

BANNER OF THE LAMP OF TRUTH.

FOR THE LITERATURE OF THE WEEKLY JOURNAL OF THE BOSTON INTELLIGENCE.

VOL. XXII.

(\$3.00 PER YEAR.)
In Advance.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1868.

(SINGLE COPIES)
Eight Cents.

NO. 23.

Original Essay.

MAN AND HIS MORAL ACCOUNTABILITY.

BY DYER D. LUM.

We have been taught—and we have accepted the doctrine as of divine origin—for hundreds of years, that man was a free moral agent, capable of choosing good or evil, and alone responsible for all that was sinful in his character to his Creator, to whom he must one day render account for the deeds done in the body. At the same time it has been as strenuously asserted that all men are "by nature" "totally depraved," "carnally minded," and "at enmity with God"; that our first propensities are toward evil; that the infant's earliest desires are essentially sinful and reprehensible. A natural propensity to sin, and that only, have our moral natures inherited.

Yet to recognize both theories are essential to attain Orthodox standing in society, and the attempt is made to reconcile them by declaring that while sin is natural and the inevitable lot of all, yet man being still a free agent, must choose or reject the free-grace of God offered through the blood of Christ "without money and without price," and is morally responsible to God for that choice which seals his destiny for eternity, either in the selfish enjoyment of a boon given, not earned, or in excruciating pangs of agony for failing to comprehend dogmas that are incomprehensible. All are asserted to be alike free to accept this free-grace independent of all conditions and circumstances, and sin in one is the same as sin in another, making, however, one modification, that he that "sins against light," or in the face of their teachings, is the most guilty. There is an arbitrary scale of sinful actions, like a price-current, with the price of infraction definitely stated. As in our school-boy days, moved by our innate total depravity, we used to say,

"If it is a sin to steal a pin,
It must be greater to steal a tater";

we were but giving expression to a theological truth.

They have asserted that the mind of the infant when first ushered into the world is like a piece of blank paper, on which is to be written its future character and destiny. It may inherit physical disease and bodily defects, but its moral nature, excepting—oh strange inconsistency!—its tendency to sin, is an unwritten page on which as yet no lines have been drawn, no stamp impressed.

This, I think, in all fairness, is the legitimate deduction from the Orthodox theology. Mighty and terrific, then, is the responsibility with which we are clothed, not only as toward our children, but also as concerns our own eternal welfare. Its announcement is prefaced with a solemn "Thus saith the Lord," and pressed home on our convictions with a "Believe or be damned." In all due deference and respect, I prefer to risk the damnation hereafter, than assert a doctrine that stultifies my highest aspirations and deepest convictions, and in itself deals damnation to the soul's purest utterances here.

The grace of God "without money and without price," is too dear at such a sacrifice of our noblest faculties. Though, judging from the manner in which the gospel is now preached with its exorbitant tithes and heavy pew rents, a free gospel would be open to the institution of being a second-hand one; or if accepted as freely as offered, it would in our churches place us in the predicament of possessing a "dead-head ticket."

Let us investigate man's moral nature, and try to grasp at some of the laws which regulate and control it; seeking truth in the scientific spirit of induction, adding fact to fact, rather than in the theological mode of deducing theories from an antiquated and musty record of by-gone and uncivilized ages; basing our conclusions on a "Thus saith the facts," as of higher authority than a priestly assertion of a "Thus saith the Lord"; in reason, rather than tradition.

In the first place we array ourselves against all such blind leaders of the blind,

"Those pseudo Priests—Councilors of God,
Who write down judgments with a pen hard nibbed;
Ushers of Beelzebub's black rod,
Commanding sinners, not to loe, black ribbed,
But endless fines to scorch them with like fax—
Yet sure of heaven themselves, as if they'd earned it,
The impression of St. Peter's keys in wax!"

by asserting the universality of LAW as supreme and absolute, controlling even the "hand of providence," and of which it may in truth be asserted that "there is no variableness nor shadow of turning." Mark you, the universality of LAW, not laws, holding to the divine unity of all things; and I use the word LAW as equivalent to FORCE, or Method of FORCE. Force is an unit, Nature its expression.

H. T. Buckle, in his invaluable History of Civilization, says: "The main object of legislation being to protect the innocent against the guilty, it naturally followed that European governments, so soon as they became aware of the importance of statistics, should begin to collect evidence respecting the crimes they were to punish." This evidence has gone on accumulating, till now, it forms of itself a large body of literature, containing, with the commentaries connected with it, an immense array of facts, so carefully compiled, and so well and clearly digested, that more may be learned from it respecting the moral nature of man, than can be gathered from all the accumulated experience of preceding ages. I say this advisedly; and whoever has examined these subjects must be aware of the way in which writers on morals repeat the commonplace and hackneyed notions of their predecessors, so that a man who reads everything that has been written on moral conduct and moral philosophy, will find himself nearly as much in the dark as when his studies first began."

We do not owe it to choice that we are not Mahometans, idolaters, or cannibals, but solely to the circumstances of our birth and education. If you had been born on the banks of the Ganges or the Euphrates, of native parents, and had there grown to manhood, you would not have viewed Christianity from the same standpoint as you now do. How few there are in the world who accept their religious convictions from mature and unprejudiced deliberation. Theologians should

"Consider well, before, like Hurlothrumbo,
They aim their clubs at any creed on earth,
That by the simple accident of birth,
They might have been high-priests to Jumbo Jumbo."

We all have Sacred Books and Divine Methods of Salvation, which to doubt, or even to logically criticize, is a crime, and blasphemous. Most persons accept their beliefs on trust, relying on authority rather than reason.

The torrid and frigid zones have never produced the civilization of the temperate zones. Outside of this narrow strip on the globe, man has left no enduring record. Draper, well aware of this intimate sympathy between man and Nature, has aptly remarked that but for the Gulf Stream, Newton would not have written the Principia, or Milton sung; for otherwise, England would have been as bleak and dreary as Labrador, and the Anglo-Saxon race were Esquimaux.

If Washington, Lafayette, Kosciuszko and Kosuth, had been born and lived in abject poverty, struggling through life for merely enough to prevent the divorce of soul and body, as millions do, the world would never have heard their eloquent words, nor witnessed their still more eloquent deeds. Is not life itself influenced by invariable law? Births and deaths in large cities are ever relatively the same, not only in number, but also in regard to sex and age. By the study of statistics we may even calculate how many letters will this month be dropped into the Boston post-office with postage unpaid, apparently the most accidental of events. The same is true not only of crime in the aggregate, but even as to their nature, enabling us to determine both the perdition and aphelion of any crime in its annual orbit. In summer, crimes against persons preponderate over crimes against property; in winter, the reverse. The tendency of women to commit crimes against persons, is to men the same as the relations of physical strength between the two sexes. We cannot assert of this man, or of that, that he will commit a crime, yet we ascertain the relative number that will be committed during the year. In France, they have ascertained that one Frenchman out of every six hundred and fifty will be a criminal this year. We cannot assert that the weather will be one year hence to-day, yet we may state what the number of rainy days and clear ones will be. Both are alike governed and controlled by Law. The impulse to crime, in a sufficient length of time, is an invariable quantity. In France, where statistical knowledge has been more carefully collected and tabulated than elsewhere, we can ascertain the probable number who will commit suicide during the ensuing month; what per cent. of the number will drown or shoot themselves, and what by poison or hanging. And when we reflect how many suicides result from sudden impulses, as losses by gaming or bankruptcy, bereavement of friends or sudden destitution, we can no longer hold to the old theory that Satan is the chief cause. Does Satan work by mathematical rule? Will God permit mortals to succumb to the allurements of the Evil One in arithmetical ratio year by year? Nor God, nor Satan, nor man's free agency, forms his character and molds the state and condition of society.

"Shall man believe his God unjust,
Because some ancient Jewish scribbler
Related what men take on trust,
Although the Lord is there belied?"

Look where we will, both in the organic and inorganic world, alike in the domain of matter and of mind, we behold but the working of incomprehensible and immutable law, "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." Historians no longer encumber their pages with mere relations of battles and court intrigues; no longer are they filled with relation of events caused by this one's weakness, or that one's firmness; nor yet do we read of battles won and national calamities averted by providential interposition.

Thus far we have considered the effect of Law principally upon communities. Let us now contract our view and look at its influence upon the individual. Of the thousands and tens of thousands now suffering in this land from physical disease, how large a number were born with the seeds implanted in their physical constitution? One person will breast a storm, while another cannot brave the evening dew. Every physician of extended practice has observed that the children of some families will die when taken sick, while those of others will recover, even under the most unfavorable circumstances. It is well known that consanguinity in "percentage" tends to injure the offspring. Dr. S. G. Howe, in his report to the Senate of Massachusetts, on the condition of the idiots of the Commonwealth, stated: "Out of three hundred and fifty-nine cases in which percentage was ascertained, one-twentieth of the whole were offspring of the marriage of relations. Now, as marriages between near relations are, by no means in the relation of one to twenty, nor are even, perhaps, as one to a thousand to the marriages not related, it follows that the proportion of idiotic progeny is vastly greater in the former than in the latter case."

Again he says: "Then it should be considered that idiosyncrasy is only one form in which Nature manifests that she has been offended by such in-law marriages. It is believed by some that blindness, deafness, imbecility and other infirmities, are more likely to be the lot of children of parents related by blood, than of others. If so, and it seems likely that it is, then the probability of unhealthy or infirm issue from such marriages becomes fearfully great, and the existence of the law against them is made out as clearly as though it were written on tablets of stone."

It has also been observed that sound health alone in both the parents will not always produce sound, healthy children; and this also has been brought under the control of law. Temperaments must be studied, when both parents are of the sanguine temperament, the effect upon the children will be unfortunate, in that they will have a low state of vitality, and when sick, likely to die. When the parties are so nearly similar as to present to the common observer no difference, sterility will be the result. George Washington and wife were striking examples of this.

When disease has imprinted itself in the human constitution, having its violences stationed in every vital point, and its couriers traveling through every vein and artery, its course leaves naught but desolation in its track. And a person in this condition will as certainly transmit it to his descendants as the infective germ and imperfect grain will manifest itself in the season of its maturity. Thus disease, retaining its hold by hereditary title, laughs to scorn the puny assaults of remedial drugs; dragging its vile carcass down the stream of time, infecting every pure stream and rivulet that flows into it.

The child will partake of the nature of its progenitors. If it can inherit consumption, scrofula and insanity, it is none the less true that it can also partake of its parents' mental and moral infirmities. Dr. S. B. Brittan has said, "If in the one case there is a natural predisposition to disease and a speedy disorganization of the system, there is in the other an equally forcible manifestation of such mental and moral infirmities as lead to a still more fearful form of earthly interests and human hopes. If one person is rendered sickly by hereditary infirmities, which he quite as often removes nor successfully resist, it is quite as obvious that another may be depraved and vicious from a similar cause. There is not so much as the poorest semblance of reason in the assumption—whether expressed or implied—that one part of man's nature is thus subject to the law of hereditary transmission of forms and qualities, whilst other departments and attributes of his being are not so influenced and determined."

Every one of us must have observed facts of this nature. The homely proverb, "a chip of the old block," is a recognition of this truth. Every parent is aware of the influence of mind upon offspring during the period of gestation. Dr. Brittan cites a case of a lady living in a house undergoing repairs that, from various reasons, were protracted over a long period of time. Everything was in disorder and confusion. The lady could not feel settled in mind in the midst of such discordant surroundings. She had a son who was conceived and born during this period, while the external disorder had produced such internal irritability. "The young man is constitutionally restless, dissatisfied and unhappy in a surprising degree. In his waking hours he seldom remains longer than a few minutes in one place, and during his whole life he has been constantly 'seeking rest and finding none.' Thousands have inherited a thirst for intoxicating drinks from a bearded parent, and others with deep-seated proclivities for lust and unbridled passions. How often do we meet with persons being 'marked' during the period of gestation by some powerful impression upon the mother's mind, such as fear or unattained desire. A miserable drunkard, by staggering into the presence of his delicately sensitive wife, has impressed upon the unborn child his own irregular motion, so that the youth could never walk straight. Another, by the habit of piling, will blight her child's moral perceptions, and give birth to a child who will steal from the cradle to the prison-cell, and furnish an example of 'total depravity' to some blind and stupid gospeler. A person born with a deformed limb is an object of pity and commiseration. If physically lame he must have extrinsic aids to support him; if born blind, asylums receive him and he is tenderly cared for. But an infirmity may be as excusable in the moral as in the physical vision. A person may be born morally lame or blind, as well as physically so; but then no staffs are provided to support his weak and tottering perceptions of truth, no asylums are found to prevent him from blindly falling into error. Both are supported by society, 'tis true; but one in an asylum where all ministers to his comfort, the other in a prison or work-house where everything tends to feed and inflame his unhappy nature. Nor is this all: while all are ready to help and aid the physical cripple, nearly all are ready to send the moral cripple to endless perdition for limping.

I do not not that to-day there are thousands who are suffering the penalties of violated human ordinances; who have striven more anxiously, and resolved and re-resolved more ardently against their besetting sin than ever; yet who have done, and yet, with diseased natures and perverted passions—the result of ante-natal conditions—stronger by far than their weak or blinded perceptions of law or duty.

"Like infants weak and untrained,
Advancing or afraid to stray,
They are whirled from their native heaven,
And utterly cast away."

Society discriminates fearfully, and brands both a criminal and that unfortunate, though both alike are the result of inexorable law. Man's power or incapacity to act otherwise is scouted, and enters not into the judgment dealt out. Some are as incapable of perceiving moral distinctions as a blind man of discerning colors, yet the moral blindness of the one no more deserves imprisonment here and damnation hereafter, than does physical blindness. Thousands of our moral outcasts and public prostitutes, were all the secrets of their nature disclosed, felt just as naturally and inevitably as you would stumble over a precipice in the dark.

The influence of mind upon offspring must be more carefully studied and facts recorded before we can rise to any wide generalizations. We

must break through the enormous wall of prejudice with which a mock delicacy has surrounded this subject. I have cited facts, and yet, though known to all, children are left to grow up in ignorance, and females become mothers with only such knowledge as they have derived surreptitiously. Instead of accumulating experience and forming a basis for scientific induction, every parent is left to find it out from their own personal experience, and close their lives regretting that the knowledge came too late. Their children grow up around them exhibiting traits of character of which the derivation is by no means doubtful.

Attention has been called of late to the alarming increase of infantile in our land. In 1869 Dr. W. B. Wright said to the Ohio State Medical Society that:

"The time is not far distant when children will be sacrificed among us with as little hesitation as among the Hindoos."

Dr. Reamy, in the same society, said that "We have become a nation of murderers."

Great and terrible as is this evil, still it is not one whit worse, morally, than creating life without a thought. Most of the children born into the world are the result of "accident," unintentionally conceived in the frenzy of lust and passion. If the drunkard can transmit his depraved appetite to his unborn offspring, the worshiper at the shrine of lust can bequeath his debased passions as well. Millions are conceived in moments of lustful indulgence, and their advent the subject of regret or "pious resignation to the decrees of Providence." Can a mother during gestation bewail her situation without great and serious injury? Our race will never be pure, the millennium will never dawn, the kingdom of God will never come as long as children are unwelcome, while succeeding generations are conceived in prostitution, for purity, chastity, holiness rests on deeper foundations than man's ordinances, and lust is none the less prostitution when plastered with a legal certificate, and the church is not increased in spiritual wealth by leading "foul lusts and secret crimes to the baptism and the communion."

Yet we would not be understood as maintaining that all habits are hereditary, for many are formed by the parties themselves in voluntarily associating with the vicious and depraved; but in what degree they were unable to resist the fascination of evil habits we know not. Many a child of temperate and Christian parents has fallen a victim to intemperance and filled a drunkard's grave. Society wonders at his fall, and his fond parents go down to their graves in sorrow and grief. Though the proclivity to intoxicating drinks was not implanted in his nature, still there may have been a natural inherited weakness to rely upon himself, a moral obliquity or indecision, which, under circumstances in which his parents were never placed, proved too powerful for his weak resistance.

The vow of the drunkard to refuse the cup, the deep resolve of the penitent thief to steal no more, and the tears of anguish shed by the most degraded prostitute, though useless and forgotten in the hour of temptation, are sweeter incense in the sight of the angel-world than the upright walk and saintly demeanor of those who know not the fatal allurements of temptation that beset the paths of the weak. Shall we, because particular sins may not be temptations to us, harshly chide those to whom they do prove insurmountable obstacles in life?

"Earth is sick, and Heaven is weary
Of the heartless words that States and Kingdoms utter,
When they talk of justice!"

A mother conceives a son in a moment of indulgence to blind passion, and when aware of the fact, whether influenced by poverty, cares, or a mere disinclination, attempts in vain to destroy that heaven-born germ, an immortal life, and ushers it into the world, no amount of "resignation to the decrees of an all-wise Providence," or the tenderest care, can obliterate all traces of the injury inflicted. The child grows to maturity, and in a moment of passion or revenge imbrues his hands in blood. He is tried before the tribunal of human justice; the jury decides and the judge pronounces the sentence of death, and on the scaffold a minister of the religion of Jesus, and in his name, adds his sanction to the tragic scene.

In a small village in Massachusetts, a case of transmitted appetite recently came to my knowledge. A young man of temperate parents had become so addicted to intemperance, in spite of all that could be brought to bear upon him, that his father had turned him out of doors as unworthy of kinship. His mother while on her dying bed counseled her husband to renewed endeavors and greater forbearance, stating that the fault was all her own. During her pregnancy she had craved for stimulants to inspire a feeling of strength, and by weakly indulging this feeling, had unconsciously impressed the appetite upon her unborn child. Such cases are familiar to all.

What then is our responsibility? Are we not still accountable? Can we not do as we please, and are we not responsible for so doing? Granting that cases you have cited, it will be asked, are we not still conscious of freedom? We have to think so. It is "mortifying" to our vanity to conclude otherwise, but is not pertinent to inquire whether this "innate consciousness of freedom" be not hemmed in and limited by conditions? Are not our "responsibilities" more narrow and contracted than we have generally supposed? In fact, the question will arise, in view of the foregoing facts, are we accountable beings? We do not hesitate to answer that we are; but not to such laws as theologians delight to depict, nor in the manner popularly supposed. We are accountable to the laws of our being; we are accountable to our own souls. It were a specious argument to conclude that we were but mere machines driven by inexorable law.

If you are consumptive, must you do nothing toward the preservation of your health? If your

blood is tainted with scrofula, do you leave it to work the destruction of your system without seeking to avoid or protract the approaching calamity?

If a man is crippled in his moral nature, if his perceptions of truth and duty are defective, if there exists a constitutional tendency to evil, he requires other correctives than prison here and hell hereafter. Good influences should surround him. If he is unequal to the trial of temptation, strive to prevent the temptation recurring; restrain and strengthen him; to reform is not to crush, but to lift up, to ennoble. Support his feeble perceptions as you would a weak limb or slanting sapling, before it has grown into a gnarled and crooked tree. Rejoice not in thy strength over him who lacks it. We are a part of the system of Nature, influenced by all and influencing all. We cannot assert in truth of any action, that, let the consequences be what they may, we alone will stand them. It is impossible so to do; Nature forbids it. We cannot more by the laws of our nature. The moral laws are channels of force as definable as physical laws, and our "innate consciousness of freedom" enables us to move with them, lest we be crushed in resisting them. This is the extent of our consciousness of freedom; it has no other. We are accountable for every child that we bring into the world in a greater or lesser degree.

By education, by enlightened will, aided by proper surroundings over which we have control, we may prevent the temptation occurring that will otherwise prove irresistible. By and through this great Law alone will humanity ever rise to a higher and purer condition. By availing ourselves of its plainest requirements and fulfilling its obvious demands, instead of blindly "trusting in Providence" and ignoring it, the race is to be redeemed, humanity elevated, and earth become a paradise covered with peace and holiness, "as the waters cover the sea."

But still it will be urged, what of man's responsibility for his own actions? We revolt from the idea that man, as an individual, has no other accountability than arises from his constituting an integral part of the community.

The human soul, influenced by such grand and ennobling aspirations, drinking at the fountain of living waters, breathing in divine inspiration and rising in its fervor above all human bonds and limitations, cannot be wholly imprisoned and limited by the grosser conditions of material existence. The Soul, we feel, we know, is not of matter, though manifesting through it.

"Life makes the soul dependent on the dust;
Death gives her wings to mount above the spheres.
Through chains—stayed organs—dim life peeps at light;
Death hurls the involving cloud, and all is day;
All eyes, all ears, the disembodied power."

How far, then, do these material conditions, arising from its connection with matter, and incidental to the material, affect the spiritual, influence the real, the everlasting, eternal soul? To leave the subject here, is to tacitly concede the materiality of the soul, to give matter predominance over the spiritual, while we hold that without spirit, matter were not.

Either those conditions, which are transmitted by material agency, affect and control the spirit, or they do not. If not, may we not then assert the superiority of the spiritual, and thus crush the material tendency to evil that ever hovers around our path? This is a pertinent question in this connection. In considering it, we must examine somewhat into the connection of soul and body, though our space forbids us to more than briefly touch the subject. We will state the conclusions to which we have been driven as conclusively as the subject will permit.

In earth-life the human soul is developed into a conscious living individuality. It receives its first degree of individualization before it has entered into the world, and its existence here is the continuation of the process. It is evolved by law in connection with material conditions necessary to the complete unfoldment of its being. It is one of the rounds in Nature's great ladder of Progress, who ever works upwards, each act being related to every preceding act. Consequently through matter alone can the soul ever become a conscious individuality. Therefore, we do not expect of it, while constituting but a round in the ladder, to occupy a perfectly independent relation.

The body is influenced by physical and mental conditions; so is the mind. The mind is the ligature that connects spirit and body. The mind may be dwarfed or imperiled, as well as the body, but the spirit is pure, undeviled. The body and mind are necessary to evolved spirit, and spirit can only manifest through them. Hence an agent of truth, being purely itself, manifesting through the material organism, must submit to the requirements of that organism. A man or a woman may know in their soul that a deed is wrong and sinful, yet the laws of their physical and mental being refuse to act upon those convictions.

Again, a mind may be conceived with such imperfect glimpses of truth that it cannot afford media for spiritual impressions; receiving, by natural conditions, an imperfect mental organism so as to conceive truth to be error, and plunge into excesses without receiving a protest from its spiritual nature sufficiently strong to be discernible. In that case he is not accountable, though he will live to gather in all the fruits of his profligacy. The fault was committed before him, and his earthly existence rendered what it is. Still, when the better nature of man revolts against the conduct of the mental, we should aid and strengthen its protests by the exercise of whatever will power we are capable of exerting.

Though you succumb, do not give up in despair; strike not your colors; and if you ever fall, fight on and go down into the waters of death with your colors of light and might—though unavailing—resolves firmly nailed to the mast, and then victory will be yours. We are responsible, not for succumbing to the superior requirements of

our material organism; not for the imperfect media in which our souls are lodged and with which they are evolved, but responsible if we heed not its warning tones urging us on to the great moral conflict incidental to earthly life. At death we no longer need the body. Mind and spirit continue on in the great future and enter into a new field of action, and much of the material chains that heretofore imprisoned the spirit are struck off.

The spirit-world needs no crutches for the malformed limb, no glasses for the defective eyesight, and no couch for the wearied frame. That is all passed away. But still it is not all free. The mind now constitutes its sole media; but that is formed here, affected and molded by material and mental conditions, just as transmissible as physical defects, and in the great future the conflict is renewed. The spirit remains fettered, evil still exists, until in the course of time the mind and spirit harmonize. The great temptations are removed, the mind no longer finds food for its unwholly appetites, and the conflict is certain to be ended by the supremacy of the spiritual; yet its duration is measured by the amount of evil to be eradicated. The great sins of earth-life are not carried with us, but memory and desire perish with the body, and in that state a person who has felt no love for the pure, who has not struggled against the weaknesses of the flesh, who has not been actuated by high and holy thoughts, his deeds live to torment him. Evil, then, is a condition appertaining to the material, not the spiritual, and we have it in our power to further the emancipation of spirit by strengthening its protests, even if we have not the power to restrain ourselves from all wrong doing.

But, in conclusion, let us revert to the fact that our greatest degree of accountability is that of parents. Every child that you bring into the world, every organism that you mold for the living germ of purity, owes its defects, in a large measure, to your own condition. Shall we then utter into life, unthinkingly, an immortal soul? Conceive it in a moment of lust and passion? Impress upon it habits that may require untold ages to overcome? We are responsible for acting unthinkingly, for stifling our aspirations and searing our soul's living protests.

Seek truth, even if you cannot attain it. Pursue the idea of justice, even though you remain destitute of the reality of its presence. Strive, strive, strive for perfection, in spite of whatever conditions may hamper you; succumb not in the conflict though often stricken down, and when death shall have removed the bars that confined you in the tabernacle of flesh, you will find that the struggle was not in vain. Our accountability is not for earth-life alone; that is a small matter compared with the infinite fields of our Father's estate. Struggle for purity; rise higher than human ordinances for your authority; fix your eyes on the eternal, immutable Law of the Universe, that requires not mere obedience to human enactments; that places chastity as the fulfilling of man's law, but standing in the presence and the full recognition of the universality of Law, proclaims **PHYSICAL CHASTITY** in every relation of life, and the future generations will be blessed thereby.

Springfield, Mass.

Correspondence in Brief.

E. PIATT, GARDEN CITY, MINN., writes: It gives me great pleasure to be able to say to you that I read the Banner with increased interest. It seems to me that there has been a gradual improvement, especially in the Message Department, since I commenced reading it. Blessings on the dear souls, in both spheres, who are throwing their talents, their energies and their influence into this glorious work.

LEO MILLER, APPLETON, WIS., writes: Will you please have Mr. A. B. Randall's name and address (Appleton, Wis.) put on your list of speakers? Mr. Randall has been for several years one of the leading Methodists of Wisconsin, but is now a most zealous Spiritualist, and a very able advocate of our philosophy. He has spoken several times for our Societies in this part of our State, and I am assured he will respond to calls to lecture, not too far from his home.

IRA SMITH, JR., writing from Grand Lodge, Mich., says: We wish you would give notice in the Banner of a lecture to be given by him in readiness to answer calls to lecture upon "A System of Religion based upon Science and Theology," embracing all the principles of the Spiritual Philosophy. We have had the pleasure of listening to a course of lectures delivered by him at our place, in which he has succeeded in perfecting an organization (of what is called "The Free Church of America of Grand Lodge"), containing the names of between forty and fifty individuals. His address is Lansing, Mich.

J. L. RUMRELL, WHITE RIVER JUNCTION, VT., in renewing his subscription, says: As I am seventy-two years of age, with more than twenty years in the faith of the Spiritual Philosophy, and my vision grows dim, and the material world recedes from view, I cannot well dispense with the Banner of Light, whose pages sparkle with light and life, to guide our wayward steps through the valley of death. To us it is a central sun, around which lesser lights revolve, but all play their part in the great drama of life. Its folds never be furled nor cease to glow until all have passed to the Summer-Land, where perpetual day dispels the gloom of night.

J. H. POWELL, writing from Vineland, N. J., under date of Feb. 4th, says: I have just received some information relating to "Spiritualism in England," from my friend, Mr. Robert Cooper. First, he tells me that the Davenport Brothers are in the act of France, next that a spirit, "Humphrey Short," my wife's father, came to Mr. Wallace, and told the circle that we were not doing well here in America. Likewise, that the same information was given by a spirit-voice at the Marshalls. Since I have been here in this country, it appears that spirits talk at the Marshalls' stances quite freely and lengthily. I learn further, that Mr. Chamberlain's house, Kingston-on-Thames, is quite a chapel for the spirits; they preach sermons and sing hymns containing doctrines not quite in the order of progress. But as far as progress goes in the phenomenal phases of life, the mediumship, it is wonderful. Are not the dry bones of skepticism soon to shake under the power of Spiritualism in the old country?

J. B. CLUTE, NEW YORK, says: Doctor Foster, of the Fourth-street M. E. Church, this city, made a splendid effort, Jan. 19th, 1868, from the text: "There is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth than ninety-nine who need no repentance." Turn to the text, and read it for yourself. But to the object of this communication. Any man at all conversant with the Spiritual Philosophy would have supposed that he was under spirit influence, and was speaking their language; and from the apparent honesty of the man, I, for one, do think he is a medium, and speaks from inspiration. His theory was, that if we could divest ourselves of the idea of God and heaven being afar off, and could see with a spirit vision, the church in which he was then speaking would be filled with angels and the spirits of "the just made perfect." Yes, he went further, saying that God himself would be seen also. Anxious to see the sinner forsake evil and become righteous, to show the anxiety of heaven to save, he quoted that splendid effort of Burritt (the "learned blacksmith") of the boy at the Natural Bridge in Virginia, calling his name in the rock as he passed. The effect was splendid, and the breathless silence of the audience was such as to give the lie to total depravity. I think at this point he should have stopped, for then the influence seemed to leave him, and he returned to the old line of preaching.

Children's Department.

BY MRS. LOVE M. WILLIS,
Address care of Dr. F. L. H. Willis, Post-office box 20,
Station D, New York City.

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

(Original.) SNOW-BOUND.

It was a wild storm, and no one would have thought of going out but two little daring children, who thought it the best fun in the world to plow through the drifts and face the cutting north-easter. So now there were five of us, though anybody would have said there were twenty by the scampering and shouting; for if there was ever a time made for play, it is during a good snowstorm.

But "hide-and-seek," and "touch gool," and "hunt the thimble," were at last worn out, and no better than any tiresome thing, and the four little figures and the one large one gathered about what would be the sunny window when the storm was over. And the four little faces looked as if there were some great trouble in store, and the eight little eyes looked as dull as if there had never been any fun in the world.

"What shall we play next?" was the question that revealed all the trouble, and showed why the eyes looked heavy; for not to know what to do is one of the greatest of trials to children.

"Let us tell stories,"

"Oh yes," "do," "that will be 'pendid,'" was the response.

"Then you shall begin, you little ten-year-old. Now don't laugh."

"Well, once there was a great king, and he thought he would like to do some great thing. So he sent out his princes to give gifts, and each one could choose what he would have; and one took a gold ring, and one a necklace, and they all hurried to take something, only a little boy, and he waited till all had chosen and he took what was left, and that was a poor little white stone. Then they all laughed and put on their pretty gifts, but the little boy took his and touched a piece of wood with it, and it turned to beautiful silver, and everything he touched became silver, and the king said:

"That is always the way. Those that are not selfish get the best. And besides, I make this boy my son."

And then he had a fine time.

That is all my story, but I did n't make it all; some of it I read."

"Come, you little busy brain of eight summers, let us have your story."

"Once there was a great giant and he lived in the mountains, and there was nothing he wanted so much as to make little boys not mind their mothers; and so he coaxed one little boy to come and pick some blueberries, and he went, but when the sun got almost down the little boy would go down the mountain because his mother told him to. Then he coaxed another to come up and get some moss, and he went; and his mother told him not to stay after the great bell struck six, but he stayed, and the great giant hugged and kissed him and called him his dear son. But every time he hugged him it hurt him as if he had been in a vice; and every time he kissed him it felt as if there was a blister. And when he put him on his bed it was as hard as a rock. And he wished he was at home; and he cried and cried, till the old giant said, 'Who wants a cry-baby? Not I—not I.' And he put the boy out of his house and he ran home, and always minded his mother. That's all my story."

"Well done. And now, you little laughing five-year-old gipsy, let's have your story."

"Once there was a pig and a duck, and they lived together till the pig got cross, and then the duck went home. And as she was going she met a hen, and she said:

"Mrs. Hen, did you ever know any one so cross as the old pig?"

"None but yourself, ma'am."

Then she met an old grey goose, and she said:

"Did you ever know any one so hateful as the pig?"

"None but her company," said the goose.

Then the old duck went home. And that's all my story."

"Which means that one is known by the company he keeps. Well, little pussy, almost three years old, let us have your story."

"Once there was a little boy and he said to a little girl, 'Will you go to the flower-fields with me to get some flowers?' And the little girl said, 'I'd be 'lighted to.' So they went. And the little girl 'tumbled the little boy all over with flowers, and one of the most beautiful flowers fell to the ground, and the little girl picked it up and put it in her hair."

"And for that little story you shall have six kisses, for it is all your own, out of your own little heart. And here is the story from the rocking-chair:

Now you must know that fairies are very funny little things; very much like little children; and little fairy Bell was so much like a little girl I have seen, that perhaps you will think I am telling a story of her, but I am not. Fairy Bell was very pretty. She had the softest of blue eyes and the sweetest of mouths, and her hair curled in soft waving curls.

But with all this outside beauty there was something wrong about fairy Bell, for she used to say all sorts of unkind, rude things. She called other little fairies by hard names, and she used to begin every sentence with some disagreeable phrase, such as, 'By gracious!' and 'Oh jimmie!' 'My stars!' and the like. Of course you will say it was very strange that a dear little fairy, with her dress made of a rose leaf, and a hat of a white elder blossom, could ever be so rude and unkind-like. But I can assure you that fine dresses don't make people use fine phrases.

But fairy Bell's mamma felt very much troubled by her daughter's rude speech, and she said that something very serious must be the trouble with her, and she should immediately send for the family physician, which I really think was a very wise thing for her to do. The very wise doctor said that all that ailed fairy Bell was too much wormwood in her blood, for nothing else could make her say such bitter things of others. He said, also, that it was a very dangerous complaint, and would lead to something much worse, for he had known grown folks up in the big world get the most dreadful of complaints by calling hard names and repeating ill-tempered things.

So he ordered the homoeopathic remedy, that should cure by the like, and told her mother to give her as much wormwood juice as would lie on the point of a thorn. Fairy Bell thought there was never anything so bitter, and she cried a good deal at having to repeat the dose every hour. But she got no better, and her mother called the doctor a quack and called in another.

His opinion of the dreadful trouble was just like that of the first physician. But he ordered her to take a bath of gall. He declared that her words were as full of bitterness as gall, and that to be cured she must have a counter irritant. Poor Bell thought it was terrible, and surely it was, for she was altogether bitter now; surely it was, for she tasted as if she were full of gall. But this remedy did no good, and her mother said this doctor was a greater quack than the first.

Then they called others to her, but none did her good, and her mother was quite in despair; and who could wonder, for was it not sad to know that so beautiful an outside was only full of bitterness within?

Now it was near the time for the visit of the fairy queen, who always came with blessings for her subjects, and fairy Bell's mother resolved that she would not seek for gifts for herself, but beg for something that should bless her unfortunate child. So she wore a veil out of the thistle-down and colored it with the dark purple juice of the pansy petals, to signify that she was in trouble and needed help. When the queen saw her, she said:

"Why do you dress yourself in the garb of mourning? I thought you the happiest of women, with a home of beauty and a child as lovely as the white heath blossom."

"Ah, little you know my sorrow! I have a child handsomer than all the children of the realm, but some terrible affliction is hers. She is full of bitterness. Her speech is rude, and shows no kindness of heart."

"Try old Doctor Pillsbury."

"My gracious sovereign, I have."

"Then old Doctor Soakem."

"Your highness, I have."

"The case is then sad. I will give you a talkman. When your daughter wears this bracelet she shall see all her words as they flow from her. Her sweet, good ones shall be fair flowers or gems or golden seed, but all her rude speech shall fall before her as thorns as crawling reptiles, as arrows, as loathsome slime."

Fairy Bell's mother took the bracelet with a gracious bow, and soon placed it on her daughter's arm, and fastened it with the secret clasp the queen had shown to her. The little fairy was as pleased with the pretty ornament as little girls are of gold and gems, for she knew not its secret use. She went out to play under the shade of a violet, with a dozen other little ones, and, as usual, she soon began her rude speech.

"You hateful things! you are as mean as the dirt! by gracious! I'll bet you are!"

But these words all turned into frightful things. There were crawling bugs and little swords and horns and a great puff of black smoke. But fairy Bell did not realize that she was the cause of the frightful things, and she scampered off with the rest to dance on a petal of the wild rose. Here she got so angry that she flew into a dreadful passion and poured forth her angry speech like a tempest, and there fell about her heads and green snakes and thistles and thorns. And so it was wherever she went, till she got quite worn out with excitement and fear, and came to her mother for an explanation of her troubles.

"Try sweet words, my child, and see what comes to you."

So fairy Bell played with her little sister, and talked to her lovingly, and helped her in her little baby tricks, and the most lovely of violets and forget-me-nots dropped about her. Thus it continued till she found she had power to scatter beauty or ugliness wherever she went. So afraid did she become of making hideous things, that she guarded her words and reformed her manners, till she was quite a changed child.

Old Doctor Pillsbury said no doubt but it was the dose of wormwood after all, and all the other doctors could find various excellent reasons for her recovery from her dangerous malady. But the good mother blessed the fairy queen for her gift, and embroidered her a mantle with a design of roses and pansies to give to her the next festival day. On taking it the queen made the following speech:

"It has been shown to you, in the case of fairy Bell, how all your words are beautiful or hideous, and how easy it is for you to make the world lovely or hateful. No word ever spoken is lost, but is a power of good or evil. Then, my beloved children, see how much you can do in creating beauty, for you have each more power than your queen."

It remains only to be told that fairy Bell became one of the dearest children that lived in the fairy kingdom."

"Well, I'm glad," said the ten-year-old occupant of the chair next to the rocking-chair, "pretty glad I'm not a fairy!"

"Lucky for us all!" said the wise-eyed eight-year-old.

"Ah, my little ones!" said the occupant of the rocking-chair, "fairy land differs in no way from the world we inhabit. It is only a little picture of great things. Every word we speak is like fairy Bell's, and though we cannot see the hideous things, yet each word of love and goodness is a power of beauty, and each unkind, rude speech is a power of ugliness. Will you not make the world blossom afresh each day by your goodness and love?"

But the sled was at the door, and the thought of the merry ride through the drifts drove away all thought of the answer; but in the pleasant parting and good wishes the shadowy door seemed covered with flowers and gems, and there was no winter there.

(Original.) BE YOURSELF.

How many lies are told in this world by people to set up false images of themselves before others. How few are willing and satisfied to be known and appreciated for what they are really worth.

This is true in all the relations of life, more or less. But I especially deplore the evil when I see it manifested in families before children. Parents, you know not what you do when you allow your little ones to imitate deceit and falsehood from your actions. They are learning lessons now that will mold their characters for manhood and womanhood. Teach them to be honest and frank by your example. Let them know you are not afraid to live true to your own thoughts and feelings. Don't try to pass in the market for more than you are worth. That mask of deception is a shallow affair after all, which is easily penetrated and will often cause you shame and ridicule.

Be willing to work in the place you are best adapted to fill. Be not too ambitious for self-exaltation; seek rather to serve and benefit your fellow beings. Oh, what a mighty reform would there be if every-if all Spiritualists would make that their motto, each ready and glad to serve humanity in the noblest manner in which they are qualified, however humble the service, and glad if another is able to render mightier deeds.

A TEACHER.

Governor Stone estimates the population of Iowa to be at least a million. The past year is said to be the most prosperous in its history.

Written for the Banner of Light. THERE IS WORK TO BE DONE. BY J. A. FIELD.

Away, oh, away, there is work to be done,
Ere passeth the morning, ere setteth the sun,
Ere death's icy fingers around the shaft wind,
And the soul from the fetters of earth shall unwind.
Dream idly no longer of dogmas and creeds,
But scatter with freedom love's luminous seeds;
And voices shall cheer thee, from bright, stellar spheres,
The self-journing man in his pride never hears.

Thy brother, in rage, standeth close at thy side—
Thy famishing sister, with tears but half-dried—
Ask not if they're worthy, oh, take them on trust.
God giveth his rain to the just and unjust.

If thy purse ringeth faintly, then give thou a mite,
Nor blush that a trifle is brought to the light.
The angels see clearly the motive, I ween;
They judge of the act like the pure Nazarene.

If never a farthing thou hast to bestow,
Let sympathy's treasures in kindness outflow;
With words full of music illumine their souls,
As God's golden sunshine the shadowy folds.

Sweet patience and hope, that had bidden farewell,
May quickly return in their bosoms to dwell;
And their forms stand erect in grave beauty once more,
Like the wind-stricken reeds when the tempest is o'er.

Superstition go seek in Cimmerian caves,
Where forged are her shackles, where gyred are
her slaves;
And set thou fair reason again on her feet,
To fly from the crafty, gigantic Affect.

Anoint the one eye of the bigot, till light
Reveals to his optic both justice and right;
The veil of weak prejudice rend thou in twain,
And error prohibitive from weaving again.

Oh, brothers, oh, sisters, now cometh the hour!
Work, work with the angels in wisdom and power,
Till want, crime and falsehood shall hasten away
Before the true lights that are beaming to-day.

The Lecture Room.

Musie Hall Meetings.

On Sunday afternoon, February 21, Mrs. Alcinda Wilhelm made her first appearance in Boston at the Music Hall. The audience was good, and the utmost attention was paid to her address, a brief sketch of which we give below:

She announced her subject to be: "Death, the Resurrection and the Judgment," and said that in the past much of ignorance and error had resulted from the teaching that there was a special occasion for death, and a special occasion for resurrection, followed, in its turn, by judgment. As we gazed upon the panorama of by-gone days we became aware that the brightness had been obscured by early education, and that the ideas we had received were anything but soul sustaining and satisfactory. But, in latter times, clairvoyance had taught us much, and now Spiritualism came to dissipate the dark shadows, and our hearts were cheered with the assurance that death, resurrection and the judgment were one event.

Death was but the result of the law of change, not the visitation of a penalty because of some unbelief of the race in the babyhood of the past. We perceived that the law of death, or change, was all nature; lower forms could not rise higher unless by dying. The farmer ought to have the lesson taught him by the seed he dropped in the ground, which could not bring forth the harvest unless it gave birth, through death, to the germ thereof. The germ did not die, only the outer shell; it could not live in a lower grade and yet gain a higher form. The butterfly was a worm entombed in a chrysalis; ere it spread its gauzy wing in the summer air, the sun presented to us, at stated intervals, what we called night; but it was only an index of a new day. So with the seasons; spring must die that summer might be born; summer must pass that the autumn fruitage might come; time clothed each in a garment fitted for its use, till winter wrapped all in its winding-sheet of snow. We died from the cradle to the grave; we were continually throwing off particles of matter, and those who died held the other shell; it could not live in a lower grade and yet gain a higher form. The butterfly was a worm entombed in a chrysalis; ere it spread its gauzy wing in the summer air, the sun presented to us, at stated intervals, what we called night; but it was only an index of a new day. So with the seasons; spring must die that summer might be born; summer must pass that the autumn fruitage might come; time clothed each in a garment fitted for its use, till winter wrapped all in its winding-sheet of snow. We died from the cradle to the grave; we were continually throwing off particles of matter, and those who died held the other shell; it could not live in a lower grade and yet gain a higher form. 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[To be concluded in our next].

A Practical Test of Spirit-Power.

Ever since Spiritualism has had a name among men, the query has been propounded by the hard-headed and skeptically disposed, with an air of triumphant objection as if it were an irrefragable clincher—"Of what practical good is Spiritualism?" Though this is a one-sided, snap-judgment sort of way to regard anything of this character, much less so grand and comprehensive a movement as this is, and though the objection comes from persons who deal rather with objective life, from minds largely materialistic, still it is perhaps a perfectly legitimate objection as far as it goes, for it is impossible to lose sight of the fact that we "live and move and have our being" in a terribly practical world. In a general way, utility meets us on every hand. Men engaged in and absorbed by business, six-sevenths of their time, more or less, will of necessity consider everything with reference to whether it pays, or what good it does. Thus persons of this class are far less likely to give attention to such a subject as is Spiritualism, until it has fairly demonstrated itself, than those who are otherwise inclined.

Since the time when our thought became centered in this cause, have we been specially interested in considering its practical side; hence all facts relating thereto, particularly those falling under our own observation, possess for us a peculiar pleasure and significance.

Our favorite method is to classify Spiritualism under three heads: The Religious, the Philosophical and the Practical.

The other day we became conversant with a fact which naturally comes under the latter head, and which is deemed eminently worthy of record.

A highly respectable lady of South Boston, Miss E. G. Severance, gifted with rare clairvoyant powers and very favorably known as a trance medium, having suffered years of anguish from decayed teeth, finally resolved to have the remaining ones removed, and artificial ones substituted. With this end in view she visited a dentist, to whom she had been recommended, Dr. Wm. L. Johnson, of Winter street, Boston, and made the necessary arrangements.

At the time appointed, in company with a friend or two, she duly presented herself to the man of forceps, and took her seat in the operating chair, all the while fearfully dreading the result. It had been previously stipulated that ether was to be administered, if deemed necessary. While the doctor was making his preliminary examination he observed that the lady was in a very unusual and peculiar state—was, in fact, unconscious, or nearly so. Asking if she was ready to have him proceed, she negatively shook her head. In a few minutes she spoke, in a voice entirely different from her own, but which her friends present knew to be that of a little Indian spirit-girl—"Sunlight"—who is daily accustomed to control her. After receiving satisfactory replies to several questions, she said all was ready. But it appears that "Sunlight" did not have much enough to stand the pain incident to extracting teeth, and left; when another spirit, known to the friends of the medium as "Harry Smith," took control. The doctor, an accomplished professor of his art, then began, and did not cease till obliged to for lack of physical strength, affirming afterwards that they were the most difficult teeth to extract he ever met with.

Resting a while, he began again, and succeeded in removing the balance, thirteen in all, without one particle of pain to the lady, who, during the entire operation, was totally oblivious to what was done, being thoroughly under spirit-control. Coming to herself, she could scarcely realize the wonderful fact, even with all the evidence before her.

Surely this lady has experienced in her own person a practical manifestation of the value and virtue of one phase of Spiritualism. Having heretofore given to others, wholly gratuitously, the most satisfactory and material evidence of the practical good in Spiritualism, it was perhaps by way of compensation in part that she herself was so unexpectedly made to test the virtue of her mediumistic powers.

Without doubt the above case can be duplicated elsewhere. In fact, the same dentist states that he had a similar case once before, which equally astonished him as well as his patron. It is well to keep these facts before the people. A continuous line of such evidence, in the practical department of Spiritualism, is valuable as furnishing additional proof to the doubting, and is also needed to augment the accumulative testimony which reaches us on every side, through every department.

Doston, Feb. 10, 1868. G. A. B.

From Georgia.

Dr. J. R. Newton greeted our city in a lecture on the 20th of January, and healed the sick until the 8th of February, with marked success—treating over three thousand persons who were afflicted with all manner of maladies.

He was received by the people with profound respect, and has left many behind him in this city who have reason to love and revere him. He left us on the 8th of February for Savannah, very much to the regret of a large circle of newly made friends, who were importunate for a longer stay. He had only broken the incrustations, and a steady stream of the afflicted would have set in for our goodly city who are turning their faces now toward Savannah. God and ministering angels bless our brother.

Dr. P. Clark has chosen our neighboring town of Warrenton as his field of labor for awhile, and is heartily received, also. What medium for physical manifestations will volunteer for this field?

Fraternally,
HENRY J. OSBORNE.

Augusta, Ga., Feb. 6, 1868.

Meetings in Fitchburg.

The good work moves steadily on under the inspiration of the angel-world, as it comes to us through the mediumship of such souls as Mrs. Taber, of New Bedford, (who was with us during January), and Mrs. Sarah Helen Matthews (the past two Sundays). They were with us previous to the formation of our Lyceum, and awakened much of the interest that led to its organization. Mrs. Matthews dedicated our new hall, which is large and commodious, with ante-rooms for our Lyceum. The other hall was not large enough to hold the audiences after we organized the Lyceum. Mrs. Matthews has given the best of satisfaction here, both as a speaker and as a test medium and psychometrical reader. At the close of her last evening lecture, the following resolution was passed by a unanimous vote:

Resolved, That we tender to Mrs. Matthews our warmest thanks for her labor with us, both at her previous engagement and at the present time, and earnestly hope that we shall have the pleasure of listening to her at some future time.

N. A. AMBOTT, Sec.

To the Spiritual Societies near Boston.

As I am to lecture before the Music Hall Spiritual Society on the third Sunday of March next, I would like to speak before some spiritual society near Boston on the fourth Sunday of that month. Address me either at Troy, N. Y., or at the Banner of Light Office. Respectfully yours,
SILVER J. FERRY.

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

Banner of Light.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1868.

OFFICE 188 WASHINGTON STREET,

ROOM No. 1, UP STAIRS.

WILLIAM WHITE & CO.,

PUBLISHERS AND PROPRIETORS.

WILLIAM WHITE. CHARLES H. CROWELL.

LUTHER COLBY, EDITOR.

LEWIS B. WILSON, ASSISTANT EDITOR.

All letters and communications forwarded to this Office for publication must, in order to receive attention, be addressed to Luther Colby.

The Summer-Land.

All hearts yearn that way. Home is the object of universal desire; and summer is the beautiful season to which every one's instincts reach forward. To dwell thoughtfully on the inspired pages of Davis, in his "Stellar Key," where he describes with marvelous minuteness the glories and delights of the new worlds among which our lot is to be cast, is like being transported to the same in spirit already, and partaking of the enjoyments that are both numberless and nameless in that blessed realm.

It is not a fondness for the speculative merely that draws people to this engrossing subject; nor is it the love of mystery which is so strong in every nature; but it is the living desire to realize more and more those aspirations of the soul which, as they are the ideal of life, so they are its guide, chastener and perfection. Hence the inspired descriptions of the spheres into which we are all to be ushered at death, in Mr. Davis's book, are precisely what the soul craves. Hence they go very far to gratify that earnest yearning after "that attractive Spiritual Zone, which blends, astronomically and mathematically, the finite with the infinite." Hence they are unexpressed gratified with the written account and explanation of "that higher land which, accepting the testimony of seers, rolls embosomed in the Stellar Universe." Says the author of "The Stellar Key"—"The faithful, truthful, logical thinker, knows that the visible world is but a veil, a material garment, transparent to the spirit's eyes, hiding from physical vision the formative powers which are eternal. The material constitution and substantiality of the Summer-Land become a 'matter of fact' to that mind which is structurally endowed and unfolded by culture to discern the harmonious essences that perpetually build up the temple of the universe, and which can

Look through natural forms,
And feel the thrilling ardors of Law
In every pulse of Nature and of Man."

We quote again: "According to my most careful examinations of the physical structure of the Summer-Land, the fertile soils and the lovely groves and vines and flowers which infinitely diversify the landscape, are constituted of particles that were once in human bodies! But the world-rearing principles, by which those particles were attracted from the human emanations of all the inhabited planets in the solar belt called the Milky Way, are from the spiritual universe. These human emanations, like the lights and flames of crystals and magnets, flow forth unceasingly, in millions of tons daily, into the souls of the celestial lands." Citing the astronomers and the results they have reached and set down, Mr. Davis says—"There are, then, one hundred and forty-eight millions of stars, and our sun is one of them only. The mass of our earth is but the three hundred and forty-five millionth part of that one sun; and we are but an atom in relation to our earth. The place we occupy is, then, infinitely small, and we more than infinitely little."

As for the dimensions of the Summer-Land, Mr. Davis is unwilling to be satisfied with the conception that is content with a zone sixty degrees wide around the equator, at the distance of the moon. So limited a spirit-sphere, he says, finds no response in reason. With two millions of souls leaving the earth every year, in a hundred thousand years a zone would be found very much contracted for their accommodation and growth. "Look out upon this boundless universe of God," he says. "How many peopled worlds are swinging through the vast ocean of immensity! Shall there be no unitive World where all these peoples associate? Are we to be confined to this little speck of earth, this mote of shadow in the everlasting sunbeam? Why has God given me my social nature, if I am not to feel the waves of affection that float from the immortal Societies arisen from other worlds? And what room have I for immortal associations on such a little spiritual sphere as that which is supposed to environ this planet? No, no; give me a sphere vast enough to unfold all the relations of the innumerable worlds of the universe—a space commensurate with the grandeur and glory and vastness of that universe—a universal Summer-Land."

All who would achieve a desirable elevation of their mentality, who would have their brain powers overpowered and controlled by psychological laws, who desire to inspire the intellectual to the highest degree by subordinating it to the spiritual altogether, will find the close and reverent study of the interior of the distant Summer-Land, as Mr. Davis has depicted it in his compact little book, the means of leading them to a higher stage of experience, and a happier one, than was ever known to them before.

This Winter's Poor.

There are so many poor and destitute people everywhere this winter, owing to the paralyzed state of all industrial employment, that it has been found necessary in the cities to open soup-houses, at which such persons may each day in the week obtain the relief they so sorely need. Boston has within ten days gone into this truly charitable arrangement, and opened nine such places where the poor are supplied once a day with hot soup and chowder, to be eaten on the spot or taken away for family use. The privilege has already been largely availed of, and numbers have been saved from suffering. The City Government has voted to continue this charity through the months of February and March, and no doubt will do it still longer if sharp necessity bites. New York abounds a hundred fold with the hungry and destitute, who continually apply for succor. Thousands are without shelter nightly from the rigors of the season. But the lack of food pinches harder than the want of a place to sleep. Philadelphia and indeed all the cities to the West are troubled with a similar unfortunate state of things. In fact, it is a winter to be long remembered for the general diffusion of the misery it has witnessed. Until the warm breath of spring revives us, and there are awakening hopes of more active business in all its departments, little remains to be done but to help one another. This is the very time, therefore, to prove the quality of our nature. If we are indeed brethren, let us say so and be so without further ceremony.

Testimonial to Mr. Shorter.

No man in England has done more for the cause of Spiritualism than Mr. Thomas Shorter, some of whose works have been published under his Latinized name of *Brevior*. As a writer we do not think he has his superior among Spiritualists. With a clear and vigorous style, he is scrupulous and exact in his facts, and logically accurate in his dialectics. He is the author of a very able and elaborate work, recently published in London, entitled "The Two Worlds," which is a compendium of the History of Spiritualism, and worthy of the place of honor in every Spiritualist's library. But few copies of this work have yet found their way to this country. He is also the author of "Confessions of a Truth-Seeker," a treasury of facts and arguments; also of an excellent treatise, passage from which we quoted some time since in the Banner, entitled "What is Religion?" These services to Spiritualism have not only been given wholly gratuitously, but the publication of his book has been to him a pecuniary loss. From the earliest establishment of spiritual journalism in England, Mr. Shorter has devoted all his energies to advance the knowledge of it by his pen. His writings, carefully prepared, and exhibiting the marks of superior culture and philosophical accomplishment, are of a character to meet the demands of a critical taste, and at the same time to interest and instruct the many.

In the midst of his valuable labors in the good cause, and unquestionably in no small degree in consequence of them, (as we learn from the London Spiritual Magazine), a calamity of the most grievous kind has recently fallen on Mr. Shorter—the nearly total, and it is feared, the ultimately total loss of his sight. This deep trial has compelled him to resign the situation which he has held for upwards of twelve years in London, and has taken from him his chief means of support. Under these circumstances, the friends of Spiritualism in England are trying to raise a fund to invest for his benefit; and a committee, of which William Howitt, W. M. Wilkinson, Benjamin Coleman, and other well known English Spiritualists are members, has been formed to receive contributions. The Treasurer is Henry Blefield, Esq., 208 Euston Road, N. W., London.

We have had no application whatever from any friend of Mr. Shorter, or any English Spiritualist, to invite contributions to this cause from American brethren. Probably our English friends think we have enough of our own poor to take care of. But spontaneously, and from a profound sense of what all Spiritualists, of whatever nation, owe to Mr. Shorter, we call the attention of American Spiritualists to this movement in behalf of a most worthy man and gifted advocate of our cause. If all the readers of the Banner would each send even a small fractional contribution, quite a handsome sum would be raised for Mr. Shorter by his American well-wishers. But there are many who may wish to do more. To all we would say, send what you can afford in this cause to the Editor of the Banner of Light, Boston; and the contributions shall be duly acknowledged and forwarded to England to swell the testimonial which Spiritualists there are getting up for Mr. Thomas Shorter. We can assure our friends that we know of no one more honorably entitled to such a testimonial, than this modest, unobtrusive, but most able and self-sacrificing champion of spiritual truth. He has given freely, of life, time and money in its behalf; let him now receive something from those who can appreciate his services, and sympathize with his loss of sight.

Weighed in the Balance and Found Wanting.

W. Samson, of Hammoncton, N. J., says in a letter to us that E. Z. Wickes was well known by him years ago in Minnesota; that he (Wickes) was "a religious enthusiast—a Methodist;" that "he was not recognized by the Spiritualists as a Spiritualist, neither did he claim to be one, but, on the contrary, denounced Spiritualists and Spiritualism at a lecture which he gave in my hall on a certain time."

Wickes himself, in a card copied into our last issue, corroborates friend Samson's statement; yet, notwithstanding all this reliable evidence, the "religious" (?) "Christian" (?) press of the country are still loud in their denunciations of the Spiritual Philosophy, in consequence of the shortcomings of such men! Will the Universalist, Baptist, Methodist and Orthodox editors—who have published the slander, who were quick to do so and our cause justice by publishing the refutation of the lie they have so ostentatiously paraded before their readers? Knowing them as we do, we fear not. Yet they profess to be governed, in their intercourse with their fellow-men, by the teachings of the humble Nazarene. When any of these organs do us justice in this respect we shall be most happy to inform our readers.

Women on the School Committee.

As this subject has been under discussion in the Massachusetts House of Representatives, and is now upon the table for future consideration, it is proper to state that it was introduced by the unanimous action of the Committee on Education; and that the Committee, aside from all other considerations, had the recommendation of the learned Board of Education in favor of the project. A paragraph in the forthcoming report reads as follows:

WOMEN ON THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE.—In all our towns it is difficult to find men to put on the School Committee, who have both time and ability for the work. But in all our towns there are women who have had experience in teaching children, who are deeply interested in education, and who, moreover, have ample time to attend to the business. Some towns in the Commonwealth have already chosen women on the School Committee. But as the legality of this proceeding has been doubted, and as the advantages of it, in many instances, are unquestionable, this Board would recommend to the General Court to pass a law, distinctly authorizing any town in the Commonwealth to put on the School Committee a certain proportion of women, unless the present law be considered adequate.

This report is signed—Alex. H. Bullock, Wm. Claflin, James Freeman Clarke, John P. Marshall, George D. Wiles, William Rice, Emory Washburn, Samuel T. Seelye, John D. Philbrick, David H. Mason.

Music Hall Meetings.

Mrs. Alcinda Wilhelm's second lecture in Music Hall, in this city, Sunday afternoon, February 9th, was well appreciated by those who had the courage to come out in such stormy weather. The audience, however, was larger than any the churches were able to bring together. We shall give a brief report of her lecture in our next issue.

Next Sunday, Mr. J. G. Fish exchabages with Mrs. Wilhelm, she speaking for him in Worcester, and he in Music Hall. Mr. Fish is a gentleman of liberal education, and for many years was a prominent Baptist clergyman. For half-a-dozen years or more he has devoted his talents to the cause of Spiritualism, and ranks with the ablest lecturers we have in the field. His highly inspirational powers, added to his fine epistles, peculiarly fit him for the rostrum. We can promise a liberal treat to all who listen to his eloquent teachings.

The Twentieth Anniversary.

The arrangements are progressing as fast as they can for the observance of the approaching twentieth anniversary of the birth of Modern Spiritualism in this city, and a large attendance is expected to testify to the profound gratification of the community of Spiritualists at the event through which they have secured liberty and redemption. Such a celebration ought certainly to be a triumphant affair—no half-way matter; but entered upon with the zeal that leaps out of grateful hearts. We shall look for such a gathering on this occasion as will be worthy of the grand importance of the event it commemorates. Music Hall and Bumstead Hall, we are pleased to state, have been secured for the 31st of March, and public exercises of the most interesting character will be held in them during the day and evening. The great multitudes present will be welcomed with the notes of the organ, and the voices of innocent children. The exercises will fitly conclude with dancing, with the best of music by a full band. Speeches will be offered and an original poem be given. In short, it will be a time of great festivity, joy and gladness ruling the hour. Since the stone was rolled away from the sepulchre of the human mind twenty years ago, what wonderful changes have been wrought in and upon society by the power of the Spirits! It is to commemorate that dawn of our New Faith, that new rising of the Sun of Immortality, that this Grand Festival has been planned and will be carried out to a brilliant and deserved success.

Written for the Banner of Light.

REST.

BY WILFRED WYLLIES.

We long for peace, we sigh for rest,
While doubts and fears disturb the breast
By irksome cares and toils oppressed.

With hopes elated we wander far
Amidst the world's rough strife and jar,
Rest still for aye the distant star.

That sheds its *ignis fatuus* light
Across each dark and gloomy night,
To guide our steps and cheer our sight;

A beacon light that glimmers o'er
The borders of that future shore,
Where peace, for us, is still in store.

We stonily strive to win that strand,
With toil of brain and toll of hand;
But, tired and faint, at last we stand,

And through the mists that round us rise,
The bitter tears that blind our eyes,
The promised joys we overprize.

Ah! we are mad who think to find
Rest in this life for frame or mind;
There is no rest for humankind.

Save in the path of toll alone,
With duties thickly overgrown;
He there finds rest who knows his own.

For peace and rest will come like balm
From bruised flowers, and bring their calm
To him who, wounded, grasps the palm.

Value of Association.

Association is the law of human growth. It draws on the interests as well as the sympathies, though in a different manner. Individual action is almost going out of fashion. We need but look around on the various societies—Odd Fellows, Masons, Insurance Companies, Cooperative Stores—to see how intimately they affect the progress of affairs, and how powerfully they operate on the social sentiment that rules. It is admitted on all sides that association is, in a certain sense, equivalent to the application of an entirely new power by the multiplication of the old one. But to leave the work to such a power entirely, and presume to ignore the individual influence, is a fatal mistake. For what flows into the associated form flows out from the individual life in the first place. Water cannot be carried higher than the fountain; and a single slender column of it in a tube is as powerful as the whole sea. Reform movements in the mass, as armies move, may be all very well, especially to look at and receive the impression they almost invariably leave on the mind; but to neglect individual effort and rely on what association alone can do, is an error that it might not in all cases be easy to remedy. Associations are unquestionably good for the purpose of providing means to do work with, but it all resolves itself into individual effort at the last. It will never do to think of sinking the individual in the aggregated form; the true spirit lives only in the former.

"Revivals."

Since business has become so intolerably dull, we notice that "revivals" are started up again. It was so in the panic and succeeding dullness of '87, and we might expect to find it so now. So we hear of great "interest" being manifested in this place and that, which the preachers assume to be involuntary testimony for Christ. That is the phraseology they use. In Wells River, Vt., it is said that "most of the influential business men have come out on the side of Christ." The Praying Bands are starting up again in New York. There is awakened "interest" in Hartford, Conn. The Praying Bands at Bloomington, Ill., mentioned a few weeks ago that God is "overshadowing our city," and people are openly "mentioning" the name of the Almighty. This is a pretty regular business. Should prices rally to-morrow, and the channels of trade suddenly open, what would these "influential business men" do who are reported to be "coming out on the side of Christ"? Would they not rush back to offices and counters as if they had been sent for by telegraph? And would that imply that they were not "on the side of Christ" still?

This and That.

Prof. Agassiz lectured in Philadelphia recently upon the subject of education of the young. He argued—and truly—that the instruction of boys in our schools was too much a matter of words, books and languages. That is, we were governed too much by the dead Past, and did not place reliance enough upon the grandly expanding intellect of the living Present! He also told his hearers that religious teaching—by which he meant, of course, Old Theology—was not fit for boys, etc., etc. Truly the world moves! One significant fact in this connection is worthy of record. It is this: that while the great scientist, Agassiz, is uttering potent truths to the world which is ready to receive them, Rev. Mr. Manning, of the Old South Church, is lecturing upon "Modern Infidelity."

To our Subscribers.

Volume 23 of the Banner of Light being nearly close, we earnestly solicit those who intend to renew their subscriptions to do so before the time expires, as it will save us much trouble in changing the names in our mailing machine, and also prevent the loss of any numbers to the subscribers. Please remit as soon as possible.

Movements of Lecturers and Mediums.

Mrs. Alcinda Wilhelm speaks in Providence the first Sunday in March. She has concluded to remain East till the Anniversary celebration in Music Hall, 31st of March, consequently can fill a few more engagements to lecture in March—and no doubt many will be glad to obtain her services. She goes to Washington in April. Till then address her care of this office.

A. E. Carpenter, State Agent for the Association of Spiritualists, will lecture in East Walpole, Wednesday, 26th of February; at Groton Junction, Thursday, 27th; East Pepperell, Friday, 28th. Will organize a Lyceum in Cambridgeport Sunday, March 2d.

Miss Addie L. Ballou, who has been quite ill for some time, is convalescent. She has returned to her home in Mankato, Minn.

Mrs. Juliette Yeaw lectures in Salem, Mass., March 1st and 15th.

Dr. H. P. Fairfield will answer calls to lecture in New England. His address is Greenwich Village, Mass.

Dr. H. B. Storer, in behalf of the Massachusetts Association of Spiritualists, will give a lecture in Concord, on Thursday evening, Feb. 27th.

Mrs. M. J. Wilcoxson is lecturing in Wilmington, Del., during this month. In March she speaks in Washington.

A. T. Foss will speak at Mystic Bridge, Conn., Feb. 23d. Also at Hamburg, on Sundays the 15th and 22d of March.

S. J. Finney, who speaks in Music Hall in this city the third Sunday in March, will accept an engagement for the fourth Sunday in this vicinity.

A Plea for the Innocents.

A memorial has been presented to the Massachusetts Legislature in behalf of infants deserted by their parents. Statistics show that eighty or ninety out of every hundred who are sent to the poorhouse die before reaching the end of their first year. What a comment upon our "moral and religious" community. The memorialists therefore ask that the Committee on Charitable Institutions investigate the subject, and see what improvements can be brought about to give these unfortunate wails "as good a chance of life as modern science offers and as humanity demands."

Mercantile Hall Meetings.

The Lyceum was very well attended Sunday, Feb. 9th, notwithstanding the storm, showing that the children take a deep interest in their school-exercises.

The lecture in the evening was as well attended as could be expected such stormy weather. During March Mrs. C. Fannie Allyn speaks in the above hall.

"Morning Lectures."

Hereafter we shall sell A. J. Davis's book, entitled "Morning Lectures," at the moderate price of one dollar and fifty cents, postage twenty cents, being a reduction of twenty-five cents. It contains a series of valuable lectures delivered by Mr. Davis, and photographed by reported. The reader will find these lectures well worth the price. The literary productions of Mr. Davis always find thousands of readers.

The Spiritualist.

This is the title of a paper Joseph Baker proposes to publish in the city of Appleton, Wis. It will be printed on fine paper, with new type, at one dollar a year—payable on receipt of the first number. To be issued monthly. This paper is designed to be a casket of the best gems of thought, both original and selected, from our best mediums and writers, with reports from Associations and Societies, and will make each year a handsome volume, says the publisher.

Wachusett, an Indian Chief.

Mr. Starr has just completed a life-size portrait of Wachusett, a spirit Indian. The painting is artistic, and the likeness is pronounced excellent by a lady-medium who has repeatedly seen the spirit. The picture will remain on exhibition at the Banner of Light Circle Room for a few days. Admittance free.

"Modern Infidelity."

Rev. Jacob M. Manning, D. D., of this city, is giving a course of lectures on modern infidelity before the Methodist Theological Seminary, in the Bromfield-street Church, on successive Mondays, at 12 M. The first lecture was delivered Feb. 10th. So the Daily Advertiser informs us.

New Music.

D. S. Holmes, 67 Fourth street, Brooklyn, N. Y., has just published three popular songs, music by the favorite composer, Henry Tucker, namely: "I never shall forget the day," words by Henry C. Watson; "Dark-eyed Jennie Moore," words by Thomas Mahabani; "Peeping through the Blinds," words by Tucker.

527 We copied an article some time since from the London Spiritual Magazine, which was written by Prof. Gunning. In prefacing it we stated that the gentleman alluded to was a professor at Harvard College. We should have said he was formerly professor of geology in a Michigan College. Mr. Gunning informs us, however, that he was in Agassiz's department at one time, which undoubtedly gave rise to the rumor that he was a regular professor at Harvard. Mr. Gunning is a man of talent and a fine lecturer on geology. He is also engaged, we understand, as a writer for several prominent religious journals, both in this city and New York. We hope this brief explanation will satisfy correspondents who have questioned us upon the subject.

"THE WEEK" is the name of a newly established weekly journal, published in New York, the design of it being to furnish "a reflex of home and foreign opinion." The selections made from current journals show that the columns of this valuable sheet are catered for by comprehensive minds and industrious hands. It is a sort of American Galignani, and ought to be a great success, bringing together as it does the choicest contents of the ablest papers of the old and new worlds.

528 Robert Dale Owen's lecture, in Philadelphia, Jan. 23d, on the "Law of Kindness," should have a wide circulation. Many individuals we would need just such a lecture. Its publication would doubtless do a vast amount of good.

529 We hope our readers, old and young, of both sexes, will give the article on our first page their careful consideration, for it is worthy of it.

530 California is going into the cultivation of silk, for which the climate is very suitable. The cocoons are of a superior quality, and there can be little doubt of the success of the enterprise.

Message Department.

Each Message in this Department of the BANNER OF LIGHT was written by a person whose name it bears, through the instrumentality of

Mrs. J. H. Conant.

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

The questions propounded at these circles by mortals, are answered by spirits who do not announce their names.

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

The Banner of Light Free Circles.

These Circles are held at No. 153 WASHINGTON STREET, Room No. 4, (upstairs), on MONDAY, TUESDAY and THURSDAY AFTERNOONS. The circle room will be open for visitors at two o'clock; services commence at precisely three o'clock, after which time no one will be admitted. Donations solicited.

Mrs. Conant receives no visitors on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays, until after six o'clock P. M. She gives no private sittings.

Invocation.

Our Father, thou who art in heaven and in earth, we are here that we may worship thee in spirit and in truth; we are here that we may commune with thee; we are here that we may learn of thy laws, and learning them may be perfected by them. We thank thee for all thy mercies; we thank thee for all the afflictions through which we have passed, and most of all we thank thee for our victory over death. We praise thee that the grave cannot hold us; that thy voice we have heard saying unto us, "Come forth, and go ye out into the world and preach the gospel to my sons and my daughters." Father, we thank thee that thou hast called us to preach thy truths. We thank thee that our spirit has been enabled to hear thy voice and strengthened to obey it. We know that thou art all-wise, and that thy wisdom will swallow up our ignorance, and the light of thy great soul will flow about the darkness of ours, making us glorified in thee. Oh Lord, we come to thee ever asking for more of thy love, more of thy wisdom, asking to come nearer and still nearer to thee. Though thy blessings are abundant, though thou dost dispense with liberal hand unto all thy children, still thy prayers flow out toward thee; still they ask for more, still more. Oh God, we ask this hour that thou wilt send strong ministering spirits, who shall minister wisdom and love and justice unto the Chief Magistrate of these United States. Oh grant that the bad men by whom he is surrounded may have no power over him; grant that they may not lead his steps; grant that they may not fashion his thoughts; grant that he may turn to thee, and the great assembly of angels will lead him aright. Oh grant that his ears may be deaf to their words, his eyes blind unto their ways, that his hands may be powerless to do their deeds, and his feet forsake their way.

Thou art all-wise, we know, and thou wilt do all things well. But inasmuch as we behold the cloud, we ask that thou wilt dispel it; inasmuch as we behold the coming storm, we ask to be strengthened for it. And we pray that thy children who compose this nation, they who are members of this great household—oh, may they learn of thee and become wise and just. May they learn thee and become pure in heart, eschewing that which their own inner lives tell them is wrong, and following only that inner light which will lead them to the kingdom of heaven. Grant, oh our Father, that the sun of righteousness may shine upon this people, and that all injustice may flee away, and all the darkness of oppression may finally take its flight, to be seen here no more. May justice be written upon the walls of every household, and may every heart learn to worship thee in spirit and in truth. And guide, oh guide in infinite wisdom, him whom thou hast called to fill the highest office in the land. Oh give him strength; give him wisdom; guide him by thine angels, and finally rescue this land from the darkness that surrounds it. Bless all thy people everywhere. Grant that the truth may continue to flow on and still on, till every heart shall be baptized with it, and every soul understands its meaning; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Dec. 5.

Questions and Answers.

CONTROLLING SPIRIT.—Mr. Chairman, if you have queries we will consider them.

QUES.—We would like an explanation of the following quotations: "Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for a woman to speak in the church. In like manner also, let the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Let the women learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."

ANS.—In barbarous times women were held as slaves. As such they were considered, and as the age in which old Paul lived was not yet out of the swaddling clothes of barbarism, it is not at all strange that he should feel the bands somewhat, and conduct himself accordingly. Old Paul had a very poor understanding of human nature. He knew as little about human nature as he knew about the sun, and that was very little. He possessed a certain degree of ancient lore. He was read therein to a very limited extent—limited when compared with other times and other circumstances—but he had no just idea of human nature. He remained in a state of single blessedness, or I should say of single cursedness. Pardon me if I speak plainly. I want to be understood. I do not believe that he was in any sense fit to be a teacher; notwithstanding the Christian world have canonized him and held him up as a pattern saint. If God made man, and woman too, he made both in his own image, and gave unto each the power to grapple with infinite progression; surely we are to suppose that the woman was made to rise, mentally, morally and intellectually, side by side with manhood. If the great God had designed that woman should fill any other sphere beside the intellectual and spiritual, surely he would not have endowed her with the power that we find her endowed with. She can soar beyond her brother in many things. What he arrives at by hard and patient study, she arrives at through her intuitions. I believe God stands nearer to woman than to man; I always did; and since I have learned much of the

ways and means of life in my spirit home, I now know what I believed in earth-life. And I have in many points seen cause to change my opinion. Old Paul was by nature a tyrant. Could you have the privilege of perusing certain records that were destroyed in the Alexandrian library, you would hardly have so good an opinion of old Paul as many of you have to-day. But as there is not a great deal against him on the face of the record, Christianity still holds him up as a saint, strives to pattern after him, and holds up his sayings and doings as a pattern for all time. But the Paul of to-day is actually ashamed of the Paul of other days. Could he return speaking to humanity so that he might be able to demonstrate himself fully, he would affirm himself what I affirm for him.

Q.—What is the difference, if any, between modern Spiritualism and necromancy, sorcery, divination and witchcraft? Many Spiritualists maintain that there is none.

A.—And so do I—absolutely no difference. Necromancy is the science of talking with the dead. What is the science of modern Spiritualism aside from that? To learn of the dead. Necro, to learn; *Manthano*, the dead. The word comes from those two Greek words, and means simply to talk with the dead; nothing more. And all ancient arts of divination, when resolved to their primal source, when stripped of all their paraphernalia, if they were genuine at all, were genuine on the ground of talking with the dead. There is always a spurious article for every genuine one, and generally there is a greater amount of the spurious than the genuine; but there never was a counterfeit without a genuine, you may be sure.

Q.—Is modern Spiritualism any less open to or more free from superstition than Paganism or Christianity?

A.—I should hope so, at least. But there is a degree of superstition attached to it by those who have embraced it simply as a surface doctrine, which does not belong to it really. Modern Spiritualism is devoid of all superstition. It is thoroughly natural, and all the superstition attached to it, is attached to it by those who do not understand it. It is like clothing a beautiful form in uncouth garments.

Q.—Does not modern Spiritualism make larger draughts upon credulity than Paganism or Christianity?

A.—Hardly, hardly. It is a very large draught upon credulity to believe the fable of Jonah and the whale, very large indeed. It is also a very large draught upon credulity to believe that a woman could conceive and bear a child by being overshadowed by the Holy Ghost. It is altogether out of the course of Nature; and whoever believes it stretches their credulity to the very last extent. Spiritualism comes in plain attire. A little child can read it. If the mother comes to the little child, the little child knows the mother. You cannot deceive the child; and so it is with pure, simple God-Spiritualism. There is no superstition in it, and the credulity of a child need not be taxed.

Q.—Is not the resurrection of Jesus Christ as well authenticated, and by the same witnesses that confirm his death?

A.—No, absolutely no. We know by Nature that if he ever lived he died. We know also by Nature that if he ever died to the body, the body never was resurrected again. Nature never lies—always tells the truth. You cannot force Nature into a lie. You may seem to, but it is only in seeming.

Q.—The spirit of criticism is a questioning spirit. Is there anything wrong in this, per se?

A.—Certainly not. On the contrary, something gloriously right. Honest, earnest criticism should always receive attention. It is one of the great levers, I believe, through which man marches up through the various sciences of life. Criticism oftentimes informs us of our mistakes, for it causes us to look deeper into self, deeper into our surroundings. It causes us to turn critics upon self, and therefore it is of the greatest possible service to us. Why, the world would be good for nothing without criticism. When I was here on earth, I was never satisfied when the voice of criticism was silent toward me. I always felt that my effort had been so small that it was not worthy of criticism. But when it was most severely criticized, I felt that I had agitated the waters, out of which some good would come.

Dec. 5.

Clarke Simonds.

I am very thankful to be able to return in this way, though I had no sort of belief in the thing before death. I had no fixed belief in any hereafter, consequently had no idea with regard to whether the spirit could return or not. But it is a settled faith now to me. I know I can return. I have been able to watch the operations of many who have come from this place, and I have thought it very strange, very wonderful, but could not really believe in the full possibility of return, till I found myself actually possessing a body, and able to speak by the organs of speech, that I felt it to be one of the grandest blessings that God ever gave to man. Death has always been a most terrible monster, even to those who were most religious. Religion did not seem to take away the sting of death, not at all. I have seen many religious people mourn just as deeply for their friends gone, as those who have had no belief in any religion. It seems to me that the religion of the return of the spirit ought to abolish a great share of the misery that is in existence now on the earth in consequence of death. It seems to me when we once realize that the friends who have laid off their mortal bodies are not gone, that they can be with us, and talk with us under certain conditions—it seems to me it ought to make every soul quite happy.

But I am not here to preach, only to reach my friends if I can. I went out of this mundane stage of action in the heat of battle, and for quite a while I was in a confused, dissatisfied state. I felt that so far as I was concerned, I had been whipped, and I did not like it. The old spirit of retaliation was not dead, though my body was. I wanted to retaliate. I wanted to get square; but by-and-by that wore off, and I began to look around and see what I could do to help myself and others, and I found that the great cry throughout all the sphere that I lived in, was with regard to coming back to earth. It was the general business, I believed, from what I could hear. For a while I paid not a great deal of attention to it; but finally, as some of our regiment had been here and reported favorably, I thought I would see what I could do, and so I came again, and again and again, but with no success till to-day.

I am from the 15th Massachusetts; was killed at Antietam, the 17th of September, 1862. I suppose I will have to register myself under the old name—Clarke Simonds. I wish to come, into near communion with my friends, and suppose I shall be able to. You have had one message from George Simonds, from our regiment. Well, our folks will get that, and I hope when mine comes out of the oven it will be in good time. Good-day.

Dec. 5.

Charles Bachelier.

I would be very thankful to you if you would say for me that Charles Bachelier, of the 8th Massachusetts Cavalry, died in the hospital in New Orleans, in '63, and wishes to reach his friends.

Dec. 5.

John Harris.

I would be very glad, if such a thing were possible, to reach my people in England. I am aware I have no claim on your institutions, but I understood it to be free here to all who might seek to avail themselves of the privilege of coming to their friends in this way.

I was employed on board the "Alabama." I enlisted in a foreign port; for the sake of fair, more than fair remuneration, I suppose, as I had no particular love for either one side or the other; I had no conscience in the matter. I was told by the commander that there was no injustice to be used by the craft, and that so far as it was possible, shedding of blood would be avoided; and I believe it was so. A very large amount of merchandise was secured, and a great many vessels destroyed; yet I believe human life was ever held sacred, and so far as it was possible, it was always saved.

I was rather unlucky, in one sense, at the time of the disabling of the "Alabama" by the "Kearsarge." I became disabled while in the water, and sunk. It was the fortune that one often gets in war, and I suppose I should be satisfied with it if I had not left some affairs in rather an uncertain condition at the place I called my home.

Now if it is possible to reach one William Harris, of Liverpool—I am John Harris, and he is my brother—I want him to know that I can come back, and that I am disposed now to do all I can toward making things straight that he thinks are not so. [We can send him the paper containing your message, if you will give us the number.] That I cannot do; but if you direct to the general post office he will get it.

I have nothing to say with reference to why I enlisted as I did; nothing at all. I took the best course I could at that time. The circumstances, I suppose, justified it. I am my own judge in the matter, and it matters very little to me now whether any one else judges as I do or not. But I am in the way, I think, to make those matters all right, which some of my friends think were all wrong. The impression which some of my friends have with regard to my doing as I did is very wrong. It was this: that being conscious of having committed a great wrong against certain of my relations, and feeling certain that I would be exposed, I chose the course I did rather than remain in England, and get exposed. It was false, absolutely false. The sooner they get rid of that idea, the better it will be for me.

Dec. 5.

Séance opened by Theodore Parker; letters answered by "Sextus."

Invocation.

Thou Holy Spirit, whose certain light has beamed in through the darkness of every age; thou whose presence makes glorious this winter day; thou whose life blesses ours; thou whose love like a mantle rests upon all thy children; thou, our Father and our Mother, we would lift our song of praise to thee, thanking thee for all thy mercies, adoring thee for thy loving kindness, and praying unto thee for a continuance of thy favors. Oh, Spirit eternal, though we cannot understand thee, though we cannot measure thee, yet thou art near unto us, and thy love we can understand somewhat by our own, and thy wondrous wisdom we can learn somewhat concerning by the glorious Scriptures of Nature, which thou hast outspread everywhere for our inspection. Thou art talking unto us through mind and matter, and thy glory everywhere presents itself unto us. Thou hast no need that we tell thee that there is sorrow in the land, for thou knowest it well. Thou hast no need that we beseech of thee to bind up the hearts that are wounded, and wipe away the tears that are fast flowing down the cheek, for in thy love, in thine everlasting pity, thou wilt always look upon thy children, consider all their needs, and minister perpetually unto them. Though thou hast no need that we praise thee, yet we have need to praise thee. We have need, oh Spirit eternal, to perpetually lift up our hearts in thanksgiving unto thee, for thy wondrous love with which thou hast blessed us. Though death is here and everywhere, yet it is but one of the sides of life, such as our souls could hardly do without. In thy wisdom thou knowest this; therefore thou hast given us death for the sake of life, that we may the better know how to understand life in all the glory of its sunshine, in all the glory of its activity. Oh thou master-workman, thou hast no need that we dictate unto thee, for thou wilt do all things well. Thou wilt glorify thyself, and in glorifying thyself, thou wilt glorify all thy children. Oh, grant that those in mortal who have heard the voice of those who have passed through death may understand it is one of thy chiefest blessings to humanity, and may they learn to worship thee more truly. May they turn their thoughts away from the shadow to the sunshine, knowing that thou seest always the happiness of all thy children, knowing that all the helms of time and eternity are but the results of ignorance, are but the fires through which the soul must pass as it journeys toward heaven. Oh, grant that all thy children may understand that thou art a God of infinite love; that thy mercy is everywhere, and over all thy children; that thou art one God, one Father, one Mother, one Holy Spirit, ministering unto all, watching continually over all. Oh, may the hearts of thy children, all over the earth, continually send up a song of thanksgiving unto thee for all the glory by which they are surrounded. When the angels come knocking at the door of their conscious lives, oh, may they say in truth, in the depth of their inner lives, "We thank thee, oh, Father in heaven, for this thy greatest gift to man." So shall thy kingdom come on the earth, so shall thy will be done, so shall thy children love and serve thee better, and become better fitted to live, and thus better fitted to die. Amen.

Dec. 9.

Questions and Answers.

QUES.—How shall one distinguish between a positive and negative person?

ANS.—Every person must, of necessity, possess both positive and negative qualities of being, else the machine could not be kept running. Sometimes one has the ascendancy over the other. This is often the case. We rarely find a perfect, evenly-balanced temperament, but the two forces we always find except at death. Then one gains the entire ascendancy over the other. Those persons in whom the positive is ascendant are generally known by their firmness of character, by their adhesiveness to localities, to theories. Conservatism is around them generally like a wall, and it is only broken down when they emerge out of this positive condition into one more negative. There are certain characteristics of mind which are exhibited through the body, through the brain, and persons who are able to read this index to the inner life are able to judge most correctly

concerning the true spiritual state of the individual. Learn the index of the brain. It will always point very correctly. It seldom leads you in any sense astray. Every particular department of mind and matter has its own distinctive science, or branch of science, through which you may learn of the inner qualities of the individual. The leaf has a science peculiarly its own, and it is entirely different from the science that pertains to the stalk and the flower. So every particular quality of mind or matter has its own distinctive branch of science, and if you wish to understand that quality you must go to the alphabet, weigh and measure, by external demonstration, everything you wish to know positively concerning it.

Q.—In controlling this medium do you possess the body, as the spirit of the medium possesses it in her normal condition?

A.—No. That is not necessary. I surround the body. I obsees it as the musical performer obsees the musical instrument. The instrument gives forth no sound unless the musician is there and playing upon the instrument; so with regard to this control. I surround the subject, and in surrounding her I create an atmosphere peculiar to myself, which is in nearly all respects unlike her own; therefore, she finding it not at all in natural harmony with her, generally retires, goes forth into the outer spirit-world, and becomes cognizant of scenes in that world. Sometimes it becomes necessary to become thoroughly absorbed in the body. Then the mental atmosphere is created within, and not without. I act then from within. But in this case I act as the musician would act upon the instrument. I surround the entire body. It is under my perfect control.

Q.—Then if the spirit of the medium does leave the body entirely, how long a time elapses that the body is devoid of spirit?

A.—It may be devoid of intelligence, or conscious existence, for a second, hardly more. All things are so nicely arranged that there will be no intermediate time, or scarcely any; perhaps like the passing of a breath, but nothing more. I want you to distinctly understand that the animal life that is in activity belongs entirely to the animal form. That is distinct from intelligence. All the animal functions may be performed perfectly and harmoniously when there is no intelligence. Of that you are well aware. But I am speaking now with regard to the amount of time that will pass by the spirit here in unconsciousness. I say it may be like a passing breath, but a second of time.

Q.—Then could you not, if you chose, retain control of this body, and thus prevent the spirit of the medium from returning to it?

A.—I certainly could.

Q.—Then if there are evil disposed spirits in the other world, is there not danger that they will so use this power?

A.—There certainly is.

Q.—Is there no way to provide against it?

A.—Yes, by becoming as thoroughly conversant as it is possible for mortals to be with all the laws pertaining to spirit control, and by exercising care in gathering to yourself friends in the spirit-world, and not enemies. One who is truly your friend will never harm you, either in the external or the internal. Therefore seek to be in harmony with all classes of mind. If below you, lead them up to your standard; if above, reach up to receive whatever they may be able to give you. Let the law of give and take be in constant activity with you. Receive from the higher, and give to the lower. If you do this, there is hardly any danger to be anticipated from the control of an unruly or undeveloped spirit. But if you place yourself in antagonism to them, they will war with you, and whoever is strongest will be victorious.

Q.—Have spirits a fixed size? Does each spirit have its own peculiar form of organization, or are they all alike?

A.—Every spirit possesses its own peculiar form of organization, its own peculiar stature. They are not all alike. You find here the child and the mature form. You find the tall man and the short man, all the different characteristics of form as well as of mind.

Q.—How would the spirit of a tall man possess the form of a little child?

A.—Generally by acting upon it by surrounding it as I to-day surround this medium, or perhaps by influencing one or two organs. It is not always necessary to influence the entire organism. I generally do, but it is not always a necessity.

Q.—Then can a large person take control of the body of a small medium?

A.—I did not intend you to so understand me. If a little child is sufficiently mediumistic to admit of my control, I can control the child as I can the adult, only I cannot give the same amount of intelligence through the child, because the organs are not fully grown. You cannot play the same tune, or rather you cannot give the same amount of power through the flute as through the organ—yet both are music. You may play "Home, sweet home" upon both, but there is a difference in capacity.

Dec. 9.

Susan Brown.

I said if it was possible I would come. I have been dead eighteen months. I died in Elizabethport, but I lived most of the time in Portland, Me. I met with great trouble there. I was burned out, and lost everything. I took sick and had a slow fever, and I had rheumatic fever, and I died. Our folks believed that we could come back. I was colored. It makes no difference, I suppose. [None at all.] I want to go to my children, to my daughter Susan. My name is Susan Brown. I had two children—Susan and Thomas—and I want to go to them. I want Susan to know I am come, that I am happy, and that the color makes no difference here. God must be very good—I have not seen him, but I know he must be very good—very good indeed. I don't see so partially shown where I am. Everything is beautiful, and you can have all you need here. There is no fear to take everything you have, no sickness. Susan wonders if she will be white in the spirit-land. She won't care anything about it. These distinctions of color are not considered as they are here. The negro is just as good in the sight of God as the white person. Tell her she won't be sorry she was born with a black skin. I used to tell her so. She used to wish she was dead, and all sorts of wicked things, but it didn't change her color—not a bit. I used to tell her all her wicked thoughts would only make her blacker inside, and it's better to be black outside than in. I know plenty of white folks that are blacker than I was. They are whiter sepulchres. That's what Jesus meant—whiter sepulchres.

Susan has waited and watched and watched, either could not, come back or I didn't want to come. [Does she get the paper?] Get it? Bless you! she would not think of sleeping over Tuesday night without it—I've known her to read it after eleven o'clock at night. We had our work to do, you know, in the evening, after we'd been out to work all day, and then she would read the

paper. Oh, she will be so glad—I know she will. Bless God for the power to come back! It is beautiful! It is worth all the white skins in the world! Yes, it is.

Dec. 9.

Lizzie Templeton.

I come here because I want to reach my mother and my Aunt Lucy and my brother. My father was killed at one of the battles before Richmond, but he has never been able to come back to speak. But I thought I should try, because I want my mother to know how I live here, and that I am not dead. My father is very anxious to tell her not to go to New Orleans with Aunt Lucy, nor for Aunt Lucy to go, too. She belongs in New Orleans, but she has been with my mother since my death, and now she wants mother to go back with her and to take Harry. But father says it will be fatal to mother and Harry if they go, and he had rather she would not go. My name is Lizzie Templeton. I was thirteen years old. I have only one brother—Harry. He is younger than I am—most three years younger.

Oh dear! dear! I wish I could go to my mother. She says if Spiritualism had been true, she knows my father would have come back. He never came, and she don't believe one word of it. She wishes she could. He could not come; you will tell her so. To come here one must wait till conditions are right and proper for them. And it is very rare that one person can take another person's place here. They say it can be done sometimes, but hardly ever with good success. He has never found everything just right, and has been obliged to stay away, and mother has never been to any place where he could come. She thinks he should come to her, but she is not a medium, and he can't, and so I thought if I did die over again I would try to come here.

My mother is in St. Louis, and Aunt Lucy is with her, but she lives in New Orleans. She came away on account of the sickness, and because I died. [Will your mother get this message?] Yes; Aunt Lucy reads the paper—from curiosity, she says.

Tell Harry to be a good boy. I visit him as often as I can, and shall try to watch over him. Tell him to study hard, be a good boy, and make a nice, good man. Good-by.

Dec. 9.

Stephen Kelley.

[How do you do, sir?] Fine; only a thistle can't be a lily, you know; but thistles, I suppose, are necessary, as well as lilies.

I stood wondering, while the little gal there was talking, how I was going to drive this team. I thought it might be a very good one for a child, but how it was going to do for me, with my rough-and-tumble ways, I could not tell. But I see it's an expansion concern—answers for all sorts.

Before the breaking out of this infernal rebellion, I was engaged in the very good business of buying and swapping and selling horses in Missouri. I had some of the finest horses you ever see. And I used to be always happy in my trade; but when Uncle Sam began to call for folks to serve him, he called for horses as well as men, and then the business was not very good. He was not willing to pay the highest price; did not want the best breed; only something that would go. I went into the army and got killed. I said, "Confound the luck!" when I got knocked over; but it was pretty good luck, stranger, after all—only I'm rather out of my old business, and don't exactly know which way to turn; but they told me if I would just draw in here and straighten out affairs for the folks as well as I could, and straighten out my own crookedness, after that I'd begin to move along in a straight line.

My name is Stephen Kelley, and I'm none of your eastern small fry. I'm from Collinsville, Missouri. You was not never out there, I take it. [No.] Well, if you had been, and I'd known you I might have gin you a ride, and perhaps a good horse; but as it is, I'm on foot, and like to be—can't do much for you in that line.

Well, it seems from all accounts that the boy is drawing a tight rein, and is rather crowding the folks. He thinks he is the sole heir to every single mill I lost. It was not much. You see it's like this: His mother is one of the easy kind; thinks it's all right, and he's a good boy, and will do all right. He will raise the devil if he gets a chance. I don't mean he shall. It ain't best. He thinks he knows everything, and the truth is he don't know nothing. That's the way with such youngsters, you know. I'll just take him down a peg, whittle him out a little, and we'll see who has the right to drive that team. I take it I have a right to myself yet. I want Mr. Powers to bring forward those papers, and to exercise the right that he has to square up matters, and if Steve has a word to say just shingle him, that's all. It's no use to let a boy lead you, no indeed. [What is Mr. Powers's given name?] Joe. He is from—I think he is from Ohio. I think he was raised there. I ain't sure. [You left papers in his hands concerning your property?] Yes, I did. And he is waiting to see what the boy will do. Pretty idea! Wait and let him cut his throat. That's what he says—"I'll wait and let him cut his throat, and then show him what I can do." Well, I should like to know if he could not show him with a good grace after his throat was cut! He acts as if he was afraid of the boy. Wait till he commits some act that is unlawful, and then pitch in and annihilate him. That's a pretty way to do! Oh Lord, if you want to learn how things are going on in this world, just get up above it and look down, and you ain't sick clear through I'm mistaken. I tell you it's a gambling shop all through, and he that can play the best is the best fellow. I'd rather be a horse jockey through all eternity than be as most of 'em are. Gracious! I never knew what the world was till I got out of it. You can just see what's going on in the half-bushel right round you, but if you want to take a general view just get up above and look down on it, and the folks you thought was so good you'd trust your own soul to them—they're the most thundering rascals out of prison. It's true. Well, I'll take my truck and travel on. Good-day.

Dec. 9.

Warren Means.

I wish you would tell my father and mother I have tried a great many times to come, but have never been able to till to-day. I go home every day, but I am not able to manifest. But I would like to have them know that I am very happy in my spirit home, and I don't think I would return again if I could be always well. I have everything I want here. I am studying geology and astronomy, and many other sciences, and I am very happy in all my studies, and I expect by-and-by to be able to teach myself. I am sometimes unhappy, but only because the friends I have left here are unhappy and are thinking of me. I shall try to come to him, so he can see me. I have been told that I could. I shall do all I can for the children. As far as I learn I shall try, as far as they are impracticable, to impress them. I want father and mother to be happy about my death, and not to think because I did not come that I did not want to. I thought I should come here before I died. I made up my mind I should, but I

[illegible]