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Original Poetry.

THE OLDEN TIME.

BY HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT.

Oh for the time—the olden time—
When earth was in its youthful prime!
The time of truth and glory,
When men were men of manly mould,
Ere faith was bought, and friendship sold,
And honor but a name for gold,
And love a minstrel's story!
When smiles were worn to welcome friends,
And frowns for open foes,
And smiles and frowns had honest ends,
Zeal, faith, and lusty blows!
When words but spoke the bosom's truth,
And hands avouched that words were sooth;
And men were weighed as they were worth,
For gallant deeds and generous birth,
Wit, virtue, valor, fame!
For them nor garb the limbs might wear,
Nor glittering trash their pouches bear,
Gave honor, place, or name;
All in the time—the olden time—
When earth was in her youthful prime,
The time of truth and glory.

Then slavish bearing marked the slave,
And none were noble but the brave;
None louted to the golden knave,
With pedigree in purse!
Then honest merit stood as high,
Although his weeds were sere,
And bore his head as near the sky,
As Paladin or Peer.
The proudest prince the sword who drew,
When trumpets rang, and splinters flew,
Shields broke, and red blood ran,
Dared not, though daring was his trade,
To wrong by word, unproved by blade,
The meanest gentleman.
The poet's place was honored then,
The fount of glory was his pen,
His scorn the deepest curse.
Then courtesy was nigh to State,
And none so gentle as the great,
So humble as the high.
And wealth was vile that decked the rude,
And good was prized but for the good
The owner did thereby.
All in the time—the olden time—
When earth was in her youthful prime,
The time of truth and glory.

Then ladies' love was merit's meed,
And sought in truth, and wooed in deed—
For it was worth the wooing;
When none might hope to prosper there,
By costly garb, or courtly air,
Unless his heart were right;
When hearts were only proved by trial,
And constancy by stern denial,
And courage but by fight!
When, to have failed the weak to aid,
When, to have wronged the humblest maid,
To have hedged one pace from truth aside,
One pace from war's most deadly tide,
Had been a king's undoing!
When every wish, that, half expressed,
Faint faltered from the maiden's breast,
Who, safe as diamond wrapt in flame,
Preserved her honor's purity,
Was law to every knightly crest—
Although a queen's supreme behest,
Were but one blot upon her fame,
Had passed unheeded by,
All in the time—the olden time—
When earth was in her youthful prime,
The time of love and glory;
When men were men of manly mould,
Ere faith was bought, and friendship sold,
And honor but a name for gold,
And love a minstrel's story!

Then happy was the peasant's hut,
The squire's hall door was never shut,
Nor yet his buttery latch;
And when the Christmas chimes rang out,
Though wild the wint'ry storms did shout,
The yeoman sent the ale about,
Beneath his roof of thatch!
His step was firm, his bearing bold,
His heart of the good English mould,
Bowed not to force or fear!
No slave was he i' the olden day,
Yet dared his parents to obey,
His betters to revere!
For though he could not pen a line,
Nor knew to read the book divine,
Nor clerkly hymns to sing,
The churchward path he weekly trod,
His heart was faithful to his God,
And loyal to his king.
No brawling demagogues had then
Poured poison in the ears of men,
And filled their souls with gall;
The laborer, by his evening cheer,
Envied not, hated not the peer
In his ancestral hall;
But rich and poor were neighbors good,
And dreamed not, in their happy mood,
Nature had made them foes;
For side by side in sport they stood,
And side by side lay in their blood,
When Britain's war cry rose,
All in the time—the olden time—
When earth was in her youthful prime,
The time of truth and glory.

Now honesty is nothing worth,
And honor nothing high,
For sordid gold commands the earth,
If 't have not won the sky.
The meanest wretch that wakes at dawn,
To lie, to falter, and to fawn—
Give him but wealth enough,
And how shall virtue, birth, or name,
Service, desert, wisdom, fame,
Match with his gilded stuff!
For he shall cringe before the proud,
Flatter the rank, ignoble crowd,
With false demean, or fair,
Till he hath won his way to state,
And sits triumphant and elate,
Where heroes might despair.
The rich man hoards his paltry pelf,
Or wastes it on his sordid self;
And beauty is no more the meed
Of generous worth or gallant deed,
Of faith or constancy;
But ladies weigh the purse's length
Against affection's deathless strength,
Virtue and lineage high!
And youth, young spirit, soul of fire,
All that enamored maids desire,
You sigh and plead in vain,
When wrinkled eld prefers his claim,
Of loveless wedlock linked to shame,
So wealth be in the train!
The noble wastes his high estate,
The peasant shivers at his gate,
With curses deep and low;
For evil tongues have thrust between,
Malice, haughtiness and spleen,
Oppression, care and woe;
And iron hands have marred the scene,
Which gladdened every village green
Three hundred years ago.
The prince's state is sullen pride,
The church's rights are now denied,
And equity foreworn;
The low, if lonely, now are slaves,
(The high, if courteous, fawning knaves,)
Vile from their cradles to their graves,
The brawling liberal's scorn.

New world, alas! where all is strange,
Uncertain, dark, and full of change,
And naught preserves its name,
That men may doubt from all around,
Since nothing now is constant found,
If heaven be still the same.
Oh, for the time—the olden time—
When earth was in her youthful prime,
The time of truth and glory;
Oh, for the time—the olden time—
That now but lives in story!

Translated for the Banner of Light.

THE NET PURSE,

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A GOVERNESS.

FROM THE GERMAN.

CHAPTER I.

"It is no light chance. We were set apart
Wisely by him who rules the heart."

I, Sophie Von Alwin, was governess for the Countess Vahlan! My father's little estate had been wholly sacrificed in the disorder of the times; and now "my good Muller," as I had called the bailiff's wife since early childhood, wisely suggested my accepting this situation.

She knew that to be the only alternative left between me and poverty—the keen, the cruel enemy of the orphan! For a sum of money which had happened strangely in my possession, I had also firmly resolved, if chance but favored, should be returned entire.

Thus it happened 't was from her little wagon, I caught with a throbbing heart my first glimpse of the ancient battlemented castle, and the dark avenues of fir that lined its court.

Two of the loveliest little maidens in the world flitted about the principal entrance. Offering gaily to show me their rooms, mine also in future, they danced round and about me through the spacious halls, up its staircase. Those lie in an upper story, pleasant and bright, with a prospect of the hills beyond.

In such quarters could I not establish myself most securely? Without, such calm, grand views of nature! Within, busy life in the charge of such lively, mischievous elves!

The mother I found a beautiful woman; the Countess Vahlan had courtly elegance of manner, but her feeling ever seemed absorbed with her life in the gay world where she shone "a bright particular star." She was much more interested in the fact that my appearance did not mark the peasant, than in what I might do for her children.

Thus left, with a few unimportant remarks, I found the duties of my situation very easy. For my leisure in the evening, the society of the house-steward, Muhlburgh, and his young wife, was an unexpected pleasure. Much with them, I could not but observe how severely, even anxiously, they regarded the noisy company which filled the castle nightly with uproarious mirth—the countess's disregard, too, of her children. And in a short time, from some remarks, I learned Muhlburgh had in regard the tastes and wishes also of his master. But in my little republic ruled different hours and orders; the little ones sometimes, though not the only ones, chatted of their father, whose long absence I imagined at that time was compelled from the importance of his rank in the military service. And with pity, *then*, I thought of the countess—most probably driven to reckless excess of gaiety for forgetfulness!

The enthusiasm with which the tenantry, the household—in fact everybody—spoke of the absent count, was charming. And one day, passing through the boudoir, I had seen his portrait, which the countess usually wore about her neck, lying with its exquisite Venetian chain broken. Starting with eagerness forward, I scrutinized well those handsome features—yes, regularly handsome! But where was that expression of nobility, of command, that distinguishes him born to sway men's souls and hearts? Imagination suggested possibly the fault of the artist, but this, like a hundred more possibilities, vanished, and I was disappointed.

The reader will remember my mention of a sum of money in my possession when I first came as governess to Wiltenbach, which must be restored some future day. That money was connected with the most eventful incidents of my past life!

Go back with me to the summer, two years ago, when my father yielded finally to Aunt Maud's urgent request, that I should accompany my invalid cousins to Baden Baths, partly for society, and partly for all those little attentions so essential to the invalid. With this journey I was to have my first glimpse of a world larger than that hitherto bounded by our little village. All was novel, surprising. The young ladies met acquaintances, yet I did not in truth regret when our stay was near its close.

It was a beautiful summer morning, that we strolled up and down one of the avenues somewhat retired. The air was fresh from a storm the previous night, and accorded well with the spirits of my companions, who gaily ridiculed all, turned all to merriment. The sport, too, of a lovely child busily pelting with flowery missiles, a gentleman who sat in a shaded nook, his arm evidently wounded, from the well-known sign, a sling—furnished a fresh subject. But for finding anything ridiculous, the manner he bore the inconvenience occasioned by the frolicsome elf, to me was admirable; and I did not repent this interest, when losing my brooch, the gift of a dead mother, he rose on noticing my return, and bowing, gravely inquired what I had lost, then, immediately joining in the search, was able soon to restore it; this my companions noticed too in the distance. As I received it, glancing for the first time full at him, I saw a man, *looking* about thirty, but apparently much older from his manner; and with increased embarrassment I expressed my own reasons for regretting its loss, as he still listened with the same polite attention. The promenade was quite crowded when I rejoined my companions, and I was soon rallied on all sides for dreaminess, and with questions about the officer.

That evening the first dancing at the fort came off since our arrival—my first ball, too. Our proposed departure being soon known, we were surrounded by a motley acquaintance, and an officer, more conspicuous for loud laughing and bad jokes, than anything in conversation, asked an engagement of me for the first waltz. I at once refused—for I thought, too, I should prefer looking on. But, as the lines of dancers, on the music's striking up, broke in the merry circle, the effect was electrical; and already beginning to repent, I accepted another invitation. We had nearly made the tour of the room when I observed the waltzer I had just rejected. He reddened violently, and demanded an explanation, which my partner could not or would not give, for he did not defend me. So we were soon, after the opposite couple stopped, the centre of a curious crowd eager to know what was going on. I was ready to sink with vexation, when a voice called in that certain tone of command ensuring attention, "What disturbance have we here?" and I instantly recognized my friend of the morning, though dressed now in the full uniform of a field officer. Soon, gaining sufficient information, the officer turned on my tormentor.

"Possibly Lieutenant, the young lady may not have known well the rules of the ball-room—but allowing you were offended, is this the way to address a lady?"

"But, General, allow me ——" he said, stammeringly.

"No excuse sir—this is no place;" and with evident courtesy my friend continued, now addressing me, "Madamoiselle, will you accept my remaining arm?"

His friendliness gave me courage; it was evident my protector was a gentleman of rank, for, as I placed my arm in his and we slowly moved from the scene of my recent mortification, many eyes turned to the distinguished man before whom all respectfully gave way. He turned the conversation, merely alluding to the encounter with the suggestion it might be unpleasant to meet again the gazers, for that evening, of the crowd so disagreeably even upon me. Though now I noticed the difficulty the exertion even walking was to him, I did not venture to propose finding my aunt alone. His conversation was singularly agreeable; the magnificence of his dark eyes and noble bearing even won my stately aunt.

On reaching the furthest ante-room, where we found her, he related—inquiring at the same time our name and residence—the occurrence, so that I never received the dreaded and expected reproof. He was nearly interrupted by the entrance of an officer who delivered some message in a low tone, yet waiting to finish, he then rose, and excusing himself with courteous regrets, left, leaning on the officer's arm. My aunt finally, exhausted in his praises, made vigilant inquiries, yet learned nothing further than his arrival had been noticed the previous evening with several servants and a child. The next morning we left Baden.

During the next few months the peace of our country was destroyed, and these comparatively unimportant events were nearly forgotten in the troubles that followed. An engagement unfortunately occured in our valley, giving the enemy doubtful victory, and they still lingered about its outskirts. Though they bore my father no personal resentment, yet they so plundered his property and enlisted his service, that his estate was ruined. They demanded him as security from our village of its good will. This was dangerous in his unfeebled strength and years, but not this separation but the claims and threats of services abhorrent to his nature, broke his loyal heart. The grave closed over my father! Those dreadful weeks of grief, of terror, had borne me from the carelessness of girlhood, into the resolute, saddened woman!

The castle where I had taken refuge could not have withstood a surprise, and how our hearts beat when, one morning, cannonading began, yet finding our embankments firmer than we had feared. But it could not last; and even a skirmish commencing before the castle walls—for our own soldiery had not been distant—would probably decide the fate of the castle. Silently we sat—the stewardess, her daughter and I—not having the courage to speak out of despairing hearts. Yet by the shriek upon shriek which suddenly filled the air, our fears were startled into all their dreadful, their appalling reality.

We saw flames stream with lightning-like rapidity—the roof was fired—the doors fell with a crash. The combatants plunged in through the apartment. I heard the cry of "largess!" The gleaming bayonet at my breast one moment, and the next saw it hurled from the murderer's hand. I felt a protecting arm thrown about me, and remember the flashing sword which was wielded by an arm no longer powerless. It was my unknown friend.

Coming to consciousness again, two persons were near. Nothing but the inhabitants had been saved from the castle. Through the open window, the flames still wildly glared in the dark night.

I learned, with a thousand conflicting feelings, that it was the general who had saved me, and been immediately called back to command of his troops; and when, a half-hour afterward, the door opening, my preserver stood before me, the sudden flood of gratitude which filled my soul "at dangers past," overpowered me—even my thanks. He beckoned to be left, then, turning, called:

"Compose yourself, dear child; it's all over!"

"Still, how can I ever thank you?"

And here raising his hand, I would have pressed my lips to it; but throwing his arms about me, he said:

"What are you doing?" and kissed my forehead.

I clung to his arm—I knew its reliance. His voice broke the silence:

"Sophie, darling, that this moment were eternity! Yet I must go!"

"Away from me? Leave me? Oh, God! what will become of me?"

"Sophie, I am a true friend. I can never forget you; yet it is best so—"

I was weeping violently, still clinging to him.

"Farewell," he at last called in a suppressed voice. Tears filled his eyes. He was sincere, and, bending down, our lips met. I felt the past and present vanishing.

Bewildered, frightened, I sat alone. A purse of netted silk lay on my lap—how that circumstance is burned on my brain! Yes, filled with gold! How keenly I felt, then, the difference of fortune. Yet the present claimed my thoughts and energies; and, as all left the valley, I thought of my dear Muller, once my mother's lady's-maid.

My life passed quietly—monotonously—for months without interest. But was it not better than a passion which I thought to cast behind—a passion for a stranger, evidently a father, perhaps a husband! Yet sometimes after the labor of the day, when I turned over my treasure, never, never to be used, alluring fancies overstepping good judgment, sense, all, would take possession of me with dream-like, fascinating power. Yet, sharing a burden lightens the weary, wayworn; and, in "my good Muller's" wonder at refusing some offer of marriage, she had been confided in.

But the governess at Wiltenbach was joyous, as of old; for, with the rebounding elasticity of girlhood spirit, the sadness or trouble of the past seldom casts it shadow on my path; and the silk purse was seldom drawn from its hiding-place.

CHAPTER II.

"Yet e'en in yon sequestered spot,
May worthier conquest be thy lot,
Than yet thy life has known;
Conquest unbought by blood or harm,
That needs not foreign aid or arm—
A triumph all thy own."

The count was expected! All was confusion—almost intoxication of delight manifest in the swarm-peasantry! And, no longer distantly eyed among them as a stranger, I learned, now, the feeling that their master was not happy in his home, strongly influenced, redoubled each preparation of welcome.

Perhaps to compensate for that dark side in fortune, my little ones were charming in some fanciful dresses I had designed from flowers; and I delighted in my success, as I heard the childish voices declaim words of welcome I had written for my pets.

Banners, arches, garlands festooned, were in profusion, heightened, if possible, by the glorious sunshine of that morning. Our household corps looking finely, were headed by Muhlburgh; and, defiling past, they respectfully doffed their caps to the countess and children. Then reaching the gateway, a shout burst from the assembly of neighboring villagers, and old men of our own left behind, speeding the count's escort on their way.

The countess' beauty, now brilliant with diamonds, shone dazzling as the sunshine. Yet I did regret she should so continually tell her children how lovely they were.

A peal of bells soon announced his approach, and every ear was eagerly strained, 'mid the thunder of cannon and shouts, for the sound of carriage-wheels.

But, no! still drawing nearer, the tumult was heard. The count had left his carriage at the entrance of the village, and was standing quite surrounded in the courtyard below. They kissed his hands, his sword and dress, all with enthusiasm. Yet the countess wholly attracted my attention, as she looked on at these demonstrations with mystifying indifference. At length she called me, languidly, and, with the children, I soon stood in the courtyard.

The countess advanced, and now, for the first time, I saw him. I knew him. Merciful Father! I recognised instantly my preserver. And I here! in his own house!

Flight instantly was all my dismay could suggest, and turning—it was impossible. Madame Muhlburgh was near. To all inquiries, I was dumb; but faintly said: "I should be better out of the crowd."

Glancing back, as we slowly moved away, I saw the children clinging about his neck. He set them down, and their shrill voices were distinctly heard. At this, his surprise was evident, and my foolish heart bounded to have given him pleasure.

But, on reaching my room, my fears overpowered all. I shuddered at what Vahlan might believe, and every moment my fears became more painful. Finally, snatching a pen, I wrote nearly the following:—

"A remarkable succession of circumstances have always concealed your name; and in this ignorance, I accepted my present situation, came to your house—your children—without imagining Count Vahlan all honor, and my unknown protector were the same. I avoided meeting you, since only previous explanation could keep my blushes back. Still, the generosity which has always characterized you, leaves me to hope. Not feeling one doubt, you will judge as I am convinced I deserve. S. VON ALWIN."

I had hardly finished, when my disguised cupids sprang in to display their presents, with the message, too, from papa, that he wished to offer his thanks in person to the retiring poetess.

"Minnie," I said to the eldest, "I don't think I can go to the table; and where is papa, now?"

"In his cabinet, reading papers with Muhlburgh."

"Then be so good, darling, as to carry this note, containing my excuses."

And when I saw the little things hop joyfully away, I felt quite composed.

They come back finally, telling me their father had read my note, but had not spoken at first, only walked fast about the room; and had sent them away with the answer he would come himself, if not unpleasant to me.

My composure was gone instantly, and I sat vainly counting the minutes till his arrival. At last the count entered—I heard his foot-step in the hall, and, as he drew nearer, my lost calmness seemed to return.

He met me with self-possession—nay, even quietly; and if I had felt, then, the timidity and alarm I experienced when I saw him in the court, his manner would have immediately dispelled it. He spoke of his children, and then, referring to the accident which brought me there, said—

"I bless the day; and promise me that you will never, never leave me?" Then, with an earnest impulse, he clasped my hand in his.

I started and tried to read his thoughts. My love fain would have seen an answer in his face. But no, nothing but consideration for his children prompted his words. I chid my foolish heart for that moment's suspicion.

That night was passed in sleeplessness. I gave up the half-formed resolution of leaving him. I thought of the scene where he had saved my life, at the peril of his own, and shuddered as I imagined his scorn of my base ingratitude. Could I more nobly repay him than by consecrating my life to the care of his children? But to be constantly near one you love and know that you are but regarded with friendship! True, it was hard; yet I would steel my heart against the sorrow with time. The days went by; we met but seldom—never alone—and when I was with the children he passed them with a few words, never stopping. I saw he avoided me. Finally, one evening as he frequently sat in Muhlburgh's parlor, where now I seldom went—expecting to find him there, I took the purse he had left with me, so that there should be nothing between us that could bring me mortification, and entered the room. Speaking courgeously, I laid it in his hand. He started, [illegible]

"I will take it since you feel any annoyance."

"Not any, count, but my situation in your house is free of every expense. I need it no longer."

Here he glanced at me quickly, then at the purse. Call it weakness; yet I had given back another in its place. Was it not the only memento of that never-to-be-forgotten hour left me? A flitting crimson, scarce perceptible, colored his face during the moment's pause, when he said—

"Yet, think still, young lady, I have further care of you—are guardian of this property—your dowry, perhaps. Then you will receive it back?"

I had remained outwardly calm, silent; but then the quick flashing eye, as he hastily dropped my hand, startled me just in time to see him leaving the room.

I had heard something of Vahlan's unhappy marriage; now I learnt its history. His wife was a dependant in the house of haughty relations, and the evident harshness with which she was treated first interested him. Opposition to this interest coming from his own family speedily ripened the boyish fancy her superb loveliness had but commenced, to the most passionate love. With his marriage he risked family and friends!

His beautiful countess was received at court, and as years passed, developing her character, soon through flattery and intrigue his family's worst fears were realized. But only too late did the unhappy husband receive their sympathy and obtain pardon. His country's service unfortunately separated him at that time from his wife, otherwise the scandal which filled both court and city might have been avoided. But with the ruin of his domestic happiness, for her children's sake she must withdraw from court, and love for them still forbade any thought of a public separation. Yet even at Wiltenbach, since the count's departure, that happened soon after that interview last mentioned, what scenes did this house present! This was the life of great people then; but I was destined to see it nearer. I learnt, though when the count was away the countess was rarely noticed, she had now received, most singularly, invitations for the bridal festivities of the primier's son with the daughter of a rich old count. From the rank of the parties and the bride's family, great expectation prevailed in the country round; and when one day, the countess sent for me, I scarcely imagined I should make my entree in a brilliant concert-room that evening. But her ladyship must have a companion—what if her children did miss their friend; and every duty urged, every objection, were in vain. She was my mistress, and I went.

Strauss' unrivalled band won unlimited applause, and though entertained, yet I was more delighted to find myself once back with my little ones again.

Countess Vahlan, even gayer than usual, praising every one and everything, declared I must accompany her on the morrow for the dinner and ball following, yet with a release from the solemn etiquette of a pompous state dinner. Her ladyship's own maid was sent to dress me, bringing flowers, laces, and appropriate ornaments. It was a brilliant assembly, graced by fair women. Celebrated beauties at court rose in a new sphere with no less radiance. Every feeling of loneliness vanished as I received politness from all, which lustre I felt with joy was shed on me, even as a friend of that one name. Yet the scene itself roused a thousand painful memories, and, like the ghost of them I saw near me, with brother officers from a regiment stationed shortly distant, an old acquaintance—no other than the lieutenant o-

the Baden Baths. Unfortunately the recognition was mutual, and he unchanged, as I found after the ordinary greetings were passed.

"Well, really, Madamoiselle, I am convinced fortune's favors are often those most unexpected!" he observed, in a loud voice, as he again sought me for the dance, and not this time in vain.

I was silent.

"Yes, the interest I conceived for you in that jolly little misunderstanding has steadily flamed, fed meantime by flying reports; but begad, how does the countess take this last phase?"

He paused; the composed expression of my face was evidently unexpected. But, nothing daunted, he continued in his usual felicitous manner, joked on about "my Knight Errant," as he chose to call the count, and my position in his house also, most offensively.

And as my thoughts grew wilder, more unmanageable, the countess's carriage by chance was announced. Once seated, and collecting myself for a moving appeal, I was surprised by her saying she would find another friend for the masquerade ball—the grand closing festivity. Had she heard the evening's conversation? No, I was mistaken. She sent for the overdress I had worn, for her friend the next evening. I took it, and, as the carriage was waiting, approached, with the purpose of assisting a young lady who stood leaning against a pillar of the alcove in twilight holding a mask. The dress dropped from my hands. It was the very face of that miniature I had once taken for the count's!

"What are you doing, Madamoiselle Alwin?" the countess loudly called, then approaching, herself laughingly helped on with the pelisse, which being a lady's, was accordingly too small.

CHAPTER III.

I hastened from the room—horror and contempt mingling principally in every thought of them. But another, that he, my noble Vahlan, should suffer in this great wrong was overwhelming! His gift, the net purse, lay on my lap as I sat brooding and unoccupied except with undefined fears. But soon they took form. I heard a loud outcry of voices. I saw that a carriage stood in the gateway by the glimmering of torches held by a few persons. Then quick steps sounded in the ante-room, and the door opening, there appeared the countess's maid's pale, frightened face.

"For God's sake, quick, my young lady!" she called hoarsely, "the count's below." And seizing my hand she hurried me down the staircase, leaving me at the door of his dressing-room.

I went in. There was his valet, and the surgeon bending over the couch where he lay still conscious. As he saw me, he stretched out his hand to take mine, begging my pardon for this fright.

His tones of voice gave me no calmness now, and as my hands trembled so in his he looked up earnestly at me. I took heart—what could such trembling hands do for him?—and calmed myself with such good effect that the surgeon on leaving entrusted me with all prescriptions.

Vahlan overheard. His face grew scarlet.

"No, doctor, that I'll not allow; the young lady needs quiet now."

"But, count, you must avoid agitation," interposed the doctor.

Here Muhlburgh came in, and we were soon left. Then I heard him relating the circumstances to his old friend. Yet previously, as his glance had fallen for a moment on the countess's maid who had even followed me in, a suspicion of the truth flashed into my mind.

He said he had turned toward the castle on meeting the countess and learned then she was accompanied by Madamoiselle Alwin. Her valet had procured him a mantle and mask, and thus disguised, he entered the arena of maskers. He soon observed his wife, and determining the young lady with her was not the governess of his children, had followed them. It was very evident from the conversation of two masks behind, he was not alone in suspicion of his wife's companion.

On their entering a side room, he followed also. The stranger laid aside his mask. Vahlan then recognized a man he had long known as the enemy of his honor, and, rushing forward, confronted the guilty pair.

The man rose, tore off his woman's dress, and, adjourning to a grove in the rear of the castle, had received a thrust which would ever memoralize this night. Vahlan was wounded in the side. His fever increased during the recital, and his agitation was so violent at recurrence of past events that delirium soon followed. Days passed, moments of delirium, when I listened for his low words with rapture, and heard feelings now poured out I had never dared confess to my own heart. If never before, I must have loved him then. She returned—she whose name even now I scarce can write—and we had concealed it from him. But the second day after her return, as he rested apparently calm, her maid, though never having ventured in since that first night, came and beckoned me. From the spiteful manner with which the jade proceeded me, I had determined to speak to her mistress. As I entered she sat on a sofa, and the purse Vahlan had given me lay before her.

"You may well turn pale, madame!" she sneered, "at such evidence of your guilt."

"Guilt!" I ejaculated, rousing myself here to speak, "what can *you* term guilt?"

"I? wretched woman!" and, screaming with passion, she snatched the purse, tossing it at my feet, and the torrent of invective which followed was frightful on woman's lips.

"It is a pity in acting such perfection should fail from the mere peep behind the curtain; such a nice little plot too, I'm bound to say I should applaud, if the game had been secured." Then dropping sarcasm, which is a keen weapon to the sensitive, she informed me I must leave her house, and that, too, in twenty-four hours. I waited no longer, but noiselessly, like one stunned by a heavy blow, crept away, while her voice still echoed after me.

If I remember, it was about twilight, the maid came for the children—little innocents! They had been clinging with their mute sympathy for the few last hours about me. Theirs were but childish outbursts of grief; still their loving natures were deeply wounded, and refused comfort. The countess directed their little night-dresses, beds, playthings, books, all should be taken. Yet on all I looked tearless, unmoved. Yes, even with unmoved face when my darlings kissed my lips and stretched their little hands back for me.

The next strain I recall, on my poor, pent-up heart, was, Muhlburgh's giving me news of the count. After different inquiries for me, which had been passed along, his valet gave some answer that the count immediately seized on. His suspicions excited, the poor fellow was then too simple to elude him, and the violent agitation following his master's learning it, deprived him of consciousness. I saw what Muhlburgh feared; what he endeavored still to hide, and cried out in my desolation—

"I have no one on earth. What will become of me?"

"Not so; go back to the Mullers, my dear young lady—Vahlan still lives. Believe me, there are happier days in store." But speaking hopelessly himself, he was unable to give comfort.

In the morning, his wife came to make preparations for my departure. I had never spoken of the count—never been to his room since I was called from it by the maid. So I was ignorant of all that had happened since I saw Muhlburgh last. After perhaps an hour's waiting, Muhlburgh appeared, greatly agitated, but said, with evident control—

"Will you not go at once? The carriage waits below."

I looked at them passively. Oh, God! how little prepared for what he was to add!

"Otherwise you remain only to witness earth's saddest sight! They but wait the arrival of priests to administer the last sacrament."

Yes, it was a reality, to have it said so firmly, so clearly; yet now both husband and wife were weeping, and it was I who broke the silence.

"Then let me stay! Should any one leave this house while its master lies dying?"

Mulburgh assented; for, putting my arm with feeling in his, he supported me in fact to the drawing-room, passing down the principal staircase, lined with the white, terrified servants, each holding a wax-taper that their tremblings almost might have extinguished! I remember also, even now, how, after we entered, he pointed to eager, tearful faces in the court. Here were the count's friends and family. The priests and choristers had proceeded to the sick man's room, and, as the sudden ringing of bells from his cabinet broke on the air, the whole assembly sank on their knees, and hands were crossed in silent prayer! I must have fainted, for, as all rose, I lay forward on my face. Then Muhlburgh, with several of the upper servants the countess's ban had not frightened from me, raised and placed me in the carriage that still waited.

During the weeks that then passed in my life's blank, yet suffering existence, "my good Muller" had been constantly in receipt of cordials and money from Wiltenbach, and I was gradually becoming myself again, when Muhlburgh came. That he should not recognize me in my changed health till I extended a hand in welcome, I think gave me pleasure.

"My dear young lady, you have suffered so much already, how can you pardon my sad office?"

His words thrilled my shuddering frame; yet what could I learn worse than that already known? And glancing at the paper he held I ejaculated—for I knew the count had added a codicil in my favor in his last illness—

"His will?"

"No; a letter."

"Oh, give it to me quick! But yet impossible! He would not have written that last day he was unconscious."

"What, mademoiselle? You are certainly in some singular error! Vahlan is totally recovered, and sends me ——"

"Alive! The count lives!" I gasped, and my sudden joy was too much. I fainted. When, after a little time, I was able to listen, he continued, though with caution:

"Late that day he roused suddenly from his apparently dying condition. All thought his fast ebbing life then received its strength from a profound sleep which strangely resembled death; yet he unaccountably revived. And as he grew better, his family made arrangements with the countess for an entire separation, endeavoring to prevent an interview fraught with so much pain and agitation. But he saw her once. The children are now, Madame, with his sister, who remains entirely with the count."

That Muhlburgh paused here, strangely embarrassed, struck me with alarm, and I hastened to urge his continuing.

"May I hope to find you no less composed in what so nearly concerns your future?"

I nodded an assent.

"The scandal of the count's separation fell on the guilty; but that no suspicion may rest on his present course, he will hesitate at no sacrifice."

"I understand!" I exclaimed, as I rose. "Vahlan need not fear; he shall never meet me."

"Yet do you guess what it cost him?" he said, following me to a window where I had turned away.

"Enough, sir! Trouble yourself no farther, Muhlburgh, I say farewell! for from this time I see no one from that house."

He left, while every feeling of bitterness remorselessly tortured my heart. Yes, even how I longed again for that poor comfort, to mourn him—anything preferable to this cold separation! With this thought I remembered his letter, still lying with its seal unbroken, and shuddered at its probable indifference. Yet how different! passion and purity breathed throughout, and characterized a love he described as won from the first, yet unacknowledged even to himself, till danger, threatening me, betrayed its depths. But when he related his finding me again in his own house, I felt once more the combat, the martyrdom in which love had still conquered—for had it not yielded to manliness, honor? With prayers that every blessing might be showered on me, and in happiness I should forget him, he added, "but in misfortune, which ever silences the world, you shall still find a strong heart."

My pride was gone; every mortification forgotten. He loved me! I wrote, and Muhlburgh, from boyhood his friend and confidant, returned for the conversation my haughty spirit at first had rejected.

The battle was nearly won, even in those hours we sat in Madame Muller's little parlor. Life had other aims, I saw. I had been loved—loved as few wives seldom are! That was in the past. My duty was now to give him up without bitterness, without reproachful coldness.

CHAPTER IV.

Nearly six years have passed since I, a young, inexperienced girl of seventeen, first visited Baden. The years, I find, that have so changed the joyous frankness of a sunny, open nature, to sedate womanhood, have not been idle here. The quiet valley, with its woodland shade of lindens—a former retreat—is now thrown into a promenade, and the last trace of luxuriant nature vanished. But with reverence will I bow to the nymph of these waters, since my adopted mother, Madame Littens, imposes so much.

But before proceeding further, dear reader, I will hasten to introduce with some pride my adopted parents. The Littens are old, worthy citizens of Hamburg, that had just lost their child, an only daughter, when by chance we met. They themselves childless, and lonely in life, were interested, not alone in my friendlessness, but from my history. With them I left my country, and, on renouncing it, became heiress to all their wealth. Yes, *then* it was with heavy heart I loosed the ties that bound me to a land where I had suffered all—where I had loved! Yet it was better so! The bitterness I had thought subdued, outlived, even now comes back! And can I ever, ever learn—to forget? But now it is impossible to say *when*—weeks, months, may pass before we turn our faces again toward Hamburg. The air of my fatherland, that I draw in with wearied spirit, seems to bear them new life, and it scarce needs persuasion on my part to remain my lifetime here. Yet in my heart lingers that one sentence, "Homeward bound, grateful to many of earth's mariners!".

* * * * * *

Is it possible that last sentence was penned by *me*, this morning, not twelve hours ago? But perchance some reader who has followed a history, dating its happiness or unhappiness from Baden Baths so far, si entitled to immediate release.

To-day, as I strolled through the gardens, late for morning promenade, the past was brighter—more vividly than usual present with me. And thus wrapt in "a world of my own," I hardly perceived a stranger occupied a place I had destined as the limit of my walk. And as I drew near, a fancied resemblance grew momentarily stronger! I remained rooted, without power to tear myself from the spot, when, fancy my surprise! The face turned. It was really Count Vahlan!

With one stride, it seemed, he was at my side, and after a moment's hesitation—for he perceived my wish to fly—he exclaimed:

"You were escaping—would have gone, had I not seen you!"

"Yes."

"But Sophie, we have not met for a long time; how have the years passed with you?"

"Well, count. I am cared for——"

"Married!" he exclaimed quickly, while his face I thought, grew a shade paler.

"No; with friends," and at his questioning glance I described my parents, the reasons of the present journey, and acquainted him with every little change or circumstance. Meanwhile he had brought me back to his seat, placing himself beside me; and though he addressed me heartily, with the freedom of an old friend, yet I did not trust myself to meet his glance! Noticing then for the first time the crape worn on his hat, I said:

"You are in mourning, Count Vahlan?"

The surprise of his reply affected me much when he assented; remarking, "The countess is dead," with the calm gravity which accompanies deep feeling.

Perceiving now hours had flown unnoticed, for it was six, the hour when my parents took their evening stroll, I sprang up; he would accompany me.

I felt some awe, as I thought of the countess's early death, and her extreme beauty; but more as he disclosed, though with indulgence, how it had been the result of a reckless life. Her physician had commanded quiet, through which, though dangerously injured by being thrown in the chaise—for she was a wild rider—he still hoped to save her. But a restlessness, in accordance with all, shortened her career, though not her suffering; all hopes of recovery were speedily lost. 'Twas then it seemed impossible to leave her among unfeeling relatives, and he had brought her to Wiltenbach. In his own words: "Through God's mercy, on her death-bed she repented of her past life, and died peacefully in my arms."

We had now reached the entrance to the avenue, where we met Madame Libbens, with some gentlemen who were often at our house. I introduced the count, and one of the gentlemen remarked jokingly upon my absence,

"We easily decided madamoiselle, on her mother's missing her, was again on a pilgrimage."

"Pilgrimage?" amazingly inquired the count, and I was excessively annoyed that he should hear it. But not perceiving it, the stranger continued with business-like precision—

"Yes, it is made once surely each day, always alone, to a seat at the end of the avenue, and the same one at the left below; twice I think I have discovered tears in the young lady's eyes."

Here my mother who knew a part of my history, sought to turn the conversation, by inviting Count Valhan to our house, which he accepted.

Yet I felt he had understood but too well the blunder, and my face grew scarlet. He walked slowly, silent, rather lingering behind till as our party were sufficiently out of hearing, stopped, turned suddenly, exclaiming—

"Sophie! I now know you have not wholly forgotten old times; and why did you leave me years without one word?"

"Could I do otherwise and respect your commands, count, which in reality *meant* my existence should be a blank to you?"

"You have accomplished it, keeping your promise all well."

"My peace, if not my happiness was secure, and why should I disturb another's dearer to me than life?"

"Oh, Sophie! then you love me still!"

"Could you doubt it?"

"Yes, during those years of trial I was sometimes tempted to feel a doubt of love beyond the human; but now, Sophie, will you be mine?"

"Yours only, for eternity!" I murmured.

In that moment of joy all sorrows, griefs, were of the past. Slowly leaning on his arm we rejoined our party, and my rapid excuses immediately brought my mother's quick penetrating eye upon me, and Papa Litten's evident cordiality to the count betrayed he too guessed a part of what had passed between us. Thoughts of my happiness too, I perceived with joy, overcame any selfish feeling in losing me. What a happy evening was this! Kneeling as before *own loved* parents did my noble Vahlan receive my hand from theirs! We were their children; indeed the count will now urge their carrying out the long-discussed plan of settling in my fatherland.

I shall see my lovely angels again! they will be mine again by the blessed rite, to consecrate my life, my strength to their and to their father's happiness! All sorrows, all sacrifices forgotten, *he is mine!* And a heavenly-bright future smiles towards me!

Hurry and Cunning are the two apprentices of Dispatch and Skill; but neither of them ever learn their master's trade.

Written for the Banner of Light.

THE WRECKING OF THE VANDERBILT.

BY LITA H. BARNEY.

Are we perishing here? Are we perishing here?
In sight of the friends whom we all love so dear?
Oh, shrieking for mercy! Oh, wails of despair!
Are ye all the echoes that bend to our prayer?
Oh, mariner, say, is no hope to be found—
No joy and no safety come to the rock-bound?
Will the rage of the tempest, the war of the sea
Ne'er calm itself, bringing a succor to me?
Oh, waves of old Ocean, that keep us from home,
Must ye be our portion, engulfed in your foam?
Instead of the green, grassy knoll of our dreams,
Where we thought to lie, charmed by the murmuring streams,
Must we softly recline in thy billowy swells,
And sleep by the chime of thy tiny foam-bells?
Instead of bright meadows, enchanting to view,
Must we tread thy dark caverns, and tenant them, too;
And, leaving the moss-bank that pillowed our head,
Seek out from thy treasures the sea-coral bed,
Where the shark, and the mullet, and gold-fish there roam,
And bring us glad welcome to visit their home?

If thus we are destined, oh summons, come soon,
Give to us our place, and assign us our doom;
Oh, proud lab'ring vessel, contend ye no more
With elements raging, thy freight to devour,
By Steam-king forsaken when most in thy need,
Thy closing scene hastens, thy trust wherefore heed?
Full well hast thou struggled to rescue thy friends,
The farce is played out, and in tragedy ends.
Thy poor gaping sides can no longer restrain
The storm's direful strength, or their treasures retain;
And when we have lost in the closely-fought race,
'Tis best to submit, o'en in sorrow, with grace.
Together from port we have sailed on our way,
Together have pictured our joy's coming day,
Together we've glided o'er sunshiny deep,
Together we've toiled, and together we'll sleep.

But no; though our forms all forgotten recline,
Thy own stalwart beams, and our bones, in the brine,
Although they may sink 'neath decay's crumbling power,
The Architect lives, and he lives to restore.
Ye waves, all exultant in horrible glee,
The BODY is yours, but the spirit is free,
Ye may bend THAT, or break it, or chain to your will,
The soul is triumphant and animate still!
And he, oh fair vessel, who, after his heart,
Laid all thy stout timbers with consummate art,
Another shall rear, that henceforth in its pride,
Victorious Ocean shall grandly outride,
And proclaim to the world, though the tempests may rave,
Man's will shall yet conquer the wind and the wave!

* * * * * * * *

Hark, hark, what glad sound! Ah! our voice is too weak,
Oh, Parent of good, all thy praises to speak!
High over the sound of the breakers that raved,
Comes the cry, lip to lip, "we are saved, we are saved!"
The life-boat is launched on the line to the shore,
The sea's heavy booming can fret us no more,
And in the deep silence of every breast,
Each heart peals full anthem for long-despaired rest
To him, who in bounty hath given to our kind,
The WILL that shall conquer the wave and the wind!

PROVIDENCE, January 7, 1859.

Written for the Banner of Light.

KATE STRATTON;

OR,

BORN FOR AN OLD MAID.

BY WILLIE F. WILLEY.

All Littleton declared with one exception, (my own humble self,) that Kate Stratton was "born for an old maid." To be sure, the opinion of some five or six hundred persons, in a thriving settlement like ours, ought to have been regarded as of infinite importance, compared to that of a minority, composed of a single individual.

People thought it strange that a plain looking and prudish girl like Neighbor Stratton's eldest daughter, should find in the person of William Willey so brave a champion and defender. They could not possibly accuse me of any degree of self-interest in the matter, for Kate Stratton and I, although living scarce more than a mile apart, were, at the time of the commencement of my story, but little more than strangers; while with her two younger sisters, who were accounted the belles of the village, I had carried on for some time past, a most desperate flirtation.

Farmer Stratton was a man in easy circumstances, though far from being wealthy in the general acceptation of the term. He had been from early youth a hard-working man, and was not ashamed to own that he earned his bread solely by the labor of his hands and the sweat of his brow. His large family of children, consisting of three boys and three girls, he intended to have brought up after his own ideas of industry and morality; but as years of better fortune began to dawn upon them, Mrs. Stratton began to entertain lofty ideas that were hardly consistent with her former humble position in life, and which, at last, resulted in her assumption of the entire reins of government, in regard to the management of her children and all in-door affairs, to the total exclusion of Mr. Stratton, whose authority in domestic matters soon dwindled into insignificance.

Very different was the girlhood of Emma and Laura Stratton from that of their elder sister Kate. While the latter toiled with her needle every moment she could snatch from school, to keep her younger brothers and sisters neatly and comfortably clothed, her more beautiful faced sisters found only time to sing and play upon the piano, and write billet-doux to their numerous beaux. What Mrs. Stratton would have condemned in Kate, was not only tolerated, but sanctioned, upon the part of Emma and Laura. The secret of this maternal partiality might have been easily divined, had people been disposed to view the matter in its proper light. Emma and Laura, whose respective ages were twenty and twenty-one years, were unluckily endowed with an unusually large share of what the world terms physical beauty. They were blonde in the strictest sense of the word, possessing roseate complexions and curly hair of a delicate golden color, and eyes whose blue seemed the reflection of heaven's own azure. In form and features they were so nearly the counterpart of one another, as to be often taken, by strangers, for twins.

Kate, the senior of Laura, by some three years, was what people would, generally speaking, call an exceedingly plain girl. At least, so thought all Littleton, and so thought I, too, at first sight, before my eyes were clearly opened to the severe trials and difficulties under which she labored, and the keen insults and injuries which she daily suffered at the hands of her mother and younger sisters. The pale olive complexion of Kate Stratton was rarely if ever enlivened by even the faintest tinge of crimson. Her hair of a dark brown color was perfectly straight, and was parted smoothly upon a brow, which if not white and marble-like as the poets have it, was neverless high and expansive, and betokened no slight degree of intellect. Not a wave or ripple was discernable in the mass of dusky hair that was gathered in a single coil at the back of her small but well-shaped head. The eyes of Kate Stratton were by daylight of greyish cast, although when seen by the faint light of evening they seemed to have been suddenly dyed a hazel color, and were at times strangely lustrous.

Kate Stratton's profile inclined more towards the Roman type than the Grecian, for her features, though somewhat boldly cut, were nevertheless irregular. Neither would a sculptor have chosen her form for a model, since in stature Kate Stratton was a little below the medium height, and altogether too thin to realize an artist's idea of beauty and symmetry.

So much for the external description of the three sisters. In the qualities of the mind and heart, the contrast was equally a striking one. Emma and Laura, with a consciousness of their own superior personal charms, were exacting and tyrannical, while Kate, on the contrary, was as gentle and kind-hearted as her sisters were cold and unfeeling.

My acquaintance with the Strattons had not been one of long standing, as it was only some six or eight months previous to the time of the opening of our story, that I came to Littleton to make my home with my mother, who, by the death of her husband, was left desolate and alone. My father, Charles Willey, was for many years a justice of the peace, in Massachusetts, and a native and resident of Boston. Ill health at last compelled him to resign an office which he had so honorably and faithfully filled for nearly a quarter of a century. Having accidentally stumbled upon the charming village of Littleton while making a summer tour through his own native State, my father, pleased with the seclusion and picturesque scenery of the place, determined to fix upon this town as his future residence. In this instance, as in many others, fortune seemed to favor my father. A fine mansion house with highly cultivated grounds, and the property of the heirs of Jacob Littleton, the original settler of the town, was up for sale. My mother's pleasure was ever that of her husband, and as my father was evidently delighted with the quaint architecture of the old mansion house, and its beautiful and tastefully arranged grounds, purchase of the aforementioned estate was immediately made by him, and thither his wife and he at once removed. This happened just at the time of my entering college, and as the prospect of a home in the country was anything but a pleasant piece of contemplation for a boy who had been born and brought up in the city, I must confess that I looked upon college walls as a kind of blest refuge and shelter from rural ills.

Upon the expiration of my collegiate term, some five years after, I was, owing to my father's influence, specially admitted to the bar, as a lawyer. I had, however, hardly commenced practice, in company with an old friend of my father's, when I received the sudden and astounding intelligence of my beloved father's death! As quick as cars and coach would take me I hastened home, and learned from the lips of my afflicted mother that it was my father's dying request that I should give up practicing law in the city, and take up my residence with my only surviving parent, until the time of her death.

Such a sacrifice was no easy thing for a young and ambitious man to make, who was just entering upon the world's great and ever-changing arena. But duty demanded, and young and wayward as I had always been, I would sooner have cut off my right hand, than have denied my beloved father his last request, and by so doing, leave my idolized and bereaved mother to worry out the remaining years of her existence, in the solitude of a country village, with no one to look to for comfort and sympathy in this her great misfortune, but strangers, whose feelings and interests were as far removed from those of her own heart, as Greenland is distant from the charming shores of *la belle* France or Southern Italy. And thus it was that I came to make Littleton my place of residence. The large property of which my father, while living, was the possessor, would, at the death of his wife, by the right of inheritance, fall entirely to his son and only child.

My mother, who had nought left to love and live for besides her boy, was anxious to share with me the liberal income which my father had settled upon her. I thanked her for that generosity which was ever so noble a characteristic of her worshiping nature, at the same time declining the bounty and support, which my great pride of heart would not permit me to accept.

I accordingly opened a small law office, (a thing of which the little village of Littleton was quite destitute,) with the determination of persevering in a profession to which my taste and will had ever inclined. At first my clients were but few and far between, like angel visitants; but my father's previous reputation, and the novelty of having an attorney in so small a place, soon made William Willey famous, not only in Littleton, but throughout the neighboring towns, so that before I had been six months a resident of Littleton, I found myself doing a tolerably good business, and the recipient of a fair share of practise, that was daily on the increase.

The son of an ex-judge, not made void of those natural elements of success—youth and good looks, and whose every act and movement betokened his city extraction, could not fail to be lionized in a quiet country town, where gossip and lecture going seem to be the chief amusements of the day and night. Very few of my college vacations had been spent in Littleton previous to my father's decease; for, as luck would have it, I generally managed to have some intimate class-mate or chum, who always insisted upon transporting me to his own pleasant home, where, with every species of existing amusements in the known world, we managed to pass away a month's time most agreeably.

What little time, however, I spent at home during my five years's school-term, was usually so much occupied with the society of old friends, who generally seized that opportunity of visiting my parents in their country home, that I had really little or no chance of forming an acquaintance with the several families living in Littleton.

But, now that I had located myself in their midst for an indefinite term of years, I began to look about me for companions, whose habits and tastes, if not exactly like my own, would in some measure assimilate with them.

The Misses Emma and Laura Stratton were among the first young ladies in the place, to whom I received the honor of an introduction. Their fresh and pleasing style of beauty charmed me at first sight, and I inwardly congratulated myself upon the great degree of pleasure which the society of two simple and bewitching rustic belles would afford a village attorney, whom time and distance quite shut out and isolated from the more popular and fashionable amusements of the city.

My mother, who, during her season of mourning, received but little company, seemed highly gratified, when I related to her the circumstance of my introduction to the lovely daughters of Farmer Stratton. Her own acquaintance with them had not been a very lengthy one, for, during the first three years of her residence in Littleton, they were absent at boarding-school at a town some fifty miles distant.

When they returned home, finished ladies, as their dmiring mamma fully believed, they were regarded by their less fortunate female associates, as wonders, together with no slight mixture of envy and jealousy. From that hour Emma and Laura made Littleton their queendom—her youthful sons their warmest and most devoted subjects.

During the two years that preceded the ex-judge's death, the sisters Stratton and my mother had interchanged calls as often as three or four times a year; and in the slight knowledge which they had gained of one another's characters, by their rare and unfrequent meetings, the hearts of all three ladies were equally prepossessed in each other's favor. If not really twins in years, Emma and Laura Stratton were evidently twins and co-workers in everything that pertained to artifice and cunning. All of a sudden, their visits to the mansion of my late father increased perceptibly, and their efforts towards condolence upon the part of my bereaved parent, and their apparently deep anxiety in regard to her health and comfort, quite touched the sensitive heart of my mother, and excited a feeling of gratitude and friendship in her breast, in which I myself was for a time a sharer.

Two or three evenings of each week were now spent by me at the comfortable and cheerful farmhouse of neighbor Stratton. Emma and Laura equally occupied my attention, and so thoroughly proficient had each become in the art of pleasing and captivating, that little or no room for preference was left me between the two. It was easy for me to perceive that my visits at the house of Mr. Stratton (who was a man of genuine hospitality and sincerity of heart,) were a source of infinite pleasure to his wife, whose general manner, strange to say, had been exceeding repulsive to my feelings, from the moment of our first interview. There was an insinuating and deceitful air about the woman, that made me always suspicious as to the nature and truth of her professed friendship; in short, hers was a soul upon which the heart of innocence and faith might not with safety cast its anchor.

The far from pleasant impression which the mother of Emma and Laura Stratton made upon my heart, seemed to increase and strengthen daily with our acquaintance. When I related the circumstance to my beloved mother, she accused me of prejudice, and chided me for the little confidence I was disposed to repose in the other sex. I bore her kind rebuke meekly, but felt myself in no degree dissuaded of the strange ideas which had so singularly found lodgment in my brain.

I had known Emma and Laura for at least three months, before I became aware of the fact that they were blessed in the possession of a sister older than themselves. In the frequency of my calls upon them, I had often heard both mention the name of Kate, but, from the strangely indifferent and unfeeling manner in which they always spoke of her, I judged that said Kate was either a domestic, or some poor maiden aunt, who was totally dependant upon their bounty for an existence.

It was by mere accident, that I learned from one of the villagers, that farmer Stratton had another daughter besides the two which I had seen, and whose Christian name was Kate. Kate Stratton! it was a saucy sounding name, and, with the bearer of it, I associated a shrewish, headstrong woman, like Shakspeare's Catharine in the play of Catharine and Petruchio. I instituted inquiries among the good people of Littleton, about this mysterious personage, whom my eyes had as yet never been permitted to look upon, but received but one answer from the majority of them, that Kate Stratton was a plain-looking and reserved girl of about twenty-four, who was without doubt "born for an old maid."

Being, however, a person who was inclined to be a little skeptical in regard to the opinions of others, and disposed to credit only what came under the actual observation of my own senses, I determined to withhold my opinion until an opportunity of judging for myself was granted me. Once or twice after this, I ventured to broach the subject of Kate's near relationship, when in the presence of Mrs. Stratton and her pet daughters. I saw the nervous glances which passed from one to another, and noticed their conjoined efforts to change the topic of conversation.

I made no further allusion to the subject in question at that time, but said mentally to myself: all is not right with the Strattons. Here is food for investigation, and hang me for no lawyer, if before many weeks I don't succeed in sifting this matter thoroughly to the bottom.

* * * * * * * *

Fortune favored sooner than I had anticipated. A new minister was to be installed as pastor over the single church which our village then boasted. Of course the knowledge of such an affair created a great sensation among the town's people. In short, all Littleton was on the *qui vive* to behold this young and fortunate disciple of Christ.

The night for his ordination arrived. The inhabitants of Littleton turned out *en masse*, and, accompanied by my mother, I made one of the large crowd that thronged the little village church. Curiosity to catch a glimpse at the person of the young candidate, was evidently widely afloat among the young people of the place; and, conspicuous in the front pew of the broad aisle, sat Mrs. Stratton, with her two daughters, Emma and Laura, looking like a pair of Hebes, in all the splendor of their costly silks and jaunty bonnets.

As I ran my eye hastily over that varied congregation, I turned to my mother, and asked her if Kate Stratton was present. She replied in the affirmative, and directed my attention to a side pew, where a plainly-dressed, and modest, dark-complexioned girl was sitting with farmer Stratton and his three boys.

"Can it be possible," I said, half audibly, "that a mother could find it in her heart to exclude her first-born from the society of herself and more beautiful daughters?"

"I am told, Willie, that she is very fastidious and prudish in her tastes, and that this isolation from all company upon the part of Kate Stratton, is a matter of choice, rather than necessity. But hush! here comes the new minister!" said my mother, as a perceptible flutter ran through the entire house.

With slow and stately step the young pastor walked up the aisle, and from thence ascended into the pulpit. As he turned his face full upon the expectant audience, it was with difficulty that I could repress the exclamation of surprise that started to my lips, as I beheld in the person of the pale and interesting divine before me my young collegiate friend, Ralph Walters, of Boston. As the exercises of installation progressed, I could not but look with admiration upon a man, whose intellectual endowments I knew to be so vastly superior to the older divines and Christian associates by whom he was surrounded.

Something within my own heart seemed to say, there is at least one in this congregation, who will properly appreciate this talented youth, and that is Kate Stratton; for, during the entire exercises, I had closely scrutinized her plain, but strangely expressive countenance, as, unconscious of my deep gaze, she sat with her dark and lustrous eyes fixed firmly upon the pale face of the young divine. I noted the breathless attention with which she listened to every word that fell from his thin lips, while her mother and more fashionable sisters were buzzing like bees about persons and things around them, having appeased their curiosity shortly after Mr. Walters' first appearance in the pulpit.

The exercises at the church fairly over, I hastened to the foot of the altar to greet my friend, whom I had not seen for more than two years. The joy of our meeting can only be imagined by those who, after long months and years of separation, find themselves suddenly, and almost magically, brought face to face with one who had shared with them the varied pleasures and toils of college or school life. Such re-unions are as grateful and refreshing to the hearts of men, as is the sight of an oasis to the weary feet and parched lips of the traveler in the sandy desert.

After a brief introduction to my mother, I proposed that my friend should become the guest of my mother and self for a few weeks, as the parsonage was undergoing a state of thorough repairs. Ralph Walters demurred a little, at first, in regard to the acceptance of my invitation; but the urgent entreaties of my beloved parent, together with my own, soon banished all scruples of delicacy which he felt in the matter, and ended by our bearing him to our home, a most submissive, and, by no means, reluctant prisoner.

The young pastor had been with us about a fortnight, when I suggested to my indulgent mother the propriety of giving a levee, or party, to the residents Littleton, for the purpose of introducing our guest to his parishioners, among whom he had formed, as yet, but few acquaintances, and those, for the most part, gentlemen.

As I had expected, my mother at once acquiesced with my wishes, and a general invitation was accordingly extended to young and old, rich and poor, grave and gay, thoroughout our little village.

For reasons best known to myself, I determined to become the bearer of the invitation (which, according to true etiquette, was given in my mother's name,) to the Stratton family. In doing so, I laid a particular stress upon the name of Miss Kate Stratton, which doubtless revealed to the senses of Mrs. Stratton and her favorite daughters the fact that I was no longer ignorant of such a person's existence in Littleton.

Kate, as usual, was not visible at the time; but, with many thanks from Emma and Laura, and as many compliments from Mrs Stratton to my mother, I left their house, promising to call for the ladies upon the proscribed evening, about a week hence.

The evening of our proposed party at last arrived. The hospitality of the widow of ex Judge Willey had been eulogized and commented upon the whole town over, until every one was fairly infected with the spirit of anticipation. Agreeable to promise, I presented myself at an early hour at the door of farmer Stratton. The wife of the latter received me with exceeding warmth of manner, and a few minutes later I was joined in the parlor by the sisters Emma and Laura, who were arrayed in bright plaid silks, which were doubtless new for the occasion. Upon their entrance, their beautiful faces were perfectly wreathed in smiles; but, upon my inquiry after Kate, they were at once dispelled, giving place to frowns, which, if more natural to them, were not half as becoming to their handsome features.

Observing the annoyance of her darling daughters, Mrs. Stratton attempted to say, by way of apology, that Kate, who had been quite busy all the afternoon in getting her brothers and sisters ready, was terribly tired, and preferred remaining at home as company for her father, who had sprained his ankle the day previous, and was suffering from lameness in consequence thereof.

I read in the faces of the young ladies, a look of heartfelt relief; but stranger as I was to Kate, I had no idea of being daunted in my determination to see and speak with her.

In a playful manner, whose meaning was far deeper than my words betrayed, I turned to Emma, and said—

"You will oblige me by presenting my compliments to your sister, and informing her that I can receive no excuse for her absence from our little party this evening, unless it comes from her lips personally."

Here was something for which that artful trio were wholly unprepared; and so, after a few moment's hesitation, Emma withdrew to deliver my message to her elder sister.

Five minutes after, Kate entered the parlor alone, (for Emma, ashamed at the contrast in their dress, had lagged behind,) with a face suffused with blushes, which made her look really handsome in my eyes at that moment, even in her calico morning-dress. She would have apologized, but was too much affected by my presence to do so; and, in order to relieve her of the temporary embarrassment under which she labored, I advanced towards her, and, without waiting for an introduction, said, at the same time holding out my hand—

"I am happy, very happy, to meet a lady whom I have long known by reputation, but whom, until the present moment, I have never had the pleasure of beholding. May I hope, Miss Stratton, that you will favor my mother and self with your company this evening?" I asked, still retaining the hand which my companion had extended to meet that of mine own, and looking earnestly down into the depths of her hazel eyes.

For a second Kate Stratton made no answer, while Mrs. Stratton and her daughters, Emma and Laura, exchanged significant glances with one another, as my strangely interested words fell upon their wondering ears.

Hastily recovering herself, however, Kate at once replied in a tone whose unaffected sweetness charmed the sense of hearing.

"I can but sincerely thank both Mrs. Stratton and her son for the great kindness which they have been pleased to bestow upon a stranger, and could almost regret that *duty* prevents my acceptance of your invitation of this evening."

"But, my dear Miss Stratton," I interposed, beginning seriously to fear the failure of my project, "my mother will lay your refusal more sorely to heart than you imagine."

"Indeed!" murmured Mrs. Stratton, in an under tone.

"How strange he talks to-night, mamma!" whispered Laura, at her mother's elbow.

"Come, come, Miss Stratton, you *must* go along with us this evening; I, for one will not take *no* for an answer," I exclaimed, perceiving Kate Stratton's hesitancy of manner.

"But my father?" she interrogated, glancing nervously towards her mother and sisters.

"I have it, he shall go too!" I cried; "and now, Mrs. Stratton, if you and your twin Hebes, (a little flattery sometimes helps the work along,) will just step into my carriage, which is at the door, I will accompany you to Willey Mansion, present you to my mother, and then return for Miss Kate and her father, in less than half an hour, if possible."

Without uttering a word, the three ladies seated themselves in the coach, into which I sprang, (after cautioning Kate to be ready at the time of my return,) and we were soon driving towards my mother's residence, at a rapid rate.

Three-quarters of an hour later, and I entered the densely crowded parlor, with Kate Stratton, simply attired in a dress of plain black silk, leaning gracefully, but timidly, upon one arm, and her good hearted, but lame, father on the other.

All eyes were turned upon us as we appeared upon the threshold; and the burning blush which dyed the cheeks and temples of Mrs. Stratton and her showily-dressed daughters, did not escape my observation.

Just then my mother stepped forward with the young minister, Mr. Walters, who had assumed the ffice of chevalier during my absence, and after theo proper introductions, and mutual exchange of compliments had been made, began to congratulate me upon the victory which I had achieved in bringing Miss Stratton thither.

As soon as time and opportunity would permit, Ralph Walters seated himself beside Kate, who, anxious to escape the angry glances of her mother, had shrunk into a retired corner Perceiving the eagerness with which my young friend entered into conversation with one, who had been regarded as a kind of wall flower among the villagers, I increased my attentions towards the sisters, Emma and Laura, to the great satisfaction of their ambitious mamma, and the envy and jealousy of nearly all the youths and maidens present. The cold indifference with which Kate Stratton was treated by her relatives, whenever they chanced to pass near one another, through out the entire evening, did not escape my keen scrutiny, although the former had probably not the slightest suspicion that I knew aught of their family troubles.

Upon the breaking up of our little party, Mr. Walters proposed accompanying Kate home, for whom he seemed to have formed quite a penchant, and after seeing that Mr. and Mrs. Stratton were comfortably deposited in the family coach, I offered my escort to the Misses Laura and Emma.

For some time after our guest had retired, and the entire dispersion of the large company who had been present, my mother and I remained below in the parlor, busily engaged in earnest conversation.

"It is as I expected," said I, during our long talk about Kate Stratton; "Emma and Laura are the pets of their mother, while Kate, less handsome, but I dare venture to say, a hundred times more amiable than her sisters, is kept drudging at home—the Cinderella of the family, in whose pleasures and joys she should, by right, become an equal sharer. Now, my dear mother, if you will but listen to the advice of your son, you may yet become of as essential service to poor Kate Stratton, as was the fairy good mother to the little maid of the glass slipper."

"How, and in what manner, my child?" asked my mother, eagerly.

"By taking Kate Stratton into your family as a companion."

"I will consider the subject well," was my dear mother's reply, as, imprinting a sacred kiss upon my brow, she bade me good night at the door of her chamber.

* * * * * *

Kate Stratton had been an inmate of our household for about the space of six months, when Ralph Walters suddenly made his appearance in my office one day, with a face so rife with anguish and despair that it fairly startled me in its perfect ghastliness, and made me scatter here and there the pile of law-paper which I was perusing.

"What ails you, Ralph?" I cried, at the same time springing up from my seat, and advancing towards him. But he made no answer to my question, and only fixed his large blue eyes sorrowfully upon me, with an expression of countenance that seemed to say, "Thou art the cause of all my suffering."

I could not bear the sight of that accusing face, and again I cried, "For the love of heaven speak, man! I beseech you to tell me what has so disturbed thy peace of heart, and made thee more like a ghost to look upon than a living man?"

The muscles of his pale face relaxed, and his thinly cut lips slowly parted, as, with his cold blue eyes still keenly fixed upon my face, he said—

"William, you were my classmate, and are still my friend, and, being such, you are entitled in some degree to my confidence."

"I trust so," I replied, little suspecting what was so soon to follow.

"To be brief, then, I allude, William, to a subject which closely affects my heart. In short, I have loved Kate Stratton ever since the first night of our meeting. My frequent visits to your mother's mansion, long after I ceased to be her guest, must have clearly revealed this fact to your eyes. During your absence to an adjoining town last night, I again called upon Miss Stratton, and, requesting a private interview with her, knelt at her feet, and made offering of my heart and hand. To my astonishment, she calmly bade me rise, saying, in return for the declaration which I had just made, 'Mr. Walters, I respect you as a *friend*, but cannot accept your noble offer, for *I love another*.'"

A slight tremor ran through my frame as the words, "*I love another!*" fell upon my ear. I turned my head away to avoid the keen glances of those cold blue eyes, which seemed penetrating my innermost soul.

With a quick movement the young minister placed his hand upon my shoulder, and, drawing my face once more towards his own, said, in a low and husky voice—

"William, tell me, do you know this rival of mine, the man whom Kate Stratton *loves?*" and the last word seemed as if hissed in my ear by a serpent, so close was my companion's mouth to my ear.

How could I tell the bitter heart-cutting truth at that moment to him, who was my friend? Heaven spare me the sin, for the next moment I looked boldly up in his face, and forced my lips to utter a base *lie*, as I replied—

"Upon my word, Ralph, I do not *know* this man, who stands between your love and Kate Stratton."

Tears gushed from the eyes of the young divine, as, pressing my hand gratefully, he said—

"Your last words have greatly relieved my heart, and now, thank God! I shall go forth from your office a stronger and a better man."

I returned the firm clasp of his hand, and the next minute Ralph Walters had passed out of my sight.

After this, my recent conversation with my friend, I sedulously avoided the society of Kate Stratton, who now occupied almost a daughter's place in the affections of my mother. Almost imperceptibly, love, strong and enduring, had crept into my heart, as day after day revealed the inner loveliness of Kate Stratton's soul. My attentions towards her had been as tender and delicate as the heart of a devoted brother might offer to a sister whom he fondly adored—nothing more; yet there was that in the young girl's manner which told me in actions more eloquent than words, that she, Kate Stratton, was not insensible to the love which my heart felt, yet my lips dared not utter. That my mother did not for a moment suspect my secret, I was sure of, and so to prevent the rise of any fresh suspicions I redoubled my attentions to Emma and Laura Stratton, and sought to drown my own sorrow in their insipid and heedless society.

I know not how it happened, but Ralph Walters still continued a visitor at the residence of my mother, and one lovely morning in the latter end of June, my beloved parent came to me with tears of delight in her eyes, and told me that Ralph and Kate were to be married in a week's time.

And they were married; and *I* was their groomsman, while Laura Stratton in all the pride of her queenly beauty stood by my side as her sister's bridesmaid. There was something statue like in Kate's manner, as she placed her hand within that of Ralph at the altar of the little village church, and the marriage vows fell strangely and mechanically from her lips, as she promised love, honor, and obedience to the noble youth who stood in the full tide of manly happiness at her side.

The ceremony was at last over, and after receiving the numerous congratulations of those who had once prophesied that Kate Stratton "was born for an old maid," the newly wedded couple returned to the parsonage, which was to be their future home. People said that it was a good match, and even whispered around that Laura Stratton and I would soon be married. Fatal mistake! the heart-wounds of my sensitive nature were not to be so easily healed! From that day I began to lose all interest in persons, places and things generally. I neglected my business affairs, deserted my former acquaintances, and, refusing all company, shut myself up in my chamber, where I remained for the most part of the time in a gloomy and abstracted state of mind. As a natural consequence, my physical health began to suffer perceptibly. Alarmed at the terrible changes which three or four months had wrought upon my naturally robust constitution, my mother consulted an eminent physician in Boston. He advised a change of scene and climate, and early in October my mother and I set out for Cuba, having rented the old mansion house to a family for the space of a year.

It was full three years before I again directed my steps towards the village of Littleton. The two years which I had spent upon the continent had greatly improved my bodily health, although my spirits had lost much of their buoyancy and elasticity. My mother had experienced many home yearnings during our absence, and it was to oblige her, rather than myself, that I proposed re-visiting Littleton again. Time had apparently wrought but few changes in our little village, and without stopping to gain any information concerning its inhabitants, we quickly pursued our way towards the old parsonage. My mother knocked at the door, and inquired of the servant who answered the summons if Mrs. Walters still resided there, and was at home. She replied in the affirmative, and ushered us into a small but neatly furnished parlor, whose surroundings looked new and unnatural. But a single moment had elapsed before the parlor door swung open, and Kate Walters, clad in sable robes, rushed wildly into the room!

"Kate!" "William!" were the words that simultaneously burst forth from the lips of both, as in my great joy I strained my long-loved one to my heart! Ralph Walters had been dead a twelvemonth, and a new minister had been chosen to fill his place. Since his death Kate Walters had filled the office of school-teacher in her native village.

Our double sacrifice had not been in vain, and she whom all Littleton had declared "born for an old maid," is now blest and happy in the love of her husband, your humble servant, while Laura and Emma are still unmarried and loverless.

Written for the Banner of Light.

TO A FRIEND ON HIS BIRTHDAY.

BY ORPHA.

Thy birthday, dearest brother!
This the anniversary of that blessed morn
Which gave to earth one true spirit more,
Though clad in mortal form?
Would that on the altars of my soul
There burned the fires which poets kindle!
Then would I weave for thee a song,
Deep, eloquent and fervid. It should
Stir thy very soul, as though an angel's hand
Had swept the harp-strings of a spirit lyre,
Until there gushed forth music,
Such as might hold spell-bound the eternal seraph.
Noble and true of heart
Wert thou, my friend! Thou hast been
The sharer of my sympathies; the one
Who prompted me to good; the hand
That shed dew on my drooping spirits.
Say, shall I forget thee, friend of my earliest years,
When time, with remorseless touch,
Doth place his signet on thy brow?
Or when thy manly step doth fall,
And that proud, noble form moves wearily,
As one who seeks repose? Nay, not so, not so!
Affections pure and undefiled know no change!
'Tis only passion's flame, which, like the taper's glow,
Burns brightly for a passing moment, then
Flickers, fades, and dies.
Thy birthday, dearest brother!
Heaven's choicest blessings on this joyous hour!
Nor I alone, a simple, unpretending maid,
Whom thy love hath blessed, shall breathe
This heart-warm, earnest wish; but they,
The widow and the orphan, who in their affliction
Turned to thee, and ever found a ready sympathizer,
They shall repeat thy name, coupled with a blessing.
Thy birthday! oh, may many a bright one
Greet thee yet with a joyous morn, ere thou
Shalt hear the angel's summon to that land
Where time is not, nor Death comes to snatch
Our idols from us.

Never seek to be intrusted with your friend's secret, for, no matter how faithfully you may keep it, you will be liable in a thousand contingencies to the suspicion of having betrayed it.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PSYCHOLOGY.

BY A. J. DAVIS.

It is good to know that the psycometrical state, (or the soul-measuring condition,) and the superior condition, (or the spiritual state,) are to all men attainable. It is also good to know that interior sight is no gift which can be lost—is nothing merely bestowed upon the soul—but it is a spontaneous result, or manifestation of the harmonious mind; it is an inevitable development of the soul's indestructible and unchangeable energies; but the development of these sublime powers, this side of the spirit-land, depends upon the favorableness of the hereditary predisposition of the individual—upon his habits, his social situation, education, moral state, and upon the strength and purity of his soul's aspiration.

If spiritual perceptions were given to, or bestowed upon, any individual, or class of individuals, (in a manner identical with the presentation of a jewel by one friend to another;) or, if the Divine Mind should entrust them to the exclusive protection and use of any particular favorite, thereby making that individual his agent or attorney, then it would be reasonable to conclude that, should that individual, thus honored and blessed, not use his gift as it was originally designed to be used, that he would consequently lose it entirely. Although these powers can not be lost, they can, nevertheless, be much weakened, and rendered comparatively worthless, by a misuse or perversion of their proper functions. And the same may be said of every sense or faculty which belongs to man's material or spiritual constitution.

It is very wrong to believe that the Deity bestows special blessings and attentions; that he, by an arbitrary exercise of his voluntary powers, gives, to certain individuals, intellectual or moral attributes, which attributes he can afterward take away.

The constitution and perfection of the Divine Mind render it absolutely impossible that he should be a "respecter of persons;" and hence it is only proper to believe that every individual is constitutionally and eternally endowed with certain moral or intellectual attributes; the manifestation of such attributes depends wholly upon the favorableness or propitiousness of those circumstances and conditions, which have enumerated.

Inasmuch as the psycho-metrical and spiritual states are to all minds attainable, it is proper to inquire how individuals shall proceed to attain them. It is proper to ask—What diets, what habits, what occupations, what activities, are essential or favorable to spiritual elevation and illumination?

If parents desire their children to occupy a higher moral and intellectual position than they themselves do, they must must not themselves violate any physiological or psychological law, nor go counter to the pure admonitions of intuition. Hereditary predisposition is the foundation upon which to base the formation of your child's character. Of course, every human soul has an intrinsic predisposition to goodness, to harmony, and to spiritual illumination, which is communicated to it by the Father of all spirits; but it is essential that the legitimate tendencies and developments of this intrinsic predisposition be not in the least retarded by the transgressions of parents or progenitors. Instead of these tendencies being obstructed, everything should be done by the parents which is calculated to augment their full and perfect manifestation.

The world has seen examples of what hereditary predisposition can do, especially when that predisposition is favored and strengthened by proper diets, moderate activities, and careful discipline. Extraordinary warriors, poets, philosophers, and mathematicians, have been made by progenitory impression; and even so, it is possible to present to the world a variety of spiritually elevated and endowed individuals, who shall be, in morals and philosophy, what Napoleon was in the battle-field, and what young Safford is in the sphere of mathematics.

In order to augment the development of the spiritual perceptions, the individual (or the youth) should never be actuated by any extreme or impulsive sensations. His habits should be consistent with harmony. He should never walk, nor play, nor exercise the body or mind violently and inconsiderately; for extremes always disturb and retard the soul's tranquility and development. It is very important that the body be exercised in all its parts; no set of muscles should be allowed to remain unemployed; because the individual must attain to the "fullness of the stature of the perfect man," before any very valuable results can be permanently and satisfactorily obtained. It is also necessary to spiritual advancement that the moral state is good.

What is meant by good in this connection is, that the mind entertains a strong and unchanging friendship and veneration for Truth, Justice, and Deity.

And quietness of mind is also essential to interior light. Nothing will so injure and deform the soul's internal powers, as an uneasy, dissatisfied, impatient, combative, revengeful, and a non-conforming state of mind, particularly when the individual is conscious, or desires to become conscious, of his relationship to the material and spiritual universe. The spirit must desire a revelation of Truth, Justice and Deity. Its aspirations should not be confined to earth; nor limited by the solar system to which our earth belongs; but the soul must seek to expand throughout the width and breadth of the immeasurable univercœlum.

In a word, strict adherence to rules of physical and mental discipline will always refine the feelings, and elevate the mind. And if we will but turn from the external world of effects to ourselves and the internal world of causes, our knowledge of spiritual truths will be much higher and greater. Wisdom, the angel of the mind, which leads unto all truth, gently whispers—"Seek, and ye shall find—knock, and it shall be opened unto thee."

NEWSPAPERS.—Of all the amusements that can possibly be imagined for a hard-working man, after a day's toil, or in its intervals, there is nothing like reading an entertaining newspaper. It relieves his home of its dullness or sameness, which in nine cases out of ten, is what drives him to the ale house, to his own ruin, and his family's. It transports him into a gayer and livelier, and more diversified and interesting scene; and while he enjoys himself there, he may forget the evils of the present moment fully as much as if he was ever so drunk; with the great advantage of finding himself the next day with the money in his pocket, or at least, laid out in real necessaries and comforts for himself and family, without a headache. Nay, it accompanies him in his next day's work, and if the paper he has been reading be anything above the very idlest and lightest, gives him something to think of besides the mechanical drudgery of his every-day occupation—something he can enjoy while absent.

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THE BEAUTY OF BIGOTRY.

We are all of us familiar enough with the hatefulness of bigotry as it illustrates itself in the religious arrangements of the day, and many and many a new case of it comes up to excite alternately our profound wonder and our speechless indignation. We have been refreshed with the appearance of a recent instance of this most unattrative quality, exhibited in respect to the lecture delivered, not many weeks ago, by Henry Ward Beecher, before the "Fraternity Association" of Theodore Parker's church.

Mr. Beecher was employed to deliver one of the lectures of the course that was laid out by this Fraternity Committee. He came on from New York and delivered it. His topic was "The Burdens of Society;" and it was treated, we need not add, with all the breadth and eloquence, spirit and energy, for which he has become so famous as an orator.

The New York Examiner, however, an organ of the Baptist denomination, has seen fit to call him to account for the unprecedented liberty taken by him in lecturing at the invitation of an "infidel" organization; and we give the subjoined extract from its highly illiberal and unchristian article, to show the reader the quality of that bigotry which is so detestable in the eyes of all but its possessors. Says the Examiner:—

"THE 'FRATERNITY' AND MR. BEECHER.—In the congregation ministered to by Theodore Parker at the Music Hall in Boston, known as the "Twenty-eighth Congregational Society,' there is a literary association styled the 'Fraternity.' Said 'Fraternity' has got up a series of 'Fraternity Lectures,' an avowed object of which, if a newspaper announcement may be credited, was to give to the 'ideas' of Mr. Parker a freer scope than the Lyceum platform allows. But whether that was the purpose or not, it is manifest that the effect would be, so far as any impression was made on the public, to give increased popularity to the man and his 'church.' If the lectures prove, as has been claimed, 'the most successful course of the season,' they will reflect a certain lustre upon the 'Twenty-eighth Congregational Society,' and upon the man whose infidelity is its pervading spirit. Such an effect, we should suppose, would be deprecated—at least would not be even constructively aided—by a sincere friend of evangelical religion. But the pastor of the Plymouth Church in Brooklyn has appeared upon Mr. Parker's platform, to lend to it his popularity. Mr. Beecher has asserted his right to do in all things what is right in his own eyes, and we are not disposed, even if we were able, to abridge his liberty. But it is utterly incomprehensible by us, how he reconciles with his love for the Gospel such open aid and comfort to its bitterest enemies. To appear with Mr. Parker, contemporaneously or successively, upon a platform which represents neither him nor his 'ideas,' is one thing; to assist in giving *eclat* to an infidel enterprise is a very different thing—and that is what every Fraternity lecturer, and every purchaser of a Fraternity ticket has done."

To this indecent assault, Mr. Beecher has made answer in two consecutive numbers of the New York Independent; the first article he devoted to a manly exposition of his Faith, and the second to an exposition of his Practice. For directness of reply, for the noble and Christian spirit that breathes through the whole article, for manly force and exaltation, and for overwhelming energy and impetuousness, this answer is a memorable example. Mr. Beecher has done for himself, not less than for all true and trusting souls that know not how to wield the huge battle-axe of controversy like himself, a noble service. He has held up this canting bigotry to the merited scorn and detestation of all living men and women. In his hands, the poor, poverty-stricken spirits that attempt to assail him in a vulnerable part, become the most pitiful of all walking creatures. If ever strait-laced religion, that pulses with no vital, bounding sympathy for human welfare and human happiness, was rebuked and put to open shame, it has been by these recent bold and outspoken replies of Henry Ward Beecher. While we in no sense subscribe to, or sympathize with that rigid, iron-handed "Orthodoxy" which, it is but too apparent, yearly relaxes its gripe on his own soul, we nevertheless put in our expressions of thanks and delight to find that even within its own ranks a man is to be found, who both dares and has the soul to come out and openly put his heel upon one of its most hateful practices.

It is a pretty spectacle, indeed, in this boasted day of light and life, that a preacher of one religious denomination may not be permitted to speak to the people from a rostrum which another religious denomination happens to have furnished! And yet this is called a Christian age,—an age of toleration,—an age overflowing with charity and universal love,—an age when the pure teachings and example of Jesus are in process of becoming the controlling principles of the world! And the men of the New York Examiner are supposed (by some few) to be the men who are to hurry on the coming of Christ's kingdom to earth!

After denying that the Fraternity Lectures were set on foot for the purpose of propagating "infidelity," or "reflecting lustre" on the Society of which Mr. Parker is the much-beloved pastor. Mr. Beecher sets forth his views of doing good, and being good, in the following liberal paragraphs:—

"The young men in Mr. Parker's society undertook to do good by a course of general lectures; we lectured in the course; good papers are full of grief; and the Examiner regards it as 'utterly incomprehensible.' We must be still more incomprehensible then, when we say, that, though we would earnestly desire men to believe aright in religion, yet, if they will not, then we hope that their life will be better than their creed. And, if we see men of a heretical turn of mind practicing Gospel virtues and charities, we shall certainly encourage and help them. For men do not derive the right to do good from the Thirty-nine Articles; nor need they go to the Westminster Confession for liberty to recover the intemperate, set free the bond, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, educate the ignorant, and give sleigh-rides to beggars' children that never before laughed and cuddled in a buffale-robe! It seems to us a great deal better business for a Christian man to encourage men in well-doing, than to punish them for wrong thinking."

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"If anybody does right, he *ought* to be applauded. If Mr. Parker *does* well, he deserves the credit for well-doing. If the young men of his charge do well, they deserve all the 'lustre' of it. Or shall we take ground that no man who is not of sound orthodox faith is to have any 'lustre' for practical virtue? Must nobody be counted ethically right until he is theologically sound? Such a doctrine would be monstrous! Every just and generous man in the community ought to rejoice in the good conduct of every man, without regard to his speculative views or theological affinities.

"If a man institutes a temperance movement, must I refuse to help him because, being a Universalist minister, his zeal and fidelity in that cause would 'reflect a lustre' upon him and his sect? If a man would establish and endow an hospital, must I refuse to co-work with him because, being a Unitarian, its success would reflect a certain lustre upon that faith?"

But the Examiner, like a good many other timid and surface-considering persons, are specially concerned to know what effect such an independent course as this of Mr. Beecher is going to produce. It cares a great deal more for the appearance than the reality. It is anxious, like all others who are conscious of the hollowness of their faith, or position, to understand *what people will say!* And this, of all things, is the curse of all manhood and the blight of all religion.

To this suggestion as to what will be *said* of his conduct, Mr. Beecher replies:—

"But, it will be asked, will the public understand your position, and, however you may design it, will not the impression go abroad, either that you sympathize with infidel views, or are indifferent to them? No. The public are just the ones who will not misunderstand. There is formed and forming a moral judgment in the intelligent parts of the community, that popular Christianity needs more love in it. Men at large will be a great deal more apt to say that I have done a more exemplary Christian act, in daring to avow an *ethical* sympathy with Theodore Parker, between whom and myself there exists an irreconcilable theological difference, than if I had bombarded him for a whole year, and refused to touch his hand!"

On the subject of Love, as the great corrector of all earthly evils and the active central principle of life, he adds:—

"The disposition *to find some common ground of kindness and benevolence work, with those from whom we are known to differ*, will be a real preaching of the Gospel to tens of thousands who are unmoved by dogmas or doctrines. It is Love that the world wants. When Love goes abroad in the full worth of its nature, and endures, and suffers, without reward, except the sweetness of suffering borne for another, then men begin to see what is the heart and spirit of Christ, and to have some motions towards faith in him!"

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"I have long ago been convinced that it was better to love men than to hate them; that one would be more likely to convince them of wrong belief by showing a cordial sympathy for their welfare, than by nipping and pinching them with logic. And although I do not disdain, but honor, philosophy applied to religion, *I think that the world just now needs the Christian heart more than anything else.* And, even if the only and greatest question were the propagation of right theology, I am confident that right speculative views will grow up faster and firmer in the summer of true Christian loving, than in the rigorous winter of solid, congealed orthodoxy, or the blustering March of controversy."

This is noble and worthy of highest commendation. It is filled with the right spirit, because the true Christian spirit. It will produce such an effect on the minds of men, that bigots and canting pharisees will find themselves scouted by all to whom they presume to offer their snivelling complaints; not, perhaps, scouted themselves, but in their doctrines and practices and customs.

The concluding paragraph of Mr. Beecher's reply is so tender and full of love, especially by contrast with the article already quoted from his assailant, that we shall leave the subject where it is, with the addition of the closing expressions of his Christian heart. He says:—

"While we write, word comes that Mr. Parker broken down by over-labor, seeks rest and restoration in a warmer clime. Should these lines reach his eye, let him know that one heart at least remembers his fidelity to man, in great public exigencies when so many swerved, of whom we had a right to expect better things. God shield him from the ocean, the storm, the pestilence; and heal him of lurking disease. And there shall be one Christian who will daily speak his name to the heart of God in earnest prayer, that with health of body he may receive upon his soul the greatest gift of God—faith in Jesus Christ as the Divine Saviour of the world."

AT THE EVENING FIRE.

In the city we have neither fire-sticks nor backlogs; those old-fashioned and substantial delights belong to the country alone. We sit to-night at our grate of blue burning coal, and think of those who are sitting at their blazing wood-fires on the broad and cheerful hearth—themselves, perhaps, even at this silent hour, thinking in turn of us.

It is sweet to reflect that, though we know it not, far separated friends may be engaged in simultaneous thought, each of the other, and their souls may be mutually engaged in silent and deep communion at the same moment. You are at your work in the city still. The night has come down upon the world, dark and cold. You have withdrawn yourself to the comfort of your solitary room, and there, perhaps vainly trying to read or to write, are obliged to give all else up, and sit down in silence, and dream of one who is far away. What feelings, at such a sacred hour, crowd in the heart!

She is at the old homestead hearth likewise. You know too well she is there. Your spirit's eyes behold her seated in her little chair, her hands lying unemployed in her lap, her gaze fixed on the crumbling coals, her lips half parted, as if she would in an instant speak to you, and her thoughts—all, all upon *you!* There she sits, a blessed angel in your eyes; in the peaceful lap of Home; surrounded by all whom she loves and who loves her; thoughtful, half sad, dreaming of the future of which her eyes catch such bright glimpses in the reddening and dying coals; but in her silent, sweet thought, turning constantly and steadily to *you*.

She fills your very soul. Her image dances into your solitary room, and, with finger laid across the pretty lips, awakens such fancies, such hopes, such fears, such dreams, nay, such love, that you are fain to turn about in your chair to see if it be she indeed that has come in. And you become sad to find that you are alone by your coal fire, when your heart is at that blazing and glowing hickory fire on the country hearth. Oh, if you could sit at this moment beside her little low chair, and hold her hand in your own, and without a word even tell her that *you loved her* still, and *why* you loved her, and *how much* you loved her—what a solace would it not be for all the trials and perplexities of the day just spent, and how the spirit would revive again from the depression and temporary sadness into which it had fallen!

You see her still—that sweet face, so full of heavenly expression—and that expression all love. The hour—the stillness—the fitful blaze of your fire—the very atmosphere in which you sit—the memories—the hopes—alas, what work they make with the sensitive heart, and how strangely they thrill the chords of feeling! Only at such times do we seem really to *know* what it is to love.

MESSAGES VERIFIED.

MESSRS. EDITORS—In your issue of this week, I notice a communication which purports to come from John Page. I saw his first communication, which appeared in your paper some months since, when he gave an account of the manner in which he met his death, at Danvers, eleven years ago. His account corresponded with the facts of the case, *i. e.*, being shot by the watchman of the village bank, North Danvers. His last communication was characteristic, and seemed just like him. But I should like to inquire, Messrs. Editors, as an investigator, if the spirits come and communicate through the medium, without being called for, either by their friends, or some one who has been acquainted with them during their earth-life. I should like to satisfy myself that there is no mind influence in this case.

There was another communication (which appeared in your paper about the time of John Page's first message) from Mary Byrant, who said she was murdered by being thrown into a soap-boiler, by a man who lives in Lawrence. When reading that message, I was struck with wonder. Knowing there was a Mary Bryant who lived in Salem, and who mysteriously dissappeared from that place, and suspicion was rife that she was boiled up with soap, as a means to destroy all traces of her murder. I might give you some of the reasons which suspicion was grounded on; but as her suspected murderer is still alive, perhaps it would be as well to remain silent.

I have one more message, from one whom we all knew in this town, which, I would inform you, bears the characteristic of the one whom it assumes to be, viz., Oliver Bacon. He was respected by all who knew him. He was a man of property, and with a big heart, as many would testify who have been relieved of pain and suffering by his strong healing powers, without money and without price.

I have sent you these few lines at the suggestion of the standing invitation at the head of your "Messenger Department." Perhaps some one else has sent you better information concerning the same persons; if so, I am glad I have tried to make my note as plain as possible, although it is quite an effort for me to write. Truly yours,

INVESTIGATOR.

WOBURN, MASS., Dec. 18, 1858.

No spirit is ever called upon at our circle to give a communication; and it is distinctly understood by visitors, that no communications are ever given to them, hence they do not call for them. It is an exception, when a person in the circle, on hearing the name given by the spirit, recognizes him.

We have known persons to come with the intent and expectation of communicating with their friends, but in only two instances in nearly as many years, and in at least two thousand communications, has any been made to them at the time.

We prefer to give up the management of our circles wholly and entirely to the spirit-world, asking for nothing, but receiving just what is given us. We are satisfied we obtain more reliable matter by so doing. It seems to be a rule with them, that no spirit shall communicate to his friends who are present; they do so at subsequent times when they are absent, we are told.

Thus the theory of mind-reading will not apply to the manifestions published by us, of which our friend can satisfy himself, if he has leisure to attend our sittings, which are free to all. The parties he mentions, were unknown to us; when a spirit communes whom we know, we always make it known.

We wish every reader would follow your example, and write us of the truth or falsity of the messages. We can always afford to publish the truth, even though that should prove a message false sometimes. The fact that we are not attacked on account of the great number of message and facts stated in them, is good presumptive proof of their truth, while many are verified by letter.

The message from Elizabeth Spinney, published in the Banner of Dec. 4th, we have ascertained from a reliable source, is truthful in every particular.

OUR REPORTS.

We have found it necessary to report Mr. Beecher more fully. We cannot do him justice, we are satisfied, in abstract reports.

The sermon we print this week is reported *verbatim*, by an expert phonographist. We shall continue the same, so long as we find it interesting to our readers, and productive of a liberal Christian sentiment.

At the earnest solicitation of friends, we shall commence the publication of *verbatim* reports of E. H. Chapin's sermons, in our next issue, by the same reporter.

We trust this will do something towards filling the void occasioned by the illness of Theodore Parker.

ILLNESS OF THEODORE PARKER.

Drs. Jackson, Bowditch and Cabot, have had a consultation on his case, the decision of which is that he is in a deeply-seated pulmonary consumption. We have hopes, notwithstanding this sad intelligence, that a sea voyage, a warmer climate, and the advantage of his age over this disease, will restore him again to his people.

NEW SPIRITUAL BOOK.

Twelve Messages from the Spirit of John Quincy Adams, through Joseph Stiles, Medium, to Josiah Brigham. Boston: Bela Marsh, 14 Bromfield st.

We have only time and space, in this number, to recommend this book to the perusal of our readers. A more extended notice is unavoidably postponed to our next issue.

The Busy World.

☞ We publish on our first page this week, a poem, found among the unpublished papers of the late William Henry Herbert, neatly enclosed in a wrapper, on which was written, in his own handwriting, "Compiled by the author, immediately previous to his death." It was obtained for us by our New York Editor, from a friend in whose hands Mr. H. placed it, and other documents, just previous to his suicide.

☞ It is with particular satisfaction that we are able to announce that Miss Lizzie Doten, of Plymouth, will speak at the Melodeon next Sunday.

SET FREE.—Seven Spiritualists were excommunicated from the Congregational church at Lee, Sabbath before last.—*Spiritual Age.*

That church may as well make themselves busy about digging a deep grave; for the act of excommunication was the first note of its death-knell.

It is often said that no woman can keep a secret. We know of one who *says* she can; but we are almost afraid try the experiment, for fear she would break her *promise*.

COMPLIMENTARY.—A Ball will be given by the Boston Brass Band, complimentary to Mr. D. C. Hall, leader, on Monday evening, 31st inst., at Union Hall. Halls' full band, (fifteen performers) will provide the music. The tickets are one dollar, admitting a gentleman and ladies, and may be obtained at the usual places.

The Post says the story about the dog that refused to leave his master's tomb, in King's Chapel burying ground, is a *grave* joke.

It is said that Mr. Stewart, U. S. marshal for Georgia, has been removed by the President, on the grounds of not exercising sufficient vigilance in regard to the yacht Wanderer case.

Havana papers of the 19th inst., contain a statement to the effect that Gen. Reneau had offered Gen. Concha $15,000,000 to declare Cuba independent.

In executive session of the U. S. Senate on Saturday, an exciting discussion arose between Messrs. Douglas and Fitch. The latter twice charged the former with uttering untruths. It was feared a duel would follow; but the difficulty has been referred to friends, and a correspondence opened.

In the U. S. House of Representatives, on Saturday last, a resolution was adopted, calling on the President for information concerning the importation of slaves into Georgia and elsewhere.

Accounts from Montevideo, of Nov. 30th, state that a portion of the United States squadron for Paraguay had reached that port, and were awaiting reinforcements. The vessels were expected to leave in the course of a few weeks.

THE REVOLUTION IN HAYTI.—A correspondent of the New York Herald says neither insurgents nor imperialists know whom to trust or confide in, and all is confusion and doubt. Should the army remain firm—which, however, is questionable—Faustin may be re-established on his throne more securely than ever; then woe to the revolutionists.

FOREIGN.—The steamship Europa, from Liverpool, Jan. 8th, arrived at New York on the 22d inst. There is nothing important from Great Britain; but the news from other quarters is exceedingly interesting.

The disquietude caused by Napoleon's menace to the Austrian Minister, continued. The panic continued on the Paris Bourse, the decline at one time being 2 1-2 per cent. since New Year's. On the 7th, the Moniteur published the following paragraph:—"For several days the public opinion has been agitated by alarming reports, which it is the duty of government to put a stop to, by declaring that nothing in diplomatic relations authorizes the fears which those reports tend to provoke." This caused a slight improvement in the funds in Paris and London, but was only temporary, and all improvement was subsequently lost.

It is reported that France has sent a very threatening note to Austria, warning her of the consequence of Austrian troops crossing the Servian frontier.

Accounts from Italy continue very alarming.

Austria is sending strong reinforcements to Lombardy, where the garrisons are on a war footing.

An outbreak was anticipated at Milan. It was rumored, but not confirmed, that the city was in a state of siege.

Great agitation likewise existed at Cremona, Modena, and elsewhere.

A scuffle is reported to have taken place between Austrian and Hungarian soldiers at Cremona.

Further details of the debate in the Spanish Chambers on Buchanan's message, show that O'Donnell expressed great surprise at the proposition in regard to Cuba, and declared the Government disposed to demand due satisfaction for such an insult. He declared emphatically that Spain would never cede any of her territory.

The object of the conspiracy at Cracow was to recover the independence of the Republic.

The London Times says that an American invention had been taken to England, with a view to its being disposed of to the British or any other European government, and which, if it does one-half of what the patentee guarantees can be done with it, will make such a change in the mode of carrying on a naval war, as will put steamers out of the question, and render of no avail the tremendous forts of Cronstadt or Cherbourg.

The invention is a submarine boat, for working under water without air tubes, or any other communication with the surface of the water, and capable of carrying men, and a large quantity of explosives. The American and French governments are said to have declined to have anything to do with the invention, while the British Admiralty was giving it full and prompt attention.

According to official despatches, there are one hundred thousand armed men determined to oppose Turkish rule in Servia. Somewhat urgent requests had reached Constantinople for reinforcements. The Porte has augmented the Ottoman forces in Candia by 5000 men. The agitation amongst the Christian population is increasing throughout the Turkish empire.

PROSELYTISM.

The statement has gained credit to considerable extent, that the Jewish people in the West, are becoming deeply interested in Christianity, and joining the Evangelical churches. But Dr. Isaac M. Wise, over his own autograph, in the last number of the Israelite, makes the following disclaimer:—

"I know nearly every Jewish child in this city, and four fifths of all western Israelites; mark, I know them personally, and by their *nomen proprium;* and I do tell you, honestly and openly, what you say is positively not true. You cannot mention the name of one converted Jew in Cincinnati, nor two names in the West, of Jews who believe a word of your dogmas. It is a hoax to amuse some good women somewhere."

SPIRITUALISTS' CONVENTION.

A Convention of Spiritualists will be holden at Bridgewater, Vt., on the 29th and 30th of January, 1859, to which all reformers and Spiritualists are invited. The call is signed by Nathan Lamb, Dr. Holt, and Charles Walker.

BOSTON THEATRE.

The immense resources of this theatre, are amply shown in the splendid manner in which "The Cataract of the Ganges" is put upon the stage. It is, without exception, the most sublime piece of scenic representation, ever seen in Boston. And the public think so too, for the immense building has been crowded every night since its first representation. Our country readers will do well to give the Boston a call. Nixon's horses are well trained and he deserves great credit for the part he performs. In the last scene of the first act, when his whole troupe and stud appear, is a most beautiful tableau. The fearful ascent of the steps of the cataract, to a hight of nearly fifty feet, by the little black horse and its rider is, taken as a scene, worth the price of admission.

ATLANTIC MONTHLY.

The February number of this best of American magazines is before the public. "Bulls and Bears" is continued, and grows more and more interesting as it reaches the "beginning of the end." Mrs. Stowe's new novel, "The Minister's Wooing," is continued, and has some capital hits at the dying monster of old churchisms. "The Professor at the Breakfast Table" is remarkably sparkling, and nobody who loves genuine wit, and good sense, can afford to miss his table-talk. "Ought Women to learn the Alphabet," "In a Cellar," "The Philter," "The New Life of Dante," are capital articles. "Hamlet at the Boston," a poem by Mrs. Howe, is receiving much commendation.

Our readers will find this magazine suited to their tastes, and we advise them to buy it, or subscribe.

INSANITY IN MAINE.

The Superintendent's report of the state of the Maine Insane Hospital, has been sent us. It contains a very flattering account of the general condition of the institution.

One hundred and twenty-six patients were admitted during the last year. The assigned causes of their insanity were—ill health, 28; *religious excitement*, 11; *Spiritualism*, 3; domestic troubles, 11; intemperance, 8; over exertion, 7; injuries to the head, 5; masturbation, 5; puerperæ, 4; disappointed affection, 3; fright, 2; business, 2; defective education, 2; epilepsy, 2; loss of friends, poisoning and paralysis, 1 each.

Comment on the above statistics is unnecessary, as they tell their own story.

PAINE'S BIRTHDAY.

The anniversary of the birth of Thomas Paine is to be celebrated in Boston, at Union Hall, on Friday evening, Jan. 28th, being the one hundred and twenty-eighth anniversary The exercises will consist of speeches, songs, toasts, a ball, and supper. Dancing will commence at half past seven o'clock. Music by Savage's Quadrille Band. Tickets one dollar.

We do not know of a man whose memory is more entitled to respect, than much-abused Thomas Paine. Nor do we know one whose memory is more calculated to awaken noble aspirations of freedom. Two-thirds of the people of America are beginning to catch the same spirit of "Common Sense," which animated him, and are trying to do their own thinking, instead of employing people to lead them, by the very life-strings, to the slavery of bigotry.

N. FRANK WHITE.

This gentleman last Sunday, gave his third and fourth lecture in Boston, to large houses. He goes West immediately, to fill engagements made some time since, and the people of Boston will not hear him again for the present. He won laurels here in the lecturing field, and will be gladly welcomed back again. He will make a tour West to Chicago, and friends who desire his services will address him at Troy, N. Y.

MISS MUNSON IN PHILADELPHIA.

Miss Munson is still in Philadelphia, where she has a very extensive and successful medical practice. She has been highly recommended in public by a distinguished physician of that city, who stated that she had thrown more light upon his own case than he had derived from other sources, and therefore advised his friends to consult her. Her office is at No. 716 Samson street.

MOVEMENTS OF MEDIUMS

Miss Emma Hardinge will lecture at Brooklyn, N. Y., Jan. 30th, for the benefit of the poor. During the month of February at Boston, Lynn, Lowell, and Groveland. (In this month Miss Hardinge is fully engaged.) In March, at Philadelphia; in April, at New York. For the week day evenings of these months she will receive applications to lecture. In May, at Providence, R. I.; Worcester, Mass.; Nashua, N. H.; and other places week-day evenings where her services may be needed. In June, at Portland, Me., and Oswego, N. Y. Next fall and winter Miss Hardinge designs to labor exclusively in the West, and South as far as New Orleans, and requests applications for these districts to be addressed, during the spring and summer, at her residence, 194 Grand street, New York.

Prof. J. L. D. Otis will speak at Waltham, Mass., Jan. 30th; Abington, Mass., Feb. 6th; Leominster Mass., Feb. 13th; Natick, Mass., Feb. 20th; Dover, N. H. Feb. 27th. He will answer calls to speak at other places during the week. His addresses are mainly in the trance state, and upon the subject of Education. He will act as agent for the BANNER, and receive subscriptions either for this paper, or for the New England Union University. Address, Lowell, Mass.

Mrs. Fannie Burbank Felton will lecture in Lamartine Hall, New York, Sunday, Jan. 30th; and in Binghampton, N. Y., the four Sundays of February. Address, until Jan. 28th, Willard Barnes Felton, Norwich, Ct.; from Jan. 28th to Feb. 4th, No. 12 Lamartine Place, 29th street, New York.

John H Currier, of Lawrence, will speak as follows: Feb. 9th, at Warwick; Feb. 10th, at North Orange; Feb. 11th, at North Dana; Feb. 12th, at Orange; Feb. 13th, at Erving; Feb. 14th and 15th, at Northfield; Feb. 16th, at Montague.

Warren Chase will lecture, Jan. 30th, in New York; Feb. 6th and 13th, in Philadelphia; Feb. 20th and 27th, in Baltimore; March and April, in Ohio; May, in Michigan. Address, No. 14 Bromfield street, Boston.

Miss M. Munson will speak in Baltimore, Md., on the two first, and in Philadelphia on the two last Sundays in February. She will make engagements to lecture at places on the route from Philadelphia to Chicago at any time previous to the first of March next. Address her at Philadelphia, care of H. F. Child, M. D.

Anna M. Henderson will lecture in Providence, R. I., Sunday, January 30th. All business letters may be sent to Newtown, Conn.

Mrs. M. H. Tuttle, trance speaking medium, will lecture at Putnam, Ct., in Quinchaug Hall, on Sunday, Jan., 30th inst., morning and afternoon at the usual hour of religious service.

Mrs. M. S. Townsend will speak at Quincy, Jan. 30th; Cambridgeport, Feb. 6th; Waltham, Feb. 13th; Cambridgeport, Feb. 20th; Clinton, Feb. 27th; Taunton, March 6th and 13th.

Miss Emma Houston, trance-speaking medium, having returned from a visit to New Hampshire, will answer calls to lecture Sundays and week evenings. Address to the care of Dr. H. F. Gardner, Fountain House, Boston.

A. B. Whiting will attend calls to lecture in the West and Southwest, during the coming three months. He may be addressed at his home, Brooklyn, Michigan, till Feb. 1st.

H. F. Miller will answer calls for lectures to be given by Mrs. Miller, trance-speaker, in New York, Pennsylvania and the Western States. Address, Dunkirk, N. Y.

Miss Sarah A. Magoun will answer calls to lecture in the trance state on Sundays and week day evenings. Address care of George L. Cade, Cambridgeport, Mass.

Miss Rosa T. Amedey will speak in Marblehead, on Sunday, Jan. 31st; Lowell, Sunday, Feb. 6th; Cambridgeport, Sunday, Feb. 13th.

E. L. Lyon intends to spend some time in the State of Maine, and those Spiritual Societies, desiring his services, will please address him at Portland.

George Atkins will speak in Orleans, Sundays, Jan. 23d and 30th; Brewster, Monday, Jan. 24th; Sandwich, Tuesday, Jan. 25th; Chatham, Friday, Jan. 28th; Taunton, Sunday, Feb. 6th; Orleans, Sunday, Feb. 13th and 27th; Middleboro', Sun-

day, Feb. 20th, and on intervening evenings in towns adjoining, or in the vicinity of the above, if notified soon.

E. S. Wheeler will speak at Waltham, Mass., Sunday, Feb. 6th. He will answer calls from Norwich, Conn., where he may be addressed.

G. W. Atwood, of Boston, will speak under spirit influence at Washington Hall, Charlestown, on Sunday, 30th inst., at 2 1-2 and 7 1-12 o'clock, P. M.

H. B. Storer will lecture on the four Sundays of February, at Providence, R. I.

Mrs. Charlotte F. Works, public trance-speaking medium may be addressed at No. 19 Green street, Boston.

Miss Susan M. Johnson will receive calls to speak on Sundays. Address, Medford, Mass.

Mrs. Alvira P. Thompson, trance-speaker on Bible subjects. Address West Brookfield, Vt.

Dr. Lyon will speak in Cambridgeport, 23d inst.; in Plymouth, Sunday, Jan. 30th.

H. A. Tucker, trance-speaking medium, may be addressed at Foxboro', Mass. He will speak there Sunday, Jan. 30th.

Miss E. E. Gibson, impressional speaking medium, may be addressed at Augusta, Me.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Simon Shetterly, Dayton, Ohio.—We do not think it profitable to publish articles denouncing past and present institutions as worthless. Everything that has existed has been a necessity of condition, the best that could be—and so of the present—and so it must be of the future. Humanity is progressive, and, as it comes into a new and higher condition, it only sees, by contrast, that what once was right and good, has been superceded by something better.

R. A. Meeblan, El Paso.—The best cure we know for a real cancer, is, to have it cut out before it suppurates. Consult a good surgeon immediately.

T. G. M., Starfield, Ill.—Thank you for your kind regards. We should be pleased to print the communication you allude to, did not the press of other matter prevent.

H. C. P., Washington, D. C.—Your poem will appear next week. Happy to hear from you often.

Philadelphia Correspondence.

Mrs. Hyzer's Lectures—Miss A. W. Sprague's Address.

Dear Banner—Mrs. Hyzer lectured to a full house on Sunday morning, giving abundantly of that beautiful inspiration she draws from so fully. She spoke of the immortality of every fact, to the indwelling and abiding spirit of which, the fact was the outer or material garb. And men clung to its external view and adaptation, forgetful of the immortality enshrined within; questioning not the revelations given to their own souls, nor their own souls acceptation of truth; but relying on the literal versions of the past, heedless of the spiritual beauty dwelling therein. She told us of the divine faculties lying dormant within the soul of the vilest sensualist, giving scarcely any indication of their existence in his outward and debasing acts; yet, at some time in the future, the dross cast off, the soul regenerated by the fires of purification, which suffering entails on the perverted use of noble energies, the angel would stand forth, and bless the trials that had upraised him from his darkness. Not to say "I am holier than thou"—not to fear contamination by contact with those beneath—not to fear to pass through fire, least smoke should stain our robes of purity; but to enfold with loving charity all God's world of suffering, wrong and misery. Such is the mission of the true reformer—the earnest Spiritualist. Not in the assemblies of the mighty and the good, would the great teacher, Jesus, be always found; but in the lower realms, distributing his love, upraising to a better life, the sinner and the darkened soul.

She told us of a little child—away among the mountains of Vermont—whose infantile mind dwelt on the Heavenly Father until it grew the one dominant idea of her life; and, impressed with the belief that he was sitting above in the clouds on his great white throne, surrounded by his angelic legions, a crowned and sceptered King, she determined that she would see his face. For that purpose she mounted on an eminence, and, armed with a long pole, vainly endeavored to reach the clouds, thinking to pierce their denseness, and there behold the God she heard so much of. But failing to accomplish her purpose, and, losing her equilibrium, she fell from her elevated position, down among her father's swine. The affrighted animals scampered away in all directions; and, alarmed by their noise, her parents hastened to the spot, to find their darling prostrate on the ground—to hear from her, her strange attempt at discovering God. Then they reasoned with the child; told her that He she sought was everywhere—in everything—and led her mind to fairer and clearer views of Deity. The medium proceeded to give the simple fact in scriptural language, proving, then, how sacred it would be held, as bearing the signet of ancient authority; and how the child's aspiring, seeking mind, would have been portrayed as a mark of presumptuous investigation—her fall among the unclean animals, a manifest sign of especial punishment. Thus, forgetful of the revelations, the immortality living within the facts of the present, we reach far back into the past, or aspire to the future, while life is every day unfolding in beauty of revelation before us.

Not to become so harmonious (within our own belief) that we cannot harmonize with any one; but to enfold, even as God's archangels descend to do, the suffering and the erring with the gulding, saving arms of love and charity; taking to ourselves no merit for this—thinking ourselves no better or holier—but simply performing the angel duties of love to humanity. Much more she said, that was true and beautiful, as responded to by the beaming countenances, the smiles of genuine approval bestowed upon her utterances.

In the evening, a crowded house awaited her. The sweet, devotional strain: "Joyfully, joyfully, onward we move!" was sung by the choir, and Mrs. Hyzer arose to give her farewell lecture, which was listened to with that silence and attention indicative of profound interest, and strongly awakened feeling.

She spoke of the deep significance of our simplest forms of expression, taking as an illustration the phrase: "Man is the creature of circumstances." Eloquently and convincingly, as viewed by the light of her own experiences—viewed from the standpoint of moral elevation that is gained by conflict, she combatted this sentiment; demonstrating that circumstances, however crushing and oppressive, were the servants of our being, as they ministered to our spiritual education; and, by their force, by trial and suffering, fitted the soul for a higher life. We are, therefore, the gainers and the conquerors, and circumstances serve us; and we are benefitted by them, even when they wring our hearts with the intensest suffering, for thereby strength and elevation is given to the higher nature. Shower and tempest were as necessary to the earth as sunshine; and so the spirit, in place of shrinking from and dreading trial, should even ask of the Father more of that spiritual discipline whereby the soul is purified and exalted.

The farmer, casting the small seed into the earth, despairs not because it does not at once uprear its head above the ground. He waits patiently, knowing that the shower is as beneficent as the sunshine; and he waits until time brings forth the plenteous harvest. So with human souls; indications are there of Godlike capacities, vast intellectual powers, deathless energies, undying affections; scintillations of glory from the source divine that gave them; they need only expansion, growth, cultivation. Trial and suffering, by softening and spiritualizing, brought out the soul's divinest faculties, endowing it with strength, with power of conquest. Every aspiration of Nature was responded to by inspiration; and, guided by purity of motive, we could soar above the fetters of circumstances, that could not retard the soul's progression. The beautiful and spiritual meaning of the words, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone 'a new name written,' which no man knoweth,' saving he that receiveth it," she rendered as signifying the strength and wisdom gained in overcoming the world, the outside temptations, the grossness of downward tendencies. The name written on the stone was the sacred name of liberty, understood only by him who received it.

"We believe in repentance," she said, for recognition of error is repentance, and that is continual, and with it brings salvation in the future from the like error; we believe in a practical hell—a purifying process for the soul; in baptism in the living waters of a purer life, a higher morality; but our hell is not everlasting—it is not punishment of an offended Deity, but the natural, inevitable condition resulting from wrong.

As she proceeded to bid us farewell, many eyes were filled with tears, and many hearts throbbed in unison with her words of love. She thanked the friends for the kindness and cordiality she had met with; she promised to return among us, saying there was now no if affixed to that willing pledge. She knew she would return, if not with the mortal organism to address us—in spirit; for she had felt the warm hands of love; the heart-throbs of sympathy had met her utterances, and she would surely return to us again. A reverential silence pervaded the deeply-moved audience as she sang her sweet, touching, farewell song, promising reunion in "the bright land of beauty," ending with a loving "good night," that came from the depths of her true, womanly heart, addressed to all.

Blessings be on her path, and on the way of all who teach so gently, so persuasively of God and duty! who portray life so divinely, and deck purity in such exalted seraph-robes. More of such angel-teachings; more of that broad, enduring, all-embracing charity, that is so Christlike, so divine! and earth, indeed, ere long, will join in the starry music; earth, which the poet T. L. Harris says, as yet is mute amid the planetary choir.

Miss A. W. Sprague is with us; and angels have blessed her life-path with a noble and successful mission; with renewed strength, and with untiring effort in the cause she has espoused. Blooming, radiant, and serenely happy, she beams upon us for a short visit. She lectured on Sunday afternoon, at three o'clock, at Samson Street Hall, giving us a beautiful exposition of the principles of justice.

She spoke of mercy as a manifestation of justice, wherewith the advanced soul accorded forgiveness of all injuries. That much of the feeling of resentment within, was occasioned by the want of harmony in the soul; when that was attained, then justice was a natural impulse, and forgiveness a spontaneous act. She compared the theoretical preachings of the law of love, as taught by Jesus, with the practical enforcements of the Mosaic law; still calling loudly an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, blood for blood!" She said that it was justice not to return a favor we had received to the giver, who needed not its return, but to bestow it upon those more needy than ourselves or he; thus, carrying still further the purposes and lovely mission of benevolence, thus truly exercising justice.

To those who call for stringent laws, and binding penal codes, her address would prove unpalatable; but to the reformer, the man and woman exercising their best aspirations in charity, this merging of mercy into simple justice, was a beautiful truth, an evident fact.

Practicing as well as preaching this angelic doctrine, Miss Sprague bends her willing footsteps to the prisons, and cheers the drooping souls the world hast cast out from its joys and heritage, by words of love and hope, and counsel, long remembered by the grateful throng. I am told that the poor prisoners listen respectfully, in deep silence, to the spirit-medium. God alone knows the upwelling prayer, the faith, the aspiration of those longing souls!

Miss Munson is very successful in this city. She is engaged to lecture in Samson street two weeks in February. Amid the band of earnest, unflinching, soulful workers in the cause, she will always be found a faithful sentinel.

Our friend Thomas G. Forster is spoken of with much enthusiasm. All long to hear him again.

A society for health reform is organizing. Altogether, the signs of the times are hopeful; and men and women are rapidly growing out of the frivolities of life, to aspire to higher, nobler things; to cultivate the spirit and enrich the heart; and Philadelphia, although "slow," is sure.

Yours for truth, Cora Wilburn.

Philadelphia, Jan. 17, 1859.

New York Correspondence.

The Weather—The Conference—Mrs. W. R. Hayden—Warren Chase.

Dear Banner—I sit down this bright, beautiful, spring-like morning, somewhat in the predicament of the man who was called upon to speak. I don't know how to begin, or what to say; therefore, I judge the safest and best, to be the commonest way, and begin about the weather, which for the last few days has been so mild and glorious, especially for a clime like this, not noted, I should say, for mildness in these months, that one might suppose the clerk of the weather, for some service rendered, had conferred an especial favor upon the denizens of this wilderness of souls. And Broadway, between Canal street and Union square, during these pleasant days, has teemed with gay and costly equipages, handsome ladies, and of the men I think it more just to leave the opposite sex to decide. But after all, what is life in New York? To become acquainted with it in its fullest sense, its mysteries, its pleasures and its glare, a person must first bid farewell to sympathy and ingenuousness, and submit to the motion of fashion, as an anchorless ship is swayed by the waves of the sea.

The Conference, last night, notwithstanding a storm which set in about noon, was quite fully attended. Question for the evening was as follows:—The Spiritual Circle, what are its scientific elements, its uses, abuses and dangers? Dr. Orton argued that an indiscriminate or mixed circle was not without its dangers, for there is, said he, not only the influence of the spirits, but certainly the influence of mortals. The condition of each member is taken up to a certain extent by the other, as well also as the condition of the spirits; thus if the condition of those composing the circle is not harmonious, it attracts a like condition on the spiritual plane. And so, while even disease may be communicated by this blending of the physical, the moral may be injured by the blending of the spiritual, attracted by such inharmony.

Dr. Hallock—Use is the basic element and fundamental principle underlying Spiritualism, as well as everything else. And this use is administered by the most rigid economy. Spiritualism must be needed before we can have it. And the absence of a want of realization of a need, is not in itself objectional—it is only a state. Spiritualism becomes a want and need to the man who has found that nothing else answers his queries of life—a man who has to grapple with his own mind the great question of a hereafter.

The term circle, is a state—a communication between two planes—one must be positive, the other negative or receptive. In every congregation founded on true religious sentiments, the minister is positive, the congregation negative. This state exists in all life, between father and child, between earth and heaven; and, until the circle comes into a negative, a wanting condition, it must not expect to receive anything from any source. It is not necessary that a man who is imbued with the love of use—a man who acts on the God plane—should be subject to fall by associating with those beneath him; if so, is not God in danger, who is every day communicating with this world, where all are beneath him? Was not Christ in danger, as he walked the earth? A man has no business to lay his shortcomings to his neighbor; to the individual is the source of fault; to-day the individual is talked to. A whiskey-bottle is no temptation to you or I, but it is to a man on the plane with the whiskey-bottle. A man who is above a thing which tempts him, cannot be in danger; if so, God himself may be perverted by the miasma arising from his own world.

Dr. Gray—By the spiritual circle, I understand always the arrangements of conditions for communicating with the world of spirits. It has an analogy on earth; there is no real communication here, unless one becomes negative or attentive to the other. All communication may be expressed by this world circle. But spiritual circle is the creating of conditions for communication with the spirit-world. One danger arises from sitting in a circle, entirely an earth one, and imagining it to be a spiritual one. Parties constituting such circles are apt to become ecstatic, jump about, sing, go off into mesmeric fits, &c.; but we have the consolation that such are easily cured, and quickly got over; all parasitical plants die early. Another danger is the abuse of the mesmeric relation here in the body—that of continuing the relation, whether spiritual, or not, too long—such as in meetings, where men are elevated a little above the business plane, where the mesmeric condition exists between speaker and listener. No circle ought to be kept in session over one hour and a half; no revival meeting, no poetic fever, or courtship. Now, a true spiritual circle must be known by a physical manifestation; after we have become perfectly negative, before we are certain that we are communicating with those on a different plane, we must have a physical manifestation, which cannot be referred to a visible source.

Mr. Partridge thought the question could n't be decided until we knew when the true circle begins, and the false ends. He thought this hot-house circle business was objectionable—this developing of mediums. The circle gets some friend whom they suppose to be negative; by and by, after concentrating their thoughts, and getting the negative party under a high state of excitement, he or she takes hold and moves the table with their hands; then the circle says, you are deceiving us. Now the negative party is not to blame; they are honest; the circle—ignorant, too, in their own folly—causes this movement on the part of the susceptible party. After some further remarks, the Conference adjourned.

Mrs. Hayden, of Boston, opened at Munson's rooms a few days since, and I am informed that she gives general satisfaction, being quite successful in giving names. Her time is entirely occupied, and I believe she is to remain for some time to come.

Warren Chase commences at Dodworth's, to-morrow; and your quite-dissatisfied-with-himself-correspondent, hoping that as many blessings as fall to his lot, may visit you,

Remains, Hopeful.

New York, Jan. 22, 1859.

EXTRACTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

Plymouth, Jan. 17.—"On Monday evening last we visited the hall occupied by the Spiritualists of Plymouth, in which they have regular circles on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings. On entering the hall, we were favorably impressed, by listening to sweet, and, as it appeared to us, heavenly singing; and we at once felt that a large band of spirits from the higher spheres were present. We had scarcely taken a seat at the table, when an elderly lady—we should judge some seventy years of age—by the name of Manter, belonging to Half-way Ponds, was entranced, and the spirits, through her organization, poured forth a strain of heartfelt devotion seldom listened to by earth's children; it was listened to attentively, and caused a feeling to run through the circle, that fairly lifted them from their seats, and not only them, but the table, seemed a thing of life, and waved to and fro.

The next speaker was Miss C. Allen, the well-known poetess, and it is unnecessary for us to say, that the aspirations that came through her organism, were of the highest order, and God grant that we may again be allowed to listen to such sentiments.

Miss Betsey Ann Ryder was the next medium whom the spirits entranced, and although we have had the pleasure of listening to her before, we must say, that in no case did we ever see a medium progress so fast; her voice is soft and sweet; her attitudes beautiful; her language sublime. We think there is no doubt that she will make a medium of the first order. A number of tests were given through this medium to different persons in the hall, which were entirely satisfactory.

Miss M. A. Shaw was used in a very pleasant and interesting manner, as a medium for speaking to the Spiritualists of their duties as Christians; also, giving tests. The spirits also sang a beautiful hymn through her organism.

Mrs. Seymour's ideas on prayer were elevating and beautiful.

The prayer by the spirit of Dr. Ervin Webster, through the mediumship of B. N. Crandon, was listened to attentively, and the circle was closed by singing 'Old Hundred.' We do say, of all the public circles that we ever attended, this seemed to be the most exalting and heavenly, and if the Spiritualists of Plymouth hold such circles as these, the hall which they now occupy—although capable of holding three hundred persons—will not be large enough to hold the people who will be anxious to hear. God grant that the glorious cause may prosper.

John E. Case, Norwich, Ct.—"The spirit of reform is fairly before the people of this place. We have had lectures from Mrs. Farnum, Miss Johnson, Mr. Whiting, Mr. Storer, A. J. Davis, Mary F. Davis, and other fearless laborers in reform. Mr. E. S. Wheeler, of this town, recently delivered two able lectures. He is a mechanic, and his advantages for education have only been such as poverty, care, and hard labor have offered him. His speaking, considering his advantages, is truly wonderful—he may be ranked among the first speakers. Those who have known his past life are filled with astonishment at the eloquence and intelligence he now utters. We commend Mr. W. as a speaker to such as are in want of a profound clear and beautiful exponent of the truths of Spiritualism.

Dr. E. L. Lyon.—"I have just returned from the State of Maine. I spoke three Sabbaths in the city of Portland, to large and highly intelligent audiences. The cause is progressing in that city, and their motto seems to be, in the fullest sense of the word, truth and progression. Their financial affairs are executed with promptness and discretion. As a practical demonstration of their perseverance and liberality, they send you fifty new subscribers for the Banner. May their noble and praiseworthy efforts for truth and freedom be crowned with abundant success."

Reports.

BOSTON REFORM CONFERENCE.

Monday Evening, Jan. 17, 1859.

Subject—"Can a man's character be known by his judgment of others?"

Mr. Burke—There is nothing more common than to pass judgment on the character of others, for or against them. All men do this—some in a greater, and some in a less degree. Why is it not right to thus judge? Of the natural world we judge; we judge of the character of the coming day by signs in the heavens; we judge of the qualities of plants and discriminate between the poisonous and the nutritious; we pass our judgment on weight, measure, size, and shape, and why may we not judge of the qualities and character of men, to which all other things, of which we judge, are subordinate? To judge well of a man's character, we must first know his ruling passion; and, by knowing this, we discriminate with almost unerring certainty, and learn his real character:

"Search, then, the ruling passion: there alone,
The wild are constant, and the cunning known;
The fool consistent, and the false sincere;
Priests, princes, women, no dissemblers here."

Pope delineated the character of Wharton by knowing his ruling passion. Now, every man has a ruling passion, which, if we learn, we have a key to his character. The motives of action lie concealed in the ruling passion. If a man has a love of praise, he will condemn others; if he desires a clean reputation, he will blast that of others. It is a conclusion of practical life, that, just in proportion as a man levies faults on me, or on you, just in that proportion he has the elements in him which, when brought out, will cause him to be guilty of the same fault he condemns. It is not honorable, or reputable, to call any man or woman disreputable. The man who has a fault, is always first and loudest to condemn that same fault in others. Thus it is fair to presume that the judgment a man bestows on others, is but the reflection of his own character.

Mr. Buntin—To me it is exceedingly difficult to know a man's character; for deception runs through all the ramification of society. I cannot agree with Mr. Burke, for I known a virtuous, honest and good man who did denounce wrong in others. The world is so deceitful, and deceit is so common in all the business transaction of men, that a man cannot maintain his own without it. If I hear an honest man exposing the dishonesty of a dishonest man, it is to me evidence of honor and justice; while if he did not expose dishonesty, when he is conscious of it, would be dishonorable and unjust. I believe that the man who loudly praises dishonesty, is the biggest cheat; and the man who denounces it, is the most honest.

Mr. Trask—How are we going to judge correctly of the character of another person by the judgment that person renders another? Sayings are moonshine. It seems to me that the series of actions that make up a man's life, make the basis for our judgment of his character. You can form but a false judgment of a priest by his sermons; his actions are the only true standard by which to judge of his character. A few men may have the power to analyze and read character by the conformation of the phrenological organs, and the features of the face; but I cannot agree with brother Burke that character can be judged of, by judgment passed on others.

Mr. Cushman—The interest taken in the subject before us depends upon the capacity of the person. Some take but little interest in it, while others think it full of interest. Every man and woman carry with them an index of their character. All may not understand how character may be read, but he who does, may run and read, and err not. I will go into an assembly with whom I have no acquaintance, and I hear expressions from each, peculiar to each; one will censure everybody and everything; nothing is right, and everything is wrong. Such a person is all wrong within; has a character that rests on the condemnation of others, that needs patching up. By this general condemnation, I judge this person's character to be generally bad. Another censures justly—finds fault with that only which is faulty—gives credit where credit is due. This seems just, and is indicative of a just character, while those who censure everybody and everything are suspicious, unjust, and bad. Justice predicated on reason is one of the first principles necessary to sustain society. But judgment beyond justice comes from an evil source, and bears with it bad consequences. The best men find the least fault, and judge the least.

Mr. Pike—This is an important question, if it will lay down some rule whereby we, can know a man's character. The study of man is always an important study. I want a rule by which I can judge of man—a rule that never fails. Mr. Burke's rule I think may sometimes fail. We can judge something of a man's character by his phrenology and his physiognomy, by his speaking and his writings, by his unpretending and his general actions; all these together, if well studied, give us some correct clue to a man's character, while simply from the opinion a man may express of another, I feel great uncertainty about a correct estimate of his character.

Mr. Colman—If Mr. Burke's opinion for reading character can be sustained, it must be done with uncommon eloquence. I like this question, or any question that will enable me to read correctly the character of others. I have found myself unable to read human character by the manifestations of the man. I find myself continually disappointed in my estimate of character. When a man has been kind and benevolent, I have judged well of him; but I have had my judgment reversed by unkindness and malevolence. Thus the judgment we bestow on others is prompted by circumstances; and I know of no other way of which to judge of men, but by what they do, and this judgment is subject to constant change.

Mr. Wetherbee—There is nothing in this question fit for discussion. It is absurd to think you can judge of a man what he says of another. Talleyrand says language was by given for man to disguise his thoughts. There are a thousand better ways to judge of character than this. There is being developed a true way of reading character. This is already developed in some very impressible mediums to a considerable degree. This is done, and it is done too with undeviating certainty. This is a new development; it comes with Spiritualism. It has been well tested, and proved to be something new, and of great value. We may call it soul-reading; which, by some unseen, and yet unexplained means, is the reflected character of one soul on another, the impression of which is certain knowledge of the character of another.

Mr. Wheaton—The consideration of this question is both useful and interesting. The character of men and women can be known to a great extent by what they say of others. A charitable man is never a bad man. The most beautiful of all virtues is charity. No man would place implicit trust in a calumniator. Mr. Burke's position in regard to this question is correct in many respects.

Mr. Edson—The man who forgives all the faults of others has the character which approaches that of an angel; while the man who forgives nobody, and finds fault with everybody, has a character which approaches that of beasts and birds of prey, a character that rends and devours. There is at the present time a refining process in the natural development of man, which is the unfolding of an instinctive perception of the real qualities and characteristics of others. This we may say is the result of a refining process in the growth of man. Some are so developed in this direction, as to correctly perceive the true moral atmosphere and character of others.

N. FRANK WHITE AT THE MELODEON.

Sunday Afternoon, January 23d.

The choir of six sweet voices sang the psalm beginning

"Life is onward—use it."

The lecturer's text was the Old Testament passage, "Thou art weighed in the balance, and found wanting." He said: Mysteriously written as by the hand of fire on the walls of the temple of the king of Babylon, centuries ago, were these words. In peace, the people of the luxurious city had grown careless in their security, and lascivious pleasure had ennervated the heart of the king, leading him to neglect the interests of his nation; and the glut of prosperity had made his subjects sit in fancied security when the chariot-wheels of the enemy rumbled distinct to the listening ear. On her boards were the products of every clime, and in the intoxication of the sense, every one felt the impending, irresistable doom, though none dared speak the word of warning, as they listened to the frightful orgies to Bacchus, blending with the clarion of the beleaguering army. Suddenly on the walls of the palace, as with the brilliancy of a hundred lights, a flaming finger was seen, writing this direful message, and pleasure, frightened, fled, while mirth trembled in its gaiety. And while the sentence, "Thou art weighed in the balance, and found wanting," was trembling on the lips of the Hebrew prophet, the city was the pray of a victorious enemy. That beautiful city was weighed by the hand of Justice, and found wanting in those God-given principles which exalt the soul above servility. Her king became a cringing slave, deserted by those who in the maudlin silliness of intoxication, pledged fame, life and service to their master. And their own degraded selves answered for their fall.

"Thou art weighed in the balance, and found wanting." In after years this was written on the altars of Levi's ordained priesthood—not in the language of livid flame, but in words that spoke to the minds of men. The smoke that rose from the desecrated altars wreathed it in fantastic letters, and the wail of the lamb before the slaughter-knife whispered it in accents not to be mistaken. Yes, the altar of the Levite was weighed in the balance and found wanting, and now only smouldering ashes mark the spot where it stood.

Rome, robed in all the brazen insignia of power—surrounded by all the majesty of courts; her thirsty maw satiated by the blood of heritics, was weighed in the balance, and found wanting. Although her apostolic-descended priesthood hurl the thunderbolts of malignant malediction, they are impotent to harm, and she sits on the ruins of her power, and only frowns and scowls. She is passing from among the powers that have ruled man's soul by terror, and is now only a shadow of what once she was. That same dread sentence is being written on the walls of the temples of all powers that have made the masses tremble in fear and terror, and they are passing away, or surrendering supinely to the enemy at the gates. The religion of to-day is a worthless nonentity.

What has she of those three virtues, Faith, Hope and Charity—the essence of the teachings of the man of Nazareth? Where is faith? We find it not. The sick may perish with disease, and none can bid him rise, be healed. If one attempt to do the act of kindness to suffering mortality, the laugh of scorn is heard. From the pulpit the cry of sorcery comes, and curses are hurled by clergy and laity against all who exercise the gifts that should be theirs to use. She has no faith in humanity; all she has is stamped on creeds and dogmas. There is no faith in immortality, aside from that promised by blind creeds, and when the evidence comes to the searcher after it, they reject it, and call the ones who receive it, fools. They know immortality only as a transcendental dream, frosted over with age.

What is hope but a meaningless word? How does the Christian die? Is there no fear and trembling when the icy fingers of death feel for the heart-string, to break them? Some have, or affect to have, a stupid confidence in salvation through another's death. Yet they dream of fearful torture, and couple immortality with it. When the grim terror, Death breaks a gentle bud from the parent stem, and the weary mourners weep from night to morning, and mourn from morning to night, you know their hope is hidden beneath the coffin lid. No matter what the lips may say, the heart tells the sad story.

And last comes heaven-born Charity. Surely this hideous monster, with that holy name stamped upon her brazen brow, is not Charity! We did not think to find her in the Church of Rome; but the followers of Calvin and Luther, and those who fled from the tyranny of an established church to the coldness of a western wild; should, gaging themselves by their own need for it, treat with kindness they whom they came in contact with. But it was not so, and Charity sought her birthplace in the heavens again, and a brazen strumpet took her place.

Christianity was weighed in the balance, and found wanting—wanting in Faith, Hope and Charity, and, so, in all that is lovely and of good repute within her.

The feast of bigotry is nearly over. Her own self-confidence has been her ruin. The shrinking flesh no longer quivers beneath the pincers she has heated. Truth is divine, and needs no longer a creed, to make it believed. It may be bound for a time; learned rabbins may chain it, but while it is immortal, the chains will rust away by time, and she will be free again.

In nature only are the soul's wants satisfied. Out under the blue and cloud-flecked dome of heaven, away from the discordant jangle of the selfish church bells, the soul may learn more of life, death and immortality in a single hour than in a lifetime spent under the teachings of the theologian. Ask of the world what are the attributes of Deity. Your own affections tell you that love is not the least. The grain seed and flower tell you of omnipresence; the rolling and beating waves of ocean tell you of power; the dark-rolling clouds—the leaping lightning, and murmuring thunders, of majesty. Then come out of the sin-stained temples of passion and appetite. Bow not at the behest of they who cry "Great is Diana!" for you know why they cry. Don't confess yourself the slave of the past. The religion of the present day bids you believe that God, after creating the earth, met his antagonist on an open field in warfare, and his children, created in God's own image, were the prize. How much of victory was God's, let them answer. Nine-tenths of those innocent victims are doomed to unending torment. They prate of the glories of heaven; but let them stop their ears and shut their eyes, to hide the horrid cries and keep out the sight of the rolling eye-balls—rolling over in search of relief, and rolling in vain. It sickens me to dwell on such fables. Was not the mythologic Jove, more of a God than this?

Lift your voices no longer against the religion which thrusts the zealous believer before the Juggernaut car—which plunges the young and old in the bed of muddy Ganges—which burns the widow on the funeral pyre of her husband; call back your missionaries from the wilds of Africa, for their religions do not require the sacrifice of souls to propitiate divine vengeance. Avoid the cold valley of sectarianism with its airs of mystery, and intoxicating fogs; up from the luxurious couch of orthodoxy—fly from its enervating embrace, ere you become chilled and frozen there. Rule yourself by Faith, Hope and Charity, and you will not be weighed in the balance and found wanting.

Sunday Evening.

In the evening, after a hymn from the choir, the lecturer gave out his subject as the "Opposition to, and good resulting from Spirit Communion."

We shall give a fuller abstract of it next week, for, like pent-up Utica, our powers are cramped; and it is a law of modern philosophy that the lesser cannot contain the greater. In other words, our paper has only forty columns of matter, and when they are full, will hold no more.

CORA L. V. HATCH AT CLINTON HALL, NEW YORK.

Wednesday, January 19, 1859.

As usual, a committee of three was called for, and nominated by the audience, to choose a subject for the evening's discourse—consisting of the following named gentlemen: Mr. Cowell, Mr. Greenough, and Mr. Jones, who retired, and in a few moments returned the following subjects, submitting the choice to the audience:

1st. Biology is derived from two Greek words—Bios, meaning life, and Logos, meaning a word. The question therefore would be "a word about life." It is a very open question—might be taken by a smart person in a variety of senses. But if the spirits can tell the senses of the word, they can also tell the derivation.

2d. Which has done the most toward the progress of Christianity—the literature of the Hebrews, or that of the Romans?

3d. Is there any difference in the tides in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, at the Isthmus of Darien? If so, what is the difference, and the cause of it?

These questions were read in order to the audience, and in the voting on each, the yeas equalled the nays, and a scene ensued not very creditable to an audience which as far as the eye could tell, were quite respectable. Loud calls were made for a new committee—equally loud ones for the first, second and third subjects. One gentleman, a Mr. Gardner, who hardly knew what he did want, essayed to speak, but with the hissing and "sit downs" he was obliged to resume his seat. He thought it was n't quite right to vote the Cincinnati directory and call it our own. If the audience choose a question, let them choose—if the medium chooses one, all well and good. Mrs H. here rose—"We desired the audience to select a committee—not to have a free fight—a committee that would choose one subject, not three" Here the committee retired again, and decided upon the 2d subject which was presented. Voice—It's too common a subject. 2d voice—We've had too much theology—we want something practical! The subject was cried down, and a new committee called, consisting of Mr. Potter, Mr. Gardner, (who was nominated as "the man that tried to say something, but could n't,") and Mr. Lawrence. These gentlemen handed up the following subject, which was heartily cheered.

Has man progressed in intellectual power since the Christian era? Intellect to be understood as defined by Webster.

PRAYER.

Our Father, we adore thy power, thy light and thy majesty. We thank thee for all the blessings which thou hast poured upon thy children. We ask no especial favor of thee to-night—we simply ask that we may partake of the blessings here and hereafter; that we may be filled with thy love and power—and to thy name shall be the power and glory forever and forever.

DISCOURSE.

The usual time devoted to the discussion of the subject, has been spent in useless controversy, and therefore we proceed at once to the consideration of the subject. Intellect, according to our idea of Webster, is the power of consecutive thought based upon the investigation of science, or the gift in men's minds of the consecutive arrangement of ideas Intelligence and Intellect are to us as widely separated as cause and effect—one the outgrowth of the other. Intelligence is the instinct of the mind—that which belongs to every grade of being. Intelligence is a piece of marble—Intellect is the sculptor. Intellect is the gorgeous landscape picture. Intellect is always second—always governed by men's thoughts.

We are not far out of the way when we say man has advanced but little in intelligence, although intellect may have modified him. Every period has its intellectual criterion—its standard which irradiates all about it. Intellect is not common—it belongs to few minds—and the Christian era is regarded as a stupendous triumph of the mind.

The Hebrews, Greeks and Romans were the shrines of intellectual power—the arts and poetry of their time were equal to anything we have now. It did not make an errand boy of the lightning; it drove no snorting horse across the country; it was grand; all alone in the prison; all alone in the cloister; all alone where the poet spake of splendid things. Greece and Rome—we have none now. Their glory is forever departed, and the scholastic beauty of their halls is broadcast over the land—the pyramids remain as silent monuments of the intellectual grandeur of the age. Intellect has breathed on all modern science in this way; that, what was confined to the cloister and the cell, is now the common property of all who will possess it. What was once known as astrology, the science of the stars, the school-boy now dwells upon. What was known as alchemy, is now known by every artist, every scientific man, every person who understands the practical departments of life, as chemistry. What was known as mythology, is now understood as ancient history; and a bird, a leaf, or flower is comprehended by all. What was then in secret, is now lisped by infant lips and reached by millions. Poetry known then as an art by those who were far above those beneath them, is now the theme of all who revel in art and literature. Mathematics, then used as an accomplishment, is now a standard of every-day life. Every farmer, mechanic and merchant must be mathematicians, and without it your practical life would sink into nothing. We have not such exciting structures as those which are in Egypt, but still we have those which serve utility better. We have something stronger than marble pillars, something higher than trees, and more grand than the pyramids. What has done this? The Theologian says, Christianity; the Infidel, intelligence. We say both. Intelligence was before Christianity; Intellect before the Christian era; but no power short of God could blend the two. The mysteries of the pyramids were stripped, but the knowledge did not come out until years and years after the builders slumbered in their graves. Christianity has done this for the diffusion of intellect; it has not made people more intelligent or more intellectual; it has simply given what was already known to a few to the whole. Some will tell you Christianity has done nothing for the world. Why have we not a Socrates? If Christianity has done nothing to advance intelligence, we would say that every school-boy is a Socrates or Plato. Have you not in every school the wisdom of a Pythagoras? Two and two make four, is the secret of all mathematics. The simple rules of moral deportment are worth more than all the sciences.

Again, we do not say that the dawn of Christianity has had all to do with the diffusion of intelligence; it has simply been a means that God has made use of. The stars, once astrologically considered, now are read, as they gem God's temple, to guide and direct, as the compass. And the lightning, which was God's flash of power, and the thunder which was God's anger, now is your messenger; and you smile as you read a message oft brought you by the lightning. The water, which was known only as the ocean and in drops to refresh men, now is a motive power, and intellect travels to the remotest corners of the earth. Franklin, the trifler and fanatic, is now the idolized of a nation; and, still later, Morse, who carried out Franklin's idea, has given you an intellectual achievement.

Compare Greece with all her classical history to modern intellect. It has caused earth and sky to move, and bridged the abyss between earth and heaven; and now you talk with the stars. A comet, then a terror or forerunner of evil, is now a mystery to common people; yet it is known by them as a substance which has nothing to do with this earth; that it is composed of something which, if ten thousand were to strike the north pole, would n't move it a mite. But, says the inquirer, what has this to do with the Christian religion? We are speaking of the intellect only—not of the specialities which constitute religion.

Though you have not the colossal pyramids—though you have not the acquirements of the Romans, the light of the Hebrews, all are in the minds of those that can read and understand; and if the business world could find the time, it would outbuild the pyramids, if only to show the ancients what could be done. Though you have not classical litera-

CONTINUED ON THE EIGHTH PAGE.

The Messenger.

Each article in this department of the BANNER, we claim was given by the spirit whose name it bears, through Mrs. J. H. CONANT, Trance Medium, who allows her medium-powers to be used only for this object.

These messages are not published on account of literary merit, but as tests of spirit communion to those friends to whom they are addressed.

We hope to show that spirits carry the characteristics of their earth life to that beyond, and do away with the erroneous idea that they are more than FINITE beings.

We believe the public should see the spirit world as it is—should learn that there is evil as well as good in it, and not expect that purity alone shall flow from spirits to mortals.

We ask the reader to receive no doctrine put forth by spirits, in these columns, that does not comport with his reason. Each expresses so much of truth as he perceives,—no more. Each can speak of his own condition with truth, while he gives opinions merely, relative to things not experienced.

Visitors Admitted. In order to satisfy the public that these messages are received as we claim, our sittings are free to any one who may desire to attend, on application to us.

They are held every afternoon, at our office, commencing at HALF-PAST TWO, after which time, no one will be admitted; they are closed by the spirit governing the manifestations, usually at half-past four, and visitors are expected to remain until dismissed.

MESSAGES TO BE PUBLISHED.

The communications given by the following spirits, will be published in regular course. Will every Spiritualist, who reads one from a spirit they recognize, write us whether true or false? By so doing, they will do as much to advance the cause of Spiritualism, as we can do by their publication.

Dec. 21—William Poor, Mary Foster, John Washburn.
Dec. 22—John King, Anonymous, William Chase, David Hill, James Finnegan.
Dec. 23—Elizabeth Hopkinson.
Dec. 27—Wm. Alliston, Tom Aiken to Richard.
Dec. 28—Polly Barclay, Edward Wilson, Joseph Jewell.
Dec. 29—James Brooks, Charles Adams, Abigail Simson, Charles Wilkins, Francis White.
Dec. 30—Mary Ann Marden, Solomon Winslow, George Collyer, Edward Butler.
Jan. 1—George White, David Sinclair, Susan Brown, Charles Johnson.
Jan. 3—Charlotte Tucker, Seth W. Winslow, Lorenzo Dow, Lizzie Homer.
Jan. 5—Geo. Loveland, Peter Elkins Sanborn, Tim. Brickett.
Jan. 6—Elizabeth Dow, Anonymous, Joseph Hutchins, Richard Sims.
Jan. 7—Alexander Noble, Edward Henderson, William Crozier.
Jan. 8—Henri Dejoin, John Hazwell, Patrick Murphy, Edward Payson.

Samuel Atkinson, London.

I am a stranger, and do not understand your mode of operating. I have been told you require certain things of those who come unto you. May I ask what you require of me? Suppose I have no friends here, what then?

Well, friend, I am a stranger to you and yours, but I think I have some on earth who may recognize me. Will it make any difference how far distant they are from here? You require my name and age, and such facts as I can give to identify myself. Am I to understand that all who come here are to give what they please?

My name was Samuel Atkinson. I was born in London. I died in London, England; that's my home. I have friends there—relatives; one in particular, whom I am very anxious to speak with, or approach in some way. That person is my grandchild, who lives where I used to live, in Wellington Square, London. I had two brothers—John and Francis—they are both in spirit-life. Three sons there were of Jonathan Atkinson. I feel troubled about the past. Can I, through your medium, make such restitution as I shall deem proper? At the time of my death, I was possessed of many thousand pounds. I disposed of all I had, and remembered not those I should have remembered—my daughter and her child. My daughter has since left earth; her child now sustains life by hard labor, and I would not have it so, for I cannot rest. Can I not do something to undo the wrong I did on earth? Can I do it? Tell me, for I want to know.

That child was then an infant. Can I not reach some one who will hear me and obey me? I have a nephew who has plenty—he is without children—is living in affluence. Can he not, by virtue of my desires, attend to the wants of that child? He lives in London; his name corresponds with my own.

Tell him I desire that he aid my grandchild; I, who died in 1831, while he was in youth. He, with many others, stood by my bedside, and received my last words. I will tell him I have repented of those words, and wish to unlock the seals I made so long ago. And if he does not aid me, by Heaven I will punish him. I know my power, but I have failed to use it, and I have looked forward to this avenue to gain happiness. My grand-daughter is by name Maria; her latter name, Wilbraham. I tell this, that there may be no mistake made, although she is the only one on earth bearing this relation to me. I was sixty-five years of age when I died. I would have this nephew of mine to give me an opportunity of speaking with him, for there are sources at home to which he can apply, and I will not be slow to meet him. The mother of this child has long, long followed me, demanding justice for her child. 'T is well; I would be happy by entering the right gateway of the city; but it is hard—very hard—to effect that we wish to, after we have lost our mortal bodies.

What else, sir, is needed? I expect you will send this to him. I can see no other avenue but for you to do so. How long before you will send this? Four weeks! and four weeks more to reach home! Ah, I forget—you travel faster than we were wont to do.

Direct to Samuel Atkinson, London. Should I fail in this my first undertaking, can I come to you again? Well, then, in the meantime I will gain more information, and, if necessary, give it to you. Oh, I am no stranger there. For the last ten years of my life I was a banker. Oh, that I had all that I have handled, and could do what I pleased with it, I could aid many of the suffering sons of earth. But it is gone, and I, a poor, foolish old man, am permitted to come back by some influence that pervades all things, to undo the wrong I did on earth. I feel I shall succeed in my undertaking, else I should not have been permitted to come. I will go, as I have nothing further to give you. Dec. 14.

William Hodgdon.

How do you do, sir? I'm a lucky individual—I think I am. I had no money to worry me, and to bring me here.

I got a little insight into this business, hearing that old fellow asking you questions. I was named William Hodgdon. I lived and died in Vassalboro', Maine. I don't mean to say I lived there all my life. I went to sea once, as far as Baltimore, and got sick of it.

I've got a sister down there, and I want to talk to her; but she's there, and I am here, and how can I talk to her? Well, then, most I have to say here to her, is for her to go somewhere and let me talk to her. I was in my twenty-second year when I died—that's certain; but I was n't sick. I was drowned. Oh, do n't go to classing me with suicides, for I had n't courage enough to do that. I fell overboard. I was a little drunk at the time, so it was suicide in one way; if I had n't been drunk, I should not have fallen overboard. They told me I must tell the truth. Well, do you think I have a good chance to talk to my sister? I would n't have come here if I thought there was no chance, for it is n't any easy road for such as me to travel over. I was a chair-maker; I did not work much at it, after I learned the trade.

My sister's name is Mary Ann Ridgeley. My father and mother died long ago; if it had n't been for that, I might not have been quite such a chap as I was. I was drowned in Portland; I was there on a spree. I thought I'd go to sea again—should n't have thought of that if I had n't been drunk—so I got a chance to go another way.

Well, what do you pay when you come here? I was going to say you would n't get any pay out of me, for I did n't leave any property.

I'd like to ask Mary Ann if she remembers the last words she said to me. They were, "That she hoped I'd come back sober, or not at all;" and then she mourned terribly, I am told, at my death. Was n't she a fool?

Oh, by the way, where is the Devil? That's what they all tell me—that they do n't know any such fellow. I guess there aint any, or some of them would have seen him; and I'm sure I would, if anybody could. Dec. 14.

Caleb Reed.

I have visited you before, as you will see when I shall give you the name I bore when on earth. One of the brethren, who was a member of the same church as myself, has desired me to come here and answer him the following question. Perhaps it will be well for me to here state that the brother is no believer in these things. He feels persuaded in his own mind that these manifestations are not what they purport to be, and yet he says, "Give me sufficient proof that they are, and I will believe in them."

The question is, "Will the fervent prayer of the truly righteous man draw down such blessings as he may ask of his God?"

Now, I cannot answer that question, perhaps, to satisfy that brother; but I will answer it as I see the truth.

In the first place, God is not what the brother thinks he is. As I understand him, he is a law—an immutable, fixed, unchanging law—which governs all things in life. Every atom in the vast universes of nature is subject to that law, and that is unchangeable; and man may pray until he finds himself an inhabitant of the spirit-world, and his prayers will not avail him anything.

We find the Christian sometimes praying that God will send rain upon the earth. Now, if God is a law unto himself—unchangeable—he certainly cannot be changed. God is not a toy, that he can be played with by the hands of the multitude. God is not a bubble, that you can cast upon the ocean of public opinion as you please. God is not a child, that you can control him; not a slave, that you can compel him to these things.

Now, who are the righteous of earth? Certainly not the brethren of the church. I find quite as much Christianity in the people not subject to the church, as among those in the sanctuary of the Lord God, so called.

Suppose that brother has a dear one lying sick, and all earthly aid has failed, and he sees that nature is failing—that all remedies have proved unavailing—suppose he should kneel down and pray fervently with that power to restore the sick one to health, can he violently wrench the power from death and nature? No, it cannot be. I will here tell him that the child has violated the laws of her natural being, and must die to natural sight, and all the prayers of the congregations of earth cannot save her.

Men sometimes grasp at straws, when all of earth has failed them; then they are willing to grasp the unreal things of life, or those which belong to that portion of nature that is concealed from their gaze.

Sometimes a friendly hand is stretched out to them, and, instead of grasping at nothing, they take hold of something. That dear brother has yet to understand of God—of himself—of the laws that govern him; and when he has understood them, he will not expect he can trespass upon those laws, and then receive a pardon for all, by virtue of prayer. Oh, prayer is good in its place, but it will not alter God, for God is nature; and while it progresses, its laws are fixed, and none can violate them without suffering the consequences.

If my good brother will condescend for a time to lay aside his old prejudices, and will meet me face to face, so that I may speak with him as I now speak here, I will prove to him that I do indeed have power to come to earth and control a form that is not mine, and will give him such advice as will benefit him. And all I ask from him is faith and good will, not only to myself, but to all the earth, and to be in harmony with God, and, of course, with all mankind.

My dear brother may choose his own way of communing with me, and I will endeavor to meet him. But as regards his prayers, he may as well stop now, for, in my opinion, they will be of no avail.

I will not give you the name of the friend who calls for me, for it will not be advisable. Mine was Caleb Reed, and I come in answer to a good brother, who desires to know if his child can be saved by prayer. Good day. Dec. 14.

Betsey Davis.

Oh, stranger, tell my husband to seek on until I shall be able to give the intelligence I wish to. I cannot be happy on account of my children.

Dec. 14. BETSEY DAVIS.

Mary Snyder.

What have you done with the letter sent for me to answer? And so you have lost it. You had a letter for me six months ago. Well, tell my friends you lost it. I could not answer it before to-day.

Well, well, no matter; tell them I came. Good bye. Dec. 14.

We are constantly in receipt of sealed letters from parties requesting answers to them from spirits, to whom they are said to be written. It will be seen at a glance that we could not enter into this branch of mediumship, and give any satisfaction to the public, with the limited time we can devote to this page of our paper. Still we place the letters on our table, and occasionally one is answered. The spirit, at first coming, endeavored to select the letter to her from our file; but not finding the one she recognized as a call upon her, asked where her letter was. We replied, that if she could not find it there, we must have lost it, as she affirmed we had once had one, which she intended to answer.

Charles Washburn.

Surely Nature is a fine workman; she is mighty in herself, who can comprehend her. Surely not the creature, for he sees only through the present; he cannot grasp the future with any certainly.

When I was in a mortal form, I supposed, and vainly, too, that when that form should be laid aside, I should fully understand myself, and become fully acquainted with my God. But no: I find that the Creator proceeds from man the creature—as man passes from one state of development to another, he finds himself no nearer to his Creator—on no better terms with him. Oh, nature! it is wrapped in mystery. A thousand mysterious folds enshroud her; and as the creature comes forth at her bidding, who, who can number the different degrees of development that creature shall pass through?

The Christian attempts to tell you; but as he stretches his finger into the future, he finds all doubt—nothing tangible—nothing real.

The Christians tell you, if you repent and come under their especial guidance, that as the soul passes out of mortal, near the close of day, you shall be with the Redeemer in Paradise. They will tell you that God has given them to know of these things. They will tell you that one Jesus, who was God in flesh, told them so—that he told the penitent, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise;" so they tell you, of this day, that the soul shall pass from earth to the immediate presence of God.

The people of to-day are crying out for better light—more truth. They are not satisfied with the past; but they are beginning to know that the past belongs to the past, and the light of to-day shines for the children of to-day.

Oh, my spirit went forth from this body of death, trammeled by superstition and error—loaded so heavily with the vile dogmas of my time, that when I awoke in the land where spirits dwell, I found that I was a stranger; that I must travel back to earth and there buy oil, that I might see and know of the present; for I saw that man must be content with the light of to-day—must grasp at the truths of his hour, and be able to understand them, ere the Creator will give him more.

Now Nature is an all bountiful and all powerful God; from her spring all things; by her are all things made perfect; to her we look, or should look, for all blessings—for all light; to her as our God, our creator, our father, our brother, our mother, our sister. They who dwell in light have taught me of these things; they have smothered that flame that has been burning on the altar of superstition and error, and I no longer send forth my hands to grasp a God in the New Jerusalem, paved with man's idol, gold. The New Jerusalem! a mere phantom in the fancy of man, decked with all the valuables that man has found in this stage of life. The Christian tells you the streets of the city are paved with gold. Whence came this? From the baser portion of man—that which bows before a throne of gold, and worships at the shrine of Mammon.

The Christians tell you that what you receive from the spirit-world is a picture formed on the brain and given from the lips. But they tell you of the great city, with its white throne, whereon sits the King of Ages. Whence comes this knowledge? May we not say this is an imaginary picture, and doth it not come from the grosser part of man himself?

Man loves gold, and the baser things of earth, and his spirit hath attenuated itself into the far-off land, and hath pictured to him a heaven to suit himself. Gold must be there, for gold is his idol—precious stones, the gems of earth must deck that city, else man, the gross one, could not conceive of a heaven. But the time has come when truth will rise triumphant—error will fade away—when truth shall give the creature man to know of the present, and when knowing of the present, he may be better able to judge of the future.

I was wounded in spirit, depressed in mortal, and came to the land of spirits in a mood hardly fit to enter that pure state of existence. My spirit had been so rudely dealt with by the vile superstitions that crowd your land and make so many souls sad, it was a long time ere I could tell where I was. But thanks be to Nature, that kind father, that loving mother, who will never leave the child who reposes in her confidence, has taken me back to the mundane sphere, that I might be happy in going hence again.

Eighteen years ago my spirit passed from the mortal, from yonder State Lunatic Hospital. Ah, well may I say amid the shadows of death—so dark was the valley of its shade, that the angels of the spheres beyond were not seen by me, by reason of the darkness. Insanity had shrouded me like a gloomy pall—insanity induced by what? By religion—by striving to crowd too much upon my mental and physical—by trying to believe I should one day be permitted to walk in a city whose streets were paved with gold, and sing Hallelujah to the Lamb.

My dear friends told me this was true; but my spirit rebelled at the nonsense, and 'mid the battle I became shrowded in insanity, from whose vile grasp I could not free myself, but from whence, in lucid moments, I could see the terrible battle going on; and then I looked for the city of the New Jerusalem but my soul was shrouded in darkness again; and, then I left the mortal in that dreadful state.

What shall I say to the deluded ones who are dwelling in houses without windows? I cannot say Peace, be still! for they have no ears to hear, no eyes to see. Yes, I am told that my mission is to minister to some poor soul who is bound by insanity. They say I can enter the darkest temple—yet I know not how. How dare I ask? for the answer, I know, will be, Go forth—for sufficient to the hour shall be the knowledge thereof.

But to those minds, or souls, or spirits, dwelling in mortal, who are striving to reconcile doubt with certainty, I would say, Peace, be still, and strive no longer to war with that you cannot reach. Be satisfied with the developments of to-day, which are the light of to-day. Grasp at all within your reach, and when you have accomplished that, you never need ask for more, for nature will give you more.

When you find a duty that has come to you from nature, in the name of all that is holy, do that duty. And when nature tells you there is no such place as a New Jerusalem, do not strive to quiet that doubt, but reach forth for a solution, and be content with what you get; for he who occupies the talent, will receive the welcome words, Well done, faithful servant; but he who doth not improve the talent, will find he will have to dig down deep in nature for the buried talent, ere more than this be given.

Oh, mortal, be satisfied with the light of the present. Grasp not gold in the far-off land which the Christian tells you of! You need no gold in the land of the spirit—no precious stones are needed there—no white throne for the Lord God to sit upon—no Book is there with your name enrolled upon it, except the Book of Nature. If thy life be pure and holy, be sure the page will be white as a lily. Oh, walk in purity here, and nature, your father, your mother, will do well for you. She will enfold you in her arms, and you shall look back, not with grief, but joy. You of your time have no need to return to earth for light. Get it ere you pass on over the river of light, and you shall make no stop by the way, but shall pass on from one step to another, worshiping nature, gathering from the wayside gems of truth which shall guide you on to happiness.

Seek, as individuals—worship nature as individuals—for she is thy God—thy father, thy mother.

Yes, Nature has been kind enough to lift the gloomy veil which has so long shrouded my spirit. Nature—how should I thank her? how should I praise her, knowing as I do that in her exists my God? I would say to the few friends and relatives I have on earth, that I am happy—say that I have outlived the darkness of the past, and as nature prompts me I shall return and perform the duty she bids me do.

My name you want ere I go? Charles Washburn—a resident of Cincinnati. The rest you know; no more is needed. Fare you well. Dec. 20.

Ann Mitchell.

The spirit was some time entrancing Mrs. C., and we remarked that we were ready for the manifestation, as we thought the spirit might be waiting for us to speak to it.

You would n't be ready for me if you knew who I was. I guess I know what people are. I just want to let them know I can come, and that I came almost a month ago, down in Ann street, Boston. Well, you see I went there, and there was a medium there. I used to live there, and died there, and I just thought I'd move something—so I moved a table, and they said, it's spirit rappings, and so they set down and I spelled out my name, and they said if I'd come here and give my name they'd believe.

I died eight years ago—in 1850—aint it eight years? I used to live in the same house. My name then was Ann Mitchell—my right name was Nancy Jane. I gave the name of Ann there. I want tell you the old woman's name; it aint her I want to talk to. She and I had a fight a while before I died. Tell her so; she knows me; I should think she might; she knows why. I would n't talk to her if I knew it would save her soul. I want to save the gal that is a medium there. She'll believe now I come here. You fool! do n't you see what I want? I'm just the same as I used to be, and you may tell the old woman that I think just the same of her. Nobody else would go there, perhaps, but me; and I'm as good as anybody to go there.

Our attention was here called from the speaker to a visitor.

Here, look here, you fool! 'tend to me. When will you publish this? Then what will I tell them? The girl's name that is a medium is Mary Martin. I'm going there now. You'll publish my name in next week's paper, will you? Now if you lie to me! do n't you lie to me—if you do! Dec. 20.

Frank Germon.

I can't see what possible chance I have of doing any good by coming here. Some people think if they can get this thing, and that thing, and the other, they will be satisfied; and those people are generally the worst to be satisfied.

Well, well, all are actors, and I suppose I ought not to expect any one to act or believe just as I do. Somebody—no consequence what somebody, or who that somebody is—wants me to come here and commune, saying I might do a deal of good. I have been here before and accomplished what I came for. But to-day I do not see how I am to do good; however, I will work ahead in the dark, and if I accomplish anything, perhaps I'll come again. I do n't care to give my opinion on what I am called here to. It is something I do n't care about—it do n't interest me at all, and I do n't believe I am going to do any good by talking on it.

Somebody wants to know why my brother and his traveling company do n't get along well together, and why she and he do n't harmonize. You might as well ask Jack Shepard about it—he knows as much of it as I do, and cares as much about it.

This individual seems to think, if harmony was restored, (by the way, I do n't believe there ever was any between them) they might get along and do good. Now, suppose that friend, if he is so much interested in this matter, should go to work and find out where the difficulty is; and if he finds a breach in the walls, build it up. It is well for all persons to live in harmony; but if two persons are positive, how are you going to make harmony between them? They ought to have seen the difficulty before. It's a poor time to prevent a thing being stolen after it has been stolen.

Just say I do n't fancy the business I have been called to engage in, and do n't care to get any farther in it. I just come to let them know I heard the call and do n't care to meddle with it. Perhaps this is my business, and that I ought to do it up brown; but I do n't think it is.

In answer to a question, the spirit said:

The last thing I called for was a copy of Shakspeare, and the last prayer I uttered was, "Now I lay me down to sleep." This was near '49, and I was about twenty-eight years old. Dec. 20.

Close of the Circle.

Light of Nature, Soul of Wisdom, we thank thee for the means thou hast devised, whereby all souls may receive light from thy own divine self.

We find thee in thy manifestations here, in the dark, material sphere of life; and we would offer praises to thee in behalf of thy mortal children. We would thank thee, oh source of strength, for the manifestations of thy power in behalf of the darkened ones of thy creation, which are drawing them to a plane where thy light shines, where truth abounds, and where the flowers of progress are growing spontaneously by the wayside of love.

We would praise thee, oh our Creator, because thou art blessing us; we would offer thanks in behalf of the darkened ones in spirit life, because thou art blessing them. We would ask no favors of thee, oh Source of all Life, because we know thy blessings are freely given—that thy hands are outstretched to aid those who need thy aid. We know that no child of thine is forgotten, however far that child has wandered in scenes of darkness and desolation; we know thy arms encompass them, and that all shall be made holy as those who now worship thee in higher spheres of light are holy.

Our Father and our God, thou hast commanded the light to shine, and we will not pray unto thee that the light may shine, for we well know thy word is law, and unchangeable.

We would not ask thee to visit with light the darkened ones of earth or of spirit-life, for thou hast taught us to know that in thy time and thy own way, all thy creatures, all thy children, shall not only be brought to a knowledge of truth, but to dwell forever in the sunlight of thy love.

We find, oh Father, standing by our side, one whose spirit is shrouded in the vices and sins of an earthly life. We would not pray for the salvation of that spirit, but we would offer praises unto thee for the mode of salvation thou hast placed in the hands of all.

And oh, our God, while nature smiles triumphantly upon all she has created, we would return the smile of love. These poor, darkened ones, who hear not and see not, cannot praise thee; and, therefore, we, who have been doubly blessed by the spirit of thy progress, will bless thee for that we have received, and that they are day by day receiving.

And as our feet are gliding along the pathway of life, we will not ask that thou wilt give us strength to guide all who may come after us, for we well know each soul will be endowed with power for itself and those coming after them.

We ask thee for nothing, but offer thee our thanksgiving for all we are, and all we have, and all thou hast set about us.

We recognize thee in heaven, we see thee in hell, we find thee in nature's laws, in the caverns where vice reigns—down deep in the soul, where sin has set its signet, we find thee, and will praise thee forever more. Dec. 20.

David Harris.

Life seems to be life to-day as much as it did sixteen years ago, and that was when I was on earth. Life seems to ebb and flow just according to conditions. Life with me has seemed to be an ebb-tide for the last sixteen years.

I am told that anybody has the privilege of speaking for themselves through your medium, or God's medium, or the Devil's—it matters not much to me, so as I speak. Oh, I am a strange individual, and you must not expect much from me. So you want to know who everybody is that comes here. What if they have forgotten the names they were known by on earth? Then of course nobody will know them. What if they have come up out of a void? Then of course nobody will know them. It is not so with me; I know too much; and I am just ready to start from the point I left on earth. I never could see an inch of ground I could call my own before.

I was born in Goffstown, N. H., and died there, and my name was David Harris, and I lived to be forty-three years old. Sixteen years ago I died. No matter what I worked at—it is of no consequence. So I have a child—a child! who desires to know if there is any truth in Spiritualism, so-called. I have no means of proving the theory true to her. No. I can come and speak as I used to speak—that would not be any proof to me, and I doubt whether it will be to her. But no matter—it will satisfy me to come, and I shall then start upon a new path, where they tell me I shall find wisdom—or living waters. If I thought I should find no more than I found on earth, I would not walk a step to find it; but I will try—hoping to realize the dreams of by-gone days.

I must tell you a story: it is fresh in my memory, and may answer a good purpose. One afternoon, about ten years before I died, I laid me down to sleep in my cornfield, for I had worked very hard all day, and while I slept I dreamed—dreamed that I should die in ten years. That I was told of then by a bright form, I supposed to be an angel. I dreamed I should stand upon one small space of ground for sixteen years—that I should be chained to that spot. Nevertheless, I could see no chains, but should be bound—that, while there, I should be visited by many bright and beautiful strangers I should consider gods—that, at the end of sixteen years, I should be suddenly hurled back to earth, and should live, breathe and move in a form I had borrowed on earth. Then, again, I should go to the spirit-world—not to the place I had occupied, but where I should have more room and be my own master—for they told me that, on coming back to earth, I should loose the chains that had bound me to earth, and that I should be furnished wings, with which I could come and go to and from earth.

I awoke from my dream, and it troubled me—it was too vivid for a dream; but after awhile I forgot the dream. Ten years passed, and I lay sick; death stared me in the face, and I called for the old book in which was recorded my dream, and, in looking at it, I exclaimed, "Oh, God, to-morrow I shall die!" "Yes," said a voice, "you should have heard to that voice of long ago, and have put your house in order."

I conceived this sixteen years should be my hell, and that at that time I should be free from hell and sent to earth to take on some other form, I knew not what. And thus I have been wearying myself to prove true my dream, and to-day it is proved real to me, and I am sure that what is to come will prove as true as the former part has.

The child knew of the dream. The wife knew also; but death has sealed her earth-lips, and she cannot speak except as I do, in a borrowed form.

Now I come not in a dream to those who called for me, but in my own voice, in my own form—and what shall I say to them? Simply that they set their house in order, that they may be ready when strangers call for them.

I have no more to say, so good bye. Dec. 21.

FLOWERS.

I've not the heart to cut them down!
Those dry and dusty flowers,
That spring and summer smiled upon,
And fed with dews and showers;
I know they're dead, their leaves are flown,
Their stalks are crisp and brown;
Yet they may stand till winter's gone—
I cannot cut them down!

I've not the heart to cut them down!
For during summer's heat,
While pent within the sultry town,
They sprang up round my feet;
They looked up in my face and smiled,
And comforted my soul,
So that I, like a chastened child,
Endured my daily dole.

I've not the heart to cut them down!
They were my garden's pride;
And when the buds were fully blown
Their fragrance wandered wide,
And freely entered at my door,
Below, around, above,
Till from the ceiling to the floor
The house was sweet with love!

I've not the heart to cut them down!
It may be they will fall
When Winter casts his heavy crown
Of snow upon them all;
Yet let them stand till Spring shall lay
Her blessing on the earth,
Then gently bear the dead away,
While kindred flowers have birth!

The Public Press.

[This page is opened to the public for a free expression of opinion on the phenomena of Spiritualism.]

THE DIVINITY OF JESUS.

MESSRS. EDITORS—The report of Henry Ward Beecher's sermon, on Sunday succeeding Christmas, (contained in your issue of January eighth,) is more suggestive to me of the necessity of the advent of Spiritualism, than any sermon which has fallen under my eye for many years. What shall we think of the ordinary pabulum dealt out to the laity generally, in the churches, if the masterly intellect of a Beecher can stoop so low as to defend, to an intelligent congregation, positions so deplorably out of place as the following: *God was born. God was born of a virgin. God ceased to be infinitely wise during thirty years, and grew to manhood from infancy!* Such doctrines do we find gravely put forth in that Sunday homily. And on what testimony are we to accredit the doctrines? Mainly on that of four Evangelists, of whose personal experience in the verification of the facts on which they are claimed to be based, we know nothing. Laying out of view their intrinsic incredibility, how do we know that those Evangelists were ever in a condition or position where they could understand that God really *was born*; that, if born, he was born of a virgin; that he held his infinite knowledge in abeyance, while he grew in wisdom? Does the fact that the oldest Oriental religions taught an "Incarnation of the Deity," prove that such an incarnation must at some time be realized in human history—or did the belief in such a fact, normally and naturally grow out of the extravagances of religious speculation? Is it true in any other way than as a figure of speech, that God was ever incarnate in a single man? Does the doctrine, in truth, need any more sober investigation, or discover any more serious argument for its disproof than the kindred dogma of Transubstantiation, which the Protestant world, now for nearly three centuries, has deigned to treat only with ridicule?

If not, is it not one of the saddest sights under the sun, to see an intellect of the capacity and brilliancy of our liberal preacher, befogging and bewildering the minds of the thousands under his ministry with sophisms so shallow and disgusting? How dissimilar this to the preaching of Jesus himself, if we are to take the Sermon on the Mount, and not the metaphysical dissertations of the Pseudo-John, as a sample of his method! Be a natural and good man, is the substance of those precepts. He does not require his hearers to believe in a miraculously born "Son of God," in the Virgin Mary, in Incarnations of the Deity, in Atonements, in Eternal Torments, in "Faith-in-Christ," as a recipe for salvation. On the contrary, it was his wish that *men should love one another*, and act in the spirit of such a love, letting faith take care of itself. And if he is now conscious of what is passing upon earth, is it probable that he is particularly anxious that men should believe that he is God, that he was born of a Virgin, that he died to save men from his own wrath, by the "merits of his blood?" Or would he not prefer, that they should be infidel to all these precious and divinely inspired doctrines, and try to be brothers? If this is what he may be expected to wish, may we not imagine that he is a party *incognito* to this letting loose of Spiritualism upon the church, "that great Babylon," to shelter their magnificent creeds, their thousand and one "refuges of lies," and disenthral the unlettered laity from the spiritual bondage of their "blind guides," those brilliant spinners of sophistical juggles, who teach that God was born of a virgin, and that there is no salvation without faith in Christ? Would he rather that men should believe in his divinity, and live unworthy lives, or be sincerely and naturally upright and good, and infidel to his divinity? And as it seems somewhat difficult to make all men pure and good in these days, without tolerating some doubts of the entire reliability of Scripture, would it not be well, on the authority of Jesus himself, to say plainly and unmistakeably to them: "Believe just so much of Scripture as seems to you to be true, and no more—and cultivate a sweet, natural goodness; that is the only strait and narrow way to heaven."

Though the doctrines above enumerated seem unworthy of confutation on purely speculative grounds, it may be desirable to raise the question, whether the miraculous birth of Jesus, while explicitly taught by two Evangelists, is not implicitly *rejected* by a third? There is no doubt that the miraculous birth is taught by Matthew and Luke; not, however, as the birth of God—as represented by Beecher—but as the birth of a creature begotten by the Divine Spirit. Just as in the creation, according to Genesis, that Spirit brooded over the waters, to originate in them living creatures; so in two of the Evangelists, the same Spirit overshadowed a human mother to originate the purest of the sons of men. This is so plainly the teaching of Matthew and Luke, and so entirely in analogy with the Hebrew idea of the union of

the Spirit as the originator of life, that I cannot conceive how so gross a conception as that of the birth of God should ever have been attributed to them.

But if Jesus in those Evangelists is a divine creature, it seems equally clear to me that the Fourth Evangelist (the Pseudo-John—John *the Presbyter!*) would teach that Jesus was *not born at all*. At the very opening of his Gospel, the Christ is represented as existing before birth; and when his advent is announced, (John 1, 14,) it is said that he was made (*became*) flesh, as if in contrast with the "sons of God," who, in the preceding verse are represented as being *born*. This idea of an eternal Christ, who put on flesh, pervades the whole of the Fourth Gospel. Whenever Jesus alludes to his origin, he is made to hint at a conscious existence before his advent. "For I came down from heaven," he is made to say, in that discourse in which he alludes to the Eucharist as an institution already established, (chap. 6.) So in the prayer attributed to Jesus before the arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane, "Glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Many citations to the same effect might be made from this Gospel, but they are useless to any one who has carefully studied it. To any one convinced that the pre-existence of Christ is most clearly taught by the Fourth Evangelist, it is quite impossible to take those passages which speak of a descent from heaven, as figurative expressions. A writer who could not use the Greek words conveying the notions of "birth" and "to be born," when speaking of Jesus's advent into the world, who attributed to him in plain and simple language, a conscious existence along with God before the creation, never could have believed that he was born.

That he speaks of Jesus's mother and brethren should not militate against his holding the idea of Jesus's miraculous descent from Heaven in the form of an adult. Matthew speaks of Joseph as Jesus's father, in the very chapter in which he teaches that Jesus was created by the Divine spirit. But the idea, moreover, of Jesus's literal descent from Heaven, was already held by the Gnostics of that age. Marcion, of Pontus, taught it plainly, finding authority for it in Paul and Luke. (In his copy, Luke's Gospel began with chap. 3d of the work known to us). But Marcion taught that Christ came in a *phantasmic* body, while our Presbyter John teaches that he is anti-Christ who "confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh"—which is a special stroke at the believers in the phantasmic body. For those Gnostics who believed that Jesus came in the flesh, he had no censures. If, while combatting the idea of a phantasmic body, he cannot speak of Jesus's being born, which would have effectually disposed of that fancy, but always speaks of Jesus's coming in the flesh, how could such language ever have become natural to him, unless he habitually conceived of Christ as entering the world by some other door than that of birth—as miraculously and suddenly descending from heaven in a body of flesh, but in the form of a man in the full vigor of life—a king and priest after the order of Melchisedec, "without father, without mother, without pedigree—having neither beginning of days, nor end of life?"

When I hear a Beecher discoursing so eloquently of the birth of God, and of his growth in knowledge, pursuing it under difficulties in the capacity of a carpenter in Galilee, the above questions throng at once into my mind; and I feel impelled to propose them for investigation to such Spiritualists as are inclined to read the Scriptures through the spectacles furnished by the Churches. And with the one above proposed in regard to the non-birth of Christ, the following will be found interesting to him who investigates them with a serious candor:

1. If the great historians of antiquity, such as Thucydides, Livy, Sallust, and Tacitus, composed imaginary speeches for the heroes of their story, might not the Evangelists have done the same thing?

2. Is there any satisfactory historic proof that any one of the Evangelists ever so much as saw Jesus?

3. Did those Evangelists primarily address their narratives to historic curiosity, or did they address them to the unquestioning credulity of their readers?

4. Is not the chief object of the Gospels to glorify "the Son of God," and produce a "saving faith?"

5. If the Evangelists wrote under an overwhelming conviction that Jesus's second advent was just at hand in their day, and that souls could be saved only through faith in Christ, could it have been of much consequence to them what deeds they declared to have been wrought by him during his first advent, provided those deeds comported with the character of a Son of God, and tended to confirm the faith of believers?

6. Was not Jesus's appearing after death—vulgarly styled his resurrection—the grand fact that proved to his followers that he was Son of God?

7. Are not the Gospels rather dramatic pictures of the Ministry of an ideal Christ, than biographies of the man Jesus?

8. Are not the Gospels the joint product of devotional, didactic, and polemic interests in the minds of the writers?

9. If their authors wrote on the assumption that Jesus was Christ and Son of God, and were destitute of any certain knowledge of the nature of his relation to God, could they well avoid having their own theories about his origin?

10. Is the idea of his miraculous creation by the Divine spirit, by the intervention of a woman—which we find in Matthew and Luke—anything better than their theory to account for the way in which he became Son of God—a theory, however, honestly invented by them?

11. Is not John's theory quite as good; namely, that he lived along with God before his first advent, and was not born (*egennethe*), but was made (*egeneto*) the only-begotten, without the intervention of woman? that he himself took a body, and flashed at once a revelation of perfect manhood upon the world? that he came in the flesh actively—not passively?

12. Whether Matthew and Luke disagree with John, or not, in reference to the origin of Christ, may we not justly hold to these evangelists, language something like the following:

"Beloved Evangelists, your authority is very great with us children of the Nineteenth Century. We *assume* that you never err; that every statement of fact and doctrine contained in your beautiful gospels is infallibly true. We are trained in this reverence for your writings from childhood. We think it sinful to question your assertions in any—the most insignificant point. Times have changed, dear Evangelists, since you were on earth. In your day, to believe that Jesus was Son of God, in such a sense as no other man could be son, was to bear one's cross. But now that belief is so honorable a distinction, that one may bear a very heavy cross, by simply disbelieving any such thing. And to tell the truth, it is rather more easy to disbelieve that doctrine than to do otherwise. Then, too, some of the more brilliant lights in the church, (which has survived that end of the world, which, according to your gospels, should have come eighteen hundred years ago,) are pressing the doctrine to a very unwarrantable extreme. They are teaching that God was born, and was shorn of his infinite wisdom for some thirty years, and then died a horrid death, praying to himself! But this is only one of the many monstrous absurdities that are taught on your authority. The largest Christian Church in our world teaches that God can *enter a wafer*, and can be carnally eaten by a devout believer! These things shock us who are willing to follow your divine Master in bearing the cross of being called unbelievers and blasphemers. Now, as we perceive that the fountain of such pernicious teaching, which is converting the laity into blind tools of our modern Scribes and Pharisees, is nothing else than unquestioning faith in all the statements of your gospels, we are obliged, when called to believe palpable absurdities related in your writings, to say: It is claimed that such and such doctrines are true; *because they were revealed*; but they *never were revealed, because they are untrue*. We are sorry to be compelled to take such grounds in regard to them. But really, if you only knew how the Church disparages the use of Reason in matters of Religion, you could hardly blame us. She has so bewildered and muddled us with divine mysteries, that we are almost ashamed to have any reason; and when we get any natural light that is distasteful to the Church, we clap it at once under a bushel. And then you must remember, that though we know you are infallible, we have no means of discovering to *what special points* your infallibility extended. You will, therefore, allow us in matters of doctrine to contract by degrees the domain of your authority, and say upon this point, that, and the other: Our Evangelists were not inspired here! Your plain, practical precepts (saving always such as that over which poor Origin stumbled) we shall always respect; especially those which the universal conscience of mankind intuitively recognizes to be right. We think you cannot censure us for such mental freedom. We but follow your example. As you burst away from an effete Judaism, and the oppressive traditions of the Rabbins, animated and encouraged 'to seek the kingdom' by the 'signs and wonders' that attended the ministry of your Master, so we take our leave of a decrepit Church, and the doctrines and speculations of our modern Rabbins; for to us, as to you, Heaven and Immortality are again made known by great signs and wonders, and confirmed by the accompanying revelation of that 'cloud of witnesses' which was seen by your beloved brother Paul."

In conclusion, let me say, that I am highly pleased with Mr. Beecher's Christmas Sermon, and find it, as you perceive, wonderfully suggestive. While we Spiritualists are daily instructed by the Church and the world of the follies and fanaticisms of members of our own body, it is well to be reminded that members of churches under the very eyes of the apostles, were wont to be become intoxicated when commemorating the death of their Lord, and that in this later day the noblest teachers in the Church do not hesitate to retail dogmas, which deserve only to be reckoned among old wives' fables.

Yours, truly, D. L.

BATTLE CREEK, MICH.

ORTHODOX GEMS.

MESSRS. EDITORS—Reading an extract in the Banner from the writings of a clergyman, reminded me of a few "gleanings among the sayings of the lights of former days," carefully preserved in a corner of my desk, to which I love to refer occasionally, as specimens of the spiritual food dealt out so liberally to our worthy forefathers, wherewith to satisfy the soul's yearnings after a knowledge of those loved ones who have gone from their sight, over the dark waters of the stream that divides time and eternity. No doubt these extracts were exceedingly orthodox in their day; and he who had the audacity to question their teachings, was called an infidel, and doomed to the place so graphically described, as one of the subjects suitable to furnish the Christian in Heaven an opportunity to "draw fresh pleasures from the scenes below."

"Down in the deep where darkness dwells,
The land of horror and despair,
Justice hath built a dismal Hell,
And laid her stores of vengeance there.
There Satan, the first sinner, lies,
And roars and bites his iron bands;
In vain the rebel tries to rise,
Crushed by the weight of both thy hands."

"Where saints and angels from their blest abode,
Chaunting loud hallelulah's to their God,
Look down on sinners in the realms of woe,
And draw fresh pleasures from the scenes below."

Quite consoling to the Christian parent must such a faith prove in the hour of affliction! How delightful, after entering the pearly gates of the new Jerusalem, to look down upon a loved child gone before, writhing in all the agony and torment of the "scenes below." And even the prattling infants are subjects for divine vengeance, for Dr. Jonathan Edwards says:—

"Reprobate infants are vipers of vengeance, which Jehovah will hold over Hell in the tongs of his wrath, until they turn and spit venom in his face."

The young reprobates, probably, when they find themselves in that predicament, will begin to think it would have been better if they had never been born; and the good old Calvin disposes of the juvenile portion of the sinners without ceremony; he tells us—

"They bring their condemnation with them from their mother's womb, being liable to punishment, not for the sin of another, but for their own; for although they have not yet produced the fruits of their iniquity, they have the seed inclosed in themselves; nay, their whole nature is, as it were, a seed of sin; therefore it cannot but be odious and abominable to God."

Very comforting to the Calvinist mother must such a faith be, as she beholds her darling, who but yesterday was a picture of health and happiness, now turning upon a bed of agony; and, as she watches it "heave its thick breath and gasp its life away," how calmly she *ought* to resign it into the hands of that great Jehovah, thinking it may possibly prove one of the "reprobates."

Thank God such delusions are fast giving way to better views, and our Heavenly Father is being revealed in his true character—ever kind, helping the children of his love to draw nigh unto him with freedom, trusting in his mercy, and, devoid of fear, viewing him in all his works, knowing his watchful care is over all. And in this connection Spiritualism has a work to do: first, to dispel the dark clouds of superstition that have hung so long over the world, through which the future looks dark and gloomy, and to teach purity, self-denial, and forbearance, in all our daily intercourse with one another, making virtue, charity, love, and truth, the cardinal points of a faith that will go forth over all the earth, like a white-winged angel of peace, rescuing from the hells of pollution and vice our brothers and sisters; placing them, redeemed and saved, among men, as living instrumentalities in the hands of God, with which to carry out his great designs in creating man. Such a faith is worth living for, bringing a peaceful consciousness nothing can destroy; and may it find its way wherever human foot doth tread, and be welcome as the beginning of the reign of peace and love. A.

FELTONVILLE, MASS.

MIRACLES—NO. 5.

MESSRS. EDITORS—From the infancy of man, to the present period of the world, in the whole course of his Providence towards him, it would seem that the Deity has had regard to his then existing character and condition. In the beginning, when he had made but small progress in knowledge, when his faculties were but feebly developed, and his reason dim, he was pleased to accompany the communication of his will to him, by such manifestations of his power in the miracles he wrought, as would produce a striking impression upon the senses, because, at that time, mankind were chiefly under the dominion of these, and could be convinced in no other way. And it is for this reason, I conceive, that miracles of this description are related in the Old Testament to have been so frequently wrought. They required immediate and frequent direction of the course they were to pursue, and could, from the imperfection of their reason, receive this direction in no other way. Such was the character of the people at the time of Moses and Aaron, and such were the miracles that God wrought by them.

In later ages, or at the time when Christianity was first promulgated, mankind had made great progress in learning and science, and in the cultivation of their reason. They were then fitted to receive a new revelation from God, communicating new and important truths, or confirming old ones in a new way, and giving them a code of miracles of a higher and purer standard than they had hitherto received directly from God, or would probably acquire by the exercise of their own reason. And this revelation was attested by miracles of a species entirely different from any former one, being of a more moral and benevolent character, and, in themselves, also intended and fitted to improve their moral nature. This evidence, arising from these miracles, in favor of Christianity, as well as all the other evidence of every kind, were both addressed to the understanding, and designed to operate upon the moral feelings, and such as was suited to every grade of intellect and character, and every subsequent period of the world.

The Deity, by reason of the plan of his government over his rational creatures, never sees fit to deviate from the usual course of his Providence, and work miracles, except when the object intended to be effected cannot be effected in the former way. For if these were wrought frequently, and in other than under extraordinary circumstances, they would either interfere with the intellectual nature of man, by leaving no scope for the exercise of his reason, or with his moral nature, by controlling with an irresistible power his will; or else they would fail to make much impression, and lose their effect from their frequency, and be no longer distinguishable from the usual course of events. Miracles are never wrought with a view of improving the moral and intellectual nature of man, since they are not fitted in themselves as means for such a purpose, but only to attest some communication from the Supreme Being, or as another and more striking way of displaying his attributes. Our moral and intellectual nature must be improved by the gradual process of education and discipline, which are in the nature of things, as it is constituted, adapted to this purpose.

With the foregoing explanation, we can readily understand how it is, that the conditions of some parts of the world, and some periods of time, both in a religious and civil point of view, have been so much more advantageous than those of others; how it is that some nations are blessed with a higher degree of civilization and refinement, and governments of a more liberal character than others; and how it is that one region is enlightened by the divine rays of Christianity, while another is obscured by pagan darkness. It is because these nations and periods have differed in their intellectual and moral character; and while some have attained to that degree of advancement, as to render them fitted for the reception of these blessings, others are incapable of receiving them, on account of their degraded condition. Just as fast as mankind become capable of living under a free system of government, just so fast will the Deity, in the ordinary progress of events, and by his accustomed means, acting in connection with human agency, bestow it upon them. And just as fast as by their advancement in civilization, they become capable of understanding the nature of Christianity, and governing themselves by its principles, just so fast will its light be imparted to them. But to bring them to this condition, and give them this light, we must not expect miracles to be wrought; and if they were wrought, they could not effect this purpose, since miracles could not give them that intellectual and moral advancement that are necessary for the comprehension of the truths of Christianity, and the regulation of their conduct by them. This must be effected in part by the benevolent exertions of that portion of mankind who enjoy these advantages. In this way they will perform a duty which Providence enjoins upon them, and in this way will they second his benevolent purposes.

That mankind are not more improved in their condition, in every portion of the world, is either their own fault, or the fault of their more civilized neighbors, and a neglect for which they are as much accountable as for other omissions of duty. As they freely receive, so ought they freely to give. The world is purposely so constituted, that the condition of all, whether as individuals or nations, depends very much upon one another; and as we would have our own happiness increased by the benevolent regard and efforts of others, so we should, in our turn, be willing to bestow this regard, and make these efforts for their benefit.

The system of government pursued by the Deity over his intelligent universe, is, in all its parts, and in the most enlarged sense, a paternal one, a system designed to produce the greatest amount of virtue and happiness. And whether he confers his blessings, natural or revealed, upon one individual, and not upon another, and upon one nation, and not upon another, the whole cause of his Providence is designed to effect this great end. It is true, we cannot see the reason of all his conduct, because we cannot see the connection existing between all parts of his system, nor discern the end from the beginning. This, however, is owing in some degree to the imperfection of our faculties, and, in some degree, to our own voluntary blindness—a blindness produced by willful ignorance and sin on our part. We may rest assured, however, that the Judge of all the earth will do right, though the manner and the means may not at present be understood by us. W. S. A.

THE TRANCE.

DEAR BANNER—I find in the report of the Boston Reform Conference, of December 20th, some remarks from Mr. Sunderland, upon the subject of "The Trance," which does not harmonize with the theories which the gentleman sought to enforce upon the public mind some years since, in regard to the manner in which the trance was produced. He then declared to his audiences that the sleep or trance then induced, was by the power of his will over them; but now it seems as though he renounces all credit in the matter, by saying: "*I have had two hundred and fifty in my audience entranced at one time, and these trances have never been produced by my will, except by its acting through the external senses of the person entranced. I am obliged to say, that always, in this kind of trance, it is self-induced.*"

By the number of years which Mr. Sunderland has devoted to the subject of the trance, or sleep, it would be natural to suppose, that by this time he would have some clear and well-defined method to give the public, by which the trance, or sleep, was produced. He seems to divide the trance into so many different kinds, that one is almost bewildered in keeping account of the divisions which he makes, and instead of being enlightened upon the subject, with his views, it continually grows more dark.

Some twelve years ago, or more, his placards were placed in the most conspicuous places all over the country, telling the public what he would do by the power of his will. The things were done; but it now appears that the manner by which they were done is not so apparent. He alleges that "*the will is only known to act through the external senses.*" I would like to inquire how he substantiates the above proposition, when it is so ably contradicted by the facts connected with his lectures on Pathetism. He would announce on one evening that he would cause the sleep, or trance, to be produced before his subjects entered the hall.

It becomes a query in my mind how his will could affect them prior to their coming into the hall, when their external senses could not possibly aid his will in the matter? again, by what method would his subjects do things which were in accordance with his professed will, when no appeal was made to their external senses to do such things as were done? again, under whose control were his subjects when they would give accurate descriptions of some of the spirits related to some one of his audiences, especially when the size, form and appearance were not known to Mr. S., thereby precluding the possibility of his having any control in the matter? again, were the explanations which he then gave as the reasons of their seeing spirits, namely—that they were hallucinated—in accordance with the facts in the case, and may it not be truly said by the facts of modern Spiritualism, that the professor was himself hallucinated, instead of his subjects? At the conclusion of his remarks before the Conference, he speaks thus:—

"I do not believe in giving up individuality; it is wrong to give up selfhood."

May I not inquire, if too much learning has not wrought mischief in the mind of the professor of Pathetism, and is he not, in his advancing years, getting to be uncharitable towards those who have been unwittingly instrumental in helping, unconsciously, to build up for him fame and notoriety? Pathology, pathetism and magnetism, of which he claims to be the expounder, could never in the world have been introduced before the public, until some one volunteered to give up their individuality and selfhood for the purpose. When Spiritualism seeks to establish its facts before the world, it is denied by him, the right to use the same instrumentalities which he so fondly coveted, to establish his theories, unless by the commission of a wrong in so doing. I would like to inquire if it is wrong for me to give up my individuality and selfhood to the control of spirits? Was it not wrong for me to do so to Mr. Sunderland, (as I did,) to establish the science of Pathetism? Will Mr. S. reply, and satisfy

FALL RIVER, Jan. 17, 1859. INQUIRER.

IS SPIRITUALISM RELIGION?

MESSRS. EDITORS—This question is often propounded and nearly as often inadaquately answered. What is Spiritualism, and for what was it manifested to man, if it is not religion and designed by our Heavenly Father for our good? It is either of God or the personage called the Devil—the Orthodox Devil. If it is of God, he must certainly have given it to us for our greatest good in this dark state of probation. On the other hand, if it is from the popular Orthodox Devil, it is contrary to all just ideas we have ever received from the teachings of Christ and all common sense ideas of a just God.

Spiritualism is the same thing that was manifested in Christ and his followers nearly nineteen centuries ago—only a modification in form. We more certainly obtain this influence by the circle; and we are made to understand that all these manifestations are in obedience to the natural laws of God, and, therefore, owing to our being more enlightened than the world was at Christ's advent, the spiritual manifestations come in a way that we can understand the true relationship existing between us and the spirit-world. But some will ask, if this be of God, why is there so much of evil attached to it?

Admit that there are no such things as evil spirits, and we fly in the face of the positive teachings of Christ, thereby severing the present teachings from that great spiritual luminary, whose equal the world has never had before or since his day. If we discard the teachings of Christ, in vain may we endeavor to sustain any we may have at the present time. In my opinion this is the great error that is hanging now on the neck of our heaven-sent philosophy. Many, too many, are half inclined to sever the chain which connects modern Spiritualism with the teachings of Christ; and in proportion as this is effected, in the same proportion will it be unreliable, and ultimately become contemptible in the opinions of the wise and good. I believe the time has arrived, with our loving Father, that the world shall have this demonstration to enable us more clearly to understand the teachings of the lowly Nazarine, and if with the teachings we have through Christ and what we can now obtain through the present unfolding, we will not bring our reason and judgment to bear, to discriminate between the evil and good, we will have to suffer the consequences. Christ says he is the vine and we are the branches, and that we cannot possibly flourish unless we are properly connected with the vine. In vain may men endeavor to propagate Spiritualism and reject the Bible. I believe the Old and New Testaments, when properly regarded, are as perfect under all the circumstances as they should be. In looking at the old, we must recollect the time and age when it was written.

The mission of Spiritualism is to teach us the true interpretations of Christ's teachings and to spiritualize the world, and until we learn to lead the pure and inner life it inculcates, in vain do we say to Orthodoxy, "Behold our teachings from the heavens." In vain may we say to them, "What a miracle was performed here or there," if our lives do not testify in our favor, that we have had teachings from the spiritual world.

In conclusion, I will repeat again, dear brother Spiritualist, faint not, but continue to trust in our Heavenly Father, for if we will live the life the good and true of spirit-land invites and entreats us to live, we shall continue to have all the blessings of our beloved and heavenly faith. Y. C. B.

GREENE COURT HOUSE, VA., Jan. 15, 1859.

LECTURE BY H. B. STORER.

MESSRS. EDITORS—On the evening of Sunday, Nov. 18th, I listened to H. B. Storer, at Wells's Hall, in Lowell, Mass. His subject, "Immortality," had been given by Benjamin Blood, of Middlesex village. Mr. S. was entranced, and said:—

"The desolation of winter reigns without; nature is wrapping her winding sheet of snow around the corpse of the dying year; the spirit of the woods has gone; the naked branches of the trees stretch upward, as in pity, and, one who had never looked on the face of nature before, might infer that all the bloom of summer was forever lost. But experience has proved that the verdure shall be renewed. Though we may illustrate the subject by reference to the seasons, yet the analogy fails, when we come to speak of man. Who has seen the revivified form of man, after the body had died?

There are those who have been satisfied with the analogy of nature, who have trusted to their noble intentions, have listened to voices of the spirit host, as they have appealed to their inmost feelings. Others must have facts. It is Nature's method to deal with both; she points to analogy, and also to concrete facts. We propose to base man's immortality on the facts of his consciousness, and on the manifestations. We can only utter our thoughts, our belief; each individual must be the final judge. We love the skeptic; we love the doubter; for we know that when the doubts are removed, he will be strong in his new faith. Although we give thoughts which have long been accepted by the children of men, yet we pour through them the convictions inspired by life in the spirit-world.

Man is as immortal in every stage, as in any stage of being. Man is as much immortal to-day as he ever will be. If man is not in possession of all the faculties he deems immortal—unless you find immortality in the essence of each faculty—look not for it in any book, although given by inspired lips.

If the spirit may be considered immortal, by virtue of its essential nature, then we may expect that it will not be affected by the changes of the body. If the spirit is changed by change of body, then it becomes us to inquire if the change of body once in seven years affects immortality. The old elements of the body of the babe have all been changed—no single element remains. If the impressions made on the spirit are not affected by the gradual changes, why should they be by the loss of all at once? The body is builded by the spirit. We must define the spirit. That which you look on, which first meets the eye, does change; the thoughts and loves do not change.

Review your lives; call up memories, distinct and perfect, of that which took place in the past; you may have varied melodies played upon this harp. What is this being but a compilation of the experiences of life, all made on the sensitive spirit? Yet you do not need to call back the particles that once composed your body. Where is now that face through which you looked in babyhood? It is all gone. What is left? Can you make an impression upon nothing? Can there be an effect without a cause? Each spirit is a centre to attract spirit matter from the great illimitable ocean of unindividualized spirit. That it is matter, is demonstrated by the fact that it is seen by mortal vision.

The body is affected by the food you eat; must not the mind be affected by the food of the spirit? It is true, whether you accept it or not, that our food nourishes the soul as well as the body. Our experience has demonstrated that, as the spirit-form is composed of the elements of the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdom, therefore the spirit is ever in *rapport* with all the life of the globe.

We appeal to facts. We ask that time be afforded to prove to you that man is immortal. Are not manifestations made in your day? If you will resolutely close your eyes, then you must remain infidel to the great truth of your nature. If a man says he will only be convinced by argument, not by fact, then must he still be unconvinced. The history of man teems with facts of spirit-influence; they are all along the line of history. Spirit has succeeded in the past in demonstrating its presence. When you see a ponderable body moved against the law of gravity, by an intelligent power, is not that power worthy the name of spirit? When we lift a ponderable body, and hold it suspended in the air, we claim your credence. If the spirit-world, and its inhabitants, had never been seen or felt, then might the skeptic wisely deny.

Many suppose spirit to be wholly immaterial, without limit of time or space, in its action—that it can permeate all substance—do anything and everything, without let or hindrance.

Does spirit in the spirit-world attract nourishment? The spiritual body needs food, and receives it—food more refined than yours—aromas from the most refined material substances of your earth. But if we talk of *bodies*, there must be a spirit in those bodies. What does your body need? Material food. The mind needs knowledge, principles. Principles are as really substantial to the mind, as food to the body.

Understanding great principles makes the mind grow. If principles are not substantial, how do you account for their influence? You can use them as you use the rock. Man feels that, although limited, yet he goes towards the boundless, the infinite. Demonstrate the nature of the elements that enter into the composition of spirit, and you demonstrate its continuity. You do not throw off any elements of thought. The spirit is bounded only by the consciousness that makes up its form. Thought may be held in abeyance, but cannot decay.

'Hope,' says the poet, 'springs eternal in the human heart.' Yes, *we* have found it so. Hope takes hold of possibilities not yet realized. Who, satisfied with present attainments, ask no more, thus places himself on a level with the brute. Man is never satisfied, whether at three score years and ten, or cotemporary with the rounded century. The infant is not cut off more prematurely than the man with his head frosted with age.

Oh, Infinite Father, thanks to thee for this great abounding life, immortal in its nature."

HORACE A. KEACH.

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ture, classical knowledge, etc., arts, mechanics, sculptures and paintings like theirs; yet you have those which will compare favorab'y—you have that which makes up that intellectual stamina which would cause the ancients to worship. Intellect has advanced; Christianity has been the motor-power, and intellect the means through which the progress has been accomplished.

HENRY WARD BEECHER AT PLYMOUTH CHURCH, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Sunday, January 15th, 1859.

TEXT:—"And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the son of man hath not where to lay his head."—[MAT., 8th chap., 19th and 20th verses.]

A good book may be known by the amount of knowledge which it imparts; but a better book yet, is known by the thought which it excites. And the power of a mind is not to be measured by the things it can think, so much as by the things it can make others think. So that mind is not measured by the things it brings to you, but by the things it brings out of you. Every great, commanding spirit, makes those about him think even more than he thinks for them. Indeed, nothing is more tedious than knowledge or philosophy brought to us after it is completed, so that nothing is left for us, for the imagination, for the active power in us, to do. Taking completed knowledge is like going to market for your game, your hare, partridge and trout, and thus depriving yourself of the much greater exhilaration which you might experience from seeking it in the fields and along the brooks. Probably nowhere else will you find this peculiar power so strikingly illustrated as in the record of the life of Christ; and without doubt it existed much more in reality than it does in the record. But even in the record there is sketched that which a period of eighteen hundred years has been filling, but has not yet filled.

That Christ was indeed divine, appears from a hundred signs of the endless fire which enflames every soul that approaches his words. Wherever he preached, there the torpid souls of routine men began to palpitate. Men looked up who had always looked down before. The susceptible yearned, the noble aspired, the practical resolved. Such was the instance set forth in the text. Touched by the preaching of Christ, which ran back of all didactic forms, and struck the source of truth, a certain scribe had been won to discipleship. Without ridding himself of his old ideas; without answering old objections; without making either calculation or provision for the exigences which a radical change would produce; in the glow of religious enthusiasm; while yet the heat was upon him—he offered to follow Christ, and become a disciple. And if he had had a truer view of Christ; if he had not been so much fascinated with the expectation of an outward future history; if he had been more imbued with the inward, moral truth which was presented to him—we may suppose the Saviour would have encouraged him to persevere in following him, and allowed him to become his disciple. But as it was, Christ said to him, in language the most touching—to us more touching than it was to him—"I am poorer than the foxes. I am more houseless and homeless than the very birds." After this, we do not hear that he endeavored to follow Christ any more. Those words were enough to reveal to him that discipleship was not going to be respectable, or honorable before men, or lucrative; that it was only inward benefit, only manliness, not outward estate, that it promised. Different individuals will judge him differently for the course he pursued on this occasion.

Those who are cautious and practical will find fault with him for forming such a hasty resolution as he did, while others, who are conscientious and firm, will rather blame him for not completing what he began. We differ from both these classes, in some respects; though most from the former. He ought surely to have given himself up to the noble impulse which he felt, and to have executed the glorious resolution which he formed; yet, it was better to have wished to do right, and to have tried to do it and failed, than not to have so wished, or moved at all in the right direction.

Pitiful as are all mistakes, all backslidings, all broken resolutions, in religious life, nothing in all the wreck of these things is so painful and guilty as to not make any good resolutions or endeavors at all. A too unaspiring heart, that never determines or resolves higher things than the present, but trudges along the dreary path of life without one spirit-flash, without one downfall from springing too high, is one of the most sorrowful of all the sights the world has ever beheld. It is a sad thing to see a man wish to do right and come short of it; but it is a sadder thing to see a man that never seems to wish to do right. I pass to a consideration of the subject of good resolutions.

All persons—unless very stupid, or proud, or wicked—have periods of moral elevation, either from influences that arise within them, or from the pressure of circumstances upon them from without. In other words, men have periods of looking upon their ordinary conduct—and that part of it, especially, which is bad—from a higher elevation: and so they both see and feel the hatefulness and danger of their nature, or of their evil. They look out upon the way they are traveling, and have the most significant fears, and the strongest premonitions of its danger. I suppose this is not peculiar to any class of men, except those who are so thoroughly hardened in wrong-doing as to have their hearts seared. In like manner, men have higher views of truth, at times. There are visions of excellence, and of virtue, there are thoughts of a nobler human life, there are thoughts of eternal life, that come to men at certain hours, they scarcely know whence or how; although, in the moment of experience, they feel that they are divine influences.

Now these inspirations of the nature of evil, and the evilness of evil, the sinfulness of sin; these momentary risings above the drudging influences of wrong to look from a higher point of view in judgment upon our own acts; these conditions in which we have clearer conceptions of the exceeding desirableness of holiness—these states of men may take on one of three forms.

First—they may become and remain as mere emotions. As globes of water may be rocked, and all their liquid contents swing back and forth undisturbed, so the heart and its feelings may be agitated to oscillation, and after a while settle down; and then the little golden fish of vanity or pleasure will swim out, and sport about, as if nothing had happened.

Or, secondly, these feelings may take the form of aspirations—may become something more than mere emotions. They may aim at some positive good. As a child, weaning, if it hear the mother's voice through some suddenly-opened door, straightway yearns and cries, and, refusing to be comforted, sobs and looks toward the door, still longing for the mother's breast—so the aspiring soul hungers and thirsts after righteousness, and cannot be satisfied. Though, from any cause, it may make but little progress towards the good, the yearning desire yet lingers; and at the opening door of every effort, through which it inwardly hears the voice of God, the heart points upward, longing and aspiring still.

And, thirdly, when out of either of these states there comes to be formed a definite, practical purpose, then it becomes a resolution: the will resolves to abandon evil, or to seek to realize good. When at sea a man suspects that the currents have drifted him far out of his course, he may feel uneasy, and yet do nothing. When at length he takes an observation, and finds himself hundreds of miles out of his way, and in a perilous situation, he rouses up, and laments, and wishes he was where he ought to be. Then he aspires. But when he says to the man at the wheel, "CHANGE HER COURSE," then he resolves; for a resolution is a setting of the rudder; a resolution kept is a rudder held in its place; and a resolution broken is a rudder perpetually changing. Resolutions, then, are feelings wrought into purposes: they are the lower, the midway, or the higher feelings, brought to bear as purposes upon some definite object in life. Let us examine the nature and operation of resolutions.

The nature of different minds has a modifying influence on the result, as has also the nature of the things resolved. A mind will reproduce itself in its resolutions. Resolutions are not alike in different individuals. For instance, men with active, excitable, mercurial temperaments, are led to resolve easily, and are just as easily led to dissolve their resolutions. Under certain circumstances they are always saying, "Well, I will do evil no more;" are always saying, "I will at least take hold upon this virtue and this good." It is as easy to bring them to resolve one thing or another, as it is for the wind to move a stalk of wheat this way or that, according to whether it is blowing north or south. There are many men with a slender stem and a heavy head, who are thus easily swayed just which way the winds of doctrine blow. It is not because the thing resolved is not duly esteemed, but because of the mind's extreme susceptibility. It is just as susceptible to the second thing presented to it as to the first; as susceptible to the third as to the second; and as susceptible to the fourth as to the third. This very readiness to resolve has benefits to compensate for its evils. Waves all move quickly, and are lost as soon as formed, which would n't be the case if they were rocks; but if waves were rocks, there would not be any waves at all. So, though water has the advantage of moving quickly, it has the disadvantage that each wave is rubbed out by the one behind it. So there are advantages in having quick feelings; but there stands over against these advantages this peculiar disadvantage—that when the individual comes under one set of influences, the soul goes all one way, and that as soon as he comes under other influences the soul goes all another way, he being as impressible in one direction as another; so that his life, as regards his resolution, is one constant scene of tying and untying, reefing and unreefing. Persons with an imaginative temperament, have a sort of vagueness about their resolutions. They are rather generic and multitudinous than specific and single. A resolution ought to be both thick on the back and thin on the edge. You want the generic resolution to give systematic action to your specific resolution; and you want the specific resolution to give point to your generic resolution.

Persons with an emotive and imaginative temperament—persons who have a mind that acts quickly, and also a strong imagination—see a great deal that they do n't see. They bring themselves into such a state that they are like flowers, which at daylight in the morning are all sprinkled over with dew, but which, by ten o'clock in the day, are all dry. There are thousands of persons to whom, when they are under excitement, everything seems to speak and ring, but who, when the excitement is removed, relapse into the opposite state—in the morning they are all covered with dew, but before the day is gone every drop is dried off from them. Their purposes were not definite.

Persons of an unemotive and practical nature are not usually influenced to make resolutions through the feelings. A man with such a nature, listening to that part of a sermon which appeals to the feelings, will say, "That is very well for those who want it, but I am going to wait and see what the substance of the discourse is." And when he can see anything practical, then he says, "It is my turn: now is the time for me to make resolutions;" and the resolutions which he makes are not comprehensive resolutions of the feelings, but definite purposes, which respect the specialities. While you will find a man with an emotive and imaginative temperament resolving that he will be heroic, honorable, and high-minded, you will find the man who is unemotive and practical, saying, "I will make up my mind that I won't swear any more, I will make up my mind that I won't drink any more;" thus directing his resolutions to definite points.

One spreads his resolution over a great number of shortcomings, while the other strikes each particular thing in which he wishes to reform, as the woodpecker strikes each particular hole in a tree which contains the food he desires. He goes round the trunk of duty, probing for the specialities. Persons of a strong will and a fixed nature, usually resolve slowly; but when they have once resolved, they usually keep their resolution. A person who resolves quick, changes quick, and does not keep his resolution; but one who resolves slowly, changes slowly, and does keep his resolution. What impertinence do we see in instruction. Persons having noticed that those who resolve slowly stick to their resolutions, often say to those forming conclusions, "You had better be cautious. Do not make up your mind hastily." They try to make one man act according to another man's peculiarities, which are entirely different from his own—a thing which is impossible.

If a man whose feelings come quick and go quick, stops to think about making a resolution, there is nothing of him, and he will not make it at all. If he does anything, he must do it at the time when the feeling exists. Advising such a person to make up his mind slowly, would be like a man's saying to his rifle, "When I strike fire you hold on awhile, and see whether you can send the ball to the desired point or not, before you go off." If it do n't go off when the spark touches the powder, it won't go off at all.

Suppose persons who resolve quickly ARE unable to keep their resolutions? Still the best thing they could do was to make them. Men must fit themselves to the peculiarities of their temperaments. That is the way we have got to work. It is folly to undertake to make one man do as another does who has bone where he has muscle, and steel where he has lead. Every man is to take his nature according to its laws, and is not to compare himself with others.

Different persons, neither in forming or in breaking resolutions act from the same stand-point. What will affect the mercurial man, will not touch his practical neighbor. A sermon that makes a deep impression upon one, makes no impression at all upon another. Some men think, "What wicked persons these must be, who can sit under such preaching, and not be melted down!" and yet the sermon may never touch them.

There have been those who thought it strange that the equator is so hot, while the north pole is so cold; but the heat that makes the equator hot never got to the north pole, or that would be hot too.

To all of our houses there are different doors, each having its appropriate use. The master enters and receives his company at the front door; but the more common part of the household must enter at the side door. Then there is another door at which the servants must go in; and the men who bring packages must deliver them at the cellar door. So there are twenty or thirty different doors leading into the minds of men. You may go to one of a man's doors, say his logical door, saying, "I have got a package for you," and he won't hear you. He do n't live in that part of the house. That door is not unlocked once in an age. The rooms in that part of the house are not even furnished. Like a miser, he lives way down towards the kitchen. You may knock till your knuckles are sore, and he wont know anything about it.

You may go to the imagination door and knock there, and you may take it out in knocking, for nobody lives there. If you go to the door of the affections and knock, you may, if you listen, perhaps hear something baying, as though a dog were waked up; but nobody appears, for nobody serves that door. If you go round to the kitchen door, you will probably find some one. If you want to find a man to serve a writ on him, or to collect a bill from him, you must ascertain where he lives, and go there. So in order to preach effectually to a congregation, I must appeal to that part of their mind in which they more particularly reside.

In order to reach one class, I will speak to them of their interests. I will say to them, "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which it is to come." I will bring the Gospel down to the low tide mark. I will show how Christianity leads to worldly prosperity, and how respectable it is. And they will say, "That's right—that's going it; now you are preaching to some purpose. I think if that's so I will be a Christian."

Then there are other men who, sitting in their pews and listening to such preaching, will say, "What is the use of talking to people of such things? Why do n't he speak of the higher life?" I will preach the Gospel to the feelings of another class, and I will reach their hearts by appealing to the affections of father, mother, husband, wife and children, so that they will drip like trees after a shower. Others in the congregation will say, "This is a singular spectacle! This man seems to have quite an influence upon these persons. Such preaching would n't touch me to the day of judgment." By and by I preach a sermon to the logical portion of my hearers. I have my premise and conclusion—my major, my minor, and my inference—and then these men wake up, and say, "Really, he could do something, if he would only preach that way oftener." Thus I go where they live—to their intellectual door. So every man has an entrance to his mind. There are few who have minds all furnished.

There are few who keep all the doors in their house unlocked. One sermon touches one class, and another sermon touches another class. Each person, when touched, must act according to the law of his mind, and he is no better or worse than his neighbor for so doing. One man resolves when pride is touched; another when vanity is touched; another when fear is touched; another when conscience is touched; another when his emotions are awakened; another only when his intellect is excited.

Every one has a right to take healthy excitement where he can get it, and no one has a right to judge him for it. So much for the nature of the mind itself in modifying resolutions.

I will now speak of things on which men form their resolutions, and which have a great effect on the resolutions themselves. A resolution for leaving off will be different from a resolution for taking on. To resolve to cease doing a thing, and to resolve to begin to do a thing, are as different as reaping and sowing—as different as working in one element and another. A man finds himself surrounded by companions who have drawn him insensibly into wrong ways, till wrong ways have taken hold upon him. His idea is to take the first steps towards becoming good by getting rid of those evil companions. Now a resolution formed thus to break away from sin, is very different from a resolution formed to take on a positive virtue. For one man to say, "I will neither gamble or drink," is different from another's saying, "I will clothe myself with meekness as with a garment." The attitudes of the two men in thus resolving, are very different; and the resolutions are not only different, but the whole mode of keeping and executing them will be different. A resolution which touches a single line of conduct, and another which has reference to the whole life, must differ as widely as does a resolution which relates to a single element of your business, from one which comprehends the whole of it—and the difference is great.

There is many a man who could, without difficulty, attend to one branch of the business of an establishment, who could not attend to the entire business. If one man says, "I will change just this one thing," and another says, "I will change everything," although they both make resolutions, the interior meaning of the word is different in the two cases. Resolutions which respect the original elements of the mind—the training of the faculties, the formation of restrictive habits, the development of dormant faculties—are easy to make, but difficult to keep and execute; yet they are all called resolutions; so that when we say a man has formed a resolution, we only state in general terms what he has done. You will find that resolutions differ according to every faculty in the mind, as regards their power and the difficulty of executing them.

I pass next to some considerations respecting the success or failure of men in keeping their resolutions. All resolutions should be made as soon as possible, in order that they may take a practical form. The first and greatest mistake in forming resolutions is, that you simply form a purpose in your mind, but do not give it air nor exercise. One single thing done on purpose, under a definite resolution, will generally go further than all the will you can bring to bear upon it, towards clenching, or fixing it. When a man makes a resolution to avoid a particular thing, he should take a course similar to that which he would pursue if he were going to buy a horse. In buying a horse he would saddle it and bridle it, mount it, and trot it, and gallop it, and take it where there was a locomotive; and after having tried it sufficiently to become acquainted with its qualities, if he liked it he would buy it. So when a man makes a resolution, he should take it out of the stall as quick as possible—saddle it, bridle it, try it, and see what it is good for.

If a man resolves that he won't drink any more, let him, when he goes home to dinner, see if he can keep his resolution. Let him aim at resisting the first temptation, and say, "I will stop right here." If he can take one dinner without yielding, he can another, and another; but if not, then that resolution is not worth much. It won't do for a man to say, "I am resolved to turn from a worldly life to a holy one—to become a Christian—just as quick as I can make my arrangements therefor." It is exactly such a case that we have set forth in the text. A man says to Christ, "I am going to follow you just as soon as I have gone home and buried my father, and got ready." If he had gone home he would have forgotten Christ, and never returned to him. Christ, seeing his weakness, knew this; and it was not hard or cruel for him to say, "Let the dead bury their dead—let folks that have no spiritual life attend to those things; if you want to follow me, you had better do it now." So when a man says, "I mean to become a Christian," the value of that resolution will depend upon how soon and how effectually he takes the first step towards keeping it.

A resolution that is formed and not acted upon, is like a cloud that forms, but won't rain. Clouds, to do any good, must not only form, but also let down the rain; and your resolutions must be applied to practice, or they are good for nothing as resolutions. If a man means to rid himself of an acquaintance who is a bad man—and a bad man is infinitely worse than one who has the small-pox; if a man means to break away from a fascinating acquaintance, that carries hell and damnation in her soul; or one who is destroying him by the poison of the cup; if a man means to break away from a companion who, by the casting of the dice, or by the light literature of the devil, is winning him, through gambling, to destruction—he will probably do it if he takes the first step at once; but if he don't, the probability is that he won't. Did you ever see a young plowman work with a nimble pair of horses? If the horses go before he gets the plow set in the ground, it will hop and bound, hop and bound, the entire length of the field, and he will do little or no execution; but if he has the plow properly adjusted before the horses start, he will turn a good furrow the whole distance.

If your resolution goes in at the beginning, you will get a whole furrow; but if it does not, you had better go back and start again. It is said that the first step is usually half the battle. For this reason I think men, in making resolutions, have a sort of skepticism in their own mind, so that they don't believe they are going to succeed. It is of the utmost importance that a man should encourage his own mind. You must inspire hope in yourselves as you do in your children. If a child feels, "I have done it once, and I can do it again, and father thinks so," he will accomplish much more than he otherwise would. You must bait your mind, by creating in it feelings similar to this. You must render yourself courageous to break down sin and take on righteousness.

If a man gains a victory at the first step in the execution of a resolution, victory at the next step will be twice as easily gained, and at the next step it will be gained still more easily; and by and by he will acquire a kind of momentum in moral zeal, and he will carry out gloriously what, if he had halted in the beginning, he never would have accomplished at all. When you have resolved to do a thing, take the first step without delay, and make up your mind that if you succeed in taking that, the probability is you will succeed in taking the subsequent ones.

Many persons fail because they resolve too much. Very strange! for the next head under which I shall speak will be that they do not resolve enough. It is nevertheless true that many men fail because they resolve too comprehensively. A child, or a man, grows in goodness just as he does in intelligence. How do we educate a child? It is very desirable that a child should have a knowledge of his own mother tongue, and be able to speak it grammatically; it is very desirable that he should know mathematics in all its departments, and Latin, and Greek, and the modern languages; and it is very desirable that his hands should be trained to music. Each of these branches is part of an education; but suppose you were to undertake to have a child twelve years of age study them all at once, how absurd the attempt would be! Now there are a great many persons who undertake moral training in this way. They resolve to do everything at once—all sorts jumbled together without distinction. In forming and keeping resolutions, just as in education, you have got to go in single file, and not in battalion. You have got to take one step at a time. You must form a generic purpose, and hold that back, while you execute it, individual thing by individual thing.

For instance, a man says, "I have a very disagreeable temper; it is my duty to reform, and I am resolved that I will." Now no man can reform his bad temper in general. He may say to himself, "I am very apt when I go home to spend my ill temper upon my wife. I will direct my energies to correcting this one fault first. The others I will take as they come along. I am like Mount Etna, sometimes, to her—I pour out lava—I drive the poor creature almost to distraction." (O, you need n't look round to each other. It is you I mean.) If he would succeed in overcoming his bad temper he must say, "I will look that one development of it in the face, and subdue that. I will begin on that to-day." A person will say, "Is that the best way? He manifests no better temper towards others. He is just as ugly to his servants, and a great deal more so to persons who owe him, and can't pay him. I say, just let him take that one fault and overcome it first, and then he will be the better able to overcome the others. I have a horse that is very restive. He is afraid of a locomotive. There is one passes near my house every morning. I will take him down to the railroad and practice him on that. To-morrow I will take him down and practice him on it again; and if he can stand that one, I am not afraid of the thirty or forty others that are in the depot. One is as good as forty. Thus it is best to begin one thing at once, and if a man can maintain his temper at home with his wife, he can maintain it anywhere. If a man can stand under his own roof, where, more than anywhere else, his feelings are unclothed; where, more than anywhere else, his soul is apt to be swept by waves, one way or the other; where he has no vanity or pride to exert a restraining influence upon him—if there he can govern his temper, and be a decent and respectable man, he can anywhere. The amount of moral strength he will gain by that achievement will enable him to control his temper under other circumstances. Therefore, in attempting to correct an evil disposition, don't attempt to correct all the different phases of it at once, but single out some one characteristic, and practice yourself on that. Thus you give point and direction to your efforts; and when you have succeeded there, you will be able to succeed everywhere else. I feel that this is more important than I have made you feel that it is.

In my position as teacher, being constantly called upon to advise people in this department of their life, with reference to beginning and carrying on resolutions for amendment, I have been struck with the fact that men fritter away the head and fall of their resolutions, because they do not know how to bring the stream to bear directly upon the wheel of purpose, and turn it. A man buys a hundred acres of woodland, and says, "I am going to have an orchard, a garden, grain field, mowing land, and pasturage." Now suppose he should say, "I am going to have them all at once;" how absurd it would be! He can't, be draining his land, and setting out fruit trees, and raising grain and hay, while he is removing the timber. He must first cut off the timber, then grub out the roots, then drain off the superfluous moisture, then put in his grains, and prepare his meadow and pasture land, and gradually his orchard and garden will come forward; and by the time he obtains all at which he at first aimed, ten or fifteen years will have passed. His generic purpose is to have a farm, with all these various improvements; but in executing this purpose, he is obliged to make one improvement at a time. So a man, as a moral being, must have one general purpose, and in executing it, one thing must be accomplished after another, or he will fail. A man who desires to be good, but who, for want of information, does not know how to go to work to make himself so, after he has fallen down, and got up again, repeatedly, in his attempts to overcome his failings, and all to no purpose, becomes disgusted, and says, "I am trying to go against my nature. I do n't believe there is anything in it."

Many men are destroyed, just from a want of intelligence as to the mode of proceeding in the work of personal reformation. And here let me speak of a practice which is prevalent among Protestant saints. By PROTESTANT SAINTS, I mean men good enough to have their lives written, and to have them published by the Tract Society. There is no harm in writing down a long string of resolutions. You will find in President Edwards's life two or three pages filled with resolutions, of which I believe there are seventy in number. I recollect when I began to be a saint, I read Edwards, and I don't know how many other men, and undertook to be all of them, all together. Among other things, I used to pray six times a day, whether I had anything to say or not. Then I wrote some resolutions. I got down some twenty; but I found it hard to think of anything to put down. I do n't recollect that I kept any of them. Now when you have learned, by actual battle, that you can overcome an evil disposition, you may make a resolution over against a victory, in a form something like this: "I am resolved, having found by experience that I possess the ability to do so, that hereafter I will abstain from this or that bad habit." But let your resolutions follow your victories, and not precede them. If you wish to write down fifteen or twenty resolutions that will cover the ground you have tried, to be a comfort to your memory, there is no objection to your doing it; but do n't fall into that conventionalism which would lead you to write your resolutions first, and test your ability to keep them afterwards. It will be time to write them in your journal after you have tried them and found them to be practicable.

I have said we undertake too much. On the other hand, people do not form resolutions enough. For instance, they resolve that they will correct some single thing, without remembering that this single thing stands connected with collateral things, and that their resolutions must cover groups and families. Human life is like cloth, which has a thousand threads, that all lie side by side, so that what each particular thread is, depends upon what is each side of it. If a man is going to change specifics, he has got to ask all the companions of those specifics if they will change too. For instance, a man cannot change his moral habits, so long as he retains his old associations. If a man should say to me, "I will be a reformed drunkard, but I will continue to go to grog shops, and to mingle with drinking men," I would say to him, "If you do continue to go to these places, and to mingle with such men, you will NOT be a reformed drunkard. In order to reform, you have got to make three or four resolutions; you have got to resolve that you won't go to grog shops; that you won't associate with men who drink; and that you won't take ardent spirits; and the last one you will keep, by keeping the others. All men's habits go in groups, and you must affect a great many more than a single one, if you are going to change that single one.

Habits are like leaks in the roof of a house. Through such a leak the water will drip night and day, and will wet the carpets and chairs, and everything else in the room, and the owner may keep bailing, and sweeping, and drying, and yet the dripping continues, so long as he neglects to stop up the leak. Now there are a great many men who are continually bailing out their faults, but who fail to stop the leaks through which they come, so that they run in at one point as fast as they are bailed out at another. If you would rid yourself of your faults, you must remove the causes which lead to them. You must shingle the roof, and then you can stop the flow, and repair the damage.

When men endeavor to turn from evil to good, they make mistakes in this respect oftener than in any other. When you mean to take a journey, you should mark out your course before you set out. The best way for a man to reform his character, is to make up his mind to be a Christian: the best way to break off from drinking, gambling, stealing, lying, or any other vice, is to become a Christian—to be a child of God—and apply your moral influences to them. Take the fountain-head; for if you have the reservoirs, you can turn on any faucet you like; but if you have no fountain-head, no reservoir, you may turn empty faucets, and get not a drop. Let a man bring his mind under the constant influence of the living will and mind of God, and say, "I will attempt to form my life after the pattern of his life; but in detail, I will take one thing at a time." This is what is called by philosophers, a generic purpose. It covers the whole of man's life, but you must carry it out by special volitions. I have a clock at home that strikes not only the hours, but the quarters. For instance, at seven, it strikes just seven; at a quarter-past seven, it first strikes the hour, and then the quarter; at half-past seven, it first strikes seven, and then the two-quarters; and at forty-five minutes past seven, it first strikes seven, and then the three-quarters.

Now, whenever you want to keep a resolution, you must strike the generic first, and the specific afterwards—first the hours, and then the quarters. A man who, in human life, has no comprehensive plan of what he is going to be, and what he is going to do; or, on the other hand, a man who has no specific modes of carrying out the general plan of his life, is like a person who has a good body, but neither feet nor hands. Both kinds of resolutions are essential—the generic and the specific.

I remark, once more, and only once, that all resolutions require to be newly formed, reviewed, restored. They are like clocks. Some clocks are made to run twenty-four hours; some are seven-day clocks; some will run three weeks; but no clock will run forever. They all have to be wound up more or less often. Resolutions run like clocks. Some want to be wound up every morning; some every week; some once a month; some only once a year; but there is not a resolution formed that does not need to be wound up occasionally; and many a man fails to keep his resolutions, because he do n't wind them up.

In closing, I will remark, first, that there are many persons discouraged from attempting anything new on account of their past experience. They say, "I have tried to be good, till I am satisfied there is no chance for me." It is strange to see how many men fall off into the trough of the sea from this cause, and let the waves sweep over them; and how despair gets into young minds. I suppose I shall speak to the experience of thousands in this congregation when I express my belief that there is not a man who does not, before he arrives at the age of fifteen years, say to himself, "It is of no use for me to try to be good; I may as well make up my mind to go to hell, and done with it." It was just so with me. I gave up and said, "I may as well take the good of life as I go along." That kind of despair, and the reaction of it into desperation, are very common and very dangerous, and result, in part, from a mis-estimation of the benefits arising from resolutions that are not perfectly kept. Suppose you did not do all you meant to do; suppose you did finally break your resolution, was it not better that you should attempt to be good, than that you should fall without a resolution? Suppose a man's house is entered by robbers, and after he has fought them manfully from door to door, he is at last overcome, and his house is robbed; it is some comfort to him, as he lies groaning and wounded, to be able to say, "They did n't get it without fighting for it. I did the best I could." It is better that a man form resolutions, even though by and by he may be unable to keep them. The moral advantage of having tried to keep a resolution, is a great deal more than that of having given up without trying. You who have made resolutions, and have not succeeded in executing them, should not consider that your efforts to execute them are all lost. You gained a great deal in trying to keep them, although you did not achieve a complete victory.

Our whole life is a series of endeavors with shortcomings. Some persons say, "I abhor myself when I go to God with resolutions I have not fulfilled." There is not a living man that is not doing this all the time. Some are doing it under more favorable circumstances than others; but all of us are coming short, incessantly, before God. When Napoleon (the only Napoleon, for we never reckon counterfeits) died, he left, all over France, works begun, but unfinished—foundations laid; columns partly reared; statues partly formed—inceptions of things that were to have been. To see what he meant to do when death cut him down, is enough to make men feel how little they are, compared with that giant of modern times—though far from being the best man of his age.

Men should live so that God and the angels will say of them, "They built a temple there; they erected a bridge across the passions there; they reared columns there; they formed statues there." If you are unable to accomplish all you could wish, let there be memorials at least of what you meant and tried to do. Some men look back upon a life of broken resolutions with more composure than they ought to. Oh, what a retrospect there is in life, if a man could only see his own history! What a wonderful retrospect it would be, if you could call up all that you thought and you felt in the hours of fear; all that you thought and you felt in the hours of grief; all that you thought and you felt in the hours of anguish; all that you thought and you felt in the hours of exposure; all that you thought and you felt, and you promised when you overhung that blackest gulf on earth—the grave; all that you thought and you felt when the hurricane—the great disaster of life—struck you; all that you thought and you felt when you lay languishing under disease, being unable to raise your hand to your own mouth; all that you thought and you felt when God overwhelmed you, as the oak is overwhelmed by the wind in a sudden storm in summer, rending it, splitting it, uprooting it, leveling it to the ground; all that you thought and you felt in the hours of your highest religious ecstasy! As we go back to old trunks and draw out packages of letters containing wonderful memorials of history; this package of childhood, this of early love, this of mother, and this of father—as from old trunks we bring forth these mute memorials of affection; so men sometimes go back to the coffers of memory and bring forth past experiences. How many here to-day, if they were to look back upon their past history, would say, "Oh, the unkept resolutions; oh, the broken promises; oh, the unfulfilled determinations of my life!" It is better that you formed them, but it is to be deplored that you broke them. Do you not now call to mind some of those more solemn ones that took the form of oaths? Are there not men here whose red blood betokens health, that can recollect the day when they could see the sun through their pale hands as they lifted them up to God, and said, "Give me health, and I will give that health to thee"—are there not such men here on whom a score of years of health have been bestowed since they made that vow, every year, every month, every week, every day, every hour, every minute of whose lives, during all this time, has been a perjury?

Friends, is it not time for us to look after our resolutions to see what we have resolved, what we have tried to do, what we have executed, and what remains to be done? A farmer goes through his orchard, to ascertain the condition of the trees therein. He finds one that is all covered with green branches full of promising buds, and he says, "This is a good tree yet." He finds another which has some dead branches upon it, but which is sound in all other respects, and he says, "Boys, trim off these dead branches, and this tree is good for twenty years to come." By and by he comes to a tree which is very much decayed. All the branches pointing towards the south, and those pointing towards the north, are dead. The bark is falling off. There is nothing about it which indicates that it is yet alive, except one little branch on one warm side, which holds up its green banner, as much as to say, "We still survive." The farmer looks at it, and then says, "Boys, go at it; you may as well cut it down. It will never bear any more."

If God should come into this congregation, and look around, of how many would he say to his messenger, "Prune that man; there is life in him yet?" Of how many others would he say, "Cleanse the bark, scour the trunk, he will bear more fruit?" And of how many others would he say, "This is a dead tree. It will never bear anything again. Cut it down, and burn it up?" Christian brethren, let us look well into this thing. If we are alive, where is the fruit that shows it? If we are alive, where are the indications that we are? And if we are dead, why ought we not to be cut down and cast out? Why should we be cumberers of the ground?

OBITUARY.

Born into the higher life, on the morning of January 6th, 1859, GRACE, eldest daughter of S. T. and Lavenia MUNSON, aged eleven years, four months, and seven days.

To mourn for her, or wish her back, would seem almost selfish. She was too tender and sensitive a flower for earth, possessing qualities of too refined a nature to find happiness in contact with the world, but which, in spirit-life, will unfold in truth, beauty and loveliness. She was a truthful and loving child, and can but become a pure and elevated spirit, and will doubtless return, as she promised, and become the guardian of her little sisters. She manifested no alarm or anxiety on being informed that she could not live; but, on the contrary, endeavored to comfort and sustain her parents and friends, bidding them "not to weep, for she was assured that she should be happy." She said "the angels were with her, presenting beautiful scenes, and giving her beautiful thoughts." Throughout the last hours of apparent intense agony, her spirit seemed entirely separated from a consciousness of her condition. She was engaged in play with children, and seemed perfectly happy, saying repeatedly that she saw her "Cousin Josie," who had passed into the spirit-world some time previous. On being recalled, and asked if she still know her friends, she answered, "yes, I know you all; why should I not?" and would join in remark upon what might be said. She spoke repeatedly of a house she saw building, and towards morning she turned and said, "Now I am home, and here we will live and speak in poetry always." At early morning, when the sun had just risen, she passed quietly and peacefully to the morning-land, and could our spirit-vision have been opened, we should no doubt have seen her spirit borne upward by those angels, of whose presence she was so entirely conscious.

Our Gracie has gone to the mansion
She beheld with the spirit-sight;
She has finished her short life-mission,
A poem of beauty and light.

We treasure the words of our darling:
"Mamma, do not weep for me dear;
The love that I bear you is lasting,
Your Gracie will ever be near.

Tell the pets I will often be with them
In play; and to guard them I'll try,
For an angel has just now whispered,
That Gracie will never die.

Give my love to all who have known me,
And forgive me all I've done wrong,
And, papa, now come and kiss me,
I cannot remain with you long.

And, Aunty, I see Cousin Josie—
She is bending above us now;"
(As she spoke, spirit-lights flashed o'er her,)
And a radiant star gemmed her brow.

Then a cloud passed at early dawning,
And hid the sunlight from a flower,
Thus it faded in life's young morning,
And passed to an angel's bower.

Thus flowers of beauty rarest,
But gladden our eyes awhile,
And gems that sparkle fairest,
First welcome the angel's smile.

They but linger near the portal,
That opes to the morning land,
To teach us that love is immortal,
Ere joining the angel band.

The limner can trace but the creature,
The sculptor but fashion its mould;
Of the soul, mem'ry treasures each feature,
And love's fire can never grow cold.

"The pets," alluded to her little sisters Josephine and Louisa, and her disease was membraneous croup. M. E. D.

The bow loses its spring, that is always bent; and the mind will never do much, unless it sometimes does nothing.

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NOTICES OF MEETINGS.

BOSTON.—Miss LIZZIE DOTEN will lecture at the Melodeon on Sunday afternoon and evening next.

A CIRCLE for trance-speaking, &c., is held every Sunday morning, at 10 1-2 o'clock, at No. 14 Bromfield street. Admission 5 cents.

MEETINGS IN CHELSEA, on Sundays, morning and evening at GUILD HALL, Winnisimmet street. D. F. GODDARD, regular speaker. Seats free.

LAWRENCE.—The Spiritualists of Lawrence hold regular meetings on the Sabbath, forenoon and afternoon, at Lawrence Hall.

LOWELL.—The Spiritualists of this city hold regular meetings on Sundays, forenoon and afternoon, in Weil's Hall, Speaking, by mediums and others.

NEWBURYPORT.—Spiritualists of this place hold regular meetings every Sunday afternoon and evening at Essex Hall, State street, at 2 and 7 o'clock. The best of trance speakers engaged.