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Literary Department.

Written for the Banner of Light.

MIZPAH.

BY MINNIE MINTON,

Author of "Sunny Italy," "The Old Love and the New," etc.

PART II—CONTINUED.

Dec. 15th.—Shall I ever forget this day? My first sight of a soul hovering on the borders of an unknown world—my first experience of the power of trust and faith in an Infinite Father, to overcome all thoughts of this world, and to feel what we all say with our lip-service every Sabbath: "Thy will be done!"

We were walking on the terrace in the bright sunlight, and sheltered from the cool wind by the heavy evergreens—by us I mean Mrs. Minton, Minnie, Mr. H.—and myself. "Birdie" was chirping in her pretty way with her canary-like throat, (what a singer she'll make some day!) and we were talking in a desultory manner of various things—customs and institutions of England and America comparatively, authors, books, etc., etc., when Mrs. Minton caught her foot in a dry brier hanging over the path, and in recovering herself brought on a violent fit of coughing, and in two moments—oh, how I shudder even at the recollection—her white handkerchief was dripping with blood, and as Mr. H.—caught her in his arms and carried her like a child to the house, still, still that fearful hemorrhage increased. Minnie, although as pale as a block of Carrara, made no outcry, but clasping tightly my hand with her little trembling fingers, rapidly followed. As Mr. H.—laid his sister on the sofa, he pulled the bell so fiercely that several servants rushed in. In a quick, imperative voice, he ordered one to ride for a physician, another to bring lemons and ice, a third pillows, and so on. Even in my fright I could not notice his presence of mind and coolness, such a contrast to my helplessness. The whole of the household chanced to be out riding, driving, or willing away the day as usual in a country-house, so we had the *salon* to ourselves. By the time the doctor arrived, we had succeeded in checking, with ice and lemons, somewhat of the fearful flood. But he shook his head and looked very grave as he felt her pulse, and my heart leaped to my throat and the rare tears rose to my eyes, as I saw the white look of agony on Mr. H.—'s face and the despair in his eyes. How he loves her! Afterwards, when we had conveyed her gently to her room, and she lay in the stupor which God only knew if she would have strength to rally from, Mr. H.—, as he sat with Minnie pressed closely to his heart, told me in a few broken sentences how much Mrs. Minton had been to him:

"She has been my guardian angel, Miss Glyndon. She has been both mother and sister to me; her pure influence has saved me from many a sin that my wild, reckless nature would have tempted me to. Her love has been the link which held me to life, when life seemed to me so dark and drear that it was no sin to leave it. Her hand has pointed the way to hope and faith, when distrust and despair overshadowed my soul. But for her God only knows where my feet would have wandered—into what abyss of misery I should have plunged."

As the day waned, life seemed to return gradually to the poor, weak frame, and as the soft eyes opened, the poor lips tried to smile on us, and the feeble hand to touch her child's head, which bent so lovingly over her pillow, as "Uncle Robert" raised her in his arms. Minnie had been so frequently with her mother in illness, that she had learned to control her emotions far better than I; for, I confess to my shame, I trembled in every limb and shuddered with fear, when I thought how near death might be! Mrs. Minton looked at Robert—Mr. H.—, I mean. He bent over her, and caught the words, "Tell her death has no pang. God is love!" and she glanced at me, showing for whom her words were meant. But—oh, I fear death. I cannot die! It is like plunging into deep black waters to me. I see nothing beyond. What is God? I do not feel or realize his existence. I know there must have been a Creator, but what does a supreme, omnipotent being, care for such mites of his whole marvelous created things as we are? And then "after death cometh judgment," says a text I have somewhere heard. How could I meet that judgment—I, who know I am not "the wheat to be gathered into his garner," but more likely the tares to be cast into the "everlasting fire"? Everlasting! What a fearful thought. No help, no redress—not only for ages on ages, but forever! How can God be love, and so condemn his creatures? How can it be? They preach he is "a consuming fire," a God of "wrath and justice." How can Mrs. Minton have such faith? It is all dark to me—all dark!

Dec. 16th.—I am so thankful! The physician to-day pronounced Mrs. Minton out of danger for the present. To think, though, it is only for the present; that her life hangs by so frail a thread that the slightest shock may sever it; and yet she is so bright and cheerful, although perfectly conscious of her precarious situation. I have been with her most of the time these four days of anxiety, for Madame Leroy has little taste for a sick-room, and contented herself with calls three or four times a day, and strict orders to the nurse to attend to her duties faithfully, and call her if there was the slightest change. As for me, I have become so interested in Mrs. Minton, that it is really a pleasure to me to be with her. Minnie scarcely leaves her side, and Mr. H.—is in the adjoining boudoir most of the time. I have been rather inclined to dislike the "Honorable," but he is so kind to his adopted sister, that I overlook somewhat his want of deference to myself; for although I have seen so much of him, being thrown in his society by my friendship for Mrs.

Minton, he has not (did they but know it) paid sufficient attention to me to warrant the slightest jealousy on the part of Lord L.—and the Marquis. He always has an air (most disagreeable) of rather looking down upon one from a superior height. What is he, pray, to fall in deference to me? Not that he is not gentlemanly and courteous at all times, but there is something lacking.

Dec. 25th.—I was awakened this bright Christmas morning by the sweetest of baby-voices singing a Christmas carol at my door. I bade Alice open it, and into my arms ran the sweet little Birdie, crying, "A merry, merry Christmas, my dear new auntie!" Oh how sweet, how unutterably precious is this pure child-love to my heart! And her angel mother—how can I ever reward her for the good she has done me? She has called me her "dear sister," this good woman of whose affection I scarce feel worthy, and so "Birdie" lisped, "And if you're mamma's sister, you will be my dear auntie, beautiful Miss Glyndon!" It all came of my relating my history (if it deserves to be called so), telling her of my lone, loveless childhood, and something of my longings for those fond ties I saw others blessed with. I could not speak freely even to her—to another could not have spoken at all. She laid her transparent little hand on my head, and said softly, pitiingly:

"Poor child, poor child! Poorer, with all your wealth and beauty, than the child of any peasant in your land, who rejoices in a parent's love or a sister's tenderness. Dear child! let me be as a sister to you! Forgive me if I err in speaking so familiarly, but although there are not so many years between us in age, you are but as a child to me in many ways. Will you try to think of me and love me as an elder sister, who feels tenderly for you, and earnestly desires your welfare?"

I was saved from utterly breaking down, and losing all self-control, by Minnie's opportune little speech of my being her "Auntie" now. We had a long talk afterwards, or rather I talked and she listened, speaking occasionally, as her feeble voice would allow, words of comfort and cheer, speaking of a God in heaven, who is a dear, kind Father to his children, loving them and pitying them as they are led astray by their own weakness and the temptations of evil. "For, my dear, there are few trials or real sufferings which we do not bring on ourselves; often through ignorance, sometimes through willfulness."

I glanced at her as I thought, "What can you have done to bring on so much pain?" She read my look, and smiled sweetly as she said:

"The joy and peace of my heart counterbalances the sufferings of my frail body. This weakness was doubtless induced by infraction of the laws of Nature by my parents, and aided perhaps by my own carelessness. I was gay, fond of pleasure, and often exposed myself heedlessly, when a young girl, in a manner my not over-strong frame was not able to resist. Many a night, after dancing in the heated, crowded rooms of parties or balls, I have sat in the chill, damp air of piazza or conservatory, eating ices, until the over-heated frame must have been thrown into a most unnatural state. I wonder, now, that I endured as long as I did these constant outrages upon my strength. But the time came when it all ended in a long and serious illness. Minnie was but a year old then, and being so long deprived of the comfort of caring for her, when an infant most needs a mother's care, made me, perhaps, too anxious, after I was able, to have her with me constantly. I fear sometimes I am forcing her mind in having her associate so much with older persons, but it will not be for long."

I could not refrain from saying, as I saw her hopeful glance upward, "Oh! Mrs. Minton; how can you so calmly think of leaving her, when you love her so dearly?"

She did not answer for some moments, then she said, slowly:

"God is all-merciful. I do not believe he put this great, tender mother-love in our hearts to have it crushed and torn by separation. I feel sometimes, Miss Glyndon, that nothing can separate me from my child; that even after my spirit has left this frail tenement and 'put on immortality,' I shall still be permitted to hover near my loved ones, to aid and assist them. It has seemed to me sometimes, in my hours of agony, when the spirit seemed struggling to leave its flesh-bonds, that I could hear sweet voices whispering comfort—feel soft hands laid gently on my brow, soothing the quivering nerves; and although you will think it fancy, never have I seemed to feel those sweet influences but I have speedily been relieved! If fancy or truth, if indeed dear ones are permitted still to watch over us, or if heaven is entirely separated from earth, I am content to leave all in God's hands, feeling sure 'He doeth all things well.'"

"Mrs. Minton, will you tell me how you think I have caused, my whole life, people to feel rather repelled than attracted toward me? Is it my fault that this sorrow of loneliness, estrangement from others, has surrounded me my whole life?"

"Do not feel pained, dear, if I say I think in part it is your fault. Perhaps you have not striven very earnestly to make people love you; you expected it as a right, did not seek it as a blessing to be courted. I can understand, from your picture of your childhood, how the adulation you received at your grandfather's was calculated to foster your pride and vanity, make you, in short, so egotistical that you considered yourself the one to be sought, not the one to seek. Believe me, dear sister, the purest pleasure comes from forgetfulness of self, and thought of others. The less we expect, too, the more we are apt to receive. Do you think you could be humble enough to seek the good will of others, and not, when they fail to be attracted at first sight, turn from them haughtily, disdaining to take the trouble to show them they misunderstand you, and that beneath your proud manner you have a warm heart, and a nature generous enough to take delight in doing good, did you but know the way? Oh! Miss Glyndon, when I

think of all the good you might accomplish with this great wealth God has given you! Do you remember the parable of the man with the ten talents? Have you no ambition to hear one day your Lord say, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant!'"

It was impossible to feel indignant with that pure angel face before me, and the weak voice and panting breath would have checked anger in any one—but it was rather hard to bear this cool criticism of my selfish self, but I had courted it by my query, so I bore it with what grace I could, though my face burned and my ears tingled. Is she right? Am I so egotistical, always thinking of what others should give me of deference and attention, rather than what I should accord them?

Jan. 15th, 1843.—The holidays have passed, and the guests are scattering. Our hostess will not listen, however, to Lady Seton's leaving. They are old friends, and often pass months at each other's houses. If Lady Seton remains, of course it follows that I do, and *entre nous* *confidant*, I think some of the urgency for the prolongation of the visit is due to the young Earl's attention to myself. Well, what could I desire better than an alliance with this noble family, one of England's proudest, who date their ancestry to the time of the Conqueror? What more ought I to desire? yet somehow I feel not quite satisfied with the thought, and do all I can to prevent my Lord from a *denouement*. When it comes, it is true, I mean to accept, but let us wait; I am in no haste now to relinquish my liberty. Not that I fancy I should have much less liberty as Countess L.—, (sounds well, that "Countess" I should be "my lady" in reality then,) for the Earl is such a mere boy, only two years my senior, that I do not stand in much awe of him, as I suppose a wife ought to "love, honor and obey." As if I would ever obey any man! But I suppose that is a mere form of service. Surely no gentleman would demand obedience from a lady, as if she was a servant. Nonsense! What an ideal!

Jan. 25th.—I went to the music-room just at twilight, feeling in musical mood. Finding it deserted, as I expected, I sat down at the harp and sang—sang as I never sing before any one, with my whole heart in my voice. After a number of soft Italian airs, I began "Du mein seel." Before I had finished, I was startled by a heavy sigh, almost a sob, as if it burst forth against the will of the giver. Rising, I saw in one of the deep embrasures, half hidden by the curtains, the Hon. Mr. H.—, his head bowed in his hands, and his frame fairly shaken with emotion. I was actually frightened, to see this strong, stern man so utterly overcome, apparently by grief. I stood irresolute a moment, feeling I ought to go, yet irresistibly impelled to stay. It was but a brief space, I suppose, but it seemed an eternity to me, when he raised his head, his face pale as marble, but calm and still once more, and said:

"Forgive me, pray, Miss Glyndon. I did not think it in the power of human being to stir my soul, as your sweet voice has this hour. It really seemed as if a voice from heaven was speaking to my heart, as you sang. Ah! could you know all the memories that rushed over me, as you breathed that 'Du mein seel'? You look interested, sympathetic. Shall I speak? I have longed more than once to do so."

I hesitated, for there was a look in his eyes, a tone in his voice that I had never seen or heard there before, or ever thought to see or hear from this calm, stately senator, so much my senior. Finally, I took the seat he offered, and listened:

"Miss Glyndon you have known what it is to be an orphan, and feel lonely and friendless as any one who is deprived of near family ties must feel, even if surrounded by the kindest of friends—so you can understand my early years, without my pausing to dilate thereupon. You must know that the very absence of all these natural outlets of affection seems to swell the fountain of love; to be overflowing, when it meets some one upon whom to pour its waters. If you have known or not, I cannot say, (and he looked keenly at me,) what it is to lavish all this concentrated affection upon one object, if you have, you can feel better than I can express, how I loved six years ago. You can understand how I suffered when God felt her too pure and good for this earth, and took her to the angels, to whom she seemed akin. Miss Glyndon, from that day until now I have never seen a woman I wished to take—not her place in my heart, for none could do that—but a place as dear and holy, and a love as much stronger and deeper, as the man's stronger than the boy's, as the affection of maturity is deeper than the dream of early youth! Miss Glyndon, will you accept that place? will you take this love? Or must I once more feel my whole hope of happiness in life scattered; and forever? FOREVER! For a man loves but once, as I love you. The by-paasion, though pure and true, is outgrown, as the man outgrows boyhood; but one of my years can love but once, as I love you—LOVE YOU!"

The force of those two simple words! And the look in those deep, gray eyes! Everything grew dark before me. For the first time in my whole life, I felt myself loved as I would be. My whole heart went out to him. I longed to clasp my arms about his neck, and tell him that I did love him, in every fond word lips could coin. I forgot ambition, pride, self—I only loved. I suppose I must have fainted, for I was utterly unconscious of going there, but I found myself lying on the sofa, on the opposite side of the room from where we had been sitting, and saw his pale face of alarm, and heard, half-wakingly, he murmured: "She too, my God, she too, can you spare me none?" The depth of agony in that despairing cry, I shall never forget. Oh! I pray (I can pray now) that God will spare me to him, and make me worthy of him. As soon as I could speak, I tried to assure him I was well and need not trouble him, for he was fainting, and applying his vinaigrette with all the care and tenderness I had so often seen him manifest toward Mrs. Minton. "Thank God!" he whispered, "thank

God, I have you still! But are you, are you indeed mine, my own forever?" I could but place my two hands in his, and let him read in my eyes how wholly and entirely I was his, now and forever. I vow here, never, NEVER, in this world or the next, to let another call me wife! Oh! how fondly, how tenderly he soothed me into composure. How sweet to feel such entire trust—to no longer have to care for myself. For I know how he will ever think care of me a pleasure. How little I dreamed last night that this great joy was to come to me. Was it last night I wrote of being the wife of the Earl? How could, how could I think so? Did I really feel I would be; or was I trying to deceive myself and you, silent confidant?—trying to cheat myself into the belief I did not care for one I feared cared nothing for me? I'm afraid pride was cheating, dear book, *Propos*, I shall have another friend now to tell everything to, beside you of the silent lips. Will you care if I desert you? I could not bear to hurt even a book to-night, I am so full of love and happiness. My heart is chanting a *Te Deum*, indeed! He drew from his finger that ring, of which I already knew the history from Mrs. Minton. It is a massive antique ring, a circle of rose diamonds surrounding the most magnificent opal I ever beheld; indeed, there is said to be but one more precious in the known world, and that is in the museum at Vienna, and valued at more than one hundred thousand pounds. This opal, with its lustrous, ever-changing rainbow hues, was brought from France, by Mr. H.—'s Huguenot ancestry, (on his mother's side,) and had for centuries before—for ten generations, I think it was—descended from mother to son, from mother to son. It has an inscription in Hebrew, "Mizpah"; which single word means, "The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent from each other." I can imagine that prayer is ever in a mother's heart, when her son is absent from her. As Mr. H.—placed the ring upon my finger, he said, "This is the first time that ring has left me since my dying mother placed it on the largest finger of my boy-hand, (when now it scarce fits the smallest finger), and bade me vow that never should it leave me, save for my wife, in turn, to place upon her son's finger. I was but a boy of twenty when I loved Alice, and had, I knew, no legal right to engage myself formally, and before the time came for that power, she had gone where I could not follow. So it is that you are the first to wear my ring—the first to hear me say 'my wife!'" His voice sank into a whisper of intense power as he uttered those words, and I felt him tremble from head to foot as he took me in his arms and gave me his first kiss. It fairly frightened me, to see the depth and strength of his affection. If I should fail to fulfill his conception of what his wife should be! I will not think of it! Nothing can separate us! For what says the tradition of the ring, which he repeated as he placed it on my hand to-night, "Never has woman proved false or man unworthy who has worn this ring as the bond of love." Again I vow, never, here or hereafter, shall another call me wife!

Feb. 18th.—The days go by like a dream. I wake mornings with the thought, "No longer alone in the wide world, and I sleep at night only to dream of him. Him! my prince! my hero! my knight! my all that is noble and pure and good. I can say so here, although I am shy enough of speech or caress with him. He said to day, 'Were it not for those truthful eyes, dear one, I should almost doubt that you love me at all. Why, you shun me as if I were a great ogre ready to devour my beautiful princess.' Yes, I am afraid, actually afraid to trust myself much with him for fear this great, passionate love should burst the womanly bonds of pride and reserve, and show him too plainly how much, how very much I love him!"

I have read that man ever prizes most what he has always a little doubt of possessing. Mrs. Minton shook her head as I gave this as a reason for my reticence, when she chided me for my manner to Robert (I can call him so here, Robert, the sweetest of all names to me!) "It must be a very low type of manhood that could feel less affection because he knew he was loved wholly and entirely. I believe, dear, that perfect confidence is necessary to perfect love. With Robert I know it is so. The slightest distrust ever aroused his pride to an inordinate extent; the slightest suspicion that he loved or trusted unworthily, excited him, even in childhood, almost to madness. Let me tell you a little incident of his early years. It was soon after he came to my father's, a child of seven or eight years perhaps, but precocious in his feelings, as most only children are. He had one boy-friend, three years his senior; he loved this friend with all that fervor which is common in early friendships of either boys or girls—a love that seems a type of that which is to be felt in after life for one of the opposite sex, as devoted, as self-sacrificing, and more pure, because entirely free from selfish passion. This friend was utterly beneath Robert in principle and honesty. He tried to win his liking for the sake of the advantage a wealthy friend was to him. Young as he was, he showed as much art and willingness as a man. In looking back in after years, when I knew to what a sad end this boy had come in manhood, I thought how truly 'the child is father of the man.' Well, by chance Robert and I overheard this boy one day repeating to a companion how he 'came it over that milk-sop Bob' I see even now the face of utter incredulity and then of horror and loathing, as his ears gave testimony that it really was his friend who spoke. Although no coward, Robert did not go on and face his detractor; he just turned, went into the house and to his room, locked himself in, and it was hours before even my entreaties (although I was his favorite of the household) could induce him to admit me. Then when I wished to comfort him he just put up his little hands, saying, 'Do not speak of it! it is over; I have buried it!' He had indeed buried his friendship, but the shadow

of its grave hung over him for months. It was then he first grew so fond of me, and afterwards when, as you know, the sorrow of his youth came, had it not been for his trust in me, the power which my affection gave me over him, I verily believe he would have thrown life away entirely, become utterly depraved or destroyed himself!"

"Tell me about it, Mrs. Minton," I pleaded. "I long to know, but I cannot bear to pain him by the recital."

"There is not much to tell. Alice was a cousin of mine, five years my junior. When she was sixteen and Robert nineteen, she came to visit us. She was a lovely creature, beautiful as a dream; soft, loving, brown eyes, golden hair, and a complexion to which the fatal consumption of our family added an additional brilliancy. It was a brief dream of happiness, and then despair as dark as the delirium of joy had been bright. Robert loved her, as he does everything in this world, with his whole heart and soul. He never is lukewarm in anything. He is hot or cold in his feelings, his ambitions, his desires. What, with his natural strength and power of devotion, what would become of him if you were lost to him I dare not imagine! Oh, my dear sister, let me beg of you to endure all things rather than let him part from you. I foresee it will not always be sunshine between you, for you are both proud, both passionate, both unyielding. I may have gone by that time when my influence can have no power over either of you. I, who love him next to my husband and child, may be helpless to comfort him in his hour of need. Listen to me, Regina, and let my words ever sound in your ears: If you let aught but death part you and him you will be responsible for a lost soul!"

I trembled from head to foot at the solemnity of her words and manner. I thought as I never had before of the responsibility I had taken upon myself; the responsibility not only of his happiness here on earth, but perhaps of his soul's happiness through eternity. My God! what a fearful idea!

March 1st.—The letter from my guardian, Sir James Lely, arrived to-day. He objects to any positive engagement between Mr. H.—and myself. I suspect Lady Seton has influenced him in her letter announcing my wishes, for why should he who has never taken any interest save in the moneyed part of my affairs have any objection to my pleasing myself now, when a year hence I shall have a legal right to do as I choose? Lady Seton cannot easily relinquish her favorite project of uniting the young Earl and myself. Although not openly opposing Mr. H.—'s attention, she is ever saying little sarcastic things about "first love," "girlish fancies," and the like. I am not so young as not to know my own mind, I think. I am twenty, and Mrs. Minton laughingly says, "In America a girl who passes her *teen* unmarried is called an old maid." Here in England we do not consider a girl really a woman until she is twenty-five. We are not allowed to "come out" as soon as American girls, and we do not fade as early, Mrs. Minton says. I would like never to grow old; to always stay young and beautiful. "My queen-beauty," Robert calls me. It is so lonely! the house seems so deserted since he has gone! Madame Leroy left some weeks since, but Mrs. Minton, Robert and dear little Minnie only went yesterday. We shall not go up to London until the last of April. We go on a little excursion, all of us, to the Isle of Wight next week. If Robert instead of "My Lord" were only to be our escort!

"How shall I pass the weary hours?" "That must be counted ere I see thy face?" "How shall I charm the interval that lowers?" "Between this time and that sweet time of grace?"

May 10th.—It is the gayest, most brilliant of seasons! Last year I was too new to everything to fully enjoy the whirl of society. Now I better understand my own advantages, and make the most of them. The Queen herself admitted, when the Prince Consort called her attention to me, that I was the belle of "The Drawing-Room." I could not help blushing as the Earl upon whose arm I was leaning as we heard the Queen's remark bent over me and whispered meaningly,

"I think the Queen of the realm is but just in awarding the palm to the 'Queen of Beauty!'"

I saw Robert's eyes fastened on my face, and I but blushed the more beneath his gaze, for I knew I ought to allow no one to speak in such a tone as he himself. But what can I do? If Sir James refuses his sanction, I cannot make my betrothal public until next year. I mean to do so then—indeed I do! But it is not pleasant to have Mr. H.—so exacting of every look and word! He has no right yet to demand so much. Lady Seton says it is not "comme il faut" for me to be with him so much. And since Mrs. Minton went with her sister to Paris, I have not seen him as often as (I confess here, but would not for the world have him think so!) I wish. I love him so dearly as ever, but I cannot submit to any one's dictation. If you want me, Mr. H.—, you must take me as you find me, not expect me in everything to yield to you, to make myself over into a new being which is your ideal of what a woman should be. There are enough, sir, that would willingly take me as I am, faults and all!

May 12th.—Oh, how could I write the preceding page? What is the admiration of others in comparison with the whole-souled devotion of my beloved Robert? Ah, how my conscience smote me when he prayed me last night to love him, and be patient with him. "Remember, darling, you are my all. If I lose you, I lose every hope of my life, all joy of my existence. Wonder not, then, that I guard my treasure so jealously; that I live day and night in constant dread that something may happen to make me lose it. Oh that you were mine beyond the possibility of separation—that next year were but come!"

I wish so to! I feel sometimes a great dread of—

I had such a dream last night! It does not seem like a dream, it was so vivid, so real. I can

scarcely believe, even now, that I did not behold it. We were on a ship, Robert and I, crowded with people, and yet they did not seem human beings like ourselves, for they were transparent, so that I could read every thought of their minds. Their whole attention seemed concentrated on us; and then I saw that the bright and beautiful ones were trying to unite us, and that the dark and unlovely ones were wrangling, and striving to see which could the soonest separate us; and gradually there arose a mist, light and palpable at first, but it grew denser and denser, and enveloped us both, until I saw Robert slowly disappearing from my view. I tried to call out and bring him back, but these bad beings shouted and laughed me to scorn, and drowned my cries, and further and further Robert went, clothed in the dense mist, and I was powerless to call him back, and I awoke shrieking in agony, "I have lost him! I have lost him forever!"

June 17th.—A letter from dear Mrs. Minton informs me that her husband is in Paris, and they will sail for America from there, without coming to London. I am so sorry! I fear we shall never meet again, her health is so uncertain. She writes very lovingly, very gratefully for what she calls my "great kindness and devoted attentions during her illness." As if what little I could do for her could compare with what she did for me—opening my eyes to a knowledge of something higher and better than an existence of mere selfish pleasure; teaching me faith and trust in a Divine Father, and hope for the future. Oh, dear sister of my heart, I wish I could ever have your pure influence to aid me. I am weak, and easily led astray by the temptations of the world and my own passions. I have but little self-control yet. The habits of a lifetime are not easily overcome, and in spite of good resolves I am far from meek or humble or unselfish yet. I cannot brook control.

Sept. 15th.—I must be dreaming, surely. He did not say "Good-bye forever"? Oh no! no! It is but one of my bad dreams, which have so frequently troubled me lately. Yet I seem to be sitting here writing. How real it all seems! and to be thinking in my dream that I am dreaming! How strange! Why can I not waken? My head—oh my head! Is it my head? No; it was my heart he struck! "Good-bye! good-bye forever!" Surely I heard those words. My head—oh my head! Why can I not waken? It is growing dark—dark—dark!

[To be continued.]

Children's Department.

BY MRS. LOVE M. WILLIS.

Address care of Dr. F. L. H. Willis, Post-office box 39, Station D, New York City.

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

(Original.)

NELA HASTINGS.

CHAP. XIII.—NEW EXPERIENCES.

The summer passed with Nela amid so much excitement, frivolity and gaiety that her senses seemed bewildered. Even her memories seemed shadowed by the intensity of her life. When weary or entangled in the net-work of envy, jealousy and rivalry, she turned to her grandmother and the dear old home among the hills and resolved to send immediately some loving message thither; but new excitements and pleasures claimed her time. She was not heartless or unfaithful, but simply allowed herself to be absorbed by the new life about her.

But in the quiet life of Aunt Prue there was no excitement and but little change. The days brought their beauty and the nights their peace. The blooming of some flowers, a gorgeous sunset, the moon with its silver line of grace, the coming in of some old neighbor, these were all the excitements that came to Aunt Prue; for even the arrival of the old stage-coach had ceased to enliven her days, for now it brought no long, loving letters, and there was no hope rolling in with its rumbling wheels.

But was Aunt Prue sad and distressed? No; her faith triumphed over all. She looked paler than she used, and the lines on her face deepened, and her eyes did not open with that intensity of life that shows a heart of gladness behind the curtains. But she went about her work in the old, earnest way. She felt nothing undone that ought to be done. She planned pleasant surprises for Rosa, and brought no gloom to her young life; but it was easy to see that the warm glow that encircled her life was gone; the sunlight had faded out of her habitation. With the heart of faith she still prayed, but it was never that Nela might come back to her, or that her life be brightened by some new hope, but only that Nela be kept from all harm, and gain wisdom by every experience.

The bright, joyous Christmas time had come, and Nela, with her purse well filled, walked in and out of the brilliant shops to find the most expensive and rare gifts as offerings to those that pelted her. In coming from one shop two poor, half-clad children stretched out their hands to her, asking a little pittance. If her mother had been with her she would have said:

"Oh, child, you should never give to beggars. Your father gives a large sum in charity, and it is all disposed of without any trouble of ours. Never go near beggars, my dear; they are great nuisances!"

But her mother was not there, and into the eye of the little girl came so bright a sparkle, as Nela looked kindly at her, that she thought of all the bright things in the old country-home. She thought of the life with Lucy, and their merry plays together, and the Christmas Eves when they used to hang up their stockings, and of the nuts and candy that they thought such a feast. She did not seem surprised when the little girl said her name was Lucy.

"Would you like some candy or some shoes?" said Nela.

"I think," said little Lucy, "I think I'd better have shoes if they are to be new ones."

"And I'll take candy," said the boy, stamping his feet as if they were quite warm enough in their worn, tattered coverings.

"Shoes and candy!" said Nela, laughing, "and what say you to a hat and some gingerbread?"

"Pretty well," said the boy, "we're fond of gingerbread."

Nela forgot her own purchases and hurried on with the children into one store and another, until she had loaded them up with packages of all kinds and sizes. It was a new experience to her—this realization that anybody in the whole city could want anything. She had lived such a life of indulgence, and had seen every one able to gratify every wish, that she fancied the city was an Eldorado where all found their wishes answered. She was not senseless, but simply thoughtless.

"But, little ones, you can't get home with all these bundles; there you go tumbling down now!"

said Nela to the little girl. "I see I must go home with you. Where do you live?"

"Oh, round here," said the boy, feeling quite important in his new office of guide. "Come on. Won't mother be jolly?"

Nela followed after the little ones, thinking only of finding some less comfortable home than her own. She turned as the children turned, and her eyes looked down one of those desolate streets—desolate not in inhabitants, but dreary because no human pity seems ever to have sent one gleam of light through them. She thought herself in a dream, and walked on more in a maze of wonder than of thought to what she was going.

Every form of human misery seemed at once to loom up before her like some vision of terror. Women shivering with cold; men with the stupid leer of intoxication; children skulking away in by-places, or trying to find a little fun in the cold and filthy streets; shops with the poorest and meanest of wares; carts, wagons and men quarrelling about the right of passage; horrid lanes leading away to some dreadful darkness she dared not look to; cellars from which came strange sounds; yards in which swung grimed clothes—all this and much more Nela looked at, as one looks at some unpleasant picture.

It did not occur to her to turn back. Some power seemed dragging her on, and the little children never looked around that they did not see the "fine lady" close by, with her eye on fire with a light never there before.

She followed up some old stairs—one, two, three flights—to a room into which no sunshine ever came, and whose grey walls, battered and disfigured, threw a dull, leaden light on everything there. A broken stove, a scanty bed, two worn chairs, that was all—except the shadow that sat on the side of the bed, holding a little puny baby. No smile came over the woman's face, but only a frightened look, as if some new terror might have come in with those little steps. Nela spoke no word, asked no questions. A veil of blackness seemed to come over her eyes, and her tongue seemed paralyzed. She put down the bundles she had helped the children bring, laid her purse down on the table and hurried out. She stopped for nothing, for a kind of faintness came over her—a ghly, sick sense she had never known before. She had not gone far before little steps came after her, hurrying over the walk.

"Here's your purse, lady, and mother thanks you for the things."

"It is yours—all yours. I don't want it. I can't touch it again. I don't know how I kept it a day, when you needed it so. There, run back!" and Nela hurried on, as if running from some pursuing evil.

She went back past the gay shops, over the familiar places, but nothing seized her eye. She wanted to get rid of the great terror that had come to her too suddenly.

She went to her room and locked herself in. She sat down in her elegant easy chair and looked about her. She looked at the elegance as she had not looked at it since the first of her coming. Everything seemed to mock her. There flashed back to her from picture and drapery lights so intense that they seemed to enter her brain.

Nela had not been well for weeks, and her nerves were in a condition to be readily acted upon. If she had been the same well-balanced girl that lived with Aunt Prue, she would have simply said: "It is very strange that I was so stupid as not to have known that there were poor suffering people in a city like this; and she would have set herself to work to plan some method of relieving them. But she would not have gained the great spiritual lesson that awaited her.

"They have cheated me, they have cheated me," she said. "They all cheat me. What did they show me all these pretty things first for, and leave all that horrid picture till the last? Nobody loves me that cheats me. Where's papa and ma? I'll tell them so. I'll not stay here any more. I'll go back to the little chamber and to the dear grandma."

These words calmed Nela, as a cradle song calms a crying baby. Sweet visions of her old life came back to her. She smiled as she saw the dear old places, and looked into the kindly eyes of Mr. Graves, and sat down with Tony to eat nuts and apples.

She was soothed, and stopped her nervous, restless turning, and looked at a beautiful picture of the Madonna, that she had wished to have hung in her room when she first came, because it had Lucy's eyes. She looked at it, in its calm beauty, until a soft shadow seemed to come over it, and her eyes lost their vision of external things. But other lights and figures opened before her. There came trooping through the room crowds of people, and her eyes followed their going.

She saw standing upon a star, whose gleaming was brighter than that of the sun, and yet dazzled not, a being so full of benevolent love, that every motion seemed a blessing. Her room had become as wide as the universe, and she looked from the crowds that passed by her picture out into measureless spaces.

But as these troops of people passed on, she saw them bend before the radiant being, and he placed upon each a burden. They seemed of very nearly equal weight when they first received them, but as they passed along, the burden of some grew so large and heavy that they were weighed down almost to the ground, while others seemed to lift their burden so lightly that it hardly seemed a care to bear it.

As she was wondering about it, she saw herself go up to take her burden, and she looked at it carefully. It was marked, "The burden of a year." She took it cheerfully, but it soon began to weigh her down. The burden seemed transparent to her, so that she could see of what it consisted. All the fine dresses, the shawls, the jewelry, the cards of invitation, the ceremony of calls and parties, seemed represented there. All the life that she had been leading, with its excitements and frivolities, seemed placed in her burden. She saw herself worn and weary, as she bore it. Her step lost its elasticity, her face grew pale and her hands trembled. "How strange," she thought, "that what looked so charming should be only a pack for one's back—a burden hard to bear; but what can I do? The burden was given to me."

As quick as thought she saw herself before the radiant being, who looked at her with the same benign look of love and pity that beamed from his face as he placed the burden on her.

"Dear ye one another's burdens," he said. "See all these that bear the burdens of poverty?" And she saw little Lucy's mother, and thousands besides weighed down with the burdens of poverty. "Take from your heavy weight and give to these, and their burdens will be so light that they will not know that they bear them."

"But why must we have all these burdens, we that know so little, and suffer so much?" said Nela.

"You must learn the divine law of love, and to become like the Father of all. The burdens given you to bear would be like a cloud in lightness if you would learn to give what oppresses you to those who need."

Again Nela looked and saw the crowds sweep

by, and she wondered as the rich carried their houses, their furniture, their fashion and pride, and were rendered almost useless by the great weight that oppressed them; while the poor were wearied by their own as great burdens, that a little wealth would lighten.

And over all the crowd looked that eye of pitying love, and into all hearts were uttered the words, "Bear ye one another's burdens." Nela sat as in a dream, until roused by her father at the door. She let him in, and told him all her experience.

"You did very right, my child; but then you know the Lord takes care of us all, and we can't regulate things if we try. You look pale and tired; I'll get tickets to the theatre to-night, and you shall forget all you have seen."

But Nela would not go, and told her mother of all that had occurred.

"How could you do so silly a thing? Of course there are a plenty of poor beggars, but what have they to do with us, or we with them? You shall not go out again alone. I am astonished at you; what would Robert have said to have met you among those horrid people?"

If Nela could have had her own way, and have shared her burdens according to her desire, her nerves would have been quieted by the peace of her heart; but she met opposition in every word she uttered. She was worn down by a year's unnatural life; and it was no wonder that she awakened Christmas morning with a wild headache and burning fever, which soon resulted in delirium. She talked of the poor, weary, suffering ones, bearing their burden, which no one would lift. She called for her grandmother, and for Tony; but no rest came for her, and no one soothed her.

"How very strange," said her mother, "that she should have gone into that horrid place; no doubt she took some disease there. I always said it was dangerous. But I'll get the best nurse to be found for Nela. It is not at all best that we should be exposed by taking care of her."

And so Nela was left in the hands of strangers, and moaned and struggled with some fearful terror that seemed ever before.

[To be continued.]

A TRUE STORY.

Far down among the pine forests of Maine, lived a little brown maiden in her first school-days. A loving, laughing, springing little creature, in whose glorious dark eyes you might gaze forever and fathom not their depths. She was the youngest of them all—those romping, merry schoolgirls—and the pet of all, save one, and she was the oldest scholar. Little Eliza had many companions and friends of her own age, yet she looked up to this oldest girl, who was so regal and tall, of so much importance, with meek reverence and yearning affection, and longed for her friendship as she had never longed before for anything in the world. But this great girl took no notice of the child whose dark eyes could only look her love.

At last Eliza could bear this indifference no longer; she was emboldened to appear before the mighty girl who knew so much and looked so fine, and asked her if she would please to like her a little, "just a little." Then did this great girl make answer that she was very fond of wood sorrel, and if the child would trudge to the woods and bring her an ample supply, she would try to like her.

Forth in the blazing sun, at noonday, the innocent little one sped her lonely way, in search of the herb which was to propitiate her tyrant.

How she trudged and toiled in the heat, her little heart glowing with the thought of the sweet recompense she was to receive. And now Eliza finds the sorrel, and filling her apron with it, her feet aching with their hard and weary walk, she stands again before her schoolmate, and presents her offering. The fresh green leaves, with acid taste, and looking so cool and crisp, are poured in rich profusion upon the schoolgirl's desk, by the weary child, who waits with eager looks for her reward.

With slow indifference this lover of wood sorrel gathered up her prize, and turning to little Eliza, told her coldly that she did not like her! Stung with disappointed affection, the child burst into an agony of passionate tears, and this first short lesson of "the world's ways" sank deep into her young heart.

The days went by, and this lesson was never forgotten; for again and again in her journey through life, was she reminded of it. But sweeter lessons there were for her to learn of friendship that was not to be bought nor sold, but freely given and freely taken—of love that was to bless her while living, and fall not when she had adieu to earth, to enter into the joys of heaven.

When the ground was covered with snow, and the air was chilly cold, and the raindrops fell like tears of sorrow, we laid little Eliza in her narrow bed. The splendid eyes, with their deep mysteries, closed on the love and hate, joys and sorrows of the world, to open where there is no sorrow and no sin, but only the love of God. The little pale hand we saw clasping earth's frail flowers, now holds the flowers of immortal bloom. The weary feet have ceased their wandering through the world's rough and stormy way, to roam the beautiful gardens and pleasant fields of the bright "Summer-Land." Her pure soul ever craved the love of sympathizing hearts, and she firmly believed that she would meet in the immortal life happy and kindred spirits, with whom she would enjoy the heaven of congenial souls.

Boston, Mass.

Mrs. Laura Cuppy.

This gifted lady and most successful lecturer on Spiritualism, having completed her arrangements to remove for a time from San Francisco, where she has been laboring with remarkable effect, and to take the field in Sacramento, she preached her farewell discourse in the former city to a crowded assembly of believers and inquirers. The occasion was of great interest, and called forth an immediate expression of the sentiment of the congregation in the following testimonial, offered by Mr. W. M. Rider, which was adopted without a dissenting voice:

"To our Friend and Sister, Laura Cuppy: As your labors among us as a lecturer on the principles of the Spiritual Philosophy have for a time drawn to a close, we desire publicly to express to you our earnest and sincere regret at your departure, and at the same time to convey to you (though inadequately) our sense of the vast benefits we have derived from your teachings, and of your great value as an advocate of our mutual faith. While Spiritualism has advanced with rapid strides in California, it has naturally met with many opponents and detractors; and in all cases in which you have been called upon to vindicate our principles, not only ourselves, but even the enemies of the philosophy for which you have so nobly struggled, have been struck with admiration at the forbearance, kindness and charity with which you have maintained your convictions, and at the masterly manner in which you have always treated every subject brought under your consideration. We feel that the glorious truths of Spiritualism possess a most earnest and enlightened advocate, and that you are admirably calculated, by your temperance and

intellectual capacity, to impress those truths upon the minds of such of your hearers as will listen to you in the spirit of impartial justice. We are assured that your teachings during the coming winter at Sacramento will be productive of the highest good; and in bidding you a temporary farewell, and assuring you of the warmest welcome on our part when you shall return to minister to your friends in this city, we most heartily pray that the benign influences of the angel-world may be ever about your path, and continue to give you the purest and most perfect help in your noble and holy mission."

Original Essays.

WHAT IS THOUGHT?

BY L. M. ROSE.

Before proceeding, I will explain my manner of using the words thought and idea, which by many are used indiscriminately; for I find that often we do not differ so much in ideas as we do in the use of words.

To illustrate: a wooden machine is made of wood, but it is not because it is wood that it is the machine, but because of the combination of the wood that constitutes the machine.

Thought is the material from which ideas are formed. Thought is the wood, idea or combination of ideas the machine, and language is the means by which we describe our ideas to others.

All Nature is the language of God's ideas, collectively, as a unit, infinite, incomprehensible. Individually and relatively to man, always open to his research, and as truthful to him as he is to himself.

As we can only arrive at truth through relative evidences and correspondences, it becomes necessary, when we take up a subject of Nature, to examine corresponding subjects or parts.

Wherever there is an individuality, an organization, an existence, there must be a source from which that is drawn.

When we turn our attention to the vegetable kingdom, we see organization taking place in endless variety; but the source and the supply, and the law by which it takes place, is universal and unchangeable. If we continue our research to the animal kingdom, we find the same general principles corresponding. Examining man, the highest organization, we find the same truths demonstrated. When we examine him intellectually, we find the same principle of growth that is presented in him physically, and in all that precedes him.

Returning to the vegetable, we find the tree absorbing from the earth and from the atmosphere such particles of matter as are adapted to its wants, its surroundings and condition controlling its ability to receive. If we examine the animal kingdom, the same principle is manifested, varied only in accretion, and man in his greatest perfection grows only by the same law; and as he grows intellectually as a continuation of the same individuality, it must follow by the same law of growth, manifested throughout all corresponding Nature in its preceding parts, for God's laws are universal and unchangeable. It is the same law that gives to the queen rose its red, and to the modest violet its blue. One of the infinitudes of God's laws, is the endless variety in which they present their operations.

Mind, spirit or soul is organized, individualized matter, and ideas are but parts of that organization by which it is constantly growing, by absorption from the atmosphere of thought, matter that surrounds us, our conditions and surroundings controlling our ability to receive.

The infinitude of God's love and wisdom is not only open, but waiting for the opportunity to bless us, as fast as we have the desire and the condition and ability to receive. We can only be prepared to receive greater blessings by a proper use of those we already enjoy.

INKLINGS OF MORAL TRUTH.

ARTICLE FIVE.

BY GEORGE STEARNS.

The primitive meaning of the word *right* was *straight*; and in this sense it is still used in geometry, where a *right line* and a *straight line* are synonymous terms. Its root is doubtless the Latin *rectus*; for *right angle* and *rectangle* are also synonymous. *Rectitude* and *direct* are of the same derivation, the former signifying *rightness* and the latter *straight to*, or *leading to*, an implied desideratum; which is the precise literal force of the word *right*, when employed *adjectively*. Rational beings never act without a purpose, but always in view of some object to be gained by action; and when their actions are fitted to the end proposed, so as to insure success, the word *right* expresses that fitness. As a noun, it represents the *moral straight line*, which resembles the mathematical as being the shortest distance between two points; those of seeking and finding, or of consciousness and goodness.

When we study the motives of mankind, and search the grounds of human action, we find that all the various proximate ends for which we toil and strive are but secondary and subsidiary to a supreme end. It is not for money that men labor and merchandise and speculate, so much as for the use of it. They dig for gold because that will purchase the means of enjoyment. We study, we explore Nature, not for knowledge merely, but for the gratification of knowing, and for remote utilities of intelligence. The votary of fame regards less the bubble reputation than the ideal felicity which expands it. We travel, seek society, converse, trade, interchange compliments and pre-ent, and adopt a thousand devices for social intercourse, not for sake of these exercises, but for the sympathetic and ulterior pleasures which they either afford or promise the means of inciting. The Christian prays and the Infidel scoffs, the epicure feasts and the ascetic fasts, the wag jests and the sage thinks, Benevolence gives and Acquisitiveness hoards, Genius paints and so does Vanity, all for a sentiment of what they partially realize. I confess that I am moved to write these thoughts by the same general motive—partly by anticipation of the casual delight which I sometimes experience in my literary performances, but more especially by an earnest desire to help others to a successful pursuit of *Happiness*, which appears to be the sole incentive to action—the supreme end of all being and doing.

But here I am interrupted by the Banner's western editor, who unconsciously breaks into my discourse and denounces this fundamental part of my doctrine as rashly uttered by the whimsical muse of Pope. Quoting the verse, "Oh Happiness! our being's end and aim," he rephrases it thus:

"More false theology could not well be crowded into a single line of poetry. Our being has of itself the quality of endlessness, and to write or talk of the end of that which is absolutely endless, is absolutely absurd. And, then, to make happiness the aim of our being, is the quintessence of selfishness. The silly serpent's purpose is quite as high, when crawling from his wintry den to bask in the first sunbeams of March."

Now, be it observed that it is not the poet, nor

yet his verse, or even its verification, that is here attacked, but a sentiment only; and that not of Pope alone, but of all mankind; as I presume with reason; which sentiment I am bound to defend, in consideration of having made it an essential rudiment of my ethical theory. Therefore let me criticize the critic, who tells me some things which I might never have thought of without the suggestive agency of his facile pen. I certainly should not have noticed any implication of *theology* in the poet's line, and am not rid of the presumption yet, that more about God, either true or false, might be compressed into some other combination of ten syllables. Besides, what is of more consequence, I did not know, until this acting sophist told me (I say acting, because such trifling is not in keeping with his usual port and standing as a writer), that the word *end* has but one meaning, and that equivalent to *termination* or *extinction*. I supposed it meant also *object*, *purpose* and *use*; and I am still of the opinion that Pope wished to be understood as saying, not that Happiness is the extinction of our being, but the human use according to the divine purpose thereof—that there is no other good for which a rational being would live. Is there any "absurdity" in this conception? Nay, is any other conception as to the correlative will of God and wish of man possible? If not—if Happiness is the perpetual end of our being as here explained (and you have inadvertently admitted that it is, as will appear in the sequel), then why disparage the human aim to realize it? Ah, I see why. It is because you unwittingly minify and degrade the thought of *Happiness*, by interchanging this word of excellent import with that which should be appropriate to a form of simple gratification; as in your instance of a snake basking in vernal sunshine. It is because, if you have ever read, you must have forgotten, my definition of the former word as comprehending the *contentment* or *gratification* of all the congenial wants of human nature. Is this no better object of aspiration than partial indulgence? no better than to pander to some aggressive or exclusive habit, or any single appetite, however harmless? If you had not lost sight of this distinction, you would not have said that "no true man seeks Happiness," when you only meant that the best human characters aspire to something nobler than reptiles can appreciate. I know this is your thought, because you immediately add, "He seeks the right, the just, the true." Yes; but it is a pity that one should be always seeking without finding, for lack of knowing what that is which is so vaguely emphasized. What is the right? That is the question without answering which all your homilies are good for nothing. I can only infer your notion of it from your consecutive remark, that "the divinest Happiness results from self-denial and a thorough consecration of all the powers of body and soul to the good of humanity." Admitted—that in substance, if not more. Doubtless all ought to work together, somehow, for the good of each other; and this, not without a reason, but because "the divinest Happiness" is to be found in no other way. Thus it appears that you unwittingly cherish the very sentiment you affect to discard, and your quarrel with its advocates is altogether verbal and irrational. Happiness is the end and aim of our being, after all disputation is over. There is no "good of humanity" which does not savor of this, and no rational incentive to Righteousness but the conception of its instrumentality as the method of Happiness.

Hudson, Mass., December, 1867.

THE NEW CHURCH AND SPIRITUALISM.

BY A SWEDENBORGIAN MINISTER.

It is more than thirty-five years since I commenced an acquaintance with the writings of Swedenborg. As to the presence and reality of the spiritual world, man's resurrection immediately after death, the presence of spiritual beings, and that these beings were once persons in the external body, that they enter the spiritual world in the same moral and intellectual condition in which they leave this, that they are still characterized by their ruling loves—these and other things may be mentioned as taught by Swedenborg, and the same by Spiritualists. But it is well known that those technically called Swedenborgians stand aloof from those who are technically called Spiritualists, because of two or three points of doctrine in which they differ. It surely need not be a matter of surprise that New Churchmen should be slow to affiliate with Spiritualists, when it is considered that accounts from the other side of the curtain represent persons as retaining their peculiar views. Thus, in the Banner of Light, Channing has been represented as teaching as he did on this side; Swedenborg as teaching the same as here, and referring to his "Arcana" as here; and the amiable Prof. Bush as declaring that he is as much of a New Churchman as ever. Yet I have been called a Spiritualist. The name is not revolting to me.

It has been said that when a person is accused of a crime or misdemeanor, that accusation may lead him to be guilty of the very thing of which he is accused. I do not mean now to say that it is a crime or misdemeanor to be a Spiritualist, but only that finding myself thus accused may have driven me further in that direction than I otherwise should have been. I do not know that I have given up any of the essential doctrines taught by Swedenborg. But I understand some things quite differently from what I formerly did, and some things in which Spiritualists agree seem to me very beautiful and important truths, though no sect that I know of takes such ground.

The points to which I refer are the authority of truth itself, and freedom from all authoritarianism. What I see to be truth is *my truth*; what another sees to be truth is *his truth*. So Swedenborg says, what a man believes is *true to him*, and what a man loves, is good to him. We should be faithful to our own convictions of truth. Another point is the destiny of man, immortality, happiness, progression. I have understood Swedenborg as teaching that the condition of the worst would be better than annihilation; yet not an upward progression to the angelic state. Some things that he has taught have seemed obscure to me. This I have generally thought and said. I read some things in the "harmonial" writings with pleasure. And when I read what does not seem to me as truth, I am not disturbed, for I realize my mental freedom, and that I am not desired to accept anything as truth until I understand it to be truth.

Dr. Arnold once lost all patience with a dull scholar, when the pupil looked up in his face and said: "Why do you speak so angrily, sir? Indeed I am doing the best I can." Years after the doctor used to tell the story to his children, and say: "I never felt so ashamed in my life. That look and that speech I have never forgotten."

Beautiful is youth's enthusiasm, and grand are its achievements; but the most solid and permanent good is done by the persistent strength and wide experience of middle ages.

Written for the Banner of Light.

LINES.

BY OLIVE SLATER.

Oh, may one spark of pure electric fire
Drop swift from angel hands,
And light within my stagnant soul the pyre
Of sloth and doubt, that stands
Like a dead up, barring from my sight
The blessed dawning of celestial light!

Quickly consume all worldliness, vain pride,
And self-indulgent dreams;
Unseal the sources of Love's tender tide,
Till all its singing streams
Call my roused spirit forth to labor long,
Delving for jewels in the mines of song.

Should one pure gem reward the tireless guest,
Set it with tender grace,
To soothe the mourning heart—to breathe of rest,
Till Hope unveils her face,
And lifts her radiant eyes, undimmed by fears,
O'er-swept with tender trust, and Joy's exultant tears.

Above the shadows of this sorrowing life,
Above its thorn-strewn road,
Her piercing vision, through the storm and strife,
Beholds the face of God;
And the worn hearts of his weary struggles cease,
Knowing he giveth his beloved peace.

In the green pastures of his boundless love,
Beneath overshadowing palms,
Beside still waters 'mid the olive groves
Diatling peaceful balms,
The shepherd takes the tired one to his breast;
At last he giveth his beloved rest!

Spiritual Phenomena.

"DARK CIRCLES," AND THE COMMITTEE OF INVESTIGATION.

EDITORS OF THE BANNER OF LIGHT—I have seen an old gentleman in Providence, R. I., by the name of Vose, who claims to have been a medium for spirit manifestations long before the advent of the "Rochester Knockings." He told me that some years ago some of his Orthodox friends sent a clergyman to converse with him, hoping that through his labors their relative might be reclaimed from the delusion into which he had (in their estimation) fallen. This clergyman very adroitly commenced his argument by saying to Mr. Vose that the belief in spirit communion was very beautiful, and that he should be glad to embrace it were it not that, as far as he could discover, all the spirits that communicate assume names or characters that do not belong to them, and are, in fact, lying spirits. Mr. Vose declined grappling with such a sweeping assertion, unless the clergyman would state some facts to substantiate it. His Reverence replied that he once went to a noted medium and called for the spirit of his deceased mother. A spirit, purporting to be hers, manifested, and, in answer to his query how long she had been in the spirit-world? replied, "Six years." "Ah!" said the artful inquirer, "I might possibly believe you, were it not that I left my mother at home, well and hearty, an hour ago!" Mr. Vose then remarked to his visitor that it fell became an investigator of the phenomena to accuse spirits indiscriminately of lying, who thus confessed that he commenced his search after truth with a lie in his own mouth and heart. As might be expected, the godly man after this gave up all hopes of reclaiming the incorrigible sinner, and left in disgust.

I am willing to confess that for some years after I commenced investigating the phenomena of spirit communion, my inquiries were conducted too much after the manner adopted by the clergyman alluded to. If I did not go to the medium with an absolute lie in my mouth or heart, I was in the habit of endeavoring to conceal my real object, in order to test the spirits' power by letting them detect my thought themselves, which they sometimes did, but in other instances shot wide of the mark, which failures, in my perplexity and disgust, I often ascribed to the duplicity of pretended "spirit mediums." After a time I gave up this method of investigating spiritual truth, and endeavored, whilst attending sances, to conduct my inquiries with spirits with the same candor that I would use in conversing with the most trusted friend in earth-life. Since then I have seldom had cause to doubt the fidelity of mediums, whilst the incidental tests my spirit friends have seemed to delight in furnishing (often when least expected), have greatly exceeded, both in number and conclusiveness, those that I obtained whilst pursuing the former mode of investigation.

Some years of experience and observation have led me to believe that there are enemies and defenders of spirit communion in the unseen as well as in the visible world, and that the prevalence of insincerity or capriciousness at sances, whether it exists in the mind of the medium or the circle, opens a door through some occult law for the approach of mischievous spirits, who are, under such conditions, sometimes enabled to produce manifestations that are apparently the result of conscious trickery on the part of the medium, while in reality the fault attaches by right to others present, who, in their ignorance of the laws that control spirit communion, often change the consequences of their own insincerity or capriciousness to the innocent and sensitive instrument of communication between the two worlds.

The following extract is from the report made by the Committee on Spiritual Phenomena, at the late Cleveland Convention of Spiritualists:

"Concerning physical manifestations, we beg leave to say we have sought for and embraced every opportunity to investigate and inform ourselves concerning them during the past year. Some opportunities have been cheerfully afforded us, others were refused. Aside from this, we have severally, for a period varying from ten to seventeen years, made this matter a subject of observation and inquiry, and during that time have met with much that commends itself to reason, and demonstrated itself intelligently to be the manifestations of disembodied spirits, but a far greater proportion of what has been represented as such has been proven to be the deceptive tricks of impostors, palmed off upon the community as genuine spirit manifestations. And the experiences of the past year, incident to the more special attention and investigation it has received at our hands, have served to confirm our previous convictions.

These remarks are mainly applicable to the Dark Circle impostors, who pretend to do physical impossibilities, claiming that spirits do them, while they give no proof of what they assert. After a diligent and careful investigation of the subject, we are irresistibly forced to the conclusion that darkness is not a necessary condition for physical manifestations, but that it is a condition assumed and insisted upon by tricksters, having no other use than to afford opportunities for deception. We therefore recommend that all Spiritualists and others discountenance dark circles, for under any circumstances they afford no reliable proof of spirit existence, presence or communion, and must, even if they were genuine, be of such doubtful character as to be of no practical value, whilst there are thousands of incontestable proofs that admit of no doubt or other solution than the one to which

they are referred. We believe that disembodied spirits can do all that is possible for embodied spirits to do; that they can and do rap, move ponderable bodies, and thereby communicate, proving their identity by intelligent references; but we do not know, or believe, that they can do that which transcends human possibility. We have no proof that they can create and dissolve instantaneously bodies and clothing, a fact similar of those they used on earth; that they can create or dissolve, as is claimed, flowers, iron rings, hair, ropes, etc., or put twenty-seven hands at one time through an opening six or seven inches in diameter, sufficient only to admit the passage of five or six; in a word, that they can do physical impossibilities. These are the claims of the persons we have named, and the allegations of those whom they have deceived, but for which they give no proof. But proof of their tricks and deceptions are abundant and indisputable; they have been detected and exposed in their jugglery so often and so thoroughly that it would seem to be superfluous to refer to them, or to attempt to prove that what they are palming off upon the credulous as spirit manifestations are not spirit manifestations at all. What evidence do the Davenportists offer that the hands they show through the opening in their cabinet are not their own hands? It all turns on this point: they are lied, as they say, so that they cannot unite themselves, which is not true; for we have demonstrated hundreds of times that it is impossible to them so that they cannot unite themselves when tied with anything that they will allow themselves to be tied with. Concerning these things we thank God and the angels that the sun of reason is rising, and with its penetrating rays melting away these dark delusions, and that ere long we shall have a clear sky, and Spiritualism will stand forth with her garments purified of all these excrescences, and become the welcomed and honored visitant of every earthly household."

I do not know who composed the committee, nor have I reason to doubt their honest intentions; but in reading the above, it occurred to me that the minds of some or all of its members might have been in some such condition as I have spoken of, and hence the unsatisfactory results obtained. Whatever these may have been, I think they would hardly justify the sweeping language of the report or the unqualified charges brought against mediums and dark circle manifestations. In fact, it looks as if the report might, in part at least, be the result of *foregone conclusions*, as it is distinctly stated that the official investigations of the committee "have served to confirm their previous convictions" as to the falsehood of most of the "physical manifestations," and the uniform trickery of "the dark circle impostors." The committee charge that these last "give no proof" of the genuineness of the wonderful things they perform, whilst "proofs of their tricks and deceptions are abundant and indisputable."

I know not what proof the committee may deem sufficient to establish the genuineness of a physical spirit manifestation—whether it be performed in the dark or in the light—but if they admit human testimony to be of any value, I should be much gratified if they would explain the "trickery" by which the following physical manifestation was accomplished, which, though performed in the light, is precisely similar to the manifestations of spirit power claimed to be performed more frequently in the dark. The incident is related by Frederick L. H. Willis in the Banner of Light of Feb. 2, 1867, Miss Mary E. Currier being the medium referred to:

"One evening the medium went into the circle-room, and took her seat at the piano. I was in the sitting-room; the door between was open, and a flood of light from the room I was in made every object in the circle-room distinctly visible. Scarcely had the medium struck the first note upon the piano, when the tambourines and the bells seemed to leap from the floor and join in unison. Carefully and noiselessly I stole into the room, and for several seconds it was my privilege to witness a rare and beautiful sight. I saw the bells and tambourines in motion. I saw the bells lifted as by invisible hands, and chimed each in its turn accurately and beautifully in unison with the piano. I saw the tambourine dexterously and scientifically manipulated, with no mortal hand near it. But suddenly, by a slight turn of the head, the medium became aware of my presence in the room. Instantly, like the severing of the connection between a galvanic battery and its poles, everything ceased. Mark this: so long as my presence in the room was known only to the invisible, so long the manifestations continued in perfection. The moment the medium became aware of it, everything stopped. A wave of mental emotion passed over her mind, which was in itself sufficient to stop the phenomena at once. So wonderfully delicate a thing is mediumship! Even the veterans in Spiritualism have no real appreciation of it, nor can they realize that a medium is of necessity an instrument so delicately strung that the slightest jar, even the vibration of a thought on the mental atmosphere, may entirely dislodge it. This little incident proved to my mind most clearly that, in nine cases out of ten, it is in the condition of the medium that renders it so difficult for spirits to do the wonderful things in the light, rather than any lack of power or disposition on their part."

I have myself attended quite a number of "dark circles," both public and private, and whilst I cannot say that I am particularly partial to that phase of spirit manifestation, I would by no means condemn it, as I have no doubt it is of benefit to others. Some of the dark circles I have attended have been very satisfactory, whilst some others have not been so. The last that I remember being at, was a private one held at the house of Mr. William Rider, a gentleman of fortune and culture, who resides at No. 332 West 23d street, New York. The medium present was Dr. John Ladd, (a guest at the time of Mr. R.'s,) whose mediumistic power is wholly devoted to healing purposes, his practice being extensive and highly beneficial, so that he has but little time to devote to other objects. The medium, Mr. R. and his wife were the only persons present (besides myself,) all three of whom I know to be incapable of willful deception or falsehood, and to whom I will take the liberty, without consultation, to refer the committee as to the truthfulness of what follows. At that period I was as skeptical in regard to the genuineness of what was called the coat and ring tests, as the West Indian was of the alleged fact that water could become hard in an atmosphere different from that he had always breathed.

I was sitting one evening beside the medium, when he was suddenly entranced, and indicated that a spirit Indian friend of mine would perform for my benefit the coat test. The front room was separated from the back parlor, in which we were, by folding doors. We went into the room and the medium seated himself in a chair. Commencing with the middle of a soft cord the thickness of a man's thumb, I tied it securely in two separate hard knots tightly around each of the medium's wrists, which were fastened to the front round of the chair, from which the cord was carried spirally to each shoulder by being wound several times tightly around the arms of the medium and again around his neck, and thence to the back of the chair, around the top bar of which I again tied it, at the same time placing unobscured a little slip of tissue paper in the light of the knot, which must of necessity have fallen out had the knot been untied. From thence I carried the ends of the rope some feet to a piano, under which I put them together, at the same time laying unobserved a small key in the two ends of the rope. Believing the medium to be securely confined, all except him left the room. I closed the door. In from three to five minutes a signal rap was heard, and we proceeded to examine the medium. He was sitting in a deep trance, in the precise

position we had left him, his coat lying some distance from him on the floor. I proceeded to examine minutely the knots and *strings* of the rope, and found them in every particular precisely as I left them, tissue paper, key and all, save that the folds of the rope that now rested on the shirt sleeve had been slackened by the removal of a thick coat. Having satisfied myself of the reality of the performance, we were notified to again leave the room, and shut out the lights. Less time had elapsed than before when we were summoned by a rap to return. We found the medium still sitting in a deep trance, with his coat again on him, and the rope, knots, tissue paper and key precisely as we had left them.

I have no comment to make on this manifestation, further than to say that, admitting the facts to be as stated, it appears to me that it requires greater "credulity" to believe the performance to have been the result of "trickery," than to believe it to have been accomplished, as it purported to have been, through the intervention of intelligent beings of another sphere of life, whose knowledge of the laws that govern matter exceeds that of mortals who dwell on earth.

Vaucluse, R. I.

THOMAS R. HAZARD.

Dr. J. B. Newton.

DEAR BANNER—I feel that a word of grateful recognition is due, from very many persons, to the really wonderful healing powers and to the uniform kindness, to the sick and poor, of our friend and co-laborer, Dr. J. B. Newton. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, have been either wholly healed by him or much relieved from long suffering and disease; and many of those he has healed have been paid in money from five to twenty-five dollars apiece, for the privilege of healing them. The poor he does not charge, but pays them to come to him—at least in many instances to my personal knowledge. I have seen, and know him to cure blindness of long standing, permanently. I once saw him cure a woman of deafness in one ear, of twenty years' standing, and do it instantly too. I have seen the maimed go to him on crutches, and leave in one minute, or even less, with the crutches on their shoulders. I have known a case of almost blindness of long years' standing cured instantly. In the city of Cleveland, O., when lecturing there, I saw him cure a boy of lameness caused by a severe injury from a street car, of seven months' standing, almost instantly. This boy had not stepped on his foot for that length of time, (as his mother testified in my audience of near three hundred people,) until healed by the Doctor. She came and publicly thanked God, the angels, and Dr. Newton, for this blessing. I am informed of many other such cases.

Can the churches produce any such evidences of their true discipleship? "By their fruits shall ye know them." "He that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works shall he do, because I go to my Father." "And these signs shall follow them that believe: . . . They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."—[See Mark xvi: 17th to 19th verses.]

I hope that some competent person will take the office of collecting all or many authentic cases of Bro. Newton's healing experience, identify them carefully, conscientiously, and publish them in good preservable form. *Spiritualism is making history* as no similar event ever did before. Let us save all these wonderful facts, ascertain their exact character and value, and so close the doors against fraud, exaggeration and denial, and furnish the future with elements of true history. As Spiritualists, living amid the daily observation of these things, we grow careless and indifferent to their real worth and significance. Dr. Newton's work is most worthy a place in history. When some great revolution comes again, it may be that persecution, intolerance, or the temporary triumph of the regressive tendency in religion, will obliterate all these traditional relics of this hour, as the early Christians burnt all the books of "heretics," who wrote against their theology. Let us save every fact. The future will need them.

Let it not be said hereafter of us: "The Divine Guest was among them and they knew it not." And besides, we all long, yearn to be lovingly recognized. Every good deed deserves the cordial approbation of our fellows. The spiritual reformer has quite enough to contend with from the careless, heartless opposition of the outside world, and too often, alas, from those who live nearest to him or her. To him who gives life itself to the advocacy and illustration of new ideas, and especially to spiritual ideas, which lay hold on the super-sensuous and divine in this animalized world, there will be cold enough from abroad to blow chill against his bosom.

Brothers, sisters, let's love each other more and more loftily, more cordially, more divinely. Let's look for the good deeds to praise and to imitate. I am most cordially yours,

SLEDEN J. FINNEY.

An Atheist as a Witness.

I was yesterday favorably impressed with the progress liberal views have made in our Courts, as well as everywhere else, during the last quarter of a century, in relation to receiving the testimony of witnesses on account of their religious or theological opinions.

About twenty-five years ago the writer was in a Court in New Hampshire where a witness was introduced, and the counsel on the other side commenced inquiring into his religious belief. The witness frankly told him that he was a Universalist. The lawyer objected to his testimony being received, and commenced an argument in favor of its rejection. The two opposing counsel spent three hours arguing the question as to whether a Universalist could be believed under oath. The judge seemed to be in favor of rejecting his testimony, till, on further inquiry, the witness developed the fact that he belonged to the wing of the denomination called Restorationists.

Yesterday, during a trial in Judge Storrs's Court room, a witness was called and sworn "to tell the whole truth as he should answer to God." When a preliminary question was put by the attorney, he refused to answer, informing the Court that he did not believe there was any God in existence.

JUDGE—Do you believe you have any existence yourself?

WITNESS—Yes, sir.

JUDGE—How do you know you have an existence?

WITNESS—Because I have the power to move and act.

JUDGE—Yet you believe there is no great first cause that gave you that power?

WITNESS—Yes, sir.

JUDGE—Where did it come from, then?

WITNESS—I don't know, sir.

JUDGE—Hold up your hand.

The witness complied, when the judge affirmed him to tell the whole truth under the pains and penalties of perjury.

No one of the counsel objected. The witness told his story in a plain and intelligent manner, and I do not believe there was an individual in the room who thought he was not telling the whole truth. A sensible Court that.

A PROGRESSIVE.

Cincinnati, O., Dec. 4th, 1867.

Correspondence in Brief.

DANIEL WOOD, LEBANON, ME., would have men strive to think less of the dollar and more of their fellow-men, and give the honest laborer an equal chance with the oppressive capitalist.

EDNA D. VALENTINE, NATICK, MASS.—I am an invalid, and cannot attend spiritual lectures and social gatherings as I should love to do; but the Banner, thank God, supplies me with food on which I feast. It is an invaluable blessing. I am much interested in the Massachusetts Spiritualist Association. I think this organization is desirable for the purpose of ascertaining our numbers, but I hope it will be untainted by sectarianism or a creed.

WM. STACKHOUSE, EAST CAMBRIDGE, ILL.—It is a fact in Nature that all bodies are expelling their effluvia by a general law of exhalation, by which their worn-out particles are cast off. And were it not for the law of attraction to supply all the forms of Nature, all things would revert to their original chaos, but all bodies are held in an equilibrium by the laws of repulsion and attraction. It is also a fact in Nature that all things of an external character change. It is the order of Nature in her progress to elevate all forms to higher conditions, while the laws and principles of Nature are the same, never change, are immutable, are the innate qualities of all elements.

FRANK CHASE, SOUTH SUTTON, N. H.—The true science of religion is for the first time on earth established by Spiritualism. It has for its foundation all revelations, all knowledge, all science, all philosophy. Creeds are merely somebody's belief, and their use is ended. Revelation and knowledge, in religion, are what we want to make it practical; and in Spiritualism we have them. Spiritualism shows the light of truth, not doubt and uncertainty, over the earth. Spiritualism is to unfold a new theology, that will be reduced to practical science. Principles, not beliefs, will make its platform. Spiritualists do not believe, but they know the human soul is immortal.

TRUTH, LAPORE, IND., writes that Father Abbott has been preaching with good effect in that place, and has brought about an organization of Spiritualists. His devoted and successful work has been his ally, and in the light of truth, not doubt and uncertainty, over the earth. Spiritualism is to unfold a new theology, that will be reduced to practical science. Principles, not beliefs, will make its platform. Spiritualists do not believe, but they know the human soul is immortal.

DR. D. C. DAKES, writing from Rochester, N. Y., Dec. 17th, 1867, says: Some two months since, with many regrets I left the "Smoky City," with its brave little band of spiritual brethren. ("God speed" them in their endeavors to build up Zion in that beggimed, bigoted and priest-ridden place.) Duty calls me to act in other scenes. But wherever my frail bark, with its slender sail, shall seek new places, or new scenes, I shall have my friends and loving associations with me, and remain engraven upon the brightest tablet of my memory. You will see by my card that I have opened offices here in this city, No. 8 and 7 Washington Hall, and am prepared "to heal the sick" by a pure and effectual method, "laying on of hands."

E. W. LEWIS, M. D., WATKINS, N. Y.—There is no mistaking the signs of the times. Spiritual powers and forces are ripening in Watkins, and, as almost everywhere else, they are just ready to break forth with renewed vigor and energy. Here, some of the early manifestations of Spiritualism, and here it is bound to return again and make itself heard and known. We are gathering strength by numbers and newly developed mediums very fast. For a long time, myself and one or two others, with our families, stood almost alone in this thrifty and fast growing town; but already, like falling snowflakes, Spiritualists have taken their places here, and we have a goodly number all around us, and an organized Society is in contemplation of being formed. The practical workings and blessings of our divine philosophy have continued to make manifest its truths, and opened the eyes and ears of hundreds of others closed to all progressive tendencies and research. Dr. H. Sherburne, a new and powerful healer, spent a week or two here this fall, and some of the testimonials of cures effected by him, in cases considered hopeless, in old times would have been called miracles. The joy and gratitude manifested by those so benefited and so suddenly made well, is without limit or bounds. Dr. Sherburne resides at a village called Esperance, Schoharie County, not far from Albany, in this State, and is bound to take high rank as a healer, being well educated and of good and correct principles as a man and a Spiritualist. Our own tests of medical power and wisdom, received and bestowed upon multitudes of grateful and happy hearts, from what purports to be the spirit of the great and good Hahnemann, continue their convincing mission—a source of as much astonishment and happiness to us as to the suffering ones more immediately benefited thereby. These are, living testimonials of spirit power, are promising to the many others of converting the world, by first blessing and benefiting the suffering and afflicted ones common to humanity. My wife and son are both mediums of great power in this direction, and others are being developed all about us.

Spiritualism in Austin, Nevada.

I feel that it may be interesting to you and the friends of Mrs. Laura De Force Gordon, to learn of her safe arrival in this little mining camp, on Friday the 23d inst., after a long and tedious journey of some three or four weeks by private conveyance from the city of Denver, Colorado Territory. Mr. and Mrs. Gordon, although somewhat jaded, were looking exceedingly well, and in good spirits, and said they enjoyed their overland trip by their own conveyance much better than they would by the overland coach.

We had always supposed that we were living here in a God-forsaken portion of God's footstool, in the little city of Austin, Nevada, a place of about five thousand inhabitants, and situated in the mountains, about twelve hundred miles from the Missouri river, and about four hundred miles from the city of Sacramento, California. The attitude of Austin is about seven thousand feet above the level of the sea, and surrounded by the lofty, bald peaks of the Toiyabe range, with no other vegetation to greet the eye than the sagebrush and greasewood in the foot hills.

But finally the idea of its being so forsaken a place was dispelled by the announcement of the arrival of Mrs. Laura De Force Gordon. We immediately repaired to her stopping place, and found her and the doctor in comfortable quarters and in good spirits. We asked her if she designed lecturing here before taking her departure. She replied that she did not know that there were any in the place who sympathized with Spiritualism. "No matter," we replied, "you must lecture if you have to speak on the street corners." She consented. Three of us then procured Bradford's Hall, the largest in the city, and capable of seating a thousand persons. We then procured posters announcing that Mrs. Gordon would lecture the next evening on the subject of Spiritualism, at 7 o'clock, and on Sunday at 2 and 7 o'clock p. m. It was not known whether there were a half dozen Spiritualists in the city or not. The hour arrived, and the hall was filled to its utmost capacity.

Mrs. Gordon preceded her discourse by reading one of Miss Lizzie Doten's poems. She then gave a discourse of nearly two hours in length. She was listened to with profound attention; the eyes of the audience were seemingly fixed upon the speaker as she arose, and never turned to the right or left until the close of her discourse. Again, on Sunday, at 2 o'clock, the lecture was well attended. But on Sunday evening it seemed

that the very foundation of the superstructure fairly groaned under the vast sea of human beings. Several subjects were handled in, in writing. An opportunity was then given to the audience to select from the number, but as no one seemed to move the adoption of any particular one, it was moved and seconded that the speaker make a selection from the number. The motion was carried.

She accordingly made the selection, and yet wove into the discourse as many points of the other subjects as time would permit. She reasoned with eloquence and perspicuity rarely equaled by any of the sterner sex, on this or any other subject. All admit—believers and unbelievers—that she did herself and the subject justice; and ever since it has been the topic of conversation in the offices, stores and saloons, as well as in the churches and the school-houses.

Mr. and Mrs. Gordon sold their team and took their departure this morning, by the overland coach, for Virginia City, Nev., and from thence to Sacramento and San Francisco, Cal. May good spirits ever attend her and the doctor.

Austin, Nev., Nov. 26, 1867. E. S. MUDGERT.

THE BIRTH PLACE OF GENIUS.—It is one of the mysteries of life that genius, that noble gift of God to man, is nourished by poverty. Its greatest works have been achieved by the sorrowing ones of the world in tears and despair. Yet in the brilliant saloon, furnished with every comfort and elegance, in the library well fitted, softly carpeted, and looking out upon a smooth green lawn, or a broad expanse of scenery—not in ease and competence is genius born and nurtured, but more frequently in adversity and destitution, amidst the harassing cares of a straitened household, in bare and sterile garrets, with the noise of equal children, in the midst of the turbulence of domestic contention, and in the deep gloom of uncheered despair is genius born and reared. This is its birth-place, and in scenes like these, unpropitious, repulsive, wretched men have labored, studied, and trained themselves until they have at last emanated out of the gloom of that obscurity, the shining lights of their times—become the companions of kings, the guides and teachers of their kind, and exercised an influence upon the thought of the world amounting to a species of intellectual legislation.

Michigan State Spiritual Association. The semi-annual meeting of the above Association will be held in the city of Jackson, commencing Friday evening, January 24, and continuing Saturday and Sunday. It is expected that Andrew Jackson Davis, J. B. Dimes, Selden J. Finney, and other prominent speakers will be present.

We most earnestly invite every Society and community of Spiritualists in the State to be represented. We anticipate a very large Convention, and the discussion of questions of great interest. Our missionary, Rev. J. O. Barrett, will be present. The Spiritualists of Jackson have arranged with the hotels for reduced prices, for all they cannot themselves entertain.

DORUS M. FOX, President.
L. B. BROWN, Secretary.
Lyons, Mich., Dec. 6, 1867.

Vermont Quarterly Convention.

The Spiritualists of Vermont hold their next regular State Convention at Middlebury, in the Town Hall, on the 4th and 5th of January, 1868. The Vermont Central, Rutland and Burlington, and Vermont Valley Railroad return members of the Convention free, on the pass of the Secretary. Good fare at the hotels for one dollar per day. Speakers and friends from abroad are cordially invited. A large and profitable meeting is anticipated, and arrangements made accordingly. The Convention will organize Jan. 3d at 10 A. M.

Mrs. SARAH A. WILBY,
Mrs. GEORGE A. PRATT,
Mrs. C. A. CHASE,
Mr. HYMAN BAHRER,
Mr. ALONZO BROWN,
GEORGE DUTTON, M. D., Cor. Sec.

Massachusetts Spiritualist Association.

The Annual Convention of this Association will meet in Mercantile Hall, Summer street, Boston, Tuesday and Wednesday, Jan. 7th and 8th, 1868. This Convention is called in accordance with the constitution for the general election of officers for the ensuing year.

The successful working of the Association for the past twelve months, not only gives encouragement to further prosecute its labors, but creates a variety of important business, for the proper settlement of which a full attendance of the Spiritualists of the State is particularly requested, that the work so auspiciously begun may be maintained wherever rapidity and thoroughness of commonwealth.

L. S. RICHARDS, Pres.
GEORGE A. BACON, Cor. Sec.

Connecticut State Convention.

The Connecticut Association of Spiritualists will hold a Convention in Knight's Hall, 200 Main street, Hartford, Conn., Sunday, January 3th, 1868. The several Associations of Spiritualists in the State are requested to be fully represented. And the friends of Progress, although not associated with the Association, are invited to come and attend this Convention. Rev. Mr. Fox, the State Agent, and other able speakers are expected to address the Convention. Delegates arriving in Hartford on Saturday, will report to Mr. J. S. Dow, No. 11 Pearl street, near the State House, who will assign them to the hospitalities of friends during the continuance of the Convention. A full attendance is requested. Per order of the Executive Committee.

W. P. GATES, President.

Spiritualist Convention.

The Spiritualists and friends of progress of Northern Missouri will hold a Convention at Macon City, Macon Co., Mo., January 15th, 1868, at which time efforts will be made to open the way for lecturers, speakers, &c., and for the circulation of liberal literature among the people; also to devise plans by which local organizations may be put in operation in all places where a sufficient number may be gathered together to form a nucleus for others to gather around. All are cordially invited.

COL. JOHN T. ROSS, and many others.

Obituaries.

Went to the better home, from Boston, Nov. 1, 1867, the spirit of little Charlotte, youngest daughter of Thomas S. and Eliza Harron, aged 5 years and 6 months.

Another little bud, too frail for earth, has gone to unfold its petals in the bright Summer clime. She was a child of much promise, often speaking far from her years. While in a few days ended her earth-life. Though young in years yet her mind was ever struggling to know more of that beautiful home in the Summer-land that lies beyond the veil. She was a loving child, and which she so much loved to hear. Her parents be comforted with the assurance that their darling child still lives and will walk with them in the Summer-land, and that they have the sympathy of all who are connected with the Lycium of which she was a member.

A. H. RICHMOND.

Left the mortal form, Dec. 15th, in Charlestown, Mass., the spirit of little Willie Adams, aged 7 years and 16 months. This little boy was a member of Stream Group, in the Charlestown Lyceum. He now has left the mortal sphere to join the Lycium above, struck down by disease, while in a few days ended his earth-life. Though young in years yet his mind was ever struggling to know more of that beautiful home in the Summer-land that lies beyond the veil. He was a loving child, and which he so much loved to hear. His parents be comforted with the assurance that their darling child still lives and will walk with them in the Summer-land, and that they have the sympathy of all who are connected with the Lycium of which he was a member.

A. H. RICHMOND.

Passed to spirit-life, from Monaca, Mass., Dec. 13th, 1867, Mrs. Elvira S. Bradway, wife of Abel Bradway, aged 51 years. She was a firm believer in the Spiritual Philosophy; a good wife, a fond mother, and a very obliging neighbor.

CHARLOTTE BROWN.

Passed to the Summer-land, on the 4th inst., Philip Hovey, aged 56 years and 3 months. West Barnstable, Mass.

The Banner of Light is issued on an sale every Monday Morning preceding date.

Banner of Light.

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WILLIAM WHITE & CO.,
PUBLISHERS AND PROPRIETORS.

For Terms of Subscription see eighth page. All mail matter must be sent to our Central Office, Boston, Mass.
LUTHER COLBY, EDITOR.
LEWIS B. WILSON, ASSISTANT EDITOR.

All letters and communications intended for the Editor of the Banner of Light should be addressed to Luther Colby.

The Need of Necessity.

It has often been said that necessity is a constant friend, in that it calls out powers of which we were not aware that we were possessed. If development and growth be the real objects of life, then anything and everything that conduces to it is of course welcome to us. Give a young man a fat inheritance, on which he may feed in idleness and at peace all his life, and you get nothing out of him, nor indeed does he find out what there is in him for himself. That is a pretty invariable rule. Few of us would make exertions if we were not compelled to; and though we deplore the fact of that compulsion as much as we choose, it is nevertheless the best thing for our faculties that could be devised. It is fortunate above all things in the world that we did not have the selection and arrangement of our circumstances ourselves.

Bulwer used to say that it was a severe trial for a man to labor who did not feel the social need of applying himself by reason of being rich, than it was for one who had nothing but poverty for his inheritance and felt the stir of an inward ambition. It is a remark of kin to the one that there is no virtue, real and robust, where there is no temptation. The man who has plenty around him, thinks only of taking what he styles his ease, which at the last is the hardest of all things possible to him. It is far from a condition of ease to be forced to nurse a diseased mind and a broken down body. No work comes any harder than that. We are freest when we are our own masters; and that we cannot be until we attain that state when our faculties are all in perfect freedom, and ready to perform the very best service for our welfare. What we call ambition is but an incentive to effort; if we did not make that, it would soon be all over with us.

Obstacles are thrown in our way that we may exercise our courage, our will, our powers of every kind. We are everything smooth along the path, we should never be likely to become acquainted with what lies asleep within us. No body goes to work to seek out difficulties, nor would he do so if there were none in the way. It is too comfortable a thought for the natural sluggishness of the nature, that there are no difficulties to encounter, to permit it to be provoked into exertion in hunting them up and overcoming them. We discover our truest allies where we refuse to look for them. Whatever stimulates the will and lends sinew to the purpose, is to be accepted with joy as a friend indeed. And to prove it, think of the satisfaction with which, after some determined and persistent effort which has been crowned with visible success, we hail the consciousness of a new accession of power, and how we look down on the state of indolence we but just now coveted.

N. B. Starr, Spirit Artist.

In accordance with a previous announcement, friend Starr reached our city a few days since, bringing several specimens of his recently executed paintings. The first glance revealed their origin, and inclined us, aside from the well-authenticated recognitions and tests of Spiritualism, to say, as mere works of art they are richly worth the price set upon them. Add to the material thought of their artistic value the fact that they are pictured forms of the *beast in spirit-life*, and they become absolutely priceless.

Mr. Starr is a gentleman verging on seventy, quiet, modest, unassuming, and enthusiastically devoted to his work, under the guidance of immortal artists. For fifty years he was a common mechanic. Some four or five years since he began to be controlled mechanically and psychologically to paint. He now paints both mechanically and inspirationally, different artists controlling differently. He has taken pictures in public audiences even, that were then and there publicly recognized!

Among those now on exhibition in our Circle Room, are two children of Benjamin Wilbur, of Fall River, Mass. In a letter to us accompanying these paintings, Mr. Wilbur says: "They [the children] were immediately recognized by everybody who had known them in the earth-life. Furthermore, all the pictures he painted while yet in his infancy, were perfectly satisfactory."

He also brought quite a large painting, designed for our co-laborer, J. M. Peabody, representing him in his study-room, and a venerable looking ancient spirit bending over him like a father, with electric currents streaming from his fingers. Impressed to invite C. Fannie Allen into the circle-room, she was immediately entranced, and in an eloquent and impressive manner extemporized a beautiful poem, in which she referred to the gift of other ages; the deep interest they take in human progress; their partial reincarnation and inspirational efforts through the various media for the world's redemption. The controlling spirit referred to the influences of the Nazarene in the Celestial Heavens, and their continuance on earth through the instrumentalities of those who traveled as his companions under the burning skies of Asia; and then pointed to that ancient form upon the canvas as the John, banished to Patmos in his old age. We know Mr. Peabody's aversion to great names, and simply say that the responsibility of the above statement rests with the spirits—not us.

The controlling intelligence then personally addressed Mr. Starr in poetic language, at once encouraging and eloquent, promising him protection and increase of his already remarkable artistic powers for the furtherance of his mission.

Friend E. B. Wheeler being present, was also entranced, and improvised a magnificent poem upon Art and Spirit Paintings, as demonstrations of immortality.

All things considered, the event we have thus so briefly and poorly committed to paper, was to those present a thrillingly interesting occasion, and will no doubt serve to inspire them to still greater efforts in the dissemination of the grand, all-glorious truths of Spiritualism.

The price of Dr. A. B. Child's new work entitled "Unhappy Marriages," is 30 cents by mail.

The Summer-Land.

A STELLAR KEY TO THE SUMMER-LAND. By Andrew Jackson Davis. Part I. Illustrated with Diagrams and Engravings of Celestial Scenery. Boston: William White & Co., Banner of Light Publishing Company.

We approach the perusal of such a work as this with feelings inspired by the highest theme which human beings can admit to their contemplation. For this plain reason, too, it is a book above and beyond the reach of ordinary criticism. The rules of none of the schools can be applied to its examination. It is a treatise, and clearly an inspired one, on celestial things; things so far removed from this little, creeping life of ours, yet, by the marvellous power of insight and sympathy, brought so very close to our recognition that we are able to soar away to the far limits of our spirit-life, while still faithfully accumulating and assimilating the experience which ripens us for its final enjoyment.

The creeds have vainly sought to open the heavens to us, wherein are the new conditions of human existence. But here we find them mapped out with perfect distinctness. They are so clear to the eye of the spirit that it is as if it looked at them through a window. The spirit-land is revealed. Mr. Davis has discerned the interior aspects of that elevated sphere to which mortals are destined after leaving the form on earth, and in this little book he has set them down for the comfort, the instruction and the exaltation of every soul that reads in faith.

We cannot undertake, in a brief notice, to furnish anything like a just analysis of the volume—the latest and the best of all the author's writings, the crowning-work of the whole series. In its prefatory notice he says its design is "to furnish scientific and philosophical evidences of the existence of an Inhabitable Sphere, or Zone, among the suns and planets of space." And he adds, with all the weight of truth, that "these evidences are indispensable, being adapted to all who seek a solid, rational, philosophical foundation on which to rest their hopes of a substantial existence after death." In such an investigation all living men are profoundly interested. It comes home to every heart. The deadest clod of mortal, lying buried under the materiality of life, experiences from time to time the quickening stir of a belief, or a hope, or at least a thought, that lifts him to the sky of that vast and illimitable future across whose disk stretches our common destiny.

There are eighteen chapters in this book, each bearing upon the steady development of the great theme. Among their titles are such as the following, than which nothing could be more thoroughly vital with suggestions: "Of the Natural and Spiritual Universes"; "Immortal Mind looking into the Heavens"; "The Possibility of the Spiritual Zone"; "Evidences of Zone Formations in the Heavens"; "The Scientific Certainty of the Spiritual Zone"; "The Location of the Summer-Land"; "Traveling and Society in the Summer-Land"; and "The Summer-Land as seen by clairvoyance." In the treatment of his absorbing subject the author displays close and shrewd logic as well as spiritual insight; familiarity with the highest order of scientific truths as well as the most far-sighted powers of clairvoyance. As the thoughtful reader follows him along step by step, walking among the stars and becoming familiar with those marvelous facts of existence which one by one disclose themselves to him on every side, he will not be able to refrain from breaking out into thanksgivings at being made to realize so vividly the beauty, the glory, and the eternal truth of what his soul had heretofore but dimly conceived.

It is not necessary to say more than this of a work that is certain to make so profound an impression on all who are led to read and study it. Nothing more, in fact, can be said, except it be a quotation of the author himself from cover to cover. We shall take occasion to make brief extracts from the book in future numbers of the Banner; but none that we shall be at liberty to transfer to our limited space will convey an idea of the clearness, the power, and the convincing demonstrations which nobody who reads can resist, were such his desire. We will but add an expression of our hope, which is more belief than hope, that every Spiritualist living will buy this little book and make it the treasury of his soul's highest faith.

Mercantile Hall Meetings.

On Sunday, December 22d, after the exercises of the Children's Lyceum were concluded and a short recess had, the curtain was raised, disclosing to the eager gaze of the children a large Christmas tree, loaded with remembrances for every one belonging to the Lyceum. About one hundred and fifty were present, the rain and sleet walking preventing some thirty of the little ones from attending. The scene at the distribution of the presents can only be fully realized by those who were fortunate enough to be eye-witnesses. Those who helped inspire by their gifts the happy time, must have felt blessed, whether present or not. The hall was filled with parents and others, who caught the infectious spirit of the hour, and were young again, in spirit at least. An hour spent in this Lyceum would infuse new life into any one, no matter how blue or discouraged he might have been.

In the evening, Miss Lizzie Doten lectured before the Society, on the "Heavenly Host," in a style that met the expectations of the audience fully. She will speak in the same hall every Sunday afternoon during January.

Powell's Domestic Magazine.

The January number of this monthly, to which reference was recently made in the Banner, has been received. As its title page denotes, it is "a literary and progressive record," combining instruction and amusement. Mr. Powell is an English gentleman of culture, and we bespeak for his magazine success. We shall notice this work more fully in our next. Sent to subscribers (in single wrappers) on the receipt of \$2.50. Single copies 25 cents. Address J. H. Powell, 18 South Third street, Philadelphia, Pa. For sale in Boston by J. J. Dyer & Co.

Dentistry.

Dr. A. B. Child, after six months' absence from his business for the recovery of his health, has given us much pleasure to state—returned to his office, 20 School street, where he may be consulted during all business hours, having resumed the practice of dentistry, in company with his son, J. T. Child, one of the most expert surgeon-dentists in the country.

Miss Eliza A. Pittsinger.

This distinguished lady and poetess, who has been a resident of California for several years, arrived in our city recently from that State. We learn she intends to give a course of readings in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington and other cities, and also to issue a volume of her poems.

Music Hall Meetings.

On Sunday afternoon, December 22d, Mrs. Nellie L. Bronson spoke at Music Hall. It having been announced on the previous Sabbath that the congregation should have the privilege of selecting the subject for the address, a committee of five was chosen by nomination from among the audience. The committee presented to the Chairman of the meeting six questions; these were one after another submitted to ballot, and the following receiving the highest number of votes from those present, was decided to be adopted as the subject for the lecture: "Are the teachings of Spiritualism more beneficial to humanity than the teachings of theology?"

The medium, who had been absent during the balloting, then came in, and after a sublime invocation proceeded to the consideration of the matter in hand, in a forcible, eloquent and rapid manner; her remarks would have done credit to the majority of the public speakers of the day if they had had an opportunity of a week's preparation, and the sudden and extemporaneous flow of language and ideas, proved conclusively that some other power than the medium was pronouncing the discourse—a power which in every firmly-knit sentence proclaimed: "We speak that we do know! and testify that we have seen!" We give below a brief synopsis of the address:

Before we can comprehend the benefits of any one thing as compared with another, we must first comprehend the differences existing between them. We must fully understand what theology teaches—what Spiritualism unfolds to the soul of men. We should respect theology, because it had been the mother, the giver of the germ of something better; because she had given us a platform, on which to stand, while we surveyed the vast capabilities of the soul for universal unfoldment and expansion. Theology was good—as was all religion, as far as it went—as far and inasmuch as it contained the germs of good to the soul. The religion of Christianity was pure to itself, teaching the one God, embodied according to its idea, and the mediator Jesus. But so beneficent to the soul, it taught the one God, also, but he was embodied in wood or stone; the Mahometan believed in the one God—but he also believed in Mahomet; thus every system had a God, but it was embodied in the highest ideal of its followers.

Man's God was always his highest ideal; to him he brought his offerings—his blessings called forth his gratitude—he lived amid the splendor of his ideal, and the presence of the one God, taught by theology was a deity of the fancy rather than reality—a form more in letter than in spirit—in theory rather than in practice. Its followers worshipped their deity because they feared his vengeance if they refused to adore him. Theology painted a deity more on the physical plane than the world beyond.

Theology taught that the greatest goodness could be attained by the greatest sin; it taught that the soul could be purified by sinning, and declaring faith in the atoning blood of the Nazarene. Therefore to Jesus the Church follower presented his offering of thanksgiving, because he believed he would wear for him the crown of thorns, and bear his sorrow for him. This was ascribing to the Deity an act of injustice that would not be tolerated in a human being—no one would be so foolish as to bear the load of all. Spiritualism teaches no such thing as this.

Religion in itself was pure. It taught the doctrine of immortality, because of our consciousness of right and wrong—consciousness of highest good and lowest evil. It taught us to look to God for blessings, because from him came all our gifts. But in this last point Theology was widely different from Spiritualism. Theology taught that we should have a hope of heaven, and that we should all the while. Spiritualism told us we were worthy of them; that God never gave to an unworthy object; that he would not give bread except to the hungry, clothing save to the naked; that he would not breathe his fragrance on the woodland flower unless he had created in man's breast a corresponding power of appreciation.

Theology preached, "Have faith and ye shall be saved." Spiritualism said, "Work and ye shall be saved." Theology taught that faith in Christ was alone able to bring salvation. Spiritualism demanded a demonstrated love of Christ in the spirit, and declared no man could receive any benefit or evil unless he was worthy of it. The convict, sunk in the lowest quagmire of his sin, weighed down by the weight of his crime, found in the dungeon was not his condition in itself a proof of the judgment of God, and at the same time, a prayer to God? And men and women were God's ordained angels to work out the fitting answer, which should be to lead the sinner into the light of mercy. The prayers of theology differed in such cases from those of Spiritualism, which demanded we should pray in the spirit and work in the physical to accomplish that prayer. Hence the teachings of Spiritualism were more in accordance with the laws of the universe, for the fact rather than faith must lead to wisdom. Man could never be led to know himself a sinner till the inner light of his spirit portrayed it to his eye. It was a duty enjoined by Spiritualism that we light the altar-fires in the hearts of the crushed and sin-laden, that by the radiance they be led to see their true condition and "go and sin no more."

You might forever tell your brother he was a sinner, but you could not give him an inner consciousness of his sin, unless you told him. If you told him it was right that he should be punished, unless you explained to him the ways of righteousness your toll was for naught. You were not to pray alone, but to endeavor to work out the great principle embodied in yourselves.

A man sinned most against himself when he was said to sin against God; when he did so, pain would surely follow, either here in the mortal or when he reached the bounds of time. The wound was left on the soul, as the scar is on the body when the cuticle is broken; no blood could wash that scar away. Suppose we did believe, receive the rite of baptism, endorse the covenant of the holy churches—were we then without sin? If so, we might cast the stone of condemnation at our brother man. But was this the case? Would not self-examination prove the necessity of a continued salvation, that each day sins crept in, wrongs were committed for which atonement was demanded.

Spiritualism gave man the ultimate of theology: that God ruled men more through their fellow men than through air; more through the souls of surrounding mortals than in the closet. It taught that our communities within ourselves were the means prescribed for the ascertaining of our spiritual needs; that by progressive life the soul would gain higher views of right and wrong, and take upon itself daily a more perfect image of its God; that the toll of this world for goodness was not suspended on reaching the spirit-world; that our efforts were the monument upon which we would one day see graven: "Life everlasting!"

Spiritualism taught that men and women were angels as far as they were good. Hence there was no need of a church, for the roof of our temple was the canopy of heaven; the communion-table was the table of charity, from which the hungry were fed, the naked clothed, evil-doers lifted out of darkness to light. This was the true sacrament: to labor ourselves, and not leave the work to God. Theology said this in part—it was right for man to labor for the good of his fellow, but the true touchstone of Christian theology was faith in the merits of the blood of Jesus. Spiritualism proclaimed that the labor was to be done from an innate love of man. Theology made a local heaven and hell. Spiritualism created neither. It taught that each made his own heaven or hell; for if a man made a hell for his brother, he would ever be devising means to screen himself while he condemned his fellows to everlasting fire; he would be tending to drive away the thought of his own heaven, hoping for pardon from God, and always holding up to view his own good deeds as a reason why his neighbor should be damned.

Thus theology—was it Christian?—refused to receive a man who came forth from prison determined to do right; it denied fellowship with him because he had a brand on his brow; it said to all its children: "Depart from the way of evil-doers." So there was from the Church no light of redemption which should bring the sinner in this life to a more of blessed resurrection. What was that light to be found save in Spiritualism, which told us that when we had no sin in our own hearts, we might look for and condemn it in others?

Theology has built its creeds. What for? That

saints might come together and exchange their ideas and commune in fellowship without being bothered by outsiders; that they might eat bread and drink wine while they imagined them to be emblems of a higher and holier life. But this was no religion for Spiritualists, because it said: "Stand aside, I am holier than thou." Spiritualism commanded its followers to break bread with all, and to give to him that thirsted the pure waters of life.

Theology said that a man could live in sin all his days, but at the hour of death he could repent, and enter the life free from all taint or disparagement. Spiritualism said every man was resurrected from crime just when he decided to do better; if he did so in the hour of death, he must keep that vow in the spirit-land—if he did otherwise, the consequences will follow as they do broken faith on earth. A true Spiritualist would never condemn his neighbor, or stand upon the wrongs of any man. He would rather occupy every moment in looking for good, than in writing the story of evil on the blackboards of ages! The God of the Spiritualist was not a God of anger, but the greatest good he can see to his own soul and that of humanity. He believed in a God whose religion was to do good; whose form was Nature; whose law the Holy Ghost; whose Saviour rested in his own heart, not on Jesus. His creed was: "I believe in God; in the holy sacrament of Charity; in the Holy Ghost, as demonstrated in God's law of just compensation. I believe in Jesus the example—in the Christ that lives in the inner man. I believe in the Holy Church of Humanity, and will unite my efforts with all which will bring to it the greatest good." Believing such a creed, we had no need of bars to keep out one child of God!

The difference between Theology and Spiritualism was, that the one taught a hope of good, the other a knowledge; one taught we should know God by-and-by, the other that we know him now; one that we shall meet with the spirits of the just in some future, far-off heaven; the other, that we need not wait for the angels, for they are with us always; one that Jesus was the only hope of the world, and that progress was limited to him; the other, that he was an example of the past, and that progress was not limited to any man, age or world, but the soul should move on forever and forever!

At the close of the discourse several questions were propounded by the audience, and answered in a ready and convincing manner by the controlling influence. In her replies she defined the God within ourselves to be the highest good we could conceive of; said that undeveloped or evil spirits came in many cases to the media as a hungry child for bread, and that they should not be feared but aided, for they could not drag down the good; that the spirit of manhood was found in the spirit of resistance to sin. She declared that no true man had ever deteriorated on becoming a Spiritualist. If, as was asserted, some found the whip and spur of theology necessary to keep them in the path of rectitude, it was just what they needed, and not being fit for the grander Church of Spiritualism they had better remain where they were; for a man who was good through fear, was incapable of receiving the gospel of the inner life. Her replies were heartily applauded by the audience.

On the 29th of December and 5th of January, owing to arrangements with regard to the hall, there will be no meetings. The lectures will commence Jan. 12th.

Prof. Fowler's Lecture.

On Thursday evening, December 19th, Prof. O. S. Fowler delivered the second of his course of Free Lectures, to a crowded house, in Tremont Temple. His remarks were chiefly confined to the uses of Phrenology and Physiology, as applied to self-improvement and the culture of children. The great command issued to every mortal in the flesh was: "Occupy till I come!" and it was the duty of every one so occupying to endeavor to make use of every faculty given them to the fullest extent; for experience proved that whenever any power, either of mind or body, was neglected, it became feeble. The study of man was more exalted than the study of any other subject, for the work of the Almighty proclaimed the character of the Almighty, and we looked from Nature up to Nature's God. The time was coming when the study of man's powers would eclipse all other branches of science.

The lecturer here gave many examples of the capabilities for extended unfoldment found in the human form, provided cultivation was applied to bring them out. As physical action strengthened the muscles, so mental action developed the brain; and as Phrenology pointed out the seat of each development, it was easy by its aid to bring the character to a rounded symmetry. Too often the desire for a soft hand and a delicate constitution—especially in women—was made to swallow up all mental and physical strength, as Aaron's rod devoured all the other rods. There was no escape from the fiat of labor—God's laws were universal; the attraction of gravitation brought stones to the earth invariably—and so with all other forces of creation. Man must, in obedience to those laws, toil to develop the spirit-principle within him, as well as the physical and mental. The lecturer related a story of an ignorant man who, having become suddenly wealthy by oil speculations, sent his daughter to school that she might receive a finished education; calling sometime afterward he found her at the foot of all her classes, and on asking the teacher the reason thereof, he was informed that his daughter "rather lacked capacity." "Oh! is that all?" he exclaimed, as he drew forth a roll of "greenbacks": "there, go and buy her some capacity!" But it was action, not money, that would bring out the powers of body or mind.

As regarded life, in all its phases, that man made the most, who improved himself the most, and was worth the most, who enjoyed the most by reason of such improvement; for a perfect knowledge of himself, through the principles of Phrenology, was the best piece of property a man could possess. The lecturer here demonstrated by engravings and skulls, that the propensities of man were written in the conformation of the brain, but that the cultivation of those propensities made the marked developments, not the developments the propensities; also that a part of the body was a foundation from whence could be shown its weakness or strength—as the hand or arm—just as Agassiz demonstrated the forms of the Pre-Adamite animals by a few bones which have come down to our day. Man's upright, perpendicular face, as distinguished from the horizontal ones of the brute creation, was owing to the fact that the reasoning powers pushed forward the mask of the countenance.

The lecturer closed by giving some good advice on the rearing of children, declaring that love, not the rod, was the highest governing power. It was true old King Solomon had said: "Spare the rod and spoil the child," but then he would not advise any one to follow King Solomon, as regarded whipping children, or some other practices to which he was addicted. Some thought they must crush out the will in the child, but God gave nothing to be crushed out—he gave to be cultivated. There was no pleasure on earth to be compared with that of parental love, if the line of duty was strictly followed. The lecture continued for nearly two hours, embracing several phrenological examinations, and was listened to with profound attention and frequent applause.

The London Spiritual Magazine for December and No. 9 of "Human Nature," are received at this office, and ready for delivery.

New Publications.

In his timely little brochure on "UNHAPPY MARRIAGES," published at the Banner of Light Office—Dr. A. B. Child, now become "St. Asaph" by the inspired decree of Andrew Jackson Davis, shows himself so impatient of the gross and cruel wrongs, the tyranny, the hypocrisy, and the sensualism practiced under cover of Marriage and the laws that establish it in society, that he advocates the entire abrogation of a rite from which such unhappy consequences have proceeded. We fully sympathize with that impatience, and would gladly see the indignation it provokes removed by the removal of its cause. We go as far as he who goes furthest, in denouncing those ordinances and customs, however strongly defended and entrenched, which are so open to the abuse of unworthy people. And we are ready to join hands with any one and every one, Dr. Child of course included, who will work for the rescue of the marriage institution from the evil influences under which it has fallen, and elevate it to that place which so truly sacred a relation as that of husband and wife is entitled to. Regarding this little work of Dr. Child as a criticism of the institution as it now exists, we regret that we are compelled to accept all his statements as accusingly true. He cannot write down criticisms on this matter one whit harder than our own will be. But when he proposes, as the certain and the only remedy for it all, the instant and complete throwing down of the social framework which Marriage supports, he proposes a remedy which most minds will regard as worse than the disease. It strikes us that the very just criticisms of Dr. Child would carry far more influence than they will, were they to be supported by some constructive and preservative plans, or theories even, that would reasonably promise to take the place of the faulty arrangements that now underlie our social condition. However, all persons of a progressive and reformatory spirit will want to read this latest work of Dr. Child, and will thank him for having added it to the list of those books which have had such an influence in awakening popular thought in the right direction.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY for the first month of the New Year opens, as it should, with manifold attractions, of which a glance at the rich table of contents will give the reader a fair taste. Whit-tier contributes a beautiful poem on "The Wife"; Bryant has a translation from Homer; Mrs. Stowe has "Our Second Girl"; there is a readable article on President Wayland; Bayard Taylor continues his interesting sketches of the "By-ways of Europe"; Emerson has "Aspects of Culture"; Lowell has a poem "In the Twilight"; Hawthorne's papers are made to yield a characteristic sketch of his observations and experience while holding a place in the Custom House of Boston; Eugene Benson contributes a paper on "The Old Masters in the Louvre, and Modern Art"; Dickens brings up the rear with Part I. of a story called "George Silverman's Explanation." It is at once a brilliant, a fat, and a solid number.

MERRY'S MUSEUM has been purchased by Mr. Horace B. Fuller, of this city, and is to begin its twenty-ninth volume in January under entirely new auspices. The new editor is Miss Alcott, the popular authoress of "Hospital Sketches." It is to appear with a corps of new writers, with new illustrations, and on an entirely new basis, while faithfully occupying the old field. "Merry" has been a favorite with a great many thousands of young people, who themselves, or by their descendants, will welcome this marked improvement in the magazine. It is, in fact, a complete renovation. And the price is something worth considering, too. It costs but \$1.50 per year, and the enterprising publisher is determined that it shall successfully compete with the best and boldest of youth's magazines. We wish the new plans of Mr. Fuller the most liberal success.

A. Williams & Co. have HARPER'S MONTHLY for January, 1868, which presents a list of marked attractions. Its illustrated articles are numerous and profusely cared for, including "Chattanooga, and How we Held it," "The Cafés of the Paris Exhibition," "Memor of Babylon," and a Love Story by the author of "John Halifax." The papers are of sufficient variety, and all fresh, to entice the reader into a new year's subscription. The editorial department is very readable. We can but repeat our commendations of Harper, on entering upon a year which must continue the prosperity of this most popular magazine.

The Seventh Edition of the CHILDREN'S PROGRESSIVE LYCEUM MANUAL has just been published by Bela Marsh, and the fact shows how rapidly this little manual is growing in popular favor and usefulness. We are glad to notice that many of the Orthodox Churches are adopting its leading ideas in the teachings of their own Sunday Schools, and trust they will do all they can in aiding us to widen the circle of believers in Spiritualism.

POEMS AND ESSAYS; Inspirational. By J. F. C., is the title of a little brochure, published at Syracuse, N. Y., in both prose and verse. Its verses are sweet and soothing, and its prose passages are cheering and consolatory. It is worthy of a wide and attentive perusal.

THE NURSERY.—The January number of this excellent monthly magazine for youngest readers keeps up its well-earned reputation. It is edited by Fanny P. Seaverns, and published by John L. Shorey, 13 Washington street.

Prof. Denton in Music Hall.

We are pleased to learn that Prof. Wm. Denton has been reengaged to lecture in Music Hall in this city, Sunday afternoon, Jan. 12th. His address, a few weeks since in the same hall, created such a profound sensation, that a general request was expressed to again hear this able scholar give a scientific analysis of Spiritualism and its phenomena; and he has consented. Those who feel any interest in the important subject of Spiritualism, will receive valuable instruction that will richly repay them for listening.

New Music.

Oliver Ditson & Co. have issued the following new pieces of music: "Gov. Andrew's Funeral March," by John S. Porter, with a splendid lithographic likeness of the Ex-Governor; "The Maiden's Lament," a ballad; "The Birds will come again," by George Cooper, music by J. R. Thomas; "Gentle Amy Lee," song and chorus, words by E. J. Porter, music by A. B. Hoag; "Silver Star Quickstep," being No. 5 of the collection of Crystal Gems; "When tolls have ceased," a song for contralto or baritone, by W. H. Beckett; "Damen Galop," by Albert Parlow.

Several splendid spirit pictures, recently painted by Bro. N. B. Starr, the spirit artist, are on exhibition at the Banner of Light Free Circle Room. Admission free.

olly Flint, of Manchester, N. H., to her children.
Thursday, Dec. 9.—Invocation: **Questions and Answers:**
 Hannah Thorpe, of Providence, H. I.; Jenna Flint, of Ipswich,
 Mass., to her parents; Charlie Phelps, a friend in New Or-
 leans; George A. Redman, to Mr. Colby.
Monday, Dec. 22.—Invocation: **Questions and Answers:**
 Charles A. Taylor, 6th Mass., Co. D.; Charles S. Forbes, of
 Worcester, to his brother Samuel; Janet Graham, of New York.
