

RELIGIO PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL

ARTS, SCIENCES, LITERATURE, ROMANCE AND GENERAL REFORM

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

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Readers of the JOURNAL are especially requested to send in items of news. Don't say "I can't find time to write." Send the facts, make plain what you say, and "cut it short." All such communications will be properly arranged for publication by the editors. Notices of Meetings, information concerning the organization of new Societies or the condition of old ones; movements of lecturers and mediums, interesting incidents of spirit communion, and well authenticated accounts of spirit phenomena are always in place and will be published as soon as possible.

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For the Religio-Philosophical Journal.

The Christmas Baby.

BY MRS. HATTIE J. RAY.

O, I wonder! Auntie, tell me,
For I think that you must know,
How that tiny little baby
Came to us in all this snow!

And the wind was blowing dreadful,
All the night, so papa said,
And I know 'twas storming awful
When my nurse put me in bed.

But this morning here I found it,
Snug and warm as it could be;
I slipped in there just a minute,
To kiss mamma, don't you see?

Christmas day! I've just been thinking,
And I know I've got it right,
Mamma got it in her stocking,
Santa brought it in last night.

But I really wonder, Auntie,
Not a bit cold did it seem;
How he managed it so nicely,
With that flying reindeer team.

He is such a funny fellow,
Always bringing things so nice:
Large red apples, sweet and mellow,
And these little candy mice.

And he gave to me a dolly,
With such bright and shining eyes,
Always looks so nice and jolly,
Never scolds, or frets or cries.

Well, I guess I'll go to baby,
For, perhaps, she's wide awake;
She is such a little lady,
Not a bit of noise does make.

Well, I've been to see the baby,
But she's sleeping all the day;
I just think she's awful lazy,
Does not talk, or laugh, or play.

So I think I'll tell Santa,
When he comes another day,
That I'll give him back this baby,
And take one that likes to play.

Fond du Lac, Wis.

When Mgr. Capel stigmatizes Scotland, Sweden and Germany, "where the people are well educated," as "the most immoral countries he knows of," the Boston Herald asks this ecclesiastical tramp if he has not "forgotten Italy, where the per centage of illegitimacy and illegitimate births runs so high? Or does his knowledge extend to the countries of popular ignorance, in Mexico and Central and South America?" Catholic Spain is not particularly chaste and honest. At least the Spanish court is not. "Intelligence and virtue," as the Herald observes, "do not always go together, but they are more nearly related than ignorance and virtue."

A gentleman in Cambridge, Mass., who says that in his youth Sojourner Truth was a servant in his uncle's family, and subsequently an inmate of his father's house, writes that Sojourner did not know her own age, but some twenty or thirty years ago it was decided, from what she could tell and from what those who had long known her said, that she was born between 1795 and 1800. This would make her considerably under the age she has of late years claimed for herself, and there are other circumstances going to sustain this gentleman's assertion.

For the Religio-Philosophical Journal.

The Origin and Significance of Christmas.

BY DR. R. B. WESTBROOK.

The word "Christmas" contains in itself evidence of its derivation from the liturgical nomenclature of Romish sacerdotalism. Christ-mas—the mass of Christ—that peculiar priestly hoens-poens, under which it is said, that the Eucharistic wafer is transubstantiated into the body of Jesus, the Christ. The institution of this mass, is accredited to Pope Telesphorus, in the second Christian century. At first, it was what the almanac calls a "movable feast," like Good Friday and Easter, and was often confounded with the Epiphany, and was celebrated by the Eastern churches in April and May. In the fourth century, Pope Julius I ordered an investigation into the particular date of the birth of Jesus, and the result of this inquiry was the conclusion that he was born the 25th of December.

It is hardly necessary to say that this is a matter of mere arbitrary conjecture, as nothing is certainly known concerning the day or even the year of the birth of Jesus. Among celebrated Christian writers, one hundred and thirty-three different opinions have been expressed as to the time of the so-called nativity—and the latest conclusion of the best scholarship is, that nothing is certainly known on this subject, and that the chronology of the first four hundred years of the Christian Era, is unreliable, as no permanent or trustworthy records were kept.

It must not be supposed as has been intimated that the church of Rome, in fixing the 25th of December as the time for celebrating the birth of Jesus, did so because she had reliable information as to this date. She must have had some other reason for fixing her Christmas festivities at this particular time. And now it is right to recognize the well established fact, that at the precise time, in each year, corresponding with the 25th day of the 12th month, from the earliest periods of which history gives any account, all nations have been accustomed to hold festivities very similar to the Christmas rites of the Romish church. So far from the truth, is the idea that celebrations now known as Christmas holidays, are less than nineteen hundred years old, similar, if not identical celebrations were held thousands of years before the infant Moses was rescued from the ark of bulrushes, or the young child of Mary received "gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh."

In Buddhist temples, before the dawn of consecutive chronology, on Hindoo plains on the 25th of December, thousands and thousands of years ago, festivities similar to our modern Christmas were celebrated. Houses were illuminated and made bright with gilt-paper and gay colors, and garlands of evergreen, and flowers were seen in every direction, while friends congratulated each other with good wishes, and presents were exchanged among friends and relatives.

In the Chinese sacred books, we have similar accounts of the most gorgeous celebrations held on the 25th day of the Twelfth month.

Celebrations still more imposing were held on the 25th day of December among the ancient Persians, long, long before the sorrowful times when the Hebrew captives sat by the rivers of Babylon, and mingled their tears with the turbid waters, "as they remembered Zion."

Festivities in honor of Osiris and Isis, and their son Horus, were celebrated in Egypt, long before the emigration of Joseph and Jacob, and when the Pyramids were young, and that too on the 25th of December.

Some light will pour in upon this subject when we consider the fact, that these celebrations were all held in commemoration of the alleged birth of a divine man, having a supernatural Father and a human virgin Mother. Sakia and Christna, and other Indian incarnations, all had virgin mothers, and so had the Hero-gods of Egypt, Persia, Greece, Rome, Thibet, and Mexico. The virgin mother of the Savior of the Druids, more than 2,000 years ago, had a crown of twelve stars upon her head, and her foot was placed upon the head of a serpent, and the same devices are found engraved in the stone cave temples of India, made thousands of years ago. What does it all mean? What is the real source of these uniform legends, which place the birth of a god on the 25th of December, and make them all so much alike?

The Persian Magians accounted to the populace for the introduction of evil into the world by a fable of a serpent tempting the first woman to pluck a forbidden apple. This act, as the apple ripens late in autumn, was of course followed by the prevalence of winter; with darkness and cold—the kingdom of the evil principle—and necessitated the adoption of clothing. The mischief thus brought about could only be remedied by the agency of the sun, which they identified with the principle of good.

The day assigned to the birth of the sun-gods of all ancient religions was the same as that assigned by the church to Christmas. The shortest day being December 21st, the birth of Christ is put on the 26th, the first day that shows any elongation; while the lowest point, which might excite doubt, is assigned to the doubting apostle Thomas.

The point here to be made is this: that the Roman Breviary, and in short the calendars of all ritualistic churches, are based upon the Astronomical religion of ancient pagans, and that Christmas is no exception to this rule. Take a catalogue of all the festivals

and saints' days of Romanism and Episcopacy, and with no other guide than a common almanac, you may get a hint as to the origin of every one of them.

The streaming rays of the sun's glory in paintings around the heads of the Hindoo Christna, the Grecian Apollo, and of the Catholic Jesus, are very suggestive of the sun-worship, and our modern churches show their ignorance and folly by the prominence they give it in their decorations and symbols. The intelligent observer sees evidence of the sun and fire-worship, as also of the serpent and phallic-worship, on every hand among Christians, especially in the Catholic churches and wonders at the prevailing ignorance and superstition. The decorations of Christmas and Easter, with their special services, all point to the Solar worship while the May-pole, the hot cross-buns, the mystic horse-shoe, and even church steeples, if properly understood, would bring the blush of shame to modest cheeks.

Nothing can be said against the good cheer and merry-making of the Christmas holidays, but we should not allow the priestly powers to palm them upon the world, for what they are not. It is well to study the Gospels, and with them, the Bibles of the ages—the religions of all nations and peoples—but we must discriminate between legend and history, between dogma and doctrine.

True religion consists not in dogma, but in doing; not in creed, but in deed; not in what you call yourself, but in what you are. True Christianity is a life, not a form; a spirit, not a letter. It is a pure life of reverent worshipfulness and practical beneficence.

Well, Christmas will come and go! The sun will pass the crisis, and poetically may be said to have a new birth. The days will get longer and brighter, and soon the perfume of vernal flowers will float upon the winds. We shall have our Christmas trees and evergreens, in defiance of the wrath of Father Tertullian, who, seventeen hundred years ago denounced them as "gross idolatry"—but few of us will think of the mistletoe of the ancient Druids, or the foliage of laurel, myrtle, and ivy, with which ancient pagans sought to entice their Sylvan deities from the forests to their household firesides. In the Pagan worship of the sun, as their best conception of the Over-all Spirit, as in the Christian dedication of the man Jesus, we recognize the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and with the Angelic messengers, join in the Christmas carol of "Peace on earth and good will to men!" As the sun is the source of light and life to our earth, so have the Christs of the ages—from Buddha to Jesus—been the lights of the moral world, and as our eyes may be opened by the "light within," we shall recognize in them all, whatever is truly divine, and "walking in the light, we shall have fellowship with all good" wherever found, on Pagan or on Christian ground.

For the Religio-Philosophical Journal.

Life-Thoughts—The Ideal and the Actual.

BY GEO. LIEBERKNECHT.

Over and over again,
No matter which way I turn,
I always find in the book of life
Some lesson that I must learn;
I must take my turn at the mill,
I must grind out the golden grain,
I must work at my task with a resolute will,
Over and over again.

The lessons of life! How inspiring, how boundless the theme! From the cradle over which the mother bends with wondering and delight, to the bier around which all are melted in the brotherhood of a common grief, this life of ours is a marvel, a mystery, a poem. Full of hope and bright anticipations are the young, eagerly pressing forward; with swelling sails they set out toward the ocean of life—until old age takes to the life-boat and with noiseless oar drifts into the harbor.

When the German emigrant-boy bids farewell to the land of his birth and boyhood, to mother and sisters and the village neighbors, there is an unpareable sadness, there is anguish in the parting eyes; but once on the way, new and novel sensations follow one another. Sad and dreary is the first day's journey, but the next day is favored with clear, bright sunshine, and the little steamer carries the party—all strangers to one another—down the Rhine, the passengers enjoying the picturesque scenery, the sight of beautiful villages and cities, and anon a romantic view of the remains of some towering castle of old, rich in historic lore—a short delay at Cologne—thence in a crowded railway-train through Rhenish Prussia and Belgium to Antwerp—a stroll about the city and harbor, and a wondering look at the great cathedral and its majestic tower—and on the following day the order to embark is given.

Of the misery and suffering and destitution in store for us on board that crowded emigrant-vessel "Emblem," it was well to have had no knowledge beforehand. Fifty-three long and weary days and nights were consumed by the frail bark in crossing the bleak waste of stormy waters. She finally, arrived at New York about the middle of December, reaching the wharf in the evening. A cold wind blew. One young man sought permission to go on shore at once. His cap had blown into the Atlantic ocean, so he borrowed his brother's headgear. He started off, and got a glimpse of great New York's busy streets by gas-light. How quick all the misery of the voyage was forgotten! How he relished the sensation of escape from the floating, filthy prison, and the novelty of

walking on terra firma once more! Hastening on, pleased with the dazzling sights and scenes of new life, he came up with a company of uniformed militia, marching to the music of a band. This cheered him up still more. He quite forgot that he was a poor, half-clad and half-starved emigrant boy—a stranger in a strange land. There could hardly have been a happier individual on the street. He had left the Fatherland to escape the degradation and drudgery of the military service, and his happiness sprang from the proud consciousness of being a free man upon Freedom's favored realm.

Under the stirring strains of the music, an enthusiastic love of American liberty and democratic institutions took complete and instantaneous possession of him. He contrasted those citizen-soldiers with the European soldiery, used only as an engine of war and oppression, and then there fervently vowed allegiance to the land and the cause of Liberty forever. Returning to the vessel, he gave his friends a glowing account of his little reconnoitering tour.

New scenes, new hopes, new prospects speedily dim the memory of past suffering. While the old German home and neighborhood, its fields and meadows and wooded hills, the joys and sorrows of boyhood, the struggles in school and the love of the Fatherland live in memory's shrine—the heart, transplanted, sends out its tendrils in new directions, and learns to blossom and grow again. And so do all of us, each in his appointed sphere and season, turn leaf upon leaf and open new chapters in the great volume of Human Life.

Nearly one-third of a century has passed by. The pilgrim has passed the zenith of life, seen a good deal of the world and mingled freely with all classes of its people; has also had his share of the trials of life and learned somewhat by the lessons of adversity. Content and competence, he thinks, may be found quite as readily, and more effectually, by limiting and regulating our wants, than by a ceaseless strife for increase of possessions and fashionable display—so many of the struggles and ambitions that exercise mankind are born of vanity, nurtured in jealousy and end in disappointment. Simplicity in tastes, appetite and habits of life, with a corresponding indifference to worldly preferment, will save us much unprofitable labor and care. Excessive, perpetual care; ceaseless anxiety are the bane of life in modern society. The eagerness to acquire, the dread to lose, the apprehension of loss of caste, these furrow our brows prematurely. "Getting and spending we lay waste our years."

Taking a glance at the condition of human life collectively, we find a strange, singular and not encouraging spectacle of warring and conflicting forces. While mankind are all animated by substantially the same needs, impulses, desires and aspirations, we find the greatest possible contrasts in their condition and means of satisfying the natural wants. Religion says that we are all brothers and sisters of one great family, and theoretically our government is based on an equal equality of the rights of all its citizens; in practice, however, these grand declarations are set aside, or have only an insignificant small amount of influence. One of the prime objects of republican government is the maintaining of wholesome restraints to an overreaching selfishness. Through indifference and a lamentable lack of that eternal vigilance which is the price of liberty, such restrictions are disregarded or circumvented. Men destitute of a patriotic love of the common weal, have legislated largely in the interest of wealth and monopoly. All who reflect must admit that the grants of land by thousands of square miles to this or that favorite of the power which assumed to make them, were made thoughtlessly or recklessly. They would not have been made so large or unconditionally, if a reasonable foresight and a patriotic regard for the general good had prevailed. The soil is given, not to aggrandize the few, but to bless and strengthen all, and reason and equity's rule would be to allow no man to appropriate to himself any more of it than he can properly cultivate. As the family is the basis of society, that state of society will prosper best which affords the greatest number of families a fair opportunity to secure a home of their own, to live under their own vine and fig tree. The existing social order is one of division, contention and mutual hatred; leaves millions to grow up in ignorance and pinching want, while a few enjoy every luxury which imagination can suggest. It is a grave mistake to assume that this state of things is owing altogether to the innate diversities of disposition and character. The problem before us is a society which shall embody and express more of the divine principles of a common brotherhood; a social condition in which thousands everywhere will not be dependent upon the selfish policy of a few purse-proud bosses or a corporation with almost unlimited resources; a social condition in which labor will not be a degrading drudgery, and usefulness, whether exalted or lowly, the only path to honor. Seeing how prejudice, selfishness and social discord convice and darken this world, the imperative obligation rests upon us to stand not idly by, expecting the foaming current of ignorance, error and oppression to exhaust itself, but to embark earnestly in the great work of resisting and overcoming it, assured that only through systematic exertion and organized effort will it be diminished.

I cannot close without adding some words of burning eloquence uttered by that vigil-

ant and keen-sighted advocate of the rights of the common people, Horace Greeley, upon this subject:

"The frightful excess of social anarchy, misery and destitution, in the midst of the most abundant wealth and prodigality the world has ever known, is driving millions to inquiry and study with regard to their causes and their cure. Practical attempts are in progress to test and exhibit the possibility, the feasibility of a life of true brotherhood—a life harmoniously adjusted to blend and secure the rights and the happiness of each in those of all—a life ultimately free from selfish anxiety, from want and from abounding temptation—a life of which the atmosphere shall be innocence, and the labor worship. It needs only that goodness be good, openly and veritably, to commend it to all consciences and all hearts. The wintry sullenness, the frozen apathy of the mass may delay the dawn, but the bright day shall come at last. Despite the sway of selfishness, seemingly so universal, nobler and truer thoughts are everywhere breaking in on the human mind."

Let nothing pass; for every hand
Must find some work to do;
Lose not a chance to waken love,
Be firm and just and true.
So shall a light that cannot fade
Beam on thee from on high,
And angel voices say to thee,
"These things shall never die."
Genevieve, Ill.

The Present Age.

To the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal:

It seems to me well, dear friend, to pause as we come to the mile stones of the Christmas holidays, and think, from amid the busy whirl of our daily lives of what is going on around us!

The world has never known an age like the present in many ways, but chiefly in the emancipations which are glorifying it. Emancipations from errors, emancipation from ignorance, emancipation from degrading habits of sin, emancipation of one half the race from unjust subordination and unnecessary dependence, to a respectful recognition in the councils which work for the good of the nation.

At home, woman has always been the wise and able adviser, but too often her wise advice has had only a partial success, because of a feeling of *esprit de corps* perhaps, among the so-called sterner sex which has induced many to consider the due recognition of her claim as a derogation of his own position, as if her influence could be exerted against "God and Home, and Native Land." Now woman is beginning to stand in her rightful place, beside her other half, and labor with him, shoulder to shoulder, heart to heart, no longer with the feeling that his domain is intruded on, but with the firm conviction that their forces are doubled by harmonious co-operation.

In a social point of view the struggle has often been a painful one—"she has stepped out of her sphere"—"she has unsexed herself"—"she will lose her womanliness"—"our homes will be no longer what they ought to be"—and numberless other objections which are fading away, as the dews of the morning do before the rising sun.

The emancipation of mind from errors in thought, leading to absolute freedom of speech and of religious belief, which, though often asserted since the time of Luther, has only now begun to be felt as a living force. Not thirty years ago, to be a Spiritualist was considered not only as worthy of ostracism, but as not being "respectable," entirely out of the pale of that phantasm—"society!" Now all literature, all science also, are full of its teachings and influence, and the so-called "best people" are amongst its advocates and adherents. Spiritualism has always existed, it is now an acknowledged power, and is being purged of the errors with which charlatanisms has fettered it, and is rapidly advancing as it is more intelligently understood, and freed from mistakes and superstition.

The creeds are being sifted and expurgated, until we shall come at last to understand what is God's truth, and which the "commandments of men."

Once again in the world's history *ex oriente lux* has made itself felt, and the fetters of caste have been broken, and our sisters of India have been freed from their prison houses, and can now mingle in society on equal terms with their fathers, husbands, brothers and sons. They can join in public religious worship, or any form of public meeting, are no longer debarred from the privileges of education and will form all kinds of associations, as their European and American sisters do. The religious part of the reform is wonderful. The missionary, as Mr. Mozoomdar has said, brought the Christ to them as a European, not as a conception which an Oriental can take home to heart, and yet, the living Christ came, an Oriental. I see the force of the remark and understand its pertinence. The new faith, the Birama Somaj, though not calling itself by the Christ's name, is entirely imbued with his spirit, and I can well understand how Mr. Mozoomdar found among Unitarians a home welcome, and pulpits in which he was fraternally received, and from which he could freely utter his whole thought. What an advance upon the narrowness of spirit even of half a century ago, though that is not entirely dead, for the W. C. T. U. women, church members though they were, were, while on their holy mission, refused the use of one of Christ's churches in which to hold a meeting for their consecrated work, and this in the year of grace, 1882.

In scientific matters also, the "conflict" Continued on Next Page.

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When newspapers or magazines are sent to the JOURNAL containing matter for special attention, the sender will please draw a line around the article to which he desires to call notice.

CHICAGO, ILL., Saturday, December 22, 1883.

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To all intelligent, earnest, honest men and women who are interested in the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism, the RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL sends greeting; and asks your cordial, continuous aid in forwarding the interests of true spiritual culture. The publisher and editor is striving to the utmost limit of his ability to give you a good paper; one on which you can implicitly rely. Those of you who are regular readers, know how thoroughly unsectarian and independent is the paper, and how it has stood unflinchingly through every trial, in support of honesty and purity.

The publisher and editor asks that you will, one and all, do your level best to increase the circulation and influence of the JOURNAL, both by increasing the subscription list and by contributions to its columns. This is no selfish request; the interest is a common one, vital to all to whom these words are addressed. The moral support of the JOURNAL is a hundred fold greater than ever before, and it depends on you to see that the financial patronage keeps pace therewith.

Christmas Day.

Just now the Nation is in a spasm of enjoyment, and eagerly seeking for means of manifesting it. Publishers issue handsomer books than usual, and their stores are crowded with eager purchasers. Toys, jewels, fancy goods of all kinds, are rapidly changing hands. Huge masses of confectionery appear and disappear with marvellous rapidity, and busy matrons are bending all their energies to newer achievements in cookery. All this is in honor of Christmas day; all this in every city of the land—in a majority of the homes in the land. Old and young, rich and poor, wise and foolish, the busy and the idle ones—all welcome this day.

Yet, if it were meant only to celebrate the birth of Jesus, never was a day so universally honored with less apparent reason. Certainly Jesus was not born on the day his birth is celebrated; certainly not in the same month, nor even in the year to which our calendars assign the event. There is reason to believe he was born in spring-time, March or April; some say seven years earlier than we usually reckon; nor was the day chosen originally as the real anniversary of the birth of Jesus, but was the day on which a festival was held in honor of the sun; the people being accustomed to a celebration on that day, were more easily persuaded to continue it as a festival in honor of the birth of the son of Mary.

But the observance has become universal—everywhere where men can be found, in street of city or dungeon solitude, on height of mountain or in depth of mine, on sea or shore, Christmas day is hailed with joy. The Church has appointed other festivals, and made them as popular as it could, but none equal Christmas, none stir the heart of humanity as that day does.

Is it because it commemorates the birth of one whom so many call the Savior of the world? No! for men who only use the name of Jesus to give force to an oath or a curse,

observe Christmas day. Nay, we have heard of Jewish priests lamenting that Jewish children clamor for, and have, Christmas trees; certainly with no thought of commemorating the birth of the despised Nazarene. Still less is it because some branches of the church have decried its observance. Ecclesiastical authority is very weak these days, and is steadily growing weaker. Men do not think of theology, but humanity, on Christmas day. A child born? Yes; how strong an appeal to home memories. Rejoice? Yes, but why? That they are men and women, and all men and women belong to the same family. It is as if each year a wave of love passed over all lands, and the day is enshrined in the thought of all men as a day of love, a day to feel and to create joy, a day for forgiveness of injury, a day to consider the poor. So ought every day to be, says one who don't like Christmas observance. True, but every day is not so kept, even by the objector, and that men should agree, once a year, that only loving thoughts shall rule, is too large a gain to be slighted, even if they are as selfish as ever all the rest of the year.

Just think of it, fifty millions in our own land alone, all striving to discover what new pleasure they can give to children, friends, neighbors, strangers, forgetting their selfishness, greed, antagonisms and hates; their sole set purpose to manifest love for others! Is not this worth doing? One might approximately, perhaps, calculate the benefit to the race, even in dollars and cents, and the total would be enormous, but the spiritual gain, it is absolutely impossible to estimate. For it is not likely that the influence of the prevailing thought of Christmas day can end with the day. Men cannot be as hard and grasping, as captious and cynical the day after Christmas as they were before. They have felt the impulse of an unselfish love for one day, and cannot at once get back into the old ruts. The themes of the preacher, the schemes of the statesman, the plans of the business man, all are modified by the influence pervading the time. No preacher talks of hell and punishment, only of heaven and the love which makes it. Our courts adjourn, lest the bitterness of personal feud should mar the sweetness of the holy time—a day consecrated to love of humanity is the holiest of all times.

We have said that all men observe this day, but there are exceptions. The Agnostic, the Puritan, the Spiritualist, at least some of the latter. A curious conjunction, the Agnostic and the ones who would have hanged him as a blasphemer, the Spiritualist and the witch hunter, for them to agree in anything is strange, yet they do agree—the Puritan because Christmas was invented by the Romish church; the Agnostic for the all-sufficient reason—to him—that he don't know, and the Spiritualist because he looks so steadily heavenward he is apt to forget his youth; so afraid of the church he has left, that it is sufficient to condemn a thing if the church proposes it. We object to all this. We are human and rejoice in our humanity. Christmas is not theological; it is the embodiment of an idea older than Moses by centuries, "God manifest in the flesh," the divinity of humanity. So we eat and drink better food on that day to gratify one side of our nature, and give in response to the divine impulses we recognize. What if some do hold a theology we reject, and Christmas day is used as an illustration, a support of that system, can we not let them link whatever other idea with it they will, and rejoice that in the feeling of human brotherhood and love pervading the day, we, too, can share?

But to Spiritualists, Christmas day has a special significance. Not the birthday, but the day on which is commemorated the birth of the greatest medium the world has seen, the most wonderful teacher of our faith, the unfold of the doctrine we believe, that you can best serve God by being helpful to man; one who gave wonderful tests, and always referred to them in proof of the truth of his mission; who from the dark circle at Bethlehem to the materialization in Mary's presence, from the manger to Calvary, was always attended by invisible spirits; the first Spiritualist, in the sense of teaching it as a truth, and showing how mediumship could be developed. Whoever shrinks from observance of Christmas day, it should not be the Spiritualist, for Jesus was their prophet, their example, their revelator.

Prof. Felix Adler lectured before the Ethical Society, last Sunday, having exchanged with Mr. Salter. The small hall was packed to its utmost capacity, many standing. Among the audience were many Spiritualists, and there should have been many more. The lecture was a very fine effort. It received the closest attention and was enthusiastically applauded at the close. The JOURNAL regrets that it has not complete notes to place before its readers. On Monday the editor of the JOURNAL, in company with many other citizens of Chicago of various religious beliefs, paid his respects to Prof. Adler at the Leland House, where an informal reception was held.

A correspondent writes: "I am not a regular attendant upon the ministrations of the gifted speaker, Mrs. Nellie J. Brigham, but often hear her with great pleasure and profit. It has also been my privilege to listen to Mr. Lyman C. Howe of late, and I have been very much pleased with him as a speaker and a man; he has steadily grown in favor as the audiences show by increased numbers, his last lecture completely filling Republican Hall. I am glad to hear that we are to have him with us yet a little longer in New York, supplying the place of Mr. A. J. Davis while he takes a little rest and recreation."

The Probability of the Immortality of Man, Considered from a Rational and Philosophical Stand-Point.

This was the subject of Mr. Tiffany's lecture before the Philosophical Society of Chicago, on Saturday evening, the 15th inst. He proposed to examine the question from premises so nearly self-evident, that the contrary would seem to be absurd. His first premise was, that the universe was without beginning as a universe; and, hence, must be considered as self-existent; that being self-existent, it was necessarily self-sufficient and eternal; that the attributes of the universe, included, power, life and consciousness, which must have co-existed with the universe, and therefore with the universe, were self-existent.

His second premise was: That the universe, in its operations, had been eternally working in the direction of producing individualities, from the union of elements into particles, particles into bodies and bodies into systems; and at a certain stage had commenced creating organs within the individual, and endowing such organs with faculties having specific functions to perform in such individual; that in the creation and endowment of such individuals, there had been orderly and continuous progress, from the beginning to the completion of the individual in the human form; that in the order of such creation and endowment of the individual, that which preceded any advance became essential to that which was to follow; and that which followed could have been created only from the preceding advance. And that it was so from the beginning of any individual form.

His third premise was: That so far as manifestation had revealed the operations of the universe, the tendency was in the direction of creating a complete individual, or a race of individuals complete in form, in life and in mentality. That form was essential to the manifestation of individual life; and that individual life was essential to the manifestation of individual mentality; and the individual was essential to the race, etc.

His fourth premise was: That it would appear, from all that had come into manifestation, that all the operations of universal being and existence, were engaged in ultimate a race of individuals, endowed with every essential attribute of the universe itself, in form, faculty and function; that from the elemental particle to the ultimate human individual, the operations by which the complete individual had been created and endowed, had been orderly, progressive, and, so far as could be known, complete in the human constitution, as no individual had hitherto been created containing other and higher capacities.

His fifth premise was: That the human individual contains in himself, every faculty and function known as belonging to the universe; that is, he possesses all there is or can be of the elements of form; all there is or can be of the elements of life; and all there is or can be of the elements of mentality; and that he possesses each in such a degree of potency or capacity, that nothing above or beyond can be conceived of to be added to his completeness. He therefore inferred, that it would not be irrational to suppose that man had become immortal as the universe which had begotten him.

His sixth premise was: That it would be unphilosophical to infer the contrary, because there exists and is the eternal and immortal universe, which has created and endowed him, to draw from, and supply every thing essential to an immortal existence; and because the individual human, in his ultimate individuation, is so connected with this universal presence, that he can receive that which is essential to an endless and eternal life; and because, he has an aspiration for such a life, which he could not have if it was impossible to the human constitution; and he concluded by the inquiry, "Has man, through the eternal and progressive operations of the universe, attained to this ultimate status of individuation only to perish as he arrives at the possibility of completeness?" What must be the stupidity! what the blindness! what the intellectual and moral deadness! of a human soul, which cannot see in all these things, the indications of a destiny worthy of the eternal operations of the self-existing Presence of the universe; and cannot feel the dignity and value of that humanity which is not only the flower, but is the eternal fruitage of the universe.

Such was in substance, the argument of the paper, each premise sustained by citation of facts in natural and spiritual history.

Then commenced the criticisms. Professor Van Buren Denlow, commenced by saying that these wordy papers or talks about immortality, using large words, which it would take a half hour to explain or define, did not satisfy the inquirer. He wanted facts, substantial facts as bricks. The only way to satisfy one of the immortality of the soul is to be able to talk with the dead. That these talks about immortality did not amount to anything; we need the proof by talking with the dead, and that such was the only evidence which would be satisfactory. Prof. D. proceeded to state that there were phenomena which he had witnessed which could not be accounted for by any known natural law or principle; and he instanced slate writing under impossible circumstances, according to natural law or natural experience. He also instanced the formation and dissolution of the human form in his presence where there was no opportunity for trick or hallucination; and said that the most expert prestidigitators had declared these things beyond their art. But still they did not establish in his mind the fact of man's immortality.

Dr. Garrison likewise criticised the speaker, not the paper, except to contradict the fact that all the known elements of the universe had been found in the human system. He declared that he would not believe the statements of any one or every one who would certify that they had witnessed these extraordinary phenomena, because he would not believe himself or his own senses in such matters.

There were other criticisms of the subject matter of man's immortality; but none of the positions taken in the paper. They all seemed to mistake the subject under discussion, which was a philosophical interpretation of the operations of the universe, so far as they have come into manifestation. It was not proposed to prove the immortality of man from any other premises than the universal teachings of such operations of the universe, and they should have been criticised by either controverting the premises or the deductions made from the same.

Almost a Miracle.

A correspondent of the *Inter-Ocean* from Eureka, Cal., relates an incident of the remarkable preservation of a little girl about two years of age, Stella Henderson, who was riding in a covered wagon which, with the horses, was projected over an almost perpendicular chasm, a distance of over one hundred feet. When the dead horses and crushed wagon were reached, little Stella was found lying on her back between one of the dead horses' legs, in such a position that, had the horse struggled, she would most surely have been killed. The horses were so terribly crushed it is conjectured that they never moved after striking the bottom. About twenty feet from the dead horses lay the wrecked wagon, literally smashed to pieces. The uninterrupted fall was over one hundred feet. Had not the vehicle been momentarily stopped before the final leap, by the hind wheels striking against a log, the six occupants would most certainly have all been killed. When picked up the child was crying. Her face and head were bruised, and her face considerably swollen, but fortunately no serious injury was sustained. It will ever remain a mystery and a matter of conjecture as to how and in what manner the child became extricated from the wagon in its plunge and crash and got between the dead horses' feet, twenty feet away, since the wagon was covered, and the wreck shows it to have struck right side up. The sweet-faced, flaxen-haired little girl is now more idolized than ever. When the wagon was momentarily stopped by the log, all the occupants thereof managed to get out, with the exception of the little wail, whose life was so fortunately preserved.

The detectives are again telling the story of the revival that had occurred in the jail in Hartford, Conn. The prisoners held their religious meetings in a room given them for that purpose. The zeal ran especially to music and the songs were of the shouting kind. Great progress was made, and an abundant harvest seemed certain, but it was accidentally discovered that the sick absentees were busily saving the bars in another cell.

Mrs. S. L. McCracken, semi-trance medium, will answer calls to lecture. She writes: "My guides wish me to take the name of 'Spiritual Independent,' instead of Spiritualist. Why they make the request I know not, unless it means independent of all spiritualistic fraud and follies, as well as orthodox ones. At any rate I find them very forcible in denunciation of all foolishness and contemptible trickery, wherever it may be found, irrespective of creed or name."

Prof. Brooks, of Phelps, N. Y., thinks it possible that the peculiar lights attending our sunrises and sunsets are due to our being enveloped in the tail of a gigantic comet. An Albany astronomer says he is satisfied that the illumination is an unusual exhibition of what is called the zodiacal light, a nebulous girdle, having the sun for its center. There seems to be no certainty or well-defined theory among scientific men as to the cause of the phenomenon.

It appears that notwithstanding all that has been thought, said and written about it; the Vatican Library is a hollow sham, and that the recent opening of that institution to the secular public was not much of a boon after all. A Mr. Carmichael who was "personally conducted" through it, told the English Royal Society a few days ago that he failed to see there "a vestige of a printed book." The bridge, therefore, that was to "span the gulf" between the Vatican and modern thought is really a weak plank.

An English Episcopal clergyman—Canon Furse—recently advised the London pupil teachers to read the works of Cardinal Newman and John Morley. The one is the most distinguished Roman Catholic writer living; the other the greatest of the Agnostic writers, and he is, moreover, the panegyrist of Voltaire. Canon Furse qualified his advice by telling the pupil teachers that Mr. Morley's and Cardinal Newman's books should be read "as a study in good composition." But the pupil teachers will hardly read them for that purpose alone.

In reply to an inquiry: The JOURNAL welcomes to its columns messages from spirit-life as cordially as those from mortals, the only standard being that of merit. If a spirit desires to give a test of identity, he is always welcome; if he wishes to discuss philosophy, science, metaphysics or any other subject, his message will receive the same consideration as though written by a mortal and no more; if it is well written it will be used, whether the JOURNAL agrees with the writer or not.

GENERAL NOTES.

Mrs. A. J. Davis has gone to Washington, D. C., to recruit her health.

Mrs. E. M. Dole, the medium, has gone to Atchison, Kansas, for rest and pleasure.

Any book in the market advertised in the newspapers, can be obtained through the JOURNAL office.

Mrs. Kate Blade, the slate-writing medium, has gone to Buffalo, N. Y., where she will remain for two weeks.

The JOURNAL wishes its tens of thousands of readers a merry Christmas, and sends good will to both friend and foe.

As the old year draws to a close, we hope our subscribers will redouble their efforts to increase our subscription list.

Subscribers of the JOURNAL having friends whom they would like to see copies of the JOURNAL, will please send their addresses to the publisher.

Several articles intended for the Christmas number of the JOURNAL, have been unavoidably crowded out. They will appear in our next issue.

We are requested to say that Mrs. L. P. Anderson has returned from her Eastern trip, and will receive calls at 465 W. Madison St., upper flat.

"Dr." Shea who has been so long imposing on the people with his fraudulent materializations, was fined \$100 on the 12th for holding a "show" without a license.

Last Sunday Giles B. Stebbins lectured at Good Templar's Hall, Detroit, Mich., for the Spiritualists. He lectures there also the 23rd and 30th.

Lyman C. Howe lectured at Steek Hall, No. 11 East 14th street, New York City, last Sunday, in place of A. J. Davis. He lectures there also next Sunday.

A correspondent writes that Mrs. Mary Parkhurst, the well known healer of Rochester, N. Y., is kept fully occupied, and is very successful with her patients.

Mrs. C. Fannie Allyn will hold a parlor séance at the hall, 619 West Lake st., next Sunday morning at 10:15, and also lecture in the evening at 7:30. Conference and mediums' meeting at 3 P. M.

S. M. Baldwin & Co., have started an Archaeological bookstore, 207 4½ street, next to N. E. Corner Pa. Ave., Washington, D. C. Old, rare and new books are bought, sold, loaned and exchanged.

We are informed that Mr. Bates, the well known proprietor of the Bates House, Saratoga Springs, and a successful magnetic healer, sued Mrs. Hebbard for services rendered, and obtained a judgment.

Sargent's "Scientific Basis of Spiritualism" is a book which every Spiritualist should own and be a thorough master of its contents. No better book can be placed in the hands of investigators. Price, postpaid \$1.00.

In Shawano County, Wisconsin, a 16 months old baby was lately carried off by a bear. The child was playing in the door yard when seized; its screams were heard by the mother who aroused the farm hands, and made pursuit without success.

The San Marcos *Free Press* says that Billy Reed gives a rather marvellous story of a clock at Maj. Standifer's. It is thirty years old, and had been silent for eight years, until a few days since it suddenly awakened up and struck 180 without stopping.

"The Identity of Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism," is a valuable book in two volumes. Volume second of this work, containing a large mass of well authenticated phenomena and other interesting matter, can be had separately. Price, \$2.00 per volume, postpaid.

A spaniel belonging to William H. Baylies of Providence, saw a horse that had broken loose from a hitching post fall into Lohin's Pond. The horse was too bewildered to find his way out. The spaniel plunged in, swam to the horse, seized the bridle with his teeth and gradually pulled the horse around and guided him to the shore.

In the nine years last past, 541,196 people emigrated from Canada to the United States. In the last four years 401,200 came. The Marquis of Lorne, knowing this to be the case, is lecturing in England about the superiority of Canada to the United States as a field for English emigrants. The Marquis should be recalled to Canada to persuade the Canadians to stay at home.

The best results in the investigation of Spiritualism come after the verification of the phenomena. In true spiritual culture this can only be obtained by earnest endeavor on the part of the individual, aided by the best thoughts of writers and mediums to be found in current spiritual literature. Money now squandered in witnessing the Punch and Judy shows could be profitably invested and would return steadily increasing value if spent in books and papers.

The *London Graphic* and *The Illustrated London News*, both appear in most gorgeous holiday attire. The Christmas numbers of both papers are works of art. The colored engravings, of which there are several, are marvels of beauty. The *Graphic* contains an engraving of ten of its artists, copied from Harpers, and a very interesting sketch of its own history. It now numbers besides its actual staff of professional artists, no less than two thousand seven hundred and thirty persons over the country, who send them sketches for their paper. They sell 50,000 copies in America alone at 50 cents each, upon which they have to pay a duty of 25 per cent. There has been great improvements made in the past ten years, when it took them one week to prepare their sketches; through improved machinery they are now able to produce the same in three days time. International News Co., New York, are the American Agents.

The Terre Haute (Indiana) Evening Gazette contains an interesting letter from F. A. McNutt, son of our old subscriber, Judge McNutt.

It is reported that in the town of Noyon, where John Calvin, the great Genevese reformer, was born, the very name of Protestantism has been almost forgotten, and that the name of Calvin was unknown.

The Chicago Tribune says: "Col. Ingersoll has moved into his new house at Washington, next to Senator Sherman's. His family is a very charming one.

On last Sunday evening, Mr. O. A. Bishop gave a very interesting lecture at the West End Opera House, his subject being, "Frauds."

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On last Sunday evening, Mr. O. A. Bishop gave a very interesting lecture at the West End Opera House, his subject being, "Frauds."

It was very difficult—indeed, well nigh impossible, to see how Mr. Bishop accomplished this work so very nicely, until he stepped forward to explain Ackerly's method.

Those who were present and who had been duped by the fraudulent mediums of this city, wondered how they could have been so consummate dunces.

For the benefit of thousands who will see this number of the JOURNAL, we desire to state that the speaker on this occasion is not only a Spiritualist himself, but the husband of Mrs. O. A. Bishop, one of the best trances and test mediums of this city.

Exercises at Lester's Academy, 619 West Lake St.

Last Sunday morning, the weather being very stormy, and the audience rather small, Mrs. Allyn proposed to adjourn to the large parlor of the hall.

Mrs. Allyn gave the children a nice entertainment in the parlor of the hall from 6 o'clock to 7, with a magic lantern presented to her by Mrs. Gen. Tom Thumb; they seemed to enjoy it very much.

Foretold His Death. A Young Man Near Baltimore Predicts the Hour of His Demise.

BALTIMORE, Md., Dec. 8.—At the services attending the funeral of Christopher C. Brooks, at Mount Olivet Cemetery, near this city, yesterday, the Rev. C. E. Felton told how the young man had foretold his own death, and the pastor of the Mount Vernon Methodist Church, in commenting on it, said it was one of the exceptions to the general case.

To the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal: I wrote to Mr. Christopher C. Brooks, of which the following is a copy:

The following is a copy of Mr. Brooks's answer: 280 McDONOGAN ST., BALTIMORE, Md., Dec. 12.

The copy in the N. Y. Times is the same as the original in the Baltimore Sun.

Business Notices.

CLAIRVOYANT EXAMINATIONS FROM LOCK OF HAIR.—Dr. Butterfield will write you a clear, pointed and correct diagnosis of your disease, its causes, progress, and the prospect of a radical cure.

Passed to Spirit-Lite.

Joel M. Hubbard passed to spirit-life from Bowen Station Mich., Nov. 17th, 1883.

He was a devoted Spiritualist, and is now fully realizing the beauty and grandeur of the spiritual world.

Exercises at Lester's Academy, 619 West Lake St.

The First District Association of Spiritualists, composed of Oakland, Macomb, St. Clair and Ingham Counties, Mich., held its second Quarterly Meeting at Stone's Hall, Melancon, Leapeur County, the second Saturday and Sunday of January, 1884.

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"AN AVERAGE MAN." The second installment of Boucicault's novel of New York.

"HUSBANDRY IN COLONY TIMES." By Edward Eggleston, with much interesting information of our early culture and the beginnings of the tobacco and other industries.

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THE OTHER CONTENTS. Include the last chapters of the "Mansions" story, "The Broken Chain," a brief sketch of "Tommy Butt" with portraits in "Open Letters" New York, a "Field for Fiction," a comment by W. H. Bishop, with H. C. Bishop's story, "Some New Inventions," by CHARLES BARRETT, "Joseph Jackson's Noble Philosophy," etc., etc.

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Daniel F. Betty, 1883. This notice is to have it understood, that the regular price for this instrument is \$115.00, but as a special favor to our friends, we have reduced the price to \$49.75.

Healing.

To the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal: I hope my absorbing interest in a new work in which I am engaged will be a sufficient apology for making it my subject for a contribution to your columns.

Better than Gold. So easily is a cold taken that not infrequently one is at a loss to tell when or how it has originated, and is prone to expect it will go HEALTH as lightly as it came.

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