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WHAT IS SPIRITUALISM?

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY
THOMAS GALES FORSTER,
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(Photographically Reported for the Banner of Light.)

Some friend has placed upon the desk of my medium a very beautiful bouquet. This is a delicate evidence of kindness, and is fully appreciated. Flowers, my friends, have been eloquently termed God's undertones of consolation to humanity. Beautiful creatures of Divine beneficence—what eloquent orators they are!—gently bending beneath the shower and gratefully lifting their little petals up to the sunshine. Oh that the flowers in God's moral vineyard would imitate the beautiful little plants in the garden of Nature.

WHAT IS SPIRITUALISM?

I endeavored in the last two lectures to speak with regard to this question, from a scientific and a philosophical platform; that is, as well as I could do so, in two lectures. It has been suggested, and I propose to speak to-day with reference to the same question, from a Biblical standpoint; or, in other words, I propose to address myself to the Biblical objector to the phenomena of modern Spiritualism.

And in the outset, as pertinent to my theme, I can but exclaim, in the language of an inspired poet of the present day—

"Is God asleep, that He should cease to be
All that He was to Prophets of the Past?
All that He was to Poets of old Time!
All that He was to Heroes, who did
Their sun-bright minds in adamantine mail
Of constancy, and walked the world with Him,
And spoke with His deep music on their tongues,
And acted with His pulse within the heart,
And died, or seemed to outward sense to die,
Erewhile in light, as if the Sun
Gathered its image back into itself?
Is God less real now than when he sang
And smote with his right hand the harp of space,
And all the Stars from His electric breath,
In golden galaxies of harmony,
Went clanking out, heart-flushed with life from
Him?"

The Spiritualist believes that after the phenomenon termed Death has occurred, and you have buried the body, man has an individualized, conscious existence beyond the grave. You know that all Spiritualists believe this, and that all who believe this are called Spiritualists, whatever else they believe. The Spiritualist believes, in addition, that these individualized spirits can, and under proper conditions do, communicate with the friends they have left in the form. But there is a large body of mind in Christendom that declare these two items of the spiritualistic faith to be erroneous, on the ground that they are opposed by the Bible, and that they are antagonistic to the teachings of the Bible. With this declaration of Christendom, my friends, we are at issue; and I shall attempt this afternoon to show that the phenomena of modern Spiritualism, upon which rest these two items of faith, are not only not antagonistic to the Bible, but that they are strictly analogous to the facts of the Bible—indeed, that there is such a striking analogy existing between the two as to be apparent to the most casual observer.

A miracle, according to the Orthodox interpretation, is said to be constituted through a deviation from the course of Nature. But the intelligent inquirer at once suggests the inquiry, How shall man be enabled by this rule to determine when a miracle is performed? For, even in the present age of earnest inquiry, who shall decide as to the legitimate course of Nature? In the days of Moses and of Jesus, men were not so well informed as they are in the present day with regard to such matters, and consequently were more liable to run into error in drawing their deductions from the phenomena by which they were surrounded. Upon this point, Spiritualism declares that a miracle, in the theological sense, is scientifically, philosophically and morally impossible; and that if it were possible that a miracle could take place in that sense, it would not only destroy the divinity of the Bible, but it would destroy divinity itself—and why? Thus: no one will deny that God is infinite in his attributes, and that natural law is the effect of the perfection and divinity of those attributes, and that, consequently, all things have been arranged upon the wisest and best plan, for the wisest and best purposes. Any deviation, therefore, from this plan must be a detraction, because there can be no change in what is perfect, except for the worse. To base a system of religion, as is done in the Orthodox world, upon the performance of miracles with the theological interpretation of the word, is to base that system upon the inharmonious of the divine attributes; and in doing so, you necessarily deprive Deity of that which alone makes Him infinite.

The spiritual school, therefore, is entirely justified in declaring that a miracle so interpreted is utterly impossible. The legitimate corollary, therefore, is, that all the various phenomena of the Past, as recorded in the Old and New Testaments, together with the analogous manifestations of the present day, were and are in accordance with the harmonious action of natural law; and that none of the powers that were exercised in the past through any of the prophets, patriarchs or seers, through Jesus or his Apostles, were drawn from without the domain of Nature. With these preliminary remarks, I shall now proceed to institute a comparison between the manifestations of the past and those of the present, in order that I may succeed in establishing the existence of the analogy to which I have alluded.

Now, let us begin, my friends, with the first book, the very first book of the Bible. And here, perhaps, I ought to premise, and I wish the pre-

mise to be fully understood, that in alluding to the Bible, I intend no disrespect to that book; but on the contrary, I have no hesitation in avowing that there are hundreds and thousands of Spiritualists to-day, who reverence the Bible more than they ever did before they were Spiritualists; because looking at the spirit and not the mere letter, they find in their own faith an extension of the views of the inspired minds of other days, together with a newer and brighter light thrown upon the obscurities of the past, by the dawning brilliancy of the demonstrations of the present.

In the 16th chapter of Genesis, you who are Bible readers, perhaps, will recollect (and I hope you all are) it is stated that an angel appeared to Hagar (Sarah's maid) in the wilderness, and comforted her. In the 18th chapter of Genesis, three angels in the form of men, so it is recorded, appeared to Abraham upon the plains of Mamre, and Abraham fed these angels (in the form of men) with fatted fowl; and during the interview between the three and Abraham, the promise was made to him that through his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. Now, my friends, if there is any validity in the Christian plan of salvation, if there is any truth in the declarations of the old theological school, that the system of religion to-day is based upon the fulfillment of that promise made to Abraham, then the Christian religion and all the good that is in it depends entirely upon the manifestation of the appearance of angels in the form of men, just as is claimed they have appeared to the mediums of Boston in the present day. And the objector upon Biblical ground will have to settle the difficulty with himself as to whether or not there is any reliance to be had in such manifestations.

In the 19th chapter of Genesis, two angels in the form of men appear to Lot in the gate of Sodom, and through the warning which these angels give him, his family and himself are enabled to escape from impending evil. Now, my friends, it would be well if the warnings that are given through modern media—if the warnings that are given by the spirit in modern times were always attended to. Perhaps it would have been well for your nation (time alone must determine) if the true and pure-hearted Lincoln had listened to the manifestations and the warnings that were given to him through a medium in your National Capital. He would not so soon have stepped from the topmost round of the ladder of fame into the sky, but would have remained to carry out his own ideas in regard to the perpetuity of American institutions.

In the 21st chapter of Genesis, an angel again appears to Hagar and prophesies in behalf of the boy Ishmael, and comforteth the mother. In the 22nd chapter of Genesis, the arm of Abraham is arrested when he is about to commit murder upon the body of his son Isaac, having been tempted to do so by what to-day would be called an undeveloped spirit, under the supposition that God had so ordered him by way of a temptation.

In the 28th chapter of Genesis, Jacob is represented as having had a dream, wherein he saw a ladder extending from earth to heaven, up and down which the angels of God were ascending and descending. Modern Spiritualism, by its various phenomena, is proving that such a ladder exists—is proving that there is an intellectual, spiritual ladder, reaching from earth to heaven, "bright with beaming angels." You believe in the dream of Jacob, and scoff at the declarations of to-day.

In the 30th and 31st chapters of Genesis, Jacob is represented as having had another dream, in which he receives the advice, which results in the curious proceedings, to say the least, by means of which the property of his Uncle Laban is transferred to himself. During this interview with the angel in his dream, he was also advised to leave his Uncle Laban. In the 32d chapter, after he had left his Uncle Laban, the angels of God met him, and when Jacob saw them, he said "This is God's host." And when Jacob was left alone, there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. Now, all this seemed extremely absurd to the Spiritualist before the manifestations of modern Spiritualism, but corresponding manifestations have occurred in different parts of the country where there has been actual physical force manifested in contests with media by a unseen power. Consequently the Spiritualist believes in this manifestation of the past, far more than those who deny the existence of conscious individuality beyond the grave.

Again, one of the allegations brought against modern Spiritualism and heralded forth by the many-mouthed press, and by the pulpits, is this: that the tendency of modern Spiritualism is evil; that the incantations which come from the spirit-world, through modern media, are calculated to demoralize society. Now, my friends, without stopping to argue the question whether in the past or in the present they were or are immoral, let us see whether the analogy does not hold good even in this respect. In the 31st chapter of Exodus, whilst Moses was watching the flocks of his father-in-law, Jethro, an angel of God appeared to Moses and appointed him to take the captivity of the Israelites out of their contemplated exodus from Egypt. During the conversation held with Moses, the angel gave Moses the advice that the Israelites should fraudulently possess themselves of the jewels and the raiment of the Egyptian women—steal them. My friends, did ever Dr. Kittidge give such advice? Did ever black Susan, did ever star Mary, did ever Sunlight, did ever the beautiful Birdie, or any of the spirits that are controlling the media in different parts of your city or vicinity, give such advice? Yet the spirits controlling to-day are immoral; and the spirits of former times should be listened to, according to the Biblical objector!

In the 14th chapter of Exodus, an angel preceded the host of Israel in the final exodus. In the 22d chapter of Numbers, an angel met Balaam

by the way, as he was proceeding to the camp of the Moabites, whose ruler invited him to come in order that he might curse the Israelites, whose encroachments he had begun to fear. In the 2d chapter of Judges, it is stated that an angel spoke to all the people at Bochim.

In the 6th chapter of Judges, a manifestation occurs wherein the party concerned gave indications of precisely just such conditions as too often prevail to-day among some Spiritualists, and among many investigators—that is, a disposition to doubt perpetually, and to require conviction every morning; forgetting the test that has but recently been given, and manifesting an earnest desire for a continued repetition, or for the production of a similar one. In the 6th chapter of Judges, at the time that Israel was oppressed by Midian, an angel of the Lord, it is stated, appeared to Gideon and appointed him to take command of the Israelites against the Midianites. Gideon was one of the doubting Spiritualists. He doubted whether it was an angel who appeared to him in the form of a man, and he asked him for a test. The test was this: that he might be allowed to place a fleece of wool on the ground, and that the angel should so manifest that the fleece of wool during the night should become wet whilst the ground remained dry. The angel did this, and so effectually, that a bowl of water was wrung from the fleece of wool. Now Gideon was not satisfied with this, but he said, "Will the Lord permit me that I again place the fleece of wool, and let the fleece of wool remain dry and the ground become wet?" and the angel did that also. Still Gideon was not satisfied, nor was he convinced until in the 7th chapter he received another manifestation, that of the tumbling of a cake of barley-bread into the Midianite camp. All I can say in regard to this is, that when you next visit a medium, I trust you may meet with a spirit as complaisant as the one who met Gideon.

In the 13th chapter of Judges, an angel appeared to the wife of Manoah. Now the wife of Manoah was barren, and the angel promised her the birth of a child. He afterwards appeared to Manoah and his wife together in the form of a man, and they both conversed with this man, nor did they know he was an angel or a spirit until he disappeared in the flame of their own burnt offering. In the 14th chapter of Judges, it is stated that as Joshua approached the walls of Jericho, he saw a man standing by the wall with a drawn sword. He advanced to him and demanded of him on which side he fought. The book which you call infallible, says that the angel replied that he appeared there as the captain of the Lord's hosts, and that he fought upon the side of Joshua. In the 19th chapter of I. Kings, it is recorded that an angel appeared to Elijah more than once while he was fleeing from the anger of Jezebel to Mount Horeb, and that Elijah was fed by the angel with material food. Through certain media in Boston and vicinity, material things are sometimes brought into circles; and doubtless, if bread were brought, such is the fanaticism of incredulity to-day, that the modern investigator would not believe that a spirit did it, unless he were informed as to who grew the wheat and who made the bread. Yet those who doubt the manifestations occurring to-day in Boston, with regard to the presentation of material substances at circles, still believe in the presentation of material food to Elijah in his flight to Mount Horeb.

Again, it is said that spirits through modern media, are disposed to falsify, that they tell falsehoods, in other words, that they will lie. Well, now, my friends, let us see if the analogy, even admitting for a moment that this be true, let us see if the analogy will not hold good still. In the 22d chapter of I. Kings, it is stated that God himself put a lying spirit into the mouths of the prophets of Ahab, in order that he might be deceived. With what bad grace, therefore, comes the charge in the present day, by Biblical objectors, against modern media and the spirits controlling with respect to falsehood.

Again, the Davenport media, and the Ellis medium and others throughout New England and other portions of the country, have been heralded all over the land as impostors because of the materialism of their manifestations. Let us see if the spirits in the olden time were not material, and if one, at least, of the brightest mediums spoken of in the ancient record was not willing that a material manifestation should come through his organism. In the 6th chapter of II. Kings occurs this manifestation: Elisha, by the power that was manifesting itself through him, caused a solid iron axe to swim upon the surface of the river Jordan. Is Johnnie King's trumpet more material than Elisha's axe?

Again, in the 21st chapter of I. Chronicles you will recollect it is stated that David had angered God by numbering the people, and that God gave David the choice of three modes of punishment. Now, mark you, David was a man after God's own heart, and his means of communication with God were through the agency of Gad, the seer. Compare the manifestations of Gad, the seer, with the manifestations of those of the different male and female seers of Boston, and answer to yourselves and to the spirit of the age, whether or not there is not as much rationality and beauty in the manifestations of seers of modern times as in any of those presented in the past.

In the 21st chapter of II. Chronicles is a remarkable verse. It is there stated that a hand-writing came from Elijah, the prophet, to Jehoram, King of Judah; whilst the Biblical chronology shows that Elijah had gone to heaven in a chariot of fire thirteen years prior to the date of the writing. What reference can this verse possibly have, if not to corresponding conditions in the present day?

In the 34th chapter of II. Chronicles you will remember that Josiah, then King of Israel, determined to rebuild the house of the Lord; and he sent Hilkiah and others to attend to the moving of

the rubbish preparatory to the building of the house of the Lord. And Hilkiah found a book which he submitted to the scribe, and the scribe submitted it to the king, and the king directed that it should be submitted to whom? To Huldah, the prophetess, the medium! Huldah's decision was deemed by the king to be the word of the Lord, and consequently final. Huldah's opinion was taken. This occurred about a thousand years after the date assigned to the existence of Moses, and for that one thousand years the world knew nothing of the law of Moses, nor until it was decided to have an existence, by a spiritual medium, and that medium a woman! Now you believe that the book of Moses is important—you believe that the book of Moses is invaluable—you believe that the law of Moses should be obeyed. The book of the law of Moses, in all probability, would not have been handed down to present generations but for Huldah. You believe in Huldah, and yet you have just as beautiful seances, just as beautiful prophetic utterances in your city, on Elliot street, on Dwight street, on Harrison Avenue, on Hanson street, in Cambridge, in Roxbury, in Dorchester, in Chelsea, in Charlestown—all around in your vicinity. You ridicule these, you repudiate these, you denounce these, but you accept the law of Moses given you through Huldah.

In the 69th Psalm there is a remarkable verse. It is the 22d verse. Read it and remember it. David is represented as uttering a prayer in which he makes use of this exclamation: "Let their table become a snare before them; and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap." It is difficult to tell what allusion this has, but if it does have an allusion to the corresponding conditions of modern manifestations, then only the experienced investigator in modern Spiritualism can appreciate the deep malignity of any man's heart who could utter such a prayer.

In the 1st, 2d and 3d chapters of Ezekiel you have an account of visions presented to Ezekiel, and of his interviews with the spirits; and in the course of these interviews Ezekiel says distinctly, "A spirit entered into me and enabled me to hear the voices from the sky,"—precisely what is claimed by the majority of the trance mediums of modern times. And I ask you to compare the manifestations of the Book of Ezekiel with the manifestations of modern times through different media, and see which has the advantage in morality and decency. In the 3d chapter of Daniel you will remember that three men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, by the presence of the angel and by the influences of that presence, were saved from injury by the devouring element. In the 5th chapter of Daniel, the finger of an angel wrote upon the trembling walls of the revelling Belshazzar, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin," and a spiritual medium interpreted the chirography. In the 6th chapter of Daniel a manifestation occurs illustrative of that wonderful magnetic power that can be brought to bear through the human organism; indicative of the fact, that, when you shall have properly understood the laws of your being, and more fully comprehend the occult forces of Nature, you will find that men and women, the entire human family, stand upon the apex of creation and must of necessity control all things below. In the 10th chapter of Daniel, after Daniel had fasted, as is the custom with modern mediums on all proper occasions, he was entranced, and a vision was presented to him; and that during the vision the spirit approached him in the form of a man, and spoke to him, and touched him—precisely what is occurring daily in Boston. You believe in the former; you reject the latter. In the 9th chapter of Nehemiah it is said all the people praised God—because of what? He had sent a good spirit to speak to them?

In the 9th chapter of I. Samuel there is a brief history to which I wish to call your attention. Before doing so, however, let me allude to a fact you are probably all conversant with in your own history, or in the history of some one of your acquaintances. You doubtless have frequently left your dwellings with an intention of going in one direction and have found yourselves controlled to go in another; and that you have been controlled wisely and for good. My medium and a friend recently started to visit one of your cemeteries. They found themselves, however, after a ride of an hour, in the presence of some beautiful media, in your vicinity, where they participated in the pleasurable emotions of congenial minds, while drinking in the wisdom of the sky. The chapter to which I refer presents a case in point. In the 1st book of Samuel, 9th chapter—by the way, if the friend of my medium is present, he will remember that while conversing of the incident narrated, both he and the medium cudgeled their brains to tell in what chapter it occurred—in the 9th chapter I. Samuel, it is stated that Saul's father had lost some asses, and that he sent out Saul and one of his men to hunt for them. After hunting for some days Saul became fatigued. (Of course, my friends, you know I am not giving you the exact phraseology.) Saul became distressed and was disposed to give up the search, and so remarked to the man who accompanied him. The man said to Saul, "There is a man of God in this neighborhood; suppose we go and ask him about these lost asses." Saul said, "If we go, what shall we bring the man?" (It was the practice then to pay mediums; now it is the practice to condemn mediums for accepting money.) The man said he had a fourth part of a shekel of silver left, which he would give him to tell them their way. The record says that God had told Samuel the day before that he would send a man to him the following day, whom he was to anoint as ruler in Israel; and he told him also about the lost asses, and what had become of them. When Saul and the man met Samuel, he told them to be easy about the lost asses of his father, that they had been found, and now his father was worrying himself about him; but he was nevertheless to remain a day with him and he would send him forth. He remained a day with Sam-

uel, and Samuel anointed him and sent him forth consecrated as a ruler. But what else was the result of this anointing? Just precisely what has been the result of a thousand visits in your land to developing media. Saul went away a medium, and in the nineteenth chapter he passed through a similar experience to that of many modern media. An evil spirit took possession of him. How did he get rid of the evil spirit? By precisely just such means as are to-day recommended by advanced Spiritualists for creating harmonious relations around the medium—through the instrumentality of music, or by some other similar means. The servants of Saul procured David that the music of his harp might harmonize his own soul and counteract the inharmonious influences around him. Is there not a striking correspondence through this entire history with the incidents of modern times?

But again; when you go home I wish you to read in the 28th chapter of I. Samuel, from the 1st to 19th verse inclusive. You have all heard of the witch of Endor. The Bible does not call her a witch; it is only the clergy who thus denominate her. She is not called a witch except in the headings of the chapter and page, which have been furnished by the translators. The chapter itself, from the beginning to the end, does not contain the word witch. She is called the woman of Endor. She was a very good, hospitable woman likewise. When Saul went there she set before him the best she had, although quite poor in this world's goods. She gave them a sitting, as it is called in modern times, with a striking manifestation. She proved herself a good woman, and a noble, true-hearted, God-gifted medium. All throughout the land, you have just such to-day. They are called witches by some. A hundred or two years ago they were called witches in this State, and suffered physical death as a consequence.

In the 32d chapter of Job, 8th verse, one of the advisers of Job utters a declaration, which we commend to those of you who believe in the infallibility of the Bible. Elijahu, the youngest adviser of Job, proposes to speak before two older advisers, and he offers an apology to Job, if we may so term it, in this language: "But there is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Just the apology, if it be one, that all the media of the land would offer to the learned wisdom of the age. We would not assume to arrogate to ourselves a superabundance of wisdom; but whilst we are aiming to teach, we beg you to remember "there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." In the 33d chapter of the same book, "God speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction." Every word of which the Spiritualists of this age believe.

But not to be tedious, turn over a number of leaves until you come to the 1st chapter of the Book of Matthew. There you will find that an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream, and explained to him the condition of Mary. You believe that. Suppose an angel was to appear to-day in Boston and attempt to explain away such a condition in some of the mediums of modern times. You would reject such a declaration as wholly absurd; and you accept the manifestation of two thousand years ago. In the 28th chapter of Matthew an angel appeared to the two Marys at the sepulchre. What is more, my friends, he performed a physical manifestation. He removed the stone from the door of the sepulchre; and what is more, in the present age of skepticism, it was done in the dark, just before the dawn of day. You believe that, but you reject, ay, you denounce, bitterly denounce the dark circles of modern times; and utterly reject the manifestations occurring in such circles. Why should you do so? Why this universal distrust of media, men and women, whom you would recognize as honest upon any other platform—why should you charge them with charlatanism and fraud, because certain conditions are requisite for certain kinds of manifestation? Why such denunciation, even by some Spiritualists, of dark circles! Does not the great God of the universe hold a dark circle once in every twenty-four hours, and are not all the table-lands of the earth turned upside down thereby? Does not the Good Father, through the darkness that succeeds the day, render you more appreciable of the twinkling divinity of the bright-eyed stars, and of the brilliancy of the silver-faced moon, in her pathway of benevolence and beauty!

In the 1st chapter of Luke, it is said that an angel appeared to Zechariah and promised the birth of John. Now Zechariah and his wife were aged, and did not believe what the angel said, and told him as much. The angel said, "In proof of the truth of my mission, you shall remain dumb until the prophecy is fulfilled;" and he at once became dumb. The Spiritualist alone can readily believe this, and why? Because similar manifestations occur amid modern media. Some years ago, whilst my medium was in the city of St. Louis, a lady there, a female medium, was struck dumb and remained dumb two weeks, owing to certain manifestations that had been given forth against her becoming a medium by her husband. At another time, when I was speaking through my medium in a distant island in the Gulf of Mexico, a lawyer in the audience was struck dumb, and remained so for some hours. The Spiritualist, with such facts as these, can believe that similar manifestations occurred in the olden time. In the same chapter it is declared that an angel appeared to Mary and promised the birth of Jesus. In the 2d chapter of Luke, the angels appeared to the shepherds, you will remember, and an electric glory shone around, and they gave forth that beautiful declaration, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace to all good-will men!"—as the sainted Parker always rendered this verse. In the 9th chapter of Luke, as Jesus, John, James

and Peter were on the Mount, whilst Jesus was transfigured, the Apostles saw Moses and Elias talking with Jesus. Hundreds of years, had elapsed since Moses had died (speaking after the manner of men)—and in this connection permit me to call your attention to another denunciation that is hurled at the media of modern Spiritualism. You are called believers in necromancy. You are called necromancers. Let me inquire what does the word necromancy mean? It is derived from two Greek words, *nekros* (necros), the dead, and *mantano* (mantano), to learn. Was not Jesus learning from the dead when he was talking with Moses and Elias? I congratulate you, media of Boston, that you are in such good company.

In the 34 chapter of Acts, Peter had a power manifested through him, precisely as it is done through Newton and others in New England and in different portions of your country—precisely through the same law, and through the same angelic agency. In the 12th chapter of the Acts, it will be remembered that Peter was imprisoned, and his friends hourly expected his execution. One evening the friends were assembled in the house of Mary, the mother of John, in an upper chamber. Perhaps if a modern writer should endeavor to give a description of this meeting, it would be said they were holding a circle in an upper chamber of sister Mary's house. While there, a rapping was heard at the gate, and the girl Rhoda, one of the circle, was sent down to see what occasioned the disturbance. Peter spoke, and when she heard his voice, it so rejoiced her that she ran back and told the friends that Peter was at the gate. They told her she was mad. In the meantime the rapping still continued, and she insisted she was not mad. Then said they, "It is his angel." Observe the point, my friends—if it were not possible for the angel of Peter to have rapped, would the Apostles have made such a declaration?

But one more manifestation. In the first chapter and first verse of that wonderful book, the Apocalypse, it is stated that information is about to be given by an angel. And in the last chapter, after John on the Isle of Patmos had received the mysteries of the Book of Revelations, the angel, through whom they had been received, approached him. John, psychologized by the idea of the age, when he perceived the brilliant beauty of the angel, supposed God himself was before him, and "fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed him these things." But the angel said, "See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren, the prophets—worship God." Precisely what the spirits through the various phenomena of modern Spiritualism are saying to-day. The spirits who communicate to-day, my friends, as in the past, are but your brethren, members of the same great human family. Our injunction likewise is—worship God. But our desire is, also, that you will listen to the advice of those who have journeyed across the silent river before you—whose affections are still warm toward you, and who seek to pilot you securely to the bright and beautiful shores of another and a better land.

Now, my friends, I have given but a few of these manifestations, in order to show the analogy existing between those of ancient days and those of modern times, and also to represent how utterly absurd it is, upon Biblical grounds, to object to the phenomenal phases of modern Spiritualism. The hypothesis assumed is this, and I beg of those of you who object upon Biblical grounds to the phenomena, to take home the declaration—the hypothesis of the spiritual school, summed up, is this: If in the past there was a law existing in the divine economy by means of which Moses and Elias could have conversed with Jesus—by means of which angels in the forms of men could converse with Abraham, or appear amid any of the conditions to which I have alluded—if there was a law by which one of his fellow-servants could appear to John on the Isle of Patmos—then, if God be eternal and his laws unalterable, that law must still be in existence; and you, my friends, can commune with your fellow-servants who have gone before you; you, too, commune with angels proportionately to the conditions and circumstances by which you may be surrounded. And I aver that this is a logical conclusion, a legitimate deduction from whence there is no escape.

You will observe that there is a difference in the tenor and manner of the communications to which I have alluded, corresponding to existing differences to-day. There is a difference between those recounted in the Old Testament and those in the New. This is attributable to the conditions and circumstances of the age, and the conditions and circumstances of the channel through which the communications came. The pivotal point of the revelation of the Old Testament was an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. The pivotal point of the revelation of the New Testament was, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do!" so that the difference alleged to exist in the spiritual communications of to-day, and which are urged as an objection to modern Spiritualism, likewise have their analogies in the past. Consequently, if the later Revelations are to be rejected on the ground of seeming contradictions, so must the former, by the same rule of reasoning. And, besides, let me ask, if Revelations were made by angels thousands of years ago, why may they not be made to-day? Think you God permitted angels to visit the rebellious Jews perpetually, and that he will deny the same blessing to you? Upon what authority has Ecclesiasticism declared the canon of Revelation closed?

No, my friends, the canon of Revelation has not closed. Inspiration is universal, and the angels are ever near, aiming to comfort, seeking to bless. A beautiful little spirit is now near me, who passed from the form just nine years ago, according to your calendar, to-day. Her parents are regular attendants at your hall, and she bids me say, adopting the rhythm of another:

"I am happy now, dear parents;
My home's amid the flowers,
Where zephyrs from the throne of God
Are torn in fragrant showers.

Would I come back, dear mother,
And leave my glorious home?
Ah, though I love thee dearly, mother,
From heaven I would not roam.

I am happy here, dear father,
And I can watch you, too;
And I can guard your steps, father,
As you did mine, so true.

I ask you, dear mother,
Of a brighter world than this;
As the soft perfume which angels breathe
Is borne on the evening wind.

Your world is very fair, father,
With its sunny hills and dales;
But ours is fairer far, father,
And its beauty never pales.

Then rejoice with me, dear ones,
Though on earth I've closed my eyes;
For I will guide your steps, dear ones,
To my home beyond the skies.

Tell me, oh ye feeling sepias, what do you find in this language of the dear spirit which you can object to on Biblical grounds? Is there any proposition in philosophy or science that warrants the rejection of love when proffered by the de-

parted from a brighter realm of being? Can you reject from the score of the affections—that is, do you find it in your hearts to shut out the rhythmic effusions of the sky, however oft repeated, when, with soothing cadences, they are borne upon the air like the sweet sounds of distant music floating o'er the surface of a summer's lake?

Two other spirits, (whose parents are now in the hall) who left the form in early life, and in the early womanhood of their mother, are bidding me utter in language heretofore given through another medium, but still coming from their hearts—

"Tell us, parents, where is death?

We do not find it here;
We only find still more of life
Each moment in this sphere;
We're here, parents, where the flowers
Four forth their fragrant breath,
And no one in these heavenly bowers
Can tell us aught of death.

We saw your burning teardrops fall
Upon our pallid brow;
We heard you cry in agony
'We have no darlings now.'
But could you've seen the angel throng
That bore your pets away,
You'd not have shed another tear
Upon our pulseless clay."

Oh, is there not comfort in modern Spiritualism, found by the mourner in no other system of faith? Oh, is there not emanating from the phenomena of modern Spiritualism a brilliant joy, shooting out far above the hill-tops of superstition and fanaticism, illuminating the soul, and bidding it upward and onward move toward higher and holier and more beautiful relations? Oh, is not this glorious system, which appeals to the heart while it convinces the judgment, worthy of the most cordial reception, and of the most earnest vindication?

But a few words to the Spiritualists, and I shall close—for I fear I have already wearied you; and I trust I shall be pardoned for speaking plainly the words of advice, through a comparative stranger. I find, my friends, that you have here in Boston and its vicinity, a broad field in which you might operate beautifully and beneficially; but I fear you are too much divided for the exercise of that practical usefulness which might otherwise be brought into operation. Perhaps this disintegration may have been necessary thus far; but now, a large portion of you Spiritualists of Boston have reached that intellectual standpoint which enables you to discriminate between the true and the false in ethics, and which should enable you to stand forth upon a broad philosophical platform in the advocacy of the glorious cause in which you are intrusted, and which is so eminently worthy of your warmest affections and your most devoted efforts, and as a primary step to a consummation so beatifying, and so much to be desired, permit me to enjoin upon you the cultivation of more of that brotherly love among yourselves, and more of that sympathy that was so eminently characteristic of the beautiful medium of Nazareth. Cultivate kindly feelings for each other, and for all your fellow travelers along the tortuous pathway of this earthly existence. Cultivate a love for the beautiful in all things—remembering that:

"Your world is as full of beauty

As other worlds above;
And if man but did his duty,
It might be as full of Love."

Let all your aims be high and holy. Lift your aspirations toward loftier points, and struggle for more elevated positions in the realm of thought. And believe me, as thus you aspire, there is not an angel bending from the snowy clouds that roll as an ocean of drapery on the blue depths of the sky, but will smile with exceeding beauty upon all such efforts—whilst images of unfading beauty shall forever be thine, coming to thee in quick succession from the heaven of brighter minds above thee. Thus, too, you will become more united. Thus you will be enabled to move forward as a glorious brotherhood along the pathway of progress that lies before you. And thus, through the magnetism of unity, of sympathy and of love, you shall preach louder in behalf of truth than all the media you can place upon your rostrum—as trumpet-tongued you acts proclaim to the community: See how these Spiritualists love one another!

Oh, if I had lungs of brass, and a mountain for a pulpit, I could not superintend better results by speaking, than you can, yourselves, by learning to love one another, and by aiming to discard whatever is calculated to retard your advance in this direction. Oh, let your common faith in the immortality of spiritual truth be written as with the diamond's point upon the living rock; and let your diversities of opinion with regard to the various manifestations of this truth, be inscribed on the shifting sand. Cast aside the microscope of prejudice and bigotry, which too much magnifies the points of difference between you, and use the telescope of charity and reason, which will bring within the horizon of your view the manifold and mingling beauties of the glorious cause you all so much love. And in your social and business relations, in your conversations one with the other, and of each other, endeavor to imitate the example of the painter who is said to have been employed to sketch the portrait of Alexander the Great. Alexander had a scar on his forehead, and the painter was perplexed to find a way to avoid showing the defect in the portrait. He at length adopted the expedient of representing the monarch as sitting in a chair, his head leaning upon his right hand, and his forehead covering the scar on his brow. When, in a business or social relation, you attempt a sketch of your neighbor, oh my brother and sister Spiritualists, with the right hand of brotherly love cover up any scar that might otherwise create a deformity.

In conclusion, permit me to borrow an illustration. Cast a quantity of quicksilver upon the ground, and it breaks into a thousand globules, on account of the unevenness of the earth's surface. But the affinities of the quicksilver are not destroyed. Use a little care and gentleness, and you can very soon collect the globules into a bright mass, reflecting your countenance as you behold it. So with Spiritualists—it is your earthly surroundings that originate your differences—it is the selfishness of materialism that severs. A little charity, a little brotherly love, would soon collect you into one common mass of spiritual development, reflecting the glory of your common Father, the righteousness of your common cause, and the brilliant beauty of your future home. Oh, remember these things. Cultivate at all times—in essential things, unity; in doubtful things, liberty; and in all things, charity; and then, indeed, will have dawned for you the glorious millennial morn when "Ephraim shall no longer envy Judah, and Judah no more vex Ephraim."

BENEDICTION.

May the bright-eyed angels of our common Father's love so impress your minds, each and every one of you, that you may be enabled to realize that they are perpetually aiming to guide you to

That land of beauty, home of joy,
Where mingles naught of Earth's alloy.

Children's Department.

BY MRS. LOVE M. WILLIS,
Address care of Dr. F. L. H. White, Post-office box 59,
Boston, D. New York City.

"We think not that we daily see
About our path, such things as are to be,
Or maybe if they will, and we prepare
Their souls and ours to meet in happy air."
—LAMB. HUNT.

LETTER TO THE CHILDREN OF THE TROY LYCEUM.

DEAR CHILDREN—There was once a company of children who used to listen to my words while I familiarly talked to them about what they wished to know. Their faces were very dear to me, and I used to think that through their smiles and glad looks I could catch a glimpse of heaven. Ever since then, when I imagine myself talking to children, I see before me those dear familiar faces, and thus I feel as if I was always addressing old friends who would allow me to say just what I liked best.

So now, as I sit in the quiet of my room, I seem to have gathered about me the same company of loving ones, and it is because of their love and my own that I speak to you just as if I had always known you, and we will not be strangers in any sense.

The little text I wish to take, to introduce what I have to say, I presume you have heard so often that you will think it quite dull, yet I will venture to repeat it, and ask you to remember it: "By their fruits ye shall know them." I remember many years ago that I was delighted in hearing of a method of producing fine pear trees by budding on some other stock, and I bought some trees and hoped to enjoy the luxury of that favorite fruit. Perhaps you can think just how I watched my pear trees. If there came a dry season, I caused them to be watered; if the wind blew harshly, I had the strong stakes that supported them tightened.

They grew finely, their leaves were dark and glossy, and their fresh shoots sprang toward the sun in a glad, exultant way, as if quite thankful for the mere gift of life. The bark looked strong and healthy to my trees; they grew in comely shape, and were in every way pear trees to be proud of.

The fourth year I felt the glad reward of my trouble, when I saw the fair white blossoms opening to the sunlight one spring morning. Nature is so bountiful in bestowing beauty that she gives a dozen blossoms that wither and drop to one that bears fruit, and so I had fifty blossoms on one tree, and could calculate on two or three pears, and I was not disappointed. There rounded out into the tiny babyhood of pears three specimens of growth, and I believed that two at least would remain; and they did, and grew till early autumn.

And then my pears were gathered. It was a memorable day. But pears, like many other good things, improve by keeping, and so these were laid away according to wisest directions in a drawer to grow mellow. I forgot to say that the variety of pear I had chosen was the *Luscious Bartlett*, whose flavor was familiar and not to be mistaken. When the pears were fit to be eaten, they were cut with a silver knife that nothing might impair their sweetness.

—And our expectations they had no flavor; they were like tasteless pulp. The tree has continued to bear for many years with the same result; its fruit has always the same lifeless taste.

I remember also that I was very anxious to raise Asters, some fine varieties of which I had seen and admired. So I had my pet bed, and cared for my little tender plants, raised from seed that promised well; but when my Asters bloomed, they were as unlike the flower I wanted as a sunflower is to a Dahlia. I had only my little fringe of petals, instead of a great blushing head, as in the specimens I had seen.

Now the fruits of my pear tree and the blooming of my Asters revealed the tree and plant. I could not tell from the branch, or form of the fruits, from the stalk or green leaf, the richness of my tree or beauty of my plant.

Now it is precisely so with men and women and children, only with them there is no time necessary for the full development of fruit. Every day and hour and moment we are revealing the fruit of our lives. I know little children that send out buds and blossoms of beauty so fast that one can gather something every moment from their sweet winning ways.

I believe that almost all children are pleased with rich and elegant garments, and that is all right, because every flower teaches us to love beauty, and every sunrise and sunset is full of richness and elegance. The mistake we are all apt to make, is in supposing that fine dress, or a fine appearance, represents something grand or lovely. From this mistake we are quite likely to make some distinctions between those that look humble and those that look lofty. I believe all children would run to the prettily dressed child sooner than to the one in dull, homely garments.

But there is something within all this outside appearance that will reveal the real beauty. The very moment that the little form in the velvet cloak shrugs its shoulders in disdain, or the little feet in satin slippers stamp in anger, then the fruit is showing just what the tree is. There is no interior sweetness, or it would show itself in loving expression. The moment a harsh word or unkind look comes to the pretty face, then we know that the fruit is sour that we hoped to find sweet.

We think sometimes that it is easy to cover up our sourness or bitterness or tastelessness, and that nobody will find it out if only we look pretty; but the fruit-bearing time is sure to come, and then we reveal just what we are. Some little word, some little act, shows very soon the real temper and spirit that no fine garments can cover up.

I can never write much without telling a story, as you well know. So to illustrate my subject, I will tell you of a little princess, who lived up among the mountains in the olden time. She was a very wise, discreet little body, and very anxious to make the world better in some way. She thought that one of the best ways was to let everybody have as fine a time as possible. So she called about her a great many little princesses and princes, and she entertained them in her beautiful castle. She gave them *feret*, and pleasures, and lavished all sorts of elegancies on them.

Her surprise and mortification were great on finding herself in a little nest of hornets, because of the envy and jealousy of those she had tried to please. At first she was quite indignant and discouraged at finding all her generous efforts useless, but she soon began to desire to show to her guests their real condition of selfishness, in order that they might improve themselves. But she felt how difficult was her task, and she was wholly unable to devise any means to accomplish her purpose.

She was riding by herself one day, and came to the foot of a humble weaver; she entered, and was delighted with his labor. The smooth, beautiful fabric he was weaving seemed to be a rich reward for the time bestowed upon it.

"Ah," said the little princess, "how beautiful it would be if we could thus weave the fabric of our lives."

"Your wish compels me to reveal myself," said the old weaver. "I am a magician living here in obscurity. If you will, I can reveal to you how your wish can be gratified."

"I want to show to my friends just what they are, that they may grow wise and good," said the princess.

"I have," said the magician, "some wonderful threads. He who weaves with them will weave his daily life."

"Ah, I see," said the princess, "we must all learn to weave. I will set the example, and all will follow."

So the princess ordered a great number of looms which she had placed in the large castle hall, and the magician sent her the threads, which seemed only of common flax. They all very willingly began the labor, since the princess declared it the greatest sport in the world. The shuttles flew merrily in the great hall, and the weavers wove with hearty zeal. They hardly noted the passage of time. They had promised to work faithfully for a month, at which time the princess promised them a grand festival. And so they wove and wove, day by day, until the time had passed.

"Let us not unroll our fabric in the presence of each other," said the princess. "I will take mine to my own chamber, that I may inspect it by myself. You shall all do the same."

So each one started to his own private room with the fabric in his arms. The whole castle was as silent as the chamber of death, for each one stood in awe before the revelation that the warp and woof gave him. In events that stood out like pictures each saw himself. Some beheld their envy, some their hate, some their jealousy, some their deceit. They could not mistake the history woven there. Each one was filled with humiliation, and resolved to keep the tell-tale fabric in some secret place.

So they all came out from their chambers after a time, and all were silent concerning their woven fabric, yet each one knew that the others had an untold history, for some eyes were dull with weeping, and some downcast with shame. The good princess was the first to speak.

"I am sure, my friends," she said, "that we are all glad of the high and wise power that has been given us. We will weave our own garments henceforth, for it is better than idleness or mere pleasure, and we will willingly let them tell just what we are, for we will weave only characters of love and beauty. And I have offered this prayer, that all the children in all the world may do as we have done forever, and wear garments of their own making, that shall reveal just what they are."

Whether the little princess's prayer was answered or not, who shall tell? but that very night a dear little girl down in the valley came running to her mother, saying: "What makes my dress so like gold, and who put these pretty flowers all over me?" And a little boy said, "Just look at the cap I wear; it is covered all over with gold and with silver stars!"

One thing is very certain: the sweet, loving child seems ever clothed in garments as radiant as the sunlight, and the beauty of the inner life shines through the roughest and coarsest material, and makes the homely face full of beauty.

Do not forget one thing: We cannot conceal our real selves long. The blossom will come to tell of the stock; the fruit to tell of the tree; the garment will be woven that will reveal the weaver.

(Original.)

THE BLESSING OF CONTENT.

BY MISS E.,
Adult Liberty Group, Philadelphia Lyceum.

There's but one blessing that I wish,
On which my heart is bent;
It is not beauty, wealth or power—
'Tis sweet and calm content.

It would make me happy throughout life,
Whatever might be my lot,
Were I to be a rich man's wife,
Or grace a poor man's cot.

Were I by sorrows ever tried,
They'd never cause a frown;
My eyes would from all tears be dried,
For smiles would chase them down.

Ah! then with patience would I bear
All trials God had sent,
And gratefully I'd breathe a prayer,
For sweet and calm content.

SEEING ANGELS.

A STORY FOR LITTLE FOLKS.

BY EULA LEE.

June's sweet roses were shedding their rich fragrance on the clear summer air, when the Ford family left the dusty, heated city, for their pleasant country-seat.

The clear blue sky looked down upon the soft, green fields and tinkling brooks, with a sunny smile; and sunny skies make sunny faces at such times. It was something to enjoy—that long good-bye to dust and noise and crowds, and then to find themselves amid God's handiwork.

There was just a pleasant family party: Mr. and Mrs. Ford, Alice, the eldest, a girl of seventeen; Charlie, next younger, and last, but not least, Dora and Nora, the twins, two fat little dumplings of six years.

How two such perfect little Hebes ever blossomed in a great, noisome, smoky city, is a mystery to me; but they have been owing in part to daily airing in the Park, and partly to having a sensible mother, one that did not consider confectionery a necessary part of family government. They were taught perfect obedience; so there was no fretting themselves thin over impossibilities.

It was late in the evening when they arrived at Maplefield, and the two little ones were far too tired and sleepy to look about them. But the robins in the great maple tree near their window had scarcely commenced their morning hymn before two little curly heads were peeping at them through the blinds and two sweet voices chimed in the chorus.

The dewy leaves swayed softly, and meek-eyed blossoms bent their heads like penitents at morning devotions; great crimson and golden bars across the eastern sky heralded the sun's rising, gilding the far-off hills, and giving a deeper tinge to the roses. The very air seemed hushed to sleep; the clang and clatter and whirl of city life seemed too far away to be a reality. The calm stillness was unbroken, save by sweet bird-music and the distant crowing of cocks at neighboring farmhouses.

"Oh," said Nora, the thoughtful one, with a long-drawn sigh, "I wonder if heaven is nicer than this?"

"I guess so," returned Dora, "for mamma read about its being all gold and pearls. But this is lovely. Let's get dressed for a run before breakfast."

"But we mustn't forget to say our prayers first," said Nora, "for God is here just as near us as in our other home."

Then they both knelt down with clasped hands, their little white nightdresses floating above them like a cloud, and the clear, bird-like voices ascending heavenward like purest incense. Surely, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Katy, the maid, peeped at the door in silent awe. Dora smiled, her eyes rose to their feet, and ran to meet her, with a call for dresses and help. First came the bath, then the smoothing of the tangled curls. They were soon in fresh muslin, looking as bright and fair as the morning lilies.

Then with a glad cry of freedom, they ran off down the broad walks, feeling like caged birds set free.

By this time the sun had commenced his journey, and looked in at them through the tall tops, gathering up the bright jewels that glistened everywhere. Nora had not forgotten the little basket papa had given her the day before, and finding Mike, the gardener, they begged some roses.

"Shure, an' it's yer selves shall have hapes of roses, bless yer awate hearts!" and the great pruning knife severed rose after rose, until the pretty basket was filled to overflowing.

Nora busied herself looking among the folded leaves of a half-blown York and Lancaster.

"Is it here the angels sleep, Mike?" she said, rousing up at last from reverie.

"An' is it angel yer searchin' for? Sure niver a bit. An angel I've seen, barrin' yerseives."

"But they do come, Mike, and I would so like to see one," she returned slowly.

"They'll be after wantin' the likes o' yer soon, I'm thinkin'," said Mike, shaking his head ominously, as the little one followed slowly after her wide-awake sister.

"Oh! here is a nice, soft carpet; let's sit down and make a bonquet for mamma, and I'll put some among your curls," said Nora.

Seating herself with becoming gravity, Dora folded her hands and tried to keep still; while Nora, young artist that she was, arranged the floral coronet, her usually sunny face taking on a shade of care as the little chubby hands passed in and out among the shiny curls.

She was giving it the last finishing touch when a loud call startled them, and Kate appeared all in a flurry.

"Oh, you rogues! pussies, to steal off into the wet grass! Shure, an' it'll be the death o' yer!"

With wet shoes and limp muslin the children followed the indignant Katy like culprits.

"I'm sure that's nothing—is it, Nora? We've got heaps of dresses, and Kate needn't make such a fuss."

"But it makes trouble," returned Nora, "and mamma doesn't like us to do that. I didn't think."

"Well, I guess Kate will manage to survive it, anyhow," said Dora independently.

Mamma looked unusually sober when the little wet feet came to view, and Charlie laughingly declared they were a couple of mauls from Lily Pond.

Katy hurried them away, and they were soon at the breakfast table, brighter and rosier than ever.

"Please, ma'am, I think Nora is very sick; she is tossing about restless-like, and looks so flushed," said Kate, appearing very early at Mrs. Ford's door the next morning.

Clipping on a clean, gown hastily, Mrs. Ford hurried in, finding her worst fears confirmed—Nora was sick. A physician was sent for, and the anxious parents watched beside her with untiring devotion, till the stars came and paled again; yet still the fever raged, and the life-light burned dimmer and dimmer.

Near the close of the third day the gentle blue eyes unclosed, and a heavenly smile lit up the lovely face, like a flash of heaven's own brightness.

"Going to Jesus now, mamma," she whispered softly. "See they are coming!" and she raised her hands as if to grasp unseen forms.

The pure spirit, attuned for its upward flight, beheld what mortal eye could not. Nora had her wish—she saw the angels.—The Nation.

THE CONSTRUCTIVE WORK.

BY DR. J. K. BAILEY.

It is evident that the development of modern Spiritualism has reached a stage which demands organic system, as a practical element of continued growth and the means of concentrating its mighty power for the further work before it. The widely diffused spontaneity of action in this direction, exhibited in all parts of the country, and even in Europe, has led to the development of a newness among Spiritualists of the bugbear "organization," so long availing the efforts of the past, is sufficient confirmation of the above postulate. Yet it may be well to state a few of the reasons of the necessity for organic construction.

Preparations of defense upon the part of those likely to be assailed; and the "defensive works" should be such as will likely resist the efforts of "the enemy." The unassuming voice of "Orthodoxy," praying the recognition, in the organic law of the government, of its past dogmas, and the efforts put forth in that behalf, points to the battery which is intended as a means of demolishing the fortress of Spiritualism and all elements opposing its "sanctified" schemes. We think no one will deny the superior efficiency of legalized organic system, in concentrating and directing the forces of the liberal army, and in the use of the means of work the defensive batteries and hold the noble old fortress of untrammeled religious opinion, expression and worship.

Every interest of the spiritualistic movement of this nineteenth century; every grand idea of general good to humanity; every noble effort, every divine ultimatum unfold therefrom, which in any wise bear upon the highest considerations of universal use, point directly to the superior potency of legalized organization, collective system and concentration of all the forces to be employed in the great battle before us. And to secure all this an individual right, worthy of the name of surrender. Only the concentration and systematization of the physical, financial and intellectual forces, the union of the social and religious elements, need be sought or realized by organization.

As in the past of modern Spiritualism, so with its present and future, all all persons seeking individualization, to the end of independence of thought, judgment, interpretation and action, upon all principles of life, be unfolded in that direction. And this as well—even better—with the simple forms of collective action, under system and responsibility to the general rights and interests, as with the chaos of disintegration and centrifugal impetus. Then, while nothing of importance is to be lost, very much is to be gained by organization.

In the constructive work already upon us, and which, in my humble judgment, is inevitable, "let us see to it that our perspicacity and comprehension of the nature of the work before us, be not obscured by the fog of dogma, and the narrowness of dogma, be observed in the organic law of each Society, as will secure the fullest freedom to each and every individual member, upon matters of belief or membership; the strictest accountability in the exercise of official power and duty; and the broadest scope of the use of means of individual and collective unfoldment, in knowledge, wisdom, love, charity and tolerance, compatible with the objects and necessities of organization. In doing this, executive officers will find it best to submit, so far as practicable, all questions of importance—especially that of the speakers to be employed—to the Society before final action. The will of the Society, expressed by a majority vote, will usually estop all clamor or denunciation upon the part of all; because, by the exercise of so reasonable a rule as this, all will be willing to abide as a fair means of determining differences of opinion.

In the past we have not, in my judgment, given sufficient importance and attention to the very best means of attaining what I deem one of the most important results of our meetings and efforts, viz: individual culture and development of mind, thought, ideas and the expression thereof, in the most concise, intelligently plain and yet artistic manner: the "CONFERENCE," in which all shall be permitted and expected to participate under proper and definite rules, limiting time, which should be established in by-laws or articles. This, with the Lyceum and an evening lecture, would seem the very best arrangement of means to the end of the great consummation of the aggregated elements of unfoldment of the mental, moral, religious and spiritual attributes.

In exercise, use of action, only can healthy growth be attained. "Outstretching" stretching, out the necessary sources of digestion, obfuscation, absorption, etc., the result of that which cannot be digested, will not develop the desired result. Therefore, secure all possible rational means to the consummation of human destiny, upon which no one can be disappointed. This may be unfolded in the beautiful Philosophy, Science, Religion, and the other sciences.

Spiritual Phenomena.

AN EVENING WITH THE SPIRITS.

BY H. L. THOMPSON.

Since I submitted to you my last communication, dear Banner, under the above caption, I have had another great spiritual treat, or rather a great musical treat, given through spirit influence. Hitherto I had had serious doubts respecting the genuineness of such musical phenomena. But in this instance I must confess doubt could find no place in my mind. As a musical treat, apart from the wonderful source from whence it came, it was to me full of interest and pleasure. I had often heard Mrs. Hatch perform on the piano in the spiritual meetings, and regarded her as a very common-place player. I believe Mrs. Hatch herself would endorse this judgment on her former musical ability. The contrast in this particular between now and then was truly astonishing.

The entertainment commenced by the medium giving the names and describing the appearance of the spirit friends of those who had come to the séance. Mrs. Hatch then sat down to the piano and played the "Zephyr Waltz" and "Love Not," arranged as a march with variations. These two pieces, I was informed, are always played at every séance, by request of the invisibles. Then followed "Come unto me," which was performed with great taste and expression. The medium sings well, but in my judgment her vocal powers are not to be compared to her instrumental talents. She then sang and played "Shades of Eve," a fantasia. This is one of the sweetest pieces I think I ever heard. "Variations on Auld Lang Syne" came in due course. It was admitted by all present to be a superb performance. I saw several present who are known to be judges of music. The medium then turned from the piano, and said that the spirit friends would be subject for them to play—something that could be described by music. A paper was handed to the medium, on which was written, "Will the spirit friends please to play the 'Meeting of the Waters' with variations, 'Hope' with variations, and 'The Way of Life'?" The invisibles, through the medium, remarked that the three subjects just given might be said to be substantially one with variations, and as such they would perform it. It was truly a brilliant performance. I never saw such execution, pathos, sweetness, expression and taste combined in one piece. The variety and vicissitudes of life were portrayed to the life. Now the stream of life ran smoothly on by flowery banks, so gently that not even a rippling sound could be heard; now it began to dash wildly onward with great fury, and in a little while it was heard to boil and roar like a perfect Niagara; anon it swelled and rushed along with deep, majestic swell; and finally all was hushed save the sweet, calm, silvery music made as it winds its way over the pebbly shore to join the great ocean of eternity.

The spirit friends then said that they had a few remarks to make on the piece they had performed. Beethoven, who, it appeared, had performed the first part of the piece, said that the way of life should be "harmonious," but that it often met with obstacles by which its course was disturbed, but the ultimate of life should be and would be harmonious. Mozart, who had performed the second part of the piece, said that the way of life should be replete with grand and lofty actions, but that too often it became degraded and despicable by overmastering surroundings, but that the ultimate would be greatness and goodness. Then came George Hamilton, who in earth life had been a celebrated bugler in Philadelphia. He said that the way of life should be bright and joyful, but, alas, it was too often filled with gloom and sadness, but the ultimate would be sunshine and gladness. Lastly came Cherubini, who had played the last part of the piece. He said that the way of life should be natural, but that too often it was perverted and unnatural, but that the ultimate would be natural in its fullest embodiment.

The séance was then concluded with the song "Lost at Sea"; "The Battle of the Wilderness," descriptive; "Home Medley," containing the airs "Home, sweet Home," "Do they think of me at Home?" "Home Again," &c., and song of "Twilight Hours." Let me advise the readers of the Banner to go and visit 8 Kittredge Place. They will be well paid.

22 Congress street, Boston.

Spiritual Manifestations.

Some months since, a paper with the title of "Banner of Light" came to my address, marked "Rev." Z. S. Vall, 21-7. I do not know who has sent it, but by perusing the several numbers which I have received, I learn that some of your numerous correspondents give their experience in the investigation of the so-called spiritual manifestations. This, by your permission, I would be pleased to do, in a very brief manner. My motto has ever been, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." I therefore commenced the investigation of this phenomenon when it first made its appearance through the mediumship of the Fox girls. Until November, 1851, my investigation was exclusively by reading. At that time I enjoyed the first opportunity of being present at what was called a sitting. The medium was a girl about eleven years of age. Some six or eight persons were present, and we formed a circle by placing our fingers on a table. The manifestation was by raps, but the spirit would communicate with none present except the lady of the house, and she was the only confirmed believer in the room. She inquired if there was such a place in the spirit-world as the Bible represented heaven to be.

ANS.—No.

Q.—Is there such a place as the Bible represents hell to be?

ANS.—No.

Q.—What is the condition of things in the spirit-world?

ANS.—There are seven spheres or degrees.

Q.—Is there a God?

ANS.—There is a vitalizing power or principle in Nature, which is called God.

Q.—Is there a devil?

ANS.—No.

The woman then inquired whose spirit it was.

ANS.—The spirit of her brother, who, as she said, had been gone two years.

Q.—Where have you been?

ANS.—Out West among the Indians.

Q.—Did you die a natural death?

ANS.—No.

Her last inquiry was, How did you die?

ANS.—The Indians confined me and left me to starve to death.

This deeply afflicted sister felt very bad and wept bitterly. Who would not? In the midst of this general excitement of sorrow and sympathy a rap was heard at the outside door, when one of the company arose and opened it; and, to the utter amazement of all present, in came that absent brother, alive and well. It may be asked what effect his appearance had upon those present under such circumstances? I am not prepared to answer for the others, but it caused me to believe without a remaining doubt. What I believed I will leave you and the reader to judge.

A few evenings after this I was present at a sitting in a "Shakerite" house. Two men were the mediums. A wood-bottom chair was placed in the middle of the room, and in it a brass candlestick, perhaps ten inches or a foot high, about two and a half inches square at the bottom. A newly lighted yellow candle was in the stick, and the

mediums—one on each side—placed their fingers on the edge of the stool, or bottom of the chair, when it tipped over and struck the front edge of the stool to the floor, then the other way, and struck the back in the same manner. This was done many times, and very rapidly, yet the candle remained stationary and burning, going back and forward with the motion of the chair.

The mediums removed their fingers, the chair stood still, and I took up the candle and wiped the bottom of the stick, also the stool of the chair, to be sure that there was no substance that fastened the two together. I then replaced the candle, and the mediums their fingers, and the chair with the candle performed as before.

My next adventure with the so-called spirits was through the mediumship of a young lady, some sixteen years old. She was an unusually bright appearing girl. This manifestation was by writing. She placed her fingers on a table and immediately there were raps. I inquired if the spirit present would communicate with me? The answer was written by the medium, "On religious matters, but nothing else." The medium held a lead pencil as any person would to write. I asked her if she would hold the pencil some other way, as I wished to be sure that she did not do the writing herself. She replied that she would if the spirit was willing. I made inquiry, and the answer was written, "Any way the gentleman chooses."

She requested her brother to come to the table at the top, and hold her elbow clear from the table. This was done, and she wrote as before. She then held the pencil by the top between her fore and middle fingers, then between the ball of her thumb and hand, without resting her hand or elbow. The writing was as plain as at first.

Q.—Is the Bible true?

ANS.—True, all true.

Q.—Are there any spheres or degrees in the spirit-world?

ANS.—No.

Q.—Is there such a place in the spirit-world as the Bible represents heaven to be?

ANS.—There is.

Q.—Who inhabits heaven?

ANS.—God, Christ, the angels and the spirits of good men and women who have lived on the earth.

Q.—Is there such a place in the spirit-world as the Bible represents hell to be?

ANS.—There is.

Q.—Who inhabits hell?

ANS.—The devil, his angels and the spirits of bad men and women who have lived on the earth.

Q.—Are they miserable in hell?

ANS.—They are.

Q.—Will they be forever miserable?

ANS.—We know no more of the future here than you do on earth, but we expect they will.

This spirit claimed to be the spirit of a Dr. Williams. At this juncture his brother came into the room, and inquired if the spirit would communicate with him. The answer was in the affirmative. This brother had been sent for, and he inquired what was wanted of him. The answer was, "Repeat of your sins; live faithful to God, and you will meet me in heaven." Mr. Williams said that it was his brother's handwriting.

Having occupied more space than I designed, I will close for the present; and if it receives the attention that will warrant it, you may hear more of my experience. In the meantime I hope your readers will "Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good." Yours for the Truth,

Z. S. VALL.

Minister of the Gospel of Christ.

THE BEAUTIFUL LAND.

There's a beautiful land by the spoiler untrod,
Unclouded by sorrow or care;
It is lighted alone by the presence of God,
Whose throne and whose altar are there;
Its crystalline streams with a murmurous flow
Meander through valleys of green,
And its mountains of Jasper are bright in the glow
Of a splendor no mortal hath seen.

And throngs of glad spirits with jubilant breath
Make the air with their melodies ring;
And one known on earth as the angel of death,
Shines here as an angel of life.
And infinite tenderness beams from his eyes,
On his brow is a heavenly calm,
And his voice, as it thrills through the depth of the skies,
Is as sweet as the seraphim's psalm.

Through the musical groves of this beautiful land
Walk the souls which were faithful in this,
And their pure white foreheads by zephyrs are fanned
That evermore murmur of bliss;
They taste the rich fruitage that hangs from the trees,
And breathe the sweet odor of flowers
More fragrant than ever were kissed by the breeze
In Araby's loveliest bowers.

Old prophets, whose words were a spirit of flame
Blazing out o'er the darkness of time,
And martyrs, whose courage no torture could tame,
Nor turn from their purpose sublime;
And saints and confessors, a numberless throng,
Who were loyal to truth and to right,
And left as they walked through the darkness of wrong
Their foot-prints encreased with light.

And the dear little children who went to their rest
Ere their lives had been sullied by sin,
While the angel of morning still tarried a guest
Their spirit's pure temple within—
All are there, all are there in the beautiful land,
The land by the spoiler untrod,
And their radiant foreheads by breezes are fanned
That blow from the gardens of God.

My soul hath looked in through the gateway of dreams
On the city all paved with pure gold,
And heard the sweet flow of its murmurous streams,
As through the green valleys they rolled;
And though it still was in the desolate strand,
A pilgrim and stranger on earth,
Yet I knew, in that glimpse of the beautiful land,
That it gazed on the home of its birth.

Letter from Texas.

The cause of spiritual truth is finding many inquirers among our most enlightened minds of all shades of sentiment. It is a remarkable phase of the war problem that while no national prejudice here once existed, the Spiritual Philosophy as a creature of Northern growth, men of culture and thought are everywhere embracing it in Texas, and we should accept the fact as evidence of the power of superior intelligence to aid in restoring fraternal relations among brothers, peace on earth and good will to all men.

In my letter to you published in your issue of Oct. 26th, I said: I know that good mediums, and, in fact, most of the people of the Northern States, fear to come here because their persons are not safe in the South. Now, I can safely say such is not the fact. I would not fear personal insult or injury here because of opinion, as much as I would in Boston.

Now, as this statement may have been doubted in regard to freedom of opinion in Texas on spiritual and all other subjects, I respectfully request you to publish the following declaration of principles of a Conservative Convention representing the whole State, which was held in this city last month, and published in the Houston Telegraph, Feb. 23, 1868:

Resolved, That representing, as we believe and know we do, the true feelings and honest desires of this State, especially the soldiery of the late Confederate army—first in their name and on their behalf we return our profound acknowledgments to the large majority of the Conservative people of the Northern States, for the late manifestations of their devotion to constitutional liberty; their sympathy for our distressed political condition; and their assurance of our ultimate relief, and our restoration to equal political rights with themselves; and on the name and on behalf of all Texas, we hereby extend to all the friends of the Union, and especially to the friends of the South, the assurance of a cordial welcome, and that full freedom of speech and sentiment, and protection of person and property, and will be as securely guaranteed to all such, of whatever opinion, as we claim and desire for ourselves; and we further declare that to our Northern Conservative friends that, as a people, we have heartily accepted all the results of the war, with the exception of African domination; and we hereby pledge ourselves to support all measures to the men of our race and kindred in the North, in whose hands rests the issue, to save us and them from a civil war, and to secure to all the full and equal rights of all under the Constitution, and of property, under just laws being equally on all.

It is due to Texas, which has been so much misrepresented and so little known abroad, to give a

wide circulation to the announcement by its representative men of the liberal sentiments and feelings of its white intelligent population.

I will add, in conclusion, that your excellent paper is sought for eagerly at all our News Stores. Yours for the truth,
JOHN W. McDONALD.
Houston, Texas, Feb. 3, 1868.

Meeting of Missionary Board.

The Missionary Board of the Illinois State Association of Spiritualists held their first meeting in Chicago, February 21st, 1868. Harvey A. Jones, Milton T. Peters, and Julia N. Marsh, present.

Mr. Jones, Chairman, called the meeting to order; after which officers were elected, as follows: Harvey A. Jones, President; Milton T. Peters, Vice President and Treasurer; Julia N. Marsh, Recording and Corresponding Secretary.

Upon further consultation, as to methods of procedure, &c., the following resolutions were passed by the Board:

Resolved, That the Secretary be authorized to procure a seal, a book for records, and stationery for the use of the Board.

Resolved, That this Board will issue to applicants, upon being satisfied of their integrity, worth and ability, credentials, under cover of the seal, which will entitle them to lecture, organize circles, &c., make collections to defray expenses, and to do whatever else may devolve upon a missionary of this Association.

Resolved, That this Board will not be responsible for expenses incurred by speakers, &c., beyond what they may collect for their services.

Resolved, That the Secretary publish forthwith, in the Religious-Philosophical Journal and Light, a notice of the meeting of the Board, and of the objects of the organization of said Board.

Resolved, That the regular meetings of this Board be held on the first Tuesday in each month, in Chicago; special meetings to be called at any time, either at Chicago or Syracuse, by the Secretary.

Resolved, That the proceedings of this meeting be published in the Religious-Philosophical Journal and Light.

J. N. MARSH, Rec. Sec'y.

Correspondence in Brief.

DR. EZRA S. E. WINNEMORE, OTTAWA, ILL., is doing a good work in his native land, by his efforts to diffuse spiritual literature.

EREN W. SQUIRES, OXFORD, ISANTA CO., MICH., says that his place is a good locality for a harmonical settlement.

H. J. NOYES, ATKINSON, N. H., narrates a good tale of the mediumship of James B. Morrison, of Haverhill, Mass.

E. B. AVERILL, DOVER, ME., says: Our Children's Lyceum is in good condition, and our regular Wednesday evening circles are well attended and interesting.

J. K. DEARIE, POTSDAM, N. Y.—We have just taken steps to raise a fund to carry on spiritual meetings, and have good prospects. We are circulating paper for subscription, by the month, for one year, or we say on paper we will pay one dollar a month, and may not be paid for several months. In this way we expect to raise funds enough to carry on meetings for one year.

J. C. BALLOU, WOODS-CREEK—Man has just commenced in this nineteenth century to give vent to the God-given elements of his nature. I thank God and the angel-world for the spiritual enlightenment of this age. From the beautiful philosophy of Spiritualism much has been gained, and there is no reason to fear that many who are suffering, and desiring more light on this subject.

ELIJAH WOODWORTH, engaged in missionary work in Michigan, writes an encouraging account of his labors since last October. He has assisted in organizing some fourteen Societies, and is still zealously at work. During March he will be in Lenawee county; in April his P. O. address will be Hillsdale, Branch county; in May, Coldwater.

FORT DODGE, IOWA.—The Spiritualists of this place want some able lecturer—one who is not afraid to speak the truth, and who is not afraid of Spiritualism—to visit them. Mr. G. W. Henry has built a fine hall expressly for the use of Spiritualists. A good lecturer would be well received, says our correspondent, and find plenty to do there. He is surrounded by a large number of Spiritualists, and can address either of the following named gentlemen: G. W. Henry, C. Crosby, J. Theale.

MRS. A. WILLARD, CROOKED CREEK, IND., in renewing her subscription, gives expression to her grateful feelings thus: "The blessed Banner! how it brings light and warmth while it bids hope plume its wings for an airy flight toward the sure fruition of joys to come. Fear itself would be this day plucking through the clouds, sorrow and grief, and unceremoniously by the weekly visits of the Banner of Light. Long may it live to bless earth's children."

GEORGE F. EMERSON, writing from Fort C. F. Smith, Montana Territory, Jan. 7th, says: On arriving here I found several minds who closely questioned the authority and enormous teachings of the priesthood, and I have been many happy hours investigating the philosophy of Spiritualism, and we have received many manifestations of its sublime truth. We have formed ourselves into a circle, designated the First Spiritual Lodge of Montana, with a President, Secretary and Door-keeper.

MAZO MANIE, WY.—A spiritual association has been formed in Mazo Manie, Wyo. for more than a year past, composed partly of some who were educated in the Orthodox faith, and others who have long been prominent as zealous advocates of progressive and liberal ideas. The association has prospered, and its members have considerably enlarged their circle. A good number of the members have been established, which numbers seventy scholars, and the result has been a shaking amongst the dry bones of Old Theology.

SALZEM, MASS.—W. writes as follows: As your paper has a good circulation in Salem and vicinity, I feel it my duty to let its patrons know that there is a reliable test medium in the above named place, and well known to many of the people who would often like to commune with their spirit friends, could they do so near home. The medium referred to is Mrs. Lizzie Woods, and did space permit I could give some interesting and convincing tests that have been received through her. She is a sphere of light, and there are so many good spirits in the West where the cause and humanity are suffering for the want of them. I think there ought to be more of a missionary spirit among them that would extend outside of Massachusetts. There are a few of us in DeSoto striving hard to prepare a place for one who would like to settle, become a permanent citizen with us, and help to build up a society on the true principles of Spiritualism. About one year ago, A. J. Fishback, having some business in this section of country, consented to lecture for us a few times. He was a very pleasant speaker, and his lectures produced a good effect, but the field not being large enough for his talent he left for other parts, where he is doing much good. Mrs. Alcinda Wilhelm, M. D., (who possesses the true spirit of our beautiful philosophy,) while lecturing last summer in St. Louis, consented to come down and give us a sphere of light, and there are so many good spirits in the West where the cause and humanity are suffering for the want of them. I think there ought to be more of a missionary spirit among them that would extend outside of Massachusetts. There are a few of us in DeSoto striving hard to prepare a place for one who would like to settle, become a permanent citizen with us, and help to build up a society on the true principles of Spiritualism. About one year ago, A. J. 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GRAND JUBILEE!

THE SPIRITUALISTS

Of Boston and vicinity will celebrate the

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Of the advent of

MODERN SPIRITUALISM,

IN

MUSIC HALL,

Tuesday, March 31st, 1868,

AFTERNOON AND EVENING.

Commencing at two and seven o'clock.

Children's Exhibition and Festival.

The afternoon will be devoted to an

EXHIBITION BY THE PROGRESSIVE LYCEUMS,

Numbering about five hundred children.

The Exercises will consist of

RECITATIONS,

SINGING,

GYMNASTIC EXERCISES,

MARCHING WITH BANNERS, &c.,

Under the direction of

Mr. and Mrs. ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS,

The Founders of this System of Sunday Schools.

Parents and all others who feel an interest in the Moral and Physical Development of children are earnestly invited to be present and witness these interesting Exercises.

The Collation.

At the close of the Exhibition a

Collation will be served to the Children

IN BUNSTED HALL.

Order of Exercises.

The Order of Exercises for the Evening from seven until ten o'clock will consist of

Music,

Short Addresses,

AND AN

Original Inspirational Poem,

Appropriate to the occasion, by MISS LIZZIE DOTE.

To be followed by

Dancing and Social Enjoyment,

Until one o'clock.

Hall's Full Band

Will furnish the music afternoon and evening.

The Speakers.

It is expected that

Mrs. CORA L. V. DANIELS,

Prof. WILLIAM DENTON,

SELDEN J. FINNEY,

And other prominent speakers will be present and address the assembly.

Spiritualists and all friends of Progress are cordially and earnestly invited to be present and participate in the festivities of this interesting occasion. The net proceeds will be devoted to charitable and educational purposes.

Tickets of Admission.

To the Lyceum only 25 cents.

Single Ticket for the Evening, including

Dancing \$1.00

For a Gentleman and Lady 1.50

Package of 10 Tickets 7.50

For sale at the BANNER OF LIGHT Office, No. 138 Washington street; by BELA MARSH, No. 14 Bromfield street; at MUSIC HALL every Sunday afternoon; and by the Conductors of the several Lyceums of Boston, East Boston, Charlestown and Chelsea; also by the Committee of Arrangements.

Parties out of the city can procure their Tickets by addressing the Secretary, No. 11 Phoenix Building, care John Wetherbee.

Committee of Arrangements.

H. F. GARDNER,

JOHN WETHERBEE,

WILLIAM WHITE,

M. T. DOLE,

LIZZIE DOTE,

DANIEL FARRAR,

Mrs. DANIEL FARRAR,

GEORGE W. MORRILL,

L. S. RICHARDS,

JOHN WOODS,

Mrs. JOHN WOODS,

EMILY F. STEARNS,

GEORGE W. LANE,

GEORGE W. SMITH,

Mrs. G. W. SMITH,

PHINEAS E. GAY,

LUOY E. WESTON,

L. B. WILSON,

Mrs. L. B. WILSON,

W. D. CROCKETT.

M. T. DOLE, Sec'y.

JOHN WETHERBEE, Treas.

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

Banner of Light.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 1868.

OFFICE 158 WASHINGTON STREET, ROOM No. 2, 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 Decay of Marriage.

People who undertake to laugh down theories are compelled to soberly admit the facts which lie under and within them. For years it has been argued and urged, with such general statements as would serve to illustrate the subject, that Marriage is, as an institution, running to decay; that its inspiring motive was not strong enough and elevated enough to stand the strain and excitement of the new modes of living and the temptations of modern life; and that its bonds were rapidly relaxing from being mainly the creation of legal artifice, and kept in place by legal penalties, so that in time they would hold less firmly than many others whose strength lay in a simple word of promise.

On the other hand, it has been maintained with a blind and unintelligent persistency that unless Law binds parties in Marriage there can be no confidence in the bond; that there must be such a restraining power over it as will make man and wife afraid to test it, or certainly disinclined to risk the trouble, expense, and social notoriety; and that it would be far better to hold discordant parties together by the force of a feeling of shame and fear, than to have so venerable, if not valuable, an institution broken up by the whims of persons who would, if they could, only get out of one marriage pickle to get into another. This is the lowest view to take of the subject, and yet we are constrained to say that it is the view commonly taken. And it is because no higher sentiment is, or can be, appealed to by the law, than that of shame or fear, that Marriage is the thoroughly unsatisfactory and uncertain affair it is.

Hence we find that, in our larger towns and cities certainly, the custom of marrying, and particularly of marrying early, is falling into disuse. Young men plead inability to meet the expense. Some of them say girls are not what they were in their mothers' day. Others affirm that they are altogether too flippant and heartless. There is a wide-spread conviction that love and affection have little or nothing to do with the relation. There is scarcely any thought of attraction and affinity. The question on each side is—How much money goes with it? It is fast becoming a matter of mere traffic, a mercenary, calculating, and wholly hypocritical matter, in which both sides are certain to find themselves cheated at the last, and this produces a lamentable state of things socially, tending to the rapid corruption and decay of the social state. Marriage is the corner-stone of society. Take that out, and the structure falls to the ground. Let it crumble under the influence of calculation and a deceitful selfishness, and it is sure to fall away from its place and let everything else down.

That social state is already in a condition of rapid decay, where, on the one hand, the marriage relation is made the creature of compulsion, whether by law or custom—and, on the other hand, is too expensive to enter into. Trade and the money market almost wholly control this relation at the present time. Once, it was quite enough for a young man to have his heart felt him, even impetuously, and with little or no wise care for the future, that it was in love; now love has become a sentiment rarely named, because people are fairly ashamed to look one another in the face while they mention it. Sentiment has been turned into a cold calculating policy, which chills the better feelings of the nature. Dr. Franklin advocated early marriages for the very reason that they are incurred before the days of cold calculation set in—"when the evil days come not." It is then that the heart, immature as it may be, is surer of its instincts than it afterwards is of its prudence.

Then there is another reason why Marriage is more and more becoming blasted as a social institution. There is such a wide-spread addiction to the abominable practice of feticide. That demoralizes the nature of every mother who once consents to engage in it. We allow that it is hard for her to continue bearing children unwillingly, but surely a human being can discover some other way of relief than that of outright murder of her own offspring. Look at the houses where facilities are advertised for carrying on this practice. See the fortunes in which their guilty occupants roll from their professional pursuit. One such was not long since legally indicted in New York, which involved a disclosure of facts before which a civilized community should stand appalled.

A daily journal of that city takes the occasion to remark on this state of facts, that "the worst enemies of the institution (Marriage), which more than any other merits being called divine, are those who have taken on its vows." The present age ought to excel past ages in virtue; if it does not, its immorality is of deeper dye. We ought to surpass in virtue our foreign contemporaries; if we do not, we fall behind them in the use we make of our nobler opportunities. We have few institutions left that command reverence. It is our tendency to set institutions aside; but to set aside this institution of Marriage would be to destroy the foundations of social life." The pulpit had better drop its creeds, and preach on this more living subject.

Music Hall Meetings.

A fine audience greeted Mr. J. M. Peebles at Music Hall in this city, Sunday afternoon, March 1st. His lecture just suited the audience. It was clear, comprehensive and sound. All seemed to be in rapport with the speaker, and appreciate every word he uttered. We shall print the lecture in due time.

Selden J. Finney at Music Hall.

Next Sunday, March 15th, the renowned and eloquent speaker, S. J. Finney, will deliver the next lecture in the course. As a philosophical reasoner and powerful debater, Mr. Finney has few equals. We hope all who can will avail themselves of this opportunity to hear him. We know they will be highly gratified.

Mr. Peebles had crowded audiences to hear his lectures, in Cambridgeport, on Sunday forenoon and evening, March 1st. He gave splendid addresses, and donated the proceeds to the Children's Lyceum there.

Annie Lord Chamberlain's Mediumship.

This lady is one of the very best mediums for physical manifestations of spirit-power we have ever been acquainted with, accounts of whose seances have appeared from time to time in this paper. For a year or two past Mrs. C. has been an invalid, and is still one, from ulcerations on the lungs; yet, notwithstanding this, wonderful spirit-manifestations continue to be given through her instrumentality. For example, we publish the following statement, from reliable ladies, written at our suggestion:

BOSTON, March 4th, 1868.

DEAR BANNER—Reading an account in your valuable paper of spirit voices being heard at seances in London, it occurred to me that you might feel interested in the very remarkable phase of the same power which it has been our happiness to witness constantly for several weeks the past season.

It has been our good fortune to have in our family the well known musical medium, Annie Lord Chamberlain. She is, as you are aware, an invalid, and at times requires the greatest care and watchfulness; yet we know we should not have been able to keep her in our midst had it not been for the loving and constant attention bestowed upon her by the powerful band of spirits who guide and control her. It has been daily our great pleasure and relief to receive directions and advice from a physician in spirit-life, and these directions, let me assure you, are given wholly independent of the medium; they are delivered in a clear voice, every intonation of which betrays the cultivated gentleman. Not only has this beloved attendant been constantly in our midst when the lady has been suffering, but often when all was quiet, and before retiring, has the doctor suddenly made himself known by addressing us in his friendly voice, "Good evening, ladies. I want to have a chat with you"; and has often prolonged his visits for a considerable length of time. Not only is he remarkable for speaking, but *know water* has been constantly converted into medicine, into wine, and into aromatic liniments, through this power; and wonderful as this may seem to you, it is a fact, upon which we can bring to bear any amount of testimony.

Not alone, however, is the doctor's voice heard. Belle Wide-Awake, a very laughter-loving, bright lady, is a constant visitor to the family circle, and with her we have passed very many pleasant hours. A few days ago Mrs. Chamberlain lost an opal ring; Belle came to us and said she had found the ring; would bring it to the circle—which she did, and placed it on the lady's finger. At another time, while sleeping with the lady, Mrs. Cushman had the nightmare. A trumpet, lying on a chair near the bed, was dashed to the other side of the room, and she was of course awakened. The next night Belle said to her, alluding to her dream, "Your friend did not get his lemonade after all," thus proving conclusively—to her, at least—that she was in attendance the night before.

Dear little Mayflower—so well known to those who have attended the musical seances—with many others, frequently and repeatedly speaks; and we have also, on several occasions, heard voices singing in our midst, while an accompaniment with a harp was distinctly heard, although no instrument of music was in our room but a very indifferent harmonicon.

Flowers have also been received, in circle as well as after the ladies had retired—bouquets of lilies, roses, rose-buds, mignonette, &c., all bright, fresh and sweet, received at night through an open window on the second story, with the thermometer at a low point.

Spirit hands, tangible as your own, Messrs. Editors, have handled us all, and continually, when the lady was so ill that she could not move without great exertion, the doctor's hands have been heard rubbing her lungs energetically—and this not in the dark alone, but with light sufficient to prove to all present the utter impossibility of deception. The hands of several spirits have been around her and raised her up in bed, when such an exertion could not have been thought of for a moment.

Could we have kept a record of the transactions at these medical circles, I assure you the earnest investigators after facts would have had a large accumulation of valuable evidence, but time fails us, and we can send you no more to-day. If, however, you wish to hear from us again, gladly will we send you still more interesting matter.

Joy be with you all.

Mrs. WM. H. W. CUSHMAN.

Mrs. F. O. ELDREDGE.

Father Beeson's Memorial.

True to his self-appointed mission in the interest of the red men, Father Beeson presented to the Senate of the United States, through Senator Doollittle of Wisconsin, on the 23d of February, a brief Memorial on the subject of the Indian Wars, setting forth that the Indian wars of 1854-55 sprung from outrages committed by men whom the Superintendent of Indian Affairs declared to be "unworthy of the names of men," and who were reported at the time by Gen. Wool to be "disturbers of the peace and a disgrace to the country." The volunteers in this war took their pay in Oregon war scrip, which speculators bought up from ten to thirty cents on the dollar, upon which they have already realized some three millions in Government currency, as a final settlement for the expense of those wars. These speculators now have the effrontery to appear before Congress for the rest of their claim, which they place at three millions more. Father Beeson prays Congress that not another penny be paid to speculators in Indian Wars; but instead of that, that honest and capable Commissioners be sent to Oregon, "to take the testimony of innocent sufferers from Indian retribution, and from those persons who furnished necessary subsistence for the immigrants to Oregon in 1854, and to give them credit for what is justly due."

Dr. Slade, the Physical Medium.

Dr. Henry Slade, of Jackson, Michigan, as we learn by a note from S. H. Workman, has recently been holding seances in Buffalo, N. Y. The manifestations were given in the light, and were of a most remarkable character, but similar to those narrated in our paper two weeks since. At the close of Dr. Slade's seances he gave an entertainment for the benefit of the Children's Lyceum, consisting of short addresses, dances and dramatic scenes in appropriate costumes, much to the gratification of the audience.

Dr. Persons in Texas.

From the Houston Telegraph of Feb. 21, we learn that Dr. W. Persons is in that city, healing the sick with success at the Hutchins House. It is the intention of the Doctor to visit San Antonio, and remain there during April and May. Those who desire his services must see him at that place. An earnest interest is felt in Texas in regard to the Spiritual Philosophy, and we trust a new impetus will be awakened through the efforts of the Doctor.

The State of Europe.

The general European mind is greatly agitated at the present time, by questions of reform, of government, of the raising of armies, and of the balance of power. From London to Constantinople, and from Madrid to St. Petersburg, the restlessness of the popular thoughts is notorious. The Czar looks with distrust on the universal alarming of France. Prussia is concerned for a more perfect consolidation of the German States and Provinces. Italy is bankrupt in her treasury, with Rome for a tantalizing issue, and Victor Emmanuel ready at any time to resign in favor of Prince Humbert. Napoleon is heart-sick and weary, and turns his eyes longingly to the little hamlet in Switzerland where he passed so many of his pleasant boyhood's days. In England there is a change in the Cabinet, and a man of the people, though only measurably a reformer, has been called to the head of affairs. There is the Irish question, in all its forms, to come up and be settled, and there is the question of suffrage, and the other one of education. England, in short, is on the threshold of a new era, and we may expect to witness such events in her renovated career as have nowhere been written down in the history of the past. There is a seething of public sentiment on all sides. The French nation is opposed, from centre to circumference, to the new Army Bill, which converts the entire country into a camp; while her National Legislature is profoundly exercised over the Government orders restricting even the comparative freedom of the press. The great powers are all in a state of excitement over one thing and another, but the immediate threatening trouble is between the East and the West, over the long vexed Eastern Question. The peace may be kept for a time, but it is doubtful if it can be for long.

Science and Religion.

Rev. Dr. Bushnell, an Orthodox clergyman of wide repute, has a late magazine article treating of the above themes, in which, while he announces and affirms the remarkable strides of science in modern times, he insists that they are in no true sense inconsistent with the claims of religion. So far as he means that profound religious feeling which has a residence in all human breasts, he is right beyond a question; but he illustrates his meaning relative to the tenets of old creeds, by confessing outright that those tenets have had to yield. In that sense, we confess we see no further conflict. For one example, he admits that the old superstition about a literal resurrection of body and spirit on the morning of some far-off resurrection is fairly worn out and gone by—which to us is no concession at all, but to his form of faith is an innovation equivalent to a revolution. So with regard to many another old ecclesiastical theory; in his confessed judgment they are no longer tenable. Science has, in its progress, shattered them in pieces. Even a notion so long and tenaciously held as the mystery of the Trinity is admitted to be an absurdity in point of possibility. The atonement is called merely a "ransom to the devil." The work of creation is conceded to have been an impossibility within six days. The story of the flood is allowed to be a puerile exaggeration. Physiology and anatomy have exploded the notion of the literal resurrection. And so on to the end of the chapter. The cause of liberality, through the agency of science, is making rapid progress, and will drive out all these ancient buggars from the minds of men. When it is universally believed that there is a spiritual body as well as a natural body, science will teach the rest of the alphabet for Spiritualism.

Another New Book.

Wm. White & Co. have in press, and will issue in a short time, a new work by that popular writer on the spiritual philosophy, Andrew Jackson Davis, entitled, "Memoranda of Persons, Places, and Events; embracing Authentic Facts, Visions, Impressions, Discoveries in Magnetism, Clairvoyance, Spiritualism. Also quotations from the opposition. By Andrew Jackson Davis. With an Appendix, containing Zschokke's great story of 'Hortensia,' vividly portraying the wide difference between the ordinary state and that of clairvoyance."

The great sale which Mr. Davis's other works have had, gives assurance that this will meet with like success. The price will be the same as "Arabula."

Mercantile Hall.

The exercises of the Children's Lyceum Sunday forenoon, March 1st, were unusually interesting. The children are making rapid progress in all their studies and exercises. The beneficial effects of this system of teaching are becoming more apparent every week. In the afternoon the children marched to Music Hall, occupied seats on the platform, and took part in the exercises by singing a hymn. A collection was taken up for the benefit of the Lyceum.

E. S. Wheeler gave an address in the evening, in verse, from subjects selected by the audience. It gave general satisfaction.

Beautiful and Artistic.

Visitors to our Circle Room will not fail to study with admiration the marvelous flower-piece from the inspired pencil of Mrs. Hazeltine, No. 38 Charter street, Boston—a lady who had no theoretical or practical knowledge of drawing until the invisible guides her hand by their own artistic power. The amount of intricate and involved detail in this piece will strike all beholders with astonishment and admiration. After seeing such productions, all cavil ought to be silent on the score of there being no practical results, visibly, to Spiritualism. We bespeak for this remarkable production universal notice.

Going to California.

We learn that Miss Eliza Howe Fuller, one of our most efficient lecturers, anticipates starting for California the last of April. She is to be accompanied by her father's family, who design making a permanent home there. We congratulate our friends in the "Golden State" on this accession to their corps of workers. Miss Fuller sustains an enviable reputation in private life as well as a public speaker. She is also an excellent "healer," possessing what so few do—perfect health, which enables her to bear the fatigues of an itinerant with cheerfulness. We bid her God-speed in her labors of love.

The Scallion Bush or Tree.

This bush or tree grows to the height of sixteen feet, and is perfectly hardy in any of the New England States. Levi Jenner, Jr., of Fairhaven, Mass., has grown them for the last nine years, without any protection whatever from the frost. They bear a nut about one inch in length, of great excellence and delicacy of flavor, free from any oily taste. The bush bears after the third year of transplanting; the fruit ripens the last of September.

The blow of a friend pains more than any other.

New Publications.

BACON'S ESSAYS, with Annotations by Richard Whately, D. D., and Notes and a Glossarial Index by Franklin Fiske Heard, is published by Lee & Shepard, Boston. A more appropriate presentation of the price of philosophers was never furnished to an appreciative and studious public of readers for its perusal. The book contains the treasures of Bacon's superb mind. These oft quoted and universally referred to Essays furnish the germ and pith of the great man's mental riches and spiritual experience. No collection of similar size contains such a store of wise sayings and stimulating thoughts. However great the renowned author may have been in the field of philosophy, it is by these Essays that the world best knows him, or in fact knows him at all. His "Nayum Organon" may be alluded to, but it is not read; whereas the Essays are a library of practical wisdom and insight. Their pithiness of style belongs naturally to the compactness of their thought. Probably no book was ever more commonly quoted, in diluted form, from one end of the civilized world to the other, without a personal knowledge of its author, than this one. It is a positive refreshment to an appreciative mind to have its favorite Essayist, who, along with old Montaigne, taught the art of essay writing, presented in such a truly sumptuous form. The page invites the eyes to its fair field, over which they run and gambol, up and down, backward and forward, while the thought is held fast and enjoyed.

The editorial service has been performed with striking conscientiousness, and the collating work adds much to the permanent value of the volume in the eyes of the scholarly and studious reader. Archbishop Whately said that "Bacon's wisdom is like the seven-league boots, which would lift the giant or the dwarf, except only that the dwarf cannot take the same stride in them." Old Thomas Fuller says, in his "Church History"—"His (Bacon's) books will ever survive; in the reading whereof modest men commend him in what they do, condemn themselves in what they do not understand, as believing the fault in their own eyes, and not in the object." Macaulay says that "it is in the Essays alone that the mind of Bacon is brought into immediate contact with the minds of ordinary readers. There he opens an exoteric school, and talks to plain men, in language which everybody understands, about things in which everybody is interested."

Such an author, younger as he becomes older, deserves the best form and accompaniments of presentation to the reader. The intellect that sets other minds to growing should be dressed, in its products, in the fairest and most attractive garb. In this important respect the publishers have performed their duty with marked faithfulness, and all lovers of Bacon will hold them in gratitude accordingly. An accurate and valuable index accompanies the volume, and a glossary which readers will be glad to have at hand.

BUTLER'S PHYSICAL TRAINING is the result, so far as statement in book form certifies, to the theorizing of the author through ten years, and his practical experimenting for ten more, on the subject of exercise for health and cure. His principles of hygiene are few and simple, and all can readily comprehend and master them. The theory of curing is stated in a form which will not admit of its being shaken; instead of addressing his attention to the symptoms of disease, such as acute and chronic pains, which are but the struggles of positive health with invading disease, he seeks to remove the cause of the pains and struggles, which he claims is done only by building up power in the vital centres, so as to guarantee to the system that it can expel such causes altogether.

On the subject of exercise, he holds that mechanical applications and machinery should be freely called into cooperative service for the development and accumulation of physical strength and health; while his theory that the vital centres should be supplied with power before the muscular, and the latter not at all except in harmony with the other, must commend itself to the sense and reason of intelligent readers, while scientific inquirers will be compelled to admit its soundness in practice and theory both. Proceeding, therefore, on his idea that what people need is health rather than mere muscular strength, he secures it by a general and uniform increase of the strength of the system—brain, spine, and all. He does not exhaust by overworking the extremities, but strengthens by laying up fresh stores of power in the vital centres, and causing these to distribute themselves throughout the system.

The system of Prof. Butler he styles the Lifting Cure; and he demonstrates its superiority over every other method to bring back health, mental vigor, and tranquility. His system has been in full and successful operation in Boston for ten years past, and large numbers of both sexes are ready to testify to its blessings. This handsome book is but a clear exposition of his method of cure, of his making the human body positive to disease, and of the accumulation and refinement of physical power. It deserves a very wide and thoughtful perusal.

POTNAM'S MONTHLY for March has been accidentally delayed in receiving our prompt attention, as it richly deserved. Its table of articles is so fresh and full of variety as to awaken the liveliest satisfaction in the magazine reader. "Science and Religion," the leading article, is a thoughtful and eloquent tribute, cast in the mold of philosophic thought, by Rev. Dr. Bushnell, and all things considered, a production to be particularly remarked. We name some of the papers which follow: Jewels of the Deep, Pearls; American Traits as seen from Abroad; Imagination and Language; Too True, a Novel; Maternity; Juan Fernandez and Robinson Crusoe; What a Newspaper should be; City Postal Service in the United States; Mr. Thomas White's Little Sermon; Out-of-the-way Books and Authors; and Our Artists, with a sketch and frontispiece portrait of Mr. D. Huntington, President of the Academy. Putnam is both vigorous and vivacious, of a truly literary spirit, with the genuine magazine bouquet to its several contributions, and alive to the sympathetic movements of the time. It has risen out of its long silence with a new life, which cannot but be a long and notable one. It promises to be even a more general favorite than it was before.

Washburn & Co., of Horticultural Hall, Boston, have just issued their elegantly illustrated "Amateur Cultivator's Guide to the Flower and Kitchen Garden." It contains a descriptive list of two thousand varieties of flowers and vegetable seeds—also a list of French Hybrid Gladioli. The profuseness of the illustrations greatly increases its value as a guide to the amateur. It is a perfect repository of suggestions of very great value to those who are addicted to gardening and its numerous delightful associations. We direct the reader to the advertisement of this valuable and handsome catalogue in another column, of this week's Banner.

Lee & Shepard have the distinction of the Pearson series of novels by Booth and Blackmore, issued for the million in paper covers. The titles of these are, "J. V. Astor," and "Our Countrymen." They are in the style of this popular edition from Pearson's press.

BOARDING, by the day or week, at 54 Russell street, Boston, Mass. 6wth-Mar. 1

Message Department.

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

Mrs. J. M. 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. 134 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, we would bind upon the brow of this handsome day our offering of prayers and praises, not that we may add to the glory of the day, but that we may add to the stature of our own souls. We would come before thee forever and forever with our prayers, with our song of thanksgiving, yet we are deeply conscious that thou hast no need that we pray unto thee or that we offer our praises, for thou art finished in power, thou art full of mercy and love toward us, and thou hast crowned this glorious winter day with beauty, and thou wilt take away all the shadows, we know, and thou wilt lead us out into the sunlight. Thou wilt fold us about with the mantle of the great heart of mercy. We know, Oh Spirit, holy and perfect, that thou art near unto us at all times, and we recognize also that thou art here breathing through the glory of this day. Thou art everywhere, and everywhere to bless; even when the shadows fall darkly before us thy light is not hid, and thy face we are able to perceive. Though thou dost sometimes lead us through dark places, we know that thou art sufficiently wise and strong and perfect to guide us safely and bring us into morning light. Though crime with its attendant seeming evils stalk the earth to day, though men seem to forget thee, yet within the inner consciousness of every soul thou art recognized and thou art worshipped. Oh Spirit, Eternal, thou knowest the soul, and we believe that thou wilt educate the soul to a knowledge of thyself, that thou wilt finally bestow a sufficient amount of thy wisdom upon all souls, as to cause them to cease to murmur against thee, and to recognize thy law of love throughout all the action of being. Oh grant that the hearts of thy children on earth may open to receive thy love, and open also to dispense thy love to all thy children. Oh grant that benevolence that opens the hand and heart may find a place in every household. May charity, with its fair white mantle, find a resting-place in the hearts of all thy children; so shall thy kingdom come, so shall thy will be done on earth even as it is done in heaven. Amen. Dec. 19.

Questions and Answers.

CONTROLLING SPIRIT.—Now, Mr. Chairman, we are ready to hear your propositions.

Q.—I was speaking to a friend concerning what A. J. Davis said of the spirits going out of this sphere at the North Pole. He asked me how they come back, or what way? He wished me to get information from the spirits what way they come back.

A.—The question is asked in a very indefinite and unsatisfactory manner, therefore in all probability our answer may partake somewhat of the quality of the question. I infer that your correspondent has made a mistake with regard to the spiritual meaning of the article from the pen of A. J. Davis. He does not seem to have arrived at his proper meaning, and is therefore floundering in a sea of vagary, and knows not how to extricate himself. All returning spirits must become subservient to the laws governing mind and matter, and the laws governing in the particular case of return. And if they do not, or if they make attempts to infringe upon the law, they do not hurt or break the law, but they are very liable to be hurt and perhaps broken themselves. No natural or spiritual law can be by any possibility violated. You may suppose that you have broken the law, and that your own will, or action, have broken the law, but you are mistaken. The law is greater than you are, and will, under all circumstances, control the individual. Every individual spirit possesses, of course, an individuality that belongs to itself. But around and within that individuality there is a law ever in action, never silent. And whoever would act upon or through that individuality, must do so in consonance with the law—it cannot by any possibility in any other way. The spirit dies by virtue of natural law, and it returns again by the same law; although there are as many different phases and conditions and degrees of the law as there are circumstances to require it—to require variety—yet the law itself is ever the same, immutable and inviolable. All spirits act naturally, and they never break or infringe upon any natural law in order to return. Nature's laws are unbroken at death, and equally unbroken when the spirit returns. If your correspondent will pursue the subject which he has stepped upon, a little further, giving his questions in a little clearer manner, we shall be very glad to walk further in this spiritual and material school with him, hoping to gain something ourselves, and to give also.

The following letter was read:

WASHINGTON, D. C.

MR. WM. WHITE.—Will the controlling spirit or spirits please to answer for me the following questions:

It is generally believed that Napoleon I. was a low, worldly character, intensely selfish, with small moral and spiritual sentiments, and that he had no poetry or music in his nature, and as a young man, once poetically expressed it, "he had no more conscience than a dog." Now, I believe otherwise. I believe him to have been a man of the sensibilities, large sublimity, idealism and spirituality, and that the sentiment of poetry was a very prominent trait in his character, and that he had large moral sentiments, and was extremely tender-hearted and conscientious! Who does not remember the anecdote which Gen. Rapp relates of him—when the sound of church bells near Brienne caused him to burst into tears? Could this have happened to a man who loved nothing but money, and was governed wholly by self interest? Never! If there was anything stern in Napoleon's character it was the world and circumstances that made him so. His large secretiveness enabled him to appear different from what his true character was. Will the controlling spirit please tell me which of these versions of Napoleon's character is the correct one?

A.—Your correspondent says it is generally believed that he was a selfish man, &c. Napoleon I.

was one of the most unselfish men the world ever knew, notwithstanding he has been styled by some the Corsican robber; notwithstanding many believe that he worked in his military line solely to gratify his own ambition, we again declare that Napoleon was one of the most unselfish men that the world ever knew. His deep, reverent love for his country, caused him to commit many acts which would seem to be outrages upon human nature at first sight. But I believe that all the great steps that he ever took in life were taken in full view of his own acute judge, with a deep conscientiousness. When he separated himself from his fair companion, no one but his own inner angel of communion knew the heart-agonies that he experienced. But he believed in all honesty of soul that the greatest good of France needed this sacrifice. He knew that when he made it he should lay upon the altar his dearest social hopes. He tore from his brow and his heart these enduring flowers of affection, that were the only things he seldom bowed down to. The loves of this world he seldom adored, though it might have seemed otherwise. But his affection for his wife was exceedingly great, and when he separated from her, he did it through a Gethsemane most terribly severe; but he believed that the sacrifice was needed that France might live—not in the present alone, but that she might be prosperous in the future. Though many of his ideas were not so to him—he went to war because he believed that he was doing right, and he ever recognized the power that was around him, and paid solemn and silent allegiance to it. He had no fear, simply because he had the utmost faith in God—his God; not yours or mine, but his own God. When his soldiers feared most for his safety, he always said, "I shall live my appointed time, and when it is for me to die I shall, though surrounded by a legion of loyal souls." Here was faith worthy of the adoration of the world. He may have robbed his own and other countries of their rights, but he was nevertheless true to his own inner consciousness of right, and was therefore an honest man, paying homage to his own God, and to the God of nobody else. There are but few souls on the earth that understand Napoleon. He was a sealed book in almost every respect; but those who are able to penetrate beyond the material, who are able to enter the inner life, are able to understand what a man or woman is in reality. They are the best judges. Dec. 19.

Hannah Thorpe.

It is twenty-three years since I died. I do not like the word, but I suppose I must use it. Now, at the time of my death nothing was known about this beautiful returning process of those who die, and whoever was wild enough to speak of such a thing was set down as an idle dreamer and an insane person; but I knew then that spirits could return, and that they did. I believed it, though I did not understand it. Now let me tell you why. About six years before my death my husband died, and about six months before my death he came to me and told me of his spirit home, and told me when I was going to him, and how.

First, I thought I never would tell of it, but I did, for it troubled me so I could not keep it to myself. And what was the result? Why, they said I was insane. Hannah Thorpe—that is my name. But I was just the same then as I ever was in my life, and I told my friends that some day they would know that I was not insane; that it was true, and spirits could return. They pitied me, and did all they could for my comfort, but poor Aunt Hannah was insane! Well, now, after twenty-three years absence I come back, insane still, for I still have to tell them that the spirit can return, and, what is more, demonstrate it myself. My son Nathaniel was old enough to know all about what was said to have been the cause of his mother's death, and Martha—she must remember it, and Mary, too. But I think if they have not it in mind, I can call it up by my coming as I do, and that is my purpose. They hope that the spirit can return. They have heard a great deal about it, but they have not faith enough and courage enough to investigate. They think if spirits return, why can't they come to them as well as anybody else? Why need they come to this person, or that, or the other? Well, now, I am ashamed of their ignorance, I am! But everybody is ignorant upon now points at first, you know, and I would suggest the propriety of their finding out why we spirits are obliged to come somewhere else, for instance, why I am obliged to come here, instead of coming to them. Find out. If they do not, it seems to me by-and-by they will condemn themselves for not doing it. There are means all over the country by which everybody may learn something about our coming back, and I advise my children and my friends, all of them, to investigate for themselves. I used to tell them I did not blame them for not taking my word, but I did not want them to doubt that I believed it, and I used to pray that God would give them some manifestation, as I had. My prayers were not answered—not to suit me, you see; but God knew best. I see it now. But now I have very strong faith that the time has come when they must begin to see. Coming events throw their shadows before them. They say so, and I believe it. And I see certain indications in the way of hopes thrown out that folks can come back. But don't let the world know that we are at all interested. Ah, that is denying Jesus in good earnest. Don't let the world know.

Jesus said, "Whoever is ashamed of me before men, I will be ashamed of before God and his holy angels." That means, whoever is ashamed of the truth, him the truth will be ashamed of when he goes yonder. Now I advise everybody that is in that predicament to get out of it as soon as possible.

I called Providence my home. Don't forget my name—Hannah Thorpe; died twenty-three years ago yesterday. Now I must be known. Good-day. Dec. 19.

Luna Flint.

I been away from home three months, most, and I want to go home. [Where was your home?] With my father and mother. [Where was that?] Where is this place? [This is Boston.] I lived in Ipswich. I been home, only I can't go this way. I am seven years old, most eight now. Won't you send word to mother how I want to go home? Say I've got a good many things to show her. I don't want to come back to live, but I want to speak to mother sometimes. Say I liked the flowers I had, will you? [You mean when they laid away your body?] Yes; that is when I was dead. I shan't die now any more. You will have flowers when you die, I suppose. [I cannot tell.] Oh dear me! I can't go home to-day, can I? [No, not to-day. You haven't given me your name.] My name is Luna Flint. What is yours? [Mine is William White. Have you any brothers or sisters?] Yes, I have some sisters and one brother. They did not die. I did. They did not have all the folks come to see them. I did; and I know what they said. They said I was a pud, and by-and-by I should be a flower! I saw it. I was there.

How do you send? [We print your message in the paper.] In what? [In the Banner of Light.] I know that; I've seen that. [Do your father and mother have it?] Yes. [Then they will get your message.] Oh, yes, I should n't have come if they would n't. Good-night. Dec. 19.

Charlie Phelps.

A merry Christmas to you! It's a little ahead of time, but for fear I should n't come here at that time, I thought I'd say it while I was here. You will hardly believe I've only been here about twenty-four hours. Well, that's the case. My name was Phelps—Charlie Phelps. I don't know whether to call Indiana or Pennsylvania my home, or whether to say I was at home in Louisiana, for there I died—in New Orleans. I was not a slow liver. I was never known to do anything very slow. I always drove a fast team, and I told the boys I'd be back in less than twenty-four hours. I am inside of time. You see you make no mistake in my record. I said, "So sure as any spirit ever came back, I will be there communicating twenty-four hours after death." They did n't believe it, always made fun of what I believed. I had n't much spirituality. I believed in this thing because I knew it. I got developed myself by sitting with Colchester. He is on this side, and he just run me into the ring here just as easy, without any trouble at all. Some say they have to wait for years, months, some always; but here I am. Sick? No, not sick at all—not a bit of it. Do you suppose I am fool enough to drag the aches and pains of that dead body here? No; though that body is hardly cold yet. But I am here. [Do you know the hour you left the body?] Yes, I can trace it back. I do n't know your time now. [It is ten minutes to four.] And I was to get here before four o'clock to make it all right. I am inside of time.

Now I want, first of all, that William Benner should believe that I come, and never, as long as God lives, never say again, "Charlie, it's all bosh! it's nonsense! Don't talk to me about that!" Now I knew I was going to come back here, else I should n't have made the promise. I have n't had the slightest chance to look at the spirit-world. I took a straight line for this place—can't tell them anything about it. I suppose when I get further ahead I shall see its beauties, but I have n't seen much of it now. There is a kind of attraction yet to the body, a wavering between the two, but I am smart enough not to let that affect me—not a bit of it. The old adage, "Where there is a will there's a way," is perfectly true in my case. I had a will to come here, and that will made the way. Now I want Benner to tell my friends I am back here inside of time; and I have won. It was like this: "If you come back I will give three hundred dollars—not less than that, and as much over as I can—not less than three hundred dollars—to advance your cause." Well, shall I—any way you please. Give it to some poor meek man who has need of it, or send it here. Send it here—that's it. Make a track for me to come out. If he has n't the least objection in the world, I would like for him to fork over this way. Now don't say the mind of the folks here had something to do with it, because that's a lie. But shall out in some direction. I do n't care, as long as you shall out for the cause.

I am going now on the wings of the wind. I do n't mean to stand still in this life, any more than I did here. They used to tell me I'd never find time to die. But I did. I went out in a hurry at last. They did n't think I was going, but it's all right; perfectly satisfactory to the most concerned, and that's myself. Now they will understand that.

Once we were talking about these things, and they remarked like this: "Charlie, if your theory is true, in consideration of the life you are living here—a fast one, you know—you will naturally go below." "No," said I, "that is a mistake. You do n't understand my theory at all. Now, I want you to understand I shall go to just as good a place as I make, and it will be perfectly satisfactory to the one most concerned." Now they know I said that; you do n't know it; nobody else knows it; consequently whoever repeats it here must have either been there in spirit, or else I have come back and say it over again, which is the real truth.

Hold on, old boy! I'll be there in the twinkling of an eye. [It calls for you, does it?] Yes; do you want to know how? Well, there is a sort of a connection between that and me, and they are moving it some way. Dec. 19.

George A. Redman.

It is hardly possible for an outside observer to know anything of the intense friction that was gotten up here by the friend who preceded me. The lightning forces of his very potent will had almost the effect to scorch the wires pretty sensibly. But thanks to the nature of the subject, [the medium], no great harm has been done, for that nature is one that is able to recuperate very easily through surrounding forces, and however great the tax may be, and however severe the loss, it is very soon made up.

I am here, Mr. White, to answer a question which I see has been rounding itself into shape in the mind of our good friend and fellow-laborer, Colby. He wishes to know if it is indeed a truth that my negro friend, Cornelius Winne, did really bring his set of bones from Hartford to New York to me when I was in the body. He is somewhat inclined to doubt the truth of the demonstration. Now I can only affirm, as I have before, publicly and privately, that all the facts given in my volume of "Mystic Hours," are perfectly correct. I was very careful not to overstate in any case, but to rather come somewhat short of the whole truth. Every case there narrated is absolutely true, and can be vouched for by parties still remaining on the earth. I know it is a very singular and unheard of manifestation, but it was to me as perfect a demonstration of spirit-power as I ever saw or heard of. It was absolutely legitimate. The bones did come, and I have not the slightest doubt but they belonged to the man who purported to own them when in the body—indeed, I have had every evidence in proof of that since I have entered the spirit-land. I know now, as well as any one can know anything, that these were his human remains, and I know also concerning the law by which he removed the bones and played such strange antics with them. Remember me kindly to Mr. Colby, although I had no acquaintance with him when here. Tell him he need not fear to find any kind of faith upon that demonstration—it was absolutely true.

I would also be remembered to my good friend, Mr. Bruce, of Cambridgeport. Tell him I have never forgotten him during my pilgrimage in the spirit-world. I often come to him, and shall be very glad to welcome him here. I now see more of the medium operandi of spirit manifestations than here, as he will remember, but that is all gone, and they are reduced to simplicity. All the ghostly vagaries have been taken away, and they stand out in their real beauty. I would to God I could impart my knowledge to the friends I have here. That I cannot do. Every one must see and hear and understand for themselves. George Redman. [Mr. WHITE.—How did you get this question of Mr. Colby's?]

I have seen it in his mind, and have seen him bring it to paper. [Mr. WHITE.—Was sent down to me to-day, and I placed it on file to ask at some future time.] I saw it just as well, and have answered it, I think, satisfactorily. Dec. 19.

Stance opened by Theodore Parker; letters answered by H. Marion Stephens.

Invocation.

Our Father, grant that thy kingdom may come so near unto the consciousness of every soul present that they shall no longer seek thee in the heavens, that they shall no longer call upon thee as dwelling apart from their own lives. Oh grant that our own understanding may be so unfolded that we may understand that we are ever in thy presence, that thy love is an all-sufficient shield from all our sorrows. Grant, Oh Spirit, who broodeth over the nations, that every soul may learn that thou art as near unto it as the pulsations of its own natural life. Oh grant that thy children everywhere may feel that thy kingdom is with them, and that thy presence is an eternal nearness. Oh our Father, we would remember in our prayers all those who mourn. Grant that their sadness may be unto them but the harbinger of joy; grant that their despair may be but the valley that leads unto the mountain of joy. We would remember those who are compelled to toll from early morning until late at night for their daily bread, that the wants of their human nature may be satisfied. Oh give them patience and perseverance and strength sufficient for all their needs; and we would remember also those for whom they toll. Grant that their hearts may be softened and that their pockets may be opened, that they may feel that they are in thy presence, and whatsoever they do unto the least of one of thy children they do unto thee. Oh grant that benevolence with kindly hand may find admittance to every heart. Oh grant that thy love may be shed abroad so bountifully that all shall feel a love for each other; that all shall feel the bond that unites all souls and welds all souls to thee. Oh may thy children know that so long as one soul is in sadness all others must feel the darkening influence. So long as one soul is bowed down with its weight of sorrow, so long every other soul, whether it be in the highest heaven or the lowest hell, must feel the shadow. Oh Spirit, Eternal, teach us to understand thy way. And teach us, Oh Father of Justice, that justice that thou hast with thee. May we take it and live, and in so doing to our souls, may we earnestly that we may ever be guided by its light. Oh may we find strength to say unto all the weary, weak ones of earth, "Arise and follow in the light of truth. I have seen thy frailties, but I do not condemn." Oh grant that thy loving kindness may fall everywhere, so that all thy children shall recognize in thy love the one God, the one Father, the one supreme intelligence that governs all and blesses all. We do not doubt thy love. We know it is ever everlasting to everlasting. We do not doubt thy justice or thy power; we only ask that we may so far comprehend thy greatness that we shall be satisfied with our own. Oh grant that we may own that we are but branches from the great tree of life, and that whether we will or not, we shall forever and forever receive strength from that tree. We shall forever and forever be guided by the light of truth, though it take us to the center of the earth, though it surround us around like a mighty wall; yet as thou art God over all, we know thou wilt care for us. Upon the altar of this hour, Oh Holy Spirit, we would lay our gifts. They are our prayers, our praises, the sighs and tears of thy children, that are scattered throughout all the earth. They are a mixture of shade and sunlight, and thou wilt own them all and bless them all, we believe; and as we lay them upon this human altar, thou wilt hallow it with thy love; and thy holy spirit, like fresh morning dews, will enter every solitary heart, and cause it to put forth its petals toward the sun of peace. We know that darkness is abroad in the land, yet thou canst say unto every heart, "Peace, be still, for I, thy Father, thy God, thine eternal friend, am ever with thee, and strong to save." Unto thy keeping we commend all souls, praying that all may seek to thee, and in knowing thee to love and adore thee, so that thy kingdom may come and thy will be done on earth as in heaven. Amen. Dec. 23.

Questions and Answers.

Q.—Is it a scientific fact that no two particles of matter touch each other?

A.—Every particle possesses its own distinct individuality, and lives in its own sphere. It is distinct and apart from every other particle; yet so close is the contact, that the particles seem to touch. The particles of matter are composed of human body globular in form? A.—Yes, they are. Q.—Is it a fact that the spirit body, while in the form, occupies the interstices between those particles, hence corresponding precisely to the form or shape of the natural or earthly body? A.—The spirit body is a fine, ethereal substance—a substance—but so entirely different from that which constitutes external life, that it is not to be perceived by the natural eye; and that fine ethereal body plays upon the nervous system, and it is the power by which there is a constant sympathy and intelligence kept up between the brain and all parts of the body. If the spirit is absent from any part of the body, then there is no connection between that part and the brain, none whatever, because of the absence of the messenger between the office and the base of the spine, the spirit body does correspond in appearance with the natural body. Q.—Whence proceeds the petroleum oil that is found in such abundance in Pennsylvania? A.—Geologists inform us that there are immense coal beds in that locality, and that by certain convulsions in Nature, beneath the crust of the earth, the gas which is found in the coal, has become so thoroughly split up that this petroleum or coal oil sifts through it and comes down, forming wherever it can into large basins or pools, and in some instances, they inform us, this coal oil is found in great lakes, and there is a constant percolation of it. It is so that the gases generated by the existence of this petroleum will finally produce, in the localities where it is found, earthquakes more terrible than have ever been experienced in that locality for thousands of years. However, that remains to be proved. We do not know. They testify must remain present conditions, and we are to credit them from past experience, we should give them a very large amount of credit, and perhaps enough to believe that they are true in theory, at least.

Q.—Is this information derived from geologists on your side, or from the other side?

A.—Yes, from geologists on our side.

Charles A. Taylor.

They tell me the war is ended, and peace is again your guest. I hope it may prove a lasting peace, but I hear strange rumors to the effect that it is only a peace that has been brought about by the strength of arms, and not by the common sense of the people. When I heard that my country was in need, that the Capital was threatened, I felt it my duty to go and see what I might be able to do toward killing the rebellion. I was in Boston at the time—a fancy painter by trade. I threw down my brush, I went up to Boylston Hall, I enlisted in the 54th Mass. Company. We soon received marching orders, and went to Baltimore. There, before I had time to render my country any service whatever, except what I might render by my good wishes, I was killed. I was first shot, and then literally hammered to pieces. When I became free from the body—and I assure you I made no mistake in this—my body was still going on, and I think if all the bad feelings of the fiends in hell had been thrown into that one little core of existence, it would hardly have been more terrible. Why, it seemed as if the smoke of their hatred reached the world of souls, and that the world was terribly intense against us. The spirit of war was holding high carnival there. So I died; and of those I left have no distinct knowledge to this day of how I died. I am told that there was a rumor that I abandoned my company, on arriving at Baltimore. It was false. I abandoned it only because compelled by death. [What did they do with your body?] It was buried there.

I have heard the earnest heart-wish of some I have left to know concerning my fate, so I have made the effort to come here. For a time my own spirit was so bitter that I was not able to return to it, but I have advanced beyond that; that now, and there is no reason why I should not return. I would not like to be branded as a coward; I would not like to be thought of as having volunteered to do any kind of act and then sud-

denly backed down. I enlisted with the full determination to do all I could toward crushing the rebellion, and I did so. I was among the first to lay my life upon the altar for my country's sake, and I would like to see the friends I have left here should feel that I did an honest and brave act, and also that it had pleased a wise Providence to institute a way of return. I am satisfied with this life. But when I look back on the earth, I am not satisfied with many things which I am able to see. But I presume all wrong things will finally be changed to right. I was here as so. For, as everything is in the great scale of progress, we must finally lose its darkness and become clothed with light. If my friends who want to know concerning me will take the trouble to investigate the matter, through the Company's roll, they will learn all that is necessary for them to know. Charles A. Taylor, aged twenty-six. Dec. 23.

Robert S. Forbes.

Well, stranger, by some very queer turning of the crank I am on earth again. I do n't know who is at the wheel, but I suppose whoever is knows what they are about.

I had a queer experience here on earth. I am from Missouri. You see, it's like this: I had a brother in Ohio, and I started to join him. We were going to talk about going into the army to go to the front. He had not come, and I started to join him. Well, I don't know how it was, stranger, but by some unaccountable mishap I got gobbled up by a party of guerrillas, and was voted off down South. I brought up in Texas, and I was put through a sort of straight-jacket process, and I was coolly informed that all I'd got to do to save my life was to enter their ranks and fight on their side. Well, I came to the conclusion that there would not be much fighting about it, and I'd go in. So I went in. In our first action I got wounded in the ankle, and was relieved from duty and sent into the hospital; got pretty smart in the course of a few days, and had to help take care of the sick. There was some Union boys brought in there, and it was kinder reckoned I was pretty much taken up with them; did all I could for them, as a matter of course. So I was very quickly relieved. Well, I was considered worthy of being placed on Mr. Jackson's staff. The Union boys called him "Stonewall Jackson." I got there, and I had a pretty good chance to "skedaddle" into the Union lines one night. I did so, was taken as a spy, and all I could do there was no bringing myself round right. I was n't believed. Somehow or other the devil got me, and I was put in a place that I got to see what I could do to "skedaddle" from the Union lines then. So when things were getting pretty hot for me, and I see I was going to be put through a pretty tight circle, I scratched my head to see what to do, and I scratched so hard I got up an idea, so I waited for my chance, and the chance came up. I "skedaddled" again, went across, got there, and there was hot water for me there, and I was put into the frying-pan and fried, and put into the oven and roasted, and I came out done brown. I can't begin to tell you half the things that went on in my mind. I was nearly four days without anything to eat, and I was roots, and whatever I could pick up in that line. I got pretty weak, I tell you, though I was in pretty good muscle when I went in. That was pretty tough. Well, I took it into my head I'd go around through Texas and get into Missouri again, and I was some way. I was out of the plan, but was going to get round some way. And, stranger, just as I was getting along finely, and was all ready to get out of the trap, suddenly I was brought up with a round turn. Who do you think confronted me? Nobody else but the same one that took me in the first place. Stranger! If I did n't think that God had gone to the devil and the devil had got into his chair! But somehow I had a sort of a something around me that kept me alive. Well, I told a good story, and I saved my life by it. I traveled with that squad for about two months, and I should like to get thrown from a horse and I got badly damaged. I was left one night on the road, given up to die that morning, and I was put into an old black woman's hut to die, of course. She took care of me. I picked up, and in a very short time I was on my legs again, pretty nigh right, notwithstanding the hard grab I got for the poor old woman. I n't much to give. Well, I thought I'd try it again. I made for the Union lines, and got in, and I'll be blessed if I did n't get in pretty nigh where I got before. Then I was going to be hung up, any way. I was one of Mosby's spies.

I was court-martialed and I was going to have but a very short time to live. I scratched to have them think I "I don't know, but I reckon my time ain't come yet." There came up an all-fired storm that night. Oh it was a terrible thunder-storm—served as a good chance for me. I can't tell you to tell you the things that went on. I got clear. But the chief instrument in the business was a woman. She came there to hunt for her son, and had n't found him. I told her my story, and she believed me. She was kind of a mother to those that were sick, you know. I told her, and she believed me. "Yes," she said, "I'll do all I can for you, and I do n't care if she did n't do it, too! She helped me off, and I never knew what became of her, but I'd just give the world to know. [Did she give you her name?]

No. I did n't ask it. But I tell you what she did give me. My feet were terrible sore, and she gave me a pair of socks she had brought for her son, and cried when she did it. I took on, and I was rich as a king. Well, I "skedaddled" again; got back into the rebel lines. I told a good story—told how they were ranged, and what move they would make next, and I was promoted right off. But you see the devil was in it, and I could n't keep the inside from coming outside. The Union in me would poke its head out first I'd know. Well, in a very short time—not more than fifteen days—I got into trouble again—into a pretty good heap of trouble, and did n't get out of it only on this way.

My name is Robert S. Forbes. I want to find my brother, Samuel Forbes. Now, you see, stranger, if I had time to show you just what I've been through, it would make just as good a story-book as you ever read. There was some pretty tight places, you'd hardly think a rat could get through, but I went through them, and I do n't care if I did n't get clear through on this side, but I did n't. I am told it is all right—that everything is—and I suppose it is; but it won't be right to me till I let my folks know what I've been through, and how hard I tried to come here. Then I will recognize it as right. [What was your last trouble?] It was just this. I had to swear on my honor that a man—I thought considerable of—that I was true to the Confederate cause, and that I would ever be true to it as long as there was need for any fighting. They took me before without it, you see. When it came to that I got kinder raving, and I n't going to sell my honor or to save my life—I'd been through too much. Then it came out who I was and what I was. I did n't stay long after that. I sold out, stranger, to the highest bidder. Yes, I sold out. But it's just as well.

Now if any of the folks down South have any wish to know the acquaintance of a man who was with me the last few hours of my life—I should be very happy to do it. I can help it along. But I do n't hardly think they will. My hope is to get to my brother Sam, and through him to all the rest. I do n't like the idea of not having the chance to know anything about me, to me, like an annihilated man. Why, good gracious! I'd just as lief be annihilated as to be so shut out from all my friends as I have been since I've been dead—since I sold out. I'll tell you why that seems to haunt me. Just before I was shot I was very gently invited to give up my valuable life. I had a watch, some "greenbacks," and several little trinkets that were of some value. I did n't care to do it, so I said I rather guessed I'd keep 'em. An officer stepped up to me, slapped his sword on my shoulder, and said, "Come, you may as well sell out." Says I, "How much are you going to give me?" Says he, "I never give a higher bidder. I'll give you a chew of tobacco, I took it, and sold out."

Now if that chap's on the earth I should really like to have him sell out to me—in a different way, though. He is on the earth, I know, cause I should have scraped his acquaintance, so much truck with him he's got buried up under it, for a thousand years. Some of 'em do that, you know.

Now you publish, do you? [Yes.] Well, I've

