

# BANNER OF LIGHT.



VOL. XV.

{\$3.00 PER YEAR.} In Advance.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, AUGUST 20, 1864.

{SINGLE COPIES,} Eight Cents.

NO. 22.

## My Religion.

During my sojourn here in Virginia since the war began, while visiting among my friends and relatives, the subject of religion has often been the topic of conversation, in which my views have been pretty freely expressed. At times, I have remarks have been misunderstood; at others, I have reason to think, by bigotry they have been perverted. I differ, it is true, from the Orthodoxy of the day—my religious sentiments have not been lightly embraced as mere speculative opinion; but are the honest convictions of my mind, after careful and prayerful investigation, using as best I could, all the faculties God has bestowed, with simple, unalloyed aspiration for Truth, asking of him who said, "Seek, and ye shall find."

That I may be neither misunderstood or traced, I leave this paper for the benefit of my children, in which I shall endeavor to set forth in clear and explicit terms what it is I do and what I do not believe, and "give a reason for the faith that is in me."  
Truth is God's word, and a blessing to all; but error is a constant curse, whether spoken at the fireside or from the tattered pulpit. We never can be sure that our ideas are correct until we have examined them fairly, and scrutinized them without prejudice; otherwise we may be hugging a dangerous error to our bosoms, and casting the truth from us. There is nothing good that is false, and we should always be glad to exchange an error for a truth. Carlyle says, "To honestly believe a thing, we must first have disbelieved it." Yes, otherwise our judgment is partial and prejudiced, and we are apt to fall into the weakness of believing a thing because we like to, and not because we know it to be true. Many church members assent to the dogmas of their sect, and think they believe them, but between assent and belief there is a wide difference.

There was a time when I considered it wrong to investigate such a subject as this—when I thought that reason had no right to intermeddle with sacred things, and that every one did wrong who questioned God's Word, as I then regarded the whole of the Scriptures to be. That time is gone—gone. I argue with the proverb, "He that will not reason is a bigot; he that cannot is a fool; he that dare not is a slave." I have thought, read, investigated for myself. My practice has been for some years to cut from the papers whatever struck my attention, and also make copious extracts, cutting here and there wherever I found anything that accorded with my sentiments, and from a little book, the title of which is forgotten. The result of my investigation is before you.

The rough draft of this paper was completed on the 5th of August. The Sunday following (9th) was a happy day for me, for then was granted the great desire of my heart—then was the barrier thrown down which separated me from my unseen friends. I no longer require a medium to aid me in communing with them; for I myself am one, and can and do hold converse with them.

Soon after I began to investigate the Divine Harmonical Philosophy in 1855, I hoped that I, too, might become a medium. I sat at the dial, off and on, for many hours, continued with short intermissions for several months; but all of no avail. I never could perceive the slightest motion of the table, and finally gave it up in despair—for the last six years or more I have not even made an effort.

Early in 1860, my spirit-friends endeavored to develop me for writing, and in some measure succeeded—a good deal was written through me, but I never could feel confidence in what came through my own hand, unless afterwards confirmed by the dial, or otherwise through some other medium. I struggled against this want of faith, but in vain; and for this, perhaps, the gift was withdrawn after a few months' trial, and no influence has been since imparted.

While sitting at my desk reading, on the 6th of August, I felt impressed to take up the pencil. Instantly the well-known electric thrill rushed through my arm, my hand was shaken, and then a short sentence of not much interest was written. Next day this was repeated, giving a page or more. I know it was not from my own brain, because the phraseology was quite different from what I should have dictated.

Seeing they could so easily shake my hand, I requested them to confirm it by three distinct shakes, if it was indeed spirit-writing. Instantly the answer was given with an interval of two or three seconds between each motion. More writing followed, confirmed in the same way. It then occurred to me that possibly this might be the means of opening a channel of communication in which I could confide; accordingly I inquired if they could respond through the alphabet by shaking my hand. "Yes," and immediately was given, "Get the dial—I will communicate. Nancy." Just the last thing I should have expected.

With a throbbing heart the dial was placed on the table. I sat for half an hour before I could perceive the least motion. Another half hour was spent in slow oscillations of the index. Then came: "It is difficult, father—be patient; we shall succeed."  
This encouraged me. In a quarter of an hour more there came communications from my son Frank, and step-mother, clear and unmistakable! Overwhelmed with joy, with streaming tears, and a voice broken by sobs, I fell upon my knees and poured out my soul in gratitude to God for the great blessing just bestowed. Returning to the dial, it gave, "God has answered your prayer, for he is the hearer and answerer of prayer, and the rewarder of all who seek him."  
Communications after this came freely from my spirit-friends. It seemed they were always in waiting, for the moment I took my seat the dial began to move. I inquired if they knew what had lately engaged my attention:  
"Yes; you have been writing out your belief in religion. It is the strength of the Christian Faith."  
I expressed a desire to read it out to them, and to have their opinion of it as I proceeded. To this they assented, and appointed 4 o'clock that afternoon for the meeting. At that hour I took my seat, and as I read along the dial moved, giving their comments, and concluded with:  
"This is your truth, God. Go on, my son; the angels are your ministers, who go on your word what you have written, and have it in remembrance when you are called from earth."  
Who presided at the dial?

"Francis Hopkinson."  
Who else were present?  
"Father, mother, Frank, Isabelle, Leigh" (my children), "two grandfathers, two grandmothers, Isaac."  
The next day my son continued the list, and after giving fifty-eight names, some of them entire strangers, others known to me by reputation, but chiefly my friends and relatives. I remarked: "Why, you seem to have had quite a Congress."  
"Half a thousand father. They all approved of what you wrote; they thought it unanswerable. Take your stand on this platform, and naught can prevail against you. Delightful is the remembrance of this Congress."  
I shall now resume my essay, and introduce the comments of the spirits as given.

The opinion of the Protestant churches is this: The Bible is a miraculous collection of miraculous books; every word it contains was written by a miraculous inspiration from God, which was so full, complete and infallible, that the authors delivered the truth, and nothing but the truth—that the Bible contains no false statements of fact or doctrine, that sets forth all religious and moral truth which man needs, or which it is possible for him to receive, and no particle of error; therefore, the Bible is the only authoritative rule of religious faith and practice. To doubt this is reckoned a dangerous error, if not an unpardonable sin. The Bible is master of the soul, superior to intellect, truer than conscience. It presupposes that each book within the lists of the Bible has an absolute right to be there, and each sentence and word therein is infallible, true.

"Spirit.—Believe nothing but what you can understand."  
Now I ask, is the Bible "the inspired Word of God?" On the answer to this the whole argument depends. Let us look into its origin. When was the Bible formed? where? and by whom?  
The Council of Nice, which assembled A. D. 325, under the command of the Emperor Constantine, is the pivot upon which all Ecclesiastical History turns. It was at first composed of two thousand and forty-eight bishops, who became so violent in their vociferousness, that for the Emperor's presence they would have engaged in battle. Constantine was obliged to expel one thousand seven hundred and thirty of them, and only three hundred and eighteen of them remained. Before them was produced a vast number of parchments, or pamphlets, comprising most of the religious writings of the day. From them was selected the present Bible, except "The Acts," not then discovered; also, James, Jude, and the "Revelations," which were rejected.

The Book of Tobit is in the apocrypha—that is, the Church may receive or reject as to them seems proper; but Eusebius, who was present, says it was rejected by three votes; consequently it lacked but three votes of being the inspired Word of God.  
But the decision of the Council did not settle the matter, for Dr. Lardner acknowledges that so late as A. D. 500 the Canon of the New Testament had not been settled, but Christian people were at liberty to judge for themselves concerning the genuineness of writings proposed to them as Apostolic, and to determine according to the evidence. This continued until the Council of Toledo, A. D. 633, when the whole subject came up again for consideration. By them the rejected books were received and added to the Canon. Also, "The Acts," found A. D. 408, and thus was the Bible formed.

Now why were not those one thousand seven hundred and thirty discarded bishops as well qualified to decide which books were the "Word of God," as those who remained? It was no infallible judge who made the selection but the corrupt and licentious Constantine.  
Thus it appears that what is and what is not the "Word of God," has been decided for us by three hundred and eighteen exasperated bishops, whose decision was afterwards revised and amended by another set of bishops, and given to us as an infallible rule of faith and practice.

"Spirit.—This is all true. The Bible is a collection of pamphlets, given to the world at different times by different writers, each one directed by its spirit. Belief in them should be according to their respective merit, of which each must judge for himself."  
I said, "You are doubtless aware that Church History has kept dark about the early Fathers and the Nicene Council. Have you obtained further information on the subject since you have been in the spirit-world?"

"Spirit.—We have. Your account, as given, is correct."  
But the Bible itself makes no such pretension of infallible inspiration. It is no where says that the sixty-six books of which it is composed are the "Word of God," and that it does not is a powerful argument against its being so. David seems to have regarded the ten commandments as God's Word, but that is far from claiming the title for all the books. Paul indeed says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, &c.," but it should be known that the word "is," is in italics, showing that it is not in the original, but supplied by the translator. Scripture means writing, and as it now reads, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, then Homer and the Arabian Nights are inspired writings. What Paul appears to mean is this, "All Scripture given by inspiration is profitable, &c." Let the Scriptures be tried by this rule, and it may well be asked what is there in the endless genealogies, or Solomon's Song, for instance, that is good for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and instruction? Does not this interpolation of the word "is," look very like a priestly fraud?

There are several theories of inspiration. The most common and Orthodox is, that God appointed men to write it, and breathed his spirit into them, so that they gave a faithful transcript of his will. Let us test this Book, and see whether it is in agreement with reason and the character we love to apply to the Divine Being, and to the Book of Nature.  
The astronomy of the Bible differs widely from that of Nature. Genesis represents God as being employed for five days in making this little globe, and yet forming the universe of rolling universes in one day! Six days spent by Omnipotence in forming and adorning this flaming dew-drop; and an ocean of stars, one hundred millions seen by the naked eye, poured out in a breath, and dismissed in five words! "He made the stars also."  
The same writer informs us there were three evenings and mornings before the sun was made "to divide the day from the night!" Light on the first day—the sun and moon on the fourth!  
In its Geology it teaches that God made the earth in six days, and six thousand years ago, whereas Geology demonstrates that the earth has existed for millions of ages, and no geologist worthy of the name disputes it. Many attempts have been made to reconcile this, new explanations are being constantly made, and no two of them agree. One thinks the six days means six thousand years, for a thousand years is with the Lord as one day and one day as a thousand years; which also makes the Lord to have rested a thousand years!

Another pretends that every day was an indefinite period of time, embracing countless millions of years. Some think the six days were occupied by the Lord in remodeling the earth—others, that it only applies to a limited portion, the Garden of Eden.  
"Spirit.—The world is indeed millions of millions years old."  
When and by whom were the books of the Bible written? These are questions still open to Biblical critics. I will briefly advert to some of the arguments relied on to show they could not have been written by their reputed authors.  
1. The annals of Egypt record none of the Pharaohs recorded in Genesis and Exodus; and no history except the Bible and those taken from it, glorify the deeds ascribed to Moses, Joshua, Samuel, and others.  
2. In Gen. xiv: 14, Abraham pursued his brother's captors unto Dan. No place called Dan existed until three hundred and thirty-one years after the death of Moses. In Judges xviii: 27, it is said the place was called Lais at first, and received the name of Dan after the death of Samson.  
3. As is said in Gen. xxv: 21, that Israel spread his tent beyond the tower of Eder. Now the tower of Eder was over the gates of Jerusalem, and was not built until the reign of David, many years after the death of Moses.  
4. In Gen. xxxv: 31, it is said, "And these are the kings which reigned in Edom before there reigned any king over the children of Israel."  
5. The king reigned over Israel till eight hundred and eighty years after the death of Moses.  
6. The book of Deuteronomy is made to record the death of Moses.  
7. Joshua xxiv: 31 is made to say, "And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua."  
8. The phrase "unto this day" occurs frequently in the book of Joshua, and shows that the author lived after the events he is describing, and he is happy to say, "And Joshua burned the city, and made it a heap forever, a desolation unto this day."  
9. "And Joshua . . . laid great stones in the cave's mouth, which remain unto this very day."  
This expression means the lapse of a long, long time. It is supposed the book of Joshua was written after the establishment of the Jewish monarchy.  
8. Between the first and last books rolls many centuries. All other languages have undergone great changes in much less time. In the English, for instance, the reader of Chaucer requires the aid of a glossary. But any one who can read Genesis can read any other book.  
The Gospels, some of the Epistles and Revelations are supposed to have been written from forty to sixty years after the crucifixion, and except some of the Epistles—the authors unknown—that the chief inquiries and the collection of facts relative to the birth, life and death of Jesus were not made until many years after his death, and were transmitted more from hearsay than from actual knowledge, the art of writing being understood only by a very few.

But all this is considered of minor importance. It concerns only him or at what time they were written. Here are the books handed down to us from remote antiquity, and believed for ages to be the inspired word of God. Let us look into them.  
If God has written a book to be the universal guide of man; to teach him what to do and what not to do; to deliver him from eternal death, and to lead him to everlasting bliss, we may reasonably expect that one part will perfectly agree with another, that the principles would be the same throughout, since God is the same in all ages, man's nature the same, and the laws of right eternally the same. But the principle of the earlier books is *hated*. The Old Testament teaches us to do our enemy all the harm we can, while the principle of the New Testament is *love*, and we are enjoined to love our enemies, and to be reconciled to them who hate us.  
In the Old Testament we read, "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a stripe for a stripe; but our Savior teaches us, 'resist not evil; but who shall smite thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other also.'"  
Joshua orders, "thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth;" and Joshua smote all the country, &c., and destroyed all that breathed, as the Lord God commanded."  
The very opposite of this we read in the New Testament. "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you. If thy enemy hunger, feed him."  
A book written by the hand of God would show no contradictions. Turn to these passages: "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. And the Lord spake to Moses face to face, as he would speak to his friend." "The Lord is good to all; the Lord is merciful."  
In II. Samuel we read that one of the penalties of David's sin was seven years of famine. But Chron. xxi says three years of famine.  
"So David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver." II. Sam. xxiv.  
"So David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold." I. Chron. xxi.  
It is asserted in Ezekiel xviii: 20, "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father."  
In Exodus xv: 5, "I am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children."  
In the second book of Samuel, xxiv, are these words: "And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, 'Go number Israel and Judah.'"  
In the corresponding plan, I. Chron. xxi, it reads, "And Satan stood against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel."  
As these two quotations confessedly relate to the same event, how can they be reconciled? Which of the two is it that tempted David to number Israel? There is nothing to qualify or explain it, and yet so intricate that no two commentators can agree as to its meaning.  
Gen. i: 3, "God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good."  
Gen. vi: 6, "It repented the Lord that he had made man, and it grieved him at his heart."  
Ezek. xviii: 32, "The Lord has no pleasure in him that deteth."  
Gen. xxi: 20, "The Lord hardened his hearts, that they might find no favor and be utterly destroyed."  
Here the prophet asserts that the Lord *does* take

pleasure in the death of him that dieth, because he hardened their hearts," to keep them from the state in which they might be, and thus "destroyed." Scenes of such self-contradictions can be shown, and no violation of the context.  
Are they to be explained away by an ingenious and clerical reading of the text? Can it be said that these inconsistencies will not appear when the whole is read in its connections? Can they be repudiated on the ground of garbled extracts and misrepresentations? Is it not a fact opposed to fact, principle to principle? All assertion and denunciation I regard as mere breath—it amounts to nothing. It is one thing to indulge ridicule, quite another to confute with argument.  
"Spirit.—God is the same to-day and forever."  
Turn to Deut. xii: 6-10. It is the natural, inalienable right of every one to judge for themselves of the character of God, and of the true and most acceptable form of worshipping him, and also to teach the same. Suppose my religious views differ from those of my friends, my friends and my neighbors, differ from the community and nation in which I live, and by Christendom generally. The object of their religious adoration is to me a demon of wrath, revenge and blood; and but for the fact that their conceptions of God could not wholly root out nor suppress in their hearts all kindly instinct and sympathy, all reverence for truth and humanity, all sentiments of love, and all respect for their theology, had I not driven them into monsters of iniquity and cruelty. From a desire to save them from such dangerous views of God, I go to them and seek earnestly to win them to what I deem higher and truer views, and to a more practical and elevated worship. I am seized, and without regard to my sincerity and parental love, am stoned to death!  
The idea that God ever enjoined a husband to stone a wife to death, a parent to kill a child, a child a parent, is monstrous. Human nature shudders at it. The human family is a unit, bound together by a common parentage, common natures, common destiny. The idea that the universal Father could have exacted this is simply horrible—the human soul recoils from it. It never was and never can be done, while man is man, and God is God. The Bible says he did, and gives certain evidence to prove it. I have no more respect for the proof than for the thing to be proved. I can believe nothing which militates against the noblest attributes of Deity. Both are opposed to the teachings of God in Nature. A wrong is a wrong, no matter who commands it.

"Spirit.—Death is the triumph of life, but God never sanctioned such barbarity."  
Turn to Exodus xvii, Deut. xxv, I. Sam. xv. The Israelites attack the Amalekites, but are repulsed. Because of this it is said, "The Lord will be avenged on the Amalekites, and will blot out their name under heaven." "Moses was commanded to record the injury done to them by Amalek, and their wrath and revenge kept alive till a suitable time arrived to gratify it. In I. Samuel is an account of the final extermination of the Amalekites, and the accomplishment of the long-nurtured revenge. Saul is sent by Samuel to do the deed; and the commission begins with the usual "thus saith the Lord God of Israel, and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have and spare them not, but slay both men and women, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."  
Some four hundred years had elapsed since the injury was done; now we are told God roused up in the Jews the spirit of revenge, and sends them out to slaughter men, women, children and sucklings, and to destroy the property of their ancient ancestors. Can it be believed that the God of Nature ever commanded a tribe of men to be exterminated because their ancestors centuries ago did wrong? What would be thought of vengeance inflicted upon the people of England because of something committed by their forefathers in the time of Edward IV? Can it be believed that the Father of Love commanded his children to cherish the spirit of deadly hatred toward their fellow-beings from age to age, and then, after ages had passed, instigate them to satiate their cherished revenge in the blood of infants? Yes, this is all asserted to us truth by Christendom, and I am denied the name of Christian because I do not and cannot believe it.

"Spirit.—God is a God of Love; that is a sufficient denial."  
Turn to Deut. vii. Did the God of Nature write the laws of love and fraternity on the hearts of his children, and then forbid one portion to promote one another's property or enter into any agreement or friendship with another portion of them? The Bible says it did, and gives the following reason why he did it: "For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God; therefore thine eyes shall have no pity upon the nations which the Lord thy God giveth unto thee, but shall utterly consume them all." Holy people, indeed! If this be holiness, what is it all? How this holy people executed these instructions. "They utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both men and women, young and old, ass and sheep, with the edge of the sword." And in vii: 24-26, it says: "He drew not back his hand until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai as the Lord God of Israel commanded."  
The story, as told in the Bible, is one of fearful horror. God, as it relates, had settled to destroy certain nations, and to give their country and wealth to another nation. Four hundred years before the deed was done, he is made to say that he must wait "till their iniquity is full." So the Jews are led through various trials for four hundred years, till the Canaanites are wicked enough to be destroyed! Why not convert and not kill them?

Then by a series of most astounding events, such as the passage of a deep sea or river on dry land; of one million of people being sustained forty years in a desert without laboring for food or raiment, one suit of clothes lasting all the time; a flock of quails gathering round the camp of Israel, covering the surface of the earth over thirty miles in width all around the camp, and three and one-half feet deep, to furnish food for the people; the sun and moon standing still to enable these holy people to march to the slaughter of whole nations of God's children, which had never known or injured them. This God is said to have done, because he had sworn to Abraham that he would do it.  
The great end of all this slaughter is said to have been to establish on earth the worship of one God, in opposition to Polytheism. Important as this may be, can it be supposed that to win men to the worship of one God, and to have his children array his children one against another? Is this the way to root out error and establish truth? If living in darkness, could not the infinite wisdom and power of God have devised some way to enlighten them? But the Bible and all Christians would have us believe that the sword, dyed deep in the blood of millions, was the great argument to establish the doctrine and worship of God! So thought the Spaniards when they sacrificed mil-

lions of innocent people in Mexico, to set up the cross. Who justifies this now?  
And whose violence have we except from their own records, that these Jews were "the chosen people of God?" Does any contemporary history even allude to such a claim? That they were corrupt to the last degree, we want no other proof than that afforded by themselves; nor have we any reason to believe that the nations which they destroyed, with all their idolatry, were more wicked than themselves, in all the relations of life.  
"Spirit.—The God of all the earth is a God of Justice."  
In Judges xiv: 9, we are told that Samson, on the occasion of his betrothal, put forth a riddle to thirty young men, and made a bot of thirty sheets and thirty garments, that they could not solve it. Through the connivance of his wife, they succeeded; and Samson, according to the account, inspired by the spirit of the Lord, murdered and robbed thirty men to obtain the means of paying his bet!

"God is Love, the spirit of God is the spirit of Love. How, then, could Samson, under its influence, slay thirty innocent men? Suppose a man in the present day loses a bet, and to pay it, robs and murders the first person he meets on the highway, and when arrested, tells us that the spirit of God incited him to the act! Who could believe him? If sinful now, was it not so then? Thou shalt not kill—show shall not steal" was the law then as well as now.  
In Judges xv, 14-20, we are told, "The spirit of the Lord came mightily upon Samson, and with the jaw-bone of an ass he slew a thousand men. Allow one minute to one man, there were then seventeen hours of slaughter!"  
And now the day declines—there stands Samson, and around the bottles of his thousand victims, stiff and ghastly. Excitingly he exclaims: "Heaps upon heaps with the jaw-bone of an ass have I slain a thousand men." His long continued labor made him thirsty, and he prayed. Prayed? Yes, prayed. To whom, Mars or Moloch? Is he a devil worshiper, about to offer his supplications to the God of Evil, who has assisted him in his foolish work? No! he prays to the spirit of Mercy, Truth and Love—the Christian's God, who inspired Jesus to say, "Be ye merciful as your Father in heaven is merciful," and "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

But the story tells us, "God heard the prayer of Samson, and caused water to spring out of the gory jaw-bone to revive his strength!"  
"Spirit.—All that is a fable, and not worthy of belief."  
When I withhold my belief in these so-called miracles, I am told "all things are possible with God." True; that God can *at will*, control or modify nature, is unquestionable. I say, *at will*, for the question of will is not of power. It is not that the deity *cannot* modify his laws, but that we insist him in imagining a possible necessity for modification. God's laws were fashioned to embrace all contingencies that could be in the future. With God, all is now.  
An unchangeable God cannot work a miracle in the theological definition. He cannot produce an effect without an adequate cause, or an event above eternal law. God cannot contradict himself. He can will what he pleases, but he must will in accordance with the principles he has established. If he could be supposed to will a world to be oblong or square, gravity, one of his own principles, would pay no heed to it, but would round it just as it would a dew drop. We cannot suppose God to annul, alter or destroy his own perfect attributes.

The Israelites, at the command of God, through Moses, Num. xxxi, warred against the Midianites. All the male children and married women were ordered to be massacred, and the unmarried women to be given to their captives, and to be cut off. Thirty-two thousand maidens were thus distributed among them. How many men, women and children were butchered, the record does not show; and all done by the express command of God—"The Lord said unto Moses, 'Kill every male among the little ones.' The little ones all to be killed solely because they are males! and women and children, and all that are in their hands, and all young daughters to be handed over to become wives and concubines of those who had murdered their parents and defenceless infant brothers! And the Bible assures us all this was sanctioned by God, and the Churches of Christendom say they believe it. No one would believe it were the account in any other book; yet they profess to believe it because it is in the Bible.  
"Spirit.—This is the strongest passage you have written."  
We read in Judges xx: that the children of Israel went up to the heights of Beth-el, and the council of Him, saying, "Which of us shall go up first to battle against the children of Benjamin?" And the Lord said, Judah shall go up first. Judah went up first, but was defeated, with the loss of twenty-two thousand men. Again they inquired of the Lord, and the Lord said, "Go up against him;" and in the second onset Benjamin slew eighteen thousand of them. Again they inquired of the Lord, and the Lord said, "Go up against them;" and they delivered their hands. They went up—they surprised the Benjamites and slew twenty-five thousand. Thus, in these three battles, fought according to the Bible, by direct command of God, sixty-five thousand of God's children are slain, brother against brother! Call you this a God of Mercy?

"Spirit.—No; that is a God of wrath, while our Father is a God of Love."  
We have another dreadful account in 2 Sam. xxi: which states that God sent a famine in the days of David, for three years, and when they inquired of the Lord, he said it was for Saul and his bloody house—he slew the Gibeonites. We might ask, was that any worse than killing the Amalekites? However, to appease the wrath of the Lord, they hung up Saul's seven sons to atone for the sin of their father, and after that we are told, "God was entreated for the land."  
Is it reasonable to suppose that God moved David to number Israel, and then for his doing so, slew seventy thousand people innocent of David's sin, if sin it be? or that God slew fifty thousand men in one town for looking into the ark.  
As Elisha is journeying toward Beth-el, he falls in with a number of children, who, sportively, call him "Bald Head." For this trivial offence he curses them "in the name of the Lord," and there come forth two she bears from the wood and tear forty-two of them to pieces. 2 Kings, i, 23-24.  
By this we are taught that the Almighty God—the source of all loveliness, who fills all space with his glory, who is never swayed as man is by the impulse of passion—suddenly fell into a rage with children, and sent two infuriated wild beasts to destroy them! and all this because they cried out in mockery at the name of their Father! And what sort of a prophet or teacher of truth and goodness, both by word and action, could be he who could thus maliciously curse a child? Not so did Jesus, the greatest of all prophets. He evoked no curse, but blessings, even on his enemies; and as to children, he said, "Suffer little children to come unto me."

Seeing these things with a mind divested of the prejudice caused by early training, I am shocked by these atrocities; and many more might be

clted, committed under the pretended sanction of Jehovah. As likely would it be for the clouds to rain down fire, and burn up all vegetation, as that an all-loving Father should give his sanction to such iniquities.

Spirit.—"We like that; knowledge is too well diffused for men to believe all that is in the Bible."

Turn to Exodus, xxxiii: which represents God as exceedingly angry, and saying: "Let me alone that I may consume thee, and I will make of thee a great nation." But Moses is represented as remonstrating against such a wholesale slaughter; appeals to the Lord's ambition and vanity, and asks what the Egyptians will say of him if he does; tells him they will exit over him, etc. The Lord finally repents of the evil which he thought to do in killing the whole nation for that one act, sparing only Moses. But the Lord said, "Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp; and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor;" and there fell that day three thousand men. By this sacrifice, the Lord's anger was appeased.

And is God angry with men, passionate for revenge? Is he to be teased and exasperated for murder? Are we called on to believe this in the name of Christianity? It is true, there are men who profess to believe this to the letter—pious men, who find comfort therein, and count it part of their Christianity to believe it. Read the whole chapter, then contrast it with the idea, "God is Love, and reconciles the two if you can. It has been said with Paul, 'Peace be loved out fear.'" The converse is quite as true—fear casts out love. The superstitious man begins by fearing God, not loving him.

Spirit.—"We are pleased with every word."

This God of terror, fear, hatred, revenge, belongs to the Jews; one which they fashioned for themselves after their own image. Now, turn to the teachings of the blessed Jesus and his disciples: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God, for God is Love. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."

Look on that picture, then on this. Can two things be more essentially and eternally at war than are these two ideas of God? Yet we are told that both are true, and that we must learn to reconcile them.

As it is possible for human ingenuity to effect a compromise between the spirit that dictated the 106th Psalm, and that which dictated Luke vi:27-28? The spirit that controlled the Psalmist, led him to imprecate every conceivable curse and calamity upon his enemy, and upon his wife and children: "Let his days be few, and another take his office—let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow—let his children be continually vagabonds and beg—let them seek their bread, also, out of their desolate places—let the extortioner catch all that he hath, and let the stranger swallow up his labor. Let there be none to extend mercy unto him, neither let there be any to favor his fatherless children. Let his posterity be cut off, and in the generations following, let their name be blotted out. Let the iniquity of his father be remembered by the Lord, and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out. Let them be before the Lord continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth." And all this because his enemy had slandered him!

How different the spirit which influenced the heart of Jesus, which led him to say, "Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you; bless them that curse you and despitefully use you and persecute you."

Spirit.—"This is the true religion."

The great evil of the doctrine that the Bible as a whole is to be received as a truth, is that it lays one under the constant mental effort to reconcile contradictions in morals; to prove that which is false now was just one; that which is wrong now was right once, and what is inherently opposed to the nature of God, was once in harmony with it.

The word of God should be pure. Coming from a God of purity and holiness to teach men to be pure and holy, there should be nothing in it to sully the mind and thus befallize men. If the Bible had been God's book, and intended by him to be in the hands of all, he certainly would have made it fit for all to read. But many parts of the Bible are filthy, and unfit for the hands of young persons, and were they in any other book, a decent man would be ashamed for it to be seen in his house. How can that be the word of God which is so indecent to be read? what father would read out loud such parts to his daughters?

Spirit.—"That is a just criticism."

If God had written, or inspired men to write, a book which was to be man's guide to happiness and heaven, in all ages of the world, it would be filled with the most important truths, and that nothing would be found therein but what was of universal benefit? Now, all who have read the Bible with open eyes, know that a considerable portion of it is occupied with trifling matters of no importance to any one, and a great deal more is occupied with what might have been useful to the Jews, but do not in the least concern us. Look at the long and conflicting genealogies—the dreadful account of murder and rapine, and the numerous stories which can have no relation whatever to our well-being here or destiny hereafter.

What moral lesson is taught by telling us of Judah's intercourse with Tamar—of the Levites cutting up his concubine into twelve pieces, and distributing a piece to each of the twelve tribes—of David's killing and mutilating two hundred Philistines, that he might marry Saul's daughter—of David's numerous adulteries, and of David's dying charge to Solomon to bring down the hoary head of old Shimei to the grave with blood, because Shimei had cursed him.

Of what use is it to us how the tabernacle was built—how many curtains were made for it, and what the boards and beams of the ark were? Of what importance is it to us to know what kind of a dress Aaron wore—what the shoulder-pieces were composed of, and how it was fastened together? Such petty details might suit the cramped minds of a semi-barbarous people, but what world-wide use of beauty is there in them that they should be regarded by intelligent persons of the present day as divine oracles?

Who can believe that the God of Nature ever ordered a man to be decked out like a harlequin, in order that he might minister acceptably at his altar? Read the description of the breastplate, the ephod, the robe, the braided coat, the girdle, the mitre, and crown. Imagine a man decked out in all this gaudy show. Yet we are told that the quality, the cut, fashion, and trimming of the garments were all ordered by the "Being" who dwelt in the tabernacle, and from the Nile, and from the hills along with much that is unquestionably true.

I cannot believe that the waters of the Jordan ever stood in heaps like solid walls in the time of its flood, nor that the sun and moon stood still at the command of Joshua, or any other man. I cannot believe that in Noah's time a flood of water only twenty-seven and a half feet deep above the level of the sea, covered the Himalaya mountains, which are five miles high—fifteen cubits upwards did the waters prevail and the mountains were covered." A cubit is twenty-two inches.

I do not believe that the Egyptian magicians ever transformed rods into living serpents—that a whale's throat, no larger than my arm, ever swallowed a man—that the Israelites were brought from Egypt numbered 603,550 fighting men over twenty years of age, and to this we must add the old men, women and children to get the entire population. Those who have visited the plains where this vast host were said to have been, aver that by no possibility could every available spot of cultivable land in that whole region, from Sennar to the Mediterranean, and from the Nile to the Gulf afford food enough in one year to support that number for a single week; while water for

such a host could have been had nowhere. I cannot believe that the 600,000 slaves of the Egyptians, their brethren, 42,000 men—that the Benjaminites killed 40,000 men of Israel, nor that the latter retaliated, and killed 49,000 Benjaminites "in mighty men of valor"—that the Philistines slew of Israel 30,000 men—that the former had 30,000 chariots—that David slew 40,000 Syrian horsemen—that Pekah, king of Israel slew of Judah in one day 120,000 men, "all valiant and brave"—or that he carried away captive sons and daughters, women and fair maidens to the number of 200,000—that Abijah with 400,000 men went out to fight Jeroboam with 800,000, and beat him, leaving half a million Israelites dead on the field, to say nothing of his own losses, a carnage simply impossible. Waterloo's bloody field counted less than 600,000 dead. Manassas, Richmond's seven days' fighting, Fredericksburg, Antietam, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, with their mighty hosts, backed by Parrot guns, shell, grape, and Minnie bullets, filled cannon and revolving pistols, swords, carbines, heat and thirst, with all other dreadful engines, did not send half that number of souls to their long rest. How, then, is it possible to believe these Rabbinical statements?—and how can I believe that 12,000 Israelites slew all the males of an entire nation, the Midianites, and took captives all the little ones and women, without the loss of a man?

It is reasonable to suppose that if God had made or caused a book to be made that was to be a guide in the most important matters of youth and old, learned and unlearned, that it would have been written in the plainest possible manner, with no ambiguity, that all might understand and obey. A book full of mysteries can benefit no one. But the Bible contains a great deal that the mass of people cannot understand, and not a little that no one can understand.

Take the Book of Revelations, for instance. Hundreds of persons have written comments upon it, and yet there is no agreement upon its meaning; a proof that it is anything but plain. One supposes that it is the history of the Christian Church to the end of the world; another, that it refers to the destruction of Jerusalem and the wars of the Romans. Protestants think that it points in the very plainest manner to the Roman Emperor Nero, and the final destruction of Rome; while the Catholics are equally certain that it refers to the Anti-Christ Luther, and the final destruction of Protestantism. The greatest portion of Ezekiel is a cloud of thick darkness that the mind's eye seeks in vain to penetrate; and the same may be said of Daniel. In fact, except the historical part of the Bible, a great proportion of it is dark and mysterious, and comparatively little of it plain and easy to be understood. Hence we have many contending sects and parties, each professing to make the Bible its guide and standard, yet all satisfied that the rest are wrong.

The Bible is so dark that it reflects the image of every sect professed to be based upon its teachings. The Methodist looks therein, and he sees the religious system of John Wesley. The Calvinist sees his partial, cruel God, and the everlasting damnation of all but the chosen few, to which the Unitarian, the ultimate felicity of all. In short, every one sees the image of his own belief, as in a mirror, and persuades himself that he alone is right. If the Bible were not obscure, there could not be this world-wide difference among honest, well-meaning men, as thousands of sectarians are.

Many think that the doctrine of the Trinity is connected with the writings of the Apostles, yet history has made its origin a matter of dispute. The sentiments of the primitive Christians for the first three centuries were pretty uniform, but in the reign of Constantine a dispute arose between two bishops of Alexandria—Arius and Alexander—which soon spread into other Churches, inflaming bishop against bishop, and exciting the most deadly strife and hatred against each other. The controversy related to the character of Christ; one maintained the unity of God, while the other contended that the son was "consubstantial with the Father." Nothing was ever said of the "third person," that came in long after, nor was the word Trinity ever mentioned.

It was to settle this question that the Council of Nice was in fact assembled; the making of the Bible was a secondary consideration, and came up incidentally. The Council decided in favor of Alexander, and proceeded to draw up the "Nicene Creed," and to anathematize all who dared entertain a different opinion.

The Scriptures were then no longer the standard of the Christian faith; what was Orthodox and what Heterodox was to be determined by the decisions of Fathers and Councils, and enforced by imperial edicts and decrees. The new doctrine of the old were handed down to a council, then to the one and then the other being in the ascendant. Now the Orthodox are deposed, the Arians substituted in their places, with the murder of thousands, and new bishops introduced into their churches by armed soldiers, and when once in possession they treated those who differed from them without mercy. Then again the Synod of A. D. 375, after two months' consultation, decided in favor of "the Son's being like the Father or to his essence," to be the true Orthodox faith, and deposed all the bishops of the Arian party. This highly exasperated the Emperor Valens, who convened a Council of Arian bishops, transferring their churches to their opponents.

In the year 378, Gratian, of the Orthodox party, ascended the throne. He recalled those that had been banished, and drove the Arians like wild beasts out of their churches.

In 383 the Second General Council was assembled at Constantinople, "in order to confirm the Nicene faith." Here, then, is the origin and progress of the doctrine of the Trinity. During all this time the controversy was confined to "the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son;" several centuries rolled on before the personality of the Holy Spirit was brought in, nor was the dispute finally settled until the Council of Trent in 1562 fixed the doctrine of "three in one and one in three" upon the Christian Church.

[CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.]

For the Banner of Light. LINES. THROUGH MRS. CARRIE Y. McLELLAN—WASHINGTON, D. C.

The earth was shaken with terrific thunder. That sounded far and wide, And shed o'er Washington's great city A pall of warfare's tide.

The cannon told its fearful story, As loudly booming, its shot it sped, Marking with a desolation gory, Its pathway o'er the early dead.

Soldiers with earnest looks and mien Went forth from out their earthly screen, And bade defiance to the band That would pollute a nation's land.

Man takes his course, and vengeance falls With fearful force. Lo! rise the dead, That waken from their bloody bed, On the bright spirit's happy shore.

There, lost in wonder, joy, and peace, Each mortal feels immortal life, And greets once more familiar face.

Still voices fall from spirit-land, To every patriot on every hand, "Your country cries—it begs—it bleeds For Justice, aye, for honest deeds! Oh, will ye let it die indeed, For want of truth, in want of good Merely, for politicians' food?"

Al, no! remember the early fathers stood With planted foot, uplifted hand, Upon a glorious, free-born land; And now with eyes and ears more clear, Mark a nation's action on earth's sphere.

Oh, listen ere it be too late! A people's pride and boast should be Justice and Truth and Purity."

Al! loud and fearful is the storm That's gathering round the quiet home! For Vengeance treads with awful feet The Nation's path—and small and great Must feel the force of heavenly fate, "Till Truth is come, and Justice done In all the land of Washington."

Written for the Banner of Light. A PLEA FOR THE TEMPTED.

BY MARY ANN WHITAKER.

"But go ye, and learn what that meaneth; I will have mercy, and not sacrifice."

Swift rolling centuries have passed since He, The holy one, in whom was found no guile, Dade men, self-righteous, solve the mystery Of those strange words, nor the weak heart revive.

When striving 'gainst the fierce and angry sweep Of dark Temptation's waters, as they rise, And onward rush across the mighty deep Of life, o'erwhelming all its sympathies; And yet our hands we coldly, proudly wave, Unlike His hand stretched forth to sink the soul to save.

Man scorns his fallen brother, even now, Though Christ's pure teachings echo through the land.

He stands erect, with stern and haughty brow, The strictest retribution to demand; And the poor sinner, trampled in the dust, Bears to his grave the footsteps of disdain; He looks around, but finds no place of trust Where he may rest, in hope to rise again.

Relentless glances freeze the blessed tears, Which angels consecrate, and penitence endears.

Shame on the coward Pharisees that spurn The trembling, erring child of grief and sin, Who longs, yet fears to speak of thoughts which burn

On the stained altar, once so fair, within That glorious temple of humanity, Now desecrated, yet not ruined all; Oh! Love's restoring power, so strong and free, Alone can answer the wild spirit-cry, And by a thrilling music of its own, Change every burning thought to sorrow's gentlest tones.

Where, where are they, the champions of our faith, Whose bosoms throb with impulses divine? Headless of all that worldly wisdom saith In Reason's name, they wait not to define The complicated causes that have led Fraught human beings down the rocky steep Of Error, with a rapid, whirling tread, Till, dizzy and affrighted, they would leap Into the dark abyss of woe; but there, Even there God's servants haste to save them from despair.

On wings of love they fly, and fondly clasp The drooping form so sullied and debased; No worldly's taunt can loosen their firm clasp, Which close, and closer grows, till hopes are ceased

By iron Prejudice once more are free; That casket shivers at Compassion's touch, And the warm sunlight of the life to be Renews the softening heart, though overmuch It sinned. Who knows how long such hearts have striven, Bruised, crushed, unaided, lone, by vain men unforgiven?

Hopeful, we turn our yearning gaze around This busy, moving scene of mortal strife, Believing Christian heroes may be found, Steadfast and pure, to lead us on where life Immortal flows from the Eternal source, Transparent, pure, bursting the icy chains, Designed by rigid formalists to force The free-born mind to own their ruthless claims. Alas! how few stand true to Liberty, That glorious heritage of humanity!

Rise, soldiers of the Cross! your leader lives! Lift your glad eyes to yonder home of peace, Whence he surveys the struggling world, and gives

New power to wield the weapons of release— Rise, in the strength of Him whose name ye bear, Fight the good fight of faith for all who mourn, Victims of sin, oppressed by wrong and care, Down-trodden by the world, despised, forsorn— Upl rest not till the victory be won! Till Christ triumphant reign, till His great work be done! St. Louis, Mo., 1864.

Correspondence.

Practical Spirituality—An Appeal for the Suffering Unionists.

There was a time when every moral impulse which filled a conscious nature with inward satisfaction was regarded as the Holy Spirit, so that Christianity came down to us baptized in its very essence with the idea of spirit influence. Too vague and mythical are all the expressions of religious literature for the metaphysician, who would base the laws of mind upon a natural and firm basis, with its superstructure symmetrical and beautiful, the handiwork of a divine artist, who had studied the sculptured souls of all creation, and imaged forth in man the omnipresent principle of intelligence in its perfection. For want of a true appreciation of divine or perfect harmony, we have had, like the prodigal, upon the husks, and now the present age of reason and free thought calls aloud for the fatted calf to be slain, and the great family of mankind to be gathered together for a feast of rejoicing that our erring brothers are still with us, and not cast out of the humanitarian church, or the brotherhood of God, to wander alone with the passionate and selfish swine, and partake of their unsatisfying food, haggard and pale for want of a full and generous diet. The day when devils and diseased conditions were synonymous is being revived, with the latter as the most prominent idea instead of the former, and preachers of the sublime truths of love and humanity are quite willing that many theological notions which have hung as dead weights about Christianity should lie submerged beneath a rational religion which has for its object the cultivation of the moral nature. That cultivation is founded upon a recognition of a germ of divinity implanted within every human mind, and by right of its divine origin and nature is yet to stand forth in its growth of freedom, an emancipated deity, that shall with one hand forge into plowshares and pruning-hooks the shackles that once bound its limbs, and with the other grasp the sword that determines the destinies of Empire and States, and say, "Peace, be still!" Then the passionate elements shall listen to the song that comes through all of Nature's harmonies, written in glowing letters, and vocal to the enraptured ear, "Peace on earth and good will to man."

The descent of the holy principle which rules and governs the universe was not more marked at Pentecost than it is to-day, when the language of Nature is so recognized that every man can hear and see in his own native tongue the words of humanity uttered and written on the bulletin, as telegraphic dispatches that come from the internal battery wherein is generated every motive and impulse. It is the day prophesied of when "the watchman should see eye to eye, and know-

edge should increase." He who lives true to himself, whose aspirations are for divine growth, will receive those inspirations which will link him to all the magnetic centres from which are radiated divine intelligence, and he may be said to be in rapport with Deity, and a most perfect image of Deity himself. But as the shell is often more conspicuous than its contents, and must be necessarily sacrificed in the perfection and growth of the germ, so the old forms, the old theologues, must decay in the incubation and birth of higher conditions.

The dawning light of to-day reveals where we have slumbered in the night of the past. Real practical benevolence is the watchword of souls standing at the threshold of heaven, and they who, infatuated by passion and selfishness, are wandering by the moonbeam's misty light to seek some easy couch or rose-scented bower of repose, and cling to the drapery of mysterious marvellousness, selling the gift of God for pieces of silver, will, like Judas of old, blindly fall from the rugged heights of sublime grandeur where they have stood in the presence of Deity of old, they betray him with a kiss into the hands of those who would cast lots for the spotless robe of purity, and place thorns upon the head of the just, till drops of grief and bloody sweat trickle down the face, and cruel thrusts bring forth the exclamation, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" Ye upon whose vision has burst the floodgate of everlasting light, proclaiming freedom and deliverance from the thralldom of the past, why stand ye at the giddy shrine of pleasure, idly intoxicated with your petty schemes for happiness and a name, in the worship of idols you have carved with your own hands, while the cry of the mourner is heard in the land and the wretched souls you have starved are crying to you for light, and seeking at your hands sympathy, encouragement, and aid?

The great battle between Gog and Magog is being fought. Hundreds of thousands of sufferers are martyrs, by loss of everything that life holds dear for the cause of freedom. The freed, themselves, fly in destitution together, only to suffer from fear of those who hunt, shoot and rob them, to whom they are indebted for property and wealth. They stand dying upon the shores of the great Father of Waters for want of food and clothing and knowledge. Family after family of white and black refugees, in the most squalid wretchedness and poverty, are coming to these shores for protection. Are those who ignore the Church for want of pure benevolence, who assume to contend for the weightier matters of the law, justice, temperance and mercy to be without commissions for their aid? Is it necessary that Spiritualists become organized into a body before they can send men and women, money, food and clothing to the suffering? If so, then in the name of humanity, be ye organized; if not, let it no longer be said to you, "By your fruits shall ye know them," that while "Christian Commissions" and "Sanitary Commissions" of every other name abound, that nowhere are the Spiritualists represented in the great work of humanity and benevolence. While they are rich and influential, ready for every good word and work, they have nowhere agents, or teachers, or commissions to give dignity to the great cause of social and political progress by occupying the field of usefulness and labor, upon principles corresponding with the liberality and charity which they hold forth, uninfused, as not many societies are, like their representatives, by the bigoted and sectarian lines which they draw for the guidance of their charities. Hence the popular soldier, who is paid by Government and furnished by Government with liberal rations and food when well or sick, is the almoner of popular commissions, while the poor, and ignorant, and suffering die in sight of well-stored buildings for a more fortunate, but none the less deserving class.

To-day I met a woman living in a wretched hut with eight of her children, several grandchildren, and others, who says she has had nineteen children, five of whom are in the Union army, six are dead, and eight are with her, with nothing but the cold ground for a bed, suffering from disease and inclemency of weather. As I went from the wretched dwelling to another where were congregated women and children in the same condition, another said, "I have five sons in the army, fighting for freedom." And yet she, like thousands of others who have borne and raised up defenders of our country's honor, the martyrs for freedom in a darker hue, are gathered together in camps, women and children, whose husbands, fathers and sons are conscripted. In their closely crowded huts, rudely built, you will find an old woman learning her letters, with her children, half naked, around the blazing fire, terrified at the thought of guerrillas or rebel soldiers, who treat them without mercy.

Is there not work here for practical Spiritualists and philanthropists? and is it not consistent with the position by which you wish to contradict distinguish yourselves from others? There is a fascination in words fitly spoken, come they from intelligences in the form or out, but there is a more sublime significance in deeds that dry the tears of anguish, that warm the freezing heart, desolate and weary with want and suffering and pain.

Are the millions of Spiritualists, whose very name links them to the most benevolent and pure that ever trod the earth, who went about doing good, feeding the hungry and staying the tide of misery, the teacher and saviour of his age, who spoke the parable that illustrated the spirituality of the kingdom of heaven in these words, "I was an hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was naked, and ye clothed me; I was in prison, and ye visited me," to stand idle amid scenes like these?

Is the kingdom of heaven, of spirituality, to degenerate, its light be hidden under the bushel of selfishness, and its only landmarks through the land be its arcades of selfish and passionate pleasure, its mercenary psychometrists, its fortune-tellers, its clairvoyants, its showmen? Is all the mediumship of the land to be sacrificed upon the altar of Mammon—a trade by the side of jugglers, advertised and made the capital stock of a lucrative employment?

If not, then in the name of the angels of mercy—who would be glad to use the humblest agency for good—take a position in your country's misfortune worthy your numbers, your intelligence, and your noblest aspirations. Such a work is necessary for your vitality and permanence; for want of it your convocations and gatherings are overrun with speculative theorists and monomaniacal hobbyists, from whose visionary harangues arise contentious bickerings and animosities that endanger your future influence and usefulness. The intellectual mind wants work; the moral as well, or its efforts will become abortive, and diseased from misdirection, become sickly and weak, the prey of idle passions or ambitious motives, till the otherwise nobler nature is wrecked on the shoals of deceit. Let the spirituality of Spiritualism but be the watchword; purity and benevolent action be inscribed upon its banners, then would it go forth, and its leaves would be for the healing of the nations. The darkest caverns of misery and want would be illuminated by its rays, and

no power could stay its onward progress. It would cause the desert to blossom like the rose, and bring the blest of the spirit-world into rapport with the generous souls of this, till love, goodwill, kindness and harmony would drown the spirit of passion and hate.

J. DWIGHT STILLMAN, A. A. Surgeon, U. S. A., Columbus, Ky.

Overland Sketches.—No. 2.

DEAR BANNER—Again from the land of sunset I greet you and your many readers with a few brief sketches. We are now encamped for a few days to recruit our teams, upon a beautiful stream on the western slope of the Rocky Mountains, sixty miles from Salt Lake City.

While ascending the mountains, for many days before we reached Ft. Laramie, we saw Laramie Peak, whose snow-capped summit, high reared amid the clouds, seemed almost to join the shadow-land with ours. The scenery along our road is beautiful, ay, even grand, and defies my poor powers of description. Yet its grandeur does not come up to my expectations. Instead of passing through deep defiles and ragged gorges, with craggy cliffs towering mountain-high on either side, as I had supposed, our pathway has been smooth and almost unbroken over the top of the Rocky Mountains. The chief objects of interest along our journey on the eastern slope of the mountains, were the rocky bluff on either side of the Platte and Sweetwater rivers. These bluffs are not high, but old father Time, with his chisels of wind and storm, has beautifully carved their perpendicular sides into fanciful and grotesque shapes, making them resemble ancient castles, towers, and fortifications.

The Devil's Gate is composed of granite rocks forming a solid wall over four hundred feet high, on either side of the Sweetwater, a beautiful stream, whose surface seemed like a polished mirror, reflecting the perpendicular walls and the blue sky above, until the beholder fancies he has found a gateway to a beautiful world below. Inscribed high upon the walls of this gate are the names of hundreds who have passed on to the land of gold. Why this should be called the Devil's Gate I cannot tell; it seemed to me more like an entrance to paradise.

As we neared the South Pass, the lofty, snow-capped peaks of the Wind River Mountains presented a cold but beautiful contrast to the scenery we had left behind, yet one-half of their grandeur is lost to the beholder, for he cannot see them until he has more than half way ascended to their summit. Our descent down the western slope of the mountain, for nearly two hundred miles, is the same smooth and almost unbroken roadway which characterized that of the eastern slope. The surrounding scenery, however, is changed, for upon three sides of us are high mountains, whose snowy summits are lost amid the clouds—the Wind River on the northeast, the Bear on the west, and the Uintah on the south. Nestled upon a little stream which winds its way through the latter into the Great Salt Lake, is our present encampment. Close by, and on either side of us, these mountains rear their snowy heads. One of our party has just returned with a full fall of snow gathered from the top of the nearest. It was certainly a rarity for midsummer.

Our journey thus far has been a very pleasant one, the weather fair, and in the mountains quite cool. We have encountered but one storm since we left Iowa, and that was more terrific than I thought it possible for me to behold. The clouds commenced gathering about noon, and as they drew near they grew dense and still more dense, until it seemed as if one-half the sky was veiled in midnight darkness. And thus it continued to gather the blackened clouds of heaven, as if preparing for the mighty combat. We halted, pitched our tents, and prepared for the worst. About dark the storm broke forth in thunder peals above our heads, and the lightning danced in mystic majesty, lighting up the dense darkness, not at intervals as I had seen it in the States, for there was no cessation until nearly day-break. The rain fell not as is usual in thunder storms, but the whole heaven of blackened clouds seemed condensed to water, and fell in one vast sheet, submerging the land surrounding our encampment in about eight inches of water; but the morning dawned again as calm, and the sun looked forth as if forgetful of the stormy past, and we passed on our way rejoicing.

We have passed hundreds of men and women, mostly with ox teams, bound for Idaho, California, Nevada, and Oregon. Nearly all exhibit happy, smiling faces as they greet us with, "Where are you from? whither are you bound?"

Although we have traveled hundreds of miles without seeing a human habitation save that of the red man, yet we have been in the constant society of numerous friends and familiar faces; not only have those of this sphere contributed to our happiness by their presence along our tedious journey, but the immortal ones from the summer-land have also been with us. Especially have they allayed our fears in regard to Indian depredations, which the emigrant is sure to hear have been perpetrated a little ways ahead. Through Mrs. Mary E. Beach—who with her husband and only daughter, like myself, are seeking on the shores of the Pacific the boon of health which they lost in the East—a fine test and speaking medium, come the denizens of the summer-land.

One evening after arriving at our camping ground, tired and weary with our day's travel, four red men of the mountains rode up and dismounted near our ponies. One aged man, claiming to be a chief, presented us with a paper, written by some officer at Ft. Laramie, saying that he was a chief, friendly, and worthy to be treated as a brother. And as brothers we greeted them; gave them a place at our table, which was upon the green carpet Mother Nature had spread so beautifully around us. After finishing our meal and while trying to make them understand us, Mrs. Beach was controlled by one of their tribe—a Sioux brave. She raised her hands and head as if in prayer. The old chief bowed his head and wept, saying, "That is good, that is good." She then talked to him of the beautiful hunting-ground the Great Spirit had prepared for his red children beyond the river of death—of his own loved children who had passed before him. They then entered into conversation, he asking and she answering questions. Although we could not understand them, yet it was interesting to see with what intense eagerness those red men listened to catch each word as it fell from the medium's lip.

The old chief who could speak a little English, said she talked to him in his own proper dialect. This was a good test for the few skeptics in our company. To us it was a holy communion with the inhabitants of the spirit-world. They left us pleased and happy, telling us that the Great Spirit would bless us—that we were good pale-faces, and that they loved us—that we had no fears of the Indians on our journey. Oh! how much better it would be to treat the Indians according to father Beeson's plan than according to that of our Christian civilization!

Mrs. Beach has talked with three different nations of Indians, all understanding her as well as

one of their own brethren; yet she, in her normal state, knows no other tongue than the English.

We have passed several new graves, with headboards informing us that the occupants were killed by Indians. Yet we have never been treated better by white men than by these same Indians.

Before leaving the subject of the Indians I will describe a Sioux grave—if it could be called a grave. It consisted of four posts driven into the ground.

Since writing the above we have arrived at Great Salt Lake City. But of this city and this beautiful valley, and of its inhabitants, the length of this letter admonishes me to defer speaking until some future time.

Yours for the right, Mrs. C. M. STOWE. Chalk Creek, Utah Ter., July 14, 1864.

Letter from New Orleans.

In the midst of "wars and rumors of wars," the peaceful folds of the dear BANNER OF LIGHT, with its "glad tidings of great joy," come down to me with their heavenly treasures, breathing of peace, and love, and harmony, and a heaven near to us, and everything so good and true, what wonder that I hail with eager, thankful heart, the medium of unfranchised spirits—some from the flesh, others from mental and religious thralldom?

When the eyes grow weary of beholding the ceaseless accumulations of War's horrible paraphernalia, and the soul sickens and revolts at the narration and realization of this terrible sanguinary conflict that absorbs all else with its exciting intensity, then it is that the contemplation of a page containing communications from spirits dear to us in this spirit-life also, fills the soul with joy unspeakable, and brings us nearer to the fact, that despite all the conflict and strife between the inhabitants of earth, those in spirit-life and those in this "lower sphere" are certainly drawing nearer each other, and approximating toward a loving union of the two worlds. May God vouchsafe to us, through the instrumentality of his "ministering spirits," as full a union of love and confidence between man and his brother man, as between mortals and spirits.

It is impossible, dear BANNER, for me to write you anything about Spiritualism and its believers (if it has any in New Orleans), for I have not seen a single Spiritualist since I came South, excepting those from the North, who are with the Army, of whom there are a large number, I am told, including several officers of high rank. There may be Spiritualists amongst the citizens here, but being a "Yankee," and knowing how obnoxious everything that savors of Yankeeism do to the Crooles (the name here for everything native to the city or State), I have taken pains to do as they have desired of "Father Abram," "Let them alone."

Since favorable conditions are requisite to a spiritual state of mind, I doubt not my communication will be full of the doings of this world. As I write, everything breathes of the "earth earthy," excepting the BANNER on the table where I write. The steady, measured tread of the patrol guard rings out from the sun-heated sidewalk, and the deep rumbling of wheels tells of artillery dragging their murderous weapons of war to and from various barracks in and about the city. Near me, on one hand, a massive pile of brick and mortar rears aloft its dark form, and from many a quaint, venerable looking gable rises a huge cross (typical of the God therein worshipped), which answers as an unmistakable label, and says, "Cathedral."

On the other, looms up a less imposing piece of architecture of the same material, indicated to be "Parish Prison" by a troop of hard-visaged mortals, who find their way thither every morning from the numerous courts of justice. The most noxious plants and poisonous vegetation grow rankest in the shade. Thus, the temples reared by man shut out the sunlight of God, and crime and sin flourish as a result.

New Orleans may not be a worse city than any other, but I think one can truly say there are as many causes brought before the various Police, Provost, and other Courts each week, as there are church-communicants on the Sabbath in this temple of worship, numerous though they be.

There is an opinion that poverty produces more crime than any other cause. If so, New Orleans has plenty of material on hand, or will have anon. The prices that prevail here for the common necessities of life, make it nearly impossible for people to live who have a very small income.

Walking through the Market of a morning, inquires, "How much apiece for those chickens?" (half grown.) "\$1.50, madam." Look dissatisfied with the price, and you are assured they are "Creole chickens, madam." As though the information would silence all objections!

"How much apiece for those peaches?" "Forty cents—Creole peaches, madam"—the invariable clichee resorted to when a word or a look evidences a difference of opinion as regards value.

"How much, per dozen are your oranges?" "Three dollars—fine oranges, madam."

"So they should be;" and remembering how much better I had bought for thirty cents per dozen in Boston, make no purchase. Strawberries, in their season, sold for one dollar and fifty cents per box, which would be considered dear at ten cents in Boston. Fruit is a necessity in this climate, and where it grows so abundantly, almost spontaneously, one would expect to pay at least fifty per cent. less than at the North; but "Creole" is equivalent to Rebel (in the opinion of one Yankee, at least), and the fruit-vendors, &c., seem determined to try and maintain the exorbitant prices that ruled under the "reign" of Jeff Davis, when gold sold at \$12.50 instead of \$2.50. And so long as the authorities do not interfere, they are successful to a great degree.

This is one of the richest States on the continent, the resources of which have never yet been developed. The "upas," Slavery, blighted all the enterprise that has ever been introduced here, and thousands of acres of land are waiting for Democracy to supersede Aristocracy, to make glad the hearts of hundreds of homeless men and women, who need but meagre capital, if possessed of much energy, to make this desert waste of uncultivated land blossom like the rose. A shrewd Yankee farmer would hardly credit his own senses, if he were to see the implements used here for tilling the soil (they are three hundred years behind New England), and the rich reward which comes of their poorly executed labor.

Think of the prolific productions of this country under its farmers and present management, and ask, "What may we not expect when the old shall give place to the new?" Let there be a

rejuvenation of Creole capital and Yankee enterprise half as many years as there has been of Anglo-Saxon and African blood in this country, and the wealth of the State would be increased an hundred fold, ay, a thousand.

The health of this climate cannot be disputed, since the "Yankees" have demonstrated to a certainty that "cleanness is next to Godliness," and notwithstanding the numerous predictions (accompanied with prayers that it might be so) of the rebels, that yellow fever would soon make way with the contemptible "Yankees," we find that Yankee prudence and cleanliness have as fully non-plussed "Yellow Jack," as rebel wisecracks and prophecies have been disappointed. Two months of summer are gone, and the city and parish are both remarkably healthy. Thanks to the vigilance of such able Post Commanders as Generals Butler and Banks.

The announcement of the Grand National Convention at Chicago, fills me with a longing desire to be with the many noble and true hearts that will meet there. My heart responds to the call, and if impossible to be there in propria persona, I shall be in spirit, and hope to be remembered as one still true to the faith.

Thine for Truth and the Right, LAURA DEFORCE GORDON. New Orleans, La., July 30, 1864.

For the Banner of Light. LINES. WRITTEN AT THE GRAVE OF A YOUNG FRIEND.

BY JOYCE JOYCELIN.

Tread lightly, speak gently, For here 'neath the shade Of the cypress and myrtle, Sweet Elsie is laid. Where the fragrant sweetbriar, And the jessamines climb, And the wild flowers blossom To the brook's mellow chime; In the vale of her birth, Just in life's summer morn, Perished Elsie; oh, Elsie! Thou hast left us forlorn.

So graceful thy beauty, So guileless thy truth— Oh! why hast thou fallen In the spring of thy youth? Fair rose of our valley, Like the roses of June, Though withered, they still yield A fragrant perfume; So thy beauty still liveth— In our inner heart glows, And a hallowed sweetness O'er our memory throws.

When the spring-birds were joyous, And hillsides were green, And the maye-buds crimson, And mignonette seen, Her step was as light As the nimble gazelle's, And as blithe was her song As the glad marriage bells, Till death, cruel death— Without warning came he, In the bloom of her youth Struck down lovely Elsie.

Then tread lightly, speak softly, For here 'neath the shade Of the cypress and myrtle, Her grave we have made; Long the murmuring brooklet Where the violets bloom, In the spot that she loved, We have made her a tomb; And though tears wet the grass Of her grave 'neath the tree, Yet we know a bright angel Art thou, lovely Elsie.

Spiritual Phenomena.

A Remarkable Manifestation of Spirit Power in the Fine Arts.

In a former communication I gave an account of the portrait of a child with her guardian angel, painted by an old gentleman of this city, in vision, through spirit-power. I have now to give an account of a similar manifestation, which, to my surprise, comes much nearer home to me.

My wife, who is a medium of varied powers, on seeing the portrait above alluded to, expressed in the hearing of the artist medium, that she would like of all things, to possess a portrait of our daughter, who departed this world some eighteen years ago, when she had only passed ten months in this earthly existence. After giving this expression to her desire, we thought no more of the matter. Two or three weeks subsequently, our artist friend told my wife that he desired her to come to his residence—that he had something of exceeding interest to show her. So soon as opportunity presented, my wife went to the residence of the medium artist, and to her amazement, was shown a life-size portrait of a young woman of nineteen years of age, whom she readily recognized as our daughter. Of course my wife told me of the wonder, and as soon as convenient, we went together to see the picture.

On looking at the portrait, I was more than surprised. Without saying a word I gazed upon it for full a quarter of an hour. There were half-a-dozen ladies present at the time, and they were anxiously awaiting some expression from me. Finally, I said: "Mr. Starr," addressing the medium artist, "I sincerely trust that picture is a portrait of my daughter as she now is in the spirit-world." Mr. Starr replied: "It is a portrait, as much as the gross material of paint and brush, in my hands through spirit-power, could make it."

I asked how it was painted, and Mr. Starr proceeded to explain: That soon after he heard the wish expressed by my wife to have a picture of our daughter, he was deeply impressed to execute a portrait; and some days thereafter he was absolutely impelled to take paint, brush and canvas, and go to work; and when about to begin, with all materials collected together, a most beautiful vision presented itself, of a young woman; and then, with that vision before him, to work he was impelled to go, his hand, in the execution of the picture, being guided by spirit-power. He exercised no volition about it, his hand and brain and eyes seemed to be possessed by another. He did no brain work; he exercised no intellect in the production of the picture, but was merely an instrument with all material prepared in the hands of a higher power.

"But, oh," says Mr. Starr, "if you could only have seen that young spirit woman, as I saw her. To say that that picture represents truly what I saw in vision, would be a gross outrage; what I saw was spirit-form, feature and lineament; that picture is of the earth earthy."

He then went on to describe his vision, and I

must confess, his description was far superior to the picture.

"But nevertheless," concluded Mr. Starr, "that picture is as good a representation of what I saw in vision, as paint, brush and canvas could make it."

And now to the picture itself. It is that of a young woman, apparently about nineteen years of age—the age that our daughter would have been had she survived upon earth. She holds in her left hand beautiful flowers of the "Forget-me-not," and with her right hand and index finger, her arm across her bosom, she points to them, as if she were reminding us to forget her not. She is of blonde complexion, golden hair in ringlets, blue eyes, and full face, with singularly regular features, all of which were the eminent characteristics of our child. But a peculiar characteristic is that of a pouting under-lip which belonged to our child. She looks more like my wife than myself, yet there is a combination of the likenesses of both my wife and myself in the picture, and this every one who has seen the picture has observed, and think it remarkable. The dress is of a beautiful azure color, and covered over the shoulders with a mantle of lace of most exquisite workmanship. This lace painting is truly skillful. On the right shoulder is a beautiful, small white rose. And all this white and azure, the artist told us, was emblematic of purity and truth. From the top of the forehead shines an effulgent star, its rays beaming upward, and its centre made resplendent by the insertion of a "gem of purest ray serene." The artist told us he was obliged to insert this gem in the centre of the star, to give any idea of the brightness of the pure star which he saw in vision. What is most curious to observe is, that the portrait seems to be in a kind of haze. How this effect is produced, I know not, but it is remarked by all who have seen the picture. It does not, indeed, look quite like the production of mortal hands alone.

As to the character of the painting, I do not think a connoisseur in art would place it on the highest plane; but even with them it would be considered a good painting. The artist medium, Mr. Starr, has always been an amateur painter, but he wholly disclaims being a professional artist, and besides, he is now over sixty years of age. He tells us he cannot paint now in his normal condition. So soon as he undertakes to paint, he gets at once under spiritual influence, and some spirit guides his hand. He has executed recently several other spiritual paintings.

This painting of my daughter was exhibited by the medium artist, at the hall some Sunday ago, before the congregation of progressive Spiritualists, and all recognized the combination likeness in it of my wife and myself, and thought it truly remarkable. No one failed to observe the singularly hazy atmosphere which seemed to belong to the picture. I was called upon by the audience to speak of the picture, and I did so in some fifteen minutes' narration and reflection, and concluded by assuring the audience that the picture was certainly a portrait of our daughter, as we would expect to see her now, if so we could, in the spirit-land. A. G. W. C. Cincinnati, O., July 6th, 1864.

[We have received from our friend, D. H. Shaffer, of Cincinnati, a photographic copy of the picture above described, together with ten others, one being that of a child of Mrs. Anna E. Carver, formerly Miss Anna E. Kenley, of this city. The child is represented as being brought in the arms of its guardian. It was immediately recognized by Mrs. C., as being a picture of her child. The other picture is a group, in which a young lady is represented as having just received a letter announcing the death of her betrothed in battle. Near by stands the spirit of the departed, seeking to impress the young lady with his presence. The scene has been recognized.]

Mediumship Among the Contrabands.

MY DEAR BANNER—Are you willing to receive one more paper from an old subscriber and contributor? If so, you are at liberty to publish this, and I may send another, if material should offer of sufficient interest to fill a place in your columns.

I am in the service of our venerable old relative, Uncle Samuel, and have been since last spring. I am First Lieutenant in a Wisconsin regiment, and we are doing picket duty about three miles from this city. We see but little of the enemy actually in arms. There are, however, any quantity of enemies in the city and all around us; but Gen. Washburne knows how to handle the Chivalry, and where to put them when they get too blatant.

We have just had a sharp fight at Tupelo, between Generals A. J. Smith on our side, and Forrest on the part of the rebels, in which Forrest was wounded, and his army badly whipped. There is another expedition on foot that will move ere long.

We had a terrible steamboat accident, by which we lost many brave soldiers, mostly belonging to the Tenth Missouri Cavalry. I saw the boys when they came ashore from the wreck, and while they gave evidence of sorrow for the loss of their comrades, they were still ready and willing to fight and whip rebels.

The negro is here in great abundance, and is virtually free. No slaveholder in this city, or State, at present, pretends to hold or retain them. The negro character is one of great interest to me, and should be to every Spiritualist. It is intuitive, inspirational, religious and mediumistic. They are good, natural, jolly fellows, and make the best of soldiers, and are always faithful to the Union cause. I said that the negro is mediumistic. My reasons for saying so are—First, a knowledge of the properties in man that warrant mediumship; Second, in the fact that they have amongst them those who see spirits, foretell events, and recognize influences. They, of course, from their religious training as slaves, believe it is God, or Jesus, who influences them. We know that it is of God, and through his agents the spirits and angels.

I saw an old, grey-headed negro, a slave from Mississippi, an exhorter in the colored Methodist congregation, and he told me thus:

"Why, Massa Lieutenant, we knowd all 'bout dis war long ago; do good Lord cum an' told it to do ones dat he talk wid. Massa, I saw de Lord in his own home up yonder in de skies, and he told dis poor child dat he should live to see de glory of de Lord, and dat de niggers should be free. But, Massa Lieutenant, de Lord showd dis chille more den dat."

"Well, Uncle Ben, what did he show you?" "He showed me dat after many years de colored people should pass away like de red man, and be no more in dis country. Dat I did not like; but de Lord knowd what is right, bless him."

"Well, Uncle Ben, when did the Lord show and tell you all this?" "He showed me dis ting more'n ten years gone; an' my ole woman's mother saw dis war when she was a little gal, and dar is more'n fifty dat I knows on who saw dis war long time ago."

On the 4th of July I was at the Negro Camp,

near our regiment, when I noticed a negro man looking earnestly and mournfully at one of the soldiers, a negro also.

"Well, my man, what do you see about that man, or soldier?" said I.

"What?—me?—dat soldier? Nothin'."

"But hold on, my man; what were you looking at, if you saw nothing?"

"Well, Massa Lieutenant, dat soldier die 'fore long."

"How do you know?"

"Cause I seed it."

"What did you see?"

"I saw de light over his head, and I saw de black spot in de middle of de light, and when I sees dat light wid de black spot in it, den I knows de person is gwine to die; but when I sees de light and dar is no dark dare, den I know he is gwine to live."

"Do you see anything about me?" I asked.

He looked at me earnestly for a few moments, then there came a light, spasmodic shudder over him, he waved his hand toward me, and said:

"De good Lord talk with you, and shows you more'n he does this chille;" and then walked off.

I then talked with the negro soldier referred to. I found him well, his pulse regular, and his tongue gave no evidence of fever. Ten days after this, the negro soldier was borne to his long home in the spirit-land.

Now, Mr. Editor, every medium will at once recognize in these traits, mediumship. We know what it is. There is considerable interest here on the subject of Spiritualism, and my mediumship attracts a good deal of attention; and I am so situated that I can give considerable time to the discussion of the subject. Among the firm believers here, Dr. Gilbert stands out in bold relief; and next to him, Elder Watson, presiding Elder of the Methodist Church in this section; and he preaches it, too. All minds engaged in investigating the subject are of the best order; and I predict that the day is not far distant when there will be a spiritual revival here that will astound the world. I am, dear BANNER, thine fraternally, Memphis, Tenn., July 25, 1864. LIEUT.

Do Animals see Spirits?

While at Alton, Ill., on business, I became acquainted with a lady who is a partially developed medium. Being a stranger, she introduced me to Mr. and Mrs. Burns, who are both mediums—Mr. B. a healing, and Mrs. B. a tipping medium. As we approached the gate Mr. Burns was there, and at his side a large Newfoundland Dog. The lady aforesaid introduced me to Mr. Burns, but declined going in on account of the dog, as he was not inclined to be sociable to strangers. The gate was opened for me to pass through, and immediately the dog was noticed to act uncommonly strange. He rushed in the house and crept under the sofa, from which place Mr. Burns had the greatest difficulty to get him out. Mr. B. remarked that it was the second time only that the dog had ventured into that room. After harmony was restored I was invited to the table, and we placed our hands on it for a few minutes, when it tipped. Mr. B. then asked if there were any spirit-relations of mine who wished to communicate. The answer came, "yes." I then asked what relation; answer, "Grandfather." I then inquired if my good old friend, the Indian doctor, was present; answer, "Yes." Mr. B. then asked my grandfather if he could tell why the dog acted so strangely. He answered that the Indian came with me through the gate, dressed in his full costume, and brandished at the dog to keep him from me, and that the dog was a seeing medium, and saw the Indian. The next evening Mr. Burns asked his guardian spirit about the dog; he said he saw the whole proceeding, and described it the same as my grandfather had done.

This being the first occurrence of the kind I have heard of, I send the account of it to you, thinking it may possibly interest your readers. CHARLES CHATFIELD.

The Fifth Annual Festival of the Religious-Philosophical Society, at St. Charles, Ill.

(Reported for the Banner of Light.)

This Society convened for their Annual Festival at St. Charles, on Saturday morning, July 23, and continued through the following Sunday and Monday. A large number were present, and nearly all the Northern States were represented. The weather was fine, and a harmonious spirit pervaded the large assemblage. Hon. S. S. Jones, of St. Charles, was chosen President; E. S. Holbrook, Mrs. Martha Wilson and S. R. S. Uford, Vice Presidents; Milton T. Peters, of Salem, Ill., and Mrs. M. M. Daniels, of the Rising Tide, Secretaries.

After the transaction of some preliminary business, the President addressed the Convention. In behalf of a common humanity, he said, he again greeted them with a cordial welcome. This was the fifth call which had brought them together; and once more upon a broad and free platform we were to compare notes of the additional experiences and wisdom we have gained while floating down the tide of time. He then alluded to the present time as a momentous era in the history of our country. We were active members of an age big with mighty events. But he whose soul is filled with the inspiration of truth, can look calmly upon the terrible convulsions of the times; for with the prophetic eye of the seer, he can behold the bright sunshine just beyond the dark clouds that now enshroud our beloved country. The resplendent glory which is soon to dawn upon us, will more than compensate for all our present suffering and sacrifices. We, as Spiritualists, as harmonious philosophers, see and acknowledge the power that controls all for good. He then spoke of the hard struggles through which all reforms had to pass. Experience was the schoolmaster, and "compensation" the result. The ordeal is terrible to pass, but the compensation is full and ample. He continued to dwell at some length upon this theme, and then proceeded briefly to discuss man's religious enslavement. In speaking of the subject of slavery, he said African slavery was the only type that seemed to engross the attention of the masses at the present day. He feelingly touched upon various other conditions of bondage. How long he asked, would it be before the victims of all kinds of tyranny—despising their condition—would strike for independence, demand a reform, and with the powers now dormant in their natures, execute the demand.

When every soul is willing to listen to the "still small voice" speaking from within, and crying out against public and private wrongs, then, and not till then, will the fathers of this Republic be able to draw near, and imbue impressive minds with the spirit of a new and high type of Government which shall be truly democratic in spirit and fact. The true principles of the harmonious philosophy will then be felt and recognized, and upon it will be built the future Government of our people. Then let us, friends, be bold and firm; and with renewed energy persevere in the great work of human emancipation from the thralldom of ig-

norance and superstition. The cause is a noble one, and worthy of our greatest exertions.

Milton T. Peters thought organization was necessary, so far at least, as to obtain the names of Spiritualists, so that we might know who they were. Mr. Dayton spoke upon harmony and charity, and endeavored to show that evil had its uses and benefits. Mr. Hamilton favored liberality. He thought we should divide the fruits of our superior mental and muscular faculties with our neighbors. Dr. Dunn spoke upon the diversity of human organisms. Dr. Lowell explained the developing influence of Spiritualism.

Dr. Hamilton, of Maine, delivered the first regular lecture. His subject was "Charity and the overruling power of fortune."

Mrs. Crowell and Mrs. Conners spoke on the subject of spirit influence. Dr. Lowell spoke upon mediumship. Mrs. Todd, Mrs. Tryon, Mrs. Tefft, made brief addresses.

Mrs. Tefft then read a very beautiful lecture written by Corn Wilburn, on the subject of "The Life of the Affections."

Warren Chase spoke on the good time we were now having, and Harvey Jones on the free agency of man; followed by Mr. Dayton, Mr. Parks, Dr. Dunn, Warren Chase and Mrs. Tryon, which closed the first day's session. The house was so crowded that many who came could not obtain admission.

Sunday Morning.—Met in the grove at 8 o'clock. Opened in Conference. Judge Boardman, of Waukegan, made some very interesting remarks upon the religious instinct of man; his emotional or affectional nature, and true and false religion.

Dr. Lowell, Mrs. Snow, Mrs. Tryon, Mrs. Lyon, Mrs. Parker, Dr. Hamilton, Mr. Matteson, all took part in making the occasion one of profitable instruction. Music and singing were freely interspersed between the speeches, by Miss Morgan, Mr. Watson and others.

Mrs. Barnes, of Chicago, then gave the first regular lecture of the day, on "The Past, Present and Future," which was listened to with close attention.

Warren Chase and Dr. Hamilton sang brief speeches, and after Miss Morgan sang "Spirit-Rappings,"

Mr. Warwick Martin, of Waukegan, delivered the second regular lecture, taking for his subject this text: "I was alive without the law once, but the law came, sin revived, and I died." He dwelt with marked ability upon the power of Authority and the power of Love. After singing, the Convention adjourned till afternoon.

Afternoon.—Mrs. Potts, of Geneva, spoke on self-culture, dress, reform and individual freedom; followed by Mrs. Munn, on the same subject.

Mr. Peters spoke of the transition state of the world, religiously, spiritually, theologically and politically. Mrs. Lyon recited a poem, and after singing,

The third regular lecture was given by Warren Chase, who took for his text, "Gen. Grant," and for his subject, "Change of Base." The discourse was full of live sentiment, and practical suggestions, which, with Mr. Chase's well-known ability, commanded the closest attention of the large audience.

A session of Conference followed, in which Dr. Lowell, Dr. Hamilton, took part, when the meeting adjourned.

Evening.—Mr. Niddozer spoke upon Spiritualism, and the absurdities in the Bible, followed by Mr. Hopkins and Mr. Robinson.

Dr. Dunn said Spiritualists were constantly reaching out and upward after truth.

Monday Morning, July 24th.—The Convention was very largely attended, and the grove was alive with eager listeners, by 8 o'clock.

After singing, Mr. Swan gave an interesting account of his visit to Salt Lake, and interview with Brigham Young.

Judge Boardman made some able remarks on the supremacy of faith.

Letters from Dr. John Mayhew and Dr. Underhill were then read. S. S. Jones, Esq., then read and explained the Constitution of the Religious-Philosophical Society, closing with some interesting remarks on organization.

Mr. Brewster, of Michigan, advocated home reform associations, and gave a description of one at Black Lake.

Warren Chase then delivered a Fourth of July Oration, defining what he considers a truly democratic government.

After singing, Miss Worthington spoke upon the war and the good results which will accrue from it. Mrs. Barnes spoke upon the beauties of truth.

Afternoon.—The President exhibited to the Convention an ambrotype of the spirit-pictures, by Anderson, of the deceased husband and children of Mrs. Martha Wilson, of Princeton, Ill. Mrs. Wilson then explained their history and how she obtained them.

E. S. Holbrook spoke of Mr. Anderson and his spirit-pictures. Leo Miller exhibited the spirit-portrait of his deceased sister, and related how he was converted to Spiritualism while lecturing against it.

Leo Miller then delivered the second Oration of the day. His subject was "War generally; the present war; the state of the country generally, and the issues involved in this rebellion." It was an excellent and highly instructive discourse.

After singing, and brief speeches from Dr. Lowell, Mrs. Logan and the President, the Convention adjourned to meet again on the next Fourth of July. Harmony and good feeling pervaded throughout the three days' sessions.

Pay up Old Debts.

Now is the time to get out of debt and to release the property from all pecuniary incumbrance. The abundant, depreciated paper money will pay old debts once payable in specie, or its equivalent. The Government can, and has, and will, make the greenbacks as good as gold, to pay all liabilities on contract, however much the unjustifiable raid on the currency by a set of Shylocks in New York may depreciate it, or widen the margin between it and gold. A metallic currency is the currency, or basis of currency, of all nations; and of course for foreign trade we need it, or export exchanges, but for home use we have no more use for gold and silver for currency, than we have for foreign coinage. We are capable, as a nation, of producing all we need, even of gold and silver, and our foreign trade should be in our favor by balance of exports, and will be in times of peace. If the rivers were out, and all our intercourse with New York and Brooklyn closed for six months, our currency would be regulated, and there would not be over ten per cent. difference between greenbacks and gold, and prices would recede to reasonable rates. This wild speculation and reckless extravagance is neither produced by scarcity of articles, or of money, nor by real depreciation of value in the currency, except, perhaps, in the over issues of some local banks. The people need not look after gold, nor care what its price, but sell all they have to spare at the high prices; buy as little as they can get along with; pay all debts; use no tea, coffee, tobacco or liquor; mend the old clothes, wear the old coat and dress a year longer; work steadily, and practice rigid economy, and all will be well, and the country prosper in spite of the speculators. WARREN CHASE. Whiteoaker, Wis., July 27, 1864.

Correspondence in Brief.

The Banner-Herald-Convention. Enclosed please find one dollar, the half of which you will do me the favor to accept as an act of justice, to enable you to meet the current expenses of the publication of the BANNER, and the other half you will be kind enough to appropriate toward the support of your "free Circles," neither of which should be allowed to languish for want of a monthly pecuniary support from its list of grateful, and, I trust, generous subscribers.

In an emergency like the present, when high prices rule, I think it is the bounden duty of every one of the subscribers to the BANNER, who really and truly values the sublime philosophy of Spiritualism, and is desirous that its lofty and divine principles should be promulgated to the world, to contribute to its support, and to see that it is a pecuniary loss in its publication, but should also use every effort to distribute and extend its circulation as widely as his influence may permit; that those beautiful principles which we so sacredly cherish, and by which we have been enriched, may be sent forth on the wings of the wind to bless and enrich others. Let every one feel this a duty incumbent upon them, then shall our glorious BANNER not only wave from pole to pole, but the principles of our exalted faith and its divine philosophy become resonant from shore to shore.

I sincerely regret that our Brother Davis has been compelled to suspend the Herald of Progress for lack of support. These things should not be; and I do think if our brother and sister Spiritualists would only consider the matter over a little in their minds, they would arouse themselves and rally to the rescue.

I do most earnestly hope that the things at the forthcoming Convention at Chicago, as it is the first great National Convention of Spiritualists, may be attended with much good, and infuse new life into the hearts of all who may assemble there on that occasion. I hope, dear BANNER, that you will have a reporter there, and that the sayings and doings of the great National Convention of Spiritualists may be duly and fully reported and put into pamphlet form, similar to those of the Putnam Convention a few years since. I think the thing would pay; but apart from that, should there not be a record kept of one of the most extraordinary movements that has ever agitated the world? Say, shall this thing be done? I know not but that you may have already arranged it to be so.

With best wishes that prosperity may attend your every effort in the good cause, believe me, as ever,  
Yours very truly,  
THOMAS MIDDLETON.

Woodstock, Vt., Aug. 8, 1864.

A Loud Voice from Canada.

RESPECTED BROTHERS.—I do not know what effect the suspension of the HERALD OF PROGRESS may have with you, but it seems to me as though I had lost a dear friend. What a pity that amongst the millions of Spiritualists in this world, there should be such lack of liberality to support their presses. There must be thousands of Spiritualists to whom five dollars per annum can be no object. Why, then, do they let a well-conducted organ like the Herald of Progress perish for lack of support? It is a shame!

My object in writing to you is, that should you (which God forbid) find yourselves in like circumstances, before you suspend the BANNER, you will make an appeal to your wealthier subscribers for an increased subscription, sufficiently remunerative to enable its proprietors to keep it flying to the end of time. I do not know the number of your subscribers, but, according to its merits you should have them by the hundreds of thousands. Let not a second such calamity afflict the spiritual camp. Let a few thousand well-wishers contribute to the progress and truth, pay five dollars for their yearly subscriptions, and then they need not fear the lowering of the BANNER, to the great rejoicing of our opponents.

Let my subscription in future be charged five dollars, until such time as the restoration of peace and prosperity to the land will render it necessary. I would not pay twenty dollars than that the BANNER should stop.

Yours sincerely, for the advancement of our truthful Philosophy,  
L. BERTOLOTTO.  
Quebec, L. C., July 25, 1864.

Notes from Dr. Cooley.

DEAR BANNER.—We are longing to meet you again regularly. In this section the HERALD OF PROGRESS has been taken more than the BANNER, and for some reason which I cannot tell, where there has been the case, the Spiritualists are not, and have not been so active as where the BANNER OF LIGHT circulates most freely. It will soon be different. We lectured here July 24th, and more interest was manifested in this place, than at either of the times when we were here before. We are to speak again Saturday evening, Aug. 6th, in Bank Hall.—I regret in the place of the "War and its Results;" and next Sunday in the Court House. Last Sunday we spoke in Marengo twice, to good audiences. A sudden and heavy shower caused the morning meeting to be rather small. In Marengo progress is plainly visible. The Spiritualists and Universalists have united, and now hold regular meetings in the Episcopal Church, every Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock; Rev. A. B. Call, officiates. Bro. Call was a Methodist minister until quite recently, when his spirit, grown to big for the Methodist body, burst its bondage, and is now an anxious seeker after spiritual light, and teaches, as far as he sees, the truth. Spiritual lecturers who may be acceptable to the moral perceptions of the people, can have the use of the church Sunday morning and evening.

We have had in this section, for the last three weeks, the finest harvest weather I ever saw; and it is pleasing to report that the crops in Illinois have never been better in average; two months since some of the farmers thought to plow up their wheat fields, but leaving them, those very fields are now yielding from twelve to twenty bushels to the acre.  
L. K. COOLEY.  
Elgin, Ill., Aug. 5th, 1864.

An Appeal to the Subscribers of the Banner.

MR. EDITOR.—In consideration of your appeal in a late number of the BANNER for help, and more especially since the announcement of the fate of the HERALD OF PROGRESS—viz, its discontinuance for want of sufficient means—I am constrained to hand you one dollar, in addition to your present price of subscription, which I have heretofore sent you. Every reader of your most excellent paper must be aware that the BANNER must go long share the fate of the HERALD, unless you receive a larger price for each and every paper.

What Spiritualist is ready to say, Discontinue the publication of the BANNER; we can do without it? I trust not one. No; you can each and every one of you better afford to send on another dollar, gratis, to the publishers, than you can do without your paper. Shall we, the subscribers, allow an enterprise of the magnitude and bearing upon the progress of the civilized world to go down to the shades of night, and then grope our way on the journey of life in Egyptian darkness, as it were? I trust not.

In behalf of our noble cause, in behalf of the present and of coming generations, I appeal to you, one and all, with the earnest request that you without fail, forward the sum of one dollar, and that immediately. Say to the editor, send me your paper as long as you can afford to for the amount advanced, and then give us notice that you want more.  
W. D. HOLBROOK.  
Waukesha, Wis., Aug., 1864.

Dynamic Institute, Milwaukee, Wis.

Healing the sick, raising the desponding, and casting out disease, forms a large part of living and active Spiritualism at the present time. It is astonishing to see the success of some of the mediums, and the interest awakened thereby. It is only three weeks since the above Institute was opened by Dr. Persons and Mrs. C. A. Gould, who purchased and fitted up the magnificent residence of the late Moses Kneeland, one of the largest and finest in the city, and they have already treated almost one hundred patients (having over eighty

on their books). Many of Dr. Persons' cures are of the same character as those of Dr. Newton and Bryant, equally wonderful and powerful, and his success seems as great, to the extent of his applications. Mrs. C. A. Gould, M. D., whose success as a practitioner in Chicago has long since given her a wide acquaintance, I have known for many years as one of the best and most successful clairvoyants and magnetic operators in the West. They have also one other excellent trance medium and operator, and will soon need more, as their business rapidly increases. Several of the most prominent citizens of the city, inside and outside of the professions, are among their patients, and give their testimony to the cures or benefits.

It seems a day of triumph for our cause. I have been compelled to yield the last two weeks of my time to the treatment of a patient in this State, but lectured to good audiences July 23 and 31, in Whitewater, Wis., and in this city twice yesterday, to two of the most intelligent audiences I ever addressed in this city. I enclose a notice of the Institute for the afflicted.  
WARREN CHASE.  
Milwaukee, Wis., Aug. 8, 1864.

Spiritualist National Convention.

Myran Hall, Chicago, Illinois, August 6th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th, 1864.

(Reported for the Banner of Light by U. CLARK.)

FIRST DAY.

Pursuant to the call published in the BANNER OF LIGHT for several weeks in succession, the National Convention of Spiritualists to commence in Chicago, Tuesday, Aug. 9th, began to attract a large number of visitors from a distance, several days before the appointed time. On Sunday, the 7th, Metropolitan Hall, the place used by the Spiritualists of Chicago, was well filled in the morning and evening. Miss Lizzie Doten, of Boston, had been engaged by the Chicago friends to occupy the platform. Her inspirations were in her highest and happiest vein. In the afternoon, ten-minute speeches were announced as the order, and J. S. Loveland, Miss Julia J. Hubbard, Mrs. Dr. Bryon, U. Clark, Dr. H. F. Gardner, and an Iowa friend, were called to the platform.

On Tuesday, the 9th, at 10 A. M., a large number of speakers and delegates from a distance, as well as Chicago friends, assembled in Bryan Hall, the largest hall in the city, and intense interest appeared in every countenance.

Dr. H. F. Gardner, of Boston, Chairman of the Committee for calling the Convention, called the meeting to order, and was then elected Chairman pro tem, and J. S. Loveland, of Willimantic, Ct., Secretary.

The Boston and Chicago Committees having been in council on the day previous, and having prepared suggestions in regard to organizing the Convention, U. Clark, in behalf of said committees, was called on to report, J. S. Finney, and several others entered into a warm discussion, protesting against receiving the suggestions of any previous consultation. But all objections were finally overruled.

Voted, that one delegate from each State, Territory, and the British Provinces, be appointed to prepare a list of all the persons in attendance, willing to act as delegates; and that the said delegates select one man and one woman from each State, Territory and Province, the whole acting as a committee to nominate permanent officers for the Convention. Adjourned.

Tuesday, 2 P. M.—Dr. Gardner in the chair. The following States, etc., reported the following persons to form the nominating committee: Maine, D. M. Hamilton; New Hampshire, Miss Julia J. Hubbard; Vermont, N. Randall, Mrs. E. M. Wolcott; Massachusetts, Miss Lizzie Doten, A. H. Richardson; Rhode Island, delegate not arrived; Connecticut, J. S. Loveland, H. B. Storer; New York, J. W. Seaver, Mrs. L. Heath; Pennsylvania, J. Whiting; Maryland, J. Brist; Tennessee, J. E. Chadwick; Kentucky, Mrs. S. Smith, J. L. Taylor; Ohio, Mrs. Laura Cuppy, S. J. Finney; Michigan, J. G. Wait, Mrs. J. E. Fuller; Illinois, M. W. Leavitt, Mrs. J. S. Fuller; Indiana, F. M. Shuey, Mrs. P. Eddy; Iowa, A. P. Bowman, A. J. Smith; Wisconsin, O. Townsend, Mrs. S. Williams; Missouri, A. J. Brown, Mrs. D. Oversole; California, C. Pinkham; Canada, Wm. Bissell, U. C. Whiting.

The Committee retiring, U. Clark moved that the interim be filled up by voluntary ten minute speeches. Leo Miller, Benjamin Todd, Dr. H. F. Gardner, Warren Chase, H. C. Wright, J. M. Peebles, Dr. Parker, Mr. Reynolds, and Mrs. S. E. Warner each spoke in the order named, and held the meeting with interest.

The Nominating Committee then reported for President of the Convention, Hon. S. S. Jones, of Illinois; Vice Presidents, Dr. H. F. Gardner, Mrs. Laura Cuppy, Ira Porter, and Miss Lizzie Doten; Secretaries, H. B. Storer, Mrs. L. Patterson, F. L. Wadsworth, and Mrs. Buffum. The report was accepted and adopted. The President, on being introduced to the chair, made some pertinent, congratulatory remarks. Several Committees were appointed, after very warm discussions, growing out of a radical minority element among a few Western friends, and the afternoon session adjourned.

Tuesday Evening Session.—An audience of about one thousand appeared in Bryan Hall, notwithstanding the intense heat of the evening. S. S. Jones in the chair. On motion of H. C. Wright, a committee of five was appointed to report on the state of the Country, consisting of Mr. Wright, Col. Fox, Mr. Waterman, S. J. Finney and Leo Miller. J. M. Peebles was announced for a half-hour speech, and was followed the same length of time by J. S. Loveland.

The Committee on the State of the Country reported a series of strongly loyal and patriotic resolutions which were loudly applauded by the large assembly. On motion of Warren Chase, the resolutions were received and laid over for action till Thursday. Dr. D. M. Hamilton closed the evening with some pointed drives at the popular idea of infernal agents, and the Convention adjourned to meet at nine, A. M., on Wednesday.

The delegation of the first day was much larger than the most sanguine had anticipated, about twenty States being represented, and more than fifty of the most popular lecturers reporting themselves in preparation for the greatest Pentecost in our age. It is difficult to anticipate the results of this Convention, but the readers of the BANNER may look for an interesting report in a few words as possible. Our synopsis will continue in the next issue of this paper.

Peace between Germany and Denmark.

The following is the latest European intelligence by the Persia:  
LONDON, July 31.—The Paris Press, under reserve, announces the conclusion of peace between Germany and Denmark. The basis is unknown. The amnesty has been slightly prolonged. The French journal is willing to hurt on an impending sea-fight between Federal and rebel cruisers in the channel.  
In the House of Commons Mr. Layard said England intended to recognize the new Mexican Empire without waiting for the States and Territories now under Juarez to be brought within the authority of the new government.

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

Banner of Light.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, AUGUST 20, 1864.

OFFICE, 158 WASHINGTON STREET, ROOM NO. 3, UP STAIRS.

WILLIAM WHITE & CO., PUBLISHERS AND PROPRIETORS.

For Terms of Subscription see Eighth Page.

LUTHER COLBY, EDITOR.

SPIRITUALISM is based on the cardinal fact of spirit communion and influx; it is the effort to discover all truth relating to man's spiritual nature, capacities, relations, duties, welfare and destiny, and its application to a regenerate life. It recognizes a continuous Divine Inspiration in man, through a careful, reverent study of facts, a knowledge of the laws and principles which govern the occult forces of the universe; and the relations of spirit to matter, and of man to God and the spiritual world. It is thus catholic and progressive, leading to true religion as at one with the highest philosophy.—London Spiritual Magazine.

Price of the Banner.

Our friends will please take notice that the price of the BANNER, commencing with this number, is three dollars per year, or eight cents per single copy.

Our former co-worker, the Herald of Progress, was obliged to suspend for want of sufficient support; but we trust the friends of the BANNER will not permit a like disaster to befall their favorite Journal.

Economy.

It is easier by far to talk of this homely virtue and the practice of it, than to set up an example which others will like to follow. And yet the times press such a lesson upon us with full force; everything, in truth, has turned into a preacher of economy. Not long ago the country was teeming with all that was wanted to eat and to drink, and the last thing that troubled a body's thoughts was the fear lest enough more might not readily be got where the last supply came from. And so the country produces now, refusing nothing which its generous bountifulness has always furnished. But the difference between these times and those times is just here: we have to carry the heavy burden of a vast national debt on our shoulders now, and those shoulders had not felt the gail of such a load then. We were perfectly free then, and knew not what was the privilege we enjoyed.

Yet, even if this necessity did not press us so heavily, and were not sure to press us still more so in the future, it would be just as incumbent on us to take care of our current expenditures, and see that they did not outstrip our incomes. Economy should be the order of the day; instead of that, however, wastefulness would seem to have taken its place. There is little or no thought about results—everything is left to present luck. We do not stop long enough to calculate. We crack on as if there was no end to the resources. Caution and prudence are the least fashionable of all habits and practices. There is waste everywhere—waste at the spigot, and waste at the bung-hole. A dollar more in the yard now, is of less consequence in general estimation than a shilling more only a little time ago. The war, with its gigantic expenditures, which few or none of us can realize now, has so familiarized us with large sums of money that we appear to think it as necessary to lavish on ourselves as for the treasury to answer lavishly to the calls of the nation.

It is so easy to fall into such habits that the difficulty of getting out is all the greater. But get out we must, and that right speedily, else the fate that awaits us is no different from that which has overtaken other nations before us, for having given themselves up to the temptations of emersion and luxury. Where expenditures exceed incomes, as ours do in this country to-day, ruin will inevitably result; and we cannot expect that our experience is to be very much different from what that of other people has been in the past. In dressing, in living, in equipage, in general style of social expenditure, in all things where money is to go out of the pocket, we must certainly begin at once and turn over a new leaf. The last ones will say, upon this, "Oh, yes, we can economize in ever so many respects. There is the weekly paper—" But we ask you to stop right there, friends. When you seriously take hold to cut down expenses in the matter of meat and sugar, of wines and cigars, and of the various superfluities and waste that afflict rather than advantage your lives, then it will be time enough to reduce your living and your life by trying to do without the weekly visitor whose cost to you is so trifling at the most, but whose return is so generous and permanent. It is short-sightedness that begins at the wrong end in these matters: Dr. Sam Johnson trying to get up earlier in the morning, by way of mending his habits, but going to bed no earlier the night before.

How effective this huge debt will prove, through its taxes, to make us temperate and thoughtful, almost any reflecting person can foresee. It cannot operate otherwise than as a power to balance us and keep us steady. We shall find that we must either increase our supervisory care over ourselves, or go entirely under, there is such an ocean of waste all around us. Go into almost any large family where money comes easily just now to the head of it, and you will find a recklessness in relation to the table alone as will make a prudent person discouraged. In France the people are economical to the last letter; nothing is suffered to be thrown away or wasted; it used to be said that they could cook a nettle in forty different ways, and we know that every scrap of everything is adroitly turned to advantage and made to contribute its part in the general economy. Just so in Germany. Probably a more frugal nation of people, in a domestic sense, does not live anywhere, than these same thrifty, healthy, industrious, and always well-to-do Germans. None could get along more economically than they and still secure a better subsistence.

And from these, and such as these, old-world people, all of them, we must take our lessons. They have practiced this primal virtue of economy from generation to generation, and know how to do it traditionally. They have learned to bear the burden of taxation, and do it patiently. And all these things are come but newly upon us, and we must now begin to learn. Our aptitude, however, be it set down to our credit—is far in advance of that of any other people in existence; and there is little question that we should learn in a single generation what it has cost others so much time and struggle to master. Yet learn it we must, as a first condition of our knitting together and consolidating the character which it is our undoubted destiny to fill up and establish.

Heaven teaches us economy on all sides. The Almighty Power wastes no single stream, however minute, of that unlimited, spiritual force which is all the while flowing over the universe. Great as are the divine expenditures of spiritual power, they are such by reason of the fact that nothing of it all is suffered to be lost. Profuse beyond human and angelic conception as are the

resources of that power, they are nevertheless expended with a wise adaptation of means to an end, which rebuke our thoughtless wastefulness in the most overwhelming manner. There is certainly no excuse for our criminal lavishness with all our resources, given to us, too, when the generous donor himself takes infinite care that not a particle of His power be thrown away or used to no purpose.

Browning on Mediumship.

Robert Browning, who owes his distinction chiefly to the circumstance that he became the husband of Mrs. Barrett Browning, has put forth a new volume of poems, entitled, "Dramatic Personae," in which he undertakes to throw ridicule on the spiritual phenomena. In a piece entitled, "Mr. Sludge, the Medium," and which is understood to be aimed at Mr. Home, we find the following passage:

"What 'a' medium? He 'a' means, Good, bad, indifferent, still the only means Spirits can speak by; he may misconceive, Mutter and stammer—'ie' their Sludge and drudge, Take him or leave him; they must hold their peace, Or else put up with having knowledge strained To half-expression through his language. Suppose the spirit Beethoven wants to shed New music he 'a' brilliant off; why, he turns The handle of this organ, grinds with Sludge, And what he poured in at the month of 'ie mill As a thirty-third Sonata (funny now) Comes from the tap, as brass-key Sludge, naught else— The Shakers' hymn in G, with a natural F, Or the 'Stars and Stripes' set to consecutive fourths."

This is a fair specimen of the somewhat hazy style which Browning indulges in. With the exception of one or two tolerable ballads, he has done nothing to entitle himself to any high reputation as a poet. In genius he falls incomparably below Mrs. Browning. This lady, as we all know, received the great truths of Spiritualism, investigated them with the profoundest interest, and found a congenial soul for them in her devout, studious and liberal mind. It was a sore mortification to Browning, that in spite of his own protests and bitter opposition, his wife should accept as true, what he chose to reject with a supercilious and arrogant contempt. And now, not even respect for his wife's memory, was potent enough to withhold him from the expression of the bitterness he has long cherished.

Mr. Home, in a communication to the London Spiritual Magazine, has given an interesting account of his own interviews with Mr. and Mrs. Browning, in which he exposes the ill-temper, bigotry, and intolerance of the former, and the truthfulness and candor of the latter. The lady seems to have been far above her husband in generosity and elevation of character as she was in literary ability and poetical genius. Browning's foggy verses against Spiritualism can do little harm to the cause, and will hardly be relished even by those who hate it as heartily as he. The testimony of two such intellects as Archbishop Whately and the late Mr. Senior, is more than an offset for all that a host of such bardings as Browning can utter.

The truly great poets, like Shakespeare, Milton, Dante, Tasso, are all Spiritualists. The number of passages that could be quoted from these writers, showing the truth of this assertion, would surprise the foes of modern Spiritualism. We may some day give evidence of this in our columns. Meanwhile, we dismiss Mr. Browning with the remark, that as his new book will be soon republished by Ticknor & Fields, the curious may learn for themselves whether or no we have done him justice in our remarks.

No Need of Arguing.

Many persons think they cannot have a sound hold in what they are really conscious of believing, unless they can at any time support their formula of faith successfully, against the world, with downright arguments. It is a mischievous delusion. Our spiritual instincts are far above reason, and reason comes up late to do its work of harmonizing what is perceived so clearly with the capacity of the intellect to comprehend. But a living faith never rests upon reason. It takes hold a good way ahead of that; flies rather and faster; outstrips it everywhere in its race; completes its work, in fact, before reason has begun it. More than this, it is impossible to make the reason adopt views which the higher instincts positively reject; thus showing that it is the soul which explores for ground on which to establish its faith, and not the intellect, which is but one of the faculties of the soul. Emerson discourages everything like holding arguments over one's form of belief; for, in arguing, we talk for not much more than victory, in spite of ourselves. But the truth is what we want to get at, and not intellectual victory. Besides, a very different class of feelings, thoughts and reflections are called out when a person is under the stimulating operation of discussion with another; but in the hour of contemplation, which is the most truly spiritual season the soul knows anything about, the stimulus is of a very different character. Then no spirit of antagonism rises in the heart to cloud the thought. A subject is taken hold of by the handle, and for the sake of mastering it; not wherever it can be most adroitly seized for the purpose of overthrowing an opponent. Much argument only proves too little genuine spirituality.

A New Policy for England.

The English Ministry have just laid down a policy entirely different from any which has characterized their national life hitherto. It has been publicly announced that hereafter, England will occupy a ground, among nations, of complete isolation, refraining from all interference in the interests or rights of other nations, and prepared to use her army and navy only when such use is demanded by an immediate threat of danger. The leading English journal, the Times, endorses this novel platform for the nation and proceeds with out delay to apply it to the matter of aiding in putting a stop to the African slave trade. That paper argues that, under the new rule of national conduct, it can no longer be expected of England that she will lend a hand, in the shape of a fleet, off the coast of Africa and in the West Indian waters, to repress the slave trade, that being none of her business any more, and the Africans being probably as well off with this incident of slavery hanging over them as if they were suffered to be left alone, where they are born. It all means—this change in English policy—a plan to get the slave-trade machinery ready to run, by the time it is expected that the South will achieve its independence; then there will be cheap labor in plenty to take the place of what has been sacrificed in the rebellious States by means of the war, and cotton will be got out of the Southern fields for British account without any hindrance. England means, by isolating herself just now from the world, to do what the old rat did, that bade his children good-bye because he was about to retire from all earthly vanities; when it was discovered that he had provided himself with a snug berth in a whole Cheshire cheese!

We invite especial attention to an article on our first page, entitled "My Religion." It is from the pen of one of our old and valued contributors, and written in the spirit of fairness and candor.

Psychometry applied to Stones.

We had a little experience a day or two since that may interest the readers of "The Soul of Things." A friend, recently from Rome, gave us several specimens of marble from various interesting localities thereabouts. Happening to be in company with Mrs. J. S. Adams, we placed one of these relics in her hands in such a way that she could not see it, and said nothing in relation to what it was. She was therefore ignorant, so far as the outer senses were concerned, of its nature and history.

In about one minute she remarked, "I am in the sphere of some place, or building, that is very old. I see a dark marble, and the name of Severus is before me."

This was all correct; for we had given her a piece of dark green marble taken from the Baths of Caracalla, at Rome, the building of which was finished about A. D. 212, by Severus!

We then, without imparting to her any knowledge of the object, placed in her hands a piece of white marble from a temple on the Via Appia, at Rome, and she said:

"I see a large and elegant building formed of white marble."

To test still further this power, another article was handed to her, which was no sooner done than she remarked:

"I see fine palm trees, and camels, and sandy plains."

This was in keeping with the object she held—a small earthen mold taken from a catacomb in Egypt.

Such uniform correctness in her expressions concerning the sphere of each object, and the rapid changes from one to another, giving the appropriate surroundings of each without the least hesitation, may well puzzle the savans among us, whose only source of information on these subtle mental phenomena, is a dry and musty library, a repository of the thoughts of those who knew no more than themselves. Leaving these, however, and becoming receptive to the tide of inspiration, at thought that is flooding the world with light, we may become informed of the philosophy that governs these things, and add something to our limited knowledge of the wonderful powers of the human mind.

Popular Fiction.

Those journals, styling themselves literary, which have taken it upon themselves to stigmatize works of fiction like Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter," as unhealthy, because they lay bare the springs of human action and minister to the long hidden diseases of the human heart, are found on examination, to be the very ones which endorse and praise the melodramatic tales, as thick as the locusts of Egypt almost, whose turning-point is rascality of the deepest dye, and whose heroes are sure to be adulterers, traitors to all forms of moral, and secondarily without room for apology or palliation. This style of fiction is especially popular in England at the present time. It argues anything but a pure and healthy condition of the human heart over the water. Miss Braddon's works, largely as they are read among the higher classes of readers in England, all turn upon a hinge of the description above alluded to. As for healthy domestic fiction, or fiction whose interest rests mainly on those natural and legitimate analyses of human motives in which all speculative minds are strangely interested, and which they love to follow out to the last investigation of the mystery—little or none of it is "the rage" in the reading world of England to-day, and it is a question if for some time it is likely to be. That fiction is a powerful preacher of morals, there can be no doubt; but nobody can make us believe that such superficial and such really dirty stuff as is spawned from the English press, is of any particular account in the work of making men wiser or better. It is not nature at all; it is high-splend crime, vulgar and unseemly; unfit to be taken into the family where a healthy domestic sentiment is sought to be produced and perpetuated.

New Philanthropic Paper in New Orleans.

We have received the first number of the "New Orleans Tribune," printed in French and English, the object of which is to advocate and defend the rights of the colored population. It is now published tri-weekly, but the proprietors announce a daily edition, to commence as soon as type and press can be obtained from New York. The number before us contains a report of the proceedings of a meeting of the National Union Brotherhood Association, No. 1, held at St. James' Church. This association, to use the words of one of the speakers, is composed of "a people just emerging from darkness into light, from chains and handcuffs to freedom, some of them with the marks of the slave-driver's lash upon them." Another speaker, Rev. J. Goodwin, said, "I judge this to be one of the greatest institutions of the present age. I have passed through blood to reach this land of liberty. Where I came from the number of stripes was from five to six hundred, and if you could not stand the flogging you would have to die. I have known some to die under the lash. I have been whipped to make me deny my religion, but here I stand, thank God, upon free soil, a living monument of God's mercy and protection to those who love and serve him."

The new paper, in connection with the "Brotherhood," is destined to do a great and good work. Certainly the field of their operations is very large, and one in which there is much need of laborers. May their philanthropic efforts be crowned with abundant success.

A Slight Mistake.

The Herald of Progress was the medium through which departed spirits communed with the inhabitants of this terrestrial ball, and its decrease will cut off all communion with the celestial powers.—New York Sunday Mercury.

Our friend of the Mercury has made a slight mistake which we hasten to correct, that he may not suffer under the idea that communion with the celestial spheres is entirely suspended, for such an event would leave this world in a sad condition. The writer has ascribed to the Herald what is due the Banner. The former never has, to any extent, published communications from the spirit-world, while the latter has in every issue for the past seven years given its readers from two to six columns of them. And we are happy in being able to state that it will continue to do so. If the editor of the Mercury could see the quantity of MS. articles sent us for our columns, and the almost innumerable letters which wait our attention every morning, he would reasonably conclude that the interest in Spiritualism had not abated to any very great extent.

Susie Rivers informs us that the poem published in the BANNER of August 6th, entitled "Angels are ever near," by Isaac P. Alken, was written by her and printed in our paper about a year ago, (with the exception of part of the first two lines), under the title of "Presence of Angels." We are sorry that any one should so far forget the golden rule as to desire to impose upon us or any one else.



Message Department.

Each Message in this Department of the BANNER was spoken by the Spirit whose name it bears, through the instrumentality of Mrs. J. H. Conant.

These Messages indicate that spirits carry with them the characteristics of their earth-life to that beyond—whether for good or evil. But those who leave the earth-sphere in an undeveloped state, eventually progress into a higher condition.

We ask the reader to receive no doctrine put forth by Spirits in these columns that does not comport with his or her reason. All express as much of truth as they perceive—no more.

Vacation for our Free Circles.

Our friends and the public will bear in mind that our free circles are closed until the 1st of September, when they will again be reopened.

MESSAGES TO BE PUBLISHED.

- Tuesday, June 28.—Invocation: Questions and Answers: Eliza Lacey, killed at the destruction of the Arsenal at Washington, D. C., to her mother, Charles Wilkins, to his relatives in Jersey City, N. J., Jonathan White, of Portsmouth, N. H.; Edward Mason, to his father, Giles Mason, of New Orleans, La.; G. Lewis Barclay, to relatives in Wilmington, Del.

Invocation.

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Oh God, this simple prayer we utter in behalf of the two great armies contending upon this American Continent. Surely, surely they know not what they do, know not for what they are contending. They see not the golden era that is to be ushered in when war is no more with them.

Questions and Answers.

SPRIT.—We are now ready to consider any propositions the friends may offer.

Q.—Please tell us why Christ said of Judas, "It had been better for that man if he had not been born."

ANS.—Christ, or that indwelling spirit of Truth by which he was at all times controlled, perceived not only the present, but the future and the past. He knew that the course Judas was taking would bring sorrow upon him. He knew that he would judge himself righteously when he should be called before the tribunal of his own better nature, and he knew that the God within him would pass severe censure upon him, and for many long years he would be called upon to pass through great sorrow and unhappiness.

Q.—Why did he say, "He that believeth on me shall be saved; he that believeth not on me shall be damned?"

ANS.—And again he says, "He shall be damned if he do believe"—at least so that portion of the ancient record which was rejected by Constantine informs us. "He that believeth on me shall be saved; he that believeth not on me shall be damned." When questioned concerning this speech, we are told by the ancient record that he added that "he who does believe shall be damned."

Q.—He also says, "There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof is the way to death."

ANS.—How many of you in your earthly experience oftentimes choose that which at the time seems to be right, yet find it ends in sorrow? It is because you are limited in your judgment? "It is because you are not seeing in the future what the result of your acts will be. No one knows aught concerning the right while they dwell in mortality. We cannot believe that any one living on the earth knows enough of right to guide them through this world to the spirit-land, and through the unending cycles of eternity. There never was a living distinct individuality that sometime or other did not commit a mistake. If you made none, you would hardly appreciate the harmony of the spheres. Night is as essential as the day. That which you call evil is as essential to man's future happiness as good.

Q.—The way to death—how do you explain that and what is death?

ANS.—What do you call the death spoken of? We call it simply a condition of inharmorous life, by no means that condition that refers to the dissolution of the body. There is really no death, for there is no room for it. Life is everywhere, and if it is, there can be no death. It is only a term used by mortality to denote dissolution.

Q.—Are the facilities for gaining knowledge in the spirit-world greater than here?

A.—They are superior, for inasmuch as you cast off the trammels that bind you in earth-life, you are more free to investigate life in all its departments in the spirit-land. There poverty is not a misfortune, as here, over which the individual has no control. He may desire earnestly to acquire knowledge while in earth-life, but poverty debar him from doing so oftentimes. But in the spirit-land there is no poverty. It does not depend upon how much gold and silver you have, but upon your anxiety, upon your desire to know. Whatever you earnestly desire to become possessed of in the spirit-land, that you will surely obtain.

Q.—Are we liable to make mistakes in the spirit-world as here concerning the duties of life?

A.—Yes, quite as liable. It should be remembered that we are finite still, and cannot comprehend the many mysteries of the Infinite Father.

Q.—Are not all clairvoyant in spirit-life?

A.—All are clairvoyant in the spirit-land. The spirit is always clairvoyant, but there are many degrees of clairvoyance.

Q.—Does not clairvoyance enable us to judge more correctly of our relations to each other and to the principles of life?

A.—Most certainly it does. It is the great ear in which mind rides throughout the universe.

S.—We are requested by one in office at the Capital of your nation to answer the following questions: Does modern Spiritualism give us any positive demonstration concerning life after death?—and, if so, what are those demonstrations? The questions have been answered many times, and it would seem to a superficial observer to be hardly worth while for us to answer them again. But we have a purpose in view for so doing. Our answer, in brief, is, Modern Spiritualism gives you all the demonstrations concerning life after death that you are ready to receive. These demonstrations are everywhere apparent. Sometimes they appear to the mind; sometimes they come through the circumstances attending everyday life; sometimes in the quiet still voice that speaks to the soul when you shut yourself in from the wild tumult of material life, and earnestly desire to commune with your God and the angels. Then modern Spiritualism will give you a demonstration that your soul will respond to if your external senses fail to recognize it. If that friend desires to question further, we shall be very glad to answer him.

Rebecca Thaxter.

Many things have changed since I was here in the body. I am like Noah's dove: I find no place that is familiar to me. Though I have been gone since 1780, yet I have kept my relation with the earth unbroken.

You are a strange people, a strange people. I look upon you as I can, and as many of us can, and we can but draw a great line of demarcation between you and ourselves, between what you are doing now and what we did in my day. Why, when my country was in war and I was here, do you suppose that we lived as extravagantly as you do to-day? Why, I should have expected the vengeance of God Almighty to fall upon us. The women, as well as the men, were alike patriotic; not the patriotism that you folks have to-day. You have the kind that do not amount to much. I think, else you would not be so indifferent to what is going on about you as you are. Why, the women of my day would kneel down four or five times a day, and pray to God that our General might be sustained, that light might be given him that in the end he might bring us out a free people. Why, I actually took my gowns and my petticoats off myself, and gave them for gun-wadding to the soldiers of my time. I see it done at the South, because war is right there, as it was with me when here. But do you think that you of the North would do it? No, not one of you.

I lived not far from King street, in what was called Pudding Lane. I don't know what you call it now. I had two boys under General Washington, and one of them did not want to go to war. I told him if he did not go my roof would not afford him shelter a night longer, if he could not fight for the salvation of his country. One of my sons was slightly wounded, and the other was killed. I was not sorry for it then, and I ain't to this day. I'm only sorry I could not do more, so you need not have been plunged where you are to-day.

They called me when here Rebecca Thaxter. I was sixty-eight years old when I died. I am sometimes attracted to Boston, and so strongly that I often wish that I was living here again. I have learned to talk through your mediums, and in some respects my influence is a very strong one. But I find it very hard to exert it over those persons who have no real patriotism flowing in their veins, for they care very little about the country, care very little about anything beside their own comfort and pleasure.

I'm ashamed of you, every one of you. I am ashamed of you; ashamed to think you are inheriting rights that my children fought for, when you ought to be up and doing; ought to be doing all you can to save your country from ruin, instead of running here and there to places of amusement. Oh, you ought to be ashamed, and you will be when your day of judgment comes, and it's coming for you at the North pretty quick. Good-by, sir.

Ben. Cooley, Jr.

I'm Ben. Cooley, sir, of the Pennsylvania Reserves. I'm from Williamstown, Pennsylvania. I reckon that old lady's denunciation do not apply to me. If the coat fits any one of you here, why put it on and wear it.

Well, the world wags on, do n't it? [It seems to.] And Richmond ain't taken! The amount of it is, stranger, there's too much being made out of this war—money. Just so long as they can speculate and grow rich, just so long your war will last. Now if you'll all turn round and shoot that class who are making money out of Government, you'll get into Richmond a great deal sooner, and find yourself at peace.

Why, you've got men right among you, captain, that would sell their country for fifty dollars. You've got men sailing the old Ship of State, who have got about as much reverence for the Federal flag as Semmes has, who sails the Alabama. I know it's so. I didn't fight to defend them. I fought for the Union and the Constitution; that's what I fought for, and I used to pray some power might cut their wind short. But somehow or other the devil within them did not seem to get killed out. I reckon he's fire-proof. I don't know, sir, as some of them ere fellows would get hurt if they were placed in the front ranks; and I think if I was Commander-in-Chief, I'd put them there, then if the devil could defend them when I put 'em there, he might do it, otherwise they would stand a poor chance.

Well, stranger, I've got folks in Williamstown that I should be glad to communicate with in this way. That I'm dead, my folks know; well, dead in the sense they understand it, but they do not know anything about my coming back—are not posted there, stranger. I've got a mother, two brothers, and a sister

that I should like to win over to some kind of decent faith, if I could. I want my folks to know that I'm ready to open correspondence with them privately.

Well, I lived on the earth thirty-three—most thirty-four years. Ben. Cooley was my name—Ben. Cooley, Junior. My occupation was a manufacturer of whiskey. Like the article? [Sometimes.] Well, I manufactured as good an article of the kind as you'd wish to taste, not excepting old Bourbon. All you'd have to do was to give it time to grow old, and then it would be as fine as any of it, anyway, if I was in the business. I believe my folks have disposed of all I had on hand. I made a very good article, and when I sold it I could afford to lay back for awhile.

Now I suppose there are these kinds of folks that we can speak through in Pennsylvania, and I'd like to have some one, or all of my folks find one I can come to and talk through nearer home. If they'll do this I'll come and do the best I can toward giving them some kind of light about this thing. How'll that do, stranger? [Very well we should say.]

They told me it was easier running the ropes after we'd been here. I don't find any trouble coming here, only I don't like being so far away from my folks; feel as though I'd much rather talk to them than you. Beg your pardon, stranger, though. I shall have to get trusted, for I'm broke just now. [You can pay sometime.] I'll promise to pay, but whether I shall keep my promise I can't say. I do not know what they've got for currency in the spirit-world. Maybe it's worse sort of scrip than you have on this side, but from all I can hear I reckon it's better. I have not got any yet, because I haven't worked to get it. You've got to work to get all you have there. So when I get a good situation, stranger, if I do get it, I'll come round and pay you. [Thank you.]

Eleanor Jarvis.

I am away from all who know me, but I hope to meet them by coming here; those who do know me. I have been in the spirit-world little over seventeen months. I have tried always to come, but never could till now. I suppose this place is a long way from Missouri. [Yes.]

My parents moved from New Hampshire in 1854, some years before I was born, ten—some where's about ten years before I was born. They first went to Oakville, Michigan, and later they moved to Missouri.

My father is living—an old man. My mother went some years since to the spirit-world. I have three brothers in the army. One is a Colonel—Colonel Joseph Jarvis. He, of all others, I wish I could talk to. I've so much to say to him. I want to tell him I was gone, and his last letter reached our folks. I was gone, but I know what he wrote, and if I had lived I should have done as he desired, which was to assist his wife in taking care of the children; and in case anything happened to her—she was sick—in case anything happened to her, that I should take charge of the family until his return. She's alive, or on the earth, and I'm not.

I should be so glad to talk to my folks about this new country. It is wonderful, and so different from what we thought it was. I should have to talk many times to make them understand anything about it. I wish you'd say that this letter is from Eleanor Jarvis, to her brother Joseph, if I know more about this I would stay longer and talk more about it. [What town do your relatives reside in in Missouri?] Clarksville, sir. Good-day.

Charles Williams.

Charles Williams, sir, 10th New Hampshire. I'm from Concord. [This State?] No, sir; New Hampshire, or now I hail from a city without a name; so can't give you any name for the place I come from now. But I'm speaking of my body. I was a carriage maker by trade; worked on about as many Concord wagons as the next one. Did you ever ride in one? [Who do you work for?] Downing, sometimes. [Did you ever work for Abbott?] No, never worked for him. This turning into a lady rather confuses me. I'm conscious I'm myself, but the clothes are little different from what I'm used to wearing.

I've a brother in the navy, and if there's any possible way for me to get a chance to say a word or two to him, I'd like to. When last I heard from him he was on the ambient Windolite. I lost track of him now, but he's on the earth somewhere, and I wish he'd let me come to him if he gets my letter, and if he will, I'll tell him something I've learned since I came to the spirit-world—something that we could not understand when I was here on the earth. But I've learned from the old gentlemen how matters were, and where some things were we could not find. The base of our city was pretty tough. I don't suppose you was there? [No.] It was pretty tough. I suppose there was a good many that came out with whole heads, but a good many that was left there sure. I had a long time on the field, and the last few hours I suffered a good deal; the first few I did not, but the last I did. I kind of take it on now, so I won't say any longer than I can stay to some purpose. Tell the folks I'm happy, well, and "a soldier in the army of the Lord."

Annie Ellenwood.

Oh, say that Annie Ellenwood, of Hamilton, Lower Canada, comes pleading for a privilege to go home.

I believed in these things when here, and told my folks so, and they were here. Yesterday my body was buried. My friends will look for this, because I said they should have it.

Invocation.

Spirit of Divine Love, Maker of these countless rolling worlds, each one of which seems like a wondrous lyre through which the soul catches its songs of joy, or sighs of despair, forever would our souls worship thee, O Father, in childlike confidence and love, forever would look toward thee, asking for that strength which thou alone canst bestow upon thy children. Though we can give thee no dwelling-place, though we call thee by no name, though thou mayest have no form, yet thou art a Principle enshrined in the universe, to which the soul by virtue of its own inherent power of adoration ever pays its vows. Oh, thou Spirit of the Past, Present, and Eternal Future, we bear toward thee all the aspirations of these thy children, their fears, all the sorrows with which they are oppressed, all the joys with which they are buoyed up on the sea of Life. Though we may not grasp thee, yet we can come toward thee with these offerings. We can reverently lay them upon the altar of Life, and confidently ask thy blessing upon them. Oh, may we not call thee our Father, may we not address thee by that endearing title with which we have been accustomed to call thee? Though darkness surround us, and temptation be behind and before us, still may we not rest secure in thy love? and thy love embraces all life. There is no place where thy love last not settled. There never was a time when thou didst not exist, and there never will be a time when thou wilt cease to exist. As we feel our souls are a part of thee, having been thrown off from thy Divine Life, we know we shall always exist, and can but look forward through eternity for still higher and grander unfoldings; look on, on through the universe, ever aspiring toward thee, ever resting secure in thy arms of love. Though war and discord and mental darkness overshadow us, yet we know thou art with us still, thy presence is felt by the soul, realized and acknowledged by it, which is ever holding silent communion with thee. Oh, thou God of the Universe, unto thee now, as in all the past, and in all the future, we render deathless praises.

Questions and Answers.

SPRIT.—We are now ready to consider whatever propositions the friends may deem proper to offer.

Q.—Please explain the words of Jesus: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

ANS.—We cannot believe that Jesus intended to convey this idea that man ever could lose his soul, for that we know is contrary to universal law, that law which recognizes the immortality of the soul. If soul be immortal then it can never be lost. We believe he intended to convey this idea: that they would gain nothing by striving to make themselves rich in the things of this world, but would lose much instead of gaining happiness or heaven, which all seek for but fail to obtain. It would draw around the soul such conditions as would render it imprisoned, for a time at least. Now it is a well-known fact, by those conversant with spirit-life, or life after death, that those persons who are blessed—or cursed—we should say—with great riches here, are always in hell in the spirit-land. What we mean by this is, they are unhappy in spirit-life. When Jesus said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven," he never spoke a greater truth; for we never saw a rich man in heaven; never saw one who was truly happy and at peace with himself.

Q.—What is meant by the words, "Make to yourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that when you fail on earth they may receive you into their everlasting habitations?"

A.—We believe the passage is entirely allegorical and has no reference at all to things of this world.

Q.—If you never saw a rich man in heaven, where are they?

A.—Can you tell us what heaven is? Q.—Yes, I think I can; a very happy place, all harmonious and peace, and something more than a locality? Did you ever see one that was overburdened with riches here, who was in harmony with himself and the world? Heaven means harmony.

Q.—Will not all reach that state sometime? A.—Most certainly; we believe that is the destiny of all. We cannot believe that any soul is condemned to eternal destruction, for infinite love is everywhere.

Q.—Is it true that Jesus walked on the lake of Gennesaret? A.—We believe that it is.

Q.—Is it true that Peter in walking began to sink also? A.—We believe that it is.

Q.—Please explain the law that governed in that case, or how the law of gravitation was suspended? A.—You are well aware that the spirit has the power, or you should be aware that spirit has the power, under certain circumstances, to suspend the law of gravitation with regard to material things. Now this law was suspended with reference to the body of Jesus. With Peter it was not suspended. Therefore in active life the law of gravitation generally governs all things. It is a well-demonstrated fact, that by spirit-power articles are held suspended in the atmosphere. Now this is positive proof to you, that the law of gravitation is for the time being suspended, else these ponderable bodies would gravitate toward a common centre on the earth.

Q.—Jesus says, "If ye had faith, ye might do greater works." What did he mean by that? A.—Faith to Jesus meant something more than blind belief. It meant knowledge. Faith without works, Jesus once said, is useless, or it is like a body having no soul. That blind faith of which so many talk at the present day, is of little use. You have faith, you of the Christian world, of a Jesus of Nazareth. You have never seen this Jesus, and have no knowledge of him, only that which is imparted to you through imperfect recollections of his time. But there are some persons in Christendom whose faith has a living soul in it. If they have faith in a Jesus, it is not because external education has forced them into it, but is engendered by intuition, and intuition becomes active; and so their faith has a living soul in it.

Q.—Has there ever been any other law suspended beside the law of gravitation, by means of which writings have been conveyed into rooms by being passed through some other object? A.—No gross material object can be passed through any other gross material object without separating the particles of that object, of the materials of which it is composed. The law that protects one protects the other. Spirit-power may suspend this table in the atmosphere for a certain time, but it would be a philosophical impossibility for me to pass this article of furniture through the side of your room without making an opening. Law protects every object coming within its range. So we cannot believe that any one ponderable object can be passed through another ponderable object.

Q.—Please explain the law by which Jesus suspended the law of gravitation in regard to his own body? A.—It would be impossible to demonstrate it to your human senses. There are no means by which we can do this. We know that it is so. We know that it is done, yet cannot demonstrate it to your human senses.

Q.—Is it true that Elijah was fed in the wilderness by ravens? A.—We do not know, but we believe it was so. We have no positive knowledge of the matter ourselves, but have been told so. Doubtless it was so.

Q.—Is the animal creation subject to impressions of spirit? A.—Certainly.

Q.—Is there such a being called the devil? A.—Do you refer to a personal devil? If you do, we shall answer certainly not.

Q.—A spirit at the last circle spoke of a devil. I can't tell just how it was. A.—You have been so long accustomed to the term devil, that to use it becomes exceedingly natural to all. You have been taught from your earliest infancy to believe in the existence of a personal devil.

Q.—Yes; taught that he goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. A.—It is high time that these ideas not founded upon truth, should fade away. If God lives in all his creations, then he must be everywhere. If he fills the whole Universe there is no room for the devil.

Q.—Did these ideas of a personal God and Devil have their origin in astronomy, or the early ages of astronomy? A.—Yes, we believe they originated with the Persians.

Q.—And were with them merely descriptions of certain conjunctions of the planets? A.—Yes; and you wise, intelligent Christians are picking up the crumbs that fall from their religious table.

Q.—Is the term "devil" often used by spirits from necessity? A.—Yes; it is absolutely necessary to make use of the term, when holding communion with your mortals.

Q.—Is not a similar phrase expressed when they say "in hell"? A.—Yes; unhappiness is hell. Hell exists in the bosom of the murderer, and nowhere else. The mother is in hell when she part with her dear beloved child. When she stands gazing at the inanimate form of her darling child, she is not in hell, but in peace with herself and the world, therefore must be in hell. This is all the hell we know of.

Q.—Was Persia inhabited before Egypt? A.—We believe it was.

Q.—How long a time would you state that these religious notions were in existence before the coming of Christ? A.—Something like nine thousand years. Now that, you will see, clashes very hard with your six thousand years period. If you could examine the ancient records you would find that the same ideas embodied in the Christian records, are today embodied in theirs. Now the Christian, if he is wise, is patterning after the Chinese, would scorn at it. Verily it is so.

Q.—How far back do Chinese records extend? A.—They claim to be the oldest records extant; but we are not sure they are the oldest. We are inclined to believe that the Persians claim as great antiquity as they do.

Colonel Richard Todd.

I understand you entertain and deal honorably with all who come to you? [We endeavor to.] I have been striving to make my way here since I passed from my own temple of human life, at Frederickburg. I assure you, I feel very strange in coming here. I am not at all acquainted with the use of the control of these bodies; thought I knew how to handle my own, but it's quite another thing to handle that other.

I am, or was, from Enterprise, Kentucky. I was

in the 2d Kentucky Cavalry. I fought against you. I presume, were I here in the body, I should do so again. Now if you are going to refuse doing for me what you do for others, you can say so, and I will leave. [We shall do the same by you as we do by all others.]

I have friends in the North, I have friends in the West, I have many friends South. I believe all are ignorant of the fact that I can speak, and can return. I am anxious to inform them that I can— anxious to inform them that I find myself the same in my feelings as when here.

I wish to inform my friends at the North, who are fighting in the Federal ranks, that I have no more sympathy with them now than I did before death. Could I be invested with my body again to-day, I should pursue exactly the same course as I did when here.

I was once told by one of my friends, or relatives I should say, who was slightly impregnated with abolitionist ideas, that I should see differently after death. I have failed to do; should be very glad to, if his way is right. But as yet I have failed to see that I was wrong.

I have brothers in the Confederate service that I should be very glad to commune with. I would like to have them furnish a means, and I will try to make use of it. I am very anxious to make personal communications to my friends who are living at the South. So, if they will give me an opportunity, I should be very glad to speak with any or all of them. I believe you exact, or it is necessary, that we give name and age. [Yes, and direct your message to some one.] Then I will direct to Thomas Todd, of Kentucky. My own name was Colonel Richard Todd, my own name was Colonel Richard Todd, of Kentucky. I was thirty-eight years of age. Before I entered the Confederate service I was a lawyer by profession; thought I could do more good by entering the army than by remaining quiet at home. I am not sorry, and I would not have my friends mourn for me at all here. I would do the same again and have no regrets. Good-day.

Cyrus Phillips.

I died in camp at Cairo. [Speak louder.] Can't do it. I did n't speak loud for seven weeks before I died; you may ask surgeon Holdman if I did. I lost my voice I suppose by inflammation of the lungs in the first place.

Stranger, I've got a mother in Huntsville, Missouri, and she sends me word; good woman as she was made. I was all the time she had. She's mourning over my death because she thinks I'm lost; 'tisn't so. I'm not so well off as I wish I was, but I'm about as well off as I deserve, I reckon. Now, won't you say that Cyrus Phillips reported himself here, and would be very happy to report himself nearer home. Say I have met my father in the spirit-world, Joseph Phillips, and his sister that died in infancy. Now, that's a good many others; now, among the rest my uncle Nat, my mother's brother who died crazy. But he is not crazy there, and he says, "Tell Sallie—that's my mother—that I never destroyed those papers as they thought I did, and sometimes when I can talk myself, I'll tell where they are."

I was a private in the 6th Missouri, Company G, and I wasn't quite twenty years old. They say I was a stranger; I'll talk better next time. Now, say my mother 's in as happy a place as no. I'm sorry for a good many things I did, and a good many things I didn't do; so I ain't exactly in heaven you see. [You'll soon work yourself there.] Oh, yes, sir; I'm all right on the road. Get the order to march; then go ahead. Farewell.

Louisa Griffin.

I'm Louisa Griffin. My mother would like to have me come here. She lives in New York. [City?] Yes, sir. My father's in the army.

I left her in March last. I was sick fourteen days; died on the 15th. I asked my mother to give me a drink—last thing I asked for. My mother was poor, very poor. My father died before he went away, and she had only some land from the State now; nothing else; and she's sick, and she's asked me to come, so I have come.

Can I send some word to my father? I want him to be sober and send as much money to my mother as he can; and if he lives to get home from fighting, I want him to be better to my mother than he was before he went away. My brother Eddie is in the spirit-land. He's been here a long time, and he wants my father to do different. And my father's mother is there too, and says, "Tell Andrew if he do n't mend his ways he'll be very sorry when he comes to the spirit-land." That's my grandmother.

I was nine years old. If I'd stopped until May, I should have been ten. I shall do all I can for my mother and still come to her whenever I can. If she was here I should say more. [Will she get your message?] Yes, if you want it. She'll get it; she knows I'm coming. [Does she?] How did you make her understand that? [Cause I told her I would. She's one of these folks herself. [Then you can talk to her without coming.] Yes; but she asked me to come here. She do n't know anybody here. I did n't before I come. Good-bye.

Peter O'Brien.

Well, sir, I hear about your sending whatever we may come to give. I thought I might as well take no chance as the rest. Well, sir, I like to send something to me folks here. I like 'em to know, faith! I suppose they know I'm dead—like you to know I can come. [You want it.] Well, sir, I say I got to the spirit-world all right. When I first arrive there, I feel a little nervous—just a little while. I thought I was going to get something pretty severe when I reach the other side. We're told here that we get taken through some small places when we die, as punishment for our sins here. So when I got on the other side I kind of shake to myself for a little while. "A!" I think I. I do not do just right while living on the earth."

Well, sir, I had a name here. I suppose it belongs to me here, though I drop it when I go away. Me name will be Peter O'Brien. I not got much experience in the spirit-world, sir. Well, I may say I got nothing at all; just been there. I suppose you hear of the fight at Spotsylvania? That's the way I come to be out of me here, and in a condition to be somebody else just now.

Now, sir, I like to be able to speak to me brothers in this way. I got two brothers here. One's in an Artillery Company; the other is not in war at all. I should like very much to spake with me family, too. I got a wife, two children, and I got one in the spirit-world wid myself. [Where are your family?] How, sir, in Springfield, sir, this State. [Does your brother ever rest there?] No, sir; he's in New Hampshire. Ah, I think of it, sir, in Manchester.

Me brother Tim is in the war. I suppose he'll come the same way I did. I believe he's not been wounded, but I think he'll come the way I did. Now, sir, I got no sort of money to come back for, but I got some things I'd like to square up. Seeing as me brother's away and can't be 'round to me, I suppose we'll have to do with me dear old loved child. When she stands gazing at the inanimate form of her darling child, she is not in hell, but in peace with herself and the world, therefore must be in hell. This is all the hell we know of.

Q.—Was Persia inhabited before Egypt? A.—We believe it was.

Q.—How long a time would you state that these religious notions were in existence before the coming of Christ? A.—Something like nine thousand years. Now that, you will see, clashes very hard with your six thousand years period. If you could examine the ancient records you would find that the same ideas embodied in the Christian records, are today embodied in theirs. Now the Christian, if he is wise, is patterning after the Chinese, would scorn at it. Verily it is so.

Q.—How far back do Chinese records extend? A.—They claim to be the oldest records extant; but we are not sure they are the oldest. We are inclined to believe that the Persians claim as great antiquity as they do.

Colonel Richard Todd.

I understand you entertain and deal honorably with all who come to you? [We endeavor to.] I have been striving to make my way here since I passed from my own temple of human life, at Frederickburg. I assure you, I feel very strange in coming here. I am not at all acquainted with the use of the control of these bodies; thought I knew how to handle my own, but it's quite another thing to handle that other.

I am, or was, from Enterprise, Kentucky. I was



Children's Department.

BY MRS. LOVE M. WILLIS.

"We think not that we daily see About our hearts, angels that are to be, Or may be they will, and we prepare Their souls and ours to meet in happy air."

(Lionel Hart.)

AUNT RATIE'S STORIES.

No. 9.—Love and Selfishness.

As the glad Christmas time approached we were all very busy preparing, according to our best means, some gifts for those we loved. Aunt Ratie, with her usual patient, generous kindness, had assisted us each, and suggested the best and most profitable use of our time and of our means. She always knew just which shades of silk would blend well, and which would contrast, so that our needle-books and pin-cushions were never so beautiful before. She taught us how to crochet little mats, and with her gentle words of encouragement our work seemed a delight.

She had been talking to us about the sufferings of the poor, and telling us how much we ought to do to make life more pleasant to them, when Anna broke in:

"I never could understand why, if God is good, he lets people suffer. If I could do all that he can I would make everybody happy and comfortable."

"You forget, Anna," said Aunt Ratie, "that there is but one way to be happy, and that is by having a happy spirit. And has not my history shown you that it is far better to struggle nobly with adversity than to be helped? But sometimes we can become angels of mercy to the suffering, if we yield to the best impulses of our nature."

"What do you mean by that?" said I. "Why, we have good and evil inclinations, and as we yield to the one or the other we show ourselves generous and loving, or selfish and unloving. I can make this plain to you by reading you another of Fred Staunton's letters."

"Oh, how splendid!" said Anna; "how briskly we can work while you read; but first tell me what is wrong in my stitches."

"And just tell me how many beads to string for the handle of this sampler," said Arthur. "I feel so proud of being able to make it all myself."

"Most boys think it a disgrace to do anything ornamental or beautiful," said Aunt Ratie; "but I believe they can be just as manly, and brave, and strong, by cultivating their ingenuity and skill, as by loitering about the stores, or on the streets."

"You told us one day that Freddie could sew." "Yes, when he is on the seas he has no one to do a stitch of work for him, and so he determined to learn to do it for himself. He can also braid beautiful baskets; he learned of the natives of one of the islands of the Pacific."

"Oh, do tell us about it," said Susie. "I thought it was quite silly for men to do such things."

"I will get the letter and read, and then you will know all."

She went for the inland casket and placing it on the table, she unfolded again its treasures and took out the package of letters, and selecting one, she laid it open before her and read:

"MY DEAR FRIEND—It is many months since you have heard from me, but I feel sure that you have trusted me all the time, and have never doubted my faithful remembrance. I have some strange adventures to relate to you. You know I always told you that I was sure that a loving providence ordered the lives of every child of earth, and that no one would ever be forsaken who did his duty faithfully. I hoped when I left port the last time, to be able to return with a good cargo, and to feel myself rich enough to give up a seafaring life, and to dwell in some quiet home; and I need not say that I trusted that I should not live alone."

"That means," broke in Anna, "that he meant to marry you. I always thought he would; and you see if he do not."

"Hush, hush, Anna," we said; but we all laughed as we saw her earnest, hopeful face.

"Excuse me, Aunt Ratie, for interrupting you; I am so anxious to know that providence really intends to reward you for your goodness and your self-sacrificing love."

"Our voyage was prosperous at first; but a strange and unaccountable accident occurred to our vessel in the waters of the Indian Ocean. We landed on one of the islands where I hoped the ingenuity of the natives would enable me to make repairs and proceed; but nothing but delays met me at every turn; and soon all the officers and men, except the faithful Simon, declared they would desert me, and, moreover, they demanded their pay. I of course could have refused them, but I would not; so I made the best possible use of my cargo, paid them all, and was left among strangers, and with no means of accomplishing what I had believed so near. For the first time for many years I doubted the good providence that had always kept my life. I felt lonely and distressed, and had it not been for Simon's words of hope, I should have given myself up to despair."

One day we walked out together, and I told Simon that I no longer believed that a kind and loving Father watched over our lives.

"Why would he forsake us so, Simon," said I, "if he really existed?"

"Bless you, my dear captain," said he. "God is often nearest when we think him farthest; I've just been praying these many days that he would show his love, and now I'm going to wait. Do you suppose that the hosts of angels get tired of blessing us? I tell you they're only waiting a good chance."

We had walked quite a distance, and suddenly came upon a settlement of the natives. They looked miserable, and seemed most ignorant, and I felt great pity for them. Why not try to befriend them, I thought. That thought was one of those inspirations of love that, if yielded to, bring us the sure return of blessing. I went to them, and first learned their mode of life and their language. I spent weeks in making myself familiar with them, and then I began to teach them. I taught the women many ways of making garments, and I taught the men various methods of improving their modes of life. I grew quite happy with them, for they loved me devotedly. I began to feel as if providence had indeed brought me there for a good and wise purpose; I no longer felt doubtful of the kind care that kept my life; I was even willing to be separated from you for the sake of the good I found I was doing to others."

But soon there came a great test of my self-sacrifice. A vessel landed that would have taken me away and carried me to my friends. I thought at first I would go; but when I heard the voices of my new friends entreating me to stay, the inner voice of love spoke within me, and I determined to yet serve these poor children that I had found so ignorant, and that looked to me as their best

and truest friend. When they found what I had been willing to do for them, there was no bound to their love and devotion. They brought me, daily, some beautiful and valuable gifts; and, finally, they promised to take me to their most sacred place, where they kept their greatest treasures. Here they loaded me with gifts that, in a civilized country, would have made my fortune. I determined to preserve them carefully. There were pearls fit to grace a queen, rare kinds of wood, the plumage of beautiful birds, and very many specimens of stone, that I believed to be valuable. One beautiful moss agate I said should some day belong to my beloved Katie.

When I found myself quite a prince in my possessions, I began to long, more than ever before, to bear my treasures to you; but I would not forsake my friends. So I told them all about my home, and even about you. And then the love of these people showed itself. They said, 'He shall go,' and they talked incessantly of my leaving. I began then to watch for vessels, but none arrived. This I thought the greatest of misfortunes; but I found it to be the greatest of blessings. I determined to see what could be done with the old ship, that had lain dismantled for so long a time. I consulted the most cunning and wise of the natives, and they proved themselves really quite skillful and ingenious. They brought me timber, and found substitutes for almost all kinds of material that I wanted. Finally, after weeks of toil, we found ourselves possessed of a very comfortable ship, and a hundred hands offered their services to go with me, if I would promise to bring them back soon. This I agreed to do, and we sailed eastward, for I could not feel it right to take these trusting children of the isles far away from their beloved homes, and I thought that we might land in California, from whence I could find means to reach home. I was right, and here we are. My valuable treasures have been disposed of. Simon is to take the ship back to the island, and I, a rich and happy man, expect to be with you by-and-by, to prove to you that there is ever a loving providence that watches over our lives, and guides and protects all those who seek to do right."

"Oh, Aunt Ratie," exclaimed Anna, "then it is true? Capt. Fred is coming; he will marry you, and we shall have a great wedding. Oh, how splendid!"

"But I have not quite finished the letter. Capt. Fred adds: But I must not forget to repeat to you one of Simon's beautiful stories:

There dwelt on a beautiful isle in the midst of the ocean, a prince who had two lovely daughters. He wished very much to bestow every good and blessing on these children, for he loved them very much; and as he loved one just as much as the other, he found it very difficult to decide how to distribute his favors. So he called them to him and said:

"My children, I wish to make you the most beautiful princesses that ever lived in the beautiful isle, but I cannot do it of myself, for I know not how to choose gifts of beauty for you; but I give you both the privilege of choosing for yourselves. To one I give the power of blessing others, and she shall gain what she can, but only by first giving to others. To my other child I give the power of acquiring all she desires for herself."

The oldest one spoke and said: "Oh, father, give me the latter gift. I will become beautiful, and wise, and good. I am sure every one will esteem me the most beautiful princess that ever lived."

"Now," said the father, "you shall go through all the realm, and shall use your gifts, and when you return the people shall declare which is the most beautiful, and which they will choose to sit by me and administer my power."

So they went out together, these two maidens, one with the gift of benevolence, the other of selfish power. They came to a beautiful fountain, where many children had come for water, but found the water too far down for them to draw.

"Here," said Salina, the oldest, "is a chance for me to try my power." And so with a glance of her eye all the children turned toward her, and some made a place for her to lie on, and some fanned her cheeks, and some brought fresh leaves and bound about her tired feet. But the younger sister, Ahava, said, "See these dear little ones, with empty pitchers. Let me fill them from the fountain, and bind about each handle a green leaf of the cool plantain, that their soft, tender hands may not be tired."

When Salina had fallen asleep, thinking how good it was to have so many to serve her, the children returned to the fountain. There they saw their pitchers filled, and each handle bound about with a soft green leaf, and near by stood Ahava waiting to kiss them, and to help the smallest and feeblest carry their burdens a part of the way. Then they took a little water from their pitchers, and sprinkled it over the face and garments of the loving maiden, who by the soft touch felt sleep creeping over her, and laid down on the bank not far from her sister.

When they awoke there were no children by the fountain, and Salina saw herself clothed in her worn, dusty garments, but Ahava's were white and pure, and her skin was fair, and her cheeks were rosy, and she looked as if she had come from the beautiful land where maidens clothe themselves in lilies and catch the hue from the white and blushing roses.

"What hast thou done, Ahava?" said the oldest. "Thou lookest as fresh and fair as the morning, while I am dusty and worn, and my garments are soiled and tumbled."

"I have done nothing; but the children scattered some droops from the fountain upon me just as I fell asleep," said Ahava.

"Oh, I know: this is the fountain of youth and beauty," said Salina. "I will draw water, and bathe in it, and then if a few drops have made thee so lovely, how beautiful shall I become!"

So she drew water, and bathed herself in it; but it did not make her look lovely, or her garments fresh and pure. So they journeyed on, Ahava as fresh and beautiful as if she had just come from her palace, while Salina looked like a tired traveler, whose step flagged and whose heart was sad and sorrowful.

Just at nightfall they came to a garden of fruits and flowers, and there many more children and aged and infirm people were trying to gather the fruits and flowers; but the fruit grew so high that the children could not reach it readily, and the old and feeble had not half filled their baskets. Salina turned her eyes commandingly upon them, and they all went toward her, bearing the best offerings that they had gathered. She selected the choicest and ate them, and laid herself down to rest; but Ahava said, "The poor tired little ones, and the weary feeble ones, how hard it is for them to toil and reap so little. Let me gather for them."

And so she filled the baskets of the little ones, and of the feeble and old, and when they returned from serving Salina they found their baskets full of fruit, gathered from the topmost boughs, and

around each basket was a wreath of beautiful flowers. "This is the fair maiden that has done this," said they, "and she shall eat of the fruit that grow on the topmost boughs. Ahava ate as they gave her, and like Salina she fell asleep. When morning came and they awoke there was no one in the garden. Ahava arose refreshed and beautiful, and her eyes sparkled like the beautiful star in Lyra, while her face shone with a radiance like that of the flowers while the dew was yet on them and the sun first kissed them. But Salina was languid and her eye looked dull, and there was no gleam on her countenance.

"Why, my sister," said she, "how fresh and beautiful thou art! What hast thou done to make thyself so like Aurora, the queen of the morning?"

"I have done nothing," said Ahava, "save at evening I ate of the fruit that the little ones and the poor and infirm gave me."

"I ate, too," said Salina, "but they must have given me what grow on the lower branches, while to thee afterwards they gave the fruit of the topmost boughs; it is that which is sweet and luscious, and they say has divinest life in it."

So she gathered of the ripest and fairest that grew on the boughs on the top of the trees, but it gave her no freshness or beauty; and they traveled on until they came to a deep ravine. Here were children, also, and many poor and friendless ones, and they were seeking for gems and rich metals; but the children knew not where to search, and the others seemed bewildered and unable to see the shining treasures. Salina with a word summoned them to her, and they gave her all the treasures they had found, and she held them in her lap and wondered if they were really worth a princess like herself.

Ahava said, "How weary they must be, toiling here with no one to direct them! These little ones only need some gentle words and some wiser love to lead them to the spot where the most brilliant gems and the rarest metals are to be found. So she began pushing away the sand and rubbish till she came to the bright, shining gems and the sparkling gold and silver, and when the children and other toilers returned leaving Salina asleep, they were delighted to see before them more gems than they had found in all the weary days they had toiled before. They gathered their leathern pouches full, and then they said, "This is the maiden who has enriched us; let us weave her a chaplet that she may wear it forever." And they began twining a chaplet for her, and they made it of diamonds and rubies and emeralds and amethysts, and they placed first a cluster of rubies, and then of emeralds, and then of garnets, and then of amethysts, and then rubies again, and then of diamonds. "Thus," said they, "we spell by the first letter of each gem the word *Love-g-a-r-d*, which proves our love for her, and that she is fitted to be the princess to reign with her father."

While they were making it Ahava fell asleep, and when the maidens awoke there was no one to be seen. As Salina looked on the beautiful chaplet of gems that the children and the poor toilers had placed on the head of her sister, she exclaimed, "Oh, how magnificent! let me but wear it and they will all think me the queen of the realm." So she placed it on her head; but it would not fit and she was obliged to relinquish it to her sister. "Let us go home," said she, "I am tired and worn and soiled, and I have not a gift to bear back to my father while thou hast a fresh countenance, fair garments, and this beautiful crown."

And they returned. When the Prince, their father, saw them, he called together all the wise men of the realm and bade them tell which of his children was to rule with him. They said with one accord, "Why dost thou ask? Has not Ahava, thy daughter of love, beauty and fair garments and a crown, such as has never been seen in all the beautiful isle before? Let her be called the Princess of Love, and let her rule over us forever."

And she has been ever since the greatest ruler that ever lived, and her realm extended over all the earth; but yet some chose the maiden of selfishness, and all such became like her, with soiled garments and lifeless faces and without gems or gold or the regard of the good and wise."

Aunt Ratie paused, but we were all silent, for we all of us felt as if we were not under the entire rule of the beautiful princess Ahava the maiden of Love. At last Anna said, "I do believe, Aunt Ratie, that you are the good genius of my life; you always tell me something I need to know. But Captain Fred did not say when he should be at home, but I have the privilege of guessing and of wishing; and now I have a great secret to tell to all except you. So please let us go out into the kitchen while you put up that beautiful letter."

We all followed, and Anna revealed her great secret.

**Enigma.**  
BY S. E. W. X.  
I am composed of 30 letters.  
My 7, 9, 8, 1, 10, 2 is a planet.  
My 21, 14, 10 is a domestic animal.  
My 18, 15, 17 is an insect.  
My 20, 29, 12, 11 is a (prominent) part of the face.  
My 13, 3, 23, 22, 15 is a boy's name.  
My 6, 16, 24, 5 is a coin.  
My 4, 25, 2 is a metal.  
My 30, 23, 15, 5 is a number.  
My 23, 22, 26, 27 grows principally in swamps.  
My 11, 20, 1 is a human organ.  
My Whole is the title of a widely known "Human Association."

**Middle.**  
BY S. E. R.  
I'm composed of six letters; I'm common but sweet;  
By some living creatures I'm esteemed good to eat;  
Take my first—and to some pensive maiden I'm dear;  
Take my next—I'm not under the sod it is clear.  
Take my first, then transpose—and I almost resolve.  
Go forth in the summer if this riddle you'd solve.

**ANSWER TO ENIGMA BY A. H. M.**—It is a foolish sheep that makes the wolf his confessor.  
**ANSWER TO CONUNDRUM BY X. E. W. X.**—Because she is something to adore (a door).

**S. E. R., PATUCKET, R. I.**—Very "acceptable" is the response to the pleasant words. Let them not be the last. The heart of childhood needs all the golden gifts of love, and the gems gathered from the most experienced and faithful. It is sweet to know that there are homes that open their doors hospitably, and send out the kindly sympathies that reach where the eye cannot travel or the ear bear back messages.

Prices are higher by a hundred per cent. in India than they ever were before. The silver rupee worth about fifty cents, will not buy as much as twenty-five cents will in England. Articles of ladies' dresses there cost five times as much as they do at home. And yet India is draining Europe of specie and keeps it all. A plethora of gold appears to be as bad as a plethora of paper.

Three Days' Meeting.

The Spiritualists of Old Town, Milford, Bradley and vicinity, will hold a three days' meeting in Milford, on the 26th, 27th and 28th of August. It is expected that the Davenport Brothers, whose celebrity is world-wide, will be present, and possibly the Davenport Sisters; also, some prominent Spiritualist speakers and lecturers. Among them, W. K. Ripley, H. P. Fairbank, C. A. Hayden, L. P. Green, M. A. Currier, Emma Hayden, Susan M. Johnson, and we hope a host of others. All lecturers, mediums and Spiritualists are most cordially invited to come and share with us our homes, hearts and hopes. The friends here will make provision to accommodate those coming from a distance, and want every niche of room occupied.

Come! one and all! Let us join hand and heart, that we may more effectually work—  
"For the cause that lacks assistance,  
"For the wrong that needs resistance,  
"For the future in the distance,  
"And the good that we can do."

H. B. EMERY, NEWELL BLAKE, A. RIGLEY, I. M. ROBINSON, J. J. NORRIS, Committee of Arrangements.  
Bradley, Penobscot Co., Me., June 25, 1864.

**County Convention.**  
The Spiritualists of Boone County and vicinity will hold a "Three Days' Meeting," on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, the 2d, 3d, and 4th of September next, in the incorporated town of Belvidere. A free platform will be sustained. Each speaker will be responsible only for his or her ideas. Speakers from abroad are expected to be present, among whom is Rev. Moses Hull, of Battle Creek, Mich. A cordial invitation is extended to all arrangements will be made to entertain those who come from a distance.

By Order of Committee,  
H. Bidwell, of Belvidere; D. Chapman, of Bonus; D. H. Ellis, of Manchester; S. Wellington, of Caledonia; S. Lovett, of Spring; A. S. Royal, of Florio; Wm. Wadsworth, of Leroy; H. Willard, of Boone, Committee.

CHARLES GORMAN, Cor. Sec'y., Belvidere.

**Vermont Annual State Convention.**  
The Annual State Convention of the Spiritualists of Vermont will be held at Montpelier, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, the 2d, 3d and 4th of September. A cordial invitation is extended to all. Mediums and speakers in and out of the State are especially invited to be present and participate. Ample accommodations will be provided at Montpelier on reasonable terms. Arrangements will be made with the several Vermont railroads to carry members of the Convention for fare one way.

GEORGE W. RIPLEY, NEWMAN WEBBS, NATHAN LAMB, GEORGE WATSON, M. D., Cor. Sec'y.  
Rutland, Vt., July 30, 1864.

**Grove Meeting.**  
A Grove Meeting will be held at Howland Springs, Trumbull Co., O., commencing on the evening of Friday, Aug. 19, and continuing Saturday and Sunday. Rev. Moses Hull will be present, and other prominent speakers and mediums are expected. Ample provision will be made for friends from a distance.

LAZELL BOWELL, B. NICHOLS, D. CHERRY, CAROLINE STULL, BARBARA BANBUZZELL, Committee.

**Grove Meeting.**  
The Spiritualists of Ridgetown, Bradford County, Pa., will hold their third annual Grove Meeting, August 21st, in E. B. Beckwith's orchard, three miles south of Wellsburgh Depot. Speakers engaged: Mr. and Mrs. William Palmer, J. W. Mapes, and others. All friends of reform are invited to attend.

Committee: Mr. A. H. Voorhis, J. Carley, P. Miller, Mrs. E. R. Beckwith, Mrs. E. Voorhis, Mrs. G. W. Mead. E. R. BECKWITH, Sec'y.

**Grove Meeting.**  
The friends of Progress at Mechanic Falls, Me., will hold a Grove Meeting in the grove near the village, on Sunday, Aug. 21st. W. K. Ripley has been engaged to attend, and other speakers are expected. A general invitation to all.  
Mechanic Falls, Me., Aug. 1, 1864. Per Order.

**Annual Meeting.**  
The fourth Annual Meeting of Spiritualists will be held at Centerville, Bradford Co., Pa., on the 21st day of August, commencing at 10 A. M.  
Spencer, Pa., July 17, 1864. W. M. PALMER.

**NOTICES OF MEETINGS.**  
HOSPITALITY HALL.—Spiritual meetings are held in this hall every Sunday, at 10 A. M. All mediums are invited to speak. Dr. C. H. RICE.  
CHELSEA.—The Spiritualists of Chelsea have hired Liberty Hall, to hold regular meetings Sunday afternoon and evening of each week, commencing on the 20th of August, at 10 A. M. The following lecturers are engaged to speak afternoon and evening—Mrs. Sarah A. Horton, during August; Mrs. E. A. Bliss, during Sept. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31; Mrs. Anna M. Middlebrook, during February; Miss Emma Huntington, March 5 and 12.  
FRANCIS, MASS.—Spiritualists hold meetings in Leyden Hall, Sunday afternoon and evening, one-half the time. Ichabod Gardner, Cor. Sec., to whom all applications should be addressed. Speaker engaged—Mrs. Susie A. Hutchinson, Sept. 4 and 11.  
PROVIDENCE.—Meetings are held in Fratt's Hall, Weybosset street, Sundays, afternoons at 3 and evenings at 7 1/2 o'clock. Progressive Lyceum meets every Sunday forenoon, at 10 1/2 o'clock. Speaker engaged—Charles A. Hayden, during September.  
PORTLAND, ME.—The Spiritualists of this city hold regular meetings every Sunday, in the Universalist Church, commencing on the 22d of August, at 10 A. M. Lectures afternoon and evening, at 2 and 7 1/2 o'clock. Speakers engaged—Hon. George Thompson, of England, Aug. 28; Miss Martha L. Beckwith, Sept. 18 and 25; H. B. Street, Oct. 2; Wm. Lloyd Garrison, Oct. 5; H. P. Fairbank, Oct. 23 and 30; Mrs. Sarah A. Byrnes, Nov. 6 and 13; Mrs. Susie A. Hutchinson, Nov. 20 and 27.

**OLD TOWN, ME.**—The Spiritualists of Old Town, Bradley, Milford and Upper Stillwater hold regular meetings every Sunday, afternoon and evening, in the Universalist Church. Speaker engaged—Mrs. A. Currier, during August.

**THE FRIENDS OF PROGRESS** will hold spiritual meetings at Union Hall, corner of Broadway and 2nd street, New York City, every Sunday, afternoon and evening, at 7 1/2 o'clock, and of public speaking, as per notices in the daily papers.

**CINCINNATI, O.**—The Spiritualists of Cincinnati have organized themselves under the laws of Ohio as a "Religious Society of Progress," and have secured a commodious Metropolitan Hall, corner of Ninth and Walnut streets, where they hold regular meetings on Sunday mornings and evenings, at 10 1/2 and 7 1/2 o'clock.

**LOVE AND MOOK LOVE;**  
HOW TO MARRY TO CONJUGAL SATISFACTION  
BY GEORGE STEARNS. This is the name of what the Boston Investigator calls "A very handsome little work," and of which the Boston Cultivator says: "A more unique, racy and practical essay has not often been written." Its leading topics are:  
1. Vaguer Concepts of Love. 2. Perils of Courtship. 3. When and Whom to Marry. 4. Characteristics of Mook Love. 5. Many. 6. Rationality of True Love. 7. Wedding Without Hoop. 8. The Signum of Love's Pretensions. 9. Perils of Courtship. 10. Wedding Without Hoop. 11. Perils of Courtship. 12. When and Whom to Marry. 13. Characteristics of Mook Love. 14. Rationality of True Love. 15. Wedding Without Hoop. 16. The Signum of Love's Pretensions.  
Price 25 cents; postage 5 cents. For sale at this office.

LIFE, DEATH AND FUTURITY

Illustrated from the Best and Latest Authorities, BY HOMER WELBY, Author of "Predictions Realized," "Signs Before Death," etc. This is a wide number of readers, therefore he has endeavored to make it attractive by the notes and comments of explorers of the occult, as well as of the most eminent of our countrymen. The studies of Scripture, which strongly reveal to us the relation of God to man. The most recent regard for things unseen has been fostered throughout the work; and although the stores of classic thought and fancy have been occasionally resorted to for embellishment and illustration, these have been employed as subsidiary to the Spirit and the Truth.

**THE MISTAKE OF CHRISTENDOM!**  
OR, JESUS AND HIS GOSPEL BEFORE PAUL AND CHRISTIANITY. BY GEORGE STEARNS. "The Truth shall make you free."  
PART I.—What the Church has had to do with Jesus.  
PART II.—What the Church has done with the Gospel of Jesus.  
PART III.—What Reason has to do with the Gospel of Jesus.  
The author of the above work, after stating the pretensions and character of the founder of the Christian era, proceeds to argue that Jesus of Nazareth was not, and never professed to be, such a Christ as is claimed by his worshippers, and that the system of doctrines and of worship, known as Christianity, did not originate with him, but with Paul and later writers; hence that the common supposition, that Jesus was the founder of our Christian era, is a gross error, and that a stupendous mistake of Christendom. He further argues that Jesus himself taught rational and truthful doctrines; but that his biographers, though sincere and honest men, yet lacked ability fully to comprehend his teachings, and hence could only give their own imperfect apprehensions of his doctrine; but that his followers, through sincere and honest motives, and a mixture of Celestial and human influences, and that the leading characteristics of his doctrine were—one of the Father and one of Godness—Nature of the Divine Beinghood—and Heaven's Fruit of Virtue.

"The author displays much ability, research, insight and industry in maintaining these positions; and we judge establish the more important part of them beyond refutation."  
—A. E. Newton, in the N. E. Spiritualist.  
We think the author has succeeded in establishing a very important point. —Harold's Progress.  
Price 50 cents; postage 2 cents. For sale at this office. July 9.

**NEW WORK BY ROBERT DALE OWEN.**  
It will be published early in August, in a handsome volume, large duodecimo, a New York, entitled,  
**THE WRONG OF SLAVERY,**  
The Right of Emancipation,  
AND THE  
FUTURE OF THE AFRICAN RACE IN THE UNITED STATES.  
BY THE HON. ROBERT DALE OWEN.  
In One Volume, 32mo. . . . Price \$1.25; postage 18 cents.

FOR SALE BY  
MRS. H. F. M. BROWN,  
Aug. 13, 288 SUPERIOR ST., CLEVELAND, OHIO.

**THE WONDERFUL STORY OF RAVALETTI;**  
ALSO,  
**TOM CLARK AND HIS WIFE,**  
THEIR DREAMS AND THE CURIOUS THINGS THAT HAPPENED TO THEM.  
BY DR. P. H. HAZZARD, author of "Fre-Adante Man," "Dealings with the Dead," etc., etc.

The author, in his introduction, says, "In giving what follows to the world, no one can be more alive to the fact that this is the latter half of the nineteenth century, and that the present is a epochally the era of the greatest intellectual, moral, and political revolutions. Matter-of-Fact, and Doubt, that the world ever knew, than in the editor of the following extraordinary tale. He has endeavored to give a philosophical and scientific account of a novel, for departing from the beaten track of War, Love, Murder and Revenge;—Politics, Fashion, and Prussian Aids, which constitute the novel of the day."  
Price \$1.25, postage free. For sale at this office. May 28.

**BANNER OF LIGHT:**  
A Journal of Romance Literature and General Intelligence; also an Exponent of the Spiritual Philosophy of the Nineteenth Century.

Published weekly at 158 Washington street, Boston, Mass., by WILLIAM WHITE, ISAAC B. RITCHIE, and CHARLES H. CROWLEY. LUTHER COLBY, Editor, assisted by a large corps of the ablest writers.

We hope that none of our friends will withdraw their support from the BANNER, on account of the small sum we are compelled to add to its price, but trust they will see the necessity of giving us a more earnest support, so that we may keep the BANNER aloft, with all the distinguishing features which have characterized its pages, and make improvements as the advanced condition of the times require. We therefore ask the aid and co-operation of the friends of Spiritualism and Reform, to enable us to continue to make it an able and fearless advocate of the Rights of Humanity and Spiritual Progress, and worthy of its name. A very little effort on the part of our friends will place the BANNER in the front rank of success, and thus aid in sending the Light of Truth all over the land.

**LITERARY DEPARTMENT.**—Original Novels, and miscellaneous tenders, and occasionally translations from the French and German.

**MESSAGE DEPARTMENT.**—A variety of Spirit-Messages from the departed to their friends in earth-life, given through the instrumentality of Mrs. J. H. COXAR, from the HEBERT and the medium of the writer. We therefore ask the aid and co-operation of the friends of Spiritualism and Reform, to enable us to continue to make it an able and fearless advocate of the Rights of Humanity and Spiritual Progress, and worthy of its name. A very little effort on the part of our friends will place the BANNER in the front rank of success, and thus aid in sending the Light of Truth all over the land.

**EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.**—Subjects of the BANNER, and the Spiritual Philosophy of the Nineteenth Century, Entertaining Miscellany, Notices of New Publications, etc.

**CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT.**—Original Stories, Poetry, etc., suitable for children's reading, by Miss Love M. Willis, one of our most able correspondents.

**ORIGINAL ESSAYS.**—Upon Spiritual, Philosophical, and Scientific Subjects.

**REPORTS OF SPIRITUAL LECTURES.**—By Trance and Normal Speakers. All which features render the BANNER of Light a popular family paper, and at the same time the harbinger of a glorious Spiritual Religion.

**TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION, IN ADVANCE!**  
Per Year, . . . . . \$3 00  
Six Months, . . . . . 1 50  
Single Copies, . . . . . 5 cents each.  
If there will be no deviation from the above prices, when drafts on Boston or New York cannot be procured, we desire our patrons to send, in lieu thereof, United States Government money.

Subscriptions discontinued at the expiration of the time paid for. Subscribers in Canada will add to the terms of subscription 25 cents per year, for post-payment.

Post-Office Address.—It is useless for subscribers to write, unless they give their Post-Office address and name of the street.

Subscribers wishing the direction of their paper changed from one town to another, must always give the name of the Town, County and State to which it is to be sent. The paper will be discontinued, unless a remittance is made previous to this time. The adoption of this method renders it unnecessary for us to send receipts.

Advertisements inserted on the most favorable terms. Advertisements for circulation, or in any way connected with the Editorial Department, should be addressed to the EDITOR. Letters to the Editor not intended for publication should be marked "private" on the envelope. All Business Letters must be addressed,  
"BANNER OF LIGHT, BOSTON, MASS."  
WILLIAM WHITE & CO.

Attention is called to the plan we have adopted of placing figures at the end of each of our subscribers' names, as printed on the paper or wrapper. These figures stand as an index, showing the exact time when each subscription expires, &c.,