

BANNER LIGHT.



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Original Poetry.

COMMISSIONED.

From an unpublished Volume of Poems,
BY HUDSON AND EMMA D. R. TUTTLE.

One chill evening I was sitting
In the fire-light's fluted glow,
Playing with the faucets fitting
Round my heart, as cold as snow.
When a dream of bliss stole o'er me,
Like a flood of cheering light,
And an angel stood before me,
Clinging to my misty white.

On my brow she placed her finger,
Sweetly slinging me to sleep,
Saying kindly she would linger,
Till I sunk in slumber deep.
And that then she would unchain me,
And would lead me far away,
Where the sunbeams o'er play,
And the angels would detain me
For a time mid busy gay.

In the shadowy presence holy
Dimness gathered round me slowly,
And no sound the stillness broke,
Save the low and harp-like singing,
Which the spirit lips were flinging
Round me, till in heaven I woke,
And my guiding angel spoke:
"Know'st thou yonder shining spirit,
Who this Eden land inherits?"

Azure eyes with fondness beaming
Looked upon me from afar,
As I saw an angel gleaming
Bright as evening's proudest star.
Swift as light she came to meet me,
Whispering in my startled ear—
"Thy mother, child, who greets thee
In this lovely, heavenly sphere."

Mother's name I'd ever cherished,
But had never known her love,
For in early time she perished
Mid earth's storms, and went above,
And within the country churchyard
I had wreathed a grassy mound
O'er with flowers, for they told me,
Mother slept within the ground.
But where purest angels hover
I had found my dearest mother—
I had found a mother's love!

Tenderly she spoke of sorrow
Which had chilled her orphan child;
But she whispered, "thou to-morrow
With the angels shall be mild.
Be brave hearted, do thy duty
Then come up to realms of beauty."
Voicelessly she whispered to me—
"Would'st thou roam our spirit-land?
Come with me, and I will guide thee."
And she clasped my trembling hand.
Over scenes of dream-like beauty,
Bathed in glory-clinging light,
On we passed; the air was sweetness,
"All was radiant and bright,
Soon we reached a shining river,
And while resting by its wave,
"Shall I tell you," said the spirit,
"Of a toiling, fettered slave?"

When the earth had beauty bloomed,
And had decked her face with flowers,
Down the path of ages gloomed
Soul, a stranger to its bowers.
A companion there it found,
"Among all other beautiful things,
So the world were quickly bound,
And soul folded up its wings.
Soul, the shining heavenly saint,
Body made a toiling slave,
And it pined, pale and faint,
As a struggler on the wave.
Custom came with shining chain,
Wrangling it; for life it gaped,
But its tears and cries were vain—
Body's fingers clinked the clasp.
In its dark and gloomy cage
Cooking, sleeping, lighting fires,
It has toiled for many an age,
To atone the base desires.
Still benumbed with toil and sin,
"Silent as a trembling star,
Lungs the soul to enter in,
To the goal it sees afar.
Like a wing-clipped dove it pines,
Leaving from its prison bars,
Out to watch the cheering signs,
Countless, almost, as the stars.
Be it thine to teach the slave,
As we teach the mode to thee,
To return his exclaiming knave,
Body, ere it can be free.
Heaven commissioned, child, I send thee
Back again to toil on earth;
Holy angels aid will lend thee,
And thou knowest well its worth.
Be brave-hearted, do thy duty,
Then come up to realms of beauty!"
Slowly then the vision faded,
And earth's curtains Eden shaded.

SONG.

BY J. HOLLYN M. SUTHER.

Be strong! we are not parted yet!
The tide which bears our souls along
From rocky shores to soft sunset
When evening dews away in song.
Will bear us early still awhile—
Our stars thine eyes—our heaven thy smile.
"Tis day awhile, and then the night,
So roll the hours in life's decline;
But beams above our love's light,
Whose source is in each smile of thine;
That steady is the shadow lower,
Thyraft, sea sun, shall light the hour.
And when we part, the one bright thought
Shall be that we shall meet again.
When memory with the like the wraith
With love has longed out the chain,
Which when our loving first began,
Which round our hearts had made them one.

ALTHEA: A REVELATION OF EARTH AND SPIRIT-LIFE.

BY CORA WILBUR.

CHAPTER III.

A week has passed, and Selina and her child are the welcome guests at Elmstead Hall. Preparations are being made for a visit to the neighboring city; for, wearied of the wintry seclusion, Althea has prevailed on her husband to spend the remainder of the season amid the gayeties of the metropolis. Selina met with her but seldom, and a cold, distant greeting was all that was exchanged between them; yet the lady never urged the departure of the mother and her child, never spoke of them again in the usual flippant manner that was her wonted expression, toward the poor and low in station. Villandot, strongly attached to the little Esmond, loaded him with toys and trinkets; a suitable wardrobe was speedily prepared for the mother as well as the boy, and a heavy purse of gold scoured her from want in the future. With much pain Selina beheld the coldness, bitterness, and sarcasm, marking the intercourse of husband and wife; their voices, loud in altercation, often met her ear, and Althea's mocking laugh caused her to shudder with a dread forbidding. Anxious to leave those gilded prison walls, yet withheld from expressing the wish by some power she could not define, Selina waited until Villandot, with his wife, should leave the mansion, when she would feel free to go and seek some humbler, more congenial home.

In the silence of her luxuriantly furnished apartment, Althea sits immersed in thought; her costly night-roses, rich with lace and fine embroidery, cast carelessly around the tall, majestic form. Among her unnooned treasures a few forgotten diamonds, gleam, and a string of pearls has fallen from her unheeded upon her lap; rings and chains, and coronets of jewels, each of which would purchase the life-comforts of many toiling, suffering, starving fellow creatures, are cast upon the toilette-table in a glittering mass. All that poetry of wealth can do has been lavished in the adornments of that chamber, in which a queen might well repose her dainty limbs; in which the angels of the beautiful might linger admiringly, but which, alas! dark, demon forms invaded, and left their disgusting sign upon each lavish vase there.

The sculptured vases, pure and white, held lovingly the richest, choicest flowers; the gorgeous mirrors, half veiled by cloud-like folds of lace, reflected the splendor of that almost fairy bower, that "filled to faintness with perfume," seemed over-arched by an azure canopy, from which the golden stars of heaven gave light, and the crescent moon beamed down in silvery showers; so skillfully had art drawn nigh to the great teacher nature. From the frescoed walls gleamed life-like imitations of forest depth and winding stream; of ruined castles by the mountain pass; of light gondolas skimming over the placid seas; of nymphs sporting in the sacred shades; of angels, graces, children, winging their heavenward flight, casting showers of roses upon the earth beneath. The summer realm of youth and beauty, the wintry storms beat not upon the sheltered casement, the wild blast stirred not the softly waving roseate curtains; artificial light and heat was there; no breath of winter's rudeness, no token of the cold without ever intruded in those charmed precincts, where sculptured marble, gold and flowers, the wonders of painting and the delights of sound, made life a summer dream. But she who sits among those splendors, feels not the indwelling spell of poetry that breathes and whispers from each lovely thing; for she is listening to the tempting voices of the lawless hand her soul's dark gleams attract and fetter to her side!

"Yes!" she murmurs, "a most fitting opportunity; who will dare to suspect me, the proud, irreproachable Althea? none will dare! In my soul the resolve has grown, strengthening daily, hourly. In intention long since the deed has been committed—I have dreamed of its success; cold, stark, and dead, he has lain before me! It needs but the outward working of that thought in action. Men will never know it—and the hereafter?—I will venture all for earthly liberty! At one attempt I rid myself of a tyrant, and of the successful rival who, even in poverty and degradation, towers above me, in her supposed moral purity!"

She arose, and took from a small ivory casket a little vial, and placed it in her bosom.

"For many nights have I been resolved, yet have I wavered. To-night it shall be done, and Selina, thou art the instrument!"

She left the chamber, and descended to the lower floor. She entered the room Selina occupied; she was softly singing her child to rest; for, weak and wakeful as he often was, she sat up with him long after midnight, when his flushed cheeks and labored breathing told of pain.

Althea paused, and a fiery pang of memory, the sudden stinging of the wounding words: "It might have been!" seized on her heart and brain. Unloved and childless, forsaken amid the mocking splendors of her lordly home, about to taint her soul with crime, what could earth give to her of joy in the future?

"be free! be free!" The dark robes of Selina hung gracefully around her girlish form; unnooned from the comb confining it, the light-brown hair, with its golden ripples, fell in a wavy mass below her waist, veiling the pale, sweet face; from the rose-tinted lips issued that sweetest melody, to which, in grateful rapture, the adoring angels listen—a mother's song, above her slumbering babe!

And proud Althea listened, sighed, and pressed her hand upon her heart, to stifle there the upbraiding voice, to bid the divine protests of her soul be still.

"Selina!"
The young mother started, as she ever did, at the sound of Althea's voice. One hand flung back the shower of veiling tresses.

"What is your pleasure, lady?" she replied.

"You prepare each night my husband's beverage?"
"I do."
"You will leave it to me to-morrow; or, stay—has he retired for the night?"
"Not yet, madam."
"Then bring me the cup, immediately; do you hear me?"

Selina put her infant in the crib prepared for him by Martha's kind attention; she folded her arms upon her bosom, and, looking steadily upon the pale, fierce countenance of Althea, her soul asked a question; and the dark soul thus interrogated dared not equivocate. Without one spoken word, question and reply were given; and Selina, sighing deeply, forming a quick resolve, obeyed the lady's mandate; but ere she went, she took the sleeping boy, pillowed him gently on her loving heart, then left the room.

She returned, bearing the silver cup the master drank from, and, as Althea took it from her hand, hers shook with suppressed agitation, and a few ruby drops fell to the floor, staining the pure white marble of the hearth.

"You may take this back again; it is made good and strong," said Althea, returning the cup. "I wished to taste it, to find if you could make a beverage fit to be drunk by the gods of our station. It will do. Carry it back to the study."
There was the usual brightness in her tone, that for a while had been laid aside in presence of Selina. There was naught to alarm in her manner or proceedings; but the trembling mother, sighing softly to her crying child, had glanced to glance in the opposite mirror, and better there was the question answered; for she saw Althea draw a crystal vial from her bosom, and pour its contents in the silver cup!

Faint and trembling with a dread so fully realized, Selina looked up to find the lady gone, the fatal cup standing beside her. When her child fell asleep again, she wrapped him in a shawl, threw on her cloak, and, with her bonnet in hand, carrying also the cup, that shook within her nervous hold, she proceeded to the study, put the infant in Villandot's arms, and, saying, "Please hold him till I return," she hastened from the room. She threw the wine out on the frozen ground; she washed the cup repeatedly, and filled it with clear cold water, of which she took herself a long, deep draught; then tying on her bonnet, she returned to the room, where the unsuspecting old man reclined in his cushioned easy chair, and put before him the innocent and healthful drink.

"Why, Selina, child! you have brought me a cup of cold water! Nay, I am old, and need a more stimulating beverage, this cold night. Why have you not prepared my usual cup, Selina?"
She felt all self-control forsaking her. She knelt before him; all his kindness rose up vividly; to her he had been kind and gentle; she burst into tears, and kissed in grief his outstretched hand.

"Selina, what has occurred to agitate you. Tell me all; I am your friend; have I not a right to know?"
Truly he had the right! Should she leave him exposed to the fend of murder that ever lurked beneath Althea's smiles? Once felled, would she not attempt again his life? No; bitter, painful as was the confession, it must be made, though it appall his sense, and stun his heart with grief and terror!
With low, broken, faltering tones, with tears and sobs, she told him; blessing him for all past favors, praying Heaven to shield him from all danger, she told him how she had discovered Althea's purpose; that not for worlds would she remain beneath the roof another night. For herself she feared not; but for her innocent, helpless child, Villandot heard, and buried his face within the folds of his dressing-robe; once or twice he groaned aloud, as if his very soul were rent, when Selina ceased speaking. When he lifted his face from its concealment, she started back with a cry, for the livid pallor of that anguished countenance struck terror to her soul, as if the impress of the death his guilty wife would have constrained, were visible in every lineament. The furrows on his face had deepened, the knotted veins upon his brow stood forth, the wildness of intolerance agony burst upon his lips in inarticulate sounds. Alarmed beyond measure, Selina chafed his ice-cold hands, and wiped the dampness from his brow, unheeding her child's low wail of pain, who, slipping from the relaxing arms of his protector, now lay upon the carpet, regarding the distorted countenance, the agonized features, with dread and sorrow.
"Oh! have I killed you by this dreadful revelation?" cried Selina, wringing her hands. "My friend! my benefactor! Yet what else could I do? Oh, speak to me! tell me that you will not die! What can I do for you?—Oh, tell Selina, tell the poor mourning heart, to which your bounty brought anew

the hope of life, the faith and trust of humanity! Friend—father! speak to me!"

He struggled mightily for self-control; he pointed to the brimming cup, now so pure and harmless. She lifted it to his quivering lips; he drank deeply, drew a long sigh, and clasped the widow's hand.

"It is over!" he gasped feebly, and his lips moved as if in prayer, his sunken eyes were uplifted.

"You have been my saving angel! mine and Esmond, even as my prophetic soul foretold," he said. "You have truly required me, Selina, for you have saved her fallen soul from deeper guilt! Child, you are no longer safe here; she would have accused you of my murder! I know it! I feel it! You are ready to go; and I am willing you should leave this faded house. Oh, Providence! that the gifts of beauty, intellect, and pride, should thus become perverted in a woman's soul! I am deeply stricken, child; but do not look upon me so pityingly. I shall survive this blow; and she shall live to repent and to atone. Here," he continued, hastily unlocking his desk, and drawing forth a purse of gold; "take this, and call me no longer benefactor, for to you I owe life itself! While I live you shall never want. You have the rest about you? Come, linger not a moment; I tremble more for you than for myself. I go with you to the nearest inn. At daybreak you take the coach and go to S— From thence write to me; and wherever you settle, a certain amount, sufficient for all your wants, shall be paid annually. Come, Selina."

"You must not go abroad this cold night," she urged.

"I will go with you to the inn; I cannot let you go alone; and I will not rouse the servants. Give Esmond to my arms; go fetch my cloak and hat from the inner chamber, and hasten, Selina; I long to see you safe beyond this portal. Fear not," he said, with a languid attempt to smile; "I will take care of my life; I will place myself beyond her reach. You look alarmed; I will not take to extreme measures; I shall either leave this place to her, or she shall find another residence. If she were candid, frank with me, I would release her, send her home to her parents, give her the coveted money; but no! she flattered me into a belief of affection, even for me, the withered, repulsive dotard," as she now often calls me. She perjured her soul for wealth! Never, while I live, will I grant her freedom; she shall gnaw the chain that rankles! But this discourse troubles you. Come, let us be gone, Selina!"

The stars and moon looked down, benignantly bright and guiding, as the wealthy owner of Elmstead Hall, bearing in his arms the sleeping child, and leading by the hand the humble woman who had repaid him an hundred fold for the ministrations of charity, passed out of the carved, gloomy portals, and sped their way beneath the silent skies, towards the nearest inn.

Its friendly light was burning still, and, with the farewell benediction of the wronged Villandot on her soul, with his paternal kiss upon her brow, weeping in gratitude and in sorrow, she took her infant from his arms, and entered the narrow doorway, at which he had already knooked for admittance. Unhearing for the village gossip, and the misconstructions that evil minds might place upon his untimely visit to the inn, he commended Selina and her child to the landlord's care, and, with a whispered farewell, another kiss on Esmond's sleeping face, he retraced his way. Selina never beheld him on earth again!

The next day on appearing at the breakfast table, Althea started back with a loud cry of dismay, for the husband she deemed cold and lifeless on his couch, sat there in his accustomed place, stern, cold and collected, as if her foul purpose had been revealed to him—as if he came to judge and to condemn. She essayed in vain to greet him; the false, conventional smile froze on her lip, that trembled despite of her regnant self-control. Pale, trembling, overcome, she sank into a chair, almost bereft of sense.

"Althea!"—the familiar voice, the touch of his hand recalled her; "you would have murdered me; and yet I live, for Providence frustrated your guilty purpose! I could bring your proud head to shame; I could bend that unbroke spirit to the dust; but woman, fallen, base and worthless as thou art, I will not! I loved thee for thy fair beauty, that has been a bane and curse to thyself and others! I leave thee to the pang of thy never-dying conscience. But triumph not too early! Either you remain here, never passing the precincts of this domain, a prisoner on your own grounds; or you go to Melville, my furthest estate. You have your choice; but you must proclaim to the world your entire seclusion from society. Mingle in company, pass beyond the boundaries of your home, and I make public your attempt upon my life. Let seclusion and time for reflection be your punishment, and thank me; your tyrant, that I am so merciful. I will have you narrowly watched. Tremble henceforth to deceive me! I shall withdraw from you my hated presence, but my power surrounds you while I live; and of your guilty, frustrated effort, I have a witness."

"Who is the witness?" gasped forth Althea.

"The good, pure, humble Selina, whom you would have trampled upon; and this vial, which in your guilty haste, you dropped upon the floor, which I this morning found. See, some drops of the poison yet remain!"

"Where—where is the beggar—the wretch fed on my bounty; the worm I would destroy?" she cried, frantically.

give utterance to your choice, will you remain here, or go to Melville?"

"I care not—anywhere, now! life is valueless—but I can yet be free, in spite of you!"

She seized the same hunting-knife she had once before grasped with unholo thoughts, and aimed it at her heart. But Villandot seized the uplifted arm and wrenched the weapon from her grasp. Powerless with excess of rage, faint and breathless, with deathly pallor overspreading her face, she fell into his arms, and was by him borne to her own luxuriant chamber.

Soon the rumor spread, that the lady of Elmstead Hall had retired from the vanities of the world, and devoted her life to deeds of charity and prayer. No visitors were admitted, and when she attended church, a stern-browed man and elderly woman followed her steps. They were her nearest counsellors, her spiritual advisers, said the world. Alas! they were the watchers placed near her person by the refined revenge of Villandot.

Guiltily of suicide and murder in intent, unrepentant, defiant, she lived on, with what tortured memories uprising—what drear reflections crowding on her many hours of solitude! To appease somewhat the clamorous voices—to while away the time, and, even from the distance, win the applause of the world, she gave largely in charity; aided munificently in the erection of churches, and monuments dedicated to the great. In the sight of the angels a fallen, pitiful being; by the blind world lauded as a being of ministering grace and pity.

So passed several years, and yet from the past she had gleaned no lesson of profit; the inner life had not expanded, and the mercies of heaven were yet unrecognized. One day a messenger came to Elmstead Hall, and with a cry of frantic joy, Althea heard that she was free at last—Villandot had departed from earth!

She assumed the mockeries of mourning with hypocritical demureness; gave to his memory all outward show of respect. Then when the year expired, she threw wide open her hospitable gates, and the sounds of revelry echoed through the long silent halls, and the young and the gay trod anew its festal floors, and feasted at the shrine of wealth and beauty.

Still supremely beautiful, with that defiant spirit sparkling through the bright, commanding eye, thrown on the wide, fair brow, curving the ripe lips by their habitual smile of scorn—Althea moved a queen amid the charmed guests assembled to do her homage. Time had not touched with blight one grace of yore; it had not taken from the fullness of her perfect form, the sun-flashes of her magnificent hair; but thought and solitude, perhaps remorse, had taken from her cheek the once roseate freshness; this was the only sign of change—the spirit-impress of avenging powers.

So, peerlessly beautiful, so regal-like in haughtiness, her pride never wounded those who shared with her the golden favors of life, who, like herself, basking north the sun-rays of affluence, dwelt in the charmed precincts of a lordly home, surrounded by the votive offerings of art and elegance; she kept her brightest smiles for these. Only on the tattered beggar, the squallid child of want, her eyes flashed fierce denial; and yet—strange contradiction!—this woman's soul appreciated the melody of verse, the tender and devotional breath of song, the glorious revelations of art, the beauty of nature. But, dormant, uncalled upon, those angel faculties had never arisen in supremacy; the voices of the world, the fallacies of education, the pride of position, usurped their rightful places, and their pleadings were low, murmured and indistinct.

CHAPTER IV.

Plunged again amid the bewildering turmoil of a life of ease and pleasure, Althea reigned awhile the undisturbed possessor of her lordly home and unbounded wealth—for the old man, in dying, had left her all, with the exception of a comparatively small sum set aside for Selina. But at last the proud heart yielded to another's power; the enchantress laid her magic sceptre at a mortal's feet; with downcast eyes, and veiling tresses, confessed the spell that bound her blindly to another's will.

Saltomar came from a distant land; his manner and accent betrayed the foreigner, and none knew aught of his parentage or kindred. There was strange power enthroned on his dark ample brow. Althea often shaded her eyes from the strange, lurid flashes of his eye; yet in his face and bearing there was a charm irresistible to her—a fascination in his smile that bound her as with a strong chain, causing the proud head to bow before his mandate, the queenly form to bend in supplication to his stronger will, in obedience to his every wish.

They were married, and he deemed possessor of a noble name and princely fortune, confessed upon their wedding day, that he was of the humbler birth and low standing in society; that his wealth was imaginary, and his noble manners assumed; and that won by her transcendent beauty, he had sought her favor by the only approachable means. To discard him, would be to disgrace herself—to yield gracefully to her own unavoidable destiny, was the most prudent course she could pursue.

This, the impostor told her, with unflinching voice; his arm encircling her waist, her head resting on his shoulder, in all the confidence of affection. He felt her start and tremble like an aspen; but his hold relaxed not, as, with a strong chain, he held her tightly, and as she writhed and struggled, he smiled in triumph! He put back the veil from her face, and looked upon it searchingly, pallid and dis-

torted as was that lovely face with terror, shame and amazement.

"You know me now, Althea!" and he gazed steadily upon her, "and you will submit to the inevitable, as a loving wife should?"

She struggled vainly for release.

"Wretch! deceiver!" she murmured.

"Peace, peace, my lady bird! I cannot permit such harsh expressions from those lovely lips, that have vowed to honor and obey! Sit down beside me, and calm yourself."

"I am deceived—wronged—betrayed!" cried Althea; and, with a shriek, she was bursting from him. His strong arms retained her so forcibly, they left a crimson mark upon her wrists. He led her to an ottoman, and, seating himself beside her, held her there, pale and panting—silent with a sudden fear.

In the dark flashes of his eye, in the resolution upon his brow, in the significant sarcasm of his words, she read her destiny, and knew that to rebel was vain—and, strangely mingling with the vague dread—the mysterious horror that beset her soul—uprose a stray gleam of affection, even for him who was henceforth to be her tyrant!

Strange and entangled is the web of human retribution! The pride that had battled so long for mastery, sank humbled to the dust before the strong magnetic power of an evil man; the struggle for freedom from the bonds herself had chosen, had ended in making her the slave of a tyrant's will; for, as pride and indignation gained the ascendancy, and cried aloud for justice, he whispered in her ear—

"You shall learn to fear me! Know that I am possessed of your life's secret! I knew Villandot; I insinuated myself into his confidence; I know of your attempt upon his life! I know where Solina lives; beware! or your head may yet be bowed in shame!"

Then guilty fear, which in the years of seclusion had made an arrant coward of the haughty woman, bowed her to the earth before him, and she who had lived to command, bent in servile docility beneath a master's frown; when the wild, wayward affection triumphed in her bosom, she clung to him with tears and caresses.

Often she imagined, or was it but the creation of a diseased brain, the phantom of an accusing conscience—that Villandot stood beside her in his softest mood, saying sweet and gently:

"You might have been to me, wife, sister, friend or counsellor, whatever your soul dictated; now, you are a base man's slave—adored by the world, despised by him, abhorred by yourself!"

None who beheld the lady of Elmstead in her gorgeous array, with jewels, the worth of a dukedom, adorning her neck and arms, could have believed that night but the most perfect happiness had fallen to her share; none who saw the stately queen of the festival, radiant with smiles, could have deemed that she, so proud and beautiful, would condescend to kneel before a despot husband, and cry to him for mercy, averting with tears the threatened blow!

In society, ever calm and self-possessed, she smiled on all; and Saltomar, with lofty dignity and apparent composure, made use of her wealth, and led a life of indolence and luxury. Often he would absent himself from Elmstead Hall, and then its wretched mistress breathed free. Sometimes she formed the desperate resolve of fleeing from her estate and country; but a strange fascination, a vague terror of her tyrant's vengeance withheld her. So she lived on for three years a life of torture and dread, with no child to win her from the dark fancies she brooded over—no friend to soothe. For she disclaimed all sympathy; sought not for occupation and relief in the offices of benevolence; she spurned the suppliant from her gates, and long since had discharged the tender-hearted Martha, for her sympathy with the paupers that swarmed on her domain.

Her mother died, and the stern, bigoted father, lived sometime with her at Elmstead Hall. She felt that to her mother's wayward teachings she owed much of her soul's perversion; and when the stately monument arose above that mother's ashes, no tears of filial love watered her last earthly resting-place.

The bigoted zeal of her father murmured loudly against the lavish expenditures—the gayeties of her life. But Saltomar compelled her to give balls and parties, to appear in costly dress, and set forth sumptuous feasts, though she was often faint to weariness, and longed for the retirement and repose she once had dreaded.

There was a mystery insolvable and terrifying from its vagueness in her husband's past life. He had dropped hints of frightful meaning; and often, rushing from his presence, burying her face in the embroidered cushions of her luxurious divan, she would weep and sob in intolerable anguish—she, who never wept for others!

Her father died; and, shortly after his death, Saltomar departed for a long journey. Althea deemed him far across the ocean, when, at the dead of night a letter was delivered to her, and early next morning, closely veiled, and attired in a dark traveling garb, she set forth on a secret journey, taking her own carriage, but hiring a stranger to serve for coachman, with no other attendant.

Conjecture, of course, was rife; and, after a two weeks' absence, the lady returned, and was long confined to her bed by illness. In her ravings, she spoke of the confession of heinous crimes, and, with them, coupled the name of Saltomar. She spoke of prisons, chains, the gibbet! She laughed aloud, as she proclaimed herself the sole possessor of Elmstead Hall; she wept bitterly over an imaginary grave, and said she saw dark forms of evil, the aged form of her first husband standing between Saltomar and herself.

When she recovered, she had lost much of her bright and majestic beauty—much of the fire of pride and the grandeur of her intellect; but as days and weeks and months passed on, she once more resumed her place in society, speaking frankly of her lord's strange disappearance—weeping often over his supposed death; calling upon him in all the newspapers of the time. No answers came, and the world condescended with her, and Althea buried the secret of his guilt and expiation in her own breast.

She had been called to the prison, where, at last, the hand of legal justice held him. He was accused of crimes horrible and manifold, for which he was sentenced to the fatal tree. He confessed all his past misdeeds, acknowledged that he had lived in Villandot's employ, and had overheard the old man's spoken thoughts in reference to Althea's attempt upon his life. He determined to woo and win her, when he heard that she was free; and, for this purpose, assumed the dress and manner of a gentle-

man, appearing as the last branch of a noble house, who was driven to exile from his native land.

Between the guilty husband and no less guilty wife, no words of forgiveness passed; recrimination and abuse were fully spent, and from his cell she tottered, pale and trembling, his curses ringing in her ears; and worldly, even in that dread hour, fearful lest the rich, the famed, the immaculate, among whom her lot was cast, should find out her secret, and brand her aristocratic brow with shame, she resolved on eternal silence of his fate.

But when the unfortunate man had expiated his crimes upon the gallows, and the news reached her in her palace home, she felt a stray gleam of the olden affection rising in her breast, pleading, sorrowing, even for him! He died a malefactor's death, and found an outcast's burial, and at the dead of night the envied lady thought she saw him, stern, denouncing and avenging, close by her regal couch! And those who envied her dainty slumbers, knew not that she started with great drops of mental anguish on her brow, from troubled dreams of him the world deemed true and honorable; she saw a fleshless skeleton swinging in the wailing, midnight winds!

Althea lived on some years an aimless life, tortured by the fear of discovery, that would point at her the finger of conventional scorn. But remorse, all unacknowledged as it was, sapped at the foundations of her life, and spread a dark pall over her gayest robes, her richest jewels, her costliest fetes. The clear-sighted world said that she pined away in wisely grief for the mysteriously lost husband; young men and old commended her as an example of propriety and constancy, and priests vaunted loudly her religious spirit, her munificent donations to church and altar. And when she was laid upon her bed of death, these worldly exponents of God's mysterious ways prayed for her soul, and promised heaven and its gilded glories to her soul.

Althea died as she had lived, in artificial seeming; and her troubled conscience, her outbreaks of penitence, induced by fear, were regarded merely as the expressions of a contrite spirit—contrite according to the church's ordinance, the accepted rule.

Menials and hired nurses surrounded the luxurious couch; the cooling draught, the soothing opiate was administered in cups of gold and silver; the dainty food served up on finest porcelain; the weary head reposed on pillows of the softest down; rich curtains of rosy silk, emblazoned with gold, shed a soothing gleam of life upon the pale, wasted face; the golden hair was held up by fillets of pearl. But all in vain this lavish luxury; the shafts of suffering had stricken home; the spirit dark and troubled, doubtful of its immortality, trembling at the unknown pathway, was called from its beautiful tenement of clay. Without one real friend to soothe the last hour's anguish, the famed, the still young and lovely Althea passed the dark boundary line, and bewildered, stricken and abashed, awoke to spirit life.

The last hours of a pure and trusting earth-life came fraught with golden promise, with ecstasy, and holy resignation to the Father's will. Filled upon her soul's manly bosom, Solina's looks sought the blue summer sky above, and her meek lips moved in prayer. On Esmond's brow was written the anguish of separation; a strong effort restrained the rising tears, that would have intruded on the peacefulness of that parting hour, for Solina spoke so eloquently of the joys awaiting her in the bright hereafter, that even then her spirit trod. Young Esmond dared not, even with his filial love, invade the sanctuary of her soul's profound repose. She had spoken to him in solemn promise of her return to earth, that she would watch over him from the blessed abodes, even as she beheld the watching angels then. With softly uplifted hands, with low, musical voice, she invoked heaven's blessings upon him, her true, good son; with a smile of ineffable peace, with a murmured token of recognition, she said—

"Esmond, my beloved, I come!" and the white lids drooped above the soft, blue eyes, and calmly as an infant falls asleep upon its mother's bosom, she slept earth's last sleep, and awoke to joyful being in the bright land of her yearning dreams.

The scenes of beauty her ideal soul had pictured, the strains of music her prayerful soul had heard 'mid earthly darkness, the faces she had longed for with the heart's devotion, the voices of the loved, the home of her aspirations, all, all was realized, transcending far her fairest dreams of bliss.

Years passed on until Esmond rejoined his aged mother, but 'mid the world's allurement and temptations, he kept his heart pure and unspotted for that mother's love, by that true mother's influence.

The weary, darkened spirit had wandered on; with prayer on her lips, repentance in her soul, and amid the lurid thunder-clouds a gleam of azure mercy had broken, and from the barren cross a melody has come, and on the arid soil a few straggling flowers and tufts of vivid green have cheered her eye. And Lilla, the angel, invoking all the aids of sympathy, has sought to find the secrets of that guilty soul; and in the dust, abashed, with tears and groans, Althea spoke, and Lilla knew wherefore the dark and spotted raiment, and why the fiery hand burned to her tortured brain.

The angel's tears fell pityingly, and though the "many mansions" of the spirit-world she sought to bring deliverance to that wretched one. Toiling up a mountain path, she saw an old man, with many marks of earth upon him, yet with a hopeful eye, and serene brow, pursuing faithfully his upward course. He was led on by a little child, that, clad in roseate garb, and crowned with flowers, ever turned to smile and urge his laggard footsteps on.

"Would that I were as thou!" he whispered oft and sadly to the little one; and the angel messenger replying, said—

"See! thou art growing younger, as faith and hope grow strong within! On, on with faithful heart and longing soul! From this mountain's height the first glimpse of the land of beauty shall meet thy eye. There sparkle the fountains of youth, there rise the temple of worship, the fanes of song come, hasten to doff thy age, and bathe in the waters of life, that will make thee young and beautiful!"

"I cannot go any faster," gasped the old man; "this ascent wears me! Oh, I am so faint, child! guide! oh, let me rest awhile!"

"There is an unacknowledged sin upon thy soul! It impedes thy progress; something dark and heavy clogs thy speed. Wouldst thou rest inactively here in the mountain pass, when home and friends await thee yonder? Must I, too, linger, beholding not ere sunset my mother's face, her smile of welcome as I lead another stranger to his sweet abode? If thou must rest, oh rest in prayer, old man! and mayhap

the higher angels will come hither, and give thee strength."

Villandot raised his brimming eyes to heaven, and knelt on the enameled carpet of the woods. And as he prayed for light and guidance, a choral melody arose, fraught with the tenderest power of music; and the leaping streams sang forth in ecstasy their rejoicing hymns, and the tall trees away eastward in adoration, the flowers offered to the glowing skies their hearts of incense, and the sunbeams fell, a shower of inspiration on the bended head. A thrill of joy stole through the aged frame of the suppliant, foreshadowing youth eternal, love and happiness.

A rosy cloud, all fringed with silver, slowly descended from the upper realm, and bright and virginal, star-crowned and lily-sceptred, an angel of loveliness hovered above the seeker. With throbbing heart, exultant, humble, prayerful, he cried aloud—

"Who art thou, angel? Life and peace are in thy coming!"

"They call me Lilla, in my flowery home," was breathed to his listening soul in music. "It is my mission and my pleasure to inspire forgiveness, to lead the erring to the light, by love and truth!"

As a flash of heavenly radiance, broke the consciousness upon him, and with eyes veiled in reverence, with self-accusing tone, he said—

"And I am guilty of harboring yet earth's feelings of resentment. Oh! with thy coming, new light breaks upon me! I feel how low, how dark I am! 'Tis this that clogs my steps, and wears my heart, that for years has caused me to wander amid the beauties of the spirit-land alone, cheered only by angelic ministry in the presence of a little child!"

"Forgive, forgive thy enemies! love all thy Father's works!" thrilled music to the listening soul.

"Forgive, forgive!" was echoed from the gushing fount, the sighing air, the whispering flowers.

"Forgive! forgive! love is divine!" the angel voice continued, and the guiding child said sweetly: "Forgive, forgive!"

"But she has wronged and outraged me. I left her all my worldly wealth. I did not seek retribution below."

"Thy soul has not yet forgiven! Erase the memory of earthly wrongs, recall thy own short-comings. Forgive, that thou and she both may arise to a higher life!" and again from tree and stream, and mount and air, arose the angel-mandate's whispered persuasion's thrilling harmony, "Forgive, forgive!"

Then, in sight of the petitioning angel, urged on by nature's voices of divinity, with soul uprising, leaping, throbbing, with a Godlike impulse, Villandot orled in tones of victory—

"Father! to thy behests I yield my stubborn will. Althea, from my soul I forgive thee! Mayst thou not suffer another moment for the errors committed against me. As I hope for pardon, through toil, effort and expiation, so do I forgive thee in love and peace!"

Then music rolled through the blue space above, and glimpses of the life divine broke on his spirit, inspirations so fraught with majesty and grandeur, they upraised him to the cloud-veiled portals of the realm celestial, to which, as yet, the holiest spirits have not entered, save in dreams; amid legions of the pure and beatified, sinless cherubs, bright-thought angels, star-browed hosts, unto the very central world of light and glory, where all of earth removed, thought, love and beauty circles in divinest song around the revealed wonders, the perfections of Infinitude!

Up, up, through boundless worlds of unimaginable beauty, past shrines of illumined knowledge, through temples of seraphic worship, past choirs of winged angels, through spheres all Eden-like with blessing, past seas of vast research, beyond all planets, stars and suns, up to God's highest felt divinity, that spirit was uplifted on the wings of prayer, by the holy power of forgiveness!

Arousing from the trance of joy, Villandot found himself alone with his pure infant guide, and on the air yet trembled the victorious hymn of soul and nature; and yet the flowers bent in recognition of the angel presence. Looking around, he saw that the mountain's height was gained, and before him spread the land of promise, the fertile valleys, the inviting homes, the diversified glories of a vast extent of spirit land.

As the old man gazed, strange memories crowded upon him, loving and soothing with the reminiscences of earth's childhood and youth. Yon cottage, white, rose-environment, deeply shadowed by the chestnut boughs, it is so like his early home, the home he left for the world's outstretched, tempting arms! He had won gold and fame among men; but that quiet homestead, where the angels of affection lingered, how like it was to yon silvery gleaming cottage amid the jeweled trees.

"Bless God for realization!" whispers the guiding angel-child, and Villandot, gazing once more upon the landscape, feels that it is his home indeed. He turns to drink of the clear, crystal stream at his feet. Oh, joyful wonder! He beholds in the limpid mirror his own reflection; and the wrinkles of age are gone from the face now glowing with the roseate light of recovered youth; the eye sparkles with the new-found inspiration, and the frame, erect, and strong, and graceful, is beautiful with immortality.

"Divine forgiveness," he whispers, "such are thy consequences. Beautiful home of my youth! Land of joy and freedom—I greet thee with a heart overflowing with love!"

As he descends the verdant mountain's side, a spirit clad with loveliness, purity and goodness, in garb of silvery and roseate lustre, the maternal flower-wreath on her head, advances to greet him. Overwhelmed with joy and surprise—speechless with rapture, he falls upon his knees, and stretches forth his longing arms:

"Welcome! welcome, my child! long waited for!"

"Mother! thrice blest—my angel mother!"

They are clasped heart to heart, and her pure kisses shower benedictions on his brow; his grateful tears bedew her hand.

"Henceforth I am thy guide, my son," the mother says, and the child angel, singing joyfully, warning his hand in token of farewell, sails far away in a golden cloud-boat.

Around above, the unseen choir sing low and sweet the chant of reunion, and ten thousand voices of earth and air repeat the welcome words—"Found! found!"

Athwart the storm-clouds fell the guarded ray of light celestial, as the angel of forgiveness stood with healing balm in her hand, revealed to the poor sinner's vision.

"Thy husband, Villandot, whom on earth thou didst wrong, from spheres above thee sends remembrance and forgiveness. Forgive thou him beneath."

"Forgive Saltomar, the plunderer! the fiend steeped in crime! Oh, angel, I cannot, I cannot, yet!"

"Will thou remain here for long, long weary nights? Behold! The flowers grow freshly just above; the murmuring waters flow in music, blest by the warming sun that shines not here. Blue skies are there, and homes and valleys of beauty, and friends long-parted await,—will thou not ascend Althea?"

"Flowers, waters, and sunshine? Best faces, habitations of the pure and good? Oh, for one glimpse of light—one breath of fragrance! Oh, white-robed angel, lead me, lead me hence!"

"I cannot, unless thine own soul prompt and aid thee. Forgive! Upraise thy soul in prayer, like that which brought me to thy side, and, lo! the realms of the beautiful shall unfold to thy view; the rivers of divine life shall flow, the bliss of immortality begin."

"And my sins? The murderous intent; the premeditated treachery; the long years of heartlessness and scorn! My cruel disdain of God's children—the poor. See, spirit, see my robe all stained with impious thought and fell design. How can I come beneath the sunlight with this beggar's garb, this branding mark upon my brow?"

"Thou canst cast off the dark apparel, with its stains of sin. The fiery hand will leave thy brow when the holy signet of resignation takes its place. Purified by suffering, exalted by sacrifice, thou canst arise, poor, darkened spirit, by thy own prayerful effort, even to the worlds of which the highest seraph knows not of. Forgive, Althea; it is the first step in thy onward path. Even as the wronged Villandot has forgiven, forgive thou him beneath thee, that thy soul may rise."

Not in vain the music breathings of that pleading presence. Not in vain the ray of glory falling from her star-wreath to the barren soil. At the closed door the angels clamored not in vain. A long drawn sigh, a tear-drop from the heavily laden heart, itself an offering of sacrifice, and on her bended knees, with hands uplifted to the gloomy skies, Althea orled for help, and flung forth forgiveness.

The sudden flash that darted through the dense grey clouds fell on the upturned brow, and sanctified its badge of suffering, that henceforth gleamed not with unhallowed fears. That ray of light-celestial whitened the sin-stained robe, and warmed the shivering limbs, aroused the dormant intellect, inspired the hopeless soul. Athwart her dazzled sight passed a sweet vision fraught with life and joy—a home-pictorial of Idyllic repose and blessedness, gladdened by leaping waters, twining flowers, welcome faces, and glowing sunshine. The flood-gates of feeling set free by the angel's hand, Althea wept in penitence, breathed sweetly from prayerful lips the music of forgiveness, and sank to slumber 'mid the soothing chimings of fairy bells and low Eolian melodies.

She awoke to find herself reposing on a grassy knoll, and the sky overhead was clear; the rugged cliffs shut out no more the prospect, and sloping valleys, green and flower-decked heights arose before her, stretching far as eyes could reach. Here and there a beautiful grove, a wood-embosomed cottage home, a stately pillar, gardens and fountains, meandering rivers, and verdant steeps leading to heights beyond, beamed on the astonished vision of the wanderer. The scene was beautiful, but not more so than earth, when in its sun-blessed regions it wears the eternal summer's garb. After, the ocean stretched an azure line of glory, reflecting the cloudless canopy, the fitting song-bird's form.

"I cannot find my way. I am blinded by long darkness; the light here dazzles me," exclaimed the spirit, veiling her eyes from the sunshine, turning from the gladdening prospect.

"Give me thy hand, I will guide thee," said a child's sweet voice, and turning, Althea beheld an angel form of most exceeding grace and brightness, infantile in stature, heavenly with its expression of pitying and forgiving love.

"Who art thou, beautiful one? Thy face is radiant, yet it wears a resemblance familiar to my eye. Where have I met with thee?"

"On earth, by thy own mansion's gates. I was the orphaned by thy orders was whipped off thy domain. My widowed mother entreated for me. Thou, Althea, wouldst not remit my punishment."

"And now?" she cried, seized with a sudden terror, "now thou art mighty in thy angelhood, and I, a darkened spirit, stand before the abashed! Thou wilt lead me to punishment—is this my fate?"

"It is my mission and my pleasure to be thy guide; to lead thee to a higher life. Thou hast passed the dark regions. I am thy guide, until a higher one relieve me."

The child's face beamed with pure, unselfish joy; it broke in sparkles and ripples of grace and beauty over her fair face, lighting up the cerulean eyes, dancing 'mid the golden ringlets of his hair.

"Hast thou forgotten the past—forgiven my cruelty?" tremblingly inquired Althea.

"Long, long since, or I could not be dwelling in a world so fair. Oh, Althea! where I live, the golden planet worlds are nigh, and at early morn we hear the chiming harmonies of the celestial hosts! For this is not my home; 'tis too near earth; but I am come to lead thee upward."

"This—is this forgiveness!" cried Althea, with a sudden gust of feeling; and warm, spontaneous, rapturously eloquent, her full heart found utterance in fervent prayer:

"They journeyed on, and the darkened soul drew warmth and life from her infant guide; and, one by one, the lessons of the past were acknowledged, and the flower of humility expanded, and the light of faith grew strong.

She passed, one day, a venerable sage, sitting at the portal of a lofty temple. As she passed by, he arose, and from the star-captlet on his brow, cast flowers upon her path, saying, with a joyous surprise:

"Is it thou, daughter? Welcome—welcome to the upper land!"

oned, with the glory of eternal youth; the white hair was strewn with living jewels of faith and trust; no mark of time, no impress of age, laid claim to that serene, majestic face. A life of purity and gladness, of sympathy and love, had given him strength and power, had ennobled the earth-lowly, and given him a place beside the highest angels.

With faith and hope renewed, with folded hands and upward glance of gratitude, Althea passed on. Women she had scorned on earth, now angels of love and power, pressed her hands in welcome, and bathed her oft-fainting spirit in the sunlight of their forgiving joy.

Time sped on; not time as by earth-reckoning, but by the record the angels keep of aspiring heart-throbs, and progressive vows; time sanctified by prayer and effort; moments winged with golden thoughts of peace; hours freighted with fulfillments of sacred duty; days guided by the helping hands of love; nights visited by the still communion of the soul with God. So time sped on; and the burning band encircling once Althea's sinful brow, had fallen thence, and in its place a chaplet woven by angel hands, shed healing o'er the wounds of earth. The beggar's robe, ensign of her spirit's poverty, when all the stains of wrong had been effaced, was then exchanged for the more fitting spirit garb, that as her soul emerged, her heart expanded, grew brilliant with the gems of light—the spirit's meet adornment—gathered from the crystal streams, the golden strands, the sacred shrines of the immortal land.

They met in course of time—Althea in the humility and grandeur of her spiritual loveliness, and the happy Villandot. They met and exchanged greetings, and then they progressed on, for their paths were not the same.

Once, near a spirit shore of marvelous beauty Althea beheld descending from a dizzy height, on a gemmed and flower-decked cloud, a female seraph, clad in the highest majesty of heaven, in silvery white—a diadem of burning stars upon her youthful brow, and from the light brown tresses, from her regal zone flashed sun-rays that quivered in music on the responsive air. By her side an angel robed in white and azure vestments, carried on his brow the impress of power and genius, on his lips the sweet hushed smile of love.

It was Solina, and Esmond her son; and at their feet reposed, with lyre attuned to her soul's fondest lays the beautiful angel of forgiveness—the lily-sceptered Lilla!

Althea gazed upward in awe and rapture, and Solina smiled, and the shifting light of her starry diadem, fell full upon the upturned face and glorified it with beauty. Esmond waved his hand in token of recognition, and Lilla struck the golden harp-strings, and sang aloud her meed of praise!

On, on the spirit passed, learning holy lessons at every step—leading many from darkness and error, even as she had been led; rescuing from the lower spheres the proud mother that had misled her infant mind; assisting to the better life her father, long groveling in the mists of sense—the fogs of bigotry. Utterly subduing pride and overcoming evil, she led forth Saltomar; and she it was, who won his soul to repentance, after long and painful effort.

In royal beauty, but with all an angel's deep humility, she is hailed a queen amid the white-robed throng. On her face the signet of imperishable love—on her lip the smile of love. Amid her golden tresses a starry chaplet twines, roses of eternal summer bloom on her cheeks, and her deep soul is a hallowed sanctuary, by the highest angels visited. Pure and unspotted, her garments sweep the greenward of immortal plains; hand in hand with Lilla, those white robes flash amid the darkness of earth's desecrated homes, glimpses of her star-wreath brighten the desert places of heart and soul; and where these angels linger, divine melody o'er-sweeps the earth, and heaven's myriads rejoice in loud acclaim, when from the still-darkened habitations of earth, a human heart fulfills the divine mandate of forgiveness, harboring with grateful welcome those ministering spirits of peace and love.

Thou realm of the unknown! vast, incomprehensible, most glorious world of souls! With thrilled heart and soul bowed low in reverence, I venture timidly to stand before thy opening gates, where the partially revealed glories dazzle and bewilder this adoring heart; that, but for its mortal weakness would grasp thy wonders in one look, content to gaze but once in earth life on the foreshadowed ministry of light and joy and music. Yet, though I cannot go, even with uncovered feet, to thy inner sanctuary—though thy starry gates are closed, great realm of mystery! yet to my soul come visions of thy beauty. Thy angel chants sweep o'er the lyre-chorus of my spirit—thy inspirations cast o'er earth and sky and ocean the radiant veil of prophecy; and ministering seraphs whisper even to me, the lowly child of earth, of the greatness, joy and beauty of forgiveness!

Therefore, oh angels of light and love! forgive my imperfect portraiture of your exalted mission; forgive me, that mayhap with profane hand I have endeavored to write of what alone the soul can feel—the beauties of the life immortal, the consequences of earthly good and evil! But, of thy heavenly guides, I know that they inspire to forgiveness; teaching that prayer is the sacred instrument on which heaven's highest seraphs delight to praise the God of Love!

WILL YOU THINK OF ME?

In the calm and pleasant evenings,
Will ye think of her who did
When the summer hath no twilight—
Where the salt sea hath no tide?
Then when your lips shall name me,
Without a grief or gloom,
My spirit like a sunbeam,
Shall glide into the room.
Though you see me not among you,
Though I breathe not with your breath,
The bond is still between us,
And love outliveth death.
And all that blessed spirit
In the land of rest may do,
To minister to others,
That will I do for you.
In the glimmer of the moonshine
On your closely curtained bed,
It may be mine to hover
With white wings o'er your head.
It may be mine to linger
In the fragrant morning air,
And carry up to heaven
The incense of your prayer.
I may listen to your laughter,
I may watch o'er you in pain;
Will you think of me, my darling,
Though you see me not again?
In the sweet home where I nursed you,
Will you think of her who did,
When the summer hath no twilight,
Where the salt sea hath no tide?

CURED OF FLIRTING.

Written for the Banner of Light.

BY BEL BEHREND.

"Sue Nelson, I have something important to say to you, something which, if attentively listened to, may make you a wiser and more sensible girl in the future."

These words were addressed by Charles Nelson to his sister, a handsome, dark-eyed little gipsy of seventeen summers, who sat snugly ensconced in one corner of the old fashioned sofa, which, for fifteen long years, had been an ornamental as well as useful fixture in the square parlor of Squire Nelson's dwelling.

But Sue Nelson was, to all appearances, deeply absorbed in one of Frederika Bremer's novels, which lay wide open in her lap, and upon whose glowing pages the large and lustrous eyes of the young girl seemed firmly riveted.

"Sue Nelson!" shouted the evidently provoked young man, in a loud key, "are you deaf, or don't you want to hear me?" and Charles Nelson put his mouth to the small and shell-tinted ear of his sister.

Sue Nelson had not only distinctly heard the first remark addressed to her by her brother, but she had seen, by a hasty glance at his face, when he entered the parlor some five minutes before, and began rapidly pacing up and down the room, that something unusual had occurred to disturb the natural serenity and peace of mind of one who rarely allowed his angry passions to gain the mastery over the better elements of his composition.

Perhaps it was an inward conviction of guilt that made Susan Nelson attribute her loved brother's displeasure to something which she herself had either done or said, and caused the trembling girl to affect a degree of interest in the book before her, which, in reality, she did not feel.

Seeing no possible way of escaping the storm which she well knew was brooding over her youthful head, Susan Nelson—or Sue Nelson, as her relatives and friends familiarly called her—determined to put on a brave face, and an air of indifference, as an offset to her brother's excited and nervous manner.

"I would thank you, Mr. Nelson, not to scream in my ears in that manner again!" cried the young girl, jumping up from her cosy seat on the sofa, and confronting her brother with a look of unmistakable indignation; "I am no dumb belle, sir, although one would judge from your yelling in my ear, that I had been deaf from infancy!"

"Better be a dumb belle than the frivolous and heartless coquette you are now!" muttered Charles Nelson, through his half closed teeth, as, turning suddenly upon his heel, he began pacing the room once more, with rapid strides.

These bitter words did not miss their intended aim. If my reader could have seen the mingled expression of scorn and anger which swept quickly across the handsome face of Sue Nelson at that moment, you would never have doubted the existence of the sense of hearing in any woman again, while you lived.

"So you think me a vain and heartless coquette, do you? I always said that you were a cruel and unnatural brother, Charles Nelson, and this last speech of yours only confirms the truth of my assertion," and, bursting into a flood of tears, the deeply injured girl threw herself once more upon the old hair cloth sofa.

Woman's tears are, to most men, irresistible. Charles Nelson's heart was neither iron nor steel, and so, seating himself upon the sofa beside his dearly loved sister, he drew her petite form closely to his own, until the small, but oval-shaped head, with its wealth of dark, clustering ringlets, lay throbbing and beating against his manly breast.

"Don't cry, Sue! there's a good girl; I confess I was a little too hasty in my words," and Charles Nelson, stooping tenderly, pressed a kiss upon the burning cheek of his beautiful but impulsive sister.

"Since you are my only brother, Charlie, and are really sorry for what you just said, I suppose I must forgive you," replied Sue, drying her tears, and making a strong effort to smile again.

"The truth is, Sue," continued Charles Nelson, after a few moment's pause, "I am half provoked with you for your unkind treatment of Ralph Ashley, last evening. Both your father and myself noticed your entire neglect to one who, for the past year, has been warmly attached to you."

"Pshaw, Charlie! if I was a little cold in my manner to Ralph Ashley last evening, I am sure that a man of his dull perceptions must have failed to perceive it," and, saying this, Sue Nelson tossed her fine head carelessly upon one side, and began beating a tattoo accompaniment upon the floor with one daintily slipped foot.

"This is too bad, Sue, and you surely cannot blame me for resenting a remark which, three months ago, you, above all others, would not have allowed any one to make in your presence, about Ralph Ashley," and, rising from his seat, Charles Nelson moved towards an open window, which led out upon a broad and vine-wreathed piazza.

While the young man stood there, in the snowily curtained recess, with his back to his sister, and his brown hair thrown back from off his fine brow, as if wooing the caresses of the soft, south wind, Sue Nelson did not note the significant glances which he exchanged with a pale-faced, but good looking young man, who, closely screened from observation by the thick shrubbery in the garden below, had been for several minutes a silent auditor to the conversation between the object of his love and her brother.

"And so you think, Charles Nelson, that I have lost all regard and friendship for Ralph Ashley," said Sue, becoming tired of her brother's sullen silence, and feeling an intense desire to renew the subject of their previous conversation. "Pray, tell me, what ever lead you to suppose that I cared particularly for the society of Ralph Ashley?"

"Simply because his attentions were at first joyfully received by you," was the cool reply of Charles Nelson, who still maintained his position beside the open window.

"Indeed! one would think that the plain and unsophisticated sister of Charles Nelson, Esq., had never been honored by the attentions of a gentleman, before Ralph Ashley settled in Littleton," replied Sue, in a tone of voice slightly tinged with irony.

"It is your beauty, sister mine," returned the young man, casting a reproachful look upon the handsome, but scornful face of Sue, "that has spoiled you. Accustomed, from a mere child, to flatter and homage from the lips of old and young, you have come to look upon men of truth and goodness, with contempt and disgust. Now, however, like most dresses, are worn for a time, and then cast aside, to give place to fresher and more showy ones."

"I don't see, Charles, why a lady should be forced to tolerate the presence of any gentleman, whose company is a bore rather than a pleasure," retorted Sue, by way of self defence.

"No reasonable person would expect or desire such a thing. All that I blame you for in the case of Ralph Ashley is, that you ever, for a moment, encouraged his addresses. However, he is not the first man that has been snared by your net, for there was William Sampson."

"A crusty old bachelor, who was too penurious to grant himself a decent living, to say nothing of the annual expense of supporting a wife," interrupted Sue quickly.

"And Henry Austin; why was he so soon denied the house?"

"Simply because he was a discarded lover of your fair innamorata, Carrie Richards, who thought to make me believe that I was his first and only love. As soon as I learned the deception he was so artfully practicing upon me, I gave him his walking stick."

"The reason, sister, that Carrie Richards refused Henry Austin's suit, was solely on the ground of his relationship. Having fully resolved never to wed a cousin, Carrie communicated this fact to her parents, who, much as they esteemed Henry, nevertheless applauded their daughter's views on so important a subject."

At this stage of their conversation a domestic entered, bearing a paste-board box, and addressed to Miss Susan Nelson. With a fluttering heart, and trembling fingers, the young girl uncovered the box. Charles Nelson, actuated by what seemed to be curiosity, advanced to examine its contents. Beneath a delicate strata of cotton wool, lay an exquisite bouquet, composed almost entirely of flowers of a pure white hue, tastefully intertwined with graceful sprigs of blue leaved myrtle and jasmine.

"Who can the donor be?" cried Charles Nelson, at the same time snatching from the bottom of the box a small scrap of rose-tinted paper, on which was traced, in a fair, round hand, the words, "To Sue, from one who loves her devotedly."

"Why, what a question to ask, Charles; of course there is but one man in Littleton who could exercise such rare taste in the selection of a bouquet," said Sue, with a surprised look.

"And that is?" eagerly asked the man—

"Henry St. Leon, to be sure; the fascinating young Southerner, whose acquaintance I made some few weeks since," rejoined the young girl, at the same time trying to hide her blushes from the eyes of her brother, by stopping to inhale the rich fragrance of the floral tribute which lay, sparkling with dew, upon the centre table before her.

"I should much sooner think of attributing the gift to Ralph Ashley; for, if I remember rightly, I have often heard him say that flowers were his particular delight."

"Very likely, indeed; I think I have heard him say that such large and unsightly flowers as sun-flowers and hollyhocks, were far more pleasing to his eye than rosebuds and violets. No, no, Mr. Nelson, you cannot deceive me in regard to the giver of this bouquet; besides, you know as well as I, that Ralph's orthography is very poor compared to this," and Sue Nelson, with a triumphant air, held up the rose tinted scrap of paper, with its precious words, for her brother's nearer inspection.

"Well, well; have it your own way, Sue," replied Charles Nelson, curtly, at the same time seizing his hat, and moving towards the door.

"Come, Charlie, don't go off mad, now, for you know the time will come, sooner or later, when you will have no sister!" and Sue Nelson dropped her head upon her breast, and drew a deep sigh, such as only pretty and interesting women know how to emit. This last speech of Sue's was one which she always held in reserve for particular emergencies, and now, as usual, had the desired effect of softening the heart, and enlisting the sympathies, of her impulsive, but, nevertheless, loving brother.

A kiss upon the upturned brow of Sue, and a hurried "take care of yourself," and the hall door closed upon the retreating footsteps of Charles Nelson, who was met at the garden gate by a tall and pale-faced young man whom he addressed by the familiar term of Ralph, as, arm in arm, they proceeded down the street, engaged in close conversation upon a subject which seemed to engross the entire attention of both.

Sue Nelson was, literally speaking, a spoiled child. Deprived in infancy of that greatest of earthly blessings, a mother, she had grown up to womanhood mistress of her own pursuits and pleasures. A steady and faithful housekeeper had for long years presided over the domestic affairs of Mr. Nelson, who, to tell the truth, added her share to the general indulgence which the orphan child received from all sides.

That Sue Nelson was a kind and generous-hearted girl, no one who knew her could deny. Her dark and brilliant style of beauty, which she inherited mainly from her deceased mother, increasing with her ripening years, soon became manifest to the senses of the young girl, partly through the revelations of her own mirror, and partly through the flattery which was constantly poured into her listening ears by shallow and weak-minded representatives of the opposite sex.

Since the age of fourteen—a period of three years—Susan Nelson had been the acknowledged belle of Littleton. Knowing her power, the youthful beauty used it to the best advantage. A simple glance from her bright eyes, or a graceful toss of her fair head, was enough to bring to her feet a dozen suitors.

For two years Sue Nelson won hearts only to cast them away like glittering baubles that dazzle the eye for a time, but are crushed and trampled beneath our feet because of their lost splendor and fast fading brilliancy. Where the affections of the young girl would at last cast anchor was a problem which more minds than one in the village found a difficult matter to solve. Charles Nelson often trembled for his fair sister, as he daily noted her fickleness and increasing love of admiration. Whenever he essayed to speak with her upon the subject, she either reproached him for his lack of fraternal affection, or indignantly refused to receive his advice.

A year previous to the opening of our story, however, Ralph Ashley, the son of a retired merchant in Boston, had opened an extensive dry goods establishment in Littleton, and, being a young man of good morality and energy of character, he soon succeeded in ingratiating himself into the favor of the good people of the village. Ill-health had first called him to quiet and unpretending Littleton, and being pleased with the beneficial change which its pure and invigorating air wrought upon his hitherto feeble constitution, he at last resolved to settle there.

Mr. Nelson and his son Charles, were among the first of Ralph Ashley's business acquaintances in Littleton. A strong friendship by degrees sprang up between the latter and Charles Nelson, and the young merchant soon became a regular visitor at the residence of Squire Nelson. From the hour of their first acquaintance, Ralph and Sue seemed mutually pleased with one another, and as the former was most assiduous and devoted in his attentions to the pretty and fascinating sister of his friend, he soon found himself master of the field as regards love matters. Ralph Ashley, though a thorough-bred gentleman in the highest sense of the word, was nevertheless, a man of few compliments and no flattery. He loved Sue Nelson, not merely for her external beauty, of which nature had been particularly lavish in her case, but for the more lasting qualities of the head, which he well knew she possessed. Yet with all his deep love for Sue Nelson, Ralph Ashley was by no means insensible to her faults. When reflecting upon some piece of neglect or act of injustice exercised towards him by the wayward and giddy object of his choice, Ralph Ashley would console his sensitive and wounded heart with the thought that such unkindness and total disregard for the feelings of others, was the result of youth and inexperience, and that when once wedded and settled down to the calm of domestic life, Sue Nelson would be the most loving and devoted of wives.

A dangerous rival, however, to the affections of Ralph, suddenly appeared in Littleton, a few months previous to the time of the commencement of our story, in the person of Henri St. Leon, a handsome and fascinating young Southerner, who had been sent North for educational purposes, and whose wild and reprehensible conduct at Harvard had subjected him to the penalty of a college suspension for three months.

Having been placed in the family of a Unitarian divine of Littleton, Henri St. Leon, with more love for mischief than study, resolved to while away the dreary months in perspective, in the most pleasurable way. Littleton was no place for a spendthrift to squander money, and as out of town amusements are few and insipid compared to those with which the populous city daily and nightly feasts its votaries, the dashing southerner began to look about him for some pretty rustic, to whom he might make love and carry on a short flirtation with, and which would doubtless prove as ruinous to the female heart involved as it was brief and bewildering.

A timely introduction to the acknowledged belle of the village was procured St. Leon through the kindly interest of a rejected lover of Sue Nelson's, who had looked for long months with jealous eyes upon the high favor which his rival, Ralph Ashley, had gained in the eyes of his lady love.

The physical beauty and elegant address of Henri St. Leon at once charmed and intoxicated the senses of the young girl, and whose first glance sent a thrill of joy to her warm and unguarded heart. Encouraged by Sue herself in her passion blindness, as well as by the efforts of his particularly interested friend, the rejected lover of the young girl, Henri St. Leon began to make frequent and lengthy visits at the house of Squire Nelson.

Neither Charlie or his staid and sober-minded father, could bear to witness the advances of affection which the artful southerner weekly made toward their own dearly loved one. The strong prejudice which Charles Nelson had from the first felt for the insinuating southerner, at last sowed the seeds of anger in the breast of the former, and was the immediate cause of the conversation which transpired between the two on the subject of the present story.

Upon the return of Charles Nelson from his walk with Ralph Ashley, and his subsequent appearance at the tea-table, where were already seated Mr. Nelson and his daughter, the former abruptly began their usual table talk, by saying carelessly to his sister: "Well, Sue, I suppose you have heard the news?"

"No indeed, Charlie! Pray what is it?" asked Sue Nelson, in a tone of undisguised curiosity.

"Not much, to be sure," replied the young man, with an air of utter indifference, "only that Ralph Ashley has invited Carrie Richards to bear him company to the ball of Wednesday eve."

"A rare trick indeed for Ralph Ashley to play upon us both!" rejoined Sue, at the same time setting down the saucer of steaming tea that she had but just raised to her lips.

"What makes you look so pale, sis?" said Charlie concernedly, and at once attracting the eyes of both the housekeeper and his father to the blanched face of the young girl; "one would think that you were about ready to drop from your chair in a fainting fit. Water there, Bridget?"

"Nonsense Charlie, I am well enough!" quickly interposed the young girl, her dark face suffused with blushes. "But tell me Charlie, are you in earnest about this affair?"

"Certainly."

"Then what are we two injured ones to do to avenge our wrongs?"

"Why make the best of a bad matter, Sue, and go to the ball together," was Charles's doleful reply.

"That I won't! I never yet was a laughing stock for the town, nor will I be in this instance! Why, it was only last evening that I declined Mr. St. Leon's invitation to attend the ball, just because I considered myself previously engaged to Ralph. I don't know how you feel about the matter, Charles, but I consider myself deeply insulted, and in my opinion, Carrie Richards, your rare model of female excellence, is no better than that most deceitful of earthly creatures, Ralph Ashley!" and Sue Nelson, with a look of mingled contempt and anger, disfiguring her handsome face, rose from the table and hurried to her own chamber, where, after securely locking herself in, she gave vent to her madness in a passionate flood of tears.

Mr. Nelson and his son lingered late over the tea table that night, and when at length they arose, the pleased and half-mysterious expression of their countenances, seemed to indicate the existence of some secret between the two, which they would sooner or later reveal.

The evening of the ball at last arrived; and Sue Nelson, after much crying and sobbing, was dressed and awaiting the appearance of her dilatory brother in the parlor, with a degree of feverish unrest and nervousness quite unnatural to her.

To Sue Nelson's great surprise, her brother upon entering the ball room, at once moved towards the spot where Carrie Richards, looking as lovely as nature and art combined could possibly make her, stood gracefully leaning upon the arm of Ralph Ashley, whose usually pale and sad face seemed flushed with delight as he tenderly bent his ear to catch the slightest accent which fell from the lips of his fair companion. To their kindly salutations Sue only returned a cold and formal bow, while Charles, to his sister's great indignation and horror, seemed perfectly reconciled at seeing his lady-love the admired of another.

Henri St. Leon was there in all his wealth of southern beauty, but alas, his words of tenderness and flattery fell like cold lead upon the unheeding ear of Sue. Her hasty resolve, to "flirt desperately," as she said, with Mr. St. Leon, by way of revenge, and with the view of exciting the jealousy of her tyrant lover, Ralph Ashley, vanished before the evening had fairly commenced. Throughout the dance, with one or two exceptions, her brother was her constant partner; for whenever Charles Nelson saw St. Leon approaching his sister, as if to solicit her hand for the coming quadrille, he was always sure to hurry her off to some distant part of the hall, where as look would have it, just one more couple was required to fill out the set.

The morning after the ball, Sue Nelson was taking a late and solitary breakfast, when the dining room door was quickly burst open, and her brother, wild with grief and excitement, staggered toward the spot where she was seated. To her inquiries as to the cause of his sudden and violent emotion, he replied in broken and incoherent sentences, that his dear friend Ralph had been thrown from his carriage, the night previous, after conveying Miss Richards to her home, and that the injuries received by his fall were so great, that little or no hope was entertained by his physician, of his recovery.

A sudden faintness came over the young girl, as she listened to the words of her brother; but suddenly rallying, she began pacing the room with a wild despair of manner that quite alarmed her brother. Remorse seemed to have taken possession of her heart, and only one idea appeared to haunt her mind, which was that by her cruelty and neglect she had killed Ralph Ashley. After a strong effort upon the part of Charles Nelson, he at last succeeded in partially soothing the disturbed spirits of his beloved sister, who at his request finally left the room for the purpose of procuring her bonnet and shawl in order that she might accompany him to the residence of Ralph, with the hope of receiving his dying forgiveness.

Upon her return she was surprised to see her brother in close conversation with Carrie Richards. Without speaking a word to the young girl Sue, hastened out of the room, rapidly followed by Charles. But just as she was on the point of opening the hall door, it swung back, and with a loud scream Sue Nelson fell into the arms of Ralph Ashley! Suitable explanations concerning the matter now followed, and in the fullness of her joy at finding her devoted lover safe and uninjured, Sue Nelson heartily forgave her brother Charles and his accomplice Carrie Richards the successful ruse which they had perpetrated, in order to test the strength of her attachment for Ralph Ashley, and to cure her of that detestable and cruel practice of flirting. Two happier wives than Sue Ashley and Carrie Nelson, are not to be found in Littleton.

THE NIGHT WATCH.

BY GRACE LELAND.

Darkness lies all around me now, For night watches o'er the hills, And now her soft and magic voice Nature's cathedral fills: She walks along its forest aisles Like some calm, prayerful nun, And whispers to earth's weary ones, "Sleep now, your task is done." But not to me that mandate comes, To me—"Oh, watch and pray!" She cannot lift the burden up That fell while yet 'twas day. And yet her voice, loving, soft, Steals in upon my ear, And bids me ever to my God In faith and love keep near. I come to thee, Father Divine, With all my load of care, Oh! grant me strength, Lord, from on high, My daily cross to bear! My prayers go up by day and night For those so dear to me, Father in Heaven, in thy great love Oh keep them near to thee!

Written for the Banner of Light.

NOTHING TO DO.

BY EFFIE MANTON.

"Helen, I wish you would take this piece of sewing to sister Carrie, and ask her if she can finish it before to-morrow noon." The speaker was a woman in the ordinary conditions of life,—one of those negative characters that are always leaning upon some more active person for the daily performance of duty that a little exertion might overcome. "Mamma," exclaimed the bright-eyed Helen, who had just returned from her errand, "Aunt says she can't do it to-day. She has got a lot of company, and—and she says she has got a lot of sewing for herself, too."

"Well, some people never have time; for my part I could find time to do my sewing, I guess, if I hadn't so many children; not a child or a chick has she to care for?"

In the main, Mrs. Nutting was a good woman. Her motives were well-intentioned, but she lacked close moral culture, consequently she would visit and make calls when her presence was required at home.

Very unlike her was her sister, Mrs. Allen—true, she had no children of her own, but her house always seemed full of them. Each neighbor, supposing she would not find any employment, kindly consented to give her some of their cares. Had it not been for one friend that she possessed, Mrs. Allen certainly would have suffered from the burden so thoughtlessly laid upon her by others.

"Good morning, Mrs. Everett," said Mrs. Thomas, "I have called upon you this morning to see if you knew of any one who will make some clothes for a poor child. I have so much to do myself I could never think of doing them."

"And why not?" remarked Mrs. Everett. "I with a family of four children!" "Why, Mrs. Everett—you surely don't mean—"

"Yes—I mean what I say—that I think you can do them yourself; you hire your sewing done and have a servant for your housework."

"But what can Mrs. Allen have to occupy her time with, pray?" "Much; I have known her a long time, and I have found her to be one of the most industrious of women. In the first place she has no servant, doing all her housework and sewing."

"But she has only herself and husband to work for," chimed Mrs. T. "Not so—she has one of her sister's children with her constantly, and the addition of two more every time her sister, Mrs. Nutting, goes away. In addition to the care of them, I have seen her table piled with sewing that would take either you or I a fortnight to perform."

"But, of course, the little girl does a great many errands for her." "True, but does all that compensate for the time and money it takes to clothe her, beside the charge of moral training?"

"Well, I have not thought much of these things before—but then three in a family is not many—"

"She has more—a feeble aunt and a house always full of company. She told me herself that her family averaged five or six the year round. She seldom has time for visiting. I have times innumerable known her to be dressed ready for a walk or call, when her sister would enter with her two youngest children for her to take charge of for a day or two. Once in particular, I was there spending the day, when three visitors arrived to spend a week and she had her sister's children there to spend vacation while their mother went into the country to rest. Besides, her summer sewing was not done although it was the middle of July. Mrs. Nutting had left a quantity of sewing to be done by the time she returned. This is only one item of what she has to pass through, and all without the sympathy of people, because she had no children. I tell you, Mrs. Thomas, we make great mistakes oftentimes in supposing that neighbor A or B have no employment for their time. I have seen much of life, and I find that each one not only has enough to do, but enough of trials to polish their souls to purity."

"With such a warm advocate of her cause, I should think Mrs. Allen was not likely to be devoid of sympathy," remarked Mrs. Thomas, as she arose to leave. She was slightly piqued by the words of her friend, but her reason had been appealed to, and she could not forget the lesson.

"Now, who do you think will do the sewing for the poor orphan?" said Mrs. Everett, smiling good naturedly. "Why, I, of course, must do it; if, as you say, everybody has as much as they can attend to."

"Would it be true charity, my friend, if you perform it from a sense of obligation—would it not be better to do it cheerfully and from choice?"

"You are quite plain, this morning, but, really, I find truth in your words, and I mean to profit by them."

"And not yourself alone, Mrs. Thomas. I, too, need the practice of the theory I advance. We all need much self-culture."

They bade each other good day, and we trust were benefited by the conversation.

"Carrie, dear, you look weary," said Mr. Allen, as he entered the dining-room at the close of a hot, sultry day. His wife was arranging things for supper. She was weary, and sadly needed rest and quiet.

The children had been very noisy all day. Johnny, the youngest, had only three times fell into the pond near by, while playing, making large demands upon his wardrobe, too rapid indeed for the strength of his aunt.

"I am rather tired, Henry, but hope a night's rest will restore me."

"When is your sister to return and relieve you of the burden?" asked her husband, a little bitterly. "I do not know, exactly. She thinks of returning in two weeks."

"And leaving this noisy tribe upon your weak nerves—we'll see," and Mr. Allen gave some unusual demonstrations of anger, but was soon calmed by the appealing look of his wife.

"Our friends have arrived from D—," she calmly said; "let us enjoy their presence all we can while they remain with us."

"But how can we enjoy anything with our house full of children?"

"Never mind," said she, mildly; "I have no children, and find myself a special object of pity among the neighbors, who wondrously ask me what I have to do."

Three weeks later, and the home of Mrs. Allen was quiet—the visitors had departed, and the children had been called to their home. Mrs. Nutting returned refreshed from her visit, but to watch by the bedside of her sister Carrie, who lay in a raging fever. Her system had been overtaken; she had kept up during the stay of her friends and the children, and when they left, her weary frame gave out. Anxiously did her sister watch beside her, and often did she chide herself for the task she had so unconsciously laid upon her. She resolved, that should she be restored to them, she would recompense her for all her self-denial and favors. But would she live? Ah, that time must decide.

Gradually the fever and pain left her, but in such weakness that pain was almost preferable. As she sat bolted up in her chair, looking so pale and feeble, the moral development was working in the mind of her sister, who felt and repented that she had been so negligent of duty, and resolved that this should be a life-lesson. That look, so patient, chided each moment; but the higher nature was unfolding, and, as it is over, the innocent suffered for the errors of others.

Slowly came back the rose of health to the cheek of Carrie. The long September days worked like a charm upon her feebleness. Henry had her removed to a dear friend's in the country, where she regained her former strength. And when they returned to their home, they inwardly resolved that it should no longer be subject to invasion—not that friends were not always welcome, but her peace and rest should henceforth be paramount to everything else. It was a duty they owed themselves, and when the following winter, Mr. Allen was asked to have his wife take active part in a fair which the Hopefield Society had in preparation, he firmly replied—

"My wife has so long had the reputation of having nothing to do, that I mean she shall at least enjoy its practice."

Charitable calls were not unheeded by them; they gave in proportion to their means, and through the friendly influence of Mrs. Everett, a few of the neighbors had come to the conclusion that a woman with no children has something to do.

What reason is there to believe that Ananias never told a lie? Because he was born out by the bystanders.

Banner of Light.

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OUR CIRCLES.

Our Circles are not yet renewed. Notice will be given, when Mr. S Conant's health will permit her to resume.

SPIRITS AND MEN.

That disembodied spirits do sympathize and communicate with spirits in the form, or rather, with mortals, is incontestable. The whole long record of man's history establishes this fact beyond successful dispute.

To say that spirits cannot communicate, is to say they never have; no literal Bible believer, at least, would be so imprudent as to admit as much as that.

And if they have come sensibly to the hearts of mortals once, according to natural and everlasting laws, there can exist no possible reason why they may not, and should not, come again.

But the point is at this day indisputable. He who thoughtlessly nays, in "times times, ten times" that spirits and mortals do hold communion, no matter whether he be priest or layman, scholar or no scholar, Jew or Gentile, no more understands the work he is engaged about than did Paul, when he was told in the midst of the great and shining light that it was hard to kick against the pricks.

Thus much must, at least, be conceded. Now we submit, as a natural corollary to this, that instead of wasting more time in idly combatting what every person, whose experience stands him in hand to teach him at all, very well knows—instant of further wrangling, and dispute, and wordy contention about sects and God, about the ministry and Christ, and about other matters that appertain not—as they are dragged forward—to the soul's real life and real salvation, the contests be brought to a final termination, and that men should take anew their bearings in the present posture of the world's affairs, and resolve to deport themselves like living souls rather than as persons playing at hoodman's buff, or iron-bound bigotry.

In all our actions, in all our business, our pleasures, our thoughts, and our employments, spirits exert their individual influence. They come to us as they are attracted by us; but, good or bad, they come. In moments when the soul aspires to the good and pure of life, men would be most likely to draw good and pure spirits; which, on observation, is found to be the case.

If a man passes out of the body, or becomes a spirit, he is not therefore to be supposed to have suddenly, and by a miracle, changed his nature. If so, then the past suddenly becomes a blank to him—a shoresless gulf, in which his very self-consciousness is swallowed up. But it is not so. Hence a disembodied spirit retains the same passions and desires, or, on the contrary, the same purity and beauty of character, which were its distinctive features while an actor in the body; and, inasmuch as it is attracted to earth again from natural reasons alone, and after only natural laws, it would be preposterous to suppose it would select associations dissimilar to itself, or choose companionships not strictly after its own kind.

Our atmosphere we ever carry with us. If a man is satisfied with such a life as he will find in the haunts of vice and dissipation, the atmosphere of that life hangs about him wherever he goes; and the spirits who surround him can only be such as live in that peculiar atmosphere. Or, on the contrary, he keeps his soul spotless and secure, reaching out ever

after the great and priceless gifts that are showered, in the form of God's rich blessings, on the heads of such as himself—then all spirit influences correspond most faithfully to his desires, and none but the good, the beautiful, and the true, are drawn to the open windows of his soul. Yet are spirits of a different character often sent to such by the Father to learn of them; for those spirits are material, and can come in nigher communion with the human than with the angelic spirit.

Now suppose these simple truths are remembered by us—laid away, as in store, in the mind. They will form an invaluable basis both for the better understanding of the value and mysteries of spirit communion, and for the direction and development of the life itself. Our intercourse with the spirit-world has hitherto been mostly conducted on a different, and a mistaken supposition—namely, that all spirits must of necessity be pure, because they are spirits; but the reason fails to furnish the foundation required for such a supposition.

This spirit communion is no new thing; men have always dwelt, more or less, in the spirit-world, surrounded by spirit influences, every man and every spirit upon a corresponding plane. No man acts an act, does a deed, or thinks a thought, except by impression; and the character of his acts, deeds, and thoughts is the most reliable description of the character of his impressions. And knowing this so well as all souls who are gifted with ordinary perception must know it, how worse than idle—nay, how foolish it is to complain that bad and base men cannot be placed in communication with good spirits, or that gross and evil spirits persist in holding communion with men of similar natures!

The mistake is with men themselves, rather than with the spirits that are attracted to them. In this life, as we all know, a perpetual conflict is going on between the principles of Good and Evil in the soul; and that conflict will rage, now openly and now secretly and silently, until one principle comes off conqueror. The eloquent apostle has signified to us which of the two shall finally be put under foot. Now, in the progress of this long-continued struggle, the man who has already so far pledged the powers of his soul to the side of the Evil, will naturally, and of very necessity, attract to himself all pure and holy spirit influences; it could not be otherwise. And, on the other hand, he who, by every act, thought, and association, has proved that he has enlisted for life with the service of Evil, and that alone, could scarcely expect to draw other sympathy from the spirit-world than that which his most unworthy service requires. And when such men, or those even partially allied with such men, turn and complain, in a sneering tone and a ribald style, that spirit communion is not what they expected, they do but betray their pitiable ignorance of the primary laws of their own nature.

And then for clergymen and professedly good men to catch up their impious syllables in the temper of blind zealots, and charge it against spirit communion that these advocates and supporters of Evil are not satisfied, is the very last confession poor human nature could be asked to make of its intrinsic weakness.

Thus considered—that is, on the principle that like attracts like in all matters spiritual—it is plain that by this intercourse between spirits and men, which the developed powers of each have in this age combined to make so free, both are the recipients of benefit. Good angels are developed still more by the active interest they take in advancing the cause of God on this earth planet. And men whose natures tend to good are aided by them, strengthened and ministered to, in every good work.

And is not this of itself enough to warm afresh the heart of every lover of his race? Is it not cause of speechless gratitude that all the while we are striving and praying for purity and spiritual exaltation, the good angels above striving and praying with us?—and that while the unhappy spirits come back to earth, bewailing the wretched influences that misdirected them in this life, they may, by this very return, become recipients of higher good than they ever yet knew, and be led insensibly to paths whose end is purity and peace? Ah, let us fall on our knees and thank God for this most mysterious, yet most real, blessing to both angels and men, which proceeds through the open door of spirit communion!

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PREACHING AND PLAYING.

The spirit's needs are always imperative and many, if we once awaken to the mysteries of our spirit existence in this life; and still the wants of the body seem, at times, scarcely behind them. In converting the poor heathen, tracts are of less value than bread; they must needs be fed before they are religious. In other words, people require to know that soul and body may be kept together in some way, before they, truly themselves much about that element which does not hunger and thirst. We of course recognize all demands upon the spiritual faculties as of the very first and most important character; yet as there was no spirit until there was a body for it to inhabit, there evidently can be no spiritual progress till the same body first has its necessities supplied.

We have been led to these remarks by the recent account in the newspapers of the sad and sore experience of Mr. Charles H. Weeks, a well known and popular actor of Troy, N. Y. He became deeply interested in the revival of a year ago, and professed himself at last a hopeful convert to the truths of the Christian religion. In order to testify before the world to the sincerity of his religious convictions, he determined to abandon the stage, and commenced preaching. His trying experience, however, he had better be allowed to narrate in his own way:

"About one year since, during the revivals in New York, I was led to think of the future—the mysterious future beyond the grave—and, as I still humbly trust, gave my heart to Jesus. I left the theatre, and by the advice of my newly found friends, commenced preaching, having been licensed by the Fifth Avenue Church, in New York city. I will not speak of my anxiety, my sleepless nights, and days of headache, in my efforts to please the church and serve the Master, nor of the struggles of mind with regard to the temporal present, and the future. Day by day provided me with

bread, but day by day the same darkness hovered over my pathway. I was entirely dependent. This galled me, but I was able to bear this for the future good I might accomplish when I became settled as a pastor. I looked forward—I hoped.

I saw my mother sinking lower and lower, drawing nearer and nearer the grave. I saw the scanty winter clothing of herself and my young sisters, and with the picture constantly before me, and the thought, 'I cannot help them—when shall I be able to do so?' my heart grew sick. At last I consented, as my church wished it, to go to college for two years, in further preparation for the ministry, trusting in God for my support during this term. But a short time before my intended departure, I heard from my mother—she cannot live long. I have two sisters, aged respectively eleven and thirteen. Shall I, with health and strength, and claiming to be a man, leave them to suffer, as I have done? Not if my God in his wisdom does not deprive me of reason, which I have at times feared would be the case. No; if I did not struggle to relieve them, if I did not fly in response to their call, I should deem myself a coward, not fit to dwell among men, or worthy a home in heaven. I have no other method, at present, but my former profession. At a moment when my heart seemed almost breaking, with these facts vividly before me, Mr. Conner, of the Troy Theatre, offered me an engagement for three nights. I accepted.

I ask God to judge the heart and motive. I am willing all Christians should also judge. I do not intend to remain on the stage, if I can help it. I am no longer happy in theatrical life. If I am condemned for this act, it will be by men. I cannot help it."

A touching narrative indeed, and one the like of which, we undertake to say, the church has not recently been called to deal with. Here is the man, with his heart divided between affection—which is the only life of the soul—and what he has been taught, by his new religious ideas, to consider his "duty to the world." His duty to the world, because to himself, requires that he should do just as he is doing; for is he not doing the best thing he is able? And who will find fault with his course? A professed Christian? Then let that Christian remove that dire necessity from the man's door. Let him go around and obtain aid from his fellow Christians to place it out of the need of this man to do as he is doing! Let him remember what Christ himself once said about asking for bread and receiving a stone. We insist that Mr. Weeks has, by his very act, ennobled the calling to which he was bred, as it was never before ennobled by all the Garricks, Keans, Kembles, Siddonses and Macreays of the world. He has lifted it up to where it is made to take on a spiritual meaning; and it puts the church to open shame.

THE WAYWARDNESS OF GENIUS.

The ideal world in which Genius enjoys its life, contains no inhabitants save those, who, at their birth, were presented with the freedom of its realms. Outsiders need not hope to climb in there. There is no back-door, either, through which the curious may slip unperceived. Genius alone can tread its glassy streets and breathe its pure air. It is a world above our own work-day world, yet closely associated with it by a thousand mysterious influences. The weary-hearted love to set down and contemplate its shining outskirts, and in silence long for the sweet enjoyments they seem to promise. Even the most practical of practical men look now and then wistfully up at its splendid palaces, gleaning in the blue distance, and to their own hearts, at least, confess that there is another life than the mechanical one which they blindly pursue. They yield, in spite of their resolutions, to the influences that will steal into their natures, and that immediately link all men together in the bonds of a common relationship.

Genius does not regard as high a value to the ordinary rewards and recompenses of life as do those who exist only for such things; and hence it betrays an indifference that wounds the pride of worldly devotees. It refuses to worship wealth for its own sake. It is not able to find any sign of superiority in the mere outward circumstances, and looks for it only in the wealth and worth of the man. And itself so misapprehended, it learns willingness from incessant persecution, and finally refuses any respect save where it is absolutely compelled to yield it. Burdened with so many misrepresentations, it becomes first disgusted, and then defiant, until its true and high relationship to the world is forgotten altogether. We do not pretend to offer palliation for such a sorry state of things, but we heartily wish it were very different.

You can hardly expect a man of genius, wrapt in the gorgeous ideals that float like clouds about him, to come over to you at any careless beck or nod of your will. You may as well attempt to dethrone a king, as try to disenthral him. Thus does he obey his varying impulses. He will give his utterances, or he will be silent, as the mood may happen to prevail. He will work or he will wander, as his thoughts direct him. He will be idle whenever idleness hangs pleasantly about his hours. To any kind or degree of mental restraint he refuses to submit. His days are not ruled in with any parallel lines, nor are his hours filed away for the use of certain preconceived duties. He must be himself, or he is nothing. He will be free, or he will not labor at all. On such large and flowing natures mechanical restraints sit heavily and ill. They will be judged wrongfully, rather than be judged by them at all. The world is the receiver of their grand benefits, and must let them follow such intellectual habits as best their various temperaments. If it misjudges and persecutes, it alone is the loser thereby.

SOCIAL LEVEE.

The First Independent Society (Spiritualists) of Chelsea, will hold their fifth Annual Levee on the evening of Thursday, the 22d of February, in the City Hall, Chelsea. Speaking by friends of the cause. Social amusements; instrumental music by Halls Quintette and Concert Band, will occupy the evening until nine o'clock. Dancing, after nine. Cars and boat leave Chelsea and Boston every half hour until twelve. Tickets admitting a gentleman and lady, \$1; gentlemen's single tickets, 75 cents; ladies' and children's single tickets, 25 cents.

DR. E. I. LYON GOING WEST.

Messrs. Editors.—As I contemplate spending the month of March in Western New York and Ohio, I will lecture as follows: Burlington, Vt., Feb. 20th; Auburn, N. Y., Feb. 27th; Buffalo, the first Sabbath in March, (and will speak a few evenings during the week in each city if circumstances warrant); Geneva, Ohio, the second Sunday in March. Those wishing my services in Northern Ohio, the remaining part of the month, can address me at Geneva, Ohio, care of Wm. Crowell. I shall return to New England the first of April. Those wishing my services from that date can address me at Lowell, till further notice. I design spending the summer in New England. E. I. L.

The Busy World.

In the Massachusetts House of Representatives, Monday, 7th inst., it was voted on motion of Hon. Caleb Cushing, of Newburyport, that a select committee be appointed to inquire into the condition of the Indians in the Commonwealth, and to consider the expediency of investing them with the enjoyment of all the civil and political rights of the Commonwealth, and also to inquire into their rights to any land of which they may have been unlawfully dispossessed.

The Investigator tells a good story of the great "revival" in Wisconsin. Among the converts was one whose previous profession had been "three-card monte." Times being hard, he found little profit in his legitimate practice, and became "converted," as the elders say. One night, at the suggestion of an elder, he rose to edify the congregation with his experience, and thus delivered himself: "Ladies and gentlemen—I mean brothers and sisters—the Lord has blessed me very much. I never felt so happy before in all my life (very much embarrassed) if any one thinks I did, they can get a lively bet out of me."

THE RATIONALE OF SPIRITUALISM.—This excellent pamphlet, by T. W. Higginson, will be sent, post-paid, on receipt of twenty cents. A liberal discount made to dealers. Address T. J. Elliotwood, 5 Tryon Row, New York.

REV. THEODORE PARKER.—We have received from Horton's daguerrean, photograph, and ambrotype gallery, No. 113 Washington street, an excellent and striking life photograph of the distinguished iconoclast who at this time holds so high and desirable a position in the American pulpit. Mr. Horton has copies of this picture for sale at his rooms, in various degrees of finish, and at quite reasonable prices, and thus thousands of listeners to the daring words of Mr. Parker may refresh their memories of the man until his return in better health from the tropic climes, by one of Horton's photographs.

The French make awful havoc of John Bull's English, in their attempts at translation. They seem never to reflect that English words have often many and remote significations. Voltaire translated some of Shakespeare's plays. Shakespeare makes one of his characters renounce all claim to a doubtful inheritance, with an avowed resolution to carve for himself a fortune with his sword. Voltaire put it in French, which, re-translated, reads, "What care I for lands? With my sword I will make a fortune out of them!"—*Transcript.*

Mrs. Ada L. Conant, the public test medium, can be addressed at the Fountain House, Boston. Persons desiring her services please do so at the earliest opportunity.

J. V. Mansfield desires us to say that he continues his business at No. 3 Winter street. The impression has been given that he had discontinued his labors.

Octavius King, No. 654 Washington street, keeps on hand a large assortment of herbs and drugs, all of which are selected with care and regard to their freshness. He also pays particular attention to putting up medium's prescriptions; his knowledge of pharmacy enables him to give decoctions of herbs far preferable to any which can be made at home. Medicines prepared in a proper manner by a pharmacist, is more efficient.

Mrs. Bean has returned from New York, and will resume her sittings at No. 80 Elliott street, as heretofore.

We find the following advertisement in the WILLIAMSONIAN JOURNAL.

NOTICE.—L. C. WELCH, Professor of the Jack Piano, M. H. Master of the Hatchet, Fellow of the Royal Academy of Working Men, and several other very useful societies, having recently been developed as a Speaking Medium, has by spirit direction, invented a Machine for lowering the false pride of the slow-minded Spiritualists, and extracting the hollow sound from empty titles of distinction. Orders solicited. All communications perfectly confidential. Post address, North Weymouth, Ct. L. C. WELCH, Professor, &c.

They read so much Latin and Greek at the English Universities, that they forgot how to write English. A head master at Cambridge (England—not Massachusetts) recently affixed this notice to the panels at the entrance of a certain building:

"On Sunday morning next, chapel will commence at 10 o'clock, and continue until further notice."

A clergyman, by way of giving point to a eulogy of a dead man at a funeral, declared that his own experience would prove that the defunct was the most generous of men, as he had long ago borrowed forty dollars of him, of which to his dying day he had never asked the payment. Of the debt thus acknowledged before witnesses, however, the heirs the next day, demanded the payment with interest.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

FATHER AND DAUGHTER; a portraiture from Life, by Frederika Bremer. Translated by Mary Howitt. T. B. Peterson & Bros., 306 Chestnut street, Philadelphia. Price, \$1.25 in cloth; sent free of postage on receipt.

This work is said to have been stereotyped, printed and bound in forty-eight hours, from advanced sheets—a feat truly wonderful. Miss Bremer is a very pleasing, truthful and hopeful writer of fiction. Her pictures are powerfully drawn and her characters are generally types of living forms, hence they chat with you almost as real men and women would. There is a very free and full spiritual vein running through her works which renders them of much interest to us. Crosby, Nichols & Co. have it for sale.

ROSE WASHINGTON; OR, THE DAGUERRETYPE; MINNIE TURS, BY A. J. H. DUGANNE. T. B. Peterson & Bros., Philadelphia.

For sale by A. Williams & Co., 100 Washington street, Boston.—Price, 25 cents.

AMERICAN VETERINARY JOURNAL. February: 1859. This monthly is a very valuable work for breeders and owners of cattle and horses. The present number has articles on "gladders," disease among cattle," with others on various branches of the veterinary art, which are instructive.

HOWE'S DRAWING-ROOM DANCES—especially designed for Social Evening Parties—containing all the popular Quadrilles, Cotillions, Fancy Dances, Contra Dances, etc., with every variety of the latest and most approved figures and calls for the different changes. Must be arranged for the piano forte by Elias Howe; Boston. The name of Elias Howe is connected with cheap editions of musical works, and he has won great celebrity by his judicious selections. The present work is quite an addition to the music books of the age, and will win as much celebrity for the publisher as many of his former efforts did. It contains, as the title page sets forth, a great variety of the most popular music, and having the balls and changes arranged thereto, will be in great requisition at evening parties. Price, \$1.00. For sale at 129 Washington street, by Hubbard W. Sweet.

New York Correspondence.

SHOW, FUN for the Yorkers—Judge Edmond at Dodworth's—Monti—Philosophical Society's Conversational Meetings—Arts of Design—Personal. DINA BARBARA.—Last Sunday the good people of this city, who found their way to different churches on the bare stones and bricks of the streets, returned on Nature's pebbly carpet—snow. In the afternoon the city presented a splendid appearance—roof, cornice, and window-sills of all the houses were enlaced, and the leafless trees in the different squares were smothered with winter's sparkling splendors. All kinds of teams—hats, shawls and loggys were brought out, and every stable was emptied, till fabulous prices were offered for "something to go."

Broadway presented a lively scene; sleighs gilded by the quick lit bits of the Jehous, mingled with the gleam of the beam and the mystical laugh of the lassies. The cars quivered of run and all whistled vehicles were slow, and the discomfiture of some was as great as the satisfaction of many.

Judge Edmonds occupied the stand at Dodworth's on Sunday morning last, on the subject of the evidence, both ancient and modern, favoring Spiritualism. Dodworth's platform, was never fuller than on this occasion; every standing place was stood in, and every seat was sat in, and more people turned away from the hall, for want of room, than those already in it. The lecture was no worthy of the well known ability of the Judge, and its statements of facts and arguments were unanswerable except upon the hypothesis of the Spiritualist. I have given no report of the lecture because I understand that it is to appear in full in your next issue.

Of Signor L. Monti, of Harvard, little need be said, and no report is necessary. Even the Herald, which is ever ready to hunt its shallow wit at Spiritualism, and devote its columns to the nonsensical arguments of its opponents, could furnish no sort of a report, except the universally known facts and suppositions, mythology, Salem witchcraft and the thousand and one old legends about strange things which every school boy can rehearse. And it was pretty generally felt that Harvard, with all its internal convulsion had thrown up but a very small bill to grace the planes of debate, and that Monti had done better in "Italia's sunny vales" than here.

I attended, last Thursday evening, the Conversational meeting of the Philosophical Society. The meetings of this Society are held at Cooper Institute every Thursday evening, and attended by a large audience. These meetings have the peculiarity of repudiating debate. The subject is proposed and each member states such facts as he may know in relation thereto. Opinions are not asked, and no speaker is permitted to reply or refer to the remarks of another, the object being to avail of the knowledge of all, so that the reading and experience of five hundred men may be availed of in a single hour. Should one member state that on Thursday last it snowed blue in front of his house, No. 100 Broadway, another member might state that on Thursday last in front of his house, No. 101 Broadway, it snowed, and the color was white, the audience would believe which they pleased, but the latter gentleman would not be permitted to refer in any way to what the first had said. Thus all debate is avoided and short crisp facts are obtained; no speaker occupies more than fifteen minutes, while all are permitted to ask questions. These meetings were instituted by Prof. J. J. Mason together to consider different subjects without debate was strongly objected to; but after some little opposition men began to see that while they met together to teach, they were also at the same time storing their own minds, and the idea of teaching each other struck a vein of wealth in their nature. The subject before the meeting on the evening of its inauguration was Wood—thought to be when presented a dry subject, but speaker after speaker tendered his knowledge regarding it, questions were asked and answered, and so interesting did this subject become, that it was continued for eleven evenings, and the Legislators of New York subsequently ordered a hundred thousand copies of the report to be printed and gratuitously distributed. The second subject was Stained Glass. The science of staining glass was supposed to be lost, and only a few samples of the ancient art were to be found, and these in the oldest churches and monasteries of the European Continent. Questions were asked—What will color glass green? A jeweler rose and answered—That he had found that certain chemicals, when heated upon glass with the use of the blow pipe, left upon it a green stain. So from different individuals the means of producing all colors upon glass was gleaned, the whole of which no single one could have furnished. In three months' time the celebrated stained lamp appeared on the corner of Park place and Broadway, being the first piece of staining which had been done for a hundred years—so that meeting may be attributed the revival of the art of staining, which is now

of great extent and perfection than ever by the ancients. I propose to lay before your readers the doings and sayings of this Society, which cannot fail to be of interest to all. The subjects treated are all utilitarian; and the farmer, merchant, artist, and in fact all in every department of active life, may gain new ideas applicable to them and their calling. The subject for next Thursday evening is—Sugar, its growth, and manufacture.

Cooper Institute presents among other novelties the school for the Arts of Design. The pupils are ladies, it being believed by those who are self-styled servitors for the weal of the softer sex, that their superior natural taste, should be enlarged, and from their superior natural taste, that an academic course of study in art may eventually free us from the necessity of being placed under contribution to the panels for the Arts of Design. Napoleon rendered the Arts of Design part of the common school education of France, and it was this far-sighted policy which enabled him without colonies, such as were possessed by England and Spain, to war with half Europe, and with a national debt one tenth less than he saddled on England to oppose him.

Until the time of Wedgwood the English silicate-workers copied the patterns of the tin emiths of Geneva. Their porcelain, china, and crockery were mere imitations of the Chinese, both in figure and ornament. The everlasting blue and white of their tea-cups and saucers, covered with the elegant and monotonous design of a Chinese pagoda, a pink ball with six stars, a mandarin with a palm leaf umbrella away over his head, constituted their only ornament. During the same time the potters of France were equalizing and eventually surpassing those of Dresden. The fine models of the Etruscan and Warwick vases were engraved and modified into all useful utensils. Hogarth's line of beauty, the letter B imbued the eyes of French mechanics until hard straight lines lost their popularity, not only in France, but throughout the world. All Christendom paid more for French designs than for English fabrics. A pound of American cotton left France in the form of lace worth six hundred dollars, simply from the elegance of its pattern and design. The patterns of England and America, until within the last twenty years, were mere epitomes of French art. The canelures, grandules, patterns of carpets, laid indeed, every elegance to be found in upper London had its birth in France, and the French artisans received the first profit from the superiority of its design.

Even at this time the ladies of this city are paying seventy-five cents per yard for French muslins from the novelty of their designs, although six weeks after their purchase they may buy the imitation or copies made at Lowell, at twelve and a half cents. Even the factory girls at Lowell, who are engaged in the Merrimack Print Works, will be found of a Sunday drest in French calicoes, which are decided to be passed for Sunday use, as soon as they are themselves engaged in folding and labelling the same patterns made in the print works of their neighborhood. The American artisan gets a profit of one cent on twelve cent calico, while the French artisan gets a profit of sixty cents by endorsing the same weight of cotton with a higher style of art. Within the last twelve months \$1,400,000 worth of French furniture has been imported into New York for the use of its wealthier citizens. Why is this? Is the wood better? Is the workmanship as good? Will this furniture stand our climate as well as our own? If not, why is it imported? Simply because the French cabinet maker is educated in the Arts of Design. Grace pervades all the forms he creates, and wealthy Americans pay more for his talent than for the more mechanical skill, in the which we so signally surpass the French. All raw material manufactured in France is exported with a greater increased value from the superior design in which it is presented, than are the manufactures of England or elsewhere, while the manufacturers all her subjects from the best-rook, at a much greater cost than the makers of England, who use the same materials of her colonies. Still France deluges the world with French "confettions," simply from the beauty of her cases containing them. And why? The confettions of New York import, ornamented with designs from France, to contain and assist in selling the merchandise.

So long as the Arts of Design are neglected in America, we shall continue to pay millions per annum in French goods, and eye qualifications. Therefore, I say, send the school of design in New York and elsewhere, and I sincerely hope the advent of this new vocation for the public school

of America, under the hope, that the next generation may be free from indirect French taxation. Wedgewood established a school for the arts of design in his factory, which school has furnished two presidents and many academicians to the royal society.

I gave the first impulse to the diffusion of art in England, and Wedgewood not only enriched himself and his nation, but also made the eyes of his countrymen open to the value of their work. It can almost be said that the very day they use, was the day that the eyes of the world were opened to the value of their work.

Mr. Piko—A definition of Spiritualism has been called for, and our definition is briefly this—a belief in the future existence of our departed friends, and in the power of the living to communicate with them.

Philadelphia Correspondence. Warren Chase in the Brotherly Love City—A City Law.

DEAR BANNER—We had the pleasure of listening to Warren Chase, this last Sunday morning. A large audience was assembled to greet him, on his first visit to our city. The subject of his lecture was truth versus fiction, and a good, sound, practical lecture it was—showing how the erroneous opinions of the ancients had given place to the revelations of science, thereby overthrowing the absurd ideas that had been received, as regarded the formation and shape of the earth, the existence of other continents, the marvellous speculations concerning the unknown islands, that were said to be peopled by giants.

Mr. Chase spoke of the difference between revelation and testimony. He said that knowledge was not transferred; that, satisfied as he was of the reliability and beauty of spirit intercourse, he could not impose that knowledge on another; but every one had to seek for themselves, and receive such testimony as proved satisfactory to their own souls.

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 8, 1859.

Reports. BOSTON REFORM CONFERENCE. Monday Evening, Feb. 7, 1859.

QUESTION—Does a belief in Spiritualism develop a true life? Mr. Horace Bovey, of the Boston Investigator—As the question tends to show the development of the true life, I should take the negative. I understand Spiritualism to be a religion; and I will try in a few words to show the practical difference between this religion and the popular religions known to our fathers.

Mr. Bovey—The doctrine of Spiritualism is a religion, and it is a religion based on the fact that the soul is immortal, and that it is capable of communicating with the spirits of the departed. It is a religion that is based on the fact that the soul is immortal, and that it is capable of communicating with the spirits of the departed.

Mr. Watson—The doctrine of Spiritualism is a religion, and it is a religion based on the fact that the soul is immortal, and that it is capable of communicating with the spirits of the departed. It is a religion that is based on the fact that the soul is immortal, and that it is capable of communicating with the spirits of the departed.

I found no positive evidence of immortality. I could get food out of the church no more than I could get a dinner by going to the end of Long Wharf and sucking in fog. I believe in a thorough faith; but I found no satisfaction, and I found no evidence of immortality.

Mr. Webster—The doctrine of all the churches is properly stated and defined, and is based on common sense and common sense. It is a doctrine that is based on common sense and common sense. It is a doctrine that is based on common sense and common sense.

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EMMA HARDINGE AT THE MELODRON. Sunday Afternoon, February 13.

At an early hour the hall was filled with an audience anxiously waiting to hear the eloquence of Emma Hardinge. She spoke of the difference between revelation and testimony, and of the power of the living to communicate with the spirits of the departed.

Mr. Watson—The doctrine of Spiritualism is a religion, and it is a religion based on the fact that the soul is immortal, and that it is capable of communicating with the spirits of the departed. It is a religion that is based on the fact that the soul is immortal, and that it is capable of communicating with the spirits of the departed.

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personality is thicker and her intuition more true. The third specialty is woman as a mother. And what can woman do beyond this? Woman should walk side by side with man; not equal in physical force, but equal in the nobility of her soul.

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truly and humanly for them to enter the marriage union, and to transmit the disease to their children. But what can woman do beyond this? Woman should walk side by side with man; not equal in physical force, but equal in the nobility of her soul.

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existent motor power in the universe which acts upon the other systems of steam engines, and on a piece of compressed machinery. Every atom of matter has a motor power within itself, and the earth revolves in its orbit simply because of the amount of life which it contains.

MOVEMENTS OF LECTURERS. Miss Emma Hardinge will lecture on the month of February at Boston, Lynn, Lowell and Groveland.

Mr. Frank White will lecture in Oswego, N. Y., Sunday, Feb. 20th; Syracuse, Tuesday, Feb. 22nd; Wednesday, Feb. 23rd; Conesus, Thursday and Friday, Feb. 24th and 25th; Geneva, Ohio, Wednesday, March 2nd; Cleveland, Sunday, March 6th; Chicago, Monday and Tuesday, March 7th and 8th; Newburgh, Wednesday, March 9th; Troy, N. Y., and 10th; Clyde, Friday, March 11th; Toledo, Sunday, March 13th; Burr Oak, Michigan, Tuesday, March 15th; Sturgis, Wednesday, March 16th; Elkhart, Ind., Thursday and Friday, March 17th and 18th. All letters from the West or South of Chicago, addressed to him at Chicago, care of Illigius Brothers, before the 20th of March, will be considered.

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EMMA HARDINGE AT THE MELODRON. Sunday Afternoon, February 13.

At an early hour the hall was filled with an audience anxiously waiting to hear the eloquence of Emma Hardinge. She spoke of the difference between revelation and testimony, and of the power of the living to communicate with the spirits of the departed.

Mr. Watson—The doctrine of Spiritualism is a religion, and it is a religion based on the fact that the soul is immortal, and that it is capable of communicating with the spirits of the departed. It is a religion that is based on the fact that the soul is immortal, and that it is capable of communicating with the spirits of the departed.

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CORA L. V. HAZOZ AT OLINTEY HALL, NEW YORK. Wednesday, Feb. 9, 1859.

In accordance with the custom adopted at the previous meetings this season, a committee of three was selected by the audience, consisting of Prof. James J. Mapes, N. D. Buckland, Esq., and Mr. Prince, who presented the following subject: "Is the power which causes the earth to rotate resident in matter, or separately located from it?"

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Answers to Correspondents. D. S. Mendallville, Ala.—No doubt portraits have been given of spirits; but we do not think one so hundred dollars a prize in this lottery. E. Rodgers, Cardington, Ohio, and G. E. Walcut, Columbus, Ohio, are the most noted. If your spirit friends can read your mind and know your desire, they have but to come here and see if they can manifest through Mrs. Conant. If they can control her, they will obtain permission and do so in time; if not, they will not doubt set about learning how to control, and when they are proficient will attend to your wishes. Here, again, there are many blanks and few prizes, for out of the thousands of thought-calls made upon this spirit-world, only a few spirits can successfully answer. We do not know that you can do anything, but hope on, asking in your own mind, and having that faith which waits God's time.

OBITUARY. At Innoton, N. J., Feb. 21, 1859, ISABELLA M. COATES, eldest daughter of WILLIAM and JESSIE COATES, died, aged 86 years.

She was a true and appreciative child of Nature. Intelligent, gentle, kind, obliging and unpretending; she was a circle of true friends, and her death was a loss to her noble and generous sympathies of her nature, and who was a good and faithful friend has sought her spirit-home amid genial and elevating influences. Her devotion to truth and goodness was constant, and she was a true and noble soul, who lived and exercised the virtues which adorn humanity. She had realized in her own experience the truth of Spirit Intercourse, and she passed into the higher life with a peace and serenity that can only be described as a true and noble soul, who lived and exercised the virtues which adorn humanity.

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The Public Press

A LETTER FROM MRS. F. O. HYZZER.

DEAR BROTHERS—Permit a sister to congratulate you on the noble work which you are doing for humanity, in throwing out your beautiful BANNER to the gaze of those whose eyes had become weary, almost tearfully blinded, with watching through the long, long night of priestly intolerance and superstitious weakness, for such a herald of the morn of a higher liberty, a purer spirituality. May it continue to float upon the breezes of soul-aspiration and inspiration, until that God-given philosophy for which it waves, shall have become so fully unfolded in the heart and brain of our race, that no one will be found trembling for "our cause," when an occasional assault in miniature is made upon its infinite artillery, through the inflamed ideal of some imaginary hero.

Never on earth did banner wave
In such a mighty, deathless cause;
Never did mortals, true and brave,
Behold in God's eternal laws
Such all-inspiring, hallow'd light,
As now pours forth its beauty bright
Upon the soul's unfolding sight.
Never before have mortals breath'd
Such inspirations as to-day;
Never hath Truth's sword, unsheath'd,
Caught and reflected such a ray
Of glory from the central gem
Of God's eternal diadem,
Of peace on earth, and love for men.

And, my brothers, is there not a grandeur of rest in knowing that principles cannot be betrayed? What if the tory does not covertly, with no higher motive than to cry, "God save the king," while he feels the pressure of the lion's foot, or "God save the Republic," when the eagle soars over his cowardly head in triumph? What if the Arnold, indignant at the real or fancied injustice of individuals, does seek to convey Liberty to the arms of the tyrant—the mighty principle of Liberty swayed or swerved one particle in its onward pressure for birth in the great heart of the nation? The report of the cannon may frighten the child; the loss of loved ones may wring heart-sobs from bereaved widows and orphans; the hero may writhe in agony of soul at the seeming loss of the day's victory—but infinite Liberty pulsates victoriously onward, through every artery of God's universe, as though no commotion or explosion of decomposing elements had rocked or rolled between its vital glory and the blinded vision of the struggling mortal.

Thus, in conjunction with the post-throbs of the infinite pendulum, does the unerring finger of Design trace upon the dial of eternal life the history of nations and individuals, while by no threats of one mortal concerning God's vengeance upon the other; by no priestly condemnation of sin, or supplication for mercy, can the creature disturb the equilibrium of the Creator.

I am sure no soul can become weary, when once this truth has flowed into its consciousness. In the fabulous conversation of the clock, I believe the weariness of the complainer was traced to a weak computation on its part, which threw the labor of years upon the stroke of the moment; and, my brothers, does not the "would-be reformer" sometimes become weary of toiling altogether, by loading the moment with the labor of eras?

Why not be as good, as pure, as happy this moment, as its limit will allow us to be, thus continuing to do, until, ere we are aware of our advancement, we have become so habituated to the labor of making every little moment so radiant with purity of motive, so warm with continued exercise in well-doing, as to render ourselves so magnetic in our attractions heavenward to every one who approaches us, as to leave them no longer in doubt concerning our use in the world. Would not this course of discipline rapidly lessen the number of those who are making such a woeful discord in the professional anthem of the day, by their constant lamentations that they are of no use in the world, because spirits do not "use" them, and who are feeling that they are living entirely outside of every avenue to inspiration, because they are not organically receptive to a perfect thunder shower of influx, while in their blind haste to reach the starting point of a "wonderful mission," they are trampling under their feet the rich, sweet petals of Truth's unfolding beauty, that are continually being warmed into life by the gushing sunlight of God's love, and nurtured into living fragrance by the ever-falling dews of divine inspiration—all of which, in their "one idea chase," they are entirely unconscious of, all the while failing to recognize that their immortality constitutes them eternal life-members of the ever-unfolding mediatorial system of Deity, and that each one has only to tune his own medial lyre to the key of unselfish love—simple, practical charity—pure, uncorruptible sincerity—to find himself at once involved in a "mission" so glorious, as to render the every-day actualities of his earth-life more enrapturing to his soul than all the former dreams of his highest heaven ever promised him.

This folding the hands and waiting for spirits to make us useful—this smothering of what little good sense we may possess, and yielding of our own God-given energy of character to the authority of any spirit in or out of the earth-form—this crushing of reason beneath the inquisitorial wheel of "Thus saith the Lord," is in my view a weakness which is in every case traceable to a constitutional debility inherited from "Old Theology," or to that animal greed of the human nature, which aspires to nothing higher than an influx to the purse, and which at any time would prompt the mortal to "steal the liver of heaven to serve the devil in."

True, my experiences have been very limited compared to those of my co-laborers; but after seven years of constant and unceasing application to the study of living revelation, I have yet to discover the first sign of insanity, "recantation," or moral impurity, in any individual who has thrown the highest energies of his nature into the study of Spiritualism as the philosophy of life, with his highest ambition pointed, in its action, to the attainment of an immortal education, with which to bless himself and humanity; fully resolved, at whatever sacrifice, to overcome every obstacle in the way of his advancement; placing no devil in the chambers of his idealism; on whom to throw the responsibility of his misconceptions or absurdity of his opinions, but nobly resolved to bear the whole burden of his own short-comings until the progressive current of his expanding genius shall have swept them all away; always recognizing eternal life to be his briefest term of his abiding application. Such souls never think of "recantation" or "moral impurity." Such souls never think of "stealing the liver of heaven," so do they love to labor—never call themselves "creatures of circumstance," but, riding triumphantly on the tempest-billows of earthly discipline, are found, in every pulsation of their souls, thanking God for the priceless boon of an eternal life of action.

On the other hand, I have never met with one who has entered the school-room of this philosophy with no higher object than to scan the pictures on the walls, chat awhile with the pupils, and perhaps condescendingly handle for a few moments the chemical, astronomical and mathematical apparatus, either from idle curiosity, or with the weak expectation of being thereby enabled to graduate very soon with all the honors and none of the labor—who has not left the school-room either disheartened at the apparent amount of unrevealed knowledge before him, and shaking his head dubiously at the folly and sinfulness of seeking to discover the hidden mysteries of God; or perhaps, from having ignorantly tampered with some powerfully charged electrical battery, has received a sufficient flow of its invisible life into his diseased and therefore sluggish or morbidly nervous animality, to enable him to cry "devil," "insanity," "free love," and forth he rushes into the arms of that class of mortals of which he is the living symbol; and being embraced by them as one who, from having taken these high degrees in the institution of "Diabolism," has thus saved them the labor of experiment, and congratulating each other on their narrow escape from the "inferno" of action, they all settle back together into the old time-worn harness of theology, and plod on over the pathway of life, with no higher ambition than to keep up sufficient motion to enable them to avoid the "lash"—with no brighter hope than that which reaches forward to the "change," which, as they confidently suppose, will relieve them of even this amount of exercise.

But, my brothers, I do not refer to this portion of our Father's family in anything like a spirit of condemnation, for I never could see why one should be blamed for being only ten years old, any more than another should be applauded for being fifty. I only write of what I do know, and testify to what I have seen, always remembering to set all my philosophy and poetry to that strain of God's music which flowed through the soul and brain of Pope, when he declared

"All partial evil, universal good;
All discord, harmony not understood."
And again:
"From nature's chain whatever link you strike,
Tenth, or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike."
I have no idea that one mortal is out of his true relation in the great chain of universal development; and, since I settle all my accounts with the Master of the vineyard, I shall probably very seldom find myself falling out with any of my fellow-laborers concerning amount of labor or reward. And I really cannot see, since "exposure" is one of the grandest and mightiest principles of God's great educational system, why we should find fault with the younger members of the family, if, through their little embryotic intuitions, they do catch a glimpse of its utility, and therefore occasionally "get off" an infantile experiment—though, as we have lately seen, they can, at best, only succeed in "exposing" their own grossness and ignorance. This exercise of their genius, however cruelly manifested for a time, will aid them to reach a plane of higher aspiration, and by and by we may hope for more entertaining, if not more useful, exhibitions of their talent.

Therefore, notwithstanding the many inharmonies that at times seem to menace us on every hand, as one of the toilers upon the pathway of the earth-life, I must report, from any point of the journey, that the world is very beautiful, and humanity far from showing any evidence of "total depravity." In every portion of our beautiful Union the angel watchers and inspirers are leaving the fragrance of truth's glorious philosophy; warm hearts and cordial hands everywhere greet the bearer of this message of life; and here let me bear testimony to the consistent, earnest practicality, clear, expansive intellectuality, warm and pure spirituality, of the dwellers in that portion of our Father's vineyard, so appropriately named Philadelphia. In my visits among them, I have ever found myself in an element of love and kindness, which I nowhere find surpassed; and each time I have failed to meet with my brothers or sisters who have reached that tone of "questionable harmony" which leaves them out of tune with their neighbors; or, if any key is out of order, the rich, deep melody of their harmonical anthems drowns the rebellious note altogether.

In Oswego, too, in which city I gave two lectures on the 30th of this month, the cause of spiritual liberty has a very large number of earnest, sincere, and persevering defenders; nowhere have I met with a more intelligent or affectionate people; and certainly if Spiritualism is near its dissolution, in neither of these two cities, or in any portion of the country into which I have been called, has the first symptom of its departure been manifested to my perceptions. I am now en route for St. Louis, in which city I am to lecture during the month of April. Through February I lecture in Buffalo, and Spiritualists on the line of travel from the latter city to St. Louis, who may wish my services during the month of March, will please address me as early as possible, in care of J. N. Gardner, Buffalo, N. Y.

Yours for truth,
F. O. HYZZER.
OSWEGO, N. Y., Jan. 31st, 1859.

A REMINISCENCE OF DR. BEECHER.
In the year 18—, when Dr. Beecher was in the height of his popularity as an energetic, earnest Orthodox preacher, settled over a large congregation in Bowdoin street, it happened, among many converts at the time of which I am now speaking, that he made a deep impression upon old Mrs. Clapp. She was my grandmother, and I was much attached to her. Oh, with what pleasure I recall the good old times we spent together! With us it was autumn, or I should say, the Indian summer and April blending. Many years have passed since then, yet I fondly remember her, and think in my mature life more appreciatively than in my youth, as I call to mind the old familiar faces, hers in particular, seated round the old wood fire—wood and faces now no more—I can but say amen to the poet who writes:

"And blessings brighten as they take their flight."
What would I not give to live some of those forever-passed hours over again? So is it ever with the seasons of youth, when they are no more, except in memory.

Everybody who knew old Mrs. Clapp, loved her. She was kind-hearted, and possessed in abundance those traits of character which ever make one popular. It did not seem strange to me, (nor does it now, all things considered,) that the reverend gentleman's appeals should have affected her, for I was then even more deeply attached to her, than I am now. She was a beautiful woman, and like most new and young converts, (for I had a short time previously joined a Baptist church, and was rejoicing in a hope that my

name had been stricken out of the devil's ledger, and was recorded in "the Lamb's book of life," and I really felt, in my simplicity, that there was a reality in these "changes of heart," so momentous in the eyes of the rigid Christian world; that heaven was "all in all," as professors pretended.) I had not discovered, as I have since, that the leopard does not change his spots, or the tiger his stripes; that conversions are practically a farce; that church-members are no more dead to the world, its vanities and its riches, than outsiders, or than they were before conversion; and that instead of laying up treasures above, where moths corrupt not, nor thieves break through and steal, they have, if anything, a brightened eye for the main chance. I had not then discovered that the Christian virtues were not confined to church-members, and all the sins to sinners, and that the saints and sinners which make up a community were pretty much as fate and circumstances had made them, by no means much disturbed in their orbits or natural bias, by church influences or proclivities. Still, when I heard it said Mrs. Clapp was converted—good old Mrs. Clapp—it did not astonish me. I was almost out of my teens then, and I wonder I did not ask myself what she had been converted from, for she was goodness itself. Oh, poor humanity, how prone we are to follow in the beaten track! Burns had no reference to such as she, but the very opposite, when he wrote:

"Ye high, exalted, virtuous dames,
Ty'd up in costly laces,
Before ye get poor frilly names,
Suppose a change of cases."

But still old Mrs. Clapp was converted. She was always religiously inclined, but of the liberal sort; had spent the first forty years of her life in affluence, and the last—nearly as many—in straightened circumstances, and in both positions she had been the humble, worthy Christian woman. She was the mother of twelve children, and her love for them was very strong; and as they died, one after another, in early manhood or maidenhood, she clung with still more attachment to the rest. Like a will at law, the property of her love was divided among the heirs who survived; as she had journeyed on in life to near three-score and ten, only four of her twelve remained.

Saddened by her sorrows, the gloomier forms of religious faith may have harmonized with her feelings. Be that as it may, she had been many times to hear Dr. Beecher preach. He was energetic, believed what he said, attracted attention, converted souls, and among them, Mrs. Clapp. When he paid the old lady a visit, preparatory to joining his church, to talk over the articles of faith of their creed, I was an unobserved observer of their interview, from circumstances which I could not well help, and the information and inference has always been valuable to me. It came hard to her to assent to them, as it does to any one who is born with a large share of sympathetic human nature; but having gone so far, with perhaps some mental reservations, she got over most of old Calvin's points. But when it came to the article on eternal punishment, "He that is converted, born again, is saved through Christ, but he that is not must go away into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels," I saw the old lady struggle. She had eight children who had died in the pride of young adult life, gay and worldly, so natural to that age; if that doctrine was true, her eight dear ones were then with the devil and his angels! And I can almost now see the mother, as she did then, overflow with the suggestive thought, as she said:

"No, doctor, I cannot believe it; eternity is a great while. I cannot believe but God will provide some way for those who have died in their sins—so many! so many! I know he will, some way or somehow, save the creatures he has made."

The doctor was puzzled. Old Mrs. Clapp was too worthy an individual to let slip for a trifle, though the making of church members was by no means his only or principal object. He knew the old lady, and knew she was more Christ-like than half of the true believers (who swallowed the whole pill) in his congregation. He lowered his voice, the man for a moment triumphing over the sectarian, and said:

"Sister Clapp, you and I think just alike. Believe it's in God's power to save all mankind, and I hope he will, only he is our only safe guide."

"Oh, well," said Mrs. Clapp, "if I can join your church, and believe God can save all—I know he will—I assent." And Mrs. Clapp became an heir of glory and a joint heir with Christ, through the portals of Bowdoin Street Church.

I have never forgotten this remark of old Doctor Beecher; the subject had troubled me, but like most other converts to church membership—so many I felt and better men than myself had believed, that I felt it presumption in me to criticize the question; but when I heard this veteran express his doubts "under the rose," which practically made him a restorationist, I treasured it up. At heart, I don't think he believed strictly the tenets of his church any more than I do now; for consistency and prudence he adheres to them. I don't believe a thoughtful, sensible man ever did. "Actions speak louder than words"—and to them I appeal.

Dr. Beecher's children inherit his proclivities in religious matters, as well as intellectual powers, and the little doubt in the father's mind, on articles of faith, which removed old Mrs. Clapp's scruples, has expanded in the children, and Henry Ward, now the observed of modern preachers, has the good sense to express his views on non-essential points of belief with independence, and every honest-hearted Christian in his church or out of it, will say Amen. It is pleasant to feel that the rigid Christian world is growing wiser, and, necessarily, practically better. Preachers of mediocrity find their safety in conservatism. Most men are run in one mould. The pastor of Brooklyn can make innovations, and by his fearless independence with his Christian heart; the father had independence, and could carry home his own market basket without offence to his self-respect. He undoubtedly had his private doubts on points where his son has had some strictures as to the wisdom of his course; but the time was not ripe enough in his prime to express them—the son as well as others of the family are taking a step in the right direction—the lesser lights may censure him in vain; what he has said in advance of his sect will never effectually be unsaid, and in the next generation these matters will be only referred to, as having been once believed in. So are born ideas. Faintly at first—latent or only hinted at in the fathers; boldly expressed in the children; they become public sentiment in the next generation. Milton.

While we are executing one work, we are preparing ourselves to undertake another.

MY IDEAL.
"Love, as tender as the moonlight,
Hope, as rosy as the dawn—
Then come to me those no winter
Whom such glory shined on;
O, the dark December weather
May o'erhaze sea and shore,
In our hearts the blessed ideal
Makes it summer overmore!"

The strongest attractions in Nature are those between the male and female forces, which are inherent in matter. These tendencies permeate all spheres, all bodies, all mind, all living organisms, from the lowest to the highest. The mutual tendencies of the male and the female elements are necessitated in the nature and constitution of things; or, rather, we should say, that these attractions and repulsions constitute the *forces* that govern the universe. They are a mother of necessity, as much so as the laws of light and gravitation. What can the body do, unobstructed, but fall to the earth? And, as the physical bodies are attracted to this mineral earth, so is the human spirit attracted to the centre of the spiritual world. As the physical attracts the physical, so the mental attracts the mental; the intellectual attracts the intellectual. The North, or the South Pole, may be said to be the *ideal* of the magnet; and the attraction between the positive and the negative poles of a magnetic battery, cannot be more constant and invariable than the male and female ideal of manhood. Man thinks of nothing so much, loves nothing with so much intensity, as his ideal of woman; not even God, and the dogmas of religion. For, whatever the sectarian creeds have compelled their votaries to declare of their love for God, or some vague abstraction apprehended under this name, this love of ideal womanhood reigns supreme in each matured heart. There may be emotions of trust and veneration appropriate to the Infinite God; but no full-grown man is capable of loving an abstract idea of God, equally with his ideal of woman. Conjugal love is the deepest, the highest, the most intense and strongest; and, for this obvious reason, it is out of this love that the race is developed and conserved. Were it possible, as a general thing, for any other love to swallow up the inherent, all-pervading love of the sexes, the race would be put in peril, and become extinct. Life is the grand and all-pervading object of the universe. Behold how it teems forth throughout the vegetable kingdom, as if this conjugation of heat and light were struggling for the evolution of life in the ten thousand forms of vegetation. See how the grapes, the shrubs, the plants, the bulbs, the trees, all seem to vie with each other, as if to determine which may excel in essence, form, and use! Look at the beautiful flowers which expand their fragrant petals, for the gratification of our sense of smell and sight. Behold in what prolific abundance the animal kingdom swarms with life. Thirty thousand living forms, each having a stomach, intestinal canal, and digestive viscera, inhabit a single drop of water! The air we breathe is alive, or its inhalation would be instant death to all. But, observe the exceeding fecundity of the animal world. In the middling-sized cod are found nearly ten millions of eggs; and the herring, we are assured, would multiply with such rapidity as to overstock the entire ocean, if it were not that they are devoured by other fish, for which they seem to constitute the principal article of food. It is, indeed, interesting to contemplate this wonderful life-giving principle, which everywhere prevails throughout the vegetable and animal worlds. Nature teems with forms of life, varied and diversified beyond the powers of finite minds to estimate. It is her constant endeavor; what she herself, was born for. It is not the work of a century, or a year, but of each day, each hour, and each indivisible moment of time; forms of life are being born, of which Nature is the mother, and absolute wisdom is the father. This is what Nature wants. The female wants to be a mother, and all female motions tend to maternity.

It were correct, perhaps, to estimate the religious element in human nature, as one of the strongest, as we see what it has done among the Hindoos, in compelling the devotees to a life of extreme self-denial and horrid sufferings, continued voluntarily, without relaxation, for thirty or forty years. The ignorant religionists expose themselves, day and night, in the open air, standing in uncomfortable, unnatural positions, until the limbs have grown out of shape. And, what the Hindoos do to their physical bodies, the Shakers, the Popish nuns, and priests, do to their own minds. They mutilate or pervert the inmost and most sacred instincts of human nature.

And the extent to which these perversions are carried among all religionists who do honestly deny all sexual instincts, goes to show how powerful the religious element is in such cases. They have the love element of religion strong, but the wisdom element is weak. The inharmonious development of these two elements, love and wisdom, makes all the fanaticisms, and all these cases of unnatural suffering. As if such extremes in self-denial were acceptable to the God of Infinite wisdom! Whereas, I suppose the highest service which mortals can render to God is acting out the nature which he has given them, in the greatest possible degree of harmony; not too much for too little of anything; no excess, no want or diminution; all the instincts, all the susceptibilities, all the tastes, all the senses, all the faculties, all the muscles, at the proper time and in the greatest possible degree of harmony. There is always the best time for all things which the highest good requires to be done, or to be left undone. The highest good is the highest heaven, the highest happiness, or, if you prefer the term, it is the nearest to the divine. It is my ideal—the best of all things. All of health, life, food, air, motion—the best. And they of our association, our friends, our occupations—they should be such as will most conduce to the harmonious development of soul and body. And, as we become conscious of perfection in our own organisms, so we are attracted by this idea of sexuality. We want to repeat ourselves; we are conscious of an inherent attraction to repeat our own lives, and see them in other forms, that shall live and revolve when we shall have passed away. It is similar in the vegetable world. Look at the corn; first the germ, then the germination, then the tender blade; progressing, the plant is developed, shows its testes of sexuality; and wants to repeat itself—hence the blossom, and finally the matured fruit, or seed. This is the plant itself over again, and this seed, put where heat and light (love and wisdom) can operate upon it, and certain *infective, retentive, and evasive* motions are excited which constitute growth and development. Such are the beautiful circles which are constantly formed by vegetation. And it reminds us of that ancient saying, "The herb, yielding seed, and the fruit yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself" made, probably, in view of this very feature in Nature's unfoldings now under notice. The indi-

vidually of each is conserved, while from age to age it goes through the circle of its development, germination, growth, fructification, and decay.

Approaching animal life, we find the same law of development in a higher degree; the circle is larger and higher. The individuality is more specific. Vegetables are attached to the earth, and die when that association is dissolved. The animal moves about and changes its location in order to satisfy its wants. It is born, grows, reproduces itself, and dies. And from the animal downward into the vegetable kingdom, we find this law of sexuality, this want of the positive for the negative, and when the conjugation of these male and female elements are prevented, there is no increase, no reproduction of the species and Nature's work is stopped. Hence I hold it to be a matter of the highest mission to understand Nature's laws of life, as their violation (wittingly or unwares) causes all we know or fear of pain.

LA ROY SUNDERLAND.
BOSTON, Dec. 27, 1858.

AN INTERESTING CORRESPONDENCE.
DEAR BANNER—Mrs. Sarah A. Horton, of Sudbury, Vt., while at a camp meeting at Brandon, Vt., was controlled by spirits, and spoke such words of eloquence and beauty, that all listened joyfully, and were made glad. This was all well enough, until the church found that angels were speaking through her, and modern Spiritualism and its philosophy was their theme; then they began to persecute. Among the most prominent and bigoted, was the Rev. Z. H. Brown, of Brandon, Vt., who called her everything but an honest woman.

Mrs. H. is one of the best of Christians, practically carrying out the precepts of Jesus. She is still a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church; for all that, she is doing a great work in our State, as a speaker, and is also a test medium. This Rev. Slanderer recently attempted to destroy her influence in an adjacent town. I wrote to him, giving him a public challenge, which he declined. Below is a copy of our correspondence:—

BURLINGTON, Vt., Jan. 14, 1859.
BROTHER Z. H. BROWN, BRANDON, VT.—Rev. and Dear Sir—I have before me a copy of a letter bearing your signature, dated Brandon, Vt., Nov. 18, 1858, addressed to Mr. Snyder, of Huntington, Vt. Of the general character of the letter, I have nothing to say, further than that a personal acquaintance with Sister Horton, for some eighteen months, and a considerable knowledge of her public labors, lead me to believe that you have been misinformed. Speaking of our fellow-laborer in Christ's vineyard, you say that (speaking of her public labors.) "Her influence is a moral nuisance, and her teachings consummate nonsense." I challenge you to a public discussion and proof of this grave charge. You can appoint the time and place, which shall be some public building in Brandon, or Mrs. Horton will appoint the time and place, which shall be some public building in Sudbury. You can open the discussion, or not, as you choose, confining yourself to your statement. Mrs. Horton, or the controlling influence through her, will show "that the teachings through her are in harmony with those of Jesus of Nazareth." You are an accredited public teacher of the "way and the life," are preaching of "Christ, and him crucified," in the church where Sister Horton has been so long a member, and we claim it as an act of simple justice to her, that you accept this challenge, believing that your regard for truth and Christianity will cause you to accept this offer. As I am personally unacquainted with you, I refer you to Rev. William Ford, editor of the Advocate; Rev. J. D. Kingsbury, and Mr. A. H. Bingham, Principal of Brandon Seminary. Awaiting your reply, I remain Very truly yours, SAMUEL B. NICHOLS.

MR. NICHOLS, SM.—In the letter of which you speak, I expressed my own opinion in regard to the influence of Mrs. Horton. I am of the same opinion still, and believe that the same is true of Spiritualism and Spiritualists. Everywhere, as far as its influence is concerned, it is evil, and only evil, and that continually, and is, in fact, only another name for open and shameless infidelity. In regard to your challenge, allow me to say that I have more important and useful employment than holding discussions with deluded or crazy old women. I should regard your proposition as an insult, if I supposed you to be entirely sane on that subject. As it is, I pity you, and all others who have fallen into that delusion and snare of the devil. I pray God to open your eyes, and save you from seeking unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and mutter. Should not a people seek unto their God? If they speak not according to his word, it is because there is no light in them.

Respectfully yours,
Z. H. BROWN.
N. B. I wish simply to request you to make no further communications on the subject of Spiritualism.

BURLINGTON, Vt., Jan. 22, 1859.
REV. Z. H. BROWN, BRANDON, VT.: Dear Sir—I have been absent from home this week; on my return to-day I find your letter of no date, but post marked January 17th.

You will bear in mind that you are a public teacher of Christianity, and as such, you are responsible for your attempt to destroy the character and influence of any man or woman. Your letter to me is undignified, unmanly, and unworthy of a disciple of the meek and lowly Nazarene.

You know nothing of Spiritualism, nor of the teachings through Mrs. Horton, except by hearsay, which is very poor evidence. I will not enter into an argument with you about Spiritualism, for you say you do not wish me to address you further on that subject; but how unworthy of you as a man, much more so as a Christian minister, to call Sister Horton a "deluded and silly old woman!"

When influences from the higher life took possession of her at the Methodist Camp meeting at Brandon, Vt., some two years since, then the friends clustered around her, and listened in raptures to the words of truth and wisdom which fell from her lips, and priests and clergymen congratulated her on the "Great Blessing" which she had received; and so it continued for many months, and, much against her own wishes, she was directed by the same influences to seek the field as a public laborer. When the church, or the denomination, found that Spirits were speaking through her Organism then her character, reputation, sanity, all, must bow before the altar of Sectarian hate. She could only say to those who thus persecuted, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

To your charge of my own insanity. If after an honest investigation of the Spiritual phenomena, I have become a fall believer, and heeding the angel messages from the higher home bidding me to be true, "Loving God with all my heart, and my neighbor as myself," and finding angel hands over me, bidding me to "come up higher"—if this be insanity, then I am insane, and thank God for it. My Brother, be a man, investigate these phenomena, cease to call men and women insane who have honestly exercised the faculties which God has given them, and become partakers of the manna which is falling from heaven; then will your soul be filled with joy and gladness. Praying earnestly that the dawning light of the new dispensation may in God's own time reach your soul, I am, Yours truly, SAMUEL B. NICHOLS.

P. S. You say you have more important business on your hands than holding the proposed discussion—I hope that it may be in following more closely the precepts of Jesus than you have manifested towards Mrs. H. and others whose religious faith is as dear to them as your own. May God help you.

Messrs. Editors, yours truly,
S. B. N.
DUNLAPTON, Vt., Feb. 9.

