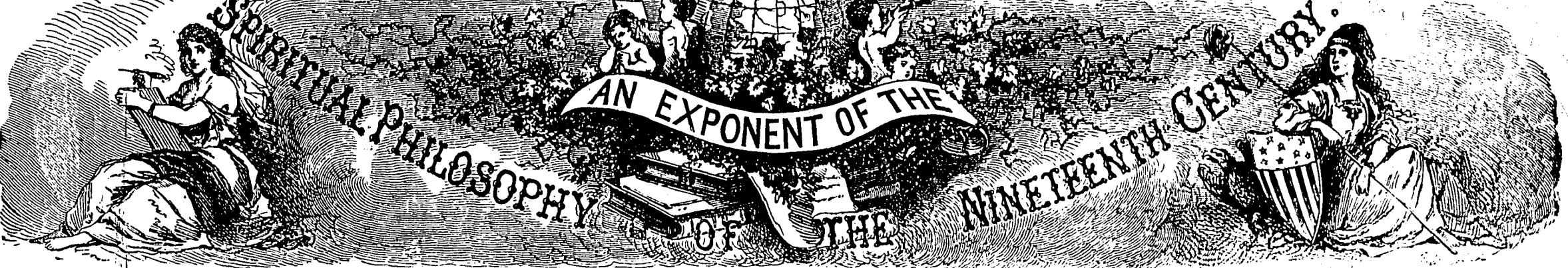


BANNER OF LIGHT.



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Free Thought.

SPEAKING MEDIUMS.

NO. II.

BY C. O. POOLE.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

In the first place, let me state that during my twenty three years' acquaintance with Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond, I have continually entertained kind and fraternal sympathies for her, and particularly for her work and career.

I do not doubt that at certain moments she is very inspirable, and, under favoring circumstances, receives spasmodic inspiration direct from the inhabitants of the other world. But I long ago discovered that, owing to her earthly surroundings, and varying conditions of receptivity, such inspiration was exceedingly fluctuating and unreliable. As a consequence her public teachings are, alas, often confused and erroneous.

With the love I have for the Harmonical Philosophy, I cannot remain silent and see its influence impaired and undermined by her partially illuminated utterances.

In her late lecture, she says (see Banner of Light, March 2, 1878):

"The Harmonical Philosophy is an intellectual statement, if we may use the term, of the spiritual forces of the universe and their contact with matter in the form of human organization; an intelligent statement of the natural process of death and the effect which that process has upon beings here and hereafter, and an absolute recognition that not only the forces of nature that are visible and palpable to science, but the forces that are invisible and impalpable, are still governed by law, and may be the subject of human study and become the sources of human guidance."

As an impromptu definition of this philosophy, the foregoing will do quite well.

It is followed by the allegation that—"If there is to be a criticism, it will come later, but it will not come upon the impetus which governed the first works of this youthful seer, that impetus being a genuine inspiration."

Correct, Mrs. Richmond, and in accordance with a definition of "genuine inspiration" on page 38 of Nature's Divine Revelations, reading thus:

"The medium existing between thought and thought, between mind and mind; is the only active, pervading medium which I am dependent on for the conception of thought, and for the perception of all things of a refined, ethereal or spiritual constitution." Again, same page, "I am not impelled or impressed by the thoughts or feelings of a foreign person, though I am coexistent of them through the medium above termed ethereal."

For over two columns of her discourse we thus have Mrs. R. on the air-line double-track road of truth, impelled by the immortal principle of "genuine inspiration."

What a pity that the inspirable woman should jump the track and land her precious subjects in the quagmire of superstition.

Many portions of her address which follow are so irrelevant, contradictory and absurd that they might be disposed of as was the argument of the lawyer in court: Says the judge, after listening an hour to the counsel: "In the commencement of your speech you correctly stated the law of your case, but your argument as to the principles upon which the law is grounded is foreign to the subject and ridiculous."

How can the following be reconciled with Mrs. R.'s premises above quoted, and especially with the facts as known and related by the seer? "We believe the first volume or work, comprising three books in 'Nature's Divine Revelations' and the five volumes of the 'Great Harmonia,' were under the direct inspiration of spiritual beings, who revealed to him through his clairvoyant powers the various conditions of spiritual and human life therein portrayed, and the needs and requirements of humanity in connection with spiritual existence."

These books were published during the years intervening between 1846 and 1860.

As to their origin and authority, the author's "evidence is the best and highest that the nature of the case will admit of." On page 375 of the 3d vol. Great Harmonia, it is written:

"I am regarded by some minds as the founder of the Harmonical Philosophy; and this idea is what I now desire to correct. The authority of this philosophy is Truth; it is not based upon the revelations of 'Davis,' but upon the revelations of Nature. All truth may be found in Nature, and in the nature of man, because God lives in Nature; therefore when we study Nature we study God; therefore, too, in proportion as we comprehend Nature, in the same proportion we

comprehend God. The terms revelation and development are synonymous."

In the year 1857 Mr. Davis published his autobiography.

Herein he relates his own wonderful experiences of growth into a self-centered and independent clairvoyant.

In the fortieth chapter is a graphic description of his process and methods of arriving at truth, concluding thus:

"And, in view of the foregoing reliable explanation, how glaring becomes the misapprehension of those who advertise my lectures as 'given through the mediumship of A. J. Davis,' as if my mind (while in the superior condition) were an insensible, unintelligent and passive substance, or spout, through which disembodied personages express or promulgate their own specific opinions! This is an egregious error—a most unwholesome misrepresentation. The special influence and guardianship of spiritual beings are interpreted, so to speak, into the independently-written chapters of individual existence. Such is an immutable law of humanity."

"And thus, amid the trials of life and the changes of death, the consolation is, not that we have been playing the part of insensate automatons under incessant inspirations from spirits, but that we are self-existent and responsible beings; and that, aided now and then by these providential agents, we have at last climbed to the summit of that rudimentary mountain which enables us to step upon the less rugged acclivities of a yet higher and more happy world."

And again, in March last Mr. Davis published his intensely interesting and instructive book, "Views of Our Heavenly Home." Section 5, in the Appendix to that work, entitled, "Diversity of Spiritual Gifts without Antagonism," is invaluable reading for Spiritualists just at this time. The subject of the "Superior Condition and the Medium State," is pointedly treated by making quotations from his first work, "Divine Revelations." Near the conclusion he says:

"You still insist that my mind must be instructed by some particular 'band of spirits.' If this was the truth, I would be most happy to announce the fact. But you read on pages 42 and 43 of 'Divine Revelations,' this unqualified additional explanation: 'When I pass off [that is, rise above the oppressive sense of a physical body] into the independent state of clairvoyance to receive impressions, I receive them as the knowledge of the essence of the substance which I had a previous desire to investigate.' THERE I DO NOT HAVE ANY COUNSELLOR OR INFORMER. . . . I do not observe entities as they would be naturally known to exist. One broad extensive light pervades all the second sphere, which 'light is the medium of perception and association.' Further on (see page 44) you read: 'It is impossible by words to convey a full and adequate conception of the manner in which I arrive at truth. My INFORMATION IS NOT DERIVED FROM ANY PERSONS THAT EXIST IN THE SPHERE INTO WHICH MY MIND ENTERS; BUT IT (the information) is the result of a law of truth emanating from the Great Positive Mind, and pervading all spheres of existence.' In accordance with this law 'truth is attracted to and is received by the mind.'"

Now Mrs. Richmond is perfectly cognizant of the uniform and positive testimony of Mr. Davis concerning the phenomena of his spiritual illumination. Therefore, in spreading before the world the egregious falsehood contained in the last quoted extract from her address, her presumption amounts to malevolence.

But here comes an old and familiar acquaintance.

Over twenty years ago it was the pet theory of the then youthful Cora that the spirit can leave its earthly body, roam *ad libitum* around this and the spirit-land, gather knowledge and happiness, and then return to occupy its earthly tenement.

Her ripened womanhood nurses this childish fancy, and the worthless delusion is now fathered on the seer, thus:

"We believe that some of the later works have been the result of his vision into spirit-land, and what he considers independent clairvoyant conditions; namely, that the spirit having become accustomed to and found the way, can visit the spirit land as well while an occupant of the physical body as of the spiritual body, and that this does not necessitate the control of another spirit, but he may meet other spirits on the way and sojourn with them as with friendly convocations."

Hallucinations of this kind were repeatedly inflicted by her and others upon the people of the city of Buffalo, near a quarter of a century ago. During the girlhood of Mrs. R. she lectured for nearly two years in that city with Thomas Gales Forster, both speaking as trance or spirit-mediums. They taught that a disembodied controlling spirit displaced the spirit in the human body, and the spirit thus ejected visited Niagara Falls and other places, "meeting other spirits on the way and sojourning with them as with friendly convocations."

Mr. Forster was then in the full vigor of manhood, a large-brained man and a splendid iconoclast, of the Ingersoll type. I then believed, and have not changed my opinion, that the mind of the young Cora was influenced by the convictions of this eloquent and determined co-laborer.

At a meeting of Spiritualists in that city, in those days, I made an urgent protest against this childish and absurd doctrine. It seemed to me then, as it does now, that any person with wit sufficient to distinguish an oak tree from a tree-toad, can detect the utter fallacy of such teachings, which de throne reason and subvert some of the vital principles of the Harmonical Philosophy.

A critical essay by Prof. William Denton, entitled "Hindrances to the Spread of Spiritualism," has just been published. The learned gentleman says: "Another cause that has operated against Spiritualism has been the great names that have been paraded before the world, and that have been made to father the smallest kind of writing and talk." He then proceeds to show, by a scholarly and analytical criticism of some of Mrs. Richmond's utterances, that the claims for her special and direct spirit-

control cannot be supported. He very pertinently maintains that "when discourses containing such sentences are placed before thinkers and critics as the veritable language of men who were masters of our tongue, we need not be surprised that they turn from Spiritualism, which is supposed to endorse them, with feelings of supreme disgust." And he concludes thus:

"I am satisfied, however, that at times and for short periods departed spirits can and do make persons their mechanical mouth-pieces. But, judging from what I have seen and heard for the last thirty years, I am also satisfied that this is very rarely done, and still more rarely by any spirits of superior intelligence. The chance of being misrepresented by the ordinary medium is so great, it is probable that very few intelligent spirits are willing to run the risk of communicating even where they have the ability. The fanaticism, the folly, and the licentiousness of many of its believers and promulgators, who represent it as the fog does the rising sun that reveals it. It will eventually unite science and religion—at present appearing as bitter foes, owing to the ignorance of their advocates. It will enlarge the boundaries of science till it include all that is fundamental in religion, destroy in all the fear of death by giving them undoubted assurance of future life, and prove itself the most beneficent angel that ever came from heaven to earth to uplift and bless despondent souls."

Mrs. Nellie J. T. Brigham, a speaking medium now lecturing in this city, quite recently, in answer to a question, stated to her audience that: "Obsession is a fact, although sometimes people have imagined its existence where it did not exist. It is true that persons can be obsessed or controlled by spirits whose natures are undeveloped. To guard against the evil effects of obsession, keep yourselves physically in the best possible condition."

If obsession by spirits can occur, as taught by Mrs. Brigham and Mrs. Richmond, then human experience is a cheat, and our legal and medical jurisprudence a net work of oppression, tyranny and murder.

As a lover of truth, of progress, and my fellow men—as a believer for thirty years in the basic facts of Spiritualism so elevating, I again protest against these diabolical incantations.

New York, June 9th, 1878.

BASTIAN AND TAYLOR—TESTING MEDIUMS.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

Permit me to express, through the columns of the Banner, my thanks to Messrs. Bastian and Taylor for the stand they have taken in regard to the testing of mediums by men who are apparently totally ignorant of the exquisitely delicate conditions that are required for the successful prosecution of their angel-inspired gift, and that of all other mediums for "spirit manifestations."

For years, as you know, I have labored to convince mediums of all classes to submit to no tests but those their guides and guardians see fit to give from the spirit side, and to suffer no person to enter a circle for materialization (the most advanced and delicate of all other modes of manifestation) without the express consent of the guides of the medium. Let this rule be adopted and enforced to the letter by all mediums, and I believe, nay, I think I may say without presumption that I know that our spirit friends will soon be able to raise up scores upon scores of mediums for materialization through whom they will give tests from their side of existence so unmistakable that thousands will be converted to a belief and knowledge of our divine philosophy in its fullness where there are now hundreds. Let all of our mediums from this day forward resolve, in spite of the alternative of starvation, with which they are threatened, to take the stand that the persecuted Bastian and Taylor have done, and I am sure that the spirit world will never allow them to regret the step.

Some days before I heard of the *coup d'état* by which a small body of fallible men (to say the least) have recently attempted to obtain rule over both the mundane and spiritual spheres, and dictate imperative conditions to both men and angels under the threat of immediate and unmeasured denunciation if they do not comply with their demands, I was told by Theodore Parker, in the presence of an excellent trance medium in Philadelphia, unknown to the public, that there was a movement, inaugurated that would, unless the sincere friends of the cause bestirred themselves, put back the progress of Modern Spiritualism for years.

Materializing mediums have long enough suffered reproach and every species of contumely and imposition at the hands of a class of investigators whose minds have been so trained by education, or constituted by nature, as to totally disqualify them from appreciating spirit-laws or things, and whose presence in materializing circles, as I long since discovered, is the occasion of nearly every fraudulent manifestation they charge upon the helpless, unconscious instruments of the unseen powers.

THOMAS R. HAZARD.

Vaughan, R. I., June 16th, 1878.

In viewing death with a systematic eye, it brings around the spirit scenes of beauty and of grandeur different from what we are taught by priests or preachers. For my part I find the spirit-world peopled, and the people understand each other. There are none of the lower vices, such as belong to mortals, in the spirit-land where I am dwelling. Had I known fully and understood what my surroundings would be after death, I should never have had a doubt concerning the wisdom and the beneficence of our Creator. I stand at times almost awed with the beauties and the strong realities of the spirit-world, though it is so natural I feel as if I had been a dweller here all my life. There is nothing to mar the pleasure or advancement of the spirit; it has powers of unfoldment, and teachers to guide and control the mind. As I see it, it will be well for all to try and learn something of their destiny—something of that which awaits them after death.—*Spirit Martha Wadsworth.*

Letter from New York.

The Death of Bryant—The Romance of Common Life—Psychometry and Maud E. Lord.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

The death of Wm. Cullen Bryant at 21 West Sixteenth street, New York, June 12th, at 5.35 A. M., interests every lover of literature. His death resulted from a fall owing to dizziness produced by exposure of his bare head to the full blaze of the sun at Central Park, when delivering his admirable address at the unveiling of Mazzini's bust. At his advanced age this exposure was more than he could bear, for the last time I met Mr. Bryant his presence painfully impressed me with a sense of the decay of age, and notwithstanding all that was said of his physical vigor and preservation, I felt sure that he was not long for this world.

In this death we have a very important hygienic lesson against the exposure of the head to the rays of the sun, which many persons need. This lesson was regarded at the interment of Mr. Bryant's remains at Roslyn, when Mr. Bellows and the spectators standing in the sunshine wore their hats. Even when the head is not exposed to the direct rays solar heat is often dangerous, and we had some mild cases of sun stroke during the recent warm weather, when the thermometer was little if any above 80°. Romantic people are not aware that even the direct rays of the moon are injurious when they fall on the bare head.

Reflecting upon the character of Mr. Bryant, we may ask why it is that men whose genius should be accompanied by inspiration and should fraternize with the spirit world have not become its herald in the present effort of the invisible world to reach and elevate humanity. Why have not Bryant and Longfellow spoken out those interior truths which the world most needs?

The truth is, the spirit of this materialistic age is adverse to the purest thought, and our poets are of the age, not above it. They have not had the power to rise into the Diviner life and freer expression which becomes a blessing to humanity. In the case of Mr. Bryant the range of his thoughts was too limited, and the intuitive faculty was almost absent. As the poet Steadman says, "Bryant regarded Nature's phenomenal aspect, careless of scientific realities—what he lost was the wide and various range opened by the endless avenues of new-found truth." His style of thought was neither broad nor intuitive, and his own poetic confessions hint at some of his limitations. Some sixty years ago he resolved to renounce poetry and devote himself to law, which he expressed as follows:

"I broke the spell that held me long,
The dear, dear witchery of song,
I said the poet's life was
Still waste my prime of years no more,
For poetry, though heavenly born,
Consists with poverty and scorn."

Mr. Bryant has not consorted with poverty, but has lived in the sphere of success and wealth and of bitter political strife. In his poem on the death of his wife he said:

"For me the sorrows in which I dwell
Strike at the core of the heart, as heat the scroll;
And with its loss I feel the fire of hell
Has left its frightful scar upon my soul."

When shall we have men of genius and men of talent to command success, with sufficient divine fire in their souls to rise above the all-engulfing power of mammon, and teach the age instead of being controlled by it?

The "spirit of the age" does not make truly great men, for such men lead the age to higher truth. The age, or rather the general sentiment of the age, has always been dull, blind, and fatuous. In physical matters men are infinitely gullible, in spiritual matters infinitely stupid. The cause in both instances is the same: gross ignorance of both physical and spiritual science. But for a few enlightened and progressive minds society would be stationary.

The possession of wealth, talent, or literary power is a trust for the benefit of humanity, which few of the wealthy and gifted realize. In my last interview with Mr. Bryant he rehearsed with accurate memory some of the scenes which occurred in his presence when I first presented my novel experiments on the brain, in New York, in 1842-3, and then somewhat pensively addressed to myself the familiar lines:

"Tricks would you teach to save a shilling land,
All hear, none aid you, and few understand."

Ah, thought I, though politeness forbade the expression of the thought, how candid is your confession that you do not care to aid or understand the highest truths of your time!

"Every one," said Mr. Bellows in his funeral discourse, "must notice that great immediate popularity is not a good augury for enduring fame." This is true of the higher efforts of mind by which the world is taught, but not of poetry. Like painting, it appeals at once to the universal sense of beauty and has immediate acceptance. Mr. Bryant was just as Emerson said, "a true painter of the face of his country and the sentiments of his own people." As Steadman remarks, "There is a sweet analogy between the poetry of Bryant and the broad, cool canvases of the founders of our landscape school—the works of Durand, Cole, Kinsett, Inness." The beauty of Bryant's poetry was instantly recognized even when he was a boy, and will carry it to posterity, like the marvelous sculptures of the Greeks.

Our newspapers are so regularly filled with doctored details of frauds, defalcations, robberies, assaults, murders, wife-poisoning, divorces, domestic misery, starvation, and suicides, that it is quite refreshing to find two beautiful incidents in one day's paper. I refer to Louis Drake and Lulu Prange.

Mr. Drake, driving his buggy on the road near Paterson, N. J., saw the runaway horses and wagon that were dashing along the highway

toward a little girl about to be run over, when he leaped from his buggy, and snatched the child to safety, but was himself knocked down almost insensible by the concussion. After receiving the thanks of the father, (Mr. Hatton) and resting a few hours, he was able to return to New York, where he was received by his admiring friends, and presented with a \$250 diamond pin, in response to which Mr. Drake has invited them to a champagne breakfast at the Warren Hotel in Sixth Avenue.

Lulu Prange, a sprightly girl of about twenty years, of German descent, was walking in Clinton Avenue, Brooklyn, when her pocket-book was gently taken from her hand by a man. It had seven dollars in it, and a valued ring. He retreated, and was pursued by Miss Lulu along DeKalb, Washington and Lafayette Avenues, when, meeting at Waverly Avenue a butcher's cart, she jumped in, urging the driver and prodding the horse, until they overtook the fugitive, when she jumped out, and recovered her pocket-book from the frightened fugitive, who was now surrounded by a crowd. His pallid and despairing looks, however, aroused her sympathy, and showed that he was no common thief. When he told her that he had stolen for the first time to help his starving wife and children, she saw that he was sincere, and with tears in her eyes told him that she would not surrender him to the police till she went to his house to learn the truth of his story. Ordering away the crowd of boys, she went with her prisoner and Alderman Donovan to his humble home, and found his tidy wife and two small handsome children, in clean apartments, destitute of food and of everything that could be pawned to prolong life. The repentant thief, with his children on his knees, his poor wife and Miss Prange, mingled his tears as she forgave him, and divided the contents of her pocket book with them. Four sturdy policemen at length forced their way in, and in spite of Lulu's protestations and entreaties, bore him off to the station-house. Meanwhile Miss Lulu attended to the wants of the wife and children, and pleaded so pathetically for him before the judge, that he was let off on his own recognizance, the sentence being suspended indefinitely.

Hollis appears to have been a man of good character, and very respectable connections, accidentally reduced by losses to extreme poverty, which he concealed from his friends. He could not get work enough to procure food. How many are there thus pining away in our overcrowded cities, while the rich lands of the South and West invite their occupation. Where are the philanthropists who will help them to emigrate?

Psychometry was pleasantly illustrated recently in the case of Maud E. Lord. A gentleman called upon a lady—one of the brightest in our delightful Psychometric Society—with an autograph upon which he asked her opinion, of which he took notes. The description was quite satisfactory, except that the lady said, This person is living. The gentleman believed she was dead, and said to her, This is Maud E. Lord; do you still think she is living? The lady reiterated her conviction that Mrs. Lord was living, and would soon be heard from, and a few days verified her opinion, which was given nearly a week before Mrs. L.'s return. JOS. RODES BUCHANAN.

No 1 Livingston Place, June 17th, 1878.

Psychometry and Spirit Materialization.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

Thinking your readers who are interested in Prof. J. Rodas Buchanan's science of psychometry, and in spirit materialization, might be interested in the following psychometrical examination of a lock of hair, cut from the head of a materialized form—which the writer identified—at one of Mrs. Sever's sances more than a year ago, I send it for publication.

Having reason to believe that a lady friend—a fine medium, as well as a remarkably accurate reader of characters of persons met—might be a good psychometrist, I placed in her hand, face down, one at a time, some dozen photographs of males and females, all of whose characters she correctly read. Being pleased with the above experiment, a few evenings afterwards I submitted to the psychometer a lock of human hair, enclosed in paper, and received a perfect delineation of the character of the person from whose head the hair was cut. A lock of hair from a spirit materialization, under the same conditions, was then given to the lady, with the following result:

"What is there here that belongs to two persons? They are opposite in temperament—nothing alike. One has a strong will; the other does not have much firmness. I don't know—there is a mixture. One of these persons is very easily influenced. One of these persons is in some place she is not in the habit of visiting—not familiar with; might be the other person's home. There is some attraction: this is the reason why one of the persons is there. She would not otherwise be attracted to the place. It required a great effort to come there. Funny idea; not acquainted, and yet they seem to be a part of each other. I get this. If you should tell people about it, few would believe it."

I will not take up space to comment, but leave the reader to draw his own conclusions.

Salem, Mass., June, 1878.

The temple of Ypsambul, in Nubia, is cut out of a solid rock, and is of vast dimensions. It was found four colossal figures sixty-five feet high, twenty-five feet across the shoulders, the face seven feet, and the ear about a yard.

Scenograph. The Scenograph is a Belgian invention, in the shape of a small photographic camera mounted on a cane. The negative being prepared beforehand, it is only necessary to place a plant, an insect, or any other object in the focus of the instrument for a minute or so to obtain a correct representation. This can be developed at leisure.

TO BOOK-BUYERS.
The attention of book-buyers is called to the fact that the *Banner of Light* is now published by the *Bookstore of the Banner of Light*, No. 10 Montgomery Street, corner of Province Street, Lower Floor.

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Banner of Light.

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Cecilianth.
Cecil—an individual who is promulgating the country under the name of high-sounding title of "The Prince of Mediums," does not, it seems, with hands in every place toward which his "all-conquering" steps are directed. For instance, Norway, May, seems to have been a place impregnable to his assault. A correspondent writing from that town recently gives the result of his appearance there in the following words:

"Prof. A. A. Cecil, who makes great pretensions to perform and expose all the physical phenomena of Spiritualism, has lately given two entertainments in this village to small audiences. His agent hired the hall where he exhibited for fifteen dollars for the two nights, but said the receipts were so light he could not afford to pay so much, and threatened dire vengeance upon Norway, because a deduction was not made; he even went so far as to threaten to never come this way again. How sad indeed must be the fate of the poor town if the said renowned 'expositor' should forever remain away."

As an explanation of Spiritualism he was a complete failure. His audience would never have guessed that his performances had any connection with Spiritualism, if he had not told them so. As a sleight-of-hand operator he fell far below Capt. Thomas, who was here a short time since. Without the lever of Spiritualism to lift by, this exciting curiosity in some hands, his so-called "tricks" would degenerate into after-schools.

Another correspondent, writing us from Brunswick, Me., bears witness to the fact that the exhibitions of Cecil and his assistant in that town demonstrated that the promises made in the lavishly advertised "The Prince" to show let-ter to the arm after the manner of Foster, to produce the moral phenomena claimed by many witnesses to be seen by them in presence of Mrs. Thayer, to introduce before the audience materialized spirit forms in a strong light, were not realized. The show proved to the writer that Cecil & Co. were good at rope-tying, etc., and had the gift of clairvoyance, which they endeavored to explain as mind-reading mind, a la Brown, but thinks their efforts did not harm in Brunswick to the cause they sought to benefit.

A gentleman doing business in Franklin, N. H., refers to the performances of Cecil at Burke Hall, in the following fashion:

"The Professor advertised largely, with floating angels on flaming handbills, and drew quite a large audience. He went through the rope-trick, and explained that he hoisted his hands by slipping the knots in the rope, which he was enabled to do by the peculiar position in which he held his hands, and arms while being tied. He next performed the handkerchief and coat-trick, he cleared himself of the handkerchief and threw the coat off of one of our citizens while the latter's hands held the Professor's hand firmly, as he says. One of our citizens asked for an explanation of these performances, but the glib Professor replied, 'Oh, you do not understand the science of the spirit-world, and you are not as I am. I just want to tell you that, yes, I can do it, but I have no explanation of it, nor afterwards.' His nature, it is shown, was unimpaired. The Professor made money here, but no converts against the spiritual theory. His failure to explain the handkerchief and coat-tricks left his audience dissatisfied with the performance. Several who would not have attended a regular spiritualist test, saw him here, and they previously believed was true, and are now in doubt as to the power and intelligence which produced the results. Most people here think that a portion of his performances are the work of the spirits, while the balance are merely clumsy imitations of his own invention."

We have heretofore refrained from speaking of "Prince" Cecil and his peripatetic "entertainment" to any great extent, regarding him as an evil who carried with him his own cure, but in this instance from our usual custom, in obedience to the urgently expressed wishes of friends residing in the above named and other towns which he has visited in the course of his perambulations, and who desire us to put the public on their guard in the premises. Spiritualists residing in localities where he for the time being rears his gorgeous edifice should remember that there is nothing of real worth to be seen at his exhibitions which cannot be met with in presence of genuine media, who are really working for the upbuilding of the cause, and skeptics, "Orthodox societies," "clergyman," etc., who seek to intrude his vagaries into their systems of thought should bear in mind that they do so at the risk of harvesting for examination the tares of simulation instead of the sure wheat of genuine phenomena.

The Great Labor Question.

There are symptoms on every hand, and more and more abundantly daily, that the relations of industry and its employing capital are to be a justed everywhere, and at no distant day. The prolongation of the hard times has naturally done much to precipitate it, and will hasten the solution of the problem. What is known as Communism in this country is interpreted to imply the forcible equalization of property, and the leveling of all conditions. That would be wholly wrong as an experiment, and would defeat the very end for which the organization exists. There is clearly nothing to be gained by adopting violent methods. They merely defeat their own object. Violence, and everything that conducts to violence, is to be frowned upon and denounced. Ideas are not sown in the furrows made by the sword, and if they were they would not take root.

It unfortunately happens, however, that human selfishness refuses to take note of the complaints made against it until it has to pay a fearful cost for its neglect. The people of a country like this cannot be expected to stand by in silence and see the rich growing richer, and the poor growing poorer, without an expression of their views on the injustice of the matter. It is wholly against the spirit of our free and equal professions. The popular creed here is that all men are to have a fair chance—not that the many are to be owned by the few. And it is a great deal better to discuss matters now than to let them drift us along with them until the cost surpasses what it otherwise would. There is no mistake whatever that the labor question has got to be debated, and that soon, and in the halls of legislation as well as before the people. There can be no permanent prosperity or peace with a population largely embraced in the pauper class. We cannot as a free people afford to countenance Communism on the one hand, or the One Man Power on the other.

A correspondent of the Daily Express, Terre Haute, Ind., of a late date, states that at a séance given the evening before by Laura Morgan, "the medium was handcuffed, and otherwise manacled and shackled to an extent that rendered her entirely helpless under the crucial and 'fraud-proof' conditions. Before the close five apparitions appeared at the curtain, several shaking hands with friends, by whom they were recognized. The séance was attended by eight persons, made up of home citizens and visitors who are here for the purpose of attending the séances."

What is the Duty of the Hour?

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

In view of the disturbed and unsettled condition of affairs connected with what for want of a more definite term has come to be designated Modern Spiritualism, the friends of that new and momentous teaching concerning the future or spirit life can ask themselves no question of greater import than the one propounded. It is now a little more than thirty years since a series of facts became known, which demonstrated beyond all question that, after what is called death, the sentient, living and thinking principle or essence of the human organism continues to enjoy a rational and an indefinitely prolonged individuality. These facts, the un doubted results or effects of purely natural causes, were, as all such facts are, so simple and plain that their occurrence was readily by minds of the most common standard of intelligence. Being facts that had relation to the instruction and welfare of all earth's children, it was quite natural that they should occur through channels that would place them within the reach of all who would seek and be willing to receive them. In the whole range of human experience no class of facts were ever known to have occurred which were attested by the hand of nature so clearly as are the various phenomena which constitute the indisputable foundation of Modern Spiritualism.

Why, then, it may well be asked, have these facts been so persistently antagonized or ignored by a large proportion of the people among whom they have occurred? When this question is correctly answered, "the duty of the hour" will have become plain.

Beginning with the earliest dawn of history, and following man down through all the mutations and stages of his progress as an individual or social being to the present time, we find no period when the human race has not been ranged in two classes, one of which embraces those who claim to have discovered and to possess the truths which concerned the masses to know; and the other, and by far the more numerous class, those who acknowledged that claim and passively followed the lead and guidance of the former class. It is true, these two grand classes were each subdivided into numerous orders or sects, all of which, however, were moved and controlled by the same governing power. This general statement is as applicable to the present state of the human race as it ever was to the most barbarous age of which we possess any knowledge; especially in relation to things which appertain to the destiny of the sentient essence of organized life. Marked now, as in all eras of the past, are prone to seek in their sensations surroundings the key to unlock the exhaustless treasury of infinite knowledge, visions of which have flitted before the interior sight of every rational being.

Trammelled and weighed down by the material form with which it is connected, the soul of man finds it most difficult to realize that it will exist, or think, feel and act at any future period, disconnected from or independent of a precisely similar material organism. Hence, in nearly all the religious systems of which we have any knowledge in which the immortality of the soul was recognized, it was claimed that the immediate or ultimate resurrection of the material body which the soul had occupied previous to death would take place, and be restored to the latter as its eternal accompaniment. Hence, also, so many systems in which it was claimed that death was either an endless sleep or the annihilation of sentient life. So prevalent and persistent has been this view of the mutual relation and dependence of the spirit and body, that whether true or untrue it has become a seeming necessity of man's finite comprehension.

It is at least quite evident that without some additional light, by which a more satisfactory and rational conclusion may be reached, we have attained the summit of human progression, and further effort to advance with such light as the past affords cannot reasonably be expected. Have we a right to look for and to expect to find that additional light? and if so, how and where? It certainly cannot come to us from mortal, material sources, for in that case the race would have perceived it long since and followed its beneficent beams. Neither can it come to finite humanity directly from the infinite source. There is but one avenue through which it can come, and that is the intermediate one of spirits that once existed in the earth-life.

There, if anywhere, may mortal vision obtain the light which can disclose the route over which the human soul must pass. There, if anywhere, we may perceive the signal lights held forth by those who, having passed beyond the gloom of the mortal life, have caught a glimpse of the infinite light beyond them. From that not distant region may it not be possible to receive and heed the angel voices of those who have reached the immortal shore, teaching those who must follow how to make the same passage with greater wisdom than was their privilege?

Spiritualists, you who know that such light and teaching is within the reach of all who can free themselves from the prejudices which close the eyes and ears of the votaries of custom and habit, how and whence did you derive that knowledge? Did it not come to you through such physical and psychological facts as could be produced by or through no other instrumentality than the exercise of the intelligence, will and power of imperishable and invisible human beings? Have not those facts been rendered possible solely through the natural attributes with which a class of persons called spiritual mediums are peculiarly endowed? Is there any reason whatever to believe that the production and propagation of those facts can be attained without such mediumistic intervention between supermundane and mundane beings? There is none. If a knowledge of the realities of the spirit-life is desirable and important to mortals, and if that knowledge can alone be derived from the spirits of the departed who have experienced those realities, and if the latter can only impart that knowledge through the inter-mediation or agency of mediumistic persons, what then is "the duty of the hour" to those who feel it obligatory on them to propagate the teachings of the spirit world? Can there be other than the one answer to that question?

What plan or duty lies before us than to do all we can to cooperate with and assist the spirit-world to increase the avenues of communication between that world and this? In this important work what portion properly belongs to us?

Clearly, to accept the mediums which the controlling spirits, of choice or necessity, select as the instruments through which to manifest themselves and to commune with us.

Those spirits can alone judge on this point, for we have no means of knowing what is required to produce the slightest spirit manifesta-

tion through such mediums. Not only is it our duty to accept their mediums, but it is the plain dictate of common sense that we should encourage, foster, assist and protect these sensitive and naturally impressionable persons, who, in the present selfish and bigoted age, are called by influences which they know nothing of to endure the antagonism and injustice of a self righteous and censorious world. Not only does common sense require this, but it demands of us that we who have everything to learn in the way of experience concerning the spirit life, spirit return and spirit control of mediums, should be content to learn from those who have had that experience, and not undertake to dictate to or interfere with the proper work of the spirit-world. Can we intelligently or properly do more than to manifest in every reasonable way our willingness to receive and welcome such spirits as may find it possible to return to us, whether for instruction or to instruct us concerning those things which it is our mutual interest to know?

This, then, is the duty of the hour. Here arises an equally if not a more important question: How is that duty being performed by those on whom the obligations of it particularly rest? What answer comes up from every section of the land, from the suffering, wronged and persecuted mediums, whose sole offense has been that they have faithfully served their spirit-guides, and thus incurred the mortal hatred of the foes of spiritual truth? In what instance have Spiritualists, as a class, rallied to the defence or rescue of a medium who has been unjustly assailed by ignorant and bigoted enemies of all mediums, and especially of those through whom the most positive spiritual phenomena occur? If we except the demonstration on behalf of Henry Slade, set on foot and mainly conducted in a foreign land, no assailed American medium has had the general support and sympathy of the Spiritualists of this country. Each medium assailed has been left to stand or fall, unless his or her spirit-guides and a few fearless and faithful friends could sustain them in the unequal struggle against popular prejudice.

Too often Spiritualists, or persons calling themselves such, have vied with the open enemies of spiritual mediums, in making false and slanderous accusations against them. The spirit of Phariseism is as prevalent among those who class themselves as Spiritualists as among any of the sects of denominational religionists. They seem to think that it is wise and profitable to endeavor to propitiate the Mijoch of public opinion by sacrificing the truth, and those through whom the truth has come. According to their reasoning, so prevalent is dishonesty, trickery and falsehood among the chosen instruments of the spirit-world, that the only safe course for these critics to pursue is to accept everything which is said to their prejudice as *prima facie* evidence against them. To such an extent have the ranks of Spiritualism been permeated by these presuming zealots, that thousands of persons—men, women, and children—who possess the divine gift of mediumship, and who could carry the gospel of glad tidings as to the realities of the spirit-life into every home, dare not acknowledge their mediumistic endowments for fear of the social ostracism which such an acknowledgment would bring upon them.

Spiritualists! Is not this a lamentable fact? Is it not "the duty of the hour" to cease the pursuit of a policy which has resulted so deplorably? It is to be expected, in the nature of things, that spiritual mediums should incur the jealousy and enmity of all classes of persons who desire to dominate the religious workings of the minds of men; and that therefore such mediums should become in every possible way the victims of persecution and warfare. These enemies of mediums are alike within as without the lines of Spiritualism, for, being governed by like motives, they can brook no questioning of their dictatorial prerogatives. Unfortunately for the mediums, they are, to a greater or less extent, subject to overriding spirit influences which control and use them, and hence cannot, if they would, conform to the dictation of mundane authority.

In this conflict of authority between the supermundane and mundane teachers of Modern Spiritualism, we may find the cause of all the inharmonious and disorder which are so prevalent wherever this conflict of authority arises. It is the height of folly to question the right of the spirit-world to teach of spiritual things; and the duty of the hour for Spiritualists is to end all such conflicts by recognizing and conforming to that right. No spirit, whether it be bright or dark, happy or unhappy, high or low, developed or undeveloped, intellectual or ignorant, good or bad, can return to earth and manifest itself to mortals, but that it may impart to us a lesson of pregnant import.

No spirit can or does so return, but that it in turn may receive enlightenment as to what is best for humanity on the earth-plane as well as in the spirit-spheres. Consequently the work to be done is the mutual enlightenment of the human race in both stages of their eternal existence.

As we cannot go to the spirit-world with our physical surroundings, and as experience has taught us that spirits can return to us when the conditions are favorable for that purpose, the only rational course for us to pursue to learn true wisdom from them is to make those conditions as harmonious as possible. Mediumistic inter-mediation being the most essential condition for intercourse with spirits, it should be our policy to do all we can to increase the number of mediums, and especially of such mediums as are ready to take upon themselves the burdens of martyrdom in their willingness to attest publicly the greatest of all truths, viz.: the sublime fact of direct spirit communion. Has this been done, and is it being done as it should be by those who have posted themselves at the portals of the temple of Spiritual Truth? Blinded by conceit, they think to dominate the true priesthood of that temple as well as the thronging multitudes who seek inspiration at that beneficent fane. May we not reasonably say to these self-constituted guardians of that temple, which was erected for the enlightenment of every one of earth's children, that "the duty of the hour" demands that they shall stand aside and make way for all to enter or depart? May we not truthfully assure them that the temple about which they manifest so much solicitude can in no way be so effectually profaned as by their shallow attempt to ape the pretensions of creedal bigots who in all ages have trodden under foot the God-enfranchised souls of their fellow-men?

Thanks to the author of all that is true, it has been ordained and established that the beauty, loveliness and value of truth cannot be tarnished by human device. To assume that it can be, is simply preposterous. And yet there are those who are so ignorant of the nature of the spiritual

phenomena as to suppose that the personal or moral status of mediums can in any way add to or detract from their value to the human race. Is it not time that these left-handed friends of Spiritualism should be asked to moderate their clamors about a matter which they seem so little to comprehend?

If every medium and every spiritual acquirer of mediums was steeped in the blackest iniquity it could not detract one iota from the importance or value of a single fact which attests the truth of Spiritualism. For those who have labored so diligently to discredit mediums, and create prejudice against them, to demand justice and fair treatment from our fellow-men whether in or out of the flesh, is supremely amusing. What justice have these sensitive received from their justice-loving censurers when assailed by the accusing tongue of the slanderer? Echo alone replies, "What justice?" What have they done to obtain for them that justice which they demand of them or their spirit-guides? Echo answers: "What?" The justice they invoke they will surely receive from their accusing consciences, if not at the hands of the spirit-power which has labored so long and effectively to render spirit-communion with mortals a possibility.

Of all sins, the sin of ingratitude is the most unpardonable. Of that sin those Spiritualists are guilty who undertake to supplant the spirit-world in the leadership of the cause of Spiritualism. That cause appertains no more to this than to the spirit-world, and no sophistry can calmsay this fact. All we know of Spiritualism, and all that we as mortals can yet learn of it, has and must come from the spirit-world to us. How, then, may we properly characterize the presumption of those Spiritualists who say "Henceforth we will shape the manner of and give tone and character to the exhibitions of spirit-phenomena."

JUSTITIA.

The Banner of Light in the West.

During the sessions of the [Sturges] meeting the writer conversed with many people relative to the journal of Spiritualism. Mr. Editor, you have a great and growing constituency in the West. Your steady, self-poised course, your freedom from gross personalities, and your philosophical exposition of the genius and purpose of Spiritualism—these points are specified by your readers as items of great merit, which commend the Banner of Light to the public. The interest which you have always taken in chronicling items of local interest to your western readers is forgotten. The Banner of Light is a marked favorite with thousands in this great western country. It avoids sentimentalism and sensationalism. It is reliable—so say its friends.

In our last issue our special correspondent "Cephias" made use of the above encouraging words, based particularly on his recent experiences in the western portion of the country. We are thankful to the friends thereof for the kindness and the unfaltering faithfulness with which as subscribers, readers and patrons in every way they have sustained us in our efforts to spread a knowledge of Spiritualism broadcast in community. We have tried our best in the past to be measurably worthy the kind regards they have so unparaphrasedly expressed toward the Banner of Light, and hope our efforts in the future may also meet with their approbation.

Mrs. John Pickering.

As we go to press the daily papers of Boston and Lowell are convulsed with a new sensation—none other than the report that at a séance held at the house of Mr. Francis Goward, in Lowell, on Saturday evening, June 23d, a Mr. Clark present seized one of the forms manifesting which it is alleged proved to be that of Mrs. Pickering herself.

Of course, having heard but one side of the report, we can rightly offer no opinion; but, we wish it distinctly understood that whatever may or may not have happened at the Lowell séance, we do know that Mrs. Pickering is possessed of the genuine gift of materialization, we having received proof of it through evidence beyond the shadow of doubt during our crucial test séance with her as recorded in our issue for April 27th. Hence we do not go back of that record one iota; neither do those who signed the affidavit appended to the account we gave of that séance.

The Highland Lake Camp-Meeting.

Advertised by Gardner and Richardson in another column, takes, as is its wont, its regular place in the procession of the events of summer, beginning July 16th, and ending Aug. 5th. Those who have ever visited the grove will need no word of praise from us concerning its loveliness; and the speakers announced give indication that the mental attractions afforded will equal those of the natural. Miss Lizzie Doten, J. M. Peabody, J. Frank Baxter, Horace Seaver, Esq., and others, are expected to be present; the opportunity for dancing will be afforded lovers of that amusement. Four trains daily reach the grounds from Boston, and extensive arrangements for reduction of fare on lines connecting with the New York and New England Railroad have been effected. The managers announce this gathering as a "People's Camp-Meeting," and will be glad to welcome to the grounds "all orderly people of any denomination."

The "San Antonio Sliftings" of the Galveston (Tex.) News for June 14th, chronicle the fact that a physician who claimed to be an apostle of the healing art by laying on of hands, and who bore the name of Lester, having drawn upon himself the vengeance of the regular medical body by the amount of his cures and the great excitement caused by them among the people there, was arrested. The News correspondent says: "Some of the local physicians were quite active in the prosecution. Toan outsider this looks like a mistake. The man is not practicing medicine, for he prescribes no medicine. He merely puts his hand" upon the patient. When the matter came "to book" Lester was at once discharged, no proof of his having made use of medicine to effect his cures being found to exist. And the followers of the allopathic Canute are over-slaughed again!

VITAL MAGNETISM.—This work is now passing through its fourth edition, and is drawing commendations from all who read it. It can be found on sale at the Banner of Light Bookstore. By the way, its author complains to us that a writer in a recent number of a certain American medical journal has not scrupled to copy pages 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 in full from this book, and appropriate them as his own. The author does not object to the publication of this extract at all, as he is glad to have the truth disseminated through all possible agencies, but he queries whether it would not have been more manly for this medical "cribbler" to have given due credit to the source of his inspiration!

