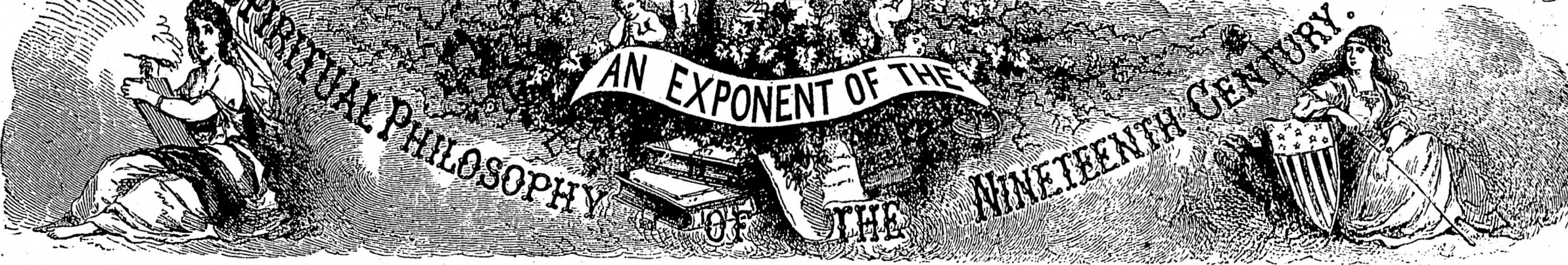


BANNER OF LIGHT.



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THE HARMONIAL CYCLOPEDIA: A Repository of Useful Knowledge Concerning Things and Ideas.

PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

Prepared expressly for the Banner of Light,
BY ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS.

ARTICLE XII.

Elimination.—The human mind inherits its past; that is—which is a truly marvelous thought—each mentality holds in its constitution the essential drift of everything which preceded it in its own special line of development; hence you obtain an explanation of the great number and variety of individual faults, peculiarities and imperfections. To rise superior to these—to recognize and “eliminate” its hereditary evils and misdirections—is the mind’s highest and grandest achievement. Individual errors must be eliminated from the character—must be thrown off, like perspiration from the skin—before the mind is capable of true happiness, and qualified for the perception and expression of “truth, pure and simple.” If the tree is crooked because the twig was bent, and if the twig received its wrong direction from surrounding circumstances—just as the common mind is formed by education—then, since the mind is not a tree, but is a magazine of elastic powers, affections, and will, it follows that the mental tree need not, like the insensate oak, remain bent, but may, by the exercise of its own great powers, eliminate both the causes and the consequences of its inherited faults and errors.

Take history, for example, which is full of errors caused by the special educational and patriotic prejudices of its writers; or take our popular systems of religion, which overflow with pious fraud, which makes most of both history and religion unreliable. Let all errors and misstatements be eliminated from history and theology, and the remainder would be exceedingly small in amount, and surprisingly commonplace in quality. But friction in the “mills of God,” or what is called “the experiences of life” (which means the same thing), wonderfully promotes elimination.

“Unhappy lies the head that wears a crown,” because there is in every wrong a germ of retribution. The erroneous condition (that of a king) is punished by the invisible principle of Justice. Truly hath it been written, “A prosperous worthlessness is the curse of high life.” A crown composed of good deeds is not for the king’s head. The elimination of error from a kingdom would be signalized by a revolution, the destruction of the throne, the establishment of a republican government, recognizing the right of all persons to vote for the laws they are asked to obey. The elimination of all error from a person (were it possible) would unfit the mind for contact with its fellows in error. Such a person would no longer be “a little lower than the angels,” but would have become in reality an angel; and, therefore, so unlike mankind, they would probably reject his teachings and nail him to a cross.

Error.—An honest mind is constantly liable to err; but such a mind cannot be false. The in-wrought desire for truth presupposes the conscious existence of error in the mind; just as a desire for the possession of knowledge springs from an inward pre-consciousness of ignorance. But I would rather be in error than in ignorance. Although error is allied to pride, and, therefore, very hard to conquer, yet ignorance is profoundly indifferent, because it is satisfied with itself. Error, if honest, is anxious to obtain the truth; but ignorance, without ambition and without light, is content to remain in its own imbecility. A false-minded person is hypocritical and dangerous, and not trustworthy in any place; but an erroneous mind may be a true friend, noble, just, and patriotic. Errors are common along the interminable path of progress. Errors in feeling, errors in judgment, errors in opinion—these stumble and fall headlong over these stones in truth’s highway. If we desire to possess solid reality, and have patience with ourselves and with others, while seeking for the light, we may never fail in obtaining the celestial prize.

But let us pity those minds who cling affectionately to their errors. Swedenborg wrote, emphatically against persons who were “in the love of error,” or who were “confirmed in the falsities of doctrine.” Their judgments are warped and benighted, because their affections (spirits in prison) cling to falsehood and error. It was Pope’s opinion that “a man should never be ashamed to own he has been in the wrong,” which is but saying, in other words, that he “is wiser to-day than he was yesterday.” The popular pride of undeviating “consistency”—of not changing your opinions, not acknowledging your own mistakes—is the Apollon of our bottomless pit of wickedness. Beware of men who refuse to look new evidence in the face. They shut their eyes to new light, by which alone new convictions can enter, displacing old errors in the affections and understanding. Such a bigot in society, in politics, in law, in religion, is the very Evil One! “Dare to be true,” says the minister of honest and honorable progress; “nothing can need a lie.” Suppose your neighbors say, “Oh, you turncoat! you weak-minded chameleon! you fickle, inconsistent fellow!” Suppose the hard-shell and the iron-clad monitors of old error do hoot and sneer at you! “Dare to be true!” is the voice of your God. Remember that

“Great truths are portions of the soul of man;
And great souls are portions of eternity.”

Abandon errors as soon as you discover it in any department of your nature. Remove all stones

from your grain fields. One truth is better than all the errors of Christendom.

Epictetus.—Eighteen hundred years ago, one of Nero’s guards, Epaphroditus, had a slave whose name was Epictetus. His cruel physical circumstances acted upon his intellectual and intuitive faculties as the wine-press acts upon grapes. “Patience, perseverance, brotherly kindness and charity”—these four cardinal Christian virtues poured out from his entire life.

Plato, Socrates, Seneca, Epictetus, Antoninus, although not engaged in prophesying of and clearing the way for the popular religion (which was developed by the Apostles, not by Jesus), were, nevertheless, remarkable teachers and practitioners of every important principle or precept that can be found in Christianity. The Romans were not philosophers; they were only intellectualists; fond of knowing all that could be known in metaphysics. They were constitutional eccetics in their independent philosophical inquiries; and by temperament exceedingly stoical in all matters pertaining to religion. How to get best and justly through the world, was the ethical and philosophical question.

“Bear and forbear,” replied Epictetus; and his life was a complete illustration of his doctrine. “Learn to be one man,” said he; and the absence of all doubleness in his own character and conduct was remarkable. “No man can serve two masters,” is another way of expressing the same idea. The Roman intellect was inevitably fatalistic in religion and morals. Their distinct perception of law in everything impressed their judgments with a belief in inexorable Fate. Epictetus had spiritual illumination superior to his era, but his chief desire was to teach the Romans how to live. Duty was never surpassed by the pride of personal rights. Every one’s duty was to strive to love virtue, truth, honor, and to daily practice what he knew to be required by these radical precepts and principles.

This system was perfect as a rule of faith and practice; but it lacked what a beautiful landscape lacks in a cloudy day, namely, light from the sun in the heavens. In our century this light, emitted by a resplendent sun in a sky far more interior, is shining upon mankind. Let us live and look, in harmony with our superlative superiority. It will be a wonderfully happy and pure epoch when mankind shall practically embody the immortal teachings of Epictetus.

Earthly Love in Heaven.—On the evening of the 27th of December, 1872, in the comfortable lecture-room of Plymouth Church, Mr. Beecher said that he was in the habit of seeing (with the eyes of his imagination, and not by any special revelation) Christ “living” and “going about in heaven as he did upon earth, manifesting the same tenderness, sympathy, love, and special attachment to his personal friends. He exclaimed: “Look how Jesus lived with Mary and Martha! How familiar he was! He was not a stranger. Mary loved Christ, and he permitted her to do so. Everything showed that he was on singularly familiar terms with the sisters. If Christ was so familiar and loving with his friends on earth, he would be more so in heaven.”

It seems, by this admission, that Jesus was “on singularly familiar terms with the sisters;” a fact which the record sufficiently proves, and which Thomas Paine had the singular audacity to significantly emphasize. But Mr. Beecher’s recognition of this “familiar and loving” relation which subsisted between “Jesus and Mary and Martha,” is predicated upon the existence and exercise of pure and unselfish love in the true human heart; while, on the contrary, Mr. Paine’s recognition of these loves was tainted with an insinuation of sexual and conjugal intimacy. Of course, it is but natural that a well-trained and high-salaried minister should, attorney-like, make out the best possible case for his celestial client; and it is equally to be expected that the opposition lawyer should subvert terrestrial evidence, and invalidate witnesses, and insinuate things not lawful for man to utter. Judging from the earthly side of experience, the jury in this case would incline to a verdict that such “familiarity was of the earth, earthy;” but, judged by the higher rule, that evil thinking is evidence of active evil in the thinker, the jury would agree upon a verdict that “pure love between men and women on earth is a foretaste of the joys of the highest heaven.”

And such is the testimony which I bring to you. In the society of the Summer-Land we perfectly know our special friends, and we love them with an ineffable tenderness, of which the sweetest terrestrial attachment is but the crudest initial suggestion and the faintest experience. Babies and children grow to full maturity after death, and adult friends are clothed upon with the new royal garments of immortality; but we nevertheless shall meet our own—we shall perfectly know them, and we shall surely love them just as substantially as we do now, but infinitely more beautifully and unselfishly.

Empirical Opinions.—The medical profession is based upon a huge mass of learned ignorance and assumption, just as the ministerial profession is founded upon a conglomerate “rock,” exceedingly full of crystallized superstitions. Medical men agree that a murderer should be hung, unless he be insane; and ministers say that no murderer shall inherit the kingdom of heaven unless he repent. The result: Doctors testify to the prisoner’s insanity, and clergymen “swear” that he has made peace with his Maker. The first profession involuntarily protests against the inhumanity of capital punishment by proving the prisoner’s moral irresponsibility; while the second profession makes its protest against the unutterable absurdity of the doctrine of eternal hell-torments, by announcing upon the gal-

lows that the prisoner is *saved*, and that he will probably become in four hours (after being legally strangled to death,) a first-rate angel “loafing around the throne.”

The empirical opinions of the legal profession will pass away when the barbarism of the gallows is overcome by an enlightened public sentiment expressed through statute law; and religious dogmatism will cease when the popular outrageous absurdities of God’s moral government fall forever beneath the progressive power of science and the reign of common sense.

Insanity is a disease of the mind. Disease means discord. Therefore any discord of the mind is insanity. Do you suppose that a harmonious mind can be selfish, or envious, or jealous, or that such a mind can become sufficiently angry to strike or murder a fellow being? No, certainly not. Then you acknowledge the *insanity* of every mind that is discordant in its relation to its fellows? Yes, truly. Then crime is the name of a mental disease. Murder is the name of an extreme manifestation of this disease, just as epilepsy is the name of an insanity in the circulatory and nervous systems. Conclusion: study to overcome the *causes* of mental disorders; study to regulate the development of persons who have a constitutional bias for crime; study to rise above the empirical opinions of the professions upon every subject; study to construct society and the character of its members upon principles of love, justice, and true scientific knowledge. Murder, and every other manifestation of insanity, will die and be forgotten when mankind begot harmonious children, and establish a system of favorable circumstances for their education and development.

Brigands, Social.—In all thoroughly despotic countries, where the rights of individuals are ruthlessly trampled upon by the iron heel of hereditary monarchy, it is but logical that outlaws should be developed. These individual and self-appointed sovereigns—these autocrats and democrats of the field and forest—organize themselves into bands for purposes of plundering and for mutual defense. “The Great Napoleon” was, by organization and conduct, one of these outlaws; a high-handed and big-headed leader of a military band; and his vaulting ambition was, politely speaking, “acquisition of neighboring kingdoms and the concentration of wealth and power;” but, speaking plainly, his aim was identical with that of any romantic forest freebooter and bold brigand. The mark of Cain should be branded three times upon the forehead of his public career and history—blood! blood! blood! and his magnificent systematic plans of universal conquest and inevitable carnage should be condemned by every lover of “Peace on earth;” and the boys at school should read concerning his forced marches and bloody exploits, so that they will forever know what to avoid, and what they must unsparingly condemn.

Romantic brigands flourished especially in the last century. The inhabitants of Corsica remember many fine specimens. The last of the daring and terrible race of forest sovereigns was Santalucci, of whom the Corsicans relate the most wonderful adventures.

But happy America! Here the political assassin need not exist. The large and enlarging principles of our government create and guarantee the perfect freedom and equality of the individual. There is, however, in the social organization of this Young Republic, a despotism of opinion which deprives woman of an equality which is enjoyed by her companion, man. He is universally indulged and sustained in the practice of vices and crimes, while his sister, if equally guilty of like offenses, is visited by public opinion with an unequal punishment, which, in its effect upon her future, is out of all proportion to the condemnation passed upon him, who is her co-partner in both virtue and vice. The result is, as the present too plainly proves, the development of *social brigands*. And these, strange as it may seem to the unphilosophical, are mostly women! They first and last suffer most from the prevailing injustice and social despotism, and consequently—which is perfectly logical—they are the first to rebel and the last to surrender.

An inverted manifestation, of this wholesome remonstrance and resistance, is the development of what I term *social brigands*. They are bold and irrepressible. They defy public opinion and systematically attack individual reputation. They hide in the forests of great cities, conceal themselves in the caves and fastnesses of the great human wilderness, from which they emerge to waylay and assassinate men who may be wealthy in reputation, even if they be not rich in noble life and character—that is, not perfectly armed against the attack of the social brigands.

The misfortune of it all consists in the diabolism of the enterprise. It is a systematic and pre-meditated attempt to *overcome evil with evil*; which, with such as Napoleon and less popular brigands, is a correct rule of conduct; but among the so-called spiritually enlightened, who have ever received into their hearts a breath of the holy Summer-Land, it is a rule worthy only of Milton’s fabulous dwellers in pandemonium. “Do not evil that good may come!” is shouted by every angel of love and wisdom. Social brigandage in this country is somewhat to be expected, until there shall exist more enlightenment and more justice upon the sexual and conjugal relation between men and women. But let true reformers, while they fearlessly and unceasingly labor to bring in the better era, stand firm for the highest principles of the best methods of progress.

Japan contemplates a scheme of national education which will require fifty-five thousand public schools.

Literary Department.

THE YOUNG AUTHORESS:

OR,

CRUMBS OF TRUTH AND FICTION.

Written for the Banner of Light,

BY MRS. H. N. GREENE BUTTS,

Author of “Vine Cottage Stories,” Etc., Etc.

CHAPTER X.

Neville Hall.
“Cousin Chester,” said Mary one evening, as they sat conversing upon the doctrine of the spiritual philosophy and general reform, “it seems to me that we ought to make some effort in the direction of having a course of lectures in this town the coming winter. But every church door is closed against whatever savors of reform, either in social life, science, or religion. If Northland needs anything it is a free hall, where all of the live questions of the day can be discussed without fear or favor.”

Chester’s eyes kindled, and his face grew luminous, as Mary proceeded. She saw that he was, in his own mind, forming some plan to favor her idea of giving conservative Northland a progressive shock by grafting reformatory ideas into the limbs of old theology. After a few moments of thoughtful silence, he said:

“I have a plan, Mary, which, if you and mother approve, shall be matured at once. I noticed to-day, as I was walking up town, that a handsome building-spot, on a very desirable site, was for sale. I was so much pleased with the location that I found the owner of the land, and secured it for a reasonable sum. I had then no definite plan as to the use I should make of it, as I do not particularly need a cage until I secure a bird! But your suggestion stung the necessity for a free hall, has added me greatly in the matter. I would like to spend a few thousand dollars in this direction, and I will honor my good uncle, who I am sure would approve of my project, by naming the building Neville Hall. It shall be free to all classes of speakers, men and women, who labor for the good of the common people.”

“My dear good cousin,” said Mary, laying her hand affectionately upon his arm, “God and his kind angels, and all of the oppressed classes, will bless you for so generous an act.”

Chester gazed admiringly into the inspired face and beaming eyes of his cousin. The look he gave her at that moment seemed to indicate something more than cousinly affection, and had a casual observer witnessed the two at this moment, they would have been pronounced plighted lovers.

But not to prolong this part of the story, we will say that never were a conservative people more shocked than were the citizens of Northland when they saw, a few weeks later, a handsome edifice in the process of building, to be devoted to free speech, and reared in the most aristocratic part of the town. But there was no help for it. The whole thing had been done so noiselessly that the people hardly realized what awaited them, until the sound of the carpenter’s hammer awoke them from their lethargy. All opposition was useless; for Chester held a deed of the land, and the generous price he offered for laborers procured him the most skilled workmen, so that the building went up as by magic. No angry ejaculations, no scathing anathemas, or voluble sewing-circles could stay the course of events. Mrs. Kent—whom the reader will remember, and a few other persons, who worked diligently in all humanitarian reforms—rejoiced with exceeding joy.

Notwithstanding Chester Neville’s reformatory proclivities, he was admired by all the fair portion of the community, and no social circle was deemed complete without him. Managing mothers sought to introduce him in their marriageable daughters, so that the accomplished young man was beset on every side. All sorts of rumors were afloat in regard to his attitude toward Mary. Although he was her acknowledged cousin, still the Mrs. Grundys thought that his manner toward her seemed often more lover-like than cousin-like.

It had been decided by the gossips that her engagement with Herbert Winslow was at an end. He had been informed by his old friend, Alfred Dudley, of the rumors in regard to Mr. Neville and Mary. Mr. Winslow had hinted, in a letter to his son, the same story; so that Herbert Winslow, in his tropical home, surrounded with the lavish gifts which Nature showers upon that poetic land, mourned for Mary as one lost to him forever. It mattered little to him that birds of the richest plumage sang in the fragrant branches of the blooming orange groves, since the music of a once loving voice existed but in memory. One look from her deep, eloquent eyes would have thrilled his soul with a purer joy than all of the dreamy, bewitching glances which he had met in the highest circles of wealth and fashion.

But we did not mean to wander, at this stage of our narrative, among the spicy groves of beautiful Florida, nor drink of the healing waters at Green Cove Springs, nor become entranced by the blue waters of the St. John’s River, which flow in silent beauty through the flowery valleys. To Elm Cottage and its interesting inmates we will return. The Indian summer rests in hazy splendor upon the artistic landscape at Northland. The changing hues of Autumn are visible in forest and woodland. Maple Grove is one

blaze of splendor. The foliage of the lofty trees is glowing with the richest and the most delicate colors, as if touched with the fingers of the Divine Artist. The fringed gentian, the blue-eyed asters, are arrayed in autumnal beauty. The bright capitol flower, overhanging the silver brook, kisses the sparkling waters, as they go singing toward the noble Susquehanna River.

“It seems to me,” said Mary to Chester, “at such an hour as this, that the heavens stoop down and kiss the green earth, and the bright eyes of our beloved angels look with tender love upon our struggling spirits. I feel, at times, as though I would like to drop the earth-form, and go to the more beautiful land, where all is sunshine, peace and joy.”

“Dear cousin,” said Chester, “I would that I could call you by a dearer name, but that can never be. I know more than your lips have ever told me, and I would spend my life and fortune to contribute to your happiness. I am not much given to sentimentality, nor to soft and meaningless words. I think we have read each other’s hearts, and realize that to live for others is the highest kind of living. Your health, Mary, is evidently failing. You need change of scene, and I will propose to you what I have already mentioned to my mother; that is, that we spend the winter in one of the Southern States. My mother favors the plan. What say you?”

“I will go,” said Mary. “If your mother will accompany us, I certainly should enjoy the natural scenery, which has been portrayed in such glowing colors by poetic writers.”

“Thank you, Mary. We will go, then, and make the most of life; singing songs of praise, rather than chanting funeral dirges.”

“Why, Cousin Chester,” replied Mary, smiling, “I think you ought to have been a poet or a preacher.”

“Had I been the latter, I should probably have resembled the eccentric Lorenzo Dow,” replied Chester, laughing. “But, Mary, how long a time do you wish to prepare for our prospective journey?”

“Oh, I can be ready in a short time,” replied Mary. “It will not take me so long to prepare my wardrobe as it would if I were a fashionable young lady, and were going to take a trip to Saratoga.”

“Well, then, as winter is approaching speedily, we will be on our way as soon as possible to the sunny South, as the poets would say. But I have one request to make of you, Mary; and that is, that you give up all writing during our absence, save letters. If you need anything in the way of money, my purse is at your command. It is my mother’s desire, as well as mine, to see the color come back to your cheeks, and light and joy sparkle in eyes that often weep.”

Mary thanked her cousin by her looks, and only replied: “You are too good to me!”

Mary and Edward had a long conference the evening before her departure southward. Never had the brother realized so intently as now how much his sister was to him. He had all his life been so accustomed to seeing her at home, that he hardly thought that she could ever leave him. He had noticed that her health was suffering from some cause, which he supposed to be Herbert Winslow. Her relationship to Chester he did not quite understand, but he knew that they were in full sympathy on many reformatory questions. But his kind sister Mary was going away—and what if she should never return? Every capricious criticism, every unkind word that he had spoken to her, seemed to be magnified, now that he was to be separated from her; and for the first time for many months he shed tears of regret. Mary saw that her brother suffered, and tried to cheer him by promising frequent letters descriptive of her journey. Tenderly kissing him a good night, she went to her chamber and tried to rest; but sleep came not to her eyelids. The silent picture of her departed mother looked down upon her in tender and loving sympathy. She thought of her past life, and of the unexplored future—of a dear-remembered face that was with her everywhere. She thought of the poor, the lowly, the homeless and the outcast, and resolved, in whatever time she might be, to work for those who had none to love them.

“Poor starved hearts!” she exclaimed; “how can they live without love?” She thought of Chester. She was fully aware of his many qualities, and knew that a word from her would make him the happiest of men. They had had one private conference, in which the soul of each was mirrored to the other. Chester knew her secret, and she thought of what might have been but for her acquaintance with Herbert Winslow.

CHAPTER XI.

A Breeze from Orange Grove.

Florida, Green Cove Springs, Dec., 1867.

MY DEAR BROTHER EDWARD—We are at length in Florida, and surely it is a summer-land

In giving this recital, I merely state facts as they occurred, without hazarding any conjecture as to the cause. The thing was totally unintelligible to any of us. We entered the house scuffling and full of suspicion, and came away satisfied that what was done was no willful trick or legend, but a deed that was done on the part of our hosts.

Ranner Correspondence.

Connecticut and New Hampshire.
NEW LEBANON N. H. Dec. 26th 1872

NEW LEBANON, N. H., Dec 26th, 1872.
DEAR BASSNETT: How glad, and how glad
did we all were to see you again! Why, one
woman we saw actually kissed you when you
were handed in from the post-office, after your
long absence. We missed you so much! Besides
being greatly inconvenienced whilst you were
away. There was no way to find out where any
one was, nor to let others know of one's where-
abouts. I was just ready to announce my in-
visit to New Hampshire through your
columns, and so none of my friends have known I
was here, and by that means I have lost employ-
ment and money, and have also had extra labor
of letter-writing to get my engagements. We
have never known your worth until you were in
fisheries, nor appreciated the kindness of your ed-
itors in freely giving us the use of your columns
to notice our appointments and make our ap-
peals; but now that you are once more with us,
we will love you more and treat you better by
giving you our editors, through you, a more hearty
welcome.

I then open say a word with reference to our missionary work in Connecticut, which is temporarily suspended. Mrs. A. M. Hall lectured so very acceptably one month, but at the end of that time retired, feeling that she was not strong enough to continue, and reported the sum of \$17.98 over and above salary and expenses. In addition, I wish to say that I have received from the friends in Norwich, Jewett City, Williamantic, Hartford and other places, contributions for tracts for gratuitous distribution, to the amount of \$16.91. Miss A. C. Burbank acknowledges the receipt of \$1,000 from T. K. Cincinnati, Ohio; \$1,000 from E. B. Parsons, West Winsted; and, Mrs. George Wilcox, Madison, Conn., and to cents from some one else, making all the sum of \$18.00. I wish also to notify the friends that my time is all taken now until April, and that it is impossible for me to answer calls to missionary work in Connecticut this winter, and if they will be patient until spring, if I do not find a suitable agent who is willing to take the work, I will take the field again myself. I trust when it is warm and pleasant we may be able to secure the services of Jennie Add, for a little time at least. Following is the list of subscriptions and collections received by Mrs. Hall for the month of November, with a few taken by myself which have never been reported:—

James H. Hyde, Unionville,

Subscriptions.—James R. \$1; Everett Horton, James Hineton, do., \$2; Al-
 ston, \$2; Capt. A. T. Robinson, do., \$2;
 John Barnes, do., \$2; John Churchhill, do., \$2;
 D. Thompson, do., \$1; Mrs. Maria Barnes,
 \$1; Mr. and Mrs. L. C. Johnson, Plymouth,
 \$1; Herbert D. Wilson, do., \$1; S. R. Blanke, do.,
 \$1; Eliza Blanke, do., \$1; Virgil Wilson, do., \$2;
 E. B. Parsons, do., 50 cents.

man, Scotland, \$2; H. O. Adams, do, \$2; a
 and Winstead, \$2; Mrs. John Sweet, Middle-
 land, Norway, \$5; J. B. Illick,
 Terryville, \$5; J. B. Illick,
 \$1; Eli McKee, Total, \$32.50.
 Unionville, \$1. Total, four lectures, \$17.47;
 collections.—New York, \$2.00; Southampton, two do.,
 \$4.20; West Winstead, two do., \$3.12;
 Unionville, one do., \$3.12; West Winstead,
 Plymouth, two do., \$4.83; Had-
 cote, \$8.00; Moodus, two do., \$50.20;
 c, two do., \$3.17. Total, \$90.29.
 E. ANNIE LILKMAN,
 Conn. Association of Spiritualists, West
 Winstead, Conn.

Maine.

NEW MEDIUM.—We are snow-bound, dear
ner, and have been for the last week, at the

[illegible]

medium powers have become more fully
oped, and I am now controlled to personate
s from the other life. I feel that I am now
get well paid for the many persecutions I
met with in the last twenty years as a psy-
chicist, as many of the readers of the Banner
know. We go from here to Baggor, to give
dramatic scenes. J. G. STEADMAN,
hereby certify that the description given
by Mr. Steadman of the medium aforesaid is
as they have both been at my dwelling-
place for several days past.

ADLEY.—The Lyceum in this place, we formed by a correspondent, is running fine—meets every Sunday in Union Hall at 7 A. A concert is given the last Sunday in each month. The following constitute its board of directors: James J. Norris, Conductor; Hiram Field, Assistant Conductor; Mrs. S. Bean, Secretary; George A. Newman, Assistant Guardian; Miss Ida M. Bean, Musical Director; Mrs. B. B. Field, Assistant Director; Mr. Harold A. Bean, Treasurer; and Mrs. W. H. W. Bean, Librarian.

BURN.—G. Amos Peirce writes: 'Midst opposition, I am doing a little as a medium, clairvoyantly, giving tests of spirit force, written and oral communications from is in spirit-life. Will answer calls to lec-

Louisiana.
NEW ORLEANS, Dec. 27th, 1872. — DEAR
SIR—The following resolutions were unan-
imously adopted last evening by the Association
of the Hall:
Resolved, That this lecture discloses Miss Johnson's engagement
with the cause, and she goes from our midst to other fields of ser-
vice, her co-workers in a common cause, deem it
their duty to express in a practical form our appreciation
of her services, and our earnest wishes for her success in all her
endeavors.

[illegible]

That, as a lady of purity, nobility
 and truth, and as a forcible and eloquent speaker,
 among our acquaintance few equals and no superior.
 That, in a course of this preamble and resolutions be-
 fore the Bazaar of Light and Religion Philosophical
 and religious, with respect to public
 U. R. MILNER, President,
 J. R. WALKER, Chairman Com. on Lectures,
 SILLIMAN, Secretary.

Mississippi.
 RR.—Robert C. Macgregor writes, Nov.
 2. The sentiment of the dear old Ban-

used me of your late dire conflagration. I have a "mite" offering is small, I am better for doing as my sympathy and promptness.

teaching and teaching colored children
schools of this county. I have been at the same time, but am a lonely pioneer (in the mean), as a worker for the new dispensation to have to do things gradually, and, as we are aware, the quiet way answers best in such instances. But I have a request to make to you: Do you know of any Spiritualists, Messianists, or other persons who are willing to be used as a medium for the purpose of exposing the frauds of Spiritualism, and the path of the false prophet?

to you from all parts of our country. Should those to whom heaven has been opened through the light of spirit-communication, fail at such a time as this to extend a helping hand to the Free Circles and the Banner, it would exhibit a lamentable degree of selfishness, to say the least. Enclosed find \$33, for which send Banner of Light—canceling former subscriptions—to L. B. Lyman, W. S. Paynter, J. R. Sawyer, J. G. Dow, C. M. Jeffers. Yours truly, J. L. B. LYMAN.

Yours truly, A. L. LEMAN.

(*Charleston, Mass., Dec. 1st, 1872.*)

MESSRS. W. H. WHITE & Co.: Dear Sirs:—

Were I, to try to express the sympathy I feel in this, your "hour of adversity," it would be an echo of what has been and will be much better and more feelingly expressed by hundreds, yea, thousands of friends who have a deep and abiding interest in the "Banner of Light."

Deprived, as I am, of the privilege of *hearing* the gospel of truth and love dispensed through the lips of inspirational speakers, the Banner seems to be one of the necessities of life; and the least I can do, and the best way I can manifest my interest in it during this "fiery ordeal,"

is to forward my subscription for another year. I enclose, therefore, \$5.25—\$5.00 for the Editor; \$1.50 for the Biography of Mrs. J. H. Conant, and 20 cents for postage, and the balance for the Banner.

In this arrangement, you see it is more of a business than a charitable transaction; for, judging the state of your feelings by my own, I thought it would cost more to your liking to return an equivalent some time than to return the gratuity. Though your speech of usefulness has been clouded and retarded, (only for a brief period, I trust,) yet be not discouraged. A brighter, perhaps brighter future is before you.

visible friends are with and will assist you, that are friends will still "come to the rescue," and strengthen the publishers by their approbation and material aid. The beloved Banner will again be unfurled, floating into the houses of innumerable friends who are hopefully awaiting to give it a hearty, cordial welcome. At least, such is my hope and belief.

Respectfully yours, BETSEY CADES.

Bradley, Mr., Dec. 24th, 1872.

My heart is full of love and sympathy for the manner of Light and the cause it advocates. Enclosed please find \$12, and the names of three subscribers.

J. J. NORTON.

Glen Mills, Chester Co., Pa., }
Nov. 25th, 1872.

Messrs. Wm. WHITE & Co.—Please find enclosed my check for \$50.00. All your subscribers would do the same (that could), and would do so toward revivifying the ashes of the banner of Light, it might soon spread its folds over the vision of the sons of men.

No. 192 Central street, Lowell, Nov. 24th, 1872.
 My friend, Wm. WHITE & Co. - Your circular of
 the 18th inst. is before me. * * * * * Thousands
 of millions, have had their eyes opened by
 the message promising redemption to the great truths
 of modern Spiritualism. - This is not another
 era, which is innovations upon Old Theology,
 denounced by denigrators, bigoted priests, who

all that in them lies to frighten their hear-
s from reading or hearing truth which comes
compens or falls from lips as truly inspired as
ere those we read of, "in the Book." But,
thanks to God and the angel host, the world
loves! I enclose an order for ^{com} I only wish
could be hundreds instead of twenty.

Decatur City, Iowa, Dec. 23rd, 1872.
 Something since I sent you a money order for
 the dollars, it being my nite to assist our beloved
 Banner. Your work has but just begun, and we
 know that you will be able to rally all the
 hooves all lovers of the truth to rally to your
 support, and sustain you not only with their
 voices, but with the "almighty dollars."
 W. D. MOORE.

Sacramento, Cal., Dec. 19th, 1872.
 Wm. WHITE & Co., * * *. We feel sure
 that the Spiritualists of the United States cannot
 fail to do without the Banner of Light.* * *
 enclosed find \$10, half of which is from E. D.

ately. We wish we were able to do more, and
haps will. This is given freely. * * *

L. ARMSTRONG.

—

San Francisco, Cal., Dec. 20th, 1872.

WM. WHITE & Co.—Enclosed is Post office or-
der for \$16 in silver, or \$17.55 in greenbacks,
which I have solicited from friends to aid the
cause of the Freedmen.

inner. Mrs. Mary H. Butler gave \$5; Mrs. A. Parker, \$1.50; B. Shraff, \$5; Mrs. S. Th. H., \$5; Mrs. E. R. H., \$1. Dr. J. R. Newton is effecting many remarkable cures here. He is very charitable toward those who are not able to pay. He is doing a world of good to suffering humanity. Best wishes for your prosperity, and earnestly hope that the Banner will soon be associated.

B. SHRAFF.

Published by D. SHAPIRO.

Written for the Banner of Light.

THE BEST BOON.

BY CARRIE SMITH.

I would not ask that wealth should o'er
My brief life fling
Its golden hue, for happiness
Riches ne'er bring.
Nor would it be my first desire
That glittering fame

Her fadeless laurel leaves should wreath
Around my name.
Nor even would I crave that, like
A white-winged dove,
Should nestle soft in my heart's nest

The bird of love,
Though wealth and fame I value both
As gifts most dear,
And love's low-breathed, soft melody

Is sweet to hear,
I'd pray to have this better boon
To my life sent—
Within my soul a living fount
Of calm content

SPIRITUALIST MEETINGS.

IAN, MICH.—Regular meetings are held on Sunday, A. M. and 7 P. M., at Berkey's Hall, opposite Masonic temple, on Main street. Mr. Tuttle, President. Communications should be addressed to C. H. Case, Secretary. J. L. Adrian, Mich.

OVER, G.—Church and Progress. J. S. Morley, was
Stuart's Hall every Sunday at 11½ A. M. J. S. Morley, was
Editor; Mrs. T. A. Knapp, Guardian; Mrs. E. T. Cole, kno
Assistant Guardian; Harriet Dayton, Secretary. ne
FOX, MASS.—See fifth page. wa
BUTLICK CREEK, MICH.—The First Society of Spiritual- but
ists held meetings at Stuart's Hall every Sunday, at 10½ A. but
7½ P. M. A. H. Averill, President; J. V. Spencer, go
gods.

ry: William MERTIN, Treasurer.
ARMORE, MD.,—Lyric Hall.—The "First Spiritualist
 gation of Baltimore" hold meetings on Sunday and
 eday evenings,
William Hall, No. 92 W. Baltimore street.—The Har-
 monic Society holds meetings in this Hall. Wil-
 son, President; Levi Weaver, Vice President;
 onald, President; George Broom, Treasurer. Chil-
 Ellinger, Secretary. Meetings every Sunday morn-
 ing, 11 o'clock.

Progressive Lyceum No. 1, Inc. Conductor: Mrs. J. J. Weaver. 9 o'clock. - Levi Weaver, Conductor; George J. Guardah; Daniel S. Armstrong, Librarian; George J. Musical Director.

KLIN, N. Y. - Brooklyn Institute. - The Children's Progressive Lyceum meets at the Brooklyn Institute, corner of Third and Broadway, Brooklyn, Sunday at 10:15 A. M.

gion and Concord streets, every Sunday at 10½ A. M.
 Kipli, Conductor; Mrs. Ada E. Cooley, Guardian of
 Lecture at 7½ P. M. by Mrs. E. F. J. Bullene.
 SEEA, MAES.—The Bible Christian Spiritualists hold
 every Sunday in Hawthorn-street Chapel, near
 Ham street, at 3 and 7 P. M. Mrs. M. A. Ricker,
 speaker. Seats free. D. J. Ricker, Supt.
 BRIDGEPORT, MAES.—Children's Lyceum meets
 every Sunday at 10½ A. M. at Everett Hall Hyde's Block.

[illegible][illegible]

IMPERIALISM, MAS.—Meetings are held in Soule's Hall every other Sunday at 12 and 6 1/2 P. M.

MILAN, O.—Society of Spiritualists and Liberalists and Children's Progressive League meet at 12 and 6 P. M. Hudson Avenue, Conductor: Emma Taithe, Gardian.

MILWAUKEE, WIS.—The Spiritualist Association meets on the second and fourth of each month, and meetings the second and fourth of each month, in Grand Temple's Hall, at 2 and 6 P. M. Progressive Lovejoy meets in the same hall, on the first and third Sunday, at 12 and 6 P. M. Conductor: Mrs. Sarah de Marsh, Guardian.

[illegible][illegible]

Under the patronage of the San Francisco Spiritualists' Union, the Children's Progressive Lyceum is held at 1025 A. a'so regu'ar Sunday evening lectures are given at Char-bak Hall, on Market, near Fourth street.

Speakers engaged: Mrs. F. O. Nyzer during Jan-
uary; Mrs. C. E. Allen during February; C. Fannie Allen during March; Moses
during April.

her with a consolation to be elevated and benefited, and sweetly her sun went down the horizon of earthly life to reflect from the spiritual its loving beams more fully upon the pathway of sorrow-stricken friends, who can miss and mourn her *high absence*. In words of trust and faith, L. P. Greenleaf conducted the funeral service, and by the inspiration of her presence, in speaking words of consolation and hope to the mourners, attracting

Is life—there are no dead?" J. R. S.

feather idol of P'oh-mah was even a sign of a more
feather idol than the most religious persons, that the
the majority of English religious persons, that the
only the majority of English religious persons, that the
of food may be pointed up by monasteries and carried about
from lady's pocket, with tasseled ribbons to mark the
being the most approves of.—John Ruskin.

of our Portland correspondent, Mr. Joseph E. Hall, which we publish elsewhere in this issue, that the so-called "Allen-Hoy" medium for the physical manifestations has recently visited Portland, and held very successful sances there. He will, it is said, visit Boston soon, when our citizens will have an opportunity to witness the curious and wonderful manifestations of spiritual power in his presence. It will be seen, by a note we have attached to the communication, that the editor of the Portland Press, who witnessed the phenomena, although an unbeliever in Spiritualism, fully endorses the reliability of the medium.

The West.

Warren Chase, Regular Correspondent.

Office at his apartment, Reform and Liberal Bookstore, 611 North Fifth street, St. Louis, Mo.

"WENT TO KANSAS."

The above is the title to an interesting narrative of a sorrowful pilgrimage by Sister M. D. Colt, and we often think of it as we travel over the prairies of this beautiful country in summer and winter. On the last half of December, we left St. Louis for a Christmas trip to Kansas, and got safely over the Missouri River, with the thermometer hanging below zero, and only eight degrees below at Leavenworth when we reached there at 10 p. m. Saturday night. Sunday the wind shifted, and we had excellent audiences in Odd Fellows Hall, which our friends have rented, and in which they hold regular meetings. There is an honest, earnest and intelligent interest in Spiritualism in Leavenworth, and if it is properly met with suitable lectures and mediums, it will become permanent and furnish some of the best society in the city. We have seldom visited a place where so little had been done for the cause, and found such intelligent and candid inquiry after its evidences, and we regret—as do our friends there—that Mr. C. H. Foster could not visit the place on his Western tour. If Bro. Shade or any one of our best test mediums could visit Leavenworth, Lawrence, Topeka, and Kansas City, (all near each other,) it would be profitable to the cause and to the medium.

Monday, Dec. 23, the thermometer went down to twenty degrees below zero; a point seldom if ever reached before at Lawrence since it was settled, but we found our friends looking after mediums, and Bro. J. H. Randall filling up the two Sundays that we were engaged at Leavenworth. We started up the lecture course for the winter in both these places and in Kansas City, and the interest has not yet slackened, but increased. And we hear from many parts of Kansas the same earnest inquiry for both lecturers and mediums. There is somehow a prevailing discouragement about the affairs of this life, and much dissatisfaction with it and demand for knowledge of the life beyond. Never in our experience has there been as much honest inquiry for the evidences as at present, and even the clergy and zealous church-members have become to a large extent honest inquirers after the truth of spirit intercourse which our mediums alone can give. There certainly is a yielding of all the Protestant churches, and a great softening and tending down of the arrogant assumptions and haughty spirit with which they so long disdained to look into the evidences we have of spirit intercourse. What we now need, is honest and faithful mediums who will be true to themselves and the spirits, and only do what they can do by spirit-aid, leaving all failures to their proper causes, and never trying to help out of themselves what the spirits cannot do through them.

We intend to visit most of the large towns in Kansas, and some in Iowa and Missouri, during the coming year if our health continues, and hope to be able to do some good in the cause to which we have given most of our time for a quarter of a century, and in which the rest of our life is to be devoted, which of course cannot be long enough for us to meet half the friends we have made in our past travels.

AWAKENING.

There certainly is an awakening among the Spiritualists of the Western States, at least so far as we have visited and corresponded with friends, and if we do not mistake the signs, it is the beginning of a practical and thorough organization for efficient work. We also notice that the impulse given to the friends by increased spiritual power, brings out that same class of impracticable novices who cannot regulate themselves, but start out with a call for all reforms to come and join them and be regulated and made happy by the most unhappy person and influences among us. We have no faith in our hope from the scores of efforts to change our whole social, political and religious system at once, and bring a millennium on earth through the persons as singular and crude as were the disciples of Jesus, who could not maintain it continuously a week after he left them. John H. Noyes has, by the power of a strong mind, made religious slaves of two or three hundred persons who could afford to yield their religious views to gain the social and domestic comforts of a better home than they could get elsewhere, but Spiritualists will not consent to accept the whole world and lose their own souls. We must be slow and cautious, and organize on freer bases and greater freedom for individuals.

Bro. BARNUM, our Methodist brother, does not seem to escape by prayers from the oft repeated providential calamity of burning up innocent animals. Under the old religious discipline, his repeated misfortunes would be considered evidence that his business was accursed of God, and that he could not prosper in it; but he is a st. b. born disciple, and will not believe more readily than doubting Thomas did. In his great sacrifice of animal life, in Broadway, four years ago, it was our fortune to be on the street opposite, and to hear the piteous howlings of the poor beasts, who, chained and caged, had to endure their terrible fates. This time we were glad to be far away, for it is a scene we never wish to witness again. Our heart is not hard enough to ever endanger a second collection if we had owned and lost one in such a manner; but we are not a Christian, and Barnum is not a Spiritualist, which makes quite a difference. When he was running for Congress some years ago, Bennett suggested that he would answer for chaplain, as he held family prayers in his menagerie, and had nearly converted the "What is it?" and he thought he might convert some of the wayward members; but he was not elected, and kept on collecting wild beasts and getting them in places to burn! God may forgive him, if he can; we cannot, and we do not pity him as he did not pity the beasts. We would suggest to him to write another series of letters against Spiritualism "as the greatest of humbugs," and let the poor animals escape another such sacrifice.

Kansas has got the chills, and we advise everybody to stay away till warmer weather, unless they come from the frozen regions of the North. The epizootic is fast wearing off the horses, and the blessed animals are again appearing in the traces and under saddle, even in the extreme cold weather, but the oxen are drawing wood and coal, and the boys running handless in the State that seldom retains snow more than a few days at a time.

Original Essay.

CORNELIUS AGRIPPA, THE ALCHEMIST.
A Biographical Sketch of the Fifteenth Century.

BY EMMA HARDINGE-BRITTES.

Those who pretend to judge humanity from a materialistic standpoint, claim that the love of money and the desire to prolong life are the two strongest impulses that have ever actuated the race. A more profound analysis of the human mind would reveal a still deeper source of interest in the insatiable longing to search into the unknown, and penetrate the occult realms of being. Beyond and above these yearnings, again, the Spiritualist would affirm that the tendencies of special minds have been providentially directed by the angels of progress to analyze those mysteries of Nature which form the stepping-stones to her most sublime revelations. Viewed from all these different points of observation, the devotion of the ancient alchemist to what has been superficially branded as a vague and impossible research looms up in the dignity of an inevitable inspiration, and invests its devotees with the glory of being pioneers in an untrodden field of science—marrying to a cause, the supreme value of which the ignorance of the dark ages was incapable of appreciating.

The flood of light which modern scholarship pours upon the mysteries of the past enables us to determine that the study of alchemy (the most occult of all branches of chemical art) was pursued in the remotest periods of antiquity; that it formed a portion of cabalistic lore amongst the Hebrews, and engaged the attention of the sages of India, Egypt, Chaldaea, Persia, Greece, and Rome.

It seems probable that a belief in the existence of the *Philosopher's Stone* and the *Elixir Vitæ* took no definite form as a practical or materialistic art, until the eighth century, when Geber, a learned doctor of Mesopotamia, openly devoted himself to the search for these profound secrets through the practices of chemistry.

Alfarabi, an Arabian philosopher of great wealth and learning, who flourished about the beginning of the tenth century, declares that alchemy was derived from the wisdom of the Egyptians, and communicated to Moses, enabling him to contend with the priests of Pharaoh in the arts of magic.

Most of the alchemists of any repute attribute the foundation of their art to Shem, the son of Noah, asserting that the memory of their founder's name is preserved in its derivation, Chem. Others again trace it back to Hermes Trismegistus, who, they declare, was the son of the god Hermes, or Mercury, from whom they claim to have named the potent drug which plays so conspicuous a part in alchemical experiments. Without entering into any elaborate description of the claims which these ancient men alleged for their branch of occult chemistry, it is enough to say that they deemed matter was originally composed of two substances only; one of these being an earth, the other a mineral, something analogous to sulphur. The combination of these two elements in their unalloyed purity, they affirmed, would produce gold; and the object of their search was to find another element, supposed to have been positively demonstrated to exist, and called the philosopher's stone, which would dissolve all the heterogeneous compounds of matter back into their primordial condition, and thus enable them to manufacture gold at will. This long-sought-for third primary, in its solid substance the philosopher's stone, could also be obtained, it was affirmed, in a fluid condition, in which state it might be converted into the elixir vitae, one draught of which would preserve life to an indefinite extent; indeed, enable its possessor to "live forever." The succession of philosophers who flourished from the time of Geber to that of Cornelius Agrippa, one of the most celebrated of their class, and a man of high scientific attainments, did not, as some historians declare, prove the art of alchemy to be mere charlatanism, or its professors impostors or self-deluders; on the contrary, they are now recognized as thoughtful, well informed, and often highly cultivated scholars; and their discoveries, especially in the science of chemistry, have bequeathed to posterity invaluable evidences of the worth of their researches. Geber himself is said to have discovered the properties of corrosive sublimate, the red oxide of mercury, nitric acid, and the nitrate of silver.

Roger Bacon, one of the most celebrated of the craft, in searching for the philosopher's stone, found out the use of burning-glasses, made valuable improvements in it if he did not actually invent the telescope, and by his discovery of gunpowder so altered the character of martial enterprises, that he has helped to change the fate of empires, and decide the destiny of kingdoms and dynasties.

The alchemists have left many thousands of volumes, not only on the nature of their special researches, but also on the subject of chemistry and natural philosophy; and in this respect their fanaticism, if it was such, has given to mankind a treasury of rich thought and scientific suggestion. How far their extraordinary claims were ever justified in the special directions of their research, we have no means of ascertaining; certain it is that some of their number exhibit immense wealth, which they boasted to have acquired by means of the philosopher's stone. Albertus Magnus confidently asserted he was possessed of the secret of prolonging life by the use of elixir vitae. Pietro di Apono, who was condemned to the rack for sorcery, claimed to be able to produce gold at pleasure. Raymond Lull, Jacques Cœur and Pope John XXII, also asserted their knowledge of the philosopher's stone. Nicolas Flamel, an adept who spent the earlier portion of his life in the most abject condition of poverty—was, in frequent danger of famishing for want of bread—grew enormously rich in his old age, and bequeathed vast sums to different religious institutions, affirming in his will that his means were acquired by the study of alchemy, although the practice thereof could not be legitimately disclosed to mankind. Setting aside all the wild fables and exaggerated claims that have been set up for the alchemists, the benefits they have conferred upon mankind by their chemical discoveries and philosophical speculations cannot be denied, and entitle them to the consideration and respect of those who fail to perceive the utility of their researches.

Cornelius Agrippa, the subject of our sketch, was an adept of a far higher order and more noble pretension than the mere traffickers for gold, or the seekers for an extended existence on earth. This remarkable man was devoted to the occult sciences rather with a view of mastering the se-

crets of Nature in the realms of spiritual and invisible existence, than for the sake of acquiring the means of enriching his fortunes or perpetuating his days on earth. He was born at Cologne, in 1486, and by his great acquirements in chemistry and natural philosophy obtained, at the early age of twenty, a widespread reputation and offers of honorable distinction from many of the most renowned schools of learning in Europe.

Notwithstanding the abundant opportunities which were open to him to establish himself in positions of emolument in the highest circles of Europe, Agrippa seems to have been unstable in his pursuits, or else, impelled by ardor in his search for occult knowledge, he felt unable to fasten himself down to any particular spot, or the routine of official life, for we find him filling the positions of secretary to the Emperor Maximilian, Professor of *Belles Lettres* at the University of Dole, Syndic and Advocate-General of Metz, and again a teacher of the Hebrew language in London, where he also practiced, with great success, the art of casting nativities.

Wandering back to the continent again, we find the great philosopher expounding the doctrines of Hermes Trismegistus to admiring crowds of literati, who flocked to hear him lecture at Pavia. He also filled the office of physician to Margaret of Austria, Queen Louisa of Savoy, and the Emperor Charles V. So great was his reputation as a divine and master of the occult secrets of Nature, that his services were eagerly sought for by nearly all the monarchs of Europe, including the infamous Henry VIII, from whom Agrippa received the most pecuniary solicitations to become a resident in the English court. Despite the high and powerful patrons which his singular endowments procured for him, notwithstanding the esteem of Melancthon and the commendations of Erasmus, Cornelius Agrippa suffered imprisonment for sorcery, endured the extreme of poverty and human privation, and closed a career at once the most brilliant and varied of any man of his century, at the early age of forty-eight years, in extreme obscurity and indigence.

Although Agrippa professed to understand the principles of alchemy, and is always claimed by the adepts of that science as a distinguished brother of their order, it is chiefly as a "magician," a miracle-worker, soothsayer, and writer upon occult arts, that Cornelius Agrippa's memory has been handed down to posterity. As a correct diviner of future events, the testimony of the numerous sovereigns and potentates he served bears abundant witness.

As a remarkable and indefatigable student into the mysteries of the invisible world, his writings alone would have immortalized him. As to his pretensions to work "miracles," the traditions of the time in which he lived are so obviously garbled by superstitious ignorance and the tendency to exaggeration, that it is difficult to find any well-defined points of historical value, upon which to found an understanding of his requirements.

There is, however, one unanimously attested narrative of his exploits, which affords some clue to the secret of his magical powers, and one which is well worth recording. It has been erroneously attributed to Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas; but one of his most enthusiastic admirers and biographers, De Lorine, so confidently asserts that the incident occurred in the experience of Cornelius Agrippa, that there is little room to doubt the truth of his statement.

Agrippa, during one of his numerous reverses of fortune, hired a lodging in a narrow street of Cologne—his birthplace—and there for a time devoted himself in strict retirement to his philosophical pursuits. The quiet for which he had thus secluded himself, however, was continually broken by the clatter of horses' hoofs, and the cries of a set of insolent grooms, who chose that spot to exercise their horses.

Agrippa had in vain remonstrated with these varlets, and besought them to select another place for their noisy performances. At length, weary of their indifference to his solicitations, and the annoyance he endured, he resorted to magical arts to dislodge his tormentors.

Langlet, in his "History of the Hermetic Philosophers," although falling into the mistake of attributing the act to Thomas Aquinas, relates that the adept constructed a small bronze horse, which he endowed with magical power, and buried with certain potent rites and ceremonies, just beneath the middle of the street, where the steeds must pass. Swift, in his "Lives of the Necromancers," makes no mention of this bronze horse, but simply states that Agrippa drew a circle on the ground opposite his own house, inscribed certain cabalistic letters in the dust, and muttered a potent charm over the spot. Be it as it may, all the historians of the act agree that, when the grooms attempted to lead their animals over that charmed spot the next day, they reared, plunged, erected their manes, snorted with signs of indescribable terror, and finally were obliged to be led away in a condition little short of frenzy. The narrators add that, as the grooms achieved no better success on each returning day, they were compelled to abandon the spot to the solitude so coveted by the magician.

A less disputed point in the life of Cornelius Agrippa is the description given of his famous laboratory at Louvain, in which he kept his book of spells and enchantments, together with his philosophical instruments, amulets, charms, and other appurtenances of his magical performances.

Being absent on a journey, a young student who was a resident in the philosopher's house, but as yet had not been permitted to enter within the charmed precincts of his master's study, found means to penetrate it surreptitiously, by making his way down the chimney. Standing within the realm of mystery, enclosed by the silent walls of the deserted study, the rash scholar immediately possessed himself of the great magician's book of enchantments, and eagerly proceeded to peruse its dangerous contents. It is said that the servants of the house, knowing that their dread master was abroad, and none having access to the secret recesses of his ill-omened laboratory, heard with indescribable terror loud knockings sounding on the door, the tramp of heavy feet, deep voices in angry altercation, smothered cries as of one in mortal agony, and then an ominous silence. On the return of the adept, they reported to him what they had heard, and following his hasty footsteps to the door of the laboratory, they observed him unlock it from without, enter, and come forth in sorrow and consternation, bearing the dead body of the rash student in his arms, with the marks of strangulation plainly visible upon his disfigured corpse.

Tradition enlarges upon this story with the wildest and most fantastic rumors. It was curiously reported, that the dead body was seen re-animated and walking abroad in several parts

of the town; that it was carried to the public hospital three several times, and as often disappeared, to be encountered again in life, and again to be picked up in some obscure hiding-place and carried to the place of official investigation. Meantime the wildest stories were in circulation concerning the demons that had been let loose in and about Agrippa's mansion, by the rash and unauthorized invocations of the unfortunate scholar.

One thing is certain: when, after nearly a fortnight of popular excitement on the question of the young student's fate, his perambulatory remains were at length secured, and the magician was cited to appear before the magistrates to answer to the charge of having occasioned his death, he was bold and consistent enough to declare that, in his absence, (the circumstances of which he fully proved,) the youth had perished at the hands of the demons whom he had presumptuously summoned, without the knowledge of how to control or dismiss them.

Cornelius Agrippa, on this, as on many other similar occasions, very hardly escaped the stake, on the charge of sorcery, and only evaded the punishment of the rack by what was deemed a miraculous disappearance from the town of Louvain.

Of the magical achievements attributed to this singular man, a volume could be written, which, for wildness and supermundane marvel, could only be paralleled by the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments."

Consigning such exaggerations to the unproved realm of fiction, we derive, from a careful analysis of the works of Cornelius Agrippa, together with the writings about him, the following summary of his claims to historical distinction.

In searching for the philosopher's stone amongst the chemical compounds of matter, Agrippa chanced upon a discovery more sublime than that which he sought; namely, the hidden magnetic virtues of drugs, stones, crystals, shells, plants, vapors, etc.; their power to enchant susceptible organisms, and the still more occult art of transmitting that power from body to body, and binding it to certain objects by the force of will. The more we search into the veils which blind materialistic history has left us of the lost art of magic, and compare these with our modern discoveries in animal and mineral magnetism, and, above all, the possibilities which are opening up to us every day in our crude and rudimentary experiments in psychology, the more we shall perceive that the subtle forces of magnetism and elixir vitae are the two great columns which support the ancient temple of magic, and whose operation extends to explain all the mysteries of mental science, spiritual communion, and the so-called "miracles" of every age and clime. How far magnetism can be utilized so as to become the solvent which can reduce all combinations of matter into their primordial elements, it may be hazardous to predict; but those who have ever witnessed the "miracles" effected by the voltaic pile, in reducing metals, and electrolyzing; those who have beheld the dead, shattered tenements of the spirit, initiating the ghastly motions and muscular actions of life, under the control of the galvanic battery, will be at no loss to comprehend the future utilization of magnetism, in all the directions claimed for the mythical philosopher's stone. Any students of the occult, that have beheld the "sensitive," obeying the will of a magnetizer at a hundred miles' distance, spell-bound by the wave of a hand, or exalted into the astonishing faculty of clairvoyant sight, by the fixed glance of an operator's eye, can be at no loss to divine the secret of magical enchantment. The healing medium, whose invisible life-forces can recall the spirit of the dying, and infuse the tides of health and strength into the frail organisms of the sick, bear living witness to the power of the elixir vitae; and in a word, the realms of the occult in nature, visible and invisible, are all yielding up the secrets of their power, and lifting the veils of their most profound mysteries, beneath the potent wands of the great modern magicians, magnetism and psychology.

If American Spiritualists, instead of wasting time in mutual recrimination, or invoking the newly discovered powers of the celestial regions to aid them in riding each their own little special hobbies in the name of "great reforms," would reverently press into the gate of the sublime temple of mental science which the nineteenth century outpouring of Spiritualism opens for them, what a world of beneficence might they not confer on their race, what a noble mission for humanity might they not be the means of performing! The need of the age is a strong, impelling power to higher life, and more exalted aims in action, than any system of intellectual or religious teaching at present affords. Scientific knowledge alone offers no impulse to the practices of virtue, or the emotions of kindness.

The working classes are weary of religious platitudes that do not promote justice in their rulers, or ameliorate their condition. The learned are disgusted with religious affirmations which contain no evidences of truth, and are diametrically at war with science. The rich are sick of everything, and all classes are perishing for want of a strong impelling power which all can feel, believe in, and comprehend, to urge them on to noble lives and elevated purposes. An assured knowledge of immortal life and strict immutability, growing out of our every deed, word, and thought enacted here, could not fail to supply the insatiable needs of the age, and furnish to the humble, motive powers for elevation; to the learned, attractions to the higher wisdom of goodness; to the vicious, importunate warnings to reform; to the powerful, stern admonitions to be just; to the rich, solemn invitations to remember the duties of their stewardship; and to the whole family of man, the reform of reforms in all departments of human life and action.

Alchemy, chemistry, physiology, and electricity are the component parts of magnetism. The influence of mind upon mind is the full analysis of psychology. Magnetism and psychology form the grand science of religion, and are the keys which unlock the mysteries of being from the Creator to the creature, from eternity to time, from infinity to the atom.

Magicians, prophets, alchemists, and mystics of all ages have but prepared the way for the Spiritualists, and if they are found incapable of appreciating their trust, apathetic to its stupendous value, or perverse in distorting its sublime meaning to suit their own petty imaginings, will they not, and ought they not, like the Jews of old, to find the kingdom rent from them, and given to a people and generation more worthy of the heavenly dispensation?

We have dwelt at some length upon the life of Cornelius Agrippa, the magician of the fifteenth century, because he is the representative of a class of mystical philosophers who occupy the mid-region between the night of miracle and supernaturalism, and the morning of spiritual and religious naturalism.

They are the stepping-stones upon which Swedenborg, Mesmer, and Franklin erect the bridge which spans over the gulf of death, and enable the immortal world to plant in the midst of the mortal the temple of a religious science and a scientific religion. As we write with the fourth book of the famed magician, Cornelius Agrippa, printed in antique black letter, lying open before us, we shall close this sketch by transcribing, for the benefit of the curious, a few extracts from his wonderful arcanum of magic and magical existences.

In the preface to Cornelius Agrippa's fourth book of magic, the publisher shrewdly defines four classes of general readers, as follows:

"There be sponges which extract all without distinguishing; hour-glasses, which receive and hold out as fast; bags, which retain only the dregs, and let the wine escape; and sieves, which retain the best only—nevertheless, the sieves are the fewest of all."

Whether these definitions fail or still continue from the days of Henry Cornelius Agrippa, let the sieve-like readers who peruse these pages decide.

The first portion of the great magician's book is devoted to an exposition of the art of "geomancy," or divination by certain highly complicated methods of setting up figures, in which numbers, points, and mathematical calculations are strangely mixed with prayers, invocations and magical ceremonies. The gist of the whole method, however, seems to lie in the following significant sentence:

"Another power there is that doth direct and rule this lot, which is in the soul itself of the projector; when he is carried to this work with some great egress of his own desire; for this art hath a natural obedience to the soul itself, and of necessity is moved and hath efficacy by the quality and desires of the soul."

The next division of the work is an elaborate treatise upon astronomy, astrology, and the spirit world, angelic and demonic influence connected with the astral system. The names, days, hours and seasons of certain ruling spirits, good and bad, are given, with their signs, sigets, shapes, colors, etc.; the gems, plants and odors peculiar to them; the times in which they rule; and the forms, rituals and ceremonies necessary to be observed in invoking and dismissing them. From a profuse description of the spirits of the various planets, we select the following characteristic specimen:

THE FAMILIAR FORMS OF THE SPIRITS OF MARS.

"They appear in a tall body, choleric; a filthy countenance; of color brown or red, having horns like harts; claws like griffins; bellowing like wild bulls. Their motion is like fire burning. Their sign, thunder and lightning about the circle."

Their particular shapes are:

- A king armed, riding upon wolf,
- A man armed,
- A woman holding a buckler,
- A hog,
- A horse,
- A stag,
- A red garment."

The consecrations, invocations, prayers, etc., are nearly all paraphrased from different portions of the Bible or ancient Cabala. The most devout reverence is enjoined for the Bible; its teachings, histories, the name of God, Christ, and all points of the Christian belief and religion. "The whole work, in fact, implies that 'true magic,' in its highest sense, is only an interior and spiritual interpretation of Christian theology."

Very explicit directions are given for the construction of magical books; and, as allusion has been made to the wonder-working power of these curious instruments, in the case of Cornelius Agrippa's presumptuous student, it may not be uninteresting to learn how they were fashioned. The adept gives directions for the setting up of one of these volumes, in such elaborate detail that it amounts to a treatise, and would occupy too much space for insertion here; but after this he goes on to say:

"There is another manner of consecrating a book of spirits, which is more easier, and of much efficacy to produce every effect, except that in opening this book the spirits do not always become visible. Let there be made a book of spirits, as we have before set forth; but, in the end thereof, let there be written invocations and bonds and strong conjurations, whereby every spirit may be bound. Then this book must be bound between two tables, and in the inside thereof let there be drawn the holy Pentacles of the divine majesty, which we have before set forth and described out of the Apocalypse. This book being perfected in this manner, let it be brought in a fair time to a circle prepared in a cross way, according to the art which we have before delivered, and there in the first place, the book being opened, let it be consecrated to the rites and ways we have before delivered. Which being done, let all the spirits be called which are written in the book, in their own order and place, by conjuring them thrice by the bonds described in the book; that they come unto that place within the space of three days, to assure their obedience and confirm the same to the book, so to be consecrated. Then let the book be wrapped in clean linen and buried in the middle of the circle, and there fast stopped up, and then the circle be destroyed. After the spirits are licensed to depart before the rising of the sun; and on the third day, about the middle of the night, return and new make the circle, and with bended knees make prayer to God, and let a precious perfume be made, and open the book and take out the book, and so let it be kept, not opening the same, lest the life of the magician be then endangered. Then you shall license the spirits to depart in their order, and, destroying the circle, depart before sunrise."

If this description apply to the easiest method of making a book of spirits, and the reader could follow the author, through all the rites and ceremonies to be observed; the fastings, purifications, prayers, states of mind, body, clothing, surroundings, necessary to insure the success of the invention and dismissal of spirits, he would understand that it is no light task to become a successful magician, and why the rash scholar who penetrated, unprepared, into the adytum of the king of magicians, suffered death by mere contact with the dread "book of spirits."

Amongst all the voluminous instructions laid down for the successful performance of magical rites, none will strike the well-informed Spiritualist with more force than the following passage, indicating, as it does, that in ancient as in modern times, the true secret of human power to commune with spiritual intelligences resides in the natural and organic qualifications of the magician himself:

"A man that is a true magician is brought forth a magician from his mother's womb; others who do give themselves to the office are unhappy, and can do no more than to give themselves to it, except he give him from above." As for young practitioners, if they are preordained to the art of magic, the other parts of all will offer themselves unto them of their own accord."

Amongst the aphorisms of magic are the following:

No. 34. "All manner of evocation is of the same kind and form; and this way was familiar of old to the Sibyls and Chief Priests. This, in our time, through ignorance and impurity, has been lost, and is depraved with infinite lies and superstitions."

No. 35. "The seventh division is: that the spirits do serve some of their own accord, which is given to few. Others they will scarce attend, though called by art."

It must be observed that, throughout this work, the author makes clear and strong distinctions between good and evil angels, white and black magic, as well as the results that may be expected from the pure and impure, and from the invocations directed by holy and unholy purposes. Here we must bring our fragment to a close. We have only to add that, whilst the whole subject is deeply occult, and unprejudiced in the ordinary experience of routine life, there is too much of system, science, and actual philosophy in the ideas connected with the subject, to justify the contempt, neglect and scornful denial with which it has been treated by the self-elected leaders of public opinion, whether in the Church or Lyceum. As for the worth and practical application of the magic taught by Cornelius Agrippa, that is entirely another question, and one upon which we do not now pretend to enter. It is one thing to kick the rough diamond contemptuously from our path as an useless pebble; another to give the price of a king's ransom for its possession, when its lustre is disclosed to our eyes in all the glory of its perfected polish. Knowledge is power, whether it be exerted to understand the use of the rough diamond, or to wield the magician's wand. In the meantime, let all without the veil of the sublime mysteries remember magic was only the John Baptist. Spiritualism is the true Messiah. We watch, wait and fast no more; having the bridegroom with us; and to those whose lamps are trimmed and ready for his coming, the New Dispensation has rent the veil of mystery in twain, and given humanity to see of spiritual things, no longer "as in a glass darkly, but face to face."