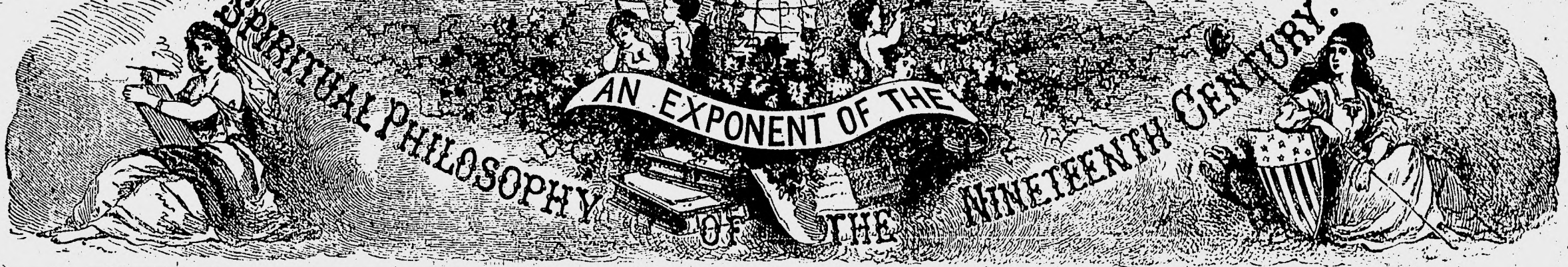


BANNER OF LIGHT.



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The "Poet of the People."

An Inquiry Concerning a Spirit-World,
Revealed to the Natural World from the Earliest
Times, by Means of Objective Manifestations;
With an Identification of "The Tree of
Knowledge of Good and Evil."

BY GERALD MASSEY.

On Sunday afternoon, Jan. 11th, this distinguished English author and orator delivered the second lecture of his present engagement, before the Music Hall Spiritualist Society, Boston. After stating that he should offer his best, and hoped to find that himself and his hearers had some thoughts in common, even if they were not common thoughts, the speaker (as is his wont) plunged rapidly into the treatment of the matter in hand.

There are two theories of man's origin. One assumes that he was struck off perfect from the mind of creation; stamped with the image of God. The other that he has been evolved physically from the animal kingdoms as a crowning work, and is slowly approximating to that divine likeness which will take eternity to complete. One depicts him as descending from his high original estate on his way to the devil. The other as ascending from the dust of the earth on his way toward God, in the fulfillment of a glorious destiny. For my part, I hold that the spiritual nature of man is as much a development, a growth of consciousness, a progressive derivation from its source, as his physical form is from the earlier forms. I have no fear of the doctrine called Darwinism, and I hold that the current fear of it argues a conception of creation that is utterly non-spiritual. Darwinism only needs a true Spiritualism to put it through and elicit it on the other side. Man never did begin on this earth as an angel ready-made; did not begin as that which will take him an eternity to become. It seems to me that he was born as blind as puppies are; blind to many laws of our being which we now call natural. In fact, it was as a law-breaker that he first recognized the law-maker; it took ages of time to get his mental eyes open by frequent running of his head against the hard wall of solid facts. The first object of his education was to find himself here—a being detached from the life around him. Having found that self which he came to make so much of, and hug so blindly, and love so unwisely, the final object of his unfolding spiritual life is to lose his own self in his growing sense of the creative love, which draws nearer and nearer to him by many ways, and the perfection of his being, the fullness of his individuality, will finally consist of his openness to his utter dependence and subsistence on the divine life. Man is not formed in the image of God merely because he goes on two legs instead of four. The Father had to reveal himself to his child very slowly, very faintly, in order that he might come within range of its comprehension at all—reveal just so much as could be assimilated—and so, little by little, and with many appeals, the likeness had to be evolved in the spiritual life from within. For every upward swell in the human ascent, there has been a descent of the divine which caused it.

It has commonly been supposed that the consciousness of God in humanity began with the Hebrew race, or thereabouts, and in the light of that theory it had always been a puzzle that man, starting out from some primitive perfection, falling in the race, and getting up so stunned by his fall that he forgot all about his past, should have proceeded to split up the Delty—that is, the supposed original consciousness of one—into the myriad forms—thirty thousand, for instance, among the Romans—encountered in the past systems of polytheism. Max Müller has argued that "In no language does the plural exist before the singular," therefore that a primitive intuition of God, a more or less conscious theism, must have preceded polytheism, as an inward fact, if not an outward worship. But the known facts of history, said Mr. Massey, were all opposed to such a conclusion, the apprehension of an infinite number of gods having for ages on ages preceded the knowledge of an Infinite One, so that polytheism came before monotheism. The idea of immortality was not revealed to man by way of remembrance, nor as the fossil remains of a preexistence, nor was the God-idea reasoned out without external evidence. After referring to the condition of the dim, pre-historic peoples of the past, whose ideas of God and immortality he proceeded to prove from the evidence to be obtained from tribes of men even now existing upon the earth, were undefined if not wholly wanting—his friend, Captain Burton, considering from research and experience among barbarous peoples, that "Atheism is the natural night of the genuine savage mind"—he asked:

How did the invisible world first make itself known to the early benighted cave-dwellers of a human mind? In answer, by becoming visi-

ble to them. It did not dawn from any sudden illumination within, nor wake up as a memory of immortality. The first idea of man's continuity after death, and the existence of a spiritual world, were engendered, I maintain, by direct phenomenal proof and visible demonstration. As we have seen, there are savages who do not believe because they have not seen; so we shall find plenty who do believe because they have seen.

I take it the first evidence of man's having become a breathing, spiritual image of God, is witnessed by his ability to recognize the fact of spiritual existence when God appears to him by means of spiritual apparition. A faculty of faith in the unseen could not have been created in the savage mind—which almost dwells in the eyes alone—without some tangible form of appeal being made to it, outside of itself. A faith in such a state was without solid ground to go upon, without evidence on which to rest, and had no existence apart from belief. Spiritualism gave this outside appeal, this foundation for faith in a future life, by the direct reappearance, under certain conditions, of those friends whom the persons so seeing had held dear. The early system of Christianity was based on this ocular demonstration, which the present church rejects; among other points cited, being the fact of Christ having appeared to his disciples as his first act after his resurrection. The Hebrews were characterized by the lecturer as a gloomy, unspiritual people, who, in spite of their recorded spirit manifestations and personal intercourse, seemed never to have grasped the idea or doctrine of a personal immortality; and Jesus was truly the first born of that nation to reveal eternal life. To the mind of the speaker the earliest apparitions of the first men would be as low in the spiritual scale as the men were in the natural world; which accounted for the extremely material type of the angels who visited or were seen by Abraham, Lot, Joshua, etc., etc., in the early days of the Hebrew race.

The speaker then went into an elaborate tracing of the rise and development of the idea in the early races of a shadow, or spirit, coexistent with man—the words being synonymous in the Tasmanian and many other aboriginal languages—"the man in the eyes" of the Magasi Indians of Guiana, which, after the death of the material man, did not also die, but "wandered about." This shadow had the capability of appearing, and the fact was of the greatest significance as explaining high-worship to a great degree: The West Indian Islanders, when first visited by Europeans, had carved little images, and set them up for worship in the shape of the very spirits which had appeared to them. One island, near Hayti, had a population of idol-makers solely devoted to such spirits as came only by night. These nocturnal spirits would be the most popular objects of worship, because considered able to work most injury.

The natives believed in both good and harmful spirits: They worshipped the evil ones as they needed propitiating, whereas the others were safe to do good, as they were good. "Were not you afraid to meet your God?" was asked of one of our English savages, after a bad illness. "No," he said; "but I was mortally afraid of the fellow, though!" And this would be the first incentive to worship. The primal bowing down to the knees, would be the sincerest groveling of horror and fear. And there would be plenty of need for this feeling to be appealed to at times. Among the Sioux Indians fear of a ghost's vengeance has been known to prevent murder! There are instances related of ghosts striking people, not with terror only, but physical blows. The Australians believe the malignancy of their demons to arise from their being left unburied after being slain in battle, or dying other violent deaths. Here we have the origin of propitiatory sacrifices. The natives of the Thinevelly District, we learn, are still accustomed to propitiate the diabolic soul of a British officer named Pole, who was a terror to them in life. For a long time they left rice and other native offerings at his tomb, in vain. At length they brought them of those cheroots and that brandy which he loved on this side the grave, and found them equally effective on the other, and set his soul at rest. So strong is this belief in the power of the Revivants to avenge an injury, that a Hindoo woman allowed her sons to deliberately cut off her head, so that she might become an avenging ghost, on purpose, as she said, to haunt, torment and pursue to death and blast the thief who had stolen forty rupees from her sons!

Many interesting examples were cited of the cherishing of this same idea of deathless returning spirits, filled with influence pleasant or otherwise, among various tribes in Africa and elsewhere, while he said the people of our own race had, within a few years, a practical relic of the same belief, in the custom of running—a stake through the bodies of our suicides buried at the cross roads, to pin them to the cross, and not allow them to rise and walk, and wander in their sleep of death to alarm the living!

Ages on ages of objective manifestation may have passed away, nay, must have passed away, before any real spiritual belief was wrought into the mind of man. There were the facts, but not the faculty of thinking them out.

The savage mind acknowledged the existence of the "ancestors" whom his eyes beheld, but he was accustomed, even after that to think of them as "ended," and not as practically demonstrating immortality to him by their visually apprehended presence. And the matter did not seem to be much better even to that of the Hebrew, by whom the something beyond death was recognized only as a misty mockery of life. St. Paul

(said the speaker) seems to have looked on the state of departed spirits as a sort of naked nothingness from which he shrank, and against which he embraced Christianity with its doctrine of eternal life. By degrees, the ghosts do evolve some kind of belief. Man begins to worship the God nearest to him, and the worship of ancestors is one of the earliest forms of religion. The worship of our Father in Heaven is preceded by the worship of our forefathers on earth, as with the Hindus and Chinese apotheosized ancestors preside over particular families. Hesiod says when the mortal remains of those who lived in the Golden Age were hidden in the earth, their souls became beneficent demons, still hovering over the world they once inhabited, and still watching, clothed in thin air, as guardians over the affairs of men. Plato says the good when they die become the reporters and carriers between Gods and men. That doctrine, as we now know, was worlds ahead of the idea of a physical resurrection which the Christian Church have clung to until they are the worst foes of a living Spiritualism.

Mr. Tylor, the ethnologist, argues that if there be spirits of persons made visible to us wearing the old dress, there must be spirits of garments also. This is not bad savage philosophy. At is the very inference that led them to the doctrine of object souls and ghosts of things. The savage saw that the spirits reappeared in the old recognizable dress, bearing the well-known weapons. He did not know the law of their representation, or re-clothing themselves in the earthly forms, and naturally supposed the things were spiritual too, or how should they be seen in spirit-life? This serves to double the evidence of his reasoning having been founded on actual and visible objective manifestation.

I know of very few facts in our modern spirit manifestations that may not be found in the past. The spirit-voice was continually heard by Moses. It testified aloud to the mission of Christ—its revelations particularly distinguish the Vedic Hymns and Brahmanas from other Hindoo inspirations. These were heard, or the Delty was—as it were, overheard. This we now call clairaudience. In fact, the name for revelation in Sanscrit is *sruti*, i.e., "hearing," which tallies with the mode of revelation described by Isaiah: "And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, 'This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand of you to the left hand.'" It was in this way, I apprehend, that Moses received the revelations and warnings of his demon. He was clairaudient, and therefore heard the spirit speak with an actual voice. Now-a-days you will find that voice explained away as the voice of conscience. "People who do not hear voices, refuse to believe that Socrates did. But what are we to think of Charles Dickens's statement, made to Mr. Lewes, who says: 'Dickens once declared to me that every word said by his characters was distinctly heard by him,' i.e., overheard? This puzzled Mr. Lewes at first, but his surprise vanished as soon as he thought of the phenomena of hallucination. Blessings be upon that word, which constitutes the skeptic's whole book of revelation! Mind you, such words are very handy things. 'They do come in so opportunely just where ideas fail. The other spirit, voice, speaking through the medium, must be granted by those who believe that Baalam's ass remonstrated with his master, or was the ass only a clever ventriloquist? In the manifestations made at Belshazzar's feast we find the direct spirit-writing, and the luminous spirit-hand seen doing it. Chinese mediums have practiced spirit-drawing with the 'descending pencil,' or appropriate pen, whose point writes in sand, for thousands of years.

The pattern of the temple, from general design to minutest detail, was given to David by a spirit; so was that of the Tabernacle to Moses; and the modern mediumistic circle was the earliest form of worship known, from the Hecate Circle, mentioned by Julian, the Chaldean, with instructions for forming it, to the English domestic circle of to-day. The Circular Temple of the Sun, the Round Tower of Ireland, the Druid-Enclosure, the Roman Circus, the Russian "Tserk," the French "Circle," German and Scottish "Kirk," and English Church, are all derived from the early Spiritualistic practice of sitting in a circle to form the electric ring and natural focus for spiritual influences to descend and manifest their presence.

It is, said the speaker, certain that the Christian worship began with objective manifestations of spiritual presence, and that these were attributed to that Holy Spirit promised to mankind, as their comforter and leader of all who sought the truth.

The speaker demonstrated, from various authorities, that the word "prophet" so inadequately rendered, signified "medium" in the sense which modern times has attached to it—said that the phenomenon of trance was known in China from the earliest ages, and that among the Darlen and other Indian tribes this gift of prophetic vision was recognized. The reproduction of the Pentateuch by Esdras, while in a trance, and under the direct influence of spirits, as recorded in Esdras, Book Second, 14-22-22, was then graphically delineated, and the speaker characterized it as one of the most remarkable cases of spirit control on record. The various methods of inducing the trance condition, including the potions used for the purpose in the East and elsewhere, were then referred to, in the course of the description the following solution from the spiritual standpoint of fact, being offered for the origin of the "tree of good and evil" so much referred to in Genesis. Speaking of the Soma drink, used in their religious mys-

teries by the Brahmins, Mr. Massey said: The tree which produces this divine juice, this spiritual Euphrasia, this intoxicating narcotic, as we should say, was, at an earlier period, the Pippal or religious fig-tree, otherwise called the heavenly asvattha.

In the second Rig-Veda there is reference made to a tree, the fruit of which is called Pippala. Birds settle on it, eating that fruit, and then sing praises in honor of the immortality which they now share in consequence of having tasted the fruit. Here, then, we have a tree bearing a fruit which was used at the great Soma sacrifices of the Hindus, to be identified as 'producing a drink that would cause such abnormal conditions as intoxication, or the somnambulant sleep. But this has been impossible almost, because the word "Soma" may mean immortality. And, one way or another, the earthly Soma has been translated into the heavenly Soma, or amrita, that is ambrosia, which drops from the immortal, religious fig-tree, out of which heaven and earth were shaped. Beneath this mighty tree which spreads its branches over the third heaven, dwell Yama and the Pitris, and quaff the drink of immortality with the gods. This is poetic, I might say phallic figure, in the shadow of which we had lost sight of the real fact. It was the drink yielded by the earthly fig-tree that made the heaven of the myth, and the literal acceptance of the esoteric expression, which has led to the supposition that the Hindus imaged the creation as originating in a fig-tree. Meanwhile the real fig-tree has undergone the same transformation in spiritual translation that the sacred ash of the Norsemen has when we see its colossal apparition in the tree Yggdrasil, up-lifting its stem and branches through three worlds.

Brought back to the root of plain fact, from which both trees have sprung and been transformed into metaphors by tradition, we shall discover that there was some clairvoyant virtue in the Soma juice, or sleep-drink; that it places men on a footing of fellowship with the gods. This is the underlying fact that clothes in the fancy and fable. This fig tree is a meeting-place for men and immortals. Under it Yama, king of the departed and the Pitris, the protecting fatherly spirits, quaffed the divine drink in common with men. Thus it becomes the mythic drink of immortality, after the fact is lost sight of. We have to do with it as the Soma, the narcotic juice used by their sleepers and seers at the great ceremonies sacred to the god, Soma, to make them immortal for the time being. Thus we find in the ancient Hindoo worship a fig-tree sacred to Soma, and beloved by Indra; God of the sky, from the fruit of which a drink was made, so potent that it not only exalted men to the status of immortals, but brought down the gods to men. By aid of its use at the sacrifices and mysteries, we perceive it was drunk by their sacred sleepers, to throw them into trances, open their spiritual vision, and make them one with the immortals.

Turning to Egypt, we find a fig-tree sacred to their worship. It was the sycamore fig tree, dedicated to the goddess Netep, who is frequently represented in the Egyptian drawings as appearing in this fig-tree pouring out the nectar of heaven from a vase for some one recently dead, and for his living friends to drink. Sometimes the soul of the deceased is pictured as a bird, the same idea as that conveyed by the Hindoo birds of the Vagus rejoicing over their first taste of immortality. This nectar is without doubt the juice of the fig made divine. The Athenians also had their religious fig-tree. It was planted along the "sacred road," where, during the Eleusinian mysteries, the procession halted in honor of it as they went from Athens to Eleusis. I have to suggest that the fig tree was sacred to the Greeks, and had the same connotation with the Eleusinian mysteries as the sycamore fig had to the Egyptians, and the religious fig had to the Hindoo rites, and was made use of to produce the drink that lapped the senses in Elysium, whilst it opened the spiritual sight.

Now, if we turn to the great work of Zoroaster, the Zend-Avesta, to which the writer of the Book of Genesis was, I think, indefinitely indebted, we meet with two trees—one named Gaokerena, bearing the white hauma, or fig, the other called the Painless Tree. And we learn, on the authority of Dr. Windischmann, that both these trees are the same as the one fig-tree out of which the Indians believed the world to have been created. I have explained the only sense in which the Hindus could have believed in such a creation. Now the fruit of the White Hauma Tree was supposed to give immortality to those who drank of its juice, and the modern Parsees, the followers of Zoroaster, still make the divine drink the medium of immortality from the fruit of this Hauma tree. The other produced a narcotic which destroyed pain; it was the Painless Tree. Here, again, we discover the fruit that produced the sleep-giving juice and drink of immortality, and it grows on a fig-tree. The Zend Hauma is the Sanscrit Soma. Also, I find in one of your North American Indian vocabularies the "Holy Herb," Tobacco, which was used for the same purpose, is called "Soma." We have here the very two trees planted in the Garden of Eden—the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. This has been suggested by Dr. Windischmann as a likelihood, but with no spiritual interpretation of the fact, no clue to its significance. This Tree of Life and Tree of Painlessness, originally one and latterly two, or possibly two kinds, then, are fig-trees. And the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil of which the woman partook at the suggestion of the serpent, and where with she did tempt her husband, was obviously a fig-tree.

Why it is called an apple, seeing that there is no such fruit mentioned in the Mosiac account, I can't tell, unless some very primitive philologist identified the apples one with the Pippala, there being an apple called a Pippin, or perhaps he looked upon the whole story as an allegory. It is the fig-tree in India, the fig-tree in Persia, the fig-tree in Egypt, the fig-tree in Greece, and it was in fig-leaves that the man and woman tried to clothe themselves.

My conclusion is that, in the Mosiac account of the "Fall," we have a representation of the known fact, common to the Oriental races from the earliest time, from the dimmest dawn of some immemorial past, that from a particular kind of fig could be expressed a juice that would narcotize the drinkers, or magnetize, or mesmerize, as we now say; and in the unconsciousness of sense the spiritual eyes would be opened, the drinkers would be in spirit-world, seeing with spirit-sight, and being as spirits among spirits—in fact, as St. John says, being in the spirit: "And ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; or partook of it in some form. "And their eyes were opened," and they knew that they were naked in the new world of inner consciousness, and heard spirit-voices, or the voice of the Lord, and were conscious of spirit presence in the garden, from which they shrank and tried to hide themselves.

My summing up of the whole matter is this. One of the Mosiac writers, in common with or following Zoroaster, conceived the idea of making a profound protest against the magic arts, the necromancy and dark devil-worship of the past, as practiced in Egypt, Persia, Chaldea, Bactria, India, in favor of the One God, the God of Light, the God of Purity, the Supreme, the idea of whom was then dawning on the world. So he figures forth what he considers to be the false Spiritualism as the fall of man, the means whereby the serpent effected the "fall" as the "forbidden fruit." I am obliged to think that the Persian view was not taken until after the Babylonian captivity.

And so much for the famous forbidden fruit-tree which brought death into our world and all our woe, the shadow of which has darkened and dwarfed the souls of men for thousands of years. So much for the dread curse of humanity, the "fall," which was the cause of our natural depravity, the "original sin," and penalty of everlasting pain inherited by us all through the transgression of Adam. With the doctrine of the "fall," down goes the doctrine of the atonement as vulgarly understood. For it was out of the wood of that much-misrepresented fig-tree that men have cut the Calvinistic cross of Christ.

Two things tend to corroborate and elicit this conclusion: The one is the stern and steadfast way of prohibiting the early forms of Spiritualism on the part of the law-giver Moses, whilst in continual communication with spirits himself, and in receipt of revelation from them. The other is the fact that a woman medium, sacred to God, is singularly exceptional in Israel. She was not permitted to be a priestess. She figures only once or so as a prophetess—and is struck with leprosy—never as a writer of a sacred book. Yet Moses must have known that naturally there are far more women mediums than men mediums, and so set his face all the more sternly against them, and made woman the weaker vessel, the most easily tempted of the serpent, and the cause of the fall of man. Fig leaves to hand him over to the advocates of woman's rights.

Mr. Massey then discussed the matter of mediumship and the influences which acted upon it, and said that experience had demonstrated that spirit communication, as a fact, did not depend on the pre-made of it, nor on the morality of the mediumship, nor on the purpose of the seekers; that like would induce like, and therefore, he advised that the purest and truest aspirations should rule in the mind of parties seeking to so commune. Referring to the rites instituted by undeveloped spirits through passive mediums, who failed to appreciate this fact, in Egypt and other countries in the past, he said: The revelation of Moses was an immense stride for humanity. He led his people up out of Egypt in more ways than one—at least tried to lead them, though they often cast longing, lingering looks behind, and the chains of the old sorceries still clung to their souls. He made a strenuous endeavor to get at the one God, and did truly ascend the Mount Sinai of a higher altitude, to issue forth his later revelation and to extirpate all forms of spirit-intercourse on the lower ranges. But the inspiration of Moses and other Hebrew mediums was by no means so direct from God, or so perfectly protected from evil interference, or so unalloyed with error as has been believed. It was as natural in the early times, for the lowest forms of one's own spirit-manifestation to be attributed to the immediate presence and agency of Delty, as it may be in our day for the lotties to be set down to the devil. I venture to doubt whether the Hebrews had any more certitude in the matter than we have to-day. Then as now the tree must be judged by its fruit, good or evil; I do not think they had so much, as they had not the same openness to the spirit of truth; had not our means of judging betwixt truth and error; had not that revelation in Christ—the illuminated image of immortal love—which we have to judge the spirit-messengers by.

Referring to the varying character of manifestations, as to truthfulness or otherwise, recorded in the scriptures themselves, and applying the same test to modern media, Mr. Massey said:

Banner Correspondence.

Illinois.

CHICAGO TRIM.—Permit me to contribute a few facts from Chicago for the noble Banner. On Thanksgiving Day I invited Mr. and Mrs. Wood, of 188 Washington street, to dine with us, and also invited S. C. Vallandigham, W. W. Waite, and Monomona, (an Indian, who has controlled Mrs. Wood for ten years,) and others of our spirit friends. And all came. Vallandigham asked a blessing over the turkey (but not for Christ's sake). I asked them to communicate through your Message Department, and I hope they will. I have traveled from the Atlantic to the Pacific time and again, and have seen hundreds of mediums, but none better than Mrs. Wood as a business medium. Mrs. Annie Lord Chamberlain, of 169 Warren Avenue, is doing a good work in a quiet way. I have attended her seances, and the most astonishing manifestations are shown. I have attended her "White Awake" will materialize and talk for twenty or thirty minutes at a time, and keep up a grand concert of bells, drums, guitar, harmonium, etc. Engaging hands touch all parties in the circle. Our good Bro. Samuel Maxwell, M. D., of Richmond, Ind., finding his business growing, has moved to this city, 332 West Madison street, and is using his mediumship, for the First Society of Spiritualists, on Sundays, and in his profession week days. He is a speaker of great merit, and by his answers to questions from the audience gives much satisfaction. Dr. Maxwell held seances and was conductor of the Lyceum for several years at Richmond, and he leaves a grand opening for some good Spiritualist to take his place, and buy the beautiful hall there, and make it a home and a good paying business. The town is a beautiful, healthy place, of 12,000 or 13,000 people. Capt. Luther Crocker, a Spiritualist of twenty years' standing, can be consulted. Bro. T. B. Taylor has just started a "Free Religion Society," of the Alzer type, at the Globe Theatre here, preaching each Sunday at 3 p. m. with most excellent success. Some of the best minds in the city are much interested. We hope the time has come when the Spiritualists will strive to have better places for their seances and lectures than even the Orthodox have, ornamented with beautiful spirit paintings, such as are produced by our wonderful artist, H. A. Straight, of 1033 West Madison street, near the river, in spirit-life, and views in this world and the next. I am glad to see so many of our Spiritual Societies setting themselves right on the social question. JOHN W. FREE, 179 Warren avenue, Chicago, Ill.

Oregon.

LELAND.—Wm. Bryce writes Nov. 12th as follows: Permit me to give my experience briefly on the power of the magnet, as related to my own case. Three years ago this winter I was suffering with rheumatism severely. Being a miner I had little hope of relief while exposed to water, which my business necessarily subjected me to. I wrote to Mrs. Lewis, of Bloomington, Ill., for a psychometric reading. The day I received her reply I was suffering so much pain I was unable to attend to my business. While reading her letter all pain left me. I did not at first understand it, knowing little of the power of magnetism. While reading the letter over again I was suddenly impressed it was a magnet-power received from her letter. When I retired I placed the letter between my shoulders, when a sudden shock penetrated my whole system like the effect of a galvanic battery. All pain at once left me. Thinking it might return again, I wrote to Mrs. Lewis to magnetize another sheet of paper. I only once after that had a slight return of rheumatism. Applied the magnet sheet, and was relieved at once. Am entirely cured. I have never met Mrs. Dr. Lewis personally, but think she must possess high magnetical powers. Her letter came a distance of 2000 miles, and proved as effective as if she had been present. Long may she live, with many other noble true mediums, to bless humanity with their deeds of love and truth. Christ possessed this healing power in a high degree. With his harmonious development, were great manifestations, for "the woman was healed by touching the hem of his garment." And yet Orthodox will cry humbug when mediums perform most wonderful cures at the present day. In harmony with the same laws that existed in his day. But a new light has dawned. Many who were in darkness are receiving and anxiously seeking for truth, even in this remote part of Oregon. The Banner of Light is diffusing great light, and each year the number of subscribers is increased. Long may all noble workers live to promulgate our beautiful philosophy.

Kansas.

OLATHIE, JOHNSON CO.—C. Tillotson writes: We have a liberal society in Olathie, and we are trying to help our fellow men to shake off the shackles of superstition and bigotry, and the more effectively to enable us to do that, we called to our assistance the indefatigable worker and lecturer, Mr. R. G. Beales of Kansas City, Mo. He has just left us, having delivered the months of November and December delivered three lectures before our society, some of which made our Orthodox friends wince, not one of them daring to meet him in a wily debate, but venting their spleen behind his back when he was away. Some went so far in their rage as to say that he was a dangerous man in this community, and ought to be silenced; but they dare not come out and silence him by fair means. On the contrary, they show that had they the power in their hands they would shut his mouth by the strong arm of the law. But we hope for better things in time, even from them. Bro. Beales will go to Ohio in January, and when I say that the friends in Ohio have in store a rich treat, I give utterance to the opinion of a large circle of thinking men and women in Olathie. I never heard any man lecture who has such a fund of good sound logical ideas stored away in his brain as Bro. Beales has. He seems to be a perfect encyclopedia of knowledge, and he knows how to tell it to his fellow man so he can understand it.

District of Columbia.

WASHINGTON.—W. E. Jamieson writes: I commenced my month's engagement with the First Progressive Society of Spiritualists in their neat, pleasant hall, Jan. 4th. Col. Smith, the President, gave me a handsome introduction to the audience, that modesty (for which we lecturers are justly famous) forbids I should repeat. The enterprise of the Washington Spiritualists is indeed commendable. The choir is "A No. 1." The officers of the society understand their business. They do not even seek to impose restrictions upon their speakers. "Be thyself," appears to be their motto.

O. B. Whiting is the efficient Secretary of the society, also connected with the Pension Bureau. The United States House of Representatives is a Babel. It is the best illustration of "confusion worse confounded" that I ever heard or saw. I should hate to be sentenced to deliver speeches in that place. I had formed an incorrect idea of the galleries of the House. Just imagine a cellar vaulted with gilt moldings. The congressmen, poor fellows, occupy the pit (it is hoped they will have better luck in the next world,) while the people are ranged on the rim; and every time they look upon the torments of those below, they rejoice that the world is not all a congress for man's illusion given.

Wisconsin.

PLATTSVILLE, GRANT CO.—J. B. Tupper writes: Since Spiritualism has assumed associative form there has been a marked interest and advancement in the cause of truth. Two regular meetings have already been held, one at Plattsville, and the other at Middleboro, and great success. Evidence of spirit presence and power were so clear as to convince nearly all present of continued existence in spirit-life. Many spirits were identified clearly and beyond question. Very convincing physical demonstrations were

given. The trance speaking and tests, through a number of sittings, conspired to awaken a desire to investigate further. Our next meeting will be held Jan. 31 and Feb. 1, at Dodgeville, Iowa County, Wisconsin.

DARIEN.—I wish to inform the friends in Bucks Co., Pa., that I should be able to lecture there in January, as I expected. Instead, should be in West Pennsylvania—in Louisville, Warren Co., the first week in January; in Harrisburg the last week of January; in Washington, D. C., in February.

I have been in Wisconsin this fall and winter; have had large audiences in Princeton, Darien, Appleton, Stevensville, Oconto and other places. I have given from four to six lectures in each of these places, and promised to visit them all again in the spring. Mrs. H. T. STEARNS, Permanent address, Corry, Pa.

Massachusetts.

LUNENBURG.—A. C. Estabrook, President of the Spiritualist Society, writes: Our Society has been holding meetings during the past five years with good success. We started with the idea of having lectures for one month, but when the month had passed we were still hungering and thirsting for spiritual food, and up to the present time we have held lectures twice a month. Meantime we have had many old and tried workers in the cause. Mrs. Townsend, Dr. Bairdfield, Dr. W. Hall and others, all of whom did a noble work for us. After them came S. S. Greenleaf, of Lowell, who remained as our speaker for nearly a year. He has many friends here, and was liked by all. But finding the cares of business too great, he finally concluded not to continue longer. We then made an engagement with Mr. J. William Fletcher of Westford, then just entering the field, and for two years he has spoken for us, giving universal satisfaction, and endeavoring himself to us in every way. As a speaker he is popular, and as a gentleman he is liked by all. Bro. Moses McIntyre, one of our oldest and most firm supporters, has been called to that other world, he being the only one during the past two years we have lost from our Society. Saturday evening, Dec. 31st, Mr. Fletcher was surprised by a party of friends at the home of John Coffey, Esq., and gave the recipient of gifts from the Society. After remarks being made, singing, etc., the party said, "Good night." At the close of the afternoon lecture a series of resolutions was offered and unanimously accepted, after remarks being made by Mr. Woods and Mr. Tarbell of Vermont. After a vote of thanks to Bro. Fletcher for his superior lectures, we said the few words of farewell. Our meetings will not be resumed until Spring, when we hope to have our young friend with us again.

New Jersey.

VINELAND.—Dr. Conley writes: Spiritual matters are lively, and the financial crisis is felt here less than in most places. Vineland is growing finely. I am lecturing with my usual success in adjacent towns.

Mr. J. H. Hartley, of London, Eng., has just closed a two months' engagement here. His lectures were very satisfactory to the Society. The Lyceum had a jam Christmas night, and two hundred and fifty fine presents were distributed to the children.

New Hampshire.

LAKE VILLAGE.—J. M. Cook, in a business letter, says: The people here and in Lacopia are all ripe for the introduction of Spiritualism among them. A good lecturer, or a good test medium, would do much good, were one or both to visit us for awhile, and it would pay financially. We are glad to know that the dear old Banner and its Public Free Circles are still doing no wrong. God bless you all; and may angels guide Sister Conant.

Indiana.

ROYAL CENTRE.—Ell Walters writes, Dec. 22d: Religion had got to such a low ebb here, that some of the five Spiritualists thought they would try and introduce Spiritualism by a lecture. So we sent for Dr. Seely, who came and delivered two discourses, one on Saturday and the other on Sunday evening, on "The Philosophy of the Soul," and "Bible Spiritualism." Nearly all the adult population of the town were present. The lectures were just what was needed, and the doctor has sown seed that will ripen in due time.

In the Field.

Will you allow me, through the Banner, to introduce to the Spiritualists, East and West, Mrs. Amelia Colby, a first-class lecturer, though not yet widely known among Spiritualists? After traveling companion is Mrs. O. Smith, a splendid musician. Besides having a sweet voice for singing, Mrs. Smith carries with her a fine guitar, with which she entertains Mrs. Colby's audiences; and before and after the lecture there are regular receive calls anywhere, East or West. Their address is Winona, Minn. JOHN H. LEWIS, Cerro Gordo, Ind.

Western Correspondence.

BY WARREN CHASE.

DO THEY LOVE ONE ANOTHER?—The evangelical Christians in and about Utica, N. Y., have been resolving in conventions that their Christian Perfectionist brethren at Oneida, in Christian community-life, trying to carry out the precepts of Christ in practice, are a nuisance, and ought to be or must be abated, and they are about to proceed to do it. We told these strictest sect of Christians years ago, that they would have to seek protection from Christian persecution at the hands of Infidels and Spiritualists, whom they affected to despise, while they covered themselves with Bible literature and did everything for Christ's sake. They are the most practical Christians we have ever seen, living a most honest and harmless life in accordance with the orders of Jesus given his disciples, but of course this does not satisfy the sects, to whom religion is theoretical and not practical, and they are about ready to adopt the practices of earlier Christian times, and exterminate them. Both parties are believers in Christ, and profess to be followers of Jesus, who would have brought "peace on earth and good-will among men," but the evangelical faction of this great sect seem to think the true way to do it is to exterminate those who do not believe as they do.

They have begun rather too soon to attempt to run this Government. They have not quite got the Constitution altered, and the laws enacted to enable them to begin the extermination of other sects, although they have exhibited their impatience in attacks on the Mormons and Perfectionists, not quite daring to attack the Spiritualists, who outnumber any two of the evangelical sects. They are wise in attacking the weaker parties first, and finding out their persecuting strength, and how far public prejudice and public sympathy will go with them. Spiritualists, Infidels, Free Religionists, and even Catholics, if they realize their own situation and danger, will all rally to the defence of any and every sect, however small, and however obnoxious its belief, to defend religious liberty and suppress persecution. Our sessions of Congress and our executive, since the war, have been more Christian than ever before, and especially the last sessions of Congress have given large evidence of piety, and thereby given encouragement to the evangelical sects, which have had prayers in the White House by the European head of the Evangelical Alliance. They may think these signs show that the people are, like these officials, getting religion to cover corruption, but they will awake to a terri-

ble mistake when they attempt to use political power for their schemes of persecution. We are willing our Oneida friends should have a lesson sufficient to teach them who are their true friends and protectors in the social and religious experiment they are making, with such eminent success that it alarms the old conservatives in the more popular churches.

FOUR DOLLAR, IOWA.—A beautiful, wealthy and flourishing little city of four thousand inhabitants, at the junction of the Des Moines River with the Iowa Division of the Illinois Central, about one hundred and twenty-five miles from Sioux City and one hundred and ninety from Dubuque, and on the Des Moines River, with good water power, surrounded mostly by prairie, with some timber and plenty of good coal, excellent soil and healthy climate—cold winters, but well adapted to people raised in the Eastern States. The place has seven small churches, when one would answer for all who want to attend church. It has several school-houses, one of which is much better and more expensive than either church—a bad sign for the churches, when they let science get ahead of religion, and the school-house ahead of the house of God; but such is the tendency in the West, and likely to be more so. The largest church and most popular society is the Catholic, and they succeed best in begging if not in "grabbing" gambling. This small and popular system of gambling, cheating and grabbing is now one of the most effective and principal means of sustaining the churches in the new towns of the West. The Methodists of Iowa Falls had one of these baroque "festivals" one evening when we lectured there, and many more went to the house of fasting than to the lecture; and one of the side-shows to the performance was an exhibition of Capt. Jack—admission to see the wonder only ten cents, with the understanding that no one who went in would reveal the secret to keep-keepers out; and so the pious gossips and gossips assured all that it was well worth seeing, and got most of the guests in to see the *cap and boot*. But this was not inappropriate to the Methodist Church, since most persons who join it for religious purposes are about as much cheated, and taken in financially much more.

We spent a week in this pleasant city, gave six lectures, and found a most pleasant home at the magnificent mansion of brother and sister Swain. Brother Swain takes seven copies of the Banner at his store for customers, and his tables are loaded with more periodical reading matter than we have found at any house in the West. We spent Thanksgiving Day with these friends (Mrs. Swain is Secretary of the State Association of Spiritualists, and has been for several years), and in the evening met about two hundred of the young men and ladies of the best society in the city, who assembled to enjoy a social treat with music and dancing in the spacious parlors of sister Swain. Mrs. Swain hires a hall and conducts the *evening*, which she has kept up with but little assistance for several years, and for which she deserves and has the thanks of the friends of this important branch of our philosophy and religion. We had very fine audiences in Fort Dodge, as we have everywhere in Iowa where the bugbears and "so-called" have not frightened many sensible persons from their food. We have yet engagements at four other places in the State which we must hurry through before the holidays, and reach St. Louis and the lower latitudes.

Scientific.

COSMOGRAPHY.
A DESCRIPTION OF THE UNIVERSE.
NUMBER TWENTY-EIGHT.

BY LYSANDER S. RICHARDS.

The moon is new when in its perihelion, or when it passes between us and the sun; the bright portion of the moon being simply the light thrown upon it by the sun. When the former passes between us and the latter body, the bright and illuminated parts of course are toward the sun, while the opposite side presents to us the darkened portion, the sun's rays being able to reach but one side at a time; the same as an apple placed in a room between an observer and a lighted candle; he cannot discover the light thrown upon the side of the apple nearest the candle; all he can see is the darkened side nearest him, while the light rays cannot reach and brighten. Now if the apple is placed just a very little one side, say about five degrees, the observer will perceive a small portion of the apple brightened in the form of a crescent; so is it with the moon, she rarely passes directly between the sun and us, unless a straight line would pass from the earth through the centre of the moon, to the sun, for then a total eclipse would be the result, and would occur at every new moon, and again when at its full; but it travels mostly in its revolution around the earth a little one side of said straight line when near the sun, and consequently a small part of its brightened side is seen, crescent in its form, as just described, in the apple. 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