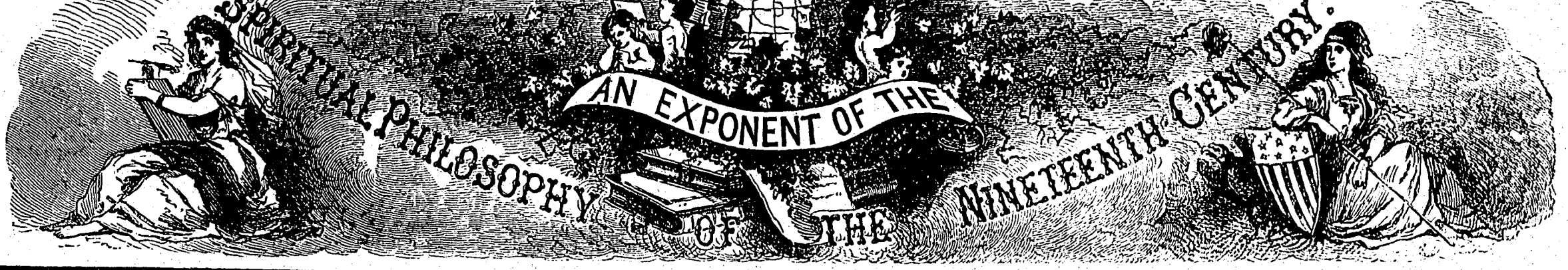


BANNER OF LIGHT.



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NO. 14.

Written for the Banner of Light.

A VISION.

BY ALICE MEADE.

From beyond the gloomy mountains,
From beyond the misty sea,
Through the golden bars of the gate of stars,
A vision came to me.

Not arrows, tipped with torture-pain,
Quivered within my breast;
They burned within my throbbing brain,
And I longed, I longed for rest;
My soul, oppressed with doubts and fears,
Drooped 'mid the wilder gloom,
And only saw 'mid falling tears
Portentous shadows loom.

When afar through the purple distance,
Far o'er the wild, moaning sea,
With steady sweep down heaven's blue steep,
Came the winged dream to me.
Like lustrous gleam of charmed light
On a dark and lonely sea,
On a dark and lonely sea,
Like starbeam cleaving rifts of night,
Shone that pale dream on me.

A ghastly troop of phantoms wan
Flew swift before its light,
And purple plumes of seraphs fan
My brows by hope made bright.
From beyond the amber mountains,
From beyond the murmuring sea,
Through the gates ajar of the land afar
Came an angel form to me:

A shape of radiant loveliness,
A face whose light
Reflected the strange blessedness
Of the glory, pure and bright,
That illumines the forms, divinely fair,
Of those who walk in white
Amid those bowers immortal where
God's glory is the light.

From beyond the cloud-pled mountains,
Far beyond the rolling sea,
From the misty strand of the spirit-land
Came the white-robed one to me.

Then softly on my waiting ear
There came a spirit-tone—
A murmurous whisper, faint yet clear,
Like the wind through pine tree lone;
Each mystic word like a sweet charm fell
Upon my weary heart;
Each soothing tone wrought a holy spell
Of peace; may it ne'er depart!

I saw, as in a mystic dream,
A city, stately, fair,
Whose marble towers and battlements
Shone through the purple air.
Her lofty domes and pinnacles
Rose gloriously grand
Beneath the skies incarnadine
Of that resplendent land.

And where those pleasant palaces
Rose 'mid embowering trees,
Gleamed marble fountains; and flowers rare
Unrolled their scented leaves,
Oh radiant land! No word, no speech
Was o'er to mortals given,
That could portray the loveliness
Beneath that summer heaven.

Angelic bands in circling flight
Flowered above those towers,
Now swept beyond my dazzled sight,
Now roamed amid the bowers;
Now roamed amid the bowers;
Now roamed amid the bowers;
Now roamed amid the bowers;
Now roamed amid the bowers;

Who are those white-robed angel forms
That often circling rise,
With steady beat of pinions fleet,
And melt in other skies?
Or light among those cool, green bowers,
Or rest beside those streams
Like flocks of glorious passee-birds
From the fair land of dreams?

"What meanest thou of these angel bands?"
To the white-robed one I cried,
With voice beyond all compare sweet,
The shining one replied:
"These are those holy ministrants
That bear upon their wings
Chosen blessings to those hearts that long
To know of holy things."

These are the forms of loved ones gone,
Who their weary wings have furled
On the plains of life, and been upward borne
To a purer, better world.
They lovingly came once more
Bring tidings sweet to those who yearn
For the dear, the unseen shore.

To hearts oppressed with loneliness,
And burdened sore with grief,
They whisper sweet, unearthly songs
That bring the kind relief;
They dry the broken-hearted's tears,
And guide the wanderer lone
Who seeketh still his doubts and fears
To find a Father's home."

It ceased; that strange, sweet, silvery tone,
My beautiful vision fled.
I only heard the little winds moan,
And the brook rushing o'er its bed;
And where the gleaming city's domes
Rose 'gainst the purple air,
A low-hung cloud of sombre mist
Mild all those faces so fair!

From beyond the cloud-pled mountains,
Far beyond the mist-hung sea,
Through the distance bright from my longing sight,
Went the beautiful one from me.

The Lecture Room.

THE COMING DAY.

A LECTURE BY PROF. WM. DENTON,
In Music Hall, Boston, Sunday, Oct. 23, 1870.

Reported for the Banner of Light.

From the evils that so many see in the present, it may be well this afternoon, in the light of the past, to look into the radiant future, and sun ourselves in its glow. It may strengthen us to bear manfully the inevitable ills that beset us. The good time that the prophets have foretold and the poets sung of for ages, must inevitably come. Not like the New Jerusalem of the Apocalyptic seer, dropping down from heaven adorned as a bride for her husband—not thus must the good time come, but as the glowing summer—wet, cloudy weather and nipping frosts, perhaps, must continue for weeks and months even, till man despair; but steadily comes the season, and at last the sun's glory overflows all the waiting land. That time must come as the ripened grain comes; a tiny seed lies in the ground for long weeks and weary days; then comes the first appearance of the emerald shoot, then the blade that bears the ear in its bosom, then, through development, the ripened autumnal harvest. So must the good time come—slowly, gradually—with many apparent drawbacks, just as among other things in Nature. As the tide comes in—one wave passing far beyond the boundary of its predecessor, and the next, perhaps, falling far short of it, till, to the eye of one unaccustomed, it appears to recede, and he cries out: "The tide is going away!" "Wait!" says a friend to him, "wait a little while!" and up comes another wave far beyond all the rest. So with the advance of humanity—wave after wave flows in, bringing the race eventually further and further on than before.

In the light of the past of this planet, I think I can see that man in the future must gradually advance in the domain of physical excellence. Men and women are to be in the future more beautiful than they are to-day—and I think you will acknowledge that there is room enough for improvement. [Laughter.] I can take you into an artist's studio and show you more beautiful faces in two hours, than you will see in two months in the streets of a New England city. Why? Because man's conception of the beautiful is beyond Nature's capacity at present to equal. The sculptor, to make a perfect statue, takes the separate perfections of different individuals—here a nose, there a chin or a mouth—and unites them in one creation of embodied beauty. The speaker said that in the time to come all these excellences would be found in each individual—those beauties now scattered promiscuously among the multitude would be centered alike in all. The time was when the noblest men were brutal in the extreme. The race had been gradually developed up to the present point of physical beauty through long ages and numerous types. The time was when the ugliest man in Boston would have shone a paragon of beauty, a star of the first magnitude, amid the uglier wretches who surrounded him. The lecturer described the skull of one of the early men of France, its enormous jaws, its lack of front-brain accommodations, its enormous back brain, and said this conformation must have been accompanied by thick lips, and a brutal, disgusting countenance. We as a race are marching steadily on in this direction. As our power over Nature increases—as our ability expands to master the rude forces around us, day by day, so as to give more time for aesthetic culture, we surround ourselves with the beautiful; and that beauty operates on man to make him also beautiful. The time will come when beauty will be the universal rule, and ugliness, (or homeliness as we sometimes call it,) will be entirely outgrown.

With this physical beauty will come also an increase of health and longevity. I know the common notion that there was a time when men lived to be nine hundred years old; and that is as true as the story of Captain Gulliver about the men who were forty feet high—the one story is just as big and just as reliable as the other. By means of statistical records, we know that men have increased in health and longevity from years that are past. The speaker then proceeded to quote from records kept in Geneva, Switzerland, for the last three hundred years, and said that during the period comprised between 1550 and 1600, the average duration of human life was twenty-one years and two months; that in the next century it was twenty-five years and nine months; in the next, thirty-two years and nine months; and that thus far in this century the average has been forty years and five months, so that a child born now has a chance for double the age of the children born at Geneva three hundred years ago. The increased longevity, as per statistics, was also given at Paris, in England, and in Russia; this last presented the shortest term of life, but this, perhaps, was owing to the want of civilizing influences to a greater extent among her people than in the nations cited.

The speaker stated that our increased intelligence would enable us to guard against many of the greatest difficulties of our ancestors. Where was the terrible plague that years ago swept off twenty-seven thousand people in London alone in one month? It could only be traced as an existence in some of the filthy city by-ways in Egypt or Constantinople. Modern science had conquered it among us, and when those cities were cleansed and drained as well as ours, the plague would end with them as well. We are showing a disposition to regard the laws of health, (a most promising sign,) and are steadily increasing the average length of human life; and this increase will continue in time to come.

Our souls, in that coming day, will stay in the body till they are ripe. I know there are many persons whose souls are ashamed of their bodies,

and run away from them before their time. Our bodies were intended as temples for the indwelling spirit, and in the good time coming the spirit shall remain therein till it is full-fledged. These skulls of ours, or the brains contained by them, the speaker said, were by no means finished. Nature was at work on them, and had been from the primeval ages. The early men had heads almost destitute of brains—the forehead low, the back head prodigious; but progress had gradually decreased the back and increased the area of the front brain; and this tendency, which was the result of hundreds of millenniums of toil, would continue in time to come.

With this increase of front brain will come a vast improvement in our educational system. Our children to-day require two months to learn what they ought to comprehend in one week. The time would come in the future, (thought the lecturer,) when they would be able to accomplish more in two months than in two years of the present system. Looking at this matter in the light of the past experience of the race, he saw the brightest hope for the children of the future. The children of the original tribes, prowling in the woods, were without education, save what was imparted from the wild habits of their parents. The early Greeks and Romans educated only the favored few. Compared with the past, the child's advantages to-day are infinitely superior, but they are small in comparison with futurity. The representation of our language is to be very much improved. There was a time, when, if a man wanted to write "horse," he had to draw a picture of the animal; but in process of time, men learned that words were composed of sounds, and it gradually dawned upon the mind through the lapse of years that these sounds could be represented by characters, resulting in written language. The speaker then referred to the Egyptian hieroglyphics, modified from age to age, becoming more and more phonetic, and said with all our boasted progress, and the advantages that we have gained in the nineteenth century, we were not so very far beyond them. He then proceeded to instance some of the many cases of delinquency existing between the sounds of the English language and its written signs; there being forty-two—some said forty-three—sounds, with only twenty-six letters to represent them. In a word, we are in a bad way, or a bad way, or a bad way, or a bad way. The question arising in the mind of the boy who is about to read a, is which of all the varying sounds he shall give to the letter. This was not, however, to be compared with the confusion attending orthography. Here are one hundred and twenty-six thousand words, out of which not more than one hundred are spelled correctly, and as a consequence of this, there is no man living who can spell correctly all the words of the English language; no man can tell when he sees a printed word for the first time, how to pronounce it. There is not one speaker who is faultless in this respect, and there is not likely to be as long as our language is in this condition.

The speaker then portrayed the huge barrier of spelling, which, more precipitous and frowning than the Andes or Alps, stood at the very threshold of the temple of learning—a barrier which all must pass ere they could enter the inner sanctuary. Parents are apt to forget that they were once children, and the long toilsome road they journeyed in by past years, so the boy is started on his career with a master at his heels with a sharp stick, to keep him to his work. Who could imagine the agony and mental labor necessary on his part to enter even the outer gate of knowledge. The speaker, as proof of this, cited several cases, showing how far English orthography differed from its orthoepy; the word physician was a brilliant instance. Why, the letters might spell Nebuchadnezzar with equal propriety; and the word philisue was even worse. Some one, evidently not versed in correct spelling, had once rendered potatoes according to the sound, "Poughtlight-tears," and here again was an instance of the confusion of a language where, as in thought, four letters were considered necessary to represent the sound of one.

The difficulty in spelling was coupled with an equal one when the student came to read. The lecturer had had a little one spell "B-o-x, chest; H-e-n, chicken," getting his ideas from the pictures over the words in the primer, and there was no more discrepancy between them than many words in their spelling and pronunciation. One of his boys, reading the sentence: "Consumption fed upon her vitals, and her days were full of pain," rendered the word vitals "victuals," and there was as much reason in the mistake as in many of the words propounded to the misconception of children, who with desperation proceeded to the task until their bewildered vision they saw not "men" but words as "trees walking," and snatched at conclusions as did the boy who read a well-known passage of Scripture with this rendering: "Strain at a gate, and swallow a saw-mill!" [Laughter.] In the opinion of the speaker, the only road of escape, both for children in school and those who had attained an older growth, was the adoption of a phonetic system, which should give us as many signs as sounds; and this the coming time would bring. Here he cited a collection of words: "though the rough cough plough me through," where a different pronunciation of the same compounded letters existed in every word, and said a student would be utterly at a loss which sound to give, the only proper one being established for each by arbitrary custom, based on a want of signs enough to represent the sounds. Children were compelled at the outset to crowd the memory with multitudinous forms, but the time would come, under a better arrangement of things, when the slow pronunciation of a word would be its spelling. Then spelling and reading could be taught in one-tenth of the time now required. He rejoiced to know that there were men so in love with progress that they were willing to labor to help on the cause of such a greatly needed reform.

Another reform must take place in our educational system. Why should our young men spend three or four years of the best part of their lives in delving in the sepulchres of the dead languages? There are some who, by reason of natural characteristics, are fitted to peer into the classics, just as there are some whose tastes lead them to work among old fossils, and such should be allowed their desires; but to force a thousand young men through such a course, regardless of natural proclivities, is only the forerunner of failure and disappointment. Our colleges seem to take the backbone out of our young men. The speaker thought they did not begin to pay for the amount of time and labor and money spent upon them. He believed the great want of the present (and the supply in the coming future) to be a college system based on natural science, where young men and young women too—the one as much as the other—[Applause] can gather to study the laws of their being and those of the universe; thus fitting themselves for the lives that are before them. Truly a great advance in this respect might be expected in time to come.

In the future, we are to have more manliness than we now have. What a shame for a man to crawl through the world like a worm, when he ought to stand upright on the shinbones of his manhood, and speak his mind freely! There used to be a time when all the fishes were cartilaginous, having a gristly internal skeleton, containing little or no calcareous matter. Then they disappeared, and the ossiferous fishes supplied their places, with a strongly-defined backbone; and it seems to me, sometimes, that we are living in the cartilaginous period of manhood. If I should ever write a prayer-book—a most unlikely thing for me to do—one of its petitions should be: "Oh Lord, strengthen my backbone!" [Laughter and applause.] I do not know anything more needed to-day than an increase of manhood—a determination to stand by the interior conceptions of our souls, first, last, and always. [Applause.] What are you afraid of? "Oh, I shall lose my place if I say such and such things." Well, you had better lose it, then; better feed on black bread, and live in a ditch, than fare daintily and be the slave of the people. Dare to be men! Do not allow the will of another man to be your law; look with your own eyes.

I can see a great improvement in humanity in this respect. I can look back to a time when there was but one religion, and that the Roman Catholic religion; when no man dared to speak against the church; when a man who had a soul of his own could not have it long, and have it connected with his body. As men began to think, sects began to multiply. Oh, you say, how unfortunate that there are so many sects in the world. So much the better for the free thinker! Put all the Orthodox people into one sect, and where would our chances be for Music Hall to-day? They might perhaps find a place for us somewhere in the cellar. [Laughter.] I rejoice in the fact that sects have multiplied, and they must increase till every man becomes a sect in himself, and is ready to give to all the same rights he has himself. Then will come the universal church of humanity. Along with this will come a great moral advance. There is room for this. It will manifest itself in the destruction of all war. "War, the knave's resource, the madman's joy, the sage's grief, the outcast's sepulchre, the widow's curse"—it must die. It shall no longer destroy beauty and trifle with existence. The voices of you and your children must bid it cease. There was a time in the past when the best fighter was always the best man; when the man who did not know how to fight could not live. The knowledge was necessary to keep him in safety from his stronger neighbors, the wild beasts and wilder tribes who were his enemies. But that time has gone by. As man has outgrown the brute condition, so has he outgrown these warlike necessities. See that naked savage (said the lecturer) wandering in the deep forest, his club clutched in his hand. He prowls for his food; he battles with and destroys the cave lion, the cave bear, the cave tiger, the gigantic ox. Only by his superior dexterity in the use of his weapons can he hope for life itself, or that wherewith to appease his appetite. He meets one of a hostile tribe; they fight, and he who is the stronger beats down his opponent and devours his flesh, in equal ferocity with the beasts that roam the woods around him. Such was the condition of the early men of Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, now the centres of art and civilization. From that state has mankind advanced to the possibility of such cities as Boston. But are we to stop here? No—not at all. The time to come will witness the embodiment, in the lives of all people, of the beautiful principle enunciated by Confucius and Jesus—"Do ye unto others that ye would others should do to you;" and war and its attendant curses shall be no more.

In the time to come, intemperance is to die. It cannot be otherwise. The speaker thought the lamentations to-day over the increase of intemperance in New England were really an indication of the movement always going on in the human mind by which progress is obtained, and that the thoughts elicited by a discussion of the evil would lead in the end to a higher degree of temperance than the world has ever seen. Temperance means total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks. The speaker showed the absurdity and injurious effects of taking anything into the system like alcohol, which came in as alcohol and left it alcohol, everywhere a poison, at war with the healthy action of the body. The time would come when men would see this, and would abandon it. A thousand prohibitory laws might be passed, and a hundred thousand policemen be enrolled to enforce them, but they would utterly fail to make a temperate people. He had but little confidence in the arm of the law as a compelling power, or in the baton of the policeman as a temperance lecture. Some people proph-

esied that temperance would go backward as a cause, but such could not be the case. In the future, an intelligent people would learn by a physiological education the effects of these intoxicating preparations, and their use would be universally abandoned.

But temperance means more than this. It means abandonment of all narcotizing substances—all things that injure the system. It means the giving up of tobacco, too. The lecturer here drew a strong picture of one who claimed to be a temperance man, and favored the selection of policemen to prevent his brother from drinking liquors, who himself walked the streets poisoning the air with the fumes of his cigar, or spitting great black seas of filth wherever he bent his steps; and declared that the policeman might, with equal propriety, be employed in putting a muzzle on him with which to preserve the cleanliness of society, only opening it to allow the victim to eat his dinner. [Laughter.] Think of the members of the Christian church, born of the Holy Ghost, too pure to sin, for whom heaven stands waiting, who go about the streets dabbled with the filthy weed, so that, in summer weather, when the wind is right, you may nose them a quarter of a mile off. If such men come to heaven's gate, St. Peter, if he knows his business, will cry out—"Get out from here! Heaven's a clean place. Depart, ye filthy wretches!" [Laughter.] If such men had been born again, it might be well to try it again. A man has no right to go about carrying more poison in his mouth than a rattlesnake, and which would kill the snake quicker than he could him. A farmer in Ohio once held a rattlesnake under a pitchfork while he put a quid of tobacco in his mouth, and the snake died before he could crawl his length. Talk of man being the lord of creation, when he is the slave of a habit so disgusting! The speaker would not endeavor to express his surprise at the course of those ladies who, clean and intelligent themselves, were willing to unite their fate with men who indulged such a filthy practice as the use of tobacco—it was indeed wonderful. But he was confident that, in coming days, the use of the weed would be discontinued and abandoned by all, and that the use of liquors and all things that operated against the physical health of man would be abandoned. The laws of health everywhere known and universally obeyed, we would have, in many respects, a regenerated world, and the signs indicated progress in that direction.

But temperance meant more than this—it meant sobriety in eating, too. The speaker referred to the old custom of burying suicides at the cross roads, but he desired to know where we could find cross roads enough to bury those who killed themselves by gluttony. David, in one instance, prays against his enemies: "Let their table become a snare before them; and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap;" and one would suppose, as he looked around among the people, that we were all David's enemies, and that his prayer was being answered! [Laughter.] The lecturer then referred to the degree to which appetite was carried in its satisfaction, and its evil effect upon the bodily functions, saying that among those present there was not probably a single one who had not at some time transgressed the laws of health at the table and paid the penalty. The women set the traps, and we paid them for it, and set ourselves to devour what was placed before us without question as to the consequences. Temperance is to go into this matter, also; and we shall not be a temperate people till this question of moderation in eating is definitely settled.

In the time to come we are to be more honest. Honesty means as good strawberries at the bottom of the box as at the top—as good apples in the middle of the barrel as at either end. I have found out the difference, sometimes—as have many of you—at markets, to my sorrow. [Laughter.] The fact is, there are but few thoroughly honest people—very few indeed. The number is to be greatly increased. How many honest editors are there in this city? How many that will refuse an offer of five dollars for the insertion of a business announcement which they know will deceive the public? They are willing any one should deceive their readers, provided they receive their share of the profits. There is one paper, in particular, which professes to keep out all such advertisements, but if you look into its columns you will find glowing eulogies of "patent" medicines which are warranted to cure all diseases to which flesh is heir, from constipation to consumption. I suppose the pious editors expect to compromise with their consciences by contributing a share of the proceeds to the treasury of the Lord! [Laughter and applause.] And if Boston is so badly off for honest editors, what of the country at large? But we are yet to have honest editors even, and—what are harder to find—honest politicians, too; men who, when they talk, will say what they think—not what will please the ear of the multitude. Such men are rare; in the coming future of the race they will be a thousand times multiplied, and honesty everywhere shall be the rule of mankind.

With all this advance in morality will come also an advance in religion. We cannot stand still in that, while we are moving forward otherwise. The sermons to-day delivered in a thousand pulpits are vastly ahead of the creeds. After declaring the creeds generally held by the mass of Christians to contain ideas and inculcations worse than the beliefs of the heathen, the lecturer said that, in time to come, the Jewish Jehovah would lie down with the Roman Jove, and oblivion hide both forever. Jesus would no longer be regarded as "Lord and Master" of any human soul. Put Jesus an inch above the human soul, and you bring down the soul just so much. We will give him credit for what he has done as a brother and a helper, but when he raises his rod to rule us, he is to us a curse.

We are to have, in time to come, a universal church. This the speaker said would comprise

NOTE: ONWARD AND UPWARD

ness of the four-illuminating philosophy it advocates.

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Banner of Light.

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North Fifth street, St. Louis, Mo.

RE-INCARNATION.

The doctrine of re-incarnation of souls on this earth, which seems to be accepted by a majority of the Spiritualists of Southern Europe, has not gained much foothold in this country nor in England, and is not likely to be accepted unless established on a stronger basis than that presented by our sister, Anna Blackwell, as given in the "Year-Book," on page 63. She says it "is a necessary consequence of the law of progress." We cannot see the necessity nor the consequence, nor why we, or any being, should be sent back to take new starts, like a boy running to jump a ditch, and, fearing to jump when he reached it, going back to run again. If we stop growing in this life, why not continue and complete in the next?—since all that the soul needs for its growth and development is there, as we are constantly assured by those who live there. Our own personal experience is, that two little boys who left our home and went there in early childhood are there yet, and quite grown to manhood, and have not been re-incarnated, nor are they likely to be. Many experiences of friends bear similar testimony, together with the hosts of little happy children that are so often seen about us, attracted, no doubt, by our intense love of children.

She says: "If souls are created at the same time as the bodies they animate, those of the children born to-day must be just as new, just as primitive as those of the people who lived thousands of years ago." Neither souls nor bodies are new creations, but only new organizations; and we do not see, if they were, why they should need to be several times re-created with new earthly organizations to gain the growth of soul which can as well continue in the next life as in this. We shall be greatly surprised if Allan Kardec returns and continues to teach this theory in a new body.

The progress of the race, which this writer thinks is owing to re-incarnation, is, so far as we can see, in no wise dependent on nor connected with it. The progress of the earth accounts for it in part, and the inherent qualities of the human soul for the rest. The higher and better kinds of fruit and flowers and improved animals would require re-incarnation as much as our race to account for them. We see no good reason for the theory in this.

The error, we think, is in accepting the Orthodox doctrine of God-created souls for human bodies, when the protoplasm theory is better. It is the argument, that, if two souls make ten, then four must make twenty. Strike out the 4, and criticize the first proposition, and the whole falls. The questions of A. B. do not, to us, seem either to require her doctrine to answer them, or to be difficult to account for without it. Let us see:

1. Why do souls manifest so great a diversity of attributes independently of the ideas acquired by education?"
ANS.—Because they are originally in infinite variety, which is essential to their eternal individuality. The germs are eternal, and no two alike; and, being eternal, are not new creations, and forever changing external forms and expressions, and acquiring and losing consciousness as they do vision, hearing, touching, etc. This answer covers all the other five questions that follow and hang on this one. We cannot see how the re-incarnation can better account for the variety in human character than either ours or the old theory of the Christians. It seems like the theory of Edward Beecher, in the "Conflict of Ages," where he accounts for total depravity by establishing a preexistence in which we all rebelled with Satan, and for which we were sent here to accept the atonement of Christ, and escape thereby the consequences, or, if refusing it, to be eternally lost.

All the argument that follows in this article is based on the conclusion that the spirit-life is not a progressive life, in which souls can gain what they fall to gain here—which we think is an error. As our evidence is conclusive that this life is continued in the next, with its consequences, and completed there as it never is here, and that, at whatever stage we enter that life, at that stage we begin the growth there and carry it on to completion—this, it seems to us, answers all the requirements of our nature, without ever being "born again" into this earthly life. Once is enough for us, and we think it is for all others.

SUICIDAL.

Accompanying the pamphlet on marriage by Mr. James, elsewhere noticed, we find the following notice of a wedding in New York from the pen of a writer for the Chicago Tribune:

"Never, in the history of New York, has anything been known like the present extravagance in dress, equipage and entertainments. The popular daughter of an ex-collector married last week was the fortunate recipient of gifts valued, at the lowest estimate, at \$80,000. A country seat on the Hudson, thoroughly furnished; carriages and horses; a check for \$10,000; a river of solitaire diamonds, and a coffee-pot of solid gold, for which the donors paid \$200, were among the most expensive presents; while jewels, lace and articles of vertu were said to have poured in, until there was no room for more."

Rome went down in her extravagant luxury and laziness. The Orthodox churches seem to be on the same road, and bound to the same destiny. Our present system of marriage must certainly be changed soon to be saved from a like fate. The show and sham of commercial marriages are sickening and ruinous. To offset the above, we read of one officer in St. Louis, who on one day last week married three couples that had run away, and one couple that had not yet run away, but of which one party probably will soon, for such is the custom here, and another case we read where the bridegroom had to borrow one dollar (all that was asked) of a companion to pay for being married, after the ceremony was over, as neither he nor his spouse had a farthing. These are the two extremes by which the system is switching out, and from which it should be rescued.

"THE LAW OF MARRIAGE"

is the title of a very unpretending eighteen-page pamphlet by C. L. James, of Chicago, which the curious can get by sending us twenty-five cents. It is an open advocate of the abolition of all marriage laws. It certainly urges its position with much ability, and draws (as is usual in such cases) largely on the Bible for support, and seems not more at a loss for testimony there than did the abolitionists a few years ago, when the Bible was the bulwark of slavery, as it now is of the subjection of woman.

In all our writings on this subject we have opposed the abolition of legal marriage, but demanded such reforms in the system as would save it from the fate which this pamphlet and other writers plainly point to, unless it is soon so changed as to save it by doing equal justice to

both sexes, and giving woman a chance to defend her person, in marriage the same as out of it, from rape and other crimes and abuses to which she is now subject, with no law to protect her while in marriage. Man needs no such protection from woman; if he did, he would soon have it by law which he could make. Woman needs it, and can make no law.

It is time for the friends of marriage to rally and reform it if they expect to save it, or it surely will be abolished.

CORRECTION.

Our brother George Filer, of Belchertown, Mass., seems a little tender on the subject of the Bible. We like the spirit in which he writes, and are glad he writes his views, but we must correct his statement that we rarely write a paragraph without going out of our way to give the Bible a thrust. Not one paragraph in ten of all we write has any allusion to the Bible; and second, we never "give the Bible a thrust" at all. It is the false coloring which the churches put over it to make the people believe it sacred and holy that we make our "thrusts" at. It is the idolatry, and not the book, we would remove. We have ever held the Bible to be as good as other old books written in the days of ignorance and superstition, and no more sacred than the Koran, Zend-Avesta and Shaster, all of which contain truths and falsehoods so mixed and blended that nothing but science can sort them. We admire, for instance, many traits in the character given to Jesus, and overlook the follies as of the age in which he lived, but to us he was no more the Christ or a Christ than any other man, since Christ means "God with us," or an especial incarnation of God.

"UNCIVIL LIBERTY."

This is the title of a pamphlet of twenty-three pages by E. H. Heywood on the right of suffrage for woman, and is the best brief digest of this subject we have yet seen written in this country. The subject is most ably handled, with no waste of words in fulsome adulation of the religious social system, on which the present position of woman is founded. It plainly points out the reforms that can be effected by the vote of woman, some of which cannot be reached without it. The author condenses his articles and gives us no superfluous verbiage, which is so common of late in the Orthodox managers of this subject, into whose hands it has been committed. The copy before us is marked "twentieth thousand," and it ought to be in every house in the nation, and read to every husband, and wife especially. Soiled it would fire with madness, and some with the vilest passions of the human heart; and many it would awaken to the rights and wrongs of domestic life, in which they would view them as they had never done before.

A NECESSITY.

There is a fine field in St. Louis for a good, steady, honest and reliable test and clairvoyant medium. One who could come here with means enough to establish himself or herself suitably, and could give general satisfaction, would be well sustained here as soon as the above qualities were known. Several have been here who were unable to settle themselves in suitable places and establish a character for reliability, and hence, however good they might be under favorable circumstances, of course fall here.

THE LECTURES IN ST. LOUIS are being well sustained and steadily growing in interest and importance, but as yet no more has been made toward an organization, and no need of it seems yet to call for action. We are in favor of organization, both local and general, but if the movement be made before there is a suitable demand for it, the experience has been a failure to secure the advantages which are sought by it. Premature births are often successful, but are difficult to manage, and we think rather more so in this than in some other departments of life.

Matters in Europe.

The mortality list has been largely increased during the week just past in the vicinity of Paris and Orleans.

On the morning of the 20th ult., the first sortie of the French garrison at Paris was begun at Champs Elysees, and Chevreton. The battle in that neighborhood lasted all night of the 20th ult., and till the next day, (Wednesday) about one hundred and fifty thousand men under Gen. Duroc, composed the rallying party. By Thursday morning, (Dec. 1st), they had captured on the east side of the Marne several villages, from Ormesson, on the south, to Champsigny, Villiers, Lile and Noye in the north, covering in the whole a distance of about six miles. On that day the Germans made a desperate effort to dislodge the French, advancing in four columns upon the central positions at Brie and Champsigny. Duroc was compelled to withdraw to the Paris or west side of the Marne; but the Germans, in following up, were exposed to a gallant attack from Forts Nogent and Deligny, thrown upon their flank. The slaughter from fifteen to twenty thousand, together with fresh reinforcements, Duroc's troops from Paris, compelled the Germans to retire, leaving the French in possession of the east side of the river. On Friday, the Germans, aware that Duroc's position, if held, meant nothing less than the raising of the siege of Paris, advanced again to the attack. Although they were subjected to another terrible fire from the forts on the east of Paris, they carried the French positions, drove Duroc back over the Marne and captured eighteen hundred prisoners.

The object of the sortie—as was probably that of Gen. Vinoy undertaken at the same time—was to form a junction with Gen. DeBouville's commanding army of the Loire, but this was not attained. Gen. Vinoy, with his army, has joined Gen. Duroc in position at Grez, about twenty miles south-east of Paris, and on the south side of the Marne. During the week, Garibaldi's army attacked at Aunay by the Prussian army of Gen. Von Werder, with twelve cannon and a considerable force of infantry and cavalry, and repulsed them with great loss. The Prussians are said to have done well during the bombardment.

Gen. Frederic Charles, rallying from his reverse at Beaune la Mare, and the Duke of Mecklenburg, from his near Vendome, reinforced by Gen. Vonderhorst, have gained successes over the army of the Loire, which obliged it to evacuate Orleans and take position between Blois and Tours. Manifestly having created a serious situation for the French, on Dec. 5, on his march to Paris, breaking up the camp of French troops there assembled.

The weather at the seat of war is said to be extremely cold, and the troops suffer greatly in consequence. The Prussian government has officially denied the existence of an agreement between the King of Prussia and Napoleon, whereby the latter was to receive material assistance from King William to re-establish him upon the throne of France at the close of the present war.

The Eastern question still remains to be settled. Granville's rejoinder to Gortchakoff will probably lead the way to the assembling of a European Congress, in which Russia's demands will be substantially conceded. It does not appear that he expressly requires Gortchakoff to withdraw his first offensive note as the condition of assenting to a conference, but he so states the matter that Russia will seem to persist in a childish attitude if she does meet having been sprung at an inopportune moment, so far as Prussia is concerned, may be regarded as amicably disposed of, although there will be a residuum of unpleasant feelings both with Russia and England, notwithstanding their mutual and profuse diplomatic assurances.

Spiritual Meetings in San Francisco.

The hitherto somewhat scattered and inharmonious forces of Spiritualism in this city have now united, and raised by subscription the means to pay for a first rate hall, very centrally located—Dashaway Hall, on Post street—in which free lectures are to be given every Sunday evening. Our esteemed friend and very acceptable lecturer, Mrs. Laura Cappy Smith, is to speak for us through the winter; after which it is her intention to visit once more her old lecturing field at the East, where she will doubtless meet with the warm reception which is due both to her personal worth and enduring excellence as a speaker.

San Francisco, Cal., Nov. 27th. H. S.

WESTERN LOCALS, Etc.,

PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE BANNER OF LIGHT.

It is blessed to labor in the cause of spiritual freedom. The masses, even among free thinkers, do not realize the full and glorious significance of the hour in which we live.

The old systems are falling. The Gods, the Saviors, the old methods, down to the very ministers, are being set aside. Good! let them go. There is no cause for fear. Trepidation, as to the coming time, is needless. God is! The angels love us and minister unto us; and man, divine man, reaches out and secures the higher blessing, the deeper spiritual insight, the more permanent joy and peace. Yes, we secure this peace, this joy, this spiritual love and interior illumination. It is in our possession, and it has permanency, too. It is not, as of yore, when educated by any of the old systems, spasmodical, volcanic and fluctuating. No; the light, under the new regime, is always at the meridian.

And now, to present this truth to the world is the primal duty of the teachers of the modern day, who are under the modern inspiration. Hundreds of souls need the assurance, that, though they give up the Bible as the only and infallible word of God, and Christ Jesus as the only instrumentality to save one from hell, still there is for them fountain after fountain, resource upon resource from which to draw the divine elixir of spiritual life and hope and courage and inspiration. Spiritualism gives this assurance.

But why Spiritualism more than any other form of rationalism? Because Spiritualism holds to the idea of revelation from the heavens; to the idea of loving guardian angels; to the idea of attempting a definition of the planes of life in the hereafter. Now, all of these ideas are immediately and indissolubly united with the religious sentiment, and they are the foundation-stones from which arise aspirations for the honest and virtuous and truthful way.

The tendency of modern, radical thought, outside of Spiritualism, is to ignore the idea of revelation from the spirit-world in toto. Disgusted with the supernaturalism of the Bible, and of Christianity, and of theology in general, the radicals kick to whole theory outward—out of the sphere of their ethics, investigations, history and common conviction. Spiritualists, however, give the rationale of supernaturalism; and they build their theology upon the same basis (that will stand forever), affirmed by all religions, viz., revelation from heaven. And here is the point of excellence and superiority in Spiritualism.

Progressive Christian, disestablished & atheist, your home is with the Spiritualists, for they furnish revelation and inspiration, on the one hand, and tangible, incontrovertible facts on the other.

Spiritualism, true Spiritualism—that kind which is orderly, methodical, organic and progressive—will save the religious idea from absolute annihilation.

Spiritualists, let us congratulate ourselves! The victory is ours! Soon we shall be crowned! Let us hide our time. We are masters of the situation. Let us announce to the world, that, though the old systems are falling, God, in his providence, has not left the spirit of man without aid. And let us go on cooperating with the angels, and perfect this system of ours, which, at last, is to bless man everywhere.

ON THE RAIL.

Inspiring, this western country! We are charmed with it. A new civilization is springing up in our midst. Leaving Chicago, we journeyed southward over the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy railroad. Illinois is a perfect garden.

We were pleased with the prices seen in Michigan, but, with seated, the Pullman palace car, riding over the numerous prairies of Illinois, pleasure changed into genuine delight, and delight finally was transformed into ecstasy.

Gracious! such a view! Level land as far as the eye can reach—to the North, South, East and West. Not a tree, not a fence, not a many times during the trip, we rode for a long, long time and never saw a house. The soil is very rich; it is easy to till. Here are acres on acres waiting for cultivation. We thought of hundreds of young men hived up in stores, in dingy offices, and then of hundreds more, loafing in bar rooms, sipping beer, and waiting for nothing to do. Here, in this life, journey West, and receive the baptism of this new world. Come! come! come to the West, the free, the glorious West! Come out into the larger life of this blossoming country! Why, the horizon is so large that it really seems as though you had moved into another hemisphere.

We were told that the mountainous regions were most conducive to inspiration. We demur from that statement now. If you want inspiration, if you want lofty thought, if you want your blood to tingle through your veins with new life, come to the West and roam over her prairies.

It was at Quincy, Ill., that we

CROSSED THE MISSISSIPPI.

Wonderful the ingenuity of man! Verily man is well provided for. If he wants to travel with dispatch, he has the means to satisfy him; if he turns his gaze skyward, and expresses a desire to gain some information relative to the stellar worlds, the astronomer enlightens him; if he seeks ponderable bodies move in opposition to the law of gravitation, and wonders at it, and seeks information concerning it, along comes the philosopher, the astronomer, who explains the Stellar Philosophy, showing that these manifestations are perfectly natural, and also saying much about the theology that thinking minds elaborate from such phenomena.

The religion of Spiritualism is more susceptible of proof than the science of Spiritualism. The former is a tangible reality to thousands. The cars run very slow over the bridge at Quincy. It is a magnificent structure. Its length is some twenty-three or twenty-four feet, we think, over a mile. The bridge is always an item of great interest to the passengers over this road, which, by the way, is one of the best in the country.

It is a mystery to us that the sovereign people do not force these railroad corporations to charge less for travel. This is not a trust at the above-mentioned road in particular, for all the Western roads have exorbitant rates. There is no reason why they are built at a small expense, compared with Eastern lines. There are no mountains to tunnel, no valleys to "fill in," and but few bridges to erect. Time will remedy this evil. The rates of the Pullman palace car should be lower, also. To be sure, everything is done to make one comfortable; but then you have the privilege(?) of dropping a twenty-five cent piece of soap every time you get in, or your luggage moved; and then another feature of this connection is, that you are not asked whether you desire any of these favors or not; they are done; and then "Mr. Man," with a dignified air, informs you that some "filthy luggage" has been soiled; and this is done, never, ladies, conscious of the growing power, frequently refuse to be mulcted in this way. Men, habituated to throwing money away, never murmur.

From Quincy we rode across the great State of Missouri. The surface of the country is little more uneven than in Illinois, and the soil has all the appearance of a "clayey" look. This State is filling up rapidly.

All through this Western country the people are liberal in their religious ideas. Orthodoxy belongs, by right, in old fossilized communities, where capital punishment is endorsed, where slavery of all kinds is advocated, and where "deity" is a mere belief, and not actualized. It has no welcome here. Unitarianism, and, for that matter, too, and too ethereal for the practical Western mind. Spiritualism, with its facts and its grand inspirations, fills the bill.

Our journey ended at KANSAS CITY, MO.,

One of the liveliest places west of Chicago, and destined, at no distant day, to rival both Chicago and St. Louis. The growth in this city has been wonderful. Prior to the war the population was small—some 4000 inhabitants. Since the close of the war this number has run up to 32,000. This beats Chicago. There is nothing like it on record, and it is a permanent growth, too. To a super-

cial observer the location seems anything but desirable, the surface of the country is so uneven. But then, energy, tact and skill exist in Kansas City, and hills are leveled, and gulleys are filled up, fine streets are made, and the click, click of the hammer and the trowel are heard all over the city. The city is visible everywhere. There are no foggy fogs here. The very atmosphere would kill them. The population is mixed, and growing more so. How they come! from all points of the compass! Chinamen are represented; Southerners abound; from the North and East hundreds come; and there grow a liberal sprinkling of Yankees. The climate is mild and healthy. Parties from Michigan, Ohio and Western New York, troubled with pulmonary complaints, settle in Kansas City, and health is soon restored to them. Here it is, Dec. 1st, and we have had delightful days for a month past—real Indian summer weather. The corn, wheat, and other crops last for a short time only. There is never any sleighing of any account. In the summer the nights are always cool, breezes coming from the great mountain ranges far to the west. This city is situated on the Missouri river. It controls trade to the distance of seventy miles north, one hundred east, six hundred south, and when two hundred and two thousand west. This is an item for business men desiring a good location. The schools are after the New England pattern; in fact, this city, and from this point west into Kansas, seems to be a second New England. Yankees are more numerous in Kansas than in any other Western State.

Kansas City claims six daily papers, also nine weeklies and four monthlies. Papers from all parts of the Union can be purchased daily at the paper and book-stand of H. T. Wright & Co., Post office building. Large numbers of Banners are sold here every week. The Boston, New York, Chicago, Cincinnati, St. Louis and San Francisco papers are rapidly here. The San Francisco Chronicle is a rare sheet. It endeavored to crush the late Lottery scheme, and its prophecies as to the disastrous results that would follow such an undertaking, time has verified.

There are many fine buildings in Kansas City. Several of the business houses and bank buildings would not detract from the good looks of any of the Boston stores, if placed beside them. The hotels deserve mention: The Broadway, St. James and St. Nicholas are the more prominent. Col. Coate's opera house is really elegant. Oh, yes! it is no wilderness, no uncultivated spot out here, as some Eastern people seem to think.

Now comes a startling announcement. We have it from a reliable source—at least that is the claim: The capital of the nation is to be removed! Everybody west of Buffalo affirms that Chicago aches to have it there; but, no—all her energies have been thrown into the White Stocking Base Ball Club—reasoning men say so. St. Louis finally imagines that grave senators will consent to discuss the science of government, and spend their money within her limits. Alas! both cities are destined to disappointment. Kansas City is the fortunate place! The matter has been duly discussed by several property owners here, and there is not a shadow of a doubt—in their minds—as to the final result.

RELIGIOUS.

There are thirteen churches in Kansas City. Spiritualists hold meetings in God Temple's Hall, the organized last spring. C. Fannie Allen lectured here during October, and met with most flattering success. Her lectures were the talk of the city. Glorious, this Western enthusiasm. The people are demonstrative. If they like you, and like your talk, they say so; and vice versa.

Following Sister Allen, we found large audiences. Never have we been so attentively listened to. Spiritualism is taking deep root in Kansas City. A well-developed physical medium for manifestations in the light, is in great demand. Facts—facts the people want! Oh, that we understood mediumship better! The phenomena are so wonderful, so convincing, that the world and to the people in Spiritualism.

By the phenomena, Spiritualism will be universally admitted; never as a mere intellectual belief.

We could name many earnest, intelligent, progressive minds among the Spiritualists here. Place the names among them. We have visited them in their happy homes, and memories musical with emotions of brotherly and sisterly love will ever linger with us concerning them.

With a little more cooperation, a little more self-sacrifice on the part of a few, a large and flourishing society can be formed. The financial question—arranging of it, the equalization of the burden—troubles the friends. A few have to foot the bills; and this is a universal complaint among our people. 'Tis too bad. Here is an item for our conventions to consider. Why don't they do it?

PERSONAL AND LOCAL.

Mrs. S. E. Warner lectures for the Spiritualists of Kansas City during December. The months of January and February, she elaborates the New Gospel in Rock Island, Ill. Nov. 27th, she delivered two excellent lectures in Wyandotte, Kansas.

Mrs. S. A. Horton lectured at Fort Scott, Kansas, with marked success, Nov. 19th and 20th. At present, she is holding sances, giving tests and presiding for the sick, at the residence of our good brother, Dr. Whitinger, of Kansas City.

Miss Baker, of the Lyceum Banner, has been doing a good work for that paper in Kansas. Her remarks at the Topeka Convention were practical and filled with inspiration.

Louis Walsbrooker has been in this vicinity. She has gone eastward. Sorry we did not see her.

Bro. Foster, of the Kansas City Journal of Commerce, is an earnest Spiritualist. This paper has the largest circulation of any daily published in this region.

Prof. Gunning's article in the "Year-Book" is praised by thinking minds.

As a laborer in the great spiritual vineyard, we thank the Banner for kind words spoken in behalf of the "Spiritualist Lecturers' Club." Truly, the day of appreciation of each other, of fraternal sympathy, genial cooperation and mutual goodwill dwains upon the public exponents and believers in Spiritualism.

CEPHAS B. LYNN.
Kansas City, Mo., Dec. 1, 1870.

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