

Free Thought.

COMMENTS ON DAVIS'S "NEW DEPARTURE."

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

In your issue of April 25th, 1879, I read with great interest Mr. A. E. Newton's communication on Mr. Davis's "new departure." It seemed to me to be a calm, clear, brotherly, judicious and able comment on the great "crisis." When closely looked at, however, neither the "departure" nor the "crisis" seem to be so momentous after all. But it is with feelings, nevertheless, almost akin to pain that I perceive that Mr. Davis *thinks* that there is a "crisis," and that there *ought* to be a "departure." But I think he is mistaken, and if I feel so, I think his misanthropy will compel him to own up, sooner or later. This he has done already. What he says may seem to imply, I do not believe, that he thinks himself the "cornerstone" of Spiritualism, although if any man had a right to assume so much, which I do not believe, few men would have a better right. No, Davis does not in his soul believe that he is an infallible spiritual teacher. I have personally known him for a considerable time; I have read and studied his works for years; I have been my delight. And the little I know of the spiritual philosophy I confess I owe in a great measure to him. I am, therefore, grateful to him. I respect and love him. But all this cannot induce me to think that his new determination is either right in principle or judicious in act. If Mr. Newton's statement of the case be correct—and after careful examination I see no reason to doubt it—there is really no "house divided against itself," no "split," no "rift" between the "Harmonical Philosophy" and "Modern Spiritualism," as Davis chooses to state.

That everything is as harmonious in our spiritual house as we could wish, I find no judicious man claiming; but that everything is tending in that direction almost every one capable of taking a comprehensive view of the movements of Spiritualism believes, and that the object and effort of all good men within its ranks is to bring about that happy time when "God's will" shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven. This is not to be brought about in a day, nor a year, nor even in thirty years. But it will come to pass, and we believe in a great measure, at least, through the spiritual philosophy.

When a man for the first time enters a cast machine-shop and looks at the various movements of the machinery, it all seems to be running, as we say, at sixes and sevens—one wheel running in one direction, another in another, apparently no unity of motion, yet we know there is a unity and a design in all. One motive power gives action to all the work.

Notwithstanding all the manifest harmony of the universe, we are surrounded with so many apparently discordant elements it is sometimes hard to persuade ourselves that there is an infinite, beneficent design at the back of them that will ultimately bring everything into harmony and happiness for the human race. Nevertheless, we believe that is the ultimate design. Such, too, we believe will be the result of Spiritualism, in spite of all the seeming discordances and distractions in the movement of the spiritual philosophy.

The longer I live, and the more I reflect, the clearer I seem to see that *there is building up in our human and immortal nature* as we seem. Now what is it that seems to be troubling the pure soul and giving the honest heart of Bro. Davis? These "manifestations"? These "physical manifestations"? I confess I care but little for such things today. But I once did, and I thank God for it; and if for nothing more, because they led me to study the works of Bro. Davis.

Physical manifestations laid the foundation; Davis's works put some of the corner-stones on the building and are helping to complete it. I am aware that spiritual things are spiritually discerned. But frequently the spiritual is seen through the physical, and still more frequently can only be seen through the physical. Jesus taught his truth, not infrequently, through signs and wonders. And so long as the bulk of mankind remain on the physical plane they must be met on that plane by physical manifestations, against which I think I shall never have any reason to lift my voice or to use my pen. It may have been that I had but little of the faculty of spiritual discernment, but I am free to confess that the study of Bro. Davis's works alone would never have converted me to Spiritualism. Once converted, they have been my food and my delight ever since. I pray God, therefore, to multiply and protect physical manifestations, and purify and bless our mediums. For them I have an ineffable sympathy. They are like harps, on which every wind that blows, whether laden with the sweetest of odors or burdened with deadly miasma, breathes—and influences for good or evil. Such is the susceptibility of their natures, in virtue of which they are mediums. The wonder to me is that there are so few morally bad mediums—so few tricksters. How soon all would be changed for the better, were our mediums cared for as Orthodox ministers are. Why should they not be so cared for, and put beyond the fear of want? Mediums are left to shift for themselves as best they may; if they can make a living, well and good; if not, they are left to starve.

God is said to have been willing to save ungodly Sodom if only five righteous were found in it. I know there are more than double that number at least of righteous mediums; for their sake I would save and protect all the rest. I am no more in love with the unholiness or disharmony that may be found in our ranks than Bro. Davis. Therefore it does not seem to me that his action is going to mend matters, but rather augment the evils; therefore I am opposed to his movement. Remain with us, Bro. Davis. We will work with you, and have been working with you as a body to bring heaven on earth; and in time we can do it. Suppose we cannot all run in your groove, what then? Perhaps we may be working at different tangents of the same arc of the circle, but it is the arc of a true circle, and therefore when produced and completed will form a perfect sphere. We may not see it to be so now, but it must be so in the end.

I am in hopes that Bro. Davis will have reason to change his mind. If so, we will rejoice; if not, we shall yet say, "Go your own way, and God bless you in your work. We shall meet you on the other shore and smile over our mistakes, and wonder that we could have been so shortsighted and so full of unbelief that we could not persuade ourselves that the powers which are at the helm of the spiritual ship could guide her over the sea, although the storm raged and rocks were near, and bring her safely into port.

One word more, Mr. Editor, and I am done. I do not often trouble you with communications,

but there are times once in a while—and this is one of them—when I feel deeply, and must write my thoughts. For many years I have been a reader of the *Banner of Light*, and shall probably continue to peruse it as long as I live. Permit me to say here and now that I have ever been in love with it. Take it all in all, I am persuaded that there is no paper published in the interests of the Spiritual Philosophy—and I am acquainted with several—that is to be compared to it, whether we regard its matter, its appearance, or the wise spirit in which it is conducted. Continue, sir, to conduct it as you have done, and fear nothing. No schisms in our ranks can ultimately and permanently harm it. So long as it is faithful to Truth and true to the cause of the Spiritual Philosophy, all will be well.

W. L. THOMPSON.

BASIC PRINCIPLES IN SCIENCE.

By FRANKLIN SMITH.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

William E. Coleman, in alluding to Dr. Babbitt's great work on the "Principles of Light and Color," says that "its foundation-principles are not therein for the first time announced." No writer upon scientific subjects, before Dr. Babbitt, that I have ever heard of, has gone down into the realm of the atoms, and shown their exquisite mechanical structure and the refined forces by which they are vitalized and actuated.

There are plenty of writers upon science, both in as well as out of the spiritual ranks, who have told us of positive and negative forces, of attraction and repulsion, and of electricity and magnetism, but not one of them has explained their *causes* or their constitution. We also have philosophers who have talked of ultimate principles, how everything could be traced down to force, and back of that we must try to go, as that in itself was "unknowable," but they all stop in some occult principle that would be, if it could be made the resting point, the annihilation of all progress in science. And we know no more of the invisible operations of Nature, of the hidden springs in the atomic realm, from whence all material phenomena flow, for all these learned and wordy disquisitions.

If science is the explanation of things by revealing their causes, then to find their foundation-principles we must know something of the mechanism by which these phenomena were evolved, something beyond the mere fact that certain properties are manifested in the process of evolution of these phenomena, which are the products and results instead of basic and primary causes.

To tell us that material phenomena are caused by electricity and magnetism does not enlighten us much without they can tell us something of how these elements work and by what mechanical principles they move matter. And the same is true when writers upon science talk of attractive and repulsive and positive and negative forces.

But Dr. Babbitt, in his "Principles of Light and Color," has penetrated to the very atoms themselves, revealed their exquisite mechanical structure, with the refined and subtle ethers which flow through them, making the universe alive with these wondrous and beautiful processes which give the flowers their bloom, everything its appropriate form, and clothed the whole with a mantle of living beauty in the form of an endless variety of colors.

He has shown how, from their peculiar spiral mechanical structure, they are joined and fastened together in diverse ways, for the various chemical compounds that compose all objects, by the fluid ethers which circulate through these mechanisms, and radiate their distinctive influences. And further than this, he has also shown how, through the medium of the refined ethers that hold them in their embrace, at the same time act upon our organs of sense, giving us a knowledge of their existence, and properties and characteristics. His work also exhibits the relation which different kinds of atoms, with their corresponding ethers, sustain to the several departments of the human organism, and shows the connection and relations between the colors of different substances and their chemical and therapeutic qualities. The practical benefits arising from this branch alone cannot be highly enough estimated. See his article on this subject in the *Banner of Light* of May 10th.

And in all this he has, for the first time in the history of science, discovered the foundation-principles upon which the whole scientific structure must rest, and they must revolutionize the prevalent conceptions of force and matter upon which the great circle of concrete sciences are based. This work inaugurates a new era in science, and it becomes a most momentous and interesting question as to how ready scientific men may be to forsake their present and past ideas, founded upon the most material view of Nature, together with a basis of metaphysical abstractions. But it is only a question of time.

It overthrows completely the position of many leading scientists, that all our scientific inquiries must be confined to matter with which our external senses alone come in contact, and demonstrates conclusively that the realm of Nature extends far beyond what our senses realize, by showing the scientific modes of its action. Indeed, these discoveries of Dr. Babbitt's open up an infinite and entirely new field of scientific inquiry in all departments of science, because they exhibit to us the mechanism by which the refined ethers, the messengers and agents of the living God, seize upon the atoms which constitute all matter, and combine them together into all the forms which compose and adorn the material universe. They enable us not only to investigate the hitherto locked and sealed departments of atomic action, but also extend our inquiries into the beautiful sphere of psychic influences, by whose operations the great living world of human souls is pervaded and controlled.

Dedham, Mass.

ACCOMPLICES IN POSSIBLE MURDER.—Meanwhile, some children are dying of vaccination, and a much greater number are deformed and diseased. We have one number before us of *The National Anti-Compulsory Vaccination Reporter*, which contains particulars of eighty-eight cases of "vaccination murders." For less than this Parliament passed an act against inoculation, which had previously been accepted and enthusiastically advocated. It is admitted on all hands and by the highest medical authorities, that fatal blood-poisoning has followed vaccination in many cases; yet it is made compulsory by law. Parents are fined or imprisoned, not only once but dozens of times, for refusing to be accomplices in the possible murder of their helpless offspring.—*Dr. J. L. Nichols, in Herald of Health.*

Scene in a horse-car: A roughly-dressed man, a new-made husband and his wife, are the occupants. Car goes off the track, and rough man says "damn." Up jumps "hubby" saying, "How dare you say damn before my wife?" "How did I know your wife wanted to say damn first?" was the reply.

Written for the Banner of Light.

THE PRELUDE.

Wanted down from spheres celestial,
Through the corridors of space,
Are the poet's thoughts and fancies,
Threads—with which his song to grace.

I was dreaming, fondly dreaming,
That an angel bright and fair
Walked and talked with me in silence,
In the fields of light and air.

Gilding over hill and valley,
Not of earth we seemed to be;
Fields Elysian were around us,
Filling us with harmony.

Moving onward, by direction,
Till at last there came to view
Belongs of such sweet perfection—
Joyful faces that I knew;

Came they forward all to greet me,
Each a flower within the hand,
Saying: "Bathel, peace be with thee,
Welcome to the spirit-land!"

Even as one were all their faces,
Yet within the mirrored sphere
I beheld the sweetest graces,
Signs of welcome everywhere.

From the harmony between us,
Lo! the sphere became a shrine;
Then I saw as in a vision
Glimpses of the great Divine.

Thus transplanted to Elysium,
I beheld in burning flames
The great record of creation
Luminated by its mighty fame.

While I stood entranced before it,
All my hopes and fond desires
Flashed across my soul's bright spirit,
As if vivified by fires.

Until all the sphere around me
By attraction's law had drawn
Every kindred thought about me,
Ready for the coming dawn.

While enchanted, beaming faces
Of the *Sacred Spirit* state
Shed around my sphere their graces,
Graces of the *Muted* state.

Until all with one accord
Flashed a *radiant* thought of worth,
Which shall open out the *Word*—
And spread its brightness o'er the earth.

Are the fancies all ideal
Which the poet loves to sing,
And which seem to him as real
As the beautiful flowers of spring?

Kindred spirits will uphold me
When I say the poet sings
Of the unadorned planet
Where the thoughts are real things.

If our fancies lead us heavenward,
Onward, to the *Spirit* shrine,
Who can say that we are wayward
When we seek the great Divine?

Thoughts are primal and eternal—
Who can solve the subtle chain?
Only He who is eternal,
He who rules the great domain.

Derby, England. T. W. WADE.

*The unadorned planet does not refer to what is generally known as the "spiritual kingdom," the world therefore may be literally taken as they stand.

Light at Last—What Dying People See.

Frances Power Coburn in an article in the *Contemporary Review* gives the following interesting narrations:

A few narrations of such observations, chosen from a great number which have been communicated to the writer, will serve to show more exactly the point which it is desired should be established by a large concourse of testimony. The following are given in the words of a friend, on whose accuracy every reliance may be placed:

"I have heard numerous instances of dying persons showing unmistakably by their gestures, and sometimes by their words, that they saw in the moment of dissolution what could not be seen by those who lived. On three occasions facts of this nature came distinctly within my own knowledge, and I will, therefore, limit myself to a detail of that which I can give on my own authority, although the circumstances were not so striking as many others known to me, which I believe to be equally true.

"I was visiting one night beside a poor man dying of consumption; his case was hopeless, but there was no appearance of the end being very near; he was in full possession of his senses, able to talk with a strong voice, and not in the least drowsy. He had slept through the day, and when I came to him he had been conversing with him on ordinary subjects to while away the long hours. Suddenly, while we were thus talking quietly together, he became silent, and fixed his eyes on one particular spot in the room, which was entirely vacant, even of furniture. At the same time a look of the greatest delight shone over the whole expression of his face, and, after a moment of what seemed to be intense scrutiny, he said to me, in a joyous tone: 'There is Jim.' Jim was a little son whom he had lost the year before, and whom I had known well; but the dying man had a son still living, named John, for whom he had sent, and I could see that it was John he was speaking, and that he thought he heard him arriving, so I answered:

"No, John has not been able to come."
"The man turned to me impatiently, and said: 'I do not mean John. I know he is not here; it is Jim, my little lame Jim; surely you remember him.'"
"Yes," I said, "I remember dear little Jim who died last year quite well."

"Don't you see him then? There he is," said the man, pointing to the vacant place on which his eyes were fixed, and when I did not answer, he repeated, almost fretfully, 'Don't you see him standing there?'

"I answered that I could not see him, though I felt perfectly convinced that something was visible to the sick man which I could not perceive. When I gave him this answer he seemed quite amazed, and turned round to look at me with a glance of indignation. As his eyes met mine, I saw that a film seemed to pass over them, the light of intelligence died away, he gave a gentle sigh, and expired. He did not live five minutes from the time he first said 'There is Jim,' although there had been no sign of approaching death previous to that moment.

"The second case was that of a boy about fourteen years of age, dying also of decline. He was a refined, highly-educated child, who throughout his long illness had looked forward with much hope and longing to the new life to which he believed he was hastening. On a bright summer morning it became evident that he had reached his last hour. He lost the power of speech, chiefly from weakness, but he was perfectly sensible, and made his wishes known to us by his intelligent looks. He was sitting propped up in bed, and had been looking rather sadly at the bright sunshine playing on the trees outside the open window for some time. He had turned away from this scene, however, and was facing the end of the room where there was nothing whatever but a closed door, when all in a moment the whole expression of his face changed to one of the most wondering rapture, which made his half-closed eyes open to their utmost extent, while his lips parted with a smile of ecstasy; it was impossible to doubt that some glorious sight was visible to him, and from the movement of his eyes it was plain that it was not one but many objects on which he gazed, for his look passed from end to end of what seemed to be the vaulted ceiling of the institution, and then down to the floor, and back again, and forward, and backward, and in every direction, giving an intelligent affirmative to her question, though unable to

speak. As he did so a change passed over his face, his eyes closed, and in a few minutes he was gone.

The third case, which was that of my own brother, was very similar to this last. He was an elderly man, dying of a painful disease, but one which never for a moment obscured his faculties. Although it was known to be incurable, he had been told that he might live some months, when somewhat suddenly the summons came on a dark January evening. It had been seen in the course of the night that he was sinking, but for some time he had been perfectly silent and motionless, apparently in a state of stupor; his eyes closed and his breathing scarcely perceptible. As the tardy dawn of the winter morning revealed the rigid features of the quiescent form which lay in the bed, he seemed to have quite departed, those who watched him felt uncertain whether he still lived; but suddenly, while they bent over him to ascertain the truth, he opened his eyes wide, and gazed eagerly upward with such an unmistakable expression of wonder and joy that a thrill of awe passed through all who witnessed it. His whole face grew bright with a strange gladness, while the eloquent eyes seemed literally to shine as if reflecting some light on which they gazed; he remained in this attitude of delighted surprise for some minutes, then in a moment the eyelids fell, the head drooped forward, and with one long breath the spirit departed.

A different kind of case to those above narrated by my friend was that of a young girl known to me who had passed through the miserable experiences of a sinful life at Aldershot, and then had tried to drown herself in the river Avon, near Clifton. She was in some way saved from suicide, and placed for a time in a penitentiary, but her health was found to be hopelessly ruined, and she was sent to die in the quiet old work-house of St. Peter's at Bristol. For many months she lay in the infirmary literally perishing in pain, and then, exhibiting patience and sweetness of disposition quite wonderful to witness, she was only eighteen, poor young creature! when all her little round of error and pain had been run; and her innocent pretty face might have been that of a child. She never used any sort of coarse or common language, and so have been in refusal, but had apparently somehow got hold of a very living and real religion, which gave her comfort and courage, and inspired her with the beautiful spirit with which she bore her frightful sufferings. On the wall opposite her bed there hung by chance a print of the lost sheep, and Mary S., looking at it one day, said to me: 'That is just what I was, and what happened to me; but I am being brought safe home now.' For a long time before her death her weakness was such that she was quite incapable of lifting herself up in bed, or of supporting herself when lifted, and she of course continued to lie with her head on the pillow while life gradually and painfully ebbed away, and she seemingly became nearly unconscious. In this state she had been left one Saturday night by the nurse in attendance. Early at dawn next morning—an Easter morning, as it chanced—some of the women who occupied the other beds in the ward were startled from their sleep by seeing Mary S.—suddenly spring up to a sitting posture in her bed, with her arms outstretched, and her face raised, as if in a perfect rapture of joy and welcome. The next instant the body of the poor girl fell back a corpse. Her death had taken place in that moment of ecstasy.

A totally different case again was that of a man of high intellectual distinction, well known in the world of letters. When dying peacefully, as became the close of a profoundly religious life, and having already lost the power of speech, he was only to look up as if at some spectacle invisible to those around, with an expression of solemn surprise and awe, very characteristic, it is said, of his habitual frame of mind. At that instant, and before the look had time to falter or change, the shadow of death had passed over his face, and the end had come.

In yet another case I am told that at the last moment so bright a light seemed suddenly to shine from the face of a dying man, that the clergyman and another friend who were attending him actually turned simultaneously to the wall to see the cause of the light. Another incident of a very striking character occurred in a well-known family, one of whose members narrated it to me. A dying lady, exhibiting the aspect of joyful surprise to which we have so often referred, spoke of seeing, one after another, her brothers who had long been dead, and then apparently recognized, last of all, a fourth brother, who was believed by the bystanders to be still living in India. The coupling of his name with that of his dead brothers excited such an awe and horror in the mind of one present that she rushed half senseless from the room. In due course of time letters were received announcing the death of the brother in India, which had occurred some time before his dying sister seemed to recognize him.

Again, in another case, a gentleman who had lost his only son some years previously, and who had never recovered from the affliction, exclaimed suddenly when dying, with the air of a man making a most rapturous discovery, 'I see him! I see him!'

Not to multiply such anecdotes too far—anecdotes which possess a uniformity pointing to a similar cause, the working of the physiological or physical, I will now conclude with one authenticated by a near relative of the persons concerned. A late well-known Bishop was called by his sisters 'Charlie,' and his eldest sister bore the pet name of 'Liz.' They had both been dead some years when the youngest sister died, and before her death appeared to behold them both. While lying still, and apparently unconscious, she suddenly opened her eyes and looked earnestly across the room, as if she saw some one entering. Presently, as if overjoyed, she exclaimed, 'Charlie! and Liz! and Liz! a moment's pause, with a new sort of delight, as if he had been joined by some one else, she went on, 'And Liz!' and then added, 'How beautiful you are!' After seeming to gaze at the two beloved forms for a few minutes she fell back on her pillow and died.

How the Women Vote in Kansas.

A Hoosier sees in Kansas many new and unfamiliar sights, but none more interesting than that of the ladies voting. He describes the privilege of voting in all matters pertaining to school, as well as in all matters of importance to the community. As far as observation goes, the ladies here have minds of their own. They neither vote for the handsomest man, nor the one their husbands are fond of, unless the candidate is in their own opinion, the proper one. Their votes cannot be bought.

They are universally on the side of morality and temperance, and have the temperance cause warm advocates of equal suffrage. Election days pass quietly. If there is any drinking or fighting done, it is not at the polls. Everything is orderly there, notwithstanding the reports circulated by anti-suffragists in the Eastern States.

Candidates keep carriages running for the accommodation of the ladies, but a great many walk up and down their own streets, and as the result, so far, has been very satisfactory, even to the men, it will probably be but a short time until equal suffrage is granted.

The gentlemen show their gallantry and faith in the ability of the ladies by appointing them to office. The enrolling clerks of the Legislature are ladies; also a large proportion of the county superintendents, who, even in the large towns, are ladies in a manner that gives universal satisfaction.—*Indianapolis Herald.*

They have in Massachusetts, at a place called Andover, a kind of minister school; and every professor in that factory takes an oath once in every five years that it is as long as an oath will last—that not only has he not during the last five years, but he will not during the next five years intellectually advance; and probably there is no oath he could easier keep. Since the foundation of that institution there has not been one case of perjury. They believe the same creed they first taught when the foundation-stone was laid, and now when they send out a minister they brand him as hardware from Sheffield and Birmingham. And every man who knows where he was educated knows the value of the creed, and every argument of his creed, every book that he reads, and just what he amounts to intellectually, and knows he will shrink and shrivel, and become solemnly stupid day after day until he meets with death. It is all wrong; it is cruel. Those men should be allowed to grow. They should have the air of liberty and the sunshine of thought.—*Col. R. G. Ingersoll.*

Letter from Henry Kiddle, Esq.

To the Editor of the Banner of Light:

In your issue of May 17th I find, with great surprise and regret, an editorial notice of me and my recently published book, which I cannot but consider most mistaken and ungenerous. You say that, acting on my "own unenlightened experience, I have precipitately rushed into print." I cannot believe that you have read the book with sufficient care to be able to form a proper opinion of the experience narrated, or to know to what extent it was enlightened or "unenlightened." If you had done this, you would have perceived that the editor had studied this subject of spirit communion for at least five years before this experience commenced; and, as to "reflex of the editor's religious sympathies," &c., the remark appears to me to show a spirit that I do not care to characterize. I must say, however, that if it had emanated from any of the organs of bigoted sectarianism or sneering materialism, I should not have been surprised; but in the *Banner of Light* it appears entirely out of place.

Why, the spirits themselves, through Mr. Colville, have reviewed the book and pronounced the communications genuine; and can you, a representative of Spiritualism, without discrediting everything you are striving to defend, condemn these messages on the paltry, shallow arguments of the secular press, enveloped as it is in gross and willful ignorance upon every topic pertaining to this grand subject?

Have you properly and fully considered all the facts as narrated in this book? Have you fairly considered the many tests referred to? Have you justly weighed the reasoning by means of which the editor arrived at a belief in the genuineness of the communications written? You cannot have done this. I fear you have read only the garbled extracts given in the newspapers, the editors of which, of course, have striven to throw ridicule upon this book, instead of fairly studying it in its entirety.

It is true that the communications are Christian—they recognize Christ and his teachings, and they fearfully depict the sufferings of the spirits in hell, as they also show the glories of heaven; but none of this more than Allan Kardec's books, which you are commending constantly. I perceive that some persons are interested only in phenomenal Spiritualism, and cannot appreciate the far greater light to be obtained from the impressions and inspirational phases. Spirits of a low grade can work miracles (to us); but those of the Christ-sphere can alone give us the true religious light; and Christian Spiritualism is now, as I see, gradually superseding every other phase.

You, sir, may sneer at the literary merit of these communications; but if their authenticity is to be judged exclusively on this basis—if this is to be the sole test of all such writings, I can show you that many valuable spiritualistic works would have to be condemned; and, moreover, what would become of many of the messages published weekly in your paper? The mode of identifying the spirits communicating is explained in the book; but all this you have chosen to ignore. Certainly, a man who has received so many hundreds of messages—presenting so vast a diversity of characteristics—and from mediums whose reliability cannot be questioned, is entitled to some credence; and his opinion must be more valuable than that of him who has seen nothing of the matter referred to; and that opinion should not lightly be set aside.

As to the messages being unworthy of those from whom they purport to come, that point was well treated in the inspirational words of Mr. Colville (an entire stranger to the editor), a few evenings since; and the messages were accepted as genuine by the spirits themselves. A proper analysis of the thoughts expressed and the information communicated by these messages will show, according to a proper standard, that they are *entirely worthy* of those by whom they are said to have been inspired. They are so decidedly pure and holy, and accompanied with such attestations, and written in such a way, that they cannot be the offspring of "lying spirits"; nor are they the "reflex of the editor's or medium's mind"; for information has been given that was previously unknown. And, besides, why the wonderful difference in the style of writing? Moreover, those that came from well-known persons or relatives are perceived to be perfectly characteristic of those persons.

In condemning this book, dictated as it has been by the spirits, you have put into the hands of your enemies, and the malicious enemies of Spiritualism, a keen weapon which you will soon feel; and again I say your article is most unfair and ungenerous, and certainly "precipitately" written; while its conclusions are as false as false can be, as I can show you still more clearly if you will come to New York, and see for yourself.

This book will be vindicated more fully hereafter, and I feel confident will be placed on a foundation so firm that no amount of envy, malice or bigotry will be able to overthrow it.

Respectfully, HENRY KIDDLE.

New York, May 19th, 1879.

SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS. 12mo., pp. 322. By Charles Beecher. Boston: Lee & Shepard, 1879. It is a curious fact in the progress of thought—and one of the full significance of which is not generally recognized—that, despite the most obvious influences of science, the manifold exposures of the charlatanism of mediums, and the antagonistic attitude of the Christian Church, the belief in the intervention of agencies distinctly spiritual, and supermundane, and in a realm of being where the deceased of our race live again, and from whence they are able to revisit us, is on the increase.

The book of Mr. Charles Beecher on "Spiritual Manifestations" will, therefore, receive a kindly welcome. The author makes no attempt to conceal his own views, confessing himself at the outset of his volume a Spiritualist, and dedicating the work "to all sincere Spiritualists without regard to name." He is evidently what has been termed a "Christian Spiritualist." While he aims at the strictest candor, and recognizes the sources of fallacy in studying spiritualistic phenomena which have been pointed out by the physiologist, such as illusions and hallucinations arising from brain irritation, he does not confine himself to the scientific method of research or style of argument. The fancies of the poet frequently get the better of his judgment, and inspire language which is true enough from the poet's standpoint, but which often leads him to commit the fault of *petitio principii*, and which lacks the admirable precision of the scientist. For example, he says that "In every soul there is an invisible realm, a heaven and earth of thought, a universe within"—taking it for granted that all men have souls—a doctrine we very much doubt.

In the volume before us, the author describes his own "heaven and earth of thought," and details the experiences of his own "universe within," and observations of other individual "universes" without. It would be pleasant to follow him to the end of his evidence of a spiritual world in the form of experiences and observations, metaphysical subtleties and philosophical abstractions, for we are, as Dr. Johnson says, "so glad to have every evidence of the spiritual world that we are willing to believe it." But we must forbear to do so. We can only in this place express our interest in the book, and cordially commend it to such as believe themselves to be of "the earth, earthy."—*The National Quarterly Review for April.*

For sale by Colby & Rich, No. 9 Montgomery Place, Boston, Mass.

A Chinaman with blonde hair is the latest San Francisco novelty. Turn him into the lecture-field; is he not by education, birth and nature a yellow-cue-tionist?—*Hawkeye.*

Is a sea-bath a surgical operation?

"His service was performed faithfully and intelligently until he got a bee in his bonnet," . . . "When the varieties of Spiritualism took possession of him, he first became foolish, then mischievous, and finally truculent." . . .

Prepared expressly for the Banner of Light
BY G. L. DITSON, M. D.