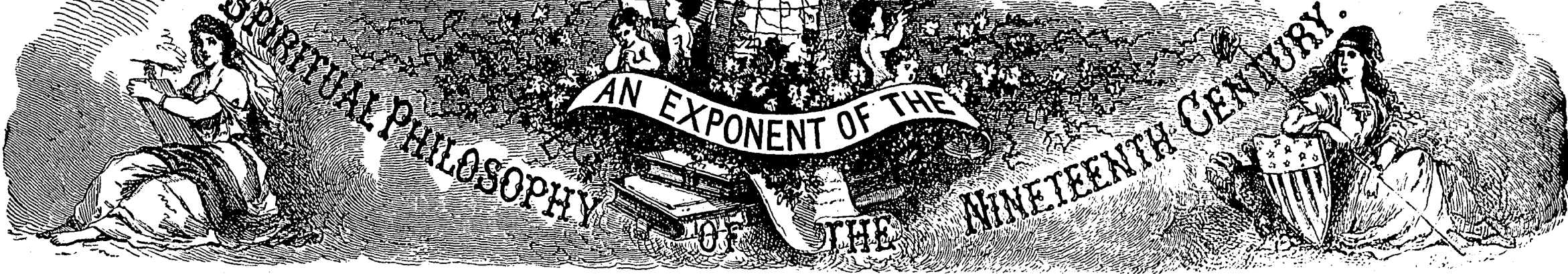


BANNER OF LIGHT.



VOL. XLIV.

COLBY & RICH,
Publishers and Proprietors.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 1879.

\$3.15 Per Annum,
In Advance.

NO. 25.

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Foreign Correspondence.

The General Condition of Spiritualism in America as a Public Movement; Its Relation to Orthodox Christianity; and the Necessity for Active Organizations Throughout the Country.

BY JOHN TYRMAN, OF AUSTRALIA.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

The boast that is sometimes made of the vast extent to which Spiritualism has spread, and the great things it has accomplished, considering its short history, and the difficulties that have beset its path, is not without foundation. Probably no movement, having the same amount of prejudice and opposition to encounter, and so few and feeble visible instrumentalities at its command, ever made such progress as it has done, within the limited period of thirty years. In spite of the misrepresentations of the press, the slanders of the pulpit, the opposition of the general public, and the fulminations of the Pope of Rome, it has won its way far and wide, and secured adherents in almost every land under the sun. And in no country, I suppose, has its progress been so marked and its achievement so brilliant as in America. It is said to number several millions of converts there; and, as the result of the observations and inquiries I have made in crossing the continent, I am fully prepared to endorse that estimate.

And yet, as a public movement, it is not in such a healthy and flourishing condition to-day as could be wished. Any one traversing the country, and judging of the status of Spiritualism by the ordinary external criteria of success, would not be very favorably impressed. He would not find buildings erected in its name, and organizations for the propagation of its principles in almost every city, town and village he visited. In the great majority of places he would find no society of its believers, nor other outward evidences of life and prosperity; and most of the few he would meet with, would be found to be too small and feeble to wield much influence over the community around, and might almost as well die as live, for any good they are likely to effect, as at present constituted and worked. At least, such is the state of things I have found in my travels from San Francisco to Boston, and I presume, from what I hear and read, that matters are pretty much the same in other parts of the country. While finding Spiritualism in America quite equal to my expectations, so far as the number of professed believers in it is concerned, I have been painfully disappointed and grieved at the condition I have found it in as a public movement, and candidly say so. It is no use deceiving ourselves; by painting things in more flattering and attractive colors than facts fairly warrant. In the few short letters of travel that I have published, I have presented things under as favorable an aspect as I could, without wishing to exaggerate or mislead; but there is a darker side of the picture, which, as alike due to myself and to the interests of truth, should be fully recognized and frankly confessed. I have found a few earnest, devoted, noble souls in each place I have stopped at, in crossing the continent; persons who have the courage of their opinions, act consistently with the principles they profess, and do their best to diffuse a knowledge of the truth among those around them, notwithstanding the still existing unpopularity of the cause in some places. All honor to those brave and self-sacrificing few; they will have their reward. But what are they compared with the numbers who believe in Spiritualism, and yet practically deny their principles, and virtually play into the hands of the enemy?

Many who profess to believe in Spiritualism never were connected with it as a public movement; and some of those who formerly were, have, from various causes, withdrawn from it, and left it to perish, for aught they seem to care, or will do to prevent that calamity. Division has crept into certain places, and scattered once flourishing societies. Indifference has stolen over some believers, and withered the zeal that formerly animated them. Disputes at various things that have been taught and done in the name of Spiritualism, has driven others from its side of Orthodoxy, and are supporting some form of sectarian Christianity, under the mistaken notion that it and Spiritualism can be harmonized.

The result of these things is, that Spiritualism, as a public movement, is in a comparatively unsatisfactory state in most places one visits. Many mediums are not properly sustained; the majority of speakers are remunerated at a rate far from commensurate with their merits; its periodical press, and other literature connected with it, do not receive the patronage they are

entitled to; and the public efforts that are put forth to extend and popularize it, are neither so many, nor efficient, as its vast importance would justify, and the condition of the world demands. I know of no movement, whose foundation is more broad and secure, whose principles are more rational, comprehensive, and wisely adapted to the wants of the human race; whose aim is more just, noble, and inspiring; and whose claims upon the liberal and cordial support of its professed believers are more fair and legitimate, than those of Spiritualism. And yet I venture to say there is no movement which, in proportion to the number and ability of its adherents, receives so little practical aid and public recognition. This state of things should not have come to pass, and ought not to be permitted to perpetuate its existence.

Among the several causes already indicated, which have contributed to bring about these results, I wish more especially in this article to deal with the last one, namely, the number of Spiritualists who are connected with, and rendering their support to, various Christian Churches. Wherever I have gone in America, I have heard of Spiritualists who are connected with the churches. Several of those establishments, I have been informed, derive a considerable proportion of their support from known believers in the New Dispensation. Some of those persons were no doubt Orthodox when Spiritualism found them; and they have never carried its fundamental principles to their logical conclusions, and become fully emancipated from sectarian bondage. While others, who once professed to be free, and of their stand on the broad platform of Rationalism and Progressive Spiritualism, have, for reasons best known to themselves, gone back to the churches; though still admitting, at least in private, their belief in spirit-communion. Whether those Spiritualists who are connected with churches, and themselves on that side from conscientious and worthy motives, or because that position is thought most respectable, and pays best in business, is not for me to determine. Some of them have gone so far as to attempt a reconciliation of Spiritualism and Christianity, professing to believe that the two, when rightly understood, are identical in their main features. In this view they are supported by a few believers who are not connected with any Orthodox church, but form a sort of little sect by themselves. And hence we have a small body known as "Christian Spiritualists," composed of persons within the churches, and partly of those outside of the Orthodox limits.

In view of these things, the question naturally arises—*Can Spiritualism and Christianity be so far legitimately harmonized that the believers in the one can honestly and consistently profess to believe in the other?* This question has been often and ably discussed in the past; but I think its importance will justify a few additional remarks upon it at the present time. I therefore venture to express my thoughts upon it, and I do so with due deference to such men as Dr. E. Crovel and Dr. S. Watson, whose views and conclusions in this matter differ from my own.

It appears to me, then, to be utterly impossible to reconcile Spiritualism and Christianity by any fair principles of reasoning. If this position can be made good, it will follow as a necessary consequence that Spiritualists cannot consistently with certain essential principles of their system, support Orthodox churches. I use the term *Spiritualism* in the comprehensive sense in which it is employed by nearly all the ablest writers on the subject, and by almost every one who professes to believe in it. I mean by it, a system of facts, doctrine, and principles which, though not strictly speaking, new, have in the main only been developed into a system within the last thirty years. It means something more than simple belief in spirits, and it follows as a necessary consequence that a person who believes in the power of departed spirits to return to earth is a Spiritualist; but surely this is altogether too narrow and incomplete a definition of the term. A bigoted Hindu, Mohammedan, Catholic, or Protestant might admit that the existence of Jesus would make him a Christian; and the sooner this loose and illogical definition is adopted, apparently, in the hope of propitiating dominant Orthodoxy—is abandoned, the better it will be for all concerned.

I also use the term *Christianity* in the sense in which it is generally understood, as comprehending a system of facts, doctrine, and customs supposed to be taught in the Bible, especially in the New Testament portion of it. I am willing to exclude the minor points on which Protestant sects differ from each other, and do so with due deference to such men as Dr. E. Crovel and Dr. S. Watson, and retain only those alleged facts and doctrines which they alike regard as essential parts of Christianity. I have nothing to do with the spurious and nondescript thing that certain very liberal and "advanced" people call Christianity, which has scarcely any feature but the name in common with what is usually meant by the term. Having rejected everything that is distinctively Christian, and has been so regarded for over eighteen hundred years, those so-called Christians do not appear to me to have any just title to the name. If they were to give their system some other appellation it would be far more honest and consistent, and save a great deal of misunderstanding, confusion and controversy.

Having thus defined the two leading terms, I respectfully submit that the *fundamental principles of Spiritualism are logically subversive of the fundamental principles of Christianity*; and that, therefore, it is absolutely impossible to harmonize the two conflicting systems. I think this could be conclusively demonstrated if time and space permitted; but in this article I can only point out two or three facts and arguments, in the briefest possible manner, in support of this position.

1. In the first place Spiritualism teaches that *inspiration is a natural, universal, and perpetual fact*. Christianity, on the contrary, claims that it is a supernatural gift, bestowed by a direct and special act of God; that it was confined to the writers of the Bible, neither those living contemporaneously with, nor subsequent to, the said writers enjoying it; and that it was absolutely infallible, both as to its source, its channels, and the subject matter it revealed. And the exceptional Divine authority claimed for the Bible rests entirely on this assumption of exclusive and infallible inspiration. But this fundamental principle of Spiritualism is tenable—if inspiration is a perfectly natural gift, dependent upon certain laws and conditions; if it was enjoyed by many, anointed, outside the limits of Bible lands; if it did not cease when the last verse of that book was written, but is experienced still, and will be as long as men are on earth; and if, instead of flowing direct from God, it comes from finite beings, as is, therefore, fallible in what it makes known—if this be

correct, I say, it logically cuts away the very foundation of Orthodox Christianity, the alleged infallible inspiration of the Bible. And the foundation being destroyed, the pretentious theological system resting upon it as a matter of course falls to the ground. The Bible being stripped of the social Divine authority claimed for it, as the result of erroneous views of inspiration, it must take its place on the same plane as other books, and stand upon whatever merits it possesses as a human production. The special sanctity supposed to surround it will lose its charm, the superstitious reverence so long felt for it will vanish, and various institutions that were founded on the exploded fiction just mentioned will become things of the past. Preachers will be no longer necessary to teach it as the infallible word of God, nor mischievous societies be required to promote its circulation throughout the world, as man's only sure guide to heaven. And yet, though this one grand principle of Spiritualism respecting inspiration, in its various bearings, sweeps away so much of the foundation of Christianity, there are Spiritualists who either lack the ability or courage to press it to its logical conclusion, and pretend that the two radically antagonistic systems are in substantial accord!

2. A second fundamental principle of Spiritualism is, that the *law of progressive development is universal and inevitable*; and that it embraces the whole human family, as well as the material universe. I suppose almost all Spiritualists admit this principle, and yet some of them do not seem to perceive what is involved in its logical application to Christianity. It plays terrible havoc with that religion as a theological system. For example, it completely demolishes the doctrine of the Fall, at one end of the system; the doctrine of *Eternal Punishment*, at the other end; and the doctrine of the *Atonement* as its great central pivot. If man is under the law in question, he never fell, but has been gradually rising from a lower, obscure beginning; and hence there was no necessity for an atonement, to redeem him from a fall that never took place; and eternal punishment becomes an impossibility, inasmuch as under the beneficent and irresistible operation of this law, all men will be finally elevated to a condition of purity and happiness. And of course this law of progressive development, in excluding the atonement as a non-necessity, also excludes the doctrine of *Christ's Deity*—the most vital part of the popular faith—from which the atonement derives its special value. Christ is thus deprived of his Deity, and the foundation of the doctrine has long since crumbled him, placed in the rank of created and finite beings, and shown to have no just claim to the homage and adoration so generally accorded to him. And when these generally accepted doctrines of Christianity—the Fall, the Deity of Christ, the Atonement, and *Eternal Punishment*—are destroyed, surely its principal features have disappeared.

3. A third fundamental principle which Spiritualism teaches is, that certain unusual phenomena, generally called *miracles*, are not produced by the direct agency of God, but by *finite intelligences*; and invariably occur in harmony with natural laws and conditions. If this principle is sound, it involves the overthrow of the chief external evidences on which the claim for the divine origin and authority of Christianity rests. And of course this law of progressive development, in excluding the atonement as a non-necessity, also excludes the doctrine of *Christ's Deity*—the most vital part of the popular faith—from which the atonement derives its special value. Christ is thus deprived of his Deity, and the foundation of the doctrine has long since crumbled him, placed in the rank of created and finite beings, and shown to have no just claim to the homage and adoration so generally accorded to him. And when these generally accepted doctrines of Christianity—the Fall, the Deity of Christ, the Atonement, and *Eternal Punishment*—are destroyed, surely its principal features have disappeared.

These three fundamental principles of Spiritualism, then—even if it consisted of nothing else—necessarily destroy the largest and most essential portions of Christianity. But the two systems are as irreconcilably opposed to each other on other points as on those just named. If space permitted I think this could be clearly demonstrated, but as it does not, it must suffice to simply say that Spiritualism does not recognize the Christian Trinity as a truth, but treats it as a Pagan myth. It does not acknowledge its God, in his character, relation to man and connection with the universe, as the true God; but regards him simply as the creation of the human mind—the highest conception of Deity which certain ancient worthies were capable of. Nor does it endorse the Christian theory, based upon the Bible, of the creation of the material universe; the origin, nature, capabilities, duties and destiny of man; the elements of true religion; the motives of moral conduct; the importance and efficacy of faith; the forgiveness of sin; regeneration by supernatural grace; the nature, uses and power of prayer; providential interpositions in the affairs of the world; the origin, character, obligation of the Sabbath; the principles and methods of rewards and punishments, as part of the Divine economy; and the power and means of departed spirits to return to earth and communicate with its inhabitants. Upon each of these subjects the teachings of Spiritualism are radically opposed to those of Christianity, as every one who is well acquainted with the system knows. And of course Spiritualism also rejects the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the physical body; a final Day of Judgment, at the end of the world; a personal God, who is practically more powerful than the Orthodox God; and a hell of eternal torment as the future home of the larger part of the human family.

Now, when Christianity is stripped of these doctrines, when its God is shown to be only a gigantic and imperfect man, its Bible deprived of

the exclusive divine authority so long claimed for it, and its central figure—Jesus—reduced to the level of a human being; when its fall has vanished, and its fountain of atoning blood has been dried up; when its monopoly of supposed supernatural gifts and alleged miracles is overthrown, and its theory of creation, providence and prayer is exploded; when its virtually all-mighty devil is annihilated, and its fires of everlasting misery are extinguished—when these and other vital parts of it are gone, in the name of what is there that is distinctively *Christian* left? Absolutely nothing! All that remains are a few ethical principles and elements of natural religion which existed long before Christianity was known, and are found to-day among people to whom it has not been introduced, and which are therefore the heritage of universal man, and as much a part of Paganism and Spiritualism as of Christianity.

Seeing, then, that Spiritualism and Christianity are thus radically and forever opposed to each other in their respective fundamental and distinguishing principles, it follows as a necessary consequence that the believers in the former cannot consistently support the latter. In so far as any of them do so they virtually either deny some of their own principles, or endorse certain doctrines of the opposite system in which they do not really believe, and hence occupy a very unenviable position when tried at the bar of common honesty and straightforwardness. As to those who call themselves "*Christian Spiritualists*," if the foregoing reasoning be correct it will be seen that their position is very indefensible and unsatisfactory. They either have a Spiritualism peculiar to themselves, or a Christianity which the churches generally would repudiate. It would be just as logical and consistent to talk of Christian Mohammedanism, or Christian Hinduism, as of Christian Spiritualism. The two systems are mutually exclusive and destructive of each other. If our good friends have not yet logically and fearlessly applied certain generally recognized principles of Spiritualism to Christianity, would it not be well in the interests of truth and fairness to do so? If they have so applied them have they not inevitably reached the conclusions, as I have been pointed out in this article? And if so, would it not be well to take a more decided stand in favor of unadulterated and progressive Spiritualism, instead of pursuing a course which, at least in appearance, looks like trimming and evasion? We may as well try to mix oil and water, or blend light and darkness, or make truth and falsehood identical, as to reconcile these utterly antagonistic movements. And if we have abandoned everything that is peculiarly Christian, as some of our estimable Christian Spiritualists do, why retain the name of Christian? We may as well try to retain the empty name, especially when we consider the blasphemous teachings, destructive intolerance and brutal persecutions associated with the name? Perhaps a few of them deliberately act from motives of *policy* in this matter. They think that, if they come out and follow the path which will commend Spiritualism to Christians, they would not otherwise look at it; and possibly they will succeed to a limited extent. But will the results justify the sacrifice of principle and many straightforwardness which this line of conduct involves? Will not the majority of Christians—especially the more intelligent and conscientious among them—be likely to despise such conduct, and be repelled from the system supposed to sanction it? The policy they are pursuing seems to me to be a mistaken and unjustifiable one; but, of course, I am not the judge of the motives of these gentlemen. I only express my individual opinion. Perhaps some of them will reply that they are not Christian in the Orthodox sense of the term; that they have rejected most, if not all of the dogmas before named, as mere ecclesiastical inventions; and that they follow the teachings, example and spirit of Christ. This point, in the main, has been anticipated and answered. Having eliminated the distinctively *Christian* elements from their system, the thing they profess is not covered by the definition already given, and they are left in the position of a man who professes to be a Christian, but who has eliminated the distinctive elements of Christianity from his system. They are left in the position of a man who professes to be a Christian, but who has eliminated the distinctive elements of Christianity from his system. They are left in the position of a man who professes to be a Christian, but who has eliminated the distinctive elements of Christianity from his system.

There are no doubt churches which would be very glad to accept Spiritualism, at least in part, in order to vitalize and strengthen their decaying system, if they could obtain it on their own terms; and of course they duly appreciate the practical support which many so-called Spiritualists afford them, while leaving their own cause to languish for want of the necessary means of vigorous and successful action. Indeed, there are not wanting signs to show that Orthodoxy will endeavor to do with Spiritualism what it has done with many other movements which it at first opposed and persecuted. It is endeavoring to do this with Spiritualism, and done its utmost to crush it out of existence, having branded its mediums as impostors, denounced its phenomena as frauds, anathematized its teachings as false, and condemned its influence as evil in its character and demoralizing in its tendency; and having ignominiously failed in its uncharitable conduct, it will, true to its traditional policy and sectarian instincts, try to appropriate it, and make it subserve its selfish purposes. But in this, I venture to think, it will find itself grievously disappointed. The two systems, as already shown, cannot be amalgamated, the one never consistently individual believers in them may act, in attempting to unite them. By all means let the churches have Spiritualism; they are greatly in need of it, and will be compelled to accept it in due time, if they are to hold the position and wield the influence in the world they desire. But let them obtain it honorably, and pay a proper

price for it, let them candidly confess the wrong they have done, openly surrender the false doctrines and superstitious customs that have so long enslaved the intellect and perverted the conscience of man, and publicly admit their conversion to the new cause; and not allow the errors of the old faith to disappear without formal recantation, and steal the principles of the New Dispensation in the dark, and after a few years have elapsed openly profess them, as though they were parts of the system of Christianity they have always taught, as they have done with too many other things in the past. Their traditional policy must not be repeated in this case. It is too transparent and unjust to pass without detection and exposure. Spiritualism is destined in the very nature of things to radically and powerfully affect the churches. It will permeate and revolutionize them, in spite of all that sectarian bigotry of the day can do to prevent it. It is doing this already, and the operation will be quickened and extended as time rolls on. But all clear observers and logical thinkers will perceive that in proportion as they embrace genuine Spiritualism, they will cease to be Christian, in the full and popular sense of the term, though they may still cling to the empty name.

Having stated the general condition of Spiritualism as a public movement, as I have found it in my travels through America, indicated some of the causes of the present unsatisfactory state of things, and made a few remarks on subjects which one of those causes suggested, the question naturally arises, What can be done to prove its status before the public, and diffuse its influence and blessings more extensively among the people? Many things could be suggested; but as this article is already too long, I can only make a remark or two on one matter.

It seems to me that the greatest need of the hour is *more general and efficient organization*. Much has been said and written on this subject, but it needs pressing upon the attention of the people again and again. I regret that the late masterly effort of Prof. S. B. Brittan has not borne more fruit in this direction. There may be a difference of opinion as to the means to be recommended for the attainment of the ends he proposes; but his arguments in favor of organization are as unanswerable as his illustrations are appropriate and striking. Spiritualism is not a self-acting machine. Its propagation depends largely upon the same kind of instrumentality that other movements have found necessary in connection with other movements. The spirit-world can only work out its wise and beneficent purposes through and by natural laws and agencies. Organized public action is as necessary as individual private effort; it would not greatly interfere with such effort, but would greatly encourage and strengthen it. And if all the Spiritualists in the country—those who have become so completely individualized that they live for themselves alone; those who hang on to the skirts of Orthodoxy in the hope of picking a few of the crumbs that fall from its richly laden table; those who are timidly hiding their light in obscurity till Mrs. Grundy condescends to endorse the movement; those who identify themselves with the churches through such erroneous though well-meant notions as have been named; those who oppose organization from fear of certain sectarian evils resulting from it—if these and others were united on a broad platform, and animated with the enthusiasm which our grand philosophy ought to inspire, what a mighty power Spiritualism would become in society, and what an immense good it would accomplish among all classes of the people! It is not for want of numbers that Spiritualism is not in a more prosperous and satisfactory condition. There are undoubtedly several million believers in it in America. But where are they, and what are many of them doing? They are scattered all over the land, and are too much like a disorganized and scattered army, only a handful being found here and there at their posts, bravely doing their duty. I visit every place I have visited where Spiritualists enough, if properly organized and earnest in the work, to make the movement generally respected, and its influence felt for good in all social, educational, commercial, political and religious departments, instead of being persecuted and treated with contempt and derision, as is too frequently the case at present.

The failure of many organizations in the past will no doubt be pleaded against any proposal for fresh efforts in that direction. Those failures are frankly admitted, but what caused them? No doubt several things contributed to them, but I can only refer to one at present. It appears to me that the chief secret of at least most of those failures is found in the fact that the organizations were too ambitious; they aimed at more than they had material at their back to sustain the hope of realizing. Instead of building up from the bottom, they in a large measure reversed that process, and began at the top; and not having a proper basis to rest upon, they inevitably collapsed. It is little use attempting to form a national organization, till a number of State organizations exist, and equally futile to form State organizations, till a good deal has been done in the way of establishing local ones. The national organizations of the churches rest upon State ones, and State ones upon a network of local ones. It is the vast number of comparatively small local organizations that give such influence and stability to the larger and more imposing institutions. And many of their dogmas as we may reject, I think we should do well to follow their example to a large extent in this respect. Liberal local associations, for business, social, and other reasonable purposes, should be formed all over the country. There are plenty of materials for such a work. From these, State Associations would naturally be developed; and in due time these State Associations would be crowned by a National Association, in every sense worthy of a great and glorious cause.

I am aware that many Spiritualists are, from various reasons, opposed to organization, and disparage all efforts in that direction. In some cases, however, I fear the objection is only a flimsy cover for selfish indifference; and where it is conscientious, it does not appear to me to rest on valid and satisfactory reasons. They seem to think that its mission is only to disintegrate and individualize; overlooking the fact that in nature, our greatest teacher, reorganization, in other forms, invariably follows disintegration. They are troubled with groundless apprehensions as to certain evil results, if too much organization is attempted. They fear that some objectionable creed will be sought to be formulated, and imposed upon the people, who have escaped from creedal bondage; or that sectarian exclusiveness and intolerance will spring up, and shed its withering influence over our heaven-born cause; or that some Spiritualistic "organizer" will bound from the ranks to the throne, establish an empire of intellectual despotism, and invade the rights and liberties of the individual; or that some other terrible calamity, as conjured up and portrayed by their own active and vivid imagination, will befall the movement. And therefore they shake their

Written for the Banner of Light. STANDING ON THE BORDER. BY MILTON H. MARBLE.

(The following lines were written on reading the article "A Touching and Confident Foretelling," page fifth of the Banner of Light for Feb. 23, 1879.)
Internally dedicated to Sylvester R. Fowler, Circleville, Ohio.

I am standing on the border of a fairer land than this,
Sorely tried by long affliction, I but long to go from this!
I shall soon cross o'er the river to the glorious spirit-land,
Enter in the holy temple; see its glories great and grand!
I am standing on the border; and my angel friends will come
Soon to hear my weary spirit to its bright angelic home,
Soon their music-words will greet me in the land where I am not,
For I hear the echoes sounding from across the river bright!
I am standing on the border. I have done what I could do
To advance our cause so noble, that I feel and know is true;
This will be my final message, (ill I send one from that shore
Just across the bridge that leads us to the Golden Evermore!

I am standing on the border. I can see a glorious land
Waiting just across the river but to grasp my waiting hand;
I am ready; I am waiting; I am not afraid of death,
For I pass away, my brother, as I live, STRONG IN THE FAITH!

Table Rock, Nebraska, Feb. 25th, 1879.

Spiritual Phenomena.

A SKEPTIC'S EXPERIENCE WITH A CHICAGO MEDIUM.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

In September, 1877, Mr. A. Townsend, of Beaver Falls, Penn., departed this life. He had been a Spiritualist and a warm personal friend of mine for thirty years. The week before he died I called to see him, when he repeated the promise he had often made before: that in case he passed away first, and it were possible for him to do so, he would make a communication to satisfy me that he still lived, and that death, like birth, was more climacteric in the immortal life of a human being. I had long been charmed with the reasonableness of the spiritualistic theory from beginning to end. Compared with the old church systems of belief, so antagonistic to each other, and so absurd, it was as Hyperion to a Satyr. I believed firmly in the testimony of others, who, I knew, would not lie on so solemn and important a subject as the soul of man, its extrusion at death, or its immortality beyond the grave. But their belief, although satisfactory to themselves, was not, and could not, out of mere courtesy and confidence on my part, become mine. Like eating and sleeping, belief is something that every man must experience for himself. I had devoted many days to the service of the Church, till after many years of bondage I gradually and finally broke my bonds and became free. I was determined not to be deceived again by the opinions and authority of other people, and therefore was an honest skeptic in regard to the truth of the beautiful theory of Spiritualism, keeping the docket of my mind always open for new evidence, but stern as a judge on the bench, or a jury in the box, in sifting that evidence.

Being recently in Chicago, and making inquiry for a reliable and truthful medium, I was directed to Miss May Shaw, who resides with her mother in West Madison street. Neither Miss Shaw nor any other soul in the house had any previous knowledge of my existence, and I had never known of theirs. The person who went with me carefully concealed from all my name, vocation, place of residence, &c., and introduced me to the medium simply as "a friend."

Miss Shaw is a young woman of nineteen or twenty years of age, and impressed me with the conviction that she was what a friend of mine calls "just good," a comprehensive term, by which he means sincere, innocent, and scrupulous in all matters relating to truth and propriety. In a few moments after my entrance, and by a process which, in my ignorance and inexperience, alarmed me, she purported to pass under the control of an Indian spirit who calls himself "Hawkeye." I noticed that her manner, who stood behind me and I came into a state of receptivity. She then told me my name, place of residence, and wrote out the name of my father, who she said, was present, holding by the hand my daughter Mary. She omitted, however, the middle initial of my father's name. He had been dead forty-two years, and there was not, among the scores of thousands of the inhabitants of Chicago, one who knew his name. The medium then said that a cousin of mine, who had died many years ago, was also present with words of kind greeting. Her name was written out in full, giving the town and State in which she had lived and died. Then, after a pause, the medium said that a warm, life-long friend, who had not been gone many months, was present. She wrote out his name "Milo Townsend," omitting, as in the former case, the middle initial. These intimations, for they communicated ideas, professing to be the disembodied spirits of my friends, all spoke words of kindness and good cheer, such as I might naturally expect from them if they were living. After an hour the séance closed. Now I took this evidence, and much more of the same kind that I had received during the séance, and retired within my soul to consider my verdict. The first question I asked myself was, whether what I had seen and heard stood in the category of actual facts or were only delusions? Could my faculties, when wide awake and in broad daylight, deceive me? Did I want to be deceived? Here was the announcement of the names of departed friends and their former places of residence, and they spoke words which only they could utter. Here was the name of Milo Townsend given, and the reason why he had not sent me the promised token of recognition and assurance sooner. Could I do anything else but believe that these were indeed the spirits of my departed friends, whose bodies were lying in the grave, and that they still lived and loved me? Is it not far easier to believe that the "dead" speaking to the living, than to explain it by any other hypothesis? Most gladly would I have given a thousand dollars in gold to any one who would explain the facts of the case as I have mentioned them, consistently with the doctrine of the materialists, that as bile is a secretion of the liver, so is thought a secretion of the brain; and that when death dissolves the body into its original elements, the human being—thinking intellect and all—no more exists than it did a million of years ago. What interest have I in being deceived as to a matter of fact? I am either immortal, or I will go into extinction at death, whether I believe or disbelieve in either alternative. Then what folly to blind myself to my destiny, or suffer any one else to blind me! If my experience ceases at death I want to know it. Like Murat, when he was court-martialed and ordered to be shot, I do not wish to be blindfolded and executed, but to gaze fearlessly upon death, and meet my fate like a brave man. But if death, like birth, is a stepping-stone to a new and more advantageous stage of existence, I want to know that too.

Last autumn, Mr. and Mrs. H. of Cleveland were visiting my family. Mrs. H. was very skeptical on the whole subject of the spiritual phenomena, yet frank and candid in all matters of fact. She listened with interest to the recital of my experience as given above. Having business in the State of Wisconsin in the course of a few months which would take her through Chicago, I earnestly advised her to call on Miss Shaw, saying that perhaps she might see or hear what would interest, if not convince her. She did so, introducing herself as a total stranger, and carefully concealing her name and place of residence. The moment the medium passed under control, she exclaimed, "Mr. B. sent you here?" Then appeared Mrs. H.'s parents, the names being given. Then a sister, whose children, when orphaned, Mrs. H. had taken and brought up

with motherly care, and who was profuse in her expressions of love and gratitude for the service. Then came Minnie, Mrs. Stewart's control, who is an Indian woman, over six feet tall; she would stand in the cabinet door, and while one of our party was holding her by the hand she would slowly dematerialize, settling down till she was not more than two feet tall, still retaining a firm hold on the investigator's hand. The cabinet door closing would completely sever the visible hand from the form, and when let go of by the person it would fall to the rostrum floor, remain in sight for a moment and then vanish! Scarcely would it be gone before the door would again open and there stand Minnie, ready to repeat the test for the benefit of another skeptic. She performed this feat no less than eight times, with as many different members of our party.

Others were permitted to hold both hands of the departed friend, and while thus engaged the control would project the hand of the medium from the cabinet; take hold of the investigator's clothing, in full view of all others, thus proving beyond the possibility of doubt that there were two living forms, or two pairs of hands, at least, within the cabinet, one of which must necessarily have been temporarily materialized.

Mr. Editor, this is but a title of what we experienced, but to relate more would simply be repetition, as every member of the party recognized some departed friend who fully demonstrated the great fact of immortality, completely answering the question, "If a man die shall he live again?"

Already has this letter assumed greater proportions than I had intended, and I am admonished to close; but ere I do so, allow me to express the hope that I may yet have in store many years of usefulness for you, and may they be spent in spreading abroad, through the columns of the dear old Banner of Light, the grand principles of that beautiful philosophy which alone evinces the fact that death has lost its sting and the grave been swallowed up in victory.

I remain, as ever, yours in the cause of truth and justice to all,
B. F. HAYDEN.
We, the undersigned, members of the above-named party, pronounce the above statements true in every particular, but only an abbreviated account of what we experienced in the presence of Mrs. Anna Stewart.
ROBERT C. MILBURN.
HARRY F. KINGSMITH.
B. F. HAYDEN, AND WIFE.
GEO. C. HARRINGTON.
JOSEPH E. MILBURN.
M. B. WAUGH.
JAMES C. CLARK.
MARION DUNBAR.

Colfax, Ind., Feb. 28th, 1879.

(From the Avoca (New South Wales Mail).
INTERESTING MANIFESTATIONS.

TWO SEANCES WITH DR. SLADE.

On a recent Sunday morning, about 10 o'clock A. M., I called at Lester's, accompanied with two friends, for the purpose of interviewing and having a sitting with Dr. Slade, a name now widely known over the whole globe; condemned by a few as a trickster, lauded by German and Russian scientists as a perfect gentleman, free of trickery, and the one who has proved the existence of a fourth dimension in space, or one who has a fourth dimensional being at his command. We soon introduced ourselves to the doctor, whom we found to be alone. I was pleasantly surprised with his agreeable, gentlemanly appearance, his frank, open look, and the courtesy of his manner. In height, he is about five feet ten inches, well built, regular features, bright, intelligent eyes, intellectual forehead, rather fair than dark, and wears a mustache. He was well dressed, wore no profusion of jewelry, but what he did wear were first-class—all being presents made to him whilst in Russia. We took our seats at a Pembroke table, the doctor seating himself at the East side, my two friends North and West, and I at the South side. He was well dressed, wore no profusion of jewelry, but what he did wear were first-class—all being presents made to him whilst in Russia. We took our seats at a Pembroke table, the doctor seating himself at the East side, my two friends North and West, and I at the South side. He was well dressed, wore no profusion of jewelry, but what he did wear were first-class—all being presents made to him whilst in Russia. We took our seats at a Pembroke table, the doctor seating himself at the East side, my two friends North and West, and I at the South side. He was well dressed, wore no profusion of jewelry, but what he did wear were first-class—all being presents made to him whilst in Russia. We took our seats at a Pembroke table, the doctor seating himself at the East side, my two friends North and West, and I at the South side. 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