so strains of curious colors were veined within and without, the effect of which was to again dim the outlines of the form itself, and to make it less the better thing it had lately seemed, and again I was beginning to loathe it, when a voice called—"Wait!"

The echo of the word had scarce ceased in my mind, when the form I had viewed so long vanished utterly, and in its place there was another, so radiant, noble-looking, animated and beautiful, that the contrast was overpowering, and ere I could recover from the revulsion of feeling, the radiant one addressed me thus: "Even as am I, so art thou! Even as thou hast seen thyself, so I was! Repine not at thy weaknesses, nor at thy disappointments; remember the body in which thou didst dwell was compounded of the fire and flame of the world's beginnings, and that its trials and conflicts are not yet purged from the body thou didst have. As thou didst see, the weaknesses of physical diseases and the errors of life thy ancestry possessed were also inherited by thee, and, with such elements around thee,

thou couldst not expect to excel in manifesting the inherent graces and virtues—not to say divinity—of thy real self. That thou didst so well is to be the thought that must now inspire you, for what thou hast beheld is but a representation of the origin and circumstances attending the creation and evolution of the body in which thou previously inhabited. It is of thee, but is not thou?" The voice ceased, and presently said, as the fair presence faded from my sight, "Look!"

This time the cadence of the voice was sweet and liquid beyond any music that ever thrilled my soul. I gazed, but the vanished brightness left the darkness more dense than ever. In silence and loneliness I meditated, gazing steadily forward the while, when a tiny speck of light, bright as a ray from rarest diamond, appeared, expanded and took form, assuming his man shape, and that shape my own! This form, so different to what before presented itself! Health glowed in its features, grace marked its every limb and part, intelligence sparkled from its starry orbs, and a soft, sweet sadness marked the nature of its speech, for the marvel was it spoke to me! Then it was I saw that it was indeed my real self, the spiritual part that had come up out of the conflict in the ages, the animalism and selfishness of the past, and freed at last from the outer husk, had revealed my other self to myself. Then the glory of it all paled, and silence was about me, and then came the darkness, out of which I awoke!

Was my dream only a dream? Or did it tell me all what the wise and good of the Holier Life have patiently instructed me in for now nearly three generations past? At this season of professions of universal goodwill, my dream, that savors of the blessed philosophy the angels have brought us, may help to stir kindlier thoughts in some breast, and cause others to realize it is not so easy as it seems to denounce the wickedness or weakness in our fellows, when the facts of our heritage, cosmic and hereditary, are duly considered. At least, I am strongest when I trust that our innate goodness will surely vindicate itself, somewhere and somehow, though when and how we may not see at present.—*The Two Worlds*.

## The Truth as I See It.

BY MRS. MILTON RATHBUN.

Wherever we dwell, within the realm of spiritual thought, a diversity of expression is sure to follow the desire to impart unto others the knowledge gained for ourselves.

One will declare that this is "the way" to light and development, while another, equally earnest and honest, will proclaim another method or direction to be "the true way."

According to our unfoldment and intelligence, shall we be able to point out the "way" unto others, whereby they may gain in spiritual wisdom? Far be it from me to claim superior wisdom or knowledge. I am simply favored by intuition, partially-developed mediumship, harmonious surroundings, and, like myriads of others, find ready helpers from the spirit-side whenever I will listen to them—dear helpers, who come gladly at my call; yea, stand without the portals and wait my tardy recognition. God bless these noble workers! But for them to what depths of darkness and degradation might humanity fall! They press toward every opening, and wield a mighty power through the vast army of mediums, many of whom are not conscious of their instrumentality in the hands of their guides and spirit-friends.

The point I wish to establish is this: Mediums everywhere should be fostered, encouraged, educated and stimulated. They should not be left to themselves, but sheltered, protected, and made, to a certain degree, independent of material anxiety.

Schools for education and development should be established, homes for mediums provided, and every precaution taken to select the wheat from the chaff. Under a proper system of education and maintenance I claim that false mediumship would become a thing of the past.

Take from some of our reliable mediums the anxiety for material necessities, and how greatly increased would their gifts become! What now seems veiled in mystery, and is given in an uncertain way, would then be given clearly, free from obscurity and doubt.

It seems strange to me that women and men who are haunted with the question: "Where is my rent to come from?" can do so well as they do—not that they give so little proof of spirit-return and identity, but that they give so much.

Many, in fact most mediums, have others depending upon them, and their anxiety is doubly pressing in these cases. I have often advocated the doctrine of giving mediumship the same chance which a court of justice grants to the accused.

I am often pained by the attitude of those who suspect all mediumship until it is proven beyond suspicion. Why not, while on the alert to avoid imposition, give to all mediums the goodwill of our hearts and sustain them so far as our good thoughts, which is a great deal, until we must change our position toward them? I never advocate fraudulent mediumship, and think, in justice to the honest instruments, the pretenders should be dealt with and expelled from our ranks. Under our present lack of system and cooperation, it is quite impossible to accomplish this end; for, whom some condemn unqualifiedly, many praise loudly.

If we had some system of schools, with their discriminating qualifications necessary to the

entrance and promotion of those manifestly endowed with mediumship, in time we should overcome many of the evils which we deplore. Much that is genuine in mediumship is unsafe and undesirable. Mediums and their controls should be educated as to the best methods of association.

The more I see of the manifestations in spirit phenomena, the more do I realize the necessity for speedy, decisive and active co-operation among the great body of Spiritualists, by whatsoever name they are known—whether Spiritualist, Theosophist, Christian or Mental Scientist, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Universalist, Unitarian, or of any other creed, sect or belief.

We all know that Spiritualism is clothed in many a garb, and known by many a name foreign to it, but so long as its truths are promulgated we must be content to await the full recognition of its claims. That will come sooner or later. Meanwhile we must do each our duty in hastening the day when mediumship—which is the cornerstone, yea, the base of Spiritualism—shall be rightly understood, and made the open door to spiritual knowledge, wisdom and beneficence.

Some day we shall realize that the "open door" to spirit-life means more than to aid our selfish ends. We shall know that the privilege of spirit-communion is a blessed boon, and should be used for real good to spirits, both embodied and disembodied. I know that some fine minds in our ranks have in contemplation the outcome which I so ardently desire, and which seems to me impossible except through means at which I have hinted. Will they not formulate their plans, and push them to the notice of the great unthinking mass who have secured the comforts of Spiritualism for themselves, and are content to let others "go and do likewise," or otherwise?

Is it not high time for action to join hands with theorizing? May we none of us shirk our responsibility. The duty of raising mediumship to the standard high in ideal lies before us. Shall we assume that duty, or shall we continue comfortably drifting?

## Contrasts.

BY HETTIE.

There are two sides to everything; an outside and an inside to a house; a right side and a wrong side to cloth; a positive and a negative pole; because of this, along certain lines and conditions people have thought these two sides or two poles were two, separated from and each independent of the other, and sometimes opposed to each other, but as one is included in and necessitates the other this cannot be true; if it were, this world would be diverse and not a universe. As long as there is light, the absence of light will be darkness. As long as there is heat, the absence of heat will be cold. As long as there is ease, the absence of ease will be disease. These negatives are real things; they are real conditions, but they are always included in their positives, and, like myriads of others, find ready helpers from the spirit-side whenever I will listen to them—dear helpers, who come gladly at my call; yea, stand without the portals and wait my tardy recognition. God bless these noble workers! But for them to what depths of darkness and degradation might humanity fall! They press toward every opening, and wield a mighty power through the vast army of mediums, many of whom are not conscious of their instrumentality in the hands of their guides and spirit-friends.

Darkness cannot advance only so far as light will let it; no more can cold advance only so far as heat will let it. It is this same truth that we are taught in the Bible when we are told to overcome evil with good, to let our light shine. But in some way we have not understood these teachings: we have thought that we must fight what we have called the sins and the evil of the world. We have thought we must shovel out the darkness before the light could come in. Did Jesus do this way? Let us remember his words, "Neither do I

will have it, is divine); we have within ourselves both poles of the divine will, the positive and the negative; this gives us an inner and an outer life, a spiritual and a physical, a divine and a human, just as Jesus had, and we are free to cultivate and exercise whichever of these lives we choose to exercise, the positive which is the mental, the inner, the spiritual, the divine, brings us by the law of attraction among the positives, which are life and light, love, health, strength, and leads us more and more to a realization of God and heaven.

To exercise (whatever we exercise and cultivate grows) the negatives, brings us, by the law of attraction, among the negatives or the negations, and these things which are coldness, darkness, weakness, hatred, sickness and death. Now, I have no reference to what is spoken of as spiritual death, for there is no such thing; nothing is ever really lost or destroyed, but the separation that is commonly called death. You may ask me, if this is so, why is it that good people are sick and die? The reason is: they do not know that they do not have to.

We have all been taught from our earliest childhood, and had it impressed upon us by our mother's minds before we are born, that we are separated from our Father; that God is outside of ourselves some place; that sin and sickness and death are powerful and aggressive, and that we are weak. How many times have we been told that we were "conceived in sin and born in iniquity," which simply means that we are conceived in ignorance and born to reap the consequences. So we have yielded ourselves to the things and conditions that have no power, only the power we give them by believing in them, and have never realized that we were divine, a part of the God-life, and one with it, and are told to overcome the world and the flesh, and put all negatives under our feet, so using them to build ourselves up into divine manhood and womanhood.

### The Reality of Spirit-Life.

BY GEORGE A. BACON.

The following graphic description of the spirit side of life, in the form of a spirit-communication, but recently came into our possession, although it was written nearly thirty years ago. We venture to publish it for the readers of THE BANNER, and others, as a most interesting and realistic presentation of life in the spheres, as narrated a generation since.

While some of its details may challenge acceptance, its main statements, if not indeed all its essential points, are hardly improved by those who speak of these things from the standpoint of to-day.

These delineations (through the mediumship of Miss Mary J. Day of New York, now Mrs. Dr. Wright of New Haven, Conn.), it is affirmed, were written by Mr. William G. Howard, who passed from this life May 1, 1832—now a resident of the third sphere—and continued by Thomas Paine, a dweller of the fourth sphere. The account given is exactly as it was received.

Washington, D. C.

Mr. Howard says:

After suffering severely, and closing my earth-life, on awakening to consciousness, I was standing by the side of my mother, who had departed this life nine years previous. The surprise in meeting my mother, my change of condition, and seeing myself, as I supposed, on the couch before me, I was confounded, and turned to my mother for an explanation. She informed me that I had passed from my earthly body into a superior existence. My mother presented me with a suit of black garments. I clothed myself with them, and we soon bade farewell to my earthly home.

Our passage was up an ascending plane, the motive power the will of my mother, and we soon landed in another world. This place very much resembled the earth. I was informed that we were in the second sphere. What surprised me the most was my newly-awakened sensations.

My mother informed me that I was developing powers of life until now I had known nothing of, and that it would be necessary for me to change my black garments, for those more suitable to my advanced condition. Accordingly, I was presented with a light gray suit, which pleased me much.

During our stay here I learned many important facts, which no doubt will be of interest to you. I will describe them as they appeared to me, and as I was informed by others:

The second sphere surrounds the earth, and revolves upon its axis. The five circles comprising this sphere are really but one expanding circle, formed from five segments. The first segment or circle is sixty miles distant from the earth, and covers nearly one-fifth of its circumference. The second circle is one hundred and twenty miles distant, each increasing the distance sixty miles, the five covering the circumference of the earth, the fifth segment being three hundred miles distant. The whole are united to the earth by inclined planes, forming a continuous passage from the earth outward and upward to the fifth circle.

The productions of this second sphere are in form similar to those of the earth. The fruit is more beautiful and pleasing to the taste. The customs and habits in these different circles in this sphere are as various as their language. All who leave their forms do not immediately ascend—many become so attached to the earth for various causes that they have not the least desire to depart. I will instance those who have accumulated large fortunes, and sacrificed their humanity to gratify this one desire—they will remain to see others grasp and often squander that which they have prized so highly. There are other causes which detain spirits on or very near the earth. The lewd and intemperate are severe sufferers. Many of them pass through the horrors of delirium, which to them is an awful reality, driving them to desperation, often continuing many years before they will or can listen to the least encouragement for mercy. We will say for the benefit of those who traffic in that which destroys the happiness of their fellows, that they will pay the last farthing before the God of their souls will forgive them for degrading the children of their Heavenly Father.

Another class, far more numerous, remain very near the earth for a long time. I refer to those who are deficient in spirituality, being possessed with barely enough to retain the form, but not sufficient to progress without a large amount of cultivation. The majority are so low that they require food, but little in advance of their primitive condition. To supply this need, Nature in her abundance reproduces certain animals on the same plane with them. Here the red man finds his hunting-ground; here he pursues his prey, and feasts on his game as he did when he roamed the forests of the West. The name of this class is Legion; they have been pouring into the spirit-world for thousands of years, and many eminent spirits have labored centuries in this work of love to liberate these child-*er* of their Heavenly Father from the thralldom of ignorance to the glorious liberty of light and truth. The second sphere presents an almost endless variety of conditions, from the fact that here are congregated people from all nations and all languages of the earth. In this sphere all must approximate toward a certain standard of morals and intelligence before they can move upward and onward in the road of progression.

After roaming over a diversified country, we made our ascension to the third sphere. The passage was of some duration, but not tedious. On our arrival we landed at a platform, no doubt intended for the purpose, as it was

on the edge of the sphere. I was soon sensible that we were in a very beautiful country. A short distance in advance of us was a walled city of vast proportions. The entrance was through an arched gateway. The door was slightly ajar. A partial view informed me that my gray suit would poorly harmonize with the white garments within. My mother said: "My son, alay your fears, garments are prepared here for you also." Then I saw one of the inhabitants pass out of a gateway and present a parcel to my mother, which she gave to me. It contained a suit of pure white. The exchange was soon made, and when arrayed in white garments my joy was unbounded. I was now a new creature, born again, and entering the kingdom of heaven. Old things had passed away, earth and earthly pursuits were fading from my mind. I was free.

Outside the gate was the keeper; on his left was a large book, in which he recorded the names of those who entered the city. I asked why all this was necessary. She answered: "My son, when you pass into the city, your remembrance of earth-life will become less and less. You may possibly forget your name, and should you in the future wish to visit your earth-home, you will return through this gate, take your earth name, resume your gray dress, for will you not those garments you left by the way to enable you to remember your earth-life, and to assist you to communicate with your friends. Hence the necessity for recording your name in this book."

As we entered the city we were greeted by my father, who passed from earth life when I was a boy. He welcomed me with joy and affection to his spirit home. I was really surprised at the beauty of the scene before me. The buildings were large and splendid. Those near the gate and for some distance were schools for the study of philosophy and science. The arrangement of the scholars was in circles of ten or twelve, with the teacher in the centre. The schools were supplied with books, charts and models. My father informed me that a large proportion of those who enter this sphere are ignorant of those principles of knowledge which are necessary for their growth in happiness and their advancement in the spheres; hopes as soon as they are convinced that they are laboring to a disadvantage because of their ignorance, they entered the schools at once, and applied themselves with their utmost ability to the different branches of study. When you entered the schools, none but your friends observed you, and they by impression, so intent are the learners to acquire the necessary knowledge for their progress in the sphere.

As we passed on toward my father's home I learned that a portion of these buildings were devoted to mechanics and art. I afterward visited them and found many filled with machinery for the purpose of producing and perfecting inventions, and to manufacture articles for use and ornament in the spheres, and also to transmit knowledge, as far as practicable, to the children of earth. The arts are here displayed to the highest degree of perfection to beautify mind, adorn temples, mansions, parks, etc. Those who labor divide their seasons into work, recreation and rest.

We have machinery for measuring time; it is very different from yours. We raise cotton of different colors, flax as beautiful as silk, any species of grass which is highly ornamental for ladies' dresses. We are not confined to white, but make any color we choose. Our costumes are similar to yours; we change them when we please. Our sustenance is fruit, of which we have abundance. The variety is large, and very pleasing to the taste.

We cultivate it or gather that of spontaneous growth. Our soil is dark; it somewhat resembles yours, with the exception of stones. If we have a desire to sleep, we gratify it. We have vocal and instrumental music. Our instruments are similar to those on the earth; our music is superior. We have a telegraph; it is more perfect than yours. The action is magnetic. As the message flies over the wires there is a slight illumination. Our language is uniform, and we also communicate by impression. Language is used for public speaking and joyful occasions.

Our light is partially derived from the sun. Our atmosphere, being more magnetic than yours, we are not so dependent on the sun for light as you are. This sphere does not revolve upon the axis of the earth. Our climate is uniform—one continual summer, flowers always in bloom and superbly beautiful. We are not sensible to cold or heat. When we meet a friend we greet him with a hearty shake of the hand. We are as tangible to ourselves as you are. We have great pleasure here in visiting and in making others happy.

West of this city is a large body of water, containing many beautiful islands—the larger ones are covered with villages, the smaller with one or more mansions. Many of these islands are graded with rising ground in the centre, sloping to the water's edge, adorned with walks, sculptured images, flowering shrubbery, and with trees of most singular varieties of fringed foliage. The scene is enchantingly beautiful, and is enriched with sailing vessels of every description, decorated with splendid colored streamers. In the distance are seen majestic ships, and visiting from island to island are beautiful palatial steamers whose soul-stirring music comes rolling over the water, tempting all to enter the smaller craft and join them in their happy pursuit of pleasure.

Gratification is not the only desire which actuates those who spend their time on the water; their real purpose is improvement. Every vessel is most perfectly modelled, and every principle carefully studied and applied. On these waters, vessels were propelled by steam power long before you had the pleasure of witnessing the same interesting view upon the waters of the earth.

If the ruling passion or genius of each individual is not perfectly developed previous to his arrival in this sphere, he will here prosecute his desire until he is satisfied with his attainments.

The same law governs every mind, whether mechanical, scientific, literary, wealth, fame, or whatever it may be. This principle bears severely upon the worshippers of mammon; it portrays the depth of its demoralization on the human mind. The sufferings of the miser in the lower spheres from the loss of his wealth may wean him in a measure from his idol and enable him to advance to the third sphere; but that there is abundance of gold. The sight of the precious metal awakens the full force of the ruling passion. He makes no inquiry as to its worth, until his pile is completed and his every desire gratified. He then learns the reality that his coveted wealth has no more value than the most common metal. All his ambition and pride is changed by disappointment to mortification and disgust, and it is often very long before he will awaken to consciousness and seek for that instruction which will unfold to him the real purpose of life.

When we wish for anything we cannot supply ourselves with, we make it known. For instance: if I desire a mansion I draw my plan to get an architect to make one for me, and it will not be long before a master builder, who is not satisfied with his proficiency, learning my wishes, calls on me and offers his services in erecting my mansion. His aim is to gratify his mechanical genius to repetition, and mine to obtain a mansion according to my wishes. This is one mode of barter with another—to do all the good you can to make others happy.

Conjugal attachments formed on earth and not founded on mutual love, seldom if ever, reach the second sphere. Many attachments are formed in the second and third spheres. A true union of souls, for all time, is when the two are so constituted that their united qualities of mind form a unit—that is, each supplies the various deficiencies of the other. One of the most, if not the greatest, endearing source of happiness in the spheres, is the spiritual outgrowth of conjugal, paternal and filial love.

There are many large cities in this sphere; also immense tracts of land devoted to country residences, including parks of great extent, beautifully adorned with palms, statuary, fruit and flowers. The land is beautifully undulated; it has running water—forming cascades, large and small lakes, trees of splendid foliage, flowing abruberry, bright green verdure, and hundreds of beautiful beings making calls and promenading to their perfect delight.

Over the third sphere are suspended beautiful magnetic lights, emitting rays in solar and form similar to the rainbow. These lights are caused by the constant intercourse of the spheres. The arts have long engaged our highest attention. Sculpture, painting, and engraving are our favorite pursuits. One great advantage we have in sculpture is the beauty of our marble. We have in this city alone (and there are many others) three hundred temples for the purpose of preserving and exhibiting specimens of the arts. The exterior of these temples are elaborately beautified. The one I conversant with is reared on a base of white marble; it has four fronts, is three stories high, and surrounded with a triple colonnade. It is an immense square building, and has a dome towering high in the heavens. The walls of this temple are made of large square blocks of marble, as pure as Parian, and inlaid with flowers of beautiful stones. This building has four entrances, one in the centre of each front. The doors are large and massive, and elegantly embellished with sculpture and mosaic work. The trimmings are of gold; the handles are very massive, and splendidly wrought with inscriptions of "Welcome!" These temples are esteemed the finest works of art in the sphere. You can form no idea of their extent, and neither can I. To examine the specimens contained in one of them requires full three score of your days. I cannot impress you with their wonder and grandeur.

[Here Mr. Howard ceases, and Mr. Paine resumes the narration.]

The dome of the temples, of which you have had faint delineation, are open at the top. They are the passageways from the third to the fourth sphere. The domes are ascended by winding stairs. The halls throughout the three stories will admit but two persons abreast. All who enter pass out through the domes.

The temples are filled with statuary, paintings and engravings of the highest merit. In the base of the temples farther than the eye can reach, are offices occupied by spirits from the fourth sphere. Around these offices are congregated thousands of spirits who throng here for the purpose of passing an examination as candidates to become inhabitants of the fourth sphere. Those who are accounted worthy are presented with a certificate, and at the same time a duplicate, with the residence of the spirit, is placed on file. One more condition is requisite before they can pass above—it is this: each must be mated, and the quality of the two minds such as will, in all future, unfold harmoniously to their mutual advantage.

These examinations are accomplished with great rapidity. When a candidate is presented whose mate has previously passed examination, the certificate on file is given, and a telegram is instantly flashing the welcome message to the mate: "Come; all is ready," and in an incredibly short time the pair, who previously may have never seen each other, and are to spend an eternity together, are face to face, rejoicing that they are worthy to enter the temple, and beautify their minds with the impress of those rare and precious works, the treasure of ages, and then to ascend to a world whose beauty far exceeds their present magnitude.

Spirits move with rapidity as their distance increases from the earth. When spirits of but little notoriety arrive in the spheres, they are generally received by their friends; but when those who are enlightened, and have labored earnestly in the cause of truth, enter the fourth sphere, they are most heartily welcomed with a public reception.

Bacchus of Egypt, Bacchus of Greece, Adonis of Greece, Krishna of India, Changi of China, Christ of Chaldea, Mithra of Persia, Sakia of India, Jao-Po of Britain, were all gods of the different nations mentioned, and were all born Dec. 25. Not only that: they were born hundreds of years before the birth of the Christian Jesus, in whose honor these Christian clergymen wish to teach the children Christians is celebrated.

Let us go back to the old Aryan Sun-ship, and teach the children the truth about the birth of the Sun-God, and then, with a true understanding of the case, they will honor Christmas as a day in which their token of remembrance can be given, and they will not be contaminated with any myth.

But if we lie to them about Santa Claus, for they will learn the truth some day, and although it will wring their heart-strings for a time, it will not injure them for life or dwarf their intellects.

The false impressions of revealed religions that are not susceptible of proof have done and will do this. Let us open the door of truthful knowledge to the children. Let them indulge in harmless diversion. It will do them good.

Lily Date, N. Y.

the north, which would bring new life and rejuvenate the earth?

In the past Christianity has labored to tame the belief in the myths, and probably today the very ones who are so anxious to remove the harmless myth of Santa Claus, that has brought so much happiness into the lives of our little ones, would be the last ones to permit an attempt to remove the gigantic myth of the immaculate conception, and kindred myths upon which the Christian religion is based.

Let us teach the truth about Christmas to the children. Let us tell them that Christmas was not, and is not, in honor of the Christian God, and that the best Christian authorities acknowledge that Jesus was not born on Christmas day.

The gods of the "Pagans" were born Dec.

25. There is a good reason for it.

The ancients worshipped the sun. To them it was the

Creator, Savior and Destroyer of life—the

Brahma, Vishnu and Siva.

You can form no idea of their extent,

and neither can I.

To examine the specimens contained in one of them requires full three score of your days.

I cannot impress you with their

wonder and grandeur.

[Here Mr. Howard ceases, and Mr. Paine resumes the narration.]

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# 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?

Written for the Lyceum and Home Department.

### SONG OF THE BUREAU DRAWERS.

The bureau drawers were wrangling  
And disputing without cause,  
As to which was the most respected  
Of all the five large drawers.  
The top one seemed most important,  
And said, in lordly tone,  
"I think the post of honor,  
Belongs to me alone."

For I belonged to the father,  
And none were allowed to come  
And rump up my contents  
In all the dear old home.  
And I contained his collars,  
His neckties, and his shirts,  
And I think I'm really topmost  
If I have my just deserts."

"Now," said the next beneath it,  
"Of honor I want a share,  
For I once held the possessions  
Of the only son and heir.  
I know he sometimes left me  
In a careless kind of a muss,  
And if any one made me tidy,  
He always made a fuss."

But he was a mother's darling,  
A father's pride and joy,  
And I think it quite an honor  
To be used by the only boy."

The tone was soft and gentle,  
The accent mild and meek,  
That the third drawer used to argue  
When called upon to speak:

"I once belonged to mother,  
And I presume to say  
That no drawer, not one other  
Was used so much each day."

The next drawer said: "I really  
Think the greatest honor mine;

For the two girls were my owners,

And a lovely bright blue-line,

Divides me in my centre,

So each could have one-half,

And o'er me they used to quarrel,

To chatter, play and laugh."

The bottom drawer responded

In answer to the call,

"I do not look for honor,

For I was used by all.

I am large, and deep, and ample,

And gave to each a share;

And if they had a treasure

They were sure to hide it there."

The door then softly opened,

And a lady came in alone,

And, moving to the bureaut,

Which now was all her own,

She opened the drawer at the bottom,

And, kneeling there alone,

She removed the precious contents

And viewed them, one by one.

She said: "These things dear mother used,

Her needles and her thread,

Her Bible and her hymn-book,

Which she so often read.

The stocking partly finished lies

Which she commenced with care;

Her little cape, her box, her comb

Which decked her silvered hair.

Here are two tiny little shoes

My baby used to wear—

Her little feet are resting now,

For earth she was too fair.

This drawer," she said, "my treasures dear

Doth evermore contain."

And as she spoke she dropped a tear

And closed the drawer again;

She left the room. The top drawer spoke

In accents not quite clear,

"The bottom drawer the honor has—

It holds a woman's tear."

SUNIE MAR.

### Mother.

The mother, more than the father, has the power to bring the home under the sway of the principles of right, temperance, and those forces making for the perpetuity of the ideal home. Home becomes home in proportion as woman is elevated, refined and honored. Home life degenerates according to the degeneration of woman. Within the charmed circle of the family the mother, the real mother, is queen. None fairer than she is on any earthly throne. Ruskin well says: "The queen that sits upon the throne of home, crowned and honored as none other can be, is mother. Her enthronement is complete, her reign unrivaled, and the moral issues of her empire are eternal." Mother, somehow, can come more closely to the heart of the child than the father can. It is "mother" in the dark midnight hour, when the tossing child awakes from its feverish dreams. "Mother!" is the first cry of the saddened child when the scalding tears of burning sorrow or of keenest disappointment burst from its eyes. "I want mother!" is the unappeased cry of the soldier boy when shot down upon the battle-field and is carried to the hospital amid the whistling of bullets and roar of canon. "Mother!" cries the tempest-tossed sailor, pitched and hurled, rocked and swayed, in the fury of the ocean storm. Mother—her hand can give the magic touch which thrills the soul into rapturous joy. Her kiss upon the feverish brow brightens the eye and dries the tear. Mother—her face, no matter how many plows have torn and wrinkled it, how old, how careworn, how sun-burned, how many hoof-marks of cold neglect have scarred it; it is the handsomest face ever kissed by God's sunshine.

It is the mother within the home to rule, to fashion, to touch into a higher form of purity. A degraded mother, and there is a degraded home. A refined mother, and there is a refined home. It is an angel touch. Home life is the real basis of social and national existence. As is the home, in large measure will be our social and national environments. Put into it pure, ideal, consecrated motherhood, and we shall have a nation towering in national strength and symmetrical grandeur, a nation uplifting its tested pillars of enduring solidity, a nation whose banner of freedom proudly wraps every citizen within its gorgeous folds. Pure homes! What follows? Pure government, pure society, pure education, pure government. Muddy the fountain, and the stream is murky. Let the fountain be of crystal brightness, and the stream will flow on in its purity. Never before has there been more keenly felt in our country the urgent necessity of ideal home life, and that home life fortified and made glorious by the potent touch of ennobling motherhood. On every hand is heard the beseeching cry of the pupil: The bar sends forth its pleadings in language eloquent and unmistakable. Statesmen in high legislative power are echoing and re-echoing these sentiments everywhere. The press, surging like ocean billows, war against American doors, and dashing spray and white foam against every window, is thundering its earnest appeals in behalf of home life, touched into resplendent beauty by the hand of femi-

nine purity. The hour of peril is upon us. The women of to-day are called to a mighty work. Character is to be fashioned, destinies wrought out. A trembling must oftentimes come to the thinking mother as she realizes that her hand is training for the future. The firm, resolute touch, the sympathetic tear, the throbbing heart, are potent influences wielded for the child's ultimate good, and therefore for the permanent good of society. The care of a mother for her children! Boys now, but reaching up towards manhood. Children now, but men after awhile, and forth into the midst of the world's temptations, its bitter strife and scorching heat, carrying into the battle a mother's training, a mother's impressions, and, perhaps, a mother's eternal mistake. —*Baltimore Methodist.*

### Free Forgiveness.

A gentleman who had a house surrounded by beautiful grounds was looking from his drawing room one evening, when he saw a boy come across the lawn, evidently bent on mischief. He was trampling down the flowers, treading over the beds, and pulling down the branches from the trees.

The gentleman went down the steps, across the lawn, and before the boy had seen his approach he had placed his hand firmly on his shoulder.

The boy struggled vehemently to escape, but his attempts were useless; a strong hand had secured him.

"Now, my boy," said the gentleman, "answer me one question. Which is the best flower in this garden?"

The boy still struggled, but, finding there was no escape from the quiet eye and firm grasp of the man he had injured, he looked round, and, after a few minutes' pause, he answered: "That rose is the best," pointing to a beautiful rose bush just bursting into bloom. The gentleman, still keeping one hand on the boy's shoulder, reached out his other hand, and, plucking the rose in all its beauty, gave it to the boy, and releasing him as he did it, "There, take it, my boy," he said.

The boy was amazed. Looking into the face of his strange benefactor, he asked: "Ain't you going to have me punished, sir?"

"No," was the reply. "I am giving you the best flower in my garden. You will never come and trample down my flower beds again, will you?"

Free forgiveness and a token of love had won the pardon of the boy's heart.

From that hour he was the willing servant of his friend. And many a time that boy would be seen, cap in hand, standing at that gentleman's gate, with the loving petition on his lips, "Please, sir, is there any little job I could do for you?" You may be sure the request was not refused.—*Ex.*

### Children at Christmastide.

*Their Joy and Mirth Should be Unrestrained on this Day of Days.*

"If there is one day in the year which rightly belongs to the young, it is Christmas Day," writes Edward W. Bok in the *Christmas Ladies' Home Journal*. "It should be given over to them, therefore, without stint or reservation. And I think sometimes that parents do not always understand this. It is right and all-essential that restrictions upon the amusements of the young should prevail in every home. But Christmas Day is the one day when these barriers ought to be lifted, and the young given free play. No wholesome liberty nor indulgence should be withheld from a boy or girl on that day. What of it, my dear friend, if such liberties do mean a tear here, or a broken chair there? Suppose the boy is particularly noisy on Christmas. What of it? Tell me, if you can, a better sign of strong, young health than the noise from a boy's lungs! Suppose he does throw himself, or even jump or stand, on your best lounge, and soil or rumple your pet tidy! Pass over it, don't notice; but let the boy have his Christmas Day."

And if the little girl does insist upon putting her sticky candy fingers on your dress, what of it? Let her romp and tear all over the house. Give her the joy of feeling that for one day the house is hers in every nook and corner of it. Let her put her smutty little hands on the white paint of door or wall. I know a home, my dear friend, where the marks of four little smutty fingers may be seen any day on the white paint of a door, and there they are treasured above the costliest ornaments in that house. Nothing could induce the mother of that home to wipe off those finger marks, and gayly would her heart sing if the little fingers that put them there could make others all over the doors and windows of that house... Let each one of us who can, give freedom and zest to the dearest treasures of the Christmastide: the young barbarians of our homes. God bless them, I say. This is also a profusely-illustrated Christmas number. The *Review of Reviews Company*, 13 Astor Place, New York.

INTELLIGENCE.—The current issue is called the Oriental Holiday Number, and has as opening article a very interesting account of "The Origin of Symbolism," by Rufus E. Moore (with illustrations); "The Mysterious Key," the first part of which is given in this number, is an occult tragedy, by Joseph S. Rogers; Alexander Wilder, M. D., writes on "The Practical Value of Philosophy"; L. Enrich discusses "Physical Science versus Occult Science"; and Hudon Genou contributes a paper on "The Philosophy of the Divine Man"; a poem by William T. James on "What the Poets Say," with "The World of Thought and Editorial Comment," make a very valuable and instructive number. Metaphysical Pub. Co., 503 Fifth Avenue, New York.

THE ARENA opens with a symposium under the title of "Idylls and Ideals of Christmas," in which Robert G. Ingersoll writes of "What I Want for Christmas," Rev. Minot J. Savage, D. D., on "Christmas, the Human Holiday"; James Whitcomb Riley gives a poem on "Santa Claus," and John Clark Ridpath writes on "The Aryan at Christmas"; A. Seane with Eusapia Paladino: "Psychic Forces," is contributed by Camille Flammarion (with illustrations). There are many other important papers, and with the departments make a very important issue. The Arena Co., Copley Square, Boston.

RECEIVED.—*Borderland*, 125 Fleet street, E. C., London, Eng. *The Coming Day*, edited by John Page Hopkins, London, England.

Waltham Lyceum.

We held an interesting and instructive session in Spruce-street Hall Dec. 19, having a roll-call of thirty-five scholars, four regular teachers, besides the conductors and guardians. This past week a donation of twenty library books was presented to the Lyceum for a Christmas gift.

To-day we had with us a number of visitors, among them Mrs. J. S. Soper, who gave many thoughts to the advancement of the work of the Lyceum.

552 Main street, Waltham.

Salem Lyceum.

Mrs. Annie S. Beals, Assistant-Conductor, was in the chair, and conducted the meeting. A number of new scholars took their places in the ranks, and are to come regularly in the future. Our Lyceum is growing slowly, but soon will be as large as any previous school of the past. All interested in this grand and noble work of the children are cordially invited to be present.

N. B. Salem, Dec. 19, 1897.

Fall River Lyceum.

Our Lyceum is doing grand work. We had as our guest at the Lyceum session Miss Susan H. Wixson of our city, who gave a grand talk to our scholars, which was much enjoyed by all. Please make special mention of the above-named lady, as she is one of the grandest women, whom to know is to love. She holds a very prominent place on our public school board, and is foremost in every good and progressive work.

MRS. ANN HIBBERT.

The Boston Spiritual Lyceum.

Sunday afternoon, Dec. 19, the question considered at this Lyceum was: "Why do not Spiritualists practice What They Preach?" and a great variety of opinion was expressed by Wm. J. Ireland, F. Foster, George Dutton, Clarence Dutton, Charles Hatch, Willie Sheldon, Jessie Jackson, Albert P. Blinn, Elmer B. Packard, Fred H. Watson, N. B. Austin, Edward W. Hatch, Mr. J. R. Snow, Mr. G. S. Hoyt, Mrs. A. Lang, Mr. J. B. Mansergh, Mrs. A. Waterhouse, Mrs. Carrie L. Hatch and Dr. J. R. Root.

After the grand march, recitations were given by Badle Jackson, Johnnie Ormrod, Harry Gilmore Greene, Adison and Johnnie Ormrod, Ann H. Hayes and Ruth Davis.

At the close of the meeting, a violin solo; "Home Sweet Home," was played by Mr. Watson, and Mr. Wilson sang "A CLARENCE ARMSTRONG, Clerk, 1 Lorcy street, Dorchester Station, Boston, Mass.

Lang, Mrs. M. A. Lang, Mr. J. B. Mansergh, Mrs. A. Waterhouse, Mrs. Carrie L. Hatch and Dr. J. R. Root.

For the little ones the question was: "Why do the Children like Christmas-Time?" and responses were given by George Healy, Harry Gilmore Greene, Addison and Johnnie Ormrod, Ann H. Hayes and Ruth Davis.

After the grand march, recitations were given by Badle Jackson, Johnnie Ormrod, Harry Gilmore Greene, Adison and Johnnie Ormrod, Ann H. Hayes and Ruth Davis.

At the close of the meeting, a violin solo; "Home Sweet Home," was played by Mr. Watson, and Mr. Wilson sang "A CLARENCE ARMSTRONG, Clerk, 1 Lorcy street, Dorchester Station, Boston, Mass.

Original Riddles or Charades from young people of all ages will be gladly received. Address this Department, BANNER OF LIGHT.

### Spiritual and Scientific Instruction.

BY L. V. MOULTON.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

I send you a portion of a letter from a party asking advice, who is typical of a large number of people in the country, and my reply thereto, which you are at liberty to publish if you should deem proper. I suppress the identity of my correspondent, for obvious reasons:

HON. L. V. MOULTON, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Dear Sir: It was my good fortune to be present at one of your lectures last spring.

The lecture was of intense interest to me, as I

had made something of a study of psychic science.

Knowing that to be in the least proficient in occult studies one must have a knowledge of natural law in spiritual and material realms, I desire to inform myself more fully on those subjects, and do not know just how to proceed.

What course of study would you advise?

Where can I get the knowledge I must have?

I am not entirely ignorant on the subject, but have come to a standstill. I fully realize how valuable your time is, and know I

am taking a very great liberty, but trust that at least you will be able to find a moment for a brief reply.

Very respectfully yours,

L. V. MOULTON.

As my correspondent had been considerate enough to enclose a stamped and directed envelope for reply (an unusual thing in my experience), I replied as follows:

Replying to yours

## BANNER OF LIGHT BOOKSTORE.

## SPECIAL NOTICE.

The BANNER OF LIGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY, located at 8 Bosworth Street (corner Tremont Street), Boston, Mass., keeps for sale a complete assortment of Spiritual, Progressive, Religious and Miscellaneous Books and Periodicals.

THREE CENTS—Orders for Books, to be sent by Express, must be accompanied by all or at least half cash; the balance, if any, must be paid O. D. Orders for Books, to be sent by Mail, must invariably be accompanied by airmail postage stamp.

Remittances can be safely sent by an Express Money Order, which will be issued by any of the large Express Companies. Summader \$5.00 can be sent in that manner for 5 cents.

In quoting from THE BANNER care should be taken to distinguish between editorial articles and correspondence. Our columns are open for the expression of important thoughts, but we do not endorse all 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 guarantee of the facts. We cannot undertake to preserve or return canceled 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.

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TWO DOLLARS PER YEAR.

The management of the BANNER OF LIGHT has reduced the subscription price of the paper to Two Dollars per year former price \$2.50.

We trust that Spiritualists everywhere will co-operate heartily with us in the step which has been taken, and that regular subscribers for THE BANNER will make an effort to increase its circulation. If every one now on our subscription books would make it his or her business to obtain one new subscriber to this paper for 1897, the heretofore high standard of THE BANNER could easily be maintained, the value of its contents and the practicality materially enhanced, and the Cause which this paper has so long defended and upheld greatly strengthened.

## The New Year.

THE BANNER wishes all its friends, patrons, contributors and contemporaries a bright, happy and prosperous New Year. It is the one holiday in the whole year that should bring hope and courage to the people. The old year, with its burdens, sufferings and heartaches has gone, while the eastern horizon of life is aglow with the effulgent glory of the sun of a new day. On this occasion, therefore, let us cast aside all gloomy fears, anxious forebodings and mental weariness, to greet the bright promises of the New Year with hopeful faces and peaceful minds.

Like Janus, let us look back at the helpful things of the past year, and forward to the glories of the year to come, with the sincere desire in our souls to blend the two for the purpose of meeting life's responsibilities understandingly, and of profiting by the experiences of each day. Glorious New Year's Day! May every heart be filled with love, every soul with courage, every life with ambition to render faithful service to mankind, and every home with happiness! It is a day for rejoicing. The sun, the day-king, is rising in the heavens; the long night is losing its power, and the rainbow of promise spans the sky. Let us face the future with courage; let us keep faith with ourselves, and victory over every form of wrong will surely be ours. All hail the New Year!

## Thoughts.

For nearly fifty years, probably, a majority of the platform teachers in Spiritualism have been teaching that "thoughts are things." Other teachers, equally able, have asserted that thoughts are merely projections from the human mind, or modes of motion by which the human being is made cognizant of facts. Which of these two schools is right in its teachings? The first class introduces evidence to prove the statements made, claiming that thoughts are substances full of potencies for good and useful purposes when practically applied. If they are substances created by human volition, may they not like the person creating them, be immortal?

Attempts have been made by scientists to photograph thoughts, with varying degrees of success. If thought is sufficiently objective to the sensitized plate to be reproduced thereon by photography, is not the claim that a "thought is a thing" clearly demonstrated? If David Starr Jordan and his confederates try to think the picture of a cat upon an exposed plate, if they succeed in producing certain disturbances in the ether that find expression upon the plate, may not subsequent experiments succeed in thinking the full picture of the cat upon the plate? Although Dr. Jordan laughed his own experiment out of court, he opened the door to a new field of investigation, whose soil is being eagerly tilled by truth-seekers at the present time.

If Dr. Charcot can think a picture upon a sheet of blank paper, that his hypnotized subject can see for weeks afterward, is that thought-picture a mere mode of motion, or does it possess objectivity? Are the models that are created in the thought-realm by our inventors modes of motion, that are objectified afterward through material forms? Is not the thought model a real object as well as its material expression? If motion or vibration can account for thought

creations, why may it not also account for life? If life is mere vibration, can it possess the principle of permanency?

Sight and hearing are due to vibration. They acquaint us with colors. In their various combinations, and make us cognizant of the manifestations of intelligence. If intelligence projects itself in outward manifestation through vibration or sound waves, is vibration the cause of the intelligence or merely the medium of intelligence? If it is the cause, then no hypothesis of immortality for the human soul is possible. If it is the medium of intelligence, the servant of intelligence, then it is simply an aid in demonstrating immortality, or the existence of a finite force in the universe capable of creating. If a finite force is capable of creating something that causes vibration, what force created finite force?

If a finite human mind by thinking and then expressing the thought sets in motion the waves of ether around it, that mind must needs affect the ether by means of a substance that disturb it. Thought, then, must be that substance that caused the ether to vibrate. If thought caused the vibration of the ether, it must be composed of material forces, subtler than the ether, that are capable of acting upon the ether. Thought, then, must be invisible entities, psychic in their origin, and cognizable through their effect upon matter. Sublimated atoms of matter, so refined as to be invisible to the outward eye, are the mediums used by the human will to express its manifestations of intelligence to its kind.

If thought is a combination of sublimated atoms under the direction of the human will, what is the nature of the will itself? This question resolves itself into the First Cause of all things, which predicated Life as a self-existent, intelligent force, involving all things, from which every finite form of life is evolved. It is only possible to say "Life is," and, therefore, Life is the cosmos. Life uses vibration for certain ends, and intelligent life uses thought for the end of expressing its intelligence to creatures able to cognize its meaning. Vibration or motion is the means of expressing intelligence, and not intelligence itself. Therefore, thoughts are creations of intelligence by which intelligence can express itself to its own kind. Hence, thoughts are living entities that express the divine possibilities of the soul-man, the real man.

## Color and Crime.

The address of Rev. Dr. R. J. Briggs, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, before the National Prison Congress, in Austin, Texas, is full of startling facts and peculiar suggestions. Dr. Briggs proves by the census and records of the courts that the colored element is more criminal than any other in the population of the United States. The ratio of colored criminals was thirty three and one-third per cent. higher in 1890 than it was in 1880. While fifty-seven per cent. of the colored race are illiterate, only fifty-four per cent. of the colored criminals are illiterate. This goes to show that education of the blacks is no deterrent to crime on their parts. Among the whites the criminals are generally, almost universally, found among the ignorant classes.

According to Dr. Briggs, the negro is three times as criminal in the North Atlantic as in the South Atlantic States; over twice as criminal in the north central as in the south central States; three and a half times as criminal in the western as in the South Atlantic States. "These facts," says the *Boston Herald*, "lead to the deduction that the Northern people are not doing their duty to the colored race. The opportunities for negroes to gain a livelihood are more restricted in the North than in the South."

If the *Herald* be correct in its surmises, some remedy for the defect should be speedily sought. The politician who has been preaching equality to catch the negro vote should be displaced by the statesman, who should set to work to devise some means by which a negro can be made to feel that he has a conscience, and to realize that he has a moral responsibility for his acts.

We glean from the *Herald* report of Dr. Briggs's exceedingly instructive and important address that there are more crimes among married negroes than any other race; that their offences are chiefly against the person and property, and that nine-tenths of the negro criminals have no trade; that they are indifferent to public opinion, heedless, careless and thoughtless. The negro is less led into crime by drunkenness than is his white brother. This is true of no other people outside of the Chinese and Japanese. The female negro compares more favorably with the male negro in crime than the white female does with the white male.

All of these statistics are interesting and instructive. They prove that something more must be done for the negro than has been done since his emancipation. Dr. Briggs suggests a remedy in the proper training of negro girls—in giving them a practical education and in creating in them a hearty self-respect. If they can be made to feel the grave responsibilities resting upon them as the prospective mothers of the colored race, no doubt much good will be accomplished; but if education increases the negro's tendency to crime, will not the colored girl be affected by that tendency? Be this as it may, the negro question is and will be for a long time to come, a hard problem for our sociologists to solve.

If more is being done for the negro in the South than in the North, let us profit by the example of our Southern brethren. If the negro needs to be educated in character and self-respect, let us by all means endeavor to find some method by which it can be accomplished. Dr. Briggs has suggested one method. Our remedy would be a higher instruction in religion. Of all people upon this continent, the negroes are the most zealously religious. They pray and sing with gusto; they engage in religious services, such as prayers and exhortations, before they rob a hen-roost or rifle a clothes-line. They swing from the scaffold for the awful crimes of rape and murder, shouting that they are going straight into the arms of Jesus. The negro is a religious animal, thoroughly steeped in credulity and superstition. He needs education, but it should be an education in the stern law of compensation. He should be early impressed with the awful thought that there is no forgiveness for sin; that he must pay the penalty in full for his every act, and that no priest nor Jesus, can wash away his sins and give him a passport into heaven. When these instructions are given the negro from the cradle up to the age of manhood, his criminal traits will grow less and less, and finally be eradicated through stirpiculture, as directed by the evolution of enlightenment.

"The dog that brings a bone will carry one." Remember this whenever the gossip doth approach thee, and guard thy tongue lest thou be beguiled to speak ill of thy friend and neighbor. He hath his faults, and so hast thou; they seek to so live as to show him the way by which his faults may be overcome. Gossip is the first stone that is ever hurled at the beautiful temple of friendship. Avoid its use as thou wouldest avoid the slime and ooze of the cesspool. The latter poisons the body, while gossip shatters the soul.

Let the love for Truth so fill all hearts that error and falsehood can find no entrance therein. Uncurtain the windows of the soul, that Truth's rays may perforate every nook and cranny of thy nature. Then wilt thou be successful in thy quest for the avenue that leadeth unto the City of Perfection.

## Medical Freedom.

The New Orleans Picayune of Dec. 10 contains a two column article, headed in large letters, with the startling statement, "Louisa Anna Health has been Guarded." The writer states that strict laws were passed, more than eighty five years ago, to prevent improper persons from practicing medicine.

Between the years 1808 and 1818 enactments were passed by the legislature, establishing a Medical Board for the eastern and western supreme judicial districts, consisting of six members each, one member to be an apothecary. The governor of the State, in concurrence with the Senate, was the appointing power. The acts prescribed severe penalties for practicing without a license—the fine for first offense being one hundred dollars, for the second not to exceed two hundred dollars, with one year's imprisonment.

The licenses given by either board entitled the holders to practice in any part of the State. Twenty dollars were charged for each license.

In the year 1838 the matter was greatly agitated in the city of New Orleans, and complaints against "medical impostors, deleterious druggists and midwives" were given a prominent place in the city directory. Accounts are also given of the founding of a Medical College and of three charity hospitals in the city.

All the above form a very interesting portion of the history of Louisiana, and New Orleans in particular. While it is all very well to establish hospitals for the sick poor, and colleges where diseases, especially those peculiar to that portion of the country, may be carefully studied in the light of science and practical experience, we are inclined to think it would be more to the purpose to appoint an up-to-date Board of Health, possessed of as much common-sense as of so called science. If the lack of proportion in the beautiful city of New Orleans is not sufficient to cause the presence of that dread disease, yellow fever, to which the writer in question refers as a disease which should be dealt with only by full-fledged M. D.'s of the State of Louisiana, who had made it a study, then we have failed to draw the right conclusions from recent observations.

The cemeteries of the city, although places of beauty in many respects, are yet menaces to the public health. It is true that precautions are taken to prevent the effluvia of the thousands of above ground graves from being noticed by the citizens, yet the atmosphere is by no means free from the death dealing bacilli that escape from the tombs. We have noticed on several occasions the terrible odors from even the most tightly sealed tombs as we have walked through several of the New Orleans cemeteries. Does it need anything more than this to prove that yellow fever and other contagious diseases are bred by the cemeteries? Cremation is the only safeguard for New Orleans, and Gen. Beauregard's will should have been faithfully carried out as an object lesson to all his friends in that city.

New Orleans and the State of Louisiana do not need any more medical legislation; crematories, clean streets, disinfectants, pure water and other accessories to health are far more to the point, and in keeping with the progressive spirit of the age. This is true, not only of the great "Creole State," but also of all other States. People do not need more legislation, but far less, with the less properly carried into effect. When legislators and the chief magistrates of the several States become once more the servants of the people, as they were in the early days of the Republic, instead of the masters of the people, as they are to-day; class legislation, tyrannical health boards, and kindred political evils, will disappear forever.

## Capital Crimes.

Connecticut, the land of steady habits, has her hands full in dealing with a large number of murderers, who have recently made way with several of her citizens. In the cases of six murders, the perpetrators are all foreigners, while the victims were native citizens. Legal purdars are closely following the conviction of the guilty parties, and the old doctrine "a life for a life" is being literally carried into effect.

Despite these execrable capital crimes appear to be on the increase in that State. We do not mean to imply that the good people in Connecticut are lapsing in morality, or that they are deliberately seeking the notoriety that has come to their State. The frequent recurrence of the crime of murder within the borders of Connecticut, clearly proves that capital punishment does not prevent capital crime. It is true that the murderers are foreigners, upon whom the moral effect of an execution may not be at once apparent; still, with the knowledge that death is certain if their crime is discovered, it should cause even the most ignorant among them to hesitate before the awful deed is done.

The *Harford Times* says: "The more hangings, the more murders." Such being the case, capital punishment should be abolished at the earliest practicable moment, and life-imprisonment, without possibility of pardon, substituted. Such a sentence, with the decree of hard labor added, will be only just to those who so wantonly trample upon the laws of the State. The proceeds of the labor of the life-prisoners, outside of the cost of board and clothes, should go to the families of their murdered victims. There were ten thousand five hundred homicides in the United States during the year ending Jan. 1, 1897. These figures are appalling, and show the American people that something must be done to stop these casualties. Capital punishment appears to be an incentive, rather than a deterrent to murder. Let it be abolished in all States by the might of law, and a check given to this awful crime.

All of these statistics are interesting and instructive. They prove that something more must be done for the negro than has been done since his emancipation. Dr. Briggs suggests a remedy in the proper training of negro girls—in giving them a practical education and in creating in them a hearty self-respect. If they can be made to feel the grave responsibilities resting upon them as the prospective mothers of the colored race, no doubt much good will be accomplished; but if education increases the negro's tendency to crime, will not the colored girl be affected by that tendency? Be this as it may, the negro question is and will be for a long time to come, a hard problem for our sociologists to solve.

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that Truth's rays may perforate every nook and cranny of thy nature. Then wilt thou be successful in thy quest for the avenue that leadeth unto the City of Perfection.

## Sectarian Chapels.

The management of one of the National Soldiers' Homes has recently consented to the erection of a Roman Catholic chapel upon the government land attached to the Home without cost, and has even donated six thousand dollars to the building fund. This same management recently refused permission to the Spiritualists to hold meetings upon the grounds, or in one of the halls upon the grounds. Our Orthodox and Catholic friends can have anything they ask for, even to an appropriation to help build a church or a chapel.

Attorney-General McKenna, although a Roman Catholic, recently decided that no religious sect had a right to erect chapels upon the government land at West Point.

Should not the grounds around the Soldiers' Homes be subject to the same law? If Spiritualists are to be denied the right to peaceably assemble for religious worship, then let all other denominations be treated in like manner. We are opposed to the erection of Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches and chapels upon government property in any section of the United States. We should protest against the erection of a Spiritualist chapel or temple just as vigorously, because we hold that it against the spirit of the Constitution of the United States, and an unjust discrimination in favor of a particular sect against the rights of the people as a whole. Is it not about time for the people to demand that no more chapels shall be erected upon the grounds of any Soldiers' Home? If they must be erected, then let them be sanctioned by law, and not built with money wrung from the people who are opposed to a State religion. A halt must be called to these constant encroachments upon the religious liberties of the people. Spiritualists of America, send in your protests, and emphasize them loudly by your votes. By so doing victory will surely perch upon the banner of Right and Justice.

## The State Spiritualist Association.

Tuesday, Jan. 4, will be one of the important days of the year in Massachusetts Spiritualism. The Annual Convention of the State Spiritualist Association will be held on that date, at which business of the greatest importance will be transacted. Resolutions setting forth the policy of the Association for the next year are to be formulated and adopted, while the election of officers will conclude the work of the day. These items alone, to say nothing of the platform and musical attractions, should induce every Spiritualist in this State to join the State Association, and to be present at the Convention in Paine Hall on the 4th inst.

The official call for the Convention appears in another column. The names of the speakers, mediums and musicians who have agreed to take part in the exercises, are given so far as they have been reported to the committee. Surely such an array of talent is an attraction equalled by no other denomination in this State. Every friend of the National Association, and of the cause of organization, mission work, and progressive Spiritualism, should at once join the State Association, and attend the Convention throughout the day. Now is the time to act; the call is for cooperative effort; united we stand, divided we fall. Spiritualists, let us attend the Convention throughout the day, and honor ourselves and the Cause by unanimously reflecting that gallant leader that modest teacher, that honest, conscientious servant of the Cause, Dr. Geo. A. Fuller, to the Presidency of the State Association. He has earned it by his long service in Spiritualism, by his fidelity to principle, and his innate love of truth and right.

The Antis in Michigan.

A State Association was organized at Jackson, Mich., last week as an auxiliary of the National Anti-Spiritualistic Association of the United States. Its organization was ushered in with a great deal of noise, and with but little brain power. Steps are being taken to organize similar associations in several of the Western States, and an active campaign against Spiritualism will be at once instituted.

"Whom the gods destroy, they first make mad"; that is true of the "Antis" is proved by their sudden anger against, and determined attacks upon Spiritualism. They will find, however, that like Sisyphus, they are engaged in useless labor. So it is with all enemies of Truth.

## Mrs. A. H. Luther.

We are in receipt of a telegram announcing the transition of this gifted worker to the higher life. She has earned the rest that has come to her, and is entitled to her reward. We shall refer to her life-work at greater length in a future issue of THE BANNER.

The assassination of actor William

**Education.**

BY L. L. WHITLOCK.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:  
In order that I may be more fully understood by those who read my article on the second page of the BANNER of Nov. 21, entitled "Ignorance," I will try to explain my ideas of education. I do not wish to be misunderstood. There are thousands of well educated people who are very ignorant in many ways; as illustration, a teacher of any science is not worthy of his position if ignorant of the subject he professes to teach, although he has graduated with honor from one of the best universities. As a student of Law, Medicine, or Theology he may be an ignorant man. If he desires to teach either of these sciences he must study them. So it is with psychic phenomena: the most ignorant medium may know that these effects exist, but not be able to give the first reason, theory, or law governing their existence.

It is an unfortunate fact that while Spiritualists should understand these laws better than any other class of persons, a large proportion know less of psychic laws than the people who now call themselves Theosophists, Mental Healers, Mesmerists, etc. Many of these have been Spiritualists and are mediums; they know that telepathy, thought transference, suggestion, and many other forms of soul and mental action do exist, and occasionally you find some person who is broad enough and knows enough to select the truth.

A large proportion of the phenomena which as Spiritualists we suppose come from "dead persons" as the world understands "death," do not show any evidence of so-called disembodied intelligence, but do often prove to be the opinions of the persons present, and still the "sensitive," "psychic subject," or "medium" cannot tell where their impressions come from.

Many of these communications are entirely unreliable, and often false, but the medium not intentionally dishonest. Then you say, "What shall we do?" Teach that ignorant idolaters should not preach in any pulpit that they do not understand and know. Let Spiritualism be taken out of its low condition and its grand phenomena, and the natural laws underlying it be taught systematically until all classes of intelligent people shall understand why spirit messages are deceiving, and not expect truth from all sources.

Let us remember that the low, vile, ignorant person has the same privileges to communicate in the next world he had here, and a greater desire to come back to these former earthly conditions, than have the high intellectual souls.

I was exceedingly pleased with your remarks at Cambridge, and at the Ladies' Industrial Society of Boston. It convinced me that the grand old BANNER had really taken on new life, and was ready to work for higher and better conditions in spirit phenomena, and a more perfect knowledge of the laws.

It is astonishing that some who hold high positions on the Spiritualistic platform do not recognize the importance of the psychic teachings of other associations, of a kindred nature, but ridicule a man or woman who has gone into the church to preach or into some more educational work; thousands of Spiritualists and mediums have, and are doing so, and will until we elevate Spiritualism by education.

**A Sign of the Times.**

(Special Dispatch to the Boston Herald.)

RICHMOND, VA., Dec. 16, 1897.—A bill has been prepared, and will at once be introduced in the Virginia Legislature, to restore the whipping post. This obsolete evidence of barbarity existed in this State for many years prior to 1881.

Its repeal was due to the fact that under its operations a young and pretty white girl was flogged for the theft of a pair of shoes. The story was published, and such a cry went up all over the State that the law was soon wiped off the statute books. It was intended for the benefit of the colored population, and came to ignominious and speedy death when a young white girl became its victim.

**Personal.**

Whereas my name has been suggested in connection with the Presidency of the Massachusetts State Spiritualists' Association, I wish to state to the public that I am not a candidate for said position, and cannot, under any circumstances, become such. I am in favor of the reelection of Dr. George A. Fuller as President, and earnestly request all of my friends to use their influence in his favor, and to cast their ballots for him on Tuesday, Jan. 4.

HARRISON D. BARRETT.

**Special Notice.**

We need numbers three and four of Volume 77 to complete the files of the BANNER OF LIGHT to date. If any reader of THE BANNER can supply the missing copies, the favor will be greatly appreciated.

BANNER OF LIGHT PUBLISHING CO.

"Imagination is but Memory's twin,

And Fancy safest flies where Fact hath been."

—T. Brown.

Let our fancies rest upon the rock of Fact, and no delusive mirage will ever lead the human soul into the dreary desert of useless speculation.

We learn with regret that Mrs. M. E. Cadwallader, well known as an earnest worker for Spiritualism in many sections of the country, is again suffering from ill health. We hope that the New Year will restore her to her old-time vigor.

Mrs. Florence White will inaugurate a series of spiritual meetings, to commence Jan. 2, at Arcade Hall, 7 Park Square, at 7:30. The Metropolitan Orchestra will give a concert of instrumental music the first hour, followed by speaking and spirit-evidences. All are welcome.

**Veterans' Union.**

At a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Veterans' Spiritualist Union, recently held, Dr. Charles W. Hidden was unanimously elected a special financial agent, to collect money for the Home Fund. Dr. Hidden has accepted the position, and has already entered upon the duties of his office.

**J. C. F. Grumbine in St. Louis.**

Mr. Grumbine holds his College of Psychological Sciences and Unfoldment at 2 and 8 P. M., at 2815 Olive street, Tuesdays and Fridays. Special courses of lectures on "How to Develop all Phases of Materialization and all Spiritual Gifts," Residence, 3230 Pine street.

**A Card from Miss Abby A. Judson.**

As I have not been able to read a newspaper for a year, and have no one to read to me, I have written no criticism on Mr. Allen's address at Onset. I hope some time to read it. The article from me alluded to in the last issue, spoke of what my spirit-friends did for me while I was at the hospital, and of what is being done and needs to be done for the restoration of my sight.

The most beautiful gardens of the soul are where the pure white blossom of human charity blooms sweetly. Look thou to all thy gardens, lest the weeds outcrowd the flowers—Spirit Ruth.

**The Massachusetts State Association of Spiritualists**

Will hold its annual meeting in Paine Hall, Appleton street, Tuesday, Jan. 4, at 10:30 A. M., 2:30 and 7:30 P. M.

The following speakers and mediums are expected to take part: Pres. Geo. A. Fuller, M. D.; Vice-President Carrie E. Loring, Director Mrs. H. S. Holcomb, Harrison D. Barrett, President National Spiritualists' Association, Miss Lizzie Harlow, J. B. Hatch, Albert P. Billett, Mrs. Nettie Holt Harding, Mrs. May S. Pepper, Rev. T. Ernest Allen, Mrs. Juliette Yew and many others.

Chairman of Committee.

**COLORADO.**

DENVER.—L. W. Van Dyke, Sec'y, writes:

The National Spiritualists' Association Auxiliary, in process of formation, held a social and dance, which was well attended, Saturday night, Dec. 18, and all was quite harmonious.

The workers, Mesdames Lyman and Bedell,

have moved from Vendome to Forrester's Hall for the winter, where they will hold three spiritual services on Sun days, two of them to be free and the other ten cents admission, to pay hall rent.

These two ladies are devoting their time to the work without a salary, and are doing all that can be done to awaken new interest in Spiritualism. Mr. Larzin speaks at each hour each Sunday afternoon, explaining the Bible from a spiritual standpoint; he also gives his services free for the good of those who come to hear him. A number of independent meetings are going on, among which is Prof. Walron's which is generally well attended.

Dr. Ewell has retired from the spiritual ranks, and is devoting his time to private healing at other points.

The outlook for the coming year is good for interest in educational and spiritual matters. According to the stars, next year will be an unusually good year in the business world, with an undercurrent of discontent operating among the laboring classes, but this irritation will assist in producing spirituality.

**CONNECTICUT.**

NORWICH.—Mrs. J. A. Chapman, Sec'y, says: Miss Lizzie Harlow, of Haydenville, Mass., is doing splendid work for our society, her engagement being for the months of December and January, speaking twice each Sunday, and aiding in every possible way all mid-week evening work. Her work is practical in its character, touching the needs of humanity with brilliant gems of thought.

Sunday P. M., Dec. 26, the subject treated was "Peace on Earth, Good will to Men," the theme which was resounding in the atmosphere from the many churches over the land. The speaker marked vividly the contrast between the spoken words and the present condition of our civilization. A touching appeal was made for the "Working Girl" of America, the address, as a whole, being deeply interesting in its appeal for a better and truer civilization.

In the evening Miss Harlow spoke under trance condition, in answer to questions given from persons in the audience, the subjects embodied, "The Anti-Spiritualist Movement," "Immortal Life," "Occupation of Spirits," etc.

**NEW JERSEY.**

NEWARK.—Mrs. Dorn writes: Sunday, Dec. 26, the First Church of Spiritual Progression held its meeting in hall corner of West Park and Broad streets. Mr. Fitchorne gave a short and instructive talk to a small but appreciative audience. Mr. Fitchorne is a new speaker, and gives promise of being one of the foremost workers in the spiritual field.

Mr. Dorn devoted about one hour to giving tests, so that altogether we had a very enjoyable meeting. Mr. Fitchorne will be with us again next Sunday, and Mr. Dorn will follow with psychometric readings.

**MAINE.**

PORLTAND.—M. A. Brackett, Sec'y, writes: Sunday, Dec. 26, at Orient Hall, in the afternoon we had a test séance by Mrs. Ridlon and Mrs. De Lewis. In the evening Dr. Paul delivered a fine lecture on "Spiritualism and the Bible," and it was listened to with marked attention. We hope to have Dr. Paul again in the near future.

THE SOCIETY OF SPIRITUAL SCIENCE OF ATLANTA, GA.—A correspondent writes—renewed its meetings in November under the ministrations of Mrs. L. F. Prior, who is a missionary sent out by the National Spiritualists' Association to the South. Great interest is manifested in Mrs. Prior's very interesting, talented and instructive lectures. Large and increasing audiences of our best people greet her every Sunday evening, and on Thursday evening at Knights of Pythias Hall, where she gives tests, which, from their accuracy, create an intense interest in her work. Not only in her ministerial duties is she giving entire satisfaction, but in her pastoral visits to the sick and those who are earnest seekers after the grand truths of Spiritualism, she is creating warm friends.

**Movements of Platform Lecturers.**

Notice under this heading, to insure insertion the same week, must reach this office by Monday's mail.

W. J. Colville delivered four lectures in Shelton, Oct. 12 and 13, and which were very largely attended by people from all over the neighborhood. The *Southern Sentinel*, the leading paper in that district, gave lengthy and highly commendatory reports of all the proceedings in its issues Dec. 16 and 17. The management of the affair reflected great credit on Mr. E. Staples, President of the Cosmopolitan Circle, under whose auspices the meetings were held.

W. S. Sprague and wife are at present doing missionary work for the New York State Spiritualist Association. Their services can be secured to organize and charter societies in any part of the State. They have May and June, and some dates for the coming season of 1898 still open for engagements. Address 965 Grove street, Meadville, Pa.

**For Sale at this Office:**

THE TWO WORLDS: A Journal devoted to Spiritualism, Occult Science, Ethics, Religion and Reform. Published weekly in Manchester, England. Single copy, 5 cents.

THE BIZARRE: NOTES AND QUERIES, with Answers in Departments of Literature. Monthly. Single copy, 10 cents.

PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL. Published weekly in San Diego, Cal. Single copy, 5 cents.

THE TRUTH SEEKER. Published weekly in New York. Single copy, 8 cents.

THE PATH. Monthly. Published in India. Single copy, 50 cents.

THE PATHFINDER. Monthly. Published in Cincinnati. Single copy, 5 cents.

THE PATH. A Monthly Magazine, devoted to Universal Brotherhood, Theosophy in America, and Aryan Philosophy. Single copy, 25 cents.

THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER. Published weekly at Chicago, Ill. Single copy, 5 cents.

and Navy Hall. Thursday evenings they are engaged to conduct meetings at 100 Franklin street. An opportunity offers Mrs. Hall visits the Liverpool, Ind., always the first word to say in that district. Mr. Hall is quite busy filling week-long engagements.

Mr. and Mrs. Hull's Cleveland address is 339 Prospect street, suite 7. Will correspondents bear in mind that all communications should be sent to Cleveland, and not Somerville, Mass. G. W. Kates and wife will serve the Troy, N. Y., Society, Jan. 10 and 23. They will accept week-night engagements in New York State until June 1. Address them 224 Monroe Avenue, Rochester, N. Y.

Mr. C. E. Earl, 1102 Girard street, Philadelphia, Pa., is open for engagements with local societies and camp-meetings at reasonable rates. Correspondence solicited.

Mr. J. Frank Baxter, having round out his three weeks of engagement at Fort Wayne, Ind., will be at home, 181 Washington street, Cheektowaga, N. Y., during the month of January. He will continue his services in lectures, singing and mediumship shall negotiate with him. He would be glad to fill engagements in New England or New York for that month, in part or in whole time. Address as above.

George A. Fuller, M. D., will lecture for the Arthur Hodges Spiritualist Society at Lynn, Mass., Jan. 2 and 3, at the Annual Convention of the Massachusetts State Association of Spiritualists, Paine Hall, Boston, Jan. 4; at Newburyport, Mass., Jan. 16; at Marlboro, Mass., Jan. 23, and at Bridgeport, Ct., Jan. 30. Has open to Camp Associations. Address 42 Alvarado Avenue, Worcester, Mass.

J. C. F. Grumbine has a full of July and first two weeks of August open to Camp Associations. Address 1720 Hawthorne Avenue (Station P), Chicago.

Mrs. Abbie N. Burnham will speak for the Waitham Society, Sunday evening, Jan. 2.

**Absolutely Free.**

DR. C. E. WATKINS'S GREAT OFFER.

Dr. Watkins will be at the Quincy House, Boston, on Jan. 15th, where all who are sick can consult with him absolutely free of charge. There will be no charges made for consultation, and no charge made for a diagnosis. If, after he has diagnosed your case, you are satisfied that he understands your disease, he will take your case, giving it his best care and attention. Weekly letters of advice and consultation free, only charging you for the actual cost of the medicine. This offer is only good for this visit, Jan. 15th. Your case will receive the same careful attention if you were paying him his regular fee. No doubt but what this offer will be gladly accepted by a great many of the sick of Boston, therefore all who should call as early in the day as possible. All desiring to go to his Health Home will please write to Jay Chapel, Sup't, Ayer, Mass.

Remember the day, Jan. 15th, 10 A. M. until 4 P. M.

**Donations**

IN AID OF THE BANNER OF LIGHT SPIRIT CIRCLE MEETINGS.

Amounts received since last acknowledgment:

Mrs. A. Glover, \$500; Mrs. E. S. Sleeper, \$300; L. A. C., 25 cents; L. D. Smith, \$100; C. S. Noyes, \$30; Mrs. O. M. North, \$100; L. M. C., 50 cents; M. Jackson, 50 cents; E. Terry, \$325; A. Zimmerman, \$25; Mrs. Seth Davenport, \$100; Wm Lincoln, \$300; Sarah E. Taylor, \$300; J. D. Low, \$300.

**Special Notice.**

The Spiritual Almanac, owing to printers' delay, will not be ready much before Jan. 1. All ordering in December can secure the Almanac for two cent stamps—four cents in stamps. After Jan. 1 price will be ten cents a copy. DR. C. E. WATKINS, Ayer, Mass.

**MEETINGS IN CHICAGO.**

First Society of Spiritual Unity meets at Irving Hall, corner of West Madison and South Paulina streets, entrance 107 South Paulina street. Services every Sunday 11 A. M., 25 and 75 P. M. Mrs. Mary C. Lynn, speaker. Harmonic Circle, III, South Paulina street, every Wednesday, 8 P. M.

The First Spiritual Temple Society meets at 720 Hawthorne Avenue (Almond Park) every evening. J. C. F. Grumbine is the permanent speaker. The School in Metaphysics, Psychology, Chiropractic, Physiotherapy and Psychopathy, meets at the same place during the week. Friends in Auburn Park, Englewood, Eggerton and in the city, as well as strangers, are cordially welcomed.

**MEETINGS IN PHILADELPHIA.**

The First Association of Spiritualists (founded 1892) meets at Warner Music Hall, Broad and Wallace streets. President, C. F. Keffer; Vice-President, Mrs. M. E. Cadwallader; Secretary, Frank H. Morris. Services at 2 and 7 P. M. Young People's Meeting, 1 P. M.

The Philadelphia Spiritualists' Society meets at Handel and Haydn Hall, 8th and Spring Garden streets, every Sunday at 1 P. M. Dr. Thomas M. Locke; Vice-President, Samuel Wheeler; Treasurer, Julia B. Locke; Secretary, Chas. L. Geffner, 1325 S. 15th street.

**For Sale at this Office:**

THE TWO WORLDS: A Journal devoted to Spiritualism, Occult Science, Ethics, Religion and Reform. Published weekly in Manchester, England. Single copy, 5 cents.

THE BIZARRE: NOTES AND QUERIES, with Answers in Departments of Literature. Monthly. Single copy, 10 cents.

THE PATH. A Monthly Magazine, devoted to Universal Brotherhood, Theosophy in America, and Aryan Philosophy. Single copy, 25 cents.

THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER. Published weekly at Chicago, Ill. Single copy, 5 cents.

THE TRUTH SEEKER. Published weekly in New York. Single copy, 8 cents.

THE PATHFINDER. Monthly. Published in India. Single copy, 50 cents.

THE PATH. A Monthly Magazine, published in Cincinnati. Single copy, 5 cents.

THE PATH. A Monthly Magazine, published in New York. Single copy, 25 cents.

**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 particularly understood in this connection, that we do not indicate the 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 are ready to receive no criticism from the spirits in these columns, as far as comfort 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 or spirit-friends on this page, from time to time, will verify them by personally informing us of the fact.

**SPIRIT-MESSAGES,**  
GIVEN THROUGH THE TRANCE MEDIUMSHIP OF

MRS. JENNIE K. D. CONANT.

Report of Séance held Nov. 19, 1867.

**Spirit Invocation.**

Spirit Divine, may we come to thee in sympathy and love to receive thy blessings in the baptism of justice and wisdom; for while we seek for light and knowledge we must know how it is given unto us before we seek for more. We rejoice in thy overruling power, that can penetrate all life through all matter, that knoweth the heart and can see our motives and carry out our desires. May we feel such trust this morning, and may the light so shine that we can glorify the angels who guide us.

As we open up our circle-room this morning, may each spirit, as it takes control, come in sympathy with those in the mundane sphere, and realize what their words will be to those who receive them, for we know it is not what is spoken, but the way in which it is spoken that leaves its imprint.

Bless us this morning as thou seest we need it; assist each one according to his requirements, and we know that thy name shall live throughout eternity. Amen.

**Mary J. Willis.**

Good-morning. I am pleased to have this privilege of returning again to earth-spheres, and becoming for the time being familiar with the past conditions. It's hard work sometimes to prove all recollections and memory, but there is one thing we know that never fails us, and that is our love for those we have left behind. I am interested in life and progress; I was interested while I was here, but recognize that from the spirit-spheres there are many, many things that the mortals do not understand. With all the education, with all the literature, and with all that has been written and talked about, yet how little people know of pure spirituality, the pure religious conception of life. It seems to me there is so much to be eradicated, so much to be cleansed, that mere words fail to express the desire we have to assist others. So many times I have heard it said, if the spirits can see thus and so, if they know and can prevent, why do they allow so many terrible things to occur, and why do they not prevent their friends here from being led into temptation? I have not returned to express a great deal as far as myself is concerned, but my desires for those that I have left in earth-life, those that have been near and dear to me, of my own family, for I left a dear companion behind me, and those that were very close to me by both the laws of relationship, and also of acquaintance, that I should like to come in touch with. I feel they do not all believe in Spiritualism, and I notice if there ever comes up a flaw in the progress of Spiritualism, they are very apt to see the flaw and not the genuine.

My name is Mary J. Willis. My home will be located specially in Washington, D. C., although I have been out of the body for several years, and those that I seek now to communicate with will be found specially in New York. Robert J. Marston will recognize me, and I wish to say to him and others that we are united in spirit, if we were separated in death.

**Elizabeth Marston.**

Well, I would like to come in, too, this morning, and send out a few lines to the dear ones in earth-life, although it has not been so very long since I was called home to the higher life. Although the body was very, very weak, yet I was sustained many years in the form by the assistance of spirit power, and I wish my dear children, especially the ones who were so kind to me in the last days of my earthly career, to know that I draw nigh unto them; and say to them that I understand them even more now than I did while in the body.

I have met my dear companion in spirit, and the dear mother and father, and so many of the loved ones that had gone on before. I have been very much interested in the Banner Circles, and thought so many times how beautiful it would be to send a few words through your valuable paper, because it reaches so many firesides where spirits do not have an opportunity to manifest; but there are many who will read a paper, or will take it to their own homes and secretly study it, and yet openly do not dare admit it; so I have told them that if I ever could I would manifest through these public circles, and I am here this morning. My husband joins with me and all the loved ones in sending loving messages to all those in earth-life, saying to them, be of good cheer, for we have not left you, neither have we gone away. You can put me down as Elizabeth Marston. My husband's name was John Marston, and we are both together. You will find my home, where I shall be remembered, in Portland, Me. Although I shall be recognized in other parts of the State, there is where I wish my message to go especially.

**Andrew Phillips.**

Well, I think that I would like to send out a letter through your general post-office, but I hardly know what to say, because I do not know any one's special address, for those that were left in earth-life move around and change so that it seems hard to keep run of them, even when in the body, and I think it is just as hard after one gets out of the body. While in earth-life I was not one of those persons that bothered my relatives very much. I liked to mind my own business and attend to my own affairs, and I had about all I could at-

tempt to. I was not very religious, and I was not what you would call a Spiritualist, but it seems that I have been drawn into the atmosphere of those that were connected with me in life, that have lately become interested somewhat in Spiritualism, and although our lives were not the happiest while in earth-life, I think at the same time we sometimes are both to blame, and I want to return to say that I want all past grievances, if any such exist, thrown aside.

I want Adeline to know that as she studies the spiritual philosophy she will find that many times we are brought into each other's lives for a purpose, and when that purpose is worn out, like a garment, we are apt to set it aside for something new. I suppose those in earth-life cannot see that, but we can in spirit, and that is my mission this morning to those that love me—for I know I am not forgotten. My old mother, now almost eighty years old, will soon join me in spirit, and I feel that she will be thankful to hear that I have met my reward in spirit. There are a few things I would like to undo; but I died as I believed, that if there was such a thing as a God, and that God was just, he knew my heart, and I never intended to hurt anybody, I never intended to rob anybody, but I had a peculiar roving nature; I would not be held down by any one, so for that reason I find myself in spirit a good many times the same way.

I want them all to know that I am here this morning, and I may make myself known again if they will open up the avenue. Say that father is with me in spirit, and so is sister Susie; but there are those in earth-life we want to reach. Just say that Andrew Phillips is here. While my old home is still in Portland, Me., my own home was in Philadelphia, Pa. That is where Adeline is, but I left the body in West Virginia. If they feel like replying to me I should like them to open up the avenue, and I will try and do more.

**Pembroke S. Booth.**

Well, it seems hard to get control of this medium this morning, but I have been awfully anxious to come in for a long time to let those in earth-life know that the knowledge of Spiritualism that I had while in the body is a living truth. I wander around and am waited many times around those that will remember me in times gone by, although I feel like a stranger in Boston.

I wish to say to the editor of this paper, and to every true soldier of the Cause, stand for right; it makes no difference who is against you or who is for you. The right will always predominate, and we have seen it through the whole existence of the earthly planet, truth has always been assaulted. They never assault error, but error assaults truth, and I wish to say to every one that they must stand on their own identity, on their own judgment, and have the moral courage to stand through all circumstances and all conditions, on the true convictions of what you know yourself. So, I say, go on; the time has come that needs a stirring. Nature, in its course of life, cannot always be calm. It is necessary for us to have the storms and the destruction.

There are many with me this morning, and it seems that the spirit-world is aroused to the consciousness of what is needed, and we are cooperating with those that will be true to themselves, true to the Cause, and true to the consciousness of the spirit return, knowing that there are as many evil spirits as there are good ones, knowing that we have many earth-bound spirits that are perfectly willing, and would prefer, if anything, to come in contact with our sensitivities, and make them, as it were, almost like a mirror, reflecting their desires and lives.

I think many have not forgotten me, and you can put me down as Pembroke S. Booth. My home is in Wilson, Arkansas. Perhaps they will remember me, but I shall also be remembered in Delaware, N. Y. I have more in spirit-life than I have in the mortal, as far as my relatives are concerned.

**Alice Milton.**

I would like to come in, my lady, this morning. There are many people standing around, who want an opportunity; but the good chairman said that I might come in, and send out a few words of comfort and consolation to papa and mamma, because both papa and mamma are in earth-life, and my mamma sometimes feels that—oh! she feels as if she would like to come in contact with the spirit so much; and I am awfully anxious, too, but she doesn't know why. Why, we stand right around her, and then she does not know; she cannot seem to be sure that it is the spirit, and she thinks it is her own imagination; and so she cries and takes on.

I have not been out of the body so very long, although some time has elapsed; but I do not know how long, because we don't reckon days and hours and weeks in the spirit-life. Our time is all alike except when we are occupied, and I want to say that I am here this morning, and so is Willie. He has been in spirit-life longer than I have. Grandmother Chase is also with me, and so is Grandma Milton; that is both my grandma's, and we are having an awfully good time.

My father's name is William Milton; mamma's is Emma, and they live in the big city of New York, and I want them to know that I have come back. Aunt Rebecca takes your paper, and she has told me that if I would come and send a letter, she would send it to mamma; and I will be so pleased. I passed away with diphtheria, so I could not talk well, and it makes my head feel just like it did then, when I come to talk through this woman, but Grammy thought that mamma would like better if I could come in, and not the older ones; so just say Alice Milton was here this morning, and I think that will do.

**Jennie Staples.**

Good-morning. We all become little children when we are in the spirit; we all have to humble ourselves to that beautiful divine law that makes us all equal. Years of experience have taught us many things, but I could not help feeling this morning, as the spirit that preceded me wanted to send a few words of comfort and consolation in her childish way, that I would like to become like unto that child, not that I feel my experiences in earth-life were a disadvantage to me; but it seems when we are tried by the environments of life—and there are so many conditions that the poor mortal has no control over; there are so many things we have to keep still and bear—that it really crushes the true spirit, and I believe that every mortal is more or less held down by ruts and conditions we allow ourselves to be molded in; and by that the spirit, in one sense of the word, in its innocence, in

its truthfulness, in its humbleness, is actually crowded out.

But I returned this morning to give consolation to those that are still struggling with the environments of earth: for oh! how little one knows of the other while clothed with materiality. We flatter ourselves as husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, friends and foes, that we know each other; but how seldom we really get acquainted with each other, so as to know how to assist, and to know what we should do under all emergencies. When we throw the mortal off, and the scales fall from our eyes, and we behold things as they are, it is like the mirror of old, we can see ourselves as James did in the looking glass. But this morning I wish to return to my friends in Worcester, where I shall be well known, and where I feel I was some assistance perhaps to others, as others were of assistance to me. I also was conscious of the spirit-return. If it had not been for the power of the spirit, I doubt if I could have sustained the physical as long as I did; but I do not feel this morning like giving a long communication, for I love to meet with those that are familiar with me. I think that I am missed in the home, although those of my own are conscious of the spirit around; but they are like all mortals, the ears are oftentimes dulled to the spirit expression, and the eyes are still dimmed to the spirit-body, and what we can see, feel and handle externally is missed. I thought I would send a few words through your valuable paper, and may God and the angels bless you, and sustain you in every move of good that the workers of your valuable paper give to the world.

Just say that Jennie Staples is here, and I know I shall not be forgotten by the dear ones, that I promised to reach through THE BANNER, if I could.

**Messages to be Published.**

Nov. 28.—Agnes E. Prescott; William P. Blinn; George Bronson; Mary Elizabeth Harris; William H. Hale; Benjamin T. Johnson.

Dec. 4.—Harriet Porter Wise; Louis H. Purnell; Joseph McCane; Edwin Chamberlain; Edith Jackson; Abram L. Thompson.

Dec. 10.—Oliver Fairchild; Jeremiah Elghamit; William Babcock; Emma E. Waite; Alice Macomber; Stephen L. Marston.

Dec. 17.—Anna Adams; William Wells; William Doten; Anna D. Doten; Emma Dryer; Rebecca L. Brown.

Dec. 24.—William H. Prince; Edward Lewis; Nathaniel Greeley; John Oist; Annie W. Clark; Rev. Edmund W. Wilson.

**The Merit of Suffering.**

BY SILAS BOARDMAN.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—II. Cor. iv: 17.

It is a popular thought that any suffering, experienced in the faithful performance of duty, is meritorious in exact ratio to the importance of the duty and the degree of suffering. It is an orthodox idea that such suffering will eventuate in a commensurate and eternal recompence. There are two sides to this question—the right and the wrong. If it is right that our entire future of joy shall be enhanced by each moment of trial here, then we may be assured that the right will prevail. If it is wrong to expect that our momentary suffering shall occasion our transfer from the lowly estate of poorly-developed animal to the glorious heritage or archangel, then indeed we are expecting too much. And it seems to me that in such questions as this our highest behoof is in avoiding the wrong and choosing the right. From our finite standpoint, with our limited powers of endurance and ability to understand, a year or a day of suffering seems very properly offset by an eternity of ineffable glory.

But let us look at this matter impartially, in the light of reason. We are told that "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." Admitting the possibility of this, if we reason with our eyes open we must agree that it is only the disobedient who are punished, and the punishment is nothing more nor less than the logical result of the disobedience. Those who are true and faithful and obedient cannot be punished, as punishment implies disobedience; yet they may be afflicted, as were Socrates, Jesus, Bruno, Hypatia and Servetus; and if Paul was really inspired, it is to such affliction that he refers in our text. But before pronouncing a final verdict on this, let us look the ground over carefully. You and I do not believe that nature is confined to a minute, paradoxical corner of the universe; but that all existence, all of the universe, everything that is, and nature, are one and the same thing. In vegetation we stir the soil and apply the fertilizer, and the plant smiles with an accelerated growth. This illustrates that true cultivation produces pleasure, and not pain. But when the timely shower is withheld, and the sun-rays are unimpeded, the plant withers with the "light affliction, which is but for a moment." It dries up, and the eternal glory of that plant is possibly a freak of the imagination. There may be a very proper limit to the analogy of the plant, yet it is highly probable that the similitude, so far as it may go, is faithful and true. Man, as well as the plant, is a product of Nature; and, while adhering to Nature's laws of culture, be goes forward according to the laws of progress, and is happy.

Remember there are exceptions to all general rules; and, in the case we are considering, cyclones and earthquakes may be among the exceptions that transcend human responsibility. I will not urge in this that the exception proves the rule. But it will be conceded that the vast majority of suffering in the world is traceable directly to our own negligence or lack of wisdom. You and I need go beyond our own community for proof of this. People wink at the widespread perpetual defiance of God's laws, and, in the moment of disaster, acquire a paroxysm of piety which they cannot understand; and, with a meanness which eclipses the imagination of David Crockett, who thought of the meanest things that he had ever done till he was able to crawl into a hollow log and escape from the Indians by whom he was surrounded; they say: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." The meanness is in accusing God of what they do themselves, and then to cap the climax by promising themselves an eternal reward.

I had proceeded thus far before the arrival of the BANNER OF LIGHT of Aug. 7, containing the excellent editorial on The Ministry of Pain, and for a moment I was nervous. But, on second thought, I venture to assume that the writer of that editorial agrees with me that the highest harmony does not imply the fatal monotony that we must be all alike. And our themes are certainly not identical. The daily lessons that we take from The Ministry of Pain are proof to each one of us that pain is a real benefice, which cannot be eliminated from the universal code until the human race attains to a stage of development beyond our present ability to comprehend. And the only merit of pain lies in the fact of its

being an emphatic warning against the error that caused it. My present topic is rather the merit and necessity of suffering, which I deny. Pain and suffering of all kinds are the result of transgression or the infringement of divine law. This is wrong-doing. Is there any merit in wrong-doing? Of course our very blindness and profligacy to error prove and accentuate the necessity of pain as the only available means of turning our wayward feet into the legitimate path of progression.

But pain as an abstract entity has no such application. We know that the fertile soil and the favoring sunshine and shower are the conditions of prosperity for the growing plant; and for every day passed without these conditions the plant suffers a check in its growth that in the same degree will be exemplified in the fruitage. It loses time that cannot be recovered. The moment that is lost is lost forever. Do you think that Nature has a code of inexorable laws for her vegetable kingdom that verges into a sort of slipshod system of jumbled anarchy and law when applied to humanity?

We are all sufferers, more or less, and it is very difficult for us to see, through the colored glasses that we wear, that the suffering is the logical result of our own errors, and in our egotism we grasp at the hope that the present suffering is a logical as well as providential guaranty of future glory.

It seems to me that here we should hesitate; that we should wait a little before forming the conclusion that there is a particle of merit in suffering. It is not legitimate. It regards our growth. And I cannot understand that it is an indispensable means of sympathy. This latter idea may be weighed in the balance of contrast. Suffering, as a rule, is simply the penalty of wrong-doing. And the rule has no exceptions under the explanation that all suffering is due to somebody's wrong doing. Now, under the philosophy that there is merit in suffering, and that it is necessary, per se, we are justified in doing wrong for the sake of the reward which follows suffering; and the same reasoning which justifies the most trivial error would lead us boldly into the world's entire calendar of crime, in view of the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

There is, no doubt, recompense for martyrdom and for suffering; but, if possible, give me rather the reward of one who is continually seeking to mitigate the suffering in the world—the reward of doing my duty rather than the prospective glory consequent upon the logical results of my mistakes.

I deny the merit of suffering. As to the question of sympathy, one with large benevolence will exemplify a spirit of good will toward everybody, and of special helpfulness toward the needy. If he lack the principle the lessons of experience may do him good, yet a beautiful example will do him more good. The suffering and self-denial of Jesus did not benefit him, but their example have not ceased to shed a lustre of glory about his pathway, and to embalm his name in the memory of mankind as the friend of publicans and sinners. It is difficult to place the requisite limit to this essay. It appears easy to multiply words without knowledge, and a semblance of logic without reason. There is nothing said here for the sake of dispute. Yet I delight in argument on subjects of importance, when it is accompanied with a spirit of candor, and fairness and patience. I will patiently listen to the most illogical of my opponents in the full expression of his views if he will concede to me a corresponding privilege; and I think any other spirit is not progressive. But it is problematical as to whether this idea is always applicable in journalism. As I understand, an editor has a certain constituency, whose wishes and rights must be consulted.

This idea of the merit of suffering is as old as history, and is no doubt in a measure the outgrowth of that egotistic principle in human nature which is unable to plead guilty to all the error that is in the world, without devising a complete offset of eternal glory. Well, if there is merit in suffering, then it must be wrong to stop it, and the philanthropist is an enemy to be suppressed—and it is time for me to stop—and leave the summing up to Moses Hull's logic, or to Mr. Barrett's casting vote. Yet I cannot help giving expression to the earnest, wish that we may all, more and more, learn and exemplify lessons of good will and love toward the universal human family; and prove our sincerity by helping as we can, and seeking to avoid wrong rather than suffering, and resolving to suffer privation and sorrow rather than enjoy the acme of our hope at the expense of another.

**Oregon.**

MCMINNVILLE.—Mrs. J. M. Young writes: "George P. Colby, the well-known lecturer, has been with us ten days, and delivered four lectures, which were highly appreciated by all. Many in the audience were church members, one of the number being a minister of the Christian Church, who is most liberal and advanced in his views. All were delighted with the music rendered by Mr. Morrow, who accompanies Mr. Colby on his lecture tour. They were entertained at the hospitable homes of Mrs. B. F. Fuller and Mr. and Mrs. D. A. Wallace, who are energetic Spiritualists, ever anxious that others may be awakened to its truth."

Spiritualism is the only religious sect or denomination in America that has not some educational institution, whose diploma is necessary to give character and confidence to those who attempt to promulgate its theories and its principles. If we wait for private individuals or State organizations to establish these schools, it will be a long time, I am thinking, before we shall be able to send into the field a sufficient number of qualified teachers or missionaries to secure the harvest that is now ripening.

**"AND THE ANGEL OF THE LORD SAID WRITE."**

Written by Dr. A. W. Wilder, 288 Dudley street, on the Sixth Anniversary of Mrs. M. A. Wilkins' Public Work.

With willing hand and ready pen  
I waiting hear that voice again  
Whispering in tones so soft and clear,  
Bear ye these words to our sister dear.

Plant ye your banner high,  
That none may pass it by,  
And see it not.

To you the task is given  
To teach the way to heaven;  
Then faithful be.

And as yo freely give,  
Freely shall yo receive  
Of treasures rare.

Make Truth thy beacon light  
For principle and right  
To do and dare.

Heed not the look of scorn,  
Nor taunting critics thorn—  
They cannot harm.

Though darksome grows the night,  
And almost sinks from sight  
Hope's radiant star,

The clouds will soon dispel;  
The welcome—all is well—  
You soon shall hear.

And in the coming years  
No more shall bitter tears  
Have cause to flow.

For gathering round with hand in hand,  
Behold a true and noble band  
Sent bither by the king's command,

To guide, to aid, protect and bless,  
To crown you with well-earned success  
For labor done.

And as you near life's eventide,  
May love within your heart abide,  
Peace in your soul. Amen.

Boston, Dec. 5, 1897.

**"Many Men, Many Minds."**

BY EDWIN WILDER.

In the agitation of thought is the beginning of wisdom."

Mr. Editor, I wish to offer my words of congratulation and commendation on the success of your effort to reach the consensus of opinions held by the educated, cultured and leading minds and lights found in the spiritual ranks; the opinion of individuals who have done honored and noble work for the Cause in the séance-room and on the rostrum; honored work as teachers and writers concerning the philosophy of spirit-communication and manifestation; honored work as healers and alleviators of mental and physical suffering and disease; honored work as promoters of pure morals and all aids to right living and the ideal life.

I have read with intense interest all of the several articles composing the Symposium published in THE BANNER of Dec. 11, and in doing so I ask myself if, with the diversity of thoughts and opinions held, as expressed, by those most able thinkers and writers, individuals of long years of experience—as workers and co laborers in the Cause—if they are not a unit in opinion, or largely in accord and agreement with some, so-called, essentials needful to the promulgation, growth and spread—as some say, the perpetuity, of Spiritualism—but, in the name of all that is great and good, can we reasonably expect any association, whether State or National, to be able to formulate and put into successful operation and practice the suggestions of Rev. T. E. Allen, and others who are more or less in agreement with him?

A strong diversity of thought and opinions is held all the way along in the ranks of Spiritualism from the time of those who commenced to investigate its phenomena, years before there was a platform, or press, to advocate it, down to the most recent convert and public speaker, as how best to work and cooperate with ex-carnate spirits in the promulgation of the truths and the possibilities of spirit communication and manifestation.

The spirit world was able to introduce itself to the attention of mankind by the aid of little children, and has thus far held the reins and managed to quicken into life a large following in all of the nations of the earth.

I have noticed thus far in their workings they have called no one person to become the King, Pope or grand Dictator in their Cause. Neither has any one been able yet to assume and maintain the position of principal spokesman, or leader, but for a day, I fully believe they are quite as able to select their agents for work, and to continue it, without man's especial intervention, as they were to inaugurate it and continue it, in spite of the opposition of the Christian Church and ignorance, down to the present hour.

While I enjoy and am in accord with parts of the suggestions made by all of the several writers to the symposium, let no one take offense if I say that, for myself, the short, clear, concise, direct statements made by Mrs. Milton Rathbun in her article are most to my liking and mind. It seems to me she has placed the whole matter in a "nutshell." I wish I could more fully accent my approval of the answer she returned to your request. If we read carefully and thoughtfully the whole symposium, can we come to any other conclusion than when "Doctors disagree, who shall decide?"

Talk about an investigating committee, and the testing of mediums, the endorsing or condemning of this one or that one, as being genuine or otherwise! Where is to be found an absolute standard for such a purpose? Suppose your committee placed a medium, or one so-called, under the most exact test conditions to-day, and he passed the ordeal without blemish, without failure. You endorse him as being above suspicion, as genuine, and on the morrow he gives a séance, and for the sake of an additional dollar, or larger reputation, he concludes to volunteer a little assistance, of what value is your certificate? Can we have any positive assurance that once honest means always honest? So long as our mediums charge one, two, three, and more dollars for an hour's sitting, we may rest assured the love for gain, or the means for obtaining a livelihood with out drudgery, will lead many a one to simulate美德。

To my mind the best known process in this case is for us one and all to keep clean and free from weeds our own gardens, guard well our own individual lives and actions, and we shall find but little time or occasion to serve on "investigating committees," and the black-listing of our fellowmen.

Mr. Editor, as President of the National Spiritualists' Association, please don't lend your aid to the converting of it into a laundry for the washing of soiled linen. Let the "Antis" do that. Messrs. Covert and Hageman, with the Christian church syndicate as an annex, are the best known persons to engage in the laundry business, and their own family will furnish an ample and full supply of dirty clothes.

Scavengers and buzzards have their place and need in this world, but Spiritualists do not share a like in the honors with them.

**For Over Fifty Years**

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

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I WILL send a free positive cure for all female diseases peculiar to our sex. A simple home treatment, a common-sense remedy that never fails. FREE, with valuable service. MRS. L. HUDNUT, 50 Park Bend, Ind.

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**THE OPIUM AND MORPHINE HABIT.**

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O. W. F. SNYDER, M. D., 308 McVicker's Theater, Chicago, Ill.

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Dec. 16.

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symptoms rapidly disappear, and in many cases two-thirds of all symptoms are removed.

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OR PSYCHOMETRIC DELINEATION,

BY MRS. A. BEVEREANOE. Character readings clear and accurate. Examinations and prescriptions for the sick and afflicted. Nature's own remedies suggested. Health restored in every case where there is sufficient vitality upon which to base a diagnosis. Adaptation to harmony in the marriage relation and home life. Adaptation between those intending marriage. Helpful advice and considerations suggested upon business, spiritual development, mental improvement, and future success.

Price 25c, postpaid, for four 2-cent stamps; full reading, \$2.00. Post-office stamp. Address, 120am Mainstreet, White Water, Walworth Co., Wis. May 1.

**J. S. LOUCKS, M. D.**

SEND your name, age, sex, lock of hair, and 8 cents in

Stamps, and we will give a correct diagnosis of your disease free. J. S. LOUCKS, M. D., Shirley Center, Mass. Nov. 20.

**ASTONISHING OFFER.**

SEND three 2-cent stamps, lock of hair, name, age, sex, one leading symptom, and your disease will be diagnosed free by spirit-power. MRS. DR. DOBSON-BARKER, San Jose, Cal.

Jan. 1.

**OPIUM**

and Whiskey Habits Curred. Writr. B. M. WOODLIE, M. D., Atlanta, Ga. 26120am Dec. 18.

**A. PROCTOR,**

MAGNETIC and Electric Physician, Park Hotel, Attleboro, Mass., Rooms 12 and 13. Nov. 22.

**DR. MACK'S**

BENZOIN EMULSION

Cures Influenza, Coughs, Colds, Bronchitis, Asthma, Sore Throat, Hoarseness, Loss of Voice, Incipient Consumption, Shortness of Breath, Weakness of the Lungs, and Diseases of the Respiratory Organs.

CLERGYMEN, PUBLIC SPEAKERS, VOCALISTS, ETC.

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DR. M. A. HALE, M. D., 120am Nov. 11, 1897.

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It is a progressive, reformative, popular, vigorous, outspoken, and ahead of the times. It is a real force in the control of financial conditions, giving rules to secure business success by mental influence.

CHAS. CLOSE, 124 Birch Street, Bangor, Me. (B.L.) Nov. 20.

**LIGHT**

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Seventy-Eighth Year, 1898.

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Prophecy and Weather Guide.

The Farmer's Every-Day Guide.

Raphael's Breeding Table.

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Symbols, Planets, Moon, Stars, etc.

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Royal Tables, etc.

Coastal Almanac.

Ready Reckoner and Wages Table, etc.

Farmers and Gardeners' Tables.

Birds and Weather Tables, etc.

Almanac for Farmers.

Almanac for Fishermen.

**Banner of Light.**

BOSTON, SATURDAY, JANUARY 1, 1888.

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