

ONTOLOGY.

We are in as profound ignorance of the essential nature of the commonest sensations now, as men were in the times of Plato and Aristotle and even of the ancients, and this notwithstanding the constant tension with which the human mind has been engaged in the investigation of psychological laws, we know nothing of the phenomena of sensation, beyond the external *modus operandi* by which they are produced. We have at extensive knowledge of the secondary laws of light and of the nature of refracting and reflecting bodies. We know much of the laws of sound, and are aware that for the most part they are produced by atmospheric vibrations: and, speaking generally, we have learned that the phenomena of vision, hearing, smell, and taste are but various modes of motion. We have an extensive acquaintance with the minute mechanism of the human eye, and can perceive its beauty as an optical instrument. We have recently acquired greatly our knowledge of the minute structure

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of the human ear, and in an obscure way recognize the mode in which various sounds are produced, and extended in the same ratio; but, speaking generally, we know something of the mechanics of each of the organs of special sense. When, however, we ask ourselves the questions, How are these vibrations of luminiferous ether translated into light, when we call light is absolutely invisible? How are these vibrations of an absolute invisible mobile atmosphere which produce shakings in the nerve-fibre of the ear transmitted into sound? How are these odoriferous waves which reach the olfactory nerves changed into smell? How are these impressions of fluid, or partially dissolved matters, which enter our mouths, transmitted to taste? Of all this we are in a state of utter ignorance, and know nothing whatever of the processes, we only know the facts by feeling the sensations. It appears, then, that the essential nature of these changes, by which we receive all or nearly all our knowledge of this world's phenomena, is absolutely unknown to us. We know that we do receive impressions, but of how we receive them we are completely ignorant. Our knowledge of natural laws is purely empirical; common sense would have enabled any number of human beings to invent a world such as that in which we now live, and conditions of life such as those with which we are now familiar. Our knowledge is so hemmed in within the limits of the faculties we possess, that we cannot even conceive of an additional sense that shall not in some degree be a combination or extension of one or more of the senses with which we are endowed. Had we not possessed a sense of smell, no analogy, no metaphor, nor any description could ever have conveyed to our minds a distinct conception of what that sense is. This applies not to smell merely, but to all the senses with which we are gifted. It is not improbable that there are beings in the universe possessed of it, may be, a hundred senses, each as distinct as those we now have; and yet we are utterly unable to conceive of one in addition to those we already possess. It is also not improbable that there may be beings with but one sense, namely, perception; and that solitary sense may have functions more extensive and complicated than all our senses would have were they merged into one. Man at present stands in relation to the external world by his five senses. Within the range of their power he can perceive; beyond their province he is as unimpressed as a rock. Vibrations of ether reach his eye, and are cognized by it if the vibrations are not below four hundred and fifty millions of above seven hundred and fifty millions per second; but there are vibrations in the same ether, and of the same kind, slightly less rapid, yet they produce no impression on the retina, but manifest themselves in the form of heat, and other vibrations more rapid than the highest of the foregoing, which also are invisible, and are known as chemical or active rays. These facts are perfectly undiscoverable by any *a priori* method, and only made manifest by the discovery is by extensive experiment and logical inference.

#### NECESSITY FOR BROAD INQUIRY.

I might proceed to prove to you that all, or nearly all, the great facts in science have been empirically discovered, as, for example, heat, light, electricity, magnetism; and that upon observation, reflection, and verification by experiment, depends nearly all our knowledge. The rule which physicists now apply to the acknowledged forces of Nature I desire them to apply to the phenomena with which the members of this society have to do. I desire them to remember that the majority of scientists are supposed to be the majority of scientists to be impossible and absurd. But they surely need not to be told that all the greatest discoveries in physical science have been in their turn laughed at and scorned. Instance the circulation of the blood, the motions of the earth and planets, and the estimated distances of the stars. There is no single fact in science which has not had to fight its way into recognition, and the scientists of the present day are acting in the same foolish manner toward certain alleged occult phenomena, which by many persons are recognized as spiritual or extramundane, as the blind Orthodox theologians of the middle and early ages acted in their time toward the pioneers of all discoveries in science. There is a crystallized orthodoxy in science as well as in religion, and in view of the progress which science has made, the apparently anomalous nature of the phenomena she has discovered, the difficulty of avoiding foregone conclusions, and of submitting facts to the crucial test of verification, it becomes scientists to lay aside their prejudices, and look at the alleged facts of so-called "Modern Spiritualism" with calm, unprejudiced, and judicial minds. To me it is a matter of small moment what conclusions they arrive at; what I condemn is their arriving at foregone conclusions without investigation of any rational kind.

#### PREJUDICES.

The so-called exposures by conjurers are perhaps beneath contempt, but I may be allowed to say in passing that I have witnessed the alleged exposures by Messrs. Maskelyne, Cooke, and Lynn, and a more hollow attempt at exposing great—though occult—physical and psychological phenomena, I never witnessed. My only feeling was that of regret, that so many simple-minded people should day by day be gathered together to have themselves deceived by such charlatany and transparent misrepresentation.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS.

In concluding this address, I may state that the facts and illustrations I have so imperfectly brought before you have lessons for two classes of persons—one, investigators into the alleged occult phenomena; and the other, investigators in the region of pure physics. To the former they show that mysterious as are the phenomena which they witness, the mysteries of nature rival if they do not surpass those of man, and are only reason why the phenomena of nature do not leave so deep an impression on our minds as do those which are observed at sciences, is the frequency of their occurrence; but in their essential nature they are equally incomprehensible, and it becomes Spiritualists, therefore, not to degenerate into mere wonder-mongers, but to devote their minds to the investigation of the laws and phenomena of that material universe in which they are at present placed, as well as to the investigation of that future world to which they are hastening. It may be, indeed, the duty of an emigrant to learn something of the country to which, at some future time, he proposes to sail; but it is equally, perhaps more important to know the laws, customs, manners and needs of the country which he at present inhabits.

#### APPEAL TO MEN OF SCIENCE.

Professor Tyndall in his "Lectures on Light," page 49, says: "No human authority, however high, can maintain itself against the voice of nature speaking through experiment." Helmholtz, in his "Aim and Progress of Physical Science," page 370, says: "We of the present day have already sufficient insight to know that the laws of nature are not things which we can evolve by any speculative method. On the contrary, we have to discover them in facts. We have to test them by repeated observation or experiment, and constantly new cases under ever-varying circumstances, and in proportion only they hold good under a constantly increasing change of conditions, in a constantly increasing number of cases, and with greater delicacy in the means of observation; does our confidence in their truthfulness arise?" He further says: "Before we can say that any one law of nature is complete, we must see that it holds good without exception, and make this test of its correctness." The members of our society have witnessed a series of phenomena which do not, but merely appear to, invalidate the recognized fundamental laws of matter. They extend their scope, and show that the limitations which have arbitrarily been placed to the exercise of force directed by intelligence, have been limitations or exceptions, and have no justification in facts. As facts or individual phenomena are the basis upon which all our absolute knowledge of nature and natural laws is based, it follows that our notions of natural laws must as a matter of necessity be extended, in order that they may embrace a series of

phenomena which are scornfully denied by those who have not investigated them, but universally commend themselves to those by whom they have been investigated, as certainly true as are the generally recognized laws of gravitation, light, heat, and chemical affinity.

I have no wish to claim your acceptance of occult modern facts, but solely for them a full, fair and impartial consideration, being satisfied that no prejudice can finally resist their inexorable logic. Professor Tyndall, in his "Heat, a Mode of Motion," says: "Nature is full of anomalies which no foresight can predict, and which experiment alone can reveal." I commend to Professor Tyndall, and to all who generously follow and think with him, the importance of laying aside the assumption of superior knowledge, to cease describing the investigation of alleged spiritual phenomena as "intellectual whoredom," and to adopt the more modest and rational course of ascertaining what experiments, fairly tried, will reveal. The facts that have been and are daily being adduced, will neither be frowned, bullied, nor laughed out of existence, and the only philosophical method is that adopted by the Professor with respect to the germ and spontaneous development theories, viz., extensive and crucial experiments. It is surely of as much importance to determine whether ordinarily invisible psychic forces have the power of presenting themselves and molding hands and feet, as it is to determine whether or not bacteria are produced by spontaneous generation. If Professor Tyndall would devote half the amount of time and ability to the former inquiry that he has to the latter, he would speedily discover that the phenomena he now so much derides are in reality genuine, and worthy of the most careful scrutiny.

You and I have no desire to force our opinions of occult phenomena upon an unwilling world. We desire investigation, perhaps a long season of doubt and distrust, and finally conviction. Sooner or later it will come, and the times are ripe for it, for the iconoclasts of science are smiting with mailed hands the empty traditions and even the real verities of ancient theology; and these modern phenomena have not reached us a day too soon in order to demonstrate the existence of forces, intelligences, and conditions of being other than those commonly recognized by the learned. The following pregnantly suggestive passage is taken from Lewis's "History of Philosophy," vol. 2, page 553, in which, referring to "Comte's Philosophy," he says: "The spiritual reorganization, which is the necessary condition of all social reorganization, must repose upon the authority of demonstration; it must be based upon science, with a priesthood properly constituted out of the regenerated scientific classes. In other words, the spiritual authority must issue from a philosophy which can be demonstrated, and not from a philosophy which is imagined."

#### NATURE.

Nature is a poem, an anthem and a picture, and he only can fully enjoy her who has opened his mind to the study of her wondrous phenomena, and can honestly say:

"Hills are mountains, and the valleys his,  
And the respondent rivers his to enjoy  
With a propriety that none can feel  
But he who, by their aid, can be inspired,  
Can lift to Heaven an unexpressed cry,  
And smiling say, 'My Father made them all.'"

#### CONSOLATION.

Oh, ye mortals! weak and weary,  
Fainting, falling by the way,  
Know ye not that it is darkest,  
Ever darkest before day?  
Know ye not that as you journey,  
Worn and weary and footsore,  
That around you and above you  
Are the loved and lost of yore?  
Know ye not that they are with you,  
Ever with you, though unseen,  
That they love and that they cherish  
With a memory ever green?  
Hear ye not the loving patter  
Of their feet upon the floor,  
Now ascending and descending  
Through an ever-open door?  
Feel ye not their loving presence  
In the watches of the night,  
When your soul is bathed in sorrow,  
And you long again for light?  
Feel ye not the loving touches  
Of their fingers as of yore,  
As they come to you with healing,  
And with words of love once more?  
Heed, oh, heed their admonitions!  
Heed their messages of love!  
For they come—the bright immortals—  
From their happy homes above;  
Come to tell you of the "glory  
That is theirs forevermore,"  
And to tell you that they're waiting,  
Waiting on the other shore;  
Waiting till your chastened spirit  
Shall lay off its form of clay,  
And with eyes no longer darkened  
Shall behold the perfect day.  
Then they'll meet you, and they'll greet you,  
And they'll place upon your brow  
An immortal crown of glory,  
If you're only faithful now.

#### CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALISM.

BY WILLIAM FOSTER, JR.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

I am no bigot. I am disposed to accord to each creed and sect all that it can legitimately claim; yet in estimating each or all as embodied in the term Christian, I cannot discard the facts of history or the results of my own observations. Taking these into account I must protest against the qualification of Spiritualism by the adjective word *Christian*. That word has lost its original significance, and if Christ himself should revisit the earth to-day, and walk among men, he would be the first to repudiate the term and declare he would not be compromised by it. The incoherent and reason-crucifying creeds of the present age bear no resemblance to the teachings of the Gospels. He laid down the principles to govern life, and enunciated the leveling law of love. The creeds do no such things. They are a compilation of dogmas, without vitality or a single principle conducive to progress or the bettering of the condition of the race. The organized church is none the better for its creeds, and what goodness its members possess is entirely independent of formularies of faith.

Let there be no entangling alliances, no putting of new wine into old bottles, no trucking to the incarnated conservatism which rules the church and is the essence of modern Christianity. The world moves, in spite of old theology, and marches on to victory over the foes of progress.

Providence, July 25th, 1876.

The human mind has a natural disposition to scientific knowledge, and to the things connected with it. The first and favorite amusement of a child, even before it begins to play, is that of imitating the works of man. It builds houses with cards or sticks; it navigates the little ocean of a bowl of water with a paper boat, or dams the stream of a gutter, and contrives something which it calls a mill; and it interests itself in the fate of its works with a care that resembles attention. It afterwards goes to school, where its genius is killed by the barren study of a dead language, and the philosopher is lost in the linguistic *Age of Reason*.

The question for discussion at a recent meeting of scientists was, "Which travels the fastest—heat or cold?" It was decided in favor of heat, so many had often been able to catch cold.

## The Rostrum.

### SPIRITUALISM IN ENGLAND.

A Lecture Delivered at the Highland Lake Grove Camp Meeting, July 24th, by R. Linton.

(Reported for the Banner of Light.)

The lecturer introduced his remarks by historical references to the spiritual history of the United States, the national origin and features of which he traced to a great spiritual movement in Europe—the sixteenth century reformation. "Little thought Martin Luther," said the speaker, "when he was defying the Papacy, by casting into the flames outside the castle gate of Wittenberg the Papal bull that condemned him and tore into tatters the canon of the schoolmen, that he was at that moment sowing the seed of a free nation in the far West; yet so it was. For the offspring of that movement, the English Reformation, culminating under Elizabeth in ecclesiastical despotism, made still more oppressive under James I., led to the voyage of the 'Mayflower' over the surging Atlantic, and to the landing of the 'Pilgrim Fathers' on Plymouth Rock. The spiritual despotism of the East thus gave birth to the freedom of the West. Was such a beginning prophetic of the spiritual future of America?" He (the speaker) thought so. Humanitarian problems had to be wrought out here. And he was much mistaken if in all the struggles of the American people, in their early settlements, the colonial wars, the war of independence and subsequent history, a deep, spiritual purpose did not underlie the whole. And, indeed, the outcome of the conflict, induced by the English historical school, was the fact, significant enough, that a movement destined to produce a mighty revolution in the world had its beginnings among its people. This could be no mere accident, no purposeless circumstance. The descendants of the persecuted of one reformation thus become the apostles of a wider and nobler one.

The sound went forth that the spirit-world had opened itself to man, and it was soon seen that it was an opening for no one nation, but for humanity at large. Modern Spiritualism, born here, might have its culture elsewhere. England had neither been tardy nor inefficient in promoting the progress of spiritual truth. Spiritualism in England had to contend against (1) the materialism of science, and (2) ecclesiastical and spiritual despotism. It was no wonder to him as a student that the Spiritual Philosophy had not made much headway among the masses of science, although there was no country where conviction had been carried more extensively home to that class than in England. Much scientific investigation of a private nature was in progress there. Some great names had boldly declared themselves, and their works are among the world's new Bibles. This had had its effect upon the public mind, for in this age we live very much under the dominion of the press. A mind conversant with the different departments of the physical universe (and by his references to astronomical, geological, and biological phenomena, Mr. Linton showed he was no mere initiate in these matters.) Nature, so-called, was everywhere so rich in lofty revelations, and so like one vast harmonious self-existent whole, that it was no marvel it should be considered a sufficient revelation of the gods, and hence the Spiritualists asserted, as some have done, strange as it may seem, that the light of nature was man's best guide to his highest development, a scientist whose vision has never yet penetrated beyond the material may well be excused. But he (Mr. L.) thought that Nature was not a divinity, but a manifestation of spirit. That was the solvent that would break down the materialism of the age. The new philosophy had taught under the dominion of a number of spiritual universe, and subject to spiritual laws. In obedience to these did his salvation rest. Therefore, though he loved to roam over the fields of creation and to gather mind-food from its abundant stores, he loved more to unobscure his soul to the consciously spiritual around, and to bring the spirit into rapport with the divine. A Godless Spiritualism was to him an anomaly.

Mr. Linton then dwelt on the hostility of the church to spiritual truth. It was, however, making its way into the English pulpit, and not a few clergymen were becoming its exponents. By a recent decision in the English ecclesiastical courts the devil had been deposed. If the devil should drop out of theology there was little to sustain the rotten superstructure. It was doomed. The church was a spirit, and it was time to follow the leading of conscience, and to do so without. The educated clergy do not, as formerly, descend on fables of cosmogony, natural impossibilities, and historical delusions, because science has taught the fallacy thereof. And for that reason the church has become very materialistic. The true bishops that rule over the priests are the men of science. Their dictum on the spiritual philosophy of the church is awaiting, and should it favorably receive, a contrary despatch, and synods, it will become spiritualistic. Already, the facts are not disputed. The source of them is the open question. The church is stormed, and the sanctuary is invaded.

Referring to the machinery by which spiritual work is carried on in England, Mr. Linton remarked that it was extremely simple, but effective. This efficiency arose, he thought, from the work being done by a number of people, and was primarily in the hands of the spirit-world itself. That organized plans were arranged on the super-mundane plane, was clear from the gradual evolution of the phenomena from the simple rap to the materialization of the full form. Such plans were not to be dictated from the mundane plane. All we had to do was to obtain and present conditions for the spirits to accomplish their work. That involves quite enough for us to undertake.

On such a principle the Spiritual Institution, with Mr. Burns as its manager, had been established. For years it had been the centre of Spiritualism in England. It exercised authority on none, and was the helper of all. The work it had done was acknowledged to be incomparable. It was simply the material hand for the spirit hands to operate through. In promoting investigation in widely distributed literary literature, in maintaining the Medium and Daybreak, and in fostering the cause generally, often in storm and sunshine, it has become the great rallying point of spiritual work in Great Britain, and in Europe, and the Eastern Hemisphere. It is based on the voluntary principle. To that Institution and the movement generally Mr. Burns has offered a self-sacrifice. The societies in London and the provinces are organized on similar principles. The spirit of emulation and selfishness is kept down by a purer spirituality. An organization entitled "The National Association of Spiritualists" has recently sprung up, but the speaker had little experience of it. There was also a not very flourishing order of Christian Spiritualists, but without any definite organization.

Spiritualism was fostered and kept alive mainly by the local societies, the operations of which were a definite part of the work of the day. The sociative principle which they represented was a necessity of the soul. By a spiritual law mind seeks its affinities. Spiritualism in England is essentially affiliative. And by these free, untrammelled associations, there comes a powerful blending of spiritual influences.

In this respect England contrasts strongly with America, where Spiritualism seems to have undergone disintegration. England had stood the shock of dangerous innovations. Spiritualism there had not degenerated into a hotch-potch of liberalism. Nor had it dwindled into a mere name. It was a solemn reality, as it ought ever to be. The spirit circle was considered as the great stronghold—the organization by the spirits for accomplishing their great work. Great attention was given to conditions. Either by applying a physiological knowledge of temperaments, or by a physiological knowledge of the laws of the human system, a blending of power was secured, and the magnetic chain rendered so intact that every facility was presented to the operating spirits. Viewed in this more serious

light, the spirit-circle became not only the true meeting point between the two worlds, but the true lever for the spiritual elevation of humanity. The training such circles, into theocratic exhibitions could not be too strongly deprecated. The attending them for mere amusement was an infamous degradation of spirit-communication, alike disastrous to spirits and mortals. If, as generally thought, the manifestations in England surpassed those elsewhere, it was partly due to the fact that the solemnity of spirit-communication in the circle was less interfered with by the intrusion of fun-seeking, mercenary, and other inferior motives. There was, in fact, a circle-sciences, as it were. Circles should be classified. In England there were (1) circles for investigators, those of the public mediums; (2) circles for acquiring spiritual knowledge and spiritual science—for Spiritualists only. Spirits alone could teach spiritual science. Physical science could never reveal the recondite laws that dominate spirit and matter. But spirits such as Franklin, Humboldt, Herschel, Huxley, and Lyster, and do become the spirit teachers to inquiring mortals. If such circles as these became more general, the spiritual philosophy would become more unique and attractive. (3) The family spirit-circle. There are thousands of these in England. It was the aim, he believed, of the spirit-world thus to unite every household with the celestial spheres. Heaven and earth will only become one when such avenues are opened for spirits to come and go, and when the earthly home is made a fit abode for spirits to commune in. Happy will be the day when the angels are in every house, when every dwelling is a church, every family a congregation, and every heart an altar where can mingle the voices of mortals and immortals in lofty paeans of praise.

A great work of the English societies was the dissemination of spiritual literature. Through the efforts of the Spiritual Institution, a literature had been issued of great significance. The scientific works, such as those of Wallace's "Miracles and Modern Spiritualism," and Crookes's "Experiments," are standard productions which, with others, ought to be universally read. There was too much unconcern and lethargy on this point. While Orthodox sects were scattering their books, pamphlets and tracts by the million, full of spiritual poison, Spiritualists were doing nothing but a miserable hand. Not because there was any dearth of great thoughts or of inspired writers, but from sheer apathy. The Spiritual Institution in England may be well called the enlightener of the people, for in the space of six years it has sown broadcast something like a quarter of a million of publications. This is the sort of work that is being done in England, faith and knowledge ever going hand in hand. The purpose of the societies is to develop, protect and culture mediums. This is a matter of deep concern to the cause. These "sensitives" are apt to become what we make them. As the recognized instruments of the spirit-world for the accomplishment of divine purposes, they should be tenderly cared for, set apart, as it were, and be surrounded with such pure and celestial influences, that the highest spheres may be touched, and the organs of the spirit-world may be brought into play. If, when they spring up in our midst, they find none to guide them, no human sympathy whereon "to lay their head," it is a marvel that erratic phenomena should appear?

A further purpose of these societies is the holding of religious services. The genius, education and leanings of the English people are toward the retaining of those customs, which have been handed down from the days of the Saviour. By these, apart from the benefits of association, much spiritual good is effected. There are no superstitious observances about these, no priesthood, no creed. Every platform is free. Lecturing or preaching is not the only thing done. The practical issues of Spiritualism are not unfrequently demonstrated. Recently there has been a great revival of the healing power in England, and some of the best, largest and happiest assemblies that have been gathered together, have been when spiritual teaching has been combined with public healing. In some places the morning service is entirely devoted to healing. The result is a wide-spread conviction among the people of spiritual power, and that the time present is spiritually no way inferior to the days when the good and gentle Nazarene trod the earth, and showed the way to the Kingdom of God. Spiritualism is neither mockery and delusion nor degrading animalism. No vaulted cathedrals or ornate churches are needed for such service. As Spiritualists, no ecclesiastical system or church organization is required. What the human soul calls for are the means for fostering the religious emotions. The effect in England of all these operations, carried out on a purely spiritual basis, is a wide-spread diffusion of spiritual truth. And in the most practical way, it is presented to the people in its purity, free from those corrupt accretions which both disguise its beauty and impede its progress.

The question arises, Has not the time come when the grander purposes of the new dispensation should be more generally entertained? Progress is the watchword of Spiritualism. Phenomenal Spiritualism in demonstrating the hereafter, and service tend to show that Spiritualism is neither mockery and delusion nor degrading animalism. No vaulted cathedrals or ornate churches are needed for such service. As Spiritualists, no ecclesiastical system or church organization is required. What the human soul calls for are the means for fostering the religious emotions. The effect in England of all these operations, carried out on a purely spiritual basis, is a wide-spread diffusion of spiritual truth. And in the most practical way, it is presented to the people in its purity, free from those corrupt accretions which both disguise its beauty and impede its progress.

Those wishing to employ a speaker are requested to write soon for terms, circulars, &c. Mr. Graves's terms are easily complied with, and are so arranged as to suit all classes and conditions. In many cases his lectures will be free. Don't fail to write, and learn his proposition. He will respond to calls to speak in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, or Michigan. He expects to make his fourth tour through Ohio during the autumn or winter. Address him, soon, Richmond, Indiana, Box 470. His "Bible of Bibles" will appear in due time."

## The Education of the Young.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

As your valuable journal, with its extended circulation finds its way weekly to only to be a duty, but a great privilege, for all who can, either by way of suggestion or advice, to say anything that may give direction to earnest and practical effort.

With this conviction I have taken the liberty, through your courtesy, of addressing your readers on what I conceive to be a subject of vital importance, namely: the education of the young. This to me has long been a matter of deep concern, and did I not know that there are thousands not only of believers in the spiritual philosophy, but thousands as well of good, earnest souls who devote themselves unselfishly to the cause of truth, I might feel discouraged at the lack of effort in this direction.

I think the mistake in this matter lies in our placing too much reliance upon the angel-world for the enlightenment of humanity in the truths of the spiritual philosophy. While we need to exert our own influence in this direction, we seem to forget that the world at large is yet to be redeemed from materialism, carrying in its train selfishness, superstition and bigotry, and that all these evils so prevalent in our society become positive and potent influences upon the minds of the young, who by our negligence remain untaught in that broader and more comprehensive philosophy which recognizes the divine in humanity.

In the same measure as we have been blessed by having the light of spiritual truths let into our souls, does it not become imperatively our duty to bless others, and more especially to give the benefit of our experience to these young, plastic minds that in the next generation are to shape the destiny of the republic? I have often been surprised that people of liberal views could send their children to any sectarian institution to be educated, with almost the certainty that they would leave these institutions with their minds dwarfed by the narrow and bigoted views they had imbibed under such instructors.

With a philosophy and a literature such as ours, it will be the fault of Spiritualists alone if our lectures and seminars are not a success, and I trust others, more able than myself, will not cease to agitate this subject, until we shall have educational institutions, not only broad and comprehensive, which, while they develop the intellect, will not be unmindful of the heart, as I am satisfied that only through the union of love and wisdom can be produced the true man and woman.

I have been led directly to these reflections by an interview I recently had with Miss E. L. Bush, well known to your readers as one of the three sisters of that name, who have so ably conducted the last term of the Belvidere Seminary, Belvidere, Warren Co., N. J. This, as you are aware, is an incorporated institution. The terms for board and tuition for the school year of forty weeks, are only \$300; music, extra, \$60; languages, \$5 extra per quarter. The location is extremely healthy, the buildings commodious, and the large grounds handsomely ornamented, embracing in all some four acres. Now with all the excellent reputation of this institution, I regret to say that for the last year it has not been self-sustaining, owing to the fact that a number of the patrons of the school have not been able to meet their bills for board and tuition. Of course the Principals had the unpleasant alternative of dismissing the pupils whose bills were not paid, but their supreme devotion to the benevolent object they have always had in view precluded a resort to such a policy. They preferred to wait as long as possible in taking the chances of ultimate payment, and in this way—owing to the depression of the times—they have been subject to heavy losses.

Now with the thousands of Spiritualists, and professed friends of liberal religion and a broader education, be pleased to consider the superior claims of this school, and give it at once the liberal patronage it merits at their hands, instead of paying their money to wait as long as possible under the direction of the uncompromising principles of religious freedom and universal progress? The peculiar claims of the Belvidere Seminary to their support were long since so clearly set forth by S. B. Brittan and Miss Belle Bush, in your columns, that no Spiritualist who reads can plead ignorance on the subject, and hence no one can have a rational excuse for indifference to the interests of this noble institution. Hoping that liberal-minded people of every class and name may be disposed to patronize the seminary, and otherwise aid in its endowment, I remain,

Truly yours,

S. T. MUNSON.

Hoboken, July 28th, 1876.

## Kersey Graves in the Field Again.

K. Graves, author of "The World's Sixteen Crucified Saviors," is in the field again as a lecturer, and is addressing crowded houses of most intensely interested people. Never before, he says, in his experience as a speaker has he witnessed such a general and eager desire to hear the important truths embraced in his lectures and an awakened interest which calls out so many people. "Some of the subjects embraced in his lectures are: '1st. The True Causes of the Present Distressed Condition of the World, and the True Remedy.' The facts presented in this discourse produced a marked and striking effect upon the audience, and often called forth the warmest expressions of approbation. 2d. Discourse: 'The Signs of the Times in the Political World.' 3d. 'The Signs of the Times and Present Condition of the Religious World indicate Great Changes and an Approaching Moral and Religious Revolution.' 4th. 'The Vast Array of Demons that Haunt the Human Mind, and which have been accumulated within the Last Few Years, Place Spiritualism amongst the Established and Incontrovertible Truths of the Age.' 5th. A sermon. Text: 'What shall we do to be saved?' All the religious orders and churches are summoned to the stand to answer this question for themselves, and their answers then compared, and the moral deduced. Various other subjects are embraced in a course of lectures, such as: 'The Principles and Benefits of Spiritualism;' 'Historic and Scientific Proofs of Spiritualism;' 'Orthodox and Spiritual Plan of Salvation Compared;' 'The Many Bibles and Many Saviors of the World,' &c., &c.

Those wishing to employ a speaker are requested to write soon for terms, circulars, &c. Mr. Graves's terms are easily complied with, and are so arranged as to suit all classes and conditions. In many cases his lectures will be free. Don't fail to write, and learn his proposition. He will respond to calls to speak in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, or Michigan. He expects to make his fourth tour through Ohio during the autumn or winter. Address him, soon, Richmond, Indiana, Box 470. His "Bible of Bibles" will appear in due time."

## That Spiritual Platform.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

In your issue of the 29th of July I read with surprise the following extract from the platform of the National Conference of Spiritualists: "Believing, also, that the genius of true Spiritualism, with its convincing demonstrations of immortal life, is in consonance with the teachings and spiritual marvels of Jesus Christ, as recorded in the New Testament." Does this mean that the New Testament is an unerring record of the real teachings and spiritual marvels of Christ? Would not such a platform embrace the elements of irreconcilable conflict within itself?

#### QUERY.

Colby & Rich, 9 Montgomery Place, Boston, have our thanks for an EXTRACT OF SOCIAL PROGRESS, by the author of "Vital Magnetism," and "The Laws of Human Life." The writer advocates liberal views of the human system, and is a most interesting and dangerous. Though he is a most interesting and dangerous, will find that free love is the advent of reason, and content, not of discontents in domestic life, his book shows intelligent and conscientious thought upon a grave question.—The Word, Princeton, Mass.



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Written for the Banner of Light.

SLEEP SONG.

BY NELLIE S. BRUNTON.

Sleep, little baby, sleep,  
On pillows soft and white;  
Sweet spirits o'er thee watch,  
And guard thee day and night.  
Sleep! sleep! sleep!  
Sleep, little darling babe,  
For mother-love is here,  
And naught may come to harm,  
And naught to cause thee fear,  
Sleep! sleep! sleep!  
Sleep, Bertie, bright as hope,  
And close those beaming eyes,  
And let the stars of light  
But cause us glad surprise.  
Sleep! sleep! sleep!  
Sleep, dear, my little one,  
And God for us will care,  
Oh, sleep in peace and rest,  
With every blessing blest,  
My babe so sweet and fair,  
Sleep! sleep! sleep!

## Spiritual Phenomena.

SEANCES WITH DR. SLADE.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

Several of the seances which I attended during my late stay with Dr. Slade in New York, were held during the day, the clear sunlight streaming in through two large windows. Under these conditions, no one being present but the medium and myself, a double slate placed upon the top of the table was filled inside with writing. This slate was not touched by the medium, whose hands were clasping mine while the communication was being written. Chairs several feet from us were overturned and lifted again, being, at my request, replaced as they had stood before, and sometimes held for several seconds suspended in the air. Hands were felt and seen, and other phenomena occurred which are only in rare cases to be witnessed in broad daylight. The hands were strong in their grasp, and very distinctly shown. One of them forced itself, with apparent difficulty, under the cuff of my sleeve, and clasped my arm very forcibly. At one of these light seances a copy of Webster's unabridged dictionary, which lay upon a desk some distance off, was brought and fell upon the table, striking the hand of the medium and bruising it severely.

On another occasion a large walking-stick, which had been standing against the wall a distance from where we sat, came up toward the table and danced about on the floor, at my right hand and opposite the medium, as if it were not only alive but exceedingly active. It then proceeded, by leaning over, to force itself under a table-cover which had been thrown over the back of a chair standing beside me, and rising upright again, with the red drapery hanging about it, resumed its *pas de seul* with much apparent satisfaction and in the most animated manner. After, as it seemed, exhausting itself by its efforts, it fell upon the floor and moved no more. The effect of this exhibition, as seen in broad daylight, was not only remarkable but extremely ludicrous, and the most earnest stickler for a serious and devout spirit at seances could hardly have maintained his gravity in witnessing it. If not a very sublime or dignified manifestation, it was, at least, a very innocent one, and since nature is not always on her dignity, and human nature has many varied phases, all good in their way, I do not think we should object because those who return to us as human as they went indulge in harmless fun occasionally.

During my last visit to Dr. Slade I had only one sitting for materialization, as the heat of the weather made this form of manifestation difficult to the spirits and exhausting to the medium. He used no cabinet or curtain, but simply turned the gas partially down in the room in which we had been sitting the greater part of the day. The forms gathered like a rapidly forming cloud, becoming gradually more dense, and taking shape before our eyes. They were extremely ethereal, so much so that objects were sometimes visible through them. As they drew near, both the face and the drapery became more material, and the latter swept over my head and shoulders as the form seemed to pass unobstructed through me. There were no words spoken, but only affirmative nods, or a shake of the head to indicate a negative reply. The faces were not sufficiently material for me to recognize them, though in one I saw a general resemblance to a spirit friend who had shown herself quite distinctly when I sat with Dr. Slade four years ago. The peculiar interest of these materializations was in their *being produced without any preparation, in a common sitting-room, used throughout the day, even the hanging of a curtain being dispensed with.*

On the evening of April 26th, we sat in the dark, for voices, the medium frequently making remarks and exclamations while the spirit was speaking, so that I was forced again and again to urge him to remain silent. After some conversation on family matters with dear friends, a loud male voice uttered these words, the speaker standing apparently close to my side: "Good evening, my friend. Tell Colby that William White bids him God speed, and tells him to keep firmly in his present course, and fear nothing. We are with him. Tell Mrs. Hardy to stand on her rights and not yield an inch. Say that I tell her to be strong, and fear not; we will see her through." Some of the voices were in whispers, but this one or two others were loud, bearing no resemblance to that of the medium. One, the sweetest I ever heard from man or spirit, spoke in Indian. Seven spoken in succession. Sometimes the sounds seemed to draw nearer and nearer, till the speaker was close to my ear, and I felt the form against my side, and again the voice floated away, as if rising in the air and passing slowly to the furthest extremity of the large room in which we sat. Frequently hands touched and grasped me; my hair was smoothed by them, and firm, voluminous drapery drawn over my face, shutting out the streaks of light which came through the crevices of the closed shutters. During these dark seances I either held the hands of the medium or kept my feet upon his.

One day while Dr. Slade and I were conversing on general subjects, not during a seance, he exclaimed that he saw the form of a woman standing behind me. I did not recognize, from the description, any one I had ever known, and he added that she held over my head a cross. That evening, when we had our sitting, the fol-

lowing was written upon a slate placed on top of the table:  
"Dear Woman, and let me say Friend—I have been a long time trying to come to some medium so I could speak a word to my friends. My name is Catharine Paul, the wife of Joseph Paul. I left my form November 19th, 1872. My remains were taken from my home, 246 West 35th street, on Thursday morning, to the Church of the Holy Innocents that was on 37th street, where mass was performed. Now my body is at rest in Calvary Cemetery, and I want my friends to know I am with them and anxious to tell them how happy I would be if they would believe I can return. My religion did me no good. Also mass after death helped me to feel better and more happy. All will be happy who try to live a good, true life. My friends will see this if you publish it. Will you please do so, and oblige  
CATHARINE PAUL."

On showing this letter to my friends, Robert Dale Owen and Dr. Crowell, they urged me, as I was unable to attend to it myself, to commission a friend to make inquiries and ascertain whether such a person as Catharine Paul had lived and died as indicated by the communication. I did so, and after some trouble and many searches after parties possessed of the requisite knowledge, all the statements made in the letter were found to be correct. Such a woman had lived, four years ago, at 246 West 35th street, had died November 19th, 1872, and been buried, on Thursday, from the Church of the Holy Innocents, in Calvary Cemetery.

Some weeks after these inquiries had been made and the subject dismissed from our minds, the medium was sitting unoccupied in a rocking-chair, my sister being in the room, when he started with a sharp exclamation of fright and surprise, and putting his hand to the back of his neck, declared that something had fallen and struck him there. My sister noticed upon his throat a bright red mark as he took from the spot indicated a slip of paper on which was written in pencil: "C. Paul died November 19th, 1872." The woman living in the house formerly occupied by Mrs. Paul did not remember, when my friend first called upon her, the date of the death, but said she would ascertain from the undertaker or sexton who had the record, and would send a note to Dr. Slade's residence containing the desired information. This note failed to come, though, on inquiry, we learned that it had been written, and that in it the statement was made that "C. Paul died November 19th, 1872." It would seem that the spirit had used the power afforded by the medium to quote these words upon paper and bring them to us in the way described. She was probably anxious to remind me of her behest and of my promise, the performance of which will, I hope, gratify her and bring to her friends the assurance which she was so desirous to have them receive through the publication of her letter. LOUISA ANDREWS.

## MANIFESTATIONS IN TURNER, MAINE.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

About the 10th of January last Mr. Wilbur B. Fisher, supported by a few of our neighbors, with my sister and myself—numbering in all about ten—resumed a circle suspended some three years ago. In our former efforts we had succeeded in obtaining very good piano-playing, with some equally wonderful manifestations, entirely independent of human hands or action. We occupied an ordinarily-sized room, located in one corner of our house, using a common bedroom adjoining for a cabinet, nearly in the centre of which the young man Fisher—as principal medium—was seated. One door and one window only are connected with the bedroom, the latter well secured during circle hours, while the former stood wide open. A piano wheeled up directly in front of the cabinet door, with the keys facing the same, and our circle formed immediately in the rear of the instrument, in the main-room, made the arrangements complete. At this point it may be important, if not interesting, to give some description of our spiritual circle, all of which seemed to labor hard and earnestly to promote the objects of our investigation, especially to convince those inclined to be skeptical.

First and foremost—for he is a character—may be mentioned one who answers to the name of Dennis, his surname being much more difficult to pronounce, a musician by profession. Next, Miss Rosalie, a French lady, but who speaks good English; Miss Marie, sister to Rosalie, who plays the piano splendidly. A Mr. Mason also called occasionally, giving us some choice music, one or two others frequently lending a hand when necessary. Last, but by no means the least, a gigantic Indian, who would open and close the evening's performance by a shaking of the walls and floor of the house in a manner that was truly frightful to unbelievers, and known by the name of Osegamway. After a reasonable time for materializing, Dennis would take the piano-stool, and play with a skill and power that astonished the country people here. During the evening two others, Marie and Mr. Mason, would give us a specimen of their art upon the instrument—all very good, choice, masterly. At the same time, like all other players, each had a distinct style of their own. The particular force of this part of the manifestations was the fact that no person in the house was a piano-player; moreover, if we desired they would tie the medium, and keep him fast, hand and foot, during the playing. The singing was altogether the most charming of the whole. After four or five sittings they began, faintly at first, but increasing in strength and volume, till at length, by the close of our circles—which continued about three months—they sang as loud as mortal men and women. The principal singer was the girl called Rosalie, whose remarkably sweet voice possessed a scope truly astonishing, especially when accompanied by Dennis on the piano. Sometimes two sang together, sometimes three, and occasionally, for a test, they would make the medium sing with them.

Their conversations with us were uniformly held in whispers, saying that, with further development, they could speak in louder tones; come out into our circle and put their hands upon our heads and faces; lift the piano free from the floor, so high that, when let down, the whole house would tremble; produce lights of various forms and sizes, that would be made to dart about the room; take up a large music-box, weighing about twenty pounds, and swing it around over our heads in a circle as large as the room itself, while playing.

Finally, after a playing was fastened up to cover the entire cabinet doorway, hands and arms would be thrust out in front of all sizes and kinds, from the smallest child's to the largest negro's. This last phase of the manifestations took place in the light of a burning lamp. On the last night of our circles the face of my mother was several times distinctly seen and recognized

by all in the room, albeit her mortal body was laid away twelve years ago. In my judgment, the most convincing proof of the presence of spirits and their power, to the doubting, at least, was the fact that after the many and varied exhibitions of great physical force they often left the medium in a dormant state, and helpless as the dead.

Many other manifestations equally wonderful were given us, in the course of our three months' exercises, but my communication is already too long, and I must be content to rest here.

Greater things have been done in some special directions, I am aware, but when the number and variety of manifestations, in the same evening, are taken into account, I am inclined to challenge the best mediums to excel our Mr. Fisher. Scores of unimpeachable witnesses in North Turner, Me., can attest to the foregoing statement of facts. BENJAMIN KEEN.

North Turner, Me., July 24th, 1876.

## "A SPIRIT HAND"—WHOSE HAND IS IT?—A PECULIAR MANIFESTATION.

A gentleman of this city, who is well known as being a lifelong believer in spiritual phenomena, recently visited Philadelphia for the purpose of viewing the Exposition, and while there attended a seance at which several astonishing manifestations took place. Among the persons partially "materialized" was one claiming to be a young man who met with violent death in our city last winter. The name of the young man was given with entire correctness, although our friend cannot say that he absolutely recognized the features, on account of the partial darkness of the room. After the materializations were over, the attending seances, our friend met and conversed with the seances, and in the process of conversation he saw the paraffine put into a box which he himself looked, and retained the key. Then, after half an hour had elapsed, during which time he declares it impossible for any living person to tamper with the box without his knowledge, he unlocked it and found therein a mold of a left hand, quite perfectly shaped. It will be understood that the nature of the paraffine is such that it would be impossible for a human hand to be withdrawn from it after a mold had been taken, even if it were possible for a human hand to have got into the locked box for that purpose. After the mold had been made the regular seance was resumed, and it was stated by the controlling intelligence that the impression of the paraffine was from the hand of the young Cambridge gentleman whose name had been given. Upon receiving this information, our friend met and conversed with the seances, and in the process of conversation he saw the paraffine put into a box which he himself looked, and retained the key. 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## Banner of Light.

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While we recognize woman as master, and take no book  
as an authority, we most cordially accept all great  
men's lights of the world. The generations of men come  
and go, and leave a few who walk in the light, never  
out of the light before first, but self-centered in his own  
individuality. Prof. S. B. Britton.

## "Spiritualism a Pestilent Superstition."

Mr. H. W. Bellows, in the "Liberal Christian," a  
Unitarian publication, expresses a hope that the  
performances of young Bishop, "exposing"  
Spiritualism, are "the beginning of the end of the  
pestilent superstition that has bewildered some ten  
millions of our people for ten years past."

We have had "exposers" in the field, and  
cleverer ones than Bishop, ever since the year  
1850, when Modern Spiritualism began to be a  
power. We have had Von Fleck, McQueen, Lan-  
land, Carbond, H. Melville Fay, Baldwin, and  
we know not how many more, and they have  
every one done the tricks that Bishop accom-  
plishes. Men like Mr. Bellows, who had sat in  
their closets and heard and read of this great  
spiritual movement, but had given nothing but a  
superficial and prejudiced examination to it,  
were elated like him when they heard of mediums  
coming into the field to expose Spiritualism.

But what has the exposure amounted to? Nothing  
that Spiritualists themselves have not wel-  
comed as helping them in the detection of pos-  
sible frauds! The great phenomena remain in-  
tact, unexplained by any but the spiritual solu-  
tion. Bishop is just as powerless as the rest have  
been to throw the least light on a single spiritual  
manifestation. Some of the minor ones, such as  
the moving of a chair or the tipping of a table,  
or the hammering of a nail, can of course be par-  
tially imitated by sleight of hand or by machin-  
ery; but what Spiritualist so simple that he did  
not know this already?

Mr. Bellows tells us he has given thirty  
years of "professional observation" to this sub-  
ject. Why professional? His profession is that  
of a clergyman. Why not come down and ex-  
amine Spiritualism simply as a man, free from  
all clerical prepossessions and associations? That  
one word professional, explains his failure to  
see what every patient, candid investigator  
cannot fail to see if he is not discouraged too  
soon, namely: that our phenomena are not  
the result of trick or of illusion, but are what we  
claim them to be, supernatural, and, except un-  
der our theory, wholly unintelligible.

What could be more preposterously silly than  
Mr. Bellows's attempt to explain the impressions  
produced by our phenomena? Hear it, oh Bu-  
channan, oh Wallace, oh Crookes, and oh all read-  
ers of the Banner! Listen to what this distin-  
guished clergyman proclaims to a hungry world:  
"As to the lights, and floating hands, and  
ghostly visitants, they must be mainly set down  
to the imaginations of persons gradually brought  
under morbid control by some powerful medium,  
who transfers impressions of his own to their  
brains in such a way as to delude their senses."

What will the thousands of strong men and  
healthy women, who are just as much convinced  
of certain supersensuous phenomena they have  
witnessed as they are of putting on their stock-  
ings and shoes, or of sitting down to breakfast,  
say to this? Perhaps twenty of them witnessed  
the phenomenon simultaneously and alike. No  
matter. They were all biologized, deprived of  
their senses and their common sense by the weak  
little woman who acted as the medium. Such is  
the explanation of Mr. Bellows.

Some hundreds of our fellow citizens, including  
many who were not Spiritualists, have been to  
see the phenomena through Mrs. Bennett. They  
must have been struck by the beautiful lights  
which, when the room was totally dark, would  
float and circle about, and then dart toward the  
pall of melted paraffine, where molds of unse-  
en hands would be taken, and transferred to a pall  
of cold water close by. These lights in their  
movements and their peculiar luminosity were  
imitable by any chemical skill. But Mr. Bel-  
lows tells the twenty or more persons who may  
have simultaneously witnessed those lights, and  
who would be ready to swear to it in any court  
of justice, that they were "under morbid con-  
trol," that Mrs. Bennett transferred the impres-  
sions of her own brain to theirs "in such a way  
as to delude their senses!"

If such an absurd conceit were true—if it were  
possible that twenty healthy men and women  
could in five minutes' time (for they do not have  
to wait longer) be so fooled and dispossessed of  
their reason as to be made to think they saw lu-  
minous balls vividly moving about, when these  
were all merely the subjective impressions of the  
medium's own brain, willing her visitors to see  
this or that at her fancy, then let us remodel  
our notions as to the value of human testimony,  
let us reconsider our laws and our processes in  
the dispensation of justice. What man would  
have a right to testify to his seeing this or that,  
when he could not know but that he had been  
"gradually brought under morbid control by  
some powerful medium," and made to see the  
things that were not? Mr. Bellows's theory  
would convert God's world into a Bedlam and  
make imbeciles of us all.

Such are the shifts to which good men are

driven in their efforts to get rid of our facts, and  
to explain how it is that "this pestilent super-  
stition has bewildered some ten millions of our  
people for ten years past?"

Superstition, indeed! Well did the late Robert  
Chambers, the celebrated Scottish publisher and  
author, whose name is a synonym for good  
sense, probity and high intelligence—well did he  
remark of the assailants of Modern Spiritualism:  
"Instead of being a superstition itself, as they may  
be disposed to think it, they would find it the  
explanation and the extinguisher of all supersti-  
tion."

What, sir, you, the Rev. Dr. Bellows, preach to  
your hearers that one Jesus Christ, after laying  
down his earthly body in death, reappeared  
bodily and tangibly to his disciples in a room  
where the doors were closed; and when we  
American Spiritualists tell you we believe that  
the phenomenon actually took place, because we  
have seen it paralleled in our own experience, you  
turn upon us with the contemptuous remark that  
we—some ten millions of us, as you say—are the  
victims of "a pestilent superstition." What then,  
reverend sir, were the disciples who testified to the  
occurrence which we accept; accept not because  
the priest tells us to do so or be damned, not be-  
cause men, supposed to have lived eighteen hun-  
dred years ago, tell us, in disputed manuscripts,  
that it was so—but because our convictions have  
come to us by the true philosophical and rational  
method, through experience, prolonged investiga-  
tion, and the tuition of facts?

Did it ever occur to Mr. Bellows into whose  
company he would send us when he talks of our  
belief in the existence of spirits and their power  
to manifest themselves in this world, as "a pes-  
tilent superstition"? We find ourselves fratern-  
izing with men, a few of whose names we would  
commend to his serious attention: Socrates, Con-  
fucius, Plato, Plutarch, Jesus Christ and his  
apostles, Tertullian, Augustine, Bacon, Glanville,  
Henry More, Wesley, Richard Baxter, Daniel,  
Tasso, Garibaldi, Mazzini, Kerner, Ennemoser,  
Goethe, Lessing, Lord Lyndhurst, Archbishop  
Whately, Robert Chambers, Alfred Russel Wallace,  
Robert Hare, J. G. Wilkinson, Dr. Ashburner,  
Dr. Elliotson, Prof. Corson of Cornell, Dr. J. L.  
Buchanan, John Pierpont, John Neal, and we  
could go on extending the list almost indefinitely.  
The belief of such men is what Mr. Bellows  
stigmatizes in his ill-considered words, as to the  
existence of spirit, and their power to manifest  
themselves in this world—a Unitarian clergyman  
stigmatizes—as a pestilent superstition!

The cheerfulness which Mr. Bellows and some  
twenty of his associates of the clergy have man-  
ifested over the doings of Mr. Bishop, is not des-  
tined, we apprehend, to be of long continuance.  
Spiritualism will thrive under such exposures as  
his. If Mr. Bishop can really show that he is an  
instrument for the production of those great  
phenomena, a study of which has made men  
Spiritualists, then he will most assuredly be un-  
able to duplicate or explain them in any way  
that will throw discredit on the spiritual theory.  
For the persons and the doctors, now so exult-  
ant, to suppose that we base our spiritual hy-  
pothesis on tricks that can be accomplished by  
sleight of hand, suppleness of body, gymnastic  
skill, strength of muscle, or the adroit applica-  
tion of machinery, is the rankest of all absurdi-  
ties, and the grossest of all ignorances.

While we have no disposition to encourage im-  
posture, we hope that investigators in Spiritual-  
ism will go to Mr. Bishop's lectures, where we  
see are being widely advertised as to take place  
the coming season, and judge for themselves how  
far he uses medial skill, and how far his tricks  
resemble genuine phenomena. No confirmed  
Spiritualist can have the slightest uneasiness as  
to the result. If the audience choose to be fooled  
by allowing the young man to enact the same  
conditions which genuine mediums exact for the  
accomplishment of his only really surprising  
tricks, and then take his word for it that these are  
done without medial power, the folly and the  
loss will be their own. Intelligent Spiritualists  
will see the imposture, and defy the operator to  
produce really medial phenomena, unaccompanied  
by medial conditions; and they will remem-  
ber that even a momentary dropping of the curtain  
will allow his spirit-aid to produce their effects,  
since they work with superhuman celerity.

## Facts Better than Speculations.

There is nothing in the most advanced science,  
chemical, molecular, or physiological, that is in  
conflict with the phenomena of Modern Spiritu-  
alism. On the contrary, the latter get new con-  
firmation every day from the developments in  
every branch of science. Why is it, then, that  
so many persons of scientific and literary culture  
prefer clinging to their own *a priori* preconcep-  
tions, speculations and associations, to lending  
their serious attention to our facts, and to con-  
ceiving that they may be built on something less  
airy than imposture and illusion?

It is notorious that nearly all the great facts in  
science have been empirically discovered; that is,  
they have been the result of careful observa-  
tion, experiment and study. This fact is clearly  
brought out in the excellent address by Mr. T.  
P. Barkas, which we give to our readers in to-  
day's Banner. *A priori* method of investiga-  
tion, apart from experimental examination and  
study, could ever have proved to us most of the  
established facts in anatomy and physics. Our  
knowledge of natural laws is almost wholly em-  
pirical; the result of long continued observation  
and experience. Some of these laws, if commu-  
nicated to us without the authentications of sci-  
ence, would seem ridiculous and incredible.

For example, we are told by the physicist that  
eight hundred billions of ether-impulses impinge  
on the retina of the eye in a second of time to  
produce the sensation of deep violet. Incompre-  
hensible as this is to us, science accepts it as a  
truth. But why are minds that are quite ready  
to accept a statement like this, so antagonistic  
when they are told, by persons who have experi-  
mentally tested the phenomenon, that invisible  
and imperceptible pneumatic forces or organisms  
can consolidate themselves into a visible and  
tangible human form, presenting the exact ap-  
pearance of a person deceased, and moving and  
conversing like him?

Even Tyndall tells us: "You never hear the  
really philosophical defenders of the doctrine of  
uniformity speaking of impossibilities in nature."

Their business is not with the possible,  
but with the actual." What a pity that Mr.  
Tyndall had not bethought himself of his own ex-  
cellent teachings when he uttered his rash words  
against Spiritualism! Yes, it is not whether our  
facts *ought* to be, whether they are in good taste,  
whether they are likely to be productive of good  
or ill effects, whether they are "possible," that  
the robust thinker should concern himself about;

but he should confine himself to the one inquiry,  
Are they true? And that question can be  
answered only by the experimental method; the  
method that has led to all the greatest results in  
science.

Five hundred years ago the notion that the  
earth is a globe, and that there are antipodes,  
was just as repugnant to nine-tenths of the cul-  
tivated people of the day as the notion of material-  
ized spirit-forms is now to Mr. Tyndall, Mr.  
Curtis, Dr. Bellows, Miss Cobbe; and the other as-  
sailants of Spiritualism. Ninety years ago, if a  
man had predicted the magnetic telegraph, the  
photographic process, or the passage of the At-  
lantic by steam-power, he would have been  
hooted at as a visionary—just as persons who  
have satisfied themselves of the phenomenon of  
materialization are now dismissed with their  
testimony as the victims of fraud, illusion,  
and hallucination. The very persons who cry out  
loudest for scientific proofs are those who are the  
most impatient of all testimony founded on  
patient observation and concurrent testimony.  
Those who affect to be most loyal to the experi-  
mental method are the very men who refuse to  
give it its proper weight when Spiritualism is  
the subject in question. What could be more  
conclusive, for example, as to our facts, than the  
objective evidence furnished in the molding of  
spirit-hands and the execution of spirit-photo-  
graphs?

But our opponents cannot escape from that  
most obvious law of thought, expressed in the  
following proposition: The merely negative as-  
sertions of a million such assailants of our  
facts cannot counterbalance or neutralize the  
positive testimony of twelve competent investi-  
gators like Butler, Crookes, Gully, Wallace,  
Hare, Barkas, Crookes, Gully, Noyes, Buchanan,  
Denton, and Gunning. The reason is obvious:  
The non-belief of the million is founded on non-  
experience and purely *a priori* speculation; the  
knowledge of the twelve is founded on observa-  
tion, experience, repeated encounters with ob-  
jective phenomena, a faithful interrogation of  
nature, and a submission of their own preconcep-  
tions to irresistible facts.

The speculative reason has its functions; but  
in the history of thought, it has often stultified  
itself in its opposition to what science has ulti-  
mately established. It was *a priori* reasoning  
that wreaked its impotent disdain on the Coperni-  
can system; that jeered at Galileo; that would  
not listen to Columbus; that ridiculed Harvey  
for his theory of the circulation of the blood;  
that told us that cities could not be lighted by  
gas, and that no steamship could cross the At-  
lantic; and it is purely *a priori* reasoning, void  
of all experience, that now tells us that our spir-  
itual phenomena are "manifest knaveries and  
deceptions." If the pioneers of thought had  
listened to *a priori* critics, the great scientific  
discoveries that have transformed civilization  
would never have been achieved. If Spiritual-  
ists had been deterred by the contempt of their  
*a priori* opponents, the grandest truth of the age  
would have remained in abeyance.

What do these gentlemen virtually tell us?  
This substantially: "It is more probable that we  
are right in our purely *a priori* notions of the  
possibilities of nature, than that Christ ever  
manifested himself to his disciples after his  
death! It is more probable that Messrs. Wal-  
lace, Butler, Crookes, Wagner, Perry, and the  
rest of you, have been made the victims of 'mani-  
fest knaveries and deceptions' in your investi-  
gations into certain occult phenomena, than that  
we are wrong in our speculative opinions, though  
these have no basis except in the fact that your  
phenomena are not yet accepted by the majority  
of intelligent people, and that in all our inter-  
course with nature we have never experienced  
such things as you testify to."

Such is undeniably the modest attitude of our  
opponents!

But perhaps we must not be surprised that so  
many make light of our testimony, and charge  
the thousands of enlightened men who have ac-  
cepted it after experimental confirmation, with  
being the victims of shallow tricks and morbid  
illusions. Among the most devoted Spiritualists  
we can now count those who were once quite as  
bitter and persistent as Carpenter and Huxley in  
opposition. Still it is a pity that the generality  
of men should, on this subject, especially where  
it is a question of purely objective phenomena,  
maintain such a scornful attitude toward the tes-  
timony of persons, their equals, if not their su-  
periors, in every mental, moral and physical  
respect.

It is a pity, too, that men wielding an instru-  
ment so powerful for good or ill as the press,  
should jump to conclusions which violate all  
those laws of inductive and deductive science  
which Bacon has laid down. The opposition  
that looks not to facts, but to sentiments and  
prepossessions, can have but a temporary suc-  
cess. Facts must win, in the long run, since  
there is nothing so brutally obstinate as a fact.  
As Mr. Barkas remarks: "The facts that have  
been, and are daily being adduced, will neither  
be frowned, bullied, nor laughed out of exist-  
ence." The enterprising editors who would  
write down Spiritualism might as well turn to  
abusing the North Pole, or to calling the Equator  
bad names. Even Harper's Magazine, which  
has now ordered the lists against us, will soon  
find that this is so.

## Col. Olcott's Letter.

We publish in another column a letter from  
Col. Olcott, by which it will be seen that the  
Theosophical Society have sent across the water  
an agent to investigate the occult phenomena  
common among the Arabs. All investigations  
of this kind are commendable. The testimony  
in behalf of the strange things accomplished by  
Oriental jugglers and mediums should not be  
dismissed without careful sifting. The Boston  
Globe says: "If we remember rightly, Houdin,  
the French conjurer, was sent to Algeria for the  
very purpose of discovering and exposing the  
tricks of the Arab miracle-workers, and suc-  
ceeded in every instance." We cannot say how  
this may be; but we know that this same Houdin  
looked into the phenomena of the Davenport  
Brothers, and admitted that they were wholly  
inexplicable under any theory of juggling or  
gymnastic skill. We shall look with interest to  
the results of the mission instituted by the Theo-  
sophical Society.

The "Spirit of the Age" (Woodstock,  
Vt.), of July 12th, contains a full report of the  
proceedings of the Centennial Convention held  
at East Granville, Vt., June 30th, which was  
largely attended and harmonious. Among the  
speakers we notice the name of Austen E. Sim-  
mons of Woodstock, "who held the large audi-  
ence spell-bound for nearly two hours."

(Reported for the Banner of Light by John W. Day.)  
THE SECRET OF WILL.

BY LIZZIE DOTEN.

"I and my Father are one,"—John x: 30.

It was midnight, and out of that deep  
Whose waves through the infinite roll,  
Which men in their blindness call sleep,  
I awoke to the life of the soul;  
And a feeling of fear and of dread,  
In that land of the boundless unknown,  
Came over my soul as I said—  
I am here with the shadows alone!

Then a nearness—a mystical sense  
Of a Presence unseen, made me pause  
And thrill with a feeling intense,  
Like a magnet that quickens and draws.  
The shadows grew restless and swayed  
Their pinions, made ready for flight;  
Then silently rose and obeyed  
A Presence, commanding the light.

Did I dream? did I surely behold  
A Being resplendent in grace,  
Whose hair was like sunlight and gold,  
With the glory of God on his face?  
And I, a poor, wandering child,  
"Though stricken with wonder and fear—  
Did I dare to look up as he smiled,  
And answer his call to draw near?

Oh, love is a mystery deep!  
The longing and lone know its voice.  
"T is a magnet of infinite sweep,  
And the heart that is drawn knows no choice.  
Oh I gazed in his luminous eyes  
With the love and the trust of a child,  
So Godlike, so lofty and wise,  
So tender and sweet as he smiled.

I felt I was worthless and weak,  
Defiled by earth's darkness and dust,  
But my spirit grew earnest to speak  
In the strength and the fullness of trust:  
"Oh thou who wast born of that light  
Where no darkness can ever abide,  
Wilt thou hear if I question aright,  
And answer: Who art thou?" I cried.

Then his voice came as gentle and low,  
As tender and soothingly sweet,  
As a stream in its musical flow,  
As the rain with its soft, silver feet:  
"A spirit—a spirit—no more  
Must thou question, dear child of the earth;  
In vain wilt thou seek to explore  
The secrets of souls and their birth;

"But the voice of thy pleading is heard,  
The cry of thy soul for the light;  
Lo! I am the answering Word  
Which quickens thy blindness to sight;  
Lay thy hand, then, unshrinking in mine,  
Till the depths of thy being shall thrill;  
Oh, Neophyte, here at the shrine,  
Discern thou the secret of Will!"

A wave from life's infinite sea  
Seemed to sweep me tumultuously o'er;  
Not yet was my spirit made free  
From the earth and its storm-clouded shore;  
But I knew I had found what I sought,  
That my spirit was guided aright,  
And those wondrous pulsations had caught  
Which quicken the children of light.

"Dear child," said the spirit, "be brave  
Thy mission on earth to fulfill,  
And know that no soul is a slave  
Who hath fathomed the secret of will.  
Farewell!"—And he vanished—away  
Like a star that hath drunk its own light.  
Then I turned to my dwelling of clay,  
To the earth and the shadows of night.

But I know, as I never have known,  
That the life which we live is a dream;  
That the spirit is never alone,  
And we all are far more than we seem;  
For oft while we battle with Fate,  
With courage undaunted and strong,  
We hear from the "Beautiful Gate,"  
Sweet echoes of music and song.

We shall plant the white lilies of Peace  
On the grave of our dearestest ill,  
When our idle complaining shall cease,  
And we work with the Infinite Will.  
We can tread where the great of all time,  
In the fullness of freedom have trod,  
And can say with a meaning sublime,  
From the depths of the soul: "I AM GOD!"

## Mean Business.

A person of an antiquarian turn of mind stop-  
ping at Southampton, L. I., and hearing a tale of  
the wonderful relics to be found on the Shinnec-  
ock Reservation in the graves of the Indians  
buried there, concluded to enrich his private col-  
lection. Some of these graves are more than a  
century and a half old. Without asking per-  
mission from the Trustees, or from the Indians  
who still remain on the Reservation, this indi-  
vidual proceeded, with a laborer, to the burial-  
ground, and began digging among the graves  
which were represented to be the oldest. He  
found the remains of two graves in one grave,  
about three feet below the surface, buried in a  
horizontal position, instead of sitting, as was the  
custom. With them were many curiosities, such  
as wampum, a stone pestle, glass bottles, earthen  
cups, silver teaspoons, a copper kettle with iron  
frame, a gun barrel, a small brass box contain-  
ing twenty Roman silver coins, and on two of  
them the figures 1670 were legible. The blank-  
ets in which the bodies were buried were well  
preserved. When the Indians discovered the  
intrusion, they were justly indignant.

## A New Trance Speaker.

The Clyde (C.) Weekly Review of July 26th  
contains the following paragraph:  
"Mr. Thomas Walker, the 'boy lecturer,' again  
lectured at Terry's Hall last Sunday morning  
and evening. His subject in the morning was:  
'What is the Origin of the Material Universe?'  
given him by the audience, which was a very  
deep subject and one which we are all anxious to  
hear discussed. The lecturer was equal to the  
task, and pleased and satisfied all present. In  
the evening the subject was continued before a  
large audience, the morning being a scientific  
view of the subject, and the evening a theological  
view. The seats were all filled and many had  
to stand. This boy is really, as Hon. J. M.  
Peabees has it, a 'prodigy.'"

## Mrs. Tappan in Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mrs. Cora L. V. Tappan will continue to lec-  
ture before the Society of Spiritualists in Gallin-  
ton Hall, 422 Fulton street, each Sunday evening  
during August.

"SPIRITUALISM IN ENGLAND" is the sub-  
ject of a very fine lecture by R. Linton, Esq., an  
English Spiritualist and author, now on a visit to  
this country, which we print in this number of  
the Banner.

## The Banner Spirit Message Depart-ment.

The spirit messages on our sixth page, which  
are given each week through the mediumship of  
Mrs. Danksin and Mrs. Rudd, are commanding  
the attention of the public in many parts of the  
world. From many and widely different sources  
we are advised of their reliability, by skeptics as  
well as believers; but whenever we solicit the  
publication of their names as authority, the an-  
swer is, "No, I had rather not have my name  
appear in such connection—it might injure me in  
my business relations with church people!"  
Hundreds of just such answers were given us  
years ago in regard to the verification of the  
spirit-messages through the mediumship of Mrs.  
J. H. Conant. The candid reader will say this  
is astonishing, when, by proving them true, the  
fact of intercommunication between the two worlds  
becomes fully evident. Yes, it is astonishing.  
But we can afford to wait. The time will surely  
come, however, when the vital importance of the  
establishment of the Banner Free Circles and the  
Message Department will be seen and ac-  
knowledgeed by the public generally.

The Banner Circle-Room Meetings will be re-  
sumed September 5th, and continued regularly  
from week to week, as in the past. These meet-  
ings were established by us at the earnest sollicit-  
ation of a powerful band of spirits, whose words of  
wisdom given to us through the lips of their me-  
dium, Mrs. Conant, twenty years ago, have been  
signally verified. When, but a year and a half  
since, we were impressed with the fact that the  
devoted mouthpiece of the angels would remain  
with us in the physical but a brief season, her  
casket of flesh being nearly worn out in the ser-  
vice, we asked Mr. Parker what we should do  
for a medium for the circle-room at her demise.  
He replied: "It is time enough to think about  
that emergency when it occurs. We shall fur-  
nish you with an instrument (or even two if  
necessary), though not precisely like that I am  
now using; we however hope to find one as  
nearly resembling the good lady as we possibly  
can." How well the band have succeeded we  
leave our readers themselves to judge.

## The Indian War.

The country has got an Indian War on its  
hands in dead earnest, before it had a chance to  
know much about what was going on. All of  
permitting white men to invade the Black Hills,  
and then attempting to protect them. The re-  
sult is just what might have been expected. We  
find the following computation of the Indian  
force made up for an Idaho paper, by Father  
Muspie, no doubt a Jesuit preacher: The Sioux,  
sixty thousand; the Crows, fifteen thousand;  
the Blackfeet, twenty thousand; the Utes, thirty-  
five thousand; besides large numbers more,  
made up of various fragments and remnants of  
old tribes now practically extinct. He describes  
them all as being united in a strong alliance for  
carrying on the present war, although they fight  
with one another when they are not engaged  
with a common enemy. They now regard the  
United States Government as their common en-  
emy, and they will turn out in full strength to  
meet it vigorously in open war. He estimates  
all their warriors together at fifty thousand,  
which, if true, puts an entirely different face on  
the matter. The Father gives it as his opinion  
that it threatens to become the most formidable  
and bloody Indian war in the history of our Gov-  
ernment. The warriors are well armed, on their  
own chosen ground, and, besides knowing every  
nook and corner of the field, will fight desper-  
ately for revenge and what they believe to be their  
rights. How true the remark of Wendell Phillips,  
that if Custer's party had killed as many Indians  
in that encounter as there were white men killed  
by the Indians, it would have been nobly her-  
alded everywhere as a great victory, but now it  
was called a shocking massacre. Custer's men  
had at least a chance to fight, which was not the  
case with the women and children killed in the  
Chivington Massacre.

## To All Spiritualists.

Stand by your spiritual papers at this crisis in  
our cause. That there is a concerted onslaught on  
our great truths at this time from all quarters—  
clerical, medical, literary and scientific—must be  
obvious to the most superficial observer. In no  
way can these attacks be answered except through  
the press. The number of secular papers that  
will admit anything into their columns favorable  
to Spiritualism is still very limited. To the spir-  
itual papers must the friends of the truth look  
for a proper advocacy and defence.

Friends! our appeal is not wholly selfish. The  
circulation of the Banner ought to be five times  
what it is, considering the really large number  
of persons who have become convinced of the  
genuineness of our phenomena. Wake to a sense  
of the impending warfare upon the most precious  
of truths. Do what you can to help our circula-  
tion, and be sure that any enlargement of our  
means will show itself in corresponding efforts  
on our part to make our journal more and mor-  
worthy of the grand but still struggling truth, in  
respect to which we are fraternally united.

Harmony and concert of effort are especially  
important on Spiritualists at this time. Let us  
sink all minor issues and give ourselves to the  
one effort of establishing by processes the most  
convincing the actuality of our facts as belong-  
ing to the domain of empirical science. When  
we look back upon the ground we have gained  
within the last five years, the prospect is most  
encouraging. Give circulation to our facts and  
our defences through the press. Employ the aid  
of good lecturers and expounders who will de-  
vote themselves to Spiritualism pure and simple  
and not run off into side issues. The enemy is  
very active. Let us show a corresponding zeal.

## Sunday Grove-Meeting.

By reference to an advertisement on our 5th page  
it will be seen that Drs. Gardner and Richardson  
will hold a meeting on Sunday, August 20th, at  
Shawheene River Grove, on the line of the Bos-  
ton and Maine Railroad.

We hear that the Spiritualist meetings in  
Philadelphia, initiated and sustained by J. M.  
Peabees and Dr. Dunn, are very largely attended.  
Considering the hot weather, this speaks well  
for both lecturers and listeners. At the close of  
Mr. Peabees's lecture last Sunday, Dr. S. Max-  
well was entranced before the audience, the con-  
trolling spirits answering questions in a masterly  
manner. He is to be entranced again next Sun-  
day, after Mr. Peabees's discourse upon "Chris-  
tian Spiritualism."

A Review, by Dr. Ditson, of our late for-  
eign exchanges devoted to Spiritualism will ap-  
pear in the next number of the Banner.













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