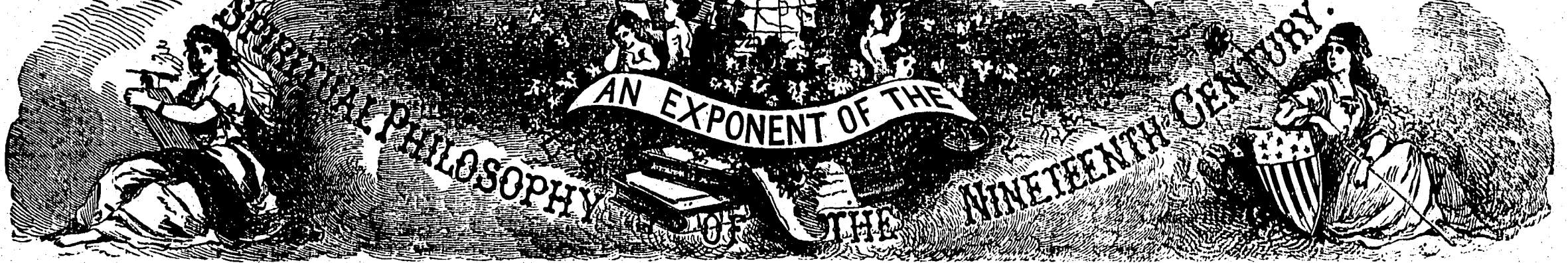


BANNER OF LIGHT.



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NO. 17.

WE SHALL MEET AGAIN.

By MRS. C. L. BRACKLOCK.

We shall meet again, beloved,
With a love as true and fond
As our earth-pulse ever quickened,
In the beautiful beyond;
Where the glorious summer reigneth,
Where no waves of sorrow flow;
Where the flowers are ever fadeless,
And the skies with beauty glow.
Though the river flows between us,
I can almost see the strand
Where thy tiny bark hath anchored;
I can almost see thee stand,
With thy smiling lips half-parted,
With the same sweet, loving gaze
Which thy dear face so illumined,
In the happy bygone days.
And I know that thou art waiting
Till we meet upon that shore;
And I, too, await the angel,
Who will bear me safely o'er.
Oh, his wings will cast no shadow;
On his brow a light will gleam,
And the dark and troubled waters
Will appear a little stream.
Though the miles will gather round me,
I shall see thy beckoning hand;
I shall hear thy joyful welcome
Ere I reach the better land.
Shall I mourn the day's declining,
When the evening comes to me
Freighted with the sweet assurance
That "I'm one day nearer thee?"
When the day of life is ended,
I shall lay me down to rest,
As an infant sinks to slumber,
On a loving mother's breast.
For the glorious dawn will follow,
As the sunshine after rain;
I shall wake to see, with rapture,
Thy beloved face again.

Mobile, Ala.

The Lecture Room.

MAN, THE IMMORTAL.

A LECTURE BY MRS. EMMA HARDINGE,
In Music Hall, Boston, Sunday, Oct. 15th, 1871.

Reported for the Banner of Light.

The subject for our discourse this day, as announced, will be, "Man, the Immortal," and in it we propose to turn the third page of the religion of the Divine Humanity. We have shown you that the evidence of the existence of a broad, universal, intelligent mind, is to be found within man—written upon the face of Nature—stamped upon every fragment of the universe in firm and legible characters. To-day I propose to question whether similar testimony on a similar ground and universal scale is not to be found for the immortality of the human soul. Do not tell me it is an old subject, not worth the examination now, and destitute of all points of interest. It is a question that is ever new, and in this day of infidelity to what has been called revealed religion—in this day of speculative philosophy—this question comes up before us with more force perhaps than it has ever been presented in the creeds of those who taught us that man was immortal, but never offered to demonstrate their teachings.

There are three sources to which we necessarily turn when we question what are the evidences that man—man the divine, man who in his totality is humanity—is demonstrated to be an immortal being. Revealed religion affirms it, science denies it, Spiritualism proves it. But has Spiritualism no relation to revealed religion and science? I claim that it has, and that it is our part, the part of wisdom, the part of true philosophy, to search, ourselves, for this very evidence, and not depend upon the testimony of to-day, which generally falls to us tomorrow. Let us question not the phenomena alone—not merely that which takes at present no inherent part in our active lives and being—but rather seek as to whether it be shown that there is a scientific foundation for the teachings called Spiritualism. It is with a view of reconciling all testimony as showing you that in the divine humanity itself is the witness that we seek, that we ask you to follow us this day.

First, let us take revealed religion alone, and we behold a stupendous failure. And why? Because it appeals to a set of revealing phenomena occurring years since, through a declared subversion of science, and a suspension of natural law. It advocates point back to one small section of the earth, out of all this vast territory; they point to one ignorant and scattered people as the fit recipients of the revelation—while the very record in which it is preserved and handed down to us, conclusively proves that that people were not believed by those of their own time. They point back for a source to this narrow section of country, to this ignorant people and their ancient date in time, and then they offer us the revelation filtered through every species of misinterpretation, and possible interpretation—in fact through everything which can affect a written statement—without bringing up one natural fact, one every-day experience, one witness within the observation of our own time, to justify their statements. They sustain these statements by one contiguous antagonism against the intellectual progress of the race. The marching ages, fraught with the perpetual revelations of science, have ever encountered as their worst foe that theology which battled for these revelations, upon the assumption of miracles, or the occasional suspension of natural law in a favored age, and among a favored people. When driven from point to point, defeated at every turn, and forced slowly to receive the demonstrations of science, theologians have demanded of the race the acceptance of their views upon the condition of a divorce between revealed religion and science, and a subversion of all the powers of the mind—blindly demanding faith in the assertion of the fathers, unassisted by any witness save the bare "say-so" of their declarative assumptions. I speak with all reverence, not of theology, but of the subject upon which theologians treat. To no theology of any age will I yield my claim to worship God; to no theology of any period or clime will I yield my claim to know that I am immortal; but I worship God, and believe in immortality only because it has been God's mercy to prove it to me. Old theology, go thou and do likewise! She has failed, and therefore when I question my first witness, I find that she cannot offer to me any foundation upon which I can stand.

I take my second—Science; and here again I make the distinction, as on last Sabbath, between science and scientists; I must draw the line of demarcation stronger, for I have listened in the past to some of the leading minds, and heard their specious sophistical philosophy, proving to their own satisfaction and that of those they lead, that man is

not immortal, and that upon the affirmation of what they call science. They point to the fact that there is law everywhere; that as we behold the heavens bright with their rolling worlds—as we look upon the sunlight or the storm, the growth of the blossom or the march of the golden-crowned dust column slanting in the fervent noon of day—that in all we see there is law—nothing but law; that that law is sufficient to account for all the phenomena of nature, all the processes of life, all the wonders of being. Last Sabbath we questioned this law, and never found that it accounted in one instance for the grand phenomenon of all phenomena—Mind! Last Sabbath we searched throughout the entire realm of this law, and never perceived one point where blind, unintelligent force could compass aught bearing the seal of design.

Whatever the scientist may claim, he is unable to declare what this law is, or who or what is the law-giver. He has excluded from his consideration the whole realm of mind—never attempted to treat of the mighty field of psychology—never entered the domain of the soul. He has thrust out of court the very power by which he examines his witnesses—his own spirit! He renders up no account of this mighty principle, consciousness, which enables him to say, "I am." On a previous occasion, too, we traced out for you the different departments of human thought, and showed you that all our research led to the culminating point of a spiritual science; that there is yet unaccounted for in the human organization, the Human Mind; that there is yet to be accounted for the might and majesty of the power of mental reflection—the force of aspiration—the longing to know of a first Great Cause—the searching for a demonstrated immortality, and the laws of human responsibility to whom and to what. And so I take up the thread where science abandons it. I step behind the visible panorama, and, rolling up the curtain of materialism, behold! I stand in the realm of mind itself. And now, let us question whether mind itself does not witness of immortality. I do not speculate; but, as I number up my witnesses, science and Spiritualism included, I am sure of the result. Revelation has existed from the dawn of man's intellectual life; it did not belong to the age of savagery, or to the age of Judaism. The savage knew not of God, the soul's immortality, or any responsibility beyond that which the law of strength lays down; but, from the dawn of the human intellect—from the hour when man ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (in accordance with the beautiful Indian allegory of Genesis, which represents the wisdom of the serpent as tempting man to seek added light concerning the capabilities of his existence)—from that hour, we find traces of man as an immortal being. We find it first among the rude troglodytes, and in the hieroglyphs of Egypt and Central Asia—sculptured in rude picture writings, which show the forms and modes of worship of now unknown races. I have stood beside the silent but most eloquent monuments of that unknown people who, deep in the heart of Honduras, Guatemala and Central America, have reared, with wonderful industry, grandest acumen, demonstrated knowledge of mechanics, and an evident mastery of what we now call the lost art, piles that have conquered time. I have stood before these monuments, and beholding the works of that mysterious people who trod this land before us, and who passed from these scenes ere you and I could possess any historical means of deciding their origin, have wondered at the mighty story, and believed in the immortality of the soul! Their monuments to their personal comfort is swept away; but their hope, their hearts' love, their strength and their wealth was laid upon the altar of religion, and that endures! Far away, in the cave temples of Indostan and Tadmor, amid the shattered wrecks that mock the march of ages, and astonish the architect and sculptor of the present day, there abide the same witnesses of an immortal mind, reaching, in its aspirations, afar into the dim regions of the unknown, over feeling after God. The footprints of civilization are marked more and more clearly by man's out-reaching aspiration; still more fair, more beautiful, more abundant in strength, come the evidences of the universal spirit of these religious beliefs, till we reach the day of revelations as recorded in scriptural writings. I need not remind you that the oldest one of the earth—the Sanscrit—is full of direct proofs of the belief of the ancient Hindoo in the immortality of the soul, and of the basic facts that exist to-day in the religions of the world. So with the religious writings of the Egyptians; and the Jewish Bible, however subjected to "interpretation and misinterpretation, gives us the same witness.

Now, this is the day of revelation. When we question what this revelation is, we find that it depends upon two sources: the divine humanity within, and spiritual revelations from without. Man intuitively aspires, and angels intuitively answer him by inspiration. We find by the testimony of the unseen intelligences that we live upheld in the arms of an invisible world; that these mysterious spirits—people are only removed from us by the thin veil of materiality that extends before our own eyes. For a moment that veil is torn aside, and we stand in the presence of an unknown people, and in the confines of an unknown country, but we feel that that country has been the home, and that those people have been the mysterious agents of that Providence which the ancient man bowed his head before and worshipped as God. Forget not, however, that mingled with these spiritual revelations comes the perpetual aspiration of the human soul in inquiry after these facts. The ancient man was a crude metaphysician, and took the kingdom of heaven by storm; in fasting and prayer he demanded news of the soul departed—killings from those gone before—in obedience to that indefinable yearning that perpetually becomes answered by the voice of the spirit-world.

So, then, we find that this revelation depends, as I have said, on two methods of communion—that from within, and that from without. Those who plead for revealed religion at the present day, declare that revelation has ceased. But it never has, neither can it cease. Why have they not considered both these sources upon which it depends. Great is the field of scientific research, but not alone in that which is built of stone and mortar, or which can be cut with the scalpel knife, is there ground for examination. Where is the seat of that mysterious principle which we call human consciousness—is there no science in its efforts and results? Is there no science in the labors of the alchemist, as he bends over his fuming crucible, and stirs its purifying fires? Is there no science in his mind, or is it merely the operations of that crucible, without his directing hand, which track the secrets of nature through diverse forms. Why, it is all science—the highest and the grandest; and therefore, do not think, because I speak of mind and intelligence alone, I ignore science, I am only pressing on, with feeble step and faltering lip, it may be, to those limits from whence science has shrunk back abashed, and dare not tread.

The first ground is the universal testimony of the entire race. If there were wanting any links in the chain, if, in all the history of the past, there ever was an age when religious belief was considered out of fashion, it would be a matter of fashion alone; but such is not the case. Man, from the earliest dawn of civilization, has maintained his hold upon the beliefs which constitute religion; all the changes of his intellectual nature have never destroyed this, but have deepened it. Look abroad this day, and compare the poor savage of Central Africa with the *civilized* of modern culture, and you will find that among the leading powers, qualities and tendencies of mind which the cultured man possesses, is a desire to worship God; he believes in immortality, and acknowledges the fact of individual re-

sponsibility for acts performed. The primitive man possesses, owns and acknowledges neither. We may not know how many ages have been consumed in our progress to the present point of enlightenment, but, tracing the path backward for thousands, ay, tens of thousands of years, we shall find, through all the past, man is a religious being, save only that class who demand of the witness of mind in matter, who call for proof of spirit-existence alone through the gross portals of materiality, who seek for the soul in dust and ashes—those who have rejected the knowledge so freely offered, and have narrowed themselves down to the visible, material universe. They are no witnesses for me. They are dealing with atoms; they are but reciting the tale of that grand phantasmagoria which we all see; they have entered not into the realm of causation; they prize only of effects, while the power that looks out of the soul laughs them to scorn, and points them to the settlement of the great problem of all. While they search for man's work and surroundings alone in visible things, the spirit-man laughs by their side, and whispers "Ignoramus" in their dull ears. A few Sabbaths ago, in my first address, I cited physiology to show that every atom of matter had a use, and was existing as an absolute necessity. I declare the same thing as regarding mind, and demand to know where the materialist puts this spiritual nature of man? He cannot quench it; he cannot merge it into any vast sea of inorganic intelligence. Therefore there must be a use for it, as a cause; a source for it, as an end; and that is one evidence within divine humanity itself, that must be accounted for, which proves that there is a source and use for man's religious nature.

I take for my next witness the fact that the whole creation shows itself perfect after its kind, except the mind of man. These blossoms [referring to a bouquet on the desk before her] can never hope hereafter to exhibit a fairer form, or exude a more beautiful perfume than in their present status. Thus in the trees and the birds; the element of perfection as to its kind crops out in all, save the soul of man. But I would ask of those who are the oldest among you, whilst you can go back through the experience of the race, and read the record of mind in monument and hieroglyph, till, in the twilight of the past man is, to all intents, one, gigantic animal—what the experience of the ages is yours, and you can trace it to your own day, and your own long life experience—is the spirit within you fully perfected? Are you crowned with all the powers which the soul is capable of sustaining? Think of it! Have you solved the hidden mystery of the skies—the wonder of the rolling spheres? Have you solved the grand mystery of the central fires? Have you read the tale recorded in the cavernous depths of the old rocks? Have you stood upon the shores of that vast, silent sea, walled in by everlasting pinnacles of ice, where never eye of mortal has looked upon its pulsing tides? Have you explored the mystery of ether—the secret path of electricity, the power of growth that has fashioned from the acorn a tiny germ the grand dimensions of the forest tree? All these things you have but partially examined and faintly understood—they are still sealed books as to their causes and their ultimate. You have ascended to a position thousands of miles above the ancients, but your descendants shall ascend just as far above you. They shall tirelessly march up the heights of intelligence beyond you, after you have closed your own experience, and have laid down your head upon the last pillow that head shall ever press. When the clouds of night are drawn before your eyes, and the thin veil of materiality is melting in the splendor beyond, and the gates, far ajar, are exposing to you the crowning lights of a far more glorious world; look back—look back upon the pilgrimages you have made, and ask how many of your hopes and aspirations have been brought to fruition; how many of life's problems have been solved; how many energies brought into play? Oh, broken flower—perishing symbol of mortality—as the very perfume of thy dying hour ascends and blends with the atmosphere of earth, so goes the soul's perfume, according to the unknown, joining that mighty chorus of aspiration that ever arises—that chorus the burden of which is "Light—more light!" The process of mortal development goes ceaselessly on—they of a thousand years hence shall receive streams of light of which the present cannot conceive. I do claim, therefore, that the very highest mind amongst us is only an evidence of the imperfection of life in this dance of atoms in which we now are moving—but an imperfect fruit in a world of material forms, which are but typical of that perfection which yet shall be.

This is my second, but I will take the third and surer ground. My scientific instructor tells me that nothing is destroyed—that he is able to trace the pathway of the atoms in all the circles and cycles of time; very much advanced he tells me they may be, or perchance attenuated to invisible air, but still existing—never destroyed. All this grant, and then I ask him: What then becomes of the realm of mind? And the scientist answers, "It is diffused into the vast ocean of mind." Grant that, too—but what becomes of the several functions of mind? For instance: What becomes of consciousness—that power which says, "I am"? If you can find that, you have found annihilation. Show me the evidence, in any part of the universe, and I will believe that the self-consciousness which enables me to say "I am" is destroyed, and will embrace the blank fact of annihilation. It cannot be merged into sightless air, for then it loses its individuality—it lives, and holds to its separate form and memory. Oh, scientist, if your darkened eyes can penetrate the veil and perceive the fact of annihilation of self-consciousness, do not lay the axe at the foot of the tree of science by declaring that this principle applies to one department of animated existence, but not to all. If this does not come into the category of science, then the manifestations of matter do not, for it stands upon the same ground, it takes the same point—the indestructibility of being. I ask ye, oh, scientists, to account for the destruction of that one single faculty of my soul, and if you cannot render the proof, then must I believe that the "I am" lives forever!

And now for my last witness on the plane of that humanity which is considered as the microcosm of all science. I look upon the race as it exists; I am told that some are happy and fortunate, whilst others toil with such an unnatural waste of life's forces and energies, that I have my self gazed upon them, and wondered why they ever were born. I am sure that they so wonder themselves. I have seen them broken and crippled, groping their way alone, without the sweet ties of domestic life and love—wretched, maimed, mangled, horrible objects, whose very sight appeals to the sympathy of the feeling heart, tottering along life's pathway, so patient, so resigned, and yet, oh, hopeless! I have seen them crushed down by the awful circumstance of a criminal stamp at birth, just as we stamp our currency at its issue, going out into existence like Ishmaelites—every man's hand against them, and their hands, by a dread necessity, against every man; till at the end of their tortuous existence, they are—as a spectacle to men and angels—crushed by the strong arm of the law, as a thing put out of life because society says it cannot bear the presence of such great sinners!

Now, friends, you and I trace the source of such criminals, and a great part of them we must shoulder upon the providence of God, or upon total depravity; but that does not account for all. Answer me the purpose of pain and suffering; answer me the problem of the wasteful destruction of property by fire—the physical deaths occurring under circumstances so terrible as those which day after day smite upon the ear—the struggle of the drowning the fiery pains of those who go up from life in the bosom of the surging flames! We ask, where is God, when the theologian bids us be silent in the face of such awful calamities, for it is the

will of God. We ask, where is he—where is that love of which theology in its calmer hour tells us so fluently? We ask why some so suffer, whilst others rejoice—why some so struggle with adverse winds and waves, whilst others sail life's billows with such tender care spread around them that it would seem that they are borne in the arms of angels! What kind of a God can it be who thus by his will alone is imposing such an overwhelming load of misery, if there be not another and a better world—if there be not hope for the fallen, comfort for the outcast, a home for the wanderer, liberty for the oppressed, justice for every man, mercy and compassion to the evil-doer—progress for all! (Applause.)

They tell us, these spirit people, that there is such a world. They do not only so assure us, but they come to us with the martyr's cross changed to a crown of glory, and the feet and hands that have been pierced, wreathed with the roses of immortality, the blossoms of an eternal joy. They come to us revealing the justice of the Good Father in every department of being. They tell us of no threshold mystery, no theological sponge to wipe away in an instant the sins of such as receive it, whilst those unable are to be plunged in eternal fire. They come to us with the record of every life complete; they come to us with the intelligence that every mystery is made clear and plain; they come to us showing this humanity of ours—this grand gospel of the divine humanity—to be just such a gospel as the ages have been laboring up the steep of time for, destined to bring all into beauty and order; they come to us, these spirit people, showing their power to ascend from the depths of despair in human life, to higher fields and grander aims; they come to us showing us that an immortality of use is theirs—that this is the only kind of immortality that can redeem the justice of God from the aspersions of the credulous; they come to us showing that a loving heart speeds them on; they come to us telling that because we have longed for it, because it ought to be—because when God gave us the boon of life he ought also to have given us the solution of all life's problems, the ending of all sorrows and fears, and because we in the past have mourned for the end unknown—this is why so many great hearts have instinctively turned aside from the baseless aspersions of theology, and this is why the voice of the angel has spoken this day in our ears.

There must be an explanation why some are riding on the crest of life's billow, whilst others are struggling desperately in its whirling depths—but the science of existence will never render this solution to the scalpel knife of that investigator who hopes alone in dull, cold matter to trace its living glory. To-day is the veil rent in twain, and we see the results of this life's experiences. This needs no discussion for those that have beheld the forms of the immortals, who have conversed with them, who know by experience that the gates are not ajar, but are wide open—those whose clairvoyant ears have heard the voices, those whose clairvoyant gaze has pierced the veil of mystery, those whose souls, while yet clothed with flesh, have walked hand in hand with these spirit-people through the glorious paths of that fairer land—it needs, I say, no discussion for such—in a word, it needs no demonstration for those to whom it is already proven; and it is enough for you and I to know that these demonstrations—although they have been rejected by that class of religionists who build only upon the revelations of the past—will break the chain of priestcraft and make the people their own priests.

You and I, as we trace the history of the past, shall see that there is a something more to be accounted for. The world of gent and fairies, of fauns and gnomes and gnomes—the world that we have seen in the brilliant imaginings of youth, the world that we have clung to, despite the utterances of dull scientific platitudes concerning its nonentity, we cannot do without. The line of history is interwoven with it in every part, in visions, in prophecies, in all seasons. As we look back, we see the angel faithful in every clime and country. And where all fail to bring proof, at last comes the opening of the gates in this nineteenth century. We have begun to be so familiar with Spiritualism, that we hardly understand that it comes as a solution of any other problem than our great heart-quest for our dead. It is not alone to answer the solemn question, Whither, whither are they gone?—It is not alone because you and I have speculated early upon all the coming years—the earth that shall be no more for us to tread, the music that other lips shall sing; it is not alone that we look upon the seemingly utter waste of life, as the billows of change roll around us, and feel an unseen hand pushing us far, far out upon the world's waves of an unknown sea; it is not for selfish purposes alone, but to solve the problem of the relations of human obedience to the Grand Man whom we call God, that it comes to us, revealing the power of communion with higher minds, the fact of the continuity of life beyond the grave—for this it comes to us. To fill us with courage for the duties of existence, to bring us strength to act, and the truth to go before us as we lay here the foundation for the superstructure of a life hereafter—for this has Spiritualism come to us.

Now do we comprehend after what fashion revelations come? Now do we comprehend that revelation is perpetual, that it is never finished, that it comes in answer to the yearning of the soul? Now do we comprehend that that yearning of the soul has a deeper meaning, that it is not merely a lonely cry from matter. Now do we realize that the entire race is not deceived by a myth; that the Eternal Mind has not implanted this religious nature in man only that it may mock him and lead him astray. Now do we understand that our lives are not, lost, nothing destroyed—all that is gone before waiting till we shall take up the history in the spirit-world. Now do we understand that from every scorn of labor down in the field of earth's existence a towering acorn awaits us there. Let us help all who need with an outstretched hand; we cannot think too much concerning their welfare; but never think that they are forsaken by the God that has placed us on the pinnacle of freedom from want or pain; let us never look upon them as children of perdition, but as brothers tolling for spiritual light at the bottom of the ladder, while we are nearing its summit.

I thank thee, oh, Great Spirit, I thank thee more for the boon of the voices that have come to me, telling of the soul's immortality, than for all the creeds and systems of civilization; for if all these were leveled to earth, the voice of the spirit would suffice to inspire me to build them up again. I know that God is; I know that man is immortal; and it only remains for me, during my brief ministrations among you, to draw from surrounding Nature the proofs she holds. I shall do so next Sabbath by presenting the testimony of the rocks, and, in my concluding address, by calling upon the witness of the choiring stars.

PATIENTIA.

By TOM HOOD.

With anxious thoughts and busy scenes oppress'd;
Erelong release shall reach thee. A brief pain I
Then—Rest!
Watch still, oh, heavy eyes,
A little longer must ye vigil keep;
And lo! your life shall close at morning's rise
In sleep.
Throb yet, oh, aching heart,
Still pulse the flagging current without cease—
When you a few hours more have played your part
Cumus Paeon!
Bear up, then, weary soul!
Short is the path remaining to be trod—
Lay down the heavily burden and touch the goal—
Then—God!

Free Thought.

THE GROWING EVILS AND HOLDENESS
OF CORRUPTION.

MESSES EDITORS—I have—and no doubt others have—been exercised of late upon the growing evils and holdenness of corruption and corrupting influences found in every department of our social structure. Not that the elements of genuine good are wanting or less than at any previous times, but because the positiveness of that good is, as it were, latent—kept from action by an undue and mistaken sympathy for those who are prominent actors of evil.

It seems the time demands that honesty and integrity should show themselves, and make a point, by both preaching and practicing these principles that are clear, from every view, as fundamental and basic in the structure of all we dream of as reform. And the inquiry will arise, what is the standard or central idea around which all the reform ideas can centre?

Is it true or not true that present as well as all past reform ideas centre in the principles involved in that saying, "Love thy neighbor as thyself"—love in the broad, fraternal, equal sense, as well as the special. The power of this love is the moving spirit of all moral writers, and is the highest inspiration in all bible, and all the brightest lights of past ages held this as a representative idea. It was that, in its fullness, that came with and inspired Jesus, eighteen hundred years ago, to establish its kingdom on the earth, or its incarnation in the hearts of humanity, feeling assured that, when once there established, its fruit in works would illustrate its value.

Acting and living the principles involved in this saying constitute all we know as moral law, and are the standard of morality. Righteousness and right action are simply the living in all our acts, those governing principles, and should be made just what they are in Nature, the central idea of all reform. To live these principles is to strike a sure blow at evil, and evil alone will disappear when the elements that give it life are cut off. When we live that life founded on these principles, we stop generating the elements that give life to evil influences and evil institutions. Neither belief nor knowledge will save us. Salvation from any known evil comes from putting in practice what we know and believe. A mere belief in any principles of goodness or man has not and will not save the world from corrupting tendencies and positive evil. Is not a belief in goodness and righteousness publicly professed, with a daily life of constant and continuous practice of immorality, positive hypocrisy?

Where is there in our whole social structure—in its institutions—one that is based upon the governing principle, "love thy neighbor as thyself"? And how can mankind, with immoral natures and immoral tendencies, create moral institutions and laws? "We do not gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles." It is here affirmed that there is not a moral institution on the face of the earth, and, as the formula stands, no one can live and act and be a moral being, therefore there can be no such acts as moral acts. Is it any wonder that corruption and evil exist? How can it be otherwise, so long as such elements are being continually generated and transmitted to every coming child, who, in its turn and time, acts out what it necessarily must—that character, the elements of which were his ante-natal inheritance, over which the child had no control.

It may be said that we must look for salvation through Jesus Christ. Rightly interpreted and understood, this idea cannot be too strongly urged and carefully considered, but we most earnestly affirm that a simple belief in Jesus, as the Christ, can never bring salvation. Eighteen hundred years of such belief have failed to bring salvation from evil and sin to the world or a single person, for we find no one living the life and practicing Jesus lived and taught. And if it has not brought salvation here, how can there be any hope for the future? Certainly Jesus, in his teachings, gave no one such assurance, and certainly common sense cannot. All the revelations the spiritual world gives us to-day, make that idea a positive falsehood. Belief may be a necessary step to a reform, if it is an incentive to action; but faith, or belief, or even knowledge, without works, is dead—of no account. What is wanted to-day, and what we have not got, is the ripe fruit of a moral life.

In the fruits which are plainly visible in our social structure to-day, as they present themselves, there are no marked lines of distinction between those who profess religion and those who do not. Taking the life and teachings of Jesus as the standard, I affirm there is no such thing as Christianity on the earth to-day; also that his rebukes of the hypocritical religious professions of the scribes and Pharisees of his day are equally applicable in this. Is this not so?

What should we think of the profession of that man who believes in temperance as the only means of salvation, makes a public profession of that belief, signs the pledge, goes out the next day, gets drunk, and so on through a lifetime—a professional believer in temperance, yet a constant drunkard all his life? Could we not point justly to such an one as "thou hypocrite?"

And what a sham!—and more—a burlesque of the teachings of some great apostle of temperance that arose years ago, preached and practiced temperance, instituted temperance societies, making a success in gaining converts, till at last the rum-sellers, seeing that their occupation was being lost, became enraged, and murdered him. Still the enthusiasm continued, the people became zealous in the reform, when some aspiring, ambitious person, who had failed to silence it by his persecution, became suddenly converted, joined the temperance ranks, extolled the greatness and goodness of the murdered apostle, and, with a zealous lawyer style, entered heartily into the

work of forming temperance societies, but silently and insidiously instilled into the minds of his converts that all that was necessary was, a simple belief in the goodness and mercy of this great apostle, and his power to save them from the effects of intemperance if they only believed in him. The people following their inclinations, finding it a very convenient way to ease consciences, accepted this as a rule of action, substituting mere belief in the great apostle for the practice of temperance. And so this great reform, begun aright, was converted into a mere ceremonial law and ritual service, instead of living real practical temperance lives. And all the change the world made, lay simply in engraving a mere belief in the saving power and mercy of this great apostle on to the old ceremonial law, and expecting, through his blood, as they enter the portals of the life beyond, to be saved from all the effects of a life-long intemperance.

So stands the Christianity of the world to-day in its practice to the teachings and the moral reform begun eighteen hundred years ago by Jesus. Again has that same power and influence appeared, demonstrating that immorality and its results upon the spirit in its spirit-homage cannot be effaced by any belief in a great apostle of truth; demonstrating that a true life alone in the earth form is a passport to happiness in the world beyond; demonstrating that a long life of immorality and its results are passports only to habitations of darkness and misery, and that it takes a long while in the home of the spirit to shake and outgrow the effects of that license, that belief without works is just as well. In fact, it was the immoral and sinful practices such a belief instilled into the hearts of humanity, and made such wretchedness and misery to spirits in their spirit-homes, that inaugurated this whole spiritual movement.

If any one doubts the statements herein made, as to the failure of the saving power of the present Christian belief, we will here introduce the confession of the Cincinnati Christian Standard of Oct. 11th, in an editorial on the subject of Thorns, which says:

"The deificity of riches." Our pen falters in the attempt to speak justly of the corrupting, degrading and blinding influence of the love of money; but never been fully described; and to handle money and increase its stores without loving it, is a perfection of excellence which few attain. There is something so base, so utterly ungodly, so dehumanizing, so all-devouring, in availing of the power of money to make a man indolent, that there is not a noble or godlike quality of his nature that he will not sacrifice to its greedy demands—there is not a crime so horrid that he may not be driven to its accomplishment, nor a depth of infamy to which he may not be persuaded to descend, rather than abandon the infatuation to which he has sold himself. Our land is filled with fraud and crime to-day through the promptings of this fearful passion. Frauds and crimes the most startling in their magnitude and recklessness, are being unearthed, until the whole land stands aghast at the spectacle. Yet these are but the legitimate fruits of an insane passion which men treat as a necessary evil. It is successful, even in religious circles, wherever it is successful. We speak not now of the honest gains of industry, the legitimate fruits of toil and industry, but of that passion for wealth which makes us impatient of the slow profits of patient labor, and kindles ambitions for sudden and enormous gains, leading to every kind of reckless speculation, and plunging its victims into madness and crime. Is it possible for spiritual life to be nurtured in nature that are abandoned to this devouring passion? Can acceptable incense be burned with this "strange fire"? The line of demarcation between the Church and the world, in this respect, is not what it ought to be.

So thinks the editor of The Christian Standard, and we insist that there is no "line of demarcation" between the Church and the world. If there is, we ask the Standard to show it to us among its professors. We insist that the greedy gain and lust of riches and licentiousness are as much to be found *pro rata* in the Church as out of it.

We refer again to the same paper, on its next page, where it begs a pardon of its readers for introducing "a quotation from that vile sheet, Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly," where it hints at the propriety—if the quality of the offering is to be taken into consideration—that the wife had better find some other father of her child than a money-lusting husband she may chance to have, or some other depravity he may be continually acting out. Why, such insinuation on the part of the wife might rob the gallows or the penitentiary of its victim, or cheat the doctor out of a part of his professional service. No—no, wife—you must not do such a monstrous, wicked act. Such "luscious doctrines" should never appear in the homes of our country. When will humanity learn the great fact that all that action mentioned in the quotation concerning the lust for wealth is contagious, and transmitted, in one form or another, from generation to generation; that beguiling children is no mean, low and lustful practice, if conducted as it properly should be; that a man lustful in his money relations and desires can be nothing else in his married relations; that an immoral man or woman is immoral in every respect—expecting, of course, that their strongest points will be the strongest reprobated? We insist that such principles as are involved in the quotation from Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly are principles in the right direction, so far as they go; that is, the principle considering quality in the raising of children as the paramount motive begetting them.

But, to complete the programme, there is needed, the remodeling of our whole social structure, making its formula founded on the moral principles of "loving thy neighbor as thyself." Then will disappear the evils mentioned in the Standard, arising from the lust for wealth, and then will appear all the possible benefits that were hinted at in Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly; for, in that formula, raising children will become a science, and considered and begotten for the universal, and not the mere private and special interest; for, in that formula, all private interests will be absorbed in the universal good. When this formula becomes the rule of practice, then will the kingdom of heaven indeed be introduced; for each will love his neighbor as himself.

From the foregoing ideas, these conclusions are drawn: that the religious systems heretofore and now taught, have not and cannot elevate the morals of humanity, because they allow man all the license of wickedness of his heart desires. That comes from the taught belief that any one may go through a long life of wickedness, and, just before he leaves this body of flesh, can repent, and ask God to forgive him through Jesus Christ his Son, a mediator between the Father and Son; that Jesus Christ, being so full of compassion and love, will forgive the past, and let the culprit go free from all punishment, and enter direct the company of the blessed; that, even after repentance has taken place, the repentant can still continue in sin. All that will be necessary is occasionally to ask God to forgive, and everything is all straight. True, a respectable standard after repentance is required. This is necessary to keep the respect of those who have no belief; for it is this outside belief that holds us and keeps in proper bounds the whole world of belief. This may appear an unwarrantable assertion; but it is needed only to refer the reader

to those nations who are the most devoted to a belief. Italy, the most devoted of Christian believers, ten years ago, seventeen out of its twenty-two millions could neither read nor write. The weight of belief being in a measure removed, the nation is rising in intelligence and power. It must make a rapid stride, for common schools are doing the work.

All the steps since the reformation, commenced by Luther and Calvin, have been so many steps away from belief to that of unbelief, shaded all the way down, until in the present Unitarian, it is scarcely visible. The darkest day, and the most immoral phase of our present civilization, was at that time when the world was completely unshrouded in belief. Martin Luther and Calvin broke the charm of belief, and since then humanity is rising. Unbelief looks no Saviour to take away its sin, so unbelief looks out—it feels and knows it must stand the result of its action. Unbelief is a moral power. Belief gives all manner of license. Spiritualists, as come-outers from all previous beliefs, must be more or less tinged with the hereditary influence of those beliefs. The road, and the one they have taken, naturally is the wilderness of confusion. In this wilderness of confusion—ideas without order—antagonism was the natural result. It could not be otherwise. In this wilderness the elements of antagonism are cast off—spontaneous their force. These are the elements brought out of the land of bondage, and are the effects of beliefs. Spiritualism teaches positive unbelief. It teaches that no living soul can commit a sin, or do a wrong, without receiving the full penalty of that sin and wrong; that justice is a fixed and inflexible spiritual law; that punishment comes as a natural sequence of sin and wrong; that from this justice and punishment for sin and wrong committed, there is no possible escape; that there is no respect for persons; that all stand equally under and in this law, and subjected to it; that while man may forgive his brother a wrong or an injury done him, that forgiveness can in no case mitigate or lessen the punishment of the wrong done.

It is the opinion of the writer that Jesus taught these same ideas; that it was positive unbelief to the Jewish religion for which he was murdered; that Paul, learned in the Jewish religion, violently opposed the influence Jesus created, and intended to crush it out, but was converted, and became a powerful and its most influential advocate; that from the nature of Paul's previous religious belief, all his inspiration would naturally formulate ideas in perfect keeping with his spiritual status; one of the most prominent ceremonies of the Jewish ritual was the ceremony of selecting a perfect kid, believing that with the ceremony of the temple the priests could offer up this as a sacrifice for the sins of the people, thereby absolving them from all the wrong they had done; that Paul, and the apostles of Jesus, after his death, naturally construed the mission of Jesus into the idea of a sacrifice by the Father of his son, as a saviour of the sins of the world; so that all there is of past and present Christianity is simply engraving this idea on to the ceremonial Jewish religious ritual, making Jesus as the sacrifice "once for all," instead of offering a kid at stated periods for the same purpose. It is also the opinion of the writer that Jesus taught the new birth and the resurrection—that is, a spiritual growth out of this ceremonial and ritual religion into a state of perfect conformity to the moral law—a state where no ceremonial religion is represented or demanded; that this growth into this spiritual state is the resurrection—that is, raised from a lower to a higher condition; that the transition from the one condition to the other is the new birth; that the Spiritualism that came with Jesus eighteen hundred years ago, and that which appears to-day, are one; that that which appeared with Jesus was to sow the seed; that which appears to-day is its ripening fruit.

It was necessary that such a mind as Paul should appear, because through his inspiration a formula could be produced suited to the natural demands of humanity; that, so formulated, the world received it, and has been drawing from that fountain until it could so mold and re-create humanity through the progressive principle that its power could be completely incarnated in the humanity of earth. Now the real resurrection is taking place, and the formula of society must be changed to suit the demands of the redeemed; and we expect, and ask, Spiritualists to look not for the present order of society to remain, for it must be changed. They must arise and establish a formula for society founded on moral law, where a man and woman can live and act and not violate the law of justice, which cannot be done as society now stands.

Spiritualists can understand that all men are spiritual beings; that all their needs are spiritual necessities; that all there is of houses and lands, all there is of food, all there is of pleasant and beautiful surroundings, are the natural necessities for the growth and development of the immortal spirit. Spiritualists can understand that diseases, both moral and physical, are transmitted; that the elements the parents have generated just previous to conception, are concentrated in the germ of the future child and determine its future life-line; that the mother's surroundings during the germinal development of that child have their effects. They can see that if they are engaged in pursuits that call out strife, selfishness, hate, revenge or any vice, they must of necessity be transmitted to the future of humanity. They can also see that if they are engaged in and surrounded with pleasant relations, and with that class of action that is moral, these also are transmitted. They can also well understand that the sexual relations these same laws rule; and that they rule for good or otherwise in perfect keeping with the relationship of those elements; that the conjugal relation is the relation of elements, and that all conjugal relations to the contrary are positive adulteries; that marriage is the marriage of elements in the conjugal relation, and all else is adultery; that adultery is the mixing of compounds that do not belong chemically together for a given purpose; that all such relations in or out of our present system of marriage are adulteries; that all such adultery is injurious to the spiritual structure, and disastrous and a positive evil to every child begotten under such conditions; that all true conjugal relationships are beneficial to every child begotten with such conditions.

Seeing all this, Spiritualists can understand that the present order of society is not adapted to the needs of the resurrection-life.

Then again, it is easily seen that we have no conditions in harmony with our intelligence to rear and educate our children. Children need children's society, and that society, like the older ones, must be with likes. All forced friendships are adulteries. Children need play-grounds, and the constant care of some older person. That care should be continued with them in their play,

instructing them in good manners, in kind, respectful actions, &c., and this care should be of those naturally adapted to children, for this gift is as natural as music or a mechanical gift, and no person should be allowed the care of children except thus gifted. Our present system of society prevents its completeness. It is just as much at fault as to the means of development and social arrangement of grown people.

To those who wish to make any further inquiries as to further action, please address, F. SKINNER, Philadelphia, Pa.

The Suffrage Question.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE ORGANIZATIONS.

BY ELIZABETH CARY STANTON.

I am frequently asked by correspondents about the number and differences of the woman suffrage organizations, and as I have not time to answer all separately, will make a brief statement of facts in the Golden Age.

At present, there are four so-called national organizations: one on the Pacific Slope, of which Mrs. Emily Pitts Stevens is President; the Northwestern, of which Mrs. Adelle Hazlett is President; the Boston wing, called the "American," of which Mrs. Lucy Stone is President; and the National Suffrage Committee, of which I am President. These are all working for the same grand end. Their differences it might be difficult to state, as they are based more on personalities than principles.

The National Suffrage Committee made its "new departure" in the "Woodhull memorial," assuming that women are already "citizens" by the Federal Constitution, specifically declared so by the tenth and fifteenth amendments, in which, for the first time, a "citizen" is clearly defined, and his or her fundamental right to vote as such plainly declared.

With this view, our manner of agitation is radically changed. Instead of forming county societies, rolling up petitions against unjust laws, or favor of fundamental rights to State and national constitutions, we demand our rights at the ballot-box, in the courts, before judiciary committees of Congress, and in annual conventions at the Federal capital. For three years in succession we have held conventions in Washington, which, in numbers and enthusiasm, have marked a new era in the movement.

With lawyers, judges, statesmen and publicists, all discussing the constitutional right of woman to the suffrage, we may congratulate ourselves that this question has passed the court of moral discussion, and is now fairly ushered into the arena of politics, where sooner or later it will triumph. We have no party to inscribe woman's suffrage on the banner. There are some leading minds in the "Northwestern" and "American" and "Pacific Slope" societies, who agree with the "National" on this point, but they have taken no official action in this direction, the majority inclining rather to a demand for a Sixteenth Amendment. This, then, is the distinguishing feature of the "National" association.

We have our office in Washington, where tracts and reports can be obtained from Mrs. Josephine L. Griffing, Secretary. We have scattered during the year thousands of Benjamin F. Butler's able reports on the Woodhull memorial. Mr. Butler's argument, Mrs. Woodhull's speech on "Constitutional Equality," "Labor and Capital," and "Finance," and Theodore Tilton's later tracts.

Some people carp at the "National" organization because it endorses Mrs. Woodhull. When our representatives at Washington granted to Victoria C. Woodhull before the Judiciary Committee of both Houses an honor conferred on no other woman in the nation before they recognized Mrs. Woodhull as the leader of the woman suffrage movement in this country. And those of us who were convinced by her unanswerable arguments that her positions were sound, and who chose to follow her, are true to the cause.

Mrs. Woodhull's speeches and writings on all the great questions of national life are beyond anything yet produced by man or woman on our platform. What if foul-mouthed Scandal, with its many tongues, seeks to defile her? Shall we ignore a champion like her? Admire her for the sake of arguments, we know that all religions, though it is false that she has been in a court-room in sentiment and practice. When a woman of this class shall suddenly devote herself to the study of the grave problems of life, brought there by profound thought or sad experience, and with new faith and hope, struggle to reform the world, and to save the souls of the future, shall we not welcome her to the better place she deserves to hold? There is to me a sacredness in individual experience that it seems like profanation to search into and expose. Victoria C. Woodhull stands before us to-day a grand, brave woman, radical alike in political, religious and social principles. Her life is a grand illustration of the triumph in her nature of the spiritual over the sensual. The processes of her education are little to us; the grand result is everything. Are our brilliant flowers less fragrant, our luscious fruits less palatable, because the debris of sinners and harnays have covered them? No. The degradation—vice, crime, poverty, and temptation in all its forms—and yet maintain a purity and dignity of character through all, gives untold proof of its high origin, its divinity.

The *Liberal* *Journalist*, that magnificent ally, so wise and pure that it looks as if it were a battle with the wind and the storm, that queen of flowers, flowering in all soils, braves all winds and weathers, sunshine and rain, heat and cold, and, with its feet in frozen clouds, still lifts its pure, white face forever toward the stars.

When I think of the merciless and continued persecution of that little woman by the press of this nation, I blush for humanity. In the name of woman, let me thank you for so generously defending her. In reading the reports of her stirring speech, I could see nothing so monstrously immoral on which to base the severe editorial comments of our journals. It seems to me that the English papers, and the *Standard* in particular, are doing her wrong in their bills to license prostitution by the State, are more legitimate targets for the press of a nation than one suffering woman who has been most unjustly scarred in her own flesh by the iron teeth of the law.

The fears of women of one another, lest they should be compromised by those they imagine less reputable than themselves, is as amusing as pitiful. I am told that the English women were quite nervous at the report that Anna Dickinson, Kate Field, and Olive Logan talked of visiting that country—they were so afraid lest they should be compromised by those they imagine less reputable than themselves, is as amusing as pitiful. I am told that the English women were quite nervous at the report that Anna Dickinson, Kate Field, and Olive Logan talked of visiting that country—they were so afraid lest they should be compromised by those they imagine less reputable than themselves, is as amusing as pitiful.

Now I think we had better agree to fight this battle just as our fathers and husbands have, two revolutions ago—all that are loyal to the principle. How much of an army should we have had for the rebellion, if every man who came to enroll himself had been asked: "Do you smoke, drink, or use any other such low-bred, illiterate, or filthy habits? If so, you cannot fight for freedom." Was it not just this element we swept into the army? And were not they the better for suffering and dying for a noble cause? Churches and reform associations are just the places to draw in the sinners, and inspire them with noble and pure purposes. Alas for those Pharisees that are forever thanking the Lord that they are not like other men. Jesus, the good and perfect one, ate and talked with publicans and sinners, and was ever kind and merciful to the erring and unfortunate. Magdalens of his time. Let us, one and all, follow his example. *Tenney, N. Y., Dec. 1, 1871. —Golden Age.*

LEARNING TO PRAY.

BY MARY E. DODGE.

Kneeling fair in the twilight gray,
A beautiful child, trying to pray;
His cheek on his mother's knee,
His bare little feet hidden,
His smile still coming unbidden,
And his heart brimful of bliss.

"I want to laugh. Is it naughty? Say, Oh mamma! I can't pray to-day. I hardly can say my prayers! I don't feel just like praying! I want to be out doors playing. And run, all undressed, down stairs."

"I can see the flowers in the garden-bed, shining so pretty, and sweet, and red; And Sammy is swinging. I guess. Oh, everything is so fine out there, I want to put it all in the prayer (Do you mean I can do it by 'Yes'?)"

"When I say, 'Now I lay me'—word for word—it seems to me as if I should be dead. Would 'You thank you, dear God,' be right? He gave me my mamma, and my papa and Sammy. Oh, mamma! you needed I might."

Clainging his hands and kissing his face, Unconsciously yearning for help and grace, The little one now began. His mother's nod and sanction sweet Had led him to the dear Lord's feet, And his words like music ran:

"Thank you for making this home so nice, The flowers, and folks, and my two white mice. (I wish I could keep right on.) I thank you, too, for every day—Only 'I'm most too glad to pray. Dear God, I thank I'm done."

"Now, mamma, rock me—just a minute— And sing the hymn with 'darling' in it. I wish I could say my prayers! When I get big I know I can. Oh, how I want to be a man. And stay all night down stairs!"

The mother, smiling, clasped him tight, Kissing and cooing her fond "Good night," And treasured his every word. For well she knew that that restless joy In that love and innocent boy, Were a prayer that her Lord had heard.

Banner Correspondence.

Pennsylvania. ALLEGHANY.—L. M. Patterson writes, Dec. 7th, as follows: It has been a long time since I have troubled the readers of the Banner of Light with anything from my pen, and I feel that I am already pardoned for the intrusion of a few lines of news from my Western Pennsylvania home.

The Woman's Suffrage movement is gathering strength and gaining very respectable proportions in the smoky atmosphere of Pittsburgh. There is an organization of earnest workers which meets in the hall of the Grand Army of the Republic on Fourth street, on the first Friday evening of every month, which is a noteworthy incident in the history of the cause.

I attended their November meeting, which was very respectable, both in numbers and appearance. The meeting was opened with prayer, in which the Chief Magistrate of the Nation, as well as stars of lesser magnitude, were remembered. The presiding officer (a lady) then made a sort of declaration of independence, stating that they had been grossly slandered by the city press, in "having been called free lovers and Spiritualists." She impressively assured the audience that they were not free lovers and Spiritualists—that she had never, until recently, been aware of the scandalous misrepresentations that had been made regarding their association. She then read a paper, stating that, because some free lover or Spiritualist happened to publish a pamphlet or advocate the cause of equal suffrage, it did not follow as a sequence that their Society were Spiritualists and free lovers.

Poor woman! She did not seem to recognize that in denouncing Spiritualists, she was meeting out to others the same injustice of which she was complaining as a grievance to the Society over which she presided. And again, does she not know that Spiritualists are the head and front of this movement, and that her society have fallen into the error of bringing up the rear? In the discussion of a question so expansive and momentous, affecting so large and varied a class of humanity, it seems unwise to drag in our religious opinions and petty prejudices, since the genius of our Government is founded upon religious freedom. If she is familiar with church history, she will know that all religions, from the earliest heathen religions, have passed through their fiery ordeals and persecutions "for (what they deemed) righteousness" sake—the Methodists, (to which she adheres,) the Quakers, (whom she applauds,) as well as others. No class of people have been more basely slandered and misrepresented than Spiritualists, and the mistakes and errors of the few (unlike other religious societies) are attributed to the whole.

It seems to be a law of human nature, that as soon as the yoke of oppression, the iron heel of despotism are taken off our own necks, we turn and place them on those of our brethren in bonds. In every new movement there is a period of intolerance, and then acceptance. But all have to pass the breakers of the first stage, after which they can sail on smooth waters. But the greater the enterprise, the more we have to work and wait for the result.

The Methodists, Quakers, Presbyterians, Catholics, Swedenborgians and other denominations who have fought their way up through persecution into high respectability and wealth, are now as intolerant toward those who are advancing onward to new truths, as if they had never known the anguish of litanies and faggots—or as if their fair fame had never been sullied or tarnished by the blackest of sin, or known of the existence of Cotton Mather.

THE MASS CONVENTION held in Library Hall, Pittsburgh, on the 24th and 25th ult., was a grand success. The galaxy of speakers, Mrs. Lucy Stone, Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, Mrs. Coles, Mrs. Cutter, Mr. Blackwell, and our own Mrs. Jenkins and Miss Hindman, delighted the large audiences with their eloquence and wisdom. But although the press reported with the fairness that usual, yet very often, the speakers could be identified by several addresses by reading the different newspapers. Some of the speeches were intelligible, while others were "jumbled up" into mere nonsense.

One of the speakers informed the audience with much gravity that they did not affiliate with Mrs. Woodhull; that she had been interviewed and queried as to her position in respect to that lady, and she had satisfied her interrogator "that Mrs. W. had nothing to do with the Convention." I would like to be informed what the people know about Mrs. W., that makes her unfit to sit in Convention with her sisters in this common cause.

Attending for the sake of argument that Mrs. Woodhull differs in opinion in some outside issues from them, are proscriptors and denunciations in keeping with the teachings of the lowly Nazarene whom they profess to follow and imitate? He was denounced because he "ate with publicans and sinners"—was called "gluttonous and a wine-bibber"—and when his disciples saw some parties casting out devils in the name of Christ, they (as in the spirit of to-day) rebuked them, because, forsooth, they did not belong to their clique; but Christ said, "Forbid them not; he that is not against us is for us." And, further, "let him that is evil be evil, as of old—let him (or her) that is guileless among you, cast the first stone"—would Mrs. Woodhull suffer by the experiment?

I am reminded of an anecdote I once read, of an aristocratic lady, who was seated on a ferry-boat, and when another of her sex came and sat down beside her, she sprang up and went to the window, and remained standing until a plain-looking country woman came in, and took the vacant seat. Immediately the lady by the window beckoned her, and told her she was sitting by a "woman of the town." She said: "Oh, well, it makes no difference; it is not catching in our family."

People whose reputation is a little shaky have to be very careful with whom they associate, while others who are established can venture to extend the right hand of fellowship to all humanity.

MRS. VICTORIA C. WOODHULL, as previously announced, lectured in Library Hall, which was filled with appreciative listeners, and Mrs. W. may consider her Pittsburgh lecture a triumph, that to some persons would be glory enough for a lifetime. Her lecture, I believe, was

not reported by any of the city papers, for which favor she ought to be grateful, as she should not have afforded to do her justice after all the slang and slander in which they had so freely indulged concerning her. Pity that people "who live in glass houses will throw stones."

The Commercial says, "She had a large, but not very select audience. A number of papers computed it at 'about three hundred,' while the Dispatch thus eloquently descants upon the occasion:

"There was possibly a large proportion who visited the hall with the expectation that the lady would branch off from the constitutional points at issue, to the still more attractive principles of free love. The audience was eminently respectable, and well behaved; so, likewise, if judged solely by her lecture last night, would the oratrix have been considered. On the seats through the auditorium were scattered the latest number of Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly, bearing the soul-inspiring motto, 'Progress! Free Thought! Untrammelled lives!' and containing numerous interesting articles on free love."

Mrs. Woodhull had for her subject "Constitutional Equality" (which she read from a constitution), and handled it with ability, and acquitted herself with great applause, notwithstanding the denunciations of the press and sneering prophecies that the "hall would be jammed full" and the fatherly advice to the people "to stay away," and the wonderment as to whether "Tilton would be with his property in the hands of his creditors and introduce her to the audience." &c.

Before leaving the stage she advanced to the front and said, "One word for myself: on the cars to-day I saw, in one of the daily papers, an article in which the virtuous editor (I suppose he's virtuous) advised everybody to stay away from my lecture, for fear of catching the disease of free love. I am happy to know that you have a modern Christ in Pittsburgh."

Vermont. BURLINGTON.—E. N. Miller writes, Dec. 10:

I have been a reader of your columns ever since your first issue—some member of our family having been a subscriber: the last two years I have been in the name of Eliza W. Miller. I have left this life for the spirit-life last August, the 8th, at the old age of seventy-nine years. He was one of earth's noblemen—an honest man; not only honest in his dealings, but honest to his convictions of what was right; a lover of truth and the well-being of the human race; reformer—being one of the three voters in town who voted the anti-slavery ticket. He was a delegate to the Buffalo Convention which nominated J. G. Birney as a candidate for President; he was a soldier in the war of 1812—served in three campaigns. The First Congregational Church filed an accusation against him for a departure from the articles of their faith, and he was expelled, to which they would not listen, and refused to hear it read. He then withdrew from the church, saying he loved the members none the less, but loved the truth more.

I love to recall to my mind his pleasure in reading the Banner of Light. His favorite writers were the workers were William D. Howells, William D. Howells, and others, particularly those of a scientific cast of mind.

He was a firm believer in Spiritualism. A few days before he left the form he saw the spirits of his friends and relatives, among them a son who passed into the spirit-life thirty-two years ago. Being asked if he still held to his belief in Spiritualism, his reply was, "Yes, I have seen the spirit-form of Harrison (his son) and I know if he still lives, I shall live hereafter in a consoling state also."

Dr. Houghton officiated at his funeral, which caused a considerable commotion in the families of his brothers and sisters, who were Spiritualists. They expressed their indignation in a manner not very becoming to people who profess to be the followers of the humble Jesus. But our reply was, We shall follow out the request of father!

We (brother and myself) invited Mr. Maynard, the Congregational clergyman, to officiate at the funeral and take a part with Dr. Houghton, explaining to him that it was father's wish to have Dr. Houghton officiate on the occasion. Mr. M.'s reply was, "Certainly I will, and you are doing as you should do" and he did take part in a very friendly and cordial manner.

What a glorious religion! Spiritualism is, to make beautiful that once dreary pathway called "death"! Its beauteous strew the pathway of death with beautiful flowers!

New York. SPIRITUALIST CONVENTION.—The friends of Western New York have again been favored with a quarterly convention, termed Mediums' and Speakers' Convention, held at Medina, the 2d and 3d of December. There had never been a Spiritualist gathering there, and but very few friends residing in the village; yet the meeting, before its close, was quite as good as expected.

It was a glorious religious occasion, and the first time listened to the grand truths and philosophy of Spiritualism. There were eleven counties represented. The meeting was presided over by our eloquent and earnest co-worker, Geo. W. Taylor. The Committee in whose charge these meetings are called, made their annual report, and were re-elected for one year. Geo. W. Taylor, North Collins, J. W. Seaver, of Byron, and A. B. Tilden, of Danville. Sarah A. Burdick, of Rochester, was appointed Secretary for one year. Many subjects of interest were discussed by the different speakers—J. G. Fish, J. W. Seaver, Geo. W. Taylor, Mr. and Mrs. Woodruff, Mrs. Hazen and others. The Moral Reform Convention, spoken of by several who had witnessed them, among the number, R. H. Curran, of Rochester, who also visited recently the State Prison at Auburn. The chaplain informed him that there was not an inmate in that prison who believed in the universal salvation of all mankind, but they were all believers in eternal damnation, or of no belief; and that prison there are over twenty-five Protestant clergymen.

J. G. Fish gave the closing lecture, on the "Ultimate of Spiritualism." The audience, through the several sessions, were cheered and inspired with vocal music by the President. Altogether, the Convention was a grand success, and, by its teachings, many people of scientific and philosophical tastes were cast into the stagnant and turbid waters of old theological teachings, which will set in motion wave upon wave, until the circumference is reached. S. A. BURDICK, Sec'y. Rochester, N. Y., Dec. 10, 1871.

LAONA.—H. W. T. writes thus: I have been these many days wishing to say the same things in regard to Lois Walsbrooke's writings which met my eye on reading a recent Banner of Light, from the pen of J. H. S. and I am glad to find every word of that paragraph is doubly true. There are few families in the land that cannot apply some part of "Helen Harlow's" experience. The book is spoken of highly outside the ranks of Spiritualists. "Allice Vale" is very interesting. My mother—aged seventy-five years—became so excited over the story that she could not sleep, and that she came inquiring "how it all came about?" She could read no more, but must know the end.

Spiritualists should appreciate the moral courage of the author. She has taken up a subject heretofore considered too delicate to be handled. I cannot conceive of a woman reading either of these books without receiving most incalculable benefit. Her bouquet of "Mayweed Blossoms" I have not read; but judging from the plain and honest title, as well as the woman who could and arranged the flowers, I dare to pronounce it both fragrant and everlasting.

In the days to come, Lois—over there—"you" will find appreciation and recognition for your labors in behalf of the downtrodden and weary.

Psychometric Readings.

MILWAUKEE, WIS.—Nettie O. Tator writes: I see in your columns a worthy testimonial to the services of the very remarkable medium and psychometrist, Mrs. A. B. (Mary) Severance of Whitewater, Wis. I lived within one block of her house, during her three years' residence in Milwaukee, and in that time had become acquainted with her power, as well as to become cognizant of tests received by many others. From what I thus learned, candor compels me to say that I regard her as one of the most remarkable mediums of the age, doing a work, in a very quiet, unpretentious way, scarcely second to any in the spiritual ranks, almost without exception. During my acquaintance with her she has answered several thousand letters, besides giving a great number of verbal delineations, which, as far as I could ever learn, almost without exception, were entirely satisfactory. Some of the most prominent business men of this and other cities came frequently to consult her upon the business

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In quoting from the Banner of Light, care should be taken to distinguish between editorial articles and the communications (condensed or otherwise) of correspondents. Our columns are open for the expression of free thought, when not too personal; but of course we cannot undertake to endorse the varied shades of opinion to which our correspondents give utterance.

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Orthodoxy Showing Fight.

A REPLY TO A RECENT ATTACK ON SPIRITUALISM BY REV. AUSTIN PHELPS, D. D.

We have received a pamphlet from the press of the Boston Congregational Publishing Society, entitled, "Spiritualism; the Argument in Brief, by Rev. Austin Phelps, D. D."

As a sign of the times this little work has some interest for Spiritualists; for it shows that the progress they are making excites the profound anger and alarm of the evangelical sects. But like Balaam, Dr. Phelps cannot wholly curse those whom God hath not cursed. He is compelled to admit, though reluctantly, some of the extraordinary phenomena; but, like our Catholic friends, when driven to an explanation, he resorts to the Satanic theory, and attributes what he cannot explain to the agency of that somewhat mythical personage, known as the devil, aided by his malignant hosts. More of this solution anon.

We will take up the objections of Dr. Phelps in their order. "Spiritualism," he says, "is not Science."

The ordinary definition of science is, "Truth ascertained; that which is known." Now the transcendental phenomena of Spiritualism, on which the central fact which makes it Spiritualism is based, are precisely those which Dr. Phelps himself is compelled to admit in part, and those phenomena are, in the estimation of Spiritualists, known and ascertained facts, from which there is no escape, and about which there is no doubt. They are just as much facts as the facts of chemistry; and if chemistry is a science, so is Spiritualism just so far as it is based upon admitted facts; and its one overarching and all-embracing fact is the existence of a supernatural intelligence and force, to which it gives its name. All other facts relating to it are subsidiary compared with this.

In disproof of the scientific character of Spiritualism, Dr. Phelps lays great stress upon the dubious claims of the supposed communicating spirits as to identity. "Nothing," he says, "but downright miracle can settle this elementary question of identity. Yet, all this is determined, we have not the first solid basis for a foundation of such a superstructure as shall deserve the name of science." Quoting from Mr. Epps Sargent's well-known work, "Planchette, or the Despair of Science," he remarks: "The most scholarly of American defenders of Spiritualism is evidently staggered by this questioning of identity; he honestly says: 'If spirits have the powers attributed to them by many seers, of assuming any appearance at will, it is obvious that some high spiritual sense must be developed in us before we can reasonably be sure of the identity of any spirit, even though it come bearing the exact resemblance of the person it may claim to be.' And again Planchette says: 'It may be that we must be in a spiritual state before we can really be wisely confident of the identity of any spirit.'"

These frank speculations or admissions on the part of a student of Spiritualism, do not affect one jot the scientific character of spiritual facts. It is not necessary that we should be thoroughly satisfied as to the identity of a certain spirit before we can appreciate the phenomena of levitation, of spirit writing independent of human aid, of music evoked by no mortal fingers, of clairvoyance, transcending all mere theories of mind-reading, of unconscious cerebration, or of sympathetic vibrations of the brain.

Many Spiritualists have been thoroughly satisfied as to the identity of certain communicating spirits. Mr. Sargent's remarks upon the subject are evidently speculative and not dogmatic in their intent. He raises a philosophical doubt and one that Spiritualists would do well to heed before taking everything for granted as true because it may come from a spirit in whose identity they have confidence.

Dr. Phelps objects that "Spiritualism is not religion." He might with as much point say, "Life is not religion." Spiritualism is simply the scientific evidence of spiritual force and intelligence; of something transcending the known powers of the mortal part of man.

We take it for granted that all truth is religious truth; that science is religion, art is religion, and that all which pertains to the welfare and enlightenment of man is religion. Everything which is felt and known aright is religion. Nothing is religious except through error, through ignorance, or through wrong feeling. Every form of activity and of thought is religious so long as it is founded in right feeling and a right affection for the truth. In this sense Spiritualism is eminently a religion—a religion to which all the "systems" of theological merchants are as a melodramatic display of stage fireworks to a calm and holy moonrise.

We do not say that a man becomes religious by believing in Spiritualism, any more than he becomes religious by believing in the atonement or the evangelical Trinity; but we do say, if the intelligent Spiritualist is not religious, and consequently moral, it is because he has not yet begun to appreciate the significance of the grand fact of which he claims to be possessed.

But, says Dr. Phelps, "A system of religion, to be worthy of a sane man's faith, must in the first place be a system."

Ah, indeed! Now the ground is shifted, and instead of religion we have a "system" of religion—an artificial placing together—a scheme of salvation—a system, not deduced scientifically from the great facts of existence, physical and spiritual, but one which certain seers or mediums first, and afterwards certain theologians, would impose upon mankind as directly derived from God—a revelation from him.

But Spiritualism thunders forth: "Stop there! Not any seer, and not any theologian, and not any mortal man or immortal spirit is the spokesman of the Unspeaking One. The creature who

says to you that you must believe what he says about God and a future life or be damned, is a fanatic, a blasphemer, and a pretender. Some truths he may speak, but this is not a truth. The responding faculty in your own reason and your own heart which whispers, 'This is divine—this is true,' is the only oracle to whose mandates you can accord a rightful obedience."

It is this system-mongering disposition among men that has degraded and polluted religious truth. The beauty of Spiritualism is, that it does not submit to the limitations of a system; it is too free an essence even to be embodied in organizations. Some of its professors may be ambitious to systematize and to organize, and they may do good in their way; but Spiritualism itself is simply a revelation of the immortal life—that is all. Every thinking man is competent to make his own deductions from that great disclosure, coupled with the facts of human existence, the teachings of science, and the rational history of the race. Spiritualism is the deadly foe of all systems that would impede the advance of an anthropological and spiritual truth by trammeling and prejudging the mind of man. System-making has been the bane of genuine religion as it has of genuine philosophy.

Spiritualism is spiritual and intellectual freedom. It says to man: Throw off these swaddling clothes in which priests and politicians would keep you, and walk freely forth, in your own individuality, under God's sun-bright heaven, and see things for yourself. Let no seer, or spirit, or prophet, or medium, or priest impose on you his utterances as the infallible belief which you must accept under risk of damnation or spiritual loss. Resist and despise all such dictation and all such threats as an insult to your understanding. Accept no old books, or interpretations of old books, as the literal word of God, or as having an authority to which, in spite of the remoteness of your reason, you ought to bow down. God's only revelation of himself is in the divine life as manifested in Nature, in science, in the phenomena of existence in your own heart and reason, and in the best thoughts of all great seers and thinkers, whether they be called Moses or Jesus, Mahomet or Swedenborg, Shakespeare or Leibnitz, Newton or Locke. All their thoughts are divine only so far as they are true, and their errors are but the necessary accompaniments of their finite and imperfect state. You yourself can accept and assimilate truth only so far as you can become a recipient for it. It cannot be forced or rammed into your untrained brain or heart by the weight of a great name or by the terror of a great threat. It is not yours until you have won it fairly by comprehension and by sympathy. Nothing can be true to you until it is true to your reason and your sense of right. No revelation can make it true to you. You can no more swallow a creed which you have not made your own, through the adaptation of the understanding and the insight of the heart, than you can jump down your own throat. Spiritualism, Dr. Phelps tells us, lacks "conclunty." "A system of religion must have conclunty."

Ah, Doctor, that one word *conclunty* reveals to us just what you want; for what does it mean? "A careful, skillful joining." And what is its derivation? It is from *con*, with, and *clunus*, "a mixed drink of spelt-grain and wine!" Now it is to the glory of Spiritualism that it abjures all mixed drinks—all theological concoctions whatever, though they be made never so "carefully" and "skillfully." They are too often but the seductive tipples of fallible and fuddled heads; not the living, unadulterated water whose pure fount is not far from the Eternal Throne.

To the prophet who comes to us with his *Thus saith the Lord*, the Spiritualist, if wise, will reply: "You may have, like Balaam, or like Ezekiel, more or less of the prophetic faculty; many weak and bad men have had it, as well as some good men; it is no conclusive proof of superior moral elevation or insight; it is often accompanied by a decided impotence of the reasoning powers. You are perhaps under spirit-influence. I can readily believe it; you may convince me of it by marvels; no matter; the spirit who presumes to say to me, through you, *Thus saith the Lord*, is probably some bullying, inflated, lying spirit, perhaps a theological bigot while in this earth life, who is thinking vastly more of his own opinions than of the humility becoming before the Most High. God you and your master are impostors! When you can come to us and modestly say, 'My reason tells me, or 'A respectable spirit informs me,' then we will gladly be your listeners. But do not hope to overawe and dragoon us with your *Thus saith the Lord*. That game is played out; and no one knows it so well as the experienced Spiritualist. He is the last man to be carried away by supererogation; to be deluded by wonders and signs and impious pretensions; for he knows what such things amount to."

But a system of religion, the Doctor tells us, must not only have "conclunty"—it must "come from God"—and further, "it must be worthy of God in its internal evidences," &c.

Now, apart from our own reason and sense of what is right or divine, the only evidence we can have that a communication is from God, rests in the assertions and reports of certain fallible and interested men. Spiritualism teaches us that all such assertions, even when backed by marvels or so-called miracles, must be taken with distrust. It shows us that marvels, very similar to those recorded in the Bible, and on which its claims to be considered a divine book mainly rest, are going on about us every day, and that the mediums for these marvels are ordinary mortals like ourselves, and often very fallible mortals, even while showing some extraordinary gifts.

"If we hear not Moses and the prophets," echoes Dr. Phelps, "are we to be persuaded by one risen from the dead and cowering in the fashion of these modern ghosts?"

Persuaded of what? All that we are "persuaded" of, is, that such marvels indicate the existence of spirits, and that these spirits are often a very poor set, hardly above the lowest mortals in their moral development. And this tremendous fact points to an enormous error in those positive religions or "systems" of religion, the pneumatology of which conveys the notion that spirits are a sort of demi-gods either for good or for evil—elevated by the act of passing from this mortal husk to a state of transcendent knowledge and power.

Spiritualism is destined to render an immense service to humanity in dispelling such mischievous delusions. It shows us that a spirit out of the flesh may be very inferior, in intelligence and moral insight, to one still in the flesh; it shows that our heaven or our hell commences with us here; and that, setting aside certain infirmities of the flesh, we may as literally be in the life of heavenly blessedness here as in the highest celestial sphere.

The evangelical "system" on the contrary, gives us pernicious ideas of a partial God—of one in conflict with all human conceptions of goodness and justice in his "scheme of salvation," that even such authorities as Calvin and Mancel tell us that what may seem evil in man may be good and just in God, thus confounding

all our notions of right, and striking at the very principle of human reason. So much for the consequences of a theological "system"—one that has "conclunty." To make good one part of their "scheme," the founders or upholders of it have to outrage reason and dispel our faith in the very existence of absolute goodness and right.

A "system" of religion, according to Dr. Phelps, must be "worthy of God in its internal evidences." The evangelical "system" requires us to believe that the Supreme Being said unto Moses, "Thou shalt see my back parts, but my face thou shalt not see."

Now, in the estimation of Spiritualists, all this is not only "unworthy of God," but wholly blasphemous. They regard Moses as a man sensitive to spirit influences, and so simple or so psychologized as to believe that a mere spirit (and one by no means of a high order) was the Infinite God. They can easily suppose that Moses was sincere; but that he had a personal interview with Deity they no more believe than that Swedenborg, Harris or similar claimants were favored in a like way. The "internal evidences" here are utterly wanting. The supposition that the Infinite God so demeaned himself, is revolting to the reason; perhaps our evangelical friends will say, "Then there is all the more merit in our believing it." But with what consistency can such believers object to the "incoherences" of Spiritualism?

Dr. Phelps says further, that a system of religion must be "consonant with other revelations of God to mankind; God cannot contradict God." To our short-sightedness, God reveals himself at times as if he were God, and at times as if he were not. If his scabbard cheers us, his leech-kill us. He dispenses life and death, gladness and grief, with the same hand. Evil is rarely much further from good than shadow from body. Every revelation, therefore, of men or of spirits, of evil or of good, may be, in a certain sense, a revelation of God; a revelation at least of what his government permits. If the Bible is his revelation, so is everything else; and it is for Reason to find where the most of divine truth is lodged.

Spiritualism is "consonant with other revelations of God," just so far as this: it appropriates all in them that is true and good in the light of eternal reason. It throws an astonishing illumination on those parts of the Bible, in which spiritual manifestations, similar to those of modern times, are mentioned. All that is truly moral, and, in the high sense, religious, in the Bible, is eagerly accepted by Spiritualism; for Spiritualism is eminently eclectic, extracting truth from every part, even the most poisonous, and finding some soul of goodness in things evil.

"Thus may we gather honey from the weed,
And make a moral of the devil himself."

Dr. Phelps will admit that Nature is a revelation of God. Now in Nature the scientist detects much that seems like imperfection and wrong; we cannot understand why there should be malformations, monstrosities, venoms and loathsome things, frightful diseases, like hydrophobia, eccentricities of climate when the very birds, that trust so confidently in Nature, perish of cold or of starvation by millions. These things are quite as puzzling as the "incoherences and contradictions" of Spiritualism; nay, as those of the Bible; or as puzzling as it is to see our evangelical friends swallowing creeds, which, if logically digested, and really believed by loving hearts, ought to send them straightway to the madhouse.

Here is another objection to Spiritualism, advanced by Dr. Phelps: "As a source of religious knowledge, its witnesses," he says, "contradict each other."

Undoubtedly; and so we ought to try the spirits, whether they be of God; try them at the only tribunal which ought to be supreme in our minds, the tribunal of reason and conscience.

Our sources of religious knowledge are not in the affirmations of any man or any spirit; but in a devout study of the works of God, of the moral order of the universe, of the phenomena of life, natural and spiritual, and of all great thoughts from whatever sources.

The very contradictions and absurdities which come to us from the spiritual world convey a stupendous truth, showing what a blind guide the dominant theology has been; they show that the change produced in us by death is not so great that we grow at once from dunces into wise men, from villains into saints, from misanthropes into philanthropists, or from sneaks into gentlemen.

These confusing, contradictory, and very illiterate communications so shocking to the Doctor's aesthetic sensibilities, show us that man is still man after he has thrown off this mortal envelope, and that no magical *presto change* uttered by theology in his behalf on his accepting an atonement, or acquiescing in a peculiar interpretation of certain old books, or putting himself in the hands of a priest, is going to transmute him, by the mere process of physical death, from a very poor creature into an angel of light.

Therefore, what Dr. Phelps says of the contemptible and contradictory communications from the spirit-world is but a confirmation of its existence to the thoughtful Spiritualist whose mind is no longer pre-occupied and pre-governed by the gratuitous "systems" and assumptions of evangelical theologians and speculative commentators.

"Is it like God," asks Dr. Phelps, "to reveal himself in dancing rattles, battered windows, uneasy pokers, the rattling of knuckle-bones, and the falling of turnips from the sky?"

But why not as well in these as in rattlesnakes, mad dogs, devil-fishes, poisonous plants, loathsome maladies, dreadful calamities, and the long list of things inexplicable and seemingly at variance with an omnipotent benignity?

Dr. Phelps's objections to Spiritualism can be turned against a thousand revelations we see every day in Nature and in human life.

"Is it like God to set going the machinery of the supernatural world, for the sake of recovering a lost ear-ring?"

And why not the machinery of that world as well as of this? May not the one be to him a very small thing, as well as the other?

"I have as much reason," says the Doctor, "to accept these as the rest for a divine revelation."

No one disputes it; and so have we as much reason to accept the bad things of the universe as divine revelations; and we do accept them as such in a certain sense. The very imperfection and incompleteness of God's world is perhaps, to angelic understandings, an evidence of its divinity: Has not God an eternity in which to work, and may not man and the universe be as yet in their rudimentary stages?

But, concludes Dr. Phelps, "Spiritualism is not good morals."

With equal right and reason might we say, "Evangelism is not good morals." Every day, almost, we hear of evangelical ministers turning out scamps and seducers; of grave members of the evangelical churches blossoming into defaulters and swindlers.

If the science of life, mortal and immortal, reverently studied and sincerely considered, under the light of Spiritualism and anthropology, cannot help in the shaping of good and moral men,

then for much weightier reasons must the evangelical promise of salvation through an atonement, irrespective of human deserts, be nugatory and ineffective in making men moral.

Spiritualism is in the highest sense a morality; for it teaches that the life which now is is perpetual shaping and influencing the life that is to be. It teaches that every thought and the memory of every act is eternally imbedded in the very organism of the spirit, so that no recollection is lost, no act becomes null and void. If we will but weigh this awful fact in our spiritual economy, what incentives to a high and noble morality ought it to generate! What are the promises of salvation through another's merits and sufferings compared with the belief, stamped scientifically on our convictions, that we carry in ourselves our own heaven or our own hell?

"Here heaven is not," you say, "but yonder it shall be." "Nay," replies Spiritualism, in the words of the noble Fichte, "What then is that which can be different yonder from what it is here? Obviously, only the objective constitution of the world as the environment of our existence."

If considerations like these will not lead to morality, then nothing in human thought or reason can; but we must give up morality as a thing for this life, and make a short and easy cut to an ultra-mundane "salvation," either through a foggy mysticism, or through an evangelical "system," under which we are saved, if not made moral, by an historical Saviour, and relieved of all further trouble or concern in the matter.

In one part of his tract, Dr. Phelps narrows down his objections as follows: his meaning being apparently that we may accept a certain dose of the phenomena if we will only believe in the construction which he, in the service of the evangelical theology, would put upon them. He says: "Spiritualism, taken as a whole, is not good sense. Not that the admission of a certain modicum of fact in its alleged phenomena is unreasonable. A man is not to be browbeaten out of trust in his own eyes. A belief in phenomena as historic facts, explained or unexplained, is one thing; religious faith in those phenomena, as the vanguard of a new and revolutionary disclosure of truth from heaven, is another. This faith, and nothing less, is Spiritualism. And this, I repeat, taken as a whole, is not good sense, whatever may be true of an eclectic dose of it."

In this remarkable passage, Dr. Phelps entirely misconstrues and misconceives the great fact of Spiritualism as a religious agency. What does he mean by "religious faith in phenomena?" Faith in everything true—faith in all natural phenomena, whether arbitrarily classed as physical or spiritual—must be preeminently religious. All truth, as we have already said, is religious truth. It is a part of God's teachings. There is no escape from this axiomatic proposition.

When therefore Dr. Phelps speaks of belief in certain admitted phenomena as being the "vanguard of a new and revolutionary disclosure of truth from heaven," he simply manifests alarm lest the progress of truth should clash with that theological "system" which he accepts as "a disclosure of truth from heaven." Now we make no distinction between the truths of Christianity and those of Spiritualism. Everything which appeals to our reason as truth, we accept as such, no matter who utters it. No prophet or philosopher can make a disclosure appear to us as from heaven, except so far as he satisfies our rational conceptions of heavenly truth. It is by no means true, therefore, that Spiritualism claims to have received any "new and revolutionary disclosure of truth from heaven." Its central truths are as old as humanity. They may be found in all the old bibles, all the philosophies, and all the histories. There may be individual seers now, even as there were in the olden time, who would frame a "system" and perhaps impose a form of worship upon Spiritualists; but such men are taken for precisely what they are worth, and no more. The moment they would come over us with their "Thus saith the Lord," that moment they are derided and dismissed by all enlightened Spiritualists. Dr. Phelps's fears, therefore, of a "new disclosure" are wholly supererogatory.

The "new disclosure," if there is any, will consist simply in the higher appreciation of all truths, old and new, in science and in life, and in the elimination of those errors which arrogant theologians and system-mongers have imposed upon mankind, and the threatened exposure and demolition of which is a grief to their successors and disciples.

"Taken as a whole," it seems, "Spiritualism is not good sense." Take a part of it, and be sure not to let that part conflict with the evangelical "system," and Spiritualism is all right.

Nay, Doctor! The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, is what Spiritualists, unterrified by theological anathemas and threats of damnation for not believing in your "systems," regard as good sense. The man who tries to swim to truth, with a "system" about his neck, will make sorry progress.

And when you charge us with "religious faith in phenomena," you either utter unmeaning words, or you would limit our intellectual freedom by confining us to such phenomena as may not conflict with the views of your own particular sect. You would not have us look through the spiritual microscope or telescope if its revelations are going to conflict with the "conclunty" of your notions on the doctrine of election, justification by faith, and atonement through the blood of an incarnate Deity.

Have you ever considered that the whole Bible is full of "religious faith in phenomena?" The Psalms are one continuous hymn, based largely on the divine significance of phenomena. When Christ exclaims, "Behold the lilies, how they grow!" the devout heart of the poet-seer is tenderly moved with love to God by the consideration of a simple phenomenon. Exclude the religious faith in phenomena, and you ignore that revelation of himself which God offers to us in his works.

And what you would have us do is plainly this: You would have us place your theological "system," your scheme of salvation, with its precious "conclunty," its parts all "carefully and skillfully joined and adjusted," this part by one Council and that part by another, this part by Calvin and that part by King James's translators—you would have us place this "mixed drink" above the revelations of God in universal Nature, in anthropology, in the astounding phenomena of clairvoyance and mediumship, in psychology, and in the great comical volume spread before us night and day, if we will but open our eyes to read!

These phenomena, you think, ought not to inspire our "religious faith," but that should come solely from your own little scheme or "system," based on an old book which is even now undergoing the revision of the leading theologians of the day, because of its mistranslations and "incoherences."

Excuse us, Doctor, but to our notions there is neither good sense nor good religion in such an attempt to limit our views of God's revelations to man.

"It is not good sense," you say, "to interrogate a modern witch of Endor to get something better than Paul's testimony to the immortality of the soul."

Paul's written testimony is excellent in its way, and so the testimony of every man who can give a reason in words for the faith that is in him, has its value; but when you ask us to attach the same weight to a rhetorical argument, or an emotional expression, that we do to a vital fact, an overwhelming proof, appealing to the senses and to our own experience, you go contrary to all the laws of human reason.

The "witch" gives us a proof, for instance, of a marvel like clairvoyance; she manifests super-sensuous powers, thus satisfying us that we have latent in ourselves a spiritual faculty—a faculty meant for a future spiritual existence, since rarely used, so far as we are conscious, in this life. Shall Paul's eloquent harangue move us more than a proof like this? Like all poetical expressions of great truths, Paul's words shall animate and move us; but when we are hungering for evidence of immortality, give us, to support our aspirations and hopes, often made languid in our conflict with the base things of earthly life—give us a great, irrefragable fact—an act, and not a mere assertion of divination. *Si divinato est, dii sunt.* If there is divination, there are spirits. And so we think it is not only "good sense," but superior sense, to have Paul's words supplemented and confirmed by the deeds of the aforesaid "witch."

We must here leave Dr. Phelps for the present. He candidly admits that there is some truth in the phenomena. He graciously says of Spiritualists: "We must concede to them a certain basis of phenomenal facts." Thank you, Doctor, for even this small favor, though Spiritualism is now rich and potent enough to laugh at such doles. It shall be passed to your credit, nevertheless.

But alas! what there is of genuine in Spiritualism the Doctor ascribes to the agency of "the devil and his angels." This hypothesis opens a new field of inquiry. It is something to have proved a devil in this material age; why then is the Doctor so hard upon the Spiritualists? Ah! the devil, it seems, is showing his diabolical mischief by certain creeds and with the "conclunty" of certain "systems." Well, even the devil may not be so black as he is painted. When we have leisure and space we may examine the diabolical part of the Doctor's argument.

Spirit-Pictures in California.

We have of late received several communications from correspondents, setting forth the existence of "spectral" pictures on window glass in San Francisco, which we shall hereafter publish. We give at present the substance of a half-column account of one such case in the Morning Call, of that city, for Dec. 9th. It appears that a pane in an upper story window in a nearly new dwelling-house, on Main street, occupied in one of its tenements by a French widow lady named Joergens and family, was discovered to be ornamented by the face of a man, which fact was not noticed before Monday, Dec. 4th. This picture the "Call" reporter describes (as seen by him) as being "that of a man apparently thirty-five years of age, with dark, wavy hair parted near the middle, and wearing a full, dark, long-sleeved coat. The head rests a little on the left shoulder, and the face (which is a full front view) has on it an expression of deep study." It continues to create the greatest interest among the neighbors. Many explanations of a mundane origin have been offered, but all fail to meet the case successfully. The lady residing there stated to the reporter that she was unable to account for its appearance; that she was no believer in ghosts; and that on Thursday afternoon, Dec. 7th, while gazing on the picture, she saw another figure. This one appeared to be a little to the right of and behind the one first seen. The outlines of this picture were not so distinct, but she recognized it as that of her deceased husband, who died a year ago in September last. Not wishing to trust to her own eyes in this case, she called her children and several persons, who identified the picture as well as herself. This second picture was only visible for about three hours. Washing the glass on both sides with vinegar, and scraping it with a knife, has produced no effect upon the original portrait, and the baffled reporter is obliged to close by endorsing its real existence, and then saying "what it is, or how it came there, are questions which cannot be answered at present."

"Walter Thornbury."

Such is the title of the literary snob—we know of no other name to which he is entitled—to whom Harper's Weekly thinks it worth while to toady, and, in its toadying, to sneer at the cause of Spiritualism. The artist of the Graphic, a London illustrated paper, received from said Thornbury an account of a spiritual séance, and proceeded to sketch it for the use of that weekly. Of course Harper's Weekly felt obliged to transfer it to its own pages, thinking that, after having exhausted Tammany, it has no other subject left but Spiritualism. And so the picture is repeated in Harper, from the London Graphic, as outlined to the artist of the latter paper by "Walter Thornbury." It represents a circle seated around a table, the accessories of ladies' dressing in particular being given with that lickerishness of taste which Harper has never hesitated to betray when it thought the public would stand it. But the deceit, or rather the falsehood, of the scene consists in representing the medium—a male—seated at the table with his hands at liberty instead of being placed on the table as they should be. This is purposely done that the observer may readily see that the toying of the chairs to the ceiling of the room is the work of his own hands, and not of invisible powers. We can assure Harper's Weekly, in the apt phrase it once applied so effectively to a cartoon of Tammany trying to explain, that this ruse is altogether "too thin," and let it likewise bear in mind that it degrades itself by thus seeking to ridicule the faith of honest and pure people.

Music Hall Free Spiritual Meetings.

Miss Jennie Lays addressed a large audience at this hall Sunday afternoon, Dec. 24th, treating as her subject, "The World's Angel of Reform." This lady, who has had but a brief though highly successful experience in the lecturing field, fully met the expectations of her friends, and was frequently applauded. We shall hereafter give to our readers a full report of her remarks. She speaks again at the same hall, Sunday afternoon, December 31st.

Thomas Gales Forster, (who it will be seen in another part of the paper is soon to "settle" for one year in New York City, as a regular minister to one of the Spiritualist societies), will speak in the Music Hall course during January.

Memphis, Tenn.

Judging from the Memphis daily papers, Moses Hall, who is speaking there for the Spiritualists, appears to be having a lively time. Some of the clergymen have given him several battles in words, only to be vanquished by him. Such agitation is doing wonders by opening the eyes of the people to the defects and false teachings of theology and its creeds.

Scientifically and
ically prepared by DR.
C. New York. Nine
50 cents.

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Oct. 31.

Now, I've made my way here through thick and thin to try and set her straight. I make no pretensions to sanctity, any more than I did when

FRANK DWIGHT, Montana, Iowa.
MRS. SOPHIA K. DURANT, Lebanon, N. H., will answer calls
in New Hampshire and Vermont.
MRS. EMILY DEARBORN EWER, inspirational speaker, 769
Broadway, New York.

Mrs JULIETTE YEAW will speak in Salem, Mass., Dec. 24 and 31; in North Scituate, Jan. 14. Address Northboro', Mass. Mrs. FANNIE T. YOUNG will answer calls to lecture; also will perform the marriage rite and attend funerals. Address, Centre Stratford, N. H., care Dr. H. C. Coburn.

THE WEST.

THE PSYCHIC FORCE AGAIN.

It is possible, if not probable, that Prof. Crookes and associates may have contributed to science a permanent discovery in his recent experiments with Mr. Home as medium. It certainly has never been clearly demonstrated what was the force or element used by the will, when the hand was controlled to write or strike by an individual. Voluntary actions are merely registered as one class of motions, and involuntary as another, and the moving medium used as an instrument in the former, was never clearly defined. Experiments have fully proved that it was electricity nor magnetism, which in their natural and abstract condition are not subject to the will: That there is an element or force which is subject to the human will, and quite certain, and it may be properly termed psychical force, as the will pertains to the soul and the elements

BARNUM AND HIS MENAGERIE.

CHRIST AS A RULER

RIGHTS

SIGNIFICANT

Last Wednesday evening the writer attended the lecture of Mrs. Tappan delivered at the Magnetic Temple, Brookline. The weather was very cold, yet notwithstanding a good appreciative audience greeted the speaker. After an earnest and impressive invocation, Mrs. Tappan stated that she was suffering from great physical weakness, not having been able to move from her room for several days. She had been impressed to come by her spirit-guides, and was better and stronger in consequence. There was no denance, during the lecture, of weakness; on the contrary she spoke with strength and power upon the subject of "To Matter." She spoke of the all-piercing filling the vast universe of God, pervading all things, giving the important to the human soul inhabiting its earthly temple, and freeing it from all the ghosts of fear, envy and doubt. A freer

WESTERN LOCALS Etc

you been a reader of that paper any great length of time?

ELDER PRINCE:—Yes;—yes; we have taken the *Light* for the last ten years—indeed, we could not along without it. I think it the nearest approach to perfection of any religious journal in the world. I look upon the most reliable of the Spiritualist papers; its statements can depend upon; there is not any fanaticism in it.

then the *Message* Department—how we all enjoy it

At a meeting of the American Association of Spiritualists held at Troy, N. Y., Sept. 12th, 13th and 14th, 1871, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That there is need of more liberal, humane and comprehensive methods for the relief of diseases of the mind; that we recognize the possibility of great good to the human family from psychopathic (magnetic) treatment of the insane, and that all efforts in that direction come from themselves to the hearty support and coöperation of Spiritualists and persons of liberal thought.

The following persons were appointed to conal'e

of exercises being similar to that of other organizations. Speaking and reading by twelve members, remarks by Henry Anson, Eben Brown, L. B. Felton and J. L. Burleigh, and a grand banner march, in which forty-eight school children took part, consumed the session.

Married:

At the residence of his father, 25 Pine street, Boston, on evening of Tuesday, Dec. 16th, Ferdinand J. Buckley to

The ceremony was performed by Rev. S. H. Winckley (Unitarian) of Boston, and was witnessed by a goodly number of friends, who joined in wishing long life and success to the newly united.