

RHODE-ISLAND BANNER.

A VOICE FROM THE LAND OF ROGER WILLIAMS.

PUBLICATION OFFICE, } Vol. 1
No. 3 Lonsdale's Block.

PROVIDENCE, R. I., SEPTEMBER 18, 1858.

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THE BANNER

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HORACE A. KEACH, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

Printed by Henry L. Tillinghast, 9 & 12 Market Square.

ONWARD AND SUNWARD.

GERALD MASSEY.

Tell me the song of the beautiful stars,
As grandly they glide on their blue way above us,
Looking, despite of our spirit's sin sears,
Down on us tenderly, yearning to love us ;
This is the song in their work-worship sung,
Down through the world-jewelled universe rung :
"Onward forever, for evermore onward,"
And ever they open their loving eyes sunward.

"Onward !" shouts earth, with her myriad voices
Of music, aye answering the song of the seven,
As like a wing'd child of God's love she rejoices,
Swinging her censer of glory in heaven.
And lo ! it is writ by the finger of God,
In sunbeams and flowers on the living green sod :
"Onward forever, for evermore onward,"
And ever she turneth all trustfully sunward.

The mightiest souls of all time hover o'er us,
Who labored like Gods among men, and have gone
Like great bursts of sun on the dark way before us :
They're with us, still with us, our battle fight on,
Looking down, victor-browed, from the glory-crown'd hill,
They beckon and beacon us on, onward still ;
And the true heart's aspirings are onward, still onward ;
It turns to the future, as earth turneth sunward.

Why should we mourn for those who die,—
Who rise to glory's sphere ?
The tenants of that cloudness sky
Need not own mortal tear.
Our woe seems arroyant and vain ;
Perchance it moves their scorn,
As if the slave beneath his chain,
Deplored the princely born.

"I've three cents left," said a loafer, "so I'll buy a paper with them." "What paper will you buy?" said a friend, curious to learn the literary taste of his acquaintance. "A paper of tobacco," replied the loafer.

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The London *Weekly Times* says that the young milliners and dressmakers of that city are condemned to sixteen, seventeen or eighteen hours of toil out of the twenty-four in each day and night.

Their work is carried on in crowded, unventilated rooms, where their frames are kept bent at their labor until their eyes ache and their limbs refuse to perform their duty. They have a short and painful life and an early grave. In a recent speech, Lord Shaftesbury said that many of these young woman had been trained gently and tenderly, in delicate and happy homes, possessing all the virtues and tenderness that belong to the female sex, and rendered by those very characteristics more obedient, more uncomplaining, more slavishly subject to the authority and tyranny of those who are put over them. His lordship adds that they have no alternative between submission and the street door ; and then asks ; "Is the condition of such a young woman one whit better than the condition of the most wretched slave in the Southern States of America?"

BIGOTRY.

I brought before his clouded mind
A life all radiant with celestial fire,
And spent in life long prayer for man—
A soul that fought triumphantly its finest sensualities—
Gaining a Heaven below, and shedding around a God-like inspiration.
I spake of one whose keenest grief
Was for the lack of love in human hearts ;
Who struggled ever, trusting through his God
To win some soul from Hell.
He listened with impatient ear,
And then broke forth : "Oh ! that he had seen as now I see ;
Had faith, and not been lost !"

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"Fanny, don't you think that Mr. Bold is a handsome man?"
"Oh no, I can't endure his looks. He is homely enough."
"Well, he is fortunate, at all events, for an old aunt has just died and left him fifty thousand dollars."
"Indeed ! is it true? Well, now, since I come to recollect, there is a certain noble air about him, and he has a fine eye—that can't be denied."

To improve a man, is to liberalize and enlarge him in thought, feeling and purpose.

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DREAM LIFE.

We are all dreamers. Childhood dreams of "butter-cups and daisies," manhood dreams of golden toys, and baubles of place woman muses of Love and Home, and age dreams of early life again. Thus we live and "our little life is rounded with a sleep," not a slumber of forgetfulness, but a repose of the soul, in the joyful hope of immortality.

A great many good truths are given to men in dreams. If we were perfectly healthy, all our impressions would be correct, and complete, but as a fractured mirror, gives a distorted image, so a shattered nervous system will reflect truth in dubious, crooked and fantastic shapes.

We have read of the patriarch, who after a toilsome journey, laid his head in a pillow of stones, and slept, to dream of the angels going up and down the ladder, that reached from earth to heaven. That spot was never forgotten. It was "the gate of heaven" to the weary pilgrim.

It was better than romance, when in earlier life, we read of the boy of seventeen, with his many colored coat who dreamed of promotion, when he became a man. To Joseph those dreams were real. He will trust them whatever his fortunes. His brothers fling him into a pit, in the wilderness of Dothan, after they had robbed him of his dappled vest. Slave dealers pay twenty pieces of silver for him, and again he is sold with the "spicery, balm and myrrh" that they carried down to Egypt.

But bound in the prison of Pharaoh, he interprets the dreams of his fellow prisoners, and calmly looks forward to the fulfillment of his own. When he is thirty years old, with a suit of fine linen, and "a gold chain about his neck," "the dreamer" has become the preserver of famine stricken Egypt.

In Shiloh, when "there was no open vision" a little child lays down to sleep; "and ere the lamp of God went out, in the temple of the Lord" he heard a voice, which told him truths, that in later years "made both the ears of every one that heard them to tingle." The future of his nation showed that "it was not all a dream."

One of the friends of Job, tells us of a spiritual dream.—
"Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof. In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon man, fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a Spirit passed before my face; the hair of flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image was before mine eyes, there was silence, and I heard a voice."

Now the memory of all our readers, will remind them of many things of this nature, in olden, and in modern times. There are many who read with reverence, the ancient records of angels visits, but who have no faith in their own intuitions now. We should feel very sad, if we must think that Heaven was farther off now than it was thirty centuries ago.

The earliest reference to music we have is in the book of Genesis, (chap. iv., verse 21,) where Jubal, who lived before the deluge, is mentioned as the "father of all such as handle the harp and organ."

HARMONY.

At a circle lately held at Milford, Mass., a medium was asked if public or promiscuous circles were beneficial? We were told that if harmony could be obtained they might be productive of good. If the object be an elevated one, all might be somewhat improved, but the chances of unanimity and refinement of purpose are less where the numbers are large. The opinion is very general that public circles have not been of much advantage to the cause of moral purity and mental culture. We may sometimes be called upon to make a sacrifice of our own preference for the sake of encouraging the ignorant who may for the time be placed within the sphere of our influence, but we can never be too careful, lest the dark minds and the spirits they attract, become the controlling influence of the circle.

We are not called upon to cast the pearls of our influence before swine, but we may sometimes lift the unfortunate from the mire of materialism in which they are wallowing, and this hope is the only reason that should ever induce us to become participants in the exercises of promiscuous circles. That reverence for our affectional nature, that leads us to regard a happy home as the vestibule of Heaven, and that just reserve that induces us to guard our parlors from the intrusion of the unworthy, should make us careful in the selection of companions when we seat ourselves in a circle for the reception and reciprocation of thought, and feeling, and purpose. We must be passive as the prime condition of success and the attainments of the desired equilibrium presupposes a mingling of the most subtle elements of our mental being, therefore we cannot be too choice in the selection of our comrades for this intimate communion.

SENSITIVE PLANTS.

There are some excellent persons in the ranks of the conservatives, who shrink from everything new. They reserve all their admiration for that which is venerable with the sanction of immemorial usage. They curl their lips in pious scorn, when told that Cora Hatch is inspired, as with dreamy eyes fixed on vacancy she showers jewelled words upon her delighted auditors.

It may seem unkind, but we are certainly tempted to take the conceit out of their minds by asking if this speaking in a trance, be a new thing. Fourteen hundred and fifty-two years Before Christ, or more than thirty-three centuries ago, this manner of speaking was in vogue. A man who said he would not speak "good or bad" of his "own mind" for "a house-full of silver and gold" was influenced to speak in the following manner.

"The man whose eyes are open hath said: he hath said which heard the words of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open;"—(and at another time the speaker makes this claim:) *He hath said which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the Most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open."* The Bible reader will find "the law and the testimony" on this point, in the 24th Chapter of Numbers.

A few evenings since we heard a lecture from that distinguished champion of Spiritualism, S. B. Britton, it was the concluding lecture of a course at Milford Mass. Mr. B. has evidently been a close student of the Progressive Philosophy, and the emphasis with which he speaks, impresses every hearer with the idea that he is enlisted for life in its defence.

GONE HIGHER.

George Combe, Esq., so widely known as a free-thinker, died Aug. 14th, at Moor Park Surrey. Mr. C. was born in Edingburgh in 1788. He studied for the Bar, and devoted twenty years to his Profession. He was the Author of "A System of Phrenology," the "Constitution of Man," various Essays and Lectures in Sanitary and Educational Reform, and the founder of the "Edinburgh Phrenological Journal."

The work from which his name has derived the greatest celebrity is, the "Constitution of Man," nearly one hundred thousand copies of which were sold in Great Britain alone, and many in Germany, France, Spain and the United States. The Hon. Horace Mann, remarked of this work, that it was "the best book that had been published, for centuries," and the noble author as he surveys our sphere from the more refined realm where he now dwells, must behold with satisfaction the elevating impulse he has given to the human intellect.

ANSWERING MENTAL QUESTIONS.

We have a number of excellent mediums in our city who are being developed to answer *mental questions*. This is a very pleasing and satisfactory mode of conversing with our invisible friends. The question is asked in the mind, and after a pause of a few seconds the medium sees some picture or symbol to represent the answer. There is something poetic in this. Are we learning anew the language of correspondence? This, which formed the great merit of Swedenborg's system, seems to be revived in our day.—What power is it that thus reads the question in the brain of the querist and impresses the answer upon the entranced senses of the medium? What could be more satisfactory to the sceptic than the tests thus proffered? The cultivated mind will instinctively welcome it as the highest phase of the new science. Until we can progress to something still more ethereal we will ponder upon the beautiful emblems presented to us by our pictorial mediums.

CHURCHCRAFT.

When we tell our friends that the Church opposes Science, they say they do not notice it. The Church seems to be very quiet.—And so she is, for we have tacitly yielded so much to her claims that she feels that we shall ever remain her slaves. When we struggle with our chains a little, the suddenness and zeal with which they are tightened, reveals the true state of the case. As a sample of the position of ecclesiastical bodies in relation to progress, take the following apology from the *London Times*, for not "dancing" when we "piped" about the Cable.

When success came at last, we proclaimed it in terms, as we thought, sufficiently glowing. Had we raised our key one note higher, we should have been thought proper inmates for a private lunatic asylum. The High Church pulpits would have denounced our exaltation of the miracles of science, and our worship of progress, and the iron cable would have been forthwith stigmatised as an engine of anti-Christ. The fault, if fault there be, is in the British public.

A modest share of wealth is good

To cheer us on our way,

For it has oftentimes the power

To make December May.

And so is beauty, so is health,

Or genius, at our call;

But a happy, careless, loving heart

Is better than them all.

A GOOD TEST.

A writer in the "Principle" in an article on the Atlantic Cable, gives the following remarkable evidence of spirit intelligence.—Mr. John B. Conklin, was the principal medium.

In connection, however, with this subject, it is my intention to give a brief account of a series of spirit manifestations received by a circle of gentlemen, in the city of New York, during the progress of the efforts to lay the cable.

After the fleet had left England, to proceed to mid-ocean, at the first meeting of the circle, I asked the spirit of my father-in-law, who had been a sea-faring man while in the form, to keep us advised with regard to the progress of the vessels engaged in the enterprise, and, as soon as the cable was spliced, to keep us posted up with regard to their subsequent success. At the first circle after the splice in June, he gave his signal, and then distinctly informed the circle that the cable had broken, on the American side, and that the attempt then made would be a *failure*! and that the vessels would have to return! This prove to be true. Without at all intending to accumulate proof with respect to these manifestations, the facts were reported to a number of gentlemen, many of whom were unbelievers in spiritualism, and a bet or bets were made upon the truth or falsity of the statement. It did prove true, as your readers have since learned.

After the confirmation of this intelligence, through the public prints, and the return of the telegraphic fleet to Queenstown, I requested my friend in the spirit world to keep us advised with regard to the probable result of the second effort, this year, to lay the cable—and this he promised to do.

The fleet was to leave Queenstown on the 17th of July, and, at our circle, on the 30th of July, my friend gave his signal, and I immediately asked, "Well, Captain, how is the telegraph fleet getting along?" He promptly replied, "Very well." I then inquired if it had reached mid-ocean yet. He replied, "Yes"—and immediately called for the alphabet, and spelled out, "*They spliced the cable yesterday*," which was the 29th of July. One or two gentlemen of the circle remarked, "That is certainly a mistake!" adding that, "it was hardly in the range of probability that the vessels could have got to mid-ocean and spliced the cable as early as yesterday." My spirit friend replied, very emphatically, "*They did splice the cable yesterday*." One asked at what hour. The reply was, "*One o'clock*; and you will hear news of the fleet within four days!" I said to him, as he was an extraordinary judge of the weather when in the form, I wished him to go and take good observation of the appearance of the weather, and give us his opinion as to what would be the result of the present effort. In from five to seven minutes (he said it was six) he gave his usual signal, and said he had examined the weather—then about 11 o'clock, Friday night, July 30th—and that the prospect was decidedly good; both vessels were progressing finely, and that the present effort *would be entirely successful*. This was emphatic.

The next morning, to wit, July 31st, the writer of this went to the office at which he is employed, and informed a dozen gentlemen or more of the import of the communication, one of whom, though not a spiritualist, yet is investigating the subject, made a written memorandum of the facts, as a matter for future reference; and, when the "Extra" came out, announcing the arrival of the Niagara and the success of the enterprise, he compared the spirit communication with it, and found them to agree in spirit and to the letter. To your readers, I need not add anything with regard to its being an excellent test.

CIVILITY.

Civility pleases all, prejudices none, adorns wit, renders humor agreeable, augments friendship, redoubles love, and, complying with justice and generosity, becomes the sacred charm of the society of mankind.

"If a civil word or two will render a man happy," said a French king, "he must be a wretch indeed who will not give them to him. Such a disposition is like lighting another man's candle by one's own, which loses none of its brilliancy by what the other gains." If all mankind possessed this feeling, how much happier would the world be than it now is.

LIBERAL LECTURES.

There was a good audience at Republican Hall to hear Miss S. Magoun. Her text (for the lecture was very much of a sermon) was the passage, "In my Father's house are many mansions," &c. Man's mind demands a lofty thought, a lofty hope. "Be not troubled;" this word is for us too. We are wandering down the great rolling avenue of life, all going to the same place. While here we are more intent upon gathering those riches that moth and rust will corrupt, than of gaining the value of higher truths.

The new commandment of Jesus was "Love ye one another as I have loved you." This was and is his commandment. It is a command not of harshness, of unkindness, but of a beautiful spirit. There is something poetic in these lessons of Jesus. How many of us to-day are troubled? We fear death; we know this life is uncertain, and we doubt of a future. The word of comfort is for us too.

We should not profess christianity merely, but practice it. No knowledge is of value until it is put in practice. Of what value were the sciences of our day if they had not been put in practice? We should not now have had the telegraph from this to foreign lands. Jesus put in practice the truths he taught.

The Spiritualists, as a body, have been charged with discarding the Bible, but where do you find your bread of life, if not in the life of Christ? Where do you find your Spiritualism, if not there?

To-day is the Sabbath of man; to-day all the churches and cathedrals of the Lord are filled with minds of men, but they are all opposing each other. The members of those churches do not regard their own individuality, do not work for themselves as Jesus did.

How many of us do in our hearts really believe in a God of omniscience and omnipresence, loving to us like the dew to the flower? We picture him as unkind and cruel, not as Jesus represented him.

Jesus taught his disciples that there was something better for them in the future. Your home below is a counterpart of a higher world where all is peace; your soul is, as it were a fac simile of God, partakes of his nature; the spirit of Christ, his principles, are with us now.

We have forgotten to be individuals; we are all teachers; we are all pupils. We receive the intelligence of God as the thirsty soul receives the drops of the sparkling rivulet, as the fevered brow receives the kiss of the fleeting breeze.

The concluding portion of the lecture was in rhyme,

In the evening Miss Magoun's subject was Home and its Influences. Our homes need educating. We have educated reason but neglected that which prompts on intellectual faculties to become lofty. Our home is where we found our first thought. Our life is like a floating skiff, our home principles are the ballast.—Our skiff is sailing through boisterous seas, and why? Because we have neglected home. Our hours are not given to the Goddess of Home Peace, but to baser passions. Now mothers are torn from their children, husbands and wives are separated. We hear it said that some ism has separated them, but it is often their own low passions. We are shedding from ourselves the influences of contention and war.

It seems hard to find that the best truths are crushed in the bud. Many lack the physical means of making pleasant homes. Are the prosperous giving forth of their means to aid them?—The sailor is one of the neglected class. The merchant places him who has the same God, below him, when often the poor man's spirit is the brightest.

Our homes teach us lessons of Free Love, we mean it in its best sense. Some who profess to be Spiritualist, remember we say *profess*, use the term in its worst sense, we use it in its noblest meaning, as that pure principle that is cognizant of the divinity within.

There is not one in this audience who does not recognize the influence of a mother. We cull the brightest flowers of life by her side. The artist may sketch the landscape, and the painter portray beautiful images, but a mother's love is forever.

Let home principles be brought to bear upon all the relations of life, to raise all from grossness to that which is more refined.—

Our homes are not to be cast aside, but are as lasting as eternity.

Home is where the heart is; and if our hearts are linked in love with a brother and a sister, all mankind will be thus loved. He who loves like Jesus, was his sister, his brother. The father of me is the father of you, and the father of you is the father of all. Home is not a place merely to loll at ease, but you should be a philanthropist to elevate mankind.

Fleeting as time is, it brings various changes. Progress is the main spring of life. The King on his throne is not happy, because while he rules others he cannot rule himself. The soul of man is bound for the port of eternity; we are made to do good as we go on our eternal way.

As flowers are perfumed with the varied electric fluids of the atmosphere, so influences emanate from each soul. Let the motto for home be, "Union now and Forever."

Well do I remember a speech of Daniel Webster's in which he speaks of his mother's lesson, that God was a principle. He loved that truth. Although he sought a wreath of political fame yet he never forgot that mother's lesson. It is a blessed thought that the mother who watches on infant footsteps, still lives, and will be a guiding star when we enter the sweet land of blessed eternity.

The close of this lecture was in poetry. The spirits exulted in the privilege of returning to earth to "utter forth life-thoughts anew."

THE WORLD MOVES.

In looking back on the sixteenth century, from the full light, and knowledge, and corrected feeling of the nineteenth,—we find many causes for gratitude, and still brightening hopes for the future. The world has substantially outgrown the religious intolerance of that day, as well as its barbarous cruelties. Though wars and conquests still exist, their horrors are much mitigated, and their frequency lessened. The difference in almost every department of knowledge, is equally remarkable. How changed is the knowledge of the surface of our planet, from what it was then? and at this period of time it is quite impossible to repress a smile, as we read of the brave Hendrick Hudson's ascending the North River, in search of a passage to the East Indies; and of Captain John Smith, in pursuance of orders from home, exploring the Chickahominy, in Virginia, in search of the Pacific Ocean.

TO CURE THE APPETITE FOR TOBACCO.

A clergyman who for many years had been addicted to the chewing and smoking of tobacco, but who has entirely abstained from the weed for over thirty years, communicates to the *Independent* the method of cure which he adopted.

"I had a deep well of very cool water, and whenever the evil appetite craved indulgence, I resorted immediately to fresh-drawn water. Of this I drank what I desired, and then continued to hold water in my mouth, throwing out and taking in successive mouthfuls, until the craving ceased. By a faithful adherence to this practice for about a month, I *was cured*; and from that time to this have been as free from any appetite for tobacco as a nursing infant. I loathe the use of the weed in every form, far more than I did before I contracted habits of indulgence."

THE WINDOWS OF HEAVEN.

Every individual is not only the expression and personification of some one of God's sympathies, affections, attributes, or qualities, as they may be termed, but is also the channel for some corresponding leading idea, or ray of Truth, which can come through no other source. Until the individual is unfolded, he is like a dark window, which, when opened, showers a flood of light upon all within, and reveals unfading glories and beauties which were before unknown.

Thus every individual is one of heaven's windows, and all are needed.

There is a purple half to the grape, a mellow and crimson half to the peach, a sunny half to the globe, and a better half to men.

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This is the song in their work-worship sung,
Down through the world-jewelled universe rung :
"Onward forever, for evermore onward,"
And ever they open their loving eyes sunward.

"Onward !" shouts earth, with her myriad voices
Of music, aye answering the song of the seven,
As like a wing'd child of God's love she rejoices,
Swinging her censor of glory in heaven.
And lo ! it is writ by the finger of God,
In sunbeams and flowers on the living green sod :
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Like great bursts of sun on the dark way before us :
They're with us, still with us, our battle fight on,
Looking down, victor-browed, from the glory-crown'd hill,
They beckon and beacon us on, onward still ;
And the true heart's aspirations are onward, still onward ;
It turns to the future, as earth turneth sunward.

Why should we mourn for those who die,—
Who rise to glory's sphere ?
The tenants of that cloudiness sky
Need not own mortal tear.
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We have read of the patriarch, who after a toilsome journey, laid his head in a pillow of stones, and slept, to dream of the angels going up and down the ladder, that reached from earth to heaven. That spot was never forgotten. It was "the gate of heaven" to the weary pilgrim.

It was better than romance, when in earlier life, we read of the boy of seventeen, with his many colored coat who dreamed of promotion, when he became a man. To Joseph those dreams were real. He will trust them whatever his fortunes. His brothers fling him into a pit, in the wilderness of Dothan, after they had robbed him of his dappled vest. Slave dealers pay twenty pieces of silver for him, and again he is sold with the "spicery, balm and myrrh" that they carried down to Egypt.

But bound in the prison of Pharaoh, he interprets the dreams of his fellow prisoners, and calmly looks forward to the fulfillment of his own. When he is thirty years old, with a suit of fine linen, and "a gold chain about his neck," "the dreamer" has become the preserver of famine stricken Egypt.

In Shiloh, when "there was no open vision" a little child lays down to sleep; "and ere the lamp of God went out, in the temple of the Lord" he heard a voice, which told him truths, that in later years "made both the ears of every one that heard them to tingle." The future of his nation showed that "it was not all a dream."

One of the friends of Job, tells us of a spiritual dream.—*"Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof. In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon man, fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a Spirit passed before my face; the hair of flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image was before mine eyes, there was silence, and I heard a voice."*

Now the memory of all our readers, will remind them of many things of this nature, in olden, and in modern times. There are many who read with reverence, the ancient records of angels visits, but who have no faith in their own intuitions now. We should feel very sad, if we must think that Heaven was farther off now than it was thirty centuries ago.

The earliest reference to music we have is in the book of Genesis, (chap. iv., verse 21,) where Jubal, who lived before the deluge, is mentioned as the "father of all such as handle the harp and organ."

HARMONY.

At a circle lately held at Milford, Mass., a medium was asked if public or promiscuous circles were beneficial? We were told that if harmony could be obtained they might be productive of good. If the object be an elevated one, all might be somewhat improved, but the chances of unanimity and refinement of purpose are less where the numbers are large. The opinion is very general that public circles have not been of much advantage to the cause of moral purity and mental culture. We may sometimes be called upon to make a sacrifice of our own preference for the sake of encouraging the ignorant who may for the time be placed within the sphere of our influence, but we can never be too careful, lest the dark minds and the spirits they attract, become the controlling influence of the circle.

We are not called upon to cast the pearls of our influence before swine, but we may sometimes lift the unfortunate from the mire of materialism in which the are wallowing, and this hope is the only reason that should ever induce us to become participants in the exercises of promiscuous circles. That reverence for our affectional nature, that leads us to regard a happy home as the vestibule of Heaven, and that just reserve that induces us to guard our parlors from the intrusion of the unworthy, should make us careful in the selection of companions when we seat ourselves in a circle for the reception and reciprocation of thought, and feeling, and purpose. We must be passive as the prime condition of success and the attainments of the desired equilibrium presupposes a mingling of the most subtle elements of our mental being, therefore we cannot be too choice in the selection of our comrades for this intimate communion.

SENSITIVE PLANTS.

There are some excellent persons in the ranks of the conservatives, who shrink from everything new. They reserve all their admiration for that which is venerable with the sanction of immemorial usage. They curl their lips in pious scorn, when told that Cora Hatch is inspired, as with dreamy eyes fixed on vacancy she showers jewelled words upon her delighted auditors.

It may seem unkind, but we are certainly tempted to take the conceit out of their minds by asking if this speaking in a trance, be a new thing. Fourteen hundred and fifty-two years before Christ, or more than thirty-three centuries ago, this manner of speaking was in vogue. A man who said he would not speak "good or bad" of his "own mind" for "a house-full of silver and gold" was influenced to speak in the following manner.

"The man whose eyes are open hath said: he hath said which heard the words of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open;"—(and at another time the speaker makes this claim:) *He hath said which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the Most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open.*" The Bible reader will find "the law and the testimony" on this point, in the 24th Chapter of Numbers.

A few evenings since we heard a lecture from that distinguished champion of Spiritualism, S. B. Britton, it was the concluding lecture of a course at Milford Mass. Mr. B. has evidently been a close student of the Progressive Philosophy, and the emphasis with which he speaks, impresses every hearer with the idea that he is enlisted for life in its defence.

GONE HIGHER.

George Combe, Esq., so widely known as a free-thinker, died Aug. 14th, at Moor Park Surrey. Mr. C. was born in Edinburg in 1788. He studied for the Bar, and devoted twenty years to his Profession. He was the Author of "A System of Phrenology," the "Constitution of Man," various Essays and Lectures in Sanitary and Educational Reform, and the founder of the "Edinburgh Phrenological Journal."

The work from which his name has derived the greatest celebrity is, the "Constitution of Man," nearly one hundred thousand copies of which were sold in Great Britain alone, and many in Germany, France, Spain and the United States. The Hon. Horace Mann, remarked of this work, that it was "the best book that had been published, for centuries," and the noble author as he surveys our sphere from the more refined realm where he now dwells, must behold with satisfaction the elevating impulse he has given to the human intellect.

ANSWERING MENTAL QUESTIONS.

We have a number of excellent mediums in our city who are being developed to answer *mental questions*. This is a very pleasing and satisfactory mode of conversing with our invisible friends. The question is asked in the mind, and after a pause of a few seconds the medium sees some picture or symbol to represent the answer. There is something poetic in this. Are we learning anew the language of correspondence? This, which formed the great merit of Swedenborg's system, seems to be revived in our day.—What power is it that thus reads the question in the brain of the querist and impresses the answer upon the entranced senses of the medium? What could be more satisfactory to the sceptic than the tests thus proffered? The cultivated mind will instinctively welcome it as the highest phase of the new science. Until we can progress to something still more ethereal we will ponder upon the beautiful emblems presented to us by our pictorial mediums.

CHURCHCRAFT.

When we tell our friends that the Church opposes Science, they say they do not notice it. The Church seems to be very quiet.—And so she is, for we have tacitly yielded so much to her claims that she feels that we shall ever remain her slaves. When we struggle with our chains a little, the suddenness and zeal with which they are tightened, reveals the true state of the case. As a sample of the position of ecclesiastical bodies in relation to progress, take the following apology from the *London Times*, for not "dancing" when we "piped" about the Cable.

When success came at last, we proclaimed it in terms, as we thought, sufficiently glowing. Had we raised our key one note higher, we should have been thought proper inmates for a private lunatic asylum. The High Church pulpits would have denounced our exaltation of the miracles of science, and our worship of progress, and the iron cable would have been forthwith stigmatised as an engine of anti-Christ. The fault, if fault there be, is in the British public.

A modest share of wealth is good
To cheer us on our way,
For it has oftentimes the power
To make December May.
And so is beauty, so is health,
Or genius, at our call;
But a happy, careless, loving heart
Is better than them all.

A GOOD TEST.

A writer in the "Principle" in an article on the Atlantic Cable, gives the following remarkable evidence of spirit intelligence.—Mr. John B. Conklin, was the principal medium.

In connection, however, with this subject, it is my intention to give a brief account of a series of spirit manifestations received by a circle of gentlemen, in the city of New York, during the progress of the efforts to lay the cable.

After the fleet had left England, to proceed to mid-ocean, at the first meeting of the circle, I asked the spirit of my father-in-law, who had been a sea-faring man while in the form, to keep us advised with regard to the progress of the vessels engaged in the enterprise, and, as soon as the cable was spliced, to keep us posted up with regard to their subsequent success. At the first circle after the splice in June, he gave his signal, and then distinctly informed the circle that the cable had broken, on the American side, and that the attempt then made would be a *failure*! and that the vessels would have to return! This prove to be true. Without at all intending to accumulate proof with respect to these manifestations, the facts were reported to a number of gentlemen, many of whom were unbelievers in spiritualism, and a bet or bets were made upon the truth or falsity of the statement. It did prove true, as your readers have since learned.

After the confirmation of this intelligence, through the public prints, and the return of the telegraphic fleet to Queenstown, I requested my friend in the spirit world to keep us advised with regard to the probable result of the second effort, this year, to lay the cable—and this he promised to do.

The fleet was to leave Queenstown on the 17th of July, and, at our circle, on the 30th of July, my friend gave his signal, and I immediately asked, "Well, Captain, how is the telegraph fleet getting along?" He promptly replied, "Very well." I then inquired if it had reached mid-ocean yet. He replied, "Yes"—and immediately called for the alphabet, and spelled out, "*They spliced the cable yesterday*," which was the 29th of July. One or two gentlemen of the circle remarked, "That is certainly a mistake!" adding that, "it was hardly in the range of probability that the vessels could have got to mid-ocean and spliced the cable as early as yesterday." My spirit friend replied, very emphatically, "They *did* splice the cable yesterday." One asked at what hour. The reply was, "*One o'clock*; and you will hear news of the fleet within four days!" I said to him, as he was an extraordinary judge of the weather when in the form, I wished him to go and take good observation of the appearance of the weather, and give us his opinion as to what would be the result of the present effort. In from five to seven minutes (he said it was six) he gave his usual signal, and said he had examined the weather—then about 11 o'clock, Friday night, July 30th—and that the prospect was decidedly good; both vessels were progressing finely, and that the present effort *would be entirely successful*. This was emphatic.

The next morning, to wit, July 31st, the writer of this went to the office at which he is employed, and informed a dozen gentlemen or more of the import of the communication, one of whom, though not a spiritualist, yet is investigating the subject, made a written memorandum of the facts, as a matter for future reference; and, when the "Extra" came out, announcing the arrival of the Niagara and the success of the enterprise, he compared the spirit communication with it, and found them to agree in spirit and to the letter. To your readers, I need not add anything with regard to its being an excellent test.

CIVILITY.

Civility pleases all, prejudices none, adorns wit, renders humor agreeable, augments friendship, redoubles love, and, complying with justice and generosity, becomes the sacred charm of the society of mankind.

"If a civil word or two will render a man happy," said a French king, "he must be a wretch indeed who will not give them to him. Such a disposition is like lighting another man's candle by one's own, which loses none of its brilliancy by what the other gains." If all mankind possessed this feeling, how much happier would the world be than it now is.

LIBERAL LECTURES.

There was a good audience at Republican Hall to hear Miss S. Magoun. Her text (for the lecture was very much of a sermon) was the passage, "In my Father's house are many mansions," &c. Man's mind demands a lofty thought, a lofty hope. "Be not troubled;" this word is for us too. We are wandering down the great rolling avenue of life, all going to the same place. While here we are more intent upon gathering those riches that moth and rust will corrupt, than of gaining the value of higher truths.

The new commandment of Jesus was "Love ye one another as I have loved you." This was and is his commandment. It is a command not of harshness, of unkindness, but of a beautiful spirit. There is something poetic in these lessons of Jesus. How many of us to-day are troubled? We fear death; we know this life is uncertain, and we doubt of a future. The word of comfort is for us too.

We should not profess christianity merely, but practice it. No knowledge is of value until it is put in practice. Of what value were the sciences of our day if they had not been put in practice? We should not now have had the telegraph from this to foreign lands. Jesus put in practice the truths he taught.

The Spiritualists, as a body, have been charged with discarding the Bible, but where do you find your bread of life, if not in the life of Christ? Where do you find your Spiritualism, if not there?

To-day is the Sabbath of man; to-day all the churches and cathedrals of the Lord are filled with minds of men, but they are all opposing each other. The members of those churches do not regard their own individuality, do not work for themselves as Jesus did.

How many of us do in our hearts really believe in a God of omniscience and omnipresence, loving to us like the dew to the flower? We picture him as unkind and cruel, not as Jesus represented him.

Jesus taught his disciples that there was something better for them in the future. Your home below is a counterpart of a higher world where all is peace; your soul is, as it were a fac simile of God, partakes of his nature; the spirit of Christ, his principles, are with us now.

We have forgotten to be individuals; we are all teachers; we are all pupils. We receive the intelligence of God as the thirsty soul receives the drops of the sparkling rivulet, as the fevered brow receives the kiss of the fleeting breeze.

The concluding portion of the lecture was in rhyme.

In the evening Miss Magoun's subject was Home and its Influences. Our homes need educating. We have educated reason but neglected that which prompts on intellectual faculties to become lofty. Our home is where we found our first thought. Our life is like a floating skiff, our home principles are the ballast.—Our skiff is sailing through boisterous seas, and why? Because we have neglected home. Our hours are not given to the Goddess of Home Peace, but to baser passions. Now mothers are torn from their children, husbands and wives are separated. We hear it said that some ism has separated them, but it is often their own low passions. We are shedding from ourselves the influences of contention and war.

It seems hard to find that the best truths are crushed in the bud. Many lack the physical means of making pleasant homes. Are the prosperous giving forth of their means to aid them?—The sailor is one of the neglected class. The merchant places him who has the same God, below him, when often the poor man's spirit is the brightest.

Our homes teach us lessons of Free Love, we mean it in its best sense. Some who profess to be Spiritualist, remember we say *profess*, use the term in its worst sense, we use it in its noblest meaning, as that pure principle that is cognizant of the divinity within.

There is not one in this audience who does not recognize the influence of a mother. We call the brightest flowers of life by her side. The artist may sketch the landscape, and the painter portray beautiful images, but a mother's love is forever.

Let home principles be brought to bear upon all the relations of life, to raise all from grossness to that which is more refined.—

Our homes are not to be cast aside, but are as lasting as eternity.

Home is where the heart is; and if our hearts are linked in love with a brother and a sister, all mankind will be thus loved. He who loves like Jesus, was his sister, his brother. The father of me is the father of you, and the father of you is the father of all. Home is not a place merely to loll at ease, but you should be a philanthropist to elevate mankind.

Fleeting as time is, it brings various changes. Progress is the main spring of life. The King on his throne is not happy, because while he rules others he cannot rule himself. The soul of man is bound for the port of eternity; we are made to do good as we go on our eternal way.

As flowers are perfumed with the varied electric fluids of the atmosphere, so influences emanate from each soul. Let the motto for home be, "Union now and Forever."

Well do I remember a speech of Daniel Webster's in which he speaks of his mother's lesson, that God was a principle. He loved that truth. Although he sought a wreath of political fame yet he never forgot that mother's lesson. It is a blessed thought that the mother who watches on infant footsteps, still lives, and will be a guiding star when we enter the sweet land of blessed eternity.

The close of this lecture was in poetry. The spirits exulted in the privilege of returning to earth to "utter forth life-thoughts anew."

THE WORLD MOVES.

In looking back on the sixteenth century, from the full light, and knowledge, and corrected feeling of the nineteenth,—we find many causes for gratitude, and still brightening hopes for the future. The world has substantially outgrown the religious intolerance of that day, as well as its barbarous cruelties. Though wars and conquests still exist, their horrors are much mitigated, and their frequency lessened. The difference in almost every department of knowledge, is equally remarkable. How changed is the knowledge of the surface of our planet, from what it was then? and at this period of time it is quite impossible to repress a smile, as we read of the brave Hendrick Hudson's ascending the North River, in search of a passage to the East Indies; and of Captain John Smith, in pursuance of orders from home, exploring the Chickahominy, in Virginia, in search of the Pacific Ocean.

TO CURE THE APPETITE FOR TOBACCO.

A clergyman who for many years had been addicted to the chewing and smoking of tobacco, but who has entirely abstained from the weed for over thirty years, communicates to the *Independent* the method of cure which he adopted.

"I had a deep well of very cool water, and whenever the evil appetite craved indulgence, I resorted immediately to fresh-drawn water. Of this I drank what I desired, and then continued to hold water in my mouth, throwing out and taking in successive mouthfuls, until the craving ceased. By a faithful adherence to this practice for about a month, I *was cured*; and from that time to this have been as free from any appetite for tobacco as a nursing infant. I loathe the use of the weed in every form, far more than I did before I contracted habits of indulgence."

THE WINDOWS OF HEAVEN.

Every individual is not only the expression and personification of some one of God's sympathies, affections, attributes, or qualities, as they may be termed, but is also the channel for some corresponding leading idea, or ray of Truth, which can come through no other source. Until the individual is unfolded, he is like a dark window, which, when opened, showers a flood of light upon all within, and reveals unfading glories and beauties which were before unknown.

Thus every individual is one of heaven's windows, and all are needed.

There is a purple half to the grape, a mellow and crimson half to the peach, a sunny half to the globe, and a better half to men.