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ARTS AND SCIENCES, LITERATURE

VOTED TO SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY

ROMANCE AND GENERAL FORM

Truth Seeks no Dash, Dwells at no Human Shrine, Seeks neither Place nor Applause: She only Asks a Hearing.

VOL. XXVI.

JNO. C. BUNDY, EDITOR.

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Dr. Slocum, Psychometrist, Criticises Wm. E. Coleman.

In the JOURNAL of May 3d, 1879, is an article from William Emmette Coleman, which assumes that Charles R. Miller's vindication of Alfred James' mediumship by the power of psychometry, is, in reality, no vindication, because Mr. Miller carried the communications to Dr. Buchanan, "who listened with much attention to my explanations, and Dr. B. submitted them to one or more of his students and," Mr. Coleman says, "the sensitive student simply reproduced the views of their master—that is all." This assertion is a very important one, and, if true, the readers of the JOURNAL should be informed by Mr. Coleman, how he knows it. Dr. Buchanan has been before the public for many years, and has been known as an able and honest investigator after truth, and the people believe him honest in giving his investigations to the world.

If the sensitives simply reproduced the views of their master, then the Professor and Mr. Miller are guilty of deceiving the people. Mr. Miller well knows the conditions required for psychometrical delineations, and he is known as an honest, earnest, untiring advocate of truth in all things, and why should he, in this instance, practice deception when all through his being he abhors it? If he was in collusion with Dr. B. to make out Mr. James a medium by making the conditions such as should enable the sensitives to give impressions taken from their master's mind instead of from the writing itself, then indeed must mankind have become demoralized, for no man works more disinterestedly for the true and pure than Charles R. Miller.

Mr. Coleman says that Dr. Buchanan is the discoverer of psychometry, and that he "stands pre-eminent in the advocacy of psychometric truth." If these assertions are true, does any one suppose that Dr. Buchanan, at this time of life, after all these years of effort to develop the power of psychometry and its value as a science, would do anything thus to weaken and belittle his own character, and dwarf the ideas he has so long advocated? Mr. Coleman says, "In each instance the convictions, ideas and views of Mr. Miller and Prof. Buchanan overcame the feeble influences of the writings themselves, which writings, if correctly and isolated psychometrized, would, no doubt, give the character of Mr. James, the pulvise author." If that is true, then Messrs. Miller and Buchanan must have deliberately made conditions such that the "feeble influences of the writings, were overcome by their stronger magnetisms. For Prof. B., the discoverer of the science and its exponent par excellence, to have done this, or to have been ignorant of necessary conditions, seems incredible. Is it not possible that in this one instance, Mr. Coleman may have been mistaken? I admit that he writes with the authority of absolute knowledge, but as he was not present, and could not know all the circumstances, may he not be in error? But if his assertions are true, he should be able to lay his proofs before your readers. If Dr. Buchanan will thus deceive the people, it is time the deception was made public. He is an old man, has worked long, and has made a reputation that will cover his name as with a mantle, that any of us would be proud to wear, and imputations against him are ignoble unless proven.

Mr. Coleman says, "In each instance the reading occurred in the presence of one acquainted with the nature of the writings and the character of the spirits presumed to have written them." I am one of the persons alluded to in the above quotation, and the assertion in my case is entirely erroneous and unwarranted. For twenty-five years I have been experimenting through my own psychometric powers, and I believe I have learned some of the conditions required for truthful delineations. For the last seven years Mr. C. R. Miller and myself have together been investigating the phenomena for the purpose of getting at facts, and we have studied conditions as well as results. In this case the facts are these: Mr. Miller came to my house, shook hands with my wife and myself, and took a seat about eight feet from me, my wife sitting between us. We talked a long time, without any allusion being made to psychometry or to the James affair. At length Mr. Miller took from his pocket a scrap of paper which he said he would like to have me psychometrize. My wife brought a new envelope, into which Mr. Miller placed the paper and then sealed it and handed it to my wife, and she passed it to me. I held it in my hands a few moments and then gave the impressions I received from the first magnetism, which I soon discovered to be C. R. Miller's. I next became aware of a different influence, and I told them the writing I held was a spirit-communication. I then gave the description, which was published, and one of those to which Mr. Coleman referred. Then I described the medium through whom the communication was given, and I told Mr. Miller he must be Mr. James about whom there was so much controversy. I then gave back the envelope to my wife, and asked Mr. Miller if the description was correct, which at the time he declined telling me. I consider that Mr. Miller's influence was the strongest the paper contained, and I gave that first. He had carried the paper in his pocket long enough to imbue it with

the spirit came next, and the medium's, being the least, or weakest, consequently came last.

While I was doing this work Mr. Miller asked me no questions concerning it; he made no suggestions with regard to it, nor would he answer any questions concerning the matter. He was not within eight feet of me at any time, and it was impossible for him, in my case, to have "overcome the feeble influences of the writings themselves," nor did he try, but conformed strictly to proper conditions as he desired only facts. The conditions required by me he knew well, and he also knew that, to arrive at the truth in psychometry through me, those conditions must be observed, and he observed them, and the result was as he has stated.

Because Mr. James has been detected in trickery, it does not follow that he is always a deceiver. Mr. Coleman may be correct in his assertions generally; but in this case he has made imputations against Prof. Buchanan, C. R. Miller and psychometrists alluded to, that are unwarrantable, unjustifiable and injurious to the whole party and to the cause of progress.

Dr. V. P. SLOCUM.
New York, 140 E. Fifteenth Street.

REPLY TO DR. SLOCUM—BY WM. EMMETTE COLEMAN.

Allow me to return my cordial thanks to Dr. V. P. Slocum for his complete vindication of the truth of my assertions regarding the character of the alleged psychometric evidence in favor of Mr. Alfred James' mediumship. In common with all lovers of exact truth, I am vastly obliged to him for his wealth of kindness in furnishing us with so effective a weapon with which to encounter—ay, demolish—the antagonists of the essential truths faintly outlined in the article to which Dr. Slocum takes exception. A few errors, however, have crept into his well digested and exceedingly apposite remarks, which it may be well to point out.

First, I am at a loss to imagine how it was possible for the well-poised intellect, the psychometrically illuminated mind, of my critic to entertain the notion that I charged Dr. Buchanan and Mr. Miller with wilful deception, dishonesty, and trickery, in their mode of procurement of the reading of the "spirit"-writings of Mr. James, or that I thought those two gentlemen "in collusion to make out Mr. James a medium," despite their knowledge of his detection in fraud and humbuggery. Not a line can be found in my article remotely hinting, even, at such imputations; and I am sure both the gentlemen are too sensible to suppose for a moment that I intended to convey such an idea. Let me now, frankly and fairly, affirm that I have no doubt of the entire honesty, sincerity and good faith of Messrs. Buchanan and Miller in their psychometric investigations. No suspicion of their dishonesty has ever crossed my mind; I disclaim such altogether. Therefore, in Dr. Slocum's iteration and reiteration that I have been very unjust in so asserting, he has been guilty of the gravest injustice to myself. I have never intimated that either of the gentlemen referred to, sought deliberately to have their ideas reproduced by their psychometric subjects, arranging conditions to that end, so as to destroy the genuine influences of the manuscripts; but I did say, and I now decidedly repeat it, that the influences of the minds of those gentlemen (unconsciously, no doubt, to themselves) did overcome the feeble influences of the writings themselves, as Dr. Slocum's letter conclusively proves so far as his reading is concerned.

Dr. S. quotes a sentence from my paper, stating that "in each instance the reading occurred in the presence of one acquainted with the nature of the writings and the character of the spirits presumed to have written them," and then goes on to say that this assertion in my case is "entirely erroneous and unwarranted." If this be true, then his reading of the James-writing must not have occurred in the presence of any one acquainted with its nature, etc. Yet, marvelous to relate, Dr. Slocum gives next a detailed account of his reading, and tells us, plainly and squarely, that "Mr. Miller was present when he made the examination. What on earth does Dr. Slocum mean by saying I am "entirely" wrong in asserting Mr. Miller was present at his reading, when he himself tells us Mr. Miller was present? My point was, that either Dr. Buchanan or Mr. Miller was present at every delineation of the writings, and that their views were reflected from the sensitives' minds in their readings." Dr. Slocum says this statement is false in toto so far as he is concerned, at the same time informing us that Mr. Miller was present, just as I affirmed. This is psychometric justification with a vengeance! Instead of my assertions being "entirely erroneous and unwarranted," it is those of Dr. Slocum's that can be so characterized most truthfully; not only in this instance, but in his totally uncalculated charge that I imputed wilful deception to Dr. Buchanan and Mr. Miller. I would advise Dr. Slocum to be more careful hereafter how he indulges in such reckless statements affecting the character and intellectual acumen of those at least his equals in mental grasp and moral stamina. Such style of logic, argument, and statement, reckless, inaccurate, and calumnious, is almost universally in vogue, however, among the advocates of the untenable theories of the unscientific modes of investigation, and of the loose and fanciful speculations, so common in certain spir-

herents and practitioners of "Diabolical Spiritualism,"—in which latter class I do not, however, include Dr. Slocum, Mr. Miller, or Dr. Buchanan, though, in some respects, they are playing into the hands of the "diabolicals."

Let it be remembered, that I asserted that the more potent influence of Messrs. Miller and Buchanan overpowered the feeble influence of the real author of the writings examined; but I had scarcely anticipated to see this truth so clearly demonstrated by the admissions of the parties involved, as Dr. Slocum has been kind enough to do. After taking the paper, he tells us, the first influence felt—the strongest emanating from the manuscript, he says—was that of Mr. Miller. Thank you, Dr. Slocum, for this admission, confirming my words exactly. Note: Dr. Slocum admits that the strongest influence felt from the manuscript was that of Mr. Miller, who gave him the writing, and who was present during its reading. Next he tells us he felt another influence, supposed to be that of the spirit-writer; but which in reality, no doubt, was a continuation of Mr. Miller's influence, an emanation from Mr. Miller's mind at the time,—corresponding to the impressions Mr. Miller held regarding the character of the writer of the manuscript,—which for the time being overcame the influence of the real writer, Mr. Alfred James. Afterwards, says Dr. Slocum, he felt the feeble influence of Mr. James, the medium. Can anything be plainer? The proof of my assertion of the preponderating influence of Mr. Miller over that of Mr. James is demonstrated almost beyond peradventure. No conscious fraud is involved in the matter, but Messrs. Miller and Slocum were honestly mistaken concerning the nature of the second influence experienced.

Another important fact: The writing examined by Mr. Slocum is alleged to be the penmanship, not of Mr. James, but of a materialized spirit-form distinct from Mr. James. If this be true, as Messrs. Miller & Co. would have us believe, Mr. James, being in the cabinet while the "spirit" wrote the message outside thereof, had nothing, in person, to do with the writing in question. How is it then that the writing gives off the influence of Mr. James, sufficiently to enable Dr. Slocum to describe his character therefrom? The truth is, Mr. James, disguised in the paraphernalia subsequently captured from him by Mr. Rice, was himself the writer of the manuscripts, and consequently his influence asserted itself after the more powerful influence of Mr. Miller had been sensed. So far from being a vindication of Mr. James' mediumship, these bogus writings furnish additional evidence of his guilt. And for a knowledge of all this we are indebted to Bro. Slocum. Again do we tender him our boundless thanks for his invaluable services in the cause of truth.

It is also significant, and worthy of more than passing notice, that in the published account of these psychometric readings Mr. Miller prudently suppressed all intimation of the mixed nature of the influences emanating from the manuscripts examined. He gave us only the impressions derived from the second of the influence, omitting all reference to the first and third—his own and the medium's,—leaving his readers to suppose that the only influence felt by the psychometer was that of the presumed spirit-writer. His reasons for this suppression are apparent. Dr. Slocum, being more ingenuous, has given us the whole truth, thereby furnishing us the data from which to clearly evidence the truth of my former assertions.

"We figure to ourselves
The thing we like, and then to build it up
As chance will have it, on the rock or sand;
For thought is tired of wandering o'er the world,
And homeward Fancy runs her bark ashore."
Justice, with her lifted scale,
Where, in nice balance, truth with gold she weighs,
And solid pudding against empty praise."

Prof. Samuel Willard, Teacher of History and Ex-President of the Philosophical Society, Frankly Expresses His Thoughts.

To the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal:
I thank you for the courtesy of several copies of your JOURNAL from time to time, and particularly for the recent one containing an editorial on Mr. Kiddle's book. It moves me to do what is for me unusual; not only to thank you, but frankly to express my own thoughts on the subject which you have so much at heart.
I say "unusual" because I generally prefer a character to prevent a man of ordinary literary or scientific culture from accepting them as reasonably attributable, in any sense, to the persons named. "Hit her is the reason why I can never be a Spiritualist, or as you prefer the name, a Spiritualist. I shud rejoice to find in the phenomena of Spiritism a real Spiritualism; that which end make me feel more sure that the departed great and good and the dear and sweet ones of this world live in another sphere; that there is, in some way, an open line of communication between us and them; that the experiences of this life illumine the souls of those that are gone, as they illumine their earthly lives—that they continue to grow wiser and better in that land so dim to us; and that they can reach back to us with love and help as much as can be had for us to receive, and with a hint now and then of the way of life and of the results of the land to which we tend,—only a hint—for we can see that life only as we

I see I shud rejoice in all this; and when the rappings begun thirty yers ago, I turned to them at wits with interest and hope. When a ner relativity of min became a medium, I watch the phenomena still mor interestedly. But the more I saw, the more I was disgusted. The miracle-mongering, much of which seemed to me no bet than the Popish delusions of Marpingen and Lourdes, was offensive; but the fizical phenomena wer in themselves az wel wurthil ov studl az Mesmerizm, Hypnotizm, Catalepsy, Somnambulizm, and the lik, only that I cud not afford tim to folw them. And no miracl cud prove enthring to me which mi Judgment cud not approve. A miracl tu pruv tu me that God wante-me to slay mi child in sacrific az poor Freeman slew his at Pocasset, lately, in short, tu pruv that God iz unreznabl and cruel, wud so for nothin. So I saw that no amount of the fizical phenomena wud pruv to me what they seemd to others to pruv. Indeed, men of the obsessions that I red ov, az in the Oakland case in California, had an opozit effect upon me: they go to sho me that if they ar the wurc ov spirits, thos spirits or such as hav escapd from som invisibl penitentiary, and whoselebrate their liberty bi harming mankind. Ther must be whole Texases of rascalz that brake out ov their appropriate netz from tim to tim, and thru "mediums" get at the urth agen.

So I let the fizical phenomena alone, and turned to the communications. Az mi father takes the "Banner of Light" and often gets other paprz, I had no lac ov "Lit from the Spirit-Land." I tasted ov A J Days, and other notabl. In result, I am in this conclusion: If what I see in the Spiritualist papers ar real communicashunz from the spirits of the ded, and still mor, if they ar from their reputed authors, then the ded hav not az much sens az the living; and it is sad tu think ov dying and sinking into such driveling, such inanity. I prefer annihilation. I have weighd wel al that iz sed about imperfection ov mediumz, difficulty ov getting control, etc., but at the end of 30 yers that excus wil not avail; surely somebod somwher haz become a tru medium for these hier powrz, if they ar the hier powrz; for these hangz, mi dud. Sombod iz all these 30 yers azot tu hav sed somthin. When Theodore Parker "controlz" Mrs. Richmond so that she can talk so fluently, I awt tu hear in what she sez som eco, at least, ov the strong man ov Music Hall. I awt not to find mer platitudz and comon plasez. It is not merely the stil that ofendz me: it iz the lac ov tho't, ov strong, uplifting, inspiring tho't. Why these pepl hav not yet cawt up with that old buc, the New Testament! In thirty yers I hav seen nothing in al this literatur that I wud exchange for on essay ov Emerson, one ov Paul's Epistles, or a page ov the Gospel of Christ as reported in the Gospels. I sez that these riters and spekers whether they ar ov this wurld or the next, hav all failed to find anywhers the truths of import deep that wer suggested to my mind long ago by St. Paul, and Calvin, and Swedenborg, and a score of other worthies. It iz the lac ov truth, the lac ov insit, the lac ov inspiration that makes me turn away from "Spiritualizm" with a hopeless disgust. Even the old truths are not rehashd with good favor. I refer entirely to the "communications." My Spiritualist friends can talk gud sens; but I don't want tu hear from them after deeth, for they will be then—flats and sentimentalists! I enjoy the editorial of John C. Bundy in the deeth, often; but save me from John C. Bundy az a gost! I luc for revelation: I find not evn what iz alreid non to me.

Excuse me for having ritn so much. I presume you hav herd the same trash ov tho't from others, so that what I say wil hav no novelty; but as we hav nev spokn on the subject, this will answer for a statement ov mi position, which it may not be undesirable to you to know, az we meet agin occasional.
But I began tu expres mi plechur with your editorial on the slopping-over ov poor Mr. Kiddle. If ther is truth in Spiritualizm which iz evr tu run and be glorified, Spiritualizm must get rid of its trash and rubbish, as Christianity is obligd to throw off its incumbrances that gather on it senturiz ago. Tho' your truth iz not mi truth, I am glad tu see you do this thing. Thro the mineral into the frash deers will burn, the gold remain. The churobes need criticism within az wel az without; so does Spiritualizm; I am glad to see you applying it freely and boldly.

Yours truly,
SAMUEL WILLARD.
P. S.—I beliv the first step in spelling reform iz to get peppl used to od ways of spelling. My faith and my works go together.
S. W.

Mr. Willard gives us to understand that he could not "afford" time to follow up his investigations into the "physical phenomena" of Spiritism. That is a pity; for if he could have afforded to do that, it might have saved him the trouble of writing the above communication.

He says that "no amount of the physical phenomena would prove to him what they seemed to prove." And he illustrates this by reference to poor Freeman, the Pocasset murderer. From the context it would seem, therefore, that what Mr. W. really means here is, that a message telling him to kill his child, could not, even if it were

that it came from God. It must have come (he would probably admit) either from a derangement of his own transcendent psychical powers, or from the influence of some depraved or insane spirit. A very sensible conclusion, and one quite analogous with that which, for some time, we have been trying to impress upon our readers in regard to supposed psychical or spiritual communications!

Mr. Willard would throw discredit on all so-called spiritual communications. "Somebody," he says, "in all these thirty years ought to have said something." When Theodore Parker controls Mrs. Richmond so that she can talk so fluently, I ought to see, in what she says, some echo at least of the strong man of Music Hall. I ought not to find mere platitudes and commonplaces. I have seen nothing in all this literature that I would exchange for one essay of Emerson's.

This disparagement of Mrs. Richmond is all unjust. We will stake what little critical reputation we may have upon the assertion that Mrs. Richmond has uttered many things that Parker in his best days could not have matched. We believe that many of her trauce utterances may come from her own psychical intuitions prompting the speculative and rhetorical faculty. But she has made splendid contributions to the coming science of psychology, and she could never have uttered such a blunder as Emerson himself uttered in his late paper on Demology in these words:

"There are many things of which a wise man might wish to be ignorant, and these spiritual phenomena are such. Show them as you would the secrets of the undertaker and the butcher."

As if a wise man ought to court ignorance of any "thing," truth or fact, in God's universe. As if one ought not intrepidly to face even devils, if they can bring him truth! What shall our poor dumb fellow-creatures, bird and beast, be slaughtered inhumanly for our benefit, and we try not to know about it? The sentiment is that of an intellectual poltroon, and wholly unworthy of the Concord sage. Think you that Mrs. Richmond could have been guilty of such a "platitude"? We doubt it.

Perhaps five per cent. of human beings in civilized lands, are original thinkers, persons of culture; morally and mentally well equipped. And perhaps five per cent. of the denizens of the Spirit-world represent them. Now, Mr. Willard's assertion that there are no good and great communications, worthy of the pen of a Fenelon, a Channing or a Berkeley; gracefully, vigorously and accurately written, penetrated with fresh, noble truths, and full of a divine and everlasting wisdom. Such communications may be rare, but they are numerous enough not to be exceptional. Their proportion in regard to the mass is what we might expect.

Look at the grand utterances of the late S. J. Finney, full of a quickening inspiration. Some of his best passages equal the best we can find in Parker or in Emerson, and surpass them in philosophical depth. Look at the poems of Harris and Lizle Dotten. Surely no person of literary taste can fail to see that these disprove Mr. Willard's sweeping remark. We could greatly extend this list.

We regret that so good and gifted a man as Mr. Willard should "turn away from Spiritualizm with hopeless disgust." But as he has not as yet been able to "afford" time to follow the phenomena in all their aspects and bearings, we cannot but hope that he may live to investigate profoundly, and thus reverse his judgment. We know of many good, unflinching Spiritualists, who, after considerable experience of it, turned away from it in disgust. Some great awakening phenomenon at length convinced them of its essential truth; and the bad in it, like the bad in human nature, or in the earth itself, was accounted for as being vastly outweighed by the good, present or prospective, and as indeed necessary to the development of the good. Eternity is a long stretch, and there is time, beloved, even for spirits and robbers of savings-banks to reform, and to write sensible communications, such as will content even Mr. Willard.

Adam and Eve knew naught of the sweets

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JNO. C. BUNDY, Editor. J. R. FRANCIS, Associate Editor.

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LOCATION: 92 and 94 LaSalle St., Northwest corner of LaSalle and Washington Sts. CHICAGO, ILL., JUNE 14, 1879.

Our contemporaries, both religious and secular, as well as the clergy and all searchers after the truth, are particularly invited to a careful and candid study of the articles in this issue entitled, respectively: "Spirits in and out of the Flesh," "The Psychical and the Spiritual," "Another Dodge," also Prof. Willard's communication and our remarks thereon, and the contents generally.

Another Dodge.

To our question why it is, that if some centuries ago the man Jesus could tell the woman of Samaria "all the things that she ever did," it is incredible that a similar power should be manifested by modern clairvoyants,—the Alliance replies: "We should say, at a venture, because the modern clairvoyant is a very different character from Jesus the Christ."

But does difference of character imply difference of nature? Are we to be told that Christ was cheating his contemporaries when he was giving them to believe that he was "a son of man," a purely human being, divine only as it is possible for every well-conditioned man to become divine by exalting his own nature, and aiming at divine possibilities? We know there is an evangelical cat hidden in the meal; but the reply to our question is none the less an evangelical dodge on that account.

He goes on to claim that he has been a diligent investigator of Spiritualism. Has he ever witnessed the phenomenon of direct writing, independent of any visible or known human co-operation? If he has not witnessed it, then he is not an investigator in the true sense; and if he has witnessed it, then will he be so obliging as to explain by what theory of a force, other than the spiritual, he can explain it? It explains nothing to call it a "psychic force," or a "natural force."

Our contemporary tells us that he is not quite sure that he was not "controlled by the mesmerism" of the female medium when he saw a piano rise from the ground. But if he is so sensitive to influences from the gentler sex, as not really to know when he has his senses about him, how can he be assured that he was not "under control," spiritual or human, when he wrote his present article?

For a man who claims to have investigated our phenomena, he shows a strange ignorance. He tells us that the same medium who convinced Professor Crookes in London came to Philadelphia, and sent Robert Dale Owen to the mad-house. This is a miserable tissue of misstatements. The medium who convinced Crookes was Florence Cooke (never in this country and never charged with fraud). The mediums who deceived Owen were Mr. and Mrs. Holmes, undoubtedly genuine mediums, though at times tricky. So far is it from being true that Spiritualism induced insanity in Owen, his physicians testified publicly that Spiritualism had nothing to do with it.

Without recognizing the spiritual force in a phenomenon precisely like that which started Belshazzar at his feast, the Alliance drops into flippancy, and gives the follow-

ing highly scientific hypothesis in regard to a force, which can write intelligible sentences, without hands or mechanism, and produce flexible hands and faces and forms moved by intelligence, out of what to our senses is absolute vacuity:

"We do not deny the presence of this force in the world, but we do not believe that spirits have any more to do with it than the north wind has. We believe that it is a natural force, and one that will be used some day very practically. We believe that man will sometime by exerting this force, call it mesmeric, magnetic, electric, psychic, or what you will, be able to move material objects at will, and are of the opinion that were it thoroughly understood, it would work in-mighty hands about the first of May in Chicago. It is indeed surprising that some enterprising Spiritualist has not put his psychical powers to practical use in this direction before now."

If this is serious talk, as it seems to be in part, what shall we think of the writer's scientific genius? Imagine a "psychic force" doing the work of a porter or car-man on the first of May! We, too, believe it to be a "natural force." The writer's remark that "it is childish to accredit the phenomena to a supernatural force" falls flat and pointless, so far as we are concerned. But a visibly unembodied force, moved by intelligence, having volition, affection, and common sense, comes pretty closely up to the vulgar idea of a spirit; such an idea as has been the same as it is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

The Alliance, gravely checking itself in its playful vein, goes on to say:

"We would not seem to make light of any religion. God forbid. And if we could see any evidence that Spiritualism is a religion at all we would not speak these jesting words about it. But we cannot. We have seen the system bring forth a crop of long-haired men and short-haired women; some who look wise and live in an unhealthy, unreal world, women who neglect home and family, and the domestic circle, and become daff on a subject that does them no good. We have seen strong-minded men deteriorate in character under it, and finally end up far from them, and while there are of course exceptions to the rule, we believe our friend of the Journal, with his courageous exposure of the frauds that infest his 'religion' to be one we must say that judging Spiritualism by its fruits, sooner, who expect it to be more than a mere fad. Our contemporary has asked for our judgment on Spiritualism. We have given a general reply. If he wants a bill of particulars and a history of our investigation of Spiritualism, and will open his columns to us, we will give them to him. It would make a story that our readers would not like to have told in these columns."

We at once accept the proposition here made, accompanied of course with the condition that the Alliance opens its columns to our replies. Herewith we open our columns for its exposure. We have always courted, and court still, the utmost scrutiny into our basis of facts. Bring on your lanterns, and search out our weak places. Our house is not built on the sands. We have no fear that what has existed through all the generations, ever since the world began, is to be shaken at this late day by anything which this shallow dealer with our facts can say. Spiritualism is here not to destroy, but to confirm. His gross misrepresentations show his ignorance. His obsolete slang about "long-haired men and short-haired women," shows the uncharitable temper of his vituperations. Even such were the epithets applied to the early abolitionists; but they knew (just as we know) they had the eternal truth on their side, and they fought bravely on till the fight ended in such a moral cakewalk as the world will never forget.

We are not so young that we cannot remember when the two great leaders, Wm. Lloyd Garrison and George Thompson, were called "long-haired" by conservative journals like the Alliance. Both men tried to become most earnest and uncovering Spiritualists. Their convictions on the subject had the force of certainties. Thompson's daughter, Mrs. Noworthy, testifies to his supreme faith; and all Garrison's neighbors in Roxbury know that he believed as fully. In intercommunication with departed friends, objectively presenting themselves, as in interviews with the living. We have letters from him confirming all this. And these men were of the "crop," to which our Christian critic so insolently refers!

As for the "insanity," which the Alliance charges on Spiritualists, Dr. Crowell, of Brooklyn, by statistics carefully got and correlated from all the lunatic asylums of the United States, has proved the brutal mendacity of the charge. The refutation has often appeared in our columns. And as for the "illicitiousness": We will promise the Alliance that we will pick out, from its own "evangelical" crew, twenty libidinous prodigates for every one that it will pick out of the ranks of Spiritualism. In a following that numbers its millions, what student of human nature would not expect to find some weak-minded ones and some depraved?

Spiritualism, by its objective phenomena, is now placed beyond the reach of harm from such aspersions. Its future is secure. If every other visible proof were wanting the stupendous phenomenon of direct writing would suffice to establish its truth. There is nothing so brutally conclusive as a fact; and having the fact we know the utter impotence of all attempts to kick against it. The triumph of Spiritualism is merely a question of time. Calculating its future by its past, another century will not elapse before its psychology will be as much an installed truth of science as the Copernican system.

"Deterioration of character!" What of the defaulters and robbers of savings-banks, who, while resting on the very bosom of the evangelical church, were swindling the community? The charge that any genuine, clear-headed Spiritualist is made the worse by his belief, is an insinuation born of bigotry and malice. What of Richard Baxter, author of "The Saint's Rest"? He based his belief in immortality on our facts. What of John Wesley? He had the phenomena in his own house, and on three occasions saw recognizable human apparitions, which were followed in every instance by news of the death of the person manifesting. Did Spiritualism make him worse? It was the very life-spring of his noble and lengthened career, as it was also of his brother Charles.

What of Dr. Elliotson? After teaching a crass materialism up to his 67th year, one little phenomenon in the presence of D. D. Home, satisfied him that he had been wrong, and he became a reader of the Bible and a devout Spiritualist, deriving infinite consolation therefrom. What of Garrison, Thompson, Owen, Howitt, Thomas Shorter, W. M. Wilkinson, Lord Brougham, Lord Lyndhurst, Senator Wade, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Mrs. DeMorgan, Bishop Clark of Rhode Island, Justinus Kerner, I. H. Fichte, Eschenmayer, Oberlin, Plutarch, Robert Hare, Gorres, Goethe Novalls, Guldenstubbé, and thousands more, equally gifted and sincere? How do names like these give the lie to the ignorant, malignant charge!

When will the writer in the Alliance send in his "bill of particulars," under the conditions?

Spirits In and Out of the Flesh.

The Chicago Inter-Ocean of May 19th quotes a portion of our remarks upon Mr. Kiddle's book, entitled "Spiritual Communications," and adds the following comments:

"It will accept to those outside of the spiritualistic faith that in throwing cold water on Mr. Kiddle's enthusiasm, the organ of the Spiritualists has given good reason for closer examination of the pretensions of all mediums, and has adopted a course of reason, that if followed to its logical conclusion, will cause all the so-called spiritual manifestations to be graded with those that have fascinated and captivated Mr. Kiddle. In showing the weakness of the new convert, the Journal has cut away the pedestals on which stand the pioneers of the faith, and has struck a sweeping blow at the whole army of mediums. Mr. Kiddle's reasoning is much like that which people have heard from others, and if it is so readily disposed of, it would seem not difficult to find flaws in what has been previously said."

If we have given "good reason for closer examinations of the pretensions of all mediums," as our contemporary says, it is in strict accordance with the purpose of our journal, which is the elimination of the truth and the rejection of all that is unverified. That the "logical conclusion" of such a course will be to reduce "all the so-called spiritual manifestations" to the level of Mr. Kiddle's, we do not believe; or if we did, it would make no difference, since the simple truth is what we want, irrespective of any personal predilections, and no matter what illusions may be sacrificed in getting at it.

It is quite a mistake to suppose, as our contemporary appears to do, that the "pioneers" of Spiritualism made such doubtful communications as those given in Mr. Kiddle's book the basis of their spiritual faith; or that they relied solely or principally on communications of any sort for their convictions as to those psychical phenomena from which they infer that, notwithstanding the assertions of Prof. Newcomb, Huxley and Tyndall to the contrary, there is evidence of a soul in man; that there is a basis of facts, objective and subjective, to prove this scientifically. We repeat it: What we accept as Spiritualism unadorned, pure, and simple, has a strictly scientific foundation. Even if the theory of the immediate agency of independent spirits, external to the human organism, were abandoned altogether, the phenomena are of a character to satisfy any patient investigator that the old-fashioned notion of an immortal soul is true; and that man, even here in the earth-life, is essentially and substantially a spirit.

Mr. E. W. Cox, President of the Psychological Society of London, does not accept our theory of the intervention of independent spirits in the production of many of the phenomena on which we build; but he knows enough of those phenomena to satisfy him that man has spiritual endowments, and is therefore potentially a spirit; and he says: "I do not shrink from the avowal of more than of mere faith—a firm conviction, induced by positive evidences derived from this examination of the mechanism of man at rest and in action—that soul is a part of that mechanism—that man is in fact a soul clothed with a body—that for this soul there is a future, and, in this future, God."

We hold, then, that man even in this life, though subject to the limitations, the needs, and the obstructions of a physical body, gives evidence of faculties that ought to bring him into relations, conscious or unconscious, with deceased human beings or spirits; that he is indeed himself a spirit plus a material organism adapted to his temporary sojourn on this planet. Psychically, as well as physically, he is at once a unity and a complex being. He has grades or conditions of consciousness, and these, if not literally separate, are yet so distinct that he may not carry with him, from one state into another, certain contents of his memory. Yet all these contents persist unimpaired, and are open to the scrutiny of consciousness in its higher states.

We do not here indulge in purely speculative notions; we present deductions from the verified phenomena of somnambulism. Even the minutest acquisitions of memory are imperishable.

A sensitive subject, in certain states, manifests clairvoyance and other remarkable gifts. Miss Fancher reads the contents of a torn letter in a sealed envelope. Young Mozart shows transcendent powers as a musician at five years of age. Blüder, Colburn, Safford and others exhibit abnormal and almost inconceivable powers of computation. There are states in which mental action takes place with wonderful celerity; results are arrived at inexplicable to the normal consciousness and wholly beyond our normal capabilities. It requires the theory of a distinct psychical consciousness and of high psychical endowments in the individual to explain them.

And again there may be mental action and a state of consciousness lower than the normal, or but little above it; and in this state what is called automatic writing, or ordinary trance speaking, may be practiced and the so-called medium may quite innocently believe that the writing or the speaking is not the product of his own mind.

So far is it from being true, that "pioneers" in Spiritualism would have accepted Mr. Kiddle's communications as spiritual in the sense demanded, we have already adduced the fact that Plutarch, more than eighteen hundred years ago, discussed this very question in an analogous form, and adopted views in harmony with our own; namely, that the psychical powers of the sensitive are sufficient to explain clairvoyance, automatic writing, trance speaking, and kindred phenomena, and that in these we do not always require the theory of spirit action independent of the individual.

Still, that spirits may and do communicate with man in certain states, generally obscure to his normal consciousness, is fully admitted; and hence come the doubts as to whether a communication belongs exclusively to the supposed medium, or whether it may come wholly or in part from a spirit. In adopting the former theory as the more probable in a large majority of cases, we by no means repudiate the belief that communications, written or oral, may also come from some influencing spirit.

Of course it is easy to "find flaws" in all communications, whether spiritual or human. Mr. Kiddle's reasoning is "readily disposed of," because in these cases we have only the internal evidence by which to discriminate between a purely human, or physico-psychical, production and one that comes from a disembodied spirit. We must always fall back on our human reason, and "try the spirits" by that. From the first this has been the view of critical investigators; for they have seen that in regard to this question of identity, if Plato declares to us through one medium that he wrote a certain communication, and through another that he had nothing to do with it, we must decide the question for ourselves by such lights as reason and experience can supply.

If, as our facts teach, the spirit, the veritable man, inheres in a non-atomic or indissoluble organism, intermediate between our coarse material envelope and the divinely imparted life, the fact of our sharing spiritual powers with spirits themselves, is made not only possible but more than probable. Phenomena occurring on the border line of freed and still fettered spirits, must therefore often be difficult of discrimination; and Spiritualists may be misled by attributing to one side of the border what is due to the other. Each class of phenomena corroborates the other, and the fact that mistakes in discrimination often occur is not at all surprising. We can well find excuses therefore for one like Mr. Kiddle, whose investigations are as yet immature.

The Psychical and the Spiritual.

A volunteer correspondent of the Inter-Ocean, under the signature of Horatio, attacks our journal for its critical remarks on Mr. Kiddle's book, as well as for other audacities, and says: "How is the unsophisticated public to draw the line between actual spirit-control and involuntary cerebration?" The meaning commonly attached to the word unsophisticated is, not skilled, simple. And so the obvious reply is: The unsophisticated public must take the trouble to study and think for themselves. Of what value are a man's convictions unless they are the result of his own thinking, aided by such light as he can get from other thinkers. The experienced investigator soon finds out that the phenomena force him to draw the line between the reliable and the unreliable in spirit communications. There is no choice for him in the case.

Here are two messages (claiming to be from St. Paul, and each gives the lie to the other: Are we to accept both as genuine? The laws of reason prevent. Are we to accept both as from spirits, though mendacious ones? To answer this, we must fall back on our knowledge of mental phenomena; and see how far these may offer analogies with the act of automatic writing. We find plenty of analogies: Sleeping dreams, waking dreams or reveries, states induced by drugs or intoxicating liquors, certain forms of disease, all offer phenomena very similar to that of automatic writing. Why need we then go outside of the mind's own complexities for a solution of a large percentage of the phenomena? That some of them are directly spiritual we not only admit, but claim. The psychical confirm the spiritual, and vice versa.

Dr. John Garth Wilkinson, whose "Improvisations" were automatic, speaks of this kind of writing as coming "from an influx which is really out of yourself, or so far within yourself as to amount to the same thing." He says:

"The first impression upon the mind which succeeds the act of writing the title, is the beginning of the evolution of that theme; no matter how strange or alien the word or phrase may seem. The inspiration is written down, and then another, and another, until the piece is concluded."

Here is a specimen of the strange stuff he produced under these conditions in a piece called "The Diamond":

"Star of the flowers, and flowers of the stars, And earth of the earth, and earth of the earth, And darkness hath battles, and earth hath wars, That pass in thy beautiful brow, Thou wert born on a day when the sun was at rest, And peace in his heart was profound; The sign of contentment went waving his breast, And thou wert his silence of sound."

Horatio asks: "Truly, if the manifestations through Mr. Kiddle's children be the product of abnormal powers, unconsciously

exercised, then may not all the so-called spiritualistic communications be explained on the same ground?"

We were once walking with a friend, when he fell on the ice and broke his arm. We were close by a surgeon's house, and took him in. The surgeon gave him chloroform, and our friend, while under the effect of it, and while having his arm set, talked continuously, showing method and wit in his remarks. Suddenly he became silent, and the minute afterwards passed into his normal state. Not a word could he recall of all that he had said. There seemed to be a partition wall between the abnormal consciousness and the normal. Now why should not his abnormal talk be as properly credited to the influence of spirits, as the automatic writing of Mr. Kiddle's children?

The reasons why "all the spiritualistic communications" cannot be explained by the theory of psychism are, (1) A communication may show a degree of scholarship which we know the medium does not possess, as where the writing is in Hebrew, Arabic, Chinese, Chaldaic or Greek; (2) It may expose facts in regard to the medium, such as he would never have uttered consciously; (3) It may be so elevated and accurately scientific in tone as to be irreconcilable with the theory that it came from the medium's brain; (4) It may be written or impressed instantaneously by some direct intelligent power upon a slate or paper, without any physical action by the medium; and in this case it may be legitimately inferred that it is spiritual, even though it come from the medium's own spirit.

It will be seen that we make this distinction between the terms psychical and spiritual: The former we give to such phenomena as can be explained without going out of the human organism; while the latter we apply to a phenomenon like psychography (or, more properly pneumatography) where the force is external to the human organism.

The true way is, to judge of a spiritual communication, first by the external conditions under which it was produced; and then by its intrinsic character, style, and merit. Try the spirits, and try their utterances; and do not suppose that very poor stuff written by a spirit has any advantage over stuff equally poor, written by a mortal—except in the fact that in the former case evidence comes to us of the existence of a spirit, though not an exalted one. To the skeptic this may be a great fact; but to the skilled investigator it is nothing new or surprising.

Visit to the Home of E. V. Wilson.

Last week we spent the late afternoon hours and night with Bro. Wilson at his farm in Lombard, some twenty miles from Chicago, in one of the finest farming districts in the world. We found the old veteran stretched upon a sick bed where he has lain since his return from the East and from which he has had near views of the Spirit-world. Though weak and desperately ill, having been given up to die by his physician, the tried soldier has never evinced the slightest trepidation; all is clear before him, his intellect is as bright and his old characteristics which have rendered him so marked in his public career, still retain their full force.

His faithful, devoted wife and loving family bear the affliction with the faith and courage which can come only from absolute personal knowledge of the great truths of Spiritualism. Brother Wilson has apparently passed the crisis of his illness and will in time, we hope, be able to again take the lecture field.

During the evening, the members of the family, in accordance with their every day custom, assembled in the parlor and held a circle for communion with the Spirit-world. Mrs. Wilson is a well developed medium, and the two daughters are also possessed of strong medial powers of which we had satisfactory evidence during the sitting. These evening circles are to this family, what family prayer is to the orthodox household. Mrs. Wilson and the children all testify to the great good they derive from the custom, both mentally and physically. After the circle was over and the family had retired, their guest wandered out over the farm, and long after midnight found himself in the fields. The moon shining out of a cloudless sky, the myriads of stars, the fragrance of the grass, flowers and trees, the profound quiet only broken by the twittering of the birds, all combined to produce upon the tired denizen of the city a most happy and inspiring effect. No wonder that with such a pure, natural ennobling environment, Bro. Wilson's family have developed medial powers; on such a farm, and especially in the month of June, the angels must love to visit and all the more when they are made so welcome.

In the morning we spent a quiet half hour in the sick chamber, and leaving the sick man looking more cheery and bright than when we came, hurried back on the early train to the city.

EXPERIENCES of old Spiritualists which are now appearing in our columns, are of great value in making the history of the Movement, and to new investigators. The country is full of rich material which should be recorded. Let every one who has clear well authenticated cases of phenomena stored up in his personal experiences, write them out carefully and concisely in the briefest space consistent with completeness, and send them to us; we will publish as fast as possible and in the order received.

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A Biographical Sketch of Mr. Epes Sargent.

During the last thirty years various brief newspaper memoirs of Mr. Sargent have appeared in America, and from these, though they make no mention of his connection with Spiritualism, the following biographical account is partly compiled:

Mr. Epes Sargent, whose name has long been in the list of our correspondents, is a native of Gloucester, a picturesque maritime town twenty-eight miles from Boston, U. S. A. While he was yet a child his family moved to Boston, and at nine years of age he entered the Public Latin School, where, in the study of Latin and Greek, he stayed five years, with the exception of six months which he passed in making a visit with his father to Denmark and Russia.

Returning to America, he resumed his place at the Latin School, and soon afterward was admitted a student of Harvard College. He did not, however, remain there till graduation, but accepted a situation as assistant in the editorial department of The Advertiser, the Boston daily paper. Subsequently his services were transferred to the Daily Atlas, where he had opportunities of passing part of the year at Washington, during the sessions of Congress, as political correspondent. Here he was admitted to the familiar personal acquaintance of Webster, Clay, Calhoun, Preston, Chief Justice Marshall and other eminent public men.

Both Poe and Willis have something to say of Mr. Sargent's appearance at this time. Poe speaks of him as "somewhat short of stature and of gentlemanly address," and says of his sea poems, "They evince a fine fancy, with a keen appreciation of the beautiful in natural scenery."

Mr. Sargent wrote four plays, which were successfully represented—The Genoa, in which Josephine Clifton, and afterwards Charlotte Cushman and her sister appeared; Velasco, founded on legends of the Cid, which was brought out by Miss Ellen Tree (afterwards Mrs. Charles Keane) in America, and subsequently by Mrs. Mowatt and Mr. Davenport in London and Edinburgh, and in regard to which Serjeant Taft, author of Ion, wrote a complimentary letter; Change makes Change, a comedy, brought out by Burton, a favorite comedian; and The Priestess, produced in Boston with considerable success.

Some of his early poetical ventures were published in The Coleridge and Harbinger, in company with his now famous colleague, Oliver Wendell Holmes. About 1840, Sargent's first volume of poems appeared, under the title of Shells and Seaweed—written, many of them, on a voyage to Cuba in a sailing vessel. His Life on the Ocean Wave, set to music by Henry Russell became instantly popular as a song in America, while in England, as it was not copyrighted, it was issued by some half dozen music publishers, and is still one of the "live songs."

The late Edmund Sears, himself a poet, and author of Foreleggs of Immortality, called attention in the Unitarian Review to the following passage, Homeric in its movement, as remarkable for its beauty. It is from one of Sargent's poems, and is descriptive of the coming of night in Summer in Gloucester Harbor:

"But when the moon shone crescent in the west, And the faint outline of the port obscured, Threadlike, curved visible from horn to horn, And splinter, sprang among the oaks, And Mars with rattling beam came forth, And the great concave opened like a flower, Unfolding firmaments and galaxies, Sparkling with separate stars, or snowy white With undistinguishing suns beyond— They paused and rested on their oars again, And looked around—in adoration looked— For, existing on the inconceivable, They felt God is, though inconceivable."

In 1852 the great Massachusetts Senator, Daniel Webster, celebrated for his fine personal appearance, and with whom Mr. Sargent had been on intimate terms in Washington, died, and the poet was called on for the words of a dirge to be sung at a memorial celebration in Quincy. He wrote the following:

"Night of the tomb! he has enjoyed thy portal; Silence of death! he is wrapped in thy shade; All of the gifted and great that is mortal, In the earth—where the ocean-mist creeps— is laid."

of elocutionary selections and translations, the success of which was very marked. These were followed by three series of reading-books, a book of original dialogues, and a much-praised work on etymology, forming twenty-two volumes in all. They are still largely in use in American schools.

During the civil war he appeared for the first time as a public speaker, and made some spirited speeches, which, as published, were widely copied, and served a patriotic purpose. They drew forth letters of warm congratulation from Charles Sumner, one of the friends of his boyhood. Mr. Sargent also wrote a popular novel, entitled Peculiar, published by Carleton, New York, and of which sixteen thousand copies were sold, though it was an eight shilling volume. An edition in three volumes was published in London by Hirst & Blackett, under the auspices of Mr. William Howitt.

In 1868, having suffered from a bronchial affection, Mr. Sargent was advised by his physician to pass the winter in the south of France; and he established himself at Cannes, on the Mediterranean. During his brief stay in England he made the personal acquaintance of Mr. W. M. Wilkinson, Mr. Thomas Shorter, Lady Cathness, Mr. William White, Dr. Ashburner, and other prominent Spiritualists. He also renewed his acquaintance with Mr. Benjamin Coleman and Mr. D. D. Home, the distinguished medium. Prof. Francis W. Newman, author of many much esteemed works, who had long been his correspondent, was also now personally sought out and greeted. Mr. Sargent had received a letter from Charles Dickens, thanking him for his novel, and he was preparing to call and renew his acquaintance with him, when news came of the great novelist's death.

To Spiritualists Mr. Sargent's connection with the modern spiritual movement will be perhaps of more interest than his literary career. His attention was drawn to mesmerism about the year 1837, when he was in his twenty-fourth year. He had witnessed in Boston the experiments of Dr. Collyer, a young Englishman, the same who later, in his old age, testified in London to the genuineness of the phenomena through Slade. Mr. Sargent saw much in Collyer's exhibition to excite his attention and curiosity. Soon afterwards, in New York, he had opportunities of studying the subject in his own way. Dr. Channing, a well-known physician, introduced him to a sensitive, the phenomena in whose presence he studied for two years under circumstances that precluded the possibility of deception. By the exercise of his own volition he satisfied himself of the mesmerizer's power over his subject. Of clairvoyance, thought-reading, insensibility to pain through mesmerism, he also became fully convinced. When the phenomena at Hydeville broke out in 1847 he was editing the Boston Transcript, and through its columns did much to direct public attention to the subject.

The mental phenomena he was fully prepared to admit, as they harmonized entirely with his mesmeric experience; but it was only after a long course of investigation that he accepted the physical marvels. The Cartesian notes that spirit can have no power over matter—that it is diametrically antagonistic—perhaps had some part in his prejudices. But the stress of facts was eventually too much for his a priori theories. He yielded after five years of study and experiment, having repeatedly proved, in his own home, under the most stringent conditions, the actual occurrence of the leading phenomena.

Having thus become finally and forever convinced of the basic truth of Spiritualism, he omitted no opportunity of passing on the truth-torch to others. In 1857 he published a succinct history of Modern Spiritualism, under the title of Planchette; or, the Despair of Science, a title which might have answered well enough for a pamphlet, but which hardly does justice to a work so earnest and comprehensive as this really is. In spite of its title, however, it has passed through four editions, and is still in demand. The Rev. Austin Phelps, D. D., refers to it as "written by the most scholarly of the American defenders of Spiritualism." Mr. William Crookes wrote of it in 1874: "Planchette was the first book I read on Spiritualism, and it still remains, in my opinion, the best work to place in the hands of the uninitiated."

In 1875, Mr. Epes Sargent put forth The Proof Palpable of Immortality, a volume of 288 well-filled pages, devoted chiefly to the materialization phenomena, but also to the discussion of moral and religious questions pertaining to Spiritualism. In 1876 he wrote a reply to Prof. Tyndall's severe attack on Spiritualism, a reply which attracted great attention in America, and was hailed as "the right word at the right time." He also wrote (1877) the article on Spiritualism for Appleton's new Encyclopedia.

These works give but an imperfect idea of Mr. Sargent's activity in the cause of Spiritualism. By his contributions, some under his own name, but most of them anonymous, in various journals, English and American, and by a very extensive correspondence, he has, as Mr. Stanton-Moses says of him, been "indefatigable in his attempts to convince an unwilling world that there is in and around us something more than materialists would have to believe."

For the last ten years Mr. Sargent has been in a precarious state of health, but has found time for much hard literary work. He is now (1879) engaged on a Cyclopaedia of English and American Poetry for the great New York house of the Messrs. Harper. It is to be a large volume of a thousand pages in double columns, elegantly illustrated, and containing much critical and biographical matter. The compiler's trained and experienced taste in poetry and art justifies us in expecting a work of rare excellence and attractiveness.—The London Spiritualist.

The distinguished Shaker, Elder Eads, delivered a sermon at Louisville, Kentucky, May 12th, in which he took the position that "The Devil is Dead." He was sure he was dead, though he presented the following argument by a negro, to the contrary: "Sah, you need not tell dis nigger dar is no debbil, kase if dah was no debbil, how does da make de picters so zackly like him? Wid dem big claws and dat great chain around his neck and de angel a holden him in de pit till God gets ready to turn him loose. When dat time comes, see if you will den say dar is no debbil?"

The Boston Herald reports that the Hon. N. P. Banks has become interested in Spiritualism. Two noted Boston mediums have recently been regaling him with spirit flowers and spirit voices at his house in Waltham. It is asserted by a Georgia paper that a young lady in Wilkes county, that state, born blind, can distinguish colors by the touch. Cases of the same sort have been known before.

Poor Bennett's Martyrdom.

In the late sentence of \$300 fine and thirteen months in prison, passed upon Mr. Bennett, of the Truth Seeker, by the United States Circuit Court in the city of New York, for sending obscene matter through the mails, there is food for much reflection on the part of all the parties concerned; far more we judge than either of them seems yet to have given to the subject. The prosecutor, Mr. Comstock, has probably not reflected that the chief desideratum essential to give a large sale to an immoral work, is not the use of the United States mails but of the United States Courts. The mails supply merely a means of transportation. If the demand for the work is sufficiently great, means of transportation will supply themselves. The chief essential to a large sale is that gratuitous advertising which shall create a public demand for the book itself. No form of gratuitous advertising is so valuable to the publisher, as to convert the government of the United States into the advertising agent, and the courts of justice into an open unpaid advertising column. These learned counsel, who otherwise would not have allowed the paltry, lewd and frivolous pamphlet to come within reach of their aristocratic noses, will under the stimulus of a moderate fee, or many of them even for the notoriety which a lascivious trial-scene affords, without any fee, pore and quote and compare the worthless and dirty texts of a pamphlet which else would not have paid the cost of printing. Millions who read their speeches, wish to buy the swashy trifle. Their motive is not to see whether it is obscene but whether the court ruled and the counsel argued correctly.

This mode of advertising immoral literature is effective. If Mr. Comstock is short in his salary, or in any way lacks compensation for this kind of work, Mr. Bennett could well afford to make it up to him. The prosecution is therefore a success if its object is to advertise immoral literature and the publisher who sells it. Through it the Haywood pamphlet and Mr. Bennett personally have had the benefit of the circulation of every newspaper in the country. This is a notoriety much beyond the merits of either. All this has been done at the cost of some injury to the cause of liberal thought. It has lent its aid to confirm an impression that no person can free himself from superstition without falling immediately into Meentousness. Every so-called liberal thinker who countenances the circulation of pamphlets concerning sexual matters which are "crude and in bad taste," as Mr. Bennett in his petition to President Hayes concedes this to have been, does more than Pope or Spanish inquisition to rivet the bands of superstition on the consciences of the people. He is the sworn servant of superstition. The Catholic and Protestant priesthood could as well afford to salary him for his services in identifying morality with superstition, as he (Bennett) could afford to pay Comstock for advertising the utterly trashy, stupid and insignificant pamphlet, which has caused all this disturbance. Mr. Bennett, therefore, has done the cause of free and liberal thought as great a disservice as was in his limited power, though one from which it will readily recover.

It is a very grave question, however, whether it is he or the court which has sentenced him, that has violated federal law. Indeed, what we chiefly regret in the whole matter, is that those who go about to punish the circulation of ephemeral and trashy pamphlets as immoral, should indirectly identify the circulator of such documents with grave principles of constitutional law and civil liberty. Those who would gladly see him punished, under some state law, are not ready to see Free Press silenced, even in his person. They are compelled to intervene, not for his sake nor in behalf of his immoral trade, but in denunciation of the illegal mode of attempting to punish it. Doubtless the Post-office should have the privilege of refusing to carry (immoral, obscene or lewd matter. If an action were brought against the Post Master for a refusal to carry a book or pamphlet, its immorality, if proven, should be a sufficient defence. The United States, as a government, has clearly the right and duty to protect itself from becoming a parveyor of obscene literature. So far the motive underlying the passage and enforcement of the act which Bennett is convicted of violating, is an excellent one; far better than his motive in violating it. The sympathies of all virtuous people who clearly comprehend the subject, and of all cultured minds of whatever faith, are, as to motives, with the prosecution. It is this very object of cases in which the law would be enforced, no profound interest would be felt in it. It would be dropped in silence as a merely irregular mode of punishing an unquestionably vicious act. The public would feel, however, that the pitiable vice of pandering to low, brutish natures deserved rebuke. Far more, the despicable attempt of seeking to identify such brutish sensualism with the cause of intellectual freedom, should be stopped. No person is justified in professing liberal thought who does not believe that intellectual freedom and social vice are at antipodes with each other. As a rule the least superstitious are the most pure in morals, and per contra, the most superstitious are the least pure.

We cordially sympathize with every lawful attempt to suppress that class of mean and crawling pamphlets, which are intended not for the intellectual, but for the infantile, and therefore of necessity for the superstitious. But we are not in favor of having a federal censorship of the press sprung upon us in the form of a post-office regulation. If federal officials can suppress the circulation of uninteresting and trashy pamphlets as being obscene, they can in like manner suppress works like those of L. N. and O. B. Fowler, George Combe and many others which treat the physical and moral aspects of the marriage question scientifically, and from a very large and painstaking observation. Who is to decide what are well written and what are badly written works upon the marriage relation? Shall we say that the press is to be as silent as the pulpit as to the most important factor in human progress? Not so! The liberal position is that the sexual relation is a proper one for scientific and moral discussion. Bad and useless works on such questions, like worthless and ill-written works on all other questions, will die of their own cost and worthlessness, unless some formidable agency like the government of the United States is set to work to advertise them. This can only be done through the aid of pseudo reformers, who, as Mr. Greeley used to say, really mean to do the world better, but don't know how. Doubtless Comstock and his friend really hope the cause of Christ will be promoted by converting the Government of the United States into a bill-poster and general canvassing and advertising agent for trashy pamphlets. This consummation has been reached in the recent prosecutions. Our poor old friend Bennett has been made happy. An immense sale has been given to Heywood's paltry stuff. The reformers in their usual left handed way have helped to promote vice in the name of Jesus, while banking a good deal of credit in the name of Comstock, and a considerable amount of cash in the name of Bennett. So the curtain falls on another judicial farce, a case of voluntary martyrdom by which a martyr not altogether lacking in shrewdness is enriched by a course of eagerly invited persecution.

To Inquirers and Friends. We are discussing the great facts of Spiritualism as they have never been discussed before in any journal of large circulation. We want "the sinews of war to enable us to proceed in this direction. The outlook is most encouraging for our cause. After rising out from the mass of phenomena all that is fraudulent, all that is even questionable, there remains a residuum of facts sufficient to settle the great question of human immortality upon a basis of science forever. Mesmerism with its clairvoyant phenomena, was the aurora, the dawn of the present stage; and we have now objective phenomena, transcendent and psycho-physical, which it is beyond the power of any practical thinker to account for except under the spiritual theory. These splendid and most significant facts it is now in our power to present to minds in search of the truth. We ask every man who is sincerely interested in its advancement to co-operate with us by helping to extend our circulation, so that we may enlist the world's best talent in presenting and discussing our phenomena. Surely Spiritualists have a duty, as well as the churches, to perform. The secular and religious press are multiplying their attacks upon us. Witness the attack of the Alliance on Spiritualists generally. The great movement in Germany and Russia, the cooperation of some of the leading physicians of the former country in our behalf, the rising movement in Sweden, Mexico, Australia, all parts of Europe, and even Asia, are worrying and alarming our assailants. They are beginning to see the handwriting on the wall, and asking one another, Can these things be true? Help us, friends, by enlarging our circulation, to proclaim their truth with a voice that may be world-wide in its reverberations. Lyman C. Howe writes as follows from Binghamton, New York, in reference to the labors of Mrs. R. Shepard there: "She has done a noble work here and made many friends, and will find a warm welcome whenever she returns. I am grateful for her timely help. She drew large audiences, and kept up a lively interest, amounting to enthusiasm, to the last; her last evening's address drew the largest audience, it is said, that ever convened in Leonard's Hall, to listen to the unpopular truths of Spiritualism. God bless our devoted workers."

Grove Meetings.

Summer has come again, with its bland air, its grass and leaves and flowers, to feast the eye and senses with beauty and fragrance. It gives us the luxury of outdoor enjoyment, of meetings under the blue sky with tall trees for our cathedral pillars bird-songs to accompany our music, and the leafy boughs above the platform for a sounding board over our free pulpit. A good grove or a camp-meeting, is recreation to the farm, and his family, air-and pure fragrance to the citizen of the dusty town, and spiritual benefit to all—a good "means of grace" whereby we can lure even our church and creed-bound neighbors to a fine forest, give their worn souls free and fresh spiritual life, and stir an inspiration in their hearts that shall not die. Thus, too, can we reach and uplift the careless and vicious, and give them glimpses of a blue sky of purity and strength, and we can all meet together, from far and near, to keep up social and fraternal feeling and lay new and wiser plans to help the old world along. In the times when summer work don't drive hard, just before haying, just after harvest, in early autumn, fit up groves with low platforms, at the foot of an upward slope, if possible, board seats and good water at hand, get good speakers, have free conferences for men and women, take baskets of provisions for picnic dinners, plan for ability, earnestness, order and liberty, and get enjoyment and benefit for yourselves and others. The trouble and cost is small in proportion to the good done. We must not be selfish and niggardly with our wealth of spiritual things, nor coldly indifferent to the slavery which binds so many in the thrall of bigotry, and which it is our duty to abolish. Let all go to work, early and thoroughly, and let us advertise scores of grove meetings. Have a bookstand at each one for spiritual and liberal literature, and have on one corner of it a pile of the RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL.

M. C. Vandercook sang at the Grove meeting at Battle Creek, the 7th and 8th instants; will be at the Rockford, Mich., meeting the 14th and 15th. Then he will take up a line of travel on the Detroit and Milwaukee R.R. Address him, Allegan, Michigan.

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