

BANNER OF THE LIGHT.



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ELSIE BENNET.

BY A. E. PORTER.

"Hearts are not steel, and steel is bent;
Hearts are not flint, and flint is rent."

It was near noon one bright day in summer, when my father and myself, in a one-horse chaise, drove up to the door of a large farm-house, about three miles from our city home.

I was a little girl then, only ten years of age. My mother was dead, and I had grown thin and pale since I had been deprived of her tender care.

My father, in his fear lest he should lose all his household treasures, applied to old Dr. Kittredge for advice.

"Take her out of school, give her plenty of fresh air to breathe, and bread and milk to eat, and my word for it, you will make a healthy woman of her."

The prescription smacked of common sense, and moreover was easy to follow, and my father began at once to look round for a summer home for me in some farmhouse. He was not long in deciding upon the Bennet farm.

Mr. Bennet had furnished our table with butter from the time my father commenced housekeeping, some twelve years previous to our sketch.

It was uniformly nice and good, which circumstance led my father to conclude that Mrs. Bennet was a notable housekeeper, and then the old farm was a favorite resort of his own in his boyhood, in the days when he used to go nutting and fishing; it was only natural for him to suppose that where he had enjoyed so much, his child might be equally happy. We live over our childhood in our children.

As we drove up the shady lane that led to the house, my father said to me, "Daughter, I have only one request to make of you; never mention 'Uncle David' while you stay here. I have good reasons for this, which I have not time to explain now; and remember I will come to see you twice a week, and if you are homesick you may return with me at any time."



A farm-house is always cheerful at midday in summer. The hens were cackling as if each one thought her egg the biggest; the geese in their white dresses and yellow boots were waddling across the lane to a little pond; the cat was sunning herself and dozing on the mat in the porch, and the dog left a bone he had just found, to see who had arrived. A woman came from the kitchen, and turning towards a field at some distance where men were haying, blew a long blast from a horn, which she took from a nail near the door. She did not see us for a moment, but the barking of the dog attracted her attention to the chaise, and she came to welcome us.

She was a large, bony woman, masculine in her person and abrupt in her manners. I shrank a little nearer my father.

"Ah, is that you, Mr. Lee?" she said, shading her eyes from the sun with one hand, while she gave me the other to aid me in alighting. "I reckoned you'd be here to-day. Well, sure she is a sickly little thing—takes after her mother's family, don't she?" They all died young with consumption.

I clung still closer to my father, keeping my hand upon his knee. The horse was restive.

"Come, child," said Mrs. Bennet, "jump down and see how you like farmers' folks."

"Go with her, daughter," said my father, as he sprang out himself, and soothed the horse that he might stand more quietly.

I rose up but was weak and dizzy. Mrs. Bennet put her large, strong arms about me, and I felt myself held as in a vice. I was passive in body, but my spirit recoiled; there was no attraction between us, and I was glad when the hired man came up, and led the horse away, that I could go to my father. We went directly to the kitchen, where a large table stood ready with its load of piled beef and vegetables for the hungry laborers. My trunk was brought in, and Mrs. Bennet bade the man take it into the little south bedroom.

"Perhaps you would like to come too, Mr. Lee," she said, turning to my father, "and see her here. You said she was a timid little thing, so I'll put her in a room next my own," leading us as she talked, through a sleeping room with a blue and white woolen coverlid on the bed, and a rag carpet on the floor.

"There, this is mine, and here, you see, is Annie's," opening a door into a bit of a room, with a single bed, draped with white—one window, where a fringed white curtain was looped up, letting in the bright sunlight upon a pot of English daisies in full bloom. There was a strip of carpet before the bed, a little washstand in the corner, and one low chair. On one side of the room was hung a plaid blanket, either to keep out the air or cover some defect in the wall, or in imitation of tapestry. "I will have a peep behind it some day," I said to myself. "Oh, isn't it pretty, father?" I exclaimed, going directly to the window to examine the pot of daisies. They were large and full, and looked as if some careful hand had tended them.

"I am glad she likes it," said Mrs. Bennet. "I did not know but she'd think it was too small and tucked up like, but I had no other room that I could spare, but the large north chamber, where nobody goes twice in a year." I shuddered as I thought of such a room, and continued to admire the daisy, and be thankful for so pleasant an addition to my room.

"There, child, you needn't have that old broken bowl and posy in here; you can fling it out of the window if you're a mind to. I've a notion 'tain't good to sleep where there's green stuff growing."

"One of Elsie's notions," she added, turning to my father, "she's managed to put in here when I was busy to-day."

I looked appealingly to my father, he understood it.

"Let it stay, if you please, Mrs. Bennet. I will fix the window this afternoon so that it will let down from the top, and then she can have fresh air at night."

"Well, just as you say—she'll get tired of her posy in a day or two, I warrant."

I was left alone in my room a few minutes, and

while arranging my toilet a little I wondered who Elsie could be, and how she should guess that I would like daisies in my room. She must be some little girl like myself, and I thought what pleasant times we would have in the old farm-house. At dinner, which was served in a room separate from that in which the workmen dined, I saw only Mr. and Mrs. Bennet, and the Irish girl who waited on the table. I forgot all about Elsie in wondering what harm there would be in saying "Uncle David" to Mr. Bennet, for they looked so much alike that if the latter had only wore a black coat, and his face not been browned as much by working out of doors, I should certainly have insisted upon it that it was Uncle David himself. When he talked, his voice was like his, only he spoke a little louder, as I believe people always do who are much in the open air, and when he smiled, it was Uncle David, too—a very pleasant smile, that lighted up the whole face an instant, and then vanished suddenly, as if some sad thought chased it away. Then he was tall like Uncle David, and his hair was just the same, all white, and fine, and soft.

I knew this before, for I had seen the two men at meeting almost every Sunday of my short life. Their pews joined, and those two venerable white heads so near together had often attracted my attention, and I had been on the point many times of asking Uncle David if that man in the next pew was his brother. But somehow I always forgot it, for we had so much to talk about when we were together, that we had very little time to give to gossiping about people. Uncle David was a bookseller, and used to bring home nice little books to sell; then he kept flower and vegetable seeds to sell, and I sometimes sorted them out for him, when he would tell me their colors and properties, till I had quite a knowledge of plants. He lived the next door to my father; indeed the same roof covered both, for it was in a block of buildings; his house was at the corner of the street, so that he had quite a little sunny garden-plot, and he filled it with all the choice and rare plants and fruits that it would hold. He had grapes, and peaches, and plums; and big juicy pears, and giant raspberries, and red and white currants, most of which he sold, for he was not a rich man, and needed the avails of them. He had neither wife nor children, no family but an aged housekeeper. But there was a portrait in the parlor of a beautiful lady, who died when she had been married to Uncle David only two years; and another picture of a little girl about my own age, only much prettier; and now, while I was thinking these things all over, I remembered that Uncle David called her Elsie. But the Elsie who gave me the daisies could not be the same, for Uncle David's daughter was sleeping in the churchyard. I had often been with him and sat down by the little white monument over her grave.

After dinner my father bade me "good bye," and as I kissed him, I whispered in his ear, "Ask Uncle David to come and see me." He looked grave a moment, and then said—"You shall go to see him next week. I need not repeat my request; my daughter will remember it."

It was a warm sunny afternoon, and Mrs. Bennet told me that I might run all round and see how I liked the place. There was cows and calves, and chickens and pigs, and sheep in the pasture—and there was a nice great barn full of new hay. I climbed up the great beams and found an apron full of eggs, which pleased Mrs. Bennet very much, for she said her "Irish gal never had no luck nest hunting." I was quite tired by sundown, and wanted to go to bed, so Mrs. Bennet gave me a bowl of bread and milk, and came into the bedroom with me.

As she was helping me undress, I told her that I had seen everything in the barn and yards, and knew I should like to stay there very much. She said it was well enough for girls, but if I were a woman and had to make as much butter and cheese as she did, I wouldn't like it as well; it was as much as one could do to keep the old house in order.

"Is it very old, Mrs. Bennet?"

"Owl! why, child, it is nigh on to a hundred and fifty years since it was built by the great grand-father of Mr. Bennet."

"A hundred and fifty years old! A great many must have lived and died here."

"Yes, indeed, I've seen 's fifteen funerals my-

self in this house, more than half on 'em when I was a girl. Let me see—oh, Madame Bennet, as they called her, died in my room; the old man in the parlor; Sim Ball, a crazy workman, cut his throat in the shed chamber; my husband's mother died in a fit in the dining-room, and Elsie's baby—but there, the men are coming to supper, and it's a long story about the baby, so I will leave that to another time. There, my dear, I've tucked you up nicely; do you mind to get up now?"

"Just a little bit, if you please, ma'am; the doors clear through to the kitchen, so I can hear you at supper."

I was so tired that I soon fell asleep, but I dreamed that I was attending a funeral in the old farm-house, and that there was a corpse in every room, and that Uncle David was there, but white and cold in a coffin. I awoke just as the old clock in the kitchen struck twelve. I was covered with a cold sweat, and trembled in every limb. The door between my room and Mrs. Bennet's was closed, but the moon shone bright, and I could see everything distinctly; the curtain moved slowly to and fro, but I soon thought it was the air from the open sash, and was getting calm again, though the thought of Uncle David dying made me weep, for I loved him very much. "It was only a dream," I kept repeating to myself, and shut my eyes to try and sleep. All at once I was sure I heard a slight noise, as of some one entering the room. From behind the blanket a strange looking figure appeared, bearing a pitcher of water, which she carried to the window and poured upon the daisy. I dared not move, and scarcely breathed, I was so frightened. She was a little, bent, withered old woman, with gray hair drawn straight away from her forehead, and fastened with the remnant of a comb on the back of her head. Her gown was of some coarse brown woolen stuff, and looked very quaint and old.

All this I saw distinctly in the moonlight, but her face was not towards me as she stood bending over the daisy. I dared not scream, but thought I would jump out of bed and run into Mrs. Bennet's room; but the power of motion seemed gone, and though I felt in every nerve of my body that the old woman was coming directly towards me, I could only close my eyes and feign sleep.

She came to the bedside, bent over me and laid her hand on my cheek. "Poor little thing! how pale she is; we'll nurse her up." David loved her. Poor little darling. "By-baby-by," and she stroked my hair and face, and crooned over me like a mother hushing a child to sleep. Strange though it may seem, as she continued to move her hand over my face and arms, I lost all fear, and became quiet and sleepy; indeed, before many minutes I fell into a sound, refreshing sleep, from which I did not wake till the sun shone broad and full into the window. I dressed myself, and sought Mrs. Bennet. She was in the cheese room, pouring the new milk into a large kettle over the fire.

"Good morning, Annie; you look as bright as a new dollar this morning; want to learn to make cheese?"

"Yes, ma'am; but father said I must take a little walk before breakfast. Shall I have time?"

"Time enough, for the day is all before you; but you don't know much about farmers' folks, I see. Our breakfast was over two hours ago—yours is ready any time," pointing to the kitchen, where, on a little table, covered with a white cloth, stood my bowl of morning's milk, the rich, yellow cream already gathered on the top, and a white loaf by its side.

"I'll just take a run to the brook, and then eat my breakfast."

The cheese was nearly ready for the press when I joined her again, and she let me have some curd and I made a little cheese, with a round box for a hoop. The Irish girl was with us, and though I wanted to tell Mrs. Bennet about the old woman, every time I got ready, something happened to prevent, and the more I thought it over, the more I thought it must be a dream. But the daisy was with me in the morning, and I had not watered it myself.

"What you tell me the story about the baby to-day, Mrs. Bennet?"

"Perhaps so, but you mustn't bother me about such things in the forenoon; when I'm sitting down sewing some afternoon I'll tell you all about it."

"Well, then, I'll go and hunt eggs, and then may I look all over the house, up stairs and down?"

"What a droll child you are! Yes, you may begin at the garret and go over the whole house if you want."

I found some eggs, and tore my frock in the finding of them; but as I had no permission from the good Doctor to climb so many trees and fences as I pleased, without mending my dress, I did not trouble myself about the accident, but went to my room to mend the frock.

I entered the room, I was sure I heard a low moaning sound like that which came to me in the dream, as of one hushing a child to sleep. I trembled so that I could not thread my needle, and ran out with another frock in my hand, into Mrs. Bennet's room. I must tell her about it before night, and yet I remembered with pleasure the soothing effect of the hand and the voice, and longed for, as much as I feared the vision.

A few minutes afterwards I was in the garret, looking at the relics accumulated for a hundred and fifty years. I cannot now describe the antiquities of this ancient repository; it would make quite a little volume. They kept me busy until dinner time, and I was rocking myself in a huge old-fashioned cradle when the horn blew the summons. Mrs. Bennet gave me a seat near herself, and though the repulsive feeling on my part was not removed, yet it was comfortable to be in the shadow of her tall figure, among so many rough looking laborers. It was pleasant to look at Mr. Bennet, because he was so much like Uncle David, and I almost wished for the one vacant seat near his side. "Annie," he said, in a voice so familiar that the tears started to my eyes, "we found some strawberries in the mowing just over the fence there; if you'll take a little basket you can have some strawberries and cream for supper."

"Thank you, sir; I'll run right away now, I've finished my dinner."

An hour afterwards I came in with my basket full of berries, and went to my room to sit down by the window to hull them. Again I heard a voice near, but now it was Mrs. Bennet, and the tones were very harsh and rough.

"Never let me find you in there again—if I do you'll catch it. You know what's to come." There was a low sobbing, but no audible reply, but the sound seemed to come from some one greatly alarmed or hurt. "Well, I'll hurt you worse than that, if you don't mind what I say."

"What has Bridget done to deserve such reproach as this?" I thought, but the minute after, came a low, pleading voice, "Please take it off—please take it off."

"No, not for one hour certainly," and then a door was shut violently, and I heard a low, incessant sobbing.

"Oh, dear," I said to myself, "I wish I was at home. I wish I could see my father or Uncle David."

The strawberries were soon hulled, and I then proceeded to put myself and room in order, for in my flight from the room in the morning, I had left the contents of my work box scattered about the bed. On replacing the articles I missed a small daguerreotype of "Uncle David."

I was sure that it was with the other articles, for I had opened it that very morning, and said to it, "How do you do, Uncle David? I want to see you very much!" I searched the room, but it was no where to be found, and I sat down feeling very sad. I dared not say one word of my loss for my father had forbidden me to mention Uncle David's name; and then how strange it was that his likeness should be taken, and nothing else missing! Like a child that I was, I had a hearty cry, and then all at once remembering that my father had another and better one which I could have, I dried up my tears, and ran up stairs to finish my survey of the house. From the garret I went to the north chamber—a cold, formal room, with a high dark curtained bedstead, and high backed chairs, all arranged in stiff formal lines, like sentinels on duty. I was making my way out as fast as I had come in, for it seemed to me that the spirits of the departed were waving the sombre old curtains, keeping watch over the dark colored furniture, and staring at me from the looking-glass, but my eye was attracted by a portrait on the wall.

It was a young girl, dressed in the costume of "sixty years since"—low boddiced lace, a frill of broad rich lace falling over the full bust, short sleeves, hair drawn back and rolled over a cushion; but one or two tiny curls at the sides of the head relieved the otherwise stiff appearance of this mode of dressing the hair. The face was fair and exceedingly lovely. It was not the full, rich lips, the soft blue eyes, or the delicate rose hued cheek, that held my gaze entranced, but the expression which the painter either gave by inspiration, or caught in some happy moment from his sitter, and fixed upon the canvass. A gust of air (from some broken window perhaps), though I did not stop to think of it again, stirred the folds of the heavy curtains, and even moved the picture upon the wall. I ran out and passed rapidly through the entry to the back chambers. There, after groping about for some time, I found a pair of stairs, leading to a dark passage. I went on till I came to a door, which admitted me into a large, rough, unfurnished room, where I saw a case of drawers, a spinning wheel, a loom, and many other things often found in a farm-house. I was thinking "what a nice play-house I'll have in a rainy day," when a low groan startled me, and like a poor little timid hare I pricked up my ears and prepared to run. "Poor little darling—by-baby-by," came from the corner of the room, and turning round I saw the old woman of my dream. She sat near a low bed, but though she tried to rise and come towards me, I perceived she was unable to do so, because of a rope which was tied round her arms and securely fastened to the heavy loom.

I spoke of her as gray and withered by moonlight, but by day she seemed more old, and at first sight hideous. Her gray hair was loose and flying in all directions, and her apparel was coarse to meanness, while the wrinkled face was distorted by suffering.

"Come, Annie—come see poor Elsie." The voice had a strange effect on me. Old, hideous and crazy though she seemed, I went readily towards her.

"Elsie's arm aches," I saw that the rope cut her arm, and I climbed upon the top of the loom, untied the knot, and released her. She rolled up her sleeve, and one broad livid streak showed how cruelly she had suffered. I smoothed her hair, and she patted my cheek. "Poor little birdie has lost its mother, and is sick. My darling will be well soon, and the roses will come to the pale cheeks. There run now," and she pointed to the door—"run quick, little one." I stepped her as if my own will had suddenly become merged in hers. On opening the door I found a blanket intercepted my progress; I pushed it aside—I was in my own room. There was my chair and window, the tiny table and work box just as I had left them two hours ago, and on the window sill the pot of daisies, fresh and blooming. "And I found Elsie!" I said to myself. "How came she here? Who is she? Oh, how I wish I could see father or uncle David!" I was a sickly, petted child, and had no more strength than to lay my head down on the window sill and weep. There was the sound of carriage wheels in the yard, and a moment after, a well known voice said, "Good afternoon, Mrs. Bennet."

I was out of doors in an instant. "Oh father! how glad I am!" And jumping into his arms, I laid my head on his shoulder and wept again.

"There, daughter, run and get your bonnet and take a ride with me."

"Oh papa, please tell me all about Elsie," I said, as soon as I was cosily nestled down by his side in the chaise.

"That is why I came out to-day," was his reply. "Uncle David thought it best not to say anything about her before you, but I have been troubled all day, and concluded that we had not decided wisely."

"Uncle David, papa? what has he to do with Elsie?"

"I will tell you that by and by; but first, what do you know about Elsie?"

He listened patiently to my recital, and then putting his arm around me, said gently,

"You must have been very much frightened, daughter; when I saw Elsie last, she was a sad object."

"Only for a minute, papa, and then as I told you, I wasn't afraid at all, and fell asleep while her hands were on my face."

"That is strange," said my father; and fell into a musing fit, from which I ventured to rouse him with the request,

"Please, papa, tell me all about Elsie."

"Yes, my child, that is why I took you out to ride this afternoon. Elsie Bennet was the only child of John Bennet, who owned that large white house, the chimneys of which you can just see, by the river side. All the land between this hill and the river belonged originally to the Bennet Farm, and was held in common by two brothers, John and David Bennet. David, who lived in the farm house which we have just left, had two sons, John, who now carries on this farm, and David; your 'uncle David,' as you call him. David Bennet died when Elsie was a child. On his death bed he gave the little to his brother, and made a will, leaving his property, which was large, all to Elsie, on condition that when she became of age, she should marry the eldest son, John. If she married any other person, one half of the property only went to Elsie, and that only during her life; the rest to a distant connection of the Bennet family by the name of LeBreton. The children were happily ignorant of this will, and a more affectionate family circle was not known for miles around. Elsie grew to be very beautiful, and as lovely in character as in person. I have seen a picture of her, painted when she was seventeen, that is one of the most winning female portraits that I ever beheld. Uncle David says that it is not flattered."

Unfortunately, as it would seem to us, John Bennet had little native refinement, and no taste for books. David, on the contrary, was of a quiet, studious turn, and his father sent him to college. It was not strange that a girl like Elsie, who read romances and wrote poetry, should fancy the tale,

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thoughtful student more than the bluff farmer. A correspondence was kept up during his college life, and voy of eternal constancy exchanged.

When John Bennet the elder learned this circumstance, he was much disturbed, for he could not look upon the loss of all those fine meadow lands without a pang.

But he was a shrewd, cautious man, and did not act in haste. Calling David to his own room, he told him that it was time that he should travel and see something of the world before choosing his profession. "Here is money," he said, handing him a well filled pocket book, "and you will find also within a letter of introduction to our cousin, LeBreton, at Savannah, where I hope you will pass the winter, and come home looking stronger and more florid."

All this pleased the young man, and he went away full of hope for the future, and with perfect faith in Elsie's constancy. His brother John went with him to Boston, and on the way he confided to him his engagement with Elsie.

John made no reply but this, "You seem to be the lucky one of the family, David."

During the winter David received no answers to his letters to Elsie. His father wrote occasionally, always mentioning her and adding, "she sends her love." He became so anxious, that he determined to go home as soon as spring opened. Just before that time, his father commissioned him to go to the West Indies on important business. Here he was taken sick, and was too feeble for many months even to write home. He came at last to Savannah, where he had a relapse, and was brought very near to death.

On his recovery, he one day took up a paper, and read the marriage of John and Elsie! Weak in body and full of heart sickening suspense he started immediately for home, but arrived there only in time to attend his father's funeral. The old gentleman had died suddenly with a disease of the heart.

John and Elsie were husband and wife, and followed the coffin as chief mourners. Poor David was a stranger in his father's house. After the formal greeting by the side of the dead, the brothers parted, and have never spoken since! David went back to Savannah, where, after some years, he married the daughter of LeBreton, a pretty little half French girl, all love and fondness for her grave husband. It was this marriage that old Mr. Bennet desired, and to accomplish which he sent David south. The two branches of the family would thus be united, and the property secured to his own family in case of Elsie's death, or her refusal to marry John.

But poor Elsie, worn out with hope deferred, and taught to think that David had ceased to love her, was won at last to give her hand reluctantly to John, who loved her truly in his rough way. But when the will was read, after the funeral, she began to suspect the truth, and one day when left alone in the house, she found her own letters and David's, all the full of the warm outbreathings of their young hearts, hid away amid piles of old deeds and accounts. It was just before the birth of her child. When that event took place she was dangerously ill for a long time, and when she recovered, her reason was dethroned.

She insisted upon calling her child David, and took no notice of her husband, but never allowed her child to be out of her sight for a moment. Martha, a stout young woman, who managed the dairy, and had lived in the family many years, was her nurse. Elsie feared her, and when raving in delirium, was quelled by the strong will and courage of this girl. When the baby was about a year old, Elsie, who had been allowed during the mild weather to ramble among the grounds, for her mania had subsided to a quiet melancholy, took him in her arms, saying, "Come, baby darling, we'll go to him—we'll wait no longer."

An hour afterwards she was seen by one of the workmen in the river, who rescued her, with much resistance on her part. It seems she had clasped her babe to her bosom, and tried to drown herself with him. On feeling the water, the child had struggled and escaped her grasp. The little one was taken from the water, but all efforts to resuscitate him were useless. I was there at the time, and saw the mother lying in hopelessness but quiet agony by the side of her dead babe. She was still while permitted to stay by its side, but the moment any attempt was made to remove mother or child, her screams were terrible to hear.

It became necessary at last to remove the corpse, but the sleepless, watchful mother was vigilant, and furious as a wild animal whose young is pursued by the hunter. Martha alone was equal to the task. Keeping her eye fixed upon Elsie, while two men held the poor enraged woman, raving like a chained tigress, she laid the babe in its coffin. For many days and nights the mother raved incessantly, and it was necessary to pinion her to keep her from destroying herself. Her case was pronounced incurable by the physicians, and though after some years she sunk into a state bordering upon imbecility, there have been, only at long intervals, glimpses of reason.

Martha remained in the house, and some ten years since Mr. Bennet obtained a divorce from Elsie and married Martha, the one whom you now call Mrs. Bennet. Uncle David, in the mean time, had removed to his present home; his wife died young, and his only child, a beautiful girl, lies by her side in the church yard. But his kind heart yearns over Elsie. He thinks that her sad life might be made less gloomy. But he and his brother are still unreconciled. They attend the same church; their seats join; there the hair of each has whitened for the grave, their forms have bowed, and the once firm step become less elastic; the friends of their youth are gone, but deeper, darker, grows the shadow between these two brothers, as they come near the silence of the tomb.

It was uncle David's wish that my little Annie should come to the farm house. "Who knows," said he, "but she may be the angel of the house."

But I have had my misgivings, and came to-day to tell you that if the presence of this poor unfortunate creature troubles you, I will take you away to-day.

"No, papa, it does not at all. I wish to stay." By this time we had returned to Mr. Bennet's, and my father, taking from the chaise box a basket of delicious fruit sent to me by uncle David, bade me "good evening," and drove away.

I divided my fruit with Elsie; she did not eat it, but putting it carefully away, drew from her bosom the picture of uncle David. "May I have it, Annie darling?"

"Yes, it is yours, Elsie."

She kissed it again and again, and after contemplating it in silence for some time, burst into tears. "That night I was restless, but not from fear. Elsie came and watered the daisy, and soothed me to sleep. I felt happier and stronger while she was with me, but what attracted my notice was her more quiet, intelligent manner."

"Can you love a poor old woman like myself, Annie?"

"Yes, Elsie," and I took the wrinkled hand and kissed it. A moment after, tears fell upon my own arms and hands.

Had I been older, and understood the effect of tears from a long sealed fountain upon a seared heart and withered heart, I should not have wondered at her appearance the next day.

I heard Mrs. Bennet tell the Irish girl to take a cup of tea to Elsie, for she was unwell. I stole in and found her in bed, very quiet, and with a calm, clear look of the eyes indicating returning reason. She welcomed me with a smile that made the withered features beautiful. "My child," she said, as she took my hand, "I feel as if I was just waking from a long, fearful dream. Can you read in the Bible?"

"Yes, aunty, I'll read my mother's chapter, 'The Lord is my Shepherd.'" She lay quietly with closed eyes, and when I had finished, she seemed talking to some unseen person. "I see! I see! it is all bright and glorious there! I'll come soon, my darling boy. Stay and I'll sing. I've caught the tune."

Then she sang—her thin, withered hands clasped upon her breast, so sweet a song I never heard before. My little heart was full of peace and love, and as she sang, her face and form changed, so that she was no more, in my eyes, an old, crazy, gray headed woman, but some beautiful being, surrounded by a halo of rosy light, and singing from pure gladness of spirit.

When she ceased singing, she fell asleep, and remained so most of the day. In the afternoon I went home and had a long talk with uncle David, who said he should come out and see her. "I could see that his hands trembled, and his eyes were moist, when I told him how much she valued the picture. Memory was unrolling the panorama of youth before him. On my return, the family physician was by Elsie's bedside; he shook his head gravely as he examined the patient, and said that this return to reason might indicate the near approach of death."

I brought with me some of my mother's sick-room caps, and white loose dresses. They pleased Elsie, and I thought she realized that she would be less forbidding with her hair neatly combed and smoothed beneath the muslin frills. The Doctor did not define her disease, but she grew weaker every day, and no signs of mania were perceptible, unless it were her unwillingness to have me out of her sight a moment. She was carried into the parlor, and at my request, my own little bed was placed in the same room. One morning she called me to her side. "Annie, darling, I must see David; ask John if it may be so." I did my errand to Mr. Bennet with the abruptness of a child. He started, turned pale, but in a moment replied: "Tell your father she wishes it."

"And may uncle David come, sir?"

"I wish it, if she does."

That afternoon the two old men stood by Elsie's bedside. When they were last in that room they were in the bloom of youth, and stood by the coffin of their father.

Uncle David watched by Elsie that night; her reason was restored, and she had strength to converse; what they said was never known to others, but from that night the brothers John and David were firm friends. Elsie died in sleep without any apparent suffering. The next day I was alone in the room with the corpse. I had always shrunk from the dead, but I was unwilling now to leave the place. All trace of brain and heart torture were exchanged for a look of ineffable peace; the glory of the departing spirit still lingered in the body. I knew now that the picture in the room above was Elsie's portrait.

That evening uncle David took me in his lap and said, "Annie, there are angels that travel with us in our journey through life, but though sometimes of our own household, we do not always recognize them." I did not understand him then, but I am growing old now, and I pray daily to God to make my vision clear to see, and my heart pure to love the angels in earthly form, that I may better love those who dwell in the sacred presence above.

PLATO'S PRAYER.

ALL men do pray: and everywhere, The calm and listening air For ever hears some human prayer, On sea and land in fields and streets, Its endless prayers the weary world repeats.

O! make all things, below the skies, Before my longing eyes, Like trees of gold respondent rise; That I may pluck their fruit to-day, And go with gilded splendor on my way.

O! seat me on the throne of power— The world's most princely dower— That I may rule, through one brief hour, And, clad in kingly purple, see Submissive millions bend the servile knee.

O! give me some enchanted name, Such as a god might claim— The darling of immortal fame; And place an Angel on each star, With trumpet voice to herald me afar.

Such prayers of men we ever hear, Renewed from year to year— The voices of this human sphere; And still the grovelling theists proclaim The world's mistaken, low and empty aim.

Now, hear a voice from ages old, Down listening aera rolled, That asks not fame, nor power, nor gold; But o'er the world's metallic din It cries, "O! make me beautiful within."

The equipage of vast estates, Which the empty mind o'er-rates— The garnished walls and golden gates, Are but the marble's fatuous faces, Beneath the stars of Virtue's high desires.

And Youth adorned with many a gem, And flashing diadem, Exchanges all the world for them, And harkens to her gauds and faces, A Jewelled soul with its immortal grace.

And nation's in their struggles pray For wider realms of sway, And march on their bloody way Marauding armies, to obtain The tempting tithe of the vanquished train.

But shall the nation's never turn To loftier theses, and burn With nobler impulse than to earn Exterior glitter, and the show Of gross material—downward in its flow?

A good it is to grade the hill Or bind the wandering rill To labor's wheel; but nobler still, With truth and virtue to control Discordant states, and beautify the soul.

Let men and nation's everywhere Bill burden Heaven's sweet air With this sublime angelic prayer, Against the selfishness of sin— "O! make us mortal beautiful within."

NOBLE EXAMPLES.—Whatever teaches the world how much can be done and borne by a man under the guidance of lofty and generous motives, with patient fatigue, pain, privation and defeat, with patience unflinching, and hope unquenched, whatever teaches that, is the prime benefactor of our time, and the most signal illustration of a wise and loving Providence. Great and beautiful examples, set up so high that all the world can see them, are the world's life, the guarantee of its progress, the fire that keeps its highest hope aflame.

Written for the Banner of Light.

ELLEN: A Tale of Modern Times.

BY J—S—T.

In one of the crowded thoroughfares of Boston, not long since dwelt a child of poverty, though born under the sun of prosperity. She had a face fair to look upon, and a mind capable of drinking in much good and much evil. One parent only was left to guide her, the other having passed on when the little Ellen was but five years of age. That one was a mother, full of all a mother's love, and an embodiment also of virtue and truth; and these latter she sought to impress upon the mind of her child; yes, she labored hard to sow good seeds in the young garden of that child's heart, that in after years she might pluck choice fruits to sustain her declining footsteps. And her labors were blessed. Good angels kindly watered what she had sown, and in joy she beheld that bud blossom into womanhood.

But, woe! as the blossom came, came also the chilling winds of poverty, for the ample fortune left by the husband and father was swept from them by the cruel breath of false men; two of whom are now living among you, their hoary hairs, venerable countenances, and high standing in the political world proclaiming what angels cannot find in the index of their souls—honesty. The others have all passed on, to receive their reward for the deeds done in the earthly temple.

As the mother and daughter found themselves bereft of all, except a good wardrobe, a few jewels, a scanty array of furniture, and but little money, they began to look around to find, if possible, a future home. But the doors which had once been open to them were now closed, speaking of sordid souls within who only bore friendship to wealth, and worshipped the god of fashion.

"Ellen," said the mother, "we must find a home to-day, for we can no longer abide here."

"Where shall we go, mother; what shall we do, we cannot find apartments in all Boston, and, if we could, how are we to pay for them? O, I feel like cursing those who have so cruelly wronged us."

"Hush, my child, let us trust in the widow and orphan's God, dry your tears, put on your bonnet and shawl and go up to Mr. —, your father's friend; tell him we are in trouble, and ask him to come down and advise with me."

Two hours later the door of that little room was thrown open and Ellen entered, pale and trembling with mental agony, and throwing herself upon the sofa, burst into a flood of tears.

"What has happened to you my child, are you ill, or have you learned more bad news."

"No, mother, not ill, but I wish I was dead, I am sure I had rather die than abide by the advice of my father's friend, as you call him."

"Why, did he advise with you, Ellen? I requested him to come and advise with me."

"Yes, mother, I told him so, but he said he could not find time, and bade me tell you, you had better find one or two rooms, and solicit sewing from our friends. He thought we might live very comfortably by so doing. I repeat, mother, I would rather die than do this."

"Well, my child, as our earthly friends have all forsaken us, let us take counsel together, after asking the God of the rich and the poor to aid us."

Together knelt the mother and child, and prayed for holy influences to guide them through the dark night of sorrow; and an unseen form was there also, witnessing their agony and mingling an invocation with theirs, to draw blessings from the fountain of blessing, and them; but they knew not of his presence, and it was well. The seal was not yet to be broken.

Again it is morning, and still the widow and orphan are without a home.

"We will go together to-day, my child, and I feel quite sure we will find some resting place, if it be ever so poor."

Long and weary was that walk. Already the sun had gained its meridian, and yet no success.

"Let us turn in here," said the mother, "we may find some place," and accordingly they entered a narrow court, inhabited only by the lower class. They had passed two doors, and, on looking up, beheld a badly written advertisement, "Two rooms to let—inquire within." They scanned the building closely; and what a contrast between that and the dwelling they were about to leave. But something must be done, and, with beating hearts, they ascended the steps, rang the bell, and were met by a good looking Irish woman, who invited them in, showed them the rooms, and, in a few moments, they had agreed to take them, and were again wending their way towards home with hearts but little lighter than when they left it. Nearly all that night was spent in collecting together all they could now call their own, and the morning found them ready to leave forever the home which justly belonged to them.

Four days have passed. The mother and child are seated in their new humble home, consulting together in regard to the future.

"I will go out to-day, mother," said Ellen, "and see what I can find to do; you are not well, and had better not accompany me."

"What success, child?" said the mother, as three hours later Ellen entered, looking worn and weary.

"Oh, pretty good, mother; I have got some embroidery for you to do at home, and a place in a shop for myself. I shall not be obliged to stay later than seven in the evening, and then I can help you some, when I get home. Oh, mother, if my father could only see us, do you think he would be happy in heaven?"

"I do not think his happiness is affected by our unhappiness, my dear child," replied the mother; "he doubtless is far away from earth, and cannot, or should not, be acquainted with our present state."

Again that unseen form is present, and would fain unseal the widow and orphan's eyes; but not yet was the seal to be broken. And he silently listened, blessed them, and departed.

"When are you to commence your labors, Ellen?"

"To-morrow, mother; and, oh, if it were not for you, I should pray that to-morrow might come and find me away from earth."

"Take courage, my Ellen—I feel we shall not always be so unhappy."

A gentle tap at the door broke off their conversation, and Ellen rose to admit whoever might be there.

"Is this the residence of a Mrs. — and her daughter?" said the strange lady who encountered Ellen at the door.

"It is," replied Ellen; and the lady handed her a note and departed without another word. It was directed to the mother, who immediately opened and read—and as she read she grew pale, and at last sunk into a chair, and handed the note to Ellen.

"What can this mean?" said Ellen, as she finished reading the strange epistle.

"I'm sure I cannot tell, my child; it is a mystery."

"Oh, mother, I wish we had read it before that strange girl left; she might have explained it to us."

Reader, we will give you a part of that strange note. Perhaps you can solve it. It runs thus:—"To my dear wife and child on earth—Think not I am not cognizant of much that has passed since I left you for my spirit home, eleven years ago this very day. Think not I do not know how you have been cruelly wronged, and who has so cruelly wronged you. Oh, measure not the distance that divides us by the length of miles, for thin is the veil which conceals you from my sight. Oh, pray on, my companion—pray on, my child; and in answer to those prayers, the God of the rich and poor will send those loved ones gone before to guide you through the valley and shadow of death. From the husband and father in the spirit life."

Again and again was that strange note read by the mother and child, and yet it remained a mystery. And the evening shadows fell, and the time to retire arrived, and still they sat there by the dim light of the fire and pondered upon its contents, striving in vain to unravel the mystery; but not yet was the seal to be broken; and they retired to dream of what had passed. At the first gleam of morning they were again conversing upon the mysterious events of yesterday; but finding they could not solve the problem, they agreed to discuss the matter no more.

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Months passed, and Ellen had become quite injured to her occupation. Her evenings were spent with her mother, and again the mother and child were contented. One evening as the two were busily engaged in finishing a garment, intended to adorn the form of one who in better days had been their companion, their friend, they were suddenly aroused by the entrance of a gentleman, who proved to be the so-called friend of the husband and father.

"Good evening, ladies," said the intruder. "I called to congratulate you on your success, and to advise you in regard to the future." Ellen, as if by a natural impulse, shrunk from him, and coldly bowing, left the room.

"I see you are very comfortably located here, but I purpose to offer you a better situation. You have doubtless heard of the death of my old housekeeper, and as I need some one to fill her place, I have come to offer you and your daughter a home with me."

"Indeed," replied the lady, "I am very thankful to you for your generous offer, but I could not think of accepting, unless my daughter is willing."

"If that be your only objection, I think it may be easily overcome. I will converse with her myself upon the subject. When shall I call and be sure of an interview with her?"

"You may call to-morrow evening, if you please."

"Very well—I will be here at eight o'clock."

And the door closed, and the father's friend was retracing his way back to his princely home. But was he alone? We answer no. An unseen form was his silent companion; and each thought of midnight blackness was known to that companion.

"Oh, mother," said Ellen, as she rushed into the room after the departure of the visitor, "why did you tell him he might call again to converse with me? I am sure I will not converse with him, as I will not go there to live. I heard all that was said, but did not wish to stop in the room, and I will not see him to-morrow night."

"Be calm my child—you are excited—you must see him, because I have promised you should. You can tell him you will not go, and I do not think he will trouble us again."

"Well, mother, I will do as you have promised," replied Ellen, and she plied her needle as though her life depended upon the amount of work she would do that hour.

Soon the garment was finished, and the two prepared to retire.

It is again evening—the mother is again sewing, but Ellen is nervously pacing the room, awaiting the arrival of her visitor. The clock strikes eight, and at the same time a rap is heard at the door.

"Go mother, I cannot," said Ellen.

"Good evening again, ladies," said the gentleman, as bowing, he entered the room. Well, Miss Ellen, I have been communing with your mother in regard to your coming together to live with me, and she refers me to you for a decision. But before deciding, permit me to conduct you to my home, that you may know better how to decide."

"Sir," said Ellen, "I have no desire to change my home at present. Indeed, I cannot think of it."

"You are not capable of judging, my dear," replies the gentleman. "If you will just put on your bonnet and shawl and walk up to my house with me, if you decide to remain here after that, I will urge you no further."

"Very well, I will go," said Ellen thinking to bring matters to a close that way; and soon they were rapidly nearing the rich man's house.

"This is my home," said he, as he drew up to a fine building on Tremont street, and as they entered the first article that met her gaze was a chair, the seat of which she had wrought with her own hands. At first she wondered how it came there; but soon she remembered that all their fine furniture had been sold, and that he might have been the purchaser. As she passed from room to room, she saw many familiar articles, and she almost fancied herself in her home of better days.

"Well, said the gentleman, after they had passed through many apartments, and were seated in the parlor, "are you now ready to decide? Remember, if you come here you shall have perfect freedom to everything in the house, and as much money as you want beside."

Temptation! Oh, how strong thy power— How full of frauds the wiles— To draw thy victim from the bowler Made pure by heavenly smiles.

The resolution Ellen had made before she left her home now began to tremble before the powerful charms the tempter had thrown around her, and before she had reached her home, she had partly promised to come, if her mother wished to.

"What could he mean, mother, when he told me I could have as much money as I wished?" said Ellen, as she and her mother were consulting together that night.

"Why, I suppose he meant he would pay you well for your labor."

"Ah! mistaken woman, you cannot see the serpent beneath the green leaves!"

Early the next morning the gentleman called to get a decisive answer—and the answer was, they would accept the offer, and make his home their home. Yes, they had agreed to go in three days; and as the rich man lay upon his pillow that night he was pondering upon a variety of schemes, too black, too gross, too hellish, to appear on this page.

And was he alone? Oh, no—for one, who was permitted to guard and guide the widow and her child was there also, although unseen—yes, there to read the dark page of that human mind, that he might better understand how to render harmless the dark arrows pointed at the temple of purity.

It is now the evening of the second day, and Ellen and her mother are seated at the little table, sewing as usual.

"Well, mother," said Ellen, "we have but one day more to stop here, and I really feel sad at the thought of leaving, for I have become quite happy here."

"Well, my dear, you will doubtless be far happier in the home you are about to go to."

thought of leaving, for I have become quite happy here."

"Well, my dear, you will doubtless be far happier in the home you are about to go to."

"Hush, mother! Did not some one rap at the door?"

"I did not hear; but go and see, Ellen"—and immediately another rap.

As Ellen opened the door, she again encountered the strange lady, who handed her a note, and again departed.

"Ellen immediately tore it open, and as it was directed to her, read as follows:—

"My dear child—a voice comes from the spirit land to warn you of impending danger. Oh, take not up your abode where serpents will poison at every footstep; but come to house, No. — street, at ten o'clock to-morrow, and all shall be explained. Your spirit father, J—S—T."

"Oh, mother, what can this mean?" said Ellen as she burst into tears.

"I cannot tell," said the mother—"it is a mystery which I hope in God's name will be explained to you to-morrow, if you have courage enough to go."

"Mother, I would not miss of going for worlds." The hours of that night seemed to roll by on sluggish wheels to the impatient spirit of Ellen, and at the first gleam of light she was up, and longing for the time of the promised explanation to arrive. At last it came, and she prepared to go, she hardly knew for what.

"Hurry back as quick as possible," said the mother, as Ellen was closing the door.

This must be the place said Ellen to herself, as she stopped at the street and number she was directed, and with trembling hands she rang the bell and was met by the strange lady, who invited her in, and bade her be seated at a small table in the centre of the room.

"Will you allow me to ask a few questions?" said Ellen.

"Oh, yes," replied the lady.

"Well, then, who are you, and what have I come here to learn?"

"I can answer your first question, but your last I must leave for some higher power to solve, as I am wholly incapable to do it. The answer to your first question is simply this:—I am a medium to whom departed spirits, or persons who once lived on earth, can come and use as an instrument in communing with their friends on earth. Sometimes they commune by rap—sometimes by writing, and sometimes by speaking. Some months since I was sitting alone in my room, when a strange spirit came to me, controlled my hand and wrote the first communication you received from me. After giving me directions where to leave it, he made me promise to deliver it that very day. One day since the same spirit came to me, and wrote out the message I delivered to you yesterday. This is all I know about it. I never knew or heard of you until the spirit came, as I told you. He doubtless requested you to come here to-day at this hour for your good, and if you will sit quiet we will see what will now come to you."

But ten minutes had passed, ere the medium was quietly sleeping under the influence of the controlling spirit, and the father was speaking to his child, pointing out the serpent between their leaves, and counselling, in regard to the future, identifying himself beyond the shadow of a doubt, and closing with a prayer, a blessing, and a promise to be with, to guard and guide his child in the future.

Where now is the fabric raised by the fiend in human form? Ah, it is hurled to a mass of crumbling ruins by spirit power!

As Ellen reached her home, she was met by her mother, who anxiously inquired what she had learned.

"Oh, mother, I comprehend all now," and Ellen related all she could remember of what she had been told by the medium and the spirit through the medium. Oh, mother, I wish you would go, and see and hear, and then you will be better able to judge."

"I will go this very day, my dear child," replied the mother. "Yes, I will go now," and she quickly dressed herself and was soon found at the house where the medium resided; and on ringing the bell she was told by a lady who met her that the medium was engaged, and she could not see her that day.

"Oh, tell her I cannot come again, and tell her I cannot get away without seeing her."

"Well," replied the lady, "I will see what she says."

In a moment more she returned and bade her walk in, as the medium would sit for her if she had spirit friends who were anxious to commune.

Soon she was seated at the table, and the medium was sleeping, under the controlling power of the spirit! And who was that controlling spirit? Ah, it was that unseen form who had ever hovered near to bless. And precious to her was the information she received in that short hour.

I shall know what to do now, thought she, as she was walking home. As she turned the corner of the little court, Ellen was at the door to meet her.

"Well, mother, did you see her? did she speak to you? and what do you think?" were some of the questions she asked in quick succession.

"Yes, my dear, I did see her, and he did speak to me," replied the mother, "and I think he was sent from heaven to save us. Oh, I feel happier now than I have since he left me, I cannot doubt now—I feel it would be wicked to do so."

"Well, mother, will you do as he directed you to?" said Ellen.

"Why, yes, my dear; I shall tell Mr. — we cannot go, and I shall tell him why we cannot. Now dear, hurry and eat your dinner, and go to the shop, and I will arrange everything again for us to remain here for the present."

As Ellen was reading that evening to her mother she was interrupted by a rap at the door, and she arose to open it.

a short distance, ere he was met by an old friend...

"Ah, good morning, friend," said George; "I feared I should be obliged to take my morning walk without company..."

The striking of a neighboring clock proclaimed the hour of nine.

"Ab," said George, "I have an engagement at this hour; and, by the way, my friend, if you are not otherwise engaged, I should like to have you accompany me."

Anything to drive away melancholy, thought the rich man—"No, I have no engagement at this time," he replied, and will accompany you if you wish.

"Oh, only a short distance from here," said George; "I am going to see a lady who is a medium, through whom departed spirits are said to return to earth, and commune with the friends who still remain here."

"No, I never did," replied the rich man, "but I have heard of it, and should like nothing better than to pass off an hour or so this morning."

Soon they reached the residence of the medium, and were seated at a small oval table, awaiting the coming of the unseen ones.

The hand of the medium was soon influenced, and these words were written:—"Friend of my early life—I have somewhat to communicate to you; but we must be alone."

The medium read what was written, and inquired if either of the gentlemen understood it, or even knew any one by the name given.

"I recognize that name," said the rich man, "but I really cannot tell you that spirit, if it be a spirit, wishes to see me alone; I did not come thinking to receive anything, but to bear my friend's company."

"Well," replied the medium, "people who come expecting nothing, generally receive the most. You seem to be the favored one this morning, and I doubt not, if your friend retires a short time, something of importance will be given you."

"Well," said George, "that I will do, and will return again in half an hour."

But a few moments elapsed after the departure of George ere the medium became entranced, and the spirit was conversing with his friend in earthly form, telling him of the past, the present, and begging him to live different in the future.

"Well," said George, to his friend, as they had left the medium, and were returning home, "what do you think of what you have seen and heard?"

"Really, I don't know—it is something very strange, and too deep for me to attempt to fathom, and I don't care to have anything further to do with it."

"And pray why not? If it is true, it is worth everything else; and if it is false, we as well as all mankind, should know it; and we certainly cannot know whether it is true or false, unless we investigate for ourselves. I, for one, am not disposed to build my faith upon the sandy foundation of hearsay; but I am going to look into the new wonder honestly and carefully, and if it proves true, I shall believe it, and shall not be afraid to let the world know I believe it either. And if I prove it false, I shall not fear to denounce it before the world."

"Well," said the rich man, "you can investigate it if you like; but for my part, I prefer to let it alone."

Reader, do you know why he prefers to let it alone? We, perhaps, can tell you why. It is because he fears those unseen ones will prove him guilty, and the voice of the people will cry out against him. But he need have no such fears, for they who come, come bearing the olive branch of peace, and would not add another thorn to those which have already cursed his soul.

Six months have been registered on the page of the past, and in the meantime, Ellen and her mother have removed to more comfortable apartments. Scarce a week passes that something from an unknown source is not sent them to add to their comfort. And they are happy; the dark night of sorrow is passed, and the morning star is guiding them on to peace. Ellen has become a medium, and after the duties of the day are over, and the sun has gone to gladden other climes with its presence, and the gentle dews are falling to refresh the earth, then the widow and her daughter invite the loved ones who have gone before, to come and refresh their souls by communing with them—and oh how loved that communion! How full that love! Well has the father kept his promise to guard and guide in the future.

Listen! The chime bells are proclaiming the anniversary of the birth of Jesus, the medium, Jesus the Son of God, the Son of man, and the embodiment of perfection. And the rich man is seated alone in his parlor, but he is ill at ease. He is listening to the faint echo of the bells, and striving in vain to still the wild tempest within. But he sees not the unseen one within his walls, who is striving to bring forth the rainbow of duty, and thereby quell the tempest.

"I shall send them a note of one hundred dollars—it is Christmas night, and I cannot rest without doing it," thought he, and accordingly he encloses a note and sends it by his trusty chamber-maid, after charging her to let no one know who she is, or where she came from.

"Mother, do you know our rent comes due to-morrow?" said Ellen, as she was looking out at the trembling street lamps, and preparing to carry home a piece of work she had been doing.

"Yes, dear, I know it," said the mother; "we have enough to pay it, and a few dollars besides."

"Oh, yes, but I was thinking what I should like to do if we were not obliged to pay all away for rent, mother."

The gentle tinkle of the door bell proclaimed that some one from without wished to be admitted. But as Ellen opened the door she saw only a retreating form, and a letter falling from the door knob, which she immediately picked up and beheld its contents.

"Oh, mother!" she cried, "only see—just what I was wishing for! Oh, I am sure it is the work of our spirit friends."

"But where did it come from, child?"

"Never mind that—I feel it is all right. Yet it is a mystery to me as well as to you," said Ellen.

It is midnight. The noisy hum of the busy world is hushed, and the mother and daughter are dreaming of future happiness, and the rich man is resolving to do his duty in the future, because he finds happiness in so doing. Slowly, but surely, the unseen ones are purging out the dross, and bringing forth the hidden gold.

It is now 1855. Three years have passed since the commencement of our sketch, and the Angel of Peace has carefully guarded the home of the widow and her child, and the rich man is slowly becoming wiser and better, although he still prefers to have nothing to do with the star of the nineteenth century; yet he is unconsciously guided by its light. George is now proclaiming the truth of that which he has so carefully investigated.

Ellen and her mother have been re-instated in their former home, and the hearts of many are made glad by their kindness.

Dear reader, this sketch was not drawn from the

airy palace of fiction, but from the temple of truth. The several characters are now living among you. If there are any among you crying out "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" or "What good can spiritualism do?" we would humbly beseech you, in the language of the inspired one, to "Come and see!"

Written for the Banner of Light.

THE ARTIST'S IDEAL.

BY MARY A. LOWELL.

JUNE, sweet, delightful, odorous June, had come at last. Not with bright, dazzling sunshine, but with a soft, grayish hazy atmosphere, and a still softer murmuring of gentle leaves and musical streams, that come with a quiet hush upon the senses, after the rude pelting of the spring rains.

A mingling of sweet briar, mountain ash blossoms, and fragrant orchard blooms, came in at the open window; while the sun would show itself for a moment, in a golden stream of light, and, anon, would veil itself in a delicious shower. Nature seemed reposing in a Sabbath stillness, and a dreamy languor was over all.

Otho Kaulbach was in his studio, leaning far out from the high, upper window, and enjoying, with the eye of an artist, the rich summer landscape. Far as the eye could reach, it rested on a succession of brilliant, or of quiet, home-like pictures, which grew lovelier upon his fancy as he gazed, and suggested the subject of innumerable paintings in the future.

The artist's room was at the upper end of the city, just where it was beginning to merge into suburban beauty. He had taken it for the season, consulting inclination rather than interest, which would perhaps have kept him in the very heart of the great city. But his soul was sick of the heartlessness and folly which he every day encountered amidst the busy throng, and he longed once more to be abroad with nature—with nature who would bend her clear, calm brow above him, when humanity might turn coldly away.

He turned almost sadly from the beautiful scene which he was contemplating, to the picture which lay on his easel, almost in the last stage of its execution. It was this, which was to determine his position as an artist, perhaps forever. As yet, he had scarcely gained any celebrity; but he felt that he had now reached a higher point, from which he could look calmly down upon the painful steps by which he had climbed.

He had begun life aright, for he was true—true to his God, to nature, and in his devotion to his great art. There was scarcely a chance for him to fail, if he continued in these beautiful truths.

The painting on which he had believed that his future success must turn, was that of the Dead Christ. His conception of it was peculiarly grand and beautiful. It was the moment after death; and so fully were life and death blended, that each seemed striving for its mastery. Death was there, yet most life-like—Life, yet most death-like!

With a face paler than that of the dead, the mother is lying on his bosom. The long, white fingers, grown thin by agony, hang passively down, and the countenance wears an expression of one stricken down by more than mortal suffering.

Over the prostrate forms, bends the sweet face of Mary Magdalen. You can see the very glitter of the tears upon her cheek. Her long golden ringlets almost conceal the beautiful forehead, yet reveal the troubled beauty of the eyes, which speak of the agony passing in that repentant soul.

By her side, is "Mary, the mother of James," whose clasped hands, (those withered hands!) and that intense sorrow which is seen only in the faces of the old, to whose anguish there comes no second spring,—in all these had the artist shown himself a true worshiper of the divine and beautiful.

As if for strong contrast, the picture opposite, was one of young and glad life. It was a copy of Scheffer's German School. Perfect in its details, from the shrunken form and anxious face of the poor teacher, who stands at the door of the school house, down to the very flower-pots on the high window sill, over which the green mildew has been creeping, this picture is still more beautiful in its expression. You can hear the hum of the children's voices, the angry cry of the boy who has fallen, the expression of sisterly sympathy from the girl beside him, the threat of the great roguish fellow who is pressing down a smaller boy, and the supplication from the sweet child who is holding to his ragged sleeve, and begging him to spare her little brother!

So beautifully executed was this painting, that even the very texture of the quaint and homely garments could be detected, and the stitches with which they were sewed, while the plaster crumbling from the old walls, the stained and discolored bricks, the worm eaten window frame, the cracked slate and open book fallen on the ground, were each and all subjects for intense study.

The young artist had turned to his still unfinished work, touched and retouched it, and each time with a growing love and reverence, such as he had never before experienced. Indeed, this painting had for many months absorbed his whole soul. For the last three days he had devoted himself to it entirely, scarcely sleeping or eating, and the effects of his vigils might have been easily traced in the white lips, pallid countenance, and the eyes so preternaturally large.

Many would have thought Otho Kaulbach was dying, so intensely had his work wrought upon his mind and frame. It was only while inhaling the delicious atmosphere of this June morning, that he could feel his over-taxed nerves refreshed, and the fever of his heart subdued.

A slight tap was on the door, and his "Come in," was uttered in that low, yet full and distinct tone, which haunts your ear long after the sound has gone from it.

A young girl entered. The first glance at her would tell you truly that it was she who had sat for the Magdalen. Otho started when she came in, and the quick blood rushed over his pale face, like the crimson sunset on a field of snow. He had not expected her yet, and for some moments he could not compose himself to his work.

He motioned her to seat, and then began rapidly and nervously to touch and efface. He looked at her, and his quick glance made her almost quail beneath the large full eyes. Once she uttered a sigh that sounded like a deep sob, and then Otho turned towards her and saw that she was weeping. It was the living, breathing, weeping Magdalen! Such as he had been striving to transfer to the canvas; and now that his ideal was before him, he had no heart to paint it, while that beautiful sorrow was embodied before him. He forgot his art for a moment before the majesty of nature's sorrow.

He had not thought of this. He knew intuitively the life of this real Magdalen, and had imagined that all such beings were callous to every thing but the glittering woe of their wretched lives, and that nature itself was dead in their hearts.

He was mistaken. The very gentleness with which he had treated her, as he treated all woman kind, reverencing the woman nature even when it was fallen and down trodden; the air of the delicate courtesy so different to its rude counterfeit in the beings with whom she had unhappily associated, had made her love him with all the passionate tenderness of a wronged and outraged heart, thrown

back upon its own desolate depths, and doomed to a despair born of its own intensity of feeling.

And now she who had been so wronged, who indeed had so wronged herself, was subdued into tenderness, even by the sound of his voice, that full, rich voice whose slightest tones had been the only music which had touched the heart of Blanche, since the days of her innocence had gone by.

Trying to compose himself to his work, he directed her to arrange the long, glossy locks that fell like a shower of golden sunlight around her beautiful face, and in so doing, his hand came directly across her white forehead. She trembled under its light touch, and a burning blush came to her cheek. He did not appear to notice it, and returned to the easel. After awhile, he said to her kindly, as he put money in her hand, "I shall not probably require you to sit again, Blanche."

He spoke almost sadly, for the girl had really touched and interested him; and he felt that he should miss the patient face that had looked out from its wealth of golden ringlets, from the old arm chair yonder, so long.

Something of this feeling, he was even bound to express, when she drew back from him with a convulsive start, and throwing the money upon the floor, she stamped violently upon it. Every line of her countenance seemed altered. She knelt down by his chair, covered her face with her thin, white hands, and wept aloud.

"Blanche! speak to me—why are you so strange to-day? I hardly know what to make of you."

The sobs were hushed in a moment, at the sound of his voice.

"Strange! is it strange that I should weep, when the last kind word is said to me that will ever be spoken? when the dream that has come upon me unconsciously in this room, must have so wild an awakening? Is it strange that I go from those eyes, with the feeling that never shall eyes that are beautiful and true look kindly upon me again? Is it strange that I should thus fall down and worship, unworthy, fallen as I am?" Otho laid his hand on her head, as she knelt before him in the wild abandonment of grief, and the storm of passion was instantly hushed.

Then she poured out page after page of the miserable life which she, a deserted, desolate orphan, had experienced.

She had genius—it was, alas! her misfortune; she had genius too—that might have broken out into strains worthy of the angels—and all had been sacrificed. How bitterly she accused herself! With what tenderness and unselfishness she spoke of him who had won her young heart's priceless love, and had then thrown it, as a dull weed upon the sea shore is thrown by the treacherous waves.

And what might Blanche have been? In this hour of anguish, she asked herself this question, and the answer came up in great throbs from her heart, "I might have been beloved by him before whom I am now kneeling in the agony of a wounded spirit."

Otho bent over her with a terrible feeling of "what might have been" knocking at his heart. That golden head was lying on his arm, and the beautiful eyes, streaming with tears, met his own. They were tears of sorrow and penitence he knew, and his own tears of pity and indignation dropped upon the shining curls. He would have been more or less than man, if he had restrained the words of consolation that sprang to his lips.

He saw in her speaking face, the agony she endured, and knew that she believed herself shut out for ever from the world, as a thing to be despised and down trodden.

"Go, now, Blanche," he said soothingly. "To-morrow I will see you again. To-day, I must be alone, to think what I can do for you, or how best to shield you from further suffering."

Otho sat down and covered his face with his hands. Out of that room, a golden sunbeam seemed suddenly to have vanished, and left only a twilight gloom. And yet, what did he propose doing? What the world might look upon as wrong and ridiculous, to attempt helping a human soul to recover its lost purity and innocence!

True—but what was the world to him, save in his artist life? Ere he slept, he had formed a plan to remove Blanche far from all who had ever known her, and to devote every thing that he could save from his own moderate and self-denying requirements, to enable her to sustain a new life and character. If the world's side of the question came up to him, during his struggle, he would turn to the beautiful, pleading eyes of the Magdalen in his picture, and believing that he was carrying out the principle of true Christian feeling, he resolved to prosecute his purpose, as far as possible.

He might have spared himself the labor of thinking. The day passed on, and no Blanche! The evening came, and still she did not appear. What could it mean? Had she failed in this new resolution, which he knew her penitential tears must have tokened, or had she been driven all at once to despair, by the remembrance of her past life?

He sent for her, but received no message in return. She was gone, and no one knew whither. So completely had Otho identified the poor girl with his plans of benevolence, that it was hard to separate them from her now; and it was some days before he could compose himself to think that his search after Blanche would prove fruitless. He might have forgotten her for awhile, had not that subdued and fearful, yet glorious face, met his eyes whenever he looked up.

And now that the picture was nearly completed, he could not tear himself away from his labor; but kept touching and retouching it, until it attained a beauty and perfection which surpassed even his own first conception of the scene.

They who looked upon it recognized a spiritual loveliness in the face of the Magdalen, which they had never beheld before; and remarked upon it sometimes, in a way which Otho, feeling as he did, that it belonged wholly and entirely to himself, could hardly endure. He almost trembled lest some one might recognize the likeness, and speak of it in his presence.

But in the mean time where was Blanche? Month after month, he asked himself this question, until anxiety and suspense had made him even more pallid than before. Self reproach mingled with his other feelings, for he felt in some sort responsible for the safety of one who had been so much with him as Blanche had been of late.

Had not Otho possessed the most truly unselfish and unsuspecting spirit, he would have feared that the poor girl would be missed by some one who would accuse him of secreting her, or even perhaps of causing her death; but his real anxiety overmastered all suspicion in his mind.

All this while Otho's fame was growing wider. Men of talent and appreciative taste visited the suburban studio, and pronounced judgment indisputable upon the creations of his genius. From what they expressed, he knew intuitively that this picture would be desired; and before the summer had waned, a purchaser presented himself, and offered even more than the price which Otho had at first thought it should bring.

As soon as he knew that he must part with it, he executed an exquisite copy of the Magdalen, and concealed it in his working room, where no one entered. The original picture was taken far away, where probably no eye, save the purchaser's, that had seen it in Otho's studio, would ever behold it again; and for this, he had a feeling of real thankfulness.

There was a period of five years, in which Otho

toiled on, winning fame that was scarcely desirable, because there was no one to whom he could think the praise which was bestowed upon him would be sweet. Somewhere in a distant land, his only brother perhaps existed; but except for this uncertain hope, he knew no relatives, nor even near friend. Otho's life was devoted solely to art; while Herman had given his to humanity, and, in all probability was now with the oppressed Hungarians, periling his existence to redress their wrongs.

Worn down by toil, Kaulbach seemed absolutely dying. The few who knew him intimately enough to speak of his state, exhorted him to relax the intensity of his struggles for fame, and seek respite from suffering in travel, and change of scene; and some spoke of a return to his native air, until his exhausted energies should be recruited. One noble hearted man, a merchant whose liberality bespoke the largeness of his soul, begged him to accept a passage to Hamburg, in a splendid ship; just built expressly for the trade with that city; and he added, "whenever you wish to return, which I hope you will soon, with restored health and refreshed spirits, you shall have the best berth on board the 'Waldeck.'"

Already were the magnificent rooms of this gentleman, Mr. Richards, adorned with the best specimens of Otho's genius, excepting that of which we have spoken as being conveyed to a distant country; and leaving all the valuable pictures that were yet unfinished, in the care of Mr. Richards, he embarked for his native land.

The sea breeze animated his drooping frame, and gave color to his faded cheek. Freedom from toil and confinement did its work; and ere he arrived in Hamburg, the artist was a changed being. Life seemed to wear a new aspect, when viewed through the medium of a more healthful state; and while he resolutely forbore to take up a brush or unroll a single sheet of canvas, even when the ship was becalmed, he yet allowed his mind to employ its renewed powers upon new conceptions of art, which should one day immortalise his name as a painter.

He had been in Hamburg nearly two months, when a malignant ship-fever broke out, striking fear and panic to all hearts. Hundreds were carried to the hospital, where they could be treated more judiciously than at home; and often the most singular meetings would take place, of friends and relatives, who would unexpectedly find themselves side by side, on sick beds.

Amidst the terror and consternation that prevailed, Otho Kaulbach remained unharmed, and, save for his feelings of humanity, almost unmoved. Life and death had such a different meaning in his mind from that in many others, that he walked serenely in the midst of pestilence, his countenance placidly free from the slightest expression of fear or apprehension.

Among his fellow passengers, a young countryman of his own, Leopold Hertz, was taken violently ill, and he too, for lack of home nursing, was conveyed to the hospital, before Otho, who would have gladly taken care of him, was aware of his illness.

As soon as he knew it, however, he went to him, fearlessly, and for several nights he watched by his side, with all the affection of a brother. In the morning he would return to his lodgings, and gather strength by sleep, and when night came, it would find him again at his post. Even after Leopold's danger was past, he would entreat Otho not to leave him; and indeed a strange fascination seemed to chain the artist to the bedside of the sick.

Towards morning, Otho might have been seen, had one awakened, bearing cold drinks or fruits from one to another of those spectre-like beings who lay prostrate under the terrible fever. One half frantic patient, whose delirium had-soothed into partial calmness, called him Gabriel; and the rest, not knowing who was the kind stranger thus ministering to their wants, copied after their fellow sufferer; and thenceforth he was known only by that name.

In the long line of beds which extended far out of his sight, Leopold occupied nearly the centre. Otho had rarely dared to go beyond sight of his bed, and his care for the other sufferers had only embraced about twenty beds beyond Leopold's, on either side. As his friend grew better, he extended his walk beyond these, and while the tired nurses were sleeping soundly at their posts, would kindly wet the feverish lips of the suffering patient, or bathe the burning heads with the fresh, cool water which he bore to their relief.

Each person's name was inscribed above his bed, and Otho would sometimes stop to read these, in order to ascertain if any other of his fellow passengers on board the Waldeck, might be among the sick.

One night, he pursued his walk beyond the ward in which Leopold lay, and entered another, where the light was less dim and uncertain. A sick man lay quite near the door, with one arm thrown above his head, and the other grasping the clothes, as if in pain. He was burning with fever, as Otho knew by the bright, unnatural flush upon his cheek, and he stopped involuntarily, and gave the glass of iced water to his lips. The man uttered an exclamation of delight, and Otho, willing to know to whom he had given so great a pleasure, glanced upwards at the name.

His brain almost reeled when he beheld it, and an indistinctness came over his sight. Spite of his usual serenity, he was unprepared to see the name of Herman Kaulbach! His brother! could it be? He pressed up to the side of the narrow bed, and then, for the first time he saw a slight, thin figure sitting beside it. The small hands were all that could be seen, for the face was in shadow, the hair concealed beneath a close cap, and the whole figure, even to the throat and wrists, closely enveloped in a black dress, resembling that of the Sisters of Mercy.

Otho spoke a few words, in regard to her patient's state. At the sound of his voice, she started, and trembled perceptibly. She recovered herself, and answered, in a low tone, that this night was the crisis of the fever. "He is my brother," whispered Otho, "will it answer to tell him that his brother Otho is here?"

By another strong effort, the figure seemed to subside from the evident agitation under which it trembled, and the voice again answered, "To-morrow,—not to-night."

"To-night, then, I leave him to your care, while I go to another friend; but to-morrow I will come to him. Prepare him for my coming, as early as he wakes."

Otho left the ward, and returned to Leopold. Finding him asleep, he sat down to muse upon the strange chance of meeting with his long absent brother. He could not long control his anxiety; and while Leopold still slept, he walked back to his brother's ward.

"He is sleeping," said the nurse as she met him at the door and waved him back. "Not for your life, do you waken him now. When he awakes he will be either out of danger, or in Heaven."

"But you are worn out," said Otho, compassionately, looking at the quivering form which could scarcely support itself against the door, "and you are weeping too," he added, as deep sobs seemed to come from her heart. "Let me watch beside him until he begins to wake, while you lie down and sleep."

"O, no, no!" was the passionate response. "I alone must do this. Go to your friend, and I will call you, if necessary."

Unwillingly he obeyed her. Hitherto she had

spoken only in whispers, yet her voice had broken through his soul, and a familiarity it bore to that of Blanche. The step up to him, in the still watches of the night, which he assumed something like distinctness. He resolved to watch her to-morrow morning, when daylight would show the features, which to-night were in deep shadow.

Towards morning, Otho dropped to sleep. He was awakened by hearing some one ask "Twenty-five did you say? Is that the number of the bed?"

Twenty-five was the number of Herman's bed, and Otho sprang to his feet, and followed the messenger to the door of the next ward. He paused at the entrance, fearing to advance until the little nurse should come to tell him that he could see Herman with safety. But the messenger beckoned him on to the side of the bed, and then took the station which she had occupied.

She had gone away after preparing her patient to see his brother; and Otho, forgetting everything but the pale image that lay before him, gave all his energies to the thought of how he should best approach him, so as not to shake too rudely, the sands of that glass which had been so nearly run out.

"Otho! my brother!" was all that the weak lips could say; and then the two were sobbing on each other's breast in a burst of nature, that threatened the frail life of one, and completely unmanned the other. Lying side by side, for Herman would have it so, his attenuated fingers clasped the warm hand of his brother, who kept whispering soothing and tender words to him, as one would to a sobbing infant, in the dear language of Father-land.

Exhausted by his emotions, Herman scarcely seemed to breathe; but the sunken eye was continually seeking some other object which he missed from the bedside.

"What is it brother?" asked Otho, as he vainly tried to think what might be wanted.

"Where is she?—the angel, who has tended me so long?" came slowly from the pale lips.

"Was it she whom I saw here last night?"

"Yes, yes,"—and in a moment after, he added, "Bring her."

The thought came to Otho's mind, of her agitation the preceding night, and he half suspected that it was some one in whom Herman had a tender interest. It could not be Blanche.

He sent the messenger who came for him, in search of her. He returned, saying that Sister Agnes was with a dying man, and could not leave him.

"Show me the way to her, and I will take her place while she comes here," said Otho, and he followed the man again through various labyrinths which only practised feet could find, in the dim grey light of the early morning.

As he passed the ward where Leopold Hertz lay he looked in, and found to his delight, that he was sleeping, with a calm, untroubled face, and breath that came soft and regular as an infant's.

It was very sweet to Otho, to know that, under God, he had saved Leopold's life—that the mother and sisters of whom he had often spoken in his delirium, would welcome him home once more.

A thrill of joy went through his heart, as he felt that his life was not altogether useless to humanity; that life which he had so deplored, and which until now, he had often chided himself for devoting so deeply to art, as to leave no room for the affections.

"This is the place, sir," said his companion, as he paused before a bed, on which lay the feeble remnant of a frame that seemed fast stiffening into the rigidity of death. Over it bent, like a pitying angel, the slight figure of the Sister of Mercy, wiping away the damps that had gathered upon the broad, white forehead.

"Sister Agnes!" said the man softly, "here is one who will take your place while you go back to your other patient." She looked up, and Otho caught the expression of that soft blue eye, moist with the dews of pity for the suffering clay before her.

In that moment, when a human soul was passing away from its mortal tenement, it was no time for speech—but Otho had felt in a moment, that this pitying angel was no other than the poor Blanche, whom he had lost so long. Strange, that he did not know her the night before, even in her deep disguise.

Suddenly she took her hand from the damp forehead. The spirit had passed, and already the look of angelic beauty, that comes over the face of the dead, as if the soul lingered there, and was smiling at its moment of release from the suffering rime, had settled on the features.

She pressed the little white hand over the eyes, and signing to Otho's companion to attend to the last offices for the dead, she went back to Herman.

His restless eye watched her coming, and not until she had taken her accustomed place by his side, and held the pale fingers once more in her own; and spoken to him in hushed tones, did he compose himself again to sleep.

Gently, then, as a tired child falls to rest on the bosom of its mother, Herman closed his eyes in sleep.

Disengaging her hand tenderly from the sick man's, Otho bade her look up. The sweet young face, kept youthful by the surpassing tenderness of her nature, was lifted to his own. From beneath the close cap, a single golden curl had strayed down her cheek, and the azure eyes looked upward from their soft depths, clear and untroubled, as if the peace of God had already descended into the heart so long asking forgiveness at his shrine. All human passion seemed to have passed away from the whole face, and a spiritual calm settled in its stead.

Over the sleeping Herman, old memories were revived, and the wanderings of her feet recounted. She had flown from him, she said, because she believed that there was a mission, somewhere for her to perform. As she had outraged humanity, so must she bear the cross in its behalf; and, at the foot of the cross, she had knelt down in the agony of a repentant spirit, and asked to be directed in her pathway. She had prayed that the new love, which his kindness and the tenderness which he had paid to her woman hood, had awakened, might be torn away from her heart, if thus her soul might free itself from stain. It was impossible, she said, that this could be, while she lingered in its presence, and there was nothing for her to do, but to sever, with her own hand, the tie that was becoming too strong for her agonized heart to bear.

But where to go? was her deep anxiety. And, as if in answer to her prayer, she heard of an opportunity to go on board a packet ship that was nearly on the actual point of sailing, as attendant to two invalid ladies. Both died on the passage, and poor Blanche was landed at Hamburg, a stranger in a strange place, and sick at heart, yet feeling that her mission had begun, and would yet be accomplished.

There were those on board, who had witnessed her untiring devotion to the two suffering women under her charge; and they exerted all their influence to get her, by her own desire, into the hospital, as a nurse. Adopting in some measure, the habit of the Sisters of Mercy, she had spent the five years in which Otho had been winning fame, in the daily exercise of her duties to the sick. Devoted to that seemed her allotted task through life, she brought to it, a generous self sacrifice, and a tenderness which shrank not from the most appalling forms of disease and sickness. Nor were these all. She soothed and comforted the sufferer's heart, and pointed him to the source from which she had received consolation and forgiveness.

BANNER OF LIGHT

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TERMS.

One Copy, - - - - - Two Dollars per annum. One Copy, - - - - - One Dollar for six months. Clubs of four and upwards, One Dollar and a half, each copy, per year. Persons who send us Twelve Dollars, for eight copies, will receive one copy in addition. From the above there will be no variation; Money sent in registered letters, will be at our risk. LUTHER COLBY & CO., Publishers.

TO YOU.

We present our letters of introduction. We trust you will not meet us with the cold, mercantile phrase which so often puts the extinguisher upon the flame of hope glowing in the bosom of some aspiring youth, "Ah, we are exceedingly busy to-day—call in upon us when you are passing;" but with frank smiles, and cordial greeting bid us welcome to your homes and your firesides.

We confess to some small share of vanity, respecting our personal appearance, (thanks to the skill of our artists and compositors) and being fully aware of the necessity of confirming the favorable impressions created by a pleasing exterior, by more substantial action, our unflinching efforts shall be devoted to the accomplishment of that end.

We trust you will meet us upon even ground, and if your eye happens to fall upon an article, in which you have no particular interest, you will not forget that our duty as journalists, renders it necessary for us to cater to a great variety of tastes. There are those you know, who delight in the solid "roast beef, and plum pudding," and others whose appetites are craving for the "wing of a sparrow," or like delicate morsel; and as we intend to spread a bountiful supply of all upon the table to which we invite you, we desire you to help yourself to what you like best, and don't quarrel with your neighbor if he helps himself from another dish.

At a well regulated hotel you will sometimes find an attendant who seems to know intuitively the wants of each guest, and at our board as you grow familiar with us, you can without trouble select your own attendant. Should you be fond of Romance, Poetry, History, or Science, they are ready at your bidding. Should your desires run in a different channel and crave information as to the progress of the Political World, the details of Mercantile and Mechanical Business, or that noble employment, Agriculture, not the less will your calls be obeyed. Select then for yourselves, giving us credit when we deserve it, and if we err, do not fail to remember that,

"To err is human, to forgive divine."

While carefully refraining from identifying ourselves with the many "isms" of the day, we prefer rather to roll onward with the car of Progress than to be crushed under its wheels, and shall therefore esteem it a duty we owe to ourselves and our readers to investigate calmly and candidly any new Truth, or theory advanced as such, and as we find it, so shall we speak of it.

Respecting the Phenomena of Spiritualism, which are at the present time attracting the attention of the learned and the unlearned, the rich and the poor, and which those only who have not investigated, reject as unworthy of notice; we shall pursue an even straight forward course. We shall not accept the views of all its professed believers, too often wild and unconsidered, neither shall we, even at the risk of being called enthusiasts or fanatics, reject the evidences of our sight and hearing. No statement of facts, not admitting of clear proof, will be allowed admittance in our columns. We are aware that many of the communications purporting to have their origin in the Spirit-life are merely mundane in their character, arising from the influence of one mind over another, and shall use especial vigilance, that whatever we publish of this nature, shall be free from such objections.

Very many we know are ready to cry out at the mere mention of Spirit communication, "Humbug," or some equally expressive word. To those we can use no better reply than is furnished by a late Editorial in the "Saturday Evening Gazette."

"If our readers have any hypothesis which accounts for these things aside from the spiritual, let them show it and expose the humbug; but the phenomena are realities that cannot be winked out of sight—and it now may be said of them that they are 'not done in a corner.' Men believe them, who are intellectually and morally as sound as those who do not, and those who deny them, should first examine before they condemn. In the mean time we say devoutly heaven, help the Truth—a prayer that all people, of beliefs, will respond to."

Without detaining you further in speaking of ourselves, we now simply ask you to look at what we have done, 'tis an evidence of what we mean to do, containing ourselves with quoting the lines of Joanna Baillie, as illustrative of the weekly Literary feast we shall offer for your acceptance.

In the rough blast, heaves the billow, In the light wind waves the willow, Everything of moving kind Varies, with the evening wind; What have we to do with thee, Dull, joyous Constancy? Sombre tale, and satire witty, Diddling glee and sprightly ditty, Measured sighs and roundelay; Welcome all, but do not stay; What have we to do with thee, Dull, joyous Constancy.

A NEW SIMILE.

The Rev. T. Starr King, in a recent lecture describing the winter scenery of the White Mountains, has caught a new inspiration. Hear him. "And at every turn, old Washington was bulging back into the cold and brilliant blue with irregular whiteness, or Madison, in more feminine symmetry, displayed a fresh view of sloping shoulders clasped to the waist in an ermine mantle, that contrasted charmingly with the broad, brown skirts of dreary wilderness, puffed out to the full sweep of fashion by unseen hoofs of granite."

Byron, and two or three other poets tolerably well known, have compared the most beautiful as well as the most terrible scenes in nature, to the light of a dark eye in woman, but we must give the Reverend gentleman the credit of first comparing the lofty mountains to their pet—we mean crinoline, although we don't know but there is equal truth and poetry in it.

LUXURY.

The "game of life" is a hard one to play in these times, and to get well through it requires an extraordinary degree of skill, great courage, and, say those who are censoriously inclined, much disregard of what is called "common honesty," and which would seem to be so called because, with the exception of common sense, it is about the most uncommon thing that one meets with in one's life day. It certainly is difficult to live, and the mass of mankind rather exist than live. The world is in a state of siege, and famine prices rule. The first day of January and the last day of December, closely as they are allied, according to that interesting annual known as the Almanac, are now widely separated by that most dreary of gulfs, an empty purse. The rich spend all they have, the middle classes no longer justify their names by having regard for that "just medium" in which happiness is said most surely to be found, and the poor are no where. The "golden mean" has been voted a mean thing, and its once worshippers have gone over to the shrine of the golden calf. Philosophic observers, as they would have us believe they are, look with a very unphilosophical dismay at this state of things, and talk of luxury, and its effect on nations. They believe that we are about to have all our old manliness eaten out of us, by the spread of luxurious habits. All the old ideas, that have been heard in every nation since there has been such a thing as civilized society known,—which were preached as emphatically in Memphis and old Thebes, in Sardis and Ecbatana, as they now are in Boston and New York,—and of concerning the encroachments of luxury on the nobler virtues, are paraded for our benefit. Their conclusion is that we are on our way to the dogs—that the nation will soon want all that makes national life respectable. We accept their premises, but we deny their conclusion. We admit that the American people are luxurious in their modes of life, and that the tendency to material enjoyment is painfully extreme, but we deny that the nation is likely thereby to be ruined. We will go much further than this, and assert, confidently, not only that no nation ever was ruined by luxury, but that in the very nature of things it has ever been impossible that any nation should have been ruined in that way. A nation, to be worthy of the name, consists of a few rich people, a tolerably numerous middle class, and a large number of poor men, the industrials, the producers, the wood-hewers and water-drawers of the world. It is possible that the rich are injured, and in many cases ruined, by indulgence in luxurious habits. It is also possible that in endeavoring to imitate the rich some members of the middle class are ruined, and instead of rising sink lip-deep into the social sea they had long beheld raging below them. But it is impossible that the poor should be ruined by luxury. They may aspire, and some of them do work their way upward to the very summit of society by their force of character and their untiring industry, there to commence the race that is said to have no other goal than ruin; but the number of such exceptional cases is necessarily small, the prizes being so few and the competitors so numerous. The great mass of mankind can never be materially affected by luxury. If they can procure ordinary food, common clothing, and shelter the very reverse of palatial, it is as much as they can expect in this strange world. We are not saying it should be so, but are simply giving utterance to a melancholy common place. In that "good time" which we are assured is coming,—it is always "coming,"—things may be different; but we must deal with matters as they are, and that looked for colonization of Utopia will take place, we fear, when there shall not be so much left of all who are now living as would fill a snuff-box. We speak only of what is, of what has been during the thirty centuries of which profane history makes mention, and of the first half dozen of which she merely "mumbleth something." We leave the golden age to be treated as it shall deserve by our great-grand-children's great-grand-children, with the belief that they will not get much nearer to it than we have succeeded in doing. That age, like a certain other golden thing—the golden result of the labors of the alchemists—never appears except in day-dreams. Indeed, it is idle to expect that we should have anything of the kind. If, as the poet says, "a day of gold from out an age of iron is all that life allows the luckiest sinner," what right has this sinful old-world, hoary with years, and sad from the rogues it has seen perpetrated, to expect a whole era of happiness?

To return to luxury: it may be said that the effect of it on the wealthy classes is bad, and that it works its way downward to the poor. We doubt whether there is any soundness in such a view of the matter. The facts do not show such to be the case. It is not true that luxury enervates a man, either morally or physically. The Duke of Wellington said that the best officers in his Peninsular army were dandies, men who had enjoyed to the full all the luxuries of London society in its most luxurious age. They not only fought as well as other men, but, which is a much more difficult thing to do, they bore hardships well, far better than did those who had been used to "roughing it" from their very cradles. All men can fight, and young soldiers fight even better than old ones, so far as mere courage is concerned, though not so intelligently. As Flora Macfadyen says, "For mere fighting, all men are pretty much alike; there is generally more courage required to run away. They have, besides, when confronted with each other, a certain instinct for strife, as we see in other male animals, such as dogs, bulls, and so forth." But fighting is the least part of a soldier's duty, particularly in time of war. Endurance is the great thing then. This was seen during the horrible winter of 1854-5, in the Crimea. Then and there, the smallest proportion of suffering and loss from sickness and exposure, fell upon men who had never before known anything of hardship. We might have guessed as much, were not the facts before us. When the French Revolution threw so many thousand persons upon the world who had once had all that wealth could buy, and threw them so in a penniless condition, they bore their losses with the utmost fortitude, and most of them became members of the industrious classes, turning their accomplishments to account, and living by the sweat of their brows. Their servants acted very differently, and whined over deprivations that had never caused a murmur to fall from the lips of the greatest losers. The moral power of cultivation and refinement is so great that it enables people to bear anything that

evil fortune can inflict upon them; and cultivation and refinement are in a certain sense inseparable from luxury. Women bear misfortunes better than men, and the reason is that they are more refined than we are, standing in pretty much the same relation to our sex that cultivated people do to the ignorant. The only sense in which it can be said, with anything like truth, that luxury ruins a nation, is when one class has the power to take a great part of their earnings from other classes, and does so take them in order that it may live luxuriously. But in this sense the effect is indirect. The wrong is done to those who are not enervated by luxury, but whom the luxury of others causes to lead a life of the most abject poverty, of all modes of existence that which leads the least to the development of the physical or the moral virtues. The "loose life, unruly passions, and diseases pale," which, according to the indolent bard of Indolence, proceed from idleness, are the genuine offspring of continued and ill-requited toil. The French Revolution was hastened, and its modes of expression were aggravated, by the demands that were made upon the peasantry by the higher classes, yet neither the one class nor the other was found to have been essentially weakened, either by luxurious living or by the oppression which that had rendered necessary. The nobility was destroyed, and it was right that it should be. It ceased to be an influential class from that time. But France was not injured by the conduct of the nobles, Luxury never was at a greater height than it was in Paris during the three-quarters of a century that followed the death of Louis the Fourteenth, and that luxury undoubtedly had its part, not only in precipitating the Revolution, but in giving to its peculiar coloring; yet it would be ridiculous to say that France was ruined by luxury. She was only changed. She is positively a much more powerful nation now than she was on the day when the States General met for the last time, in 1789, though relatively she may not be so powerful, which is owing to things external to herself, such as the rapid growth of the United States, the not less rapid extension of Russian rule, and the great increase of England's material wealth and colonial dominion. Eighteen years after the beginning of the Revolution France was mistress of continental Europe, a position which she lost only because her chief had not the wisdom to keep what he had had the power to acquire. If luxury is certain to ruin a nation, how happened it that France could accomplish so much just after the close of the most luxurious period of her history?

RETROSPECTIVE.

THE CONTINENTAL JOURNAL AND WEEKLY ADVERTISER.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1776.

Boston: Printed by John Gill in Queen Street.

A time-stained copy of a newspaper bearing the above imprint lies on our table. It is a sheet somewhat less than one-eighth the size of ours, yet its contents are highly interesting and suggestive.

Its leading article relates to the intelligence received in Congress at Philadelphia, Oct. 23, and is enthusiastic in its praise of General Arnold, whose name is now a hissing and scorn upon the lips of all. From the greybeard man to the lisping child, the name of Benedict Arnold is second only to that of Judas in its withering signification.

"O Time! whose judgments mock our own, The only righteous Judge art thou."

And yet, even now, who can tell through what wild struggles with fiery passions, or how many hours, weeks, months, the Good Angel wrestled with the Angel of Evil, e'er the brave patriot of 1776, became the base traitor of 1780.

There are many other interesting items scattered throughout the paper, all telling of the heroism, the devotedness, and the suffering of our fathers, while fashioning the temple of Liberty and Union, under whose broad dome we repose in peace.

As we look through the files of the revolutionary papers, their homely phraseology and thoughts of the moment, speaking in the highest strains of eloquence of the faithfulness of those men of the olden time, we can but think that far better than the fashionable philippic of the present day, are those teachings of our fathers.

A communication dated New York, October 21st, states that— "Many of the inhabitants are come into town: and many others, who were obliged to fly for their loyalty, are coming in daily. The Earl of Dunmore has taken a house in the Broadway, for his residence during the winter."

The advertisements are very curious, and we cannot refrain from copying two or three, as showing the relative difference between then and now. And first look at this:—

ASCENDED FROM THE SUBSCRIBER, a Negro Slave named Nané, about a Twelve-month ago, under a Pretence of a Visit, a tall slim Woman; she had on when she went away, a blue Callimanco Gown and other Wearing Apparel; she is about 27 Years of Age, was formerly a slave to Mr. Samuel Willis of Bridgewater. Whoever will apprehend or take up said Slave, and convey her to me the Subscriber, or confine her in any of the Goals of this State, shall be handsomely rewarded for their Trouble, and all necessary Charges paid by me.

FRANCIS PERKINS.

Bridgewater, November 6, 1776. N. B. All persons are hereby cautioned not to conceal, harbour, or carry off said Slave, as they would avoid the Penalty of the Law."

Immediately following is another in which "six dollars" is offered for a "negro fellow named Pomp, who is much for talking," followed by the same "threat against sympathisers. This is dated at Cambridge and signed Josiah Fessenden. Wouldn't Messrs. Perkins and Fessenden have a hornets' nest about their ears, if they published such advertisements now? We rather think they would.

Here is a chance for some one: AN UNBETAKEN for the sweeping of the chimneys of this town is wanted; any one inclining to engage in that business, by applying to the Selectmen, may know the terms.

We think if the ghost of the successful applicant should revisit "this town," he would be decidedly of the opinion that chimneys had "ris."

Hear this, you locomotive men, killing your fifty miles an hour, and your fifty men in less time: PETER ROBERTSON.

Post-Runner FROM ANGELO TO BOSTON, notifies his Customers, that the Term for which he engaged to ride and bring them the Papers, expires the 8th Day of next Month, at which Time he expects punctual Payment; and that he proposes to continue the

Route for the future, provided his Customers pay up at the end of every three months.

We trust that Peter, as he drew up before the door of his "Customers" house on that memorable "8th," invariably received not only the welcome smiles, but the more welcome dimes of said "Customers." If we are wrong in so supposing, all we can say is: We don't intend to ride post to any "Customers" of that sort.

Dramatic and Musical.

Whatever differences of opinion may exist as to the moral tendency of theatrical representations, certain it is, that in all civilized communities, the Drama has held its place in the front rank of popular amusements. As society has progressed in culture, in its appreciation of art, in its love of music, sculpture, painting and poetry, the Drama has been, and still is, the exponent and embodiment of them all.

It has not wanted its assailants, neither has it lacked its defenders, but in spite of the attacks of its enemies, and sometimes the injudicious and consequently more dangerous defence of its friends, it still holds a large sway over the popular heart, and though at times, from causes easily to be explained, failing to elicit its usual share of favor and applause, there can be no question of the fact, that it is and without doubt will remain a fixed institution of large communities. This fact, then, being granted it becomes us to ask in what manner its mission can best be fulfilled, for a mission it certainly has.

It cannot be denied that much of the prejudice existing against the drama, has arisen; not so much from the institution itself, as from its abuses by those engaged in its representation, were our actors more sensible of the responsibilities resting upon them and disposed to regard themselves as teachers, instead of mountebanks or automotons, a great step would be taken in the right direction. There is no disguising the fact that the stage exerts at least an equal influence over the minds of the younger portion of society, with the pulpit and the rostrum, and therefore it becomes the duty of those who have the management of, or take part in dramatic performances, to be careful that the influence is a good one.

In noticing dramatic performances it shall be our aim, to exert what little influence we possess, towards making the stage a means of instruction as well as amusement, and to this end, we shall be entirely unbiased in our criticisms. Whatever we may think conducive towards it we shall applaud, and whatever detracts from it we shall unhesitatingly condemn. Criticism (so called) has degenerated into a weapon wielded solely for the purpose of indiscriminate praise of friends or bitter attacks to gratify private feeling. We desire to be thought candid and honest when we say, that nothing of this nature shall find its way into our columns. Whatever we may be called upon to write respecting plays and players, while it will be free from prejudice and unthinking denunciation, shall be equally free from fulsome flattery, arising out of personal favor or friendship. In few words it will be our great study and aim to follow the spirit of the words of the immortal bard "Nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice."

BOSTON THEATRE. That skillful playwright, Dion Bourcault, and his clever little wife, better known as Miss Agnes Robertson, have finished a successful engagement at this house. The plays enacted have been almost exclusively of Mr. Bourcault's own construction, and whatever may be said concerning their originality, they certainly evince a perfect knowledge of stage effect, the minutia of each scene working harmoniously towards the general denouement; and we consider this no small merit in this age of unconnected ideas and incongruous incidents usually thrown together and denominated plays.

Of Mr. Bourcault's performance of Grimaldi in "Violator, or the Life of an Actress," we are enabled to speak in high terms of praise. It is one of those natural, unaffected portrayals of real life, so rarely seen, and therefore the more highly appreciated when seen. With "THE PHANTOM" we are not pleased, although we cannot refrain from speaking a word in favor of its scenery, and appointments, the great resources and taste of the management never having been shown to better advantage than in this play.

"BLUEBELLS" is better adapted to bring out the peculiar talents of Agnes Robertson than either of the others. Pleading in everything she undertakes, we still consider her met at home in such characters as Andy Blake and Bob Nettles.

Since the departure of Mr. and Mrs. Bourcault, the management has produced RUTH OAKLEY, the new play by the author of the LITTLE TREASURE, and Shakespeare's HENRY THE FIFTH, to which we shall refer more fully hereafter.

NATIONAL THEATRE.—The most unexampled success has attended Mr. Wm. B. English since he opened this theatre. The house is thronged nightly, and the shouts of laughter and applause wake the echoes of the North End as of old. Miss Lucille has jumped at one bound into the good graces of the young men, and her sister Helen is but a very little behind her. Such trumpery as "The Three Fast Men" is very little to our taste, but it seems to be the rage, filling the hearts of the audience with laughter and the pockets of the manager with coin—so we won't moralize.

BOSTON MUSEUM.—"After me the deluge," exclaimed one of the Louis, and after Dred, Jackwood, says Manager Kimball. All we can say of the latter play is, that if such a thing were possible, it would be more dreadful than Dred itself.

However, the dark cloud passes off and sunshine comes with the artistic performances of Miss Eliza Logan.

ORDWAY HALL.—This popular place of amusement continues to receive a full share of favor, and not undeservedly. The melodies are of that happy class "to whose tone the common pulse of man keep time." Mr. Ordway is about making a tour with his company to the West. We wish him success. As a manager he is prompt and energetic. As a man, frank, social, and warm hearted.

GEO. P. BURNHAM, Esq., has just completed a five act Play entitled THE DEVAULTER. It is domestic in its nature, inclining to the style of "Still Waters Run Deep." It is full of dramatic incidents, and will, we learn, shortly be produced simultaneously in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. We predict its success.

All this was told in a few simple words, without a single hint of self-praise or assumption. She had striven only to make her peace with God and humanity, and she trusted that her purpose was not wholly unaccomplished.

From the time that the ship fever began its deadly work, she had scarcely slept; although the spirit within was so bright and hopeful, that wakefulness had left no mark upon her countenance. All there was serene and beautiful—unstained and fresh as the painting on that memorable canvass. She had, one day, parted with a patient in whom she had been singularly interested—a young boy, whose wailings for his mother had pierced her heart, and who owed his life to her care. He grew strong under her gentle treatment, and was discharged. She followed him down stairs, and to the outermost door, almost feeling like one who parts from a beloved child. Both wept—the boy and his gentle nurse, and he left her, promising to find her out at some future day, and make her some return for her kindness.

As the carriage took him away, another appeared, bearing a sick man whose pallid face resembled one on which she had once gazed in an agony of repentant sorrow. With a thousand emotions rushing to her heart, she followed the litter up stairs, and begged to be allowed to attend him. When the name was given, Herman Kaubach—she had nearly fainted with the excess of her feelings. Her care of him was rewarded—for Herman lived, and it was sweet to think that she had saved Otho's brother.

Then, after recognizing Otho himself, she felt that it would not be well to discover herself, and she had gone away to smooth the dying bed of an another, meaning to remain at a distance, until he was gone beyond recall.

"And you could do thus, dear Blanche, to him who has sought you through wearisome years, and found you at last, ministering to the only relative which I have in the world?"

The old appealing look came upon the face so dear to him, as if her eczemas had returned upon her, whether one might be again loved, who had worn that terrible stain.

"Try me not too severely," she said, beseechingly, "leave me to my tears and my work; and may God bless you, and pity me." He rose, and took off the cap which concealed her hair. It fell down in long, sweeping waves, over the course black serge which composed her garment, and gleamed like a rich mass of spun gold, in the dim light that shone feebly round Herman's bed.

It was not the soft richness of that hair, nor the blue eyes' lustrous light, beautiful as they were to an artist's gaze, that chained and entranced Otho's spirit.

She looked at that moment, as Mary Magdalen might have looked herself when the sweet words of pardon and forgiveness were uttered to her stricken soul.

"Blanche!"—and the words came slowly and tenderly to his lips,—"God knows I would weep tears of blood, to wash away the remembrance of your past life from me—from yourself—from all the world. To me, you will ever be the pure hearted, the noble and the true. If your trusting faith in human nature, made you fall into error, you have so truly repented, so nobly compensated for the past, that it would be the deepest cruelty to cast you back, unprotected, upon a world which has little charity for the poor and outcast."

"But yourself, Otho!—can you bear the reproach that would surely come upon you?" "Let any one dare do this," he answered proudly, "were it not for the shrinking of your own spirit, I would carry you back to the very place whence we came, so strong am I in affection—so independent of reproach."

"I cannot go!—spare me, Otho! leave me! do any thing but draw their cold, merciless eyes upon me." "Be calm Blanche! no eye shall look upon you, save with love and reverence. Herman!" he continued, as the sleeper awoke and gazed upon the beautiful hair that hung round her like a golden veil, "Herman! this is my Blanche—your sister henceforth! Help me to love her as I ought."

Blanche raised her eyes, all wet with happy tears, to the noble countenance of her protector, and read there, how safely she might anchor upon that generous heart.

"Were not the sinful Mary's tears, An offering worthy Heaven, As o'er the faults of former years, She wept, and was forgiven? When, bringing every cherished gift, Her days of luxury stored, She o'er her Savior's hallowed feet, The precious perfume poured; And wiped them with that golden hair, Where once the diamond shone, But now the gems of grief were there, That shone for God alone— Were not the gifts so richly shed, That hair—those weeping eyes— And the sunk heart that inly bled, Heaven's noblest sacrifice! Thou who hast slept in error's sleep, O! wouldst thou waken in Heaven, Like Mary kneel—like Mary weep— Love much—and be forgiven!"

For the Banner of Light.

GOD.

BY CORA WILBUR.

I hear Thy voice at early morn: at stillly eve, In the breeze fragrant-whisperings upon the forest side. In the blue seas' solemn murmur, breaking on the rocky shore, Lists my spirit, rapt in prayer, God and Father! evermore.

I see Thee in thine attributes of beauty, love, and light, In the golden sunshine streaming; in the holy star-lit night. In the snow-beds' bloom and fragrance, in the sea-shell's beauty form, In the moonday's creamy stillness, in the wilderness of the storm.

I feel Thee in the solitude—at Nature's leafy shrine, In the struggles of my spirit for a consciousness divine. By the deep "immortal longings," by the waves of thought that o'er My silent prayer come flowing, dwell Thy Spirit, evermore.

I seek Thee not in Heaven; Spirit Father! Thou art nigh— In the humble daisy hidden, in the lustrous stars on high. In Thy power and glory dwelling; in our daily path we trace The harmony and beauty, and the love-gleams on Thy face!

I seek Thee not where man has said: "Thy consecrated ground," Where custom tells my yearning soul, Thy presence can be found. Bound by no law, chain'd by no creed, upon the flowery sod, Let me uplift to Thee my heart, my Father and my God!

I worship Thee, with tears unsoen by prying mortal eye, With the reverential silence of a grateful ecstasy; With the joy-gleams of my spirit, for the promise divine; That Thy myriad voices whisper, in the future shall be mine!

I fear thee not, my Father! for thy smile illumines the earth, Man alone has crept-bound, heavenly light, and home-lit near. In Thy beautiful revelations gleams no chains, no chastening rod. Thou art Nature's radiant beauty; Spirit Father, loving God Philadelphia, March 23, 1857.

THE THASONS OF BOSTON.—Some hearts, like primroses, open most beautifully in the shadows of life.

Familiar Letters.

INTRODUCTORY.

SCRAPING ACQUAINTANCE.

Readers of the BANNER OF LIGHT! To each and every of you we extend our hand. We wish you to take it, not with the tips of your gloved fingers and the formal bow of conventionalism, but with the hearty, earnest grasp, and the bluff, unceremonious greeting of a friend; for as friends we shall treat you, one and all, unlocking for you the inner shrine of our heart, and opening to you unreservedly and without concealment, the volume of our thoughts. In our daily walks, should we find a gem dropped from the finger of God upon the earth, irradiating the dark places with its lustre, or witness the performance of a noble, self-denying, generous action, such as purifies and exalts the mind of man, raising him to a sphere beyond the earthy and the sensual, we shall bring the treasure to you, and ask you to join with us, in the wealth, the admiration, and the applause.

We shall ask you to lean upon our arm, or allow us the friendly privilege of leaning upon yours, and so, in hand and heart united, we will wander together through the busy work-day world, the mart of Commerce, the workshop of the Mechanic, the studio of the Artist, and the sanctum of the Student. Everywhere, in brief, where the God-given mind of man develops itself in works of utility and beauty. We will visit the Farmer at his plough, and learn from him the lessons of seed-time and harvest;—ramble off to the shores of old grey-beard ocean; climb to the mountain peak, which receives the last parting ray of sunlight; trace the windings of the stream through the quiet Sabbath-like stillness of the secluded valley, where it babbles and sings ever musically and unceasingly the mysterious harmonies of Nature. Perchance, with fishing-rod in hand, we may lure the speckled trout from his haunts, and commune with the spirit of the gentle Isak Walton, catching some of his inspiration and wisdom. We profess an ardent, enthusiastic love of Nature in its primeval state. The magnificent scenery of the hills, the splendor of the sunset, the quiet rural lanes, fragrant with blossoms—ay, the simplest leaf which buds, ripens, and flutters down to the earth, the common grave of the corruptible, speaks to us in tones more grandly eloquent of the wisdom, the power, and the love of the Great Spirit, than aught we hear under the sounding domes, in the artificial light of gorgeous cathedrals, erected by the hand of man.

Whether threading the crowded streets, jostled hither and thither by the swarming multitudes, or far off from the noise and din of cities, whenever our eyes flash with enthusiasm, grow dim with human sympathy for the world-sorrow we can only witness, and not assuage, or sparkle at the recital of the witty and the ludicrous, we shall ask you to share alike in the enthusiasm, the sympathy, and the mirth. Everywhere we shall wander free and untrammelled, pausing not to ask, is it politic? is it popular? but rather, is it true? is it just? Our own unbiased impressions shall be imparted to you, and should we, in our delving, stumble upon a mine of labor or of Thought, which the Father designed for all his children, but which is, miser like, jealously guarded from their knowledge and participation, we shall fearlessly jump the fence, calling upon you to follow, even though before our eyes glitter the ominous words—"Beware of man-traps and spring-guns."

To you, sober, dispassionate man of business, taking the world as it is, indulging in no fanciful dreams, never pausing upon your way to enjoy the beauty and the melody reflected and echoing from other and more harmonious spheres, but confining the energies of your mind solely to the Practical and the Real, we may at times seem like a "dreamer of strange dreams." But let not the friendly grasp of your hand be less cordial on that account. We shall not neglect you. If our Pegasus occasionally uses his wings, and indulges in flights of fancy and imagination, we shall not fall at other times to apply the curb-rein, and bring him down to the quiet jog-trot of the worker. With us you shall visit the busy marts of other cities and towns. Their comparative growth, in all that may interest you, shall be carefully noted. Statistics of Commerce, Mechanism, and Agriculture, presented in the same form and words we should use in ordinary conversation with you, will, we trust, make us welcome, at your counting-house, in your workshop, and beside your plough. We are determined to be upon terms of intimate friendship with you, and shall, like a guest assured of his welcome, draw up a chair beside you, and indulge in a leisure hour's chat at the breakfast table, or when the evening lamps are lighted, whether you dwell in a palace, a farm-house, or a cottage.

To you, O poet and dreamer, our thoughts will be as heart-sympathies. As we walk together through the halls of Art, and gaze enraptured upon the pictured canvas or the sculptured marble, radiant with the beauty of God-like inspiration; read aloud from some treasured volume shining all over with brilliant gems, or pause by the wayside to pluck a delicate blossom and look down into its heart all aglow with the perfection and love of the Creator, reading therein lessons of Patience and Hope and Faith, we need only to look into your eyes, or press your hand, and you will appreciate and understand our thoughts. Following the stream of literature, issuing from the press, neglecting its dull sluggish pools, and leaping over its muddy torrents, we will pause to drink where some clear spring bubbles up, sparkling with great thoughts and eager aspirations. Some obscure and lonely corner, hidden by poverty and neglect, stray gems of art and song, the written or painted inspiration of some wayward child of genius,

Who through long days of labor, And nights devoid of cease, Still heard, in his soul, the music Of wonderful melodies.

We need not say with what delight we shall call your attention to the new soul-line we have found; even as a child, eager and joyous hearted, calls to its playmates to share the pleasure derived from its new toys, shall we beckon to you, so that your hearts may be brightened with ours in the worship of the Good, the Beautiful and the True.

You are fond of children—of course you are, else we could not cherish you as a friend in our hearts.

You have remarked how delighted the little ones are with pictures—music—poetry. You have seen their sunny eyes glisten and sparkle, when pleasant stories were told them or beautiful things shown to them—and you have seen the tears rush up to their eyelids in sympathy with the sorrows of others. Perchance you may have been called on like when you have displayed the same feelings. And what higher compliment could be paid you? How many a man, after having exhausted the learning of schools, mastered his sciences; waded through all the depths and shallows of book knowledge and gone out into the world, as that world would say, though thoroughly educated, strays back in remembrance, his mind growing purer and holier, while he recalls some simple rhyme learned from the lips of his mother while standing beside her knee an innocent, wondering, trustful child, rich in little save Faith and Love. Ah! the more those olden memories flash up in our hearts, the nearer we are to the angels.

We were reminded of this passionate love of the beautiful, which pervades the minds of children, among all classes, while witnessing the performance of the Marsh children at the Howard Athenaeum. A bright little girl, perhaps five years old, was prattling her delight, and making the atmosphere about her sunny and musical with her pretty ways, turning to her mother she asks: "Mamma, I should so like to play these pretty plays with them; why can't I, mamma? Don't you think I could?"

"O, but you know how hard it is for me to teach you your lessons; you would want a better memory, and have to study very much," the mother replied.

The answer of the child was full of vivacity and eagerness, as shaking her graceful little head roguishly at her mother, she exclaimed:

"Ah, yes, mamma; but you don't teach me such pretty things!"

There then was the secret. The practical education was commencing too soon, and we thought how often it is that children, while their minds are budding and blossoming with all bright fancies, are confined down to dull prosy studies, until the bright and the beautiful have no room to expand, and so the fragrance fades off from their lives, and they grow up educated in the world's acceptance of the word, but cold, egotistical and selfish. We don't believe in cramming a child's head with dictionaries and arithmetics, before it has hummed its first strain of music, or tried to draw its first "oases" or "oases." Do you?

"Here's Ingoo come among us!" In our journeys towards the region of the setting sun, we have beheld some pretty tall specimens of corn, and heard many still taller stories respecting that useful plant. But here is the tallest. A choice coterie of friends were conversing upon the extraordinary fruitfulness of the "Great West." Stories of immense turnips and beets, monstrous cabbage heads, and last but not least, squashes, alternately excited the wonder and the admiration, till at last the talk turned upon corn. After a liberal statement of facts, one of the circle, who had but lately returned from that bountiful region the prairies of Illinois, started the wonder if not the credulity of his hearers by relating the following:

While gathering the crop from one of those celebrated thousand acre fields, one of the ears fell point downwards to the earth, and in consequence of its great weight sunk to a considerable depth. It having been found impossible to extricate it by ordinary means, a stout yoke of oxen were attached to it, and after incredible exertions, on the part of said oxen, assisted liberally by the "gad" of the driver, the cob was drawn but clean, leaving a well sixty feet deep, completely paved in the most thorough manner with the kernels.

The corn was immediately acknowledged, and the subject by general consent postponed indefinitely.

How quiet, placid, and soothing are the starry nights of Spring. From the crowded Theatre we rambled away off to the highlands of Roxbury. The holy stars looked down in their pristine beauty upon the slumbering world, and we were alone with the memories of the past, memories of the living, memories of the estranged. Through the brain fitted conflicting thoughts, resembling a battle-field, over which galloped contending armies, and now was heard the trumpet call of the enemy, now the rallying cry of a friend. But as our eyes followed the march of the evening star, the soul crept up nearer to the Infinite, and sought for an unfolding of the mysterious destinies of Creation.

Cerulean depths, in whose broad dome afar, Lights the splendor of the evening star, Aglow with love. Thy golden gates unbar Radiant with hope. To the strife-weary heart, A ray of thine own holy calm impart.

As we walked back through the balmy air, it seemed wondrous strange that sorrow and crime could breathe it. And yet, in the streets of the city, on this very evening, while the stars were looking so lovingly down upon the earth, "most" glorious murder had broke ope the Lord's anointed temple." A man walking quietly towards his home had been stricken down by the hand of an assassin, and his life-blood glittered on the pavement, in the lustre of those pure calm stars.

A WORD TO THE LADIES.

In one of our exchanges we find the following directions for preserving bouquets, in their original freshness and beauty, for a long time:—

"First sprinkle it lightly with fresh water. Then put it in a vessel containing soap-suds; this will nutify the roots, keeping the flowers as bright as new. Take the bouquet out of the suds every morning, and lay it sideways—the stock entering first into the water; keep it there a minute or two, then take out and sprinkle the flowers lightly with the hand with water. Replace it in the soap-suds and it will bloom as fresh as when gathered. The soap-suds need changing every three or four days. By observing these rules strictly, a bouquet can be kept bright and beautiful for at least a month, and will last longer in a very passable state."

As we think no decoration so beautiful in drawing-room or parlour as fresh blooming flowers, and being somewhat curious as to the truth of the above, we promise that one of our fair readers, who shall first send us the result of the experiment, the most beautiful bouquet we know how to select. What fair hand shall we be indebted for solving the doubt?

WRITE AND BLACK.—Ex-Vice President Dallas and the Emperor Solouque lately occupied the same seat in the British House of Commons.

PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICAL TEACHINGS OF SPIRITUALISM.

NUMBER ONE.

Rational minds are expected to entertain rational views upon rational subjects, and as your paper is to be devoted, in part, to the various phenomena and rationals of spiritualism, it is to be hoped that much light, reflected through such minds upon a subject so important, will be borne through the world, illuminating the minds of those who sit in darkness, upon its pages, and that it may in truth thus become, not only a Banner of Light by day, but a Pillar of Fire by night, to a world sitting in spiritual darkness and languishing under the endless variety of evils to which it has given existence.

With your permission, I purpose to present for the columns of the Banner of Light, from time to time, a few reflections upon the philosophy and practical teachings of spiritualism, even though the light I may reflect, compared with that from other minds, may be like that from the least and most distant star, compared with the sun at midday.

Ignorance of the relation and laws of the higher elements connected with earth, and its surroundings—elements connecting the mind with the body; the immortal with the mortal; the invisible with the visible—is the foundation of all our errors connected with higher existence—the cause of causes, which have led to disbelief, superstition, the innumerable systems of false faiths, and these to unnatural and unwholesome systems of civil and political government, unhealthy and soul-destroying social institutions, pernicious creeds, and damning spiritual heresies.

Modern spiritualism, so called, discloses all these errors, both in theory and practice, by revealing the higher nature and capabilities of the present life, and its assimilation to the higher spheres. Each revelation, or manifestation, involves in its regular order, each of the natural elements, from the most ponderable to mind, and from the most gross or benighted mind, to the purest and most effulgent light, emanating from the mind of Deity himself. Each requires these elements to be in harmony, that the lower may properly respond to the impulses of the higher, according to the regular law of mechanics. Each serves as an experiment, if it be not even designed as such by higher spirits, to teach the existence of the higher elements, as well as higher intelligences, and the necessity of the harmonious relation of these elements, involving obedience to each, as the only means of progression, or of higher mental and spiritual attainment. Each is given without supernatural agency, and unfolds to our minds the great truth, that

"Fixed laws control all matter and all mind,— If violated, evil must ensue; But if obeyed, their virtue we shall find To make life pleasant, and its hills subdue."

Here is written the answer to the question of those who have ears but hear not, eyes but see not, "what good can spiritualism do if it be true?" If you confine your researches to the experiment alone, regardless of the principles it illustrates, it will do you little good, just as it does to go through with forms of religious worship, without the spirit of that religion; or to cry Lord, Lord, with your lips, while your hearts are far from him. What good does it do to learn, by experiments, the relation of solids and fluids to the human system, the nature of poisons, as well as healthy elements? If idle curiosity should alone lead to such experiments as the chemist or naturalist presents, they would be of little value; but who can calculate the value of the practical application of the principles often thus unfolded? So with the higher elements in hydrostatics, or electricity, or mind, of wondrous, mysterious character have been, and may be presented, but all know their only value consists in the developing of those principles which may be rendered practicable.

To comprehend the principles involved in many of the most simple experiments passing before us, is often enough to render our names, with earth's children, immortal. To comprehend and reduce to practice the principles presented in spiritual experiments or revelations, will render not only our names, but ourselves, immortal, and crown that immortality with the riches of spiritual endowments. A knowledge of such principles is essential to the development of our spirits, in their present sphere, and for our joyous entrance into the brighter spheres before us. It is also necessary as the only rational basis of mental or moral philosophy—mental or moral reform.

Newton saw in the simple manifestation of a falling apple, a principle extending far beyond the experiment itself, even to the connecting of planet with planet—the existence of a universal law. The simple experiment of the boiling kettle was to Fulton the revelation of a principle which has, to a great extent, revolutionized commerce and locomotion, and greatly changed the habits and pursuits of man at the four quarters of the globe. Franklin's kite was a medium through which he became familiar with an element and its laws, with which mankind had ever been in ignorance. Mesmer and others have found those of peculiar idiosyncrasy, who have to them proved mediums for the revelation of truth connected with our present mental existence, through which they have taught us something of the affinity of mind. And when the principles presented through them are better understood, those experiments which have too long been offered merely for the purpose of gratifying curiosity, or exciting wonder, will be looked upon as illustrations of principles, principles involved in every act of existence, from its earliest moment, through this sphere, and those we are approaching.

In like manner, it has been discovered that there are those in whom the elements of earth and of higher existence are so blended, that, as it is believed, the spirits of those who have passed from the sphere we occupy, reveal themselves to us, giving positive evidence of their presence, and informing us of the changes they have experienced, their present condition, and the beauties and glories of the spheres before them. And this is spiritualism.

Now what is there in this irrational? What is there irrational, or irreligious? Is it irrational to believe in the relation of one element to another, even of the highest to the lowest? Is it irrational to believe that the higher elements exist in the lower, and even manifest themselves there? Is it irreverent to notice, or even to study those manifestations? May we not behold the glory of God in the heavens? Or study his handiwork in the firmament? May we not hear his speech uttered day unto day? Or learn knowledge which night unto night showeth? Must we confine our researches to the grosser elements, and behold no glory, hear no speech, and obtain no knowledge because it comes through the higher elements—our minds and our spirits? Is it irreligious to obey the laws of the higher elements any more than the lower? Are not the higher as intimately connected with our happiness as the lower? Are not the laws of each God's laws? And is it not the perfecting of wisdom to know them, of reverence to observe, and of religion to obey them?

It is a principle in nature that no power can be felt beyond its own extent. Upon points within its extent, it may be more or less sensibly felt, as it is concentrated. Each of the higher elements is interlinked with the lower, and its power may be concentrated and rendered visible upon the lower. This is true of water and its effects upon solids, of atmosphere upon both, of electricity upon all. Is it not equally true of mind, itself an element; or of spirit, an higher element still? Facts, we think will give the affirmative answer.

If the fall of an apple involves the principles which govern the universe of matter, the simple experiment of Mesmer, in bringing two minds in rapport, involves the principles of the mental universe. One shows the control of matter by matter, the other of mind by mind, but each involves a third agent, electricity. It can be clearly shown that each and every form of attraction is but an electrical effect, and that by reversing or disturbing this agent, we change or disturb the attractive force. By mechanical means, it may be so employed as to reverse the power of gravitation, and ponderable matter be thus suspended in the air!

To bring two individuals in rapport, also requires a favorable electrical condition. All mental experiments of this class depend upon electrical condition. Psychological experiments also depend upon mental condition, in its connection with the electrical. At atmosphere, water, and the solids are subservient to electricity, as it becomes the attractive force—the organizing, animating, and sustaining power, to them. In its turn, however, it becomes the servant of the mind, and the only medium through which the mind can approach matter. Does the mind see through the mechanism of the eye? The mechanism of the eye may be perfect, and the mind still connected with the body, but if electrical agency be denied, no vision is enjoyed. So with each of the senses, through which the mind comes in contact with grosser matter.

Through this agency, then, the mind acts. It calls electricity to its aid, and if no obstruction to it exists in its connection with the eye, the mind sees through the eye. So with the senses of sound, taste, smell, speech and touch. The mechanism of itself actuates, nor can the mind effect it, except through its motive power—the mind's vicegerent—electricity. Through this the mind acts first through the organism of the system with which it is connected. If it would see, the vicegerent is employed upon the eye, and sight is made apparent. Would the mind utter itself to others, ears, the servant is dispatched to the vocal mechanism, and performs such exercises as the mind directs. So with each of the other senses.

Under favorable circumstances the mind of one is enabled to send his servant into the citadel of another's mind, where in the same way he is enabled to do his master's bidding. If the master bids him, he makes the neighbor's tongue to speak, ears to hear, or nerves to feel. This is animal magnetism.

If the mind of the operator bids him, the servant seizes the mechanism of all the senses, and sends out from the citadel its own occupant, for a season, and only permits him to return at his pleasure, or to control such of his senses as he pleases. This is termed clairvoyance.

Psychology involves no such direct electrical agency, but is the doctrine of mental impressions. In other words, the experiments known under this expression, is the influencing of one mind by another, to do what it would not otherwise be inclined to do, or able to do, and often what it knows not it has done.

In all mental experiments, electrical agency is either directly employed by the operator, or indirectly employed by the operator, or indirectly by his subject, as he impresses him. Hence to be successful, this agent must be in a favorable condition. It is influenced and changed by changes which may take place in the lower elements. It may be disturbed by the higher element, mind. Upon such contingencies, hagg mental manifestations. Upon such contingencies, too, hang spiritual manifestations. URANUS.

MISS DAVENPORT.

We clip the following beautiful tribute to the distinguished Tragedienne from the Charleston (S. C.) Mercury.

SONNET.
All moods and feelings—Sorrow—Love—Delight—
Tempestuous pride—and low-voiced Tenderness,
The mournful pleadings of a mute Distress,
And royal passion's fiery-veined might,
Thou hast embodied in our souls, and sent,
Unceasing the deep fountains of our tears,
Or lifting up our spirits from their spheres
In the low Aerial to the glorious heights
Of some sublime Ideal—Art in Thee.
The genial Handmaid of a natural Grace—
Moves to a quiescent measure bold and free,
Yet moulded over in such perfect part,
By that serene and sweet humanity
Which crowns the Genius with a loyal Heart.

SPIRITUALISM IN FRANCE.

Mr. Hume, an American, has created a great excitement in the higher classes of Paris, by his wonderful power.

Mr. Hume is a man of the world, occupying an intermediate position, and admits only a few intimate friends to his exhibitions. At an interview with the Emperor, it is said that "a religious fear pervaded the whole assembly at seeing matter before the intelligent agent of the will of Mr. Hume, made whose many miracles the dreams of an author's imagination were as nothing."

A TAX ON BACHELORS.—A bill has been introduced in the Legislature of New Jersey, which provides for the imposition of an annual tax of \$5, on every bachelor over twenty-five years of age.

Editor's Table.

THE PSALMS OF LIFE, a compilation of Psalms, Hymns, Chants, Anthems, &c., embodying the Spiritual, Fraternal, and Reformatory sentiment of the present age.—By John B. Adams. Boston: published by Oliver Dison & Co.

Glady do we welcome this new volume of Music and Poetry. We can conceive of nothing so earnestly and so long wanted as an improvement in our church Psalmody. A large portion of the contents of our books of Sacred Music has been a standing libel upon the poetical taste of many generations—with new soul-poets, springing up like bright flowers all around us, breathing out their inspirations of Love and Charity and God will, the harsh, gloomy offspring of Ignorance and Superstition have still held undisputed sway, until the very tunes to whose music our infant pulses beat time, have become weary and distasteful.

Therefore we repeat, right gladly do we welcome those grand old tunes, wedded to bright and beautiful thoughts, the melody of the Past blending with the harmony of the Present.

The Editor has evinced most excellent judgment and taste in the selections. Preserving the gems of the old collections, he has added the very choicest specimens of the poetry of the present age, together with original compositions and new arrangements.

And not only is this volume valuable, as a Psalm book. When we say, that its pages are filled with the best productions of Moore, Scott, Campbell, Longfellow, Whittier, Masses, Tennyson, Lowell, and many others, we have said enough to recommend it as a common place book of Poetry. We cannot omit copying the closing lines of the Editor's preface.

"With the hope that it may supply our present wants, and that every reform—religious, political, social, and domestic—may find within it that which will cheer the soldier in life's great battle, wreath the brows of the despairing with stars of hope, and lead all to a firmer trust in God and love for one another, "The Psalms of Life" are submitted to the People."

We are under obligations to Messrs. Redding & Co. for European papers and magazines. Their counters are always filled with the latest and the best. Our friend "Mike" has a just appreciation of our wants.

The Busy World.

THE BLIND SEE.—A "blind man," led by a little dog, had his dog seized by some rogue in the streets of Paris whereupon he opened his eyes, gave chase, cudgelled the wretch soundly, took his dog, shut his eyes, and went on again.

IMPROVEMENT.—Workmen are now engaged in laying the foundation for a splendid seven story brick building at No. 21 Washington street, next to our office.

FIRE.—The Hotel at Harbor Grace, Newfoundland, was consumed by fire a short time since. The inmates, forty or fifty in number, being asleep at the time the fire broke out, six of them perished in the flames.

WARRIORS.—Great preparations are making in England to send out troops to China. Spain is also preparing for an expedition against Mexico, and endeavoring to secure the influence of England and France to quiet the fears of our having a hand in the brush, with an eye towards Cuba. The latest accounts from Nicaragua leave General Walker and his command in an extremely critical situation. The Circassians have again beaten the Russians on the banks of the Luba.

THE SULTAN OF TURKEY has presented to France, the Church of the Nativity, and the Palace of Knights of St. John, at Jerusalem.

WESTWARD, HO!—Three hundred and twenty-seven names were registered in a single day, at one of the Hotels in St. Louis, last week.

TAX ON BROKERS.—In Pennsylvania the tax on money and stock brokers is three per cent. per annum on commissions and profits.

RAPID PASSAGE.—The clipper ship Romance of the Sea, of Boston, Capt. Henry, has made the passage from San Francisco to Shanghai in thirty-four days. The best trip on record.

SARDINES, precisely like those imported from the Mediterranean, are found in the Coosa river, a few miles above Wetumpka, Alabama.

NATIVE GRAPES.—Mr. Longworth, of Cincinnati, urges the raising of seedling from our best native grapes, without a cross with European grapes; thereby, he thinks, we shall equal their best table grapes, surpass their wine grapes, and supply them with wine.

MR. J. B. HOWE, Stage Manager of the Bowery Theatre, New York, has constructed a five act drama, embodying all the points in the famous allegory of the Pilgrim's Progress. It is to be performed by a company of twenty children. This is rather an innovation upon the usual style of stage plots, and we are curious to know its result.

YOUNG SNOODGRASS IN CUBA.—A somewhat adventurous Yankee has made his appearance in Cienfuegos, Cuba, with a banjo, in the character of young Snoodgrass. He is reciting the fullest particulars of the Burdell murder case to the wonder of immense crowds, picking up, at the same time, no little change.

LITERATURE IN RUSSIA.—In St. Petersburg there are five successful literary magazines. One of them, the Russian Messenger, has more than three thousand subscribers.

THE WHEAT CROP.—The new wheat crop promises splendidly throughout the Southwest and South: The farmers at the West are also satisfied with the prospect.

THE CARLTON HOTEL, corner of Broadway and Leonard streets, New York, for many years one of the most quiet yet successful of first-class hotels, has been sold for \$250,000, and will shortly be torn down to make way for stores. Mr. Preston Hodges, the proprietor, has made a fortune out of this establishment, and now retires to enjoy it.

MARLE SUGAR.—The present spring bids fair in some sections to be a good one for making maple sugar. From the northern section of Vermont, east of the mountains, and from the upper portion of New Hampshire, we hear good reports from the farmers in regard to this staple.

QUICK.—A Messenger mare, five years old, owned near Portland, recently paced a half mile in 1 minute and 10 seconds.

LAST WORDS.

We must confess to some disappointment concerning the typographical appearance of a portion of this, our first number, most particularly that under the head of "The Messenger." In our next number we are determined that nothing shall be wanting to make the Banner of Light what we wish, and intend it shall be, a model paper.

Under this head we shall publish such communications as may be given us through the mediumship of Mrs. J. J. CONANT, whose services are engaged exclusively for the Banner of Light.

The object of this department is, as its head partially implies, the conveyance of messages from departed spirits to their friends and relatives on earth.

The communications with mortals is now an established fact, not admitting of a doubt from any one who has investigated the phenomena which is attracting so much attention at the present time.

This communication is brought about only by strict adherence to natural laws, and under favorable conditions; and however anxious one's spirit friends may be to converse with those who have left behind them their existence and presence, without the observance of these laws and conditions, it is impossible. The presence of medial power is one of the requisites.

Many people cannot consult mediums, and far more have strong prejudices resulting from false ideas of their mission. In either case, spirits find it impossible to communicate with their earth friends in a manner to prove their presence.

We have been very successful in gathering valuable tests of the presence and power of spirits of those who were never known, for friends on earth who were equally strangers to us.

So very convincing have these tests been to us, and to those to whom they were sent, that we feel confident that such as we publish will be interesting to the public, and bear fruit which shall prove refreshing to humanity.

Communications made in this manner cannot fail to open the door of spirit communion wide, and prove the fact thereof; while the opportunity afforded to the spirit world to reach their friends on earth, cannot be without effect in adding to the joys of spirit-life.

These communications are not published for literary merit. Truth is all we seek for. Our questions are not noted—only the answers given to them.

We solicit replies from those to whom they are addressed, and will endeavor to answer any queries relating to them which may be sent us.

We also solicit questions on Theological subjects to be answered through Mrs. C. Our object is to remove the prejudice existing among religionists against Spiritualism, and show that it is sent from Heaven, not to demolish the Bible, but to prove its truth.

It is also charged with teaching immortality and upholding vice. The communications will be so interesting as exponents of their teaching, and showing that they demand the practice of the Christian virtues, and always point to Christ as the way, the Truth, and the Life.

These messages are published as communicated, without alteration by us.

Mary L. Ware.—"I feel strong" said the dying one, "because I am nearer the source of strength" and because I am casting off the weak body of death, and putting on the spiritual, the immortal body.

A few short years ago I was numbered among the inhabitants of earth; now I am a dweller in the spirit land, and yet I often return to earth, to scatter buds which I trust will be blossoms in the future.

Oh, I love to commune with the dear children of earth, for while I am communing, the halls of memory become brilliant with the stars of the past. I love to think of the sorrows of my earth life, for above each cup of sorrow I can see a blessing.

Oh, that the sorrowing children of the earth plane, could penetrate with the eye of faith, each dark cloud, and view the blessing hidden within its embrace. Oh, that the lamp of faith would burn brighter in the earth life. We of the spirit life, are often found bending over the forms of those we loved, and those we still love so dearly, repeating these words "Oh ye of little faith!"

Arise ye dear ones, put on the whole armor of faith, for the promised land is in view. Already you may hear the soft music of the angels who are constantly sitting among you, singing, come, oh come, and drink at the fountain of living waters which is gushing forth in your midst.

D. W., or Northern Light.—No intimation was given us as to what name the spirit communicating was known by on earth. It was said that this was the name by which he was in the habit of communicating to his friends, who would acknowledge the test. If so we shall be happy to receive information in reference to it.

Oh thou source from whence all wisdom emanates, I thank thee that I as an individual spirit am permitted to return to earth, and manifest, although in an imperfect manner. I thank thee for the talents thou gavest me when I dwelt in my earthly temple, and I sorely regret not having used those talents to better advantage. Forgive the transgressions, oh Father of Spirits and of mortals, and I in return will revere thee in the elements, and praise thee on the wings of the morning.

Oh ye inhabitants of earth, this is the prayer I am constantly uttering. This is the element in which I live. And this is the element I rely upon to bear me upward to the great source of all wisdom. From Northern Light, D. W. in the spirit land, Humility.

Louisa J. Cutter.—Time! what is time, but a flower that buddeth to-day and bloometh to-morrow? Three years have been borne along upon the gentle wings of time, and many flowers have blossomed and bloomed since hushed voices and muffled footsteps were heard in the chamber of the departed one. Sorrowful faces stood around my bed, and hearts all bursting with grief, yet wrapped in a pure mantle of love, were the gems that lighted my pathway from the material to the spiritual world; and as the last chord was cut and the last farewell was given, angel faces were visible to me, who had come from homes of love, light and beauty, to welcome another of earth's children to its spirit home. Oh, could the dear ones who stood around me in mortal forms, have been permitted to gaze upon the angel band which came to welcome their child, their sister, to the land of peace, they would have ceased to mourn, and methinks have joined the angels in singing praises for the redemption of another spirit from the fetters of clay—the body of death. These fetters are riven—my spirit is free. Yes, free to return at will to those dear ones I have left in the earth valley.

When my mortal form was carried to the little church, none gazed with more anxiety than I, for I was present though unseen by mortals, and beheld the true sorrow of fond parents as they gazed upon the relic of their child, but failed to see the spirit embodiment of that child in their midst.

Gazing in wonder on the scene, And wrapt in joy sublime. And to you, oh child of earth, whose hand I now guide to pen these few feeble and broken ideas, I would say, high and holy is your calling; You stand as an open door, between the natural and spiritual world, it behooves you to keep the golden hinges of the door, ever bright and well oiled with the oil of faith, hope, virtue and love, that the angels may find easy access through you to their own dear friends on earth, and that you may be a star brilliant with lustre in the spiritual firmament.

You were a stranger to me when I dwelt on earth; but by your medium powers, which are as a loadstone to every anxious spirit, I am drawn to you that I may quench the fires of anxiety by the cooling waters of communion with these so dear to me in the earth life.

Louisa J. Cutter. It will be noticed that the concluding portion of this above communication is addressed to the medium through whose hand it was penned.

Abbe Ann Tubbs.—Good morning; you don't know me, do you? I have a great desire to speak with you. I used to live on earth, no very long time ago either. I lived a happy life, scarce a cloud passed over the sky above me. I lived a pure life—not a holy one. I was vain, frivolous, a great lover of fun. Mirth seemed to be the only shrine I ever worshipped at. After a while I was taken sick and mirth ceased. Less and less came rays of sunshine on my path, and then all was gloom.

Dear friends encouraged me, but none said you were going home; they were loath to part with me, and dared not say farewell, and I was loath to go. For during my last hours, I became willing to leave. Yes, I was a merry child—with a kind husband, father, mother, sisters, brothers—so many kind friends! Now I can come to them, and speak to

them, and they are so glad to see me. I hear them say you are going to print a paper. May I not occasionally send a line to those I love through it. I have some who are separated from you by water and land—some of them it is not so easy for me to reach.

I often come to the last friend who talked with you. When I first saw her, she was very desolate as if mourning over something in despair. She resembled a near friend of mine on earth in spirit, and I was anxious to do her good, I hardly knew why. I see she don't know me—she told you so, but I am one of those she said took an interest in her. I am just as happy as ever. I would not return to earth to live, though I had so many friends. I only care to introduce myself. My name was ABBE ANN TUBBS.

George.—Twenty-four years ago I lived in the now flourishing town of Concord, N. H., and peace and prosperity were my companions. And as I reposed under my own vine and fig tree, I dreamed not of future sorrow. But alas! the sun that greets us in the morning is often shadowed in the clouds at noonday.

So it was with my earth-life. The sun shone very bright in the morning, but before noon it was eclipsed, and I was left in darkness to grope my way to a brighter spot as best I could. I had friends, and they bade me seek refuge in the ship of Zion—in the church. I did so, and to my sorrow I found they were without a pilot, and were dashing wildly among the breakers of Envy, Superstition, and Bigotry, and I said to myself I cannot securely remain here; and I accordingly embarked in the long-boat of Unbelief, and soon landed upon a point of land called Infidelity. From this shore I could often see the old religious ship sailing by on the high sea of Popular Opinion, and was often hailed by the commander, and requested to again become one of their crew. But I steadfastly refused, and chose to dwell under my chosen canopy, without a God, or even a hope of future existence. But I was unhappy. I was constantly hoping for something I had never yet heard of; and one night as I lay down to rest, a dense darkness seemed to envelop me, which continued for some moments, and I began to think I had lost my natural sight, when lo! I beheld a star in the darkness, which I watched with intense interest; and gradually it became larger, and began to form into the shape of a human body, and soon I beheld the perfect image of my own long lost child—my Annie. I now arose and stood before the figure, and implored it to speak to me; and it did speak and uttered the sacred name of father. "Can this be Annie?" said I. "It is," said the figure, "and I am often with you." Then suddenly the room became filled with a flood of light, and the sweetest strains of melody that ever fell upon mortal ear, fill upon mine at that moment, and continued at least fifteen minutes. Then all seemed gradually to return to its former state, and I was left alone—but not to sleep, for I could not, but to reflect upon what I had seen and heard. And from that moment my star of infidelity grew dim, and at last it went out entirely, and I was left to drift upon the waters entirely out of sight of land, and was just thinking of making sail for the Jordan of Death, when my eyes were greeted with the most beautiful bark I had ever yet seen. And the new craft was called Spiritualism. I now turned my frail canoe from the Jordan of Death, and paddled hard to overtake this new craft. Soon I reached her, and received a hearty welcome from the crew, and soon was one of their number. I now began to enjoy true happiness—the promised land was constantly in view, and we were often so near that promised land that we could hear from and see its inhabitants. And thus I sailed on for three years, until I was called for by the Great Spirit, and welcomed home by my child and myriads of angels. This last great event took place in the year 1851. The boat which transported me was called Consumption. And now, before I leave, permit me to say a word or so to those who are without a hope. Oh, yes, weary wanderers of earth-life, embark in this new craft of Spiritualism, and sail on to the promised land.

Robert Earle.—Are you a friend to me, or have I come to an enemy? If there is a hell I'm sure I have tasted it. But I am growing wiser; better, happier. I wish to say a word or two to my friends; they don't live very near you. I have been here a short time—a few years only—and I have been in darkness all the time till about three months ago, when I began to see. Yes; I began to see, and saw through a little fellow that used to be with me when I was on earth. Oh, God, did I ever think it would come to that.

At the beginning I was an habitual drunkard; it was rum that sent me from your sphere to the one I first inhabited on coming here, ere it was my appointed time.

Now what shall I say to benefit my friends? I have a wife, who is in a position to be an instrument of great good if she will. I can't go directly to her. I want to, but cannot. She's a good soul, but she has her faults, like everybody else.

What shall I say to make her believe? I am lost, entirely lost. Darkness returns to my spirit every time I come to earth, for I do not know what to say to make my friends believe.

I belonged in Providence, R. I. My name was Earle—Robert Earle; and I kept the hotel called the Earle House, and my wife still keeps the same house. What shall I do to make her know I am with her?

What a vast amount of good she might do! What a vast amount I might have done! I had plenty of money—she has plenty. I want her to use my money in a manner that shall benefit the world. She is not going to stop on earth long. She has the dropsy, and before she has any idea of it she will find herself with me. She thinks she is well now, but she is far from it. I want her to have light now. She is a good woman, and I want to benefit her. I don't want her to wait till just before she gets ready to come to me before she gives away her store, but do so as charity demands, that she may have the blessing of it accumulating on earth. I want her to stop rum-selling in that moral hell down stairs. She can do it; she has the power—and I want a heaven there instead of a hell.

Yes—I may aspire too high, but I want her to be the best woman that now lives on Narragansett shore.

Yes, friend, I sold rum—I drank rum, and I have received my punishment for it since I have been here. I was called a kind-hearted man, but there was always a hell within. I wanted to do something to cast that hell out. So I tried to do a little good.

When she goes up stairs in the room we used to call our private room, I go too, often, and I try very hard to let her know I am there, but I can't do it. The Deacon is a medium, but God only knows when his powers will be developed. He's in the office; we always used to call him "the Deacon."

Well, stranger, I shall meet you again, and perhaps do better. Good day.

Joshua Houston, Baggage Master.—"Yes, I am dead, and alive too—both at the same time. Oh God, it is true—I'm dead. I don't understand this business, but I am determined to come. This makes three times they have let me communicate—out of pity, I suppose. My great trouble is that I want to return to earth to talk with my friends. I have been here a little over a month, as near as I can judge.

Those two days were tough, but I no more expected I had got to die when I went home with that cold, than I expect I am coming back to earth to live now. I was a foolish man, for I heard of spiritualism, but would not attend to it. Now I know it is no humbug. Did you ever hear of a fellow dying with consumption in two months? The quick consumption? Yes, I should think the old folks were right in calling it the galloping consumption; I galloped off fast enough.

Well, all I can say is, I am sorry I did not do different. Women ruined me; it's too true to deny.

They tell me I have got to come back to earth in this way, to help those I left there. There is Pike; I wish to God I could talk to him; he is an old friend, and I associated with him a great deal. He knows I am dead, and just how it was with me. I want him to do right. I did not do as I ought to, that is well known. I was Baggage Master on the Boston and Maine road.

I cannot tell you more; fear knocked almost all my senses out of me when I died—thus I am confused, and want time to collect my senses. Soon I hope to do better."

Solon H. Tenny.—"I cannot concur with others in telling you that I would not return to earth again to dwell,—for I would. Yet I am not unhappy here, only as I see my own earth as unhappy. I should be reconciled if my earth friends were so; but they are deploring that which seems to be hard fate, and it affects me sadly. I cannot rest—indeed I cannot. I have kind friends here in the spirit life that do all they are capable to make me happy, and yet the chord which draws me to earth is stronger than that which binds me here. I am constantly around the earth plane, striving to manifest to those I left behind.

But it is right. I regret many things which occurred in my earth life. I look back and shudder to think I was no better, yet if my own friends on earth were happy, I should be in a better state than I am. But there are friends, yes, relatives, who are not spirits that are doing much for me and I feel indebted to them a great deal. I hope soon to manifest to some of my earth friends in such a manner as to leave no doubt in their minds that I am still with them.

Oh, my poor Mary she mourns in true sorrow. It seems as though that night of sorrow would never turn to day. She is in deep affliction; I hope to be able to help her soon. My poor mother, too, she mourns the loss of her son. May the God of Heaven bless that aged form, and give the spirit light."

Thomas Sinclair.—Perhaps you do not remember me. My name is Thomas Sinclair, and I come again to trespass on your patience. What I gave you some time ago reached only a certain class—it failed to reach those it was most intended for. I am happy, and yet I seek for more happiness. I am told the true way to find happiness is to make others happy; and if I give my friends on earth a lamp that will guide them to a better life beyond, what greater source of happiness could I open to them?

I, too, was a strong Universalist, and when the old man with hoary hair walked into the pulpit and spoke of my dissolution, he little thought I was standing beside him, while my body lay beneath him.

I have reference to him whom you may know as Sebastian Strepter.

I have a word to say to those who were in my employ. Oh, I would they could see. I would I could make them happy. I think of them now as I never did before. I respect them now as I never did while on earth.

Augusta to William.—Are you a messenger? So I was informed. Well, I have a message to give you for my friends. My name is Augusta Wadsworth. I have a brother living at some distance from here. He has just parted with a little bud, and that bud has come to us.

I would have you say to him I would rather that bud would have stayed on earth a time longer, and yet we are happy to receive it. Tell him and his dear companion to mourn not, for the little one that has gone from them has come to us. Tell him also I have a message for him, and if he will seat himself at his table at home, I will try my best to manifest to him. He is in Loomisville, Massachusetts. His name is William Wadsworth, and his wife, Margaret. Tell him he is a medium—that mother is happy. Ask him to send word to father, and with it a blessing from us. Tell him Thomas wishes to be remembered; not forgotten—Maria also.

Henry Wilson.—Lowell.—Good day, sir. I hope you will pardon me for intruding; but really I have a desire to make myself known to friends I have on earth; and as I cannot approach them in a direct way, I will, if you please, try to approach them in an indirect way.

I have been in the spirit land eight years, or between that and nine years. I came to this medium last night; I controlled her spirit, used her form, but could not speak, and left in a few moments. I was brought here by the friend who communicated to you yesterday, he being an old friend of mine. His name is Thomas Goodhue; we lived in Lowell. I was taken sick with a cold, as I supposed; but I grew worse, and my friends sent for Dr. Churchhill. He did the best he could, but he failed to understand my case. He doctored me for fever, while I had the small pox. It was too late to save me when they found it out, as they did not do right at first. You wish to know who I am? Well, write to the old company, the Mechanic Phalanx; they knew me and my friend; prove us by them. They all turned out and followed my body to its resting place. Poor Churchhill felt sad; he's a good doctor; but he with his mortal eyes could not penetrate far enough to discern my actual case.

Yes, I lived on Middlesex street. I can even now call up from memory's halls much. I was told to come to you. Prove me; see if what I've told you is true. I simply wish to let my friends know I am not a great way off. I wish to communicate to them; but I know I cannot knock at their own door; so I must knock at others', and get them to help me. I was a young man all unfit to pass into the spirit world. Although there have been many changes on earth since I left, I am pretty sure some of the company will inform you that what I have told you is true. They must, for I am sure it's true. I have no desire to tell you an untruth. My name is Henry Wilson; I was a mechanic, and aspired to be a machinist.

Spring Flower.—Good morning, pale face. Me got message you sent me. Want to send great blessings to my Fan. She just got what you pale faces call congratulated. Me want to do what you pale faces call congratulate. My name is Spring Flower. She best little medium you ever see. Fan has got old squaw; got old chief, too; squaw good—chief good too; but Fan, mother chief got her. Pretty little squaw here longside of Spring Flower. She once lived with chief, my Fan's father. She want to send blessings too. My Fan got pretty hair, pretty eyes. She live out where big trees grow. Old chief's name is: you take a bug and a bee, put 'em together, and what make? You call name where big trees grow, and me tell you. Roxbury; that 'em. My Fan no very well; she some lame. Me want you tell her be very careful no catch cold. My Fan sing so nice, play so nice. Well, me only come to bring buds, flowers and blessings, because my Fan going to be married.

Good moon. You go see old squaw, and say Spring Flower come. My Fan sometimes go off in whizzing things—what you call 'em? Me stay by to see she no fall down—she got so much, sun tell time—moon tell time—water tell time—flower tell time—you tell time with thing in case. My Fan got thing like that. Me got best time—me see it everywhere. Good moon.

Joseph Henry Wilson.—"Forty-two years ago this very hour I was dying, changing, passing away from earth, and entering the spirit life. I lived, when an inhabitant of the clay form, in New Orleans, and have many friends in the Southern States." "Only came to see if I could manifest. This is my first attempt. In time I will visit you again, and give you much more."

Little Jemmy Wade.—I don't know you. You never saw me, did you? I know how to speak through mediums. I have got plenty of fellows here to learn me. I can write through them, too; have been taught all about it. I talk to my father and

mother sometimes. My mother used to tell me how to be good. I've got a brother here with me; I've got two angels here, too—they were babes when they came to the spirit world; I've got two sisters here also. Frank learns me how to talk. I'm seven years old or was when I came here. I was having a nice time, and the boy I was to play with pushed me overboard. My mother was away, and my father, too. It was awful hot, and they were gone to a watering place; and when they came home little Jimmy was dead; and then I came and talked to them a long time after I left. Oh, my mother loves to talk with me. She's been sick—so has my father; he's better now. My name is Jimmy Wolfe—that's the way it's spelt in my spelling-book. I lived in East Boston, my father lives there now; his name is John. I've got a brother John, too—a sister Susan, and a sister Sarah, and another sister, too—Aurilla; she's Frank's little girl; she's close by father and mother, but Frank's here long of me. Oh, how she cried. Susan is a little girl. I was drowned, the angels say; it was after I came home from school at night. I know when it was. Oh, I wish you could see my mother; she cries sometimes. She knows that I'm here, and that I can talk to her, too. They came right home when Jimmy was drowned.

You don't know who lets me come to you; he comes to my mother sometimes, when she's sick; he's good, and gives my mother medicine to make her well; and my father, too. Don't you know it? You should know it; Dr. Fisher is his name. He talks to my father and my mother. I hear him. Can't you go see my mother? Do—she'll be so glad, so glad. I'm going to see her now. Good bye.

H. J. Gardner, of Hingham, who died by poison recently. Years ago I clasped one to my bosom whom I supposed would be true to me, to herself, to her children, and to her God. Dark is the page. She has proved unfaithful—she has proved a demon. She suffers—so do I—so do the children—so do the friends. I am here, I scarce know why; I was brought to you, for what purpose I know not. My name is Gardner; I lived in Hingham. I feel sad for those I have left behind—not for myself. My mother! my children! It is for them I am unhappy. She who was a part of myself has transgressed all human and divine laws. I do not know why I returned to earth; it seems to be a mystery which is yet to be unraveled.

I listened to a spiritual discussion upon on earth, and read papers upon the subject which were left in my office, and gained some information in this way. But why I am brought to a medium who is a stranger, by spirits who are strangers to me, I am at loss to account; but I suppose it is the will of God.

Oh, God! I forgive those who have sinned. This was my last prayer on earth—it is my first thought now. May they cease to do evil, and learn to do well. May no more poisoned arrows be aimed at unconscious victims' hearts. May the public deal in wisdom; may justice perform her mission; may charity also have an abiding place among the sterner members of the council. I see it, comprehend it, know the consequences, know the sin, and know also that stern iron will that urged the hand which sent me here. 'Tis for that I pray, that love may soften that adamant heart, and make it all it should be in the sight of man and of God.

It comes to me that I have much to give you. For the present let us veil the past, and penetrate the future, courting blessings from thence.

I am dead to the world, I live not in a visible form, yet I can return. I do return, and I shall continue to return, as I am to be an instrument through whom vengeance is to come, through whom peace is to come also; through whom pardon is to come to those who have sinned, who have desecrated the temple of the Lord God by murder.

I have friends. To them say my friendship will never die, but continue to burn brighter and brighter, till I clasp them by the hand in the spiritual life.

I have children and a parent on earth. To them say that the love of a parent and of a child waxeth not old, neither decayeth it with the body of dust.

I have enemies. To them say, I sue for pardon for all wrong I may have done them, as together we must bow before the great intellectual throne of love, and together ask forgiveness.

Mary Ann Ray.—Have you any objections to my writing a short message to my friends on earth? I am now a spirit, and my only desire is to return to earth to benefit my friends, and my enemies also. I passed from earth a short time since, and went all unacquainted of what the future might be.

O, if I was again on earth, I do not think I should slight the privileges so many have offered them who are now in the earth life.

I suppose you would like to know who I am. Well, I will tell you. I was not born this side the great waters, no, old England was my native land, but I passed away in the Western wilds after living in this country a short time. I left a father, mother, brothers and sisters in my old England home, and came here with the hope of a long earth life, but I was mistaken; I have learned much since I left the earth, but I regret not having informed myself of these things when on earth, but all my people were opposed to the new light, because they did not know anything about it, with the exception of one brother. He lives a short way from here, and will rejoice at my rapid progression. O, send these lines to my friends in England, they cannot reject them. O, I cannot thank them will. I left those on earth I am anxious about, and I wish to let them know that I am not dead, but as yet I hardly know why I am in the state I seem to be in. His name is John Ray, and he was my husband. He lives at the West, and they tell me if I give you this message you will send it to him, or he may get it. He is a medium, but he does not know it. I must now go, as I do not wish to tire you. Ah! my dear father, mother, brothers and sisters, and my dear, dear husband, I do live in the spirit life, and can come and converse with you.

T. P. or Thos. Goodhue, of Lowell.—You and I are strangers; but the best of friends were so once. I, in common with the great throng that gather to earth, am going to try what I can do. Confound it, if this isn't a woman. Well after you come to know me better you won't wonder that I am glad it is a woman, though I don't know why I should be, for they were the ruination of me. Well, I declare this form strongly reminds me of one I used to know on earth; but as I am a stranger in this place, I suppose my eyes deceive me. Yes, I loved the woman too well, but I never could get them to love me.

I have been in the spirit land between three and four years, as near as I can judge, but don't know for certain—it seems as long as that to me. When I was about forty years of age I became a cripple; lost the use of my legs; the cause I don't know as I am compelled to tell. It was not by any accident, however. I used to deal in carpets somewhere about ten years ago. After that I became unfit for such business, and consequently retired, and took the situation of stage agent. In this capacity I won a great many friends and any amount of acquaintances; and, as good luck would have it, got appointed postmaster.

This soft chair seems like the one I used to sit in after I got my apartments nicely fitted up; had lost the use of my legs, so I had to be trundled about in a chair. I was foolish enough to expect a long life of enjoyment; but as my sedentary habits brought on a sort of dyspepsia and bilious affection, I came to the spirit land rather sooner than I expected. However, just send word to my friends on earth, saying that I am alive—not dead;—and if I was on earth I should travel a different path. If they doubt, they surely will reap a whirlwind for what they have sown. Yes, brandy and women brought me to a pitiable situation. But I am here sure; I shan't get any lower, and if I try I shall go higher.

My name is Thomas Goodhue, of Lowell—was commonly called T. P. I am no humbug. Don't

want you to set me down in any such company; for if I am travelling in a low degree, I don't want to sail under false colors.

I wish you a pleasant good morning, hoping you will have as much success as you will be able to stagger under.

Thomas Bixby.—Praise God. I feel like praising him. I feel like worshipping all he has made, because I see in all his works the face of Deity. I once lived on earth, and I once sought to serve my God there; but I knew not how to serve him. I had not the star to illumine my soul, which you have, but I tried to do the best I could, and I have been happy since I entered the spirit life. I grieve sometimes when I return to earth and see those I love unhappy. Three dear children remain on earth. Can I make them all happy? can I make them all aware of my presence? oh, can I wipe away all their tears? it is my wish. Some year have passed away since I was with them in form like theirs—they were good children, yes. I have a part of my family with me here, but oh, we are united all I trust; those in heaven—and those on earth are bound together. Oh, if mortals could only see their friends as they come around them, I am sure they would rejoice. I am anxious not only to benefit the children I have on earth, but I desire to benefit mankind. I am standing on a plain of love, and I feel like drawing all the children of the Father to happiness. I have children in the West, friends in the East, and a dear child here that will be glad to receive a message from me. They who are away may not understand, but it will be like seed sown in good ground, and I am sure of a harvest.

I must now leave, as others are anxiously looking on, waiting for their time to come. I lived and passed away in Waterville, Me.

William Russell, Taunton.—"My friend I assure you it is a source of pleasure to return to earth, and although I cannot directly manifest to many of my own dear friends, yet to have them know I am happy, am often with them, and have them know something of the spirit life, is more than I am able to describe to you. I had many friends on earth, and as I have been here but a short time I have many there at the present time. I wish to say to those friends, one and all, that I see now as I could not see on earth; and to those who always spoke of me as being a calm spiritual man, I have much to say. They have a great company of friends all of them in the spirit life, desiring to manifest, and the being that they called spiritual on earth now begs of them to admit those dear ones to their fire-side.

I have a dear friend with me. She has assisted me much since I entered my present life. Her name is Abigail Field, wife of Albert Field, of Taunton, and as pure a spirit as ever was welcomed by any angel band to the spirit life.

Although I could not see into the future when on earth, I placed perfect trust in God that he would redeem me—and my trust was not ill placed. I am happy now, and would not return if I could.

My friend, may I not hope that through you I may often send messages to my friends on earth?"

Amos Sutton of New Hampshire.—The inhabitants of the earth-life are continually thinking and talking about preparing for eternity. Why, my dear friends, you are in eternity now, just as much as you ever will be. The earth-life is your first state of animal and spiritual existence, and it is the beginning of a life of eternal progression—hence it is eternity. When you lay down the animal or the earthly form in the grave, you have then cast off the gross mortal part, which cannot enter heaven or the spirit-land, and have become a spirit, clothed with a spiritual body, which is a perfect counterpart of the natural or the animal body. The earth is a sphere adapted to the growth of the animal and the spiritual combined, and when the animal and the spiritual in your nature become divided, you can no longer be considered an inhabitant of earth, because you have cast off all that belongs to earth, and the spirit seeks for a higher, a superior, a more sublime element to dwell in. This may be called the first part of spiritual existence apart from the animal. This also is a state of eternal progression—hence it is eternity.

In the beginning all was good, but not perfect, and therefore our loving Father, the perfect, the holy one, placed the wheel of progression in the Garden of Eden, and it has never ceased revolving, neither will it—no, not throughout an endless eternity. Therefore, dear friends, as star after star appears in the firmament of progression, cease to cry out mystery, and remember—progress is written upon all nature by the finger of Deity.

Lewis Barnes, a retired sea captain of Portsmouth, N. H. Again I return because I am not happy. What I gave you some time previous has reached the ears of my kindred, my earth friends, and they wish to know why I don't come to them, why I don't speak to them. I would ask them in return why they don't eat if they have nothing to eat? Why they don't ride if they have no conveyance to ride in? And I ask them also why flowers bloom in summer and not in winter? And if they are capable of answering these questions, they are capable of knowing why I don't come immediately to them. I can't come, any more than the cold frosts of winter will let the flower bloom, I cannot come. They must be willing to receive messages from me in the way I can send them. If I was in New York they would not be foolish enough to suppose I could speak to them only by letter or something in that way. Now there's a distance between them and me—yes, it divides us—that distance is superstition. What shall I do to tear down the walls of superstition. I can't go there and do it—I must stand a long way off and throw stones. Oh, they say if I would only come to them, they would believe. I hope they will never be unwise enough to ask that question again, but I do hope they will be wise enough to place themselves in a position where I can approach them. But good day, sir, I shall come to you again when a favorable opportunity presents itself.

Samuel Adams of Boston.—It is a fact people don't die; they live, I guess, forever. What made me such a fool all my life? Well, the world is made up of variety; we must have some fools, and I might as well be one as anybody, I can come and I can go, but can't always do what I want to. I had conversation a short time ago with a man about forty five years of age; he's on earth. Then I hardly knew whether he was on earth or not—now I know—he told me to come to his house every morning at such a time and he would read the bible, and explain it as regarded myself. Well, I went and got light, and consequently I am here today. He told me I should never die. He told me all I had learned on earth was false. So you see all I had gained on earth profited me nothing. He told me to come to anybody when I could get a chance and manifest to them. But mediums when I go don't like me. I did not expect to have anything to do after I was dead. I thought all I had was a body without a soul. I used to have a name once; but I do not know what I shall be called here. My name was Adams once. I used to make all sorts of traps; didn't do much the latter-end of my life. I ought to have had enough to have supported me. Ought to have had my pension; shan't forget that but I have no use for it now.

George Palfrey, an engineer, killed at Elliott, Maine.—I see a young man here who says he is going to show me something. He looks to be about thirty years of age. He shows me nothing but a train of cars; but oh, they'll fall—they will certainly fall. There's a bridge up—there they go—they are down—oh, mercy, hear the screams!

showing me the scene. He's the engineer. The crowd are looking at him to see if he is dead. The spirit says—"My name is George Palfrey; that is my body; that you now behold happened in the year 1861. The bridge is at Elliott, Maine. It was the five o'clock train on the Eastern road, coming from the East, going to New Market. There was no water under the bridge, which was up by mistake, and the cars fell.

Frederic Grey.—To my dear friends on earth—Ye who have known me in my pilgrimage—ye who have supped at the same table—ye who have worshipped at the same altar—I now return and bless you for many favors I have received at your hands. I am now free from the prison-house of death—yes, I am beyond the confines of the tomb—and it becomes my pleasure as well as my duty to come and manifest to my friends on earth. Oh, ye dear ones listen to the voices from the spirit land, and compare them with the word of God, and if you find harmony there, oh receive them like meat in due season, and your soul shall wax strong by eating thereof. Let no man or the spirit of man, deceive you. Prove all things—hold fast to that which is good.

REMARKABLE TEST.

The test which follows is so remarkable and convincing, that we are constrained to say a few words respecting the gentleman through whom it came.

Mr. J. V. Mansfield first became interested in Spiritual manifestations through accompanying a lady to a circle—he at the time only fearing that her health would be injured by frequent attendance at such circles.

It was noticed that no manifestations could be had in his presence, until he was finally requested not to come, as his unbelief broke up the circle.

At length another lady medium came to the house, and said she wished him to come again. He did so, and she requested him to ask for the raps in any place he wished. They were given as directed. He then asked the medium to sit up to the table and see if it would move; to which she replied that it would move without doing so, and accordingly it did move about the room, the parties being some distance from it.

It was then asked if he had any spirit friends there, and the medium wrote the word "Jerry," and following it "Thomas." These were the names of the father and brother of Mr. Mansfield, which fact was unknown to any in the room.

The father communicated that if Mr. M. would sit one hour a day, in fifty or fifty-four days he would be a writing medium; and on the fifty-second day he became such.

The brother, Timothy, said—"If you will bring my old violin, I will play on it."

Some time after Mr. M. had become a writing medium, he visited the northern part of Vermont, and brought back the violin spoken of by his brother, which he laid upon the piano.

A few days afterwards a seeing medium came into the room, and said he saw a male spirit bending over the piano, and thumping the violin. Mr. M. was incredulous, and pointing to a number of daguerreotypes upon the table, asked if it was like any of them. The medium selected the likeness of the brother. Sounds were asked for and responded to. Then a distinct request to strike the A string, and it was done, and afterwards to pull the F string very hard, when it was pulled with such strength that it broke; the violin now remaining in that condition, with the string rolled around it.

Shortly after, Mr. Mansfield was developed as a medium for answering sealed letters, and so many applications were made to him, that he was forced to choose between his former business and this, and deeming that it was his duty to devote himself to the cause, he chose the latter alternative, sacrificing therefore considerable pecuniary interest.

It is proper in this place to say, that while so many derive luxurious incomes from teaching the old creeds and dogmas, dealing out waters often stagnant and unwholesome, those who draw from the clear living spring of the Present, and the glowing inspiration of the Future, are neglected or derided, because of the necessity, which no mortal can overcome, of providing for the temporal wants of the body. We trust that truer views will soon take the place of those so manifestly unjust.

Not long since a party of ladies and gentlemen assembled at the office of S. V. Mansfield, Esq., the distinguished writing and test medium, 29 Exchange street.

Among the guests assembled were Capt. W. of the U. S. Navy; Lieut. Mc— of the Army, and a distinguished physician, Dr. R—. Through the medium was written the name of Emma Winslow. She stated that she "died in England, March 10th, 1867, aged 15 years 8 months 10 days."

"What is your object in coming to us, as you lived and died in England, so far off, and so long ago?"

"Can your family ever be discovered?"

"This is my object, and to furnish you a strong test of the power and willingness of spirits to communicate with mortals."

"I am sister to Sarah Winslow, who died in Boston, 1867, aged 26 years."

"Was she buried in Boston?"

"You will ascertain the above to be truthful by searching the burying-places in Boston."

"What burial ground?" we asked.

She replied—"I do not know the place by name. Boston was a small town at that time; but you can find the truth of the aforementioned, if you persevere."

It was asked if her remains were entombed or buried. She replied—

"Buried."

"Does any stone indicate the place?"

"Yes."

"Marble?"

"No; a common slate stone is there, which will show the above record. I come, therefore, to give you this test with the many you have received."

These remarks having excited much interest, it was concluded, before any other test was asked for, to confirm, or prove its falsity, by examining a cemetery in Boston. During the next day they found a tomb-stone bearing date "1867," and "sacred to the memory of Sarah Winslow, who died in Boston, aged 26 years." This cemetery is surrounded by a high wall, and no one, unless by permission, is allowed entrance. Section after section was visited, and, although all had abandoned the search, it was only by the persevering efforts of Lieutenant Mc—, who, after many hours' patient examination, discovered the stone sought for.

The grass being ready for the scythe, the keeper of the yard wished that further efforts might be postponed until some other time, when the medium being influenced to write, laid down a piece of paper, and his hand moved, when was written—

"You have passed my grave, SARAH."

The party retraced their steps, and found a stone hidden by the long grass, moss and earth, eight inches below the surface, and which had never been disturbed since it was originally placed there. Upon removing the earth, the almost illegible inscription was deciphered; faithfully agreeing with the above description, and utterly unknown to any living person. The effect upon those who witnessed this discovery was intensely interesting.

The same party re-assembled at the medium's office in the evening, and the following was written through his hand—

"Well, my dear mortal friends, you found me truthful, did you not? I told you perseverence

would accomplish the sought for object. We were with you to-day, and controlled the circumstances which led you to ascertain the truthfulness of what I told you last evening. Sarah was with you, also, and impressed you to turn back and search for that which you were so doubtful about; and you were partially directed to that place. We impressed the officer of the grounds to find fault with you. All was managed by us to bring the desired object about. Now doubt spirit communication if you can. What more do you want?"

"Are you a relative of Gov. Winslow?" was asked.

"I am a distant one, and I am glad to see you meet together for the investigation of so great and powerful truths. Go forward my beloved mortals, and you shall unmistakably know that spirits, do come, as ever to earth, though only recently have they talked as they do at present. The principle, has always existed, and spirits have communed with some few—but the spell is now broken—My friends the ball is rolling, and will continue to roll on, until superstition, bigotry, idolatry, and error of every description, shall be banished from the sphere you inhabit. Then take courage—go forward and great will be your reward. I am truthful, and will come to you, my friends again in good time."

What was your object in coming to us, perfect strangers?"

"It is," she replied, "to remove all doubts which are often raised in regard to spirit communication—that is, that the mind has to do with it in any way."

I was once a living, talking mortal, as you are, and an inhabitant of Nottingham, England. My sister came to Boston with relations by the name of Geer, and that family was lost on their return to their native land. I have more to say to you, and will in due season move your hand to write it. We thank you and your companions for hearing what was impressed on your minds, or was. We impelled you to write last evening.

We are in the wisdom circle, and will give you such advice as may be of much service to you during your pilgrimage on earth's sphere we are the spirits of

EMERSON AND SARAH WINSLOW.

The Gentlemen whose initials are given are ready to vouch for the entire truth of the above statement.

LINES.

BY SARAH A. HOWELL.

TO-DAY the snow wreaths on thy grave are lying,
Oh, thou beloved! and bare the branches wave,
Above thy rest—and yet my love undying,
Centers still warm upon that lonely grave.
Not lonely—no, within its sheltering bosom,
My child and thine is sleeping on thy breast,
My darling! oh, my God! my peerless blossom
Lieq with the father in that silent rest.
It is not much I ask of Thee, oh Father!
'Tis but to take my other child and me,
Our scattered family again to gather,
And fold them on the heavenly plains with Thee.
It is not much—aid yet, for long, long even
Delaying years, I've asked it at Thy hand,
And still I lift my longing eyes to Heaven,
Waiting thy call, as by their grave I stand.

THE PASSING ON OF MINNA.

BY JOHN S. ADAMS.

NOT many years have passed—I do not know but that months might represent the interval better, since I made the stage coach acquaintance of a man whose lively crown gave truthful evidence of a long and happy sojourn upon this little mound which we call "earth." As stage coaches are numbered among things that are nearly if not quite obsolete, I may here remark that I had been all day subject to the monotonous rumbling of a rail-car, and now found an agreeable change in the cradle motion of a stage, which a merry looking countryman drove twice a day from a little wooden building, yelping "a depot," to towns interior.

I had not long been seated when I was attracted to the ripe old gentleman before mentioned. This was effected by his modest, yet noble bearing. There was, also, somewhat in his soul that acted on mine as the unseen spirit of the magnet does upon the steel—and keep from a nearness to his soul I could not.

That topic of universal consultation, the weather, introduced us to each other. It was a glorious day in June—and, as one by one its charming hours passed away to that storehouse of immortalities behind the veil of our material, to be ushered again into our presence in the cycle of God's eternities, with added beauties—we found our subject worthy of angel thoughts, and ourselves very incompetent to the task we had undertaken.

In the dearth of words, feeling how weak spoken language is to represent the children of the soul, conversation naturally turned to a consideration of why it is so, and we discussed the question for half an hour. It was a period of real enjoyment to me.

We spoke of the misuse of words—of language misapplied, of words that should shine as stars in our orthography—and be as far from the reach of terrestrial objects, as the stars—harnessed down to do the drudgery of a menial and employed to make some worthless nostrum appear of value, or some trivial thing, a gem of surpassing splendor.

I know not how it was, or exactly why it was, but, somehow or other, our illustrations were so wrought up by a sense of the ludicrous that I found myself illuminated with the sunlight of laughter half a score of times that half hour, and as many times every month of my existence since.

Well, so much for what it is worth. I, for one, do not pass it by as worthless, neither will you, perhaps, for it is the preface of what may be somewhat better.

At nightfall we halted at a little cottage nestling like a white dove, under the wing of a very motherly-looking hill. This cottage had the appearance of wealth—yet not of that wealth which Slate street boasts, or Wall street counts a fortune. Reckoned by dollars and dimes the wealth of this cottage would appear meagre. It was built of rough logs, as far as we could see—but we could not see much it was so shrouded in a mantle of green leaves and fragrant blossoms. Nature, by the way, had done much for this little home. She had displayed her love for it by festooning its cornices with pendant vines, and shading its door with great and generous bunches of lilac. Then she crept all around and above one window in a bright green ivy, and over another in the round-leaved honey-suckle. And she kissed the little step with fairy-leaved moss; and threw her protecting arms over all in the wide spreading branches of the great elm.

By the bye, what a kind, dear soul this Nature is. Did you ever think of her goodness? And haven't you shuddered many a time when the minister told you that she was depraved and we should shun her. And haven't you wondered and asked yourself why it was that God made her so beautiful and then commanded us to despise her? But when you grew older, and your eyes opened, and you saw how false all such teachings were—how free and glad your soul felt! How you clung to good and loving Nature, and cherished her presence and teachings all the more for the abuse you had heard thrown upon her.

This cottage was the old gentleman's destination. I felt somewhat sad at the thought of parting with him, and as he grasped my hand and remarked that he should be glad to have me pass a day or two with him; I involuntarily got out of the stage and acceded to his kind request.

A middle-aged lady came to meet us. She

threw her arms around my friend's neck, and said—"Dear, dear father, I am so glad to see you. Minna is nearly ready to go."

There was something that glistened in the old man's eye. Was it a tear? Why should he weep? In a moment he turned to me, begged me to excuse his inattention, and introduced the lady to me as his daughter.

She grasped my hand with that fervor of earnestness which speaks volumes for the soul. In that secluded spot I had indeed found a lady, rather, a true woman. This was evident in every look and motion. There were no jewels on her hand, but a whole heart within it. She was not attired in silks, but love and truth robed her whole being as gold and silver can never do.

We entered the house. Everything betokened refinement, industry and taste.

I soon learned that it was the home of a widow and her only child, a daughter, who was fast approaching that change usually denominated "death." That the gentleman with whom I had newly become acquainted was the father of the widow lady, and that he had journeyed day and night about twelve hundred miles that he might greet once again in the earth-form his beloved grandchild, and comfort his daughter.

The village was an old settlement—an honest, truthful place; and if any error was held as truth either in the political or theological creed of its inhabitants, it was more from ignorance than willfulness. There was a school-house and two churches. One of the latter was of the old Puritanic stamp, and looked tired of standing there, pointing its spire to some unexplored region above.

After a bounteous repast I was led into a little room where lay Minna.

She smiled sweetly as my gaze met her own, and I at once felt myself in the presence of a purely spiritual being. And yet I experienced no restraint; for, if indeed I was a stranger, that smile, and I shall never forget it, made me perfectly at home. She could not speak much; it exhausted her, it was wearisome. But, ah, she did talk in a language not of earth. Upon a snow white, tastily fringed pillow, her pale emaciated head lay, while her full blue eyes cast inquiring glances around upon what by many would be deemed vacancy, but which to her was thronged with angel forms.

I had learned her history, her life, and I was truly thankful that the dear ones who guide and guard me had led me to the place, and thus enabled me to be a witness of a scene which would be to me a baptism on high.

"She had not," professed religion," but she had professed it, and soon she was to receive the great reward. She had beheld the door of the great spiritual temple opened, and had heard a voice from within, saying—"Come up hither."

Minna had always worshipped in the great building not made with hands—Nature's fair cathedral—and now she was to pass up to its higher courts to join the myriads congregations in its holier worship.

Did she weep? Ah, no. Why should she weep? She would rather rejoice, for she knew in whom she trusted.

Did we mourn as we stood around her and saw the chords which held her spirit sundered one by one?

Not so. Not so.

She beheld the path before her, and it was flooded with glorious light. There was no "dark valley" for her to pass through. No cold waves for her to buffet. She had made that valley luminous with acts of goodness, and dried up all the waters with the warmth of her love.

All that night we had watched the doors open, and the angels beckon. Step by step the willing spirit had receded from its earthly tenement and neared its immortal home. We heard the soft footsteps of unseen attendants, and seemed to catch an occasional glimpse of their radiant forms.

Hour after hour passed, and yet she lingered. "I see," said she, "my spirit home—beautiful—beautiful—beautiful! This is my father, my brother; and there is he to whom my young heart was pledged, but who passed on to the better and, waiting to join his hands with mine at an angel altar. They are there, all there. Yes, I see them—they smile on me—they are all there."

She paused. Heavenly joys illumined her countenance. There was bliss too great for human utterance—too ethereal to find expression on lips of flesh. She whispered "yes," as if in reply to some spirit with whom she was in converse;—then turned to us and said:—

"Yes, send for my old pastor that I may tell him what I see. O send for him that he may see my joy. He has turned away often and said I was deluded—has said the angels did not come and talk with me, and smooth my pillow—that I should be sorry when I came to die—O send for him, send for him, that he may see how a true spiritualist can die. No! not die, but pass the second birth—be born of the spirit."

A messenger was dispatched, who soon returned accompanied by an aged clergyman. It was by him Minna had been baptized in infancy. He had closed her fathers eyes when his spirit fled, and had followed to the grave the earthly form of her brother. He had taught her the religion of the past. Had taught her that God was revengeful, and subject to like passions as ourselves. She had been taught by him that unless she publicly united with the church she would fall into eternal darkness and despair when what he termed "the solemn hour of death" should come. He well knew that she lived a blameless life; that she fed, the hungry, clothed the naked; that she visited the distressed, and had given many a cup of water to the thirsting around her. But notwithstanding all this, he told her it would avail nothing unless she had a change of heart.

And how should she "change?" To what better condition could she transfer her heart? She knew not; and night after night, through the silent hours, she revolved the question in her mind:—"How can I change for the better? Christ went about doing good. He trusted in God. He came to set us an example that we might walk in his ways. He told us that these were the works God would have us do to find acceptance with him. He spoke not of any mysterious change—O, what a doctrine my pastor teaches."

"But then," thought she, "whom shall I obey, Jesus Christ or my pastor? On whom can I best rely, God or man?"

The problem that filled her mind for a time with gloomy apprehensions was at length solved. She determined upon following Christ's teachings independent of man's interpretations—and she did through good report and through evil.

Soon after this the tidings reached her—that angels were holding intercourse with men, and O how glad those tidings were to her ears! Did she strive to prove it all a delusion? Did she join the church cry against it, and obstinately deny as impossible what her reason and her bible told her soul was God's eternal truth?

O, no, she did not; but joyfully welcomed the truth, and became, if possible, more angelic than before. Some called her foolish; others, insane. Some forsook, and some neglected her, but she clung with ardent hope and faith to the glorious reality. Nothing could move her, for she saw that, to a world, and a church even, sunk in materialism, to souls doubting immortality, and to

mourners weeping over the graves of the dead, of whose fate they knew not, a great truth was being revealed; and she knew that she heard and they might hear the startling words, "The dead live—they are near you—you can talk with them and they with you."

O, faithless was the joy of her soul, and the souls of all who accepted this truth. Death was indeed robbed of its terrors. The trembling, doubting, almost hopeless one became strong and lived a new life.

A few joined Minna in her new faith, and but a few. It required almost a martyr's courage to adopt it in the midst of church anathemas and public ridicule, yet those who bore the cross externally, as surely wore a crown within.

One night—it was a calm summer night—the moon shone brightly on every hill, Minna had a vision. She beheld herself borne away by two bright beings to a glorious home where she was welcomed by all the dear friends who had left her on earth. She met them all, and there was, indeed, a joy unutterable and full of glory. They led her up higher and yet to more distant-realms, and opened her sight more resplendent beauties; then some one whispered in her ear—"This is your spirit home, which you shall soon inherit." She awoke, and the vision was no more; but all night its beauty dwelt in her mind, and her little room seemed full of holy beings, and vocal with sweet voices.

She never forgot it. How could she?

The pastor took her pale, thin hand in his own, and said—"My dear child, may God bless you."

Her eye was gently smiled, and she replied, with the light of a soft smile radiating her face—"He does bless me. He blesses all his works."

The clergyman appeared to catch a gleam from the word spoken. He was silent for a moment, during which Minna's face became unusually clear and life-like.

"Hark!" she whispered. "Hark! a choir of angels is coming. I can just hear the music. They are more than I can number. But who is this that comes to bless my pastor? She says she is his mother, and she comes to bless him. She is tall, and graceful in appearance. She has a dark and speaking eye, and black hair. A sweet smile plays upon her features as she kisses a bible, and extends it as if to give it as a parting gift to her son."

"My mother! MY MOTHER!" exclaimed the pastor, as he threw himself upon his knees at the bedside, and burying his face in his hands, gave vent in tears to the deep feelings of his soul.

It was indeed his mother that Minna had described; and the last earthly act of that mother had been the presentation of a bible to him, accompanied with a kiss, more than half a century before!

"The music is louder," said Minna. "See! they approach very near now. Don't you all hear it?"

"I do—I do!" said the clergyman, yet on his knees.

We listened, and we all heard it. The very air of the room was tremulous with its vibrations.

"Let me kiss you all," said she, "for father says I must now go. He has brought a chariot—so beautiful. Do not weep for me. I shall often, O, so often, come back to see and talk with you. My dear pastor—your mother wishes me to tell you, as from her, that the angel faith is true. She wishes you to have faith and believe."

"I will," was the earnest response.

"Now good-bye all," said she. "Mother, grandfather, pastor, and you, dear friend, good bye! Welcome angel friends! Welcome, welcome, eternal life! Welcome, welcome."

Minna had entered her chariot and gone.

I remained till the last joyous rite had been performed; and the good old pastor, at the grave, while tears of joy sufficed his face, spoke of her joyous passage, and avowed his fixed belief in the ministrations and manifestation of spirits.

We had no sad tears for that bridal—no dark habiliments in which to clothe our bodies. We only strewed white flowers upon the grave, and bade her sleep on.

"Sleep on." Holy benediction to a life of active goodness. It sounded like the vesper bell on the undulating waves of an Italian sunset,—the spiritual breathings of a departing day.

Sleep on; yes, sleep child of earth, now the inheritor of heaven. Sleep on. Spring shall bud for thee in sweetest fragrance. Summer shall blossom in beauty. Autumn shall scatter tinted leaves around, and winter shall deck in robes of spotless purity the little mound beneath which thy weary limbs so quietly repose.

And yet thou dost not sleep. Ah, no. It is only the temple that has fallen—its tenent has gone to a more glorious home. We watched thy breathing. Painter and fainter were the pulsations of thy earth-life. The last came. It came—it passed away. We watched its flight until we saw the golden gates of the "New Jerusalem" open to receive it.

And when it entered we felt our earth-chains upon us. We realized that thou wert free and we were not. That thy feet could enter in while ours must wait until the glorious angel, the beautiful, God-commissioned one whom we call "Death," should release us from our captivity to flesh and blood.

Rest thee, Minna. May our end be like thine.

A Sketch on the Departure of Winter.

BY YAMA CARA.

Good bye to you, old Father Winter! I am glad you are gone, with your freezing and snowing, and whizzing and blowing;—yes, I am glad you are gone. Let poets tell of your joyous long evenings, and pair with a vivid glow your fire-side scenes—they can never make you seem attractive to me. No, for it is my nature to dive deeper than the shining surface. When I think of you and those who battle off your frosty breath, I think, too, of those who cannot feel the fireside glow when you send the mournful winds to sing requiems over departed summer. Could all dwell in palatial homes you might be welcome, for then we could enjoy the gas-lit halls where beauty meets us to dance with merry hearts, that have no care save the ordering of the gossamer robes that enwrap them. We could smile when we hear the jingle of sleigh-bells or listen to the fresche chat of those we love. Yes, those would be happy pictures were there no darker shades in life—were there no hungry, barefoot children crawling into den-like homes and asking in vain for bread.

Winter, we have seen dark clouds in life since we began to run our race on earth, and many times you were more than half the cause. We have seen the old tumble-down house of a rich, miserly landlord let to starving tenants at an exorbitant rate; yes, and we have seen the heartless biped, after receiving the tear-stained gold from the starving widow with the babes, gather it all into one grand pile of thousands and give it to some popular society, that his name might be engraved on marble. Merciful winter! merciful in comparison to such hearts. I will not blame you for this, for your icy breath could not congeal his adamant heart more.

I have seen pale children in rags, prematurely

old in grief, ask the millionaire for a shilling, and he in silent scorn would turn away, or perchance reprimand them for daring to accost him, and then pass on as though he had done his duty. At such times I have prayed—but it was a wicked prayer, and I will not repeat it, for it was frenzy that made me utter malediction. I would not have done it in a same moment, for I should have remembered that God is just, and retribution will surely come.

I have seen the grief-stricken mother turn the last coal into her almost worthless stove, while her babes, with their thin hands, strive in vain to scratch the frost from the narrow panes, that they might peer from their squalid abode into the wintry drifts without—I have seen the proud man bow before grim disease, and, with his hollow breath, pray for death to release his earthly fetters, that when he could no longer be a help to those he loved, he might not drag them to greater suffering. I have seen the strong man beg for work that he might keep those dependent on him from suffering, and while he implored for honest labor that the rich man needed, he would give him but the smallest pittance, knowing that now winter had come, he must work for that or starve. Yes, and I have seen the moneyed man pass by the worthy mechanic who lived within a stone's throw of his brick mansion, and give his profitable work to be done where the gains were not needed; giving only the heavier and less lucrative jobs to his neighbor; but so such I have always said, "Toll not there are those who see these things and will assist you to fame and fortune by and bye. Patience, honest mechanic! There's a good time coming, but for your sake and mine, I wish 'twould hurry."

We will dwell no longer on dark pictures—would that I could blot them out from life as I can from my paper!

I have just opened my window, and the sunlight comes dancing in and dries the ink, as my pen scribbles along over the sheet, before me, and the gentle breeze that has just closed the door behind me, tells me faintly that soon the flowers will begin to peep out early from their wintry rest, for winter did not kill them—they only doffed their summer garb and drank away to sleep till old Janus, with his train, should leave us again. I hear merry voices now on the hill side opposite my window; O, how refreshing sound the peals of laughter as they echo from tiny throats!

There goes by old Jacob, the wood sawyer. He walks much straighter to-day than he did a month ago when I saw him pass. This warm sun has thawed the ice about his heart and hope has made his form erect, so he has sharpened his saw and gone forth. Reader, my heart aches for that poor old man—let me describe to you the spot he calls home.

Go down a narrow alley but a few rods distant from my own humble abode, enter a little time-stained hut, and mount carefully a rickety stairway; turn to the right and knock at a low door. You will hear a shuffling step within, and then it will be opened by an aged female whose limbs are scarcely able to support her. This is the wood sawyer's wife, an amiable old lady who devoted twenty-five of the best years of her life to bringing up a family of children, ten in number—and where are they now?

I will tell you where some of them are. Two of them are in heaven, so says the mother. One is in the land of gold, and reports says the fates have dealt kindly with him there; but if it is so he has never made it manifest at home, for not even the price of a saw has the old man received from his child. Another is a cripple lying on yonder low bed in the corner; he of all that family of eight now living seems to have a heart, and yet a mysterious Providence has seen fit to make him helpless. He loves with a holy devotion the One that afflicts him, and waits patiently for the time when he shall see Him and know all things pertaining to himself.

Two daughters—shall I tell their history? Yes, let the truth be known—often pass their pious mother's home with painted cheeks and coarse jests on lips that should be pure as angels'. They have sometimes proffered the mother gold, the price of guilt, but with tears and prayers for their reformation she spurned the gift, preferring to live in poverty with her crippled child, the youngest born.

Reader, come with me a little way up the street, and I will show you a princely dwelling of brick, ornamented within by fresco, while in those large halls, parlors and conservatories, there is lavished enough of wealth, to make me, if it were mine, write only for the pleasure of mentally meeting with the great world. Often when the thick frost is gathered on the narrow window panes of the poor, do sounds of music and mirth burst forth from the round swelling windows upon the night air, telling that luxuries freely abound within.

After this the old wood sawyer and his wife, and the crippled son, all fare well for a few days from their rich son's table. The princely merchant pays the rent of the old tenement, saying he would like to hire his father a better, but times are hard—it costs him a great deal to live, and he cannot afford it. Yes, and he lays in a ton and a half of coal for his father's winter store, while twenty tons are heaped in his own cellar. Generous man! His wife says his parents are well provided for, and he believes it, for he seldom goes there—has no time, has to meet his friends on Change. Both he and his proud wife often tell how eccentric and childish the old man is—will saw wood in spite of every remonstrance from them. "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child!"

Merciful death! ought not such ones as the poor old wood sawyer to be grateful that they can by and by lie down and rest, and receive the reward of well doing? But enough; thank Heaven, the old wood sawyer's children are not a type of every family. There are those who remember how the now aged mother once watched over them when her round cheeks wore a rosy hue—how she stooped over their pillows and with hushed breath waited to catch the sounds of their breathing, to see if disease hovered near. Yes, and they remember, too, how willingly their noble father toiled to feed and clothe them that they might receive earth's greatest blessing—a good education. The old couple are gently gliding towards that great unknown country, of whose mansions one book alone has told us; but so pleasant do the children make the pathway, that the aged parents scarce know the difference when they pass from earth to heaven.

One is a wintry picture, that it almost chills the life-blood to look upon, while the other leads us to thank God for an existence here, and makes us strive to be worthy of it.

There goes a little shavings boy, with his dilapidated basket swung over his slender arm, where the patches of his jacket are borne backward like striped pennants attached to the rigging of a ship of the line on a holiday. I know in what kind of a home you were born, but none of us know where you may die; but by the looks of your bright eye and broad forehead, and the way your little bare, red feet skip over the mud, I opine that some day your voice will be heard elsewhere than in a pauper home, or the muddy streets. Fortune sometimes makes statement of such as you so hurry, young America, carry home your shavings, and then away to the school-house and save yourself the heart-ache in future years.

Pearls.

And quietude, and peace, and rest,
That on the universal stage of all Time,
Shall be the crown of all our days.

There, on thy mother's knees, a new born child,
In tears we saw, when all around thee smiled;
So live, that sinking to thy last long sleep,
Smiles may be thine, when all around thee weep.

One noble life, or a single noble deed, set up conspicuous
In the sight of all, becomes a fountain of life to many.

How beautiful is night!
A dowy freshness fills the silent air;
No mist obscures, nor clouds, nor speck, nor stain
Breaks the serene of heaven;
In full orb'd glory, yonder moon divine
Bells through the dark blue depths;
Beneath her stately ray
The desert circle spreads,
Like the round ocean, girdled with the sky.
How beautiful is night!

To commit a falsehood is like the cut of a sabre: for
though the wound may heal, the scar of it will remain for-
ever.

In the beginning sweetly sang
The nightingale in love's first hours,
And as she sang, grow everywhere
Blue violets, grass, and apple flowers,
She bit into her breast—out run
The crimson blood, and from its shower
The first red rose its life began,
To which she sings of love's deep power.
And all the birds which round us trill,
Are saved by that sweet blood they say;
And if the rose song rang no more,
Then all were lost and passed away.

Keep your temper in disputes. The cool hammer fashions
The red hot iron into any shape needed.

KEEP IN YOUR OWN SPHERE.

"Every white will have its black,
And every sweet its sour."

People and things will find their own particular level,
or harmony is ever out of the question. There is no
such thing as making an affinity—it must be made with-
in us. We wonder when we see a very tall man marry
an extremely short woman—which is often the case; but
could we know the workings of their minds and im-
aginations, then should we cease to marvel. And how
very often are we surprised at, what to our superficial
eye appears the height of absurdity, to see a handsome
looking man, with pleasing address, fall in love with an
old and very homely woman. But he knows; yes, the
husband sees below the mere surface,—he beholds that
which passeth show. It is the gem that gloweth within
the ordinary casket, and with such a powerful lustre
that it has taken captive his soul. He sees that, and
nothing else; he is a happy man. It is all right.

In choosing a companion for life, one should seek
among his or her peers. Never go out of your ordinary
walks to do it. For there you will find one that has
had about the same equal chances for education—their
tasks, pursuits, their out-goings, their in-comings, in
fact their whole life has been on nearly an equal foot-
ing. Then, among your every-day associates, select a
companion which in your own judgement, will harmon-
ize with you, and

"Like souls that balance joy and pain,
With tears and smiles from Heaven gain."

happily and cheerily will ye tread life's pathways,
trudging smoothly along, alike over its rough and
pleasant parts, till you leave this home below for a
brighter and a better one, where an eternal sunshine
shall await your coming.

The poet Moore said a true thing in these pretty lines:
"You may break, you may shatter the vase if you will;
But the scent of the roses will hang round it still!"

Even so. Take any person whose early education has
been neglected, or has had a wrong bend, and it will
ever adhere to them, more or less through life. We
cannot cover or hide it, try we never so hard. The
world will see through us and find it out at a glance.
No matter how hard we try to disguise it,—they will
"Smell the mould above the rose."

A friend of mine relates the following experience to
me. It is true to the letter. He has a snug little fam-
ily and plenty of house room and help, so his good
thrifty wife took it into her precious little head to take
a married pair to board, thinking that she might there-
by put an extra dollar or two into her purse for "pin
money." And she did it. She gave out her intentions
among some of her friends, and in a few days a gentle-
man with his wife called and engaged the rooms. The
man had a very good address—he made the bargain;
his companion said little or nothing, and as she made
a good appearance as to her outward rig, nothing objec-
tionable was noticed on her part.

The next morning at breakfast things began to de-
velop themselves a little, to the surprise and astonish-
ment of the hostess, who knew but little of the world
outside her own sphere,—but to the delight of her hus-
band, who relished a good joke most hugely, and who
had "mixed in" a little more with human nature in its
various phases.

"This is a nice piece of steak; isn't it, Jane?" out-
spoke the gentleman boarder.

"I'll bet 'tis," returned the young woman.

"Should you like a piece a little more done?" asked
the host, brandishing the carving knife and fork, ad-
dressing the lady in question.

"Just try me, and see," most pertly suggested the
new bride.

Accordingly a nice bit, done brown, was helped her by
the officious host.

"Now you suit me," was the tripping reply, accom-
panied with a knowing wink.

"What! you have not yet finished your breakfast,
Mr. M.?" exclaimed the hostess. "Will you take
another cup of coffee?"

"I think not. My appetite is not very sharp this
morning."

"Fity about you, aren't it?" said the pert little
spouse.

At all these expressions the hostess was thunder-
struck. It was perfect sanscrit to her; she looked
amazed, while her husband could hardly contain his
laughter. Thus went on affairs, until the children of the
host began to catch the contagion, and off astonished
their mother with such slang terms as—"Got my eye
peeled;" "Over the left;" "Can't come it;" and many
others of such phrases besides, one of the little ones had
learned from the woman to eat with his knife, whereby
he cut his mouth most barbarously. At length, the hos-
tess thought that the extra money she might gain by
the operation would hardly balance the "evil communi-
cations" which were fast "corrupting the manners" of
her family; so a polite invitation was given to the
boarders to vacate their quarters at the earliest oppor-
tunity.

TRUTH IS IMMORTAL.—How beautiful the thought,
that a heavenly truth is never lost; a thought of
beauty goes sweeping through the universe of space,
fill it finds a welcome in some heart. It leaves its
impression there within the spirit-shrine, and goes on
forever, flowing and leaving its dagger-scorpion of
joy within another soul.

Written for the Banner of Light.

THE BRAHMIN'S TASK.

BY RICHARD CRANSHAW.

In the land whose soil has been so oft enriched
by the life-blood of its sons—beneath whose lurid
skies so many thousands of wealth-seekers have
found unknown and unwept graves—whose gales
are heavy with perfume, and whose groves seem
but vast cathedrals, from which arise the endless
chanting of innumerable feathered hosts—in this
East Indian land our tale begins.

By the side of a pleasant stream, an aged tra-
veler, with staff in hand, moved slowly and wearily
along. Now and again he cast his eyes towards
the west, and as he noted the rapidly declining
sun, essayed to quicken his steps, as though fearful
the shades of night would overtake him before he
reached his destination.

Each moment, however, he felt his strength
failing, until at length his feeble limbs refused their
support, and he sank down upon a mound of
grass-covered earth, unable to drag his foot-sore
steps another pace upon their way.

Again he looked up at the sky. He watched
the sun as it sank slowly from his view behind a
distant hill; he watched and saw that where it had
been a moment previous, was now a sea of mingled
red and gold, changed slowly to purple, and finally
settled into a calm, deep grey. The cool air, that
swept pleasantly along the river shore, and the
rippling of the river's tiny waves against its pebbly
margin, soon had the effect of lulling his senses to
forgetfulness, and he was speedily unconscious of
weariness or pain, in the embraces of a profound
and dreamless slumber.

He was aroused with a sudden start. He looked
around him, with an undefinable feeling of terror,
but the clear light of the newly risen moon discov-
ered to him no cause for his apprehension. The
river still rippled musically along, and he could
hear nothing else save that and the waving of the
branches around him, stirred by the passing wind.

Hark! what was that? He bent down his head
and listened eagerly, while he felt that the pulses
of his heart beat heavily within, and almost over-
powered outward sounds with their vehement
throbs.

Again it came! Again, in a long, low murmur,
slowly rising till it became a fierce and maddening
yell. Nearer and still nearer! The traveler was
no stranger to the dreaded sound, and with ash-
en lips and starting eyes he rose quickly to his feet,
and raised his arms beseechingly to the sky.

"Brahma," he murmured, "Brahma, the mighty,
the all-powerful! Thy servant asks thine aid in
this hour of fear and agony. Oh, turn not away
unheeding, I beseech thee."

He could hear a distant rustling and crushing of
dried branches as if beneath some heavy tread;
then ceasing, and giving place to another and a
fiercer yell than before. Again would be heard
the advancing of the unseen cause of his terror,
coming each moment nearer and nearer, but paus-
ing now and anon to give utterance to another
fearful roar. He would have made another appeal
for mercy; but he could now distinguish the sound
of snuffing the air as if to determine his own
whereabouts—followed by a low growl of mingled
rage and gratification—a dead and sickening silence—
a fierce bound of some huge form from the
depths of an adjoining thicket—and then—the
unhappy traveler was lost to all sense and recol-
lection! His first intension of returning remem-
brance was one of intense bodily pain. Opening
his eyes with an effort, at first all surrounding
objects were undistinguishable to his gaze; but as
they became more accustomed to the obscurity
that reigned around, he saw that he lay upon a
couch of skins within the rude precincts of a
woodman's hut. By his side knelt an old man,
busily engaged in applying various healing herbs
with no unskillful hand to his torn and wounded
limbs. Above his head stood erect the tall and
graceful form of a young man, atired like his aged
companion in the coarse raiment of a wood-cutter.

He stood leaning upon a rude spear, and apparently
deeply interested in the old man's occupation. At
his feet the carcass of a huge Bengal tiger, whose
striped hide was here and there stained with the
life-blood of many wounds, lay extended, his im-
mense and terrible form, even in death, fearful
to look upon.

The wounded stranger tried to speak his thanks
for the timely deliverance from a dreadful death,
and also for the interest displayed in his further
welfare, but his attendant physician placed his finger
on his lips to prevent such exertion, and motioned
that he should again compose himself to slumber.
A sleeping draught which he administered had the
desired effect, and once more he sank into profound
and refreshing slumber.

Loud and clear sang the songsters of the wood,
and brightly beamed the morning sun through the
open doorway of the hut when the wounded man
awoke.

"Where art thou? What has happened?"
He looked around him. The old man whom he
had seen the evening previous was there alone,
seated at the side of his couch, having been en-
gaged in watching his profound slumbers.

"Thy danger for the time is over, and I may
now answer thy inquiries; but weakness still dwells
within thee, and I may not permit too much eager
converse. Therefore hear, but curb for the time
all disposition to reply.

"While the shadows of evening lay upon the
earth, my son wandered forth to drink in the cool
breezes wafted from the river's banks. He ap-
proached thee at a moment when the deepest peril
perhaps of thy lifetime hung over thy devoted
head. He saw the death-spring of a ferocious
beast toward thee, and but for his dauntless heart
and ready arm, the stranger's bones might have
blanched upon the river's shore, or found a hiding
place within the depths of some dark forest
jungle."

The listener shuddered, and hid his face within
his trembling fingers.

"But Brahma, who watches the footsteps of his
children, sent thee deliverance by the hand of my
brave boy—my Delphage, who, after slaying the
monster, bore thy insensible form to this poor hut,
and the little skill I have attained from a long
abiding in the forest, and a careful study of its
numberless healing herbs and plants, has so far
preserved thee for existence."

The old man uncovered his face, and looked in
the speaker's countenance.

"An existence which shall be henceforth devoted
to repaying its preservers for their kindly human-
ity. I swear it, and the great Brahma bear witness
to my words! The weak and infirm stranger may
yet prove an all-powerful friend."

"I ask no thanks or reward from thee for an act
of duty from one fellow man to another. This
world's cares and sorrows, joys and hopes, will ere
many risings and settings of yonder sun be alike
indifferent to me."

"But thy son," suggested the stranger.

The brow of the other became suddenly clouded
with an anxious shade.

"Alas! he has the aspirations and ambitions of
a high and proud heart, which yearns for some
nobler fate than that of dragging on the humble
existence of a mere hewer of wood. Here he is
like the captive bird, who beats its life out against
its prison bars for the liberty it cannot hope to

attain. The iron barrier of caste is woven around
him, and this, as well thou knowest, is as immova-
ble as the on-rolling power of destiny itself."

The other laid his hand upon his brow as if in
deep thought, but before he could frame a reply,
the youth in question made his appearance in the
doorway.

"You are better, father, I may hope?"

He advanced with the gentleness of a woman,
and knelt by the wounded man's side as he spoke.
The old man laid his hand kindly on his youthful
preserver's head.

"I am—I am. The guardian spirits of the
brave hover ever o'er thy path through life; for
that I am now here to murmur forth a word of
thanks and blessing."

The youth reverently bowed his head to receive
the benediction.

"I am more than repaid," he murmured, "for
so slight a deed, in receiving a good man's bless-
ing."

"Modesty, bravery, and respect for the old,"
said the aged traveler to himself; "these are vir-
tues that caste cannot hope to bestow upon its
children—they are the attributes of greatness not
to be conferred even upon the offspring of princes.
They are the titles of Brahma's own nobility."

And thus communing, he gazed upon the young
man's face and form. Beyond the middle height,
and with limbs firmly and fully developed by the
life of activity he led amid the free hills and fore-
ests around him; with a full, resolved eye, and a
noble, manly countenance, he seemed indeed fitted
to fill a higher and more worthy station in the
great world than that of an humble wood-cutter.

In a moment the aged traveler had read and
estimated him at his true value, and as he ceased
his clear though hasty scrutiny, he looked from the
son to the father, who had remained with his eyes
dwelling admiringly and affectionately upon the
young man's graceful figure since he had entered
the doorway.

"Friend," said he, breaking the long silence,
"you must give him up to me."
The wood-cutter started, and fixed his eyes in-
quiringly upon the other's face.

"Give him up?—give up my boy—my Del-
phage?" he stammered.

"Even so!" responded the stranger. "He pos-
sesses talents which thou dost not dream of, and
which it were wrong to suffer thus to lie buried in
a woodman's hut, useless to himself, and lost for-
ever to his fellow men. I repeat it—you must
give him up to me. I possess power to station
him in a position where the abilities within him
may find scope for action. Although I am not now
able to disclose myself unto you, and the causes
of my being found thus alone and unfriended
in the midst of this wild and deserted tract of
country, yet look upon this token, and assure thy-
self of my truth and power."

As he spoke he drew from his breast a light
gold case, richly chased and jeweled, and opening
it, displayed the sacred scroll of Brahma, which
was only to be found in the possession of the higher
order of its priests.

The inmates of the hut reverently prostrated
themselves, and bowed their foreheads level with
the floor.

"Now," continued the priest, "speak, old man,
and choose for thy son his future destiny."

After a painful pause, the aged woodman con-
trolled the tears rising to his eyes, and replied—
"Father, thou knowest not what thou demand-
est of me. The vows of the Holy Temple forbid
that the ministers of her altar should form an
earthly tie, and therefore thou canst but guess at
the parent's deep love for his child. Sever us—
my boy and I—and the frail bonds that hold my
aged frame to earth would snap asunder like the
trunk of the decayed palm swept down by the
fierce simoon.

"I know what thou dost remind me, that here
in these dark haunts, tenanted by the wild beast
and the deadly snake, he is immured in a living
grave, but oh! suffer him only to close my eyes in
peace, and to lay me deep beneath the forest
mound, and then—then I consent that he should
find a nobler walk in life, and a fitter sphere of
action, than this life of poverty, hardship, and low-
liness."

The Brahmin turned to the youth.

"Let him decide," said he, without further com-
ment.

With mute and trembling anxiety, the old man
waited to hear his son's reply. The latter ap-
proached and laid his hand upon his father's arm.

"This was my first, and truest friend," addressing
the Brahmin:—"the cherisher of my infant help-
lessness—the guide of my footsteps when they tot-
tered with the feebleness of childhood. He has
been to me all that a father should be—I should
be less than a son to desert him now. No! even
a seat upon the royal throne could not tempt me
to forget my duty to the author of my life."

The father could not utter a word. He only
pressed the noble boy close to his heart, while
tears of joy shone in his dim eyes. The Brahmin
merely said,

"He has spoken well."

As he now seemed exhausted by the long con-
versation he had held with his entertainers, they
arose and left him to repose. When he was en-
tirely alone, a look of proud satisfaction lit up his
countenance as he murmured forth—

"After all my years of toil and danger, I have
at length reached the consummation of my wishes.
The great Brahma has sent in his own good time,
and by his own inscrutable method, the long-sought
deliverance. The Brahmin's task approaches its
fulfillment."

And so saying he laid his head back upon the
couch of skins, and was speedily wrapped in deep
repose.

A year had passed away. Midnight hung like a
mantle upon the earth, and in its folds of gloom
enveloped the woodman's cot in the depths of the
great East Indian forest. There was a solemn still-
ness reigning within its rude walls, broken only at
intervals by what would seem a human sob of over-
powering grief. The winds stirring the branches
of the trees without, caused them to wave to and
fro as if in kindly sympathy, and as they nodded
and inclined one to another, they seemed gifted
with tongues, and whispered gently of one laying
dead and cold within.

The youth, Delphage, was fatherless—the old
man had passed quietly away in the arms of his
boy.

None but those who have felt what it is to be
alone—quite alone and unfriended in the great
world, can conceive of the deep sorrow that dwelt
within that brave young heart as he knelt beside
the motionless form of his dead parent. None but
the child of unfriended poverty can dream of the
utter desolation that held sway within his soul.

The rites of the dead, completed by his own
affectionate hand, he turned his face toward the
distant city, and leaving the ashes of his father
within the earth's green bosom, left forever the
haunts of his childhood and his youth.

There was desolation and weeping within the
gates of the great city of Delhi. A malignant
and unparing pestilence swept its inhabitants by
thousands from the earth. The destroying angel
had breathed pollution on air and water, and they
drank in death with every wafted breeze, and every
thirst-allaying draught.

In the courts of the great prince of Delhi, roy-
ally, feasting and debauchery held unrestrained

sway. A multitude of richly clad nobles assembled
around the person of their unworthy sovereign,
and each vied with the other in conceiving new
pleasures to employ the passing hour. Now and
then one of the number was observed to sink down
from his gilded couch, and fall upon the marble pave-
ment, a hideous, writhing form; but it elicited no
further notice than a command to the attendant
slaves to drag forth the unsightly object, and amid
horrible jests it was borne forth and consigned to
the care of the priests of Brahma.

From the palace it was but a few steps to the
temple of the Deity of India. Within its immense
walls the solemn voice of chanting and prayer
never ceased, and now and anon the rude shouts of
the revellers in the adjoining palace broke in upon
the rites and drowned the holy sounds with blas-
phemy and laughter.

Fainting from weariness and want of food, as the
sun began to sink below the horizon, Delphage
the woodman's son, directed his steps toward the
portals of the temple, into which he saw grave
men slowly following one another. And as he
entered, and the full splendor of the immense place
was presented to his view, he sank down upon the
polished floor, and bowed his head in mute adora-
tion of the God in whose presence he felt himself
to be.

Suddenly he was touched upon the shoulder,
and looking up he saw to his surprise the face of
the aged traveller whom he had been instrumental
in delivering from the fangs of the tiger.

The old man came close to his ear and whis-
pered—

"Follow me."

He led the way out from the temple, and they
reached the street. His conductor then turned for
a moment, and said in measured tones—

"Delphage, thou hast been long expected, but
the hour has come at length. Now shall thy desti-
ny be accomplished, and the Brahmin's task fulfil-
led."

"What meanest thou, father?" asked the youth.

"Thy words are mysterious."

"Reply not, but follow and behold."

So saying the Brahmin advanced with slow
and solemn footsteps, until he reached the gates of the
royal palace. No guards appeared to bar their en-
trance, the pestilence having driven them from their
posts, and the two proceeded without interruption
even to the ivory and gold door that opened into
the royal hall wherein the revellers feasted and
drank.

The Brahmin then took the young man by the
hand, and pushing the doors wide open, stood in
the presence of the king and nobles of the court.

They all rose with one accord to their feet, and
looked with astonished eyes upon the rude and ill-
clad intruder.

The king at length demanded who and what they
were, that they thus dared to appear unheralded
in the presence of royalty.

The Brahmin in low and measured tones made
reply.

"Prince of Delhi, I am one whom thou hast
cause to tremble to look upon. I am the minister
of an avenging Deity, and my errand is to bid thee
step down from the throne thou dost occupy so
unworthily, and give place to the one chosen by
Brahma to succeed thee."

"Insolence!" exclaimed the king. "Where are
my guards, that I may see these vile catfiffs cloyen
to the earth?"

A hundred swords flashed from their scabbards,
and the assembled nobles prepared to rush upon
the intruders. Delphage had listened in mute sur-
prise while his conductor addressed the king in
such extraordinary terms, and had decided that he
was in the power of an unhappy madman, but as
he saw the demonstrations of menace, every noble
and chivalrous feeling was aroused, and he sprang
forth between the priest and his assailants, and
though totally unarmed, determined to protect him
with his life. The Brahmin thrust him gently
aside.

"Put up your glittering blades," he cried to the
threatening nobles, "and be as ready to draw them
on your country's enemies, as you are upon a de-
fenceless old man, and the tide of battle cannot fall
to run always in your favor." With some show of
shame, they lowered their swords before the stern
reproof. The priest again addressed the king.

"Again I bid thee, oh king, descend. Thy
throne is red with the people's blood, and their
cries ascend to the sky because of thy oppressive
and unhalloved rule. Their enemies trample them
under foot, and thou dost dance with thine hand-
maidens within thy palace walls. They perish by
the wayside, and sink down in the streets, and thou
listenest to the songs of minstrels, and with a
laugh raisest the brimming wine-cup to thy lips."

A thrill went through the glittering assemblage.

"Listen! A vision came to me by night. It tol-
d me of the coming pestilence, and that the sins
of this vile court could by no means but this be
purified. It was to be sent by the great Brahma
as a warning token of his just displeasure, and if no
heed was given to his terrible voice, a deeper desola-
tion still should fall upon it. Three times, oh
king! I have warned thee. Three times thou hast
turned away with contempt from my voice. Thou
hast reached the end of thy vile course, and here
thy sway forever ends."

"A further vision visited my couch. It bade me
arise, and seek one more fitted than this shadow of
a monarch to rule over the destinies of a great peo-
ple. For weary years I sought him. I looked
upon the titled throng standing around the throne.
I could not find him there. Corruption dwelt
amongst them. In every caste of men I sought
him. They all proved wanting in the great requis-
ites for a perfect monarch; a kind and courageous
heart; a respect for age; a modest bearing; a
mind unwavering from its sense of duty; and a
holy veneration for his God."

He turned and laid his hand upon his young
companion's arm.

"I have found them here!"

The prince started from his throne.

"This scene has lasted long enough. Away
with them, and let them be torn limb from limb.
Drag them forth, I say, from my presence!"

But even as he spoke, he was seized with trem-
bling and blindness, and caught at the arm of his
throne to keep himself from falling. The Brahmin
raised his hand towards him as he ceased speaking.

"Even as thou dost say—this scene has lasted
long enough. Prince of Delhi, the finger of the
destroyer is upon thee even now, and the wrath of
Brahma is accomplished."

As he spoke the monarch fell headlong from the
steps of the throne, and rolled over on the pave-
ment a blackening corpse.

The nobles, with horror marked upon their faces,
murmured forth in hollow tones, "who is this
man?"

The Brahmin threw from him the coarse brown
garment that had enveloped him, and stood forth
in the gorgeous robes of the great high priest of
Brahma.

All with one accord prostrated themselves with
their faces to the earth. He advanced and raised
the form of the youth, and led him to the foot of
the throne. Then he turned to the nobles.

"Behold your future prince—behold the chosen
of Brahma—the appointed deliverer of our unhap-
py land!"

And carried away by their mingled terror and
reverence for the holy representative of their aveng-
ing Deity, they with one accord cried out—

"Long live the choice of Heaven—the appointed
of our God!"

And the high priest led him to his seat amid the
acclamations of the assembled throng, and the
woodman's son was sovereign of the great province
of Delhi. The pestilence disappeared, and the
country's enemies soon humbly sued for peace, so
much did they suffer from the courage and ability
of the new leader of their former easily conquered
foe.

And as the Brahmin saw these things accom-
plished, he laid down to close his eyes in death;
and as the last breath passed from his lips, he
raised his eyes toward the sky, and pressing the
hands of his former companion, the young king
murmured—

"Brahma, now is thy servant's task finally ful-
filled on earth. Take me home to rest from my
labor."

The young king was alone with the dead!

Agriculture.

CULTURE OF THE PARSNIP.

Messrs. Editors.—I speak from experience, as
well as observation, when I say that in my opinion
the value of the parsnip has not been sufficiently
appreciated, and that its cultivation is still too
much neglected