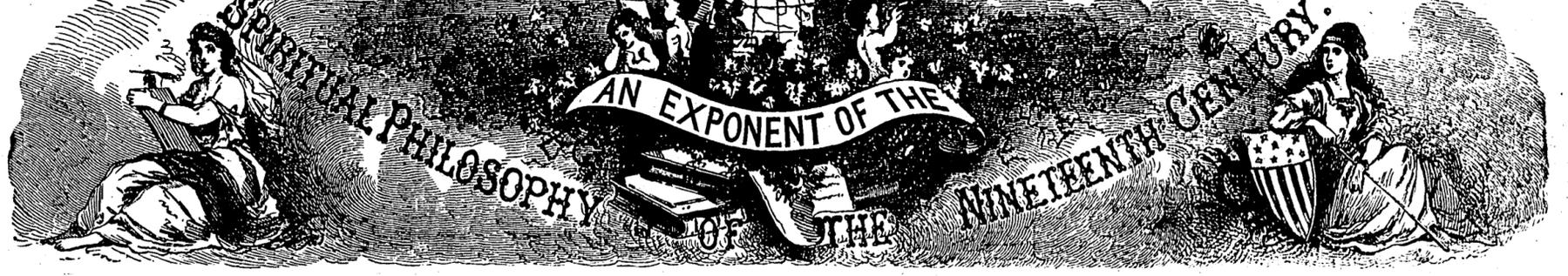


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SPIRITUAL GIFTS. NUMBER ELEVEN.

Written specially for the Banner of Light,
BY EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.

The Holy Ghost—Spiritus Mundi and Impersonal Mediums.

Of all the mysterious personages of that mysterious assemblage of theological performers which cluster around the mysterious "third person" of the Christian Trinity, we avail ourselves of the ideas suggested by this visionary "Paraclete," to question whether an analysis of the office and functions assigned to him may not, in some measure, account for much that is occult and wonderful in the realm of human intuition, or whether that which was vaguely called "intuition," and some ardent Spiritualists attribute solely to the ceaseless inspiration of spirit-friends, may not proceed from a realm of spiritual influx, of which in our materialistic philosophy we make but little account.

To proceed with my examples, however, before I venture to start a theory which may not find favor with those readers who cannot endure to have their opinions disturbed, permit me to recall the fact that the "Holy Ghost, Paraclete, or Comforter," makes no figure on the stage of Christian theology before the days of John the Baptist.

The Jewish Scriptures record that John spoke of Jesus as he who should baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire; the same Gospel also states that, at the baptism of Jesus, the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove. These and many other passages of the Jewish Scriptures, in which mention is made of the Holy Ghost, clearly point to the idea that no real personage was indicated; but an influx of the Divine Spirit; even the impartation of spiritual gifts, by the laying on of hands, was designated as the gift of the Holy Ghost, and no candid and intelligent student of these Oriental writings, especially if he be acquainted with the Gnostic ideas prevailing at the time, can fail to discover that the Holy Ghost was simply the spirit or intelligence proceeding from the Supreme Being, and acting upon the recipient in the form of inspiration, influx, or the impartation of spiritual power. Divested of all mysticism and theological jugglery, the imposition of hands was but a means of imparting the "Holy Spirit," or awakening spiritual power by the contagion of touch; in other words, by psychological intention and magnetic influx. Even the famous Pentecostal gift of tongues, though scripturally described as "the descent of the Holy Ghost," in the visible form of flame, was nothing more than a powerful influx of spiritual force, visible to the eye as *odid light*, and manifest to the intellect in "the gift of new tongues."

That this Pentecostal power was a special outpouring of spiritual force, none can question who believe in the record at all; but, although described in the Gnostic style of writing then prevalent as the direct descent of the mysterious Paraclete, the intelligent Spiritualist will be at no loss to determine that the real element of power was to be found in the accordant and harmonious condition of the assembled multitude; in minds stimulated to ecstasy by waiting expectancy and the subjugation of all selfish ideas to the one focal object of that vast assemblage. The "descent of the Holy Ghost" upon such a multitude, time, place, era, and the fervent tendencies of an Oriental people duly considered, was as natural then, as sobs, tears and self-accusations are to hysterical women at Moody and Sankey's revival meetings now. From the time of Jesus and the Apostles it is evident that the manifestation of spiritual powers, whether procured by natural endowments or the imposition of hands, is described by evangelical writers as the "gift of the Holy Ghost," and none but Christian fanatics whose ignorance and unreasoning faith led them to impersonate every idea the Orientalists imaged forth in allegory, could mistake this mysterious spiritual afflatus for a real personage, or place it on a heavenly throne as one of a triad of personal Gods.

A curious paraphrase of the Holy Ghost legend obtained currency amongst certain classes of European mystics during the great outpouring of Modern Spiritualism. During the early days of this movement, I met with a large number of intelligent persons in Europe who attributed very remarkable spiritualistic endowments, not as the majority of the Spiritualists claim, to the influence of their deceased friends, but to a mysterious, incomprehensible, impersonal sort of a personage, a somebody, yet a nobody, to whom has been given the comprehensive title of the *SPIRITUS MUNDI*. Vague and various as are the theories afloat concerning this last named mystic agent, there seem to be two which represent the sum of the whole. One class of believers infer that there is in the world an element aggregated of all the intelligence dispensed by humanity. Its operation on the mind is assumed to be something analogous to the influence of oxygen on the body, but in addition to its universal influence upon mentality, it is represented as susceptible of being collected and focalized by any concrete gathering of persons to such an extent that it can and does respond to questions, moveables, and, under the influence of will, effect all the marvels attributed to the spirits of the so-called dead.

I need hardly add that the advocates of this remarkable theory become considerably involved in their attempts at explanation when hard pushed by common-sense inquirers, also that they are for the most part materialists, who, although compelled by the stern logic of facts to believe and acknowledge that the phenomena of Spiritualism do transpire, yet will not or cannot accept of the Spiritualist's theory of causation. The second class of believers in the action of an universal "Spiritus Mundi" simply substitute that term for the Apostle's "Holy Ghost." Unlike the credulous and unreasoning Christian, they do not pretend to impersonate their idea, but claim that it is the direct procedure from the Divine Spirit—the influx of God-like power, the action of the Supreme Being manifest to those who in faith and apostolic aspiration seek the gift. As an example of this class of believers, I shall here cite my own experiences with a very interesting family to whom I had the pleasure of an introduction during a hurried visit to France some eight or nine years ago. The family in question is one of high rank, and occupy too exclusive a social position to permit of my naming them, although the peculiarities of their phenomenal experiences have become the subject of widespread rumor. The members of the family consist of the father, mother, and three children. The eldest, at the time of which I write, was a fine lad of fourteen, with a brother two years younger, and a little fairy sister of six summers. It was the custom of this family once in each day to assemble together in what they called their hours of Pentecost, during which they were visited by the manifestation of the spirit in every conceivable form of intellectual development. Their exercises consisted of invocations, the singing of hymns by the assembled circle, the performance of fine music by hired musicians stationed without the place of gathering, trance speaking, drawing, writing, visions and eloquent improvisations. Their sessions were limited to two hours, and during that time they received prophetic addresses, medical prescriptions, business directions, and instruction for the younger members of the circle in reading, writing, elocution, languages, mathematics, astronomy, history, and every branch of knowledge necessary to perfect an accomplished scholar.

The father of this wonderfully trained band of mystics, a nobleman whose rank, standing and unimpeachable character would seem to forbid the possibility of deception or falsehood, himself assured me no teacher of any kind had ever given his children a single lesson. In the trance condition these little ones had themselves mastered every branch of knowledge with the most perfect facility, and that, commencing from their earliest infancy. It was their custom to employ themselves in useful and intellectual pursuits during the day, but whatever problems arose among them that their quick intuitions did not immediately solve, were reserved as matter of inquiry to the *Spiritus Mundi* at the next day's séance. Having the privilege of an introduction to this singular and accomplished family, I was courteously invited, before my departure for England, to be present at one of their séances. Joyfully availing myself of this opportunity, I repaired to the *chateau* at the time appointed in company with an intimate friend of the family's, by whom I had been introduced as "one worthy to share in their holy communion." Before entering the Oratory, which had been fitted up for and was kept exclusively devoted to that purpose, I was gravely though courteously warned not to indulge in feelings of idle curiosity, or advance to that spot as a mere spectator of some remarkable phenomenon. "If," said my host, "you are sincerely desirous of partaking of the high spiritual afflatus to which this sacred place is dedicated, I doubt not you will realize the presence and influx of the *Spiritus Mundi*; to no lesser motives will the divine power we invoke deign to respond." Somewhat daunted by this preliminary demand upon conditions of mind I did not dare to analyze, and certainly could not command, I nevertheless advanced with all possible desire for truth, if not for religious illumination, and this was the result:

The Oratory was built in a secluded grove, fitted up with vases of flowers, rare pictures, noble sculptures, gems of natural beauty and artistic skill everywhere greeting the senses. Soft music from invisible performers stole on the ear; a remote chime of exquisitely to ed bells occa-

sionally rung a sweet peal, and the distant chant of a beautifully intoned litany was answered by responses from the family, standing around the altar-shaped table within. That altar was simply adorned with a pure white cloth, supporting seven delicately perfumed lamps, and clusters of fragrant flowers. The family took their seats in a semi-circle close by the altar, on the further side of which were seats for invited guests, occupied on the present occasion by myself and the friend who had introduced me. Although not particularly prone to reverence or veneration for ecclesiastical displays, I was too easily psychologized by my surroundings to have required any further injunctions to yield myself up to the fascination of that deeply impressive scene. There was a serene and earnest air of aspiration too on each calm brow, that would have subdued the most rebellious or mocking spirit into courteous attention, if not sympathy with the principal actors. After the opening invocation by the master of the house, and the performance of the musical services before mentioned, each member of the family, according to custom, proceeded to lay the special petition which filled their hearts before the invisible presence they invoked. The little girl lisped out a prayer that the Great Spirit would be pleased to inspire her with an understanding of how the flowers grew which she held in her hand. The younger boy wished for inspiration to continue the Roman history, in the study of which he was at present engaged, and the eldest offered a brief prayer for light upon the mathematical problems to which he was devoting his attention. These singular requests seemed to be presented in the most perfect confidence that they would be complied with, and addressed with as much good faith to the invisible presence as if spoken to their attentive father. As the children concluded their brief petitions, the mother arose, speaking evidently in a deep and unmistakable somnambule condition. She reminded her children that there were strangers there who had honored them with their presence, and who, therefore, in Christian kindness should be preferred before themselves, and she called upon her husband and children to unite in the prayer that such tokens of spiritual light and guidance should be vouchsafed to the visitors as would best suited to their frame of mind and requirements. Instantly as with a flash of mental lightning the eldest boy, addressing me said: "Lady! you are anxious to be informed of the fate of Sir John Franklin. Learn it now!" The boy had echoed my inmost thought—nay, revealed one of the secret purposes that was leading me to visit every available source of spiritual light and knowledge.

The moment the child had ceased to speak, and silence followed, a vision full of deep meaning and significance was presented to me. Like everything that transpired in that strange scene, it was given rapidly, clearly, without pause or halting. It came as the children spoke, upon the instant, and passed away almost as rapidly, and I have since had reason to know that brief as that vision was, it represented graphically the special points of the great navigator's life and death, upon which I sought to be informed. Directly it closed, each of the party described it, and though I had not had time to breathe a syllable of what I had seen, their words agreed in every iota with one another and my own visual experience.

"Dear lady," said the little girl, turning coaxingly to me, "I see you are wishing two things, and they cross each other in your mind just so"—crossing her little hands over each other as she spoke; "you wish that I should have my question answered about how the flowers grow, and yet you want still more to hear about your *double* that was said to have appeared to a circle of people somewhere in the north of England. Now, don't you, lady?" This was strictly true, every word of it. I had felt a wish running through my mind that the little fairy who had brought her flowers to show to "dear God," and ask him how they grew, should be satisfied, and yet I could not keep from thinking all the time about a tale I had heard of my "double" having appeared and communicated to a circle in Yorkshire. Before I could respond to my little querist she arose, and with a beautiful mixture of childish simplicity and spiritual dignity, recited some incidents known only to myself—on earth at least—went on to describe the circle where I had appeared, mentioned correctly several attendant circumstances, and wound up with a brief but deeply philosophical explanation of what the "double" or apparition of the human spirit really is. My own future destiny was my next fixed though involuntary thought, and before it was fully framed into shape, the matron arose, and poured out in thrilling accents a prophecy, the details of which will never pass from my mind. Many of its predictions have been already fulfilled—some have failed—still I believe in them, for the memory of that inspired woman cannot connect itself with aught but truth and purity.

"Stonehenge!" cried the deep voice of our host, speaking seemingly in his normal condition, but with the same breathless rapidity in which each communication followed on the heels of the other. My companion was addressed this time, and our host fixed his piercing eyes upon him as he waited for an answer. "Yes—I was thinking of Stonehenge," replied my friend, "and wishing that I could receive some special information concerning the rites once practiced there." Instantly our host explained grandly, authoritatively, and philosophically, problems connected with that mysterious Druidical temple which must have been the echo of divine truth.

At length the closing moments of this wonderfully fascinating and instructive séance drew

nigh. I had not been in that presence above fifteen minutes before I felt that I was partaking in the illumination of the scene, and, realizing the wonderful mental lucidity of those who surrounded me, I was beginning to read them as they read me, when, to my regret, I perceived mentally—for I was all perception now—that the hour for parting was at hand. I wished for music, and they *knew my wish*, and obeyed it. I longed for further intercourse, yet felt the hedge of impossibility crowding upon me. They spoke my thoughts, expressing their deep regret that we should so soon be estranged. I knew they were sincere in those regrets, knew, as they said, that we should never meet again.

I knew the points of difference between their belief and mine, when we soared away to heavenly knowledge, but perceived our perfect agreement on points that concerned our mortal existence.

We all enjoyed in those two brief, wonderful hours perfect clairvoyance of mortal things. Each of the family responded to my unspoken wish by improvising a verse of song, then all joined in a chorus of benediction. The sweet bells pealed out, and the invisible musicians gave us a parting pean, and so closed the séance with this strangely gifted family. I subsequently learned from the friend who had introduced me, himself the most intimate associate of these persons, that they regarded with abhorrence the idea of communion with the spirits of the dead; indeed they strenuously denied even its possibility. I have some reason to think they wished to convert me from my heretical belief in this respect, though I need hardly say they failed signally, if that was their intention.

The nobleman whom we visited had in early youth, it seems, received his "illumination" through visions, and the visitation of what he deemed to be "an angelic messenger" from the Most High. He had selected his wife, and reared his children, entirely under this heavenly guidance, sometimes conversing face to face with the same "angel" who had at first conferred his mission upon him, but still oftener conducting his whole scheme of life by the influence of the *Spiritus Mundi*, which he regarded as the Holy Ghost of apostolic times, not as the material God of the Christians, but as a direct procedure from the Most High, or the spirit of God poured by influx into the minds of those who in humble faith and high aspiration put themselves in the Pentecostal attitude of waiting for his coming. At times, the walls of their Oratory were shaken, the floors quivered, exquisite perfumes were wafted through the chamber, and deeply occult meanings were revealed to them in the philosophy of color, tones, and perfumes. I could write a volume on the significant and instructive ideas derived from these persons, did space permit. At present I can but add that though there was a speciality in the sublimity and exaltation of these persons' spiritual views, I have met with many other highly endowed mediums in Europe, who attributed, as they did, their great gifts, not to individualized spirits, but to the *Spiritus Mundi*, or Soul of the World, communicating to mortals through influx. Such were the opinions cherished, I believe, by the interesting family of the Bertolacci, the friends of William and Mary Howitt, and once prominently known among the spiritualistic circles of London. The Misses Bertolacci received whole volumes of communications through the planchette. Like the French nobleman above referred to, Mr. Bertolacci claimed that much of his children's education was obtained at their séances, and in a little pamphlet put forth on the subject of their experiences, more marvels are related of them than I should care to repeat, yet all the phenomena which fell in such abundant profusion on this family were attributed, as in the former case, to direct influx from God, and not in any way to the agency of spirits. Numerous other instances have been presented to me of the same kind; indeed, I can recall the experiences of some of the most remarkably endowed families and individuals of my acquaintance in Europe, as being believers in the direct agency of the *Spiritus Mundi*, and utter disbelievers in the influence of spirit friends, or the souls of humanity.

Considering the very hospitable reception that the mere hint of any ideas out of the ordinary groove in which spiritualistic opinions delight to run is sure to meet with from the *progressionists* of our own time, it is scarcely safe to hazard any speculations upon the views presented above, unless, indeed, I were disposed to join the popular cry of "it is all the spirits, and nothing but the spirits." "There cannot be anything else in this world but men, and the souls of men, and all that can be said to the contrary ought to be put down." And yet, despite all the belaborings I have received for hazarding *unorthodox ideas* of spiritual forces, despite my unshaken faith in the constant ministry, presence, watch and ward of beloved spirit guardians, I venture to opine, even this grand field of spiritual influence does not cover the whole ground of man's occult nature and powers and possibilities. How often do we discover that we ourselves "are wiser than we know;" that we are constantly, but apparently mechanically, doing just the right thing in moments of emergency, when we have no time to think out our course, and yet act from what we vaguely call "instinct or intuition." Whilst admitting the constant ministry of our angel friends, are we so very sure that there is no higher power than them capable of reaching us? No higher being controlling them, and influencing us through these nameless intuitions? Are we so sure that there is no collective soul-element in the world, operating upon and through matter, as the soul acts through the body, infilling men

and spirits both with more than finite perception, and gleams of more than finite wisdom?

How often do we find the most correct representations of truth from what is called the "impersonal medium," and how constantly we are lessened to the value of observing and heeding our own impressions! Recalling the successes and failures of my own life, I can now declare that they have ever been, the one or the other, in proportion to my obedience to or rebellion against my *first impressions*.

The hedge of circumstances is constantly intervening to prevent our following out our impressions. Duty, necessity, good breeding, &c., &c., frequently compel us to associate with persons strongly antipathetic to us. Every day's experience shows us the necessity, not of crushing out or quenching our prejudices, but of acting in their defiance, and living above them, yet future events seldom fail to show us that these antipathies and attractions are the inspirations of our spirits, discovering intuitively the secret things of the spirit in others.

It is a popular doctrine of Christianity, although we seldom if ever find it practically illustrated, that we are required to "love our enemies" and "do good to those who despitefully use us."

Not being myself a professed Christian, I own no allegiance to Christian dogmas; but as a matter of principle, and in obedience to natural law, I decidedly repudiate these unnatural theories, and both in theory and practice substitute for the *impossible* word Love that of *forbearance* to enemies. I do not love them, cannot, will not try to love that which is unlovely and malign to me. I may despise them, let them *severely alone*, but the *Spiritus Mundi* separates me from them by an impassable barrier, and it is because my whole life is a ceaseless demonstration of invisible, indescribable spiritual forces operating in methods far beyond my own shallow means of perception, discovering secret things and hidden natures, that I am compelled to believe the impersonal medium is one whose soul is especially open to the influx of the Soul of the World; that we live, breathe, and have our being in this universal Soul, and that by influx upon our own spirits we steer our way in our blindness and ignorance with a wisdom we know not of.

As a matter of principle I always burn anonymous communications *unread*, and commit noxious literature, whether written or printed, that may be intrusively forced upon me, to the same fate. I have been instructed by wise spirit-guides not to suffer my mind to be harassed or the worst enemies of my nature to be aroused by the contact or perusal of noxious things; but I can go beyond these mere external guards of the senses. I know the approach of the evil thing. An evil letter pollutes my fingers without breaking the seal, and the spirit of evil literature marches on before, and exposes the skeleton form of the evil mind that dictated it, ere it reaches me. I am constantly thus warned, constantly thus saved from the annoyance of perusing hateful communications. I know thus both evil things and evil people. I can lay down no law for their discovery, no rules for their detection. It is by contact with the Soul of the World, the spiritual life which fills my life, that these impressions come, and that these perceptions become infallible.

Whilst I gratefully, lovingly attribute to my precious angel-friends all care, guidance and watchful ministry that they are capable of rendering, I am day by day, hour by hour, more and more startled by gleams of the wonderful powers of the human spirit itself, and I have yet to learn that the singular realms of intelligence we so vaguely attempt to define as intuition, instinct, presentment, or even spiritual impression *alone*, are not due in a great measure to our contact with the ocean of spiritual life over which our barques are drifting from the shores of time to eternity.

My next paper, and the last of this series, will be a *résumé* of "Spiritual Gifts and Occult Powers in Man."

ONE DUAL PRIMAL ELEMENT—ONE UNIFIC DUAL LAW OR PRINCIPLE.

BY LEON HYNEMAN.

Groping with mental vision closed in the bright light of day, science peers through the fossil creeds of impotent theology to divine the unknowable, the causes imperceptible to sensuous vision, and is ever asking "what is matter?" "life?" "force?" and kindred questions. It is not possible to arrive at a solution of the questions through such an imperfect and altogether unreliable channel as the biblical record, a channel which reveals no consistent conception of Omnipotence, and represents the Infinite as a monstrosity of imperfection, cruel and vindictive.

It must be understood that in order to arrive at the knowledge of the seeming mysteries of the unknowable, there is nothing mysterious, nothing incomprehensible to the sincere, unbiased investigator, if he will divest his mind of crude theological theories, the inventions of priestcraft, to attain complete control over the minds of the adherents of churches, and subjugate their feelings to their unmeaning, debased creeds. Hence the submissiveness to priestcraft domination of the masses of church-attendants and church-supporters, who passively submit to priestcraft authority in tolerating their presence at the birth of a child, in joining those in wedlock, and superintending ceremonies at the grave; thus, from the cradle to the grave, in all the important events of life, they minister to keep control over their subjects, to retain them

The Rostrum.

THE EVIDENCES OF IMMORTALITY FROM SPIRITUALISM.

A Discourse delivered before the Free Congregational Society, Leavenworth, Kansas, Sunday Evening, December 12th, 1875, by Rev. E. B. Sanborn.

(Reported for the Banner of Light.)

Each step we take carries us into deeper mysteries. This world is itself a mystery, and life and death, with all their terms, are its shadows, for which we find no substance.

Thrones once crowded the halls of Hypatia, to hear discussed the questions, "Whence am I, what am I, what can I know?" The immortal courts of nature are crowded now with earnest, wondering souls, who would know the more inscrutable mystery still. "Whither go I, what shall I be?" There are many who can tell you all about it. They have found the beginning and the end, and if you can be content with their ready demonstrations, mysteries will not trouble you, and like a feather on the current of the river you may float on undisturbed to the infinite sea, but if you pause to note the smallest event in time, if you whirl in some eddy of sorrow, and wonder why the eddy is; if you are tossed over some eddy of misfortune, and reflect on the pain and misery that fill the world; if you mark the minutest transaction of the world, and permit your mind to wander into the secret places to which they are the doors, you will find your content vanishing like a summer cloud, and a divine unrest pervading your soul, impelling you to see all the unseen and know the unknown.

Before the solemn mystery, as the newborn babe is placed in his arms; in the awful obscurity that enfolds the common activities of man; pouring into the darkness which are presented to him in the dark presence of death; no intelligent and loving soul can rest content. Where our fathers saw all things clearly, ignorant of the forces that move all things, we find only a more unsearchable depth. Though our science has built a longer and a broader road into the fog-banks before and behind us, yet the further we go the wider seems the unknown field, and where man has trod with confidence our feet move slow, uncertain, trembling.

It was a sweet delusion that conceived a heaven where a few celestial aristocrats might bask in the light of infinite royalty forever, careless of the ignorant horde which could never be presented at the court. But how much sweeter was that warlike democracy which tore away the veils of heaven and flung of the honors of the royal court, and sullied out to see what had become of the missing ones who had made the earth so dear. What a restive, anxious world has come out of that incognito! Men find their further-reaching knowledge involving more incomprehensible mysteries still. What is the correlation of forces, but who can tell us what they are? With a given form of force, you can produce other modes; but whence the mode with which you start?

You may chain all existences by discoverable links to Huxley's protoplasm, but from what do you derive the protoplasm? Take what course you will, there is no end; and he who follows whether real thought will lead, will always find enough to engage his curious search.

There are mysteries of the human soul which no skill has been given enough to solve, and in the presence of our own secret experiences all of us are awed into silence. The dreamland, whose wonders we catch gleams of in our sleeping, and whose vague portents touch us now and then with splendid glints, stretches away beyond, a world so strange, so vast, so entrancing, that unnumbered ages will not be time enough for man to make it all his own.

Humanity has puzzled itself over the marvelous dreams that have astounded every race and civilization; and yet we have only guessed at the unaccountable causes.

Away back in the childhood of man, in the very cradle of the human race, the vast table-land of India, there was attained a culture that in some respects has never been surpassed. And in the midst of their investigations, probing the secret courses of Nature, scrutinizing the operations of the human mind, they were bathed by such varied and mysterious manifestations that all their science and culture were amazed, and becoming half the slave and half the master of these epiphanies, excited by the seen, and filled with wonder at the more awful suggestions of the unseen, they forgot their science, until, led by priestly magicians, they buried wisdom, culture, manhood, in degrading superstitions.

The mysteries of Egypt, a wealth of wonder even more woven from the most solemn aspirations of the human soul, the inmost secrets so curiously blended with science and religion—derived their power and majesty from the mysterious utterances and appearances, which their science could sometimes detect, but could never quite disclose.

The illustrious men of Greece, great philosophers of antiquity, bound sandal on their feet, and with pilgrim staff wandered to the great sanctuaries of Egypt to learn of the Unknown, and, being initiated into the mysteries, fascinated by their cabalistic rites, venerating the dread causes that lay behind, brought them home to their vigorous race, and in their turn laid the foundations of science and religion in things they could not wholly comprehend, planting the seed that has sprung into song, fiction, allegory, mythology, and finally miserable superstitions.

Moses, educated and initiated into these strange ceremonies, inducted into the secrets of the awful temple, became the master of a race, and the builder of a nation, using the mysteries, and imparting them only to the highest priest-hood.

Jesus, the prophet of the divine humanity, coming to the common mass with a new and mighty message from on high, enforced his word and commanded his audience by unaccountable powers and strange works, said to have been found in similar character among the Essenes at Jerusalem. In the succeeding events of time, men have been startled by the unusual and apparently unnatural exhibitions of force, that fear has fashioned devils, and imps, and fallen angels, to fill the gap which actual knowledge could not bridge. The demonology of the Middle Ages, legitimate descendant of the Greco-Jewish thought, was the theoretical endeavor to account for the manifestations in men and around them, which seemed beyond the pale of sense. The witchcraft of Europe and New England, hideous and alarming, presenting phases of action that eluded all investigation, was another exhibition of the same power that had been the core of the ancient mysteries. The experiments and assumptions of Mesmer, in France, revealing still more strange and unexplainable things, and the curious, wonderful (and sometimes foolish) manifestations which men call Spiritualism to-day—all appear to me the display of the same powers, abilities, faculties, which reside in the human being wherever he resides, in this world, or in some world we cannot see.

You and I understand the correlation of physical force. We know that we can make heat, light, electricity, magnetism, chemical affinity, each from every other, and from them all demonstrate a unity of force. I think the day will come when these different modes of manifestation which are now known under the various names of "regenerating fire, artificial magnetism, clairvoyance, mesmerism, animal somnambulism, mind-reading and Modern Spiritualism," will be known, not guessed, as the different modes of a unity of spiritual force which is now hidden from the masses of mankind. Observing all these things from an attitude of criticism and inquiry, I am irresistibly convinced that they are all of one kind, that any human blood. I think our knowledge of them is just dawning; I think that none of the names now in use can state the wholeness of the science that is to come out of man's search and study into these mysterious things. You all know me to be not a believer in what is called Spiritualism in its phenomenal sense. That is to say, I do not yet

received the conviction which many say they have; but in a theory which shall be more sometime than Spiritualism has ever claimed, I am more than a believer. My thought will seem strange to some, but if to myself it be clear I shall not care what another thinks. Not the feeblest grandam, says Emerson, not the mowing idiot, but uses what spark of perception and faculty he has to chuckle over the absurdities of the rest. Difference from me, to every man, is absurdity.

The argument from the history of the world and life which you have heard me state, as inference of immortality, may be briefly resumed by a simple proposition. We know that man has progressed, and the indications are that man on earth will continue to progress, until the earth possesses a race of human beings whose spiritual characteristics will be complete, in whom the spirit will be the master of all things. We have seen that these powers man possesses may be reasonably expected to live beyond the change of death. If these powers do so live in identical being, the inference is fair that they too will progress to entire perfection.

Granting, then, a time when the earth will contain a race of pure spiritual beings, to whom matter is but an incident, and that out of the materiality we behold there are also pure spiritual existences, to whom matter is no restraint, the conclusion forms itself that that time will see an intercourse between the beings who make the earth their home, and the beings who have seen death, as free as is now possible between you and me, and more, because we are restrained by the conditions of the body.

This, I think, is indicated by the facts of science and history. I cannot prove that it will be so; I am not sure that it will. But it is clearly the purpose pointed out to me as that the spring-time will bring the foliage and grass and flowers.

I think that the many modes of what seems to me a spiritual force, confirm this thought. If they do confirm it, they give us another plank, a whole forest from which to build the ship of immortality.

Let us see, then, what we can find from this realm of thought. Are there traces of powers in man which are in a rudimentary state?

How many of you have had experiences that opened unfathomed worlds looming up like white mists in the waking hours! You have visited strange places, and found yourselves unable to resist the conviction that you have been there before. The scenes appeared familiar; your feelings seemed repetitions; the words you heard and the words you said, were like the echoes of some former speech, until, against your will, you have tried to recall some former visit, well knowing that you had never been there at all in conscious being. How many of us have puzzled over trying problems, vainly, and bewildered, haled, weary with despair, have retired to rest, only to awaken from refreshing slumber with the problem solved and ready to our will. So often has this been the case with me, that I have learned to expect the help of such mysterious working of the mind in sleep, to lead me out of mental wildernesses. I am subject at times to impressions and presentiments that certain events will bring such and such results, and so invariably have they been fulfilled that I have even followed them against my own calm judgment, and always to my great advantage. They seem to me to be the results of mind-work, when the body sleeps; the results of a careful study of conditions, circumstances, facts, which the mind has seized and labored over secretly, until the only legitimate conclusion is deduced. These come to me as conclusions more likely to be true than any I am likely to reach in the most active moments of my being. From these experiences, which find to be common to all men and women, I infer that the mind, or my real self, is largely independent of the body, and may perform its functions sometimes, when the bodily instruments are quiescent, better than when I am in a conscious state. In some conditions of the body the mind seems to have a larger power of observation, travels over a vaster country than I am able to compass in a wholly conscious state. It seems as if I were that I am not aware of, influences I am not acquainted with, guide me, and events I am not aware of that I have not seen, when I am set free from certain limitations of my common life.

Then I find this inference strengthened by observations of curious phenomena I have made. I have a friend who manifests powers as rare as those of any medium, and if I should intimate that she was a medium for spirits she would never forgive me. By the influence of will from another friend she will fall into a state precisely like that of a medium in a trance. She never enters this state except in the direct influence of this other person, yet in this state she will reveal the most unaccountable things, and never make a mistake. I have known her to be sent, while in this condition, on errands of inquiry about persons far away, and though it was not known where the persons were, nor what they were about, she would describe the surroundings, tell the occupation, portray their feelings, and many other wonderful things, which were always verified by letter; and not the smallest clue given as to the means or method of doing it. She has foretold most important events to parties questioning, and the events transpired long after they were forgotten, and in such closeness of detail that the memory was started into a remembrance of the prediction. In such times the mind seemed to leave the body, annihilate time and space, observe things near or far with equal readiness, and devote itself to the duties of the directing will, utterly oblivious of the body in which it lived. Returning to consciousness, there was no memory of what had transpired, more than if it had been a dreamless sleep. There was a weariness and exhaustion, as if long journeys had been made or heavy labors performed.

This is a result akin to the experiences of nearly every one in the unconscious labors of the mind. Mesmerism and clairvoyance, too, are of so similar a character that they must be of kin to this. How these things are done—why some are able to do them and some are not—I cannot tell. I give what I have known.

So far as I have seen, what passes as the manifestation of Spiritualism is so much like this that I cannot think they are entirely separate. My friend, a Spiritualist, says to me, "If minds in the body can thus influence other minds, and be superior to time and space, may not minds out of the body do the same; that is, supposing that our dead are still alive?" To be sure they can; at least it is but logical to admit that they can; I believe that it may be so, but I am not convinced that it is so, because I have not known it to be done. This is a realm in which each soul must have his own experience to convince him. I believe that all men will have the experience some day, and I myself with the rest, for I know it is only in reasonable accordance with what I can taught by the facts of life to-day. There are millions who have this conviction now; there are others who are not convinced. To some it is a sweet possession of the soul; to others it is only a fond desire. Some believe without sufficient proof; others will not look at proof at all, but turn their heads away when it is advanced. To me the whole matter of so-called spiritual phenomena unlocks a whole world of mystery which it will take man ages to explore. But many will not explore; they are sure it cannot be. There is an old proverb which says, "The wise man came, heard, investigated, decided; the fool denied."

I saw a woman painting; both eyes were bandaged so she could not see. I changed her paints, threw her materials into great confusion, yet she took brush after brush, used this color, then that, each in its proper place, drew bold lines and the rarest, delicate flowers and curves of leaves upon the canvas, with as much ease as the famous Italian painter drew his famous "O." In an incredibly short time she gave me a fair specimen of flower-painting, which I still preserve as a souvenir of my observation. She said a spirit painted it. To many it was proof of clairvoyance. To me it seemed another phase of power within the soul, by which the common light of day was found unnecessary to the clearest vision. It was a mystery to me then; it is a mystery to me now; and though she said she was not there, it seemed to me that she

was more powerfully there than she ever could be in the normal state. What gave her that added power I could not tell. My friend said spirits, undoubtedly; but while I believed it possible, still I could not know for I did not see them, and they did not come to me.

I have a friend whose knowledge of musical medicine, repeated parts of us would enjoy the wondrous measure of her entertainments. We gathered around the table, all skeptics except the lady, all clapping hands. At one end of the room we had piled up musical instruments of every description, from a jews-harp to a big base drum. At our call, a piece of music would begin to play upon some instrument, while other instruments, harmonious and appropriate, would join in the melody, giving us at our will the sweetest and softest symphonies, or the most boisterous carousals of sound. But the music was always in the air—here, there, everywhere, and different instruments chiming in their accordant notes. When one instrument finished, it would fall from the place where we had heard it in the air, as if thrown down violently by some hand. The guitar attempted a solo with a favorite air which I had called; it sailed about the room, knocking in the corners, and settled at last upon my head to play its sweetest strains, as if to say it liked my choice. So ran the entertainment for an hour, and when we lit the gas, the room was a scene of the utmost confusion. The instruments lying as we had heard them, all, scattered everywhere, the drum, the horns, the violins, strings snapped, and trumpet burst, as we had heard them go in playing "Yankee Doodle." They told me it was spirits; and it really seemed at times as if a mighty host of invisible ones were giving us a glimpse of their celestial concerts. There were the deepest, tenderest, loveliest melodies, and the most joyous, rollicking and merriest phantasies that could be conceived. It was a revelation of a world of unknown powers that lies around us. It did seem then, it does seem now, that nothing could have produced that carnival of musical sound except a multitude of intelligent beings. I think it might be so, but it did not come to me as a fact. There is a great field of manifestations becoming more and more prominent every day, in which you may find tests as trying as human genius can devise, which go to sustain the assertion of the Spiritualist. To the Spiritualist himself they are as common as the leaves upon the trees. I have seen really scientific men, to whom these phenomena were actually obnoxious, confounded in their own reasoning, and while still remaining skeptical to the claims of the Spiritualist, were yet convinced of the truly genuine and marvelous character of their manifestations. All these communications from friends that seem so strange, the revelations from unknown sources, are not more unaccountable than the experiences and manifestations of my friend who was not a Spiritualist. They belong to the same realm of activity. It matters little whether you call it Spiritualism or not, it is an activity that has an utter indifference to matter. On every hand I hear the evidence told that they whom we know not, and exert an influence upon our actions through means undreamed of. And as men in a superstitious age thought they were under the influence of some star, blessed or baneful, and others believed themselves accompanied by some familiar spirit, so I find hundreds now who are not Spiritualists vaguely impressed with the feeling that some unknown soul whose love can never die is lingering in their presence to help and comfort and console. I cannot prove that it is so, but I believe it will be so, if it is not so now, and all men will sometime realize it as a fact. Your proof is not convincing to me, and no proof that I can have will be enough for you.

To dwell forever in the presence of those we cherish, to feel the pleasure of their sympathy and love, in a world where clouds and tears and sorrows never come; where the divinest influences linger around the soul, and no discord ever comes to mar the harmonies of being—this has been the loveliest dream of every age and of all religions! But to find those joys to-day, to see the barriers of death crumbling away, the veils of darkness uprolling like a mist, to hear the voices and heed the counsel and see the faces of those we love—this is surely a dream entrancing enough to captivate one who does not even believe that he has a deathless soul, and who only smiles about the myths of another world!

There are sad hearts for whom death has made this world a tomb, which has been cheered and lifted into light and glory by the scintillations of love from an unknown world, which, unseen, lies around us all. The gloom has been transformed into shimmering splendor by processes more marvelous than any physicist has found. And souls to whom this world has been a hell have been suddenly awakened to find it a heaven surpassing any tale of seer or fairy.

While moralists are confounded by a maze of difficulties; appalled at the inefficiency of future rewards and pains to stay the present crimes; ashamed and shocked at the irreligion of the most religious, here is a force which trains men and women into the life of right by the simplest though subtlest influence—the love of unseen ones who are ever anxious for their higher growth.

I knew a man who was the roughest of the uncouth phases in this western life, full of blunt, repulsive speeches, heedless acts and intolerant deeds. One day he said an angel came to him; then another; they talked to him as angels talked to men of old in tents and fields and tabernacles. They broke him of his evil habits; they gave him a broader vision of the human life; they enforced him to his duty to his fellow-men, and built within him a faith in a future life, which was far more beautiful and fair than the partial heavens and wells of the old theologians. In this way his dead wife and boy subdued his whole life, and sustained him till he died. It was a genuine conversion, the exaltation of a life; not in the old way, but slowly and steadily remodeling his being. I could not understand it then, I do not understand it now, but I believed his story, for I saw the result of it in his changed and happy life. As I stood by his coffin I told the story to the many who had learned to love him, and they knew it as the story of a life. Before such force as that the dreariest life would soon be glorified, and the crudest being be refined. If all humanity could be touched by it to-day it would be the regenerating power of the race. To me it is a mystery, but to many it is a real fact. The laws through which these things operate seem to lie beyond our widest wisdom; still we have not yet found the bottom of the infinite ocean, nor all its shores. I think we shall, sometime.

Now if these things be genuine, they furnish incontrovertible evidence of a continued life. Are they genuine? Time alone can tell. They are better evidence in their favor than the religious revelations on which the mass of people hang their hope and faith.

I sum the argument up in this result: As man has grown from the brutal to the intellectual being, still fashioning the human form to finer shapes, so will he grow to a maturity of spiritual being, ultimately, as far above the intellectual stature of to-day as the present being is above the cave-man from which he came. We catch foregleams of that time even now, in the strange manifestations of power which I have related as outside of Spiritualism. These show us the powers which are still undeveloped, and which demand no end of time for their full perfection. Then there come to us still stranger revelations, which are akin to them, but which tell us of a possible interchange of influence between those who have passed beyond, and those who are still here. Then there come other manifestations which cannot be scoffed at, showing us that those we love still care for us, and are toiling to bring us into the highest life.

Reasoning from what I know of the things called mesmerism, clairvoyance, and other modes of spiritual force, I am led to regard these other modes, which pass under the title of Spiritualism, as the activities of the spiritual being, which we are least acquainted with as yet, but which will outgrow all the imposture and nonsense of its infancy, and become a precious fact to all humanity.

Toward this the phenomena of the soul incline. The philosophy is clear to me, but I do

not think it demonstrated with such clearness as it will be, and not clearly enough to convince one who has no conception of the philosophic thought. To me all knots and sects of men are stepping stones, whose partial and limited investigations lead upward to a spiritual center where, sometime, all souls shall gather, conscious of the infinite harmony. As the rays of life, in scattered tribes and families, run back, and all converge at last upon the vast plateau Iran, "the real apex of the earth," so shall we find our spiritual activities all drawn to a powerful focus, including every phase of strange and unaccountable mystery that puzzles us to-day. Men will not be mesmerists then, nor Spiritualists, but beings so perfected in the spiritual life that there can be no need of mediums, no clouds between, and the life beyond and the life on earth will be a unit of activity—man the divine fruit, in the noonday of perfection:

"And behind the dim unknown, Standeth God within the shadow, Keeping watch above his own."

Spiritual Phenomena.

SATISFACTORY TEST-MATERIALIZATIONS.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

Visiting this city for a brief season, I have improved a portion of my time by investigating Spiritualism and testing some of the celebrated mediums here. The recipient of some very fine tests, I propose to relate one or two for the benefit and pleasure of your largely-increasing number of readers.

June 5th I sent by express to Auburn, N. Y., a lovely wreath of flowers to have it reach there June 6th, for the decoration of the grave of my wife, who passed to spirit-life three years ago on that day.

The evening of June 6th I attended a materialization séance in the spacious parlors of Mrs. H. Wilson, 204 West 34th street, considered the finest materializing medium in New York State. "Uncle Nat," the controlling spirit, materialized himself immediately after the formation of the circle, talking quite a long time, and giving to many in the room splendid and satisfactory tests. Just before retiring he requested the audience to join in a sweet, soft song, saying, "There's a little Bird here anxious to show herself."

All cheerfully complied, and after waiting a very few minutes the curtain slowly parted, and there stood plainly visible to every one in the circle a beautiful spirit with a "wreath of flowers on her head." It was my wife, with the identical wreath on which I had forwarded to Auburn the previous day, with instructions to place it on her grave on the anniversary of her entrance into spirit-life, June 6th, 1873. When I had explained the circumstances to the circle, they one and all confessed it to be one of the most beautiful and convincing tests ever seen. But I was to have another chapter. The following evening, June 7th, I visited Mrs. Dexter, a lovely old lady, and a wonderful clairvoyant and test medium, at 313 W. 43d street. There I received the following communication, of which the subjoined is an exact and truthful copy:

"Spirit-World, June 6th, 1876. The month of June and song."

My Dearest Beloved—The deep anguish of parting is compensated with the joy of meeting. Dear as the good spirits are, always anxious for a sacred spot in memory, I come with my love-offering, wearing the beautiful wreath to crown this meeting; and shall I tell you that I call it no sacrifice to leave my flowery home of beauty and song to greet you at this happy meeting? And the fragrance of your love is wafted up to my spirit home, and I descend under the influence of light and love to kiss away the falling tear, to quiet the anxious heart and soothe its anguish when you dwell on our parting. Don't forget the rose-bud, our darling child, belonging both to father and mother, a link in the golden chain that will bind three hearts forever.

Let the sacred influence come, baptizing you with a holy mission for your work, lifting the spirit up with a holy aspiration, to be able through the vision of your spiritual development to behold us in our work of love for the redemption of the world. Our great aspiration and holy prayer is: Oh, Father, give us the means to reach our earthly loved ones, and lead them on to us! Now, God is love, and through that love all will be redeemed. Then we will work together, spirits and mortals, to accomplish this work. Don't think the task a hard one, for God works through his children, and if you work with God, we will be crowned with a glorious immortality. Thanks for the flowers.

Your BIRDIE forever.

Last evening, June 11th, I attended another large séance at the house of Mrs. Wilson, which was most satisfactory. Among the spirits materializing appeared General Robert E. Lee, who was instantly recognized by several, one of whom was a Mr. Hill, who served with General Lee, when the latter was 2d Lieut. of Dragoons, out on the Plains, before the war, also by another gentleman, a Colonel Bonner, of Georgia, and by myself, having seen him on the field in Virginia. Other spirits manifested themselves to their friends in the circle, and in all cases were fully recognized.

The sances of this lady are giving unbounded satisfaction, fully convincing all seekers after the truth that "life beyond the grave" is an established fact, and not to be disputed. At all of her sances Mrs. Wilson cheerfully submits to the most rigorous and exacting tests.

GEORGE S. GREEN. Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York City.

A REPORT OF SITTINGS WITH MRS. MAUD E. LORD, THE PHYSICAL MEDIUM.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

When phenomena of so marked a character as those produced through the mediumship of the above mentioned lady are witnessed by us, we deem it an imperative duty to record the same in such a general manner as to secure their reaching the public eye; and as a consequence of this we ask that you kindly give space in your journal to the following narrative of a few sittings with this remarkable medium.

All the sances which we attended were given at the residence of Mr. Kase, on 15th street, Philadelphia. The séance-room, or that which was usually used for the purpose—and it may be interesting for us to state in this connection that we have attended sances given in three different rooms in this dwelling—was, we should judge, say 12 by 18 feet, or just about sufficiently large to seat from 20 to 25 persons comfortably. As we entered the room we noticed that the chairs were arranged in a circle, and each person was requested by the medium to occupy a certain chair. When all were seated, and after the doors and windows had been closed, and securely locked and bolted, Mrs. L. asked that they be seated also, by some skeptical person present, which was done usually by piercing the casing of the doors with knives, in such a manner as to make it absolutely impossible for anybody to enter without removing the knives, and some-

as church members, and to assure themselves of their living, their bread and butter.

The investigator, if true to himself, to his conscientious convictions, will not fail to observe the mode and manner of Nature's illustrating to the human senses the modes of unfolding phenomena. To simplify the subject to the understanding of investigating and inquiring minds, we will briefly state that all our wrought forms of Nature's phenomena have their basis in one element, and are formed according to the laws of the elements. Scientists may ignore the statement, but they will in time, when they outgrow their materialism in accepting the biblical testimony, ultimately conform to the truth of the statement. With regard to the question, "What is matter?" we observe that all matter, however concrete, in all forms, is wrought of invisible elementary substances—the molecules which are attracted according to immutable laws, combine to build up forms, are in themselves substances of minute form, and are also made of atoms, molecules, conglomerating, and finally forming the forms in agreement with the requirements of the several differing parts of each form. Thus it will be seen that all matter is formed of invisible elements, which are substances.

What does matter, in any and all forms, resolve into in dissolution—to the constituents of the forms, or their component parts? Not so. They resolve into the primal element of which the forms were wrought. Hence the truth of the recent admission of science "that there is nothing lost in Nature." The principle of conservation ever rules in Nature's domain. The life of Nature is maintained by constant uninterrupted change throughout the infinite universe. In one eternal round production, reproduction, dissolution, follow. Thus humans and animals, subsisting on animal and vegetable food, have always subsisted, in a great measure, on the predecessors of their times. It must also be considered that material forms are constantly throwing off into the vast regions of space, so-called, etc., in the constant evolution of matter returning into the primal element, and thus Nature's life is ever sustained in reproduction of new forms.

Matter in its use is invisible, as germs, principles, forces, etc., are to human senses. We see in reality nothing but the manifestation of things, the real is hidden. Materialists accept the objective, the evotive, as the reality, but do not recognize the interior life-principle which unfolds throughout all of Nature's phenomena. Intellectuality is manifested in all organic and inorganic life. It is manifested in Force, in every degree and kind of action, motion, combination, in the primal element, as is seen in their results. It is observable in the progressive order of vegetable and animal life. In the latter it is called Instinct, and in many animals intuitive perceptions are unfolded. Instinct is intellectual power, and is perceptible in feather and insect species. All things are endowed with psychic capacity; it exists in Nature's constitution.

37th Avenue, New York City.

Written for the Banner of Light.

THE CHRISTIAN AT THE HOUR OF DEATH.

BY SEBASTIANO.

There is an eye thou canst not see,
Whose look is lit with frenzied fire—
Spell-bound, in vain I strive to flee,
It chains my soul with coils of fire.

There is a grasp thou canst not feel,
That thrills all my being to the heart—
The foe-man's blade of keenest steel
Could not a deathlier chill impart.

There is a voice thou canst not hear,
Which bids me leave my love, my home—
"Sinner, be gone!" It whispers near,
"For now the hour of death hath come!"

THE SPIRITUALIST AT THE HOUR OF DEATH.

There is an eye thou canst not see,
Whose gaze is soft as Luna's rays—
It wakes up youth's first love in me,
And all the dread of death allays.

There is a hand thou canst not feel,
That soothes me with its fond caress,
And beckons where bright gleams reveal
That joy my weary soul shall bless.

There is a voice thou canst not hear,
Which calls me to my spirit-home—
"They that you mourn," it whispers near,
"Are here to greet you when you come!"
Florence, Italy, 25th September, 1875.

Belvidere Seminary.

Friends of liberal, unsectarian education, will do well to remember this institution, and give it their influence and patronage. It will enter on its second decade of usefulness the 13th of September. It graduates its pupils in full or special courses. It has experienced and practical teachers in mathematics, languages, music and literature. Its department for physical culture is provided with a gymnasium, and all the necessary apparatus for vigorous and healthful exercise. Especial attention is paid to the moral and social cultivation of its pupils. Thorough students find here faithful, earnest teachers, a pleasant home, healthful influences, kind and impartial treatment, and the discipline of vigorous, systematic study, which is the key to the real treasures of knowledge. The new decade of this school will be marked by the adopting of new and improved systems of instruction, and new conditions in several of its most important departments.

For catalogues address,

E. L. BUSH, Belvidere, N. Y.

An exchange has the following: The Hancock Shakers, who live, on the Massachusetts border close to the New York line, say their old leader who managed the community at the close of the Revolution, while at work one day in a boggy hay-field, was seized with the prophetic power of the spirit, and thus addressed his wondering companions: "The day will come when men will travel on iron roads, in vehicles drawn by iron machines, propelled by the power of steam—and (trusting his long rake-handle into the spongy ground) such a road will one day be built right here." The Boston and Albany Railroad passes over the bog and the very spot where this utterance was given, ninety-four years ago.

The day of fettered limbs and gagged tongues is gone by. Men will not be ruled by men as they have been. The children of the future will call no man master. They will think out their own faiths, and consecrate their own lives.—W. H. Murray.

To Book-Buyers.

At our new location, No. 9 Montgomery Place, corner of Province street, Boston, we have a fine Book-store on the ground floor of the Building, where we keep on sale a large stock of Spiritual, Reformatory and Miscellaneous Works, to which we invite your attention.

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Depositing from the BANNER OF LIGHT, care should be taken to distinguish between editorial articles and the communications intended for others by our correspondents. Our columns are open for the expression of important facts, but we cannot undertake to endorse the various shades of opinion to which our correspondents give utterance.

Banner of Light.

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"While we recognize no man as master, and take no book as an unerring authority, we most cordially accept all great men as lights of the world. The generations of men come and go, and he alone is wise who walks in the light, reverent and thankful before God, but self-centered in his own individuality."—Prof. S. B. Britton.

Mr. Geo. Wm. Curtis in Harper's Magazine on Spiritualism.

The August number of Harper's Magazine, in its "Easy Chair" department, for which Mr. Geo. W. Curtis, poet, novelist and politician, and a highly esteemed gentleman, has the credit, contains an article on "Spiritualism Phenomena," the whole of which we quote in numbered paragraphs below. If so good and able a man as Mr. Curtis can fall into such mistakes, and be swayed by such prejudices, can we be surprised that such publications as the N. Y. Observer, the Times, and the Graphic should open their columns to frequent sneers at all who have anything to do with Spiritualism? Taking up the objections of Mr. Curtis *seriatim*, let us see what they really amount to. He says:

(1) "The persuasive spirit of Katie King, which so deeply influenced Mr. Wallace and other men of science and note in England, was able to cope with the unsparring rigors of our climate, and turned out to be a very simple deception."

With regard to the so-called Katie King affair in England, we have heard of no one man or woman of the thirty or forty, that during a period of more than a year, investigated the Florence Cook phenomena, who has since expressed the slightest doubt as to their genuineness. Mr. Crookes, Mr. Varley, and other scientific investigators have been fully sustained in their conclusions by multiplied occurrences of the same kind, only more surprising, both in England and in this country up to the present time.

The so-called Philadelphia "fraud," if a fraud (of which there is now much well-founded doubt), notwithstanding the sudden suspicions of Mr. Owen, shortly before his insanity, and notwithstanding the persistent opposition of Dr. Child, whose very positive "subjective testimony," based on his own mediumship, describing interviews with Katie King, is strangely inconsistent with his present denunciation of the Holmeses—this so-called "fraud" has at any rate been supplemented by abundant genuine and thoroughly established phenomena of materialization, quite as remarkable as anything Mr. Owen describes in his Atlantic Monthly article, and which have fully vindicated the character of the mediumship of Mr. and Mrs. Holmes. The Mrs. White, to whom Mr. Curtis refers as "Mrs. Somebody," in the 6th paragraph quoted from him below, was proved to be wholly disreputable and untrustworthy; and once, on the same evening when she was claiming to show in another circle how she played the part of Katie King, Mr. Roberts and others witnessed the genuine phenomena in the presence of the Holmeses.

In private houses, like that of the well-known Mr. Kase, of Philadelphia, the phenomena have occurred during the present month, and the testimony in their favor from numerous persons of high intelligence and pure reputation cannot be affected by the negative assurances of any number of persons whose opportunities have been less frequent and less favorable. Mr. J. M. Roberts, of Burlington, N. J., a gentleman whose sincerity needs no couching for, has spared no amount of labor and expense in the unraveling of all the doubtful points in regard to the materialization phenomena through the Holmeses, and he has a work in preparation on the subject, which must carry the conviction to all unprejudiced minds that the Holmes phenomena have been fully established, and that there has been the grossest misrepresentation in regard to them. The "simple deception," of which Mr. Curtis speaks, proves then to be a simple fact, throwing light on the greatest question that can interest a human being. Even if fraud at any time could be proved, that proof would not invalidate the subsequent indications of genuine mediumship.

(2) "The more recent wonders of the same kind also have been wholly deprived of their miraculous character. Indeed, the grave trouble with the phenomena has always been their ludicrous character."

Since it turns out that persons who leave this for the spirit-world retain their identity—that fools and knaves are fools and knaves still, and the wise and good retain their ruling traits—it is rationally to be expected that some of the phenomena should be "ludicrous"—indeed, since the fools are usually in a majority, it would not be surprising if most of the phenomena were of this description. But such is not the case. Those investigators who in a grave and reverent spirit would look into this subject are generally met in a corresponding temper by the intelligences on the other side. The frivolous and the scoffing usually attract those to whom such company is not congenial.

(3) "There are, however, instances of singular responses made by the mediums to certain questions—evidence of knowledge of things peculiarly intimate and personal, which are curious and surprising, and for the explanation of which the key seems not to have been found. These,

however, may fairly be classed with all well-attested phenomena of the night-side of nature. And as many other apparently inexplicable phenomena occurring at the same time and under the same circumstances are attributed by the operators to spiritual agencies, but prove to be the result of exceeding material forces, it is illogical to assume that the rest cannot have a similar explanation. Many, fortunately, require none. The poetry of the departed Shakespeare and the wisdom of the translated Bacon or Franklin are plainly due to lunar influences, not in heaven, but upon earth. Consolation administered by spry table legs, and assurances of immortality proceeding from tambourines, happily do not cry for explanation. They explain themselves. Signor Bilz could give such spirits odds, and win the game."

If we rightly understand the meaning of this paragraph, it amounts to this: The instances of clairvoyance through mediums may be classed with other cases of clairvoyance; an assertion which obviously "goes without saying," since the theory is, that all clairvoyants are mediums, and all clairvoyance is an exercise of a spiritual faculty. The "phenomena of the night-side of nature" derive no explanation from that somewhat obscure phrase, borrowed from the German. The phenomena obviously all belong to the same group; and as they give evidence of super-sensory or spiritual powers, we are justified in calling them *spiritual*.

But, we are told (substantially) by Mr. Curtis, that inasmuch as certain other phenomena, supposed to be spiritual, may be explained by the known action of material forces, it is therefore illogical to suppose that the rest of the phenomena (however unaccountable) may not be explained in the same way. Let us see what this argument is worth: Mr. Curtis goes to hear the raps, but discovers that the so-called medium produces them with his thumb nail. Must the rapping phenomena be therefore ruled out as all equally fraudulent? Or, after the medium has been detected in fraud, he is lifted to the ceiling before a dozen witnesses, under circumstances where their senses and their common sense tell them that no fraud is possible. It would be all right for Mr. Curtis to say: "Do that again—do it twenty times, under varying conditions—you have cheated me once, and I do not mean to be cheated again if I can help it," but, after the phenomenon had been thoroughly tested, would it be altogether logical to say, that inasmuch as the rapping was explained by the fraudulent use of the thumb nail, therefore the levitation must be referred to some equally simple, material cause, though the testimony of a dozen witnesses is wholly opposed to any such supposition? Would it be an altogether "illogical assumption" for a person to say: "The ways by which raps can be fraudulently produced are conceivably many; the way by which a man can be lifted to the ceiling, under the conditions given, limits itself to one: namely, the exercise of an unknown force?"

Or, take another case: A pretended medium tries to make Mr. Curtis think that a certain inscription on a slate is independent writing by a spirit. The pretence is proved to be a fraud. Mr. Curtis then takes his own locked slate, and goes to Dr. Slade, and in his presence, before the eyes of all, in broad daylight, while no one is touching the slate, a sound of writing is heard, and on opening the slate Mr. Curtis finds an intelligent message in the handwriting of a deceased friend. Would he be justified in rejecting such a proof of abnormal action, simply because he had once been deceived through the slight-of-hand of a trickster? We put no imaginary case. Hundreds of intelligent persons, who are not Spiritualists, will testify to the phenomenon of independent slate-writing, under test-conditions. This is notorious to every person who has taken the least trouble to satisfy himself in regard to our claimed facts.

"Some mischief-loving spirit writes doggerel, and signs the name of Shakespeare, or Bacon. Oh, what a conclusive proof against the fact that there are spirits! A man who has been a joker in this world continues a joker in the next. Oh, what profanity to suppose that a spirit is allowed to show that he has not parted with his identity! Have our critics ever considered the matter seriously? Is it reasonable to suppose that the frivolous-buffoon of to-day shall be a grave philosopher to-morrow, simply because he drops his outer covering of flesh and bones?"

"An assurance of immortality proceeding from tambourines!" How very undignified! Is it conceivable that a spirit would try to excite our attention by moving or playing on a tambourine? And why not, though to you it may seem below the dignity of any one but a leahey? May there not be departed laqueys in the other world? And if, in the absence of other means of manifesting a supersensory force, one of them should lift a chair, a table or a tambourine, in order to let one see that there may be occult forces at work around us, shall one fall back on his dignity, shocked by the impertinence of this spiritual fellow, and thus lose the vast significance of the occurrence?"

"An assurance of immortality from tambourines!" Ay, from tambourines, so long as it shall be an "assurance!" From pipe-stems, if you please; from "vessels made unto honor, or unto dishonor." There is low company as well as high, we suppose, in the other world. If a spirit cannot come to us with a harp, and play Mozart's Requiem, let him come with a banjo, and play Yankee Doodle. We shall not let our pride or our dignity interfere, where the purpose is to impress us with the fact of spirit action. Of this a devil, as well as an angel, may furnish a proof; and whether a spirit kneels before us in prayer, or dances Jim Crow, the important fact to us is, not what he does, but what he is.

(4) "One of the recent avatars was that of a woman who, being tied fast, was in some manner walled upon by mysterious agencies, which did what no living person could do who could not use arms, hands, feet or body. As usual, the things were done behind a screen. The 'spirits' are not content with their own invisibility. The laws of the spiritual world, it seems, require that the medium through whom they manifest themselves should be invisible also. If a guitar is played, it must be in a box or a cabinet, or in the dark, or behind a screen. Why the spirits of heavenly light fear the light of earth, or the spirits of just men made perfect are unwilling to confront the gaze of very unjust and imperfect men, doth not appear. The medium can only assure us that it is part of the mystery."

Here Mr. Curtis refers to the case of Mrs. Fay, who may or may not be a genuine medium, or who may play two roles as opportunely favors. He ought to know, too, that the probabilities are that at times she manifests genuine medium power. Possibly Spiritualists may do her injustice; but the suspicious fact is, that Mr. H. Melville Fay, who accompanies her, has blown hot and blown cold. Like young Bishop, he

doubtless has mediumistic power. Finding that genuine phenomena did not pay, he took up the role of an exposé of Spiritualism. "Why should spirits help him; then?" it may be asked. The spirits, probably, see that nothing is so damaging to the cause of truth as apathy; and they are quite willing to help regenerate mediums in their work; well knowing that all so-called exposures, in winnowing the false from the true, must eventually result in favor of the truth.

When Mr. Curtis intimates, as he does in the preceding paragraph, that the laws of the spirit-world require that the medium for materialization or other phenomena should be "invisible," he shows that he has not kept pace with the actual facts. The remarkable phenomena through Mr. Slade, such as independent slate-writing, independent movement of objects, and occasionally the materialization of hands and faces, take place in broad daylight when the medium is in full view of the sitters. The materializations of spirit-forms in the presence of Mrs. Bennett, of Boston, take place when she is in her normal state, and in full view of the spectators. Frequently at Terre Haute the spirit forms that come in the presence of Mrs. Stewart will allow you to lift the curtain and satisfy yourself that she is sitting there in a state of trance. Mr. Crookes and Mr. Varley not only proved, by electrical tests, that Katie King and Florence Cook were distinct personalities, but Mr. Crookes, and others, repeatedly saw the two together. It is therefore an error to say that by "spirit-laws" the medium must be invisible when the phenomena take place.

If, instead of settling these questions on a priori grounds, Mr. Curtis had taken the trouble to go to No. 21 West Seventeenth street, New York City, and asked for Mr. Henry Slade, he could have satisfied himself that Mr. Wallace, Mr. Crookes, and the rest of us have good reasons for our faith. If he had carefully and patiently investigated, he would never have written his present article.

(5) "Doubtless there are many honest people who went to the exhibition of the medium, paying money at the door, and who came away firmly convinced that they had witnessed supernatural phenomena. For how could a woman with her hands tied behind her back throw a guitar, put a nail upon her head, drive a nail into a board, blow a flageolet, or tie a knot in a band around her neck?"

Here Mr. Curtis instances a few minor manifestations, such as could be produced by gymnastic skill and celerity, or by exceptional suppleness of body, and leaves the meekly receptive public to infer that it is by such exhibitions that intelligent and rooted Spiritualists are made!

(6) "These were precisely the questions which Mr. W. Irving Bishop undertook to answer. That such things could be done by spirits he did not propose to question. He would only show that they could be done by men and women also. If he could do this the 'supernatural' element would vanish, and the 'medium' would be compelled to prove that they were not done by her clever self behind the screen. If, again, she could not prove this, she must be considered an exposed 'humbug,' and 'Spiritualism' would have severely suffered, as when poor Katie King yielded to the pitiless confession of Mrs. Somebody in Philadelphia. Mr. Irving Bishop did what he promised. In company with a committee of well-known citizens of New York of high character, he appeared upon the platform at Chickling Hall. He was placed in a chair, and his hands were tied closely to a ring in the air, and his head and neck were tied to another, as if he were about to undergo the punishment of the garrote. His feet were also tied together by a rope, the end of which was held by a spectator. A tambourine was then laid upon his lap, with several bells, and, like the 'medium,' he was then hidden by a curtain drawn before him. Instantly the tambourine resounded, the bells rang, and both tambourine and bells came flying over the curtain, which was at once withdrawn, and Mr. Bishop was found closely tied. It was obviously mysterious, and probably the work of spirits. Perhaps Plato and Galileo were thus illustrating the immortality of the soul."

And Mr. Curtis allows Mr. Bishop to exact precisely the conditions exacted by a genuine medium—namely, to be "hidden by a curtain" during the manifestations—and then, because the tambourine sounds, and the bell rings, and both come flying over the curtain, and when the curtain is withdrawn the young rogue is found "closely tied," Mr. Curtis and his fellow-spectators, without further examination, take Mr. Bishop's word for it that no mediumistic power is used—that it is all an unspiritual trick!

"Ah! but Mr. Bishop will repeat it all before the audience, and satisfy them it is a trick," you will infer. But he is very careful to do no such thing. Nothing in the least difficult, or that could not be duplicated by means of bodily contortions and rapid movements, will he condescend to repeat so as to explain it. He does, it is true, repeat the paltry feats of thrumming a guitar with his detached fingers, driving a nail into a board, blowing a flageolet, or tying a knot, but he does not, because he cannot, show that complicated knots can be *instantaneously* tied and untied by any explicable process, and within view of the audience. He does not explain the common phenomenon of the spirit-hand.

As for Bishop's pretence that the effects of the floating guitar, which, while a medium's hands were held, we have known to touch the ceiling, and fly bird-like all round a large room, the strings being played on the while, can be produced by his swinging the instrument about with his freed hand, he knows this to be a lie, and every experienced investigator knows it, too. The feats of driving the nail and putting a pill on his head, and all those that are explicable by suppleness of limb, any gymnast can learn by practice. Does Mr. Curtis seriously suppose that it is by such cheap puerilities that millions of rational beings have been converted to Spiritualism?

(7) "A board with a nail and hammer was placed by his side; the curtain was drawn, and instantly hammering was heard. The curtain was pulled back; Mr. Bishop was tied close, and the spirits had hammered the nail fast into the board. A nail was placed upon his lap, the curtain drawn to supply the proper spiritual conditions, and the next moment he was seen with the nail, like a night-cap, upon his head."

"To supply the proper spiritual conditions!" Mr. Curtis intends this as a joke, reflecting on the duped Spiritualists. If he lives ten years, as we hope he may, he will be satisfied that he himself has been the dupe.

(8) "A doll was cut from paper, a guitar was played, water was drunk from a tumbler on his knee, while his feet were held fast and his neck tied close to a ring behind him. All was done behind a screen, and if it was not spirits, what was it? It is the question which very honest and intelligent and scientific men have asked. No man bound in this manner could possibly do these things. But they are done. No human collusion is possible. What does it mean? 'My hands,' answered Mr. Bishop. And forthwith, bound as he was, and in full view of the audience, he repeated what he had done behind the curtain, and showed that it was due to suppleness, agility, great quickness, and self-posses-

sion. Alas for Plato and Galileo! Supernaturalism? Spiritual agencies? Does the courteous reader recall the concluding words of Dr. Brownson's 'Charles Elwood': 'And Elizabeth—will you tell us nothing of her? Pardon me: I have planted wild flowers upon her grave and watered them with my tears.'"

Mr. Curtis conveys an erroneous impression in asserting that Bishop, in full view of the audience, repeats all that has been done behind the curtain. He does no such thing. He throws dust in the eyes of Mr. Curtis and the rest simply by selecting a few unimportant feats, and duplicating these, leaving the really inexplicable ones all unexplained. This is fully shown in the following letter addressed to Dr. Epes Sargent by Dr. Noyes of New York, a cultivated physician of high character, a cautious investigator, and one singly devoted to the truth. Let Mr. Curtis read it, and see what his own swift judgments are worth, so far as Spiritualism is concerned:

320 EAST 55TH STREET, NEW YORK, July 5th, 1876.

EPES SARGENT—Dear Sir: I will not attempt to give you an exhaustive analysis of all the points in Mr. Bishop's performance which convinced me that he is a medium, but will merely outline a few general features which were inconsistent with the part of a mere imitator, and then narrate two particular incidents which were not and it seemed to me could not be explained as jugglery.

In the first place we would expect that a genuine exposé would lay the stress of his explanations on his most difficult feats, and in general would seize upon the points which would make the demonstration most complete. The contrary is the case with Mr. Bishop. The most surprising events of the evening were never referred to in the explanation, which was really no explanation at all. One would naturally expect that an exposé would put his explanations first, and then perform the feats in a manner which would demonstrate that they were performed in the way indicated; but Mr. Bishop, like Baldwin, first goes through with a séance, which, as far as conditions go, might be a real mediumistic one, and then adds a so-called explanation, which is so hurried and so far removed in time from the performance of the different feats that it is easy for him to omit any reference to the really difficult points while conveying a general sense of explanation to careless observers. This fact ought to have weight, that the whole arrangement of the séance is favorable to the operation of a real medium, while it is unfavorable to a strict analysis by the audience. The simple expedient of requiring the exposé to immediately repeat each feat done behind the curtain, before the audience, and insisting on his getting exactly the same effects, would very soon bring these deceivers to light.

Another point, which indicated, in a general manner, the character of his first part, was a mediumistic one, was Mr. Bishop's demeanor. No sign of muscular exertion appeared. He wore the passive, abstracted air noted in mediums. But when he came to illustrate his suppleness before the audience, his manner underwent a sudden change. He drew himself up and had all the appearance of a man preparing for a muscular struggle. He seemed to summon all his strength, and during the contortions he writhed in every limb. The disturbance of his body in all parts was extreme. This point is to be noted. In the particular incident I will presently relate, the only explanation possible other than the spiritualistic one, was that while Mr. Bishop slipped his hands in the fastenings and twisted his body to allow their action in front of him, his head and knees were absolutely motionless. In the illustrations before the audience, however, his head sank down in a marked manner, while his whole body was violently agitated.

Still a further point which tended to establish the mediumistic character of his first part, was the nervousness with which he insisted on having absolute privacy behind the curtain. One would suppose that if a spectator should peep behind the curtain while Mr. Bishop's feats of suppleness were in progress, his testimony to the dexterity of the performance would add weight to the exposé. At least such a spectator would do no harm, as he could only confirm Mr. Bishop's own testimony. But on the occasion in question Mr. Bishop discovered a man concealed in the upper gallery of the Academy, which was closed to the public because it overlooked the space behind the curtain. He insisted that the man should come down. The man explained that he was up there for the express purpose of looking behind the curtain, but Mr. Bishop was inexorable.

The two incidents which seemed to me utterly inconsistent with the jugglery theory were these: First, the shot test. The committee placed in his hands a certain number of shot, which were found in a place and correct in number, after strong evidence of power behind the curtain. In the exhibition of his *exposé*, it is said that he rolls the shot between his fingers, but no evidence was offered that this was the case, and a sight of his struggles when illustrating his suppleness before the audience, made me prefer the theory that his hands were not the ones that made the disturbance. Before adopting his theory I would want to see his hands while the feat was in progress, which, I imagine, he never allows. The second remarkable incident was a sitting with Ex-Mayor Hunter, in which this gentleman, blindfolded, grasped Mr. Bishop's knees and forehead. Evidence of activity behind the curtain were abundant, and the Ex-Mayor testified that he was grasped by hands, pounded on the head with a guitar, and had flowers presented to him. At the same time he positively asserted twice that Mr. Bishop, to his feeling, was absolutely immovable. He said this must be explained. It was not, however. Mr. Hunter appeared to be an observant man, and I thought that if Mr. Bishop performed the feats in the way he afterwards illustrated, the Ex-Mayor was extremely dull not to perceive that he was squirming like an eel.

Both of these incidents are perfectly consistent with what we know of the operations of spirit-power, but they are quite inconsistent with Mr. Bishop's explanation. Yours truly, THEODORE R. NOYES, M. D.

The phenomena that have wrought conviction in the minds of serious investigators are precisely such as, in the nature of things, cannot be exposed or duplicated by any person exercising the normal, unaided power of a human being. Therefore no experienced Spiritualist feels in the least concerned when he hears of these "exposures." For Mr. Curtis to assume that we base our theory on performances which any gymnast or juggler could imitate, is wholly unwarranted by the facts. We fear that politics and literature have demanded so much of his time the last fifteen years that he knows about as much of the present state of Spiritualism as Mr. A. R. Wallace or Mr. Crookes knows about the local politics of New York.

If Mr. Bishop by his vaunted "suppleness, agility, great quickness and self-possession," can lift himself to the ceiling and stay there without holding on to anything for five or ten minutes, and can teach others to do this by the simple exercise of their normal powers, he may begin to accomplish some of the marvels that have seemed to justify Spiritualists in their theory. If, then, under such conditions as genuine mediums acquiesce in, he will produce recognizable forms of deceased persons, cause them to talk rationally, and vanish before your sight, accomplishing this all by his "great quickness and self-possession," without the intervention of any other force or aid, we shall begin to think he is as clever as he would have the world suppose.

To those who have not kept pace with this great spiritual movement, it is such a comfort to have even a Bishop come and satisfy them

that it is all moonshine! No wonder they overlook his little evasions and subtleties, and, because he can do a few tricks before their eyes, assume that he can do all, even those phenomena requiring the aid of spirits.

Bro. Beecher, too, is highly elated, along with the rest of the New York editors, in the comforting notion that Spiritualism has come to grief through the united efforts of Mrs. White and Mr. Bishop. He copies and commends, in his "Christian Union," the remarks of Mr. Curtis, and he puffs the stupid book by Dr. Hammond, who denies all the phenomena that he cannot explain by nervous derangement, hallucination and unconscious cerebration.

Go on, gentlemen; your rope is a long one, and this is a free country! Very gradual is the progress of truth. Keep out of its way as long as you can. Snatch at straws, dodge all serious investigation, shut your ears to testimony and your eyes to facts! Select some one low or ludicrous development out of the vast complex of good and bad, noble and ignoble, which the invisible like the visible universe involves, and make your stand there, and try to turn it to the belittling and discrediting of the whole grand subject, and cry out with Tyndall, Huxley, and the rest, "Spiritual agencies indeed!" as if these last might not be a mixture of the frivolous and the sublime—as if there ought not to be all grades of intelligences in that spirit-world which holds the departed of this planet! Make your own *a priori* negations the bounds of truth in opposition to the affirmative testimony of those whose knowledge is founded on the most ample experience. Nevertheless the great spirit-world is around and above us all the same, and is not at all arrested by your contemptuous denial. Spirits come and go, and they scorn no effort, however lowly or vulgar, to prove to us that they still live. Both objectively and subjectively they appeal to us, and would win our attention. They even condescend to move tables and to tip chairs. They show us the hands, faces and forms once familiar to us here, for they would prove to us their identity in every way, objective and subjective. They lavish on us their well-remembered tokens of affection. They talk audibly of matters known only to ourselves and clairvoyant intelligences. They come before us palpably, write messages, paint pictures and draw likenesses, showing high artistic culture, and execute with preterhuman celerity. They join in our songs, and give us music from unseen instruments. They bring us flowers through closed walls, and show that to spirits matter is no impediment. They vanish and reappear palpably and tangibly in a moment. They cut pieces from their improvised garments, and then, with a whisk of the hand, make the cut place whole again. They do a thousand things, always increasing in variety and marvelousness, to prove to us that they exercise powers such as mankind in all ages have rightly attributed to spirits.

All this, we well know, will seem like mid-summer madness to the scoffers who do not want to be convinced, and who refuse all persistent investigation. Nevertheless it is true, and the truth is winning its way slowly but surely. All these so-called "exposures" have their use in preventing stagnation, and in stirring up all true Spiritualists to do yeoman's service for the truth. Its course being spiral, every seeming retrogression is for the accomplishment of an actual gain in progress. Mr. Curtis addresses a splendid audience, in point of numbers, through Harper's Magazine. He may, for a time, satisfy some of the Dumfrieses of the day that "the thing is all gone up—isn't worth a feller's looking into"—but he will live to regret that he was ever instrumental in encouraging even such minds in their ignorance of a truth which satisfies the reason that death is but a step to a life of enlarged powers and opportunities. He will regret his course, simply because he loves truth better than victory, is thoroughly noble and sincere, having a force of gentleness that makes him more than a match for the bullies and the "roughs" of debate, and too courageous withal to truckle to any conventional shams for the sake of a transient popularity. Such a man, when he is undecieved, as he will be, will be strong for the truth.

The Yacht Disaster.

No occurrence has struck such a feeling of distress into a great community as the sudden capsizing of the yacht Mohawk in New York Harbor last week, with her select party of pleasure-seekers on board, all ready for the excursion of the afternoon and evening. Commodore Garner, the owner of the vessel, with his wife and other ladies, besides one or two more, were confined in the cabin and drowned. By the all but miraculous escape of Mr. Schuyler Crosby, who was one of the party in the cabin with Mr. Garner at the time of the disaster, the details of the final struggle for life in that pent space are spread before the public, and they are touching in the extreme. Nothing, in fact, could be more so. Both Mr. Crosby and Mr. Garner took hold of the latter's wife, while the water was filling the little cabin, and endeavored to draw her out and carry her to a place of safety; but she was pinned down by a table and by other heavy weights which the careening of the vessel had thrown on to her, and it was impossible to extricate her. She kept answering the calls of her husband and his friend as they sought to encourage her to assist their efforts to rescue her, until a sudden lurch of the craft buried her completely under the water, and her husband refused to leave her, and died with her.

What is by no means the least interesting or significant part of this catastrophe, which has cast such gloom over the public mind in New York, is the fact reported in the Boston Transcript—in which paper we first saw it—that Mrs. Garner was distinctly impressed, at the time her husband contemplated purchasing or building this yacht, with the idea that it boded ill-fortune, and that she persistently besought him to proceed no further in his design; but he had formed his purpose, and set his heart on its fulfillment, and thus the result was to be. As most people say, fate was in it. This devoted pair were to meet their end in just the way they did. What matter, after all, as some said after Custer had met his fate at the hands of the Indians, whether the end come a few years earlier or later? It is only a difference of time in our entering upon the great life beyond, and in that life time is unknown, as is distance likewise. But here is still another instance of the truth of premonition, whose voices people are too apt to disregard or ridicule. After what has been warned against really occurs, the same persons raise their hands with an expression of awe that is far more superstitious than anything could be which simply pays timely regard to the forewarnings themselves.

Message Department.

The Spirit Messages given at the Baltimore Circle and the Boston Circle, reports of which have appeared in this paper, have attracted the attention of many of our readers...

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

THROUGH THE MEDIUMSHIP OF MRS. SARAH A. DANSKIN. (Wife of Colonel Washington A. Danskin, of Baltimore.)

Mrs. Danskin's Mediumistic Experiences. Part Third. BY WASH. A. DANSKIN.

At times, when clairvoyantly examining a patient for disease, another interesting feature will be added. Some spirit friend of the person under examination will appear, and be described.

On one occasion, I remember when a bright boy of fourteen years was brought to the office. His case apparently was hopeless. He was not only a very handsome child, but intelligent, ambitious, and advanced intellectually beyond his years.

Having devoted himself too closely to study his strength had given way, and when his parents became alarmed at his faded appearance and consulted their physician, his lungs were pronounced seriously if not hopelessly affected.

His condition only growing worse under the "old school" treatment, he was brought by his mother to Mrs. Danskin, and we had the pleasure of seeing him in about two months restored to health.

His parents were Germans, and though having several other children their hopes and affections seemed specially concentrated on this one. His name is Cuno Rudolph, and at the close of the examination Doctor Rush said: "A spirit has come here with him, one who is deeply interested in his welfare; in answer to my question he says he is his brother."

Matthew Ward.

Matthew Ward was my name. After a severe illness of long standing, I fled from the tenement of clay to times unknown, and from whence, it has been said, "no traveler returns."

I am standing now upon a pedestal, viewing the holy ground and making out the place where I will find rest. "There is rest for the weary, there is rest for you," has been sung and told in ages gone by, and who will dare doubt it, with a same mind? Not I, for I am a pilgrim, I'm a stranger in a foreign land.

Am I doing that which is forbidden, in speaking to the children of earth? Of what advantage will it prove to me, or of what benefit can it be to others? They know full well the grave has taken up the body, but what knowledge have they beyond the boundary of this little globe?

How dare we search the mysteries of God, the unseen but not the unfelt? How woe, if in the net I've committed a wrong, I will pay the penalty, for curiosity, I acknowledge, brought me in the trail with others.

Phoebe Williams.

I died at my son's; his name was Williams. He lived on Hilyard street, Orange, New Jersey. My name was Phoebe Williams, the widow of the late Albert Williams. I was in the seventy-third year of my age, and the summons of death came, not with the horrors of the damned but with the pleasantness of the blessed.

Has the human mind conception enough to draw the line between the material body and the spiritual body? As one passes into seeming decay the other is born anew, with all the faculties quick and active to perceive and to designate between beauty and deformity and between good and evil.

I am not gifted with prophecy; this comes from truthful inheritance, given to the spirit under the law of unfoldment. Son, sons-in-law, daughters, daughter-in-law, and grand-children, accept the announcement that is heralded, not in "thunder tones" nor "upon musical instruments," but spoken sensibly, whereby the enlightened and educated minds may draw their deductions and learn some little in theory if not practically of that country into which each one must go.

Mary Dunn.

Mary Dunn was my name. I was forty-six years old. I was a native of the parish of Abbey-dorney, County of Kerry, Ireland; but for the last sixteen or eighteen years I've been a resident of Baltimore. My remains were carried from North Bond street. With no reluctance do I come, though little did I know except that which was taught me by others who knew more than myself.

I have found these over here who resemble those I left behind. They draw around me and give me consolation, telling me not to be sad for having left friends behind me. They will by chance, they say, read this, and understand that God, in his mercy, has been kind to my soul, for it was baptized in the holy water that makes all things pure and clean in the sight of God.

I have no more to say; and now I go back again to the beautiful home from whence I came—not with sorrow, but with rejoicing. This is the copy book which Mary Dunn gives to all her friends and acquaintances.

Thomas Mullen.

And it's the name that's the best thing to give first, is it? Well, my name was Thomas Mullen, and I was just about twenty years old. I had an awful long time of illness. My mother's name was Catherine, and my father's name was Thomas; but my father, he died before me, and I died after him. It was from my mother's residence I was taken out to be buried, and she lives on Josephine street.

If this is proper and nice, it's more than I know, because I know nothing about it; but I'll try it. I do not know whether it's right or wrong, therefore I can't say what advantage it's going to be to me to come and speak through a lady who does not know me, nor do I know her; therefore she can't feel any interest about it; nor do I know whether my mother will ever see it or not. If she does, I don't believe she will believe it, therefore I think it a waste of material; but I'll do what they tell me.

If, mother, you can ever see this, it will give you an idea that I've passed through the valley; went into a place that's given me life without any pains, without any aches. I am free now; I can sing just as I used to hear the birds sing, and oh! how I used to envy them, for they seemed so happy. But now I do not envy anything, for God and the bright angels have made everything pleasant and beautiful for me.

I know, mother, I wore your patience out. I know I was cross and irritable sometimes, but I could not overrule it, for I felt so bad; now that is all gone; I am happy, I am content. I would not come back if I could. So if you see this, read it, and know that it is Thomas that is speaking from that beautiful world called heaven.

I have no more to say, but thanks to all my friends for putting away my remains so nicely.

Margaret Crook.

My death took place on Long Island, near Brooklyn, New York. My name was Margaret Crook. I was the wife of Philip Crook, and the daughter of Lawrence Van Cleek, of New York.

I knew but little of the change, but with all the mystery wrapped around the word "death," I find underlying it all things pleasant to gratify and satisfy the spirit that seeks it. In making a return from that bourne whence, in days gone by, we were told no traveler could come back—if, dear friends, in making this return, not by my own will alone, but by permission of one who has more power, strength and wisdom than myself, I establish the fact that we are not held in bondage in this world of delights, will you not receive it? Will you sit and ponder over the matter, and frame in your minds that it is a deception? What motive could I have in deceiving the kindred or friends that I have left behind?

The perfect reality of this life makes us almost doubt that we ever lived on earth; ever passed through sickness, agony and sorrow, and then gained the beautiful point of an eternal life, with all its pleasures, which have no drawbacks. Remember, in this beautiful world of realities we are compelled to bring all our faculties into requisition; having found the path that leads to the beautiful sphere of unfoldment, we must then exercise patience and perseverance in the grand and noble work that lies before us.

Having accomplished this, we then find God in every step of our advancement—in every unfoldment of our intellect. When intellect is brought into play, we must exercise it to its finest point of development. The finer our perceptions are the clearer will be God and his manifest works.

What a grateful remembrance flows over me while I am a short-stayer in this mundane sphere. It brings up all things that I ever knew, and all things that I ever did, either in that we call good or in that we call evil. In comparing the two words I have no power to draw the dividing line. They are one and the same thing; it is the position from which we view them that makes the difference.

Now what a beautiful unfoldment has come to my mind—neither to fear death nor have any terror of the grave. And oh, friends! it is sweet thus to commune with you. Farewell! My part has been done; it is now for you to glean light from the sentences I have spoken.

Fannie Ramsey.

Oh, the shock! I very suddenly died, and in that death I found myself a personality with all the attributes of the woman still. Memory rife, friendship strong, love the same—how could I comprehend the change that had come to me!

While thus pondering, a voice soft, low and musical, spoke to me, and it made my heart bound. These questions were asked: "Who art thou? whence comest thou?" In a short time it spoke again, saying: "I am to teach you of the home into which you have passed. It is not for an hour or a day, it is for eternity. Now let your earthly garments fall and I will robe you spiritually, for you are not of the earth earthy any more, but of the spirit spiritually."

Fannie Ramsey was my name. I was of North Fifth street, Philadelphia. In the forty-fourth year of my age. The wife of Albert Ramsey. He and I were wedded harmoniously. But who can keep the voice from growing still to the earthly ear? Death must come, and in its due and beautiful time it sought me.

Death for a time creates sorrow, sadness and gloom in the household, but soon—it is natural—the once familiar face is forgotten; the footsteps are no longer listened for; something fresh and new comes and takes the place of the old; then hilarity once more reigns in the house. No condemnation, for the law now forbids the human mind to dwell on those who have gone before. But when the historic page bears written evidence that death is only seeming, not real, that God the Infinite, the Supreme, has filled all universes with his life, then death will be understood, and that which has so long been a terror will be looked upon with joy unspeakable.

May what I have spoken reach the minds and hearts of those who knew Fannie Ramsey.

BANNER OF LIGHT CIRCLE-ROOM.

The following Spirit-Messages were given through the mediumship of

MRS. JENNIE S. RUDD.

At our Public Free Circle Room Meetings, and reported verbatim expressly for the Message Department of the Banner.

These Circles will be resumed on the 31st of September next, and continued regularly on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday of each week.

Frances Augusta Barnard.

The question has been asked at this place—Why don't more of the friends of the parties who are present come to them, rather than that the medium who is here should be controlled by strangers? Were the circle-room opened entirely for the benefit of the parties visiting it, it would be very correct that spirits of the friends present should have the most of the time; but this department of the Banner reaches not alone the few who are gathered here this afternoon, but it reaches every State in the Union, and travels on across the waters, visiting other countries. Then we must provide for the wants of the majority, rather than for the minority;—but rest assured, friends, that whenever an opportunity presents itself, and we can possibly bring your friends to you, we will do so.

I was a medium when I was here—not controlled publicly, but privately. I felt the spiritual power, when I was called away from earth, strongly. It seemed to me as if I must reach my friends in the earth-life, and I worked many days and many weeks before I could impress different mediums and bring about a chain of influences to take a medium to my home, that I might take my mother in my arms again and tell her there was no death; that I had not left her, only for a season; that I might strengthen the faltering steps of a father; that I might hold a husband who is frantically with grief from my loss—that I might hold him still, bringing him back to a life of usefulness. I had a varied experience when here, yet for every experience I thank God today; for every cross there has been a crown for me. The spirit-world I was no stranger to; it seemed very natural to me. I met loved ones who went on years before, only to find that they had progressed so much beyond me that I must work to catch up with them in spirit-life; yet our home was one. And when I hear people saying how hard they have to work to get a communication from the spirit-world directly from their friends, I want to ask them if they realize for one moment how much labor we expend in giving these communications? If they for one moment realize what powers we put forth, how diligently we work that we may reach our loved ones? And perhaps, even then, after we have reached them and identified ourselves and made it all plain, they forget their promises to us, and feel that we are dead rather than that we still live! You know not, friends, what we on this side have to contend with. If you did, you would ever assist your loved ones; you would hold their hands and strengthen them with all the love in your hearts; you would assist them in their efforts to reach you.

I succeeded, after many weeks, in reaching my home—in reaching my friends. I succeeded in binding up their wounded hearts and pouring into them the consolation of the spiritual light, and when I had labored for two long years with them, from month to month, then I came to join a band of influences to assist those who wanted to communicate with earth; and we are enabled to do so, and, though I may go to my loved ones still, yet my work shall be for the spirits who stand waiting at the foot of the cross, saying, Listen to me! let me come home to my dear ones! No; I have not forgotten home and friends. Dearest than ever to me they are. I would reach them as often as possible; still I have a higher work. Frances Augusta Barnard.

John E. Henry.

First, then, I am to give my name—John E. Henry. I've sometimes been called "Irish Hank." I am not a Christian, I never was. I was not a good man—I wish I was. I would be glad to tell you that I have come here with a good smooth story, and that I could say it was smooth sailing on my side of the question; but I can only say I have come to my own place; yet I find here good angels—wise spirits they are, all of 'em—and for the helping hand given me to-day I say God bless them all, for I see a sympathetic look in many of their faces. I was tired of life. I had had a vision—I know it now, I called it a dream, but I know it was a dear, good spirit, an old lady that watched over me when I was a boy, and never expected to see me make the man I did. After that dream I wanted to be better; but did ever any of you want to leave off any bad tricks, and find you were encouraged in it? No sir. If you ever get into any bad habits and lead a tough life, remember, I tell you, if you want to turn over a new leaf, nobody will help you. That's been my experience. Of course those that did not know me believed I was humbugging 'em; they said it was too sudden a turn for me; and those that did know me believed I was crazy. I do not wonder at it. But when I looked on the dead face of my friend, Mike Cowell, I do not know what came over me; I felt as if it was time for me to stop and begin new, and I tried to tell an old friend of mine, Mary Farran—I won't tell her slang name, it was too bad. She was a kind-hearted woman, and came pretty near being accused of my murder, but she did not do it. I was telling her about it, when she told me of her daughter's going over; and taking it all together, with the efforts I had made in the last few days to try to do better, and the hard luck I had, I said, "It's time to get out of this," so with a pistol shot I got out.

Now, when I got on this side, I was told by several that if I'd free my mind—I suppose that's like the Catholic confessional, pretty near—if I'd free my mind, I should feel better, and see the light, and I am glad I come here, for I've seen more light within the last few minutes than I ever expected to see. I certainly rejoice at it. I know now and understand that I can turn over a new leaf, and paste it down, and it will be white inside, and I'm going to commence and make some new marks, and you may rest assured that my future shall be different from what my past has been. I am going to try to do better. All these friends tell me they will help me.

I want to say to the old "pals" down here, Stop! it's time for you to stop. You may say you do not care about the future; I tell you, you will care. It will all be plain to you when you get up here, and you will be sorry. It's time to stop, I say.

To Mary: If you'd brought your girl up right,

she'd be with you now, and not be sent out before her time. She might have been a good, respectable, fine woman. I am looking over you, and if you know what's best for you, you'll try to turn over a new leaf, with me.

[To the Chairman:] I've done the best I could, sir; I ain't used to confessing; I could better shake dice with you, or play thimble with you; but I've told you my story the best I can. I went out from San José, California. That's all.

Thomas D. Goodier.

Mr. Chairman, will you please record in your paper that Thomas D. Goodier went out from Minneapolis, of consumption, about two years ago? I would like to reach my friends in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. I am resting and growing strong, and shall soon be useful to them.

John W. Bradley.

I am John W. Bradley, of Carmi, Ill. I stand before you, to-day, Mr. Chairman, as a stranger, and yet I would lay off my shoes, for I feel I am standing on holy ground. I was a pastor of the Christian church, and I endeavored to lead my flock to fasten their gaze on the spiritual world as I saw it. I felt sometimes I had influences that were strange to me, and when I have been asked in private: "Do you think that spirits ever come back?" I have said: "It does not seem to me that, in the providence of God, we should forget our loved ones when we pass out and go to dwell in heaven." But I must say I was surprised when, a few weeks ago, I found myself on this shore; surprised to find that I, like the man who preceded me, had come to my own place; that there was no dodging any question; that we must depend on our own actions for the development of our spiritual; that we are building our own houses; that each act of our daily lives goes away up into the very heavens, and that Christ will be so near us in influence and spirit and power that we can feel like one redeemed each moment, if we only follow his example. I will send this word to my flock: There is a deeper meaning in the word spiritual than you have ever dreamed of. Read your Bible with newer light; let the light of the spiritual world fall on it, and receive not only the Father but the Spirit. Fear not to be liberal; let in all liberal thoughts, for they are flowers dropped by God and the angels. I would send my love to those that loved me here, to those I watched over.

Charles B. Corey.

My name is Charles B. Corey, of Westport Point, Mass. I have been gone about two years. The question has been asked, "Why do you not hear from him at headquarters?" I will answer, that I was weak when I went out, and I have really had no chance to manifest before. I am not asleep. I am working—working for the benefit of the loved ones here. The aged one will be here with me soon. I am trying to impress my earthly relatives, and shall reach them. Be not discouraged; the light will come.

William Thompson.

I didn't know there was so many folks here. I am a little boy. I was eleven years old. I was killed at the Dannel Manufacturing Works. I was struck on the head with something they called a mandril; perhaps you don't know what it is? Well, it's a big machine that they use; it struck me on the head, and I did not get home alive. I've been gone some time over a year—a good deal. I thought I'd like to tell the folks that I wasn't dead. I didn't know anything, really, after it struck me. I was playing, and it came down and struck me on the head, and it killed me, so they said, and when I got out and tried to talk to them they would not answer me, and they haven't answered me yet. I don't know how I got here, but this gentleman you call Mr. White, he said, "You'd better go with me," and so I came along, and he said maybe they'd hear me afterwards, or hear from me.

So I'll say I'm very happy, and I'm not careless now; but I'm in school and trying to improve all I can. My name is William Thompson. [Where did you live?] In Pawtucket, R. I. Do not you know where the Dannel Manufacturing Works are? [No.] I thought everybody knew. Excuse me. I've gained a good deal since I came up here.

MESSAGES TO BE PUBLISHED.

THROUGH THE MEDIUMSHIP OF MRS. SARAH A. DANSKIN. Julia, the Suicide; Wm. Fisher Patterson; Harriet Briggs; Barney Williams; Daniel C. Stratton; Isabella Mansson; George Beckwith; Arilla Rockwell; John Whuester; Dr. Hall; John Ward; Henry Whians; John Dunlap; Ward Cheney; Henry Haven; Elizabeth Walker; George Coggell Torry; Henrietta Grant; Sarah Reynolds; George Lacey.

THROUGH THE MEDIUMSHIP OF MRS. JENNIE S. RUDD. Mary R., of New Orleans; Luther M. Kenneth; Emmet Lingley Bugbee, of Charleston, S. C.; Grandmother; Harriet; Mary Johnson; George, formerly of Market street, Baltimore, Md.; George Hanson Rowe, of Lawrence, Mass.; Monroe B. Grant; of Hartford, Vt.; Henry Lewis; Henry Le Roy, of St. Louis, Mo.; Cyrus L.—D.; Mary Durgin, of Montreal; Charles Brown, of Boston; Addie; her mother, Harriet Whiting, of Meriden, Conn.; Dr. Mann.

To the Liberal-Minded.

As the "Banner of Light Establishment" is not an incorporated institution, and as we could not therefore legally hold bequests made to us in that name, we give below the form in which such a bequest should be worded in order to stand the test of law: "I give, devise and bequeath unto Luther Colby and Isaac B. Rich, of Boston, Massachusetts, Publishers, [here insert the description of the property to be willed] strictly upon trust, that they shall appropriate and expend the same in such way and manner as they shall deem expedient and proper for the promulgation of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul and its eternal progression."

PUBLIC MEETINGS, ETC.

Grove Meeting. The Spiritualists and Liberalists of Belvidere and adjacent country, will hold a three-days' meeting on the Beacon County Fair-ground, at Belvidere, Ill., on the 18th, 19th and 20th of August, 1876. The grounds are pleasantly situated, with fine groves, plenty of water, abundant stables for horses, and other buildings for the accommodation of the guests. The apparatus and dining hall will be found on the ground. Come, everybody; bring along your social influences, and plenty of healing, your lamps filled with provisions. Come, anticipating a feast socially, intellectually and morally. The speakers engaged are Mrs. Mattie H. Parry, of Wisconsin; Mrs. H. Stone, of Iowa; Mr. Leonard Ellis, of Manchester, Ill.; Dr. O. J. Howard, of McHenry, will act as President of the meeting. W. L. Fox, of Belvidere, Corresponding Secretary.

HYMAN BOWLER, Committee of Arrangements.

Grove Meeting.

The Spiritualists of Kalamazoo, Mich., and vicinity will hold a two days' meeting in Elysian Grove, on Winslow's Island, in the Kalamazoo river (three quarters of a mile from town), on Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 26th and 27th.

1876. Admission to the Island by ticket only. Price ten cents. Passage each way by the cars and commodious boat at the cable ferry free. Giles B. Stebbins and Mrs. Lydia A. Pearsall are engaged to be present, and other speakers are expected. Persons from abroad will be entertained by the friends as far as practicable. There will be each day a basket picnic dinner on the ground; also refreshments for sale. Let this our Centennial and second yearly meeting, be a success. Mrs. H. M. Smedley, Sec.

Conventions.

There will be a meeting of the Executive Board of the Connecticut Association of Spiritualists, at Compoone, Aug. 9th, at two o'clock, a. m., for the purpose of making arrangements for our Annual Convention and the transaction of such other business as may come before it. D. ROBINSON, Secy. E. ANNE HINMAN, Pres. New Haven, July 18th, 1876.

Spiritualist Meeting in Ohio.

The Spiritualists of Portage County, Ohio, hold their yearly meeting at Mantua Station, on the first Sunday in August (6th), forenoon and afternoon. A. H. French and others are engaged as speakers. Persons coming from a distance will be provided for and made welcome, so none shall go away dissatisfied. Come and get your spiritual strength renewed. Bring your basket full, and have a picnic at noon. D. M. KING, Mantua.

The Van Buren Co. Association of Spiritualists and Free-thinkers will hold their next quarterly convention in the Public Park at South Haven, Mich., the first Sunday and Monday in August, 28th and 29th, 1876. C. B. Lynn and others will address the meeting. ROBERT BAKER, President. FRANK R. KNOWLES, Secretary.

New Books.

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Among the essays contained in it may be found Pro-existence and Prophecy, Life and Marriage in Spirit-Land, Prediction of Earthquakes, Causes of Insanity, Apparitions, The Mormons, Invisible Influences, Locality of the Spirit-World, Drama and Painting there, etc., etc., etc.

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WHAT AND WHERE Is the Spirit-World? A Lecture delivered before the Semi-Annual Convention of the Michigan Association of Spiritualists at East Saginaw, Mich., July 15th, 1876, by DR. GEORGE A. WATKINS.

Price 15 cents, postage 2 cents.

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Banner of Light.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, JULY 29, 1876.

Minutes of the National Conference of Spiritualists Assembled in Philadelphia July 5th, 1876.

(Continued Report.)

Pursuant to a "Call to Consider the Organization of Christian Spiritualism in America," published in the Banner of Light...

The organization of the Conference was completed by the appointment of J. E. Bruce, Secretary, Dr. H. T. Child, Assistant Secretary, S. P. Kase, Treasurer...

J. E. Bruce, of Massachusetts, moved the following resolution: That the time is come for the organization of Spiritualism in America.

Hon. J. M. Peebles, of New Jersey, moved that a committee be raised to present to the Conference a Declaration of Principles embodying our idea, or ground of organization.

The committee on the Declaration of Principles reported the following statement, which, after being freely and critically discussed, was, with some slight verbal alteration, unanimously adopted:

PLATFOHM. We, Spiritualists of America in Conference assembled, conscious of a deep religious nature in man, with its wants, its moral duties and its sacred obligations...

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES. We recognize in Jesus of Nazareth the spiritual leader of men, and accept his two great affirmations of love to God and love to man as constituting the one ground of growth in the individual, and the only and sufficient basis of human society.

STATEMENT OF AIMS. While we seek after all knowledge, scientific, moral and spiritual, while we study to know the truth and dare maintain it...

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In the year 1877, as may seem to them fit, a Delegate Convention, composed of five delegates from each society which shall be formed within the year, and of such other persons, in places where there are not enough to form a society, as may signify their sympathy in the movement and apply to the committee for credentials, which convention shall have for its main business to decide the question of a permanent national organization, and to transact such other business as may come before the convention.

Considerable discussion was had respecting the name of the New Movement. But a hearty and unanimous agreement was reached that this was a question which ought to go over for final settlement to the Delegate Convention next year.

After passing a vote that a copy of the minutes of the Conference be sent to all the Spiritualist papers in the country, and thanking Mr. Bliss for his kindness in the use of the hall, the Conference adjourned to meet at the call of the committee of twelve.

Names of the Committee: James Edward Bruce, M. D.; J. Hamlin Dewey, M. D.; E. Gerry Brown; Rev. Wm. Fishbough; Eugene Crowell, M. D.; E. P. Miller, M. D.; Rev. A. J. Fishback; E. C. Dunn, M. D.; J. S. Avery, M. D.; Rev. Samuel Watson, D. D., with two other names for the South, which Dr. Watson shall select.

All communications respecting the movement in general should be addressed to the chairman of the committee of twelve, J. E. Bruce, Newburyport, Mass.

Localities wishing to form societies, or societies desiring to notify the committee of the fact of their organization, etc., will take notice that J. H. Dewey, of Boston, Mass., is chairman of the committee for New England; Rev. William Fishbough, Brooklyn, E. D., N. Y., is chairman for the Middle States; Rev. A. J. Fishback, Webster Grove, Mo., is chairman for the West; and Dr. Samuel Watson, Memphis, Tenn., for the South. J. E. Bruce, Secretary.

ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE.

The public "Call" for this Conference has already made this noticeable proclamation to the world: "We whose names are hereto affixed, after a calm and conscientious survey of the present condition of Christendom, are convinced that the time is fully come when a new religious departure should be taken. We feel deeply that modern life rests upon a new spirit, and that the religious wants of men to-day can be met only by a broader and deeper interpretation of religion than is to be found in the current teaching of the churches. We feel that a New Movement in Spiritualism is demanded, whose aim shall be to indicate and organize the religious thought which underlies all modern life in such a manner as to afford a cultus and worship for all those who, by their lack of interest in existing church organizations are practically without church relations, and deprived of spiritual blessings."

One or two things in this "Call" we wish to impress upon the people: 1. We are convinced the time is come when a New Movement in Spiritualism should be made. This conviction is grounded in the double fact, that a new spirit has arisen in the modern world, and that the old regime in religion is inadequate to satisfy the wants of this new spirit.

At page 205 of the January number for 1876, the Westminster Review has this somewhat remarkable passage: "A great doctrinal reform has become desirable, and no observer can doubt that it is rapidly approaching. The signs are unmistakable; the disintegration of the old establishments is steadily progressing, and while one part of our society is already proclaiming its complete emancipation, and attempting to live without any religion at all, another part, drawn into terrorized refuge, is abjuring evidence and reason to seek refuge in authority. Neither extreme will draw the course of the other. The reign of ignorance and superstition will not return, neither will the mass of mankind succeed, at least as yet, in merging its accustomed hopes and aspirations in purely scientific pursuits."

"What the future vent of religious sentiment will be, whether we shall incline toward the conception of some Spiritualist, and find reason to believe in a hierarchy of beings usually invisible to us, whom we shall join at death, and with whom we are destined to progress, (we mention the Spiritualist creed as one which has considerable chance of gaining ground, but we regard it ourselves as a deplorable delusion,) we regard it as a deplorable delusion, and we regard it as a deplorable delusion, and we regard it as a deplorable delusion."

Now this writer, whose paragraph respecting Spiritualism has come to our notice since our Call was printed, has, as you see, been traveling to a certain extent the same road with us, and has, we think, set forth very forcibly both the ground and necessity of a new religious movement.

He clearly perceives the inadequacy of the old order, and his admission that among the possible sources of supply for the wants of modern men, "the Spiritualist creed has considerable chance of gaining ground," is rendered all the more important and suggestive by the confession that he "regards it as a deplorable delusion." It is clearly not a case where the wish is father to the thought. The simple fact is, the progress of events in the religious world has brought this keen-eyed observer to see and admit what he neither wishes to see nor finds pleasure in admitting, viz: that in the modern world Spiritualism has a fair chance to become the religion of the future.

And this leads us to the nature of the new departure. Now here the language of the "Call" is significant: "We are convinced the time is come when a new religious departure should be taken." It is "a broader and deeper interpretation of religion," which is needed to meet the wants of men to-day.

The simple discovery of a new mode of communication with the unseen world is not enough. To have news from another world that our departed friends still live is no doubt a great consolation, but to be able to live ourselves in such a manner as to be deemed worthy to meet our dear departed, and to mingle with them freely in their angelic felicity, that is a deeper joy still.

It is Spiritualism's greatest danger to-day that, through lack of inspired religious imagination, it may settle down into the habit, so natural to men in this leaden age, of thinking of the spiritual world as in no way materially differentiated from this world except in mere endlessness of duration. If this calamity should finally befall our conception, God help us, for all hope that our movement might rise to the dignity and power of a religion would then have forever departed. Nothing is better established in spiritual philosophy than the fact that it is of the very essence of any divine message which it is possible for men to really care about, that it shall proclaim the ascent as well as the continuation of life.

The path to which it points its pilgrims must not be the dead-level of that dusty and weary road with which, alas! we are all too familiar here. Valleys have their uses, but an endless page about the base of the mountain would render life monotonous by taking out of it all the beauty and glory of the landscape. So the pathway into Eternity must break up that low level of our present living.

It must be shown to be a spiral, whose beacons are better hopes, and whose constant stimuli are deathless aspirations to attain to higher and ever higher standards of being and becoming. And since science has not made us familiar with the fact that human beings are not parts of a world where all noble attainment depends on growth, and where all growth is organic, we know that if we would grow and become perfect in spiritual life, we can only do so by organizing that life in accordance with the fundamental laws of its development.

Now, in aspiration toward an ideal we have

touched the most fundamental law of spiritual progress. But aspiration is grounded in knowledge, and hence a cultus or school of instruction must precede and accompany worship. Accordingly, after adopting a "Declaration of Principles," which in a sentence grasps the substance of all spiritual philosophy, at the same time that it lays bare the ground of all right conduct, and brief as it is, leaves out, as we think, not an essential feature of that primitive spiritual religion of Jesus, which, in spite of the hindrance which ecclesiastical Christianity has weighted it, has yet made the modern world, the Conference deemed it wise to draw up and send to the country the form of a Constitution for organizing the idea and action of this "Declaration" in local societies. And as foremost among its statement of aims, the Conference has declared, "Our immediate object is to organize local societies upon a financial and religious basis." Such societies are indispensable as the regular schools of training for the religious sentiment and the development of spiritual life. This object they will seek to accomplish through the regular and orderly administration of the two great principles of Knowledge and Aspiration, or Worship. In order to do this, societies must be firmly established and permanent teaching secured. This can only be done by settled teachers of the several groups of disciples, and for such orderly arrangement it is clear that an adequate financial basis is necessary. Much study of the nature and scope of our fundamental idea and of the practical method of its organization and action in local societies has been bestowed upon the form of constitution we send out, and we hope it will be generally acceptable to our people.

We send down no commands to the people. Our platform is not put forth as authority, but as guidance. We have not declared what men must believe—not even what we ourselves must believe in all future time. We have simply set down some principles which we hold to-day, but which, if we see cause, to-morrow may change. We have aimed to make our statement large and liberal. We have sought breadth and flexibility. We leave every man to read and interpret the Platform by the light that is in him. And with this liberty of the spirit we think the ground we have taken is one which every religiously disposed person can come and stand upon. At least we can work together here for a year. Our local societies can start from the point we have made. All that was done at Philadelphia is preliminary. We set forth our idea, we drew up the form in which it seemed to us it would be wise to organize that idea in local societies, and we appointed a committee to sit through the year and oversee and direct the formation of societies, with power at the end of the year to call these societies together in a Delegate Convention which shall have full power to continue the work of its committee, or to give it any new shape which the wisdom of the people in convention assembled shall decide upon. Virtually the Philadelphia Conference is, and in the nature of the case it could be, nothing but a provisional committee to prepare business and arrange for holding a convention of the people, with full and appellate jurisdiction over all questions relating either to the ground or method of the permanent organization.

Taking this view of its functions the Conference left every question untouched, the decision of which was not absolutely necessary to set in motion the purely provisional work with which it was charged.

As an illustration of this the question of name is an instance in point. Several names for the New Movement were suggested; and there can be little doubt that if the matter had been pressed to a vote, "Christian Spiritualism" is the name to which it would have been christened. But the fact of history is, those who were the most interested in this name were the movers in getting this, with other questions, put over to the People's Convention, and all heartily united in the vote that, "This body, for the present, take the provisional name of 'The National Conference of Spiritualists.'"

Now, brethren, our idea and its method is before you. It is no sect in the church and no schism in Spiritualism that we aim to establish. We are simply Spiritualists at work. Accepting what of verified fact there may be in the science, and holding by all that is well established in the philosophy of Spiritualism, but throwing out the vagaries of the one and discarding the crudities, and false, pernicious theorizing of the other, the New Movement goes forward to establish the religion of Spiritualism upon the enduring foundation of God and the soul.

Let every man and woman who has sympathy with the movement throw off her lethargy, and hasten to the front. God's bugle calls to the battle. Let the response be a great uprising of the people. Don't wait to hear from the committee, but let the committee hear from you. In every town and hamlet call your neighbors together, read over the Platform and Constitution; take this address for your preacher if you can find no better, and without delay organize a society, even if there be no more than six persons to start with. Do this, and God and angel helpers will do the rest. You will be moved from on high to go to work. The spirit and power will come into you, and all good influences go out from you to bless and perfect your fellow-men. Names of such as have in them the spirit of the New Movement will be added daily to your ranks, and in due time, if we are faithful, we shall mobilize an army whose tread will one day shake the earth, and whose great but bloodless victories shall be recorded in the heavens.

Movements of Lecturers and Mediums.

Prof. William Denton commenced a course of lectures in Salem, O., Thursday, July 27th. He will remain in Ohio till the latter part of August, on the 27th of which month he is announced to speak at the Lake Pleasant (Mass.) Camp-Meeting. He will be at Lake Superior during September.

Mrs. Susie Willis Fletcher arrived in this city, from England, Saturday, July 22d. We learn that she met with good success in the exercise of her mediumship while abroad. She will remain home until spring, when she contemplates returning. She will resume business in Boston the 1st of September.

J. William Fletcher will be absent from Boston until the 1st of September, being obliged by excessive labor to take a rest during August.

Miss Mary E. Currier, the musical medium, of Haverhill, Mass., will attend the Lake Pleasant Camp-Meeting.

Mrs. Susie N. White, trance medium, will be absent from the city during the next three weeks.

Mrs. Rachael Walcott is summing in the Allegheny Mountains. Her absence, until the 1st of September next, is Oakland, Garrett County, Md.

James M. Allen has been speaking this month in Matine, Mass., Bristol, Conn., and Athens, Ohio. His address during August will be Gates, McDonald Co., Mo.

J. M. Peebles is to speak at the Spiritualist Picnic, Compo-nue Point, Conn., Aug. 9th.

Anna M. Middlebrook, M. D., will speak for the Free Lecture Association, New Haven, each Sunday during the month of August.

New Jersey.

At the Convention of the State Association of Spiritualists, held at Ancora, N. J., July 1st, the following named officers were chosen for the ensuing year: Dr. D. W. Allen, President; J. M. Roberts, First Vice-President; Mrs. E. P. Wooley, Second Vice-President; Miss Susan P. Fowler (Vineland), Secretary; H. N. Fowler (Ancora), Treasurer; Executive Board, Dr. J. B. Dunton, Vineland; John Wilcox, Ancora; Mrs. J. L. Nourse, Anne L. Atwater, Burlington, and Dr. L. K. Cooney, Newark.

We are in receipt, from many sections of the country, of complimentary letters similar to the following, which was recently written by a subscriber at Champlin, Minn.: "The Banner improves with age. I could name more than a dozen articles published in the last volume, each one of which is worth the subscription price. It is more thoroughly read than any other of the many papers that reach our home."

Cut Out, and Circulate without Delay.

Complimentary Testimonial to Andrew Jackson Davis.

We desire to call the attention of Spiritualists, Liberals and Reformers to the Pecuniary Testimonial which some of the friends of Andrew Jackson Davis are endeavoring to raise for his benefit.

His great work, "NATURE'S DIVINE REVELATIONS," was given to the world before he had attained his twenty-first year. Since that time he has written and published more than thirty volumes, some of them on the Harmonical Philosophy, and all of them on matters of profound and universal importance to mankind.

While his health permitted he was prominent as a public speaker and teacher. For the last two or three years he and his companion, Mrs. Mary F. Davis, have supported themselves partly through the assistance of personal friends, and partly from the proceeds of their small bookstore in New York. But the times are hard now, and his book business does not yield to him an adequate support.

His friends believe that the world is the better for ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS having lived in it. Many reformers and benefactors of their race while living, have endured hardships and poverty, who after their death have been honored with costly pageants, "storied urn or animated bust."

"Seven Grecian cities strove for Homer dead, Through which the living Homer begged his bread."

Will not the friends everywhere of Andrew Jackson Davis—those who have been benefited by his writings and teachings—esteem it a privilege to participate in giving to him an ample pecuniary testimonial of gratitude and good will while he is yet with us in the earth-life? His fiftieth birthday occurs on the 11th day of next August. Let all who can make this year memorable both to themselves and to Bro. Davis by forwarding a generous contribution for his benefit.

Post-office orders, checks and drafts payable to his order may be sent to him at No. 24 East Fourth street, New York, or to either of the officers of the committee.

WILLIAM GHEEN, Chairman, 1268 Pacific street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

C. O. POOLE, Cor. Sec., 140 West 42d street, New York, N. Y.

LIST OF DONATIONS.

Table with columns: NAMES, RESIDENCES, AMOUNTS.

BRIEF PARAGRAPHS.

THREE WORDS OF STRENGTH.

There are three lessons I would write— Three words as with a burning pen, In tracings of eternal light, Upon the hearts of men. HAVE HOPE. Though clouds environ now, And gloominess hides her face in scorn, Put forth the shadow from thy brow— No need to wish its morrow. HAVE FAITH. Where'er thy bark is driven— The calm's disport, the tempest's mirth— Know this: God rules the host of heaven, The inhabitants of earth. HAVE LOVE. Not love alone for one, But man, as man, thy brother call, And scatter, like the falling sun, Thy charities on all. Thus grave these lessons on thy soul— Hope, Faith, and Love—and thou shalt find Strength when life's surges roudest roll. Light when thou else wert blind.—Schiller.

We all have our ideas of justice, integrity, purity, benevolence, and we cannot estimate their value to us. We may, and do, fall far short of them in actual life, but we can never go beyond them, for every new ascent in virtue shows fresh heights to be gained.

"Is your house a warm one, landlord?" asked a gentleman in search of a home. "It ought to be," was the reply. "The painter gave it two coats recently."

A close thinker says that the reason why many people know comparatively nothing, is that they never can bear to hold anything.—Frederick.

Pretty good, Bro. Seaver. Some of your hypercritical correspondents need just such talking to.

Two young ladies of La Crosse were standing by a ditch thirteen feet wide, which they didn't know how to cross, when their escort said "snakes!" and they cleared it at a bound.

The Centennial grounds comprise 400 acres.

The first Russian newspaper dates from 1703. Peter the Great took part personally, not in its editorial composition, but in correcting the proofs, as appears from sheets still in existence, on which are marks and alterations in his majesty's handwriting. Only two copies of the first year's edition have been preserved. They are in the Imperial Library of Stockholm.

He seldom lives frugally who lives by chance. Hope is always liberal, and they that trust her promises make little scruple of reveling to-day on the profits of to-morrow.—Johnson.

The danger of "sunstroke," so called, is not avoided by keeping out of the sun; exposure in a highly heated atmosphere, even out of range of the direct rays of the sun, will often produce all the symptoms, and sometimes the fatal result of sunstroke.

The good Samaritan stopped at the sound of wo; so does a good horse.

George Eliot thinks half the sorrows of women come from their foolish specks. They never learn the happy art of saying nothing when they have nothing to say, or something that ought not to be said.

The sure method to prevent sunstroke. Keep cool.

Passengers can now leave Boston at eight o'clock in the morning and arrive at the summit of Mt. Washington in time for supper the same evening. . . and catch a snow-storm.

A young man admiring the delicate fabrics for collars in a milliner's store, wished he was emperor of all the rubes.

The "heated term" culminated last Sunday in copious showers of rain—thanks to . . . cause and effect. Now we hope for a period of "lovely weather."

As every thread of gold is valuable, so is every minute of time; and as it would be great folly to shoe horses—as Nero did—with gold, so it is to spend time in trifles.—Mason.

The Italians say that "she is beautiful whom you think beautiful."

What requires more philosophy than taking things as they come? Parting with things as they go.

Mr. Thomas Holloway, of England, is steadily pursuing his scheme for the erection of a ladies' college. It will cost him more than a quarter of a million of dollars. His convalescent hospital is another work almost as great.

A Minnesota farmer says, "We raise 400 bushels of potatoes to the acre here, which would be a big thing, if we didn't raise bugs enough to eat 'em up."

Our Indian policy is called the "peace" policy. If that is the name of it, we should like a war policy. The policy has been one that allowed all sorts of swindles to be practiced on the Indians, the Government itself setting an example of perfidy in violating treaties, and the Indians often suffering for bread, always supplied with rum and rifles. We need a change.—Boston Herald.

New Publications.

THE TRUTHS OF SPIRITUALISM.—We have received from E. V. Wilson, the widely-known lecturer and seer, (and editor of The Spiritualist at Work,) a book of over four hundred pages, bound in red cloth covers and printed on tinted paper, wherein are arranged a goodly number of those remarkable tests of spirit identity which he habitually gives at the close of his lectures; interspersed therewith are many which have come to him in hours of travel, at railway stations, on the cars, in the cabins of steam boats, etc. Much information from the spirit-side of life is conveyed by the volume, some of it in the colloquial style, and all of it interesting to a remarkable degree. To the Spiritualist the work is an armory of test-facts—where immortality or the continued existence of the human spirit after death has been proved by living witnesses—to be drawn upon at will, and to the skeptic the pages will present food for thought of a most decided character. We have glanced through its contents with a view to making extracts therefrom, but we prefer on the whole to recommend the entire book to our readers. The volume is for sale by Colby & Rich, No. 9 Montgomery Place, Boston, Mass.

H. O. HORTON & Co., corner Beacon and Somerset streets, Boston, bring out the ATLANTIC MAGAZINE for August in a style eminently attractive to readers during the heated term. A rich prose and poetic from Mrs. Preston, Charles Dudley Warner, Lucy Ellen Guernsey, W. T. Harris, Maria Kemble, Gen. O. O. Howard (The Story of Chattanooga), E. P. Whipple (Charles Dickens and the Pickwick Papers), and others. "The Characteristics of the International Fair," by a special correspondent, and the regular departments, make up a charming number.

A. WILLIAMS & Co., 23 Washington street (corner school), Boston, forward us SCHUMBER'S ILLUSTRATED ST. NICHOLAS for August. The first is called a "Mid-Summer Holiday Number," and contains nearly a hundred engravings illustrative of scenes at Niagara, Colorado, Nova Scotia, the City of Trier on the Mosel, and elsewhere. The continued story by E. E. Hale reaches its twenty-fourth chapter, and Bro. Harris concludes "Gabriel Conroy." ST. NICHOLAS is also put up in the same style of holiday excellence for young readers, and contains more than twenty articles by writers of high reputation, among them being James T. Fields, Mrs. Oliphant and Lady Maria Child. Over forty fine illustrations give tone to its pages.

A NATION'S BIRTH AND OTHER NATIONAL POEMS. By George H. Colver. This is a volume eminently appropriate for the Centennial Year of the Republic, redolent as it is with the flavor of its for country and honor to its brave defenders. The struggles of the Revolution are set forth in vivid measure, and the virtues of him who was in truth the "Father" of this land are brought again to mind. In addition two stirring episodes of the war before Tripoli are recited. The book is from the press of Lee & Shepard, Boston, and is in their best style of execution.

ANTHUR MERTON, M. D., sends us from Philadelphia a copy of a work from his pen, entitled "The Book of Life; or The Human Constitution with its Cosmical Relations." Nearly three hundred pages are comprised between its covers, and the subject matter treated is frequently illustrated. The design of the book is to prove to its readers that in man's nature the mind is the controlling power, and the body occupies a merely subsidiary position; and the author therefore endeavors to call attention to the importance of a consideration of mental hygiene.

THE BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS has issued in nicely gotten up form two essays, six months in preparation, for the prizes offered by it, and which were accepted as the best, by the Board of Adjudicators. The theme given out was "The Probable Effect of Spiritualism upon the Social, Moral and Religious Condition of Society," and the successful authors were Miss Anna Blackwell (first prize), and G. F. Green (second prize).

THE CHINESE PROBLEM is considered from the Christian standpoint in a pamphlet from the press of Lee & Shepard, Boston—L. T. Townsend, D. D., author of "Credo," etc., being the writer.

THE PHRENOLOGICAL JOURNAL and Science of Health for August—S. R. Wells & Co., publishers, 737 Broadway, New York City—Is received, and proves to be a valuable compendium of useful information.

WARE'S VALLEY MONTHLY—St. Louis, Mo.—continues in its August issue to fully sustain the high reputation which it has won in the past.

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The Oldest Journal devoted to the SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY In the World!

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Advertisements copies sent free. SPECIALTERMS published at twenty cents per line for the first, and fifteen cents per line for each subsequent insertion.