

# RELIGIO PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL

HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY

DEVOTED TO THE ARTS, SCIENCES, LITERATURE, SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY, ROMANCE AND GENERAL REFORM.

Truth wears no mask, bats at no human shrine, seeks neither place nor applause: she only asks a hearing.

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## FANCIES AND FALLACIES ABOUT GOD.

A Discourse Delivered Before the Free Religious Society of Chicago.

BY R. E. UNDERWOOD.

"How knowest thou aught of God,  
Of his favor or his wrath?  
Can the little fish tell what the lion thinks  
Or map out the eagle's path?  
"For aught that my eye can discern  
Your God is what you think good,  
Yourself flashed in the glass  
When the light pours on its flood.  
"When the fish swims out of the water,  
When the bird soars out of the line,  
Man's thought may transcend man's knowledge  
And your God be no reflex of you."

It is the fashion at the present time, says John Stuart Mill, to disparage negative logic, that which points out weaknesses in theory or error in practice without establishing positive proofs. Such negative criticism would be poor enough as an ultimate result; but as a means to attaining any positive knowledge or conviction worthy of the name it cannot be valued too highly, and until people are again systematically trained to it, there will be few great thinkers, and a low average of intellect in any but the mathematical and physical departments of speculation.—Mill, on Liberty, page 87.

No subject, by reason of its sacredness, can claim exemption from criticism. "Question with boldness even the existence of a God," wrote Jefferson to a friend, "for if there be one he must more approve of the homage of reason than that of blindfolded fear." In this spirit I purpose to examine some of the positions and reasonings of theologians regarding God, indicating what I consider their weaknesses and inconsistencies, without attempting to present any positive views as to the character and attributes, or even the existence of Deity.

Theology teaches that there was a time when God alone existed. Not a sun, nor a planet, not a satellite revolved through all the measureless fields of space. Possessed of infinite power, able by a dictatorial word to summon a universe into existence and to make it teem with life, and to make that life joyful beyond the power of man to describe or imagine, yet as the ages rolled by he chose to remain in the solitude of his own thoughts, the sole denizen of illimitable space. "At length, after a period that can be spoken of only as beginningless, he arose from his mastery inactivity, and by a magic fiat, exercising for the first time his splendid powers, 'created the heavens and the earth.'" According to the theological view which makes God the author of everything save himself, there was a past eternity—a time extending into the past infinitely from the moment of the first creative effort—in which there was nothing of an objective character to claim the attention of Jehovah; neither the heavens nor the earth; neither angels to require his care, nor devils to plot against him, nor men to provoke him to wrath. One can not help wondering why so many millions, billions, trillions of ages were allowed to pass without one gleam of life, one ray of light, or one particle of matter throughout all the vast realms of space.

And how can we reconcile this fancy—for it deserves no better name—with the unchangeable ableness which is ascribed to God? A greater charge than this view supposes, it is hardly possible to conceive. It implies that at a certain time, God for the first time, assumed a new character—the character of a creator and governor of worlds, that he exercised for the first time his noble powers, of which he had never before been practically conscious.

Again, such a creation implies dissatisfaction with his previous condition. His own nature, it would seem, was insufficient to render him perfectly contented. New desires are inconsistent with perfect happiness. Deity desired a universe. Had he been all-sufficient to his own happiness there could have been no motive to impel him to call worlds into existence. If he created a universe because he felt a want, or experienced a desire to see worlds and sentient beings, and the creation afforded gratification of that want or desire, it must have been an addition to his happiness. But this implies that his happiness was incomplete before the joyful moment of the creation; that moment which witnessed the transformation of nonentity into countless millions of revolving worlds, beautiful in brilliancy and teeming with living beings. Are theologians willing to accept the conclusion?

Theologians generally still hold to the theory of an absolute creation of everything from nothing. Yet they are unable to offer even the shadow of an argument in favor of their assumption. The sum total of matter has never—so far as we know—been increased or diminished to the extent of even an atom, and as Sir William Hamilton so forcibly shows, an absolute creation is not even conceivable by the human mind. The assumption that mind can or ever did create matter, has no possible foundation, for neither experience nor analogy can be adduced in its favor. "All things," says the devotee, "are possible with God." Supposing this to be the case, there is no reason to believe that the matter which now exists was ever brought from nonentity. But when it is said "all things are possible with God," the statement should be qualified somewhat. Two acts which involve an absolute contradiction can not be performed. We may repeat the question which the little boy asked his Sunday school teacher, "Can God make a three-year-old out of a minute?" Certainly not. And he who says his universe was made from nothing and to relieve himself of the la-

bor of giving a reason for his belief, declares "all things are possible with God," proves only that his reason is in bondage to his theology. *Et nihil nisi fit* was taught as a maxim by the profoundest sages of antiquity and it commends itself to the unperverted mind to-day.

God, we are told, is everywhere; no more bounded in space than limited in time. Yet he is a personal being. How a personal being which it seems to us must necessarily be an individual existence, distinct from all other objects, circumscribed, and therefore limited, having a "centre," as Paley says, "in which perceptions unite and from which volitions flow," can at the same time be an omnipresent being, is to our unregenerate mind not apparent. It seems to us that consistency demands theology give up either the personality of God, the absence of which surely implies the absence of intelligence or the omnipresence of God, the surrender of which involves the surrender of his infinity. If he is not personal, how can he possess a distinct individual intelligence and character? If he is personal, is he not necessarily limited? "Personality is a selfhood," says Strauss, "fenced in against outsiders." The difficulty cannot be avoided by making a distinction between human and divine personality. "The word must have the same meaning," as Morton observes, "whether used of man, or angel, or divinity. To deny human personality to God, or personality like that of man, is to deny a personal God." Personality is necessarily circumscribed, limited, and therefore, finite. Emerson characterizes belief in a personal God as a "theological cramp."

Yet this is the only conception of Deity that possesses any significance for the devotee, or that can, in the present intellectual condition of man, be made the basis of religious worship. Who cares for the God of Fichte? An anthropomorphic being—one that thinks, reasons, feels and suffers, alone can satisfy the great mass of religionists. When the mind begins to question whether God is a personal being, it is on the way to Atheism and has but little need of a God to worship.

Theology teaches the existence of a being of infinite power and infinite benevolence. But the difficulty which has glared into, and tortured the mind of the theologian in all ages, still presents itself, like some frightful vision of the night to disturb the happy dreams of the Theist to say, Why does evil exist? For countless ages the earth, the ocean and the air, have been full of strife and murderous death. Thousands of animals are so constituted that they can live only by the death of others. In almost every species the number born is such that a majority die of starvation. How reconcile these facts with unlimited power and love. The human body is the habitat of two or three dozen species of parasites, some of which are the cause of great suffering, and often of death to man. "Shall we say," asks Herbert Spencer, "that man, 'the head and crown of all things,' was provided as a habitat for these parasites? Or shall we say that these degraded creatures, incapable of thought or enjoyment, were created that they might cause unhappiness to man?"

Continuing our inquiries we might ask the theologian to tell us how, consistently with his theory, earthquakes are permitted to swallow up cities or volcanoes to bury them in ruins? Why millions, including the innocent, the gentle and the good, perish every year by war, famine and disease? Why tempests and tornadoes sweep over prairie and rise over oceans, destroying houses and crops on the land, and ships and merchandise and human life on the sea? Why the drought is allowed to rob the hard-working farmer of the fruits of his honest toil, sending poverty to the homes and grief to the hearts of multitudes of the struggling poor? Why millions are permitted to be kept in slavery, whole nations trodden under the heel of tyranny and vast regions of the globe enveloped in mental and moral darkness?

Contemplate the philanthropist pining away in a loathsome dungeon, or the slave writhing under the lash of a merciless master, or a martyr for his devotion to truth, expiring amid flames, or a mother dying in the agonies of maternity or weeping over the dead body of her first born, and then tell me how you can believe that a being whose love is so great, that ours, in comparison with it, is but a dew-drop to the mighty ocean, can permit these spectacles of suffering, when a single volition were sufficient to restore peace and happiness to every human breast.

Some derive temporary satisfaction from viewing the world through the sunny Claude Lorraine glass of optimism. But how can any logical mind accept that doctrine as a solution of the problem of evil, and still hold to the theory of a being of infinite power and goodness? If a man has a child and punishes it to reform it, because he is unable to attain that end without the infliction of pain, his limited power exempts him from the charge of cruelty. If he possessed the power to educate and develop his child without such means, the infliction of pain would surely indicate cruelty. Infinite power and infinite goodness could produce a universe only in which was perfect happiness. If it be said that happiness can be attained only by permitting a certain amount of evil, what becomes of God's omnipotence? If it be said God could have made a perfect universe, without using evil as a means, but has not chosen to do so, what becomes of his infinite love? "It is useless," says Winwood Reade, "to say that pain has its benevolence, that massacre has its mercy. Why is it so ordained that bad should be the raw material of good? Pain is not less pain because it is useful; murder is not less murder because it is conducive to development. There is blood

upon the hand still and all the perfume of Arabia will not sweeten it.

Theology teaches that God is not the author of evil. But what sense or logic is there in the statement that there was a time when God alone existed, that he made from nothing, everything that existed, and yet is not the cause of evil? Did he not, according to the Christian system, create the universe, with all its forces, whether latent or active? Did he not make man and angels with certain constitutions, with certain tendencies? Supposing the fable of Eden be true, did not evil exist before the Fall, embodied in the serpent, that appeared to our ancient mother? Whence the evil? Was the serpent that introduced sin into this world, the Devil in reptilian form? Whence the Devil? Was he an angel of light who kept not his first estate, who rebelled against his creator, and who in punishment thereof was hurled from heaven? The Christian theology so teaches. But if this angel was disobedient and rebellious, was not his conduct owing to the disposition and tendency of his mind? Since he came direct from the hand of God, was not God the author of his disposition? Would the angel that became a devil have been guilty of the act of rebellion, had there not been something in his nature to prompt him thereto? If the angel, who fell and lost the favor of his Maker, sinned, must he not have been an imperfect being? If he were a perfect being and sinned, does it not follow that a perfect being can be the author of evil; that imperfection can come from perfection? On such a supposition, why may not God, as a perfect being, be considered the author of evil? Nay, if a sinless, perfect being, can become a Devil, what assurance has the theologian that God himself will not, one day, fall and become a Devil? If the angel that first sinned were an imperfect being, was there not evil, positive or negative, in his constitution? Does not imperfection imply evil? But if the angel were an imperfect being when he came from his Maker's hand, was not God the author of his imperfections, and the cause of all the results consequent on his existence? Again, we ask, how can the existence of evil be reconciled with infinite power and infinite goodness?

That there is an intelligent being who created and governs this universe, is, as said, is evident to every thinking mind. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." The order, harmony and adaptation observable in nature, it is said, prove design; design is evidence of a designer, and a designer must be an intelligent being. It is absurd, we are told, to suppose that this orderly world, containing such admirable adaptations of means to ends can exist independently of a being who made and controls it. Nothing could have come by chance, it is said, and therefore it is inferred that this universe must have been created or fashioned by a God. Let us view this famous argument for a moment.

God is something or nothing. To say he is nothing, is to say there is no God. If he is something, he is not merely a property or quality, but an existence *per se*, an entity, a substance, whether material or immaterial, is unimportant. If he is a substance, a material or spiritual being, there must be order, harmony and adaptation (or fitness) in his divine nature to enable him to perceive, reflect, design and execute his plans. If Deity does not reason, but perceives truth without the labor of investigation and contrivance, he must then possess an adaptation or fitness thus to perceive as well as to execute his designs.

To say God is without order, harmony and adaptation or fitness, is equivalent to saying that he is a mere chaos, worse than that imaginary chaos which theologians assure us would result if divine agency were withdrawn from the universe. If a being without order, harmony and adaptation, or a divine chaos, so to speak, can create an orderly universe, there is no consistency in declaring un Intelligent matter could not have formed itself into the objects which we behold.

If order, harmony and adaptation do exist in the divine mind (or in the substance which produces thought, power and purpose in Deity) they must be eternal, for that which constitutes the essential nature of God, must be the eternal basis of his being.

If the order, harmony and adaptation in God are eternal, they must be independent of design, for that which never began to exist, could not have been produced, and does not admit of design.

of-life that reaches from the lowest forms of the vegetable kingdom, up to man? How much more wonderful that an infinite being should exist without any cause—a being who is infinitely more admirable than the universe itself.

Again, the plan of a work is as much evidence of designing intelligence as the work which embodies the plan. For instance, the plan of a steam engine in the mind of Fitch, of a locomotive in the mind of Stephenson, was as much evidence of design as the piece of machinery after its mechanical construction. If God is an infinite being, if he knows everything, if no addition can be made to his knowledge, his plans must be eternal, without beginning, and therefore uncaused. If God's plans are not eternal, if from time to time new plans originate in his mind, there must be an addition to his knowledge, and if his knowledge admits of addition, he must be finite. But if his plans had no beginning, if like himself they are eternal, they must like him be independent of design. Now the plan of a thing, we have already seen, is as much evidence of design as the object which embodies the plan.

Since the plans of Deity are no proof of a designing intelligence that produced them (for they are supposed to be eternal), the plan of this universe, of course, was no evidence of a designing intelligence that produced it. But since the plan of the universe is as much evidence of design as the universe itself, and since the former is no evidence of design, it follows that design cannot be inferred from the existence of the universe.

The absurdity of the *a posteriori* argument for a God consists in the assumption that what we call order, harmony and adaptation are evidence of design, when it is evident that, whether there be a God or not, order, harmony and adaptation must have existed from eternity, and are not therefore necessary proof of a designing cause.

The reasoning of the Theist who employs this argument is precisely like that of the Hindu in accounting for the position of the earth. Whatever exists must have some support, he said. The earth he imagined resting upon the back of an elephant, and the elephant upon a huge tortoise. He forgot that his own premise, that whatever exists must have some support, required that the tortoise should rest upon something. The inconclusiveness of his reasoning is apparent to a child.

The Theist says order, harmony and adaptation are evidence of a designing intelligence. The earth and its productions show order, harmony and adaptation.

Therefore the earth and its productions are the result of designing intelligence.

Just as the Hindu stopped reasoning when he fancied the earth upon an elephant and the elephant upon a tortoise, so the Theist stops reasoning when he says God made the world. But as surely as from the premise that whatever exists must have some support, follows the conclusion that the tortoise rests upon something, as it rests upon the elephant, does it follow from the proposition that order, harmony and adaptation are proof of an intelligent designer, that the order, harmony and adaptation in a supposed Deity, are evidence of an intelligent designer who made him, as are various parts of nature, adapted or fitted to one another, are evidence of an intelligent designer who produced them. If we grant the premise, we are led to the conclusion that there has been a succession of creative and created gods in the beginningless past.

is some analogy between some of the productions of nature with whose cause we are unacquainted, may we not reasonably infer that the latter, like the former, have been produced by a conscious, intelligent, designing being?

There is in our opinion no sufficient analogy to warrant any such conclusion, and besides, such reasoning leads necessarily to a *reductio ad absurdum*.

As Atkinson says, "Man designs; Nature is." Unquestionably there is the appearance of design in some of nature's productions, but the design evidently exists only in the human mind. "It is reflecting reason," says Kant, "which brought design into the world, and which admires a wonder created by itself." Or as Humboldt expresses it, "man uses nature as a mirror wherein are reflected the properties of his own being." Man calculates, contrives, forms plans, and uses means to accomplish his purpose, because he can neither perceive all truth at a glance, nor carry out his wishes by a mere fiat, and because he thus designs, he supposes God does the same, forgetting that contrivance and the use of means imply ignorance and weakness.

In like manner because man has intelligence and love, he ascribes these qualities to Deity. As a rigid analysis of our conceptions of God shows that the predicates of God are only our own qualities, so I believe, that reduced to its simplest form, the belief in God is but a belief in our own existence; that in affirming God's existence, we but indirectly affirm our own; hence, anthropology is the true key to theology.

The complicated and beautiful forms of nature are indeed wonderful; but the believers in a Deity, in order to sustain their position, have something more to do than to go into ecstasies over these productions. The theory of Darwin, if true, and it is gaining ground every day among scientific men, pretty effectually disposes of the theological view of nature, and takes from the popular illustrations of the design argument, nearly all their force and appositiveness.

The mind under the influence of theological teachings insists that there are facts which the existence of a designing intelligence alone can explain. Why, it is asked, do animals in cold regions have thicker fur than those in warm climates? Why are the legs of the timid deer adapted to run faster than the more courageous animals need to? Are not the feet of the mole especially designed for digging? Is there not design in the instinct of the cat to catch mice? Are not the wonderful bodies of animals and especially of man, evidence of wisdom and skill more admirable than are possessed of any other creature? To which we reply, it seems to us more reasonable to believe that the coverings of animals are determined by the temperature and other natural conditions, than by the foresight and skill of a personal Being, that in the struggle for life those with the thickest fur, would in a cold climate stand the best chance to survive, while those most thinly clad would perish; that by the law of heredity the surviving animals would transmit their advantage, and by a process of selection, so admirably illustrated by Darwin and Wallace, in course of time we should have naturally and without any design, races of animals in the north with thick, heavy fur, fitting them for a cold climate. The same principle of selection will explain why animals are thinly clad in warm regions.

Instead of supposing God gave the deer a timid disposition and long legs to get out of the way of danger, we think it more reasonable that the entire structure of the animal is the result of accumulated advantages, acquired through ages, in the great struggle to live, in which varieties with unfavorable variations died out, and that the animal instead of being endowed with long legs to run fast, simply runs fast, as Buechner remarks, because it has long legs to run with, its ability to run rapidly and avoid the necessity of combat, has probably produced the timid disposition that it possesses. If unable to get out of the way, quite likely it would be more courageous than it now is.

Instead of supposing cats were made to catch mice, we should say with Huxley, "there was no express construction concerned in the matter, but that among the multitudinous varieties of the Feline stock, many of which died out for want of power to resist opposing influences, some, the cats, were better fitted to catch mice than others, whence they thrived and persisted in proportion to the advantage over their fellows thus afforded them." The habit which had its origin in hunger of the animal and its surroundings, in the course of generations, by the law of heredity became permanently fixed as an instinct, a part of the nature of the animal.

Animals generally having the greatest number and the most important advantages, triumph. In the carnivora the advantage is for the one that has good claws, strong teeth, supple and vigorous muscles. To these animals such color as best serves them to escape from their foes or to spring upon their prey, is a decided advantage. Hence we should expect to find desert colored animals in deserts. Such is the case. The animals and birds in the deserts of Africa and Asia resemble the average color and district in which they abound. Rev. Dr. Triestram in his Ornithology of North America says, in the desert without exception, the plumage of every bird, whether lark, chat or sand grouse, and the fur of all the smallest animals and the skins of all the snakes and lizards are of one uniform tawny or sand color; and as we should expect, the animals that have survived in the struggle for life in polar regions are white. The polar bear is the only bear that is white. What other color would be so favorable to ex-





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CHICAGO, SATURDAY, MAY 30, 1874.

The Dark Side of Life or Evil an Emanation from Nature.

In our previous articles we alluded to the fact that mankind, in the aggregate, were just as good as the physical condition of the earth...

travels among the wild tribes of the world, harmonize perfectly with the deductions of Draper. In our own country we know that the descendants of the Plymouth Rock Pilgrims have considerably elongated, so much so that a competent European physician has predicted that the American race would die out, killed by consumption, as the chests were getting too narrow for the lungs.

nowhere! Is it at all strange that a dark side of life exists; that heinous crimes are constantly being committed and that wars have never ceased? True, the dark side of life is an emanation of nature, and nature is an emanation of God.

Remarkable Phenomenon. BRA JONES.—I wish to ask a question, but first I must tell the circumstance that leads me to the house alone. We were reading. I sat listening—no wind was stirring—all was very quiet.

The New Spiritual Phenomena. Under the above head the San Francisco (Cal.) Chronicle, alludes to the Spiritual manifestations that have been startling the people on the Pacific coast.

Philadelphia Department

HENRY T. CHILD, M. D. Subscriptions will be received and papers may be obtained at wholesale or retail, at 234 Race St., Philadelphia.

The Materialization of Spirit-forms.

There are few subjects that involve more profound philosophy, or awaken a deeper interest than this. It is a fact that chemists and philosophers in Spirit-life are acquainted with many of the subtle laws of force, which have hitherto been beyond the lines of our knowledge—perhaps as the poet has it, "Not dreamed of in our philosophy." The dissolution and the re-formation of iron, wood, cloth and various substances which are now pretty well established facts, illustrate the above.

We know that we may take any substance in nature, water for instance, and by submitting it to a high temperature, we render it invisible and impalpable—suspending the cohesive force which has held the particles near to each other—not in contact, however, as that is an impossibility. The theory of the opening of an iron or wooden ring, and placing it upon the arm, is that certain chemical forces are brought to act upon it, which for a time suspend the cohesive force of the atoms and permit the particles to separate; but as in the case of the invisible condition of the water when the power which has separated the particles is removed, the cohesive force causes them to assume their former relations, and we have the water; so when the chemical force which has temporarily suspended the cohesive force of the particles of iron or wood, etc., they return to their former relations. At the seances with Mr. and Mrs. Holmes, in this city on the 1st day of May, a bouquet was presented to a spirit that appeared and was recognized at the opening of the cabinet. This disappeared, and we presume a similar action took place—namely, the cohesive force of the leaves, stems and flowers, etc., was suspended and the spirit which had been clothed with a material substance disappeared, taking the flowers with her.

The question, "How do spirits materialize themselves," was put to the spirits speaking through Mrs. Brigham, at Lincoln Hall, and she said, "Among the various manifestations of ancient and modern Spiritualism, materialization is considered the best of all its proofs, for it appeals to the sight. You ask, How this is done? When this really occurs, as we know it does now, and has in all ages under favorable conditions, we would have you understand the truth, and not be too credulous, for we believe that those who are so, offer a premium to deception. Those who investigate honestly, in order that they may know the truth, are the best friends of the truth. Some suppose that when they see a spirit thus materialized, they see them just as they are now in Spirit-life. This is not so—you would not recognize them,—many of them at least, for they are vastly changed, but when they return to earth, they endeavor to present themselves in the old and familiar forms that you may recognize them.

The mediums through whom this manifestation occurs, is somewhat like a battery through whose powers the spiritual elements from the atmosphere and from the physical and mental organization of the circle, where there is one, are attracted. In your earth you find silver mostly in combination with quartz or some other substance; to separate this you triturate the mass, and mingle quicksilver with it, and thus the pure silver, and then by electrolysis the silver is separated from the mass. We use this comparison to show you what is the influence of the medium, when materialization takes place. Through this power certain elements are gathered together, and a face or hand is formed. This can only last a little while without exhausting the medium. When the materialization is passed, the elements are resolved back into their former condition. It is through the power of mediumship that the atoms used in materialization are brought together; they always exist in the atmosphere.

We will add that the recognition of spirits, which is one of the great objects in this, requires that they should be clothed in their old forms so as to be readily known. When, too, coming into the atmosphere of earth there are certain precautions necessary to protect the spirit-form. Many spirits on their first appearance come with a white bandage of turban round the head to protect that delicate and sensitive organ, the brain.

Male spirits in the interior life always wear the full beard, and the females long flowing hair; this is a part of the economy of nature, and in the higher development of physical life, which is coming to this earth ere long, mankind will learn an important lesson from this and not mutilate and disfigure their physical bodies by the barbarous habits that prevail to-day, and are well named.

To perfect a materialization and render the spirit visible and tangible, only requires a medium to aggregate the materials from the atmosphere, and so arrange them that they may be placed upon the spirit itself for the most perfect materialization.

Model hands and faces may be made which are not placed upon the form of a living spirit, but they are only models, and can not speak or give evidence of intelligence in themselves. When arrangements are made for materializations at a circle, there are certain rules generally observed, differing somewhat with each band of spirits, and yet essentially the same.

Having had a number of opportunities of witnessing materialization in the presence of Mr. and Mrs. Holmes of this city, we propose describing these and giving such explanations as the spirits may desire.

We have long had a desire to investigate this subject thoroughly, and so we have formed circles consisting of about twenty persons, who agreed to meet regularly once a week and to keep the same parties in each circle so far as possible, knowing that such conditions are required for the most successful materializations. Mrs. Holmes, formerly Mrs. Ferris, is well known in this country and Europe, as a physical medium in whose presence musical instruments and other objects are moved round the room in the dark; a spirit voice is heard purporting to come from Richard. An iron ring or a wooden tambourine ring is placed upon the arm of a gentleman or lady while holding both her hands. The sensation of fanning so that the air of the room is quite cool, is felt. Then curious spirit lights appear very bright, with rather indistinct outlines of human faces, with long luminous hair. After this Mr. Holmes goes into a small cabinet with an aperture in the door. The gas is lighted and in a few minutes faces appear. The rules for the formation of these sections of a circle are that each one must join both hands, the two occupying the ends placing both hands in the hand of the person sitting next to them. The necessity for this is not explained, but the violation of the rule is very apparent as the manifestations, if not entirely suspended, will be very feeble and irregular.

Among the conditions, honest skepticism which only asks for satisfactory and positive evidence, is the best. Too much credulity

weaken the manifestations, but suspicion or deception are sure to interfere with them. Honest skepticism is only asking for evidence of truth; but a suspicious or deceptive individual tells the medium and the spirits that they are false and deceptive, and if it be true that this world is a mirror which reflects what ever we look for, it is still more true that the Spirit-world is such, for the faintest shadows are often reflected and intensified.

The operation of materialization is performed by certain spirits who manipulate the elements that have been aggregated through the influence of the medium. They do this in the dark and are more or less successful in making a correct representation of the life form of the spirit; these are brought into the light so as to be seen for a few seconds, and after repeated experiments they can sometimes remain longer. At first the faces are fixed like models, but after a time the features move, and under favorable circumstances, vocal organs are constructed and the spectral image not only presents the form, but holds converse with those who are present. Many persons are very much disappointed in these manifestations because they do not at once realize all that they had anticipated, and if they allow suspicious feelings to come in, they will certainly fail.

We have seen and recognized many spirits, and have no doubt of their power under favorable conditions thus to appear. We would say to all, be patient and truthful and you will succeed. Form circles of those in whom you have confidence, and meet regularly until the fairest opportunity is afforded for the spirits to accomplish that which they so generally desire. This form of manifestations requires an immense effort on the part of spirits, and we should be willing to give a corresponding portion of time, and above all those genial, truthful and harmonious conditions which bring the two worlds into absolute proximity and enable us to see each other face to face.

The Spirit World.

A DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE INNER LIFE.

[For a me time past my spirit friends have been urging me to add to the Philadelphia Department, one in which they may have the opportunity of sending their thoughts to the world. The extended circulation of the Journal, furnishes the means of reaching more individuals than any other paper on Spiritualism.]

Spirits have expressed a desire that I should not only read for the communications which they are able from time to time to give through my medium, but select some that I may report as given through other mediums, whose names will be given with their communications. H. T. C.]

The Water Lily.

AN EMBODIMENT BY MRS. NELLIE J. T. BRIGHAM.

Dark beneath the skies of winter, Lies the sluggish water low, While the sombre clouds above it, Drifting masses, come and go; And beneath the silent water, Lies a germ that is at rest, Waiting nigh the slime and darkness, While hope whispers in its breast.

Soon the ice of weary winter Melts and passes all away, And unfolding buds and blossoms Pave the fragrant path of May, And the golden sunbeams quiver On the river, shining through, Telling all the happy story, "Earth is fair and skies are blue."

Calling, "Oh! thou child of Heaven Light is given for thy way— Rise! the winter has departed, Night has passed, to it is day." Then the listening lily rises Climbing upward to the light, Till amid the leaves encircling Comes the blossom into sight.

Whence comes all the wealth of whiteness, And the beauty of the snow, With its heart of golden glory, Where the treasured sunbeams glow; From the dark and silent waters, From the ooze and mud below, It arose with patient toiling, Till God clothed it white as snow.

So in all your grief and doubting, In this winter world of sin, Take the lesson of the lilies, All your weary hearts within. Hope through all your nights of sorrow, For a morrow bright and fair, Where the soul is lifted upward From the waters of despair.

Rise though sorrow's waves are bitter; Rise, from darkness and from wrong; Thou shalt find the smile of Heaven And thy soul shall bloom ere long, And within the land of beauty, Thou shalt find rejoicing there, Blooming like the water lily From all earthly grief and care.

JOHN EMERSON, OF NEWBURYPORT, MASS.— GIVEN THROUGH KATIE B. ROBINSON.

I am in hopes, friend, to be able to give you something good connected with the philosophy of Spiritualism. I have long wished for this opportunity to give forth to the world the positive evidence of truth. We want to present through the JOURNAL the living word of God, that coming generations may read it with pleasure and profit. The time has come when mankind are awakening to a more profound interest in this great subject, which lies so near the well-being of the race. The time is coming when people will become so spiritual that they will compare the two books, the inspirations of the past and the inspirations of the present—then will they discover that the mediums in all ages have mingled more or less of their own ideas with the inspirations which have come through them, and that in the present day as mediums become more enlightened, these inspirations will become more pure. Mankind will lose the idea of sacredness as belonging to that which is old, and learn the important lesson that truth alone is sacred—that it is now, always has been and always will be. The Spirit-world has more power over the human world to-day than it ever had in the past, not only to give forth its truths through inspiration, but to correct the errors which are sometimes mingled with these. There are bands of spirits around mediums to-day, who have a better understanding of the laws of inspiration.

The Spirit-world is learning better what your world needs, and they are earnestly working to send such communications as shall meet the demands of humanity. There are many persons already prepared to receive the spiritual thoughts that come through our mediums, while there are others who need the spiritual manifestations on the physical plane. We see that the people are very desirous to see the faces of their departed friends, therefore the Spirit-world is preparing many mediums for this peculiar form of mediumship, which is not new, but the distinguishing feature of the day is that all the manifestations are coming to be more perfect, because they are better understood, and you are enabled to

comply with the conditions intelligently. We have been moving along gradually, because we knew that many lives would have been sacrificed if we had gone much faster. The angel teachers and messengers are preparing the way and sowing the seeds day by day.

I am John Emerson, of Newburyport, Mass. When I was in the form I preached there, and I can see now that I came very near to Spiritualism when I was there, though I did not know it then. I passed away with consumption. Sometimes I would take one text, and another would come to me, and now I find as I look back I was truly inspired and directed by a band of noble spirits, and when my work on earth was finished, I was not satisfied; I felt a desire to return and speak to the people, so I was attracted to this medium and became one of its guides.

I should like to speak again at Newburyport, for I see that the seeds of Spiritualism have been sown there. I can see them springing up by the way side, and in the churches in every town and village. I was much pleased to meet our good Brother Sharps when he came here. I had often spoken to him through this medium.

DEATH, A VISION BY N. J. T. BRIGHAM.

Seated in a easy chair in a pleasant home, I saw an old lady—her fingers were moving listlessly as she was knitting to pass away the time. No one was present save the invisibles who are always with you when you think you are alone.

Presently she passed into a dreamy state; the fingers moved more and more slowly, and soon they stopped, the head reclined forward, and then I saw the spirit formed over the body—it rose up a beautiful counterpart of the body that sat on the chair, only that it was more youthful and beautiful, it looked as she did in her youthful days. She looked at her body in astonishment. She looked all around the room and it was beautiful, the golden sunlight was shining there, and the light fell upon her motionless body—the house in which she had lived, the dusty tenement was there, but the spirit had passed away. While looking dreamily, and wondering how this could be, her daughter came and said, "Mother are you asleep?" No answer came. The daughter drew near and gave one look, and laid her hand upon her brow, and said, "She is dead!" "Oh no," the mother said, "my daughter I am here, I am alive!" But the daughter heard no word. There stood the spirit when all the family came in, and she said, "Don't grieve for me, I am not dead."

You may call this death, but she had only passed out of the body, into the beautiful morning of the Spirit land. The little boat which had been tossed on the tempestuous sea of life at last had come to rest, like a cradle that was still. The angels stood around that little boat as it was moored there, and helped the one who had lived in it so long, to come up out of it on to the shores of their beautiful home, and you call it death. We call it life, as we welcome them to our home; it is life everlasting.

If you only had the power to show you just for once what we have seen, we would show you that there is no death.

BENEDICTION.

Oh! Thou who art the sunshine and the light, Give us strength to guide our souls aright, And may we turn like flowers to the sun And say, "Forever may thy will be done."

Japanese Peas—200 Bushels to the Acre—Something New.

Farmers and gardeners, read this. Agents wanted to sell the Japanese Pea. These peas have recently been brought to this country from Japan, and prove to be the finest Pea known for table use or for stock. They grow in the form of a bush, from 8 to 5 feet high, and do not require staking. They yield from one quart to a gallon of peas per bush. A sample package, that will produce from 5 to 10 bushels of peas, with circulars giving terms to agents, and full directions as to the time and manner of planting, will be sent, post paid, to any one desiring to act as agent, on receipt of Fifty Cents. Address, L. L. ORMENT, Cleveland, Tenn.

TESTIMONIALS.

We have cultivated the Japanese Pea the past season, on a small scale, and we are convinced they are a perfect success. Their yield was enormous. For the table and for stock they are unsurpassed by any other pea. They grow well on this land and are bound to be a No. 1 fertilizer.

A. J. WHITE, Trustee, Bradley County, H. Hix, A. E. BLUNT, P. M., Cleveland, Tenn.

I have cultivated the Japanese Pea the past year, and raised them at the rate of 200 bushels to the acre. The bloom excels buckwheat for bees.

F. E. HARDWICK, J. P., Bradley Co., Cleveland, Tenn., Jan 23 1874. n1024

The Little Bouquet Orphan's Fund.

This fund we propose to use for sending the little gem of beauty to orphans in as many different families as the donations will pay for.

Dr. G. Bloods, New York City, ..... 60 Elizabeth Young, of Champaign, ..... 25

Who will next be inspired to a similar deed of noble charity? We shall report.

Passed to Spirit Life.

[Notice for this Department will be charged at the rate of twenty cents for lines for every line exceeding twenty. Notices not exceeding twenty lines published gratuitously.]

Departed this life, on the morning of Jan. 26th, 1874, I. A., second daughter of George C. and Sarah Chapman, in the 11th year of her age.

Many friends convened to hear the first spiritual services ever rendered in the place on such an occasion. The utmost interest and feeling was manifested by the able speaker, Isa Smith. She departed her stay she was peacefully and calmly. Although short her stay she was much beloved by all who knew her.

Passed to spirit life, on the morning of the 8th of May, LENA, the youngest daughter of Finlay Letts McArthur, aged 18 years and 30 days.

Her sickness continued for two years and six months. She longed to be free, and be with a loved brother that had gone on before. She was loving, kind and tender.

See patients personally at her Boston office, 44 Beach St., Tuesdays and Thursdays. v101114

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CARTER & WARRIN, IMPORTERS AND DEALERS EXCLUSIVELY IN LINENS & HOUSEKEEPING DRY GOODS! Housekeepers and Ladies about to begin housekeeping, will find at their store a large and well-assorted Stock of these Goods, comprising everything new and desirable at Reasonable Prices. Country orders will receive prompt attention. Ladies are respectfully invited to inspect our stock. CARTER & WARRIN, 77 State Street. v101113

CANCER CAN BE CURED. DR. G. D. BEEBE, formerly Medical Director U. S. Army, and well known as Surgeon of the highest skill and reputation, may be consulted regarding cases of Cancer or any Tumors, the nature of which is not fully understood. Dr. Beebe has had a remarkable degree of success in the treatment of this cruel Disease, and is able to guarantee a radical cure in a large proportion of cases. Call before 10 a. m., or address G. D. BEEBE, M. D., 933 Prairie Ave., Chicago. v101113

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Permanent U Magnets. Will lift 24 lbs. Price \$1. Address JAS. POOL, Electrician, Friendsville, Ill. v101113

AHEAD OF ALL! GIVEN AWAY, From this date, Handsome CROQUET SETS. I will furnish to every new subscriber to The Excelsior Magazine, (issued monthly, subscription price \$1 per annum) a Handsome Set of Croquet, consisting of Eight Maple Balls and Mallets, wrapped in bright colors, Arches and Stakes complete, sent in a neat case with handles, (worth at retail \$4.50), upon the receipt of \$4.50 which is only 50 cents above the subscription price of the magazine. Remember, you are getting a set of Croquet and The Excelsior Magazine for one year, worth together \$8.00, for the low price of \$4.50, being less than the retail price of the Croquet alone. I am enabled to offer this great inducement to subscribers for a limited time, through a special arrangement with L. G. Bignall, of "The Bignall Mfg. Co.," Nos. 256 & 258 Lake St., Chicago. Eastern subscribers will be supplied direct from the Eastern Mfg. Co. Such a Magazine is needed. Literature and the Arts, in combination, are not represented so fully in this country. Its terse, compact summary of literary and artistic intelligence, with its splendid illustrated fashions, and its complete Supplement, commands steady to every Article. It is elegantly printed, on cream-colored paper, has a chastely interlarded grey cover, with a large sculptured figure representing the Arts. Sample copies, at once, back numbers furnished to subscribers. Special inducements to getting up of Clubs, Agents wanted. Enclose money or P. O. order to B. GARLAND WALKER, Editor and Proprietor, Room 59, No. 157 LaSalle St., Chicago, Ills. v101111

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BEGG WITH SEWING MACHINE. PORTABLE FAMILY SEWING MACHINE. BEAUTY, UTILITY, AND STRENGTH COMBINED. \$20. BEGG WITH SEWING MACHINE CO. 862 BROADWAY, N. Y. v101117

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A Strange Funeral Discourse—Or the Difference Between Presbyterianism and Spiritualism.

BY A. J. FISHBACK.
Mr. Editor—As the discourse to which I call attention was one of the most remarkable that I ever listened to...

Nature's Interior Unfoldings.

BY D. G. MOSEER.
NUMBER TWO.

This earth must be considered as an infinitesimal of "the stupendous whole," as is the smallest conceivable molecule, millions of which are required in the formation of a single fibre of a human muscle...

was done, but Florence had vanished. Only the medium, in her black silk dress, lying entranced in her chair, was to be seen.

Voices from the People.

NEW YORK.—Robert Winthrop writes.—Please tell us if there is any virtue in the "Japanese Crystal," (sold in Boston), in developing clairvoyance. How is it to be used?

When the mind is engrossed upon a single thought, and yet not active, but simply passive in contemplation, it is an easy matter for a spirit of positive mind to seize upon such a person's organism, and manifest spirit power through such mediumship.

HANNIBAL, N. Y.—Mrs. E. Larzere writes.—My Woodhull friends say to me when I quote the "Journal," that you dare not preach what you practice, but so long as its preaching and teaching is all right, I am satisfied.

OKOLONA, MISS.—E. D. Hall writes.—If you can succeed, as you are now doing, in convincing the world of the "Spiritualists" do not believe in, and also of that which is not Spiritualism, you will have done a good work for which all true Spiritualists, and truth loving people will thank you.

ALBION, NEB.—Hiram J. Rice writes.—We had another circle last night, but had no manifestations of any kind. Does it make any difference whether we hold circles in different rooms, or would it be best to have them in one room all the time?

It is always best to continue the circles in the same room. Meet regularly on the same nights of the week. Make your appointments, and the spirits will respond, but if you meet at no regular periods, the manifestations will be indifferent.

BROOKLYN, TEX.—R. W. Burns, M. D. writes.—Although the "Journal" contains and maintains some ideas I do not endorse, yet it is the most valuable paper I ever read. It is like a visit from an old friend, and when it fails to reach me promptly, as is frequently the case by reason of irregularity of mails, or detention by theft, the seven days between mails appear like a month.

ALTOONA, PA.—Wm. Witten writes.—I like your bold, independent style. You are mostly persons of advanced ideas who are willing to be criticised, as well as to criticise the acts of others. I like it because it provokes deep thought in the minds of its readers.

WASHINGTON, CITY.—M. C. Eason writes.—Our Society (The First Society of Progressive Spiritualists of Washington, D. C.) was never in a more prosperous or flourishing condition, and has not changed its title to one styling it a Liberal Organization, as was erroneously indicated in the communication of one Richard Roberts published in the "Journal" of the 18th ult.

NEW YORK.—Dr. Thomas J. Lewis writes.—Since we have opened our Clairvoyant, Business and Medical Temple at 1264 Broadway, New York City, we have formed a circle for the scientific investigation of Spiritual subjects; and the results thus far are truly wonderful, and when fully tested, will be greeted by the readers of the "Journal." It was through the medium of the "Journal" that an old Chicago medium, Dr. Morrell, found us, which shows the importance of all Spiritualists patronizing and extending the circulation of the "Journal."

N. G. Fields, of Keosauqua, Iowa, writes.—"I thank you very kindly for the degree of forbearance you have shown me. I like the character and style of your paper, and hope to be able to pay more promptly in the future."

At the close of a séance held at the residence of Mr. J. C. Luxmore, 16 Gloucester square, Hyde Park, Eng., Miss Showers being the medium, the following test was obtained, showing the rapidity with which, under favorable conditions, the spirit manifesting in the "full form" can change conditions.

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It is the only consolation that I have. It is to me the guiding star of my life, and I hardly know what I would do without it. Please send it to me a little longer, and I will most assuredly send you the money for it as soon as I possibly can.

McCord, of St. Louis, Mo., writes, "We are going to have a Spiritual Jubilee here. Brother Prentice is to be the speaker; a good time is expected. Mrs. S. A. Rogers Heyder, of Hazelhill, Mass. says that our opposition to Woodhullism has made the "Journal" popular. Loyal Griffin, of Mount City, Ka., deplors the loss of his wife, with whom he had peacefully and joyfully lived for 25 years. She is still with you, brother, in spirit, to cheer you on in the journey of life."

For Moth Patches, Freckles AND TAN, ask your Druggist for Perry's Moth and Freckle Lotion. Which is harmless and in every case infallible. Also, for his improved COMEBON and PIMPLE REMEDY, the great SKIN MEDICINE for Pimples, Black Heads or Flesh-worms, or consult B. C. PERRY, the noted Skin Doctor, 49 Bond St., New York.

BABBITTS HEALTH GUIDE now ready and for sale at the office of this paper. Price, \$1.00.

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Attention Opium Eaters!

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Mrs. Robinson will furnish the remedy, and send it by mail or express to all who may apply for the same within the next sixty days, on the receipt of five dollars (the simple cost of the ingredients), and guarantee a most perfect cure or refund the money, if directions accompanying each package are strictly followed.

The remedy is harmless, and not unpalatable. She makes this generous offer for the double purpose of introducing the remedy, and for bringing the cure within the reach of the poorest people who use the pernicious drug. The expense of a perfect remedy will not exceed the cost of the drug for continuing the deleterious habit one month!

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DR. GARVIN'S CATARRH POWDER. A Safe and Reliable Remedy for the Cure of Catarrh in the Head.

Another Edition Now Ready. Just issued another edition of the sequel to the "Stellar Key," which is almost universally known as DEATH AND THE AFTER-LIFE.

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CATALOGUE OF BOOKS FOR SALE BY THE Religio-Philosophical Publishing House.

All orders, with the price of books desired, and the additional amount mentioned for postage, will meet with prompt attention.

Table listing various books for sale, including titles like 'An Hour with the Angels', 'A Discussion between Mr. R.V. Wilson Spiritualist', 'A History of the Bible', etc., with prices listed.

Table listing various books for sale, including titles like 'Life of Thomas Paine', 'Life of Henry's Wish', 'Mental Medicine', etc., with prices listed.

1847 GILMAN NURSERY 1874. Includes advertisement for Gilman Nursery, Moses-Woodhullism in a Nutshell, and Prof. Wm. Denton's Works.

INCIDENTS IN MY LIFE. BY D. D. HOME. Includes advertisement for 'The New Wonder! NATURE'S HAIR RESTORATIVE!' and 'JESUS OF NAZARETH; A TRUE HISTORY OF THE MAN CALLED JESUS CHRIST'.

MRS. A. H. ROBINSON. Healing Psychometric & Business Medium. Includes advertisement for 'A Good Head of Hair Restored by a Spirit Prescription' and 'NEW BOOKS' by G. W. Carleton & Co., Publishers, New York.

