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JASMINE; OR, THE DISCIPLINE OF LIFE.

BY CORA WILBURN.

CHAPTER II.

Carve-dropping and its Results.

Wherefore unto one alone
Are those sounds and visions known?
Wherefore bath that spell of power,
Dark and dread,
On her soul a tress'd dower
Thus been shed?—MRS. HEMANS.

My father and his wife were about many months, and all the bitter and vindictive feelings awakened in my soul, strengthened in intensity, as time sped on. If ever any human being possessed the tormented art to its fullest extent, that woman did whom I was compelled to call by the endearing name of "grandmother." The tasks I most disliked she imposed upon me. I had to stand for hours behind her chair; to sit and sew interminable seams, while the balmy air of summer called me with pleading voices into the fresh, green woods. My story books were interdicted, and hard, dry lessons subsisted at all times. Then a new mood would seize upon my pursuing evil genius, and all books would be forbidden, and I was promoted to the place of waiting-maid. I had to clear up her chamber, which was purposely strewn with piles of garments, with loose papers, and a hundred unnecessary odds and ends. I had to clean the many phials, bottles, and glasses that loaded down her table; to arrange with the utmost neatness, and in its exact appointed place, the articles of her toilet; for the old lady was endowed with that one choice attribute of womanhood—a love of order. But she persisted in it all her life, and when the room-cleaning fit was upon her, there was no rest for my weary feet, nor cessation for her incessant demands.

Sometimes I bore it meekly, and set diligently to work, seeing in return only sarcastic praise and sneering compliments, so much harder to bear than a downright scolding. Sometimes my proud and angry spirit revolted, and I retorted fiercely, telling her "I was not a servant to be ordered about, and that she was not my own grandmother." To which she would reply with a laugh that chilled my blood, "that there was no telling what I might come to; had better learn and be handy, as I might have to wait on other folks beside herself. Pride always has a fall," remarked this curious moralizer; "and as queens have had to beg their bread, there's no saying what Jasmine Northrup may come to." These speeches always filled me with vague and terrible forebodings.

She labored hard to convince me of my own utter unworthiness, of my total lack of goodness, of my personal deficiencies, my want of affection and truthfulness. All this while my child-heart was wallowing loudly for the love denied to its unceasing prayer. She succeeded in implanting in my breast that distrust of self that has haunted me through life, causing me to hesitate and tremble even in the fulfillment of life's holiest sacrifices and duties, as a miserable interpreter of the language of conscience and intuition.

Oh, ye who have the guardian charge of young souls, refrain, I implore you from implanting in those innocent, quivering hearts, the thorns of self-distrust. Let the child go forth from the sanctuary of home, strengthened by examples of goodness, fortified in conscious rectitude against the poison teachings of the world, paupered in the invincible armor of innocence and truth.

But Catharine Strong, with a deep, unholly purpose at heart, sought only to locate suspicion, craft, duplicity. The tales she told me were all of man's treachery and woman's deceit; recitals that served to engender fear and avoidance of humanity. She went beyond the limits of the bitterest animosity; for in the cast of my features, the tones of my voice, my every movement, she found the ample, unfailing proofs of my utter perversity, saying:

"People with such lips never came to any good in the world; they're born liars and tricksters, and eyes that look up, as yours do, belong to a bad disposition, and a wicked heart. You'll be a good-for-nothing laxy, impudent, unlucky mortal as long as you live, Jasmine!"

And day by day this was repeated, until I half believed it, and would shed bitter and secret tears over my unworthy self. Then, again, I would feel the sweet rush of benevolent impulses, of yearning affections, of heavenward aspirations; and with conscious self-pity my tears would flow less bitterly, and I would call on God for help.

I was an imaginative child, of a fervid, poetic temperament; and scenes or recitals of the beautiful and the terrible, imprinted themselves in ineffaceable characters upon my memory. Never shall I forget the cold horror and the sensation of despairing gloom that seized upon me, when, with the zest of a malignant fiend, Mrs. Strong presented to my mind's eye the vivid picture of the doom of the eternally lost!

She told me of a subterranean region, dark with everlasting night, and illumined only by the lurid glare of sulphurous streams, that, to the accompaniment of earthquake shocks and thunder-peals, dashed athwart the cavernous expanse, revealing the dread arch demon seated on his fiery throne, surrounded by his legion-emissaries in horrible and grotesque forms. Around the seething, bubbling lake of torment hung cauldrons filled with the liquid fire, and into this, at Satan's mandate, were cast the shrieking and realising souls, there doomed to a life without end. On emerging from that torture bath, they were whipped with glowing rods, held in the bands of seething and appalling fluids. The laughter of the Dread Ruler of that realm, rose high and thrilling in its sarcastic mockery above the rabel, merriment of his myriads

there, and that sound forbade all thoughts and hopes of prayer, of penitence or peace; from it the angels fled aghast, and the righteous veiled their ears. No mother-love could rescue thence the condemned child, no expiation avail, no pardon could be gained—all, all was despair impenetrable as the night that brooded there; ascending as the tortures of that realm of unappreciable woe!

Even now, after the lapse of years, that fancied imagery of terror arises before me, bringing with it something of the olden fearful thrill. Then, as if in contradiction to that portraiture, that woman of strong mind and reckless heart, would tell me of the heaven of the blessed. But she failed in impressing me with its charms; for as her nature tended, so was the heaven she aspired to—a magnificent kingdom, rich in heavenly glories, sparkling with the earthly gems that decked the monarchs of the dust; its flowers and its fruit; its city, and its "many mansions," were to her mere correspondences of earthly grandeur; she could not attempt to fathom the spiritual significance of heaven's golden streets and gates of pearl. In the purely materialistic sense, she understood the revelations of that unseen and beautiful land, where the beloved and reunited dwell—where there "shall be no more night" of sorrow, doubt or separation.

Oh, heaven! to which all hearts aspire; that of the savage as well as that of the devoted Christian—oh, land of peace! to which the sorrowing and aspiring all nations look forward to as home; how from earliest childhood have I yearned with intensest longing for thy rest divine, for the promised meeting with the angels gone from earth.

Strange contradiction! Yet whenever I fell into these sweet and soothing reveries, forming my own poetic ideas of the eternal summer-land, endowing its trees with music, its flowers with gemmed lustre, its atmosphere with the love-rays of the divin' benignity; going in spirit on its "waters of life," its Jasper-mounts, its blessed homes and portals of the morn, I failed there, amid the radiant forms and star-orned brows, to meet with her—my mother! I could not feel her there, and an aching void was in my breast; then with a terror absorbing my every faculty, I turned to the pictured dread of that other region; but could not locate her there. It was as if a voice called to me, "Not there—not there!" and I turned away consoled and weeping. Then I prayed for her I deemed in purgatory, with a fervent, childlike faith; encouraged in this by Nurse Ainslie, who, relieving my fears concerning my mother, yet would give me no assurance that she was with the best above; telling me ever to pray for her, that God was merciful, that some had to suffer awhile in the flames of purgatory, before ascending to the heights of blessedness, and that the prayers of the young availed with all the saints and the Holy Mother. Further I dared not question her, for her face would whiten, and her lip tremble at any further allusion to my lost one. So I prayed for her through many a year, unknowing the extent of my supplications, until—

In my chamber was a little altar, decorated in summer with the choicest flowers of the garden, in winter with the holly and the evergreens of the park. On saints' days and festivals, wax candles burned there in homage, and the offerings of a sincere heart were rendered. There lay my rosary of ivory and coral; around were suspended the images of tutelary saints, and the sweet, pensive face of the Virgin, and the repentant Magdalen. A little marble fount, carefully filled with holy water, stood within reach of my hand. To that home-ahrine Nurse Ainslie and I repaired at night and early morn. I have often noticed that to Saint Magdalen in particular, the good woman offered many a supplication, and dedicated many a vow; that she prayed to that representation of a ransomed saint in heaven with tearful eyes and a deeper entreaty. I often wondered why.

Mrs. Strong was emphatic in her religion as in her speech; her prayers were loud, vehement utterances; her saints were those of the able bodied, vigorous-minded order. She was unparing in her denunciations of all other beliefs, and I think it afforded her a triumphant exultation to feel convinced that millions of our Father's children would be doomed to everlasting torment. She was a woman of the stamp of the Catharine de Medicis—cruel, unsparring, relentless; veiling all beneath a conventionally self-possessed exterior.

As for Agatha, she was a weak, vacillating, worldly creature; a prey to vanity and a sort of poulter that never revealed itself in my father's presence. Completely under her mother's dominion, she only nominally ruled the household. Mrs. Strong it was who swayed her rod of iron over us all. It was her mother who made Agatha artificial, designing, and a plotter; left to herself, she would have been content with dress and ornaments, with the love of her husband, and the lot of her establishment. But a hand stronger than her own led her own almost blindly to the commission of great wrongs.

"But," exclaims the reader, "are we to have indications of perverser characters only? Is there no redeeming trait in these unlovely ones? Are human beings all evil?"

Not so, friends, and I only portray these dispositions as I found them; as they displayed to me the evil side of their natures. In my cruel persecutions lived the germs of many noble qualities, and there existed others; but the perversion of leading traits led to the unappreciation of a life, and brought on themselves the fearful retributions of the transgressor. Mrs. Strong was inordinately ambitious, and trampled upon all obstacles that stood in the way of the attainment of her object. Her daughter was a passive instrument in the hands of her imperious will. Her weak and sinful acquiescence in all her mother planned; her want of thinking for herself formed for her a peaceful present, leading to the inevitable retribution of the future.

Two beings in that household I failed to read even with the clear intentions of childhood. One was my own father, the other Mrs. Strong's maid-to-waiting-maid. I could not fathom why, with a young and pretty wife, with wealth and friends surrounding him, he should so often appear gloomy and unhappy. Nor could I understand why the haughty Mrs. Strong, before whom all the servants trembled, should bear the occasional insolence and defiant speech of her maid, Rosetta; a middle-aged, portly and comely woman, had

come with her mistress across the seas, from the far West India island, where Agatha, despite of her sea-shell complexion and golden hair, was born. Rosetta had been the Madame's slave, but freed upon English soil, was indolent, careless, and impudent as no other servant dared be; and amidst did Mrs. Strong or Agatha venture to rebuke her; for, fixing her glittering black eyes upon her mistress, she would say a few words in Spanish, before which both would shrink and pale, and give no answer. "The Madame," as she invariably called the old lady, gave her many handsome presents throughout the year.

One day, at the commencement of autumn, while the trees yet stood green in all their regal splendor, only here and there a changing leaf betokening the passing season, there came to Oakfast Hall a stranger—at least he was such to me—and inquired for the master. I was playing on the porch, when he came in, followed by two of our servants, who kept repeating that Mr. Northrup was not at home.

"I'll see for myself. I'm not to be put off this way!" said a voice, so peculiar in its tones that I looked up in astonishment, with a strange, aching wonder surely pictured in my eyes.

The voice was neither loud nor harsh, nor did it convey the idea of anger; but it had a metallic positiveness, a cool determination more repellent than the most violent outbreak.

"Master's been gone this three months or more, I assure you, sir," said one of the men. "Here is Miss Jasmine, sir; you can ask her."

"Hallo!" said the stranger, "this is the master's daughter, is it? The girl I have never seen before—a lucky chance indeed! So; you are Jasmine, the little lady I've been told about, hey? Come here, my dear, and tell me the truth; has papa really gone away, and do you know when he will return? I know you will tell the truth, with those clear brown eyes of yours."

Advanced shyly, for I was unused to strangers, and timidly put out my hand. I was attracted and repelled at the same time. Yet no one but Nurse Ainslie and the servants had spoken to me so kindly, and I was never permitted to go into the drawing-room when company was there. I answered promptly:

"Papa is not at home, sir; our servants always tell the truth. He and—madam have gone to London, Paris and Italy. They did not say when they would come back."

"Hem, ha, indeed!" said the gentleman, regarding me fixedly, with those strange, small, restless black eyes of his, and retaining my hand in his firm grasp. "Well, my little girl, show me into the house, and we'll have a little talk together."

Half alarmed, I knew not why, I was about to lead the way, when Mrs. Strong made her appearance, and sweeping her glance over those present, said, with her usually stately and freezing politeness:

"May I inquire your pleasure, sir?"

Something in the tone seemed to displease the stranger; he drew himself up and calmly surveyed the tall and imposing form before him with a coolness that savored of audacity. I saw the old lady's cheek and brow flush with anger and impatience.

"My business is with Mr. Herbert Northrup, madame," he replied, looking her steadily in the face.

"Your name, sir?" she demanded.

"Mark Calliffe, at your service, madame," and smiling to my hand, he bowed deeply, while a little curled the corners of his firmly chiseled mouth.

The servants, at a signal from their old mistress, proceeded to their usual avocations. I was looking intently at Mrs. Strong. I saw a puzzled look steal over her face, then a heightened flush, that paled, as if some sudden recollection had crossed her mind. Her thin lips were compressed a moment, then in a more cordial tone, she said:

"I think I have heard Mr. Northrup speak of you as—as an old friend, I believe?"

He smiled again, and bowed.

"You are welcome to the Hall, sir. Will you step into the drawing-room?" and she led the way, saying to me, in a sweetly acid tone, "Go to your room, Jasmine, my child."

I ran to my chamber with strange, vague thoughts coursing through my brain—with a fear of the strange gentleman that was as undefined as it was oppressive. I sat down to think over his appearance, and his few kind words to me. He was tall and well-formed, quick in his movements, with a sort of nervous haste about him that contrasted strongly with the clear, metallic, commanding tones of his voice. His face was massive and full, with features strongly marked, high and wide forehead, singular, piercing, jet-black eyes, that bore a yellow gleam in their depths, and exerted a powerful and magnetic charm, attractive and repellent at once. I had never seen such eyes, and I believed as I pondered upon their expression, and in true child-like parlance, "felt afraid." The same feeling had come over me often in the presence of Rosita, whose large, dark, luminous eyes sometimes wore a glassy fixedness, as if she were spell-bound by some unseen power. Then again they would shine with a brilliancy not their own, for the mutator's eyes were sad most usually. I felt afraid when these moods were upon her, but I never feared her as I did this new-comer, this Calliffe—Mark.

I dwelt upon the name, I could not reason wherefore, with increasing, undefined dread. I have not finished the description of him. His hair was light, tinged with reddish tints—another contrast that and the carefully trimmed beard to the night-dark eyes and sun-burnt skin; in speaking, teeth of glittering whiteness were disclosed. His upper lip was thin and wide; the upper lip almost concealed by the long mustache. It was a contradictory face. It repelled while it unconsciously attracted. His smile was fascinating; his expression of countenance changeable; his voice shifted its tones from politely civil inquiry to tender modulations and sarcastic retort. Somehow, I half understood all this, even then. The prevalent sense of coming evil, the mystery of antagonistic forces, was revealed to me that day and hour.

When was he? Where did he come from? What did he want with papa? Why was Mrs. Strong so strangely affected at the mention of his name? My ten-year-old brain puzzled over these questions until it ached. Nurse Ainslie turned pale when I mentioned the stranger's name; and evaded all my eager inquiries. I almost cried when I heard he was to remain over night.

An insatiable desire possessed me to know more of this man; to listen to his conversations with the "old

one." I was called into their presence after dinner, probably at his request, and treated very graciously by my life-tormentor, and with almost fatherly kindness by Mr. Calliffe. I heard that he had been a schoolmate of my father's, that his life had been one of change and travel since; that his wife was dead, and that he had one son. All this I remembered afterwards, in a dreamy, confused sort of way, for I was ill for many weeks after the singular visitor left, and had retained but vague, indistinct remembrances of that which occurred at the time. But I remembered the name, and that of his son, Aurin. The rest was brought to my dim recollection by occasional words from Mrs. Strong, and snatches of conversation I overheard between her and Rosita. My nurse never mentioned Mark Calliffe again.

It is one of my dream-like memories, hearing the old lady say to her maid-to-waiting that she wished her to try her power upon the stranger; to which the woman replied, that she would not again for worlds. Rosetta had a fashion of dividing her words, which rendered her speech peculiar. She spoke also with a foreign accent and a slight lisp.

I heard something about "an enemy—knowing the past." The words "mystery and misery" seemed to ring in my ears whenever my thoughts reverted to the scene. But so many favored visions succeeded that day, I could not separate the reality from the fantastic forms and unintelligible address of the pleasing and terrific spectres that haunted my sick bed.

I thought that Rosita grew angry, and said some thing to her mistress, in her quick, Spanish tongue, that paled the old lady's cheek. Then they made friends again, and Rosita wept, and the dame called majestically from the room, and the little eaves-dropper stole to her chamber, and pondered, and determined to watch and know more. That I remember.

I believe I stole into Mrs. Strong's room that night, and concealed myself behind the ponderous bed-curtains of damask, that, even in summer, were draped around her couch. There seemed to be a solemn stillness around, and I have dreamt of the scene so often, that vague, ethereal as it appeared, it took a certain form and significance, from which I awoke oppressed and trembling. Dream or fact, I stood with throbbing heart, tightly clenched hands, eager, expectant, with strained eyes, on tiptoe, watching the stern face of Agatha's mother, the strange, corpse-like whiteness of Rosita's countenance, from which her fixed, glassy eyes stared as if upon the revealed secrets of another world!

The large room was illumined by the soft, tempered rays of a silver lamp of ancient shape and costly workmanship; the dying embers lingered in the grate; the curtain window-folds were drawn; there were deep shadows in the corners; the massive wardrobe, the old arm chairs, the pictures of saints, the antique bed, with its dark red and black hangings, all were unwrapped in a semi-gloom. The voice of Rosita sounded afar off. Its cadence was changed; its lisp, foreign accent gone. Something she said of being the messenger of departed spirits, of warning, of fearful import—I know not what, but it thrilled my heart with terror, and I fled from my shelter with a muffled beating of that burdened heart, stifling with both hands the cry of agony that arose in my lips.

Thus in my dream; and so may have been the reality. A fever prostrated my overtaken strength the night of Mark Calliffe's stay beneath our roof. Nurse Ainslie and Rosita watched by me. I could not bear the sight of Mrs. Strong, and she seldom intruded her unwelcome presence upon me. Slowly I recovered health, and Mark Calliffe, and the occurrences of that night, took on the shadow-forms of past imaginations. Other events followed, that absorbed my every thought and feeling. My father returned, stern, cold and inflexible as ever toward me. Agatha was charming and impressive, as before, indifferent, superciliously condescending, mildly sarcastic, to the step-child she lately hated. Three months after her return from seeing the world she gave birth to a son, the long-hoped-for heir of Oakfast Hall.

CHAPTER III.

The Shadow of the Death Angel's Wing.

"Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north wind's breath,
And stars to set; but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, oh Death!"
—MRS. HEMANS.

There were great rejoicings at my home—feasting and revelry and the gay midnight dance. Never, to my recollection, had the old Hall decked its spacious saloons and chambers in such festal garbs. Outside, the storm-winds of March howled, and the snowdrifts whirled. Within, all was warmth and gladness. Crimson silk curtains and cheerful fires cast their gleam upon the pearl cheek of the young and fair, heightening the natural rose hue there.

I watched those quivering ladies, in their glittering robes and sparkling gems, with a secret wonder and admiration. Children came, too, who seemed the posed of all hearts. Occasionally some loving young mother meeting me, would pat my head and kiss my brow; some kind, white haired old gentleman would call me a "dear child;" but all this favor was as naught to the affection and caresses bestowed upon my baby brother, whom I was permitted to see once in a great while, as an especial favor; to be allowed to kiss him was the highest privilege awarded. I loved the innocent, helpless creature, but beneath the scrutiny of Agatha and her mother, I did not half demonstrate the sisterly love I felt.

Six months my brother Charlie lingered with us, a pale and puny, patient and feeble little sufferer; then the great house was hushed, and the cheering daylight was excluded from the sick-room, and the nights were spent in watching, and even Agatha's cheek grew pale with long vigils, and a shadow lay upon my father's erst unclouded brow. Mrs. Strong stepped softly, and forgot her own imaginary ailments, in care of the tender, fading blossom. Nurse Ainslie wept in silence, and there was a hush and a foreboding silence over the deserted hall. Physicians came and went with solemn looks and light tread, ominously shaking their heads. I was not permitted to see the dying babe; but one day, when a piercing wail issued from Agatha's chamber, and I saw my father hasten to his own room with blanched face and quivering lips, I knew that the little spirit had departed, and I knelt down and wept, in fresh and utter loneliness of heart.

I saw the bereaved mother, pale and changed by sorrow, mourning wildly for her lost treasure, and for the first time a sentiment of blessed pity found place in my soul for her. To Mrs. Strong's vehement display of grief I turned a deaf ear; I uttered not one word of hypocritical condolence, and but once did I attempt to soothe the almost frantic woe of my father's wife. She repulsed me coldly, saying angrily:

"Get out of my sight! I wish you had died in his stead!"

From that hour the bitterness resumed its sway.

Again my father took her abroad. Again the time sped on, and I accomplished the tasks imposed on me. The priest of that neighborhood, the good Father Lane, gave me religious instruction. I had a governess, chosen by Mrs. Strong, a deputy tyrant, whom I could neither love nor respect. I learned my lessons after a mechanical fashion, receiving from maternal Nature sweet and lofty teachings, far beyond the ken of the dull, dry school-books. I know now that from the all-encompassing spirit-worlds the orphaned and neglected Jasmine received impressions and was instructed in the laws of life.

Discarded by my father, repelled by coldness and indifference, with no heart responding to the affectional requirements of mine, with no superior intellect to guide the workings of my own questioning mind, I turned to Nature with a childlike faith and trust, with a love that amounted to idolatry, with a reverence that was unspoken worship. And she—best mother—began to interpret to me her revelations to me her beautiful realities; she unveiled to my inner sight the life-plans of the Infinite Mind, as manifested in the mission of the flowers; the aims of the mineral; the sentient aspiration of the animal; the universality of spirit in its greatest and most refined forms. Strange theories not taught in the catechism, nor transcribed in the lives of the saints, came to me unbidden, sent from some unknown source, spoken in no mortal tongue, yet indelibly impressed on my memory with the evanescent impress of eternal truth, couched in poetic symbols, in unnamed garbs of speech, in untranslatable songs, in music crooned from no harp-strings of this world!

I knew then that the spirit of each contemplated flower was endowed with gem-like lustre and with melodies of joy that arose in grateful response toward the parent heart of love; that the emblem colors of the rainbow and the dawn, of the sunset and the summer's glory, were the faint and far-off reflections of the spiritual realm, forebodings of things unseen, too bright for mortal eye to gaze upon! I felt the all-pervading aura of the beautiful, the attraction of the corresponding good. I loved the glittering gem, not for their world-awarded value, but for their intrinsic beauty and deep spiritual significance of life. The murmuring leaves told me each secret, the waves of the streamlet sang a home song so sweetly soothing I dreamt that I was cradled on my mother's breast, that a shower of kisses, each on a beautiful cheek of heaven, was lavished on my tear-stained cheeks, my moody brow, my tear-filled eyes. Amid the silly grandeur of my native hills, the leaping waterfall and the sweeping wide told me the story of maternal and celestial care, but it was in another strain, more grand, majestic, thrilling with the holy fervor of devotion, with awe and reverential thought.

Then I knew that circling hosts, unseen and powerful, were there, around, above, all Nature teeming with the ultimate of perfected change. I breathed in an atmosphere of poetry, where round was music, and thought gave birth to loveliest forms of life. There I knew and felt God, and called him Spirit-Father, Mother of all worlds, Beauty, Sun-blue, Love, and Everlasting Peace! Although that the links of being connecting the visible with the interior, the evanescent with the imperishable, the transitory with the immortal, had been coated to my ignorant keeping, to compensate me for the losses of this life. All this, in a vague and dreamy sort of consciousness, of semi-perception, of partial revelation, was known as a part of the Spiritual Philosophy, came to me, a Catholic child, the descendant of a world honored name. Rosetta is the foster-mother of great principles.

I looked up to the starry heavens as to my future assigned abode. I came to walk amid the clustering isles and planetary worlds that were peopled by a kingly race. I saw architectural fanes and domes; palatial homes and gardens that excelled in gemmed flowery splendor, the Oriental's loveliest stretch of fancy. I saw there earth's lovelier forms, transfigured to perfection's loveliness. I recognized the loveliest angel of each living thing. I saw transmuted sorrow and suffering royalty attired in compensating glories. I passed through heavens numerous and divine, feeling everywhere the presence of the Lord of All, but dwelling with no embodiment of the Supreme and All-pervading God. And yet I felt drawn upward, as if golden heart-links of aspiration ever bound me to the kindred souls above, as if the inspirational draughts of love and knowledge were offered to my thirsting lip by ministering angel hands.

But in the outer world there was discord, and alas, too often, in my own inner realm. My being was divided. With Nature, I was a doleful, loving, patient, and aspiring child. At home, a wretched, unforlorn, wayward creature, cherishing hatred and dark thoughts, brooding over real and fancied injuries, indulging in deep despondency—at intervals exempt in most ecstatic hope and unappreciable joy.

Thus passed on the years, and again the old Hall resounded with the festive greetings and the welcoming joy. I saw but little of my father, he never relaxed his sternness of manner, the coldness of his address toward me. His journey abroad with his wife, over whose impulsive beauty time and even sorrow passed lightly. Two more children were born to them; the boy-angel lingered but a few weeks on earth, the little girl just breathed the atmosphere of a troubled world, and sped to the land of rest. In the solitude of my chamber I wept for those dear infants, so beautiful and placid in the death-repos. I thought they would have learned to love me had they lived awhile on earth.

The pleasure of the world soon chased the sorrow from the heart of Agatha, the palace from her cheek, and the languor from her step. Her figure attained to fuller proportions as the years sped on, and a manly dignity added to the attractiveness of her presence.

She lost much of her insipid... She strove to reflect his nature; though incapable of this, she improved in the effort.

Ever since the illness that followed upon Mark Catlin's visit, I had retained of that mysterious occurrence only a vague and confused remembrance.

What then to me was incomprehensible, is now fully understood. Much that now is hailed as reform, as physical aids to the cultivation of the spirit, was accepted by me in my loneliness.

Neither would I wear tight clothing, or consent to have my hair twisted and distorted from its natural way. I would wear a simple dress, and I would not put up with it.

Whenever Miss Dean released me from the monotonous routine of the school-room, I sought my favorite retreat, and read there my favorite poems.

I was fifteen, when my Nurse Almira sickened and approached, by slow degrees, the confines of the Better Life.

For weeks I watched beside the bed where lay my only friend, and oh, what rebellious thoughts surged in the undisciplined heart.

It was toward the close of a balmy day in June, when I deemed her strength slowly ebbing.

to the bedside. On the same evening that held the large key was a lesser one. Nurse Almira opened with it the quaint looking box.

"My mother's letter! My mother's!" I snatched the papers from her hand, and kissed the seal, the superscription that I could scarcely read through blinding and falling tears.

"My dearie! Oh my dearie! be comforted! Oh, do not cry so hard, my dear little lamb! She's safe in Heaven, now! Oh, do not! you take my strength away, and I have so much to tell you."

The thin arms were wound around my neck, the cold lips pressed to my burning forehead, as she leaned forward, weak and emaciated as she was, to comfort me.

At the open window the sweet June breezes wafted the mingled fragrance of the honeysuckle and the rose. The meditative silence of evening encompassed the prayerful earth.

Sometimes here the soul is lifted, To a height more pure and gifted Than to mortals often cometh, in the beaten walks of life.

Then the fleeting inspiration Gives of life new revelation, And we see, if seeking rightly, where the path of duty lies.

Then methought all joy and gladness Must be merged in gloom and sadness; Those bright hopes, the life-time swelling, one by one would soon depart.

Ever in this world of sorrow, Joy to-day and grief to-morrow, Transient gleams of sunshine glimmer all along the earthly way.

THIRD ANNUAL CONVENTION OF SPIRITUALISTS, AT ROCKFORD, OREGON, ILL.

[Reported for the Banner of Light.]

On Thursday afternoon, September 24, Benjamin Todd, Mrs. C. M. Stowe, and Miss Louise Whitaker, arrived in Rockford on their way to the Oregon Convention.

We left Rockford at 3 o'clock, exhilarated by the clear morning air, and the expectation of the glorious social, intellectual, and spiritual feast that awaited us.

On Friday, at 2 o'clock P. M., we assembled in the Court House. Speakers present were Benjamin Todd, of Wisconsin; Dr. Morrison, of Henry Co., Ill.; Mrs. H. F. M. Brown, Mrs. C. M. Stowe, Janeville, Wis.; Mr. Jones, of Elroy, Wisconsin Co., Ill.; Mr. J. H. Morrill, Rockford, Ill.; Miss Louise T. Whitaker, Wis.; Mr. Col. A. M. Mitchell, Chicago, Ill.

The meeting was organized by appointing Mr. Wm. Moore, President; Mrs. C. M. Stowe, Vice President; Mrs. M. Moulthrop, of Rockford, Ill., and Mrs. M. M. Daniel, of "The Blazing Tide," Secretaries.

On motion, carried, that the Convention be opened by conference, allowing each speaker fifteen minutes. The President opened the meeting by contrasting the bondage of the Orthodox churches with the freedom of Spiritualists.

Remarks by Mr. Jones and Mrs. Mitchell. Mr. Chandler, of Independence, Iowa, said, The Church cannot be killed, for just as long as individuals live upon the earth and need a church there will be one, and they are necessary as long as individuals need them.

Mr. Moore sympathized with the sister in favor of leaving the churches alone. Mr. Bisset, said he had been brought up in the Church of England; was taught morally by his mother, who said it was no disgrace to be poor, if he was only honest.

Mr. Jones said, We need organization to solemnize marriages. Mr. Brown said, Spiritualists had organized for that purpose. She read a certificate granting her the right as minister of the Gospel to solemnize marriages.

Dr. Morrison thought it was better to do something toward harmonizing marriages instead of solemnizing them. Organization is the legitimate offspring of de-composition. It is impossible to organize this compact here to-night, as it is to fly.

Speakers for the day: Mr. Jones, Mrs. C. M. Stowe, Mr. Col. A. M. Mitchell, Dr. Morrison, Mrs. H. F. M. Brown. Mr. Jones said, He looked upon Spiritualism as the offspring of the aspiration of the human heart.

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Mrs. C. M. Stowe repeated a poem, entitled "The Golden Dove," written by L. Moulthrop, of Rockford, Ill. Subject for lecture, "Spiritualism vs. Orthodoxy." Learn to govern yourselves. Man is unhappy when subject to authority.

thought that four millions of Reformers might be able to accomplish a good deal toward saving their country. How much more Spiritualists could do than any other class of people, is a subject that is not worth discussing.

Mrs. Brown spoke on the same subject. Mrs. Wilson, of Providence, Bureau Co., Ill., exhibited a spirit picture, representing her husband and two children, taken by Mr. Anderson, the spirit artist, a short time after their decease.

Afternoon Conference.—Mr. Chandler, on the "All-Right" doctrine, said, Why condemn a person when he has not the means of producing more harmonious relations? Mr. Brewster spoke on various subjects.

Mrs. Whitaker said she was happy to think all was right; therefore it was right for her to speak, and that she would reform. She once believed all diseases of the physical frame came by the hand of the maker of this beautiful world.

Mr. Chandler said that individuals are not responsible for acts when their organizations are such as to cause them to perform those acts. Afternoon lecture by Dr. Morrison. Subject, "Organization and Disorganization." The reporter could not be present during this lecture, therefore did not get a synopsis of his remarks.

Mr. H. F. M. Brown. Subject, "Spirit Teachings." He said, No question is so frequently asked as "What do spirits teach?" Spirits, like mortals, have like and unlike opinions on principles, and like us, differ widely upon minor points.

Sunday morning exercises—Conference opened by prayer from Mrs. Mitchell. Remarks on oral prayer, by Mrs. Stowe. Benj. Todd on the same. Did not believe in praying to a personal God; he said every wish was prayer, every aspiration of the human heart, &c.

Mr. Mitchell spoke again, in a great state of excitement. I think she did not fully understand the meaning of Dr. Morrison's views also. There seemed to be a general misunderstanding of words. I think all realized within themselves what the nature of true prayer is.

Mr. A. B. Pickard (Reformed Methodist) said he was once a preacher, but had changed his views because he had found a better way, for he that never changes never corrects his faults. Bald the soul could not be unhappy, else God would be unhappy, as the soul is a part of God.

Mrs. Stowe repeated a poem, "A Dream of Heaven." Dr. Morrison made some remarks in reference to the sanitary department. Meeting adj. to 1 o'clock. Afternoon Conference. Mr. Brewster, Mr. M. Chamberlain, of Watertown, and Miss Whitaker took part in the exercises, after which the Conference closed.

Mr. Brewster endorsed Bro. Todd's sentiments. Mr. Peters thought women had their rights. Said, Women had the advantage over men in all courts of justice. Speakers for the day: Mr. Jones, Mrs. C. M. Stowe, Mr. Col. A. M. Mitchell, Dr. Morrison, Mrs. H. F. M. Brown.

Mr. Jones said, He looked upon Spiritualism as the offspring of the aspiration of the human heart. Spoke of the Church of Home and others, lastly the Protestant Church—all are crying, "Give us light!" but the response has been, "Your destiny is eternally fixed."

Dr. Morrison said the spiritualist who was first to speak, though he had been upon it each day, it was as fresh to him as when he first beheld a tree, and he was as fresh as that gladden among its petals, was a man of truth.

Mr. Moore gave some ideas on prayer. He said, "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, Uttered or unexpressed, That moves the Father's heart, That trembles in the breast."

The speaker requested the audience to either select a subject, or propose questions which the spirit artist, controlling the medium would answer to the best of their ability. The questions I will here give, but the answers I cannot record for want of space, neither can I do justice to the speaker, by giving a part of them.

Mr. G. L. Lacey, who is traveling with them, gives a short lecture previous to calling the attention of the audience to the manifestations that are to take place in the cabinet. His remarks are very interesting and instructive to those who have not informed themselves upon the phenomenal manifestations.

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SPIRIT INTERCOURSE:

A FAMILIAR LETTER ADDRESSED TO A CRYSTAL BY A SPIRITUALIST.

MY DEAR SIR—I desire to present to you in a somewhat methodical manner—more so than the limited space of conventional discussion would admit, and less impassioned than would be the necessary condition attending that mode of presentation—an argument based upon principles and incontrovertible facts, to demonstrate, in a measure, to your mind, the "evidences" of spirit intercourse with men.

From what you have already admitted as pre-judgment of this whole matter, and with due regard to the Bible standpoint of your objections to the admissibility of these evidences, and to the adoption of the religious philosophy that must inevitably follow their acceptance in every thinking mind, I cannot hope that your sensible efforts will prove scarcely an entering wedge to the diversion of your favor toward this dreadfully tabooed subject. But remembering that I have many a time encountered the bitterest opposition and denunciation in controversy of this same matter, and having full assurance to believe that my humble defence has often proved "seed sown in good season," which has sprung up and borne fruits many fold more than my most sanguine expectations would have justified me to anticipate; and, moreover, having the satisfaction of knowing that my present antagonist entertains a positive and devoted love for Truth, wherever it may be found; stimulated by a profound and unflinching conviction of the truthfulness of the Spiritual Philosophy, the ardor of my enthusiasm urges me on to undertake to elucidate the grounds of its revelation. And I am firmly persuaded that he who would receive its sublime teachings, and would strive to exemplify its sublime and spiritualizing influences, would part with worlds sooner than be deprived of them.

I should not feel so strongly impelled to a similar undertaking with every one—for I must not travel out of my present calling to my neglect—and I indulge myself in the present effort from having a due sense of the important influence of the position you occupy, with regard to the many minds you have power to affect, one way or the other, by prejudicing them against an investigation of the "spirit phenomena"—the genuineness of which you now repudiate—or by inducing them to examine for themselves what is espoused by very many noble, brave and intelligent men and women, as a new Word of God which has been revealed to wayfaring men out of the very heavens, should it ever become your wish to "try the spirits."

I think it will hardly be necessary to allude to the Bible at all, in considering the evidences of spirit communication with the world; although if I felt the need of any extraneous proofs, or corroboratory testimony, I need scarcely say to you that I should find an abundance of anecdotes and parallel cases of "spirit manifestations" recorded in that book, which would simply serve to show, by comparison, how the present age is repeating, on a grander scale—immensely transcending, in some remarkable features—many of the "miraculous" events and supernatural influences therein delineated with so great simplicity and such matter of course narration.

I shall not feel under any obligations to the old "Christian Fathers" even for the multitudinous evidences of spirit intercourse with which their curious writings teem; nor to the many ancient and erudite Spiritualist Philosophers, whose works have survived to us, and which now, in our vernacular, so freely and familiarly discuss the science of spiritual possibilities that attach to mundane and supermundane souls; but I shall feel fully satisfied to rest on such tangible developments as have and are constantly presenting themselves to the commonest observation in our very midst—which appeal to the senses in most palpable manner—to the ear, to the eye, to the feeling; to the understanding, to the reason, and to the highest spiritual faculties and sympathies of the soul in their holiest exercises.

And now at the outset, I cannot consistently refrain from a brief antidote to the extreme shallowness of the knowledge of spiritual as well as psychical "things" in common acceptance. Little seems to be "dreamed of in our philosophy" concerning real spiritual entities. Much is known of material things, and "sciences" in this direction abound, although (to my mind) the most valuable and comprehensive of these, even—in their germinal stage still—like lifeless infants in their cradles, their plaintive wallings, prophetic of physical regeneration, all truth-beer but by an earnest and devoted minority of untroubled seekers on the "progressive" plane of study—who are almost banished from the land of civilization, because they dare to believe and teach "above what is written." Men repeat as a formula, "there is a natural body and a spiritual body," &c., without seeming to have the slightest perception of the real nature of a spiritual body, or of the significance of "raised an incorruptible body." The ideas of the keenest minds in our day upon these questions are ambiguous, vague and utterly unsatisfactory. And yet I affirm, that the ideas of a spiritual body and its reformation can become as clear and well-defined to our conceptions as the physics of a tin-plate-storm.

So likewise of Life—about which one word such volumes of speculation have stood for substantial knowledge, as in themselves have formed an impenetrable cloud of darkness to hide its essential elements, and to obscure the real principles of its activity. What ideas are conveyed by such begging-the-question definitions—for philosophers to give—as "Principle of Life," "Vital Mediator," "Nisus formations," and similar high-sounding but unmeaning terms, which are only different names to designate what is no more defined than ever! Thus far has bright-eyed science gone.

Again I affirm, and on the strength of thorough experimental analysis, that the principle of life are as demonstrable, as tangible, almost, as heat and cold; and their methods and peculiarities of action, in health and disease, can be mapped out in a clear and well-defined chart of general or specific conditions.

Still the "learned world" wags on, undisturbed, in the old familiar pathway, with the nasal organ of a contemptuous pity elevated in dignified disapprobation of the presumptuous interlopers who would dare propose to furnish an alphabet of principles—which would enlighten the whole ponderous mass of physical science, accumulated through labored centuries of trial and research, by supplying the long wanted key to unlock the "mystery of life."

Call Magnetism and Electricity principles; for, though strictly speaking they should be regarded as elements or agents, yet are they of that primal character to meet all our requirements in the solution of the problems of living motion; and back of these, in Nature, the mind need not seek; and hence, for the next step beyond, so far as we now know, attains the source of all life and intelligence.

Magnetism and electricity have become, in a degree, recognized as principles in the government of animal life; though their basic importance has not been universally allowed and built upon in the construction of Theories of Life. In the solution of the mysteries of physical phenomena, also, they do not yet occupy their proper rank, and receive superior consideration; but are rather regarded as the elements of accidental, curious mental manifestations, and not as coordinate with, and the principles of life itself.

And yet bodies and limbs, in health and disease, are treated with strict regard to these elements as governing principles; and so far as experiment and analysis have been prosecuted, with a view to systematic adjustment of their laws, they have exhibited such uniformity of method in their working, and such exact-

blity of being managed and controlled, even as terrestrial Magnetism and Electricity, as well warrants their ultimate unfolding into a wonderful science, that shall entirely cast in the shade all hitherto speculations on the life of the body, or of the spirit, in this world or the next.

You may ask, what has all this to do with spirit intercourse with the world? I answer, everything; for I am deeply sensible that no one will be prepared to understandingly examine and appreciate the phenomena called "spiritual," without carrying with him, into their investigation, the guiding chart of the magnetic-electric principles. And I would earnestly recommend every one, before allowing himself to witness the singular exhibitions attendant upon the séances of "mediums," to first make a careful study of the science of Animal Magnetism—so far as it has attained that dignity—and, in its phenomenal aspects, trace it upward, in a natural order of progression, from the simple condition of mesmeric "sleep" and "dependent clairvoyance," to that beautiful unfolding of the "spiritual perceptions," when the inner senses of the soul are opened in rapport with the essential, spiritual elements of things, and realize the actual workings of the living forces of Nature, in vegetable and animal creation; mount to the very "stars," in the exaltation of unrestrained vision, to penetrate ardent spheres, and bring back to earth tidings of a peopled universe.

Would it appear strange to one who had arrived thus far in his researches of psychological developments—who could look back upon the pathway of his study, and feel never to doubt that he had been informing himself of possible, real and oft-repeated conditions of the human body and soul—had witnessed for himself, indeed, and tested, in all sensible ways, the genuineness of those wonderful unfoldings of the spirit, that had stepped almost on the threshold of the new life, where but a single link in the chain that binds to earth remained unbroken—would it appear marvellous, I say, that this expanded vision in its subtlety should "discern spirits"—in the body or out?

What think you, when a man—a healthy, intelligent and good man says, I will watch by the bedside of my brother or sister when the expected hour of death draws nigh, and behold the "mystery" of the dissolution of soul and body; and in a self-conscious state of mind actually does observe the deeply affecting process of the spiritual body—perfect type of the natural, though of highly refined and subtle essence—born again, resurrected by degrees (sometimes minutes, oftener hours) and standing forth a new being, palpable to the new sense of the observer as any object of matter to normal vision, and the living representative of the person, whose body lies inanimate and has fulfilled its mission. [And this first stage of existence, even to the representation of the "umbilical cord," which is reproduced in a band of amyloid or electric light which connects the two bodies, and when the re-formation of the spirit body becomes complete, returns to the natural body as a needed portion of the life-principle to preserve this body from immediate decay.]

Do you believe this, you are ready to inquire of me, and yourself not the observer? It is not of vital moment whether I believe it or not; but when many sane, intelligent and truth-loving men and women corroborate each other's testimony on such a matter as instance, and all feel satisfied that there was no deception, illusion, fantasy, or any other condition or contingency, that might cast a doubt on the reality of their experience, I feel, in all rational duty bound to accept the statements from their own lips as worthy of credibility; and I should feel compelled to admit, that by my own vision made clairvoyant—as may not be impossible—my experience and satisfaction would be as complete, and my convictions as strong as theirs. Though this world of ours may be an unreality, "the baseless fabric of our dream" of life, still, what we call our experience and our consciousness are quite as substantial to us as though the idealist philosophers never wrote, to cast the doubt of metaphysical vagaries upon their validity.

The phenomena of Clairvoyance, and of its highest form of development, spiritual ecstasy, are so well attested, and have been so systematically observed by careful and able experimenters, who have been untiring in their efforts to analyze and bring within the scope of scientific exactness these newly discovered capabilities of the human mind, that it needs no defence of mine to support their claims to be regarded among the fixed facts of Nature, and amenable to her definite laws. The wonderful successes following the application of disease—however much of falsity may have attached to the search of unadvised hantlers, employed as "subjects," or howsoever of charity, may have taken cover under the inviting canopy of this wide open, democratic shrine of the temple of Nature, where degrees and titles can be so easily earned and confidently assumed—these successes, I say, are sufficient credentials to establish the vast importance to the world of the new system of "remedial agents," and ought to make the heart of science expand to cordially embrace the angel of promise, that comes "with the living in wings," the harbinger of physical regeneration to man.

To perceive the interior workings of the functions of the body, in all their beautiful activities; to sense, at a glance, as it were, the silent-voiced harmonies of the diseased system; to surely know, by actual sight and sympathetic feeling also, where the equilibrium of the life-principles has been disturbed or broken, and to how great an extent they have been impaired—and all without a word of enlightenment from the mouth of the "patient" to describe, in the language of science, each form and stage of disorganization; and, finally, to instinctively prescribe, in the nomenclature of materia-medica, remedies, which shall prove so nearly infallible—truly such powers and capabilities as so accomplish all this should be hailed by an admiring and delighted world, and devout thanksgiving and gratitude should be rendered from every heart to the Creator, who had endowed man so bountifully with "spiritual gifts."

These modern revelations of happy to soul, shake the faith of men in time-honored systems of pseudo-philosophies, and give an impetus to human inquiry, such as, I trust, under God, will serve to vastly expand our limited horizon, and eventually sweep every cloud of error from our intellectual armament.

The brave spirit that dares to rise from off the prostrated bed whereon he has afflicted to lie at ease, under the uncompromising mandate of dogmatic authority—"thou shalt thou go and no further;" where he has folded his arms to repose under the soporific influence of a facile belief, that is grounded on the promise of "nothing is impossible with God," and always casts upon Him the onus of its incongruities; and when new developments of the prolific energies of Nature flit thwart his vision, to disturb the listlessness of his slumbers, serene in his ignorance, he is never ready to exclaim when aroused, "It is not for me to search into such mysteries."—It is his sacrifice to attempt to pry into the secret counsels and purposes of the Almighty, which He has seen fit to withhold from us—"such a brave spirit, I repeat, having once shaken off the clog of a servile superstition, that bids him be 'accursed' who shall add to; or subtract from a previous revelation," which already embraces all that he has a right or need to know," will 'and himself mounting upward as on eagles' wings, whose vision the brightness of the very Sun of Truth shall not dazzle, and whose steps shall feel free to wander anywhere in the sublime fields of God's universe, to bring from thence precious treasures of knowledge and wisdom, which

which to build up, beautify and adorn the "living temple" fit for the "image of God" to dwell in. Has not the Creator set bounds to human knowledge? Ay, even so. But who will say he has reached the limits of human inquiry? or be so presumptuous as dare to define them? Are not the aspirations of the soul unbounded, showing that, though He be infinite and comprehend all things, yet are we forever to progress toward infinity; and therefore there can be no possible measure assigned for the fullness or capacity of our knowledge, except that it shall not be infinite?

Then let us not allow ourselves to repulse, in any manner, the god-like spirit within us, but, on the contrary, let us keep wide open the portals of our souls for the influx of new truths—diviner light—and maintain the tribunal of our sacred Reason a supreme court of judicature, ever ready to dispense righteous judgment to every claimant. Say not unto such as come unto you with new and strange doctrines, "Ye are of the Devil;" for in bidding welcome to such guests you may find yourself entertaining angels unawares.

I will now hasten to the consideration of the paramount question of spirit intercourse with the world, although, I confess, with great diffidence of my ability to do half justice to the strength of my own convictions, by undertaking to set forth in order the "law and testimony" to another, which, through many years have been gradually unfolding to my acceptance. However well I may succeed in my small expectations, I beg your will not judge of the merits of the claims of "Spiritualism" by such despatch only as I may be able to make, nor conclude that "the subject has, by any means, been exhausted in its capabilities to display a most formidable antagonism against the learning and logical skill of its ablest adversaries.

The world recognizes and accepts as unquestionable only three sources of rational intelligence—God, man, and the spirits of human beings, who have departed from this earth. That fabulous individual, the Devil, has, in past ages, been very highly honored among men, and has viciously borne our iniquities, till the burden of the human sin which has been cast upon his unrelenting shoulders, has finally weighed him down so deeply in the "infernal abyss," that I think I may safely conclude the nineteenth century regards him as finally having fallen through the bottom of the "pit," never to experience a personal resurrection among the children of men; and that the enlightened portion of mankind here come, by pretty general consent, to consign him to his original birth-place and only legitimate sphere—the human body! So there will be no need of embarrassing the subject with the possibility of any agency attributable to his source, by which to solve any mystery of intelligence that may seem unaccountable.

Now allow me to suppose yourself sitting down amply with a "medium," so called—or rather, imagine yourself alone, and in no occasion of any latent faculty or susceptibility to evolve any extraordinary phenomenon. Your attention (as has been that of thousands,) is attracted to certain sounds, resembling the droppings of water, on the table, or any article of furniture, on the walls of the room, on the floor—sometimes in one place, sometimes in another. There appears to be a persistence in these sounds to be heard of you, and you are finally induced to bestow upon them your special notice. Suppose the happy suspicion enters your mind that these sounds may be the result of intelligent action on the part of somebody, and that, without much seriousness, you interrogate them: "Is anybody making this noise?" Rap, rap, rap! "What's all this?" And a succession of raps seems to respond to your interested feelings. You persevere to experiment, until you find yourself having established a communication with an unseen something, which manifests decided features of intelligence. You soon form a telegraph of signals, by which you are able to converse. By using the alphabet and pointing out the letters, three distinct and quite audible sounds may indicate the particular one you shall select—or, one or more, as you may see in your code of signals. Are you at fault, for a moment having mistaken the letter intended, a single sound may answer, No. Now you go on—say three "raps" signifying Yes, and one, No—to your selections from the alphabet, and find yourself in possession of an intelligible combination of letters, arranged to form words, which embody ideas, and entirely foreign to your own thoughts. You have experienced the "Rochester Knockings" in their primary simplicity.

Continuing this process from day to day, for any length of time, the conviction forces itself upon you irresistibly, that you have established a free, intelligent intercourse with unseen beings; for the communications you receive, responsive to your own thoughts or inquiries, or made independently of your own consciousness, appear to be sui generis, and entirely foreign to yourself.

But this Intelligence—whence cometh it? Who is its author? It answers for itself, upon your supplying the conditions, and sets up claims as coming from those "who have gone to that bourne from whence" (it has been so often affirmed and believed) "no traveler returns;" gives you most striking examples of an intimate knowledge of the life-history of persons who have passed into the "silent valley"—and who as none other but themselves in propria persona, could rationally be supposed to possess the means of producing. And, in multitudes of individual cases, after piling up proofs, as Pelton on Ossa, to exhaust every feature of testimony that could be exacted of unseen intelligences to establish personal identity, you are impetioned to betake yourself to your sober and candid reflections, to discover, if possible, any other source, or any other agency of the "mysterious phenomena," than those which, *prima facie*, commend themselves to the plainest understanding of such as have become "Spiritualists."

Now suppose that hitherto, only your curiosity has been engaged, and that no prejudice of education has been allowed to bias your mind against an impartial scrutiny of any problematical phenomena which these intangible intelligences may evolve from the great arcana of Nature; that you are unwilling to stultify your good sense by the *ex parte* investigation and superficial judgments of that magnanimous cabal of learned "Doctors," who so ignorantly enshrouded the Rochester "egg!" You do not permit your credulity of the whole matter to culminate in the ridiculous absurdity of "Teo-ology" and "knee-joint articulation of speech, *et idem* genus, cum quibusdam aliis. You resolve upon a thorough observation and most critical inquiry; invite and encourage a familiar manifestation of the "spiritual" powers; take counsel of others, who have had similar and greater experiences; institute comparisons through different "mediums," and adopt the instructions for further investigations, furnished from the very source itself, which is the object of your research; thus deriving internal evidence that shall become a double test in substantiating the genuineness of their celestial origin.

What are some of the "manifestations" you will encounter to repay your labor and to challenge your admiration? Such as these: Solid substances taken up in mid-air, apparently independently of the law of gravitation; musical instruments played by viewless hands, or breathing tones from unseen lips in familiar strains; closed pianofortes—whose keys are swept by unseen fingers, and whose chords vibrate unwritten beauties of melody, such as are most exquisite and rarely vouchsafed to human hearing. Most elaborate and beautiful drawings of flowers unknown to our botany; magical paintings of rarest landscape scenery, and portraits of most perfect resemblance to the per-

sons of the "dead," who have left behind no memorials from which to create a "counterfeit presentment" of them—all executed through the purely mechanical agency of human hands, often totally unskilled in art—works of which any artist might be proud—and produced in such incredibly short spaces of time as to mock the swiftest exertions of human artistic talent. Remarkable specimens of calligraphy by and without the agency of human hands; *fac simile* autographs of those who have lived upon the earth; Greek, Hebrew, Sanscrit, Persian, Chinese (or whatever else) languages written with great freedom and perfection, without in the least affecting the minds of the writers, who act as mere machines; solid things carried and brought across the ocean by swift-winged messengers, who seem to nearly annihilate time in the transmission, &c., &c.

And of a different and still higher character—volumes of treatises upon subjects involving the technical language of the sciences, thrown off with an ease and rapidly truly amazing, and by such as are altogether innocent of the learning which they so lavishly display; burning words of eloquence on matters of deepest moral and spiritual import, flowing, as the waters of mighty rivers in freedom, from lips least familiar with "golden freedom oratory;" poems of artistic excellence improvised as by suddenest inspiration, whose measured cadences fall upon the listeners' ears simultaneously with their first echoes in the mind of the deliverer; glowing appeals, full of most ardent love for the human race, to the noblest qualities of the soul, in its most devout and holy exercises, to awaken out of the slumber of spiritual lethargy, and give to the armor of truth and righteousness, with which to enter the "good fight" in the battle of life; affectionate warnings to secure a spiritual unfolding of character in this world, that will entitle the largest capacity for happiness, and the fullest enjoyment of the unimagined glories of the Heaven of the Spirit-Land.

Add to all this, and much more, that living embodied spirits of those who have dwelt in the flesh are openly seen of men, and as free and natural communion is bolden with them, as between man and man—and what machination of learned skepticism shall avail against such testimony, that a great highway has been opened between the spirit-world and ours? Surely a new and wonderful field has been disclosed to man in the domain of Nature. Assurances of the richest harvests in every department of knowledge have already been afforded, and such large promise of the fruits of a more enlightened spiritual wisdom has been vouchsafed, in the imperfect glimpses that have yet gratified the human vision, that it needs no prophet to foretell the possible dawning of an early millennial day upon the earth.

I have asserted three sources of rational intelligence, as embracing all we have reason to know, or believe, to have a real and permanent existence. As to that Evil Intelligence—whose reality only depends upon the necessities which Heavens, barbarous religions involve, on the "good Lord" and "good Devil" principle of worship, it is sufficient refutation of its legitimacy in creation, to affirm—that what can be but an unexceptionable axiom—that God is the author of all principles, and these only good. An evil principle, in all creation, is an anomaly. There can be no perpetual legacy of evil entailed, by any possibility of divine law, upon any being, not even be that majestic conception of infernal attributes embodied in the Biblical Satan. Therefore a being all-empowered for evil, arrayed in eternal opposition to a being all-powerful for good, involves such a monstrous absurdity, detracts so utterly the aid from the mightiness of the Infinite God, and leaves him but an ever-warring power against another, if not equal, still a never-conquered adversary, that it is most manifest blasphemy to hold faith in his existence.

The opponent of the spiritual theory will have no occasion to differ from the advocate in not attributing to God, directly, the origin of the spiritually-claimed "manifestations." It only remains, then, to discover and distinguish these phenomena, as belonging to the wonderful caprices of mundane intelligences—human powers acting without will or effort, and with a blind spontaneity rivaling the chemical elective affinities of Nature's laboratory; or as the glorious evidences of newly developed intercourse, between the spirits who once dwelt among us in the flesh, and their beloved earth.

A vessel cannot contain twice the measure of its contents at the same time; no more can the human mind give out that which was never consciously possessed by it. Even furnish it with any amount of data in form of facts—statistical, personal reminiscences of different individuals' lives; and without culture, without discipline—the refinements and polish of all that is discernible by education, mind cannot handle its facts and rival the style and method of the best literary abilities. And yet we witness the rudest specimens of uncultured persons—young children even—writing and speaking in high vein of philosophy and science, executing marvellous works of art, skillfully manipulating instruments of music, and rehearsing the most difficult musical compositions, with all the familiarity and grace of ripe ecclotars and superior artists.

They do these things manifestly not of themselves; it is absurd to suppose they do. Who, then, are the real actors? Can it be imagined that it is any other, than those who themselves claim to be the actors? At least, can it be any other beings—for some it must be—than the denizens of the spirit-world, who alone can be present in a manner impalpable to human senses, in their normal state, to intelligently influence such as are susceptible to their subtle forces?

What magic power has thus suddenly come upon plain, uncultivated men and women, by which they are enabled to "lay hands" upon the diseased human organism, and, with an almost unerring precision—as with many remarkable "healing mediums"—direct their newly-awakened energies to the location and very heart of disease, and expel it with the same "miraculous" suddenness as ever characterized the "treatment" of the Physician, Jesus Christ? The blind eyes receive their sight, the withered limbs regain their native elasticity and strength; and every curable bodily infirmity—though seemingly incurable to common judgment—is made to yield its wasting, decaying, and inert vitality to the revivification of healthful activity. What but the true sublimity of spirit vision can thus clairvoyantly make the spiritual organism of the human body, and make application of its intelligence to hidden conditions of life, which baffles the scrutiny of the wisest trained practitioners.

It may be answered, that the highly-developed magnetic clairvoyant accomplishes all this. To no inconsiderable extent, it is true, he does. But a well-defined influence may readily be perceived between the spirit-infused healing medium and the independent clairvoyant physician. The latter obeys the exalted instincts—so to say—whic his own expanded spiritual organism has attained; while the former, with a like development of his spiritual faculties, becomes deeply sensible of the controlling influence of a superior personality, feels himself only the agent of another, and that other a freed spirit, with whom he holds often and visible intercourse.

When sane men and women, in full possession of their normal senses, know that they behold the unmis-takable forms of their spirit friends; hear their voices in song of familiar converse; hearken to their instructions about the conduct of earthly matters in which they had special interest when on earth; receive and record their prophecies, which are exactly fulfilled; and daily feel themselves growing in spiritual knowledge

and grace, from obedience to the elevating ministrations of the heavenly messengers; the opponents of the spiritual theory only subject themselves to the gravest charges of gross culpability, when they willfully and maliciously, as is quite often the case, denounce, without investigation, the cloud of witnesses and the reality of their experience, which so manifestly testify of the reading of the veil between the abode of the so-called "dead" and the dwellers on the earth.

When the abundant credulity of the wisest during all time, upon matters least susceptible to rational demonstration, rattle in all history; and the present generation is ever convicting those that have passed of the ridiculous absurdities of many cherished beliefs and infidelities, it is astonishing how difficult it becomes at this late day of enlightenment, to induce the current of prevailing and controlling thought into any new philosophy. So difficult is it to break through dogmatic conviction of the genuineness of a fact, the grandest in all human experience. And the wonder is all the more amazing, in this instance, since it has ever been acknowledged in the professed *biographies* of the churches, and most devoutly desired to be so by all, that spirits are constantly around and among the inhabitants of the earth, and in some mysterious manner ever influencing for evil or good their former fellow mortals. But just so soon as this great truth becomes matter of clearest demonstration, and the best minds, upon fearless investigation, yield to the overwhelming conviction, and submit the proof, the very ones of all others who most stoutly and devoutly believed before, are the most obstinate to assent, and the most persistent in their denunciation—they make no decent attempt to *disprove*—the entire array of testimony which is involved in the demonstration.

All these exhibitions of hitherto latent powers and capabilities of matter, mind and spirit, are patent to the readiest observation; and when the new "spiritual" light shall have broken through the gross darkness, and shall make materialism of human philosophies, creeds and superstitions, the scales that now cover the blinded eyes of passive vision, will fall off and every one seeing for himself what manner of man he is—being admonished from the higher spheres—and to a degree having the spiritual senses unshrouded to penetrate the veil of obscurity within which the god-like faculties have been shrouded, as in a living tomb, will arise and shine, his light having come, and the glory of (the true) God being risen upon him.

You object to "call back" your departed friend and brother. He has passed through "the valley of the shadow of death," and you feel it a sacrilege to disturb the repose of his freed spirit—even if it be possible—by attempting to renew his connection, to any extent, with a life of pain and sorrow. You feel religiously bound to grant him the largest liberty to enjoy the happiness which attaches to the new life, unalloyed by any sympathy with the vale of tears from which he has escaped? I will ask, has God created us such changeable beings, that the death of the body, even, shall vary materially alter our real human characters? Have we been by slow degrees, a life-long, working out individual characters, to so suddenly lose all their features which serve to identify us? Or can you conceive it possible to part with your interest in the highest welfare of the race, through all the means employed on the earth to secure it, simply because you have gone out of the earthly body?

You do believe that the human affections for the dear ones of earth are not impaired in the spiritual man; for you would feel very unhappy to know that your sympathies for mankind perished with the dissolution of soul and body. Then would it not come back, if you could, to be near to those for whom you had lived and suffered? Would it not be hard to entertain the thought of a possible law of spiritual reprobation, preventing your active sympathies with the beloved? Rather would you really go away far from earth and the scenes of your life, if you could remain to silently watch the objects of your affections, though you could do no more? I trust not.

Have you the least conception derived from any other source than the creative imagination, where the spirits of the dead go? "Not at all," you will answer. Then what prevent you from harboring the very natural belief—in the absence of positive knowledge—that the realm of the spirit-life may begin from the earth, gradually leaving it and mounting upward to meet the spirit's progression, as the earth attachments and attractions become by degrees diminished?

The idea which commonly obtains, that the spirit, upon its departure, must go *everywhere*—to heaven or to hell—nowhere, is certainly the merest rhapsody of sand to hang a hope upon, or to sustain the weight of a shadow of an argument against the probability of the closest contiguity of the "spirit land" with our earth. It would be the most natural inference possible, that the spiritual part of man should, after the death of the body, enjoy and inhabit the spiritual part of the earth. As in the body, the material world was all sufficient for existence, sustenance; and as the spiritual part of the earth—the essential, imperishable part, or its emanations—could not have been made in vain, or rather could not have been created without its positive usefulness for the spirit of man; it would be quite safe, as well as rational, to suppose that a man's little lifetime on the earth, did not exhaust the capabilities of that earth, to furnish to another gradation of being a sphere of local habitation.

No one need feel himself under any obligation to defend the so-called "spiritual" phenomena of the present day, because of the skepticism of such as refuse to examine their merits and test their validity. For the laws of Nature and their possible products, the Creator alone is responsible; and He doeth all things well. It is our province to read aright, if we can, his revelations from out the great arcana; and to use our powers to study and analyze the fragmentary developments of new phases, as by slow and irregular progress they come to manifest their significance to our dull apprehension; and finally, to combine into illuminated science the seeming mysteries and incongruities, which always of necessity attend the early stages of every department of our knowledge. No apology is needed for the many "contradictions" that have thus far resulted to the experience of investigators; but explanations are pertinent, and much light can be shed upon the antithetical "revelations" emanating from the "spiritual spheres," and much order can thus be brought out of the seeming confusion of elements, and apparently conflicting testimony harmonized.

So remarkable antagonisms of opinion, on earth, in regard to matters of fact, prevail upon the earth, and the contending advocates of different systems, throughout the whole realm of knowledge, hold so tenaciously to the standard superiority of their own doctrines, that it would not seem at all inconsistent with the earthly education and development of spirits, that they should behold the spirit-land, their own condition and that of others, through the medium of their own creating, viz., their entire individual human characters. It would indeed appear very unnatural and irreconcilable with our ideas of "progressive development," not to receive just as conflicting and contradictory accounts of the new sphere of existence, as the faiths and real characters of the spirits were different in this life.

The change of perception is no doubt great, even to the insupportable condition of the spirit; but as we hold to no vast moral changes suddenly occurring among men, to measurely adjust ourselves to individual identity, it would be a rational and consistent inference that the

ladder of spiritual progression must have its gradual rounds of advancement—that, step by step must be attained the imperfect and oft-times very uncertain and erroneous teachings in the school of this life, before the new powers of the soul can really and appreciably be brought into activity which it has been used.

The fact that such imperfect and objectionable specimens of men and women are sought and made use of as "mediums," militates not at all against the validity or character of the "communications." Moral character has no more to do, logically, with capacity for unimpeded mediumship, than it has to do with a lightning-rod, which is made a medium between the clouds and the earth for the passage of the electric element. The ordinary "spiritual" medium is simply used mechanically, through physical character only, for the transmission of thoughts, and the evolution of powers from the unseen world; and as these phenomena cannot be produced without the intervention of human bodies, to whose life principles alone the spirit forces are affixed; and as all human organisms do not possess the requisite magnetic conditions, (which are rarely found in development in the individual,) only such are chosen as have the fullest physical capacity to receive impressions of the spiritual elements.

1. For one, might wish—for the readers' credibility of spirit-intercourse by the better class of minds—that only the pure and intelligent became mediums; for then Spiritualism would commend itself to freer acceptance—or investigation at least, being clear of the animus that is charged against it, from the oft-times disreputable moral character of such as become mediums. Perhaps, in like manner, a greater "respectability" might have attached to the mission of Christ, in his day, had he not sated with publicans and sinners, had he not selected the ignorant, *sine culitis* fishermen of Galilee to be his mediums and interpreters.

Truth seems impaired when unbalanced lips give it utterance. A diamond is precious still, though embedded in the filthiest slough. Were not the disciples of Christ made better and wiser men by becoming in his hands, the instruments to work out the democratic principles of his doctrine? Many, I know, who have become mediums, are greatly changed in their moral character from their former thoughtlessness and indifference to matters of a spiritual nature. The teachings which unwittingly they have become the means of imparting, have effected a regeneration in their own lives; and to very many, for the first time, has this unbidden revelation proved a Gospel of glad tidings and great joy.

In the general category of "Spiritualists" are to be found every variety and shade of opinion, and religious or irreligious character; for Spiritualism to the world at large, who profess to be persuaded of the genuineness of its commonest claims to acceptance—the phenomenal aspects—is yet a very crude and ill-defined display of heterogeneous wonders. But the subject has its homogeneous features as well; for very many troubling, critical and intelligent minds, actuated by a genuine philanthropy, and imbued with elevated religious principles, have striven to redeem Spiritualism from the vulgar exposition which embraces only external "manifestations;" and have bestowed their best efforts in an impartial examination and discussion of facts and philosophy, to discover its uses, and the dangers to be avoided in intercourse with unseen beings; and though they, with becoming modesty, confess that they have but entered the vestibule of the new temple, they have experienced the most profound and heart-cheering convictions, that the living God dwells within, more gloriously manifest than in any temples built by human hands; whose inspiration of a loftier wisdom and holier affection in the religious soul in vito to spiritual worship, such as the world has never known.

It is often flippantly asked—"Suppose spirits can and do communicate with men, what is the good of it all?" I will content myself with answering briefly in the very language of a spirit, given through a writing medium, among several hundred pages of pertinent matter, in my presence.

"Notwithstanding the perfect confidence which many tell you they feel in the existence and power of God, but few of the thousands who are daily seared into eternity, approach their death beds without feelings of fear and horror. They look forward into the vista of the future, and fear that, perchance, they may be mistaken in reference to their immortality, and hence cling to life with the utmost tenacity. Doubts lurk in their minds, and they cannot go to the grave like him who wraps the drapery of his couch about him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

but fearfully, reluctantly approach it as the grand finale of all life and pleasure."

"This fear of death arises from the doubts that people entertain in reference to God and the immortality of the soul. To alleviate the dread of this mortal life, spirits came from their happy homes to show their earthly friends that there is in store for all an immortal existence; but men in their boastfulness reject them, and say they never had a doubt as to their immortality. And yet it is a fact, that but few have perfect faith in an immortal existence. Faith is not knowledge. People, who will take the trouble, can learn from us the fact of immortality, and hence have every doubt removed. How many a one, since we first began to make our demonstrations, who has refused to receive our visits—when laid low upon the bed of death, have wished that they had examined our claims. They find that they need more than faith to sustain them in that trying hour—they wish for knowledge. And how many there now are, who are rejecting us and our advocates, who, under the same circumstances, will repent in sackcloth and ashes, that they did not investigate the matter."

And again: "I will briefly sum up the objects in our communication with you, and then pass to my subject: First, to teach men the fact of the soul's immortality. Secondly, to show them the soul's future condition, and what is necessary to be done to secure happiness therefor in the spirit-land. Thirdly, to remove all error, and plant truth in its stead. If no benefit will accrue from all this, then am I incapable of judging of benefits—then perhaps our visits are useless and need not be made. But we are inclined to believe that there is benefit to be derived from our visits in these respects; hence we shall continue to make them, until the world is changed in its moral and mental character—until religion is based upon true principles, and society harmonized."

I may appear to you to have been indulging in the language of mere rhapsody; but I declare, from the bottom of my soul, that no epoch in the history of the race was so fraught with broader or higher spiritual interests. And I cannot but feel that it is the imperative duty of every spiritual teacher, or any other, to cast aside all prejudices, and duly recognize the indisputable facts, which form the basis of Modern Spiritualism; to treat with the utmost liberality and candor the honest and self-sacrificing faith of a class of men and women, the sincerity of whose convictions, and the integrity of whose principles have led them to leave the scorn and indignation of the whole hierarchy of *societas* orthodoxy."

Best assured that truth-loving, law-abiding, intelligent and spiritually-minded men are not, in this practical era, warning against their own present social interests in the community, for any sectarian purpose, or for future self-aggrandizement; but being unobtainably persuaded of the merits of a cause that concerns the spiritual welfare of mankind, are bound to steadfastly abide in the new faith—not indifferent to the

skepticism and opposition of the community, but reckless of the favor of individuals, or synods, which would remotely imply any terms of repudiation or compromise.

Now, if public teachers would only meet the issue manfully, they must studiously refrain from all animosities, and not enter into the contest against Spiritualism, as though they were fulfilling a divinely appointed mission to exorcise the Devil for just so soon as they adopt such a course, and as often as they attempt to impose the hypothetical dogmas of exclusive faiths. In proscription of facts and principles, which at the outset are ignored from a flat refusal to examine their claims and merits—just so soon, and ever after, are they amenable to the clearest charge of bigotry; and although they may well succeed in closing the eyes and stopping the ears of their customary hearers from sight and sound of the evidences of strange doctrines, or may impress upon their passive receptivity an unchallenging acquiescence in the belief that the Devil is, in very truth, herein manifest as an "Angel of Light"—it will be at the expense of the virtuous indignation and hearty disgust of all genuine Spiritualists.

Let the learned religions class join hands with the better portion of Spiritualists, to wrest this "mysterious" matter of Spirit intercourse from out the hands of all charlatans and empirics, and give it the freest ventilation; and allow the brightest sunlight of human reason to be shed fully upon it, that the world may not go stumbling on in ignorance of the subtle powers that are able to dispense both evil and good to man, when he, in his blindness, shall not know to prefer the one or the other. Let it not be forgotten—as has been so often exemplified, that

"Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again—The eternal years of God are hers."

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LUTHER COLEBY, EDITOR.

The Issue.

"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 world, 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 calmer waters of the Pacific; and I see one people, and one law, and one language, and one faith, and, orer 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 Growth of Spiritualism.

His eyes must be shut who says he can see no further progress in the great Spiritualistic Movement that overtook the world some fifteen years ago. The time is gone by when a man can say there is no progress, just because it does not agree with his prejudices to believe it. Happy is he who can observe, even though it goes against his notions, and is not afraid to report the facts he sees.

On looking over the field, we do not know whether to be more astonished or gratified at the remarkable changes which have been brought about by the instrumentality of Spiritualism. Men and women whom the creeds could not reach, but who were rather hardened by having didactic phrases sibilated at them, year in and year out, and who have been set down by others as infidels from time immemorial, are, like the flinty rock, suddenly smitten by the wand of spiritual truth, and their natures gush forth living waters. Persons become interested in their interior life and estrangement who never cared to know aught about themselves before. The talk on the soul, and its engrossing demands on the life of man, has usurped a good share of the hours of business, and may now be heard at any time freely indulged in the streets, in the cars, in hotels, and in all public places. The public discourses are inspired with very different purposes from those which animated them years ago. There is more fraternity among churches, and the religious professions within them are possessed of a profounder vitality. The very atmosphere of society is filled with the spirit of the new era which has dawned, and the effects are becoming rapidly perceptible on every side.

Perhaps the most satisfactory proof of the spread of Spiritualism in this country is furnished by the very fact that it is now taking place so quickly everywhere. Mediums are to be found in many and many a family where tanners little dream such facts exist. The power resides just where it is placed, and cannot be talked or laughed out of its lodgment. Circles of minds are consequently interested and enlightened, which had lain in the dark before, or groped blindly about on their way. The spirit of inquiry has spread among all classes, and reached high and low alike. Like a spring flood, it has effectually baptized the level lands of life, and enrobed them for the work of the future. Not many places but have been thus reached and fertilized. The clergy have been obliged to recognize its presence and influence in their congregations, and of course deter more or less to it in their discourses. They feel that in the hearing of men and women who have a faith in the presence of disembodied spirits, they must needs measure their phrases and qualify their denunciations of such as used to be thundered at as heretics.

All ranks and classes of social life now and feel the blessed influence of this new and reviving belief. Where the old faiths proved dead, and were making little better than dead men of those who subscribed to them, another life seemed all at once to spring up and glorify everything around. Charity began to abound. Benevolent sentiments multiplied. Sympathy grew common. Heart was moved to heart, and the law of attraction developed itself as one of the most potent of all. Not that this spirit of love and fraternity has become universal, or anything like it; but it has become awakened, and is to-day working with a power which a little while ago would not have been conceded to it. All this, to be sure, cannot be spoken of as anything actually accomplished; but it is a largess of promise, from which the greatest results are yet to be secured.

Those who would in any proper degree realize the spread of our beautiful and soul-elevating faith, should peruse the thousands of letters from all parts of the nation, of which we are yearly in receipt, and study the workings of the hearts whose secrets are so freely poured out on their pages. It matters not if they come from the educated or the ignorant—God's truth is, by general confession, blessing all alike. The call is constantly for light—more light. The hunger grows greater even by what it feeds upon. A common aspiration reaches up and out from the popular nature; and a common sympathy runs through the length and breadth of the land.

Not is this spread of spiritual faith confined to our own country. It has long since effected a foothold in Europe, and made its way over the continent. In London, there is published the Spiritual Magazine—a monthly production of some of the most advanced minds and enlarged spirits of the age. It is a powerful token of the hold which Spiritualism has upon the general mind of the kingdom. When men like Howitt and Bulwer subscribe to its truth, and Faraday invites the savans of science to keep abreast with the progress of discovery, and poets and painters, lawyers and statesmen unite in acknowledging themselves daily influenced by their belief in the presence and power of invisible spirits—we may be sure that such facts cannot go long without their influence on the popular mind and heart of the realm. There is likewise a spiritual organ in Paris—the *Revue Spirite*, which exercises a wide influence by the monthly presentations it makes of the truths of the new and better Gospel. The subject also moves the German mind now, diverting the thinkers and overruling students of that land from their cold rationalism, and giving new life to their chilled hearts. Letters from leading men in Germany are constantly reaching us, from which we derive assurances of the most gratifying nature in this respect.

While such is the bright record which the cause is able to make at this juncture in the world's affairs, the BANNER has aimed and striven to be nowise lagging in spreading and sustaining it throughout our own land. From the beginning, it has been upheld by superior powers, whose promises on its behalf they have never failed to redeem. But the friends on earth are expected to hold up our hands while we labor with all possible faithfulness for them, else the invisibles would work in vain. They can effect their purposes only through human instrumentalities. Our tasks multiply and grow great, as we look over the field which is to be cared for; and unless we are sustained by true friends of the cause, peculiarly as well as by silent sympathy, our labors will but come to naught. In the future, the BANNER OF LIGHT is to take a position it has never yet attained, and by reason of the rapid spread of our blessed faith over the land. We have abundant assurances from our spirit friends, and we only ask for the practical cooperation of those who believe in the exaltation of our common race.

Lessons of the War.

Ask an individual who has passed through trouble and sorrow if he would consent to forego his inward joy and sense of relief by never having tasted his sufferings, and, if he understands himself, he will tell you that he would prefer to have the exaltation that followed after, even at the cost of a much greater suffering. Such are the divine compensations in life. None of us would have chosen the sorrow and grief beforehand, yet none but would have had the subsequent enlargement and elevation of soul at any cost.

Who of us all could have actually foreseen the events through which we have as a people been hurried for the past three years, even after its outlines were mapped before our sight by the friendly invisibles? Had we been permitted to compass all the details with our vision, we should have shrunk from their very contemplation with horror; we should have said, "Let but this cup pass from our lips, though we drink bitter dregs afterward in return for the mercy." So little are we competent to realize what is for our highest interest, and to know what mean the experiences which are sent us oftentimes as mercies in disguise.

Man is thrown upon the world, and then expected to make his way. He receives a certain number of suggestions, and a certain number of obstacles; and they are pretty evenly proportioned each to the other. There are just enough of the latter to thwart us in our plans, and just enough of the other to keep our faculties excited to the point where it is expected that the obstacles will be eventually overcome. If we could have our desires for the mere act of wishing, there would be an end of our desires. If we never knew what it is to labor for an object, to struggle resolutely under the stimulus of hope, it would be a very stagnant and level life indeed that we lead, and would really be worth hardly the trouble of asking.

The War was visited upon us for a distinct purpose. Through its agency, powerful and searching beyond all others that could be devised, influences are made to reach us all which could be set in operation in no other so effective a way. Its cruel plowshare drives its iron through the heart of many thousands of families. Very few but know the agony and bloody sweat of a spiritual suffering never before thought of as possible to their natures. So it seems best to the Divine Author that human souls shall be made willing recipients of the higher truths. All the avenues to their hearts were before closed up by success; as soon as disappointments come, they turn to other aids than they looked to before, and open their natures to timely suggestions which would not have been welcome visitors in the past. Such efficient work does suffering perform, preparatory to the reception of higher influences. So much rough breaking up must needs be done before the soil is ready for the sowing of the seed. Then the result will show how necessary was the previous preparation.

Who can sit down with himself and say that this war has worked out its ends in the way originally hoped for? How strangely has not everything turned from the course it was expected to follow? The object set before us all was plain enough, but we have been led to it by different routes than those which our personal preferences had selected. This fact teaches us that there are powers that rule above our heads, and that it would be far better for us to heed them, and work with them, than to oppose and resist them. They command us at last, whether we will or no.

The war, as it has been prolonged, teaches us patience under difficulties, and even under the burden of sufferings. We needed to learn that, above all things. Such an ill-restrained, impulsive, impetuous people it was not easy to find on the face of the earth. But now we have obstacles of so gigantic a character thrown across our path. It has compelled us to wait while we work, and not expect that we can accomplish our plans, no matter how excellent they may be, in a single day.

But, above all, faith is enlarged, and more enduringly established in every heart that loves the country of its birth. We needed more faith, long before we were smitten with our present troubles. We could not have gone on, and been a prosperous nation, a moral people, or in any true sense great, unless this element in the national character had by some means been strengthened and elevated. This will make us a profounder religion than we have hitherto acknowledged. This will bring us to a position where we shall be better prepared to do the work of the spiritual powers that interest themselves in the general welfare and happiness of the human race. With our faith increased, there need be little fear lest we may not in time be made whole. And that is to be the most important work which present trouble is to accomplish upon us as a people.

Mrs. Laura M'Alpine Cuppy coming to Boston.

We understand this eloquent and able lecturer in the spiritual ranks is about to visit Boston, and other portions of New England, on a lecturing tour. Mrs. Cuppy enjoys an enviable popularity at the West, where she has earnestly labored for the last four or five years, and we doubt not she will meet with a cordial greeting in the East.

Park sters are generally ugly people. Mark that.

The French Emperor appears now in a new light, and one not near so satisfactory as that in which has been exhibited of late to the gaze of astonished Europe. Just when he thought he had got matters all arranged at home, so that he could push forward another step his plans on this continent, and when he thought he had deferred the Polish matter so as not to interfere with his designs in America, Austria invites a diet of the great German Confederacy, and, by proposing such changes and modifications in the Constitution, as well as the spirit and need of the several principalities, manages to place herself at the head of the great German power, and suddenly sets Napoleon to thinking. Instead of silencing Austria, as he had hoped, by taking the Emperor's brother for his newly built Mexican throne, he wakes up only to find that Austria has stolen a long march upon him, and put herself in the front of one of the greatest powers—as at present reconstructed—in Europe. Instead of being left to pursue his original plans unimpeded, therefore, he finds his path to universal empire blocked by the neighbor whom he certainly thought he had lulled asleep.

The next and only thing left him to do, was to make friends with Russia at any price. He lost no time in going on his knees to Prince Gortschakoff, the Russian Minister, who had already offered him a direct line in his correspondence on behalf of the Czar relative to Poland; swallowing all that had been written to him, if only Russia would make up and be friendly. This is the present attitude of the once mighty Emperor of France. His case offers nothing but an opportunity for ridicule to the intelligence of all Europe. He is meekly willing to forget Poland and all he once said and offered to do for it. If he could but secure himself from the misfortune of Russia's ill-will. The tactics of the Austrian Emperor wrought all this, and compelled the French royal brother to eat humble pie for the sake of saving himself and his throne from another of those European coalitions which were the dread of his uncle, and properly so of himself. His power has departed, however, with the throw of his last somewhat. We question, if even Jefferson Davis will not in his heart despise him.

Written for the Banner of Light. REST.

BY JOHN S. ADAMS.

The weary traveler clambering o'er the steep, As twilight shadows o'er the mountains creep, Sees in the distance, as he onward tramps, The first faint glimmering of the evening lamps. How calm the humble cottage homes appear, And as the weary footsteps venture near, The latchstring's loosed, wide open thrown the door, The pack released and tost upon the floor; While in good homely accents, angel-blest, The honest yeoman says, "Here take your rest."

Rest I what a host of blessings in its train Come gliding o'er the calm and peaceful plain. Sweet dreams of home to soldiers' wa' worn souls: Of sunny skies where stormy ocean rolls. And the tired seaman calmly rests to find The dear loved friends he left far, far behind. The sick forgets his ills, his pains take flight, And Rest, the blessed angel, rules his night. Whether an outcast, or by friends cared, Welcome to all the words, "Here take your rest."

And thus when we, who joyous walk to day With footsteps light o'er life's attractive way, Shall reach its mountain steep and slowly tread, Weary and worn, the paths through which we're led; Will see afar the lights, as up we climb, Shining in homes beyond the bounds of Time. Brighter they'll beam, until, surpassing all The lights of earth, we feel our burdens fall. And mingling with the loved and with the best, To us the angels sing, "Here take your rest."

Lycceum Hall Meetings.

Mrs. Sophia L. Chappell, of New York, is to speak before the Spiritualists of this city next Sunday, afternoon and evening. Of Mrs. C. our readers are somewhat familiar. She is highly prized in the State of New York as a very able and eloquent lecturer. One of our correspondents, alluding to her engagement here, says, "She is one of God's chosen, and no one can come into her sphere without being elevated and blessed. You will be delighted with her lectures. Give her a good harmonious home, for much depends upon the conditions that surround her, and when no antagonistic elements mar her usual serenity, she will utter the most beautiful sentiments and soul-stirring thoughts ever heard from any one."

Illness of W. K. Ripley.

We are requested by Bro. Ripley to withdraw his name from the list of lecturers on account of his inability to fulfill his engagements, being afflicted with frequent attacks of hemorrhage from the throat. We regret to learn that Bro. Ripley is thus obliged to retire entirely from the lecturing field for the present, for he has been a most efficient and earnest laborer in the spiritual vineyard, and will be missed by those who have been accustomed to listen to his eloquent inspirational addresses; but he assures us his heart and soul are still in the cause of human progress and spiritual unfoldment. Our friends in Massachusetts and Connecticut, where he had made engagements to lecture, will be disappointed, for he cannot meet those engagements. He is at his home, in Snow's Falls, Maine.

Prosperity and Generosity.

Boston and Maine Railroad stock is over twenty five cents above par. Much credit is due the well-tried Superintendent of this road, William Merritt, Esq., under whose judicious management the shares have increased nearly one fourth their original value. Mr. Merritt is affable, just and generous to his employees and to his patrons, wherein lies the main secret of prosperity. Let the people and the nation become more affable, more just, more generous, and they will become more prosperous and happy. The day has gone by, if it ever was, when success shall follow success and be crowned with prosperity, under the silly, assumed aim that feeble-minded men take to themselves because they are elected to the rule of others. The most potent ruler is the most democratic. A. B. C.

Poetic Readings.

Miss M. A. Cannon announces to the citizens of Boston and vicinity, a series of poetic readings at the Reading-Room of the Mercantile Library, No. 28 Summer street, on the evenings of Sept. 28th, Oct. 1st and 5th. Her selections are from the writings of some of the most popular authors—living and dead—such as Longfellow, Macaulay, Bryant, Tennyson, Poe, Hood, Bourcain, Coleridge, etc. Tickets for the series, \$1.00; single tickets, 50 cents.

GP? We call the especial attention of our readers to a very interesting and well-written paper in the "Banner of Light," which will be found on our third page. It is a familiar letter, addressed to a neighbor, and we think will well repay perusal.

There is always some one to find fault with after the horse is gone and it is useless to look the stable-door. Gen. Rosecrans had a greater combination against him than he was prepared to resist with any hope of success, and his defeat was the consequence. It is a disaster that should have been provided against, and might easily have been. Where the fault lay that it was not, is not for us to decide, or even to discuss. Yet even with this temporary success, the rebel cause is by no means saved; it is not even bolstered up; its breath may be a little extended, but only to make it die harder in the end. Much as we can but desire speedy and decisive victories for our country in the field, we are not the least certain that the protracted struggles through which we have to go in order to reach them are of the first value in giving discipline to our characters and adding breadth to the new national character. Through trials and sorrows alone can we expect at length to enter into the better state which has been promised us as a nation. Our very reverses are sent but as blessings in disguise.

A Warning Word.

The London Star, perhaps the most widely circulated journal of the great metropolis, confesses, in a late article, that it looks with dismay at the prospect of a war with the United States, whatever the cause or controversy which may draw the sword from its sheath. But—it adds—"to risk such a calamity, in order that mercenary ship-builders may get rich upon the spoils of the slave, or because paltry legal quibbles assumed a greater importance in the eyes of our rulers than the vast issues of war, we should regard as the consummation of wickedness and folly." These sensible and decidedly humane remarks are prefaced to an expression of the writer's undisguised joy at the thought that Government is at last about to stop the mischievous business of fitting out vessels of war, which were notoriously preparing to make a descent on American commerce, and for whose exit from English ports there could be no sign of an apology. It is well that the government of Great Britain has put in its veto on these arrangements as soon as it has.

Enlisting Slaves.

The black man is edging in to this controversy of ours as fast as he safely can. As his future is so much involved as our own, it is but in obedience to the laws of Providence and the designs of His creation. Whether the negro is destined always to live here among us, or it is in his future to be transferred to the land whence he sprung, it is certain that the education he is to obtain from the present trials through which we are all passing, will be of the first importance to his character. The black man has a destiny, of course, or he never would have had an existence; and he has been thrown temporarily upon the care and tuition of the white race, as much for the good of the latter as for his own. It only demonstrates the close connection that exists between the most widely distinct portions of nature, the enlistment of slaves into the great Union Army is calculated to circulate their self-respect, and give force and energy to their too yielding and compliant nature. They are being slowly taught what individual liberty means, what it is worth, and at what cost and pains it is to be maintained.

Rosecrans and his Trial.

The usual tactics of Davis and his War Department have been again been called out, in the concentration of their forces against Rosecrans before Chattanooga. He is not a man to be cowed by any ordinary opposition, having been sufficiently tested in the service of his country before this. While he held Chattanooga, and threatened northern Georgia and the whole line of rebel communication, it was necessary for the rebel President to make the grand movement in opposition, and beat him back forthwith or surrender his Confederacy. By doing so, he of course uncovered Richmond, and offered the Union commander in Virginia an advantage of which they should have been hasty to avail themselves. This same stronghold in Tennessee has been called the heart of the Confederacy, as indeed it must be; and there it was to be expected that a great struggle should take place, to decide the fate of that part of the rebel concern. Hereafter, Chattanooga is to be set among the names which have been made memorable in the history of this war.

A Stocking Supporter.

At last something serviceable, convenient, and easy to wear, has made its appearance, to take the place of the elastic, or garter, which has been in vogue so long, for the want of something better, and which has severely done more injury to the system, by stopping the free circulation of the blood, than most people are willing to believe. This new invention does away entirely with that objection and all the other inconveniences arising from the use of the ancient garter. It commends itself at once to the attention of the ladies; and mothers especially will find it just the thing they have so long desired for their children.

The inventor of this article had the idea given to her in a dream or vision. She saw the whole arrangement made and put together, "while she was asleep," and on the following day she endeavored to reproduce it, but failed to do so in one particular; but on the following night she was again shown in her sleep how to make it, and the part which she had forgotten the night previous was particularly made plain to her, at which she cried out, to the astonishment of her mother who was sleeping with her, "I have got it!" and then awoke.

Correction.

In our last issue was published an item stating that the delay in the transportation of packages of the BANNER and other Boston papers to New York city, was occasioned by the procrastination of the agents of an Express Company. This was a mistake. The Expresses are always prompt, and we have no desire to curtail their usefulness. The packages are sent by the Railroad freight trains. The delay was occasioned by not getting at our packages until nearly all the freight was delivered to other parties. Our friends south of New York, who have notified us of the non-receipt of their papers at the proper time, of late, will receive them in due season hereafter, as satisfactory arrangements have been made for the prompt delivery of our New York packages.

Mr. Foster, the Test Medium.

This excellent test medium has just arrived in town and taken rooms at No. 11 Suffolk Place, (leading from Washington street,) where he will be happy to meet his friends and the public generally for a limited time. Some remarkable tests of spirit-presence have been given through his instrumentality of late, and have been informed by several reliable gentlemen who had sittings at his rooms in a neighboring city.

Last Picnic of the Season.

Dr. Gardner announces a picnic at Jaland, Abington, for Tuesday, Sept. 29th, providing the weather is suitable. Otherwise, it will take place on the following day. A grand time may be expected on this occasion, if the Superintendent of the weather will only allow the sun to shine. We think he will.

Message Department.

Each message in this Department of the Banner was written by the Spirit whose name it bears, through the instrumentality of Mrs. J. M. O'Connell.

These Messages indicate that spirits carry with them the characteristics of their earth-life to that beyond—whether for good or evil.

We ask the reader to receive no doctrine put forth by spirits in these columns that does not comport with his or her reason.

These Messages are sent to the public. The Banner Establishment is subjected to considerable extra expense in consequence.

The Banners are held at the BANNER OF LIGHT OFFICE, No. 128 WASHINGTON STREET, Room No. 3, (up stairs), on MONDAY, TUESDAY and THURSDAY AFTERNOONS.

MESSAGES TO BE PUBLISHED

Monday, Sept. 14.—Invocation: "Will you explain the full meaning of this passage in John, where Jesus said: 'Gather up the fragments that nothing be lost—referring to the loaves and fishes?'"

Tuesday, Sept. 15.—Invocation: "The 'Atmosphere of Christ.' Questions and Answers: Cyrus Downing, to his brother Thomas Downing, of Springfield, N. Y.;

Wednesday, Sept. 16.—Invocation: "Do accidental injuries to the Physical Body, or Malformation of Growth cause or produce deformity of the spiritual body, when induced into the spirit world?"

Thursday, Sept. 17.—Invocation: "Are there specific applications of the Arts and Sciences to external objects in the Spirit World?"

Friday, Sept. 18.—Invocation: "By what principle or agency do the spirits who have lost, or whose property may be lost?"

INVOCATION.

Spirit, Infallible and Divine, we lift our souls to thee. Here in the sacred temple of mortality do we implore thy blessing. Father, we know that we can receive no blessing from thee, except we are willing to give unto all thy children.

Psychometry.

What theme will the friends present for our brief review this afternoon?

Psychometry, or the capabilities of Psychometrists.

Psychometry may be called one of the cornerstones of the science of life.

It is a science, but a child. Its powers are limited, because years, as mortals, are limited.

To fully convey to your minds the power that lies hidden in the term Psychometry, you have been taught from various sources from the spirit-world, that every mind is connected with all other minds.

And my teachers ask, that when he receives an answer, that he will let the world—the skeptical world—know that there is a truth in clairvoyance that could not have been revealed in other way.

Ques.—Psychometry seems to extend back into material things, the image of everything in Nature. May not this science be the means of unfolding the mysteries of all past time, the creations of Nature all through?

Ans.—We believe that the capacities of the human soul are without limit—that all soul or all mind is bound together. We believe, also, that there never was a thing created that was not impregnated with thought, with life, with an impress of the human soul.

What is life? Some call it law running through mind and matter. So it is. To illustrate our subject: Could you look, as we are able to, into the life-history of this article of furniture (the table), you would see it as it has come up through all the various stages of vegetable life.

It has written its own history with as much or certain degree of intelligence as is found concerning the soul-history of human life.

How would the clairvoyant be able to trace it back, and learn what it was in the past? It is by this life-life. If we may so term it, that runs not only through human life but material life, whether in a crude or sublimated form, that you are able to learn of the past.

If you were not connected with every form of life, human or material, you could never know the history of them. It is only by your connection with all forms of life that you are able to analyze these forms.

Could you know whether this were wood or stone (the table), unless you were inseparably connected with it? And if you are, is there not life here, devoid of intelligence to be sure, but as much life as is written in soul-life? It is no miracle that some are able to read the ancient history of things.

It is done by law, grand, immutable law, such as the human mind at the present day has little conception of.

James Finlator.

I made an appeal to my friends in England some near three years ago, but I have been exceedingly unfortunate with regard to reaching those friends, so I've begged the privilege to come again.

The closing scenes of my mortal life were not very pleasant. I got involved in business, and I thought I would rather live in the life beyond, than tarry any longer on earth, so I took my own life.

I have regretted it, God only knows how much. Now as I am a stranger to you and to all present, I should like to identify myself. I tried to when I visited you before. Perhaps I shall do no better now, but I will try.

My name was James Finlator. I lived on Cornwall street, London. My family consisted of a wife, of a son and daughter, James and Ellen.

I took the hour of early morning, when my family were at breakfast, to take my life. I left my business in a very unsettled state, and my friends have suffered more or less in consequence of that.

Now I would like to have you address a letter, making inquiries concerning me, to the publishers of the "London Times." Ask them to look over their files of December 1837, and see if they will not find an account of the suicide of James Finlator.

As I have returned to you again, after an absence of years, bearing no good fruits of my return to you, I feel it absolutely necessary that you have other proof. You do not know that I ever lived, that I am at all the person I say I am, and that I am giving you my own history.

You do not know that it is not an emanation from some other mind, either present or absent. So I want you to have material proof, and after you've got it, I'll beg the privilege of coming again, with the particulars of my life, and concerning what I wish my friends to do for my sake, if not for theirs.

Will you write? [Do will.] When you get a return I will come again. Good-day. Sept. 10.

George Hollingdale.

I've come here to tell my brother that his letter to our brother Edward has been lost, and mother says if he will direct again to Edward, who is in Sydney, New South Wales, he will be successful.

My brother, who lives here, do not know where our brother Edward lives. He has not heard from him for a long time, but some time ago my teachers told me that I might come and tell my brother that Edward was in Sydney; so I came and told him, and asked him to send a letter to him there. But it was lost, and he must send another one, directing to King street, Sydney, New South Wales, just as he did before.

And my teachers ask, that when he receives an answer, that he will let the world—the skeptical world—know that there is a truth in clairvoyance that could not have been revealed in other way.

When he receives the intelligence that our own brother Edward is really there, that his spirit-guides have told him correctly, then they ask that he give that to the world, for the benefit of those who are in darkness.

William K. Perry.

Who's postmaster? [Have you got a letter to send?] I have. [Shall I write it or talk it?] Talk it, then; all can hear it. [Maybe I don't care to have all hear it. I beg your pardon, but I don't know how you are to send my letter. [We shall publish it in a paper.] Oh, good! I well I might as well talk it, then. [The public would know it in either case.] That's so. I see how it is. This place is a sort of a receiving ship for the intelligence of all creation.

Well, it is any of my business to find fault I suppose, so long as I'm allowed to come here.

Well, I like thousands of others, got out of a little too soon. We are never ready to die, you know, and are always apt to think when death comes we are called too soon.

But I took it in my head to fight for Uncle Sam here a little time since, and in so doing lost my traveling machine. I beg pardon for my want of reverence; I don't mean to shock your feelings in the least.

The fact is, I can't look upon these things as some do. I'm aware that I've passed through that solemn gateway and got across, where folks live, still can't feel solemn, to save my soul, and although I've got to live forever in the spirit world, yet I can't feel so despondent.

I never did believe in this old-fashioned doctrine of a heaven and a hell, when I inhabited my body. I did not know as there was any hereafter. I did not care much whether there was or not, although if there was a heaven I always believed I should get as good a place as I deserved.

So the folks need not expect me back here as a saint, when I crowded the river with other papers. Nor do I believe it's expected of me either, if I understand these things, to play the Christian when I ain't one.

Well, I have a wife and two little boys that I should like pretty well to talk with. I have two brothers—yes, and various other relatives. I've a step-mother I'd like to talk with, and some boys in the army. But first of all, I'd like to go home and talk with my wife. Well, suppose I want to talk about money when I get there, what then? [You can do so if you wish.] I do not know as it's a production of the spirit world, [it is of this world, anyway.] It seems to be the foundation of all things on the earth. Well, money it is, money it is; that's what I want to talk about most of all.

My folks are sadly in need of money just now, and they are made up by a little trick of one of my friends, or one whom I always supposed to be my friend, who undertook to make things straight for my wife, and who, in helping her, has helped himself in the same way.

[That was hardly fair.] That's so, particularly when he's supposed to be in the shade. [Dead?] Yes, that's the world. If he had only done this when I was here I would have cared half so much about it, but he thought I was out of sight, and he would play out a little, I suppose.

Now I want him to fork up to justice and make things square with my wife, for if he do n't I'll expose him. I never talk what I don't mean, and when Feey I'll do a thing, I mean to do it; so if I say I'll come back and visit judgment upon him, I'll be do'd if I do n't do it! Beg your pardon for swearing, but I forgot myself.

Well, I suppose it's necessary for me to tell you I am—something about myself, so that folks will know me. [Yes.] I belonged to the 11th Ohio, Company G. My name was William K. Perry. My family live in Cleveland. They have lived in Columbus.

The friend I have reference to, shall I give his name? [As you think best.] It stands pretty fair upon the world's books. I guess I won't make a black cross against it—not yet for helping himself as he has to money. It may be that he has thought that he was only taking what belonged to him; for we had some business transactions together, and he concluded that a certain amount more than I felt to be his due belonged to him, and it may be that in acting as he has that he feels he has committed no robbery.

A gentleman said, Why this sensitiveness about mentioning names? If he has wronged your family you ought to give his name at once. That's your opinion. [It is the opinion of a good many also.] It may not be mine. I give my own name, my object in coming here, and if I identify myself to my wife, I shall to him, and it may be that I'll not have to come again.

If he do n't come up to the scratch and do as I want him to, then I'll come again and give his name. So far as I'm concerned I'd just as lief give it now, but he's living in this world and stands on a fair footing with society, and it seems to me only right to give him a chance to right the wrong before exposing his name. [I think so.]

I was going to say that he and I had some little business dealings together before I went away, and he concluded that a certain amount more than I paid over to him belonged to him. After talking the matter thoroughly over with him, I at last came to the conclusion that we'd split the difference, and I'd meet him half way. I still think I served him right, and he appeared to be satisfied at the time, but he may have changed his mind since. I always tried to be honest, and I think I am now, else I should give his name. If he comes up to the scratch, and makes things square with my wife, I'll not expose him to the world. But if he is not disposed to do that, then I'll come back and give his name. [Dr. Gardner said, "Try to get the facts first, and if that do n't answer, try brickbats."] And if that do n't answer, build a fire. Good-day. Sept. 10.

Thomas Kent Williams.

What day is it? [Of the week?] The month? [The 10th.] Then I've been in the spirit-world just three days. I died at the Douglas Hospital, of fever, and believe they called it pneumonia. I have a father and mother in Jackson, Mississippi. They do n't know anything about my death; but I suppose they think I was taken prisoner, by not hearing from me.

I was in my twentieth year. My name, Thomas Kent Williams—Thomas K. Williams. Tell my father and mother I was kindly cared for by your folks. I've no fault to find, except with one of the physicians, or surgeons, that came in; he insisted on doing me with morphine, and I did n't feel like taking it, so I had some words with him. I believe I did n't feel just right with him. I've nothing to say against any one else.

Will my father that by writing to Richmond Post-office, he'll get my last letter, with some facts concerning what he wanted to know about. My mother, tell her I think she'll be able to come this way to see her friends soon. She's from the North, formerly. I think my letter will reach my father somehow. I do n't know how. What do you ask? [Nothing anything. Will you give your father's name?] My father's, Thomas, and mine, too. Kent was my mother's maiden name. Good-day, sir. Sept. 10.

J. P. Frank.

I would solicit the privilege of writing my message. Is there any objection to my doing so? [None.] I fear I may not be able to control this body long enough to speak, therefore I think it best to do so by writing.

[Written:] My Dear Family and Friends—It seems but yesterday since I was with you in the flesh. And indeed I can hardly realize that I am no more of the earth, for so strong are my earthly tendencies that I am, as ever, one of you. But do you know that I am unhappy in my present home? Yes, the shadow has fallen upon me, and it has come in consequence of the sin of omission; for I omitted to do justice to one of my earthly neighbors.

And to-day I return to ask the aid of my wife and family, that I may now, if not too late, restore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to friend Burnham the things that are his.

Will you aid me? Now do n't say no, for so sure as you do, you will suffer, as I have, the consequences of the wrong events of my life. I have much that I wish to say to you, of this beautiful land, but I can think of little else than the restoration of that piece of land—and I'll see the deed in the right man's hand. When this is done, then I shall be happy, and happy to tell you of this better spirit-land, which is in no way like the heaven I dreamed of and talked of so much, in Brother Thacher's Church in earth-life.

THE OLD PINE FOREST.

Oh, I loved to roam that old forest ground, Yet it wakened some childish fears, So dark with its deep, green tangles, and gray With the moss of an hundred years.

It seemed in the shade of that solemn old wood, As if Heaven was nearer to earth— Neath its soft, sighing murmur my soul was soothed, And my holiest feelings had birth.

Oftimes have I gazed through some opening afar, To a spot in the distant blue sky, And wondered if God was then looking at me, Through that space with his All-Seeing eye.

And sometimes I listened, expecting to hear His voice break the stillness around, For they said he oft spoke, but in terrible tones, And I longed for, yet dreaded the sound.

They taught me that God was a being of wrath; But, in roaming that shady old wood, I felt in the depths of my innermost soul That our Heavenly Father was good.

Suspicion and distrust are the greatest enemies to friendship.

Itinerant Etchings of U. Clark. On the back track—Disappointed ambition—Trance Speakers and Normal—Fading Mediums—Miss Howe, S. S. Loveland, Mrs. Hyzer, G. M. Johnson, Mrs. Clark, Jennie King, Mrs. Chappell, etc.—Central and Western New York—Changeling hopes and love.

From the little Eden book of Noank, on Long Island Sound, I passed to Norwich, Conn., spending a single night with the Harveys, Parkers, and a few other devoted souls who cling with fervor to our celestial Philosophy.

Norwich has gone through fiery ordeals, yet promises well for future labor. Our Rev. Bro. B. P. Ambler is located here over the Universalist Society, and presides to a handful of intelligent hearers, made up of new-and-old-line revivalists of the faith which was once deluged unto the saints.

But Bro. Ambler, the minister, is not like Ambler once the inspirational speaker. His sermons must now be prepared to suit his supporters, and must be kept free of all that smacks of out-and-out Spiritualism.

Alas! how are the mighty fallen! Bro. Ambler was originally one of the twelve apostles selected by A. J. Davis for the regeneration of this generation. Like most of the other members of that apostolical twelve, he started out with large expectations of some matchless mission, and was doubtless disappointed in not witnessing the immediate overthrow of all old principles and powers.

And the glorified exaltation and triumph of the new-fledged heroes of modern evangelization. Not many months elapsed before Bro. Ambler, Harris, and others of the pioneer twelve began to find that the world was not so easily astonished and overturned; and now I do not know that a single one of all the original twelve is found actively and efficiently engaged in the field of spiritual progress; and I believe it is because they began with sanguine ambitions and personal expectations not in accordance with our celestial philosophy.

I have no recollection of judgment to pronounce, no reflections to cast, yet I cannot resist the evidence of palpable facts. In the spiritual dispensation, we recognize no leaders or heroes or monopolists of honors or emoluments; he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is equal to the greatest in the world's esteem; and men and women who enter our ranks with any sanguine hopes of ease, of opulence or pre-eminence exaltation, will at last come to the bitterest grief and disappointment, and perchance lapse back into the lap of the Church, or drift into the current of popular conservatism.

I spent some of the hottest days in August with J. B. Loveland, at Willimantic, Conn., lecturing on Sunday, and lecturing the remainder of the time. Bro. Loveland is temporarily engaged in secular business, though by no means out of the lecturing field.

As a thinker, reformer, inspirational speaker, logician and orator, J. B. Loveland has no equal in our ranks; and we rejoice that the Spiritualistic public is fast coming up to the appreciation of such workers. The time is coming when the public will judge of speakers by what they are and what they say, and not by any claims of abnormality, or distinctions of sex. Shows, shams and pretensions have had their day. Genuine inspirations depend on nothing extraneous in the form of airs, manipulations or gestures. Some of our best pioneers have been trance speakers; some never claim to be entranced before public audiences; let each class be judged by what comes through them. It were the height of folly and fanaticism to draw lines of inviolable comparison or distinction. We have had enough of this superstitious nonsense. The country has been flooded with men and women setting up questionable claims of something abnormal and extraordinary. I scarcely ever visit a place without having been preceded by some of these men or women claiming great missions as the mediums of some mighty messengers direct from the loftiest spheres of heaven! Fudge! Let Spiritualists "prove all things," and judge them by what they weigh and what they are worth, regardless of all external pretences.

In Toledo and West Stafford, Ct., Blackbertown, North Dana, Ware, Oxford, North Belknap and Franklin, Mass., I met earnest co-workers, and found good openings; as likewise in Bloomfield and Poquonok, Ct. Miss Flavia Howe, the young trance speaker and healer, has commenced a promising mission in the latter place; and I was surprised to find a young sister so highly gifted as a public speaker so little known beyond the field of her home labor. But like many other newly unfolded laborers who are not yet widely known, she is destined to be called out into a broader field of usefulness.

Joined by two little travelers bearing the names of Lilla and Minnie, with any amount of small baggage and a big doll in the bargain, I shot over the Western railway, and am once more in the old Empire State. A Sunday at Gloverville opened a new field of some promise. Parting with Lilla at Syracuse, I was welcomed by good friends in one of my old fields in Centre Lisle. Large audiences on a Sunday at Binghamton attested the growing interest in that magnificent town. A full church greeted me at Sheequeen, Pa., one night, and the next day a pleasant spiritual picnic was enjoyed at Rome, among the friends of our amiable co-worker Miss F. E. Washburn. On Sunday two large and successful meetings were held in Holden's Hall, Elmira, and several old friends and now suggested an effort toward my opening regular Sunday meetings. My visit to the adjoining little village of Webb's Mills was shadowed by the departure of the only child, a little son of William and Harriet Maper, grandson of our ex-Rev. Dr. I. V. Maper. But it was a happy privilege to minister funeral consolations to the bereaved, giving assurances of a spirit-land beyond all sorrow and death, and a celestial home, from whose many mansions the cherub boy now smiles with an angel-guardianship.

My last Sunday's labors were in Le Roy, another of my old places of visitation, and I was gladdened with a warm welcome and auspicious signs. Mrs. P. O. Hyzer speaks here one quarter of the time, and fills up the remainder of her Sundays at Batavia, Holley and Byron, attracting large audiences, and leaving deep and lasting impressions. Our cause is unusually promising in Central and Western New York. Nearly every important locality gives signs of new vitality. The great need is for more laborers. The public workers are exceedingly rare. Ira Hitchcock of Oneida, one of our first, oldest and ablest speakers, now seldom takes the field. Mrs. S. L. Chappell has left Oswego County for St. Lawrence, and was lately called to the East. Mrs. E. O. Clark is in Lawrence, Mass., though still a resident of Eagle Harbor, Orleans Co., N. Y. Dr. A. G. Fellows, of Albion, has gone home to his celestial labor. Dr. H. M. Danbar, of Penn Yan, was taken sick while in the army, and has joined the armies of heaven. Geo. M. Jackson, the trance speaker, served in the army as long as his health would permit, and is now an invalid at Pratsburg, the residence of S. A. Johnson, the young speaker, Jennie King, of Auburn, has entered domestic relations, which imply a suspension of her public mission. Other laborers, however, are being prepared for the field, and will take their place according to public demand. "The harvest is truly plentiful; but the laborers are few." A thousand old members and disciples crowd their minds as I once more revisit the scenes of earlier pioneer labors. Sad changes have passed over the life once radiant with rosy hopes, yet new aims and efforts take their place. "The friends of other years are gone, or changed worse than death; have alienated their affections, than heaven's form of discipline and the recompense coming in the form of friends new-born out of old ordeals, and newly unfolded affections which uplift the soul to celestial realms."

Where parting words were said, A word unknown, and believed and loved, Shall bind all tried and faithful hearts to God, And to each other, in waiting hours.

U. CLARK.

Writes for the Banner of Light. HE IS NOT DEAD.

DEDICATED TO THE FAMILY OF THE LATE CHARLEY WILLIAMS, OF THE FIRST NAVAL CAVALRY, WHO WAS KILLED AT BATTLESTOWN, VA., JULY 1862, 1863.

BY D. W. WOOD.

Sweet sleep wraps up the grieving sister now, And smiles of joy are dancing on her brow! The smiling tear that glistened in her eye Has dried beneath the paralytic eye Of bright delusion which her dreams create— Her bosom beats thro' gratitude to fate.

She fondly dreams the cannon's deadly roar Has hushed in peace—"this cruel war is o'er"; And in those arms, now trembling with delight, A brother rests—bold champion of the right; In boundless joy she holds that brother's head, And sweetly whispers, "Charley is not dead."

Deceptive dream! The hour of joy is o'er; The truth breaks in, more crushing than before; Far, seeming far, has dawn that gentle sleep, And left the heart to realize and weep. It wildly throbs, while mournfully it sighs, "Nesth Southern suns my darling brother lies."

Far from the home where, close by sister's side, He loved to sit—her idol and her pride; Where Love's bright star its sacred flame cast On present joy, and bade the happy past; Wrapped in the flag "neath which the hero fell, He thought of home, and dreamed a last farewell.

No sister met that young patriot's bed, Nor mother's tears could wash the gallant dead; No plaintive voices sang his soul to rest; None cared to stoop to catch his last request. How could a sister have dispelled the gloom, And smoothed the pathway to that dual tomb!"

The scene grows darker; as the restless mind Goes on in thought, till hope is left behind; Fate, cruel fate, has crushed the charm of earth— The weeping sister now repeats her birth; She prays for death, lest memory off should steal To other days, and there their joys reveal.

Another thought! through clouds of darkest grief Her bosom now discovers sweet relief! A radiant star, to bear a heaven to see— The glorious truth—man's immortality! She wonders then how should he ever forget That earth and heaven will be blended yet!

Her songs consoling, reach the father's ear, And smiles, like sunbeams, dry the mother's tear; She tells them though from earth the spirit fled, "Oh, happy thought, dear brother is not dead! He lives to welcome sisters, parents, friends, In brighter spheres where life's noon never ends.

And till we meet where angels sing the lay Of spotless bliss, and one eternal day, Where cruel war no more has heard of more, And this is better than the hour before, We all shall think of our dear Charley's name, As linked forever with his country's fame.

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LECTURERS' APPOINTMENTS.

[We desire to keep this list perfectly reliable, and in order to do this it is necessary that Speakers notify us promptly of their appointments to lecture. Lecture Committees will please inform us of any change in the regular appointments, as published. As we publish the appointments of Lecturers gratuitously, we hope they will reciprocate by calling the attention of their hearers to the Banner of Light.

Miss Lizzie Doyne will speak in Philadelphia, Pa., Oct. 4, 11, 18 and 25; in Boston, Nov. 23 and 29. Address: Park-street, 77 Tremont street, Boston, Mass.

Miss Sophia L. Chappell will speak in Lycoming Hall, in New York, Oct. 4 and 11. She will also speak in New England after that date. Address, 101 Oct. 1st, Potsdam, N. Y.; after that date, Boston, care Banner of Light. An early application is requested.

Mrs. Fanny Davis Smith will lecture in Lycoming Hall, Boston, Oct. 25. Address, Milford, N. H.

B. B. Stevens, inspirational speaker, will lecture in Lycoming Hall, Boston, Oct. 16. Address, Box 4 Warren street, Boston.

Miss M. S. Townsend will speak in Quincy, Sept. 27; in Providence, R. I., Sept. 28; in Milford, Mass., Nov. 1 and 8; in Troy, N. Y., December; Philadelphia, in Jan. Address as above, or Bridge-water, Vermont.

Mrs. Mary M. Wood will lecture in Keokuk, Oct. 4; in Burlington, Oct. 11; in Portland, Dec. 6 and 13. Address, New York City.

Mrs. Augusta A. Gunnam will speak in Groveland, Oct. 4; in Buffalo, N. Y., November; in Philadelphia, Pa., Dec.; in Troy, N. Y., Jan. Address, Box 616, Lowell, Mass.

Mrs. Laura DeWane Gordon will speak in Ohioport, Mass. in September; Springfield, Mass., in October. Address as above, or Box 506, Leominster, Mass.

Miss Sarah A. Hoxton will speak in Moriah, N. Y., Oct. 4 and 11; in Huntington, Vt., Oct. 18; in LeRoy, Oct. 18; in Bridge-water, Nov. 1; in Reading, Nov. 1; in Lowell, Mass., during March Address, Brandon, Vt.

Miss Emma Houston, will lecture in Portland, Me., during Oct.; in Willimantic, Conn., Nov.; in Taunton, Mass., and in Lowell, Oct. 11, 18 and 25. She will also give lectures for the remainder of the winter, and spring as early as possible. Address, Manchester, N. H., or as above.

Mrs. Mary M. Wood will speak in Roxbury, the month of October. Address, West Killbury, Conn. She will make her fall and winter engagements immediately.

Mrs. Laura M. Bolles will speak in Glenburn, Me., Oct. 11. Address, Bangor, Me., care J. D. Rich.

Mrs. Martha L. Brewster, trance speaker, will lecture in Taunton, Mass., Oct. 4 and 11; in Quincy, Oct. 18 and 25; in Philadelphia, Pa., during Nov. in Lowell, during Dec.; in Burlington, Mass., during January; in Stamford, Ct., during Feb. Address at New Haven, care of Green Oak-street, Reference, H. B. Storor, Boston.

Dr. E. E. and Mrs. S. A. Townsend will lecture in Green Oak-street, Oct. 11 and 18. Oct. 18, the latter part of Sept. and first part of Oct. Address, Medway, Green Oak-street.

Mrs. Laura Coyne lectures in Richmond, Ind., Oct. 23, 30 and 27. Will leave for the Eastern States in Nov. All declining her services will please direct care of O. North, Richmond, Ind., or of F. E. O'Grady, Dayton, O.

Mrs. Anna M. Middlemore, Box 422, Bridgeport, Conn., will lecture in Ohioport, in Oct. in Lowell, in Nov. in Buffalo, N. Y., in Dec.; in Bridgeport, Conn., Jan. and Feb. Intends visiting Vermont in March, and will receive proposals to lecture in that State during the month.

Mrs. Fanny S. Bond, trance speaker, will lecture in Norton, Mass., Oct. 11 and 25, Monday and afternoon.

Mrs. Nellie J. Turner, inspirational speaker, Jacksonville, Vt., is engaged to speak, on Sundays, one-half the time the present year, at Ashfield, Mass.; at Shelburne Falls, one quarter ditto, and at Jacksonville, Vt., the remaining half of the year. She will speak in those localities on week days, if required.

WARREN CHASE. His address for Sept. is Elipson, Vt. Lectures in Elkhart, Ind., Oct. 4, 11, 18 and 25; in Bloomington, Ill., Nov. 1; in Clinton, Nov. 8. He will receive subscriptions for the Banner of Light.

U. S. GUNNARSON, trance speaker, Lowell, will speak in Worcester, Oct. 12, Nov. 7 and Dec. 6.

ISAAC T. GREENLEAF will speak in Dover, Oct. 4 and 11; in Portland, Dec. 30 and 27. Address, Exeter Mills, Exeter, Me.

Mrs. Mary A. Thomas, Cincinnati, Ohio, will speak in Richmond, Ind., at the Yearly Meeting, Oct. 14, 21 and 28.

Mrs. H. P. M. Brown will speak in Burlington, Oct. 4 and 11. Lectures, while there may be addressed care of J. G. Wait, Me.

Mrs. E. A. Buses, Springfield, Mass., will speak in Troy, N. Y., through Oct. in Troy, N. Y., Nov. 1, 8, 15 and 22; in Worcester, Dec. 13, 20 and 27.

S. L. H. WILSON, post-office address during Sept. and Oct. will be Hancock, N. H. He will speak in Goldwater, Mich., Sept. 27; in Hancock, N. H., through Oct.; in Troy, N. Y., through Nov.

