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Written for the Banner of Light.

CONSTANCE IRITON, OR, MY UNCLE'S WARD.

BY MISS SARAH A. BOWEN.

CHAPTER X.

The next morning I awoke to hear the rain dashing against the windows. "Oh!" exclaimed Constance, who was already up. "Isn't this delightful. We shall now have an opportunity to see how Neptune behaves in a storm."

We found quite a company assembled in the drawing-room, looking rather gloomy at the prospect of a day within doors. One glance at the leaden sky, revealed the fact that rides, walks and sails were likely to be dispensed with for the next twenty-four hours at least.

I stationed myself at the window to gaze upon the sea. The waves were black and threatening, and gave low muttering growls as they came surging in upon the beach.

"A penny for your thoughts, Miss Appleton," said a voice at my elbow, and turning I beheld Mr. Hastings.

"They are not worth that exorbitant sum," I replied, laughing. "In the first place, it would puzzle me to analyze them, and then I doubt whether they would be edifying or amusing to any one but myself."

He smiled. "Allow me to be the judge of that. I know that you were thinking of the ocean. Do you like it in this state?"

"Like it!" I repeated, contemptuously. "There is something grand and sublime in this mood. I have seen it with a smiling sky reflected in its bosom, and I admired it; but now that I behold it in its rage, it inspires a feeling of awe for its strength and power. I believe I should really enjoy to be on the deck of a ship at this time, with the dark, lowering clouds overhead, and the wild rushing billows underneath."

"Well, if you had happened to have been out, I should have prayed that the vessel might be staunch and true, and not betray its trust; but as for me I am ever comparing the sea with human life. Yesterday it lay, to all appearances, tranquil, yet to an experienced eye the waves would have been seen to work in sudden rage, as if the storm-god had whispered to the breezes that he was coming in his might and power, and they as they kissed the sparkling water, had revealed it. Just as the soul lives in one time in an atmosphere of brightness, but even when the sky is yet unclouded, it counts the approach of the wild, bitter winds of desolation, and the raindrops of pain and agony."

He paused, while I looked up in surprise, as he had expressed some of the thoughts that had been passing through my mind. He appeared to read my face, for he continued:

"Ah, I have repeated some of your reflections, have I?"

The same idea, although it lay in a rude, chaotic condition not yet elaborated, whereas you have robed it in polished language."

"Generally speaking, it is better to give our thoughts expression, and throw it out upon the world to become current interchange between mind and mind. Sometimes counterfeits color is forced upon us, but we must test it with the solid of reason and common sense, and then if it has not the ring of the true metal, cast it aside."

"We do not always possess keen enough perception to detect the spurious," I replied, with a sigh. "Much that in society passes for gold, is nothing but brass."

"Very true. We require to be vigilant and always at our post, else we shall certainly be imposed upon. There was one other striking illustration about the ocean that I wished to call your attention to, and that is, that after every storm that sweeps over the soul, a most profound calm follows. Did you ever think of it?"

"Yes; but although the sun appears to shine brighter after every trouble, I am not satisfied that it really does. The contrast makes it seem so."

"That may be one reason, but there are others. We know that there is always a reaction after a tempest. One extreme ever follows another."

At this instant, Florence came up to speak to me, I introduced her to my companion, and then we conversed for a few moments together, but after a while she went to find Constance.

"Well, Miss Appleton, I believe we have mortified long enough for this morning at least. What say you to a game of chess?"

"I am at your service; but I fear that you will find me an opponent not worthy of your skill."

"Does that mean anything?" he rejoined, smiling. "I believe ladies are apt to depreciate themselves."

"Are they?" I said innocently. "I was not aware of it. I am not one of that kind."

We had now seated ourselves at the board, and were soon engrossed in the game. I perceived that he was well versed in all the tactics of warfare, and for a time I was obliged to act wholly on the defensive. At last the pieces were in such a position that I thought I had a decided advantage. With my knight and castle I could dash down and capture his queen and check-mate him.

Just as I had got my plan matured, I looked up and beheld Constance, surrounded by a group of gentlemen, dashing her diamond with in every direction, while my uncle stood leaning against a column, instantly regarding her, while a moody, bitter expression rested upon his countenance.

"May Appleton!" I inwardly ejaculated, "what a goose you are never to have mistrusted that before. A romantic episode being enacted right before your eyes, and you so perfectly unconscious. There, miss, your beauty will soon be the subject of the gods are only propitious."

At this moment my meditations were suddenly interrupted by my opponent, who, with a quick glance, politely informed me that it was my turn to move.

"Oh, dear!" I said to myself, "I warrant this tell-tale face of mine has been smothering him by revealing all my thoughts." "I am sorry," I said, "for my inattention. In the meantime, I apologized for my inattention, but with my head still full of my wonderful discovery, I blunderingly advanced my queen, which was immediately captured by an insignificant pawn. As a consequence, my elaborate campaign was a failure, and in a few moments Mr. Hastings said:

"Checkmate."

I was now completely disgusted with chess, and beckoned uncle Robert to take my place, while I retreated to my old seat by the window. I had scarcely begun to dream, when George Mendon, like an evil genius, aroused me. Mentally consigning him to the antipodes, I prepared myself for martyrdom. For twenty minutes he inflicted his small talk upon me, laughing uproariously at his own feeble wit, and then, to my great joy, Angelina Carr came to my relief. I now joined Constance, who was looking over a book of engravings.

"It is insufferably dull here," she exclaimed, with a yawn. "Dull! I thought you seemed to be very well amused half an hour ago."

Her lip curled.

"We want to be something else besides amused sometimes. Such a set of coxcombs as have been flitting about this morning! They seem to think that any woman must be perfectly delighted with their conversation. They have now departed for the bowling alley. Really, I have not seen but just one man for some time."

"Who is that, Howard Percy?" I said, mischievously.

"Yes," she replied, with the utmost gravity.

"He would, undoubtedly, be flattered by your preference; but you forget, uncle; you do not intend to class him with those brainless fops?"

"Certainly not; Mr. Lindsey is always excepted," she coolly replied, and walking to the piano, she sat down and commenced playing.

The sound of the music attracted the loungers from the other parlors and the hall, and soon quite a crowd was collected about her; but she did not appear to realize it. Howard Percy bent down and whispered something to her ear; once, and then a faint color tinged her cheek, and I turned away with a sigh for uncle Robert.

Half an hour after Florence came, and linking her arm in mine, said:

"Come up to my room. I want to have a good quiet talk. Here we can't be together more than five minutes without something or other interrupting us. There is that Mr. Hastings now circumnavigating this way. I declare, I do believe he's an snigger, and if you don't accompany me up stairs this minute, I shall know that's the case with you."

That speech was sufficient to send the blood tumultuously to my face, and also to quicken my steps from the parlor, while the roguish girl by my side almost went into convulsions in her amusement to see the effect that her words had produced. We were soon occupying very comfortable positions in her room, one on the lounge, and the other in the rocking chair, while our tongues flew rapidly.

"I'll tell you one thing," said Florence, "I do believe that Constance will be my cousin yet."

"Do you indeed. Upon what grounds do you base such a conclusion as that?"

"Oh, because Howard is head over ears in love with her, and then he's a wealthy and handsome, and would make her a good husband."

"Really, then, you think that she's just like a ripe peach ready to fall into his arms on that account. You might say the same of five hundred, and yet she would not marry them."

"Oh, you provoking creature! Why, I've even gone so far as to plan the bridal tour, and now you must go to trying to dash my air castles to the ground, even when I'd let you be first bridesmaid."

"Thank you; your kindness fairly overwhelms me. But I fear that your arrangements will never become perfected, with that couple at least. I do not believe that their paths will ever blend in one."

"Dear me! How consoling you are! But if she do not care for Howard, I do not think there is anybody that she is interested in."

"No, I guess her heart is untouched yet. She does not seem to care particularly for any one, that I can see."

"Well, then, I'll wager my emerald ring against your ruby, that she'll become my cousin yet. How, and is a great favorite with the ladies, and she can't help liking him. I'm confident that he will win her. I'll help the match along, if I possibly can."

"In trying to make you, may mar," I said coolly, "and I presume that Constance will think she can attend to her own affairs without any assistance. I am sure that I should."

"I am certain I never thought of such a thing as aiding you," she replied, her black eyes dancing. "You and Mr. Hastings are getting along so awfully merrily you do not need it."

"Do not be so foolish. Can't a lady speak to a gentleman without having designs upon his heart, or can't he be civil and polite to one of the opposite sex, and yet have no desire to make her his wife. You draw very hasty conclusions. But I see it is late, and I must go to prepare for dinner, and I would advise you to do the same."

"Stop a moment. You haven't accepted my wager."

"I never indulge in betting."

"Ah! ah! I am afraid you will lose," she replied, as I shut the door.

Thus the day, laden with joy and pleasure, drifted remorselessly down the river of Time. Mr. Hastings became my escort on our walks and rides, and regularly each morning the servant rapped on the door and presented a beautiful bouquet, with a knowing glance at my blushing face. I almost unconsciously to myself, a new sweet, deeper enjoyment and more delicious than any that I had yet known, was slipping like a golden thread into my cup. I was happy, and I was content, and I was free.

At last there came one night when the music of my own heart lulled me to sleep. Maurice Hastings had spoken that day the words that every woman waits to hear. I referred him to my uncle, and that same evening the latter led me out upon the balcony, and there, with the star-gemmed mantle of the friendly night to hide my blushes, he said, with an infinite tenderness in his voice:

"So some one else loves my Mayflower, and would rob me of her, and you, prefer him to me. I had expected that this would happen some time, but really I was not prepared for it so soon. I guess your mother and sister will be astonished."

My lover now joined us.

"Maurice Hastings, I give my darling to you, Cherish her faithfully, and as you treat her, so may the Great Jehovah deal with you."

"Mr. Lindsey, I will guard her as my life."

"God bless you both. May you be happy."

So we were betrothed.

Clouds dark and heavy had gathered about me in the morning of my existence; now the sun, in all its radiant splendor, shone upon me.

We were to return to "Maple Grove" now very soon, and a gay party went to join us there. My uncle had given Mr. Percy an invitation to return with us, but Constance was strangely taciturn.

One more walk Maurice and I took upon the beautiful beach. "Twas there my life was crowned."

CHAPTER XI.

One week after we returned home there came a letter from my mother, enclosing one from Laura. The former wrote:

"I am perfectly delighted with your good fortune, although how you ever succeeded in entreprising so wealthy a gentleman as Mr. Hastings, I am utterly at a loss to determine. I never gave you credit for half so much management. He was expected at Barstons this summer, and considerable disappointment was manifested when it was rumored that he had gone to Newport. I can scarcely realize that he is to become my son-in-law, and, above all, your husband. It would not have seemed so strange if it had been your sister; but it only verifies the truth of the old adage that 'love will go where it is sent.'"

I passed in bewilderment, and said to myself: "Why, who can Maurice be, that people should be so much interested in his movements, and care so his affairs so freely?"

I took up Laura's missive with considerable curiosity. It was the first time that she had seen fit to honor me. A vein of ill humor ran through the whole.

"So it seems you are as artful as anybody else, in spite of your demure face," she said. "You have played your cards well, and have won an eligible match. I never happened to meet Mr. Hastings, although I know that many a cap has been set for him. What a pity that he should walk through the woods, and pick up a crooked stick at last. It is really laughable that you, of all others, should take him in. The only prayer that I can offer for the poor fellow is, that he should be engaged before me. Give my best respects to my proposed brother. I should advise you not to let him be tempted to slip through your fingers. I think he showed his good sense by not falling in love with that hateful Constance."

I smiled, and thought, "If he could withstand her fascinations, and choose me from among the throng of beauties, I will least him anywhere," and taking my letters, I went to seek my uncle.

I found him in the library. I placed the writings in his hand, and then sat down to await his remarks. He read them through, and then looked up with a smile.

"I told you, May, that they would be amazed."

"Is he, then, so very rich?" I said, for until that day I had not so much as thought of it.

He arched his eyebrows in mock surprise.

"Why, you little unsophisticated puss! it is possible that you are engaged without having that very important question answered. Luckily your mother does not know of it, she would go into violent hysterics that might endanger her life. Here, let me make a note of it. A young lady of the nineteenth century was so very imprudent as to accept a suitor without ascertaining the amount of his bank-statement. Why, May, the leaders of fashion would unanimously exclaim that you were a fit subject for a straight jacket."

"What a tease you are," I replied, laughing; "but now do enlighten me with regard to his finances, for I am exceedingly desirous to understand what constitutes him such a catch in Laura's eyes."

"Well, then, pet, he's one of the nabobs of New York. When he was fifteen his father and mother died within a few months of each other, and Paul and Maurice, the only children, found themselves possessed of independent fortunes. The former, being ten years the oldest, became his brother's guardian, and well did he fulfill the trust. He had great talents for business, and he invested their property so judiciously that by the time Maurice was twenty-one it had doubled. A few months after that event, Paul was stricken with brain fever, and never left his bed until he was carried out in his shroud. Your lover became heir to his wealth, and that, in addition to his own immense fortune, constitutes your sister's 'eligible match.'"

"Well, I don't see through her speculations, so I am no better pleased than I was before," I rejoined, as I left the room.

That afternoon Maurice and Florence Percy arrived, and in the evening Harley and Edna Graham. Our company was now full. All the bright days we patronized out-door amusements, but when the weather confined us to the house, we had concerts, charades and tableaux, and enjoyed ourselves to the utmost.

Gradually my uncle withdrew himself from our pleasures and excursions, pleading business for an excuse, while Howard Percy became more and more devoted to Constance. The latter seemed changed, and I was puzzled to account for her almost capricious manner. At times she was gay, to excess, and then grave and silent for days together. I made no attempt to gain her confidence, for I felt that the wisest course was to leave her to herself.

It was now the 1st of October, and the beautiful Indian Summer had cast its violet-tinted veil over the earth. The trees had long since thrown out their pennons of scarlet and amber. It was the delectable time before autumn died.

One evening we were all gathered upon the veranda. The west was blushing rosy red at the approach of the sun, and when he disappeared from her view her tears fell like molten lava.

"If I were a poet," exclaimed Harley Graham, "this would be my favorite hour. Now my lyre would be tuned to sing its sweetest strains."

"If I were an artist," said Howard Percy, "I should fling down pencil and brush to despair before the glowing colors of yonder canvas."

"Well, as for me," said the sun-loving Mordaunt, "as I am perfectly contented with myself and the world, and have no desire to be any different from what I am, I think that the greatest halo with which I could invest this hour would be to bear a certain young lady away—yes! to a particular question; then the Indian Summer would be typical of Paradise."

We all laughed, with the exception of Edna, whose cheeks were as pale as the midst of our mirth, and she joined us.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, with a smile, "I have an idea which I have been meditating upon for several days, and now I come to lay my proposition before you, and to receive your votes. What do you say to a fête on the grounds, about the tenth of this month?"

"Capital! capital!" we exclaimed, without one dissenting voice. The rest of the evening was spent in discussing the plan and making our arrangements. The next day the invitations were issued. Such a busy time as we had. Uncle seemed determined that people should be astonished at the brilliancy of the entertainment.

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The eventful night at last arrived. Luna, with all her numerous attendants, graced the occasion. It seemed like fairy-land, the lighted grounds, the ravishing music and the gay assemblage.

Refreshments were provided in the arbor, while on the lawn, happy tripping feet kept time to glad melodies. The fountain was illuminated by many colored lamps, until the drops caught and reflected all the hues of the rainbow.

On the river were pleasure-boats, and occasionally we heard the musical dip of the oars, while over all rang merry peals of laughter. The house flamed with light, and there were sounds of mirth and revelry in parlor and hall, for some there were who did not care to join the festive throng outside; for those my uncle had thrown open the doors of his beautiful cabinets, that they might gaze at the wonderful curiosities and antique gemstones therein. Here and there were what tables, that those who delighted in the quiet 'rubber' might avail themselves of the opportunity.

Constance seemed to be unimpaired, moving from group to group; she always appeared when most needed. Once as Maurice and I were walking up the avenue of elms we met her.

"Have you seen your sister since she arrived?" she inquired.

"What?" I exclaimed, in astonishment, "has Laura really come?"

"Yes, and Mr. Lindsey told me about ten minutes ago to inform you. Why are you surprised? You sent her an invitation, did you not?"

"Of course, still I did not suppose she would accept of it. An father and mother with her?"

"Believe so."

"Come," said I, to my companion, "you must go up and be introduced to them. They are probably anxious to become acquainted with you."

"With all deference to you, May, I should be delighted to postpone seeing them for the present. I am selfish enough to dislike anything that will take me from your side. This is the first moment that I have had you to myself this evening, and I'll warrant it will be the last."

"Oh, but you know, that I must entertain my uncle's guests. There's Constance, now, has turned Howard over to some pretty girl, and allows the company to monopolize her attention. I must not let myself be outdone by her."

"Oh, but that is not a sacrifice to her. I really believe she is glad of an excuse to get rid of him."

"Do you think so? Well, perhaps you are right. I am rather mystified myself. Then you don't believe they will marry?"

"Marry! no indeed. The poor fellow does not dare to stake his happiness upon the cast of a die by offering himself, so he dallies along, alternating—rising to the clouds, and then sinking into the pit. I do not think, however, that he will remain in that state of suspense much longer, he will soon hear the edict of banishment."

"You are very observing," I said, laughing, "but really, I had made up my mind that he was the chosen one. I wonder who will win if he does not."

Maurice looked up with a smile.

"Why May! is it really possible that you do not know? Why, where are your eyes, darling?"

"Just below my brow," I replied, laughing; "at least they were there half an hour ago, and I believe they have not moved."

"Are you trying to evade my meaning? Then I shall be obliged to tell you in just so many words, that if Constance ever changes her surname, it will be at the solicitation of your uncle."

"I hope that your supposition is correct," I said earnestly. "Nothing would please me better. Not come now. I must present you to my sister, and then leave you to play the agreeable to her. She is very beautiful, and I presume you will enjoy her society so much, as to soon become reconciled to my absence."

"No, indeed, you know very well that to me there is no one in the wide world that can compare with you."

Oh how it pleased my foolish heart to hear him make that assertion! and so finding Laura, I introduced her to each other, and then turned gaily away.

Half an hour after, I met them promenading together. Maurice sprang forward and offered to relieve me of the burden that I was carrying, but with a laugh I declined his assistance and passed on. Merrily and joyous the hour glided away, and when the East began to glow, we were vainly seeking repose.

The next morning we missed Howard and Constance, and when an hour after the former appeared, pale and haggard, and announced his intention of returning to the city, we exchanged significant glances.

"May, I am glad you did not accept my wager," whispered Florence, "for then I should have lost my emerald ring; but I had n't the least idea that things would turn in this way. Poor fellow, I pity him."

"So certainly appears to need it, still I presume he will console himself in a month by taking a wife."

"Why, you heartless thing; he looks more like drinking poison, or shooting himself. I really believe that I must endeavor to perform some little comely office for him so as to cheer him up," and the lively girl danced away, and soon I discovered her packing his valise.

My father and mother departed that afternoon, but Laura tarried. The days glided smoothly along, and still she lingered.

Uncle Robert seemed more like himself, and once again he joined us as of old.

Mordaunt and Edna appeared to be progressing finely with their affairs, and there were hours when they were entirely indifferent to the society of the others.

Harley devoted his attention about equally between Florence and Laura, and sometimes I found myself speculating as to which he would finally decide upon.

Guardian and ward were almost always together, and the cloud that once rested over the latter, seemed to be removed.

Aunt Alice often required some assistance from Constance or myself, and finally I withdrew from the rides, giving Snowball up to Laura.

CHAPTER XII.

One morning as we sat laughing and chatting around the breakfast table, my uncle exclaimed:

"In the midst of all our rambles, there is one wild picturesque spot that I have entirely overlooked. I should have been vexed enough after your departure if I had forgotten to take you there."

"Where is it?" inquired Harley.

"In the outskirts of a small village about ten miles from here. It is called the 'Dead Man's Bluff.' It would make a grand painting, but I will enter into no description of the place, as you will all prefer to behold for yourselves. I think we had better go to night. It will be splendid by moonlight."

"Oh that will be delightful," said Florence, "but Mr. Lindsey, how happens it that it possesses such a singular cognomen?"

"There is a beautiful grove of trees near the cliff, and the story is, that a dark, gloomy man, a foreigner, built himself a house there, which was a relic of wonderful architecture. He shut out all intercourse with the simple villagers, and kept but one servant, a sinister old hag, who was as taciturn as himself. Of course, many reports floated about on the gossiping tide. Finally the majority of the people arrived to the conclusion that he was a pirate. How near they came to the truth, I am unable to say. At any rate, he was pursued by fearful memories, and one morning some laborers going to their work beheld him running wildly toward the bluff, and ere they could reach the spot he had flung himself over the precipice. His mangled body lay upon the rocks while his blood tinged the water. They went to the mansion to inform the servant, and were horror-stricken to find her weeping in her gore, with a diabolical look of baffled rage and hate, stamped by the seal of death upon her countenance. Considerable excitement prevailed for a time, but at last died away. The pair were buried in the garden. Nothing was ever discovered that revealed their history. The house soon acquired the reputation of being haunted. No one was found careless enough to live there, so after a time the owls and bats took undisputed possession. The spiders have spun their most elaborate draperies, the dust from Time's chariot-wheels has settled over the furniture, and decay and desolation reign. They say that an occasional ghost has been seen sitting there, and blue lights flicker in the darkness."

"A haunted house! How very romantic!" exclaimed Constance.

"I was just thinking," remarked Maurice, "that I did not believe the ladies would have the courage to go, after such a recital."

"You ought to be condemned to solitary confinement for a week, for that speech," laughed Florence. Really, the idea of a gentleman daring to impugn our valor in that way."

"I beg pardon, directly. To be excluded from such society as this, is a punishment greater than I can bear."

"You are forgiven then, but be very careful how you offend again," replied his fair judge.

I had noticed that Laura's and Edna's cheeks had blanched during the narration, but they eagerly disclaimed all fear.

I was pleased at the prospect, but in the afternoon found myself a martyr to a bilious headache. I bore up under it as long as possible, but at last in attempting to cross the room, I staggered, and would have fallen, had not Constance caught me in her arms.

"Why, May! are you sick?" she exclaimed. "Your cheeks and lips are colorless. What is the matter?"

A spasm of agony contracted my brow, and for an instant I could not speak; at last I said, faintly:

"I have a very severe pain in my head."

"Oh that's all nonsense," said Laura. "She's only trying to excuse herself from going to-night on that plea. But we shall certainly think that you are afraid. A convenient illness will not avail you."

"Oh, May! be brave enough for anything but wounding people's feelings," replied the fearless Florence, "and that's more than we can say of some folks."

"She is really suffering. I know by her looks," said Constance. "I guess we will give up the idea of going to-night, dear, and wait until you're better."

I perceived the shade of disappointment that passed over several of the countenances, and I hastily rejoined:

"Oh, no, I will never consent to mar the pleasure of your trip in that way. You must promise that you will all go if I am not able to be of the party. It is not worth while to postpone it on my account, for perhaps you will not have another such an opportunity."

Beautiful things are suggestive of a purer & higher life, and fill us with a mingled love and awe. They have a gracefulness that wins us, an excellence to which we involuntarily do reverence. If you are poor, yet modestly aspiring; keep a vase of flowers on your table, and they will help to maintain your dignity, and secure for you consideration and delicate behaviour.

This Paper is issued every Monday, for the week ending at date.

Banner of Light.

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LUTHER COLBY, EDITOR.

"I cannot believe that civilization in its journey with the sun will sink into endless night to gratify the ambition of the leaders of this revolt, who seek to

Wade through slaughter to a throne
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind
but I have a far other and far brighter vision before my gaze. It may be but a vision, but I still cherish it. I see one vast Confederation stretching from the frozen north in one unbroken line to the glowing south, and from the wild billows of the Atlantic westward to the calm waters of the Pacific; and I see one people, and one law, and one language, and one faith, and over all that vast Continent, the home of freedom and refuge for the oppressed of every race and of every clime."—Extract from John Bright's Speech on American Affairs, delivered at Birmingham, England.

The Force of Example.

Great is the silent influence of example. The least among us can be a teacher of nobler truths, though unendowed with eloquence of speech, or power of poetic utterance. Righteous living is the loftiest instruction; and to live purely and justly in accordance with Divine law, is possible for the humblest intellect, needing only the striving and aspiring heart of goodness. He or she, who, following the daily routine of toil, fulfill the oft-looked duties with humility and cheerful souls, is blessed with the answering peace compensations that ever await the faithful laborer. Such may think their sphere of usefulness limited, but their benign example spreads far and wide, a household word of encouragement and comfort unto many on like striving paths.

The patient thrift of the mother, her unvarying kindness and gentleness, her oft-tested, meek forbearance, her utter self-abnegation, are so many examples of goodness exercising a wide-spread influence, of which she is herself unconscious. The example of patient, unflinching perseverance, of honest emulation, of lowly, consistent virtue, of generous and pure resolve, though limited to the household sphere, all are worthy of the admiration and homage of the world, though heralded by no trumpet voices of Fame.

It is the province of some of our best writers to portray the heroic lives and soul-struggles of the humble; to delineate with the master pen of feeling and spiritual insight the upward strivings of the toiling masses, hungering for a better food than the world's scantily awarded bread. From the descriptions of the sumptuous palaces and midnight revels of the rich; we are taken to the murky hovels of the poor, and permitted to catch sweet, transient glimpses of the angelic nature indwelling in the down-trodden, imbruted humanity of large cities. Blessed be such books! They depress, but they also elevate the heart. Their example is the continuation of the love-teachings of the Nazarene. Mighty is the power of the pen, when wielded by a progressive and beneficent hand.

The inspirations of poetry, the charms of music, the illuminating beauty of soulful pictures, exert a silent, powerful influence. Many a familiar strain of melody has guarded the heart from yielding to a strong temptation. There was an angel's whisper in the appealing chorals. Vivid, it may be sorrowful, but heavenward-aspiring feelings have been recalled by the sweet aspect of a pictured face; many a remorseful echo awakened, and the incentive given to a better, nobler life, by the perusal of some heart-touching poem. Great life-lessons have been learned from the pages of fiction; and the soul has been imbued with religious fervor amid the companionship of those silently imploring monitors—the good books of all times.

But it is in human effort and aspiration, in self-culture, in the unceasing watchfulness of the mind and heart manifested in present deeds, that the force of mightiest example dwells. It is in the daily, unostentatious life; in the fulfillment of every loving and every bitter duty; in the independence of honesty and rectitude; in the evidences of advancement in home, heart and spirit culture, that mankind is to be bettered, the state of society exalted, the sufferings of millions ameliorated, the false, outer distinctions are to be swept away. By the potent force of good examples the world is to be rescued from misdirection, and the Kingdom of Harmony is to be brought to earth. Therefore, for the sake of all, as well as for our individual good, we owe the world the bestowal of the ennobling influence of a pure, just, and truthful life.

The Very End of the Matter.

The writer of the book-notices in the Journal—if it is ever considered fair to notice a critic—in speaking of the famous Cumming's book (which has not been written, and written about?) in reply to Bishop Colenso's review of the Pentateuch, the title of which same book very modestly reads, "Moses' History, and Bishop Colenso Wrong"—says as follows: "These lectures are designed to meet the wants of such faithful and unwarmed persons as have found their faith in the Pentateuch shaken by Dr. Colenso's very flimsy attack upon it." We want to ask them: Is it a flimsy attack on their faith? Has sufficed to shake it, may it not be equally flimsy? lectures that are sufficient to restore it?—especially in the case of persons so youthful and unlearned." But to proceed:

"The author replies to the Bishop conclusively. He reminds his readers that gentlemen's objections have been met and answered long ago. He exposes his want of philosophy, want of scholarship and want of candor, his hard, narrow, one-sided view of the topic which he professes to handle, and the reckless audacity which leads him not only to exaggerate real difficulties, but also to create others which have no existence. He shows that the Bishop cannot even have read with care the books which he affects to criticize, and points out blunders both absurd and unparadisable."

There is a criticism for one to go by—a religious criticism in a "news paper." No bigotry there, no credulity; clear judgment, vast learning, perfect self-satisfaction, and no appeal from the decision! Will Bishop Colenso say in his editions now?

In France.

The intelligence from France indicates that the opposition to the Government has made a much bolder and more successful stand in Paris than was anticipated, establishing the Emperor and all his adherents, Paris offered some Government candidates for the legislature to the people, and they were every one defeated. But in the Provinces the Government was more successful. Twenty-four is supposed to be the whole number of the legislative opposition to the Emperor's party; a number quite as large as was dared to be expected, prior to the election. Napoleon now has as much on his hands as he can cleverly attend to—this opposition at home, the Polish insurrection, and the war with Mexico. His troops have finally succeeded in taking Puebla, and it is believed they will eventually have possession of Mexico beside. Then will begin the political game which it is claimed for him—he is soon to open on this continent. The curtain of the political future of the State of this continent is being unrolled, and the revelations which will be made are of the first interest and importance to the whole civilized world.

Concerning Maternity.

We have a second communication relative to the question of maternity from Mr. Patrick Welch; the first we gave in full, with our own remarks. This one we have not the room to reproduce, nor does it require it, in fact. He merely advances two points—that, in his comments on his last letter, we failed entirely to understand him, and that, secondly, he is a serious reformer, a man in earnest, and of true respectability. Had we doubted the latter point, we should not have given his letter—even on so important a subject—the attention we did. As for our misunderstanding him, that matter has already passed out of his and our hands to a degree, and we must each of us be content to let the reading public decide for themselves. Mr. Welch seeks to argue the question all over again, and, as we think, does not stand up so stoutly for his original declarations as we supposed he would; he doubtless sees how preposterous—to call them by no worse a name—they are, now they present themselves to his eye in open and candid type, and would fain whittle off their corners and dress them down with sandpaper. This disposition is what pleases us with him more than his original communication did.

In lieu of any extended remarks of our own on the subject, further than to add that this question of child-bearing and child-rearing is one of the fundamental questions of the age, and must be thought of, and talked of, and thoroughly comprehended by every responsible man and woman—we append a letter which we have received from "An American Woman," who has knowledge of what she writes, and can convince Mr. Welch, probably, better than we can, whether his first letter was "misunderstood." We advised him, in a matter of debate like this, to ask the women—the mothers, what they thought on the subject of bearing great broods of children, believing them competent to give the most reliable testimony to the point. The letter we herewith furnish appears to have been only the result of our suggestion to him. It deserves thoughtful reading:

Mr. Editor—I have just finished reading your cool comments on Mr. Patrick Welch's somewhat excited remarks concerning Maternity. You say, "If he would know the exact truth about this matter of health and happiness, let him ask the women." I wish he would ask me, but fearing that he will not, I volunteer a few words without waiting.

I have been a wife, and also a mother, but not to such a crushing extent as Mr. Welch would doubtless have condemned me. If he had had the opportunity, I think that I did not run the risk of making his acquaintance.

I believe that no woman is happy or healthy, because health depends upon happiness, who has more children than she can care for tenderly. Her body is exhausted by actual labor, and her heart is broken by her inability to supply all their needs, physical, mental and moral, unless she is herself so nearly on the verge of collapse as to recognize only the material plane, and to recognize only the material plane, in which case she may be "healthy while bearing children," but do progressive men desire large families of children from such stock?

Within the circle of my acquaintance are two of the ministers' wives, of whom mention is made. They are nearly sacrificed, and will in a short time probably give up their earthly pleasures to two other women, who will be subjected to the same condition. Heaven help poor womanhood! The male world knows nothing of the sorrows of women, and they themselves scarcely know their own position having accepted it in consequence of being born under it, and not realizing the wrong done to their natures by reason of their ignorance; and how few of us have an opportunity to know anything of the everyday life of the household, especially if burdened with ten or fifteen children, which Mr. Welch considers a suitable number. In my opinion that number of children is enough to shut up every avenue to any other knowledge than that which pertains to the earthly necessities of the said children, and in most cases the mother's life is sacrificed as soon as, or very soon after, her period of child-bearing is over.

I think, however, that Mr. Welch, notwithstanding his gender, is not far ahead of us in knowledge. His standard of value for human appears to be the number of children she can produce. If it be a truth, which at present I warmly deny, that "the most prolific mothers are the healthiest, happiest, and longest lived," then I must agree to his opinion, as a lower development of the female sex than I am prepared to believe. According to Mr. Lazzarus, a writer on this and kindred subjects, excessive fecundity shows a very low development of all the other powers. He gives in illustration the numerous families of the lower classes, whose whose education is extremely limited, and whose cultivation and improvement and enjoyment has been almost entirely lost by circumstances in all points, yet if their physical nature is in order, they can propagate to a large extent, and it is among them that we find the ten and fifteen children in a family.

On the other hand, he speaks of the scarcity of children among the rich and highly developed families of the aristocracy, one of them being a child, the necessity of adopting him to their estate. Mr. Lazzarus says much more on this subject than it is worth while to quote to Mr. Welch, and proves clearly, to my mind, that Nature is better pleased with one truly developed individual than with ten or fifteen badly-begotten and worse brought up human beings. I believe that the poor man's blessing is the greatest curse to the poor man's wife, which she has had a chance, rarely an affection for them making the curse heavier. In such families I have seen some children with rickets, and some with bandy legs; and, indeed, such an overwhelming family, with only one mother and one poor woman, is liable to every accident and deformity. No one woman can properly take care of and rear them.

In regard to the laziness of women, I think something must be said to her, and to the man, who is enjoyed by women. Have been domesticated, and borne the heavy burden of housekeeping and care of children, which no man knows anything about; and have, by necessity, changed this position for the man's sphere, so called, and applied myself to the business of getting the living for myself and family, which I find far, very far easier. No man can be a housewife, and care and labor in her house and for her family, unless he could take her place in every particular, and hold it for three years, at least. Short of this means of knowledge, he can only misjudge us.

I find that Mr. Welch's century is a longer period of time than mine. If I read his article understandingly; but this is of little importance to women, in whose behalf I am interested, and I wish that mothers of large families would send word to the BANNER office whether they are healthier and happier for having these families, and state what number of children they would have had of their own free will.

Yours truly, AN AMERICAN WOMAN.

Rebel Disaffection.

Any evidence that the rebels at the South are becoming tired of their "cause," unite us to a dot. It would be a great deal better if their own sad experiences would cooperate with our outside blows, in the work of destroying the fiend called Secession forever from the face of the earth. The North Carolina people have for a long time been dissatisfied with the condition of matters, and have not refrained from speaking of it openly; neither have the citizens of Georgia. Davis seems to have made up his august mind to please Mississippi and South Carolina, at any rate—let the others feel as bad as they may. This is what the Raleigh Standard has to say of the treatment which North Carolina is now receiving at the hands of Jefferson Davis and his fellows: "If that cause (of the Confederacy) should become merely the cause of Davis and Seddon, and if parliament should take the place of patriotism in the administration of the Government, the cry in this State will be, 'To your tents, O Israel!' North Carolina will never have wood and draw water for those who slight and undermine her. She must be the equal of the other States of the Confederacy, or she will leave it and endeavor to take care of herself!" We like the strain. It signifies that all spirit of freedom has not died out in the breasts of Southern, more than of Northern, men.

Mrs. Cora L. V. Hatch in Lyceum Hall.

The numerous friends of this eloquent lecturer will be pleased to learn that she is to speak in Lyceum Hall, in this city, next Sabbath and the two following Sundays, afternoon and evening. To her course of lectures, an admission fee of ten cents is charged to non-subscribers.

The Banner Message Department.

We are aware that some misunderstand the object of our Message Department. They look it over, and perhaps are struck with the similarity of the various communications, or find little to interest them, and at once conclude that our space had better be filled with other matter. We admit that a certain similarity exists, such as must necessarily, when individuals for the first time essay to convey to mortals the data of their life and death and impressions of the spheres. They are all repeating the same story. There has been published, however, the greatest diversity of matter. If the reader will glance over the volumes of the BANNER since it first began the publication of Spirit Messages, we think he will be amazed at their diversity. But to gratify mortals is not our only aim. It is the benefit conferred on the spirits themselves which we must look at. By learning the possibility of communication with earth, an avenue for improvement is opened to them. By assembling at our circle, they are brought in rapport with those who are willing to aid their progress.

The verification of the majority of the Messages, not only show their truthfulness, but the immense good they are doing. Whenever one applies, it makes firmer converts, and spreads a radiant joy over their minds.

The BANNER was the first, and is the only paper devoting a department to the spirit intelligences, thereby offering them a free channel of communication. We are confident that it has in this manner conferred the greatest good on thousands of spirits as well as mortals.

Local Telegraphing.

All the good notions—and some few bad ones too, we fear—originate in Boston, and that is why the self-complacent wise men of the place style it the "hub." The latest crochets, and it is an excellent one, is the idea of a telegraph communication, with Boston as a centre, between Boston and nearly or quite all the surrounding towns and villages; in fact, a sort of suburban family telegraph. It will enable a man who does business in Boston, but has his home outside, to send a message to his family at any hour of the day, or vice versa. If a man's wife has changed her mind about her dinner since getting up from the breakfast table, and seems to think she would prefer to have roast lamb and green peas for dinner, from the city market, to the state dinner she had before thought of contenting herself with, all she has to do is to get the operator at the suburban office to play on the keys and order her good-men in town to send out just what she prefers. How handy this will be! In case of sudden sickness, of an accident, of death, or of any special and unexpected demand for something from Boston which had not been thought of in the morning, the telegraph wire is impressed into service, and the desired goods are filled. We might, on the whole, call this the Social Telegraph, to distinguish it from the larger business affair which talks about politics and stocks with hardly three hours' rest during the whole twenty-four.

Street Air.

To smell the atmosphere of the streets of a large and dirty city all day—dirty even at its cleanest—and then to go out of town a few miles to one's sweet and quiet country home at night, where the lungs can revive themselves with all the fresh odors of earth and plants and flowers, and the sleep overnight is calm and unbroken—is an experience calculated to make a lasting impression on the thoughts of any one who has ever tried the contrast. In certain weather, the dampness of narrow streets does not get expelled during the entire day; and to breathe this sort of air, while the brain is excited to the highest degree of energy by business and professional avocations, is as hurtful to the whole man as anything could be imagined. Street air cannot be sweet air. That can be found nowhere but away from the deep grooves, or ruts, of city enclosures, where the sun does not always penetrate or the winds always blow. We feel, when we look at the "pale faces" of the pent-up citizens of a crowded town, after we have visited the country, as if we should be glad to give them all the fresh air they need, and let them lay roses and all other sorts of flowers on their cheeks without limitation.

What is Health?

Not muscle—not mere strength. The men who can lift the most, as well as they who can swing the heaviest sledges or strike the hardest blows, have their aches and pains as much as the feeblest race of mortals; white, oftentimes, those of delicate organization, and even men of a feminine quality of physical energy, are found to be in the enjoyment of high health, and to make a world out of this common world for themselves, which many an one might well envy them. We cannot but consider good health that happy combination of the physical and spiritual energies which holds a constant balance all the time between the two, and creates a harmony which contributes to the most exquisite enjoyment of each. If a person is all physical strength, it overbears his spiritual organization. If the spiritual is stronger than this proper combination seems to warrant, then the physical goes under, and carries the enjoyment that arises from harmony to that extent along with it. The happy adjustment of all the forces is the exact point of health for every one. How few attempt to secure it!

Quite an Idea.

A bill has been introduced into the Legislature of Connecticut, and referred to a Committee, providing that railroads shall carry members of that body wherever they want to go, free, during the existence of that Legislature. Of course it only includes rides within the State. It is the first cool and refreshing breeze which we have had since summer set in. A contemporary suggests that it be amended by inserting a proviso that keepers of hotels and boarding-houses shall be compelled to furnish the members with board and lodging gratis while the Legislature is in session. We would have them throw in soap, likewise; tooth-brushes would be "in common," of course, where living and furnishing was conducted on such a principle. We see now that "the world moves." This looks like "progress." If this railroad scheme is not a revelation, we should like to have some one look in his dictionary and tell us what is.

Spirit Power.

We can none of us too often revolve in our minds the paragraph in Mr. Willia's lecture in this city, on the first Sunday of June, viz.—"The spirit life that has passed from the earth necessarily increases greatly every year, because innumerable souls pass to the immortal realm. Hence, the spirit and conscious life, that flows back to earth, is constantly increased. And what is the effect? Why, this: the atmosphere of the earth is becoming more and more magnetic, and more and more filled with the spiritual element; and therefore a period has arrived when man asks of spiritual things, for they feel the life, or power, of the spirit. The greater the degree of magnetic life that resides in the atmosphere, the more readily do men perceive the spiritual facts of the universe."

A. E. Newton's Lectures.

Mr. Newton delivered two discourses on Sunday, June 14th, afternoon and evening, in Lyceum Hall, in this city, on the subjects of "The work before us," and "The Church of the Future," which evinced much profound thought and ability. At his request, we make no report of them.

Physical Education.

We have in Boston, what no other city of the country has, a Normal Institute for Physical Education. It is established and located at No. 20 Essex street, and is under the charge and management of Dr. Dio Lewis, aided by several competent professors and lecturers in the several departments. Dr. Lewis's system of gymnastics is fast being introduced into our public schools, and has received the hearty endorsement of teachers of every grade. It works beautifully, as a system, on the health and mentality of the pupil, recovering for him the great amount of strength and elasticity which was lost under the old, careless and ignorant systems of instruction. Dr. Lewis's Institute, we understand, has already held four sessions, and graduated sixty-two teachers; these teachers are engaged in teaching the new gymnastics in colleges, seminaries, and other institutions. There are two annual sessions, often weeks each, beginning with the second day of January and the fifth day of July. Both sexes are admitted. Thus far, more than half the pupils have been ladies. Physical culture is among the great wants of the age; we are glad to see the public mind awakened to its importance by the instructions, essays and lectures of a man so much a master of his subject as is Dr. Lewis. His gymnasium has already sent a graduate to New York, who is teaching large classes of physicians, clergymen, and others.

The Black Flag.

We allow that it may be the most natural thing in the world for the Southern white men in arms to revolt at the thought of being confronted in battle by the black men, some of them perhaps their own slaves but a little time ago, and we think we can understand how it is their aroused vengeance could drive them on to a resolution to raise the black flag and give no "quarter" to the black soldier. But it ought to offer itself to the reflections of those men, that the black soldier can refuse to give quarter as well as they. When it comes to a matter of mere physical strength, it admits of little question where the victory will lie. A black man can cut and thrust, stab and kill, just as freely as his white enemy; and the latter takes upon himself even more personal danger than is necessary, in professing to despise a strength which is, after all, superior to his own. In some instances, the rebels have seized colored pickets and hung them; but immediately after, the colored pickets caught a white rebel picket, and hung him. It was found to be just as broad as it was long. Anybody can see to the end of such raving madness as this.

An Excellent Test.

Mr. Benjamin Starbuck, of Troy, N. Y., writing to the Herald of Progress in reference to Mrs. Augusta A. Currier's lectures there, gives the following: "She had a very good manifestation here on Saturday. She returned to Troy, late Friday evening, and before leaving her room during morning, her brother, who has been in spirit-life for several years, came into her room, and seating himself upon her trunk, said, 'Augusta, mother is with me.' Much startled, she exclaimed, 'What?' He repeated, 'Mother is with me, and has passed from earth-life,' and the vision vanished. She immediately went to E., to see if any letters had been received from home for her in her absence, but found none. Upon questioning the spirits through the raps, they said she passed away the first of the week, and that Mrs. C. would receive a letter by the noon mail, giving her the intelligence. And surely a letter from her husband did come, with the intelligence that her mother passed on to the higher life on Monday last."

A Bird's Egg.

T. W. Higginson says in his new book of Essays, speaking of the pretty toys Nature secretes among the leaves and grasses—"I think, that, if required, on pain of death, to name instantly the most perfect thing in the universe, I should risk my fate on a bird's egg." The associations and predictions of this little wonder—that one may bear home between his fingers all that winged splendor, all that celestial melody, coiled in mystery within these tiny walls! Even the chrysalis is less amazing, for its form always preserves some trace, however fantastic, of the perfect insect, and it is but moulting a skin; but this egg appears to the eye like a separate unit from some other kingdom of Nature, claiming more kindred with the very stones than with feathered existence; and it is as if a pearl opened, and an angel sang." There could not be put in words a more beautiful fancy than this last.

Spiritualists' Annual Picnic, at Island Grove, Abington, on Tuesday, June 23, 1893.

All those who would avail themselves of this occasion to visit the delightful Grove at Abington, and spend the day agreeably, outside the dusty metropolis, must bear in mind that a special train of cars leaves the Old Colony Railroad Depot, corner of South and Kneeland streets, on Tuesday, 23d inst., at 8.45 and 11.30 A. M., for the Grove. Returning, leave the Grove for Boston and Way Stations at 4.30 P. M.

Eminent speakers are expected to take part in the exercises. An excellent band will furnish the music for dancing.

Should the weather be stormy, the excursion will be postponed until Thursday, the 25th inst.

Fare from Boston to the Grove and return, by special train: Adults, 60 cents; children, 30 cents.

The Pentateuch and Bishop Colenso.

Bishop Colenso is giving and trouble to the Bishops of the Established Church in England. He will not resign, nor retract the views he has put forth in his work on the Pentateuch, so they have resolved, as far as possible, to disqualify him from exercising any Episcopal duty. In this new movement the principal leader is the Bishop of Oxford, who has addressed a letter to the clergy of his diocese, forbidding the Bishop of Natal from ministering in any of the churches of the diocese.

Our learned correspondent, "C. B. P.," it will be perceived by referring to an essay from his pen on our second page, has something to say in regard to the Work of Dr. Mahan, of "The New York Theological Seminary," which has been put forth to answer to Bishop Colenso. Our correspondent's essay is a racy production.

The Future of America.

A discourse by Theodore Parker, (through the instrumentality of Mrs. Cora L. V. Hatch,) delivered at Lyceum Hall, Boston, on Sunday, May 10th, 1893, is for sale at this office. The discourse was phonographically reported, and occupies over five columns of the BANNER. Those who heard the lecture, pronounce it characteristic of Mr. Parker, and very appropriate reading for the present time. Singles copies five cents; \$3.00 per one hundred copies.

Donations to the Free Circles.

The expenses of our Free Public Circles are nearly thirty dollars per week. We are thankful to the friends who have of late aided in a measure toward liquidating this heavy outlay, and we hope we shall still continue to be aided in this department by those who appreciate our difficult labors. Our list of acknowledgments will appear next week.

New and Curious.

Two very interesting essays will be found on our sixth page—given by inviolable, entitled "The Immortality of American Independence," and "The Origin of HATRED." Do not fail to give them a careful perusal.

Change is Natural.

Such as we have the past, and strongly as we are wound about with the fibres of its following associations, we confess we cannot sympathize with those who take up so much of their valuable time in lamenting over the changes and breakings-up which are necessary accompaniments and tokens of progress. We try to think the Present is as good now, and as rich in fruition, as it ever was; what we call the Future is but a creation of the imagination, and what we call the Past is of no further use to us. Nature never repeats herself, neither could she exist in a state of monopoly. There must be constant variations taking place, continual changes going on. All growth implies a constant displacement of old particles for the coming of new; were we to stop where we are, all circulation of spiritual life would at once stop, and stagnation and death follow as a matter of course. Those who choose to look at this thing as it really is, cannot fail to see that change is but the result of motion; and that motion, activity, is the first evidence of life. Would we wish to live, and still desire to be dead? The question is answered before it is asked.

Friends pass away from mortal life, and we grieve for the loss; but death is as natural as life, and is, in fact, but the birth into the new and immortal youth for which we are all more or less anxious. Then, too, grief performs an excellent office in wrenching away from our affections, where they had taken root, many an idol love, which was good enough while it acted merely as a stimulus, but is debilitating and dwarfing to us when it comes to overshadow our individuality. We are always made better when we suffer; that is the true office of suffering. No matter whether it is in life or limb, in friends or fortune, suffering brings us back at once to that point where we make the closest possible acquaintance with ourselves. But for these trials, which come but as angels in disguise, we should soon become self-satisfied and self-sufficient, and grow calloused where these necessities keep us soft and sympathetic. He is a person of superficial experience who cannot gladly accept all these changes of life, and even go out joyfully to meet them. They furnish the soul with the very allment it needs; and to wish to avoid or escape them is to prefer to starve than to feast, in the midst of plenty.

A Small Garden.

Whoever would lead a wholly happy and contented life, must needs cultivate his little garden. It is a great solace and a great friend. Cato was a nobleman for working in his little patch, and so was Cincinnati. It need be but a trifle of a strip; certainly not more than enough to awaken a little care each day, and more tender friendliness than care. It is so good to see your own seeds sprout and grow. They are your own offspring. You have an affection for them which grows likewise. Edward Bates, the present Attorney-General, said he never could have carried himself successfully through his professional labors, but for the recreation furnished him by his garden—his home being in the outskirts of St. Louis. It is the garden that a person cultivates with his own hands, of which we speak; to keep a hired gardener to perform the work is as good as to have nothing at all to do with it. In a very short time one becomes devotedly attached to the plot of ground he works over, and his home is many times dearer, because of the beauty he every year creates around its windows and doors. An hour in the garden in the morning, while the dew of the day is on, is a refreshment and an inspiration until the evening comes down. Very few persons, who actually know what the pleasures of a garden are, would forego them for other attractions of the most powerful character.

New Publications.

THE BATTLE RECORD OF THE AMERICAN REBELLION, by Horace E. Dresser, A. M. New York: Sinclair, Toussie, 121 Nassau street, and Henry Dexter, 118 Nassau street. Pages 72, 8vo.

The author of this work has treated the reader to a richer and better entertainment than the bill of fare, found upon his title page promises. It is a record not only of the battles, skirmishes, fights, &c., which have occurred during the Rebellion, but of the most important and noteworthy occurrences in the legislative, executive and military departments of the Government of the United States, and those of its foe, the Confederate States. It commences with the first movements of the rebels, and comes down to the close of last year from which period it appears by a preface note, it is designed to continue the Record in a Second Part, when the war shall have ended, or the occasion shall warrant. The order is excellent—the events and their dates being alphabetically arranged, and thus furnishing a ready and most convenient Manual of Reference. It should be in the hands of every citizen—to the soldier who has fought and shed his blood, and witnessed the fall of comrades in the battles here noted, it must be a useful and desirable hand-book. This book is just the thing for the masses; cheap and accessible to all—it is a *numism in parvo*. It is the very pith and marrow of affairs, the account of which constitutes those costly and most valuable bundles of History, now swollen to five volumes of more than six hundred pages each, "Putnam's Record of the Rebellion," by Frank Moore. The author of "The Battle Record of the American Rebellion" has done the public a great favor by thus epitomizing the history of the rebellion, inaugurated by those Arch Fratricides who have caused the land to be drenched in blood. The book is for sale by Wm. White & Co., 128 Washington street, Boston. Price, single copy, 25 cents.

THE NATIONAL QUARTERLY REVIEW, No. XIII, was placed on our table by A. Williams & Co., 100 Washington street, just as we were going to press. Without having time to examine the work, we give a list of its contents: The Greek Tragic Drama—Zacharias; Theology of the American Indians—Phonographic Short-Hand; Arabic Language and Literature; Earthquakes, their Causes and Consequences; Mahatma Collier; Woman, her Influence and Capabilities; Prevalent Antiquities; Manufacture and Use of Artificial Precious Stones; Notices and Criticisms—1. Education and Science. 2. History and Biography. 3. Belle-Lettres. 4. Miscellaneous.

HARPER'S NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE for July is already issued. It is well filled, as usual, with an interesting variety of reading matter, illustrations, fashion plates, &c. The popularity of this excellent publication is undiminished. Williams & Co., 100 Washington street, have it for sale.

Miss Emma Hardinge in the West.

Miss Emma Hardinge proposes to spend the fall and winter in the West, and will be happy to make engagements accordingly. Miss Hardinge promises to reply to the numerous applications already received as soon as her route is determined on. Address, Room 209, Delano, Burlington Co., New Jersey.

The Arcana of Nature.

The second volume of this exceedingly interesting work, just published by us, is having a rapid sale. Those ordering from us will be supplied with it most promptly. For full particulars see our advertisement in another column.

Announcement.

Mrs. H. F. M. Brown will attend the convention at St. Charles, Ill., on the 24 of July. Letters will reach her while there if directed to the care of Mr. Jones, Reg.

Message Department.

The Seances at which the communications under this heading are given, are held at the Bazaar of Light, Office, No. 123 Washington Street, Room No. 3, (on stairs) on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday Afternoons, and are

Free to the Public.

The doors are closed at precisely three o'clock, and no person admitted after that time.

Each Message in this Department of the BANNER was claimed by the Spirit whose name it bears, through the instrumentality of

Mr. J. M. Goss.

while in an abnormal condition called the trance. The Messages with no names attached, were given, as per dates, by the Spirit-guides of the circle—all reported verbatim.

These Messages indicate that spirits carry with them the characteristics of their earthly life to that beyond—whether for good or evil. But those who leave the earth-sphere in an undeveloped state, eventually progress into a higher condition. We ask the reader to receive no doctrine put forth by Spirits in these columns that does not comport with his or her reason. All express as much of truth as they perceive—no more.

MESSAGES TO BE PUBLISHED.

Thursday, May 14.—Invocation: Questions and Answers: Charles Herbert Johnson, of Jackson, Miss.; Lieut. Colonel Kimball; Geo. W. Allen, to his father, in St. Louis, Mo. Sunday, May 18.—Invocation: Questions and Answers: Gen. T. H. Jackson, late of the Confederate Army, to his friends; Charles Graves, to his mother, Deborah Graves, of Louisville, Ky.; Edna Mason, to her parents, in New York. Tuesday, May 19.—Invocation: Questions and Answers: Charles Graves, to his mother, Deborah Graves, of Louisville, Ky.; Edna Mason, to her parents, in New York. Thursday, May 21.—Invocation: Questions and Answers: David Wilfong, of Philadelphia; Ann Maria Hill, to her husband, Captain Jerome Hill; Ben Collier to his wife, in Springfield, Mass.

Monday, May 25.—Invocation: Questions and Answers: Nathaniel Littlefield, to his sister Jane, and mother, living in Princeton, Ill.; Clara Frances Alden, of Cincinnati, O., to her mother, Jacob Ryder; Wm. Johnson, of Garrettsville, Georgia.

Tuesday, May 26.—Invocation: Questions and Answers: Samuel Wright; Bobby Burns; Matilda C. Wallace, of Hampton, L. C., to her mother and brother Theo. Wallace.

Thursday, May 28.—Invocation: Questions and Answers: Abram Torrey, to his relatives, in Carrollton; Edward Burrows to Timothy Ostrander, of New Orleans, La.; James Donovan, to Ted Donovan, of New York City; William Porter, to his parents, in Columbus, Ohio.

Monday, June 1.—Invocation: Questions and Answers: Solomon Shaw, of Springfield, Mass., to Mr. Clark, Town of New York; Albert M. Barker, to his father, in Boston; Alice M. Warner, to her parents, Charlotte and Wm. Bacon, of Troy, New York.

Tuesday, June 16.—Invocation: Questions and Answers: Anthony Lachance, of Pinetown, Portugal; Charles Kroppel, to his friends, in Boston; Isabella Frye, to her husband in Brooklyn, N. Y.

Invocation.

Oh, thou whose wondrous presence we see and feel, but may not understand; thou Mighty Life of the sunbeam and of the shadow; thou Past, Present and Eternal Future; thou who art our all in all; thou by whom we live, move and have our being; thou Mighty, Mysterious Presence, whom we have been taught to call God, we feel that we are this moment enfolded by thy love; we feel thy presence, yet, Oh God, we cannot comprehend thee, for the finite can never wholly comprehend the Infinite. Oh, Master of Life, thou hast taught us to ask for more and more light, thou hast implanted a desire for light within our souls, and for this, Oh wondrous Spirit of the Hour, we leave our homes to journey for a while with mortality; for this we forego the pleasures of our home, that we may minister unto the necessities of humanity, and thus come into nearer rapport with thee; thus understand more of thee and thy divine law; for this, Oh Mighty Father and Mother, we are willing to enter the jaws of hell, that we may in the hereafter enter that heaven which thou hast prepared for such as do thy will. Oh, Father, does not the human soul forever love thee? Oh, tender Parent, we know of no child of thine who in his own heart does not honor and worship thee. Oh, Father of Life, the human soul will forever adore thee, for it feels thy presence, acknowledges thy wisdom and power, and therefore must forever worship thee, must forever love thee. Our Father, we look abroad through the earth, and see darkness and woe. The night of sorrow seems settling upon humanity, and clouds are flying wildly across the horizon. But we will fear no evil, for we know that thou art walking with thy children, art calling them to a higher understanding of thee, of thy wondrous wisdom and thy mighty power. Thus we adore thee, we kneel forever in thy presence, that we may forever and forever be blest by thee.

May 11.

The Immortality of American Independence.

By request, we speak concerning the "Immortality of American Independence," that independence which was legated to you by your forefathers; by which the various arts and sciences of civilized life have been propagated and sustained; that independence to which you owe much of your nation's prosperity, and of the opposite, too; that which has been, and is, but shall not be in the future. Concerning the immortality of this independence we have been desired to speak.

All principles are immortal, but the forms of principles are mortal. The present age, or the present hour, we should say, is talking largely against the immortality of your American Independence. Instead of praising of its immortality, we say, it is talking against it, and is demonstrating the fact to you that your American Independence is not immortal. But instead of your receiving in the past a child of immortality, you received only the form of the child, only that which bore upon its form the mark of decay.

"American Independence"—what is it? Let us glance throughout the length and breadth of your fair continent, stepping to analyze the powers that be, that were born of this same American Independence. There is little doubt existing in the minds of any one that your forefathers, in all honesty and sincerity of purpose, fought for that which they deemed holy and true. They felt the necessity of a higher form of independence than that which they had attained in the past, and hence they fought for the future. They laid their lives upon the altar of their country, that you might enjoy the fruits of liberty. Therefore we honor them, therefore we feel that they should be honored, therefore you should treasure their memory, for they have done much for you. But the Spirit of the Hour demands that you do something for yourselves. This spirit tells you that your forefathers did not give you an American Independence that was immortal, for the present hour is writing its death warrant. So it must die, for it is but a form of life. It must die or change, and you are called upon by the powers of your own being to assist either in its reformation or downfall. The friend who has desired us to speak upon this subject, feels quite sure that the American Independence legated to you by your forefathers is indeed immortal. He feels that it must not and cannot die. Indeed, he sets so great a value upon the Constitution and the Union, that he does not believe that they, too, like your American Independence, are children of time. He will tell you that they are immortal, for he feels that the spirit of the Infinite lives in them, and that all the ages are his own. He says that your American Independence is good enough—quite good enough for the future; but oh, he has judged merely from the world of form, and not from the world of spirit. He has forgotten to bring the law of progress upon it; he has forgotten that parchments do not grow, that the thoughts and writings of the past are no longer adapted to the minds of the present. He does not see that the human race is marching on, and is forever and forever demanding something higher and better.

"American Independence" We have said it hath given you many, many beautiful results. Science and

art, in all their various forms, have been strengthened by it; but the time has now come when you, as a nation, demand something higher than that you have had in the past, namely, the form of independence. Have you been independent, in the strictest sense of the term? Have you been independent even of the powers of materiality? Surely, we think not, for to be truly independent is to be truly harmonious. You are harmonious? Your present picture of civil war answers the question. Is your independence of God or man? Again the booming cannon thunders forth, it is of man. Slavery—was it all swept from the mighty platform from which your forefathers proclaimed American Independence? We believe not. True, they believed they stood upon a platform of eternal liberty, but the seeds of discord were there, and they have grown large in the present; indeed, they are mighty trees, and from the branches thereof you are gathering the bitter fruit.

Now, then, it was high time that your forefathers' wise gift of American Independence should die, for it was wisdom to them, and it is all humility and love bestowed upon you. They gave you as much power as was bestowed upon them, and no more. But you, as a nation, require far more power than American Independence has legated to you, and therefore the Infinite of your own being expects much at your own hand. He has demanded that this, your American Independence, die, and die it surely must. Look at the creed-bound darkness, malice, superstition and religious envy that fills your churches. If the spirit of American Independence had been indeed of God, do you suppose that these things would find a dwelling-place in your religious edifices? Do you suppose that you would have had your forms in the gutter and your forms in high places in earth-life? True independence elevates all humanity; true independence is that which is born of the Infinite; therefore, unless its foundation is a spiritual one, you may expect it to be short-lived.

Your independence is writhing and groaning in the agonies of death, for the Great Master hath so ordered that it should die, in order to give place to the Spirit of Reform, and you, should you feel that you have nothing to do toward bringing into life this new child of American Independence? Verily we tell you you have, and although you have thus far been deaf to the voice of the Father, yet we tell you he is calling you in thunder tones every hour you live, and demanding that you bring your gifts, every one of them, into his holy temple, whether they be the sacrifice of human honor, power or right. These God Almighty demands of you; for the time is now come when all these bubbles that American Independence hath engendered upon you are about to burst.

Oh, child of the American nation, God calls you into the field, not, it may be, to the battle-field of material strife, but of spiritual strife. He demands that you renounce the things of the past, that you inaugurate for yourselves a new system of American Independence, that you may live by and through it in the present. And if your brother and your sister ask aid at your hands, shall you refuse to give it them because you occupy higher places in the land than they do? Never, if you would be found in the way of duty. The time has now come when the Almighty requires something more of you than he did in the past. You have gathered into the storehouses of your lives all of the past, therefore the sacrifices of the present are not those of the past.

Oh, our friend in mortal, who has desired us to speak concerning your American Independence, we can but speak concerning its death. Remember, Oh friend in mortal, that these things are born of time, and therefore with time must pass out of existence, that higher forms of life may have places wherein to grow.

May 11.

Edward Price.

Mr. Chairman, I am a stranger here, and unacquainted with your manner of procedure. The fact is, I know very little about this return. May I ask, do you publish our words, or do you send them by letter to our friends? [We publish them in a paper.]

I have many friends at the South, and some at the North, that I should be very glad to open communication with in any way, but particularly with my own family. My family are in Montgomery, Alabama. I left my business about eighteen months since, and entered the Confederate service.

As high as I'm able to judge, I have been in this new world about for five days. I presume you have received accounts of your last battle before Richmond? [Do you refer to the recent cavalry raid?] Yes, I lost my life at that time; am I right about time? [I should say that it was not more than four or five days since that affair occurred.] I should judge it was about that, though I have no manner of judging. [I've been a little bewildered and mystified here, but I am told that will pass away.]

My name was Price—Edward Price. I feel that I'm here asking favors of those who stood in the relation of enemy to me. [They do not now.] Do I understand you to say that all are equally well received here; that you feel quite the same toward me, as you do toward one of the Union army? [The same.] Well, may I ask also for the privilege of talking at home, as I do here? [Certainly; ask them to furnish you with a medium.]

I was slightly wounded at Fredericksburg, for I happened to be there, and went home to my friends for a short time. When I was about leaving home again, I told them that I felt that I might be killed, but they thought it was because I had been sick and was weak, consequently did not give the matter much thought. I made this remark to my wife, Charlotte—for that was her name—When I return, if I ever do, I'll tell you why I feel as I do. She urged me very hard to tell her the reason at the time, but I did not do so. I'll tell her now.

When I was wounded at Fredericksburg, after my wound—which was simply a flesh-wound of the leg—was attended to by the surgeon, I fell asleep, and I seemed suddenly to be ushered into the presence of dead folks. For a moment I could not realize where I was, but presently I saw my father. He said, "My son, soon you will come to me." "But," says I, "am I to die on the battlefield?" "Yes," "Shall I never see my friends again on earth?" "Yes; once more." So then passed away from my sight, and I awoke. Well, in spite of all I could do, I felt there was great truth attached to this dream or vision of mine. It seemed to make a great impression on my mind that it would certainly prove true. When I did come to die, and to the spirit-world; I met my father, and he says, "My son, did I not tell you the truth?" I seemed to instinctively comprehend the truth, for a great light poured in upon me, and through that light I was induced to return—impelled to come here. Do you understand it? If you do, I don't. [I do not understand why you were impelled to come here, unless it was the only source through which you could reach your friends.]

When my portmanteau shall reach my friends, they will find it to contain a letter written by me the day before the engagement. In that letter I made the same statement, or nearly the same as I have made here today, with regard to the vision. You will understand they will know that there is no way by which you could have possibly acquainted yourself with these facts, except through a spiritual source.

Now all I ask is the privilege of going home and talking as I do here. I have much to say with regard to my affairs on earth; but I think I will wait until I find a medium to speak through at home. Is it possible for me to find one? I do not know, you understand; I am ignorant of these things. [We presume there are many mediums at the South.] I am exceedingly

obliged to you for your kindness. If I ever have an opportunity I will certainly endeavor to repay you. Good-day. May 11.

Michael Kelley.

Humph! pretty good sort of a chap, in his way. He used to be hotel-keeper. I wonder if he'll enter into the business now he's got to the spirit-world? [Where did he keep a hotel?] Down in seashore land, where he said he came from. [That's a little more than he told us.] Did he tell you that he was a hotel-keeper? [No.] Then I've told something new. He was that; he was a hotel-keeper there in Montgomery. [Where you ever there?] Yes, sir; I've been there myself; yes, sir.

I died at Libby prison, in Richmond, Virginia. I was taken up to Montgomery. I can't tell why, but a certain part of the prisoners was transferred across the country to Montgomery, Alabama. This same chap was into the place where I was confined one day. It was not a jail-house, nor nothing of the sort, but sort of a warehouse the Confederates used to keep their prisoners in. It was there I met this chap. I ask what he was, and some one told me he was a hotel-keeper. He said to me, "Pat, what do you think of our niggers?" I said, "Some of 'em's pretty smart, and some of 'em's got pretty thick skulls." "Pat, would you like to come with me to take charge of my niggers in the hotel?" I said, "Yes, I do not know but what I might like to; but how come you to ask me about any such thing?" "Well, Pat," he answered, "I thought you was a slave yourself at the North." I said, "You're right in one thing, and in another you're not right. I work where I like, and I play where I like, and that's what your black slaves can't always do." So you see I found out he was a hotel-keeper there in Montgomery. The last time I see him on earth, I see him there; the next time I see him was in the spirit-world. He was one of those persons that if you should see them once, you'd always remember them.

I belonged to the One Hundred and forty-third New York Regiment, Co. I. I should like very much to go home and talk, but I do not know about doing as I used to, for the most of me got cut up so quick that we are all in a while to get back and straighten up things. I'm all burly-burly, and all want to come first; but I find it's by law we all come back here, so there's no use in one's trying to get back before another. Now, Boss, Captain, Major, General, Colonel or President, I do not know what you are. [I'm all six, I guess.] Oh, you're all right. I want to know what you are going to do for me? An Irishman feels sensitive sometimes about making himself understood, but its very clear what I want. I want something like this—[Medium]—so I can talk at home. [If you can give some facts or incidents of your life it may help your friends to recognize you.] Faith, that I can do easily enough.

Well, the first incident of my life that I do not remember at all, was my being born in Belfast, Ireland; that's the first, to go back to first principles. I suppose the first and the last you want? [Any that you may remember.] Well, I was told I was born in the year 1829. I can't tell about that, Captain, for though I was there myself, I did not take much account of time, I take it. When I was between seven and eight years of age I went with my uncle across to Liverpool. There I look, I suppose you call it the small pox. That's another incident of my life. You understand, I want eight years of age. Well, about the first thing I remember distinctly was that sickness. There was two incidents in my life.

When I was in my twenty-first year, I come across. I stopped first in New Jersey. I live a little while in Patterson, and finally fetch up in your city—New York City, I mean. When I was twenty-six, just about that, I was married. That's another incident of my life. Another incident is like this: that after I had been married about four or five months, my wife tells me she does not like me any more. I said very well, that's all right, and perhaps you'd like your own folks better; so take to yourself wings and fly off. So she leaves. I applies for papers for desertion, what you call it. [A divorce.] Yes, that's it; and I got it, too.

Well, a little short of two years after I marries again. That's a very good incident of my life, for I likes my wife very much, and she likes me. She's not so good a Catholic as I like, that is, when I was here. Now I don't care. Well, sir, then is the big incidents of my life, and the last of all was the incident of my death, which took place at Richmond. First, I go there; then I was transferred to Montgomery, and after that I was taken back again to the first place. I was wounded, that's how I come to be taken. Faith, I do not think I'd have been taken if I had not been.

[Where were you wounded?] I was wounded in the foot. [I mean at what place.] Oh, I was wounded at the battle of Ball Run. They say we run like the devil. Faith, I credit as much of that as I please. They say the Yankee's heels were seen very clear a long way off, longer than a nigger's. There was something of a panic or confusion, I suppose you'll all admit that. I hear so from this side, too, so I suppose it must be true. [It was a good deal so.]

[What is your wife's name?] How? [Your wife's name?] Last one is Mary. [Was she in New York?] Yes, when I left. She was living in Henley Court; it leads off of Walker street. I do not know whether she's there now, though. Well, my name was Kelly, Michael—not Pat at all; if the gentleman did call me Pat. He could not have called me by a better name.

Now, Boss, I do not know about paying you; have not got anything to pay with. What'll I do if I am not successful? [Come again.] That's all right; drive the team until I reach home, hey? [I think you'll reach your wife.] Faith, I think I will; for I'm not one of the sort to give in, unless I'm wounded in the foot, then I can't run, you know. Well, Captain, good-day to you. I suppose now I'll not go out just as I did before. [I've never tried it.] Oh, you have not? That's so. Well, I tried one way. I'll try 'tother now. Good by to you. May 11.

Agnes Keniston.

It is the 10th of May, 1883. [To-day is the 11th of May.] I died on the 10th of May, 1863, in Holly street, London, England. My name was Agnes Keniston, and my age twenty-three years.

I received spiritual manifestations through myself, and I told my people when I died I'd cross the water and speak through some American medium so soon after death that you shall know that this is true. I was not aware that I had passed one day in the spirit-world, but if it is the 11th, I have, for I died on the morning of the 10th of May.

My uncle, who was a minister, said to me when I was about to die, "Agnes, do you feel safe in your belief now?" "Yes," I said. "Does it afford you any of the consolation you need in your dying hour?" "I said, "Yes, it does." "Are you happy?" "Yes," I said. "Dear uncle, I'll come back and convince you." He said nothing, but I know what he was thinking of—that I'd never come.

On the 10th of May I died, or left my body. It is now the 11th of May. I have traveled these many miles, I speak to you in America. I tell you the time of my death. Is it not enough? It should be, surely. My kind guides, who watched over me for the last three years of my life, have assisted me to fulfill my promise. So I'm here to-day. Adieu. May 11.

Invocation.

Spirit of the Universe, we recognize the perpetual baptism of thy love. Though the tempest rages wildly

around us, and the wild waters of affliction threaten to overwhelm us, yet we know that we are living within the sacred atmosphere of thy love. Oh Father, the Father of the tender blossom and the falling rain-drop, thou Mighty Master of Life, who has lived through all the ages, and will continue to live through all eternity, we will rest secure in thy presence, knowing that thou art omnipotent, that thou hast power over all the elements, and given us this new spiritual light, therefore with this light we offer unto thee all the thoughts, desires and aspirations of thy children, knowing that each one of them will be acceptable unto thee, knowing also that thou must forever love them, for they are thy children and thou art their Father. Oh, Spirit of the Universe, we ask thee for power to speak truth, for already we feel this light filling our being, and for this, as for all other blessings, we will adore thee forever and forever. May 12.

"The Origin of Baptism."

We have not chosen this theme because we expect to throw all of light or truth upon it, but because we know that humanity knows very little concerning the origin of the various rites and ceremonies of the Church; and if we have power to add to the little light they already have, that by so doing they may be enabled to understand the origin of even one of these rites, we shall be well repaid for our efforts.

It is a well known fact, by those who are versed in ancient history, that there was a very great difference existing between the people and the rulers, for the priests were the rulers and the rulers were the priests. In consequence of this distinction, the people were at all times in perpetual fear that they should unwittingly offend priestly dignity, for these persons known as priests or rulers claimed to be in direct rapport with the Infinite, to be the agents of the Infinite, or persons especially appointed by God for executing his laws. So it happened that thus said the Lord "I was held sacred by the people, and woe be to those who should dare to transgress it."

It is also a well known fact that all beasts of burden were very scarce with the ancient Egyptians, particularly at the time when flesh-offerings were first in vogue. Therefore it was that those who worshipped at these Egyptian temples labored very hard to convey their offerings to the place of sacrifice. Egyptian law having provided against the slaughtering of offerings in sight of the temple, consequently this work was obliged to be performed many leagues from the temple. The principal mode of conveying these offerings to the place of sacrifice was by the use of green withs, or cords made of green withs, attached to the hocks and horns of animals. But as the latter were scarce among the ancient Egyptians, the persons who performed this labor, or took the place of beasts of burden, were such as had been guilty of some trivial offence pertaining to the Church.

Now it were not at all strange if these offerings should present an unbecomely appearance, should be somewhat soiled upon reaching the place of sacrifice, after having been dragged over the road in the way mentioned. And inasmuch as the officiating priest had a right to appropriate to his own use a portion of these offerings, so he claimed the right to enunciate "thus saith the Lord" with regard to cleanliness respecting these offerings. So it was that when the presiding priest found these offerings unfit for his use, he found cause to declare, "thus saith the Lord, the offering shall be subjected to certain ablutions before it is brought into the presence of the priest." If there chanced to be a running stream near by the temple, then the offering was required to be immersed in it seven times; if not, it must be suitably washed by other means. After this the worshippers were to present it to the officiating priest, who baptized it with water taken from the holy cup, which cup was said to contain the literal blood of the Infinite, and whoever was so fortunate as to receive even a drop of this holy water, was sure to find favor in the eyes of the priest, hence in the eyes of the Infinite. Here, then, we find the origin of baptism.

Leaving the ancient Egyptians, we will pass on to the days of John the Baptist. And here we find that which was entirely material with the Egyptians incorporated into the spiritual; or whereas it existed in a material sense with the ancient Egyptians, it has now become a spiritual symbol, indicative of finding favor with the Infinite, as regards the infinite spirit of the human—for it is human. The ages spoken of or referred to between the time of the ancient Egyptians and that of John the Baptist have added somewhat to the color of this symbol. Thus it is that where we found it dwelling in the material with the ancient Egyptians, we find it at the time of John the Baptist a spiritual symbol. And it is even now believed by Christians of the present day that the Infinite will not accept the sacrifice of the human heart's desires without this crowning external symbol. Oh, monstrous belief! too absurd to find a place in the minds of enlightened humanity even for a single moment.

Standing as we do apart from all forms of religious worship, and gazing as we do upon the mighty past and upon the glorious present, we can but pity that class of religionists who cling with such tenacity to those forms that belong to the ages of darkness and superstition. We say we pity them, for we know that when the scales drop from their eyes, instead of bearing the true mark of originality, they will be like vessels on the great ocean of life, without compass or rudder; for they have so long builded their faith and anchored their hopes on the darkness of the past, that it will take a long while for the light to penetrate the thick incrustation of superstition.

They call these rites and ceremonies sacred, but they are not half as sacred as the song of the bird and the perfume of these buds—[here the speaker pointed to a bouquet of flowers upon the table.]—not half as expressive as these fair flowers. Oh, you had better worship at the shrine of beauty as seen in Nature, than to worship at those dark shrines of the past.

We have done, for our time has expired. The subject is one that you may each one of you perfectly understand if you analyze it according to the light of common sense; for surely if you do this you will learn a something more of infinite law and infinite religion. May 12.

Matilda K. Allen.

I promised my people I would come back if the spirit lived after death. I believed it did; but if it should have power to come back and speak to its friends, I would come, and come to this place, that I would give them whatever light I was able to. I made no promise to speak of my early life, so I'll say nothing about it.

First, let me tell you my name and where I am from. I have been in this spirit-world a little more than three months. My name was Matilda K. Allen; I lived on the earth ninety-one years two months and four days. I died in Richmond—not Richmond, Virginia, but Richmond in Utah Territory.

Now I've told you I promised my people I would come to this place after death, if I could. I'm here just as much as I ever was. I promised them more, also—that I would give them all the light I could; but I'm incapable of giving them any light now, although they need it bad enough. God knows! I've only come to prove to them that I can come to fulfill my promise to those of my friends who are still here in the Mormon religion, for it is not mine now, nor can I say it ever was, bless God! I tried to do so, particularly during the last years of my life, doing among them, but it always happened that somebody's wife was committing adultery, or something

husband was at fault somewhere, and I could not make up my mind that the Mormon religion was what it should be, as I didn't have full belief in it. I loved my people because I was with them, and I do now, and we can love a person, you know, if we do not believe as they do.

Now about Brigham Young. I want to speak a word about him. I know he has a great many excellent traits of character, but he has a great many faults, and they are so glaring ones, and a while ago I was in his place I'd put a million on my neck and jump into the river; for, like poor old Judas, he sometimes feels that he ought to do it. I really did not mean to say as much about him when I commenced, but I could not help it.

Now, my son, you publish a paper, do not you? [Yes, THE BANNER OF LIGHT.] Well, I know about it. I've heard about it; you see it sometimes goes to Richmond, and my folks will read it; my people will see my message, and Brigham Young will perhaps see it, too. I did not care for him when I was here, and I care less for him now, for he is a tyrant, and ought to be hung as much as any traitor. But if he'd like to talk to me through some good medium, he can do so, but it must be one that he can't have the slightest influence over, for I know that he possesses a strong magnetic will of his own, and I claim that as a right. But if he wants to talk with me through a medium of my own choosing, he can do so, and I'll tell him more about heaven, and hell too, than he's ever dreamed of. So much for him.

Well, now, to those dear children who said to me, "Mother Allen, I wish there was some way by which we could be free. It seems to me that there's less of slavery in the beautiful Eastern country. [Meaning the States.] Do you know it seems to me that people there must be a great deal happier and better off than we are, and I wish we could be free. I wish we could go there and settle."

I used to say, "Children, be content, and if God intends you to be free, he'll show you the way to be so."

I say so now, and those children—girls they were—one of them is a medium. She can talk to me if she only knows how. So I want her to follow her impressions, whatever they may be, and in that manner I'll get into communication with my people, and tell them how they can be free. I had some enemies—everybody does—who thought I was an enemy to the Church, and who was not very sorry when I died. But tell me I do not feel any enmity toward 'em, for I know they are poor, deluded critters, to say the best of 'em. But when they come to the spirit-land, they will see as I see, and they will want like the Church is the only thing to be thought of. Well, this is true. We can come back and talk, and I want to speak with them about Mormonism, the religion of my people, for it was not my religion.

Now, my son, I'm done. [Would you like to have a paper containing your message sent to any particular person in Utah?] Yes, I should like one sent to Brigham Young, if you will. Good-day. May 12.

Alfred Kimball.

Well, bub, what's the news? [There's not a great deal at present.] I'm a stranger here and do not expect to do much. That old woman could run the machine a good deal better than I can. [She had more power, perhaps.] So it seems. [She returned with great power, because she died naturally.] I suppose so. Well, I did not. I died unnaturally.

I was private in the 112th Illinois Regiment, Company C. Alfred Kimball was my name. I died in the St. Louis hospital, of fever, rheumatism, and the shakes. All together, I feel rather bad to-day; do not feel used to it. I am from Brownville, Illinois. I've folks there—a mother, sisters, and a brother, who would not doubt be glad to hear from me, for I'm not sure that they know I'm dead; maybe that they do, although I do not think so. When I heard of this new Post Office, I stepped pretty lively this way. I came at double quick. I take it, and when I got here I learned one thing, and that was, that you must know how to run the machine before you could be allowed to use it. So I had to stay in the outside ranks and drill awhile, before they'd let me come in.

I suppose there are these kind of folks (mediums) all through the country. [Not in every place.] Well, your Boston, Massachusetts, is a pretty long way from Brownville, and I do not know about taking one like these so far. They generally—women do—have so much baggage to take with them. If they'd go on twelve days' rations and a blanket, it would be all right, but that's not the way they do business, is it? [No.] Well, if these kind of folks are not to be found in Brownville, what'll I do? It's all very good for one to come here and talk, but in my case, it only sharpens the appetite to talk at home.

Well, I should like to meet my folks and talk to them in this way, and then I'll tell them what I've seen since I've been in the spirit-world. Oh, a variety of things I've got to tell them; so if they can find me one of these kind of people near home, I think I should be inclined to use one of them. It seems to me that I should be able to make myself known to my folks. [Do you people know about this mode of return?] Well, I disremember whether I ever heard them say anything about it or not; however, I do not suppose I come here in vain.

Well, if any of the folks get my letter and invite me to come home and talk, I'll do it; but if they get it and do not ask me to come home, then I'll take it for granted they do not want me. [What ages were you when you passed away?] Twenty-five. [Can you give any facts of your life?] Well, I do not know how you should know anything about me. I do not know anything about you; if you know me, why then you are ahead of me. [I ask for your benefit, not mine.] Yes, I see. What shall I give? [Any incidents of your life that will serve to identify you to your friends.] You mean by that something that took place with me on earth. Well, my life on earth was pretty even, and I do not know what to hitch on to.

Why, I can think of my whole life and not remember hardly an angle or turn in it. Some folks' lives are made up with a hitch here, and a crook there, but mine was not so. I do not know what to hitch on to. Well, the biggest of all that ever happened to me in my life, was my death. You see if I was with the folks, they should ask me any question about my life, you see I could answer it, but I do not know what they want. [All right.] Well, if I did it all right, I'll come back again if I can get a chance; no knowing whether I can get the chance. Well, good-by. May 12.

Olive Galties.

I've got a mother in Cincinnati, and a father that's gone to the war. My name was Olive Galties, and I was ten years old. I died of sore throat and fever in March, a year ago this March.

My mother is sick because she thinks my father is wounded and will die; but he is not to die, and he is not badly wounded. My brother, who died before I did, is here; and he says, "Tell mother if she will find somebody that for Olive can speak through, do well, all about my father, and keep her posted of his movements."

When I was four years old I had the measles and whooping cough. When I was six years old I had the long fever, I was burned on my arm, and the next year when I died, I used to dream strange things, and my father and mother thought I imagined it. I was not so. My teachers, here, say that my brain was very sensitive to impressions from the spirit-world.

Written for the Banner of Light.

OBSESSION.

BY MISS EMMA HARDING.

In the last week's issue of the BANNER OF LIGHT I notice some remarks made on the subject of Obsession by a spirit through the mediumship of Mrs. Conant. Amongst the truly valuable evidences of spiritual communion which this excellent lady's services afford us, we of course look rather for tests of spirit presence, than sound philosophy; I am not surprised, therefore, to find one of our invisible friends, speaking through Mrs. Conant, disposed to dodge the word, by including in the category of its various meanings the electrical and magnetic influences by which spirits are enabled to exercise automatically certain organs of the body of the medium, as the brain, hands, feet, etc., etc.

Whatever may be the orthographical meaning of the word, we popularly understand by it the complete control of the body through the organs of the brain by a spirit, wicked in intention, mischievous and sometimes dangerous in acts, and often irrational, both in word and deed. In my own experience I am frequently called upon to visit persons who manifest the most extraordinary tendency to perform evil acts, and utter profane language, speaking sometimes in harsh, guttural tones, and not unreasonably imitating, both in speech and action, the lower animals. Such cases as these are very commonly pronounced by Spiritualists, "Obsession." Perhaps they are; but before we can form any correct theory on the subject, and ere we jump at conclusions that present us with hideous and revolting features of spirit life, and open up dangers in the communion which might well justify a general outcry against seeking its practice, let us consider some of the facts belonging to cases that come under the notice of the mediums, myself and my experience for one.

I was called upon some months ago to see a young girl who was, as her friends positively assured me, "obsessed by evil spirits," and was only to be cured, as certain "good spirits" declared through the sufferer's own lips, by my power over "the dark spirit" as exorcist. I found an interesting girl of fifteen years old, (who at the time of my visit was under the malign influence in its fullest force,) flittingly hanging on to the cornice of a high room, whither she had climbed up with all the agility of a cat, and now crouched up into a sort of human ball, launched fearful execrations at the bystanders, in the coarse, rough tone of a man. Presently the poor child crept down to the ground, and proceeded to crawl round the room with dreadfully animal movements, occasionally barking like a dog, and varying such sounds with harsh and abusive, but entirely irrational speech; her parents informed me her condition assumed many phases, often presenting evidence of "most high and holy control," discoursing admirably; improvising poetry, singing, and sometimes speaking languages with which she was entirely unacquainted.

Before I left, one of those paroxysms of a "superior state" influenced her, and addressing me, what purported to be a spirit physician, informed me in choice language, "that I did understand the case," and requested I would state my convictions to the parents.

This I presently proceeded to do, although I am bound to add, without impressing those convictions in the least upon their minds, already predetermined to accept of nothing that would clash with the theory of "obsession." As the last spirit that appeared to influence the young lady evidently read clairvoyantly what was passing in my mind, and manifested an amount of intelligence through the medium's trance state that entitled his opinions to consideration, I shall venture to give the theory, frequently submitted to me by spirits, and then pressing on my mind, even as I have received it. This person, and many others whom I have visited similarly affected, was the subject of a diseased brain, which at periods regulated by some exciting cause not understood, produced sometimes a partial and sometimes a more general condition of inflammation on the cerebrum or front brain, generally supposed to be the seat of reason, but certainly the organ whose healthful action is essential to the manifestation of intelligence. In this disorganized state of the legislative organs, the entire rule of volition is under the domination of the brain (cerebrum), and its adjacent nerve faculties are now in operation, and as these exist equally in all animals, and are the stimuli to all animal movements, the result operates in purely instinctive and animal actions, while whatever of humanity is still operating through the disordered realm of reason, being under the domination of the animal faculties, displays itself in language and acts human in form, but animal in will, and all these can and (I believe,) do take place without the influence of any spirit at all, except the unfortunate tenet of the semi-lunatic form of the subject.

In several instances I have clairvoyantly perceived the so-called "obsessed," spinal curvatures and other defects of the great source of nervous action, the spinal column, which the parents have been compelled to own to, and which alone would account for the occasional displays of aberrated intellect. Accidents in infancy, or any cause hereditary or circumstantial, which affect the brain or nerve center, I have found upon careful investigation, very common in these cases, and, as I believe, wholly sufficient to account for their existence.

The ignorance or carelessness of the parents often disregards these physical causes, and, if they happen to be Spiritualists, I find them just as ready to fall back upon the universal solvent of "obsession," as the Orthodox are to attribute every conceivable phenomena of life and nature to the direct act and will of God. It may not be invariably apparent even to the most careful scrutiny, that all cases of so-called obsession result from physical causes, but I have proved so many to do so, that I still watch and wait to see a yet larger number render up this solution of their mystery.

I have visited a great many lunatic asylums, and notwithstanding the assurance of one professional attendant on these unfortunate, that in the majority of cases of lunacy, post-mortem examinations could throw no light upon the cause of madness, I am convinced that the whole of the dreadful array of such cases grow out of unnatural pressure upon the brain, and whether this results in external inflammation of its material organism or not, whether the disease marks itself upon the substance, or simply riots through its nervous fibres in the imponderable element of life, I cannot yet discover a single case of lunacy which does not manifest disturbance of that equilibrium which should exist amongst the organs whose totality we call "the brain," which disturbance is in itself the lack of reason; and this I claim to be sufficient to account for lunacy, and I am equally convinced, in partial and erratic action, is just what we call "obsession."

When we remember that "the organs of the brain," as we term them, are not separate parts in the least degree demonstrable in its substance, and that the subdivisions of the cerebrum, into which the phenologist has classed the various faculties, are all but own hypothetical arrangements, totally unsupported by any corresponding appearance in the matter itself, it is evident that though the substance of the brain is the instrument through which the faculties of the mind become manifest, that there is a subtle and imponderable element pervading that substance, which may become

disturbed, and thus affect the mind's expression without being appreciable on the mere material surface. I believe, moreover, that this imponderable element is "nerve force," "vital force," "life," or by whatever name we may term the connecting link between spirit and matter; that this is our spiritual body, the clothing of the innermost, and which at death of the body becomes the quaternary of the soul; that this nerve force is affected by whatever physically affects any of the nerve centres, and spiritually by excessive pressure on the mind; that being the medium between body and mind, it is the instrument of both, and represents any disturbing cause of ill to either; but as it is imponderable, its effect on matter is not appreciable at all times to the senses, and hence the difficulty of the anatomist in tracing lunacy in a diseased condition of the brain.

I beg to add to this dissertation a few words of comment on the popular theory of "obsession" from a spirit friend, whose opinions I highly value:

"Observe the actions and speech of most of the victims of 'obsession,' and you will remark them to be in general irrational, useless and purposeless. For myself, I confess I know of no income spirits. The cause of insanity is removed when death dissolves the union of a body and spirit, suffering of which, in either case, results on the other, but regains equilibrium when separated. If a spirit is at all rational, how can you expect a manifestation of pure imbecility or savagery in humanity should proceed from his influence? I do not dispute that a spirit may so completely subjugate the will of a mortal to his own as to appear to dwell within that mortal's organism, but why do you attribute such foolish, senseless acts and words to a conscious intelligent soul, presenting no line of demarcation between the cunning of madness and the obsession you complain of? I repeat to you my belief, that the display of animal movements, blasphemous speech and semi-human actions, attributed to the obsession of evil spirits, is the result of a disordered brain and the predominance of the animal propensities over the intellectual. If you urge that the 'obsessed' frequently speak with an angelic as well as demonic tongue, evidencing clairvoyant and other exalted powers, and proving the possession of bad spirits by this display of control from the good, I answer, bad and good spirits may both control a very helpless and unindividualized subject; and the fact that a person has not sufficient self-control to escape the charge of lunacy or obsession, is clear proof of this passive and negative condition so favorable for the control of other entities; but it is not to the display of foreign intelligence, good or bad, that we object as proof of 'obsession,' but to the lack of it; and observing such innumerable instances in which base and criminal acts, above all insane and unintelligent ones, are charged upon the 'obsession of evil spirits,' we hope yet to be able to convince the world we have plenty of moral hospitals here in spirit-land for the cure of souls whom foul conditions on earth have contaminated, and that bad spirits can progress here as well, if not a little better, than by going to spirit circles to chew, and spit, and swear, and drink spirit on lumps of sugar, through sympathetic mediums, and then become suddenly very much improved in mind and state by the exercise. But that positively we have no insane asylums here, consequently I am at some loss to determine where the *INSANE OBSESSIONS* come from."

In concluding this article, it may not be uninteresting to notice the case of a young lady at Providence, R. I., whom I have lately visited, who has been bedridden, I believe, now for some three or more years. One side is partially paralyzed—one hand and arm therefore entirely useless; the lower part of her body frightfully contracted and drawn together for weeks at a time. She has been known to abstain from any other food than the trifling substance extracted from chewing and spitting out little pieces of bread. This unfortunate young girl, like other cases I have alluded to, is at times subject to frightful paroxysms of what my friends assured me gravely was "obsession," but which were evident symptoms to me of inflammation of the spine and brain, producing temporary insanity. The usual obsession hypothesis was adopted, it seems, from the young lady's extraordinary manifestations of spirit control of a high order in her lucid moments. Also another remarkable feature of her case is her clairvoyance, which in some instances is the most direct I ever witnessed. I am possessed of an excellent drawing of birds, executed in a room where every ray of light had been excluded for weeks, to favor a faint streak of light intolerable to her; yet in this state, with her one hand, (the other numb and lifeless,) she has executed a great number of drawings, writings, and needlework, could read, tell the time, and the persons who presented themselves at the street door before it was opened. Some of these drawings, executed not in the dark, but in the thick darkness, are elaborate and excellent, and the paper dancing dolls she cut out, painted and dressed, are very superior to many an one's work performed in the light and aided by two mortal eyes.

As an evidence of the natural and perpetual clairvoyance of this singular case, I presented her with a book, by way, as I said, of testing her assertion that she had perfectly recovered her eyesight, when she immediately read down the page for me clearly and well, and could hardly be made to believe me when I told her she had been reading from a book held upside down.

My own conclusion on this, as on many other yet more marked cases, is, that the repulsive and irrational features proceeded from lunacy, but that in conditions where the worn and suffering nervous system was highly negative, the over watchful love of guardian spirits controlled the weak organism in manifestations of use and beauty. As a specimen of this poor sufferer's capacity for expressing sublime spiritual ideas in appropriate language, I enclose one of the poems that she wrote, and which are from time to time circulated as curious evidences of spiritual life in the midst of what is little better than physical death.

THOUGHT.

Whence shall we trace its origin?
How shall we note its birth?
'Tis not confined to things of time,
Nor bound by things of earth.

It penetrates obscurity,
Gives into things forgotten;
Bores till it reaches realms of light,
Or water's space doth float.

'Tis swifter than the lightning,
Rivals the meteor's glow;
More vivid than the brightest ray
The sun abroad doth throw.

Yields light from gleams immortal,
Illuminating all time;
A brilliant caught from unseen worlds,
E'en to God's throne doth climb.

We feel, but cannot fathom
Its wonder-working force;
Mind, in its most profound research,
Cannot divulge its source.

'Tis born, and who may stay it?
'Tis gone, oh, tell me where;
'Tis registered, the record kept,
Will heaven not show it there?

We cannot stay its impulse,
May not impede its flight;
But we must meet it at that day
When darkness is made light.

Annual Grove Meetings.
The Annual Grove Meeting of Spiritualists at New London, Ohio, takes place July 30th, 31st and 1st Aug.

Warren Chase, of New York, and Warren Chase, of New York, will speak there. Good time to subscribe for the BANNER to him.

Spiritual Grove Meeting.

The Friends of Progress and Reform will hold a two days' meeting in Northern Illinois. In the town of Florida, Boone County, four miles south of Belvidere, on Sunday, June 25th and 26th, in Robinson's Grove. A large number of speakers will be present, and all who may attend from a distance. It is expected that a large number of speakers will be present; among them will be the names of Mrs. N. W. Little, Mrs. A. Ames, Miss Belle Bingham and Dr. Benson, and we invite all speakers to attend the convention. The meeting is general to all, and the platform will be free.

Per order of the committee. HIRSH BOWELL.

Annual Festival.

The fourth Annual Festival of the Religio-Philosophical Society will be held at the Universalist meeting-house in St. Charles, Kans. Co., Illinois, commencing on Friday, July 1st, and continuing Saturday and Sunday. By order of the Religio-Philosophical Society. S. B. JONES, President.

NOTICES OF MEETINGS.

SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, LYONS HALL, THURSDAY EVENING, June 23rd, 7:30 o'clock. Meetings will be held every Sunday by the Society of Spiritualists, at 3:34 and 1:15 p. m. Admission 10 cents. Lecturers engaged—Mrs. Cora L. V. Hatch, June 25th, and July 2nd; Mrs. M. R. Townsend, June 26th, and July 3rd; Mrs. M. R. Townsend, June 27th, and July 4th; Mrs. M. R. Townsend, June 28th, and July 5th; Mrs. M. R. Townsend, June 29th, and July 6th; Mrs. M. R. Townsend, June 30th, and July 7th; Mrs. M. R. Townsend, July 1st, and July 8th; Mrs. M. R. Townsend, July 2nd, and July 9th; Mrs. M. R. Townsend, July 3rd, and July 10th; Mrs. M. R. Townsend, July 4th, and July 11th; Mrs. M. R. Townsend, July 5th, and July 12th; Mrs. M. R. Townsend, July 6th, and July 13th; Mrs. M. R. Townsend, July 7th, and July 14th; Mrs. M. R. Townsend, July 8th, and July 15th; Mrs. M. R. Townsend, July 9th, and July 16th; Mrs. M. R. Townsend, July 10th, and July 17th; Mrs. M. R. 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