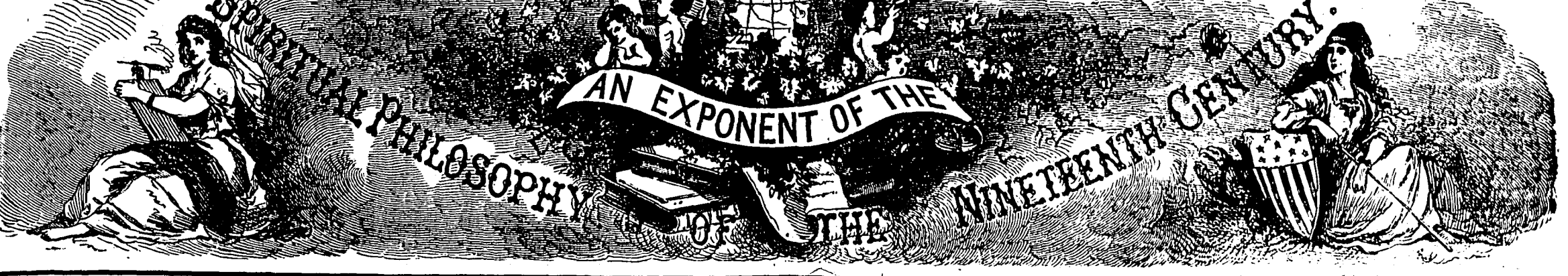


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Original Essay.

SPIRITUALISM AND NATURAL LAW.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

The editor of the Popular Science Monthly has in the issue of that magazine for October condescended to admit an article from Dr. J. R. Buchanan, in reply to Dr. W. B. Carpenter's recent work on "Mesmerism, Spiritualism, &c., Historically and Scientifically Considered." Mr. Alfred R. Wallace's reply to the same work had been already allowed a place in a Supplement to the Monthly. It is useless to inquire whether these favors are due to a love of fair play, or to a sense of a growing spiritualistic sentiment which it is thought best to treat with an air of respect. It is enough that an article unequivocally defensive of the reality of the spiritual phenomena has at last found admission in a magazine of so solid merit.

But the editor in his place hastens to manifest his sympathy with the prevailing scientific incredulity upon the subject by censuring the temper in which Dr. Buchanan has responded to the utterances of Dr. Carpenter, and particularly to criticize the extension which Dr. Buchanan has given to the phrase "laws of Nature." The point of his criticism can be best exhibited by citations from the editorial. Dr. Buchanan has asserted that the Spiritualists were the foremost of all men to insist on the inviolability of those laws, and to claim their extension not only over all physical phenomena, but throughout the equally extensive psychic realm. To this the editor, Prof. Youmans, answers:

"It is obvious that Dr. Buchanan here uses terms to suit himself, as he gives to the phrase 'laws of Nature' a meaning very different from its established scientific significance. In its scientific sense, the term 'Nature' designates that sphere of phenomena, material and mental, of which we have constant experience, which is accessible to the human faculties, and which by its order becomes a subject of methodical knowledge; while the laws of Nature are the uniformities of action that are coextensive with this sphere. To this tract Dr. Buchanan annexes a psychic realm, meaning thereby not the common sphere of mind which is already embraced by the term 'Nature,' but a super-mundane, extra-material, preternatural, or spiritual world, above and beyond the sensuous order. This spiritual realm he claims to bring under the operation of the laws of Nature, and therefore to make it a part of Nature, which we hold is simply to confuse all distinctions and confound the natural with the supernatural."

We grant the truth of Prof. Youmans's assertion, that Nature in its scientific sense comprises that sphere of phenomena, material and mental, which he has well indicated by three essential criteria: (1) that (embracing classes of objects) of which we have constant experience; (2) that which is accessible to the human faculties; (3) that which by its order becomes a subject of methodical knowledge; and we grant that the laws of Nature are the uniformities of action coextensive with this sphere.

What we assert as Spiritualists is, that the spiritual phenomena are within the proper scope of scientific inquiry, and that science has of late assumed a direction so thoroughly materialistic that its cultivators are angry with the phenomena because they are so strongly suggestive that themselves are at fault.

Laying out of view the constitution and movements of the heavenly bodies, as a department of science of which there is at present no question, in the realm of phenomena it is the business of science to deal with chemical compounds, the so-called imponderable agents, and the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms as such.

Every fact of Spiritualism falls properly within the special science of anthropology. Its subject-matter is found in sounds musical or otherwise, changes in the structure of substances, the locomotion of ponderable bodies, in writings, pictures, maladies, and trances, as exhibited in their connection with persons called "media." These subjects are legitimate ones for the treatment of science, and on their basis Spiritualism rests. It cannot reasonably be objected that because the peculiar facts with which Spiritualism has to do are unusual—that because the sounds, the movements of ponderable bodies, the writings, the maladies and trances known to Spiritualism are more or less abnormal and mysterious, that therefore they are not proper for scientific inquiry. None of them are so inconsistent and infrequent that they have not often recurred. Moreover, in every field but that of the spiritual phenomena, science has hitherto delighted to get its one unique fact in order to assign it its place in nature. A thrill of pleasure would pervade every committee of the Royal Society if it were announced in their solemn assembly that there had lately been discovered in zoölogy a new species of the genus *meppitis*. Why should not science be on the alert for new and strange facts connected with man's organism or his actions? The facts of Spiritualism certainly answer to all the criteria of the subjects-matter of any science, as laid down by Prof. Youmans. They are such facts as have been, and still are, repeatedly experienced. They are not only accessible to the normal action of the human faculties, but most of them are quite palpable to the senses. The variety in which they occur, renders them susceptible of classification and methodized knowledge, and thus suggests that the law of their genesis and evolution can be comprehended.

Prof. Youmans's real objection, however, to Dr. Buchanan's views, is that he includes a psychic realm within what he denominates "Nature," and thus embraces in Nature "a preternatural, or spiritual world, above and beyond the sensuous order." As it is charged that such an inclusion of a "world above and beyond the sensuous order," breaks down

and abolishes the barrier between the natural and supernatural, we should of course infer that Prof. Youmans restricts the proper domain of the science of phenomena to facts belonging exclusively to the sensuous order. Singular as it may seem, he endeavors not to do so; for he declares that Nature as the subject of science, comprises "that sphere of mental phenomena of which we have constant experience." This sphere of mental phenomena into which he allows science excursions outside of the "sensuous order," consists wholly of ideas, emotions and the like. The old psychology investigated the genesis and relations of ideas and emotions as embraced entirely in the sphere of the waking and sleeping consciousness. The later psychology traces back the genesis of thought and feeling to some sort of connection with muscle, nerve, and brain. If Prof. Youmans adopts the later psychology, does he not after all find the scientific explanation of mental phenomena in changes of brain and nerve, and thus really restrict science to sensuous phenomena?

His view of the limits of science we think we clearly understand. It should be confined on the one hand to the investigation of phenomena patent to one or more of the senses; on the other, in so far as it may venture out of the sensuous order, it should be limited to the study of the genesis and association of ideas and emotions. His spiritual world is entirely restricted to mental phenomena as they deploy in the field of personal consciousness. In other words, the realm of mere consciousness is the only possible spiritual world, the only one that deserves the name, the only one that science can recognize. Or to present the case concisely, in his view the domain of the science of phenomena comprises two departments; one made up of sensuous objects and their relations, and the other of ideas and emotions and their relations. Whatever else may exist, being outside of the sensuous order, is outside of nature. Differing from scientists like Helmholtz, Haeckel, Buechner, and their fellows, he is only not a sheer materialist, because with Tyndall and most of the English *savants*, who try to keep terms with theology, he has fenced off a little subjective world of "mind," whose phenomena we suppose he holds to be inexplicable by transformations of substance. The German *savants* are almost to a man materialists, and they seem to have no sympathy with the timidity of their English brethren who pretend to save a spiritual realm, every phenomenon in which they at the same time admit to be conditioned on physical changes.

It has been a maxim with English *savants* for nearly fifty years that the only discernible *neues* or tie between physical phenomena is that of invariable sequence. That a spark explodes powder is a fact that will occur whenever spark and powder are properly brought in connection. But nothing passes, they think, between spark and powder tending to explain the explosion. So in the mind realm, Haeckel and Buechner would maintain that when mental exaltation follows the taking of a grain of opium, a mental change has followed the action of the opium, of which change there is no explanation other than the contact of opium with nerve. In the case of the explosion, a spark has changed the state of powder; in the case of the excited feeling, a particular opium has changed the state of a nerve and with it that of a mind. The particular state of mind and feeling is exactly measured by the amount of motion set up by the opium. Sequences in mind being precisely determined by specific amounts of physical change, and sequences in material facts being determined by nothing else, the German physicists wonder why any sensible person familiar with these laws should emphasize the separate reality of spirit, whose existence every moment depends on a definite quantum of motion in matter.

We know that Prof. Youmans and the English school would assert that Buechner's facts only establish a correlation between changes in matter and changes in mind; but if the correlations are constant, if changes in mind are always accompanied by changes in matter, if we know of no instance in which mental changes are not attended by definite amounts of physical change, we have no reasonable ground for an inference that mental changes can go forward independently of physical ones.

In response to this idea of correlation Prof. Haeckel might say: "A brilliant dream in the head of an opium-eater is simply correlated in its minutest features with the impingement of certain opium particles on the nerves of the dreamer's stomach and brain. The image in a mirror is in the same way correlated with the luminous ether reflected from an object. The result in both cases is simply the motion of matter. The image in a mirror is just as truly a spiritual product, as the mental reproduction of the same image elaborated by the retina of the eye and the lenses in the mind. My dear Prof. Youmans, all phenomena are but sequences invariable or otherwise of other phenomena. In the last analysis, there are but three things in nature—matter, form and motion. Why not confess it? Why put forward a spiritual world attenuated into mere mental phenomena as a foil against the charge of materialism? A realm of spirit that is so intimately allied with matter, that all the currents of mental life are known to waver and fluctuate with physical changes, is independent of matter only in name. Show your colors, and do not shrink from the epithet of materialist."

We think it must be evident from our quotations from Prof. Youmans's editorial that he acknowledges no spiritual world other than thoughts and emotions correlated to matter, no spiritual world in which moral agents exist intrinsically inappreciable by any of the senses, no spiritual world above the sensuous order. But the non-recognition of such a world is just what in popular language constitutes materialism. The popular apprehension has not yet reduced the hemisphere of being opposed to matter to a nebulous mass of sensations, perceptions, conceptions, and feelings. In the common conception, a materialist is one who holds such a view of Nature as to deny the possibility of the existence of persons in a supersensuous world. It is ridiculous to put in a caveat against applying the term to Dr. Carpenter, if the doctor's views of supersensuous possibilities coincide with those of the professor. Common people believe in a supersensuous world, in which moral beings hold intercourse with one another in modes transcending the ordinary reach of the senses; they have never imagined a spiritual world, inhabited only by thoughts, emotions and volitions floating loose from souls. This sort of world was discovered a few months since by one of the librarians at Harvard. But as yet there has been no great demand for eligible sites in it. Denial of such a world is not materialism, but the denial of a supersensuous world, or of any reliable means of verifying such a realm, is so.

The fundamental tenet of Modern Spiritualism is in accord with the popular faith, that moral agents in the attributes of personality like ourselves, do exist in modes habitually inappreciable by any of the five senses; that under delicate but fixed conditions they can exhibit their powers of volition, thought, and feeling by demonstrations falling however with-

in the capacity of those senses; can render themselves visible, audible, and tangible; can create savors and odors, and above all, can establish their identity with persons supposed to be dead.

We believe Prof. Youmans to hold that science cannot justify even by an inference the existence of such intangible persons; and that by no means can it make their relations to each other and to us the subject of investigation, so as to promulgate rules by which those relations can either be better understood, or rendered more conducive to an orderly and beneficent intercourse between them and us. All this is not only not within the power of science, but not consonant with its dignity. It is plain that science turns up its nose at the idea of laying telegraph lines across the Jordan.

Let us give a few illustrations of the capacity of science not to know when she is not in the humor. If, for example, upon a slate writing should be produced hundreds of times, under circumstances absolutely precluding any chemical processes, or any mechanical agency other than of a common pencil, that fact would not in the estimate of science be sufficient to justify the inference that a person in intangible presence had produced the writing.

If a table suspended in mid air were made to yield intelligible movements in the presence of persons having no agency in the motion, and without the intervention of mechanism appreciable by any ordinary human sense, that fact would not warrant the inference of the presence of an intangible person aiding in the suspension.

If a well-known tune were played on a piano without the intervention of any mechanism distinct from the instrument, or of any automatic appliances, or the contact of any object of sufficient consistency to be at once visible and tangible, science could not justify the inference that an intangible person did the playing.

If three persons the sole occupants of the same chamber and the same house, none of them ventriloquists, should, in such chamber and house converse with an audible voice addressed to all, and if the voice should communicate to each one facts known only to each, that fact according to science would not justify the conclusion that the voice proceeded from a person who lacked the attribute of a tangible body, and was not one of the three.

These supposed illustrations exhibit the attitude of science to the alleged facts of Spiritualism, as understood by Prof. Youmans and Dr. Carpenter. No amount of testimony is adequate to verify the alleged facts; no logic known to science is sufficient to warrant an inference from any facts of the existence or intervention of spirits, or the reality of any supersensuous world!

The behavior of the loadstone is thought by scientific men to warrant the inference of a magnetic force; a stroke from the Leyden jar indubitably proves the presence of an electric force; the fall of an apple establishes the reality of the force of gravity. Yet no human sense can directly cognize any one of these forces. They are simply inferred from motions of bodies. They belong entirely to the supersensuous world. Science can manage to put on them the seal of its approval, even though they are strictly supersensuous, because they are *impersonal*.

But other forces equally supersensuous, revealed like gravity and magnetism in insulated cases of the disturbance of the state of solid substances, science cannot recognize, because they are *personal*, and reveal human intelligence and affection existing in modes hitherto undreamed. There is danger, probably, if science recognizes any such forces upon any testimony, that man may be discovered to be capable of surviving death!

"Dr. Buchanan (says Prof. Youmans) opens his batteries against the materialists, but might he not as well have left this to some late theologian? This polemical dash cannot be effective against Dr. Carpenter, who is certainly no materialist, either by his own avowal, by the tenor of his writings, or their common interpretation. On the contrary he is a religious man who has written copiously and cogently against materialism."

Doubtless the religious world will be thankful for his aid. It is just now in great distress and grateful for small favors, and it has always been ready to welcome a good turn, even from the father of lies. The doctor's assistance may reasonably be expected to smack sufficiently of inspiration from that quarter to render it highly acceptable. How very cogent against materialism must have been the writings of a man of science, who restricts all spiritual existence to mental activities exactly correlated with changes of nervous substance, and who has loudly trumpeted his conviction that no uttered testimony, no evidence, no facts can prove the existence of spirits! These are the sentiments the doctor nurses as his contribution to religious knowledge.

To assert the existence of a spiritual realm possessed of the power to make occasional interventions in this, Prof. Youmans maintains to be the confusing of all distinctions and the confounding of the natural with the supernatural. Is it so?

The fundamental principle of all true science is that every phenomenon or event is always dependent upon conditions. To affirm the reality of the supernatural is to assert the existence of a realm of being in which conditions as nearly as possible alike will not be followed by like phenomena; or that like phenomena are not preceded by like conditions. But to assert the existence of a supersensuous realm is to assert that forces appreciable in themselves by none of the five senses manifest themselves in sensible phenomena. The whole visible and tangible universe implies an invisible and intangible hemisphere of being that is supersensuous. It were strange if there were nowhere present in that hemisphere personalities habitually exalted above the sensuous order.

Undoubtedly, for long periods in primitive times the race of man was seriously thwarted in its progress in knowledge by the propensity to attribute all strange or grand phenomena to spiritual personalities. And the human mind for ages has been gradually learning to narrow the realm within which such agencies intervene; till now modern science emphasizes the other extreme, and asserts that outside of man's visible personality there is nowhere any other than involuntary agency, and no causes other than such as can be appreciated by the five senses, or reduced to a level with such causes. Science now denies that there are any supersensuous causes, least of all any supersensuous personal causes. But if supersensuous causes intervene in the ordinary series of phenomena only under conditions, they are still amenable to natural law. When the Spiritualist denies the possibility of the explanation of certain phenomena by any hypothesis of involuntary agency, either purely physical, or such as invokes ideas and emotions in a happy murmur of unconscious cerebration, he neither denies the natural nor invokes the supernatural. He simply declines to insult his understanding by attempting to explain all phenomena by agencies purely sensuous and involuntary.

Spiritualism will compel science to face this dilemma: either to admit the intervention of supersensuous personal agencies in mundane affairs, or to deny the existence of any real supersensuous agency in Nature. The German *savants* accept the latter alternative without hesitation. No original forces exist according to them, that cannot be reduced into some form appreciable to sense; and with them consciousness, thought, and personality are incidents in the involuntary change of nerve matter. Nervous substance is not the instrument of mind and soul, but mind and soul are evolved in the grander evolutions and involutions of nervous substance.

Dr. Carpenter, Tyndall, and their compeers have not advanced quite so far. Their "respect for religion" induces them to barricade off a little corner of creation, within which ideas and emotions can hover and flutter, held to substance by a metaphysical tie of correlation, and from which they can occasionally discharge elegant arguments against materialism in aid of theology. This kind of nonsense will in another generation cease, and the English *savants* will no longer play the valet to theology, but will avow an unflinching and thoroughgoing materialism.

"The spirits (says Prof. Youmans) are never alleged to be the causes of cohesion, refraction, digestion, gravity, or any of the matter of course operations that go on around us. They are only disclosed to us by striking, wonderful, exceptional, or miraculous manifestations; that is, the common order of Nature gets along without them, and they are only known by breaking through it."

Why should they be referred to as the causes of cohesion, gravity, and similar constant operations that go on around us? Persons in this world are not expected to be parts of constant operations in which they do not voluntarily share. If man after ages of experience has learned that the great constant operations of nature are not controlled by personal volitions, why should the intervention of supersensuous persons be expected in other than exceptional instances, which on account of their rarity seem for a time miraculous? Personality is itself a phenomenon whose characteristic it is to vary the order of all constant operations. The basis of nature is the involuntary and impersonal repetition of like movements; the summit of nature is the voluntary and personal diversification of movements beyond any known law of uniformity. The higher we ascend in the scale of being, the more multifarious the interruptions of personal volition into the established order in modes not precalculable. It is only in the laboratories of nature that a grinding mechanical routine prevails forever and ever. If then while in the body we demonstrate the reality of our personality, only by interrupting that order which forces like gravity and cohesion establish, why, provided we are so fortunate as to survive death, should we not acquire enhanced powers of interruption? In every personal movement while we live, we disturb the order established by gravity. If we continue to do so after death, we are surely proceeding in the line of *anti-mortem* analogies.

Extending the list of imagined absurdities in which Spiritualists believe, Prof. Youmans continues:

"In Nature we see with our eyes; in the 'psychic realm' men are said to see with the backs of their heads. In Nature tables remain at rest upon the floor forever unless some definite terrestrial force is applied to move them; in the 'psychic realm' they travel about or rise to the ceiling without the intervention of any earthly cause."

In nature we not only see with our eyes, but we have abundant evidence that in common epilepsy, to say nothing of innumerable alleged cases occurring in the mesmeric trance, vision of physical objects can be effected without eyes. It is easy to verify the fact, if one be not so scientific as to have lost capacity for patience and candor. No facts are known to Spiritualists tending to show that in the "psychic realm" men see with the backs of their heads. But if the principle of the Darwinian selection is real—in accordance with which it is said that unused organs waste away, as in the case of the eyeless fish, or may by a protracted strain be developed in abnormal localities, it is clear that ere long many scientific critics of what is possible in the spiritual world, will have eyes only in the backs of their heads. Such a transposition of the optics in the case of a certain eminent English physiologist would not be likely to detract in the least from the remarkable directness of his vision.

Spiritualists cannot enumerate the instances in which tables and like articles have risen in the air in the presence of competent witnesses without the aid of "any definite terrestrial force." And any pretender to science who during the last thirty years has made any effort proportionate to the novelty and gravity of the phenomenon to witness the fact, has simply been unfortunate, if his search has not met with success. The "psychic realm" contributes just as much to these table levitations as it does to the levitation of a bar of steel in the coil of a helix, traversed by an electric current. A force inappreciable by any of the five senses, in both cases causes the levitation; in the case of the steel, the force is impersonal; in that of the table, personal.

In Nature (says Prof. Youmans) if a man unguardedly loses his balance in a window, he falls to the earth; but in the "psychic realm," Mr. Home floats in the air by moonlight out of one window and in at another at a height of seventy feet from the ground. In Nature, if we wish to go to a house, we must walk there, or get a conveyance to be carried, and then can only get inside by the opening of some passage of entrance; but in the "psychic realm" (quoting Mrs. Guppy) "sails through the air all the way from Highbury Park to Lamb's Conduit street, and is brought by invisible agency into a room of which the doors and windows were closed and fastened, coming plump down in the midst of a circle of eleven persons who were sitting in the dark shoulder to shoulder."

Why should one who ventures to vouch for Dr. Carpenter's respect for religion, incur the risk of shocking the feelings of religious people by so indiscreet an allusion to the levitation of Mr. Home and the flight of Mrs. Guppy? Does not Prof. Youmans know, religious persons might say, that nearly the entire Christian world believes Jesus to have appeared after death in a physical body, and in a room into which entrance for material things was closed? That the Evangelist Philip in a substantial living body, on a journey from Gaza to Jerusalem, was suddenly caught away to Azotus? It is a good thing to ridicule the Spiritualists, but in using alleged facts for that purpose, care should be taken to select such as will not return like a boomerang to bruise the heads of religious people. Of course the Spiritualists are fools, but if Mrs. Guppy's flight had been narrated in the New Testament it would not be so very incredible after all. In fact if the occurrence were assigned to Palestine and to the first age of the Christian era, it would derive just that degree of enchantment from distance in place, remoteness in time, and the absence of all reliable testimony in its favor, to entitle it to a high place among the so-called evidences of Christianity. Certainly, Prof. Youmans, you would not say that Philip's flight, or the Prophet Elijah's transcendent chariot ride, oc-

(Continued on fourth page.)

"SWEET SPIRIT, HEAR MY PRAYER."

BY GEORGE WENTZ.

Of all the human-helping songs to God
That swell upon the dim cathedral air—
Most helpful seems to me this song of all—
"Sweet spirit, hear my prayer."

There is a supplication in the sound;
And on that flight of music's solemn sigh
My weary soul, earth-sick and full of care,
Mounts upward to the sky.

A clear soprano, like a mounting bird,
Soars o'er the organ's deep, vibrating tone,
To bear to her the lovingness I feel
But may not plead alone.

For she, a spirit, from her lofty place
Doth o'er her sympathetic ear incline
To hear a mortal's word, and stills her heart
To catch the beat of mine.

The tender pleading of the song remains,
While priest and altar fade upon the air;
And all the dome is worshipful with her
Whose spirit hears my prayer.

THE CAUSE OF INSANITY, AND ITS PERMANENT CURE.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

If there is one thing that should attract and employ the mind, and weigh upon the conscience with a greater force and stimulus at this time more than any other, it is the consideration of those sadly unfortunate ones, whose numbers are so rapidly and alarmingly increasing, affected with mental prostration and nervous derangement, commonly called insanity.

How painfully and frequently we are called upon in these days to see the sacred domain of the mind ruthlessly and rashly invaded, and all the rich treasures gathered there devastated, scattered and laid waste by a power so insinuating and subtle that its approach cannot in the slightest manner be perceived, much less measured or stayed by the common understanding, or any method now known to the schoolmen for its discovery, prevention or cure.

There is nothing so sad or deplorable in all Nature's broad domain as faculties blighted and reason derelict.

Having been called upon to give the matter close attention and study for many years, and having passed through numerous painful experiences, I propose to say something of the cause and permanent cure of this malady.

There are times in the earth's history well-known and marked, when old things have to pass away and give place to the new; a period of change, of breaking up—disintegration, disruption, derangement and confusion taking place—in all the realms of mind and of matter, elements struggling for supremacy; the new battling with the strongholds of the old; the old offering firm and determined resistance.

A faint semblance of this is seen in external Nature in the breaking up of dreary winter, manifested by wind and the storm cloud, preparatory to the ushering in of warm and genial spring. And just so sure as the ice and snow have to give way to give place to genial flowers and verdure, equally sure it is that the cold and rigid forms of the past, with their chilling, dreary and deadening influences, must give place to others, wherein dwell spiritual life, warmth, and an ever-increasing vitality, strength and beauty.

The time having now fully come through long ages of preparation, and all events having been fulfilled necessary to the development of the race up to the present point, man now stands anxious and expectant, looking to the bending heavens, awaiting tremulously for the down pouring of that long promised power, the earnest of whose coming has been given to every tongue and people through suffering ages, sustaining them as a bow of promise to do battle to the weary end, when they were to be released and surely delivered from the environment of false and distorted ideas, theories, modes of thought, rules of conduct, laws and customs born throughout the dark ages of ignorance, selfishness and superstition.

He who in the beginning said "let there be light, and there was light," has again spoken and said, let there be more light, and in obedience to that Omnipotent Voice bright robed messengers of light have come forth and are encouraging upon some quail, denizens of darkness, distorted thought, falsities and superstition, and with a power that cannot be resisted are bringing from their dark caverns and hiding places those who in their willful and obstinate persistent blindness, are seeking vainly to cling to that which must inevitably breed disorder, spiritual darkness and insanity. Light thus radiating from the beaming centre of an All Father's love, penetrating and curing the dark recesses generated by all the falsities of the past, must bring to the surface those stultified and misshapen forms, victims of pernicious teachings and example, which have sapped the inmost principle of life, instilling a virus poisoning body, mind and soul. "We war not," said one of old, "with flesh and blood, but with powers, principalities and spiritual wickedness in high places."

But the earth-plane is the arena upon which the great battle is to be fought, the terrible conflict between light and darkness, truth and error. The vast spiritual world stretches for ages back of us, beneath and all around us—a stupendous reservoir in which still exists all the essence and the animus of their pernicious education and experiences, and the poor deluded children of dogma, creed and example, all becoming more and more intensified and active by the light which is being poured in upon them, are calling upon the rocks and mountains to cover them to hide them from the presence of this power.

This vast spiritual world and world material are gravitating, or being drawn by the power of wisdom, nearer and in closer connections, the one blending and interpenetrating the other, making exchanges of the products of both, and the world of matter being negatively at least, than all this vast world of spirit, it must receive in a large measure and partake of that which is so powerfully impinged upon it. If the curtain were lifted, and that which is behind revealed to mortal eyes, they would stand appalled, and the wonder would not be why there are so many suffering from mental derangement and disorder, and myriad other ailments so prevalent at this time, but the wonder would be why there are not more affected.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and many others all over this fair country, are busy devoting their energies, spending their millions in multiplying and enlarging the abodes for these rapidly-increasing unfortunate ones, without taking a thought or appropriating a dollar in the direction of discovering the cause, or exerting any means for the prevention of this terrible scourge and pestilence stalking about at noon-day in their very midst. Spiritualists, who compose so large a share in the Commonwealth, cannot escape sharing largely in the responsibility for this condition of things. To them, as to none others, in this or any age of the world's history, has been given the means and opportunity to clearly perceive and know the subtle cause, and the power of staying this mighty tidal wave so noisily and so disastrously surging in with a constantly increasing force upon the intellects and consciences of men. There are many who have been called by the higher and more divinely exalted spiritual influences to be educated and trained to act and stand as bulwarks and towers of strength and safety against this great insidious tide of evil, through whom heavenly influences could be poured and transmitted to the subjugation, overcoming, teaching and exalting of all this degraded, frenzied mass of imperfectly individualized humanity.

They have taken their eyes from the one great grand purpose for which the phenomena are given, viz., the amelioration and the betterment of the condition of universal humanity, and fixed

their attention too much upon phenomena themselves, impelled too often by no higher motive than selfish ends or idle curiosity on the one hand, and nothing in too many cases but a sordid desire for popularity and sordid gains on the other. What wonder, or how could it be otherwise than that both investigator and medium should be overwhelmed in disappointment, perhaps disaster. The consequence of carelessly seeking, receiving and using these mediums gifts must necessarily be terrible. There are but two alternatives, and two only: either onward and upward, or backward and downward. On the one hand we go forth to deeds of usefulness and love, hand in hand with angels, constantly developing a nobler manhood and womanhood, strewn flowers of happiness and contentment along our pathway, or on the other hand settling back into unholiness, passions and all manner of debasing self-indulgences, drowning the pure white soul of our being in these muddy and turbulent waters, there to drink the bitter cup of anguish and remorse for an untold period of time over golden opportunities and gifts misused, despised and neglected, and valuable time wasted.

Having been born into these spheres of living, spiritual realities, through long years of prayer, and the suffering and tears of one who was given and revolved around and say side of the threefold capacity of companion, wife and mother, together we are now called to be the instruments, under angel guidance, to establish a Home and School for the rescue and treatment and education of those wanderers whom God shall see fit to gather into this fold.

We were sent from Boston, Westward, some four years ago by an influence we had no power or will to resist, and in which we had reason to have the utmost confidence, it having brought my companion from the strongholds of the Roman Catholic faith and after long disturbing influences, and myself from atheistic Materialism, and both of us from a low condition of health—physical wrecks. After having spent nearly all my living upon physicians, and been given over by them as being beyond their skill, I was snatched from the verge of the grave by angel hands. Both myself and wife having been restored to perfect and robust health by angel ministrations, we feel that we can safely trust them and become the willing instruments in their hands to aid in establishing surroundings through which they may extend the saving hand to many, many others. We are finally sent, after some three or four years delay, to the beautiful city of Denver, Colorado, which is now our home, and where we are directed to commence in a humble way to prepare at first a house and schoolhouse where the great teachers and healers can freely approach and administer to the stricken ones sent to their care and instructions. I have been sent back to Boston by them in furtherance of the object proposed. An Insane Asylum it will be outwardly called, but inwardly it will be a schoolhouse for the unfortunate. Those who are in sympathy with this movement, can address me for the present at No. 329 Tremont street, Boston.

J. D. RHYNS.

"THE INDEPENDENT SLATE-WRITING PHENOMENON."

To the Editor of the Transcript:

About a year ago the newspapers were full of attacks upon Mr. Henry Slade, a so-called "medium" for "independent slate-writing." Prof. E. Ray Lankester, of London, had, at an experimental sitting in that city, snatched away the medium and denominated him as a cheat. The evidences of this were wholly theatrical, and were rejected as insufficient by Messrs. Alfred R. Wallace, Dr. Carter Blake, Sergeant Cox, and some forty more men of science or of culture, who testified to the genuineness of the phenomenon. Notwithstanding this, Mr. Justice Flowers, of Bow street, before whom Slade was tried on Lankester's complaint, decided that the court could not go against "the regular course of nature"; that the pretence of spirit action was probably a fraud, and therefore, that though the testimony in Slade's favor from respectable persons was "overwhelming," he must regard him as gullible, and sentence him accordingly to "three months imprisonment at hard labor." All this for the infernal testimony of two persons only—Messrs. Lankester and Donkin.

From that decision an appeal was at once entered, and those Spiritualists of the United States who knew the phenomenon were genuine in a very short space of time raised the sum of two thousand dollars, and sent it to England to help their English brethren see to it that Slade was properly defended. At the new trial, January, 1877, Mr. Slade was released from further prosecution on some quail, denizens of darkness, distorted thought, falsities and superstition, and with a power that cannot be resisted are bringing from their dark caverns and hiding places those who in their willful and obstinate persistent blindness, are seeking vainly to cling to that which must inevitably breed disorder, spiritual darkness and insanity. Light thus radiating from the beaming centre of an All Father's love, penetrating and curing the dark recesses generated by all the falsities of the past, must bring to the surface those stultified and misshapen forms, victims of pernicious teachings and example, which have sapped the inmost principle of life, instilling a virus poisoning body, mind and soul. "We war not," said one of old, "with flesh and blood, but with powers, principalities and spiritual wickedness in high places."

But the earth-plane is the arena upon which the great battle is to be fought, the terrible conflict between light and darkness, truth and error. The vast spiritual world stretches for ages back of us, beneath and all around us—a stupendous reservoir in which still exists all the essence and the animus of their pernicious education and experiences, and the poor deluded children of dogma, creed and example, all becoming more and more intensified and active by the light which is being poured in upon them, are calling upon the rocks and mountains to cover them to hide them from the presence of this power.

This vast spiritual world and world material are gravitating, or being drawn by the power of wisdom, nearer and in closer connections, the one blending and interpenetrating the other, making exchanges of the products of both, and the world of matter being negatively at least, than all this vast world of spirit, it must receive in a large measure and partake of that which is so powerfully impinged upon it. If the curtain were lifted, and that which is behind revealed to mortal eyes, they would stand appalled, and the wonder would not be why there are so many suffering from mental derangement and disorder, and myriad other ailments so prevalent at this time, but the wonder would be why there are not more affected.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and many others all over this fair country, are busy devoting their energies, spending their millions in multiplying and enlarging the abodes for these rapidly-increasing unfortunate ones, without taking a thought or appropriating a dollar in the direction of discovering the cause, or exerting any means for the prevention of this terrible scourge and pestilence stalking about at noon-day in their very midst. Spiritualists, who compose so large a share in the Commonwealth, cannot escape sharing largely in the responsibility for this condition of things. To them, as to none others, in this or any age of the world's history, has been given the means and opportunity to clearly perceive and know the subtle cause, and the power of staying this mighty tidal wave so noisily and so disastrously surging in with a constantly increasing force upon the intellects and consciences of men. There are many who have been called by the higher and more divinely exalted spiritual influences to be educated and trained to act and stand as bulwarks and towers of strength and safety against this great insidious tide of evil, through whom heavenly influences could be poured and transmitted to the subjugation, overcoming, teaching and exalting of all this degraded, frenzied mass of imperfectly individualized humanity.

They have taken their eyes from the one great grand purpose for which the phenomena are given, viz., the amelioration and the betterment of the condition of universal humanity, and fixed

E. Watkins, of Cleveland, O., was making a brief professional stay.

[Mr. Sargent here rehearses the main facts of the séance substantially as printed over his signature in the Banner of Light for Sept. 29th, and concludes as follows:]

Now, if any of my readers can explain these phenomena, so direct, explicit and unequivocal, by any theory, excluding that of the operation of a supersensible energy or force, working intelligently on a material substance, I shall be pleased to be enlightened.

Dr. Carpenter warns us off from all belief in these demonstrable phenomena, on the ground that it is dangerous to meddle with what is opposed to "the common sense of educated mankind." But it has been well retorted that there was a time when every new discovery—the circulation of the blood, the motion of the earth around the sun, included—was contrary to what was then called common sense.

"There is nothing," says Broussais, "so brutally conclusive as a fact." A fact is a divine disclosure, and it must win in the long run. I can produce at least a hundred reputable witnesses from Boston and Portland who will testify to having witnessed in the case of Watkins, within the last three months, an equally conclusive case form, the phenomenon of independent slate-writing to which I here bear testimony.

"But any number of witnesses," says Carpenter, "cannot commend to the attention of a man of science what is rejected by our inherent sense of the improbability of the fact referred to." I am not surprised at the extreme anger (in which there is an element of fear) manifested by Mr. Leslie Stephens in the Fortnightly Review, and by Mr. Frederic Harrison in the Nineteenth Century, toward what they both stigmatize as this "disgusting subject of Spiritualism." It tends and annihilates their godless and Sadducean systems. It makes perfectly credible the appearance of Christ, after the dissolution of his external body, to his disciples in the room with closed doors.

Let us distinguish between science and men of science. Men are fallible; science is infallible. Lord Bacon could not accept the Copernican system; and yet it is now admitted as a fact.

Messrs. Stephens, Harrison, Hammond and Carpenter rebel at our proofs of "independent slate writing"; and yet it must, at no distant period, be admitted as a fact.

EPES SARGENT.

No. 68 Moreland street, Boston, Mass.

DO EMBODIED SPIRITS EVER LEAVE THE FORM AND CONTROL MEDIUMS?

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

I have seen and read much of the case of Frank Baxter and the Abe Bunter circumstance. I do not propose to reconcile or explain the matter, as I know nothing about it except what I have read in the Banner. I am not personally acquainted with Frank Baxter, nor with St. Paul. I only know them by their works and reputation. They both have my entire confidence as mediums controlled and used by invisible spirits. I have no doubt of the integrity of either. St. Paul did his work nobly, boldly and fearlessly in his day, and has gone on to his reward, enjoying the compensation of his fidelity to the subject he so boldly maintained.

Mr. Baxter, I trust, will be as true and faithful and as useful in his day and service as his faculties and abilities are capable of being made by the wisdom and powers that control them. Whether less or more than that of St. Paul, he will be as sure of the reward due for his fidelity and service to God and mankind as St. Paul.

Spiritualists should learn, as well as others, that we do not possess all knowledge, and, more than this, that, compared with what is unknown, we are very ignorant. We should not doubt the existence of a fact because we cannot comprehend the subject.

Every day and every year reveals something to the true Spiritualist that he did not know before, if he keeps awake to what comes to the observation of mankind. I suppose that the wisest men among us fall as much short of knowing all knowledge yet to be known as they do of filling all unoccupied space in the universe.

We understand very little of spirit, of spirit-life, of spirit-ability, either within or outside of the human form. In 1855 I lived in 20 Park Row, Chicago, Ill. We were holding weekly circles then at my house, at the request of the well-known spirit of John Quincy Adams, ex-President, who attended and superintended the spirit side of our circles, which he promised to do when he requested us to hold the circles. Thomas Gales Forster and Cora L. V. Scott, before her marriage to Dr. Hatch, were both at the time stopping in Buffalo, lecturing there or in the vicinity. At one of our evening circles in Chicago there was a sudden apparent spirit stir, and in a moment the medium was controlled by an Indian girl spirit, called "Shannie," whom we well knew by her uniform address and manner, and she introduced us to the spirits of Cora L. V. Scott and Thomas Gales Forster. They both manifested their presence, and declared that their physical beings were then controlled by other spirits, lecturing, and with "Shannie," as an experiment, they came to our circle. They were in much haste to return lest some bad effect might ensue from their absence; so as soon as they had fully established their identity to our circle all left at once in apparent haste. This is a remarkable instance of a spirit existing in the form leaving it and manifesting itself after the manner of disembodied spirits.

Again, upon the 75th and 76th pages of the book entitled "God Dealing with Slavery," an instance is briefly related, which is as follows: Dr. Franklin, through a writing medium in Boston, wrote to me at Chicago, about the 1st of December, 1861, just after the war of the rebellion commenced, requesting me to come to Boston as soon as convenient. I did so some days before the 20th. On the 21st Dr. Franklin requested Mrs. Parmelee, Mrs. Lull—both mediums—and myself to unite in forming a circle for continuous sittings on Thursday evenings, for permanent uses and purposes, declaring at the time that our chemical or magnetic forces, brought together, formed a battery that they (the spirits) could use to great advantage in the control of mind and men, and which they desired for the purpose of reaching the mind of the President and men in authority in our national affairs, who were conducting the details of the war.

We obeyed the request and formed the circle under spirit instruction and guidance. There were present more than sixty spirits of our former most eminent men and statesmen, who gave their earth names and requested their records with the record of this "circle of three." Several of them spoke of the object and usefulness of the circle in aid of public affairs, as an instrument for the use of controlling spirits; of much importance.

Dr. Franklin instructed the circle to meet and have a sitting every third Thursday evening in Mrs. Parmelee's parlor, in house 1040 Washington street, Boston, the hour from eight to nine o'clock. To my remark that, living in Chicago, I could not be present at the sittings, he replied to me, "I wish you to go by yourself on the

same evening, at a corresponding hour (making allowance for difference in time), and fix your mind, thought, will, and inner forces upon this place and circle, and so hold yourself for the hour, and it will serve us the same purpose as if you were here in full person." I obeyed this injunction fully with all my consciousness at the circle. Both Mrs. Parmelee and Mrs. Lull, being mediums and clairvoyants, informed me that I was there at the circle, a spirit, as clear and distinct in form, manner, and expression as any of the disembodied spirits, who were numerous, that attended the circle.

I have frequently heard of other cases where the spirits of living persons have been seen and identified. I suppose it has become well established fact that spirits of persons in the form not unfrequently, under some extraordinary intensity, do appear, as other spirits, at any distance from the body to which it is the life and essence, under conditions that are peculiarly effective. St. Paul's spirit went into the third heavens and had conscious recognition of wonders that were unlawful for him to utter at that time. St. John was "carried away in the spirit." The bodies of these two persons were resting in torpid dreamless sleep. Neither of them performed these feats from their own effort or volition, some power above acting upon them.

1 Kings, xlii: 23: "Now, therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee." Read the whole chapter. This case shows clearly how lying spirits got into the mouths of God's prophets of old, and how the same might occur in the case of Frank Baxter and Abe Bunter, without any agency or fault of the medium.

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A large portion of the work is devoted to the consideration of the Bible, and the writer explains what in many places seems to be the original meaning of the words and phrases which are now translated in the light of modern thought.

The story of Jesus is also treated at great length, and

ments of the great fact of immortality, in words full of sweetness and glory and of a divine philosophy. They reach toward a larger ideal of existence here and hereafter, that shall meet the demands of reason, conscience and intuition, be confirmed by experience, respond to our tenderest affections, satisfy our highest aspirations, and so light up our daily path that we may have more strength and wisdom, more truth and tenderness, for the conduct of life. They may give hope and cheer to the mourner and desponding; by glimpses of the Better Land through the gates ajar, and voices from those "not lost, but gone before."

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