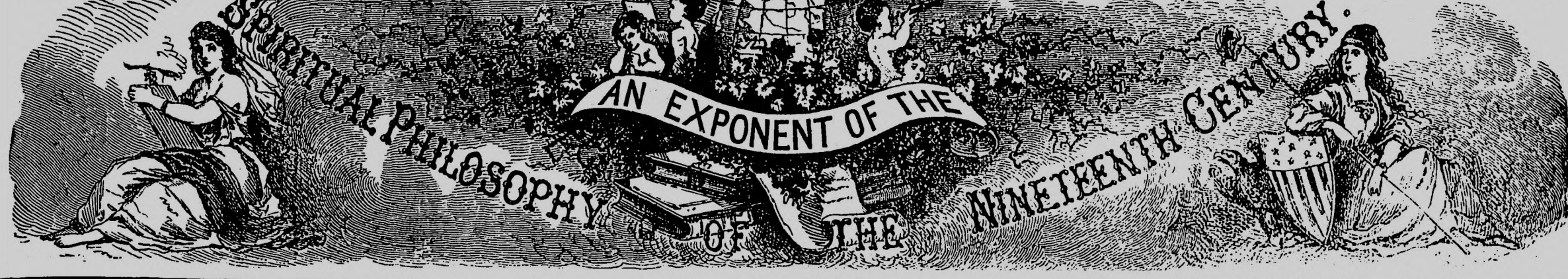


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(From the Chicago Times, Dec. 28th, 1874.)

SPIRITUAL RATIONALE.

Text of a Paper Thereon Read Before
The Chicago Philosophical Society.

The Relation of Spiritualism to the Dominant Religion, Science and Social Order.

It is Claimed to be Revolution, an Almost Painful Readjustment, and a Universal Solvent.

How it Works and What it Seeks to Accomplish.

One of the largest audiences in the history of the Chicago Philosophical Society filled the lecture-room in the Athenaeum building on last Saturday evening. The subject, under the title of the President and a number of other officers and members of the Society, will furnish all necessary explanation of what follows:

CHICAGO, Dec. 18th, 1878.

"WILBUR F. STORRY, Esq.—Dear Sir: Recognizing the *Times* as *par excellence* the arena of free discussion and the organ of free thought, to which the thinker looks for the latest and best in the domain of thought, we, officers and members of the Philosophical Society of Chicago, would deem it a favor to ourselves and the public to see published in the *Times* a paper read before our Society on "The Rationale of Modern Spiritualism," by Frederick F. Cook, a member of your staff. Many of us expressed to Mr. Cook our desire for its publication in the *Times*, but he manifested a delicacy about moving in the matter, and we therefore make this request.

We regard the paper as among the ablest read before our Society, evincing, as it surely does, great research, candor and judgment, and literary ability of a high order.

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I am not unmindful that the subject to which, with your kind indulgence, I shall invite your attention this evening, is one seldom discussed before the elect. In the world at large it frequently forces attention, often with positive rudeness; but wherever opinion is organized, whether religiously, socially or scientifically, it meets with little hospitality, and, when tolerated, it is either with compassionate condescension or undisguised contempt.

I do not allude to this state of things to find fault. The rather, so long as the field of human nature remains what it now is—a more playground for the passions—I would not have it otherwise. I could conceive of nothing more disastrous happening to the race at this time than a universal acceptance of supersensuous phenomena. Without adequate preparation and discipline, the end would be a return to superstition.

Only the most superficial treatment has hitherto been accorded what is known under the name of Modern Spiritualism. If its phenomena have an objective reality, their importance to mankind cannot be overestimated; and it is from this point of view that the subject should be studied.

The time having arrived in the order of human progression to widen the avenue of communication between the two worlds, two methods were open to the spiritual powers—to admit only the higher class of minds at first, and let the truth in diluted and contracted form work downward; or, taking the opposite course, start the movement at the very foundations of society, diversify it to the utmost, employ chiefly blind forces, and hedge the whole about with mystifying safeguards. The first course represents the human method of teaching; the last is the mode adopted by the more enlightened spirit-world. The difference is expressed by preaching and practicing. In this lies the solution to all the mystery.

It is charged against the movement that it is almost wholly confined to the uncultured. While the ranks of the believers contain many of the most enlightened minds of the age, I am free to admit that its potency lies, as yet, chiefly with a class untrammelled by precise definitions or exact thought—that it is these who give it substance, stamp it with their peculiarities, and represent it in the world.

THE EYES OF THE WORLD. One day mankind will rejoice that this is so—that in the infancy of this dispensation the blunders of human wisdom were kept out of its experience, and that the guides were wholly spiritual.

We sometimes learn too much of the true side of a question by studying its false side. Let us suppose, therefore, that the spirit-world had taken the human wisdom course in this instance, and confided its secrets first to the learned. See a scientific world in the direct confusion, despairingly searching for its most cherished and now exploded premises! Behold a religious world in the throes of soul-agony, stifling haggard and distracted amid the debris of its shattered creeds! Religious beliefs have their roots in the heart, and when you tear them out by force you take that which is almost dearer than life itself. The late Walter Bagehot well remarked: "One of the greatest pains to human nature is the pain of a new idea." No, a wise dispensation would not thus inflict the race. It would work precisely as it is working. It is stealing upon the world like a thief in the night. The change comes, but no man knows whereof. It operates as a gentle amelioration; its disintegrating force, though potent, is scarcely perceptible; fully one-fourth of the native-American element is even now converted; another fourth has become quite familiar with the idea, and is ready for acceptance without a pang; and with all this wonderful work accomplished, within less time than is allotted to a generation, the mischief done is a minimum. This shows how completely the destructive forces of the movement are hedged about.

The more study is given the method of the introduction of Spiritualism, the more is the student impressed with its wisdom. Scientific truths, having but a remote connection with the feelings, come first to the learned; but religious truths, which may be said to be *all* feeling, can only be planted where formulas and creeds have lost their significance—where the spirit has wholly superseded the letter. Spiritualism is therefore carefully veiled from those who are either not ripe for a change, or, being individually advanced, would through their influence too violently disturb the religious and social equilibrium. The first class includes all that is orthodox; the second the leaders of science, with a few carefully selected exceptions. Had this truth come first to the *savants*, as a discovery, and subject to no conditions except such as are commonly recognized with regard to scientific experiments, directly it would have permeated the entire social economy, producing untold misery. No doubt there are thousands to whom the revelations, even in this abrupt way, would have come as a boon; but, on the other hand, there are millions whose minds the unwelcome truth thus ruthlessly forced would have called into action all the baser passions in defence of their cherished dogmas. "What cry more pathetic than that of the old heathen, who, bereft of his idol by the missionaries of a strange religion, wailed out piteously: 'You have robbed me of my god.'"

The religious chapters in the history of mankind are written in blood. Changes involving not a tinge of the revolution expressed by Spiritualism have convulsed the civilized world. Society is wholly

AN ARTIFICIAL STRUCTURE. Not a law, not a custom is founded in abstract right or the facts and possibilities of human nature. Progress thus far has been all patchwork, clumsily held together. As the fabric is now constituted no new idea can adjust itself to it without complete readjustment. To admit a new article into any creed, religious, social or scientific, necessitates a revision or reconstruction of the whole. When the least change involves so much trouble, what would not a universal revolution do? This it would shatter the entire social structure to fragments. It would be a return to chaos.

The nineteenth century marks the most important epoch in the history of the world. To it will be traced the genesis of a new line of progression. The year 1818, a time of political and social revolution, marks the transition from the artificial to the natural order. It was the year that heard the awakening raps at Hydesville. It was the year the spirit Master Mason, laying the corner-stone for a new social structure. Spiritualism puts human nature for the first time on solid ground. It is as broad as life itself. It is all-inclusive. All truths adjust themselves to it naturally. *It is a universal solvent.*

To the world at large Spiritualism is merely a superstition, having for its basis a latent credulity, forced to activity by a system of cunning deception, trickery and fraud. Holding to this view, it is in a measure creditable in the intelligent masses that they sternly set their faces against what they believe to be but a form of Fetishism. Civilization is a hard-won light. On its altar countless lives have been sacrificed. I am in fullest sympathy with those who would guard this sacred flame from the stifling influence of superstition. But in doing this we should be careful lest we fall into error in the opposite direction, and foster intellectual bigotry and intolerance.

Man is a creature of conformity. Spiritualism is readjustment. These postulates give us a key.

In order to deal justly with Spiritualism, our first duty is to study man, both in his mysterious individuality, and as a complex whole. Who of us understands the operation of the human mind? Is not man the proverbial symbol of perversity? Ask the reformer by what methods he circumvents this self-inflicted incarceration of conceit! Are not the wise often the most foolish; are not the foolish wise? The truly great die unheeded in their day, and it is left for future generations to revere their memories. These things have come to be the veriest truisms; all of us recognize them when we hear them; but how many give them practical application? Whenever a science of the human mind shall be revealed it will be discovered that in essence *all permanent progress is reaction*. First conceptions are nearly always erroneous. In legislation this truth has found expression in the aphorism that the wisest laws are those which repeal others.

I have dwelt thus at some length on the human side, because I deem its right understanding essential to a proper consideration of the spiritual side of this problem. We have not only perverseness but a diversified perversity in human nature. To this Spiritualism is adjusting itself with a view to readjustment of the entire social fabric. Its object is revolution without the usual blood-stained concomitants.

Let us now contemplate this movement with reference to some of its general aspects. It is thirty years old; it counts its adherents by millions; its literature is published in nearly a score of languages. It has entered the pulpit, the laboratory, the busy marts of trade—no place is so remote that it does not make a stir in it—and it differs from all other movements that have heretofore left their impress on the race in this, that it is not transplanted, but is spontaneous and self-propagative. It often comes an unbidden and a most unwelcome guest.

It is unique in other ways, but most in this, that its best friend is its radical opposite, the materialist. This point is well worthy the serious attention of thinkers—the sort, I mean, who classify Spiritualism among the delusions. Was ever delusion so rational that it could recognize essential good in its antithesis? If madness, Spiritualism evinces wonderful method. Its ranks are chiefly recruited from rationalists, secularists, materialists, infidels. It is only now and then that a member of a church is converted, and when this happens, the victim feels as much out of place as a fish out of water. Now, this tendency of *unbelief* to believe most men as yet regard an *over-belief*, is certainly a very curious phenomenon, and if Spiritualism is really the delusion science would have us believe, is it not time to stay the spirit of doubt, if the ultimate threats to be morbid and groveling Superstition?

We have been contemplating the human mind and certain general aspects of the movement. Now let us turn our attention to another side of this enigma. What does Spiritualism imply? To what changes is it likely to give birth?

Spiritualism is Revolution, not simply Reform. Reform works downward; it is scientific in its spirit, and, though not generally regarded so, is practically conservative. Revolution works upward; it reasons far less deeply than it feels. In rare instances the revolutionist and reformer are blended. The difficulties that attend a religious transition are enormous. Man is by nature lawless. Religion, whether expressed by Fetishism or an ethical refinement, aside from brute force and the love of kindred, is the sole influence that can keep this lawlessness under control. Now a readjustment is decided upon! what an uprooting must not take place! and while the transition is in progress, what care must not be exercised! Elements in their

revolutionary or readjusting stage are always extremely destructive. Conservatism is simply another word for adjustment accomplished. In view of the trifling mischief that is doing during this most wonderful and radical of all transitions, I would call conversions to Spiritualism a process of spirit selection. It is so wisely ordered that the light is vouchsafed only under carefully guarded conditions. It seeks and blends only with such elements as are in affinity and individualized. Somewhat of notoriety is bound to attach to all things that are in their nature marvelous, but the aim is ever to minimize the excitement, as essential to a rational propagation. And this is the reason why spirits do not meet the demand to prove themselves in such public exhibitions as the finding of Charlie Bass and the like exploits. I allude to this not because I have at any time deemed these challenges for public tests worthy of notice, but solely for the reason that they are the stock-in-trade arguments of the superficial, and as the world is composed mostly of this class, the matter may be worth reverting to in this discussion.

The question is often asked, if Spiritualism is true, why did it not come before?

It came before; it always has been, but in variously modified forms. However, the question for all that is quite natural, and was asked nearly two thousand years ago, with reference to Christianity, the forerunner of Spiritualism, by one reputed to have been the teacher of the noble emperor, Marcus Aurelius. The question was propounded to one of the Fathers. In those days it was Christianity that was a superstition in the eyes of the learned, and it was with extreme condescension that any of the heathen scholars deigned to enter into a controversy with a Christian. And had *The Atlantic Monthly* been published during the reign of the Antonines, and a certain, as yet anonymous, author lived, the culture of the period would not doubt have been favored with an extremely well-written essay on "Some Dangerous Tendencies in Roman Life."

It is difficult to resist the temptation to pursue this thought; to point out that Christianity, on which our civilization up to the present is founded, came also as a revolution; was also marked with exorcismes; was the active force then in the universe, and, by a laborious process, this thing that was decried as immoral established a high moral standard among a people whose immoralities had become worse than brutish; subdued passions that knew no law, either human or divine; raised woman from a position of servitude to almost equality with man, and did a thousand other noble things for which it now-a-days seldom receives credit. The culture of Rome saw only superstition and a moral degeneration in the upstart religion. The priest of the Sanhedrin could imagine no good come out of Nazareth, and cannot yet. Let those who heap contumely on the one, and plead for the civilization of the other, remember that nascent Christianity and nascent Spiritualism are exact parallels, except in this, that the former came in a time—and was thereby modified—when it had to pay for its existence with blood.

The chief characteristic of Christianity was that it operated on the conscience—almost discovered it, opened it, developed it. But a conscience suddenly set in operation is a terrible force, and, coming as this did upon the unprepared masses, produced a condition of mind bordering on frenzy. Hence we see the whole Christian population in sackcloth and ashes. By tens of thousands they seek the deserts, take refuge in gloomy caves, stand solitary and motionless for years on the top of high pillars, leechate their flesh, and in a thousand other ways turn order into bedlam. Still, if all this was necessary to develop the conscience in the dominant race who will grudge the price? Now, let us observe how perfectly the Christian scheme was adapted to meet this emergency—to cure what it had made ill. It was absolutely essential that human nature with a conscience suddenly quickened should be provided with a refuge. The new religion stood ready with a protecting church, the cleansing blood of the Lamb and a host of mediators. To the calm, individualized thinker there is somewhat almost ludicrous in these agencies; but to men steeped in immorality, suddenly subjected to a process of self-examination involving eternal salvation or endless torment, there was a terrible reality in the state of things that confronted them. The church has been blamed for overdoing its work. I doubt if the charge be sustained when the facts of history shall be more intelligently interpreted. What ignorance and brutality require to subdue them the barbaric twins, force and fear, not high ideals. The essential thing at first is subjection; for the rest do the best you can.

I enter into

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THIS MATTER, so fully for the reason that I intend to draw from it an important conclusion—the necessity for a new religion. What is the essential characteristic of Christianity? *Dependence*. Now, let me ask if this quality is not in its nature stunting? And whether it does not follow that those who possess the elements of growth, in order to grow, must remove themselves from its influence? As Christianity is constituted, progress within its fold, beyond a well-defined limit, is utterly impossible. To this limit it has brought the world triumphantly. So long as men *must* be kept in leading-strings, there is nothing better to recommend than the Christian religion. But what for those who are growing into selfhood? What if Spiritualism be not true, but bleak, dreary Materialism? This is the logic of the situation, and no candid, thinking mind will gainsay it.

The Orthodox Church is fully alive to the truth and force of this conclusion. It is fully to deny the parallel—dependence is its strength. What is known as liberal Christianity is a beautiful tribute to man's illusion, but no credit to his head. It is an enticing illusion—the mystic vale through which men pass, almost without halting—from the dark, iron-bound beliefs into the clear light of Spiritualism, or the dreary wastes of Materialism. Liberal Christianity is a manly, a hazy nothing—the smoke from fast-dying reeds in a storm. In Orthodoxy there is yet somewhat of spasmodic force. Its lurid flames ever and anon light up the religious horizon, though with every effort they sink lower and lower. But the pale exhalation known as liberal Christianity is utterly sparkless. It warms for a time with a borrowed heat; it shines with a reflected light; its aroma produces an intellectual intoxication—for a time there is even a semblance of enthusiasm. But, alas! Soon the heat diminishes, the light grows dim, the aroma is dissipated, sober second thought sets in, and the whole illusion is dispelled. And what remains—a barren idealism—some people call it "Culture"—food for shrivelled stomachs, nayhap, but the soul-hungry, before whom such fare is set, cry in anguish, "Give us to eat; we are starving; our lot is despair." I could almost wish this were otherwise. Had I found an inherent flame in either Universalism or Unitarianism, I could well have rested by its fire-side. I looked for it with passionate desire, only to be sadly disappointed. Religious force and life is not ethical, but eschatological. Morally, all the leading religions are pretty much alike. Ethically, Marcus Aurelius and Christ were brothers, but the kinship failed of religious recognition, and the former, al-

though the noblest of men, persecuted the followers of the latter to the death. A seed that could thrive on culture would fatten on east wind.

IN SWEDENBORGIANISM

there was once an original spark, but its over-zealous friends, troubled with a bad attack of respectability for fear of being called Spiritualists, have closed the door of inspiration, wrapped their somewhat premature bantling in layers of cotton, and now sit gloomily about a huge pile of literary dearthness and metaphysical abstractions—the smallest, most stunted, most unsympathetic pattern of a religion under the sun. It is the most desperate attempt to prove that one swallow makes a summer anywhere on record. It is a sort of a religious "what is it?"—too gloomy for a farce, and too comical to be serious.

Finally, Altruism, the ultimate of an unchecked, unreasoning skepticism, is not only an illusion but a delusion. It worships in a palace of ice, permeated by a chilling atmosphere called humanity. The effort to make believe that there is warmth here is only less comical, because sadder, than the conceit of the immortal Col. Sellers, in Mark Twain's "Gilded Age." Having placed a lighted tallow-dip in a stove, this expert psychologist tries to impose on his slivering guest the scientific theory that the imagination is the greatest factor in the universe, and that, if he can but bring himself to believe that the semblance of fire in the radiator equals the reality, he will soon be in the enjoyment of an exalted state of perspiration. Soon Altruism will not use even this paltry candle to delude itself with; it will cease trying to delude itself altogether; its emblem will be a ghastly, grinning skeleton. If now it indulges in a semblance of emotion, and holds up to the world a religious caricature, it is because it feels it must make a showing for the sake of appearances. Some of the worshippers at the shrine of humanity—devotees like John Morley, Frederic Harrison, Leslie Stephen and John Fiske—no doubt really feel a glow in their natures. But the warmth is transmitted. It has come along a line of religious ancestors; it is a remnant of hereditarily stirred activity for a time by the friction of combat. Let the conflict once cease, let Altruism be the reigning influence—as it soon would be but for incoming Spiritualism—and a gloomy Pessimism would take the place of present enthusiasm; more and more would the motto be "every man for himself." And by rapid stages the world would revert to barbarism. I have an intense admiration for the Altruist ideal—almost realized in such a character as Marcus Aurelius. It is pure, unselfish, crystalline, but it is only for angels. In another and better world I believe we shall all fully realize it. But so long as the selfish propensities are the most active in the race—and our very existence on earth is based upon them—our ideals and realizations must ever remain distinct and separate. This is the dread law of matter.

I think I have now prepared the way to direct special attention to the chief characteristic of the *personnel* of Spiritualism—individualism.

INDIVIDUALISM

is essential to admission; and, once admitted, it is above all the mental quality that is more and more developed. Here then we have perfect reciprocity—a tendency on the part of thinkers toward individualism, and departure from the established religion, and a new religion that can only exist where individualism is measurably accomplished.

It is, indeed, a wise dispensation, and could have been ordained only by the powers of whom Tennyson, with his rare spiritual insight, affirms:

"Who know the Seasons, when to take
Omission by the hand, and make
The bounds of Freedom wider yet."

Spiritualism came not before because it could not come—must not come. Perhaps I can best illustrate the extremely subtle relations between the two orders of existence—the mundane and the spiritual—by taking you along with me, as step by step in my experience, I proceeded to reason upon them.

Like most men, when my attention was first called to the subject under discussion, I regarded it as a sad farce, compounded of equally of imposture and delusion. But I soon found reasons to change my mind. Through the enshrouding fog, the surrounding darkness, amid the jargon of strange sounds, I now and then caught glimpses of rare light. But all natural order seemed inverted. I seldom received what I expected, and usually got what I did not expect. Sometimes the brightest intelligences—or who purported to be such by name—would spot the veriest drivell, while the ignorant Indian control, laboring painfully through a perplexity of ragged English, would surprise me with the wisest counsels and choicest bits of philosophy.

I had, indeed, fallen upon a will-o'-the-wisp. For months, during a patient investigation, it was all hide-and-seek. But the more I penetrated this world of contradictions, the more I became convinced there was something in it well worthy a thoughtful man's attention. I might have said with Joe Gargery, "It's a middle; or" following the fashion, laughed at the notion that spirits, our dear, departed friends, should return only to play the part of mountebanks. Either is a happy way of bridging the difficulty, and saves considerable trouble. But I chose rather to leave the *a priori* ground to the philosophers and scientists, acknowledge that I knew nothing about how men and women would act under a new order of existence, and accept the teachings of *experience*. I have held to this course during the past six years, and have reason to be well satisfied with the results.

After studying the varying phenomena for awhile, and as the perplexity only increased with each new experience, I began to question my mode of procedure. From attempting to solve spiritual methods from the human standpoint, I began to study *human methods* from the spiritual standpoint—that is to say, I studied the operation of

THE HUMAN MIND,

both individualized and in the mass, from the highest attitude to which my finite discernment could carry me; and although this light was necessarily very limited, yet soon the atmosphere cleared wonderfully. It was not long before, one by one, the fog-bells lifted—and what before, to my mind, had been no better than the fribbling of fools, suddenly became instinct with highest wisdom—not that the words always took on new meanings, but that I saw more clearly the motives which prompted them.

Let us, as circumstances will permit, put ourselves in the place of exalted intelligence in contact with man in his present development. What do we find? An unbroken line of failure! I say it without fear of contradiction—an unbroken line of failure. What success has been achieved, year by year, century by century, has come in spite of us; has been the result rather of reaction than action. Of course, I refer to the mass of mankind—and let it be remembered that Spiritualism deals with the mass directly. In those branches of science where man comes in contact solely with matter, he does passably well; but whenever he deals with a problem in which mind is a factor, he is hopelessly at sea, and it is only through an endless, never-ceasing buffeting that he is measurably forced into the right. It has been well said that progress is martyrdom. It lies invariably in a direction opposite the

path along which the masses insist on plodding, and its pioneers are always crucified.

The perversity of the human mind can scarcely be over-estimated. Few, indeed, have been able to deal with it understandingly. It is far more than is flattery, like the Irishman's pig. Pat was driving it to Limerick market, when he met a friend. "Where are you driving the pig, Pat?" was the greeting. "Whisht, be aisy," rejoined the astute Irishman in great trepidation and under breath, "to Limerick, but the pig thinks I want to take him to Tipperary, and that's what makes him go along so faintly."

I dwell on this point persistently, because the human mind is the solvent of the whole problem, and I feel convinced that philosophers, statesmen, psychologists, and all who make a study of the mental characteristics of man, will, in ages to come, turn to this period as an inexhaustible mine of psychological wealth. I am not of those who believe that the manifestations of spiritual power now so general will always abide with the race. They occur only in transition periods. They come to inaugurate new dispensations, and, having set the movement well going, the power is wisely withdrawn; because, it is doubtful if human nature be strong enough to make them permanently profitable. Hence I regard this as essentially a history-making epoch. It is a time when an intelligence superior to the human or embodied mind is shaping events—and how it deals with the perversity that at every turn opposes it, will be a subject of research to the student for ages to come.

Let me pause here a moment to establish a

A BASE OF OPERATIONS

from which all may proceed together. To what extent do skeptics and believers stand upon common premises with reference to this subject? It will be granted, primarily, on all sides, that a movement, be it founded on delusion or fact, known as Modern Spiritualism, and counting its adherents by the millions in the most civilized portions of the globe, has a vital existence. How rapidly it is growing I dare not venture to assert, for fear of seeming to strain a point, but this much I may say, that it is today a more potent propaganda than all the sects and churches of Christendom combined. I mean by this that it converts more from an absolute non-belief. And what it gets, it keeps. A convert from Spiritualism is a curiosity.

For all practical purposes, a sufficient common base has now been established, and we may proceed to an examination of the structure. Let us inquire first as to the method of its growth. All other religious movements of which the world has any account, started from a single centre, were identified with a single individual, and were subsequently propagated almost wholly through the zeal of missionaries. The single point where Spiritualism makes contact with its religious predecessors, is in its missionary force. But the Spiritualist missionary or lecturer—except he be a medium—is not a convert; he is a little more than a familiarizer; he does not even establish organized *fact*. In all else, Spiritualism differs in method from all other religions. It is, in the first place, universal. In no proper sense can any place claim its birth. Its second peculiar distinction is spontaneity; but for all that, it is forced—an exote. Apparently we have here a contradiction, but it is such only in terms. Spiritualism is spontaneous, because in most instances the phenomena on which it rests its claims come unbidden. It is exote, because in the order of evolution, as we understand it, it is without natural antecedents, and, if evolved at all, comes to us from a set of conditions, which, except through a law of reaction or contrariety, should produce precisely opposite results—a destructive skepticism.

Having explained the mode, what are the results sought to be accomplished? Nothing short of revolution in every department of thought! It means all this or nothing; it is either an intelligent, most potent, and wise dispensation, or the maddest freak that ever possessed the human mind. I hold it to be the first, and upon those who shall choose the last I will put this task: Explain to me the genesis and evolution of the delusion! Where or in what are its antecedents? There is no effect without an adequate cause; now in what subjective potency lie these tremendous results, regarded as delusion? I have been at some pains to study this subject, but nowhere can I find a parallel; for be it remembered that Spiritualism flourishes best where skepticism is most active. It works hand and hand with the materialist. Literally it lives, grows, and thrives upon what, according to all scientific prescriptions, should kill it.

I wish I could treat this subject in detail, but time forbids more than a mere outline of suggestions. In truth the theme is one pregnant with volumes. As I glance along

THE VISTA OF MY EXPERIENCE

I observe a broad, well-defined line which divides Spiritualism into two distinct orders of activity. On the one hand it is exoteric and on the other esoteric. It is one thing for the world and another for itself. Along this dividing line come the multitudes. It is a curious medley of minds—all humanity thrown into a lump. It is an eager throng; it comes to be amused, to be awed, for excitement, to leer and scowl, to seek succor of sorrow, to drown despair. Now let me ask you in all candor, what would you think of a dispensation that would listen to the ignorant demands of this motley crew, and fill them, blind as they are, with yet more blinding revelation. Surely, you could have but a poor opinion of it. No, the spirit-world can give but sparingly, and yet it must give in sufficient quantities to make headway—and to balance these proportions, so as to minimize the mischief, is a task calling for a wisdom that can nowise be lower than that of angels.

The observant student, as he passes along with the jostling crowd, will note great gaps marked "expressions." The presumption is that these expose mediums; but, in fact, only human ignorance—they are *softly-voiced*—sacrifices to the Moloch of prejudice—meat cast to ravenous wolves. Somewhat in the line of "exposure" is always kept on the stage. But, in the meantime, another work is going forward—a process of spirit selection. There is an esoteric Spiritualism into which there is no prying except by consent of the spirit-world. The crowd that clamors to be admitted is carefully scanned. Perhaps not above 25 per cent. of those who investigate at any time, be their motives never so good, are chosen. Sometimes it happens that a person is refused at one stage and admitted at another—the result depending on all the conditions, social, religious, moral, intellectual or otherwise, that at the time, or promise in the future, to environ the investigator. You have all probably heard that "conditions" are necessary to manifestations. This word has been much abused because, as related to Spiritualism, it is little understood. The "conditions" to a successful seance are the most subtle factors that can be imagined. They are far less physical than mental, but they are both, and much beside—they are also spiritual.

As well as I am able I will illustrate these subtleties. You will readily acknowledge that the success of any movement depends in large measure on what may be

...and the

 "The Voices," by W. S. Barlow, has reached its eighth edition. Colby & Rich have it on sale.

Reception at Mr. Newton's.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

In response to a notice which was given last Sunday evening at the meeting of the First Society of Spiritualists inviting all friends of the congregation to meet this evening at the parlors of Mr. and Mrs. H. J. Newton, No. 128 West Forty-third street, for a social gathering, and to also afford opportunity for the members and friends of the society to meet Mrs. Nellie J. T. Brigham, a goodly number availed themselves of the privilege. Among those present we noticed Mr. John L. O'Sullivan, whom it may be remembered was minister to Portugal during President Pierce's administration; Mr. L. De V. Wilder; Mr. Alfred Weldon, the faithful leader of the choir (he not having been absent either at the morning or evening services for upwards of a year); Mr. John B. Gardner, a photographer of large experience and a man of literary talent; Mr. Albert L. Leubuscher, publisher of inspirational poems delivered by Mrs. Brigham, and others.

Mrs. Newton, with the assistance of her two daughters, Florence and Maudie, had trimmed the parlors for Christmas time. The material used was evergreen and the autumnal leaves of the forest; they were so deftly interwoven and tastefully arranged as to add a new charm to the paintings and engravings that grace the walls, at the same time giving a peculiarly happy effect to the room.

The first hour was occupied in a social manner, as at the two receptions previously given by Mrs. Newton. Mr. David C. Leys sang "The Bird at Sea," Mrs. Anna Randall-Diehl gave the "Polonaise," from Romeo and Juliet. Mrs. Diehl is well known as a professor of elocution, and she was in favor with the company even before she spoke—her genial countenance and expressive dark eyes winning favor at once. Miss L. C. Dimmock, organist for the society, and also teacher of music, favored the assembly by singing "Say not Farewell," Mrs. Sarah C. Van Horn recited "The Cane Bottom Chair," by Thackeray; Mrs. Diehl followed with the piece entitled, "Female Tenderness," by Douglas Jerrold. She was happy in its rendering, giving it life, variety and good expression. Mr. Leys sang "Nancy Lee," Miss Dimmock playing the accompaniment.

As the clock struck ten, Mrs. Brigham rose, and there was perfect silence, when she gave an appropriate address on the New Year. We give the opening sentences as follows: "Nature shows you mountains, hills, valleys, and the tallest trees and thickest forests, and the promise is richer trees and flowers that will make your greetings beautiful; so the spiritual nature has its different heights, the elements of truth and its teachings; some tower like the mountains, some only like the hills, and some cover the valleys in their lowliness. The truth within you is not all that which rises itself mountain high, teaching you of sublimity, but rather like the wayside flowers. In this way would we bring to you the thoughts of heaven to-night. In the dawning of the new year in which such lovely, happy greetings have gone from house to house, from heart to heart, does my heart go out to you all to-night." One of the company requested Mrs. Brigham to improvise a poem, giving the subject, "The Snow," and she gracefully complied with the request.

The friends now seated themselves about, forming an oval rather than a circle, and Mr. Newton requested Dr. James V. Mansfield "To see what he could see, and to tell what he could tell." Dr. Mansfield said it was his practice to write communications at his office, and that there was scarcely an hour in the day but he saw spirits. He said, "I now see a lady standing by Mr. Newton."

Mr. Newton—"You have never been able to give me anything before."

Dr. Mansfield—"No, sir. I see a lady here. She says, 'I am your granddaughter, Abby Morter.' [A lady in the circle pronounced it to be correct.] I see beyond, I don't know, [a pause]—it will come to me, a lady, a spirit, I should think less than thirty years of age. She gives her name as Josephine Thompson [a pause]—Henson."

Mrs. Brigham—"I recognize her. She came here once before."

Dr. Mansfield—"I see one by Mr. [a pause]—now I cannot get the person's name. I do not think I will be able to give any more. [A long pause.] I see one standing by the Doctor here. It seems to be a young man. I don't get the name. I saw him once before this evening. I see by Mrs. Felt her husband—you were nearly all acquainted with him. I see by this gentleman a large man, and he gives his name as Israel Gibbs Atwood. That is about all. If I had begun earlier in the evening, I could have given many more. I sometimes give fifty or sixty names."

Mrs. Felt—"When you saw my husband did he look as he did in life, or younger?"

Dr. Mansfield—"He looked very pleasantly. My father was sixty-three years old when he died, and he looked to be eighty. My brother died at twenty-eight, and he appears now to be eighteen years of age."

One of the company—"Doctor, did you ever see a deformed spirit?"

Dr. Mansfield—"I have never seen a cripple in the spirit-land as yet. A gentleman came in my office, and I saw a lady with him, and I placed a chair for her to sit down, when I found there was only a gentleman there. I said to the gentleman, 'A lady came in with you.' 'Came in with me?' the gentleman said; 'I do not see any.' I said, 'I saw one.' 'Describe her.' 'She was light-complexioned.' He was dark-complexioned. Immediately I commenced writing, and she called this husband of hers by name, giving him a pleasant greeting, and she signed her name to it. She says, 'Now go back to the hotel and have our daughter who comes to you come to the rooms.' 'What does that mean?' he says. I said, 'Have you not a daughter in the city?' He replied, 'Do you think I have?' I said, 'The spirit says you have, and I believe the spirit.' He went to his hotel and returned in company with his daughter. She was a blonde, about twenty years old, and exceedingly pretty. While we were talking I saw another spirit; it was a boy; he was dark-complexioned, like the father. I said to the gentleman, 'Have you a little boy in the spirit-world, too?' He replied, 'Are you sure a boy is there?' I said, 'Yes, sir.' The little boy came and gave the communication, and gave his name. I got his wife without his thinking of her, and the boy, who I also saw come in with him. Well, that was enough for the gentleman, and he was converted."

Mrs. Felt—"Dr. Mansfield, did you ever see a pet animal appear with a spirit?"

Dr. Mansfield—"I do not know that I have."

Mr. O'Sullivan—"Do spirits appear low down, as if on the floor?"

Dr. Mansfield—"I scarcely ever see them below here." [Indicating the middle of the body.]

Mrs. Diehl—"Do the spirits appear to be clothed?"

Dr. Mansfield—"They have a thin drapery, not so thick as in that picture. This picture here gives a good illustration." [Referring to a sepia picture as they are usually shown, with slight drapery.]

Mrs. Diehl—"Fading away?"

Mr. O'Sullivan—"Very slight, thin drapery?"

Dr. Mansfield—"Yes, sir."

It being now nearly half-past eleven o'clock, the company dispersed with the best wishes for the host and hostess.

New York, Jan. 4th, 1879.

New Year's Party—The Fancher Case.

Dr. Samuel and Mrs. Abbie Grover celebrated the sixth anniversary of their marriage at their home, No. 40 Dwight street, Boston, on the evening of January 1st. The occasion called together a pleasant party of friends, who joined in hearty congratulations of the host and hostess. Excellent singing by a quartette—composed of Misses Nellie M. King, Esther Singleton, and Messrs. John C. Bond and W. Worcester—also by Fannie Dolbeer, Cora Hastings, Miss Mandel, and Mr. Colville; social converse; a trance address and an impromptu poem by W. J. Colville; remarks by Mrs. John H. Currier and A. H. Richardson, Messrs. John Wetherbee and others; a musical circle where Mrs. J. W. Cushman was the medium; the partaking of refreshments, and the singing of "The Sweet By-and-By," by the assembly to close, made up the order of exercises.

In the course of the evening Dr. Grover returned the thanks of himself and wife to the friends present for the kind wishes extended by them, and, by request, gave a brief account of his visit to Miss Mollie Fancher, of Brooklyn, N. Y., which occurred December 2d, just before his leaving for Florida. Dr. Spear, who had had special care of Miss Fancher for thirteen years, while

he did not believe in clairvoyance, and regarded the trance as "a mystery," yet informed Dr. Grover that the marvelous reports concerning the young lady were mainly correct. Dr. G. then visited the house, found the lady in a *cataleptic* state with a sheet over her, and under much the same circumstances as have been frequently described in these columns. Before he (Dr. G.) had spoken, even, Miss Fancher said, "You are from Boston; I saw you when you left there." By the cards in your pocket I perceive that you are an eclectic physician." In the course of further conversation she gave it as her opinion that her visitor might have helped her had he been consulted some time ago, but could not now. He asked her if she suffered pain, and she replied in the negative. He told her that he saw a spirit standing at the foot of her bed—an old man with white hair and beard, and she replied, "Oh, yes, I see him often." Dr. Grover is of opinion that had some disciple of the progressive method of medicine—instead of the allopathic system—been engaged at an early stage her difficulties could have been mainly removed. A lady present related to him the statement that in the last four months Miss Fancher had not partaken of as much nourishment as would be consumed by an ordinary person in forty-eight hours.

From a Prison Cell to a Reception Hall.

A reception was tendered to Mr. E. H. Heywood in Paine Memorial Hall, Boston, on the 3d inst. Every seat was occupied. The audience was composed in about equal parts of men and women, who were evidently friends of Mr. Heywood and the cause of liberty. Over the platform were suspended the words, formed of evergreen, "Free speech and a free press forever," and, beneath, was suspended a white dove, emblematic of purity. J. M. L. Babcock presided. Among those who led the audience in its tribute of respect and love to the guest of the evening were Messrs. H. H. Horace, Seaver, D. M. Bennett of New York, A. L. Lawson and Laura Kendrick. In all the speeches, the utterances which found the most hearty response in the sentiments of the audience, judging from the applause, were those in denunciation of Anthony Comstock. He was styled a "contemptible figurehead of an odious law," "sluthound," "plant watch-dog of orthodox bigots," "infamous informer and spy."

Resolutions were adopted expressing sympathy with Mr. Heywood, and calling for a repeal of the infamous obscenity postal law, and the ignominious removal from office of the equally infamous Anthony Comstock. Thanks were tendered to the President and to the Attorney-General for their action in Mr. Heywood's behalf. Mr. Heywood occupied a seat upon the platform with his wife and children—a touching family group. When he arose to speak, the audience loudly cheered him. He seemed to be deeply moved by the warmth of his reception, and his voice was husky with emotion. He said:

From a prison cell to a reception hall was indeed an eventful transformation. But he understood that it was not to him personally as much as to a citizen whose rights had been struck down. As an individual he could have shunned the public notice, but he was again assured before his trial that if he would quit publishing his book it would be well with him. But he knew it would not be well with him, for while physical death was bad enough, moral death was even worse. Liberty was worth as much to him as life. His family and the dear friends of friends were dear to him as to any other man. But there was something dearer than those. It was the right to think, the right to speak, the right to assemble, and the right to know. He therefore thought it better to be in exile from his home and family and society, than to surrender his rights as a citizen. He spoke of a revolution in public sentiment since his imprisonment. When he was sent to jail some of the papers approved the sentence, or thought it should have been more severe. The same papers either approved or did not criticize the President's action in releasing him. He referred to Comstock's present as a parallel in its persistence and vindictiveness only by the slave power and Salem witchcraft. He called for a repeal of the obscenity postal law, and the removal of Comstock from power. The question was, whether the people of the country should decide what books they should read, or whether they should be dictated to by the exponent of the bigotry and ignorance and immorality of the city of Brooklyn. Before he went to Dedham Jail, he said, he was "A. M." by virtue of his graduation from Brown University, but now he came out with the honor of "U. S. C." (United States convict). He closed by saying that the obscenity law under which he was sentenced should not be modified, but repealed.

New Publications.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY for January has the following table of contents: "Aspects of American Life," Charles Dudley Warner; "Ancestors," J. T. Crowbridge; "The Latest Songs of Chivalry," Harriet W. Preston; "The Lady of the Aroostook," XL-XIV, W. D. Howells; "Round the World at the Paris Exhibition," "The Pines of Eden," G. P. Lathrop; "A Birthday," Harriet Prescott Spofford; "Workingmen's Wives," "Is Universal Suffrage a Failure?" Goldwin Smith; "The Dead Feast of the Kolk-Folk," John Greenleaf Whittier; "Our New Neighbors at Ponkapog," Thomas Bailey Aldrich; "Americanism," V. L. Richard Grant White; "An Artist's Model," Kate Putnam Osgood; "A Student's Sea Story," Harriet Beecher Stowe; "The Contributors' Club," "Recent Literature," Boston, Houghton, Osgood & Co., 220 Devonshire street, Wintthrop Square, publishers.

A. WILLIAMS & Co., 283 Washington street, Boston, (corner School) furnish us with the January numbers of SCHENCK'S MONTHLY and ST. NICHOLAS, which they have on sale. The first-named magazine has, among a charming table of attractions, a paper on "Old Maryland Manners," by F. B. Mayer (illustrated); and "The Title Club at Work," by Mackay Laflin; "Leonardo da Vinci," by Clarence Cook; "The Mountain Lakes of California," "At the Old Ball's Head," etc., etc., are also worthy of special mention; Constantine E. Brooks has a Christmas ballad, "Dion the Bold" (with drawing by Mrs. Mary Hallock Footes); "Haworth's" continues to be of interest. The illustrated articles also are many and varied—which remark may be truthfully applied to the departments and their contents. SCHENCK'S ILLUSTRATED makes a fine showing for the new year.

ST. NICHOLAS for January is denominated a Christmas Holiday number, and is superb in its contributions and illustrations. Articles of high merit and attractiveness are given in its pages from John G. Whittier, Chas. Dudley Warner, Julian Hawthorne, Theodore Winthrop, Frances Hodgson Burnett (author of "That Lass o' Lowrie's"), Mary Mapes Dodge, Celia Thaxter, Susan Coolidge, Hezekiah Butterworth (editor of "Youth's Companion"), Frank R. Stockton and Olive Thorne.

Among the artists who contribute the three score and more pictures of the number are Frederick Delman, Alfred Fredericks, James E. Kelly, Alfred Kappes, Alfred Ledyard, Fidelia Bridges, Granville Perkins, Jessie Curtis, Sol Eytinge, Jr., Kate Greenaway, of London, F. S. Church, and R. Sayre.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON for January—issued by a company of the same name at Springfield, Mass.—is rich in the character and diversity of its tabulated matter. Rebecca Harding Davis has a short story; E. E. Hale's serial is concluded; Prof. George P. Fisher treats of "Witchcraft"; Rose Terry Cook in a "Letter to Mary Ann" affords good advice to young ladies of literary aspirations; "Socialism" is discussed upon exhaustively by George M. Towle, and other articles, poems by Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, et al., and the departments make up a fine number.

THE WIDE AWAKE, for January—D. Lothrop & Co., publishers, No. 30 and 32 Franklin street, Boston—leads off with a Christmas poem and frontispiece; "Boston Rosebuds" receives fine illustration at the skillful hands of Miss L. B. Humphrey; "Lady Betty's Cooking School" is an article full of valuable hints to the girls in America; G. B. Bartlett's article (illustrated) on Ralph Waldo Emerson is worthy the reading of adults as well as the young. The usual departments are well sustained. Report avers that one hundred and twenty thousand copies of this "wideawake" magazine are now being read and enjoyed.

THE HARMONYAN MONTHLY, for January, edited by Wm. H. Winslow, Ph. D., M.D., has a table of contents appropriate to its title. It is published in New York, 145 Grand street, and Philadelphia, and is evidently a good number of a magazine eminently worthy of the patronage of all interested in the Homeopathic system of treatment.

THE SPIRITUAL OFFERING for January, D. M. Fox, Publisher, Rochester, N. Y., has the following among its table of contents: "The Maid of Orleans," with portrait, by S. B. Brittan; "Modern Spiritualism," its De-

velopment in Rochester and Subsequent Growth," Chapter III, by R. D. Jones; "Spirit-Communication from Adelaide A. Proctor;" "Samuel B. Brittan," Biography, chapter IX; "The Evolution of the Religion of Israel;" "Our Young Folks;" "Editorial Notes," etc.

THE SATURDAY MAGAZINE—Fred B. Perkins, editor—issued weekly at 11 Bromfield street, Room 1, Boston, is a readable and noteworthy production.

Received: THE SHAKER MANIFESTO for January, G. A. Lomas, editor; published by the United Societies at Shakers, N. Y.

THE PHRENOLOGICAL JOURNAL for January—S. R. Wells & Co., publishers, 737 Broadway, New York City. This number begins the sixty-eighth volume of this popular and sterling exponent of Phrenology and kindred topics.

NEW MUSIC.—The songs, arias, etc., as executed at the Boston Museum in H. M. S. Pinfold, reach us in good and compact form from the publishers, White, Smith & Co., 516 Washington street, Boston.

Movements of Lecturers and Mediums.

(Matter for this department should reach our office by Thursday morning to insure insertion the same week.)

Mrs. Eliza M. Hekko, the talented writer and fine speaker, who has been on an extended lecturing tour in Maine, has returned to her home in Charlestown District, this city. Her labors were confined mostly to the northern part of the State: Dixfield, South Paris, Norway, Bethel, and other towns. Her week-endings were devoted to the cause of temperance, and on Sundays she preached the new gospel. She reports a strong feeling in favor of temperance, and a desire to hear the Spiritual Philosophy expounded. She contemplates a visit to Connecticut.

George A. Fuller has been lecturing during December as follows: The 8th and 15th at Northampton, Mass.; 13th, Vernon, Vt., in the Universalist church; and the 20th in Tyler's Hall, Athol, Mass. His engagements for January are as follows: 3d and 12th, Greenfield, Mass.; 10th, Milford, N. H.; and the 20th probably at Nashua, N. H. Mr. Henry B. Allen has been holding sances at the above-mentioned places, creating great interest. Mr. Fuller would like to make further engagements. Address during January, Sherborn, Mass.

C. B. Lynn's address during January will be care of Clark House, Troy, N. Y. Mr. Lynn will lecture in Philadelphia during February.

Bishop A. Beals has closed his engagement at Waukegan, and at Whittier, Ill. The friends there desire him to return and resume his labors as soon as May. He will next fill an engagement at Chebanse, Ill., commencing the second Sunday in January.

Mrs. E. A. Cutting addressed the spiritual meetings in a very acceptable manner last Sunday afternoon and evening at Mechanics' Hall, Lynn, under the auspices of Mr. and Mrs. George Dillingham. The developing circles at 12 o'clock were well attended and are doing much good. Mrs. Cutting will be present at the meetings on Sunday next.

Mrs. E. L. Watson, of Titusville, Pa., concluded her engagement for ten lectures in Philadelphia, Sunday evening, Dec. 20th. She has been re-engaged by the same Society (which meets at the Academy, corner 8th and Spring-Garden streets) to occupy its platform during the Sundays of March. Prof. R. G. Eccles speaks for this organization during January.

P. C. Mills spoke in Grand Army Hall, Saugus, the three last Sundays in December, closing the year with a discussion with Mr. David Knox on the evening of the 31st. He terminated his month's engagement there Jan. 5th, but held another discussion on Wednesday and Thursday evenings with the same gentleman at the same place. He expects to go to New York about the 15th of January. Would like to make engagements to lecture anywhere in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio or Indiana. He proposes remaining in the West at least until the first of May.

Amanda Harthan, M. D., who has been suffering from the effects of sunstroke since June, 1876, has regained her health, and her spirit-influences have returned to her with such force as to enable her to resume her practice of treating the sick. Her present address is Springfield, Mass., care of E. C. Cook, corner of Margaret and Water street.

Mrs. Nettie Pease Fox will accept calls to lecture on week day evenings, in any town or city on or near the railroad west of Albany. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings must be the time, to enable her to return to her Sunday congregations. Address 170 1/2 West Main street, Rochester, N. Y.

Horace Greeley Knapp, on Sunday, Jan. 12th, will deliver the first lecture on Spiritualism that the people of Nyack, N. Y., have had the opportunity of listening to.

Mr. Frank Baxter speaks for the Brooklyn Spiritualist Society, in the large hall of the Brooklyn Institute, corner Washington and Concord streets, commencing the first Sunday in January and continuing for the whole month.

Mrs. B. M. Lawrence is prepared to accept calls to lecture on religious, social and political subjects, on Sunday or week day evenings, on terms warranted to prove satisfactory to Spiritualist and Liberalist societies. Address her 287 Main street, Charlestown District, Boston.

Mrs. N. J. Willis speaks in Lincoln Hall, Weymouth Landing, Mass., on Sunday, 12th inst., at 2 1/2 o'clock P. M.

Mrs. Clara A. Field will speak in Quincy, Mass., on Sunday next, and will remain over the following Monday for the purpose of giving sittings, etc. She will be in that town every Monday till further notice; the remainder of each week she can be found at her office, No. 7 Montgomery Place, Boston.

Mrs. E. L. Saxon, says the Religio-Philosophical Journal, won golden opinions from her labors in New Orleans, during the prevalence of the yellow fever. For ninety days she afforded relief to an average of fifty women a day at her house, in the distribution of clothes, food, medicine and sewing. Such have not only angel helpers but help the angels.

A correspondent writing from New York City says: "The Herald of a late date states that 'Wilkie Collins still refuses to conclude Edwin Drood.' A little bird tells me 'he is satisfied with Dickens's finishing of the work himself.' Wonder if it is true?"

One of England's most distinguished writers says in the course of a recent letter to our address, from London: "We get the Banner of Light, and it is to us spiritualized food, containing a supply for every true demand. God bless you always!"

Our thanks are due Rand, Avery & Co., commercial and law printers, 117 Franklin street, Boston, for fine specimens of calendar work for 1879-80.

Victoria C. Woodhull is to lecture in St. James's Hall, London, Eng., Feb. 21st and 28th and March 7th.

A letter from Hattie Dickinson in re the New York Lyceum will appear next week.

The elegant six-story edifice in Chicago, known as the Honore Building, in which the post-office was located, was consumed on the afternoon of the 4th inst. So sudden was the fire that the occupants barely escaped with their lives. This is the third time the post-office in that city has been burned out. The total loss by the fire amounts to over half a million of dollars, partly covered by insurance.

The well-known and popular seedsmen, Messrs D. M. Ferry & Co., of Detroit, Mich., are again before our readers with their annual announcement. Their catalogue, which is mailed free, is offered to all our readers. We would advise them to avail themselves of this offer.

Yonthful editors need more graceful pens.

Spiritual Notes From London.

(By an Occasional Correspondent.)

Mr. J. William Fletcher will lecture every Sunday evening at Cavendish Rooms, London, commencing January 1st. This is a new movement to provide a suitable place for spiritual instruction, where all may go free of charge, as no admission is charged and no collection taken. The meetings are solely under the direction of the spirit guides of Mr. Fletcher.

Mr. C. E. Williams is meeting with the most flattering success.

Mrs. Margaretta Fox Kane is doing much to convince the skeptics, with her wonderful power and independent writing.

A Society has been formed in Florence under the direction of Signor Fenzi, the Spiritualist, to collect the facts of Spiritualism, in view of publishing a history complete of the movement.

The article "A Spirit Photographed in the Light," by J. William Fletcher, published in a recent number of the Banner of Light, has been translated into the French, and will appear in the coming number of the Revue Spirite.

The new secret society called "The Order of the White Cross," is holding regular sessions with very satisfactory results, more people having applied for admittance than can at present be accommodated.

Mr. W. H. Lambelle continues his lectures at Ladbroke Hall.

Miss C. A. Burke, the young lady assistant at the National Association of Spiritualists, is receiving great praise for her literary efforts, her poetical productions being especially commended.

Miss Corner, daughter of Mrs. Amelia Corner, President of the Dalston Association, has also met with success in the same way. She is a powerful writing medium, and her works are largely the result of spiritual control.

December 18th.

Spiritualist Meetings in Boston.

PARKER MEMORIAL HALL, Spiritualist meetings will be held at this hall, in Parker Memorial Building, corner Appleton and Berkeley streets, Boston, on Sunday, 13th inst., during the season of 1879. Good lecturers and excellent music. The public are invited to attend free of charge. John Tyerman will lecture Jan. 13th. For order see Com.

INVESTIGATOR HALL, Paine Memorial Building, Appleton Street, W. J. Colville, will lecture on Sunday, 13th inst., on the subject of "The Spiritualist's Guide." Services commencing at 10 1/2. Congregational Singing Practice at 12.

ARMY HALL, Children's Progressive Lyceum, 36, holds its second Sunday morning at this hall, corner West and Washington streets, commencing at 10 1/2. The public cordially invited. D. N. Ford, Conductor.

PYTHIAN HALL, The People's Spiritual Meeting (formerly held at Eagle Hall) is removed to Pythian Hall, 12 Tremont street, Sunday morning and afternoon. Good mediums and speakers always present.

EAGLE HALL, Spiritual Meetings for speaking and tests are held at this hall, 60 Washington street, every Sunday at 10 1/2, 2 and 7 1/2 P. M. Excellent quartette singing provided.

PARKER MEMORIAL HALL, The Spiritualist Ladies' Aid Society will meet at this place, Parker Memorial Building, Berkeley corner of Appleton street, every Friday afternoon and evening. Mrs. John Wood, President; Miss M. L. Barrett, Secretary.

KNOWLEDGE HALL, 7 Tremont Row, Meetings continued every Sunday at 10 1/2, 2 and 7 1/2 P. M.

ARMISTED HALL, Meetings are held in this hall, Waverley Building, Charlestown District, every Sunday evening, under direction of C. B. Marsh.

Amory Hall.—We were blessed to-day with fine weather and an attentive audience, the members of which listened to an interesting, pleasing and instructive programme, consisting of an overture by the orchestra; singing, responses, and Banner March; remarks by Mrs. N. J. Willis; duet, Mr. Howlett and Miss Susie M. Adams, from the Cambridge Conservatory of Music, accompanied on the piano by Mr. Fisher, the Conductor of the Conservatory; recitations, "God's Care," Bessie Stevens; "Tall Oaks from Little Acorns Grow," Flora Pringle; "To my Mother," Jennie Lothrop; song, "On the Mountain," accompanied by orchestra, Alice Bond; recitations, "The Golden Stair," Willie Graydon, Alice Devereaux, "Sorrow," Charlie Lothrop, "Hang up the Baby's Stocking," Jennie Smith; song, "Only a Flower," Nellie Thomas; recitation, "God takes Care of Good Children," Little Miss Blaisdell; reading, "How we Saved St. Michaels," Mrs. Durgin; Wing Movements, led by Mr. Ford; song, "Joyfully I Move," Miss Susie M. Adams; recitation, "The Knight's Toast," Alfie Peabody; song, "Only a Little Wanderer," Florence Danforth; recitation, "How Benny got his Drum," May Waters; duet, Mr. Fairbanks and Grace; reading, "Little Jim," Miss Adams; song, Mr. Howlett; closing with Target March.

WM. D. ROCKWOOD, Cor. Sec. Children's Progressive Lyceum No. 1, Boston, Jan. 5th, 1879.

Pythian Hall.—The meetings at this hall were unusually interesting last Sunday. Dr. J. A. Wood opened the exercises in the morning by reading the 25th Psalm, supplementing the same with an invocation and remarks which were replete with excellent thoughts and suggestions as to how we should improve our opportunities for doing good during the year upon which we have just entered. Mrs. Barrett followed the opening with reading a poem entitled "The City of the Living." Dr. Charles Court gave an exhortation which was of a most interesting and edifying nature. Recitation of Longfellow's "Psalm of Life," by the Chairman, and remarks by Mrs. Minnie Chamberlain, George C. Wall and Mr. Crooker, filled out the morning exercises.

In the afternoon Mrs. H. Clark (entranced) presented a highly instructive address upon "The Past, Present and Future of Modern Spiritualism," subject chosen by vote of the audience. Several questions were also answered very readily by the controlling influence, evidently to the satisfaction of all present.

Meetings for social conference, tests and speaking, will be held every Sunday morning and afternoon. A good array of speakers and mediums always present.

Charlestown—Abbotsford Hall.—Sunday evening, Jan. 5th, Mrs. Susie Nickerson White occupied the platform in this hall as speaker and test medium. A large audience was present. After a song by the choir and a short invocation, the speaker gave an interesting discourse, the subject being furnished by the people: "The Relations of the Sexes in both the low and high spheres of the spirit-world," and "Reincarnation." After the discourse several fine tests were given, which were recognized as correct. Both the lecture and tests afforded great satisfaction to all. Mrs. White will speak and give tests in this hall next Sunday evening at 7 1/2 o'clock.

C. B. M.

Liberal Club.—Next Sunday evening, at 7 1/2 o'clock, at New Era Hall, 176 Tremont street, the Boston Liberal Club will continue their debate of the following question: "Do any of the Human Phenomena Proceed from Departed Human Spirits?" John S. Verity and James Sumner will maintain the negative, and Moses Hall and Laura Kendrick the affirmative.

The Boston Social Science Club will hold its next meeting at Woman's Club Rooms, No. 4 Park street, Friday evening, Jan. 10th, at 7 1/2 o'clock. Subject—"Godwin Moody's Views of our Labor Troubles and their Cure." Discussion continued.

God's Poor Fund.

From Friend, Newton, Mass., 75 cents; Wm. C. Buckingham, Peconic, N. Y., \$1.00; George James, Andrews Settlement, Pa., 50 cents; S. B. C. Reading, Mass., 50 cents; Mrs. M. H. Clapp, Dorchester, Mass., \$1.00; B. H., 50c.

W. F. Jamieson debated with White Hall, Ill., for four days and five evenings with Rev. John Hughes Universalist, Dec. 30th, 31st, Jan. 1st, 2d, 3d. He was at Carthage, Ill., Jan. 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, for a course of five lectures. He will be at Ashmole, Ill., for a second debate, Jan. 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th. Address him at Carthage, Ill.

The late "cold snap" hereabouts has partially subsided.

William Denton

Will inaugurate a course of illustrated scientific lectures in Investigator Hall, Paine Memorial Building, Boston, commencing on Sunday evening, Jan. 12th, and on succeeding Sunday evenings to the close. The subjects of the lectures will be: 1. The Firey Beginning of the Universe; 2. How the World was Made; 3. Law of Progress; 4. Exemplified in Geology; 5. Glacial Period and Advent of Man; 6. Man in the Stone Age; 7. What the Scriptures of the Earth Reveal. Tickets for the course with reserved seats, \$1.00; course tickets, 75 cents; single admission, 15 cents. Tickets may be obtained at the Banner of Light office.

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