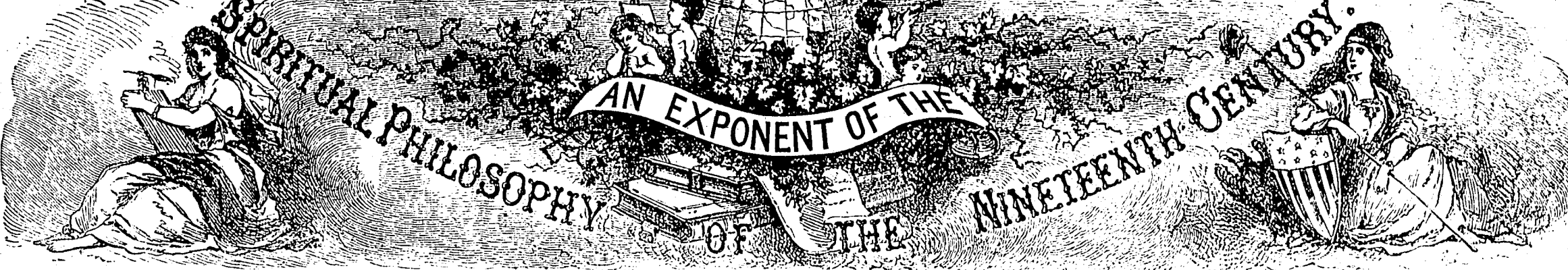


BANNER ON LIGHT.



VOL. XXXIII.

COLBY & RICH,
Publishers and Proprietors.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, AUGUST 23, 1873.

\$3.00 Per Annum,
In Advance.

NO. 21.

Foreign Correspondence.

LETTERS OF TRAVEL.

Written expressly for the Banner of Light.
BY J. M. PEBBLES.

(Continued from last issue.)
JESUS THE COMMUNIST.

Let us revert, for a moment, to those great practical communists of the past, Jesus and the Apostles. The Nazarene, gifted with the intellect of man, and the love of woman, bathed that reform which talked platitudes of well-meaning and did no work. His promise was "to him that doeth the will of my Father." The present "landmark" talk about the sacredness of private property, constituted no part of Jesus's teaching. The Apostles, imbuing his spirit, pronounced woes upon the selfishly rich. "Go to now," says St. James, "ye rich men; weep and howl, for your miseries that shall come upon you; your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you." Few need to be reminded of the "gift of tongues," and the other rich spiritual gifts showered upon trusting hearts on the "Day of Pentecost." The power was so marvelous that "three thousand souls" were moved to repentance. And of these, it is recorded, "all that believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need." On this auspicious day the Jewish Apostolic Church, or genuine Christian Church, under the inspiration and baptism of the Christ-spirit, began to exist. The communism was absolute. These newly baptized souls, full of fervor, were willing to surrender selfish ownership for the common good. Their principles were peace, purity, and "all things in common," constituting the Millennial Church, the Church of the Ages—*Ekklesia*, translated *Church*, means, literally, assembly. As understood apostolically, it implied a sympathizing assembly, convened and welded for a heavenly purpose. "Now there were in the Church (*Ekklesia*, assembly,) that was at Antioch certain prophets," (Acts xiii: 1.) "These prophets, apostles," "women of Samaria," and believers generally, quickened by the Christ-principle, constituted themselves into spiritual families, brotherhoods, and communities holding "all things in common." But says one, "Men naturally like to have their own." Granted; and so some men naturally like to have their neighbors'! Thieves are of this kind. But it is no more natural for thieves on a low physical plane to steal, and misers to clutch and hoard, than for the philanthropic and spiritually-minded to adopt a broad fraternal communism. The angels in the heavens are certainly communists. And I have yet to learn that spirits put patches of the summer-land into market, loan money, or speculate in corner lots! When men pray, "Thy will be done on earth," why do they not go to work and do it? Jesus came centuries ago. When is salvation coming?

THE SCIENCE OF SAILING.

Navigation has reached a wonderful degree of perfection. How soon will aeroplanes sail through the atmosphere in safety? Airships are sure to prove successes. The principle is perfectly understood in spirit-life.

Our Captain brings out his "sea-bibles," each day, the sextant, quadrant and chronometer, for observations—the thermometer indicating the temperature; the hygrometer to show the degree of moisture in the air, and the barometer to mark its weight—these, floating positions, foretell approaching weather with great exactness. What a perfect system of circulation—the aerial wind currents, and the briny currents of the ocean. It is thrillingly interesting to watch storms at sea. By the way, the typhoons of the China seas and the cyclones of the Indian ocean have their fixed laws. When courses of steady winds are obstructed by islands, towering mountains or other causes producing whirling tempests termed typhoons, the wind takes a rotary motion, while the storm itself has a progressive motion. These spiral storms following the law of gyration sometimes move at the rate of fifty miles per hour. The typhoons prevail in the China seas from June to October. Sailors dread these storms, and also the "pirate-junks" of Chinamen. The approach of a typhoon is indicated by rolling, uneven swells; the rapid sinking of the barometer, and reddish hazy clouds deepening into purple and black. No rules can be relied upon, says Capt. R. Muller, for the management of a vessel during these terrific tempests. "Give us sea-room," however, is the sailor's cry.

NORTH STAR AND SOUTHERN CROSS.

We are north of the equator, and shall soon be in the tropics.

SPERMALISM IN THE FIJIS.

This group of Pacific islands, numbering over two hundred, sighted by Capt. Cook, and discovered by the navigator Tasman, has recently become somewhat famous with Englishmen, because of its cotton-planting advantages. The climate is tropical. Naviti Levu is the most populous of the islands, and Thakombau, a native six feet high, and kingly in bearing, is the most influential of the chiefs. Levuka, though having few natural advantages, is the principal commercial mart. Cotton, sugar and coffee planters, do well. Cocoanuts are abundant, and some wool is exported. The Ramie plant, or China grass, samples of which I remember to have seen in New Orleans, grows finely in these islands. Cannibalism was practiced here till 1854. What Americans there are here, were originally from the Southern States. White men are in possession of three hundred and fifty thousand acres of these cotton and coffee-growing lands.

In a recent copy of the *Fiji Times*, I find a labored article under this heading, "Spiritualism in Fiji." The writer, after speaking of the natives as "low and depraved in the moral scale," assures us that "low and brutal" as they are, they "believe in a future state of existence, in apparitions and the efficacy of charms," their "prophecy profess to talk with the dead, and they cure by striking the diseased part with the hand." This writer, treating of Spiritualism among the European residents, says there is a "deep interest among the more thoughtful of our citizens, upon this important subject." "Those who believe, affirm that the phenomena throw new light upon the scriptures, as well as demonstrate immortality." There is a "want among us," he further says, "of a good test medium."

THE CHINESE PRAYING FOR WIND.

Our crew of Chinamen is a source of fruitful study. They have books aboard, and read them, when not playing at chance games. Their heads are all shaven, save the pig-tail tuft. Rising in the morning, they clean their tongues by scraping them, and then sip their black tea. In the latitude of the trade-winds, we were sorely vexed with calms. It had been a dead calm under a scorching sun for five days. As nature hates a vacuum, so do sailors a calm. Was there a remedy? On the sixth day, Sunday morning at sunrise, there came off deck a dozen or more serious-visaged China passengers, with dishes of rice, bowls of tea, different colored paper, slim dry incense reeds, slender red-topped wax candles and matches. "What's up?" inquired Dr. Dunn. Just informed by the "mate,"

our reply was, "The Chinamen are going to pray for wind." Among the number who had come forward, was the Chinese doctor, and another grave-looking, shaven-headed individual, evidently endowed with some priestly function. Putting themselves in position, they touched matches to the paper, throwing it overboard while in flames; then lighting their reeds and candles, they went through with certain pantomimic incantations, becoming their method of prayer—ending by throwing the rice and tea into the ocean. Result—a fine breeze soon from the right quarter. "There!" exclaimed our exultant "Celestials," "the wind-god has heard us!" Why not just as rational for Chinamen to thus pray for wind, as for Christians bowing over cushioned pulpits to pray in their way for "rain;" for the "staying of the grass-hopper devastation;" or the "recovery of the Prince of Wales?" True prayer is not lip-pleading, but silent aspiration. It affects supplants, and inclines angels to listen, but does not change the Deific laws of the Universe.

THE BASHI ISLANDS.

This group walls, the entrance into the China Sea from the Pacific. They are named from an intoxicating drink made by the natives. They are finely cultivated, producing yams, sweet potatoes, rice, tropical fruits and scented woods. The storm we encountered yesterday was fearful; it tore some of our sails to shreds. This morning, May 21st, passed a floating mast, evidencing a shipwreck. Just at sunrise saw a water-spout, south of us. It had a dark, heavy, whirling appearance, reaching from the cloud down to the water. They sometimes sink vessels in these seas. They are also infested—these seas—with pirates. All countries and conditions of life have their dangers.

We are five hundred miles from Hong Kong—the wind fair.

SHADOWS FROM THE DARK AGES.

Editor BANNER OF LIGHT.—Stopping in this fair city a few days, I find, in the daily papers of the 5th, reports of the doings of a meeting held here to form a branch of the American Evangelical Alliance. As its name imports, this Alliance is, or claims to be, *pur ecclésiastique*, Christian and "Orthodox," and sets itself up as a shining light and fit defense against Romanism on the one hand, and all heresy, infidelity or dissent from its immaculate standard on the other. They adopted the articles of the American branch of the World's Evangelical Alliance, framed in 1867, as an indication of the belief required of such as they desire as members.

Let us see to what we must assent to be fit to evangelize the world, in this company of modern Pharisees. Among these articles we find:

First—The divine inspiration, authority and sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures. * * *

Third—The unity of the Godhead, and the trinity of the persons therein.

Fourth—The utter depravity of human nature in consequence of the fall.

Fifth—The incarnation of the Son of God, his work of atonement for the sins of mankind, and his mediatorial intercession and reign.

Sixth—The justification of the sinner by faith alone. * * *

Eighth—The immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, the judgment of the world by our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, with the eternal blessedness of the righteous and the eternal punishment of the wicked.

Ninth—The divine institution of the Christian ministry, and the obligation and perpetuity of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The one gleam of light in the recognition of "the immortality of the soul" becomes well-nigh darkness, as we see it clouded by the awful and "eternal punishment of the wicked," and these wicked a large majority of our fallen race, cursed by "utter depravity of human nature in consequence of the fall."

It is interesting to see how the clerical managers closed this year by hedging themselves safely within "the divine institution of the Christian ministry."

As these dark and narrow dogmas stand in pitiful contrast to the purer light, the finer charity and the broader thought which have grown from the days of Jesus and Paul to our own, it is small marvel that the people hold such evangelical alliances in light esteem, or that their clerical leaders are held as but "blind leaders of the blind."

G. B. STRENNISS.
Rochester, N. Y., Aug. 12, 1873.

HAUNTED BY HIS BRIDE.

The Davenport (Iowa) Gazette vouches for the absolute truth of the following, though from obvious reasons all names are suppressed: One of the leading citizens of Davenport had an only daughter who was betrothed to a young man of fair promise, a clerk in a leading commercial house at Dubuque. His visits to that city were regular, and arrangements had been made for an immediate union, when the bride-elect was stricken down by typhoid fever, and, in spite of all which skill and care could do, died. (The Gazette report says: "We saw her in her coffin, dressed for the bridal of death, not for the consummation of all earthly love. We witnessed the agony of her lover, as he bent in speechless, tearful abstraction over the state-lined burial case.")

After the melancholy journey to Oakdale, the young man returned to Dubuque. Nervous fever set in, and a peculiar hallucination—as it was thought—seized him that his lost one was present in the room, draped in the same garb which had enveloped her clay. All remonstrance was in vain. He minutely described her dress, her appearance, and her position in his chamber; even when his parents or friends would sit or stand where he declared her to be, he saw her glide away and take another place. "This went on for weeks, and the patient was gradually sinking under the physical and nervous excitement, when a friendly nurse was tried to cure him of his ecstasy."

AN ECLIPSE AT SEA.

May 14th.—Forty-seven days from New Zealand, and no land seen since the seventh day out. Anything for a change, a calm, a storm, rain, bows, lightning, sea-birds on the yard-arm, whales spouting, sharks following the ship, one of which Dr. Dunn and the sailors caught—and now an eclipse. Last night, in Long, East 130° 22' and Lat. North 16° 11', the moon rose at seven o'clock full and fair. Soon a dark shadow was seen creeping slowly over the eastern limb. Our China passengers were quite frightened. The Cooks are ignorant and superstitious. At nine o'clock the scene was absolutely magnificent—the shadow-draped moon in the east; at the right in the south-west the Southern Cross; at the left, and nearly opposite the Cross, the north star; while rushing planets poured their shimmering beams down through abyssal spaces into the mirror-polished ocean! The grandeur of the scene can never fade from my memory.

LITERARY DEPARTMENT.

ETIENNE;

OR,

LIVING IN CLOVER.

Translated from the French of Etienne Abont, for the Banner of Light.

BY WILLIAM PERCIVAL.

I—CONTINUED.

He was not agitated, I dare say, but he was nervous; and every time he passed a certain mirror in the style of Louis XIV., he unconsciously adjusted some part of his dress. I see him still, leaning back in his arm-chair *a la Voltaire*, whilst his valet, upon his knees, put on his boots; I see him walking the pavement of the Chaussee d'Antin with great strides, his foot delicate as that of any Parisienne, his leg like that of a mountaineer; and I could paint him entering the rickety church, swept away two or three years ago by ruthless hands. He had on iron-grey pantaloons and vest, and a well-fitting blue frock-coat, which set off his figure without inconveniencing him. A small piece of red ribbon was in his button-hole, his overcoat was thrown over his left arm, and his right hand held his hat. I shall add that he wore a turn-down collar, a long cravat, Swedish gloves, and a particle of jewelry. Nothing more simple and bourgeois than this morning attire—and yet I swear to you that Francis I. and Henry VIII., meeting upon the Field of the Cloth of Gold, had not a loftier air combined.

He stood motionless and collected for some minutes; then, resolutely entering the little aisle on the right, he walked up the entire length of the church. He then faced about and slowly returned, casting his eyes over the crowd, like a man commissioned with numbering the blue bonnets. When he rejoined me, I had no need of questioning him; his face expressed ill-humor and scorn. "I was sure of it," he said. "Come, let us have breakfast."

"You saw nobody?"

"Nobody, positively."

"Then I appeal. You did not look properly."

"Go and look for yourself!"

He did not need to entreat me to make the trial again, and I had no difficulty in finding Madame Berge. She was in the middle of the first row of seats, dressed as she had previously announced to us; and I may add that the blue-velvet became her exceedingly well. Her personal appearance was most appetizing, if I may be allowed to use the word. Her roush face had the color and solidity of a Sevres biscuit, and her figure all the daintiness belonging to a Clotilde beauty. The contrast between her golden hair, her brown eyebrows and black eyes was lovely. Her hand, too, strictly gloved, after the fashion of the provinces, was small, and her teeth were beautiful. This is all I was able to note during a cursory and unfavorable examination, as an officer makes a survey under the fire from a citadel. The young widow, whose age her greatest enemy would not have estimated to be more than twenty-six years, was seated between two fantastic dragons in human shape, who had escaped, it seemed to me, from some one or other of Tupper's stories. Picture to yourself an undersized man of seventy-five years, withered, shrunken, and faded as a flower in an herbarium; and an old virago, of some thing of a beard, frightful-looking and monstrously fat. It was impossible to see such a pair without thinking of those spider-couples, of which the female devours her mate after marriage. The greatest harmony seemed, however, to exist between these monsters. They watched by turns, following the mass in their books; as soon as the man lowered his eyes, the woman would raise her head, and when the woman resumed her prayers, he would resume his watching.

I hastily rejoined Etienne, and rendered him an account of what I had seen, not concealing my admiration for the beautiful and touching victim. At the first words that I spoke, his skepticism, his dandyism and his freezing looks gave place to sincere emotion; he grew pale, and leaned upon me for support. I could not prevail upon him to await the moment fixed for his going back to the front of the church. He darted away like an arrow, upset several chairs, elbowed some worshippers, and returned with a radiant face, his hat in his left hand and his handkerchief in his right. "You are right," he said; "she is simply charming. We love each other: I shall marry her, and I shall invite you. But let us go out; I need air." His imagination was so greatly heated that, but for me, he would have forgotten to put on his overcoat at a temperature of thirty or forty degrees. We left, and during a full quarter of an hour he unobtrusively shuffled about in the black and sticky dirt which is the snow of Paris. For my part, I forgot to freeze, though nothing chilled your blood like a sleepless night. I felt a strange rapture in listening to the nonsense of this great child.

We saw the congregation come out and disperse in various directions. Hortense left the church upon the arm of the withered old man and, flanked by the giants. All three entered the rue de Tivoli. The young woman did not see us, or, if she perceived Etienne, she did not show it; but her two companions, relieving each other, turned back a number of times, the one looking ahead whilst the other guarded the rear.

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Etienne burned with a desire to follow them. I restrained him by proving that he would risk compromising all parties, and so we wended our way to breakfast.

"Happy man! With what an appetite he devoured time and space, not slighting the chicken *a la Marengo*! The obstacles, the rivalry, the plots of the Berse family disappeared before him like the mutton chops; he tasted both the Musigny wine and the happiness of being loved like a true connoisseur. He ate a dozen or fifteen splendid crabs, making quite as many projects more than splendid. It was a double pleasure to see and hear him. He furnished his house, discussed the liveries, stocked the stables, galloped upon his favorite horse in the side alleys of the Bois de Boulogne, and designed costumes for Hortense such as princesses have not. He would open his drawing-rooms to the *élite* of talent, while the great lords might stand waiting at his door. All at once he plunged into the very depths of the country, and began one of those idyls which youths dream at eighteen years, gathering violets by the bush and raising triumphal arches of corn-flowers."

"Is he not a fine fellow?"

"The world wearies him; he would be all to his wife, in order to have her all to himself." "If he found her a little unpolished still (nothing more excusable, poor thing!), he would remind her with his own hands. 'It is not a more difficult task, after all, than to create a perfect heroine, as we do every day in our novels. I have fashioned more than twenty women, true as life, to please the public; I would now fashion the best and most charming for my own use. Zoum! Every one for himself.' Is it not quite just and natural for a poor romancer to enjoy the luxury of a romance for once in his life?"

"I imagined that his air-castle lacked one important thing."

"What is that?"

"The study."

"My dear friend," he replied, in a graver tone, "I know what I have been able to produce amidst the hubbub of Paris. Boulevard, carrels, mistresses, bores, companions, creditors, theatres, suppers, duels, newspapers, letters—they have still left me the time to write two or three *gentle* books. You saw this morning that, even with two bottles of champagne in my head, I can improvise merrily enough. Judge from this what I shall be able to do when quiet, security, happiness, and honorable love shall have given me back to myself, thoroughly regenerated! I shall produce masterpieces!"

"Jean Marcan?"

"Jean Marcan first, and a hundred others afterwards. What is an 18mo volume? Seven or eight thousand lines of print. I can dictate five hundred in less than two hours, as you have seen; one day of a free and happy man's life represents ten working hours at the lowest count, that is five thousand lines. At this rate I should produce a volume every two days, one hundred and eighty in a year, with plenty of time for rest. If this large number frightens you, reduce it to a half, a fourth, a tenth; there will still remain eighteen volumes per annum. Give me thirty years to live, and I shall have at least five hundred and forty volumes upon the shelf. If I die in my prime, fifteen years hence, I shall still leave the bookshelves a more imposing tower than that of Voltaire. We know why the writers of our age are all barren, or nearly so: it is because they waste nine-tenths of their time and ink in soliciting favors from a figurate, indulgence from the tailor, and delays from the bailiff. A million lines are daily lost in Paris to the detriment of the provinces and posterity. Take all the men of talent—I know fully two hundred and fifty—marry them to women like Hortense, give to each two hundred louis per month, and the ages of Pericles, Augustus, and Louis XIV. will be but as a day in midsummer compared with ours!"

He continued in this strain till two o'clock of the afternoon, and then he sent me home to bed, without the promised letter of introduction. I, young and careless, did not awake before nine o'clock the next day.

II.

Five or six days after this revel, I reflected that it was time to pay a visit to my new friend. The porter, in answer to my inquiry, replied that M. Etienne was not at home, and I left my card. I made the attempt again the following week, and for the sake of greater certainty, I walked right into the house without inquiring at the door. The precise valet recognized me; he took me neither for a creditor nor borrower, but he was either unable or unwilling to tell me at what hour I should find his master at home. All that I could obtain from him was some paper, a pen and ink, which were on the table in the ante-room. I wrote to the well-hidden man, requesting him as a friend to make an appointment with

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me. The request was not answered. A full month had passed since our dinner at Tattlet's, when one of the company stopped me on the boulevard and said: "What have you done with Etienne?" They accuse you of suppressing him; nobody has seen him since."

I replied that he was invisible to both great and small; and that he was doubtless concealing himself to write without distraction, since the journals were beginning to overflow with his articles.

The fact is, he filled more sheets than in three or four months than in the most productive year of his life. He wrote a prodigious deal of everything, appropriating more space than any ten writers of the first and second rank. Not that all he published during this period of feverish illumination was worthy of his name, as may be imagined: for one beautiful page, absolutely pure and classical in form, ten or fifteen ordinary ones would slip from his pen. The stories, bluettes, and fancies, which he sowed broadcast, were sometimes radiant with the smiles of a happy man, but often reflected the wry faces of an overworked laborer. His diligent readers, the faithful ones who followed him with kindly attention even in his ramblings, offered his having to live, in excuse for such irregularity; yet they felt that the greatest writer in the world must necessarily spoil his hand at this trade.

About the middle of March I met him, or rather caught a glimpse of him, at the Théâtre Italien. He stood at the entrance, to the orchestra, persistently leveling his glass at a box opposite, which I had not noticed. My attention was aroused. I set about discovering the object he was eyeing incessantly, and recognized Madame Bersac, in full dress, glittering with diamonds. The big rural phenomenon was sitting at her side, and the little withered gentleman was tossing about on his chair in the background. Hortense appeared to me not at all out of place in the fashionable world of Paris: I was almost astonished to see that her person and toilet sustained the most overwhelming comparisons. A provincial, half as beautiful and nearly as elegant, who should risk this ordeal in the presence of her lover, would lose him beyond recovery. Etienne seemed greatly smitten, and proud to witness this triumph of her loved. Some furtive glances which they exchanged proved to me that there was an understanding between them, but that they persisted in hiding all from the two grotesques in human shape. A feeling more earnest than mere curiosity prompted me to ask the sequel of a romance begun under my own eyes.

I caught Etienne's eye; he made a friendly gesture, followed by a little rapid dumb show, which represented the hunter's "All is well," and then he entered the lobby. After the play, I sought him in vain; the Bersacs had also disappeared. The weeks rolled on; spring gladdened Paris; flower-carts could be seen at the turn of every street; but nobody saw Etienne. He was riveted to his desk, as it were, and gave no sign of life except by three novels in the newspapers, which dragged their lengths along from day to day. I concluded from this that he was eager to settle up his accounts, preparatory to marrying Madame Bersac. The novels which he was hastening to completion were doubtless produced by agreement, and perhaps published for advantage. Toward the end of May, posters, advertisements and bills made known to all lovers of art that the celebrated collection of M. E., consisting of pictures, designs, engravings, bronzes, marbles, ceramics, arms, tapestry and antique furniture, would be offered for sale at the Hôtel des Ventes for two days. Some simple-minded persons deplored the fate of the renowned writer, whose prodigies of work had not succeeded in redeeming the follies of his youth, and who now de spoiled himself of his dearest possessions to satisfy his greedy creditors. For my part, I began to suspect that the marriage was near at hand, and that Etienne, like the honest fellow he was, made it a point of honor to pay his debts himself.

The sale attracted not only collectors and dealers, but artists and writers of every grade. Etienne alone did not appear; but several persons remarked a diminutive old man, in a seely coat and white cravat, at the auctioneer's right hand. In this mysterious gnome, who forced up the bids actively, and always stopped at the right moment, I recognized the man of Trinity Church and of the Théâtre Italien—the body-guard of Madame Bersac. His presence and zeal proved two things to me: Hortense had accepted Etienne, and the former husband's family, instead of having an open quarrel with the widow, had taken in hand the interloper's interests.

This last discovery simply overthrew my hypothesis. If the little gentleman had espoused Etienne's cause, the passions, the calculating spirit, the thoughtless part, which I had assigned him—the whole fabric of my argumentation, in fact—would fall to the ground, and I was in the presence of an innocent old man devoted to Madame Bersac—her father, perhaps; her father, whom I had greatly misjudged, upon the strength of a letter wrongly read and understood. My conscience did not feel very easy, and to crown my vexation, I thought the good Etienne could not forget such unkind language. He was not one of those who love by halves; would he forgive me for standing, though for justice and foolish sport, a family about to become his own?

These scruples soon gave to the most insignificant circumstances a sinister hue. I persuaded myself that the reason why I could not gain admittance to the great writer was personally debarring me his presence; that his escape from the Théâtre Italien before the end of the play was due to a desire to avoid me. The promised letter—I was still waiting for it. So much coldness, after the friendship he had so plainly expressed! There could be no doubt: my ingenious commentary upon the text of Madame Bersac's letter had cost me a friend.

I was musing upon this subject some fifteen or twenty days after the sale, when I received a rather large packet through the post-office. It was an envelope containing seven letters from Etienne, of which but one bore my address. Here it is:

"MY DEAR FRIEND—I owed you a letter of introduction. It has been delayed; but I now comply with your request, and send you half a dozen. You have lost nothing by waiting. Hasten to rap at the editors' doors; the opportunity was never better, my retirement makes room for others."

"Yes, the young aspirants who accused me of blocking up every avenue will now be able to move about, if so be that they have legs. I have laid aside my pen, the public will no longer hear me spoken of; it is a fixed and settled matter; you may communicate it to my friends and enemies."

"Since our last and first meeting, I have been the happiest of men and the most burdened of slaves. I have finished a life of drudgery, commenced a life of love, exhausted more cares and joys than would be required to kill a Hercules. However, I am in good health."

"Hortense is the most beautiful, the best, the most angelic of women. Blessings on you, who read her rightly at the first glance! We love each other as none ever loved on earth. If I knew of a man more madly enamored than myself, I would go this instant and pick a quarrel with him. After a thousand crosses, the recital of which would take up too much time, all is settled the best way; we shall be married next Tuesday at—her native town. I shall invite no one, not even you. Hortense wishes me to break with Paris; she wants an entirely new Etienne, and she shall have him."

"We are ridiculously rich; I reddened to the very temples when the contract was read. My wife has life-interests worth a hundred and twenty thousand francs a year, and twenty thousand in her own right. All this comes from old Bersac—Bersac the elder, as he is called by the family. This excellent gentleman, whose departure serves me so well, did an extensive business in wines and brandies; he is remembered by many in the departments of the southwest. My portion is limited to the copyright of my works. Bonifard, who utilizes them, has got into the laudable habit of giving me four or five thousand crowns; one year with another. This revenue is clear, the auction sale having paid all my debts, and even the wedding-gifts, which are worthy of Hortense and myself. We have, then, an income of more than one hundred and fifty thousand francs, besides a house in town and the chateau of Bellombre, the latter said to be splendid and royally furnished. Keep these details to yourself, or should the public evince too lively a curiosity, print only so much as shall appear to your essential."

"I have not yet told you the prettiest part of the matter: we have an admirable steward, single in kind, able, honest, perfect, and he costs us nothing. What a prize for Hortense and me, who know about as much of artifice as the Thurons! This man, providentially ours, you have seen, but you did not read him at all: it is Bersac junior, titular notary, and sharp as an old devil; but a good devil if there ever was one. His fortune is very moderate. While his brother was making millions out of claret, Célestin—that is his name—courted the rebellious muses, printed a poem on Clôvis, brought out a Gallo-Frankish tragedy at a theatre of the arrondissement, which was hissed, made his first appearance in *Les Agamemnon*, and a shower of apples, started a Legitimist newspaper entitled 'The Finger of God,' ran aground upon the inhospitable banks of the notarial profession, a petty clerk at thirty, married a peasant, girl—your have seen her—and for this sacrifice, above my powers and yours, he received ten thousand crowns cash. Buying a poor office in the canton, he takes a practice by storm, increases the boldness of his attacks, and rises by dint of his wrist to the highest position in the department. Here his varied accomplishments and his well-known probity have gained him universal esteem; he is beloved, respected, and rules opinion. I have these particulars from Hortense. Her fondness for him is not blind, as he harassed us a good deal for three months; but she does justice to his virtues, and avers that no one could quarrel with him without rousing the whole province."

"Let us be just. Here is a man who has struggled all his life to gain an income of ten thousand francs; it is all he possesses. Rightly counting upon his brother's inheritance, he sees Bersac senior take a young wife and leave her all his income after a two years' marriage. There was but one way to repair this injustice: Célestin has a son, a man of my age, and commanding a battalion of *chasseurs à pied*; but Hortense flew into a passion at the first mention of it, and replied that one Bersac was enough, that another would kill her—the dear creature's mind was already occupied with your friends. Célestin, who is no fool, knows that his sister-in-law will escape from him sooner or later, and yet he does not use her harshly; far from it, he takes the poor thing's interests in hand, attends to her leases, improves her lands, receives her rents, and invests her savings. Do you know two *bourgeois* noble enough to do the same? He followed her to Paris and kept an eye upon her, because he knows that she is young and confiding; but from the day that her choice fell upon an honorable man of some worth he approves it unreservedly, extends his hand to me without any ill feeling, and devotes all his time to arranging my affairs. They treat me like an adopted son, these Bersacs. Would you believe that the good old lady calls me her brother? Such sentiments are worthy of the golden age!"

"You know me somewhat, though we have eaten little more than a grain of salt together, and you will therefore perceive that these good people are not dealing with an ungrateful wretch. Good fortune has not perverted my moral sense; I feel that this wealth, gained by the labor of others, is not my own. It lies only with me to squander almost the whole inheritance—Bersac has proved it to me, by the documents; three-fourths of the capital is in securities not registered, and the widow is formally relieved from giving bond or inventories. Such confidence does us honor; but, far from wishing to abuse it, we shall not even turn it to account, and I desire to transfer to these poor devils the titles to the property of which Hortense has the income. As to the small fortune she possesses in her own right, we shall keep that for our children, if we have any. They will have an income of twenty thousand francs from their mother, twelve or fifteen thousand a year from my books and plays, besides all that we shall have saved for them, for I am a man who can be saving when duty requires it. But, should we die without offspring, I mean that all coming from the Bersacs shall return to the Bersacs; it is but justice; neither my wife nor I have any near relatives."

"It is in this spirit, my dear fellow, that I have caused the contract to be drawn up by a trusty notary, slightly acquainted with the family, but who has promised secrecy. Poor Célestin was unwilling even to touch our marriage articles—so great is his delicacy! Fancy his surprise and gratitude, when he shall see himself endowed with these advantages by one whose conduct and profession inspired him with mortal fear!"

"You can form no idea of the absurd prejudices these provincials have. The best and most intelligent of them think there is little difference between a redskin and a Parisian author. Bersac the younger exhibited a comical astonishment upon learning that I neither drank absinthe nor

smoked night and day. He asks me seriously whether we authors and the actors of the Comédie Française do not live together in the same garret? The other evening he came to me with an air of great mystery, and after a long preamble upon his monarchical and religious sentiments, confessed to me that his wife, my intended, and he, and all his friends, would be painfully affected if I should write for *L'Impartial*. It appears that *L'Impartial*, published in my future department, is a diabolical sheet. I had a good laugh; imagine me connected with the crude *Impartial*!"

"My dear Bersac," I said, "I am head and ears in the newspapers already, and you would render me a signal service by showing me how to avoid reading any."

"He kissed me upon both cheeks, and resumed, in a tone of resignation: 'I know that your ideas and beliefs unfortunately differ from ours; the kingdom, which our wishes recall, has not your sympathies, and your works, which I have read, do become acquainted with you, in more than one place betray the boldness of the independent thinker.'"

"And what of that?"

"Have pity on us; it is Hortense who sues for it. Remember every now and then that our illusions are dear to us, and that it would be cruel to strike a blow at them."

"Why, the first element of good manners would prevent my doing so! Have you ever in conversation heard me—"

"God forbid! There is no better bred man in the world. I was only thinking of the books that you will write, my worthy friend, of those beautiful books, for all of which we shall be some-what responsible, the family being jointly and severally liable in the provinces; and those brilliant works, which you are doubtless going—"

"What works? what books? Who told you so? Have I not produced enough, then? Do you think I am going to get married for the sake of continuing this brutifying labor? Nobody shall know the efforts I have made these three months and more to draw a last supply from my brain. I am worn-out, exhausted, disheartened. The little I had to say, I have repeated ten times over; the public is drowning in my prose. I am going to send in my resignation; let it seek its pleasures elsewhere; let it ask laughter and amusement from those who are less tired and weary!"

"What! you are not going to write any more?"

"No."

"Seriously, you do not intend to have anything more printed?"

"Nothing except the notices, which we shall send off next week."

"Upon your word of honor?"

"My dear Bersac, the word of an honorable man is always a word of honor."

"I shall make a note of it, my worthy friend."

"What a pity that I cannot depict for you the thousand grimaces of contentment which wrinkled his little face! I made a man happy without any cost to myself; for, between you and me, I was only waiting for an opportunity to cast Hércule to the dogs. When I turn my head toward the past, I see nothing but follies in action, in words, and in writing. And to think that I believed myself impelled toward this path by a kind of talent! There is but one road in life, my dear fellow, which is not a breakneck one: it is that on which I intend to take the air with Hortense for the next thirty years, in a carriage and four. To love, to be loved, to live merrily, to look philosophically at the fates and absurdities of others—that is the only enviable lot. You do not believe it? Wait. You are young; your spirits itch; your comb-bristles while you what your back? Go, my good fellow, and vent your passion; but, should an occasion offer half-way, do as I have done; follow the example of him who, having it in his power to become a glorious game-cock, preferred being a cock in a field of ripe corn."

"This letter should have made me glad for more than one reason. It opened to me tightly-closed doors; it reassured me concerning the feelings of a friend; it rendered justice to my diagnosis; it constituted me, in some sort, the spiritual legate of a living person, since I alone, of all in Paris, was able to announce and comment upon Etienne's retirement. But, for all that, it cast me down."

"I have tried little to me to know that he would be overruled and even plundered by that old rogue of a Bersac. Business is only business; that is to say, a thing of the third order in the lives of thinking beings; but that a man with so great a future should have renounced his art, either from disgust or from weakness, to remove the silly scruples of the family—this grieved me deeply. If no one had made this renunciation a condition, he was indeed to be pitied. Doubtless the toil of the last few months less him to believe himself written out; but what was one to think of him if he had sacrificed art to the unreasonable demands of the Bersacs?—given all his titles to glory for the pottage of Bellombre? Even love only half covered the shame of such a bargain; and I asked myself seriously whether Etienne, the renegade and traitor to his own talent, still deserved my respect."

"Time and reflection somewhat reassured me. How had the widow been taken with the brilliant writer? By reading him. Loving his talent, then, she cannot exact the sacrifice of him without monstrous inconsistency. Little Célestin himself, church-warden though he be, cannot want a man like Etienne to put an extinguisher upon his genius. The ex-notary, the ex-journalist, the ex-poetaster, the ex-laborer still has some respect for letters left at the bottom of his heart. And even though wife, family and the province should unite all their efforts to strangle a superior mind, though he should tamely submit to the murder, has he any control over the masterpieces which are in him? No; the fruits of genius, insipid of everything that can be done, see the light when the hour has arrived; books like children, are born on the day appointed by nature; neither the author nor the mother can delay this happy fatality one moment. The blood individual who says to you, 'My brain is full of masterpieces, but I keep the door shut,' might leave the door open with impunity." Thus I argued with myself.

"I had the particulars published which Etienne confided to me for this purpose, but I took care not to spread the report of his renunciation of literature. All Paris admired the good taste and sense of the fair provincial who indulged the luxury of enriching so superior a man. The newspapers predicted that the great author, freed at last from every care, would throw all his powers into some master-works; but the wording of the marriage notices quite astonished the brother writers and friends of the bridegroom. I gave their exact tenor."

"M. Etienne has the honor to inform you of his marriage with Madame Hortense de Garennes, widow of M. Bersac senior."

"M. and Mme. Bersac junior have the honor to inform you of the marriage of Madame Hortense de Garennes, their sister-in-law, widow of M. Bersac senior, late judge of the Tribunal of commerce, late member of the council for the arrondissement, with M. Etienne, property owner and gentleman of this city."

[Continued in our next.]

Free Thought.

"THE TWO SIDES," OR HOW SHALL SPIRITUALISTS DISCUSS "IN OPEN MEETING?"

In the Banner of July 19th there appears an article entitled, "The Two Sides; or what subjects shall Spiritualists discuss in open meeting?" The aforesaid article is from the fluent and able pen of our esteemed friend, George A. Bacon, and is written in a spirit the gentleness, candor and catholicity of which should commend itself to every reader, and set a noble example to the many who sorely need to imitate its tone and temper. There is but one point in which our friend has failed, and that is just where he leaves off—an omission which I venture to think might be supplied by another essay from his fertile pen on the mode of how Spiritualists should discuss, and that not only in open but also in private meeting, and everywhere else, whether in public or private.

Not to enter the arena of discussion with persons or personalities, (a course I have long eschewed, and which no circumstances will induce me to pursue,) but to supplement or suggest a supplement to our friend's admirable essay, I beg leave to offer a few remarks on another and as yet untouched phase of Mr. Bacon's theme. I have nothing whatever to add to the two pictures he draws, save this: Why not freely, constantly and openly discuss both sides of the subject? Spiritualism is both phenomenal and doctrinal—phenomenal in its modes of communion, and therefore essentially scientific, and the subject of scientific research and discussion.

All that appertains to psychology, or the science of soul embodied or disembodied, should become the subject of thought, teaching, experiment and discussion. On the other hand, the fact that every returning spirit teaches that as we sow on earth we reap in eternity, and that the deeds done in the body determine the status of our condition hereafter, render it imperative upon us, as thinkers, to discuss every subject at our meetings which may make man better, and help the spirit to become filter for its life of compensation or retribution.

If the malice and bitterness with which for the last two years I have been assailed for the promulgation of my opinions in opposition to free love have not entirely deprived me of a hearing from the journals and rostrum—which I about as much as any one else in America have helped to build up—I would here- with urge that our platforms should be open to the discussion of every subject of human and vital interest, but always with this proviso: that when an abuse is agitated and a reform or remedy proposed, the reformer shall not dogmatically insist that his or her method is the only way, that all that do not conform thereto are not Spiritualists, and that Spiritualism means this or that particular view of reform and nothing else. It may be urged by the timid, the gentle, the peace-making, and the peace-loving that no true Spiritualists would or could take this violent course, and that radicals of all others should be the most tolerant of all shades of opinion, and the last to label a great and world-wide cause with the idiosyncrasies of their own peculiar minds. The gentle and the peace-loving wish this generous and just state of things, until that which they wish they finally believe to be the case; but the stern logic of facts proves that this is a mere Utopian view, and that the present broken and divided condition of our ranks, the withdrawal of thousands of our best supporters from the public advocacy of the cause, the difficulty of commanding funds for our meetings, and the generation of decay and defilement that prevails amongst us is not for lack of spirit power or spiritual phenomena; but because the violence of radicalism has usurped the public ear, voice and rostrum, and driven the more moderate from the meetings, and disgusted thousands whose views were in opposition to their own.

For many years—in fact, from my childhood—I have been a student of anatomy, physiology and physics. Since becoming interested in Spiritualism, I have from time to time abandoned the wish of my friends in and out of the form that I should practice as a physician; only to devote myself more sedulously to the public exposition of the cause of Spiritualism; but I have never abandoned my studies of the laws of life, health, and the body's relations with the spirit, and these studies have led to some singular and perhaps deeply-momentous discoveries, amongst which I may remark upon one, which bears strongly on the subject-matter of this article. There exists a true, faithful and infallible method of diagnosing disease by a new science, the details of which I have been so highly favored as to become instructed in. One of the disclosures thus afforded is this: out of, say one hundred poor women, whom, as some public clinics held last spring in Philadelphia, it was my duty to diagnose by the new method, at the least average, ninety-five were afflicted with female weaknesses, the result of which must be inevitably to entail disease in new, old and complicated forms, upon their offspring. Now, I will take the opinion of every learned physiologist in the world, including some of my own teachers and all the greatest physiological authorities extant, that impure acts, impure lives, over-indulgence in sensual enjoyments, and impure thoughts even, are the causes which, in nine cases out of every ten, lead from inflamed imaginations to inflamed organisms, and finally to chronic and hereditary diseases.

Carpenter, Dalton, Columbus, Meigs, Dewees, Warren, Combe, Morrill, and hosts of others whose lectures and writings have been especially devoted to this subject, have emphatically declared and analytically proved, that sensual thoughts and over-indulgence in sensual acts, were the inducing causes which, not in nine cases out of ten, but in ninety-nine out of a hundred, laid the foundation of the dreadful diseases to which my unhappy sex have become so fatally and universally liable. Now, Mr. Editor, it was this train of physiological discovery, followed out in deep research, which led me some years ago to make systematic attempts throughout the country to benefit the condition of poor outcast women, and in this particular branch of reform to denounce and lecture against the crying sin of the age, sensuality, and the over-indulgence of animal passions. I did not call my reform Spiritualism; I made no effort to fasten my views or plans of action on Spiritualism, and though I appealed for aid to many prominent Spiritualists, it was only because my acquaintances were among Spiritualists, not because they were such. With the views very briefly touched on above, strengthened and enlarged an hundred-fold by my wide experiences among the victims of sensuality, it cannot be supposed that I regarded or ever shall regard

with any favor, a set of philosophers who strive to excuse what I deem a sin against the highest laws of nature, and open the door of freer and wider enjoyment for those very passions which I know to be debasing to the soul, corrupting to the body, and destructive of the highest human conditions, physical and mental. Still I should never have interfered with the free love philosophers, contented to let every one act out their own lives, and answer for themselves in the same proportion as they elect to live for themselves, had I not found such a fierce and determined resolve amongst that party to fasten their peculiar modes of action, thinking and speech upon Spiritualism.

Without following out the repulsive theme in its growth or details, it is enough to say that at this epoch, in nearly every city in the Union, Spiritualism and Free-loveism are held to be synonymous terms amongst the community, and are so very often preached on spiritual platforms in connection, that, with some few exceptions, they form the rule, giving color to the whole cause, and inducing, I repeat, to my certain knowledge, thousands of earnest and faithful Spiritualists to withdraw from all public recognition of Spiritualism, lest their families should become indoctrinated with free loveism, or their own names become associated with its advocates.

Now, Mr. Editor, I have no quarrel with the free-loveists personally, no wish or intention to dictate to them. Whenever I have entered a plea against the direct and universal association of their views with Spiritualism, it has invariably been without personality or personal vituperation; but there are two distinct evidences that this course has not been reciprocated by them, and that on one point at least, Spiritualists cannot discuss all subjects without the whole body becoming committed to the opinions of the few. These evidences are, first, the universal identification in the public mind of free-loveism with Spiritualism; and next, the fact that I—the only public speaker, as far as I am aware, who has publicly pleaded against this association—have been so denounced, insulted, reviled and taboed by the Spiritualists publicly and privately, that I have been driven out of my field of usefulness, and compelled to drop pen and hush voice; and let the storm of abuse and vituperation pass by.

I do not write in any spirit of complaint, nor with the slightest intention of changing this order of things. From the moment I saw how the tide was setting, and read articles and letters of insolent and ungrateful denunciation of one who had been for years the friend and fellow-laborer of the writers, I determined on my course, and shall never vary or alter it.

I have moved, and shall again, at the bidding only of impulses I can respect and intelligences I can honor; but I neither answer whom I despise, nor propose to make the columns of a journal, professedly devoted to the highest interests of humanity, an arena for the exhibition of envy, hatred, malice and all uncharitableness. If I now allude to the fact that I, as an individual, am driven away from the scenes where it has been so long my privilege to devote time, power and means, it is only to illustrate my assertion that the discussions of the Spiritualists in open meeting have been too incidental instead of too free; that radicalism has put on the robes of tyranny, and dogmatized the discussion of Spiritualism into free-loveism and very little else.

A lady is now in our midst—a public medium—pure, beautiful and accomplished, who was distinctly informed by a party of females in New York, assuming to be leaders in Spiritualism, that she "could be no true Spiritualist, and of no account as a medium, if she were selfish enough to wish to keep her husband to herself." So long as public opinion and the United States laws do not interfere with men and women who choose to live like animals instead of angels, I have nothing to say, nor is it any business of mine.

It will make good harvest for doctors and lunatic asylum keepers, and society will ultimately right itself, when the wrong is at the uttermost; but when I hear earnest Spiritualists assuring me they dare not take fair wives and daughters to spiritual meetings, or encourage impossible sons or loving husbands to listen to spiritual doctrines, for fear of the most shocking desolation falling upon the home and heart; when my desk is full of the most insulting articles and letters, heaped upon me because I beg that Spiritualism may not be entirely merged in these doctrines; when I know that, for this very article "the hounds will be upon me," as a good friend lately wrote to me—then it is that I entreat George Bacon to employ his talents and arguments in suggesting to Spiritualists, not what they should discuss, but in what tone and temper they should discuss every subject that belongs to human interests, or affects the weal or woe of the human soul hereafter.

I do not know when—if ever in this generation—the great reproach of the one idea that has been fastened on Spiritualism will be wiped out.

I do not know where, as an individual, my place in the great spiritual vineyard will be, or if it will ever again be as the public mouthpiece of my beloved and faithful guides; but reason, justice and whatever gleams of scientific knowledge I may have acquired, assure me a movement so broad, catholic, and all-embracing as Spiritualism will not be forever left in the rude grasp of a clique or party, nor will the angels who recross the precious thresholds of the homes they have left, forever be required bringing desolation, ruin, heartbreak and shame, to the honored ties of husband and wife, before they can be permitted to become "controlling intelligences."

All who have faith in the higher law and the ultimate triumph of supreme good, can afford to wait the resurrection of the beautiful—good only is permanent—right only is eternal—but there are some who are privileged by place or circumstance to aid the unfolding light, and assist in raising the veil which obscures the vision of poor humanity.

George Bacon's temperate and valuable article qualifies him for a still further advance in the road of reason and the advocacy of justice. Let him push on in the path so seasonably opened, and suggest to the devotees of liberty for themselves that whilst every reform might be a fitting theme for discussion amongst Spiritualists, one set of reformers' ideas might not be the fittest method of defining Spiritualism; but why should I exercise my unpoplar pen in pleading for that which is sternly, silently but surely working out the Master's will in ways we wot not of? The day of self-judgment is upon us, and men and women, unassisted by the invisible power that is dealing with them, seem to be compelled to appear in their true colors, and reveal themselves for what they really are. If my friends think proper to act or write on my hint, well—if not, equally well. I have performed the task allotted to me—offered my plea as the word is given me for Spiritualism and my Master's bidding done, all is done for

EXMA HARRISON BURTEN.

