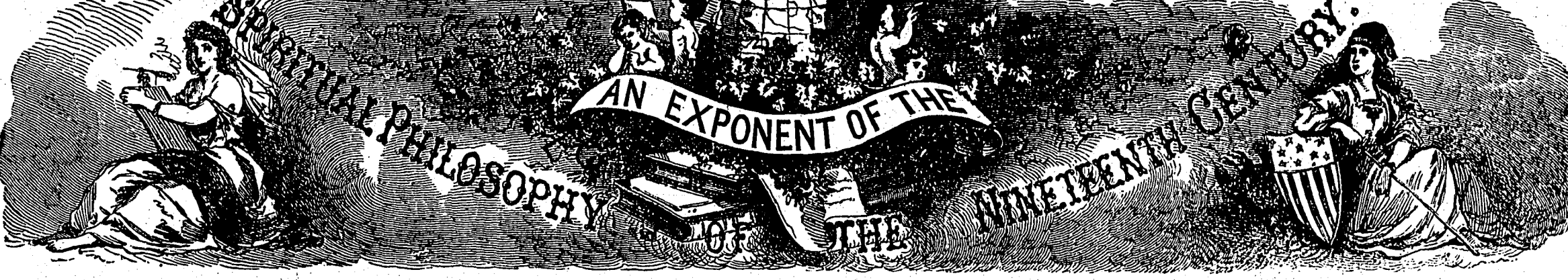


BANNER OF LIGHT.



VOL. XLIX.

COLBY & RICH,
Publishers and Proprietors.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 1881.

\$3.00 Per Annum,
Postage Free.

NO. 11.

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The Rostrum.

REASON AND REVELATION. A DISCOURSE.

BY HENRY KIDDLE.

The most marked feature of the highest civilization of our age is, perhaps, the strong and general assertion and vindication of mental freedom. This includes the right not only to think but to give full and free expression to our thoughts and convictions. It is, in another form, the right of free discussion, and extends to all subjects and all modes of discussion. It includes the untrammelled agitation of political, social, moral and religious questions, and claims the right of free expression on the platform, through the press, and sometimes in the pulpit itself. There is no repression by municipal or civil law, though there is, occasionally, persecution by those whose minds are tinged with blind zealotry, ecclesiasticism, or social intolerance. But these are to be considered as instances of a want of development in particular individuals, societies, or communities, rather than as a stigma upon our modern civilization as a system; and the time will probably come when men shall dare to make known their true convictions without fear of bankruptcy in business, loss of official position, or social ostracism. There will then be far more candor and honesty than at present, and far less hypocrisy.

The intolerance which we often see exhibited at this time is a remnant of preceding ages of ecclesiastical tyranny, or is the natural outcome of the pride, arrogance, and exclusiveness which have ever been the characteristics of a special priestly caste or craft; and from this form of bondage our age, otherwise so free, has not yet disengaged itself. But, thank God! even the church ministers are now catching the contagion of freedom, and are beginning to claim the right of uttering their sincere convictions—of being the apostles of progressive truth rather than the servile exponents of antiquated theological systems and effect religious ideas which the minds of all thinking men have long outgrown. They prefer to be true to themselves and their best thoughts and noblest aspirations rather than to stand as mere hirelings, advocating doctrines which in their hearts they do not approve, and concealing the very truths their hearers need most to enlighten and spiritualize their benighted minds. Many are those who have already cast away the "theological thumb-screws," and asserted their convictions, even at the risk of losing salary, popularity, and social standing, and of being obliged to stand alone. But they are not permitted to stand alone; for heroism is too sublime not to win admiration, and the soul of man loves freedom even as the eagle loves to soar in the empyrean, vindicating its claim to be called the "bird of heaven." Hence eager crowds are now listening to the inspired and inspiring words of these self-emancipated ministers of the gospel of truth.

Are they not better religious teachers for this, even though "Orthodoxy" disowns them with a sneer or a frown? Do they not teach a higher, purer, more vital Christianity when they speak from the "abundance of the heart," instead of "preaching" a cold and prescribed intellectualism? And are they not worthier followers of the Master, who said: "The Truth shall make you free?"

My friends, there must be either freedom in religion or no religion worthy of the name. True religion is, doubtless, emotional; but it must have a foundation stronger than emotion or sentiment, or it will inevitably become a rapid nothing—a social habitude or a senseless and useless formalism; and such, it seems, is the character of much that now passes for religion. To a great extent, as is sorrowfully admitted by clergymen, Christianity survives only in name. Its spirit has fled; its lifeless forms alone remain. And who, let me ask, are responsible for this but those who claim to be its teachers, who have persisted in "teaching for doctrine the commandments of men"—who have endeavored to turn back the hand upon the dial of civilization, who have denied all progress in religious truth, and who have hurled anathema and contumely on man's reason, one of the highest gifts of God?

But, let me say, we are never called upon to believe what is unreasonable; but we should never be unreasonable in our disbelief. To reason is man's prerogative; to reason as correctly as possible is his duty. No man can receive truth without the exercise of reason; nor can he receive any truth by the exercise of reason alone. Could reason teach the blind the nature of color, or the deaf-mute that of sound or music? Reason does not supply food; it only digests and assimilates it; and, if reason does not perform its office, the mind becomes diseased, just as would the body were the digestive functions of the stomach to cease. But reason (ratiocination) can no more give nutriment to the mind than the stomach can supply food to the physical system. It is important to bear this simple truth in mind.

Knowledge is based upon direct perception and consciousness; belief should be the offspring of reason. Those who use their reason as a guide to religious belief have been stigmatized as Rationalists, sometimes "Infidels," by those who think they have never reasoned on the subject. But there can be no real religious convictions that are not based on facts and reason. Some may vainly proclaim mystery the glory of faith; but no true office of religion, as the tie that binds man to his Maker—as the passport to a future life, or a source of consolation in the afflictions of the present, can be performed by mystification. I admire the saying of Robert G. Ingersoll (however I may detect many of his teachings) that "nothing can be true in religion that shocks the understanding of a child." Indeed, this seems to me to be one of the fundamental principles of Christianity, the Founder of which said: "Except ye become as little chil-

dren, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." He did not say, except ye be learned theologians, subtle exponents of the doctrine of the Trinity, the Atonement, Predestination, &c., but "as this little child."

This is a great truth. Religion deals with the mightiest questions that have ever occupied the attention of men; and the attempt to grapple with these by means of reason has divided mankind into thousands of sects, and led to the bitterest strife, to the most awful bloodshed. No wonder that Milton should have represented the fallen angels occupying themselves in such discussions:

"Of providence, foreknowledge, will and fate,
Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute—
Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy."

And notwithstanding all the attention such questions have received, from the mightiest intellects that adorn the annals of the race, and the thousands of volumes that have been filled with the fabrics woven in the loom of human reason, have any of these questions been settled? Are they any nearer a settlement by means of philosophy now than they ever were? Can any one who, at the present time, attempts to solve, by the exercise of his reason, the great problems of man's earthly life and future destiny, do more than reproduce the arguments of the sages of the past? Can he expect to bring to bear upon this work a more profound and penetrating intellect than that of Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, or Democritus among the Greeks, or Descartes, Spinoza, Malebranche, or D'Holbach, among the moderns? More recently, philosophers in Germany, France, England, and our own country, have made the attempt; but, I ask, has any one of the problems that lie at the foundation of all religion, as well as every negation of religion, been solved to the satisfaction of mankind? No; these questions still stand as immovable rocks upon the shore of truth, against which the billows of human reason dash themselves madly but in vain.

How can it be said, then, that the truths of religion are so simple that they may be adapted to the comprehension of a child? If there is no subtlety, no mystery or mystification in these truths, why have so many brilliant minds vainly exhausted their powers in the attempt to unravel and elucidate them? It is because these gifted minds, these piercing intellects, had obtained no adequate basis for their reasoning. They have had no data, or data falsely assumed; and it is obvious that whether we reason correctly from unsound or insufficient data, or incorrectly from sound data, our conclusions must be false. These philosophers have generally begun by rejecting all foundation for their reasoning except what may be furnished by reasoning itself; like Descartes with his famous dictum, "*Cogito, ergo sum*."—*I think, therefore I am*. And on such a slight and insubstantial basis they proceeded to erect the vast superstructure of man's relations to God and the universe, the nature of the present state of existence, and his prospect of a life beyond. They groped in the dark, and lost their way in the winding mazes of their own speculations. Giants as they are, with only intellect to enlighten and guide them, their efforts are vain and fruitless. They are like blind men, but are only blind because they refuse to open their eyes. Hence it is that a little child, that has its eyes wide open, can see what they are vainly groping to find—can take them by the hand, and lead them to the open light of day. Because the child has not yet put out the light of intuition, that light which far outshines the most brilliant illumination of the rational intellect. Wordsworth's apostrophe to the child is pregnant with this truth:

"Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy soul's immensity;
Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage; thou eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted forever by the eternal mind—
Mighty prophet! Seest blest!
On whom thoughts do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find."

Intuition is that "inner light" which, in the language of Scripture, "lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Let me cite the words of the modern seer, the author of the "Great Harmonia":

"Every one has an internal preacher and a church. The latter may be closed, and encompassed about by one that is external and material; and thy preacher may be silenced, and held in subordination by an outward and superficial preacher; but the kingdom of Heaven—the Good and the True—is *within thee*. To know this let thy wisdom be unfolded; and from its depths will spring the holy and beautiful truths of intuition—the light of the inner world. Unmask thyself, and wear no garb but what Nature gave. Appear as thou art—the eternal child of an ETERNAL FATHER."

The records of philosophical reasoning show that the human mind can make no progress except by ascending the steps furnished by intuition. Materialism rejects all but the physical senses, and the ideas which come from their action. Its dictum is, "*Nihil est in intellectu quod non prius in sensu*"; but this is a position that leads only to barren speculation, in which the mind is forever travelling within the bounds of a narrow circle. Without assumed axioms, mathematical reasoning could prove nothing; and without similar intuitive principles all other reasoning has ever proved barren of results. There must be something revealed to the human soul, or the lever of reason can have no fulcrum on which to rest, and must, consequently, be useless.

Thus revelation precedes reason, and enlightens it; and in the investigation of religious truth neither can be dispensed with. The man who has lost all faith in his intuitions—all faith in everything that he cannot discern by the senses and by reason, is effectually cut off from all but materialistic science; and religion for him does not exist. Nothing exists for him but the surface of the objects that make up the physical world. He can see these, as he thinks, and can handle them; and, therefore, he seems to know them. All else is chimerical and illusive, for he cannot explore it with his telescope or microscope, nor fix it on the point of his scalpel. He has a learned word for every negation; and when he has thus designated it, he vainly thinks he has solved the inner mystery of its being, and has scientifically disposed of it for all time. Thus he invents the terms "unconscious cerebration," "psychic force," or "reflex mental action," to account for the phenomena of spirit communication, and seems quite astonished that the world does not see that the problem is definitively solved.

Such is the position of the modern materialistic scientist, as it must inevitably be of all those who reject every form of revelation, trusting themselves to the quicksands of reason alone. But it will be asked, what are the sources of this revelation, so indispensable to the discovery of religious truth? I answer: 1. Intuition; 2. Inspiration; 3. Spiritual communication.

I have already spoken of intuition; but let me say further, it is the original revelation which is given to every soul at its divine birthright. There are impressions upon the human consciousness that are like the instincts of the lower animals. They are innate, and are ineffaceable, though

they may be obscured by the perversions of the intellect in its attempt to penetrate to that which is beyond its ken. Could men be entirely passive to the teaching of that inner voice, feeling that by it alone they can be brought to a true knowledge of the existence of the soul, its destiny, and its relation to Him from whom it emanated, they would be saved from much of the skepticism, materialism and atheism which now darken their minds.

Wisely was it asked of old, "Canst thou, by searching, find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" The philosopher, exulting in the strength of his intellect, has repeatedly essayed that search, to find, invariably, that he ended in a negation. The Absolute evades every process of ratiocination. In the language of modern inspiration, "it is not a matter for the human intellect to investigate, whether God exists or does not exist. If there is not a point the human mind may dare to consider. If there is not throughout the whole universe a revelation of the Divine Mind so palpable as to make the Materialist and Intellectualist stand in awe before its presence, it is not possible to argue the point with him. There is a revelation of God in every human spirit. There is an innermost voice that tells you of this Supreme Existence; and if you have not this voice, if you have no consciousness of this Presence, no power of the human intellect can give it." [Mrs. Richmond.] This I believe to be true; indeed, the whole history of philosophy proves it to be true; the history of mankind proves it to be true, for it shows that the natural intuitions of man lead him to discern an intelligent Being in the universe around him, up to whom he may look in reverence and love. It is true that when he strives to discover the attributes of this Being by the exercise of his feeble understanding, he goes astray, and finds that he can only conceive of God as an exalted or magnified image of himself; while the more cultured philosopher, in the exercise of reason, by a general denial of all such attributes, reduces God to a nonentity. The knowledge of God is not material, but spiritual truth, and can be only cognized by spiritual insight or intuition. "You cannot find out God by any scientific experiment; you can discover him by no mathematical formula. It is not within the scope of the human reason to establish his existence; but by the law of the human spirit, by its intuition, is God's presence known to every human heart."

"Man knoweth not how near God is to him.
God's hand is laid upon him. There is placed
On every brow the signet of God's thought;
Nor can that signet ever be effaced,
Though it grow faint and dim."

Thus we see there is soul-knowledge as well as sense-knowledge; for, in revealing to us the material life, the soul does not lose all the impressions which belong to its being, as the offspring of the Great Over-Soul. Many of them still survive, with a greater or less distinctness, to serve as a guiding light to the man while passing through the darkness of earth. In the language of a deep thinker, "Intuition is but an awakening of the innermost soul to an active, personal consciousness of what it knew by virtue of its divine genesis." Intuitive truth, when properly cultivated and explored, will be found to have at least as wide a range, and as positive a character, as materialistic or purely intellectual truth; and it may be said that no man can be truly wise that has not learned to read the revelations of his own soul. So much for the teachings of intuition.

The revelations that come by inspiration are akin to those of intuition in this respect—that they are both of spiritual origin. In the one case it is the man's own spirit that guides him; in the other, it is the influence or impression of other spirits, with whom, by the operation of certain general laws, he is brought *en rapport*. It is not possible to conceive, much less to declare, to what an extent the world of humanity is indebted to inspiration for what it is, and for what it has accomplished. Sphere on sphere, the world of spirit is ever pressing on the world of mortality, and is limited in its power to influence only by man's capacity to receive. The achievements of creative and inventive genius are not due to mortal minds alone. Whence, think you, come those grand, those mighty ideas which often change the destiny of nations? Thought is the sublimest of all realities, and can be evolved from no material laboratory.

"Hast thou ever thought, oh mortal man!
That the sun itself in a thought began?
And that thoughts are the inner suns that dwell
Inspired as minds in each burning shell?
Hast thou ever thought how the light forth came?
I'll tell thee. God breathed, and a sphere of flame
Outrolled, and enwrapped the universe.
Each ray of light was a thought in verse
From the poet heart of our God outspung."

The poet's intuition teaches him that he owes his creative power to divine afflatus; his genius is but another name for susceptibility to inspiration. And thus it is with every true artist—poet, painter, sculptor, or musician. Uninspired talent may imitate, but it is only inspired genius that can create. The illustrious musical composer, Richard Wagner, is one of the grandest exemplars of this fact; and certainly only the law of inspiration can explain the wonderful phenomena presented in the career of Mozart, as described by himself and illustrated by his works. The annals of genius are, however, filled with illustrations of the working of this law.

Such persons are, in more modern phrase, sensitives, psychics, or "mediums"; and every one knows that the eccentricities, both intellectual and moral, of those who are called geniuses are similar to the curious and often sorrowful vagaries of the modern medium, for the reason that the very law that makes him, in the "superior condition," sensitive to the higher inspiration, in the lower states or moods of his material nature subjects him to the control of debasing spiritual influences; and this is the law of "spirit-affinity"—the principle that "like attracts like."

The inspiration I here refer to speaks to the soul in no audible voice, for it does not address the consciousness of the individual whom it guides or aways. It responds to the inner voice of the soul that asks for it, for inspiration is the correlative of aspiration. In that great masterpiece of the German poet, Goethe, we find a sublime conception of this important fact, when Faust, lost and wearied in the mazes of his fruitless search for wisdom, at last directs his deep yearnings to the spirit-intelligences around him, and at once obtains an answer, in his inward emotions, that he can scarcely interpret till the words of the mystic sage confront him:

"Die Geisterwelt ist nicht verschlossen;
Denn Sinn ist zu, dein Herz ist tod!
Auf, bade, Schüler, unverdrossen,
Die Ir'seuche Brunst im Morgenroth!"
[The world of spirits is not closed;
Thy sense is shut, thy heart is dead!
Up, scholar, up, and bathe unflinching
Thy earthly breast in the morning red.]

But there is an inspiration that comes with a voice that is audible, at least to the spirit-sense, like the inner voice—the *daimon*, or spirit, that spoke to Socrates, as in so many cases in these times of modern spiritual revelation. Such, too, without doubt, were the source and character of the inspiration of the Jewish prophets and seers, though invariably interpreted as of direct, divine origin, and given to the world with the high-sounding words, "Thus saith the Lord." This inspiration partakes of the character of direct spirit-communication, but the individuality of the communicating intelligence is not made known. I shall, therefore, pass to the consideration of the third source of revelation—spirit-communication, or, to use its modern designation, Spiritualism.

In the religions of the world this has played a very prominent part. In every age and in every nation we find the evidence of spirit-intervention in some form; and we find a religious belief and system based upon it. The Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Hindus, Chinese, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Jews, Peruvians and Mexicans, as well as the barbarous tribes of every country and epoch, all believed in the existence of the spirits of the departed, their power to communicate with the living, and the fact of their communication. The spirits of great men—heroes, law-givers, prophets, sages, &c.—were deified, had their particular altars, fanes, oracles, and special forms of adoration, and were believed to have given repeated demonstrations of their power, and sometimes of their presence. This is the basis of the religion of the Greeks and Romans, as illustrated by their mythology, and confirmed by the prophetic power of their oracles. It constitutes a peculiar form of Spiritualism—proper to those people and those times. Of course it is easy for a person living in these days, and where a different kind of civilization prevails, to dismiss all this, in the plenitude of his enlightenment, as an idle and baseless superstition; but let him remember who and what these people were that believed in these things—the subtlety of their minds, the extent of their culture, and the splendor of their genius; and it cannot but seem a wondrous fact that such a people as the Greeks and Romans, the former more especially, should have based their social and political systems upon a belief in the gods of Olympus or of the Pantheon and the rites and ceremonies belonging to their worship. Religion in those times and with these peoples was not, as it is now in this country, a thing apart from the state; it was interwoven with every part of the state system; for not a single public act could be performed, whether in the making or the executing of the laws, without some appropriate religious observance. The same was true, also, of their social system. Cicero bears witness to this in no irreverent or disbelieving spirit:

"Pride ourselves as we may upon our country, we cannot say we are superior in number to the Spartans. In strength to the Gauls and Carthaginians, in art to the Greeks, not to the Egyptians and Latins themselves. In the homely, native sense which belongs to these people. It is in piety only and religion, and the wisdom of regarding the providence of the immortal Gods as that which rules and governs all things, that we have surpassed all other races and nations."

It was against this mighty system that Christianity had to contend, and vast must have been its force to have succeeded in overthrowing it. But the time for the fall of Paganism had come; and the inundations of barbarous nations lent powerful aid to the Christians. It was, however, but the destruction of one form of Spiritualism by another higher, purer, and consequently more powerful. The history of Judaism and Christianity is the record of a Spiritualism based on the highest spiritual principle known to mankind, or ever recognized by mankind—the knowledge and worship of one great Spiritual Being—the Creator and Governor of the universe—possessing the personal attributes of love and wisdom, and exerting on the human soul a never-ceasing influence that "makes for righteousness"; and the Jewish conception of the Supreme Being, even from the earliest times, with all its occasional disfigurements in the minds of particular individuals who clung to polytheistic notions or inclined to an excessive regard to tutelary gods or spirits, was a far more exalted one than that which prevailed among other nations. It was this belief in the *unity of God*—a recognition of one great Spirit, of limitless attributes, and a fatherly relation to all his creatures, that sent Abraham from the country of the polytheistic Chaldees, and made him indeed the father of a posterity in number like the "dust of the earth"; for the Abrahamites, including the Jews and the Christians, are the ruling nations of the earth to-day, albeit the Jews have not been a nation for nearly two thousand years, but present wherever they are mingled with other people, and protected by the principles of humanity and fraternity which Jesus taught, a living evidence of the truthfulness of their own prophetic seers, whom they willfully disregarded. In passing from the darkness of Egyptian polytheism, Moses returned to the pure and holy Spiritualism of his Hebrew ancestors; and the first commandment enunciated through him was, "I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have none other gods but me." Could there be a more emphatic enunciation of the unity of God on the one hand and a denunciation of polytheism on the other? Hence the Jewish Spiritualism recognized only spirit communications from the Most High, or from his representatives—angels or spirit messengers; and communications from the lower, earthly, undeveloped human spirits, were discouraged, or positively forbidden, as we find it by the Levitical law.

But the tendency of the human mind is to fall away from the worship of the Infinite Spirit, and to delight itself in polytheistic worship—in intercourse with finite spirits, whom mankind either consult with overweening confidence, or construct images in their honor, or altars for their adoration. Thus, although the Jews were kept apart from other nations by the most peculiar institutions—institutions that make them a separate people to-day, their tendency to relapse into idolatry, that is, the worship of finite spirits, such as Baal, an Assyrian and Phœnician deity, is one of the most marked features of their singular history.

Hence it was that, by whatsoever spirit the prophet was inspired, he was made to give forth his utterances as from God himself; and, indeed, they were from God, if they came from an angel acting in harmony with the divine will, as they ever purported to come. There were, indeed, a few spirits that declared their personality, and gave their spiritual names, such as Gabriel, or the man Gabriel (his word meaning in the Hebrew *man of God*), Michael (meaning *one who is like God*), and Raphael, who is described in the book of Tobit as "one of the seven holy angels which present the prayers of the saints, and which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One." But these were a very different order of beings (different in the degree of their advancement and purification) from the "familiar spirits," or "pythons," with whom the Jewish law forbade all intercourse under strict and fearful penalties.

Whence did the Israelites obtain these ideas which, with

all their imperfections, were so much in advance of the religious views of contemporaneous nations? Whence, for example, came the sublime truths that form the groundwork of the story of Job—the exalted spiritual sentiments which pervade the Psalms of David, and the powerful monitions of the prophets? In the light of the spiritual knowledge we now possess, we may answer, by inspiration. These constituted a revelation to them, and one which no power of mere intellect or reason could have evolved, for "nothing can come of nothing."

It is true the inspiration was neither "plenary" nor infallible; for the law by which it was given forbids that it should be. Neither ancient nor modern inspiration gives an infallible revelation in the sense in which the Jewish Scriptures are generally held to be infallible by Protestant Evangelical churches (as they are styled). Man is ever called upon to exercise his reason, his judgment, and his intuitive perceptions, in discriminating between the false and the true. This illustrates the relation between Reason and Revelation; for while no exercise of human reason could reveal certain truths, it may properly judge what is and what is not revelation. This may seem to some a paradox; but you may easily comprehend many things which without extraneous aid your mind could never have ascertained. You can easily understand the principle of the telephone or phonograph, but you could not have invented it. A child's mind may grasp a truth which it may have required centuries of scientific exploration by the best minds to make known. The simplest understanding experienced no difficulty in comprehending the truth that the planets revolve around the sun in elliptical orbits, when it was announced by Kepler in the seventeenth century, although no one, during the thousands of years preceding that time, had been wise enough to discern that fact. Nor, probably, was it ever to be found by reason, but by intuition, though reason could, and did, verify it. Bacon, by his remarkable power of intuition, was enabled to anticipate many of the conclusions of recent scientific research, as is shown by his "Century of Inventions." Thus it is with the revelations of religious truth that come to us, spiritually or intuitively; while reason unaided could never have conducted us to them, it may enable us to comprehend and verify them.

At the present time, we see many persons spending a great deal of time, labor and oratory in ridiculing the religious ideas of the Jews, as they find them recorded in the different books of the Bible; and I admit it affords a prolific field for this work. But the contradictions of the Jewish religious records become absurd only in view of the absurd position assumed by theologians in regard to them. When these scriptures are held up as the absolute and literally infallible "word of God," to be accepted without question as our final and exclusive guide to religious truth, it is natural to reasoning men, nay, it is obligatory upon them, to point out the contradictions and absurdities that most glaringly oppose any such position. A proper vindication of the truth, of religious freedom, of common sense, requires that this should be done. It is the blind teachers of theological systems that are to blame for the very thing they call "infallibility." Let them be rational; and not only will the light of Revelation shine more purely and resplendently, but all will open their eyes, and their hearts, too, in order to receive it.

So, too, has it been with that later revelation which Jesus, the Messiah or Christ, came to give to mankind. How exalted was it in its ethical teachings! How beautiful and philosophical in its spiritual principles! How pure, loving and lovable in all its features, as presented by the Master! And how wonderfully it won the hearts of mankind, especially in view of the affecting martyrdom by which its truth was so grandly sealed, and in consequence of the great spiritual fact of the Resurrection by which it was confirmed. No revelation so complete, of its kind, had ever been vouchsafed to humanity. Other Messiahs have visited the earth—have lived as men, have died as men; but which of them ever revisited the earth not only with restored personality, but in material form, as a demonstration of the genuineness of his spiritual mission, of his surviving spiritual power, and as a confirmation of the prophecy, "Lo! I am with you always unto the consummation of the world."

This is the great fact of a demonstrated immortality by Spiritualism the foundation of the Christian system; for, said St. Paul, "If Christ is not risen, then is our preaching vain." The apostles did not preach of Christ simply, as a teacher or special Messiah, but of "Christ and the Resurrection"; albeit it is not resurrection in the original Greek, but *anastasis*, rising, i. e., the rising of the disembodied spirit from its mortal, cast-off form. And now the very people who base their religion upon Spiritualism, laugh the idea of spirit-communion to scorn, showing sometimes against the people who assert its truth the same temper of mind as that which of old nailed Jesus to the cross, made martyrs of the apostles and early Christians, and in subsequent times bound the church martyrs to the fiery stake.

Why is this? It is because they have chained their reason with the rusty shackles of changeless creeds and senseless dogmas, and have closed their spiritual and intellectual vision against the admission of any more light, notwithstanding the Master said: "I have many more things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." Christianity, said to say, has become to many minds a hateful name, because of the follies and irrational claims of those who have assumed it, and professed to be the exponents of its doctrines. It certainly cannot be from anything he taught, who claimed all who do the will of God as his brothers and sisters; who taught that "God is love"; who set an example of humility by washing the feet of his disciples; who prayed that his disciples might be one with him as he was one with his Father—that is, in harmony with him—and who said, after he had become a risen spirit, as a farewell to his followers: "I go to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." A proper construction of his words, even as imperfectly recorded, will show that he never claimed anything beyond humanity, or expressed anything but sympathy with and love for humanity.

The Christian revelation, thus bright and beautiful, was in succeeding years perverted by the false reasoning of selfish, sensual, arrogant or power-loving men, who, in the garb of priestcraft, took possession of the prerogatives of religious rule and ecclesiastical authority. Why should any man command, in the light of reason and the plain facts of history, Christianity and ecclesiasticism? The one shines with all the radiant beauty of a seraph from the highest spheres; the other appears clothed in the dark, demonic garb of inquisitorial cruelty and terror. Do not let us discard what the gentle, humble, all-loving Nazarene gave us, on account of the wicked perversions of his hypocritical and unworthy make-believe followers. Such is the frailty of human nature that few there be that live up to the full height of their own ideals, and still fewer that let their conduct uniformly exemplify the purity of their professions. Hence, you cannot judge or condemn Christianity for the actions of those who call themselves Christians, any more than you can condemn Spiritualism for the conduct of Spiritualists. Liberalism for the outward character of Liberalists, or the principles of any other system, association or party for what particular members of it may sometimes do, or fail to do. Reason must judge in another way; it must consider what these wrong-doers would have done if they had faithfully observed the principles of their class or order. It must condemn them as recalcitrant, not as followers; and if that reasonable course is pursued, there will remain no foundation for any assaults on either Christianity or Christian Spiritualism, since the two are confessedly identical in their ethical and spiritual principles.

The modern spiritual revelation, called Spiritualism, promises, in its consummation, to surpass that of every other age. Never were the "windows of heaven" so thoroughly opened as they have been during the last thirty years; and the light that has streamed through has caused an illumination that even bigotry itself has felt. Never has the discussion of the great religious questions been so general or so vehement; and the idols of obsolete faiths are being pounded to pieces. Reason and revelation combined are doing this great work. Men and angels are working together, as instruments of God, to lift the world of humanity to a higher spiritual plane. The new Messiah has not come in any ma-

terial, human form; but Christ has come again in the heavens, with all his holy angels with him, and has brought the same angelic message, as of old, of "peace and good will"; and there has been a most remarkable fulfillment of the prophecy, "Hereafter ye shall see the angels of God ascending and descending upon the son of man"; for have not the spirits both from above and from below entered into communication with humanity on earth? Goethe's saying, "The spirit-world is not closed up," has most fully been verified; and never has there been so clear and rational a demonstration of the truths pertaining to man's physical and spiritual being, his immortal destiny, and the nature and conditions of the future state.

But already has the tide of perversion set in; and man's self-will and arrogant intellectualism have, even at this early day, done much to pervert the pure doctrines of Modern Spiritualism, and to discourage its acceptance, by painful and repulsive sentiments and practices. The distinction I have already made between the professors and the things professed is here most carefully to be observed, if we would not discard the ideals of truth and righteousness presented to us from Heaven, because they are above the baser natures of those who have no affinity with the angelic hosts. Spiritualism, as the designation of mere spirit intercourse, communication or manifestation, is an indefinite term as to principles and teachings; for it may be something akin to the ancient sorcery or pythianism—the holding intercourse with the spirits of the darker spheres, not to instruct them but "to be debased by them"; or it may be of the same nature as that Christian Spiritualism which only sanctioned communion with the good, the beautiful and the true in spirit-life—that is, with those in harmony with the Infinite Spirit of goodness, and doing his will. There is a Spiritualism that degrades and debases, by bringing mortals down to the plane of the lower spirits; and there is a Spiritualism that enlightens and purifies, by lifting its votaries up to the angelic spheres of harmony and love. Many of the ancient religious systems recognized this distinction, as did Moses and his followers, who discriminated between the mediums of lying spirits and the holy seers and prophets of God. Modern Spiritualism will also have to draw the line between these two distinct classes of spirit communion, not by an exclusive support of the one and a total condemnation of the other, but by the application of intelligent principles and rules, based upon a just and rational discrimination. Then, while we strive to elevate our own spiritual condition by cultivating an intercourse with the progressed spirits, we shall be able also to hold communication with the dark and unprogressed so as to benefit them, not sinking to their plane by asking favors of them, or becoming ourselves the instruments of their persistent passions and vices.

And this brings me to the important point, that the revelation of this age, now in progress and probably not yet culminated, is not intended to set aside or to supersede in any degree the free exercise of human reason; for it is by that exercise that man must stand or fall when he is confronted with the record which he will find inscribed upon his own conscience. Has he been true to the dictates of that inner guide? Has he with due reverence and in the spirit of humility received and utilized the light of revelation vouchsafed to him, or has he, in selfishness, pride, and self-will, rejected it or perverted it? These are the questions which all will have to answer; and on the answer given before the inner tribunal will depend the kind and degree of atonement which will be demanded "to the uttermost farthing."

The facts which have been made known by modern inspiration could never have been ascertained by independent research; but they are such as the reason of all, who can reason, must approve and accept. With the light which they bring a new cycle dawns upon the world—a cycle in which the human mind will no longer be fettered by the thralldom of priestly dictation and dogmatic systems that insult reason, common sense, and the character of the all-loving Creator.

At present, Rationalism, or Liberalism, in its extreme phases, is like a pioneer opening the way for the angel armies, who come to bring deliverance to their brothers and sisters in the flesh. The angels are, however, not like the pioneers; they come not with mere negations; they come to build up rather than to tear down. They recognize truth in the past, as well as the present, and they bring the truths of all times and all peoples into one grand, harmonious, unified whole. Their weapons are the sublime truths of Spiritualism, as they have been revealed in all ages, and in all climes, together with those still grander ones which, at this epoch, the human mind is able to bear; for these truths, wherever preached now, to unprejudiced minds, are invariably grasped at once by the intuitions of the soul.

An unseen world, real, natural, and beautiful, has been disclosed to the enraptured vision of humanity, wherein the denizens of earth can see their departed relatives and friends—the loved and lost ones, and can hear their voices whispering words of affection and encouragement to them who still linger in their tabernacles of clay.

Seed-time and harvest do not come together; this generation will, probably, only witness the sowing of the seed; the fruits will be gathered by those who come afterward. "Let patience have her perfect work." Let reason reign always, illumined by the heavenly radiance of revelation. Then there need be no separation of the "Age of Faith," and the "Age of Reason"; for, in the coming age of the New Dispensation, Faith and Reason shall conjointly be the benefactors of mankind, and hand in hand, lead them through the vale of earth to a blessed and blissful immortality.

"Man is the true Republic. Earth shall see
A new Democracy—
The priesthood of the Free!
Inspired lawgivers shall rise,
And from sublime skies
Receive interior wisdom, and create
The universal state."

Dr. Babbitt's New Work on Religion.

This work, which is now on sale at the *Banner of Light* Bookstore, No. 9 Montgomery Place, Boston, contains 364 pages, and about fifty handsome illustrations. The following extract will serve to give a glimpse at the matter and manner of the book:

SPIRITUALISM REVEALS A GRANDER UNIVERSE.

1. It unfolds *clairvoyance*, and through that reveals new glories of light, color and form which are incomparably superior to those of the outward universe. This clairvoyance reveals the radiations that come from all objects, and thus leads to a new philosophy of force. It shows that there are finer atmospheres interpenetrating that which we ordinarily breathe, and grades of light so refined that they can be transmitted through objects that are ordinarily opaque, so that by their means the interior eye can look into human systems, get a better idea of the philosophy of life, and learn the location and processes of nervous and mental action as well as of disease. More than this, it looks in upon more beautiful realms of being; see lakes, rivers, fountains, parks, cottages, palaces, and happy beings, some of whom are recognized as old friends, formerly inhabitants of earth; and others more advanced in years and growth are seen to be more radiant in expression and exquisite in form than sculptor, artist or poet have ever conceived of, unless their inspirational faculties have been opened.

2. It unfolds *clairaudience*, or that sensibility of man's spiritual ear which can come into rapport with the finer atmosphere that spirits use, and catch their words, and in some cases their glorious music.

3. It unfolds *psychometry*, or that sensibility to the finer magnetisms which emanate from all things, and reveal the soul or interior character thereof, as well as the character of all objects in the vicinity, which have radiated or impressed their forces upon the object that is being examined. Prof. J. H. Buchanan and William Denton have written extensively on psychometry.

4. I have known prominent persons who did not dare to let psychometrists have their autographs for fear all of their traits should be revealed. Mrs. Dr. Hayden of New York once psychometrized the autograph and paper of a man who wished to be insured for \$10,000, and who was pronounced "sound as a bullock" by the examiners of the insurance company. She immediately advised them not to insure him, declaring that he would not live eight weeks. The insurance company took her advice and asked the gentleman to wait eight weeks. In seven weeks and two days he fell dead.

5. As people become more developed in clairvoyance and psychometry, fraud and deception will be almost impossible. Not only do these mediumistic natures read people's char-

acter, sometimes immediately, but spirit friends come and warn or impress them against those who are dangerous and unprincipled. There is one thing that sensitive natures should guard against, and that is the psychological influence of some strong-willed, either in the body or out of it, who may use an undue influence or act in an unprincipled way. In such cases, or rather in all cases, people should ever maintain their own individuality, act on their own judgment and carry out a true manhood, or womanhood. Even spirits are human and will sometimes make mistakes, and in one respect it is well they do so, otherwise, people would be apt to ignore their own reason and trust all to a supposed infallible standard.

6. The power of spiritual intelligences to control matter, as has been demonstrated in almost countless ways, is a revelation to the world. Dr. William B. Carpenter, of England, still clings to his often-explored theory of *unconscious cerebration* as an explanation of spiritual phenomena, as if that would explain how it is that heavy objects, including human beings, are carried through the air by invisible power, pianos made to dance to the sound of music by the simple touch of a little child, as has been done in Boston, Chicago and elsewhere, or a hundred other similar things, that have been demonstrated to the satisfaction of some of the most scientific men of the day. But some will pronounce the whole matter jugglery, and declare they can do everything mediums can. When a person claims that, it is safe to pronounce him an impostor, for the greatest magicians of the world, including Houdin, the prince of magicians, Belchamini the Court conjurer of Berlin, Hermann, Jacobs the German professor, Rhys and others, have all given up the magical phenomena as being beyond the power of pretitigation to explain. Young Bishop, who has made himself notorious by professing before large audiences to show how the tricks are done, came out in the *New York Sun* in flaming style as to his ability to explain the whole matter. I answered him. He then replied to me, and said he could do anything that any medium could. I then challenged him to do any one of several things that a little child four years old did under influence. He did not pretend to answer this challenge, and his silence was an admission of his weakness. He offered to do anything that any medium would do at the conference held at the Harvard Rooms, New York; but there Chas. H. Foster vanquished him, and caused him to back down. Later, I said he admitted that some things in mediumship could not be imitated. Prof. Phelps, of Andover, son of the Rev. Mr. Phelps who had such wonderful spirit manifestations at his residence in Connecticut, allows that the phenomena are superhuman, but attributes them to evil spirits. Is it not so that so cultured and good a man is still so narrow in his conceptions as to believe in demonophobia? Is it not a calumny against our Divine Maker to say that he has given devils free range, to go to and fro upon the earth, tempting his own dear human children and leading them down to hell, while the angels and the good beings are evidently shut up in some distant heaven, with no power to come to our aid?

7. The *Gift of the Giver*, Boston, affirms that Spiritualism has given no new or important ideas to the world, and others have echoed the same song. It seems as if some of our editors with a materialistic bias have outdone Rip Van Winkle himself, for he slept only twenty years, while they have been asleep to this great cause for a third of a century. The demonstration of a condition of mind called destiny for man, in a nobler word, of knowledge and philosophy of the fine forces, of a great healing reform, of a religion broad as the earth and full of joy, of a higher theory of physical and spiritual culture, of clairvoyance, psychometry, statism, anthropology and psychophysics, of a higher spirit of liberty among the nations—these are some of the achievements of Spiritualism, the great world at large is so ignorant of what Spiritualism is doing and has done that I have found it necessary to give these points in its favor in this chapter. Materialism is so rife, however, reaching as it does even into the church, that these diviner realities of the spirit-life too often fall on London ears and blind eyes, and many people have that quality of brain which cannot see spiritual things if they try, and are the first ones to describe those who can as *myopes, dupes, fanatics*, etc. The truth is that if a person cannot rise far enough above the worldly and fashion-loving society of to-day to be called by some such names, he is either derelict in duty or slow in his spiritual perceptions.

P. E. FARNSWORTH IN THE RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL.

BY JOHN WETTERBERG.

To the Editor of the *Banner of Light*:

"What is one-man's meat is another man's poison": The fable of the old man, the son and the nag, with its moral, "there is no pleasing everybody." How true the proverb and the fable above mentioned appeared to me as my eye fell on Farnsworth's article, in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, on the *Banner of Light's* Message Department. Seems to me that just one unmistakable message from a spirit, with the same certainty that this message comes from a Wetherbee, would settle the question as to the wisdom and usefulness of publishing these messages of high and low degree; because that single demonstration would prove the open door from the spirit-world into that circle-world, and the probable source of all the messages. I am aware the survival of the spirit, and its communication with man in the form, is a settled point with Spiritualists, and the manifestations, ethical or phenomenal, are but cumulative evidences of an established fact. The article, however, which has attracted my attention seems to call for a word on this special feature, the Message Department in the *Banner of Light*. Every Spiritualist ought to know, and if not obtuse does know, that the merit of these messages is not in their intrinsic wisdom, but is altogether in their genesis or source. Take the whole paper that contained the Farnsworth article—to be sure it was not a very bright one, only an average—but suppose you multiply its quality by ten, so as to bring it up to the *Banner* standard, how its contents would pale, or sink into insignificance as a matter of interest, by the side of a few raps from over the river, saying, "I am Adeline, and am still alive;" or by the side of a message on a slate demonstrated to have been written without physical contact with either pencil or slate; or a message of a few intelligent words from an unmistakable spirit source; does any one doubt that? Does any one doubt Ernest Renan's declaration when he says, "If we could but once a year exchange two words with our loved and lost, death would be no more death." Just as certain as that French essayist's writings make the average newspaper articles pale, so would those "two words with the loved and lost," if a fact instead of an "if," make his own eloquent and cultured efforts pale. The value of the Message Department is because of those "two" or more words from the other side. It is of no consequence whether the two words are wise or foolish, but are they from the loved and lost?

I fully appreciate Farnsworth's indifference to messages that may lack wisdom and culture when not from his own circle of spirit-friends; so I did Horace Greeley's indifference when he said he had not time to waste sitting around a table listening to messages from other people's brothers, aunts and cousins; and there he was right. But if he had advocated abolishing the circle, and thus preventing other people's brothers, aunts and cousins from coming, he would be doing wrong. Farnsworth is not obliged to read the "messages"; but seems to me he is not so good a Spiritualist as he claims to be if he wants to put out or throw water on the light that tries to shine on that sixth page, that not only other people want, but that spirits also wish to give; for this Message Department is their movement, and who knows but the prosperity and popularity of the *Banner* may be but their reward of merit for its not forgetting to entertain invisible strangers, and thus having entertained angels unawares—only there is no unawares about it; but the text quoted is significant. Ah! there is the rub! does Farnsworth say? Rub to him, but I want it distinctly understood, not a rub to me.

I can call to mind, in my quarter-of-a-century acquaintance with Modern Spiritualism and the *Banner of Light*, several unmistakable test communications to me personally; and now, within this present month of May, I have had a communication from my friend, J. S. Thrasher, of Galveston, which is one of the most perfect tests and identifications of its being that man's production that could possibly be in the nature of things. I shall tax the *Banner* at an early day for space to refer again to it, as worthy of public attention. It is the most complete identification of a spirit that I have ever heard of or read of. What are all the learning of the schools of this mundane sphere, all the eloquence of the Ciceros, and all the criticisms of a Farnsworth, compared to the unmistakable message from a departed friend, that identifies himself beyond a question? He that hath ears to hear let him hear, or in this case read, what the spirit of J. S. Thrasher says to me, and the circumstances connected with the saying of it.

The message referred to will be found on the sixth page, present issue.—Ed. B. of L.

It was this late fact that was in my mind when my eye fell on Farnsworth's reply. So I felt like sending this harbinging of the fact forth, and my notice of the Farnsworth article with it, to the *Banner* readers, and it will also be a hint to notice my forthcoming corroboration, which to me would of itself settle the question of the value of that department, and I trust to those also who think my head level and believe me truthful; and if Bro. F. cannot see it, it is because he lacks my experience on the point. Why I should be favored and he not, is one of the mysteries. I freely own that if I was a spirit I would give my test to a Farnsworth before I would a Wetherbee, a setting is such a valuable adjunct to a jewel; but accident this time favored me, and I must make the most of it with my own talent, but for the sake of the "Message Department" I wish I was a ten-talent man—I will not say like Farnsworth, though I might do so, as he has a tongue and I have not, at least an oratorical one.

Having announced my proposed reference to the Texan message, I suppose I ought to end this notice of the Farnsworth article and let that clincher settle it when it appears; but a brief reference to a point or two in the article will add intelligence to what I have already written, so let me add that no one of course objects to criticisms of public matters, but a man with a following, or a constituency that sees often through his eyes, should be just, and Mr. F. was not. It was a sarcastic, contemptuous allusion to what many people better than I am, and as good as he, consider a useful feature in the paper. If I understand the English language, there were "base insinuations" in his speech, I thought born of ignorance or prejudice; as he now qualifies it, perhaps I ought not now to refer to it; the doing so, then, is for his following, and I trust I am forgiven. He thought the percentage of thirty odd corroborations out of many thousands rather small. I have said one unmistakable one is a justification for the department, but so far from a hasty gathering of thirty corroborations, if my memory serves me, more papers during the last ten years have had corroborations in them than have not. I should think Farnsworth considers them "decoy ducks," or dummies, by the way he refers to them. If what he says of Mr. Kiddle's endorsement, and Buchanan's psychometric test of them, and the connection with "quick recommendations," is a "straight-forward manner of giving his opinion of the message department," then I differ from him in definition. It looks to me like contempt.

I of course wish there was more definiteness and less vagueness in many or most of the spirit utterances through media, public or to private individuals. I think the skeptical world has often good grounds for saying with Faust that "sack abounds and bread is scarce"; but the little bread, if it so be, is bread that the world needs and wants, and cannot find anywhere else; it is the intelligent evidence of a divinely shaping our ends. That is the attractive feature of the *Banner* messages; not their wisdom or their learning, but their source. Knowing that in some cases they are what they claim to be, and presuming I am not the only one favored, I respect all. I must say I never saw one so low and illiterate that its possible source would not entitle it to my respect as a phenomenal fact, if not for its contents or quality. Crabs, you know, become sublime when they are hung up as signs in the zodiac. The source of a message, however low or illiterate, if from a spirit, makes it sublime. I hope the *Banner* circle-door into the spirit-world will continue to be kept open. The spirit-world that found a good instrument in the late Fanny Conant, has, after her race was run, found a good successor in Miss Shollanmer; the mantle of Elijah has fallen on Elshar; and I feel that the race of prophets will not die out of the earth, nor messages out of the *Banner*, if the spirits continue to will it. For one, may their "shadow" never be less.

New Publications.

STATISTICS OF LABOR IN MASSACHUSETTS. Twelfth Annual Report.

"The Bureau of Statistics of Labor," of which Carroll D. Wright is chief, has issued in this volume of 631 pages, a full report of the work it has accomplished the past year. As it touches the most reliable source of information upon a subject that is rapidly assuming a position of much importance to all, too great praise cannot be awarded to its compilers for the thoroughness of detail that characterizes it at every point. The work is divided into four parts: Part I., "Industrial Arbitration and Conciliation," is in response to a call of the Legislature of 1880 for a full investigation of the practical working of the principles of industrial conciliation and arbitration, and what legislation, if any, is necessary to enable employers and employees to secure the benefits of such principles. At the same time a call was made for data and testimony to be obtained in all the New England States and the State of New York, relative to a uniform system of laws to regulate the hours of labor in those States. Part III. of this Report is in response to this call. These two departments will prove exceedingly valuable for present use, and as a reference in the discussion and regulation of a subject that is assuming vast proportions, and which demands close and careful study. Part II. gives the "Statistics of Drunkenness and Liquor Selling, 1879-80," and Part IV. a report upon the "Influence of Intemperance upon Crime."

THE REASON WHY, or Spiritual Experiences of Mrs. Julia Crafts Smith, Physician, Assisted by her Spirit Guides. 1 vol. 12mo., pp. 187, cloth. Boston: Published by the Author.

The first three chapters are written by the father of Mrs. Smith, in spirit-life, and portray to some extent his life on earth, his entrance into the spirit-world, his meeting with long vanished friends, efforts made by him to cause his presence to be recognized by his family on earth, and the mode of proceeding adopted by him to develop the mediumistic qualities of his daughter, and induce her to consecrate her life to the good of humanity. Interspersed through these prefatory chapters will be found instructions to those wishing to become mediums, and advice to those who are.

Mrs. Smith was early conscious of spirit presence, or, rather, "something" that seemed to have a care over her, not realizing who or what it was. This was in her seventh year, and from that time forward evidences of spirit power and aid were constantly given her. In 1843 her mediumistic work commenced in earnest, and from that time to the present she has been remarkably successful in her efforts to relieve the sick. This volume is a record of many of her experiences, and will be found to be exceedingly interesting in the numerous evidences it gives of the truth of Spiritualism, and the immense amount of practical good it is doing for humanity.

SWITZERLAND. By Harriet D. S. Mackenzie. With one hundred illustrations. Lothrop's Library of Entertaining History. Edited by Arthur Gilman. pp. 385, 10mo., cloth. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co.

Switzerland, cradled amid rocks and glaciers in a republic surrounded by monarchies, the early home of liberty, the rich and exhaustless source of legendary lore; a country in whose grandeur of Alpine scenery the lover of the picturesque delights to linger, and the adventurous traveler finds every hope for opportunity to satisfy his desire for novelty and danger! No one, whether his pilgrimage in this sphere of being has been short or long, falls, when his thoughts turn hitherward, to recognize a subtle charm that holds his mind spellbound. The sturdy integrity and the skill of the Swiss people are in keeping with its impregnable geographical situation. Though much has been said and written of the manners and customs of the Swiss, a popular history of the wonderful little republic has not been produced until this exceedingly interesting and attractive volume by Mackenzie appeared, and we have to thank the enterprising publishers for giving it to the public in an elegant and substantial form. The one hundred beautiful full page engravings with which it is illustrated add greatly to its value and attractiveness, and the book cannot fail to be esteemed as a treasure by all who possess it.

LEGENDS OF THE PATRIARCHS AND PROPHETS, and other Old Testament Characters, from Various Sources. By the Rev. S. Baring-Gould, M. A., author of "Curious Myths of the Middle Ages," "Origin and Development of Religious Belief," "In Exile Israel," etc. New York: D. B. Bennett, publisher.

It would be impossible in a single volume to give all the legends connected with the personages whose history is included in the Old Testament, but the compiler of this has presented nearly all possessing a peculiar interest, and produced a book that will prove deeply interesting to the reader, and shed much light upon the origin of narratives supposed to have been written by men inspired of God for the special edification and guidance of the human family.

The Musliman traditions are nearly all derived from the Talmudic writers. Of the Jewish traditions, one class is derived from Persia; another from the Cabalists; another is due to Rabbinic commentators, and another may be credited to the exaggeration of Oriental imagery. But when these classes are swept aside a few genuine Jewish traditions remain, to which the accounts of Lemech and his wives, and the story of the sacrifice of Isaac, undoubtedly belong.

These legends have a curious interest for all; and if read with an honest desire to learn the truth, lead wherever it may, will tend to enlighten and considerably lessen the idolatry of those who worship the Bible as a special revelation of God to man.

BELLAMI, A Passionate Love Story. By Octave Feuillet, author of "The Count de Camors," and "The Amours of Philippe." Translated by Mrs. Sherwood. One vol. 12mo., pp. 222, paper. Philadelphia: T. B. Peterson & Brothers.

The scene of this story is laid in Brittany, a locality that may be called the home of picturesque legend. The author has taken an incident of the Vendean war, and wrought in and about it a story of intense feeling, that at every point excites and interests the reader, and renders the book so absorbing that it is difficult to lay it aside until finished. It is said to be free from the objections usually made to French novels.

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Last evening, Monday, the 2d inst., I was present with some fifteen or more others at a séance held by Mr. Keeler, for materialization, at Col. Kase's. This evening's séance was very satisfactory, though generally the manifestations were not perhaps quite so vivid as they were at the séance on Friday evening. Quite a number of the materialized forms were identified by their friends in the circle. On more than one occasion two forms came at the same time, and once a male and a female form stood near each other, fairly outside of the cabinet, for some time, a rather indistinct face being shown simultaneously at the cabinet window. My wife and two of our daughters, Gertrude and Mary, severally came out of the cabinet, and, as usual, all embraced and kissed me. Mary held a piece of lace the size of a large handkerchief in both hands, and dematerialized it to the sight of all the company. I playfully remarked to her that she must have hidden it in the bosom of her dress, and, suiting the action to my words, I stepped up to her but could not detect any resemblance of the lace about her person. "Well,"

love of what we call "evil." Have tried many ways to lead myself out of the business, but when they need a lesson, I learn by carefully studying the conditions they represent, how to go to work. Is there not benefit to be had from this? Life is a school; we in the primary department must know *what* and *what* to study in order to accomplish the end of the primary department. No one can avoid its discipline or run away from this school. The skeptic must go through each department as well as the believer.

"My communication from "Marquis Richards" is so like him, no one who knew him could doubt for a moment its truthfulness. He also wished to state one other incident. When I was a girl this same Marquis Richards was called on as a witness in a case where he was anything but popular in those days. A cousin of his, Bryan Richards of Bristol, Conn., who was no believer in such things, had a son EDWARD, who went away, and his father knew nothing of him until he was twenty years of age. Marquis, who took the *Banner of Light*, saw in it a communication from EDWARD RICHARDS, who stated that he went to Mexico, married a Spanish wife possessed of money; had a child; died of a fever; and was buried. The students said that the man from Bristol, Conn., Marquis, sent the paper, with the communica-

are in attendance. Of these I may name Mrs. Mosher, a test medium, formerly of Lynn, Mass.; a Mr. A. M. Jones, of West Astoria, Me., an excellent instrumental worker, and Mr. A. B. Dyer, a medium for tests. I have previously met, I met a medium by the name of E. Cook. His hand is controlled, and tests of spirit influence are given in great numbers. At Bath, Me., is J. Donnelly, a medium who has so bad an impediment in his speech that at times it is next to impossible to understand him, yet when under the influence of spiritual control he speaks so intelligently of subjects presented. This one fact alone should be sufficient to convince any one that a power independent of himself acts upon and through his organism. At Lisbon Falls, Me., Mrs. E. A. Prince and Mr. W. Blenheim are developing a medium of much promise. At this place I met a lady who told me her father, a prominent citizen of California, had been asked to give test message at the *Banner of Light* Circle. He did so, and it was published in the *Banner of Light* Feb. 10th, 1881, furnish-

Iowa.
OTTUMWA.—Ellen Armstrong writes: "Mrs. Nettle Pease Fox, who is now located in this place, recently closed a course of three lectures in Newton, Jasper Co., which awakened a good interest. The friends there are active and liberal, and rich in spiritual gifts. We found some good mediums. Dr. Adams, a splendid clairvoyant physician, has a large practice and is growing into financial success. We met there

From Canaan, N. Y., June 12th, 1880, Daniel Sizer.

[Obituary Notices not exceeding twenty lines published gratuitously. When they exceed this number, twenty cents for each additional line is required, payable in advance. Ten words to a line.]

A Card.

This, Street, of Lockland, O., is authorized to act as our Agent to receive subscriptions, sell brick cards, and attend to any other business that may further the interests of the Anti-Slavery Association. Mr. Street is now in Cincinnati, and will visit Boston this summer, and attend the Camp-Meetings held in the vicinity and elsewhere.

Cincinnati, Ohio. CHAS. B. KINSEY, Sec. M. H. A.

Message Department.

Public Free-Circle Meetings.
 An address at the BANNER OF LIGHT OFFICE, corner of
 Pine and Montgomery Streets, every TUESDAY
 and FRIDAY AFTERNOON. The hall will be open at 2
 o'clock, and services commence at 3 o'clock. At
 which time the doors will be closed, allowing no access
 until the conclusion of the service, except in case of
 absolute necessity. The public are cordially invited.
 The messages published under the above heading indi-
 cate that spirits carry with them the characteristics of their
 earthly life, to that beyond, whether for good or evil—con-
 sequently those who pass from the earthly sphere in an unde-
 veloped state, eventually progress to a higher condition.
 We ask the reader to receive no doctrine put forth by
 spirits in these columns that does not comport with his or
 her reason. All express as much of truth as they perceive
 in more.

It is our earnest desire that those who may recognize
 the messages of their spirit-friends will verify them by in-
 forming us of the fact for publication.
 As our angel visitors desire to behold natural flowers
 upon our Circle-table, we solicit donations of such
 from the friends in earth-life who may feel that it is a plea-
 sure to place upon the altar of spirituality their floral offer-
 ings.
 (Miss) Shellenhamer wishes it understood that she
 gives no private sittings, and that she is not to be re-
 ceived by visitors on Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Fridays.
 Letters pertaining to this department, in order to
 ensure prompt attention, should in every instance be ad-
 dressed to C. C. & R. C. of the
 Lewis B. Wilson, Chairman.

Messages given through the Mediumship of
 Miss M. T. Shellenhamer.

J. S. Thrasher.

I sought to express myself at your last meet-
 ing, but failed to obtain a hearing. Two days
 previous to that time I sought to manifest to
 my friend in the body who had invited me to
 come to this circle, and send him a message.
 I tried to do so, but failed. To-day I am glad
 to find myself in possession of the medium's organ-
 ism. I return, first, because I feel it to be my
 duty to do so; secondly, because I wish my friend
 to realize that I am at times enabled to ap-
 proach him and influence him with my pres-
 ence. It is true I have failed to manifest to him
 through the various mediums he has visited, but
 for all that I have been by his side, I have
 watched the workings of his spirit, and I have
 felt glad to endorse them. It has been possible
 for me to impress him with my thought to which
 I have seen him give expression, and it has
 gladdened my spirit to feel that I can come into
 sympathetic communication with him, inde-
 pendent of any medium. I would say to my
 dear philosopher friend: You are in the right,
 as I know you were when I was in the body. I
 feel that you are walking the right path; I feel
 that your company is an angelic one, and that
 your environments are of the spiritual. It is
 true that you may not always sense the pres-
 ence of your spirit-friends, yet you may do so
 sufficiently to realize their continued influence
 upon and interest in you. I am glad that I have
 been enabled to join your band. Although my
 particular work lies in another direction, yet
 there are hours when I may direct my influence
 and spiritual power upon you for some little
 good, as I believe—I send you my love, for I
 feel deeply and truly drawn unto you, and I
 say I am with you in your studies, I am with
 you in your work.

I perceive there is much for me yet to attain
 as an individual spirit. Wisdom and knowledge
 and truth lay before me, which are not to be
 gathered like the flowers that are so thickly set
 along the roadside; they are rather to be delved
 for, like gems which lie hidden and demand
 work before they will come to the light; but he
 who works bravely and well, early and late, will
 not fail to discover the gem and to bring it to
 the light. I wish to seek for those gems which
 I know lay before me—truth, wisdom and knowl-
 edge—and I shall be glad to transmit them to
 my friend, that he may give them appropriate
 setting and place them before the eyes of hu-
 manity who watch and wait for divine truth
 concerning the immortal life, for that knowl-
 edge which taketh the place of faith and bring-
 eth glory and wisdom to guide the soul upward.
 This is my first attempt at controlling in a
 public circle, and, in fact, in any other place,
 therefore I do not expect to express myself as
 freely and thoroughly as I hope to in the future.
 I have friends in Boston, unto whom I send my
 affectionate greeting. There are those in this
 city with whom I was formerly associated. I
 shall be glad to meet them at any time, but to
 my particular friend I would say: I am com-
 fortably situated in the spirit-world. I have all
 that I require and need. I do not desire to take
 any more than what belongs to me as a spirit,
 for there are so many who are in need I feel to
 leave all the rest unto them. You may say it
 is J. S. Thrasher, of Galveston, Texas, to his
 philosopher friend, John Weatherbe, of Boston.

Fannie Randall.
 [To the Chairman:] Will you please let me
 send a message? I know how to come, because
 I have come before; but I never came to this
 place. My mamma and papa will know, because
 my mamma is a medium, and I come to her. I
 talk right through her just as I am now talking
 through this medium. My little brother comes,
 my auntie, my grandpa, and lots of spirits. We
 have just splendid times at home; it makes
 mamma, and papa, and all the children feel real
 happy to have us come from the spirit-world.
 A gentleman here said I could come and send a
 message if I would like, and my mamma will
 feel so pleased to get it. She likes to get some-
 thing through some other medium. We thought
 it would do her good if I should come and tell
 her we all send our love. I want to tell her we
 are all coming by-and-by. I am coming, and I
 am going to bring all the good spirits that be-
 long to her band, on the 10th of June. She will
 know what day that is. It is a day I like ever
 so much, because that day brought me all the
 pretty things of the spirit-world. We are all
 coming on that day; we are all going to bring
 flowers, fresh, sweet flowers, to make the place
 so pretty. She will hear from us then, sure.
 She often hears from us, but this is going to be
 a special time. I guess she will feel surprised
 to know I have come here. I want to give her
 a surprise. I think it will do her good. Grandpa
 sends his love to papa, and tells him he is look-
 ing ahead for him. He says something is in
 store; I don't know what it is, but grandpa
 knows, and he says it is all for good. He sends
 encouragement and cheer, and says, pretty soon
 things are going to be brighter than they have
 been for the last few years. He says he is sat-
 isfied, but still there is brightness coming.
 Auntie sends her love to mamma—she is just
 the best, good auntie that takes care of us little
 children; she is so kind we all love her very
 much. I don't know, but I think I have got
 just the prettiest home that ever was. I was a
 little bit of a girl when I went away. It seems
 a long time to me; I have been growing ever
 since, and am now quite a big girl, and by-and-
 by I am going to be a woman. I come back real
 often. My name is Fannie Randall. I come from
 way off ever so far, from Salt Lake City, Utah.
 My mother's name is Elizabeth; all her friends
 call her Lizzie. My father's name is James Ran-
 dall. Won't you please say grandpa says he is
 helping Charlie; he has work to do with Charlie
 by-and-by, that will be for great good. And I

send my love to all of them, every one at home.
 I guess that is all I have to say.

May 6.

Science held Feb. 15th, 1881.

Invocation.

Like the flowers that turn their heads toward the
 sun, ready and anxious to drink in the light and re-
 freshing dew of morning, so would we turn our souls
 toward thee, oh, our Father God, ready and anxious
 to drink in from the inspiring strength which thou
 alone canst bestow upon the human being. We bring
 thee all that our souls contain as an offering of love
 and of thanksgiving. We would consecrate our lives
 to thee anew, asking only that we may receive light
 and knowledge and truth, in order to dispense it freely
 abroad unto others. We would this day ask of thee
 the power and strength to send forth words of conse-
 cration and peace that shall fall like dew upon the hearts
 of thy sorrowing children; and we pray that thy minis-
 tering angels, gathered here from time to time, may be
 endowed with new strength and vigor, in order to per-
 form their work faithfully and well. We ask thy bless-
 ing to rest upon every means for disseminating truth
 and knowledge concerning spiritual life and immor-
 tality. We ask thy benediction to rest ever and ever
 upon the spiritual press; may those who guard and
 guide it be given power and strength to go forward in
 their work, that the glad tidings that there is no death
 may fly from zone to zone, and fill this vast land,
 that humanity may rejoice with a new feeling of gladness
 that there is light and life and joy forevermore. Amen.

Susie Fisher.

[To the Chairman:] Please, mister, may I
 come? My name is Susie Fisher. My mother's
 name is Mary Jane Fisher. I have two little
 brothers and one little sister. My brothers are
 older than I am, but I call them little because
 they are small. My brother Willie is working
 now, running errands for a woman; my little
 sister is sick, and my mother feels awfully bad,
 so I wanted to come back. My mother has to
 work real hard all the time; she don't feel
 good, and she feels so sorry that my sister Sarah
 is sick, it makes me feel bad, too. I wanted to
 come to mother—I want her to know I can
 come. My sister is going to get well—she isn't
 going to die. I guess she will be well before
 mother gets my message, then she will feel bet-
 ter. I think perhaps if she knew her little girl
 could come back, it would make her feel hap-
 pier, don't you? She has a real hard time, but
 there are some people who are good to her. She
 knows it, and she thinks she will do the best
 she can for them all. There was a woman
 —I suppose she is a lady, but I call her a woman—
 who came to my mother, and wanted her
 to put all her children in the poor-house! Wasn't
 that hard? And my mother said she could n't do
 that, anyway, unless she was unable to take care
 of them. After the woman went away, my mother
 cried like everything. I saw her, and that made me
 feel bad, too. That was before I died. Then there
 were four of us, and the woman wanted mother to
 put us all away, and not see us any more! Then I
 got sick, and then I died. Mother said she knew I
 was safe and well; she felt happy about me,
 for she knew where I was; but if I had been in
 the poor-house, she wouldn't know what was
 going to become of me.

My mother don't know that the spirits of her
 friends are around her. I want her to know it.
 She has been getting along a little better since
 that time. I think the spirits help her. They
 come to her sometimes when she does sewing,
 and they make her rested. Then there are two
 ladies she sews for—I guess they are mediums,
 because the spirits can make them be real kind
 to my mother. They are kind, but then the
 spirits make them kinder; so I guess if mother
 knows all that, she will feel better. I hope she
 will. And perhaps sometime I can come and
 talk right out to her, right by her side—I mean
 perhaps she can be somewhere sometime where
 there is a medium, where I can talk. Oh, if she
 does, I shall be so glad! My mother lives in
 Trenton, N. J. Her name is Mary Jane; my
 name is Susie Fisher. Please say I send my
 love, won't you, to my mother, and to the chil-
 dren, too. We see that they are going to get
 along real nicely. I guess by-and-by everything
 will come all right.

Hattie A. Davis.

My friends are in Oakland, Cal. I feel to re-
 turn and speak to them, not knowing whether
 they will receive my message or not, but trust-
 ing and hoping it will reach them, for it seems
 to me such care and anxiety as mine will be
 able to guide the message home to that place
 where I desire it to go. I feel limited. I feel
 that I cannot give all the instructions and direc-
 tions here which I should do, and which would
 be sure to bring my message under the eyes of
 my friends. It is not on my own account, but
 because I respect their wishes. Still, I return
 to say to them, Yes, it is all true, all that I
 hoped, all that I desired—even more than I could
 have dreamed of—and now I feel perfectly sat-
 isfied, and I may say gratified, with my new life.
 I know that my experiences were somewhat
 strange and varied. I felt at times that I could
 not tell why I should receive this and that, why
 I must undergo such strange experiences and
 pass through so much that seemed calculated to
 depress the spirit, and yet now I feel to under-
 stand it. I feel to comprehend that they were
 for my benefit, even though they seemed to over-
 shadow me while in the form; and I wish my
 friends to realize that all these things have
 passed away—that a new life, a new world has
 truly come to me—that I am now seeking to
 grow. I think they will understand.

Yet I return with messages of love from
 friends I have met; from those dear little ones
 who passed away early in life, blighted in the
 bud, as we would say; yet not blighted, for they
 have only been transplanted to a sunnier clime,
 where they grow and expand in the light of our
 Father's love. I have found them again, sweet
 and beautiful and shining; they have brought
 me comfort and strength, and instructed me as
 I never could have instructed them, in the laws
 and studies of life. My passing out was strange
 yet beautiful. For a brief time it seemed that
 I was asleep, and unconsciousness clouded my
 being; but in a little while I awoke to a new
 morning, a new light, finding myself surround-
 ed by familiar faces and friends. Looking back,
 I saw my body clothed in robes for the grave,
 and I felt that I was forever free. My friends
 surrounding my body sang my favorite hymn; I
 heard their voices; I recognized their familiar
 tones, and it seemed to waft my spirit to even
 sweeter enjoyment. I wish to thank them for
 all kindness, for all care, and to assure them
 that in the future I shall be able to guard them,
 to bring them some influences from above, and
 perhaps be a benefit to them when they, too,
 cross the river of death and enter the spirit-
 world. I hope I shall be received by my
 friends; that they will give me an opportunity
 to return to them. The friends I desire most
 to reach to-day, as I said before, are in Oakland,
 Cal. I have other friends in the East; to them
 also I send my love and my remembrance, and
 an assurance that I can, at times, hasten to
 their side and speak to their spirits in the old
 familiar words. One friend has fancied that I
 returned to her and spoke—whispered in my
 own voice. I wish to say it was no fancy; I did
 return, three days after the decease of my body,
 and speak to my friend in the early twilight.

Perhaps I shall gain power to return again
 more frequently, and manifest to my friends so
 palpably that they will know I have never died.
 I am Hattie A. Davis.

R. A. Bullock.

I feel like a pilgrim returning to the land of
 my fathers. I have passed through troubled
 waters since I emerged from the body, and it
 seems that I am almost a different being. One
 passing out under the same circumstances
 through which I passed, will probably realize
 something of the same condition of spirit. I
 cannot say all was entirely bright and beau-
 tiful. I found myself to be the same man, pos-
 sessed with the same hopes and fears, surround-
 ed by the same tangled knots, which I could
 not unravel to my satisfaction; so I was no
 better off out of the body than I was in the
 body, and I found myself attracted to the old
 familiar scenes upon the earth. I passed into
 the market, through the office, up and down the
 streets, meeting here and there a familiar face.
 I could not realize why it was I was not recog-
 nized. This was an unhappy experience to me,
 till I learned that I was a disembodied spirit—
 that I was not tangible to my friends on earth.
 After a time I began to grow out of that con-
 dition, but it left its impress upon my spirit.
 I felt that I should never return to earth and
 manifest, even though I found it possible for
 spirits to do so; but to-day I have changed my
 mind. I think it will benefit me—I think per-
 haps my friends may be glad to hear from me,
 that I am very well situated at the present
 time; that I feel that I am now entitled to
 happiness, which to a certain degree I mine.

I have friends in the spirit-world who sur-
 round me with their love and protection. I rely
 upon it. This has enabled me to grow, and to
 day to return and speak through mortal lips.
 I have an occupation in the spirit-world very dif-
 ferent from that which was mine in the body.
 My friends would not understand it or realize
 the significance of it did I speak of it now.
 When they join me in the spirit-world they will
 understand it fully; they will each one find
 they, too, will have an occupation which will
 be adapted to themselves, and perhaps be of use
 to others. I merely send this out as a sort of
 a link connecting me with the past, for I intend
 to take up the chain of my past experiences,
 and go through them, in order to take out things
 which will be of benefit to me in the future,
 which will point me to certain landmarks by
 the way, and perhaps benefit my spirit. I send
 my fraternal greeting to all friends, and shall
 be glad to be remembered by each one. I de-
 sire my message to reach my friends in Woon-
 socket, R. I. R. A. Bullock.

Bennie Gray.

I can't say much. I want my mamma to know
 I have come, and I want my mamma's friend to
 tell her, and say I isn't sick any more nor do
 feel bad, but I is all well, in a pretty place,
 and did n't go over no river. There was no water
 there at all; it was all nice; the pretty grass
 and flowers were growing. There was no water
 at all to go over, to down little boys, and I
 want to tell mamma so, then she will feel easy,
 won't she? And can I come again? My mam-
 ma lives in Chelsea, and I is Bennie Gray.

Science held Feb. 18th, 1881.

Questions and Answers.

CONTROLLING SPIRIT.—We are ready for your
 questions, Mr. Chairman.

Ques.—[By Joseph Brown, Bangor, Me.] I
 have lately read an article in which it was said
 that Jesus Christ was below Paul and Plato.
 On the other hand, a spirit claiming to be Swe-
 denborg stated that Jesus was the ultimate of
 God's intentions to man. Will the presiding
 spirit give his opinion upon the subject?

Ans.—In scholarly attainments, in education-
 al advantages, the poor carpenter may have
 been inferior to Plato and Paul, and many
 other teachers and philosophers; but in simple
 eloquence, which the common people could un-
 derstand and appropriate for themselves; in
 trusting confidence in the Father of all, who
 cares for every creature; in loving tenderness
 and helpfulness, which would embrace the en-
 tire human family, we consider that Jesus was
 the equal if not the peer of all others; but that
 the Nazarene was the ultimate of God's inten-
 tions to man we are not prepared to affirm.
 There are possibilities of good and of power,
 depths of tenderness and love in the human
 soul, which we believe have never been unfold-
 ed. And we believe that the ultimate expression
 of God's intentions to mankind will be expressed
 in a perfected humanity, unfolded in all its
 parts, complete in all directions, deficient in
 none.

Q.—[By Reuben Albertson, Sitka, Alaska
 Territory.] Mr. Samuel Millage, by birth a
 Slavonian, quite uneducated, has become in-
 voluntarily developed as a clairvoyant, clairaud-
 ient and writing medium. A spirit ("Bishop
 of the Greek Church") induced him to procure
 a New Testament, promising to cause him to be
 able to read it. The medium can and does now
 read the New Testament, although he can read
 nothing else, not even the messages coming
 through his own hands. Will you please ex-
 plain the phenomena, and state if any like case
 has occurred before?

Ans.—Such cases that mentioned may not be
 common, and yet we do not consider them rare.
 The spirit influencing, who is in charge of this
 medium, is undoubtedly using him for a pur-
 pose of its own, which will in due time become
 manifest to those who surround the medium.
 Probably this particular medium is at present
 passing through a process of development, and
 it would be unwise for his spirit-guides to per-
 mit him to read any other document or work
 but that for which they intended him to be used.
 We cannot discuss this particular case, not be-
 ing able to come in rapport with the medium.
 Were he present we could do so; we could then
 probably understand and explain the peculiar
 phenomenon manifested through his medium-
 istic powers, but he is undoubtedly a good me-
 dium, passing through this unfoldment at the
 present for a use and a work in the future. If
 the spirit now controlling him is wise and good
 —and this will certainly be manifested in time—
 no doubt the medium will be used for a good and
 noble work. In the meantime we would coun-
 sel patience and attention to the directions of
 the spirit guide in control.

Q.—[By F. O. Warner, New Braintree.] Please
 state, if possible, the cause of cancerous hu-
 mors; also, whether these humors attack the
 mucous membrane of the human stomach, and
 prevent the proper digestion of food, and state
 what will prevent these humors, or remove
 them when in the system?

Ans.—We consider that the cause of cancerous
 humors, and all other humors in the system, is
 impoverished and impure blood, which may be
 inherited or acquired. It is very likely that all
 accretion of humors of any kind in the system

will attack the mucous membrane and glands
 of the stomach, thereby disturbing the processes
 of digestion, which would cause pain and un-
 easiness to the person. Those who are afflicted
 with humors of the stomach should be particu-
 lar in their food; they should partake of that
 which is of a soothing, healing nature, such as
 warm, fresh milk, and sparingly of olive oil,
 fruits and grains; they should avoid all that is
 stimulating, such as spices, condiments and in-
 toxicants; in that way the humors will be able
 to slough themselves off through the system,
 and perhaps a benefit may ensue. Those who
 are suffering from an accretion of humor in the
 system, whether it be of a cancerous nature or
 no, should be, as we have said, very careful in
 regard to their diet. Flesh food is particularly
 noxious to the system that is filled with impure
 blood. Fruits, grains, vegetables and milk
 should be partaken of freely. We would add
 that in the spring of the year—not for days or
 weeks, but for months—it is advisable to par-
 take daily of sarsaparilla tea. This we have
 given to us by a spirit physician; likewise when
 there is humor in the stomach interfering par-
 ticularly with the process of digestion, it is ad-
 visable to prepare a syrup of bayberry bark and
 the honey of wild bees, to be taken by the tea-
 spoonful three times a day.

William Aikens.

I am anxious to return and speak to my
 friends. I have many friends in Boston, in Al-
 bany and New York, and I feel that I shall at
 least succeed in reaching some of them and an-
 nouncing my presence and my power to return
 from the spirit-world—to return strong and free,
 unlike the pale, emaciated shadow who spent
 his last days far away from home and friends,
 but powerful and strong. In the full vigor of
 mature manhood I return, to say to my friends
 I am now in possession of that health and
 strength which I felt myself robbed of in the
 later years of my earthly life. I feel that this
 will be the best message I can send to my
 friends and acquaintances, that they can in
 deed rejoice to know I have passed beyond
 the mortal pale of life and have entered a new
 home where all is adapted to my wants and the
 purposes of my being. I passed on with com-
 punction, at Panama, far away from my friends,
 but I rejoice that I have power to wing my way
 backward to this place. The old, familiar scenes
 where my associations were as sweet and friend-
 ly, and I wait my blessing, my message of love
 to all who care to hear from me. My earthly
 existence was nearly forty-one years; my spiri-
 tual existence is brief, scarcely measuring one
 year. My name is William Aikens.

Mrs. Mary W. Bartlett.

I was told by the time my message would ap-
 pear to my friends it would be very nearly the
 anniversary of my departure from earthly
 scenes, and I wish this to be so, desiring that
 when that anniversary shall occur, my friends
 may receive a letter from me, and feel that I
 have returned to give them greeting. I came
 here to-day to send out a few faint, feeble words
 and expressions of my life and being. I was old;
 age had left its impress upon me ere I was sum-
 moned from the earthly life, but I feel to re-
 turn, renewed with the vigor of youth, and to
 say to my friends and to my family that I would
 you could see me now as I am in spirit; that
 you could behold me, freed from all traces of
 pain, and age, and weariness, and I am sure you
 would feel rejoiced that I had left the earthly
 life behind me, and entered upon a new home
 and new associations. I have met my friends
 who passed away before I did; they send their
 greeting and their love. We are all united
 and happy together. The experiences of early
 life, many of which were painful, are now ex-
 plained, and I feel to rejoice in the goodness of
 our Father God. I come from Worcester. My
 name is Mrs. Mary W. Bartlett.

Joseph Hadley.

The change from the body, or from the mortal
 to the spiritual, I may say, was strange, and
 startling to me. I did not expect to pass
 through such an experience as I have done
 during the last few months. My ideas and com-
 prehensions of a future life were entirely dif-
 ferent from this reality which presses upon me.
 I did not believe in the power of spirits to
 return to mortal life and manifest; I did not
 believe that spirits lived together as you live
 together here on earth, in families and circles,
 having social relations and pleasant occasions;
 but so it is, and I find habitations similar to
 those of earth. I am surprised, yet I cannot
 say that I am altogether suited to this spiri-
 tual life which I now experience. I feel that, after
 all, it is best, because it is natural, and because
 we can appreciate it from our earthly experi-
 ence which prepared us for this new life. And
 I feel to send a few words to my friends. I
 think some of them will see my message. My
 mother is with me. But a few short hours, as
 it were, separated us, and we were again united
 in another life, in a higher and a better world;
 and although she, too—poor old soul! if I may
 so express myself—was disappointed and sur-
 prised at her spiritual surroundings, yet now
 she has grown to appreciate them, to be glad
 because of them, and to rejoice in the presence
 of those friends with whom she had parted
 years before, who were waiting to welcome her
 to the spirit-world. We are happy; we are sat-
 isfied in a measure, and expect to become more
 so.

I wish my friends to feel that I shall be at
 work; that I can never be idle; it is not for me
 to cease work, to rest forever. At this, of all
 things, I rejoice; and I find in my own experi-
 ence that, no matter if we do believe in old re-
 ligious ideas and notions, if we are earnest and
 true in our investigations, and desirous to learn
 the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
 truth, we can very easily throw off the old ideas
 that weigh upon us, we can emerge from any
 darkness which surrounds us, and speedily gain
 information and knowledge concerning the new
 life which we enter. This is my experience. I
 speak of things as I find them. I send my greet-
 ing to my friends, and assure them that I am
 happy, and I should be happy also to meet with
 them at any future time, if they can provide me
 with an instrument for returning, and I shall be
 more than happy to welcome them to the spiri-
 tual world, and show them my surroundings,
 when they, too, are called over. I hope they
 will investigate this thing and seek for truth;
 that they will throw away all old ideas that
 cramp and confine the spirit; throw away all
 prejudice, and be as tolerant as they know how
 to be toward all people, all things and all reli-
 gions; let them continue to receive all the good
 that they can receive from that which they feel
 may be the best and truest for them, and con-
 tinue to walk that road which they feel is the
 straightest, and I am sure they will find them-
 selves in a good condition when they arrive on
 the other side of life. My name is Joseph Had-
 ley.

I may say that I come from Gloucester,
 Mass., as that was my abiding place when in
 the form.

Isabel Huling.

At length I feel that I have the privilege of
 coming and speaking at this place. I would like
 to send my message to my daughter, to assure
 her that her father would have come and mani-
 fested, but he found himself unable to control;
 that I have sought to come several times in the
 past, but could not gain control of the medium;
 but at length, through repeated experiments, I
 have succeeded in gaining possession, and I wish
 to say to my dear child, We often watch over
 you; we come to you in your home and into
 your surroundings. They are not always pleas-
 ant; you have your trials and your shadows;
 you are weighed upon in spirit; but I am glad
 to see that they pass away and leave you sunny
 and free, and that you can rejoice in a knowl-
 edge that your loved ones are around you. This
 will lighten your burdens through all the fu-
 ture; it will bring you peace in many a dark-
 ened hour; and yet I am glad to feel that your
 life is marked out for you in such a way that
 you will receive joy and gladness as well as sor-
 row and pain, which seems to be the lot and
 experience of all beings. I feel that the time
 may come when I shall be able to come to you
 in person, to influence you with my presence
 and impress you with all that I desire to give.
 I have sought to come in the past. I came,
 bringing a lock of hair for identification, but I
 find that I shall have to come again and again
 in order to make myself known as I desire to.
 I am satisfied to do this, for I feel that I shall
 perform a work in the future, and my husband
 also. He, too, sends his love; he, too, will come
 and manifest through others, to give a token,
 to give sound advice which shall be of use in
 the future. I feel that I can say but a few
 words; but I rejoice that I can come, even
 though it be in a feeble manner, and express
 myself. For years I have been watching over
 and guiding and guarding my loved ones, and I
 shall always do so in the future time. Isabel
 Huling, to Mrs. Belle Gordon, of Hinton, Penn.
 I wish to add that I have sought to manifest in
 Pittsburgh. I feel I shall be able to bring a
 power by-and-by which shall be felt and known.

Estella Paige.

I wish it to be known that I am happy, that I
 am glad, that I have a beautiful spirit-home. I
 had shadows and sorrows in earthly life. I knew
 what trouble was; and yet now I do not sorrow
 for anything of the kind. I feel that this new
 life is so complete, so beautiful, that I cannot
 feel sad for any of the past, but I would not
 have my friends think that I am away from
 them, that I am over in the spiritual world
 proper, and do not know all that befalls those
 who are dear to me on earth, for it is not so.
 I often return. I return to my dear old home,
 which is sweet to me, and to those who were so
 dear, so dear I am, who now are close to my
 spirit. I come to-day with a message of love
 which I hope will be one of consolation, one of
 peace, and which I hope will be received as
 coming from the dear ones in the spirit-world.
 Many times since my decease I have returned
 to my dear mother and sought to lighten her
 burdens, which pressed upon her very heavily.
 I have striven to bring consolation and to influ-
 ence kind friends in her behalf, and I feel that
 I have indeed been blessed in my efforts. I feel
 that I can bring sunlight and peace to her heart,
 and point her to a home beyond the river of
 death, where all her dear ones await her, where
 a beautiful home is prepared for her, where she
 shall dwell in harmony and peace, and be glad
 to know that the sorrows and trials of earthly
 existence are forever past. God will indeed
 protect the widow and the orphan, and know he
 will influence his children to assist and cheer
 those who are unhappy and distressed. I know
 that he has done this; I know the angels are
 ever working for the benefit of those who are
 in sorrow and anguish. I wish to send out my
 thanks and my blessing to all those who have
 been so kind in the past; and, indeed, their
 angel friends surround them and bring them
 blessings; they strew their path with beautiful
 flowers, emblematic of peace and happiness,
 and they bring always and ever messages of
 cheer from the home of peace. And I would
 like to say to you, my dear friends, that any
 time I can be of use and assistance I shall be
 glad to do so.

I say now I am happy, dear mother—I am
 happy in my new home. All pain, all weariness
 has passed away, and strength and gladness
 are mine, which seem to enlarge my sym-
 pathies and love,

