

BANNER OF LIGHT.



VOL. II. [COLBY, FORSTER & COMPANY,] BOSTON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1857. [TWO DOLLARS PER YEAR,] NO. 12. [PAYABLE IN ADVANCE.]

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HUCKABUCK;

AN UP-COUNTRY STORY.

A Picture of

LIFE IN THE RURAL DISTRICTS.

BY JEREMY LOUD,

AUTHOR OF "DOVEFOOT," "GABRIEL VANE," &c.

THE BUNGALOW BALL.—CONTINUED.

Evening would not be put off a great while in those short days, however, but soon came down over the houses in a dusky dress, bedecked with glittering stars for the festive occasion. One by one the sleighs drove up to the tavern door, and unloaded their precious female freight. The bells struck an inspiring variety of chords, chiming and rhyming everywhere around the old house. The girls laughed and cackled as they were bundled out from among the robes, and the young men seemed to do nothing else but shout—"Whoa!"—to their waked-up horses. There were knots of idle loiterers about the tavern, who occupied their intellects with guessing out who might be in this sleigh, and who in that. But for the cold, they would have sat down on the "lazy-bench" against the front of the house, and taken their observations more deliberately.

The little bar-room below stairs was crammed and jammed full. It was not the Maine Law era then, and John Kagg—who had foreseen the pressure sufficiently to subsidize an assistant for the occasion—kept the toddy-stick going as if he was trying to see what he could do towards beating the tattoo. The drop-pers-in were there, with their coats and hats on; while the ball-goers came down from the little ante-chambers without either, and indulged in a showy twirl of their slippers, now and then, for the envy of the company. All sorts of people, dresses, voices, and breaths, were mixed up around the hot iron stove, with figures and countenances to match.

Up stairs, the scene was rather more enlivening. Besides the fact that the dancing hall was better lighted than the reeky little bar-room, the faces were brighter, and the eyes sparkled with a very different lustre. Toddy had less to do with it than the music. There were two musicians besides Elijah Bungalow in the wooden pulpit, one of whom piped at the clarinet, and the other sawed at the viol; and the instant these two struck up their melody, with Elijah Bungalow's violin to lead them on its wild chase away, it seemed as if everybody's hair—no matter how long or short it was—stood right up on end. There was not a human heart in that great room, young or old, but beat faster, and still faster, at the sound. "Hark! they're at it!" said some of them down stairs; and forthwith the straggling ticket-holders rushed breathless up stairs again, to be in at the work with the earliest of them.

Sturdy young farmer-fellows hurried to pull off their cowhide boots in the cramped ante-rooms, and to thrust their woolen socks, feet and all, into calf-skin "pumps" they drew forth from the pockets of their overcoats. And stood up before the stinky little mirrors, with a bright yellow landscape and a Venetian red population daubed sprawlingly on the upper half. And combed over their greased locks with a wonderful deal of care, as if a ten minutes' dance—as they danced—would not obliterate every trace of comb, grease, or perfumery. And flirted out their gay handkerchiefs, to give them one last brush over their faces. And finally fumbled in their vest pockets with trembling fingers, and fished up a bit of sweet-flag, a nip of orange peel, or a bright red wintergreen lozenge. And, with just one more look at the glass, pushed boldly through the door, and found themselves bewildered and lost in the brilliant hall.

I am not going to describe the real ball-room scene, for my gifts are far too few. If I were a painter now, and had the time to spare besides, I should never think I could finish such a sketch short of a preliminary study of two years, and a labor with the pencil of at least three more. The items are so various, and the figures so closely grouped, I should despair of doing the thing as it should be done in less than five good honest years.

After you once squeezed through the gaping squad outside the door, that lined the narrow entry, you came into a room with an arched roof—they made them so, when dancing was a serious business—and lighted rows of tallow candles stuck all about the walls; a motley collection of gay colors sprinkled over the floor, some of the visitors seated on benches ranged around the walls of the apartment, Elijah Bungalow, in his best black suit, calling off the numbers, or the sets, and the effective little orchestra putting its three heads together just over the edge of the pulpit. The moment the floor was filled to its fullest working capacity, Elijah held a brief consultation with the music, and of a sudden the violin, clarinet and viol struck up in lively concert. Every gentleman scraped a solemn scrape on the floor to his lady, and forthwith business was begun for the night.

"Balance to partners!" called Elijah, in his blandest tone to the company.

"Right and left!" he shouted again, with a bow that Brunzel could not have bettered.

And away they went, male and female heads bobbing and bowing, rising and falling, ducking and congealing from one end of the long hall to the other, and the gay-hearted music frisking along to try and keep them company.

The spectators in the room, and especially those about the door, stared like pictures of the nightmare. There wasn't a graceful dancer on the floor, but they had instinctively picked him out. There wasn't a sweet and rosy girl's face that from time to time came down near the door in the course of the dance, but they were alive with admiration. The rough fellows outside knew as well as anybody, that a lady never looks half so beautiful as when she is dancing with her partner, or sitting firmly and gracefully in the saddle.

There was a slab-sided young man in the party, tall and ungainly in his figure, with sandy hair and whiskers, who prided himself on his superior agility with his spindling legs; and who did not hesitate to declare on all occasions—which he was mainly in the habit of doing through his nose—that he could outdance the best "city chap the Bungalows were willing to bring along." Of course, as prize dancing has not yet come much into vogue, like prize fighting, the Brothers never presumed to contest his superiority, but only glanced at one another with a smile that wasn't meant at all for admiration. To see this lanky fellow jumping up like a frog hopped to a fish hook, and making his pair of slender legs go round and round, over and across, like the windlass of a well when the bucket is running down, was enough to set a grin on a brass-faced door-knocker. He kept his mouth open, too, as he danced, sometimes rattling his teeth together in castanet fashion, when he came down to the floor from one of his lofty leaps, and sometimes working his lips about in all sorts of designs and devices, in sympathy with the efforts of his lower extremities.

There was Robert McBride, too, who was going around and asking many a pretty miss to dance, and who was glad enough, in truth, to be seen dancing with him. As he looked about to fix his eyes on a partner, for the next set, he happened to spy out Patty! And without further ado, he came straight over to her and began to make himself agreeable.

"You here, Patty?" said he, standing up right before her. "And Miss Shadblow, too? I declare, what's going to happen? Did the old man know you was coming?"

Patty looked at Robert with a modest glance, for her heart told her that in the whole room there was not one so handsome as he. How she wished then she could dance, for she knew she would have been his partner! Her eyes went wandering over the hall, but ever came back to him again, and for just a moment dared to rest on his face.

"I wish you'd only been to the school this winter, Patty," said he, dropping his voice to a tone of confidence. "We've had such splendid times here, I can tell you! But, maybe, next winter Mr. Shadblow'll let you go. If you know how to dance, Patty"—leaning over and whispering it in her ear—"I'd ask you to dance with me!"

Her heart bumped so hard at the words, she was sure he could hear it.

And with a few more pleasant speeches, he bowed himself off and skipped over to a young miss whose hand he had been trying to secure since the first of the evening.

Mrs. Shadblow, who was determined to smuggle herself and Patty in that night, even if her husband went to bed down-sick in consequence, sat and enjoyed it as hard as she could. The music sent such sensations over her, she could scarcely keep her hands quietly folded in her lap. If ever she wished that Patty had learned to dance, it was certainly then. And if over she wanted Mr. Shadblow to be in any place in particular, that was the very place. It did her so much good, in the freshness of her heart she believed it could not fail to do as much for him.

And Esquire McBride was wedged in there, too, among the rest, talking up in a loud and important way to those around him, and trying, as usual, to attract quite his own share of public attention. He smiled and bowed to one and another as they sped by him in the dance, and before finally leaving for home, took occasion to state his opinion that it was all "a very well got-up affair."

About the door had collected a crowd of lookers-on from below stairs, who appeared to enjoy the scene as much as any of those who were participants in it. Piled up in a solid embankment, head upon head, they offered a formidable obstacle to any but the stoutest, who desired to effect an escape by that way from the affluence of the ball-room. Rough coats and shaggy heads, brawny arms and great squinted eyes, wide-stretched eyes and unshaven

faces—they were mixed up in a most indecipherable miscellany. It would have puzzled a Philadelphia lawyer to make an index of them for future reference.

On the very outskirts of that crowd hung old Malachi; with his hat jammed under his arm, as if it might be a temptation to an entry thief; bending, and crouching, and peering in every direction to catch a casual squint under somebody's elbow; and squirting his tobacco-juice excitedly over the entry floor; till the space around him looked as if it might be the vestibule to a slaughter-house. Or now and then asking somebody in front of him "what they were doin' now?"—and "if that air music warn't better for a feller, any day, than a hot breakfast in the mornin'!"

Gosh, likewise. He had got his ebony countenance fastened up near the top of the door, where his very original commentaries were turned to good account by his white friends who were less favorably located below him. But the most embarrassing thing about it was—he would explode in his laughing fits. There was no stopping him. Whenever he happened to espy anything particularly amusing, or as often as the tall young man with the sandy hair and whiskers went up into the air in one of his salutory expeditions, down came Gosh with his half-choked snicker, and down came everybody else along with him. They laughed to see him laugh. The humor in his face was as contagious as the black measles.

Towards midnight, up sneaked Deacon Soso; holding on by the stair rail as he came along, and stepping as softly as a cat towards a young bird in the grass. He looked all around him, as wise as an owl. He listened a moment to the music. He caught a glimpse of the smiling faces within, the gay dresses, and the dancing. And before he stopped long enough to think who and where he was, he had got interested in what was going on. Yet for the whole of Huckabuck, he would not have allowed himself to step over the inner threshold and give countenance to the scene!

The roughish negro caught sight of him from his perch, as he came creeping up the stairs, and kept his eyes eagerly fixed on him. To one and another near him he whispered, "There's the Deacon! There's the old Deacon!" which had the effect to put several faces about in the opposite direction, and to make the Deacon an unconscious object of observation. In truth, he was so intent on trying to see all there was to be seen, that he soon forgot both himself and the peculiarity of his opinions. When, however, he chanced to lift his own eyes, and discovered to his mortification that so many other eyes were fastened on him, said he, in his gruff voice, dolefully shaking his head—"It's a crying sin! It's a shame and disgrace to the town that tolerates such things!"—and turned away with a malignant grunt down stairs.

Gosh came down upon him with a cataract of laughter, that he had kept pent up as long as he could; and all the rest with him, of course.

At twelve o'clock the dancers selected their ladies, and went off in a jam down stairs to supper. They ate and ate, till everything disappeared. They stuffed, and gorged, and acknowledged themselves "full." The oysters suffered the most by reason of the supper-contract with John Kagg, although there were fewer turkeys strutting about among the farmers, next morning, than there had been in six months before. Pies vanished like snow-flakes on a pool of water. Confectionery was grabbed out of the dishes by the double handful. And one by one they fell away from the wreck on the board, and climbed up the stairs, panting for breath, into the hall again. In some of the chambers, however, a foolish young man or two might, by diligent search, be discovered stretched across the beds, their coats and boots still on, with whose brains John Kagg's execrable gin had played a much dizzier tune than the Bungalow fiddle, and who lay thus bestowed about the house, insensible to all the noises and the melody that came stealing over them.

Somewhere about three o'clock in the morning, the great affair was over. The tallow candles had all burned out. The instruments were asthmatic and screechy, and the dancer's limbs weary with long exercise. The girls hurried on their "things," and the beaux bounced out from hiding places on the stairs after them. John Kagg came along to blow out the flaring lights that were just ready to end their existence in smoke, and all hands, the orchestra not excepted, took the hint and made ready to go. And in half an hour afterwards, you couldn't have found a lonelier place within the limits of Huckabuck than that same upper room in John Kagg's tavern on the corner.

The receipts to the Bungalow chest amounted to some thirty-seven dollars and odd. They were satisfied.

"And yet," said Deacon Soso, who was to be commiserated for the unhappy fault somewhere in his digestive apparatus, "those same folks never'd carry thirty-seven dollars to our minister at the donation-party!"—which, considering that on those annual occasions the Deacon invariably eat full four times as much as he brought, is to be received as a very fair specimen of his sentiments on the subjects both of justice and generosity.

VIII.

MRS. BANISTER.

When Robert McBride was well along in his seventeenth year, his father determined to send him to New Haven to College. With a view to this arrangement, Robert was sent for the better part of the two

and a half years previous to a very famous Academy in a distant town, where he had occupied himself with studying—not the "reading, writing, and 'rith-metic," that John Porrhinger knew how to teach in the little red schoolhouse—but Algebra, Virgil, the Greek Reader, and the Four Gospels. In the vacations he was always at home, idling about the house or the street, and oftentimes wetting a line or two for minims in the little Huckabuck river. Or, now and then, he came across Patty somewhere in the meadows back of Mr. Shadblow's, engaged in gathering the early dandelions for "greens," or perhaps squeezing together a bunch of simple wild-flowers in her hand. Ever since their early school-days, and especially since the days of her terrible misfortune, he had been drawn to her with all the strength of a boyish affection. Sometimes this means nothing, and results in just as much; and oftentimes it holds the will itself in its silken leash, and controls the conduct of a long afterlife.

It was on a spring morning that Robert fell in with Patty again, on the old west road that led you by Mr. Shadblow's house. Patty was wandering away to gratify her morning mood; and Robert, having been across the lot in search of wet feet and a fresh cold, chanced to meet her plump in the road. There was a line of old apple-trees on each side of them, ruddy with blossoms and murmurous with bees. The grass by the road-side was as soft to the feet as a carpet. The robins were as blithe as the day itself; and the voluble thrush was rattling off his humors in every alder jungle, as if he meant to pay up all claims on his existence in full and at once.

"Ha!" saluted he, his face glowing like the landscape. "Which way are you going? Aren't lost, are you?"

Patty answered him that she was going "no where."

"There's where I've been," said he; and I've got enough of it, too. Now I'm going home!"

As he spoke, he sat down on a large gray rock by the road-side, took off his cap, and ran his fingers through his hair. His forehead was wet with perspiration. "See my boots!" said he, thrusting out one foot. "I've been down where the frogs blow their whistles. I tried to catch one; but that ain't so easy, you see! Ever catch a frog, Patty?"

"No, she never had."

"Well, I tell you what it is, now; they say their legs are good to eat, and I thought I'd try it for myself; but what frogs I've caught this morning, are all in your eye!"—shutting up his left eye, by way of a happy illustration of how it might look with frogs in it.

Patty finally thought better of it, and sat down too. And chatting of one thing and another, swinging his hat, and listening to the noisy thrush close by, he that morning renewed his somewhat decayed friendship in full force again. So that among the other things he told the girl, he did not fail, by any means, to apprise her of his intention to go to College.

"Father's said I must, and so I s'pose I must; though, to tell the truth, I don't care a fig to go, and had just as lief stay at home as not!"

Patty inquired to know how soon he would have to leave home.

"Oh, next September," said he. "I'm going back to the Academy for about ten weeks, and then in August I'm going on to New Haven to get admitted. I shall enter as a Freshman, you know—though I don't s'pose you know, either; and it will take me four long years to get through. Four years is a good while to look forward to, Patty. That will bring me to twenty-one years old! I shall be a man then! But I wouldn't give a fig to go, as I know of. I'd a good deal rather stay here in Huckabuck. But then, father's got a notion in his head that I must be a lawyer; and he says a person must go to College first to fit himself. And so be it!"

A double row of timid and trembling youth sat perched up in the gallery of the College Chapel, on the Monday preceding the next Commencement Day, telling the Tutors who slid into the long pews beside them what little they knew of Latin and Greek, but not how much they had "crammed" for the six months before, to know even that. Robert McBride was among them. It was all new to him, of course. He sat looking down into the body of the vacant Chapel with a feeling of loneliness. He glanced around into the pale faces of his fellow-pupils, out of whom the new class was to be formed, and experienced something like homesickness. Not a single face did he know. The Tutors, with their cold, hard, dry way, made him feel uncomfortable. And whenever a Professor chanced to make the tour of the benches, Robert declared to himself that he never could go through it in the world.

But he did, and came out bright. He received his certificate, signed by the presiding officer of ceremonies, and found his way across the spacious green to the hotel, where his father was waiting for him, with a heart beating high at the thought of his triumph. And from that day Robert McBride was a member of Yale College, and had all his hard and happy life before him.

But a short time after this event, too, Esquire McBride was promoted by the Legislature to the Judgeship of the County Court. This was something, for it gave him quite a title. To be accosted as Judge McBride, by this one and that one, was a far better thing, in his ears, than to be called "Square" of this latter appellation he had begun to be heartily sick and tired.

Judge McBride had managed by this time to accumulate a good deal of money, in his way, which

was safe enough, while in his hands, from the reach of anybody and everybody. There was no telling him how to manage. People said he was a man that never made a mistake. When they got him into the directorship of the Follifog Bank,—an institution in a town some ten miles distant—the stockholders imagined that every paper dollar they issued was soon going to be worth at least two in gold. He enjoyed the reputation which some men are most ambitious to enjoy—of being fully "up to things." You could n't hope to surprise him. He was made the Bank attorney, because he knew how to save bad debts, how to enforce payment in all cases, and how to thread his way safely through every one of those underground passages known only to law or lawyers. It was prosperity with him now, on every side. With a seat on the bench, and a son in Yale College; with two blooming young girls at home, and a plenty of money to carry in his trousers' pocket.

Huckabuck looked up a little about these days, too; though it was but little, either. Some of the few adventurous emigrants from the town began now to flock back again in the summer, and many of their new friends came with them. Of these, the greater part took quarters with John Kagg, who stood ready to accommodate them with anything his larder, bar, or bedchambers could supply. And in this sort of business, his excellent wife was his adjunct at his elbow. Some folks said she was the man of the house; but if any living woman could ever hope to master the stubbornness of John Kagg, when he once got his back up, she must have possessed along with it the same kind of faith that is said to be able to remove mountains. Mrs. Kagg might have been mistress of the house; but the master of it, never.

With others who dropped in quietly at the old tavern-house, was a lady from New York. She and her only son passed two or more of the summer months with the well-fed publican, and agreed that it was the pleasantest surprise they had met with in a long while. The town was so clean, and the air was so sweet. The privileges were so many, and the stillness of the place so undisturbed. So delighted was the lady in particular, she declared that if there was a house to suit her to be bought any where near, she would become its purchaser without delay. She had seen enough of the world, she said, and would be glad to get out of its hubbub. She had been jouniced about to her satisfaction, and now desired nothing more than a sequestered nook, where she could sit down and be quiet for the rest of her life.

Entrusting her errand with Judge McBride, which was to purchase a snug little nest of farm-buildings about half a mile beyond Mr. Shadblow's, at the place known to all Huckabucks, young and old, by the name of "the Pine Tree"—she and her son left for New York again as soon as the hot weather was well past, intending by another season to return and take up their permanent abode.

And when the next summer came round, Mrs. Banister came too, just as she had promised.

She was a lady of extensive wealth, which, in a town like Huckabuck, was not without its proper influences. She dressed in a suit of deep black, for the loss of her husband. It was soon understood—for what was not certainly known, would be pretty sure to be guessed out—that she was the widow of a rich planter on the island of St. Kitts, who had died several years before, leaving her with this only son; and that, not long after, becoming weary of her monotonous life in the bosom of the sea, where she could sit every afternoon on her own little porch and watch the rolling waves of the Atlantic, she determined to sell her estate, and, with her son, remove to New York. There they had lived a considerable time already, when the merest accident brought them one summer, as I have related, up to Huckabuck. And the rest of it everybody knew well enough, without the trouble of guessing. Mrs. Banister became a resident, and was of course the wealthiest person in town. Probably she could have bought out Judge McBride, and given it all back to him without feeling it. She was too rich to make other people envious, for they knew their envy could not reach her figures; and accordingly they became respectful instead, and some of them worshipful even. Mr. Shadblow began to feel poorer than ever, in view of such enormous wealth, and a thousand times more miserly. In her manner, the stranger was as quiet and retiring as possible. While she did not desire to be ostentatious, she was not averse to exchanging ordinary courtesies with the village people, she did not, either, feel anxious or eager to multiply acquaintances around her. The church beheld her a constant attendant upon its weekly services. In deeds of public charity her hand was always open as a free and generous giver. By silent and unnoticed means she scattered her bounty with judicious profuseness among the poor and deserving, and seemed to be continually on the stretch to discover some new objects worthy of her persevering generosity.

But there was a secrecy flung around the manifestations of her sorrow, which entirely baffled the speculations of the Huckabuck wonder-hunters, and led them to conclude that there must be some mystery within to which they could not penetrate. In her suit of sable, of which in public she never offered to divest herself by even the lightest trifle, she went to and fro among them like an enigma. They would come of them have given all they were worth,—and that would not go a great way towards the purchase of a very valuable secret—to know exactly why it was she wore her mourning habit so long; and why her countenance held to so sad and dejected an expression; and why she appeared so shy of all society, while so abundantly able to lead off and carry

the palm; and why, in truth, she was guilty of doing a thousand things just as she did, instead of in a better way they would have recommended to her with such alacrity.

But all their wonder never found a solution for its manifold problems. As mild as she was, she still possessed decisiveness enough to repel every offensive and presumptuous advance with the dignified determination that became her lady-like character.

With her came, too, her only son. Byron Banister was entering upon his twenty-first year. A young man of a fair and comely exterior, with the prospect of large wealth at the death of his mother, and scarcely conscious of any of that rigid self-denial, whether of appetite, of passion, of prejudice, or hatred, that best serves to weld stoutly together the varied elements of a character, and make it reliable and enduring—it may be naturally supposed that he regarded the world simply as his own personal oyster, to be opened whenever he fancied it proper to take out his pocket-knife and set about the easy operation.

The taste of town-life, such as he had casually got in a metropolis like New York, made this simple and sincere country life decidedly unacceptable to his mental palate; and still, such was his secret regard for his mother, feeling about with so silent an influence among the fibres of his heart, that he willingly for a time accommodated himself to his new location, with its many disagreeable accompaniments and associations, and took up his residence in Huckabuck for a period of several successive months, without any further murmuring than might be expressed in his caricatures of Huckabuck manners, and his ridicule of their standard of sociality.

When, however, time had worn off the attractiveness of the novelty somewhat, his restless spirit pined for scenes of greater activity; and forthwith began with him a series of changes in his residence, that were the only things—so he told his mother—that would tempt him to endure life on any terms whatever. These changes consisted in a summer's residence with his mother at Huckabuck, and a winter's with his newly acquired friends—the artists, in Boston. Some sudden turn of the tide, or shifting of the wind, had sufficed to carry him eastward, instead of back again to New York, where he thought he speedily found all that he desired in the way of change, excitement, and associations.

The first thing almost that Mrs. Banister felt compelled to do after coming up to Huckabuck, was to procure a staid and capable housekeeper; which is sometimes not such an easy matter. Chance, however, carried the way to Miss Abigail Lovitt, a maiden lady of a great many years standing, and at the moment the trusty housekeeper of General Tunbely. She had been in the service of the General for more than twenty years than she would care to reckon; and had proved faithful and true to the minutest particulars of her engagement; had always consulted his interests and pleasures as closely as if they were her own; and still—it gave her heart a pang to think of it soberly—and still he had never felt encouraged to propose an engagement of a more intimate and interesting nature! Why could it be? He, a bachelor—she, an — well, she never had been married! It was the strangest thing in the world that they had not long ago slipped their necks into the yoke matrimonial, and said, "either this way or that," no more about it.

"Now," said Miss Lovitt to herself, when she heard of the new want of Mrs. Banister, "I shall have a chance to see if he ever means to do anything! I'll go right off and apply for the place, and this very evening he shall hear of it from my own lips!" She clasped her hands together, as she jumped out of her chair. "Yes," said she, "I believe I've got the old General now! Let me see him git away if he can! He's been dodgin' and dodgin' me all this time, and I've put up with it, and put up with it; now we'll see how he'll act, when he finds he's got into a corner!"

Hardly said, before it was done. She received a proposal from Mrs. Banister to come and take charge of her household, with liberal pay and a number of privileges attached; and returned for an answer that on the very next morning she would come over, and let her know her decision. And the spinster laid in wait for the poor General that evening, like a wary old spider watching for a chance to pounce plump on some miserable little fly.

As soon as supper was over, she laid before him the particulars of her new offer. "Did you accept?" asked the General, looking a trifle anxious.

"Oh, no!" she replied, with a kindling in her eye. "Oh, no! I knew you'd have something to say to it; so I put off my answer till mornin'."

The General sat and thought about it. Finally said he—though his heart was by no means in his words—"I can't very well afford to pay as much as Mrs. Banister, for she's the richest woman in town, you know."

"Oh, I don't expect you to!" put in the housekeeper. And she was going to drop a pertinent hint besides; but it didn't come out at the right time, and so went unsaid.

"Don't expect me to?" repeated he after her; "why, what do you expect? You certainly wouldn't be willin' to stay here for less than what you can git somewhere else?"

"I might," answered she, looking down at the teapot, no doubt because it happened to stand right before her. "I might, even for less!" and she blushed, it would not do to tell how extensively.

The General got into the enclosure of a new pause, and rambled all around it before he found his way out again. "Umph!" he ejaculated, under his breath, while he gathered up his knife and fork from his plate; and laid them down side by side again. "I shall be sorry to lose ye, Abigail," said he, dropping his eyes to the table, "but I s'pose I can't help it. You've been a faithful woman—none

could be faithfuller; but I'd advise every one to go where they can dew best. I shan't give no different advice to you, nuther, as much as I'd like to keep ye. I must hunt up somebody else."

"The old Arab!" said Abigail's heart to itself, as it floundered about in her bosom behind the teapot. "He's gone and taken me at my word! I'll go now, whether or no! I'll let him see if I haint got as much pluck as other folks! I'll let him try house-keepin' by himself for a while, and see how good it feels! To let an old friend, that's worked for him faithful and true as many years as I have, go off in this way! A pretty state of things, I'll be bound!" Then coming to herself sufficiently to feel something of the embarrassment of her silence, she replied to his conclusions: "Wal, if I must, I must! and there's no help for 't! In the mornin', then, I sh'll go over and let myself to Mrs. Banister!" And she rose from behind the teapot with a vast deal of compelled composure, brushed the crumbs off the silk apron she was artful enough to put on for the occasion, and set back her chair in its place against the wall with a thump that stood for emphasis.

"You'll find a better home over there than I can ever give ye here," remarked the blunt General, by way of a delicate piece of consolation. "Miss Banister's a nice woman, I know; the very nicest sort of a woman. I hope you'll suit her, Miss Lovitt; and, in fact, I rather think you will!"

IX.

THE HUCKABUCK BENCH. Somebody said not long ago, after having waited half an hour in a vain attempt to effect a safe crossing of Broadway below the Park, that if a man knew enough to pilot himself through the floodwood of drays, carts, omnibuses, and carriages that suck through that noble avenue, he was abundantly qualified to become a Justice of the Peace in the country anywhere. And still, had Deacon Soso, who, by the by, was a Justice in good standing up at Huckabuck, undertaken the perilous passage of that tide of vehicles, he would assuredly have been swamped before he was well a third of the way over; unless, like the favored and famous Seventh Regiment, he could have had the street cleared by the staves of the police for a long distance above and below him.

Of the worthy Deacon's head, the less said the better. It is one of those delicate subjects that will not bear much handling. And yet such much might be permitted any candid narrator to observe, especially as it helps his reader to a better understanding of the subject in hand—that had the Deacon happened to live at the time the wise men of the East followed the Star along through the heavens, it is very certain he never would have been of the number who went to Bethlehem.

If there was the least occasion, however, for holding a Justice Court in Huckabuck, to think of asking any other person than Deacon Soso to sit on the case would have been an exceedingly gross breach of the rules, and almost of the peace. Such a position before the public might be small enough honor, for people with an ambition like Alexander's; but for him, it was exactly suited to his tastes, his style, and his general intelligence. Some men might easily make better Judges than he, but few could hope to become better Justices. In that capacity he was ahead of all possible competition.

There came down a rainy day upon the quiet little town, one Spring, when nobody wanted to work, and everybody felt good for nothing unless it was to go a-fishing. Just in the nick of time, however, it was discovered that General Tunbely had lost a number of chickens from his hen-roost the night before, and that Gosh, the big negro, had been taken for the thief. There was to be a Court about it; and it was to be held that same forenoon in the spacious hall in John Kagg's tavern. The simple announcement of such an event, combined with the public astonishment at such an unheard-of atrocity, was sufficient to pack the apartment as close as ever hall was wedged during the contests of an excited political warfare.

"General Tunbely's had his chickens hooked!"—"The nigger's the thief, and they've got him!"—"They're a-goin' to have a Court over 't the tavern!"—were proclamations made in busy haste all up and down the street, summoning men and boys, like the roll of a drum, from their slumberous occupations, and distributing dark knots of people here and there over the wayside, from as far up as the meeting-house to as far down as where the road forks at the guide-board with a three-fingered hand in black paint daubed on its upper left-hand corner. Of course they were talking about it; about the chickens; about the time it was done; about General Tunbely; about the Court; and about "the nigger." The Huckabuckers were as great a people for talking as the Feejees ever were for eating. All day long, and a good way into the night—every hour of the day, and every day of the week, Sundays not excepted—it was nothing but talk—talk. Every man ("I do not speak of the women") was a born lawyer, by right of his tongue. They looked at a subject—no matter how trifling—and talked at one side of it; and when tired of that, they turned it over and talked at the other. Could it only have been cured—and the habit was too thorough an one ever to hope to cure—there was tongue enough in that town, alone, at a moderate estimate, to supply the wants of a large and hungry population.

When the town was thoroughly awake, the knots that had gathered along the roadside and around the Post Office began to untie themselves, and flutter, like flocks of black birds, over to the tavern door, which they besieged with their united forces, and awaited with much eagerness the arrival of the prisoner. They were engaged in arguing the case on its merits. The men were talking and whistling, and the boys were listening and whistling. The little bar-room was full, and its occupants were obeying the weed with all the energy in their jaws. A general hum arose both within and without, that reminded one of the sounds of a beehive.

Presently one of the town-constables, a doughty young chap with a high shirt collar for the occasion, brought along his prisoner. Everybody stopped talking, and got ready for a substantial stare. If they were all tongues before, they seemed to be all eyes now. They made room for the consequential officer to take his prisoner and his shirt-collar through the crowd, and the moment he had gone up stairs, rushed like a drove of mad cattle pell-mell after him. The balusters creaked and snapped with the pressure, and threatened to let the whole mass

down in a heap on the lower floor. The upper ones were lifted pastore of their feet, and carried forward on the shoulders of the eager press below them. To get the best view of the negro was the highest ambition of that memorable morning.

As soon as they had wedged through the door of the hall, they began to scatter themselves here and there in pursuit of eligible seats and standing privileges. In the first place, a dense semi-croire was formed without delay around the Justice's bench, and the prisoner. Next, concentric rings were established about this first circle, for the purpose of fixing it where it was. Then the mass rushed up in a miscellaneous melee, crowding and jamming, pushing and hauling, and butting and backing. The shuffle of feet; the confusion of voices; the calling out of one to another; the clatter of chairs and benches; the occasional laughter, that rang clearly over all the rest; the steady running up and down the stairs in heavy Huckabuck boots; these all together made up an occasion such as even John Kagg's tavern was not yet perfectly familiar with.

But when the Justice himself—who of course was no other than Deacon Soso—came in and took his seat, and began to run through the copy of the Statutes he brought along, and afterwards to bestow his magisterial gaze and frown over the assembly at large—silence reigned. Men and boys put aside their loud conversation and laughter, and gave their attention to the newly entered Court.

For a moment or two the Deacon engaged in a little consultation with one of his acquaintances at hand; this was only a pleasant pastime, to delay the proceedings until his associates should arrive. Which they were not long in doing, however, as the commotion of the crowd, parting to let them through, fully betokened. The assistants upon whom his sage choice had fallen for the purpose of adding dignity to this occasion, were Mr. Pennybright, the store-keeper, and Captain Teenty. They jammed their way up, took a chair apiece on either side of the Deacon, brushed up their hair, tilted back to a dangerous angle of importance in their seats, and surveyed their admirers with an appearance of most deliberate satisfaction.

The presiding magistrate, and Mr. Pennybright, the reader already knows. Capt. Teenty may be a stranger; and I therefore assume the duty of introducing him in a paragraph as nearly proportioned to his size and importance as may be. A little head and face; bushy whiskers all the way round; four feet and something in his boots; with a high dickey like a close board fence, that he could but just look over by climbing to the top; huge cuffs to his coat sleeves, that covered his knuckles; and never so much bewildered as to be incapable of remembering that he was once a captain in the Huckabuck "mills." Good-hearted, people said, what there was of him; but as much given to strut and swagger as the voracious bantam cock that considers a sidewalk a highway surveyed especially for his behoof.

"The Court will come to order!" said the Deacon, looking a big bundle of offences at the assembly.

"Polly! Polly! Polly! Pretty Polly!" rapidly cried John Kagg's green-headed parrot, that happened to have been left hanging against the wall. At which half the crowd tried hard to look grave, and the other half buckled down to a good "snicker." The prisoner indulged in three suppressed sobs, and bowing his head down in one of his indeliberate explosions. This soon brought the whole room after him, gravely and all.

"Silence!" called out the Deacon. "Mr. Grand Juror, read your complaint against the prisoner!"

The grand juror thereupon rose to his feet, drew forth a voluminous document from his breast pocket, which a wide-awake publisher would have concluded to be the manuscripts of a long romance at least, and proceeded to rehearse the story of General Tunbely's woes in due legal phrase, leaving out no shred, scrap, frayed end, paring, or chipping of that all-the-way-round expression which is such a delightful characteristic of the law, and which more frequently serves to befog and befuddle the wits of common listeners than it ever does to enlighten and inform them. The mouths of the assembly were all agape, as he went on piling up one heinous charge after another on the poor negro, till it would seem that even his broad and titanic shoulders could not support them. He read to them how that the ebony wretch had, during the night before, in the town, county, and State aforesaid, with force and arms, willfully, maliciously, and with evil intent, with sticks, staves, clubs, and divers other implements of a hostile and dangerous character, invaded the sanctity of General Tunbely's (aforesaid) hen-roost, while its unsuspecting occupants were wrapped in balmy slumber. He accused the black rascal, in the course of his discursive and somewhat romantic narrative, of having carried with him weapons of a nature that would excite the heart of the town to a feeling of terror. He charged him with breaking the peace, about which the fellow pretended to know nothing at all,—and with setting an evil example,—about which it is barely possible he did. And he wound up with a flourish of trumpets about the majesty of the law, the protection of the rights of persons and property, and a desire that the guilty culprit might be punished, as a terror to evil-doers for the future.

They ensued a short pause, during which the spectators held their breath.

"Morgan," said the Deacon, rising from his chair the better to impress the dignity of the Court upon both prisoner and auditors,—"you have heard the complaint read; what do you say to it? Are you guilty, or not guilty? You may answer for yourself."

"N-n-no, sir," answered the negro, stammering, and lifting his eyebrows so as to move his wool a little; "I n-never hooked his chickens!"

The Deacon, who knew better, looked at him steadily a moment with those queer little eyes of his, and then, turning to his associates, sat down between them, and crossed his legs, with a view to go about it leisurely. After consulting with the Grand Juror briefly, said he aloud, giving a resonant "Ham!" to clear his throat,—Call on your testimony, Mr. Grand Juror!"

Of course General Tunbely was called first. He got up and stood facing everybody. He had a rapid and extremely inaccurate way with him,—a sort of hit-or-miss style of speech and manners,—that made plenty of fun for other people whenever they happened to feel in the mood, but never appeared in the least degree to disconcert himself. Indeed, it was seriously thought that the more confused he was, the better he got on. When he spoke under excitement,—which was almost always the case,—he began to wave his hands about other people's heads, and to fume and froth at the mouth like a lobster on land.

It was not a very popular way, but it now and then excited laughter.

"Were your chickens taken last night?" was the grand juror's first inquiry.

"Yes, sir, they was; a rooster and three hens."

"Were they stolen?"

"I'm pretty confidant of that, was the answer."

"Do you know by whom they were stolen?"

"Of course I do; by that infernal nigger!" pointing to the prisoner, and making a fierce grimace. The audience set up a laugh.

"Nigger!" screamed the roguish parrot from the wall. "Whew!" and the house came down, culprit and all. Captain Teenty smiled; Mr. Pennybright glanced up to where the parrot ought to be; and Deacon Soso gave his countenance more longitude than ever. You would have needed a mariner's compass to find your way safely up to its high latitudes.

"Well, General Tunbely," his legal questioner went on, sticking his thumbs into the armbolts of his waistcoat, "I wish you'd proceed and tell the Court what you know about this transaction. Tell what you heard; and what you found; and what you saw; and so on. Tell all about it."

"As 'most everybody knows," said the General, cuffing a small boy by accident with his gesturing hand, "I had the nigger once to live at my house; and a good feller he was, too. But he got into these bad ways, ye see, and took to drink a little, and stealing a little, and—"

"No matter about that!" curtly interrupted his Honor. "Begin with last night's doin's; let what's back o' that all go!"

The General looked at the Court a minute, with his mouth half open, and finally thought he had got its proper idea all the way into his head.

"Ah; yes," he faltered. The prisoner rested his elbows on his knees, stooped over to accommodate himself to the new posture, and looked up steadily into the face of his accuser.

"When my hens went to roost last night," he went on, "there was twenty-three on 'em; and when I went out to feed 'em this mornin', as I do every mornin' when I fodder my cattle,—I feed 'em out of a two quart measure, ye see,—I thought there was some on 'em gone, and so I had the curiosity to jest count 'em all over! I counted, an' counted, an' counted; and I couldn't make but nineteen on 'em! Four was gone! I went all round the yard, and the barn, and the sheds, to find 'em. I hunted, an' hunted, an' hunted. I poked my hand into every hole and corner there was; and knocked my head agin every single rafter over the scull,—the prisoner chuckled to hear this;—but nary hen was there to be found anywhere round! Thinks I to myself, in a minnit, almost,—they're stole; an' if anybody's hooked them hens, it's that infernal black nigger!" The culprit went off in another guffaw.

"Whe-w!" whistled the parrot. And all hands broke out in a laugh together.

"You should use proper language in Court, General," remarked his Honor, with a view to check the witness's tendency to excitement and exaggeration.

"Yes, I mean tew," said the latter; "and I think that to call that black feller an infernal nigger, is jest as proper as preaching!"

"Well," said the grand juror, desirous of setting his witness on the right track again,—what did you do then, when you found your hens were gone?"

"What did I dew? I did what I s'pose any man'd dew; I cussed some little, and then I started off for the nigger!"

"Well, did you find him?"

"I rather think I did, sir; if I had n't, 'taint at all likely he'd be settin' there, while we're talkin' about it! Find him? I guess I did; I found him in bed, the cussed black thief! and my hens and rooster dead, down in the sullar! I looked at 'em, poor critters! with their necks wrung round jest as I'd like to take an' twist 'em!—and—"

"Order!" called out his Honor, checking his speech again.

"Wal," answered he, "I wish he'd a-come and stripped your hen-roost, Deacon; and then see how you'd like it! You can't guess how other folks feel always, by only hearin' 'em tell their story! But as I was a-sayin',—this 'ere house he was in, was a hut over nigh the Coalpits; jest such a place as I knew he'd be likely to take the poultry to, and where I know he's been in the habit of hangin' round for some time back along. He'd got 'em there in the sullar, as 'twas, you see; and as soon as he waked up, he meant to pull off the feathers. If I hadn't ha' been as s'pry about it as I was, I never sh'd identified my hens in the world; I sh'd lost the whole on 'em, and he'd gone clear besides. Because he'd ha' got the feathers off!"

People looked round at one another, and seemed to settle down into the conviction that this was a straight story, and all to convict the prisoner.

"Will you swear that the hens you saw in that cellar," asked the prosecuting officer, "were the same that belonged to you, and were carried off in the night?"

"Yes, I will!" promptly answered the General.

"That is all," said his examiner. "I now wish," added he, rising and addressing the Court, "to introduce the testimony of Mr. Tossitt, who occupies this house in which the prisoner was found." The Court bowed. "Mr. Tossitt!" called the grand juror; "come forward here and be sworn!" A passage was made for him through the crowd, and the negro sat bolt upright and looked straight in his face. Comrades in petty iniquity, as they long had been, the prisoner could not but regard the countenance of his old friend with an irrepressible disposition to laugh. He put up his eyebrows two or three times, therefore, by way of a preliminary performance, hurried his wool rapidly forwards and backwards on his crown, to get all things ready, and gave a few sly grins each time he thought he had caught the new witness's eye.

Mr. Tossitt was a man of fifty years, and more too. He performed odd jobs for the farmers round about, and now and then a small one for himself; and in an exceedingly miscellaneous way managed to pick up a scanty living. But there was no occupation that he pretended to follow as a regular business, unless it was rum-drinking. He was willing to give his time to that, and put in no charges for extra labor. The hut he dwelt in, he occupied alone; cooking his own food, washing his own shirts, and attending as he best knew how to the requirements of such a household economy as his would necessarily be. Occasionally he had the pleasure of entertaining a straggling visitor or two, of habits and proclivities similar to those of Gosh, who always made cheerful comports with him of what trifling booty they brought in, and were made welcome to a bed and a hiding-place as long as their forage lasted.

Such in brief was the other witness whom the

prosecution had summoned to substantiate the guilt of the prisoner.

"Now, Mr. Tossitt," said the grand juror, "I want to ask you one question"—here the nigger began to snicker;—"did Morgan come to your house last night?" The old fellow looked all around him in a bewildered manner, and said—Y-y-yes; yes, he b'lieved he did; he come some time in the night, but he wouldn't pretend to say when. He was anxious to shield himself, to screen his colored friend and ally, and at the same time to appear perfectly candid to the Court.

"Did he bring any hens with him to your house?" was the next question. Looking around him as wildly as before, his head trembling with the palsy induced by rum, and his lips in motion as if he were mumbling something down his throat,—I-I-I didn't see him bring in nothin', said he. "Then you saw him, when he came in?" persisted his questioner.

"Yes, I saw him plain enough; but I never see nary chicken, nor rooster nuther."

"But just now you said you did n't know when he came!"

"No, and so I did n't; for I haint got no clock; and somebody stole my watch, over so long 'go!" The auditory roared. But the negro's clear—"Wal! wal! wal!"—was to be heard high above every voice in the room. As soon as the shouting had subsided a little, there burst forth a cry from against the wall, which everybody recognized as the parrot's, and which increased the merriment still more.—Deac'n Soso! Deac'n Soso! Gone to Court! Gone to Court!—Polly—Polly—Polly,—pretty Polly! Whe—w!"

When order was restored a little, the public examiner ventured to propound another question:—"Did Morgan say those chickens those were?—I mean, where he got them?" The confederate heitated, while his head trembled more than ever. The negro was looking up in his face with one of the most shrewdly comical expressions it is possible to conceive.

"I s'pose I must tell, then?" said Tossitt, inquiringly.

"Yes," ordered the Court, "you must tell all you know."

"Wal," answered Tossitt, "he told me how't he'd hooked 'em off o' Gen'ral Tunbely's hen-roost!"

"Ah, he did, hey?"

"Yes, he did; but there's no believin' what he says, he's such a lyin' scamp; and I never b'lieved a single word on't!—and I wouldn't advise you to nuther!"

Gosh gave two or three internal rips of laughter, and immediately collapsed. Prisoner as he was, he never let slip a chance for fun. All the rest followed after, till nothing was to be heard in the hall but round after round of hearty roaring. For a downright drizzly day, it was as merry an one as old Huckabuck had seen in a long time.

"That'll do, Mr. Tossitt," said the grand juror, bowing him back into the crowd again. "I've nothing more to say on the case," turning to the Court. "I think the charges in the complaint have been all made out."

As the Court saw that the prisoner had no counsel at his side, it proceeded to ask if he wished to say anything on his behalf.

"Y-y-y-yes, sir," answered Gosh, making his under jaw fly up and down like the treadle of a scissor-grinder's wheel; "I've g-g-got to say't I n-never hooked his hens! an-n-n-holics-if-he-s-says-so!"

"You must be respectful in Court, Morgan!" cried out his Honor. "Anything more?"

The prisoner shook his head and looked down on the floor.

"Then," added the Court, putting on a great deal of staidness, "I shall proceed to pronounce judgment against you; which is, that, in consideration of your ignorance of the law,—the darkey smiled, for he felt confident that he knew as much of legal science as the Deacon did,—in consideration of that fact, Morgan, I shall not punish you as severely as I have the power to do. We find you guilty,"—looking round to his associates for a confirmation of his opinion, which they bestowed with a bow,—and adjudge against you a fine of seven dollars, with the costs."

The negro shook his head despondingly.

"Gosh!" said he, in a loud whisper; "I never c'n pay that!"

In lieu, therefore, of the money, he was duly remanded to Brimfield Jail, where he might have leisure to "work it out," and turn philosopher, as he found the inclination.

The assembly heard the judgment, and began to disperse with a hum of conversation. "Good for the nigger!" cried out old Malachi, on the extreme verge of the crowd. "Nigger! nigger!" answered the parrot, in his shrillest voice. At which the guilty fellow for the first time looked up at the bird, elevating his eyebrows considerably. "Go 'way, nigger! go 'way, nigger! Whew! who—w!" said the parrot.

And Court, prisoner, constable, and all, gave in now to the merriment that could no longer be suppressed. In the confusion that followed, the constable clapped on the iron manacles to the wrists of his charge, stuffed his warrant in his pocket, and started off for the jail.

Not for some minutes after his wagon had got out of sight; did the idling collection of people recover their senses sufficiently to remember that they had gone without their dinner. Upon which thought, might be soon heard a brisk tramp of boots all over the street, and a loud slam of doors from one end of the village to the other.

X.

TOWN ORATORS.

Robert McBride brought home his room-mate with him, one winter vacation, to show him the sights at Huckabuck. The visitor was from one of our Southern cities, whose eyes would be likely to be extensively regaled with the many novel things they saw.

"To-night," said he to his friend, after getting up from the dinner-table, "our Lyceum holds its weekly meeting. You will want to go, of course."

Mrs. McBride thought the young gentleman ought by no sort of means to fail to attend the meeting, as it would let him into the primitive ways of thought indulged in by the people, more than any other gathering she could then think of. "At any rate," added Bob, "there's where you must go, if you want to see the Lions; the Lionesses you'll be more likely to find at the evening meetings; or perhaps at the minister's donation-party." His mother assented; and his two sisters joined in with a merry giggle.

With a prospect like that before them, the afternoon melted down very rapidly. It was time for supper before they began to think of it. And after

wards, the bundling up in coats, and cloaks, and shawls,—the running up stairs and down,—the gabble about what they were expecting to hear and see,—and the laughter over their own audacious appearance,—served to keep them merry from the time they went out the door till they reached the little red schoolhouse. The two girls poked their way along in the twilight of a single candle, to an endurable seat on the left-hand-side of the room, and the two college friends found a hard perch on an oak bench opposite. The meeting had not yet come to order, for the members were not all there.

One by one they came in, however, clump-a-to-clump in their great heavy boots, like a party of dragons just dismounted. Now and then, one brought a poor little tallow candle, that looked as if it had been drowned at its baptism, and stuck straight up in an iron candlestick, which he prepared to light at the flaming dip on the sentry-box at the farther end of the room. Or occasionally a good flat turnip, bored in its middle to the proper dimensions, was set upon a desk by way of an ornamental candleholder, which might be esteemed perfectly safe so long as there were no sheep around. The wicks, when they got too long, the bold salamander fellows pinched off with a thumb and finger.

There being a "kerum" at last, as Mr. Porringger called it, that intellectual individual took his seat in the sentry-box, by virtue of having some time before been chosen President of the association; and, after giving as many preliminary Hems! as was customary, proceeded to rap a few times on the desk with his big bony knuckles, and to call on the assembly to order. The ladies, of whom there was quite a little jam present, straightened themselves up on the comfortable seats, and the men left off talking and whispering, and gave their attention. There was a knot of boys near the door, who evidently were laying matters out for a jolly good time. They nudged each other now with their elbows, and began to listen to what Mr. John Porringger might be about to communicate.

"The meeting will please to come to order!" called the schoolmaster a second time, very moderately. "You will listen to the reading of the minutes of the last meeting, by the Secretary." At which that functionary arose on Mr. Porringger's left hand, and rattled off the sayings and doings of the docty debaters the week before, evidently to the intense satisfaction of all concerned.

A bit of a pause ensued, just long enough to give the spectators a chance to exchange friendly sentiments again, when Mr. Porringger rose very presidentially in his seat in the sentry-box, pushed back the candle that was sending up the smoke of a small chimney in his face, let down the ends of one set of fingers into the deep soundings of his vest-pocket, and remarked,— "H-h-hem! hem! hem! Ladies and Gentlemen!" just as fast as he could give the syllables expression. Next, said he,— "I am very glad to see so many out this evening, for it helps give character to the exercises. It shows, too, that folks are beginnin' to think more about the improvement of their minds,—bringing himself down on his boot-heels for a proper emphasis,—which they didn't use to do so much as they do now. It's far better to be here, than to be idlin' away the evenin' at the stores and the tavern; for here the intellect finds means of improvement. I therefore say agin, I'm pleased to see so many of you out to-night; and hope to see as many every night through the winter."

"The question for debate this evening, Ladies 'n Gentlemen, is— Whether Divorces ought ever to be granted by Courts of Law? For the affirmative, there is John Leathers and George T. Biddad; 'n for the negative, Amm Popkins and Josiah G. Chinkapin." A pause. "Are you ready, gentlemen?" Another pause. "H-h-hem! Mr. Leathers, will you please to speak to the affirmative?" No answer. The President leaned over the light, to shade it from his eyes, and peered all round the room; and at once the audience set to, and tried to assist him in his hunt. But no John Leathers was there.

"Is'n't in, he?" said one, and another. "Is'n't in, he?" repeated the president. "Then we must call on his colleague to advance the first arguments in favor; Mr. George T. Biddad! Is he in the room?" Yes, he was; and he let Mr. Porringger know it by jumping straight out into the middle of the floor; with a folded sheet of foolscap in one hand, and a long wooden pencil in the other. His "arguments" were probably fixed where they could not get away from him.

Said he, raking back his red hair with the unemployed pencil,— "Mr. President!"

"Please to offer, sir!" answered that prompt official, crowding his shoulders back against the wall.

"I aint very much prepared on this question to-night,"—glancing very modestly at his voluminous notes,— "but I'll say what I've got to say in as few words as I can." So far, very well; except his humorous fiction about being prepared. "Mr. President, I think that divorces ought to be granted by the Courts,"—with a timid glance at the ladies over against him,— "as much as anything else is granted by 'em. For why not? Yes, sir; that is the question, after all; why not? When the other side'll show me why such privileges had'n't ought to be granted, then I'll undertake to tell the other side something they don't know about! Mr. President, this is a good deal of a question; more'n some folks think for. I don't b'lieve people stop to think how big a question it is. It affects all our interests, sir; and a good many more, too. It enters into all the undertakings of human and civilized life. There aint a man, woman, or child livin', but it bears some sort of relation to him. I think a divorce ought to be allowed when it's necessary. And when it's necessary, the Courts can tell better'n anybody else, because they know all about these things. And when it aint necessary,—when it's got up just because the parties want to get rid o' one another,— why, the Courts can tell that, too. Anybody that b'lieves in the majesty of Courts,—as I believe, sir,— will say that there's where these matters are to be decided. If the law can tie the two folks together, for my part I don't see what's to hinder the law from doin' their 'em agin! What's in the way? What's the objection?" Yes, Mr. President; I ask the other side, what's the objection?—said I pause for a reply!"

TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.

EMERTY.—It was Cobbett who said,—and he told the truth, too,—that woman is never so amiable as when she is useful; as for beauty, though men may fall in love with girls at play, there is nothing to make them stand to their love like seeing them at work—engaged in the useful offices of home and family.

He who finds pleasure in vice, and pain in virtue, is a novice in both.

Poetry.

Written for the Banner of Light.
AUTUMN.

Froud Autumn, with his golden crest embrowned,
Has stepped with gentle footfall from the plain,
And left the world with all his influence crowned,
While every whispering leaf his hues retain.

How like a royal one he came, and trod
With thundering step on Summer's dying day;
Outstretching far o'er earth his magic rod
Till nature laid her emerald robes away!

Froud, not in wisdom, but in outward show;
He sought the violet by the brooklet's side
To win; but o'er them came a deeper glow—
As died the gentler Summer, so they died.

He wandered 'neath the old elm forest trees,
But every leaf his influence felt profound,
And fell upon the bosom of the breeze,
Which sadly sang, and laid them on the ground.

His breath exhaled around earth's pristine bloom,
A sterner power than won it to the perfume,
He slowly breathed in all its rich perfume,
And passed it by, and left it to decay.

At o'er the heavens dropped their dewy tears,
And cold, uncertain rains deluged the earth;
The magic work of Summer's transient years
Fell low in dust where'er he wandered forth.

The ground was clad, when first he came in power,
In fruitfulness; he kissed its waving grain,
Its golden corn; and in his earlier hour
From harvest-folds went up the rich refrain.

But ere he went, around the Farmer's home
The cheerful days of a chilling wind,
Through weary days and dreary nights would roam,
And enter through each crevice it could find.

'Twould stand beside the blooming maid within,
And kiss her brow, and pluck her cheeks and hands;
And hurl itself against the flames, where grin
The elfins of the grate in all the brands.

But Autumn, with his golden crest embrowned,
Has stepped with gentle footfall from the plain,
And Winter comes, with arctic coldness crowned,
To clothe in white from valley to the vane.

THE SEVERES CLOCK.

BY MADAME DE CHATELAIN.

"Depend up it, niece," said Aunt Rose, "that punctuality is, after all, one of the qualities most acceptable to a husband, especially when he is a man of business. Beauty will fade, and accomplishments may grow stale, but the homely virtue of punctuality always helps to promote harmony in a household; therefore, my dear, as I feel some misgivings about your having duly cultivated this essential quality, my wedding gift shall be a clock, whose daily ticking will, I hope, remind you of your aunt's words."

Augusta Wilmers admired the beautiful Sevres porcelain case in which the dial was set, though she cared nothing about the works—just as some people admire a beauty, whether she be endowed or not with a spark of intellect—but tossed up her head at her aunt's advice.

"Really, aunt," said she, "you seem to think Clarence's love is to be measured by minutes and by seconds; now, I expect it is to last forever!" added she, with more coquetry than logic, as she shook her ambrosial curls and stole a triumphant glance at her pretty face in the nearest glass.

"You remind me of the French wit," said Aunt Rose, with a quiet smile, "who, when called upon to define the difference between a clock and a pretty woman, declared that one reminded him of the hours, while the other made him forget them. I dare say Clarence thinks the same just now; but you know, my dear, when it comes to every day sort of life, even love requires to be wound up now and then, like clocks and household affairs, or it may come to a standstill for want of a little care; and then if the pendulum ceases to tick—"

But Augusta had ceased listening to her aunt the moment she hinted at the possibility of "every day life" succeeding to her dream of romance, and was far away in the ideal realms of castle-building; leaving the good lady to expound her comparisons of clocks and hearts in the "desert air."

The clock looked very pretty when placed in the drawing-room of the young couple's new home, and was universally admired. The little porcelain shepherd in his Watteau costume, consisting of an apple-green coat and pink knee-breeches, presenting a dove in his beehooded and furbelowed shepherdess, in a sky-blue dress, as they sat eternally smiling and everlastingly fond, at the base of the clock, in happy oblivion of the hours rolling on above their heads, was thought a most appropriate emblem for a loving pair like Clarence Fletcher and his bride, and everybody admired Aunt Rose's tact in her choice of a wedding gift.

And how did the clock work? Why, the clock had got a little disordered in its voyage from Paris to London, and had contracted the habit of being a trifle too slow. This, like most bad habits, might have been easily eradicated by early attention—only, "like mistress like maid," as the saying is, and, in this instance, it was like mistress like clock. Augusta was slow and inexact, and not caring about punctuality, let the clock follow its own vagaries. The shepherd and shepherdess looked quite as pretty and as loving, whether the hours went right or wrong—so what did it signify?

The first trick it played her was this: Clarence had agreed, one very fine morning, to come and fetch her exactly at two o'clock, to make a round of calls, to return their wedding visits. As he could but seldom spare any time from his business, he particularly requested Augusta to be quite ready at the appointed hour, urging her playfully to begin her preparations at least half an hour before she thought it "high time" to do so.

Augusta meant to be ready, but she was sitting at her croquet that morning. The weather, though bright, was cold, the fire looked cheerful, and the room felt comfortable, and Augusta was half unwilling to stir. Besides, she was busy counting stitches, and could not be counting the hours continually. Still, between whiles, she cast a glance at Aunt Rose's clock, just for an excuse to assure herself that there was still plenty of time, and that she need not yet relinquish her favorite occupation. The stroke of one gave out its tiny silvery warning, but Augusta said to herself, it was really not yet anything like half an hour before the "high time" Clarence alluded to; so she formed another pretty ogival figure to complete the design of one of the points of the collar; and it was not till another stroke, purporting to announce the half hour, that Augusta slowly rose, and proceeded to put up her work, thinking how prudent she was. We say purporting, on the part of the clock, because, being a

quarter of an hour too slow, the real hour was not half-past one, but a quarter to two. The consequence was, that Augusta had only taken out her bonnet, and just fixed upon the combination of dress and mantle she deemed the most tasteful, by the time the hour of two sounded in good earnest from the nearest church in the neighborhood, and Clarence, who was punctually itself, drove up to the door.

Augusta was now sorry she had not begun sooner to get ready, because she saw Clarence looked annoyed when he came up-stairs, and found she had not even begun to put on her things; but, of course, she laid the blame on the clock, and said if he would but take patience for five minutes, she would be quite ready to accompany him. The five minutes extended, however, to thirty, during which, she heard Clarence pacing backwards and forwards in the drawing-room, with all the unmistakable symptoms of impatience.

When she, at length, made her appearance, expecting that her elegant toilet, which really set off her pretty face to great advantage, would call forth Clarence's admiring comments, she was disappointed at his taking no notice of her dress, and complaining of the lost time. Augusta felt rather provoked at this realization of Aunt Rose's prognostics, and said, with a pretty little pouting air, that he need not grudge waiting a few minutes for her.

"But, my dear," replied he, "your few minutes amount to half an hour—which is more than I can afford to waste."

They now stepped into the fly; but as Clarence had only a couple of hours to spare, it happened that the deduction of this half hour prevented their paying a visit to their most fashionable acquaintance, which Augusta purposely deferred to the last, in accordance with the lady's habits, and where she had particularly wished to exhibit her elegant attire. She was, therefore, rather out of sorts at the disappointment; nor was she restored to serenity by Clarence's telling her jocosely that she ought to lay to heart that capital saying of some nameless Irishman, "that when you lose an hour in the morning, you are running after it all day long."

"But it was only a half hour," pleaded Augusta. By this time they had reached Pall Mall, where Clarence alighted, and took a cab, having to return to the city, and left his wife to her own devices. She now bid the coachman drive slowly up Regent street, while she began to consider how she should spend the rest of the afternoon, secretly regretting that the state of complete equipment peculiar to a recent bride, precluded her indulging in that pleasant mode of curtailing time styled by courtesy, "shopping"—though it is often only playing at shopping, by the bye—the great resource for idlers of both sexes, but more especially a god-send to those ladies who do not know what to do to fill up the hours between luncheon and dinner. Presently, however, Augusta remembered that friend in need, Berlin wool, which is in eternal request, and accordingly ordered the coachman to drive to a well-known depot for the elegant superfluities of the work-table. Here she found a friend of hers, a young lady rather inclining to the "fast" school, who instantly pounced upon her, or rather upon her fly, saying she would be a "dear creature" if she would drive her to several shops she wanted to visit, adding that she should be glad of her advice in the selection of the articles she was going to purchase; her taste being proverbial.

Augusta was nothing loth to shop by proxy, and therefore readily consented.

"I suppose the truth is, Carry, that you are going to be married?" said the young wife.

The fast young lady disclaimed any intention of what she called "giving up her liberty" just yet—still she was not the less solicitous to put herself under arms for the wholesale conquest of that sex whose companionship she rejected. She flew about from the jeweler's to the laceman's, then to Cramer's to hire a piano, and show off her playing to one or two loungers in the shop—then to the haberdasher's, next door—then to purchase a fan—then to lay in a stock of satin slippers. The fly began to assume the appearance of an ambulating bazaar; still Miss Carry did not seem inclined to cry, "Hold! enough!"

Augusta was amused and delighted, though she soon found that she was only playing a secondary part, and that her advice was less wanted than her fly. At last, however, by the time it was close upon her dinner hour, she recollected that there were such things as hours, and reminded her lively friend that she must go home, or Clarence would be waiting for her. The "fast" young lady laughed at such wife-ish notions, declared that she never minded keeping the good folks' at home waiting for her, and meant to do the same by her husband, supposing she could ever make up her mind to tie herself down to the dull, plodding state of matrimony—and finished by insisting on Gus's conveying her home, that they might have a good chat by the way.

Instead of pretemporarily refusing so indiscreet a request, Augusta consented, partly not to be thought too homely by attaching over-importance to her husband's comfort, and partly because she was always led away by the amusement of the moment, to say nothing of her fancying there must be time enough left. Those who have little employment for their time, always imagine that most valuable article to be made of casquette!

The ladies now drew off to Caroline's home; on reaching which, instead of merely depositing the young lady and her purchases, Augusta went in, nominally, only just to shake hands with Carry's mother and sisters—a process that was, however, prolonged into a regular gossip, from which she was only startled by the plain-spoken language of a clock, more exact than her own, reminding her it was half-past six.

"Oh, dear!" cried Mrs. Fletcher; "I ought to have been at home long ago. I shall not have time to dress for dinner. Indeed, I am afraid Clarence has been waiting for dinner, for he is so very exact!"

"You must teach him to be less fussy," said Caroline. "I should keep him waiting, on purpose."

"My dear, how can you talk so?" interposed Caroline's mother, just for propriety's sake, being well aware her daughter never attended to any remonstrance on her part.

Meanwhile, Augusta had risen to go; but she still went on talking about their mutual friends, and about parties in view, and stopped to look at a collar one of Caroline's sisters was working in Irish point, and give her opinion on the pattern, all of which lost another quarter of an hour; so that by the time she reached home it was seven o'clock.

No sooner had she entered, than the housemaid

asked if any addition was to be made to the dinner, as master had brought home a gentleman.

"Dear me! is your master home already?" said Augusta.

"Oh, yes, ma'am," said Betsy; "master has been at home this hour, at least; and cook is afraid the dinner will be spoilt."

"Well, cook must do for the best," said Augusta, somewhat flurried: "I must go up and dress as quick as I can."

But before she could reach the landing, Clarence had come half-way down stairs, saying, "My dear Augusta, what has happened? You have made me quite uneasy."

"Happened, Clarence? Nothing."

"But it is seven o'clock. See!" said he, drawing out his repeater, which went exactly with the Exchange.

He looked so grave as he spoke, that Augusta had not the heart to answer him in a tone of levity, as she had intended, but said, in some confusion, that she had met Caroline—that they had been shopping together—and, in short, that it was Caroline's fault (just as she had laid her shortcomings on Aunt Rose's clock in the morning) if she was after her time.

"I always thought Carry was rather slow; but I suppose you have been running after the lost half hour, if the truth was known," said Clarence, in a bantering tone. "However, now you are come, all's right; only you must make your peace as you can with my friend, Charles Denham," added he, handing his wife into the room; "for I warn you that he is a great epicure, and won't relish having his dinner spoilt."

Augusta now murmured an apology to her husband's friend, who politely begged her not to credit all that Clarence was pleased to say for him, assuring her that the pleasure of her acquaintance would compensate even for going without a dinner at all. But she was too much annoyed to make any suitable reply, to his cordial advances, and hastily withdrew to take off her bonnet and put her hair in ringlets, besides changing her dress. Before these arrangements were effected, the crowning finish was put to the already overdone dinner, and by the time the trio sat down to table, Clarence was exhausted with his protracted efforts to keep up a lively dialogue with his friend, and almost faint for want; while Charles Denham had oversteered his appetite, and though not quite such an epicure as his host jocosely assumed, was just in the state that disposes people to be critical.

As for the cook, it would fill a volume to describe the state of exasperation she was in, and we therefore renounce the task. Her ill-temper was reflected in the housemaid's face, which was very much flushed, like one who had been in a pucker for the last hour and a half; while Augusta, conscious of being in an atmosphere of discontent, of which she was the primary cause, had not even the presence of mind to do the honors of her table in a manner to atone for its shortcomings. Altogether, what with the spoilt dinner, and Augusta's embarrassed manner, Charles Denham thought that "pretty Mrs. Fletcher," as he had heard her called, was not so attractive after all, and was certainly a very bad manager, and felt inclined to pity rather than envy his friend.

Though he put a good face on the matter, Clarence was mortified that his home should have been seen under a disadvantage the first time his best friend came to see him after his marriage, and regretted having brought him to share pot-luck—always a rather venturesome test; and when, on Augusta's retiring to the drawing-room, Denham asked him for a cigar—provided Mrs. Fletcher allowed smoking on the premises—he could not refrain from saying he was sorry he had fallen on such a bad dinner.

"Never mind, my dear fellow," said Denham, who took things as they were, like most persons who had traveled a great deal; "I have eaten many a worse—amongst the Bedouins."

The cigars were fetched, and as they were first-rate of their sort, and the wines unexceptionable, Denham solaced himself for the failure of the dinner; and, certainly, if the number of cigars he smoked were to be viewed as the tariff at which he estimated its merits, he must have rated it at a very low ebb, by the tenacity he showed in puffing away all recollection of the bill of fare. Clarence felt his friend had been used too ill to disturb him from his present easy state, by proposing a removal to the drawing-room; and it was only on his rising to ring for more cigars, when the case was exhausted, and on Denham's assuring him he was now satisfied, that he suggested the propriety of taking a cup of tea. To say the truth, he was not sorry that Augusta had had to endure a little waiting in turn.

It was eleven by the time the two friends came up stairs. Mrs. Fletcher had taken her tea long ago, in despair—but the urn was now brought in afresh, and she proceeded to make tea for the second time, with the air of a martyr. Denham, just emerged from your true smoker's land of dreams, was less bright and talkative than before, and took his leave as soon as politeness allowed.

"I'd give ten pounds it hadn't happened the first time Denham came to see us," observed Clarence, as soon as he was gone.

"It" meant the waiting, and the spoilt dinner, which he would not specify more distinctly, not to renew his wife's vexation.

"I think a friend ought not to mind about the dinner, particularly when he came unexpected," observed Augusta, with a splotch of bitterness in her tone.

She could not forgive Denham for having kept her waiting for tea, in revenge for his having waited so long for dinner, especially as she had made several little additions to her dress since dinner, which had passed unadmired even by her husband.

Meantime, Clarence had set the clock by his watch. "There," said he, "we've overtaken the lost half-hour, let's try and not lose it again."

But the day's lesson was lost on Augusta. Like all inexact people, she was scarcely aware of her falling; or, if taxed with it, was sure to lay the fault on some person or thing. Moreover, instead of taking care to keep Aunt Rose's clock properly regulated, she did not even perceive that it had sunk back into its bad habits in a day or two after Clarence had set it right. The next trick it played her—for it was always the poor clock that bore the blame—vexed her more than the luckless dinner inflicted by her own fault on Charles Denham, because it deprived her of an anticipated pleasure.

A large party of friends had invited the Fetters to join them in a picnic. A general gathering was appointed at the railway station, from whence they were to start for their destination, some twenty miles from London. Then the pleasures of the day were to begin by an aquatic excursion that was to

take them to a picturesque ruin. All the creature comforts had been provided to make the party as agreeable, physically speaking, as could well be imagined; and the weather was pleased to add the crowning grace to all by being splendid "for that day only," to speak like the play bills.

When the gay assembly had mustered at the station, Denham, who had been appointed manager-general by common assent, proceeded to ask, "Are we all here?" when a voice replied, "All, except Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher."

"Oh, I am not surprised at that," said he drily: "the contrary would have surprised me much more. I dare say Mrs. Fletcher has not decided which bonnet she shall put on."

"What shall we do?" said one.

"I dare say they'll be forthcoming by the time the bell rings," said another.

"I bet they'll be no such thing," said Denham, laughing. "They'll not come till the train is off."

"I always thought Fletcher was punctuality itself," said a middle-aged gentleman.

"So he was, when a bachelor," replied the inexorable Denham.

Some of the ladies, who had been outshone by Mrs. Fletcher's beauty and elegant dresses, were delighted to hear of these "spots on the sun," and there was a great deal of laughing, and an animated discussion was carried on as to whether they would or would not come, till at length the bell put an end to any further speculation, and they all ran to secure their seats.

And what had hindered the Fetters? Aunt Rose's clock, of course; at least, so said Augusta.

Clarence had made all the arrangements with mathematical precision: He had agreed, on leaving his wife, after breakfast, that he would send a fly for her at a quarter past one, that she should take him up at his office, which would save his time, and enable them to reach the station without any apprehension of missing the train, or not finding up all their friends; and he moreover warned her two or three times over not to fail to be quite ready at the appointed hour. Augusta promised to be a model of punctuality, and fully meant it, or rather, thought she meant it at the regular; but after the usual non-descript trifling she regularly indulged in for an hour or two after breakfast, she ensconced herself comfortably in the corner of the sofa, and taking up the novel she had relinquished in the midst of a thrilling situation on the previous evening to play polkas for Clarence's amusement—a degree of self-abnegation which she looked upon as something heroic—she was soon deeply plunged into the heroine's troubles, and read with unabated interest to the end of the first volume. She then rose languidly to fetch the second volume, casting a glance on the clock, as she threaded her way through flower stands and tables loaded with elegant knick-knacks, to the *etageres* on which lay the volumes. The treacherous little clock, still too slow, like its mistress, did not yet point to noon, which had really just struck; so Augusta thought she might safely take a peep just at one more chapter, to see what Lady Blanche said to her lover, after which she would begin her preparations to show Clarence how exact she could be.

Again she lolled on the sofa in oriental ease and laziness, and after reading the first chapter, thought there was plenty of time to dip into another, till lured from chapter to chapter, and lulled by the fragrance of the flowers into still further reluctance to return from the dream-land of romance to real life, she was only awakened to the flight of time by the maid's coming in to remind her that it was going upon one, and to ask if she would take luncheon before she dressed to set off.

Augusta looked half-frightened as she now started up from the sofa.

"Dear me, who would have thought it was so late!" were the words she muttered, as she flew down stairs, just to take a biscuit before going up stairs to dress. She had scarcely taken a morsel, however, before the fly drove up to the door, being as much before as she was after time. "Of course, Clarence had sent it rather sooner than necessary, in order to 'hurry me,'" thought she to herself, by way of comfort. Still, she went up stairs to begin in right earnest the business of the toilet. We say, business, advisedly, for to her it was, as we know, anything but a light matter; no wonder, therefore, it went half-past one by the time she stepped into the fly. Still, there might have been just time to take up Clarence and reach the station, as the coachman had received special orders from Mrs. Fletcher to drive quickly; but it happened that one of the streets in the city was being paved, which obliged all vehicles to take a somewhat circuitous route, when the crowding of carts and coaches had occasioned one of those stoppages that so sorely try the patience of travelers bound for the railway, or diners out that are involuntarily causing the despair of some modern *Vatel*. Many ladies would have alighted and preferred walking the very short distance to the office, but Augusta always felt so comfortably assured that there must be plenty of time, because she had such a superabundance of that article always upon her hands, that she set out the delay with easy indulgence.

At last she reached Clarence's office, and the coachman went in to apprise Mr. Fletcher that he had at length brought his fare, as desired.

"Well, Augusta," said Clarence, coming to the coach door, "where are you going to drive to next?"

"What a ridiculous question, Clarence! Why, to the station, to be sure, or we shall not get there in time."

"My dear, the time is quite over for getting there," replied Clarence; "did you not hear two strikes as you came along? Of course, I concluded you had given up all thoughts of joining the picnic."

But Augusta had no such idea, and looked the picture of disappointment. "I'll never trust again to Aunt Rose's clock!" she began, when Clarence interrupted her rather impatiently with, "Hang Aunt Rose's clock! If you had begun to dress before the time, this would not have happened; and now we shall appear rude to all our friends; to say nothing," added he, more jocosely, "of depriving them of the party which we were to contribute."

"Oh!" cried Augusta, "I forgot to bring the party, I came off in such a hurry. But it was all ready."

"A deal of good that will do them," said Clarence, with quiet rally.

"Now, come Clarence, do get in," said Augusta; we can overtake them by the next train."

By way of answer, Clarence drew forth "Bradshaw's Guide."

"Never mind that tiresome book," added his wife, "let's drive on."

"Driving on will not induce the railway company to start a special train for us," replied Clarence.

There is no visible machinery by which they were turned out. The method of their production is mysterious. Hence values cannot be set upon them.

It takes a cultivated person to appreciate intellectual things, we know very well; but it is a sorry case for us as a people to find ourselves in, if those are the only and single matters in which our usually acute estimate is at fault.

How many a poor fellow of rare gifts and accomplishments has gone to his grave, because the world made no room for him while he lived; because he did not deal in hides and salt, but dealt in rhymes instead.

THE NOVEL MANIA.

Whatever has the present panic may have done, it has at least been productive of one good result; and that is, the squelching out of the troublesome brood of trashy novels that seemed at one time to have got possession of the land.

But we are glad to feel assured that these things have changed; let us hope, permanently. The New York correspondent of the Post, however, thinks the present lull may be only a deception, and goes on in his pleasant and sarcastic way thus:-

"There is a slight stir among publishers. They are beginning to venture into the market books which have been ready for months. With the exception of school-books, gift-books and 'juveniles,' we shall have few, however, until spring.

"Of dropping buckets into empty wells, and growling old in drawing nothing up."

GOD EVERYWHERE.

God rules in the market, as he does on the mountain; He has provided eternal laws for society, as He has for the stars or the seas; and it is just as impossible to escape Him or his ways in Wall street or State street, as it is anywhere else.

The world—we mean the busy, bustling, money-making, scheming, planting, housebuilding world—must yet come to recognize this as a fact, and all will be well. God with us—God in us—God around us—these sweet truths it is for all people yet to learn. They sometimes hear it said, it is true; but too frequently those who utter the syllables, forget that it is so almost as soon as they who have listened and tried to understand them.

PUFFING.

People generally understand, by this time, that puffing has become an art, a regular science. Some men—we read an advertisement of this kind only the other day, in a Boston daily—offer their services in this line, holding the business in the light of a profession. He advertised to write poems for other people, addresses, lectures, sermons, notices of books and quack medicines, love letters, epistles for duellists, and almost everything else that a sane man could think of. It was laughable to read over his prospectus.

But it is in the medicine line that this business, unheard of only a few years ago, reaches its highest point of culmination. There you can see it in all its glory and splendor. There the writer expatiates without stint or limit on the anatomical structure of the human family, their delicate physical organizations, the one great want that this particular age feels, the happy concurrence of circumstances which have brought the celebrated Dr. So-and-so to the door, and everything else after the same style and character. These nostrum puffings go all lengths, Nothing but the limited capacity of the English lan-

guage holds them in check, and even then they get the bit in their teeth, and hold it there while they run. We append a story that is quite to the point:-

A manufacturer and vender of quack medicines, recently wrote to a friend living out West, for a good strong recommendation of his, the manufacturer's, "Balsam." In a few days he received the following: "Dear sir:-The laud composing my farm has hitherto been so poor, that a Scotchman could not get a living off it, and so stony that we had to slice our potatoes and plant them edgewise, and bearing of your balsam, I put some on the corner of a ten acre lot, surrounded by a rail fence, and in the morning I found that the rock had entirely disappeared, a neat stone wall encircled the field, and the rails were split into even wood, and piled up symmetrically in my back yard.

I put half an ounce into the middle of a huckle-berry swamp—in two days it was cleared off, planted with corn and pumpkins, and a row of peach trees in full blossom through the middle.

As an evidence of its tremendous strength, I would say that it drew a striking likeness of my eldest son out of a mill pond, drew a blister all over his stomach, drew a load of potatoes four miles to market, and eventually drew a prize of ninety-seven dollars in a lottery."

POEM IMPROVISED BY MR. WHITING.

The following stanzas are part of a poem of about one hundred lines, which was improvised by Mr. Whiting, Trance Medium, at the Melodeon on Sunday, Dec 6th.

They were furnished to us by a gentleman who was appointed on the committee to select the subject for the poem, and who suggested that on which the spirit in control spoke. They were written from memory, by the gentleman, who was an utter skeptic, and as he is somewhat noted for his retentive memory, we have no doubt it is a correct copy of the improvisation.

FEAST OF BELSHAZZAR.

The pompous King at his table sat, With nobles and courtiers around; He quaffed the rich wine, and with implous hand He swore his kingdom forever should stand. The song went round, the unseemly jest, The scoffing words, and blasphemous breath; The haughty King, with his brazen arms, Ruled o'er the fair city of palms. But lo! upon yon distant wall Appeared the spirit hand—The trembling King with gully fear Looked o'er the affrighted band. But see! the hand in words of light Glanced glittering o'er their eyes—Dread silence, horror, awful fright As moving on it lies.

MARK, MARK, was written on the wall, And THEEL UPHARIN appeared to them all! They sent for the Prophet, the King looked round— "Thou'rt weighed in the balance, and wanting art found!"

MISS C. M. BEEBE AT BOSTON.

This gifted medium is announced to lecture at the Melodeon next Sabbath. She is a Boston lady, and though not a trance medium, for whose services the public seem to have a penchant at this time, she is very enthusiastically spoken of by men of talent in all parts of the country.

Miss Beebe writes her lectures, or they are written through her, she being a writing medium. The power controlling her, acquires mechanical use of her arms, and many of her lectures have been written while she was busily engaged in reading, thus showing that her mind does not dictate the productions.

We call attention to a "Letter from New York," published on our sixth page, written by one of the first scholars in our country, which speaks in high terms of Miss Beebe's productions. In addition to this, we have letters from the West, and in every one she is said to have created the most intense pleasure by the character of her lectures.

The friends will surely find that their attentions to Miss Beebe will be amply rewarded, and we trust they will give her a full house and a candid hearing. Hours of service 2-2 and 7 o'clock, P. M.

LECTURE BY MRS. W. K. LEWIS.

A lecture, particularly adapted to skeptics, on the subject of Spiritualism, is announced to be delivered by Mrs. W. K. Lewis, of Roxbury, on Wednesday evening, at the Melodeon Hall.

Mrs. Lewis is possessed of rare conversational powers, is witty, satirical, and at the same time kind, and we should judge she would be able to prepare a very acceptable and interesting lecture. The proceeds of the lecture are to be added to the treasury of the Harmonical Band of Ladies, who are doing much good in distributing charity to the needy.

We hope to see a full hall, as the object is so entirely a charitable one, and we think those present will be edified, amused and enlightened.

The Misses Hall will enliven the exercises by singing.

MRS. HATCH.

We regret the necessity of informing our readers that Mrs. Hatch, whose indisposition on last Sabbath prevented her fulfilling her engagement to lecture at Music Hall, still remains at Salem quite unwell, and as the Doctor has sent for her wardrobe, it may be concluded that she will not be in condition to favor us with her proposed lecture for some days.

No person who has heard Mrs. Hatch, but will heartily sympathize with her in her sufferings, and earnestly pray that she may be restored to her sphere of usefulness which she is eminently adapted to fill.

J. T. G. PIKE, ECLECTIC PHYSICIAN.

May be found at the National House, Boston. Persons who wish to avail themselves of the services of a regular physician, who has had all the advantages of the schools, and who is at the same time possessed of the advantages of Clairvoyance and Mesmerism, to enable him to more fully understand the diseases of his patients, will do well to make the acquaintance of Dr. Pike.

It is believed that many useful hints may be gathered from disembodied physicians, which, in the hands of those who are competent to treat disease, are of great value.

As Dr. Pike has the means of consulting with those spirit physicians who act as the guardians of Mrs. CONANT, we think he has unequalled advantages as a physician to present to Spiritualists in the New England States.

Loring Moody will lecture in Washington Hall, Charlestown, next Sunday, Dec. 20, at 8 and 7 o'clock P. M.

Mr. Charles H. Crowell will speak, in trance state, at Wells Hall, Lowell, on Sunday, Dec. 20th.

The readers of the Banner of Light, who wish for insurance on LIFE, or against loss by FIRE, are invited to apply to M. Mun Dean, No. 76 State street, Boston, Mass., who effects insurance in the best Stock and Mutual Companies, at equitable rates.

The Busy World.

RESUMPTION OF SPECIE PAYMENTS.—At a meeting of the officers of thirty-eight of the banks in New York on Friday evening, it was resolved unanimously to resume specie payments on and after Saturday last. Eight banks were not represented at the meeting, but it is supposed they will concur in the movement. Saturday was exactly sixty days from the date of the suspension. It is stated that the banks were never so strong before, there being twenty-six millions of specie in their vaults.

The Presidents of the Boston Banks also met at the Clearing House on Monday, and resolved on the part of the institutions they represented to resume specie payments immediately. Hence the resumption in the two cities, as well as throughout New England and New York is complete.

From Mexico.—The steamship Tennessee has arrived at New Orleans from Vera Cruz, 7th instant, bringing advices from the City of Mexico, to the 4th instant. The position of the Government was decidedly better than at the date of the last advices, the reactionary forces having been vanquished by the Government troops at Puebla and other points. Comonfort and the Supreme Court were formally installed on the 1st of December. The port of Navidad has been declared open to commerce. The Government had issued a proclamation regulating the transportation across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec by the Louisiana Company. The latest advices from Yucatan state that Campeachy was still besieged, and that the inhabitants were suffering severely for want of provisions.

LATER.—On the 16th ult. an attempt was made at Tampico to assassinate Gen. Moreno, and several other officers and civil authorities, who were assembled at a banquet. Don Vallemar, the leader of the assassins, was killed.

SAD AFFAIR.—Mr. Jarvis Blade, of the firm of Lawrence Stone & Co., has been quite ill for some weeks in consequence of the financial troubles of the firm. He went to Bath, where it was thought his health might be improved by an entire removal of business cares, among family friends. On Thursday, however, his reason left him, and he attempted to destroy his life, by cutting his throat, but was discovered, and although he had lost much blood, it is supposed that he may regain his health.

IMPORTANT FINANCIAL PROSPECT.—Private information from Washington states that the administration is maturing its plans for the issue of the loan proposed by Secretary Cobb. Something in the nature of a conference on this subject is talked of, and in well-informed circles there are intimations of more than the project of a mere loan. Mr. Cicco, the United States Treasurer in New York, is now in Washington, in consultation with the President and Secretary of the Treasury. What the result will be, or in what shape the government plans will come before the public, is matter only of conjecture. A Bank of the United States, like the former, it undoubtedly will not be. But it is said that there is in contemplation something like General Jackson's plan of a bank.

SALE OF EX-PRESIDENT PIERCE'S CARRIAGE.—The carriage presented to ex-President Pierce by the citizens of Boston, was sold at auction on Saturday by Mr. Edward Riddle. It was purchased by Messrs. Brown & Severance, stable-keepers, Charles street, for \$410. The proceeds are to be devoted to the support of the poor of Concord, N. H. The harnesses for this carriage are now for sale at No. 71 Cornhill.

The Galveston News says that the cause of Gen. Walker in Nicaragua will be aided by seven hundred men already enlisted, and that they are about to start for Central America.

The ordinance which Walker expected to find at Punta Arenas on his arrival there, had been disposed of. He will receive an additional force of men, which will leave Mobile this week, under Gen. Henningsen.

Among the marriages recently announced was that of the Rev. John Pierpont, of Medford, Mass., to Mrs. Fowler, daughter of the late Archibald Campbell, of Campbellville, New York. Mr. Pierpont, who is widely known as a poet and advocate of total abstinence, was born in April, 1785. He is therefore entering into conjugal relations, for the second time, at the age of 72 years.

The object of Sir William Gore Ouseley's mission to this country will not be specially communicated to the State Department until the opinions of the British government relative to that part of the President's message concerning Central America have been ascertained.

THE OLD CRADLE OF LIBERTY.—Faneuil Hall contains standing room for 6320 persons. Including the space afforded by window recesses and the porch of the hall, the room when pushed to its utmost may hold an audience of 5700.

The British brig Margaret, at New York, from Grand Turk Nov. 26, reports three American brig just arrived, but names not recollecte. Captain Windsor also reports a great scarcity of provisions at Grand Key, and a portion of the inhabitants in a state of starvation.

The General Government is much pressed for money. So urgent, indeed, is the necessity for an immediate supply that the Secretary of the Treasury urges congressional action immediately, authorizing the issue of treasury notes.

The U. S. steam frigate Powhatan, Capt. George E. Pearson, having repaired the slight damage to her machinery, sailed from below Norfolk on Thursday afternoon, for the East Indies. Ex-President Pierce and wife have gone out in her to Madeira.

SENSELESS.—Lewis Josselyn, editor of the Lynn Bay State, was nominated for Mayor of Lynn at a Citizens' meeting in Lyceum Hall on Thursday evening week.

CONNECTICUT BANK BILLS.—The bills of the Bridgeport City Bank, Bridgeport, and the Exchange and Mercantile Banks, at Hartford, Conn., are now received at the Suffolk Bank.

Accounts from Alabama report tremendous rains and freshets for several days. The loss is said to be immense.

Statement of Rhode Island banks, out of Providence, December 7: Circulation \$1,607,368; deposits \$709,413; loans \$7,763,895; specie \$140,213.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E. P. O'NEVVA, Wm.—You can increase your club by sending names from other places, as you desire. "Aron" will appear in next week's Banner, also a communication from E. G. "A Wife to Her Husband"—No. 9—will be printed in our next issue.

Late European Items.

The steamship Europa, from Liverpool on Saturday, 26th ult., arrived at New York on the 14th inst. ENGLAND.—The demand for money was diminishing, and the issues of the Bank of England were almost within limits again. Gold was flowing in steadily. The Bank of France had reduced its rates 1 per cent.

The Ministers will propose the total abolition of the East India Company's government as soon as Parliament meets, the Indian empire to be brought under the British Crown and Parliament.

Lord Clarendon announced to the French legation that the French negro immigration scheme from Africa would probably be abandoned.

Turkey has officially intimated the probable necessity of moving troops on the Danube, on account of trouble in the Principalities. Troops are said to be already concentrating at Widdin.

300,000 in gold from Australia had reached Suez, but the news was not telegraphed.

FRANCE.—On the 26th ult., the Bank of France reduced its rate of discount one per cent., by making it 7 a 9 per cent., in place of 8 a 10.

It is stated that owing to the situation of affairs in Mexico, the French Charge d'Affairs had requested the French Admiral on that station to send some ships of war to the Gulf of Mexico for the protection of French subjects.

Some more Italians are understood to have been recently arrested in Paris, on a charge of conspiracy against the Emperor.

SPAIN.—It was reported that the government had sent orders to Gen. Concha, Captain General of Cuba, to organize a body of Infantry, with the necessary Artillery, in order to be ready at a short notice to commence hostilities against Mexico, in the event of the present negotiations failing.

INDIA.—The overland mail had arrived at Trieste, with dates from Calcutta to October 23, and Bombay Nov. 3.

Fifteen troop ships from England had arrived at various Indian ports with about six thousand troops on board.

Lucknow was safe. The divisions under Gens. Outram and Havelock were both in the Presidency. The enemy were said to be in great force in the vicinity, and very strong in artillery.

A convoy of provisions had arrived safely at Lucknow shortly after its relief, and reinforcements of two thousand men, it was supposed, would reach them from Cawnpore about 24th October. A column of three thousand men, under Gen. Greenhead, was also on its way to Lucknow, and was expected to arrive about the 30th of October, when the British forces there would number seven thousand men.

Greenhead's column defeated a large body of Delhi fugitives with heavy loss to the latter, at Bohanshur, on the 4th of October. On the same day they also stormed and destroyed the fort of Maloghur, which the enemy had seized, and on the 5th inst. they had another successful engagement with the fugitives at Allygur, in which four hundred of the enemy were cut up. The column then proceeded to Agra, and reached that place on the 14th of October, when it was suddenly attacked by a large body of mutineers who were repulsed with immense slaughter, the loss of all the guns, forty-three in number, five lacs of treasure, and a large amount of spoils. The number of the mutineers killed is stated to be one thousand, while the British loss was small.

Col. Wilson had attacked and defeated the rebels at Bithoor, driving them out of a strong position.

The king of Delhi was to be tried by a military commission. Two more of his sons had been taken and shot.

Reports were rife of threatening disturbances at Hyderabad. Nena Sahib was said to be near Bithoor again.

Maun Singo, heretofore a friend of the British, had turned against them since the storming of Delhi was announced.

The fall of Delhi had a marked effect in Meerut and contiguous districts. Arrears of revenue were being brought in rapidly, and loyalty was the order of the day in the northwestern provinces.

Part of a Bombay regiment had mutinied at Deesa.

The Europeans at Saugor, above a thousand in number, were still in the fort, and calling urgently for relief. Fears were entertained for their safety.

Part of the 33d Bengal Infantry had mutinied at Deoghur, and two regiments of the Kota contingent had also mutinied and murdered the political agent.

The Pacific Coast.

TWO WEEKS LATER FROM CALIFORNIA.—The Empire City has arrived at New Orleans with the mails and over two millions in gold. She departed at Havana with the steamship Star of the West, from Aspinwall.

Gen. Walker, who, it will be remembered, took his departure from Mobile Bay on the 13th ult., in the steamship Fashion, landed at Punta Arenas, in Nicaragua, on the 25th, with one hundred and fifty men. Not the slightest attempt was made to prevent the landing, and in fact the purpose of the expedition appeared to have been not even guessed. The United States sloop-of-war Saratoga was lying in the harbor, and the Fashion passed under her stern at full speed with only ten men on deck. The whole party were landed on Scott's wharf. Walker had, it seems, sent fifty men up the river by other entrances before making his appearance at Punta Arenas. After landing the expedition, the Fashion took her departure for Aspinwall, where, at the departure of the Star of the West, she was taking in coal. Commodore Paulding, of the United States frigate Wabush, attempted to seize her at Aspinwall, but on examination of her papers found them correct, and consequently could take no further steps against her.

The British and American naval forces had sailed from Aspinwall for San Juan, and would very probably take part in the scenes in that vicinity, or at least prevent the landing of any more filibusters.

It was supposed that the difficulties between Costa Rica and Nicaragua, alluded to in previous accounts, would be settled without a resort to hostile measures.

The news by this arrival from California embraces no points of special interest. The public were much excited with regard to the sea-worthiness of the Pacific Mail Steamers. The following vessels had arrived at San Francisco from the Atlantic ports since the departure of the steamer of the 6th of November, viz.:—Sierra Nevada, Aurora, Old Colony, Goddess, Herald of the Morning, and Sancho Panza.

Flashes of Fun.

A DUTCHMAN'S REASONS FOR MARRYING.—A stout Hollander applied at the probate clerk's office in Cincinnati, on Saturday, for a "check" to get married with. A person who happened to be present asked his reason for wishing to take a wife in such hard times, when he replied: "I plenty time now—nothing to do. Soon I have work, work—can't tend to mine wife. Plenty time now—so I gets married." And paying his dollar, drawn from a well-tied shot-bag, he departed with his license to occupy his leisure hours in getting married and attending to his wife.

The lady who caught a cold, has decided to retain it for "home consumption."

DEFINITION OF MAN—By a Woman.—A thing to waltz with, a thing to flirt with, to take one to places of amusement, to laugh at, to be married to, to pay one's bills, and to keep one comfortable.

An ill-humored wife, abusing her husband for his mercenary disposition, told him if she was dead he would marry the d—l's eldest daughter, if he could get anything by it.

"That is true," replied the husband, "but the worst of it is, I cannot marry two sisters!"

The husband of a beautiful wife, upon returning home one day, was met by one of his offspring, all smiles, clapping his hands, and saying, "Pa, Mr. B—has been here—he's such a nice man—he kissed us all around, and mother to!"

Some—a tall ladder leaning against a house—a nigger at the top, and a hog scratching his hide against it at the bottom, "G-way—g-way dar! You'm makin' mischief."

A teacher was lecturing a class of little girls on the influence of pious instruction in the formation of youthful character.

"Ah, Miss Caroline," said he to one of the class, "what do you think you would have been without your good father and pious mother?"

"I suppose, sir," answered Caroline, "I should have been an orphan."

"'Tis strange," muttered a young man, as he staggered home from a supper party, "how evil communications corrupt good manners. I've been surrounded by tumbler all the evening, and now I'm a tumbler myself."

It is said that a worthy minister in Indiana, who had become somewhat mixed up in land speculations, recently announced to his congregation, at the opening of divine service, that his text would be found in "St. Paul's epistle to the Corinthians, section four, rayge three west!"

A LADY'S READY WIT.—A "foine" young gentleman, in turning swiftly on his heel in Broadway, ran his head against a young lady. He instantly put himself into a position to apologise.

"Not a word," said the quick-witted maiden, "It isn't hard enough to hurt anybody."

The cozzomb frowned and slooped.

"Is it not very curious," said an old gentleman, a few days since, to his friend, "that a watch should be perfectly dry, when it has a running spring inside?"

YOUNG AMERICA ON ITS DIGNITY.—Stranger to a little boy—

"Well, my little friend, ain't you lost?" Little boy, stepping back and eyeing stranger,—

"Look here, mister, don't be so familiar, if you please—I am not unprotected, laying his hand on a revolver; "just remember, I am a gentleman."

Dramatic.

BOSTON THEATRE.—Mr. and Mrs. Thorne have been playing during the past week to thin houses. They were cordially received, however. On Monday night a respectable audience was present to witness the "dramatic story" founded on Mrs. Stowe's great work, entitled "Leaves from Uncle Tom's Cabin." This version is different from any ever presented in this city. It is by Frank Fowler, Esq., member of the British Literary Institute, and has been performed in London with great success. Miss A. M. Quinn, the juvenile prodigy, made her first appearance here as Eva. Mr. C. R. Thorne personated Uncle Tom, and Topsy found a representative in Mrs. C. R. Thorne.

NATIONAL THEATRE.—Mr. English is decidedly a lucky manager—or a shrewd manager—for he has well-filled houses nightly. Mr. James Pilgrim's benefit on Friday evening must have been highly gratifying to his acquisitiveness, to say the least. The play was the Rag-Picker of Paris, in which Mr. Wyzeman Marshall volunteered to appear, and played Jean better than ever. A revival of "Mazepa" will be the prominent attraction this week.

BOSTON MUSEUM.—The Great Spectacle, entitled the "Nymphs of the Rhine," continues to be the attraction at this popular establishment.

OLDWAY HALL.—The old company having withdrawn, Mr. Oldway has secured an entirely new corps of artists, viz.:—the Powers brothers, Andrew Wyatt, Peter Lee, and Washington Norton. Several new songs, composed by Mr. O., will be produced soon.

Editor's Table.

A Discourse on the Immutability of Decrees of God, and the Free Agency of Man. By Mrs. Cona L. V. Hatch, of New York.

This is the title of a neat pamphlet, containing a photographic report of a discourse pronounced by Mrs. Hatch in Newburyport, Mass., on Sunday, the 22d of November last. It is needless for us to state that this complicated and never ending question of Free Agency has been most thoroughly, and at the same time most beautifully treated. In the trance state, and subject to the influence of superior spirits, Mrs. Hatch is a woman who, in the most wonderful manner—judged by the ordinary methods—enunciates profound truths, illustrating them in the most happy and striking style, eliciting the sympathies of her entire audience, and in fact carrying them all along with her to the end of her discourses. She is one of the most efficient spiritual teachers and preachers we have ever listened to. Her manner, too, is not less spiritual than her matter. She speaks as if her pure lips were indeed touched with a coal from off the altar. Few who have heard her, but will be glad to read her discourses over again on the printed page. Her friends will all of them go over this pamphlet with peculiar satisfaction.

Poetry.

LET US TRY TO BE HAPPY.

Let us try to be happy! We may if we will, Find some pleasures in life to entertain the ill; There was never an evil, if well understood, But what, rightly managed, would turn to a good. If we were but as ready to look to the light, As we are to sit moping because it is night, We should own it a truth, both in word and in deed, That who tries to be happy is sure to succeed.

Correspondence.

PROGRESS OF AN UNDEVELOPED SPIRIT.

BALTIMORE, Dec. 10, 1857.

It was my privilege while on a visit to Virginia, last winter, to introduce the subject of Spiritualism, in a part of the State where it had been scarcely heard of, and no manifestation had yet been seen.

Circles were formed in different families, tables were moved, and on one occasion the alphabet being called for, the name of an individual was given, well known in the county; one who had possessed in abundance all the good things of life, but died in the horrors of delirium tremens.

Soon after my return to Baltimore, at the first circle I attended at Mr. Meacham's, he came and gave a characteristic communication through the dial, which, on account of what has since occurred, I regret not having written down. It went to show that his condition was not happy. I keep a record of my experience in Spiritual matters, some of which is very interesting. Perhaps you may hereafter find it worthy a place in your column.

At Mr. Danskin's, March 1, after some half hour passed in conversation, Mrs. D. remarked that some spirit was whispering to her—"dial, dial, dial." It was accordingly placed on the table, when the following was spelled out:—

"You have given me some confidence, Smith; go on. You are my spirit guide—you must not forget me, for I lack confidence. God, direct me what to do. Come, my friend, let your loving heart give some kind words to me. Get a dial and send it down home; then I can converse with them when I gain knowledge from you. You first brought me to earth. I am very unsettled in mind. Bend your heart in supplication for me. Grant this unto me, friend, for friend I will call you. W. E.

(The name was given in full.) Can you give us your experience since you entered the spirit world? "Cannot express my mind—I need comfort from you."

Mrs. Danskin was then entranced, and the guardian of the circle speaking through her, said:—"It would be well for you, friend Smith, to give some kind words to this spirit, so that he may be released from the weight that seems to distress him. I then urged him not to despair, but cherish hope; that God was not the revengful Being he had been taught while on earth, but a loving Father to all His children, and that His mercy and compassion could yet be extended to him.

"But why was I bound?" "For your past sins; it is your sins that have bound you. "In what way?"

You transgressed the Divine Law—the suffering follows as the natural consequence. "Why was I not taught in childhood, that I might escape the snares into which I have fallen in life and in death. I would rather spend ten thousand years in misery on earth than to feel one pang which now I feel. I would gush forth my agonized feelings; but I dare not manifest them through this medium."

No, William, you must be very gentle with this medium, for you see that her health and strength is feeble. "It would not be to injure her, but to express what I feel, and to show the agony I endure."

Here his utterance became so rapid that we could not follow him with the pen, and much was lost—we got only a few disjointed sentences. "Not against God, but against those who raised me. Why did they not draw the boy in with affection? Why did they cast scorn and?"

You have no right to utter a word of complaint against your uncle. He lavished upon you all his affections, and spared no expense to make you what you ought to have been. "Yes, but he did not speak to me in kind words. How, then, could I be anything else?"

No, William, it is your own sins, and not the faults of others that has brought you to your present unhappy condition. "My sins! They are as present to me as if they were burned into my soul with letters as large as a carriage wheel. Every one of my sins is there before me and of my past deeds; and every line I read seems to make my brain as if fire was there, and the heart seems hard, and I wish for death, but it comes not to my relief. You drew me to earth, and if you have one feeling of kindness within your heart, transfigure me from this place, and take me to a place of rest; for there is nothing here but pain, and sorrow, and sadness. The very heart is buried—it is sore, as if a dagger had pierced it. Oh, then, elevate me—give me light—give me peace—give me knowledge, so that I may carry evidence to my friends that I am not a wicked spirit, but that I have some human feeling yet within me."

Have you seen your father and mother? "Think you that my father and mother witness the degradation of their child? Think you that a mother can come to one so defiled? I fear not. Mine is a wasted mind—mine is a broken heart. Mine is a brain burned with liquor. Oh, why did it not burn me to ashes?"

Did you not know that your spirit was indelible? "Too late I found that out. Why was I not taken from the influence which surrounded me? Why

was I not bound hand and foot? It were better to torture the poor body than to let the soul feel what it now does. Friend Smith, I could show through the medium the agony I now feel."

Deal kindly and gently with the medium, or it may prevent further intercourse, and me of doing you good. "I will not harm her."

Have you been with your wife and child? "I am too wicked to draw near to my wife and child; but when from you I gain knowledge, then I shall be enabled to visit them."

Why do you come to me? "Because you are kind in heart toward the poor benighted spirits, but others are not. There is an animosity against the poor darkened ones." (Here a good deal more was lost.)

"Do I speak as if I had more light, than when first I came to you?"

Is your condition any better than when first you entered the spirit world?

"It is some little better than when I first came here—but not much, not much."

You should lift up your heart to God in earnest supplication for his mercy.

"God! Can I find God?"

Surely you can.

"Where?"

In your own heart. It is the influence of His holy spirit there that now causes you to feel your present sorrow, and desire to progress.

"My own heart! that is too sore—the heart is too sore. Oh, I desire so much to manifest through the medium my fullest extent of suffering!"

That would not help you in the least.

"But it would be of use to you."

Not at all. I can well imagine that your condition is awful.

(Again much was lost.)

"But, man, I see the cup, the bitter cup which holds the deadly poison, even now, at this moment, being lifted to many lips, which will drink of the same curses which I drank of."

Will you now endeavor to lift up your heart to God in prayer?

"Am I bright enough, or good enough, or kind enough to offer a prayer?"

God is ever ready to hear the supplications of all His children.

"Do you pray for me?"

I then offered a prayer.

Oh, our Father and our God, by whose wisdom and power we have been created, by whose love and mercy we are sustained, before whose all-seeing eye not even a sparrow falls to the ground unnoticed, look down with compassion upon this Thy sorrowing child, now present, for even though steeped in guilt, is he not still Thy child? Roll from his mind the clouds of error and ignorance, that the light of Thy love may shine upon him, cheering his sad heart, enlightening his darkened understanding; driving away the despair which has so long overwhelmed him, that he may be enabled to look up and cry from a full and overflowing heart, "My Father, oh, my Father, have pity, have pity on me, a sinner."

"Oh, tears, why did you not flow? Why were you driven back? I feel as though, could I but have shed one tear, that my heart would have been opened to the prayer just offered. 'Tis not softened as yet. I must come to you often before I can receive truth and light within the heart. Oh, God, manifest Thyself to me in some way."

That is a good prayer, William; repeat it often, for it befits you well. Do you not feel better, and that you have made some progress?

"Well, yes—am I not gathering some knowledge? I am not so dark as I was. I feel as if something had been drawn from my mind. I feel as if I had taken one step."

Then let that encourage you. Fix your heart on God, and you can only go onward and upward.

"Upward! Can I go upward? Oh, the voices here say, 'Come back, come back—they are demons! they are demons!' Oh, God, manifest Thyself to me. When may I come again?"

Whenever you find me here, and the health of the medium will permit.

"I hear a voice say, 'thou hast stayed thy time.' When I come again, can't you, or some one, sing a hymn? Sing one that will give peace to me; for I feel as if music would relieve the deadened soul. You will advance me—I lean upon you as upon my staff. I feel lighter in heart and firmer in mind. What I mean by this is, I am not so crushed as I was. Lord, manifest Thyself to me—manifest Thyself to me. The voice says I must go, and I must obey."

At Mr. Danskin's, March 8, sitting with the dial, the following came:—

"I am here. W. E."

I am glad to meet with you again, William. I feel a deep sympathy for you.

"Remember your promise. I delight to hear your voice. It seems to cheer my darkened soul. Guide me, oh, guide me to a home more bright than this. Peace rests not in my darkened soul."

Here Mrs. Danskin was entranced.

"Do not harsh to me. Awake, awake from your slumbers and give aid to the poor, sin-burdened being that stands near you. Oh, were you in my condition, would you close an eye? No—it would be done for you. Then, I say, awake, give aid—give aid."

The utterance now became so rapid that for fifteen or twenty minutes we could not secure a word. After a while we got a few sentences.

"My senses are crushed—my whole system is blotted by the vile liquor which I imbibed while on earth; I crushed the bud and the blossom. I stung them to the heart, and now the canker is within the soul, and I must suffer what I made them feel. Elevate me—draw me from the dark condition in which I dwell—give knowledge to the mind—tear the dark veil from my senses—give the thought to me within my hand, so that I can see it and feel that God some day will receive me."

My sins are magnified—they stare me in the face, and cause my heart to weep tears of blood."

April 1.—At another circle that I occasionally visit, being in communion with my spirit-mother, I inquired if she could tell me anything about William. She replied, "He is gradually awakening from his long sleep. You are doing all you can—let that suffice."

April 3.—Mr. Danskin, on entering his parlor, found Mrs. D. entranced, and in tears. Presently she spoke in a low voice:—

"I am crushed with weight of woe—I can find no relief. I am wearied—I can find no friend on whom to look, or with whom to speak. I am W. E."

Mr. Danskin said, "Have you not been to Mr. Smith?"

"Yes, but I cannot speak to him, nor unfold my feelings as I desire. It agonizes me to think I cannot penetrate his thoughts as freely as I would."

April 7.—At Mr. Danskin's, Mrs. D. became entranced by W. E., when the spirit said:—

"And hast thou spoken. Oh, my friend, thou hast placed richness within the soul that was dead. I have been drawn from that dismal darkness. Gleams of light are around me, and the mind comprehends the words which you taught me when first I came to earth; and oh, to thee I owe for words which will ever cheer my heart, because thou hast given me knowledge which never, never would have been mine. How was it possible that I could have degraded and polluted the soul and the body which nature had so bountifully provided for me. I cast all under my feet. I thought I had the world in my own hands—I cared not for God or man. Could I but come again and live the life over again, what a different man would I be. All this I owe to thee. I feel it and I know it, for there is a bright one whispering, 'Brother, it is I that came to thee, not to put upon thee curses, but to draw thee within the fold of purity, of light, and of wisdom, where you will enjoy the happiness which'—

Why did I not serve Him when I was on earth? Why was I drawn within the vortex of dissipation? I answer the question myself—because I was a fiend. I am being led step by step to reach that point where dwells my sister. I have not attained that yet, but I feel as if it would not be long—then she and I will be clasped in each others arms, never more to part.

Let not what I have said to-night cause you to forget me—I need your prayers. I desire not to stop at this point. It causes chills to run through my frame when I look back upon my past life. The mind within me now appears to be tranquil. Speak to all of my friends, and say to them that William E. is not the polluted man he was on earth. Oh, my God, be a father to me—draw me within thy love—let me be as thy child—give me knowledge—give me peace, so that I may watch over others and—Where did I get these words? Some angel must have whispered them, for I—

April 8.—Sitting at another circle, the dial gave the name of W. E.

"I have joyful news for dear S—. Give Mary comfort. I am progressing. The spirit of Emily is helping me out of my wicked state."

June 4. At Mr. Danskin's, with the dial— "Give the ultimate joy to me, for I have reached my Father's home, and life is within me. The soul which was dead is now alive, enjoying the home of the peaceful. I am safe from all painful recollections of my past life.—W. E."

It may be well to remark that these communications have been given through five different mediums, unknown to each other; and none but the first knew that such a person as W. E. had ever lived.

F. H. S.

LETTER FROM NEW YORK.

NEW YORK CITY, Dec. 4, 1857.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BANNER OF LIGHT:—Spiritualism seems as much a fixed fact in this city, as any other, good or bad; and in wealth, social position, intelligence and influence, its adherents will compare favorably with the disciples of any other faith; old or new, not excepting the "miserable sinners" of our most exclusive and semi-papistic churches. It endures a wonderful amount of killing, too, which is something in its favor. Our editors have paraphrased it to death—our Doctors of Divine have preached it to death—and scientific asses and sciolistic snobs have "exposed," "explained," "refuted," "used up," and incidentally "annihilated" the thing, times without number, to the entire satisfaction of themselves and innumerable boobies who swear by old formulas, and are morally certain that nothing can be true outside of the three-foot puddle which they have circumnavigated, in the full faith that it is the ocean that clasps all entities, and mirrors all verities. Still, like the great Webster, it "lives." Nay, it loosens no fibre which it has fastened upon life. The fabled vitality of the cat, is scarcely a circumstance to that which Spiritualism exhibits.

It is noteworthy, too, that its adherents are, to an unusual extent, found among the educated, intelligent, thinking classes. Of course, this faith has its fools, as well as all other faiths; but they are not, in some, the dominant power. A great deal of folly, too, has been baptized into its name—literary folly, theological folly, scientific folly—If Spiritualism is something independent of all these, and their extinction touches not its essential vitality.

Another thing I notice, in looking over the congregation that assembles, from Sabbath to Sabbath, in Dodworth's Hall. The proportion of men to women is about three to two, and a majority of the whole exhibit a large frontal and coronal brain, indicating a marked predominance of the intellectual and moral, over the lower or animal organs. The significance of this fact I leave to the interpretation of phrenologists; the fact itself can scarcely fail to arrest the attention of any observant man who attends a meeting of Spiritualists in this city. I speak as an outsider, and so it will not be presumptuous in me to add that these congregations probably contain a larger relative number of representative men than any other in the city.

The lecturer at Dodworth's Hall through the month of November, was Miss C. M. BEEBE, of Boston. Her discourses would have been considered remarkable ones, both for their vigor and beauty, and for the wide sweep of their philosophy; had they been pronounced by one of our most eminent literateurs; coming from a young woman of modest pretensions and unassuming manners, they challenge both our admiration and surprise. I have never listened to a more graceful rhetoric than they display. Artistically, they seem to me well nigh faultless. Nor are they *vox ex præterita nîhil*; for the musical sentences that glide so deliciously from the lips of the fair speaker, are vital with great thoughts, that command consideration if not assent. It is but sober truth to say that, for a rare felicity of diction, the general catholicity of their spirit, the epigrammatic force and point which characterize many passages, and the familiarity with old and new philosophies, religions and sciences, which they display, Miss Beebe's lectures are truly wonderful. In these qualities they may safely challenge comparison with the highest efforts of the pulpit and the rostrum. As might be expected, she finds among the educated classes—among readers and thinkers whose aesthetic sense has been improved by liberal culture—her most appreciative admirers; though the large humanity that throbs sympathizingly through her speech, with all that suffers or rejoices, with all that

desponds or aspires, makes the common people, too, hear her gladly.

If she does nothing more, she will at least help to elevate the literature of Spiritualism, by giving to its beautiful belief a correspondingly beautiful expression. H. B.

ANGELS AND ABRAHAM.

[From the unpublished manuscript of an Orthodox clergyman.]

Thirteen years after Hagar's return to her mistress, the Lord renewed his promise to Abraham, assuring him of the birth of a son by his wife Sarah. This promise, and many other gracious assurances, were made by the ministry of angels.

The Lord appeared again to Abraham, in the heat of a long summer's day, as the Patriarch was seated in the door of his tent. Now far advanced in years; yet with an eye undimmed by age; and with a manly frame, full of the majesty and dignity of virtuous and believing nobility; and with faith undebated and strong, though tried severely through many years—the father of the faithful "lifted up his eyes, and looked, and lo! three men stood by him; and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself towards the ground."

The apostle, many years after this event, exhorts his brethren to hospitality, enforcing the exhortation on the ground that, in doing so, some had entertained angels unawares. Abraham ran out to greet, cordially, three supposed men, knowing them to be strangers. He of them had no knowledge, but they were by no means strangers to him, and his conduct was a fine illustration of the patriarchal simplicity and hospitality of former times, which have not even yet entirely disappeared in the east. "And he said, my Lord, if now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant. Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come unto thy servant. And they said, 'Do so as thou hast said.' The wish of the hospitable old man was granted, his prepared entertainment was honored, and the hearts of the stranger guests were comforted. What conversation passed, during the progress of the meal, and what were the thoughts of either party, we have not been informed. When about apparently to depart, they made inquiries for Sarah, who had done her part in providing the meat, bread, and milk. The great object of this angelic embassy had not yet been communicated, and the unmeasured importance of the ends of Providence must not be overlooked. "And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold in the tent." In the commencement of the interview, Abraham seems not to have been aware of the character of his visitors; yet soon he seems to have discovered the superiority of one of them, in the language used, inducing him frankly to answer the questions of the guests. Sarah, doubtless, listened to the questions asked under the tree, while busy in her domestic affairs in the tent. "I will certainly return unto thee, — and Sarah shall have a son," said the heavenly messenger; hearing which, Sarah laughed. "And the Lord said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh? Is anything too hard for the Lord?" By three angels, one assuming to be chief over the remaining two, God taught Abraham things which must shortly come to pass, and which were of unmeasured importance, as links of the chain of Divine Providence.

Another Providence is announced by the same messengers, and its successful termination was secured by the same agency. The iniquity of Sodom and the adjoining cities on the Plain, called for the rebuke of a just God, and the hour of their doom was fearfully near and portentous. These seeming men and actual angels arose up from the shade of the tree, and looked towards Sodom, as if their steps were in that direction, eastward from the place where Abraham's tent was pitched. Abraham went with them towards the Plain, evincing the same courteousness which was apparent in his welcome. "And the Lord said, shall I hide from Abraham, that thing which I do?" The Lord, for reasons mentioned on the sacred page, determined to reveal to Abraham the chastisement soon to fall upon the cities of the Plain. "And the men turned their faces from thence, and went towards Sodom; but Abraham stood yet before the Lord." While Abraham plead for the guilty, he succeeded in lifting the impending doom on condition that ten righteous men were found among its thousands of inhabitants, while the two men pursued their way to do the bidding of Providence. The bidding of Providence was performed. "And Abraham got up early in the morning, to the place where he stood before the Lord: and he looked towards Sodom and Gommorrah, and towards all the land of the Plain, and behold, and lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace. And it came to pass when God destroyed the cities of the Plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in which Lot dwelt." Mercy had heard all the prayers of Abraham for the guilty; and then, when those who had heeded Mercy's warning had fled, and when the chastisements of justice came upon the unmoved and obdurate, Abraham had no complaint to make. When he saw the smoke from the valley, coming up like the smoke of a furnace, the man of faith grumbled not, nor shed a tear against the strict and righteous demands of emblematic retribution. So always in time or eternity, will the goodly exult in all the mercy and justice of God, and so always does God use the ministry of angels in conducting the affairs of mankind. As God is the same in all generations and places, with no variableness nor shadow of turning, by angels he now warns the good, and aids them as much and as surely as he did in the days of Abraham and upon the Plains of Mamre.

A SPIRIT MOTHER TO HER DAUGHTER IN THE EARLY LIFE.

[Communicated through the mediumship of Mrs. EMMA A. KNIGHT, of Roxbury.]

Daughter, recall not those scenes of sorrow—let the past be buried in oblivion—judge not too harshly of what others have done—let God, in whose hands we all are, pass judgment on the criminal. Try and have charity, even though the heart be bleeding, be nigh breaking. Remember that God is ever with the good and true; His sympathy and strength ever ready for them; but to those who do wrong, extend your sympathy, for you know not how much it is needed. He knows not, who has never wronged another, the pangs of a guilty conscience, a remorseful spirit. Then, daughter, be cheerful, and do not complain, for there are better days in store for you. "I am often with you, and the sweet cherub

you gave unto my care until you should join us, I often bring to see you. He calls you mamma; I would carry him also to his papa, but I cannot now, for he is enveloped in the mist of a false life, false associations, and false principles, and my darling must see nothing of this until he can understand. My child, the time will come when you will believe in these things—when you will really feel and see the presence of those loved and gone before. I do not weep for you, my child, for I see the end and know that all is well. Therefore, try and have Faith and Hope for the future, and Charity for those who have wronged you.

YOUR AFFECTIONATE MOTHER IN SPIRIT.

MRS. HATCH IN MUSIO HALL.

The editor of the Boston Daily Bee, after listening to Mrs. Hatch at the Music Hall, on Sunday, Dec. 6th, speaks of her in the following manner:—

DISCOURSE ON THE "LOVE OF THE BEAUTIFUL."—Mrs. Cora L. V. Hatch, the well known "Trance Medium," gave a discourse yesterday afternoon at Music Hall, on "The Love of the Beautiful." A very large and attentive audience was present. She commenced the services with the Lord's Prayer, given as a chant. This was rendered in a most devotional and impressive manner. She then offered prayer, which was given in a style at once devout, soulful and eloquent. At its conclusion she proceeded upon her discourse, taking as a theme "The Love of the Beautiful," and spoke within a few minutes of an hour. She treated the subject in a three-fold aspect, viz: the Physical, the Intellectual, and the Spiritual or Infinite. Each was stated, amplified and illustrated with marked clearness, force and ability; the audience giving in the meanwhile almost breathless attention.

Her discourse, as before stated, was nearly an hour in length. She spoke fluently all this time, using, as it seemed to us, the most choice, appropriate and expressive language; most fit indeed for the "beautiful" subject under treatment. Had it been prepared by the most accomplished scholar, and with study and care, it could not have been better, in our judgment. The thoughts were clear, vigorous, happy, and the illustrations apt, forcible and poetic. The whole was infused with a spirit of earnestness, soul and beauty, that could not but have impressed her hearers in a highly favorable manner. The most fastidious in sentiment, or the most profound in religious belief, could not have taken exception to position, argument, illustration or rhetoric. Whether Mrs. Hatch speaks in trance, or as Mrs. Hatch, from her own mental resources, is of little consequence when ideas of so elevated a nature, couched in such vigorous and admirable language, are uttered. They will fall upon willing, if not rapt ears. Such a discourse as that of yesterday must be regarded as remarkable, whether its origin be so subtle as to defy human vision, or whether first written, and then committed to memory.

If in the latter case, it indicates high scholarship; and a memory as methodical and tenacious as that of Everett, for not a word was misplaced, nor was an inaccuracy observable. It was a production full of beauty and poetry, and in a language noticeable for strength, eloquence and appropriateness.

Mrs. Hatch, as our readers may know, is a young lady of some eighteen years of age, possesses considerable personal beauty, has a bright, sparkling eye, and adorns her head and shoulders with a pretty shower of curls. She has superior conversational powers, is naturally a bright woman, and is not a little fascinating to men of sense. And yet—this is one of several puzzles in relation to her—when in repose there is nothing in her looks indicative of superiority over the hundreds of her sex we meet every day. Nevertheless, when she speaks, in trance or out, she is more than most of her sex. She is the "something new under the sun," and also something remarkable.

A DREAM WARNING.

In ancient times, we learn from Holy Writ, God sometimes warned his people in dreams that were to be communicated by his servants, the prophets; and there is no reason for supposing that this has been revoked. On the contrary, not only ancient but modern records contain frequent accounts of warnings by dreams. The following case, related in Blackwood's Magazine for June, 1826, is in point:—

"Being in company the other day when the conversation turned upon dreams, I related one, of which as it happened to be my own father, I can answer for the perfect truth. About the year 1781 my father, Mr. D., of H—, in the County of Cumberland, came to Edinburgh to enter the class.

Having the advantage of an uncle in the regiment then in the Castle, he remained under the protection of his uncle and aunt, Major and Mrs. Griffiths, during the winter. When Spring arrived, Mr. D., and four gentlemen from England (his mates), made parties to visit all the neighboring places about Edinburgh, as Rosslyn, Arthur's Seat, Craig-Miller, &c. &c. Coming home one evening from one of these places, Mr. D. said:—

"We have made a party to go a fishing to-morrow to Inchkeith, if the morning is fine, and have been spoken our boat. We shall be off at six."

"Mrs. Griffiths has not long been in bed and asleep, when she screamed out, in the most violent agitation, 'That boat is sinking! save, oh, save them! The Major awoke her, and said: 'Were you uneasy about the fishing party?' 'Oh, no! she said, 'I have not since thought of it.' She then composed herself, and soon fell asleep again. In about an hour, she cried out in a dreadful fright, 'I see the boat is going down!' The Major again awoke her, and she said: 'It is owing to the other dream I had, for I feel no uneasiness about it.' After some conversation, they both fell into a sound sleep; but no rest could be obtained for her. In the most extreme agony she again screamed out, 'They are gone! the boat is sunk!' When the Major awoke her, she said: 'Now I cannot rest; Mr. D. must not go, for I feel I should be miserable till his return—the thought of it would almost kill me.'

She instantly arose, put on her dressing-gown, went to his bedside, for his room was next her own, and with great difficulty she got his promise to remain at home. 'But what must I say to my young friends, whom I have promised to meet at Leith at six o'clock?' 'With great truth you may say your aunt is ill—for I am so at present.' Consider, you are an only son, under my protection, and should anything happen to you, it would be my death.' Mr. D. immediately rose and wrote a note to his friends, saying he was prevented joining them, and sent his servant with it to Leith. The morning came in most beautiful, and continued to till three o'clock, when a violent storm arose, and in an instant the boat went to the bottom.

with all that were in it, and they were never heard of more, nor was any part of the boat ever seen. I often heard the story from my father, who always added: 'I never can forget that my life, by Divine Providence, was saved by a dream.'

The Messenger.

Under this head we shall publish such communications as may be given us through the mediumship of Mrs. J. H. Cox, whose services are engaged exclusively for the Banner of Light. The object of this department is, as its head partially implies, the conveyance of messages from departed spirits to their friends and relatives on earth.

So die and so live! When death comes to separate the spirit from the body, then, if not till then, man finds his entire dependence upon the Superior Being.

Yes, the very articles that went to make up my heaven on earth, go to make my hell in the spirit life. I loved to be thought a great deal of, to be respected. I loved to see my fellow man bow down to me.

Sometimes I am left alone for what seems to be a long time; then I am surrounded by those who seem poorly in harmony with me. Ah, how true it is—how true a poor man finds heaven at his own door, while a rich man may wander a thousand years and then be far from it.

Well, friends, I am no longer one of earth, but I find the same powers I had, I have now; and I cannot have them, because they say I have not needed them—because they say they will not form heaven for me here.

I am like a serpent with fire on one side and Bay leaves upon the other—revolving round and round, striving to find something which shall be for my advantage.

Ah, misery seems pictured in the faces of all I view. Every one bears the signature of misery to me—they may be ever so happy, but the very spark of happiness clothes them in misery to me.

I am unhappy, as all earth's people may know, who knew me on earth. Oh, that I was again at home! that I shall never, never call mine again, for when I compare that which I had on earth with that which I have now, one is a palace, the other a hovel.

I loved to be sitting above the common people. I loved to be clothed in fine garments. I loved to hear the people cry out when I went forth. I loved money, and I loved that which money purchased, my title.

You speak of Truth, but when you bid me seek for happiness by and through the affectional, you bid me seek for that I never had on earth.

Do those who are higher than I come to speak with you? Can it be that bright ones descend to administer to your happiness?

A mighty sheet of water divides you from my own country. Ah, if I might once be there; if I might once more live over some parts of my earthly life! But never is echoed by everything in Nature.

Oh, how shall I, as an individual, find heaven? Must I come up by some other person's way. Most I come up like a beggar, and call the crumbs which others throw to me? By Humility's door must I enter?

William Haddock, Montreal. Sir, by divine will I am here to-day. The clouds have just been placed over my earthly form; and hearts have just left the place where they have laid me.

He looks as though he appears as a white horse. He is bald headed, and appears as if he were 70 years old. He is thick-set, and his eyes are dark blue.

when on earth. I knew that power existed in my spirit, and I often asked myself if I should be able to exercise that power after death. Today I am satisfied I can use that power as I could on earth, only to a greater extent.

Yes, this very morning they covered the earth over my material form. Now I would not have them mourn, but I would have them provide me an instrument through whom I can commune with them.

I was 28 years of age; I died in Montreal; my name was William Haddock. I have a large circle of acquaintances in the place I have mentioned.

They say that Hope is a flower that never dies. Well, if that be true, I shall never die. That has been my food for twenty-six years; six months, and two days—that being the time I have lived in spirit life.

After living in London something like eighteen years, my father died, and I was left to carry on the business, and support my mother. Now one would suppose I might have been happy, from the fact that I became, at my father's death, the possessor of 10,000.

My father left me, as I told you, with a goodly amount of money, and his last words were: William, take good care of your mother. Said I: I will do so; she shall never want while I live.

My mother, seeing her condition and my prospects, daily faded, and at last went down to the grave—and I looked upon her as one I had murdered. I turned from that churchyard, and said to myself: "Oh, that I could know the right way, and, once knowing, pursue it."

At last, becoming weary of death and desolation, of misery and familiar faces, I quitted my country and came to America. I landed in New York, and there remained something like three years, eating and drinking, but most all the time in misery.

One night, after I had been near five years in New York, I came home late, and threw myself down to rest, if possible. I slept, probably long enough to carry off the effects of the liquor I had drunk, for I assure you I was sober.

When I go around unbelievers, everything is dark. To the spirit out of the form, the emotions of the spirit in the form are visible. If you are a hard-hearted man, I should know it not by the spirit, but by the atmosphere around it, which I could see when I came within a certain distance, and I could not perhaps see the spirit.

Now when I go to my friends, it seems strange to me to see that they will cling to the darkness of the church. They think that which was food for the Jews is best for them. Everything about them ought to teach them differently, but it does not.

What do you think of a Christian who goes to the church Sunday with a long face, and all the rest of the week lies, cheats, and steals as bad as other men? I know I'm hard on Christians, but I do not speak what I do not know. I saw this on earth, I know it. I was not prejudiced, for when I saw a Christian that was good, I was ready to acknowledge it, and wished I was as good as he.

I might have told you I married in early life, but my companion not proving congenial, she went one way, I another. I think she is on earth, for I have not seen her here. I should have spoken of this before, but it was one of those knots tied by mortal hands, not registered in Heaven, and therefore easily sundered, and almost as easily forgotten.

My father's name was William Crawford, my name was the same. In conclusion, let me tell all those on earth, who are seeking for happiness, to be sure they find the right path, then they are sure and find, but never take the path until you are sure you are right. Let them consider well before they walk, especially young men, and let those who have promised, perform—especially if the promise is made, will surely know the truth.

A word to those who still doubt the phenomena of spirit intercourse. Twenty-six years ago it was revealed to me; eighteen hundred years ago it was revealed to those who dwell at that time on earth, and walked with one-called Jesus.

Now a word to those I once knew on earth, if there are any left who know me. Let them commune to seek for happiness in the true way before they cast off their mortal form. Let the time be now, not hereafter.

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George Billings.

I believe you receive manifestations from spirits. I take it you are a scribe for them. I have been in the spirit world something like seven years; my chances for communicating have been very small; scarcity of medium power accounts for this.

I left a family—they are dear to me, very dear. I have long been very anxious to communicate to them. I have long been to you before, something like two years ago it was, but I suppose you do not remember me.

All religionists had better take the life of Christ for their guide, do just the best they know how to do, and come under no other restrictions. Oh, how I wish I could have ten years more to live on earth, how different I should live, and how I would stir up the minds of my friends.

Some spirits tell you they eat; well, they do, but they do not explain it to you as I do. When I was on earth I was always curious to understand everything I saw. If I saw a piece of mechanism, I was never satisfied with myself until I understood it.

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new stockings and a new dress, and there were friends about me—could you see yourself if you were dead? Father wants mother to be happy and not work so hard, and he wants her to give away his clothes to some poor man. He says it is wrong for her to keep them when so many need them.

William Dunbar.

At last my time has come! For eleven long years I have been striving to manifest to my friends. The way seemed hedged up, and my coming to earth to be attended with numerous difficulties.

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mit murder; the evil in them might have told they it was right, but the voice within said no. Go into the Methodist Church, and tell the Methodist that a Baptist brother has committed a sin, and it is his duty to talk to him, and he will tell you he belongs to another church, and it is not his work. What a small soul that man has! He has forgotten that God has told them to do a kindness wherever they can. But their souls have been so long in the crucible of the church, that it is impossible for them to stretch out their hands as far as God wants them to; and they forget that charity extends to all men. For my part I am inclined to think that all the church-going people of this age are sick, and need a physician. I may fall in my prescription, but I think not, and shall prescribe caution. I used to prescribe once for these poor old bodies, and shall not infect them with any poisonous influence.

Mary Gillett.

Peace, like a white-winged angel, ever hovers near the place where mortals and immortals meet to communicate. And peace begetteth order and love. The guardians of the spirit circle are three—Peace, Order, and Love.

And in the earth circle, you should have corresponding guardians, that harmony may be in men, and that your manifestations may be pure, and without alloy. Love is said to draw all things unto itself. Love is said to be the great magnet that rules all subjects in spirit life, and love alone rules in earth life. By this great principle I return to earth to gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost.

By love the disembodied spirit reaches the inmost sanctuary of the souls they have on earth. By love they cast out, one by one, the errors of earth; by love they cast about them a mantle of purity; by love they welcome them to the land above their earth abiding place. By love I am here to-day; by that love which endures to all eternity; which, although the snows fall upon it, will not wither and die like your earthly flower.

I have dear ones on earth—I am bound to those dear ones. Salvation is in my right hand, and peace in my left. If they follow me I will save them from sin, and the ways they think are death. With my left hand I will make pleasant their earthly abode, and scatter blessings at their feet.

I, as a spirit, as a mother, do come to earnestly beseech and pray that they who are dear to me may walk by the lamp of wisdom. I return to draw them, by the lamp of love, beyond that which leads to death, and to bid them to fear not, for it is the Father's good pleasure to bestow rich blessings upon thee.

Time has passed on since I lived in the fear of death. That time has not been missed by me, but has been occupied in building a bridge over which I might come; and I beg them to follow that sacred light from far in the distance.

I do earnestly beseech of them to lift the mantle which has fallen upon them; angel hands are striving to lift it up, but earthly hands are wanting to aid. Oh, shall we fail because our earthly ones heed us not. Oh, when we enter by love shall we not conquer? when the Father hath said, by love shall ye overcome all things. The sweet flower of belief has been transplanted to the earthly garden of the souls of those I love. Angel hands are watering that flower, angel minds are strengthening it, and oh, shall not earthly hands now water it, that they may taste the first fruits of the season? An answer from the earthly sphere even now comes to us, Oh, yes, we will strive to aid you; and a messenger comes from beyond, saying Try, and the King of Nations will send you power. Try and hear, and soon thy sorrows shall be turned into joys; soon thy chains shall be cast off—soon thy soul shall rise on earthly wings, and fill the earth with joy.

We ask for aid from earth. We ask it not from beyond, for that we already have. Those from whom we come will understand our message, though you may not. Suffer this to be ignorance to you, for at another time I will come and give you light.

William Johnson.

You receive communications from spirits, I believe. Does it make any difference as to who comes? Any papers to sign before you proceed? I was told about four hours ago that I could communicate here if I came.

To begin with, I suppose I must tell you who I am. My name is William Johnson. I was born in Exeter, and I lived there till I was 21 years old, then I came to Boston. I lived in Boston about two years, then I went to Troy, and lived there a while; I think a little less than a year. From there I went to New Orleans. My business was trading—peddling if you please—if you have any objection to the name, call me traveling merchant. I should have said this was my business until I went to New Orleans—then I tended bar; if you have any objection to that, call it something else. I continued in that business about a year, when I took sick and died. I have a party of friends in New Orleans who believe in Spiritualism. They came to see me when I was sick, and asked me to come back if I could, and let them know if it was true. I told them I would, so, sure I am. I have been dead since July, 1855. I stopped about home to get a chance to come to them, but here a little while ago I was told I could come here and talk. The names of my friends in New Orleans were Jim Wakefield, Jim Shannon, Tom Brown, and George Bentley. George married a woman down to Bangor, somewhere, and, while I was sick, she was taken sick, and I have learned she has come to the spirit land; but I have not seen her. He may think it strange if I did not speak of her, so I mention it. I said my name was Johnson, but what my real name is I cannot tell you, for I suppose I was an illegitimate child. I am told my father is in the spirit world—my mother is on earth, and named Caroline. Some of the time I was in Exeter, I was indirectly connected with Lewis Towle. This being a spirit does not seem to me to be what I thought it was. I cannot bring myself to think I am dead. But I have done all I came for, and will now go.

John Fernandez.

John Fernandez presents himself before you. Two weeks ago I died in Delhi, India. I belong to Great Britain, was born in Manchester, England. My grandfather came from Spain, in youth, and settled in England; that accounts for my Spanish name. Two years ago I left Liverpool, and sailed for the East Indies. I then, after arriving there, stopped long enough to obtain cargo, and then left for Manchester, my home. A short time after, I left again, and went to India. I was taken prisoner, and died in prison at the time I told you, after suffering more than you would believe, were I to tell you. I have a wife and five children living in Manchester; they do not know I am dead. They expect I have been detained there, but have no idea I have suffered what I have. Two days ago I was told I could come here, and was told that perhaps after months my message would reach my wife. I am glad to be free, that I have no body to be tormented, that God saw fit to take me from my sorrow, my sufferings. I got into some trouble with some India men on account of bringing some fruit, and as there was trouble ashore, of course, being an Englishman, I was not treated with much respect. All the crew were taken, two of them died before I did, but the rest are living now—the vessel was taken. For seven days before I died, I was without food, ten days without water, and if ever man prayed, I prayed for death; at last it came. About all I had was lost with the vessel. I was taken prisoner about a year ago. One of my comrades was murdered, I suppose outright, but I think the rest are on earth, but I don't know much, for I tell you for a year without light of air, you cannot expect much intelligence. I am happier now, for I now think my wife will receive this in time. Her name is Margaret. I am sure if God has provided this way for us poor spirits to come to our friends, He is a good God, though I have not seen him yet.

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