BANNER OF LIGHT.

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THE SERMONS

OF Rev. Mr. HENRY WARD BEECHER and EDWIN H. CHAPIN are reported for us by the best Phonographers of New York, and published verbatim every week in this paper.

THIRD PAGE—Rev. Dr. Chapin's Sermon.

EIGHTH PAGE—Rev. H. W. Beecher's Sermon.

Written for the Banner of Light.

"BERTHA LEE;"

OR,

MARRIAGE.

To the Memory of my Husband this tale is dedicated

BY ANN E. PORTER,

Author of "Dora Moore," "Country Neighbors," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXXII.—CONTINUED.

'Addie,' said he, 'that gentleman is Mary Lincoln's father; there can be no doubt of it, I think.'

I sprung right out of my chair, and exclaimed—

'There, now, I know why his countenance attracted me so! Mary's eyes are just like his.'

'Do not be so demonstrative, Addie,' said Pa; and I thought he did not seem so pleased as he ought to be, that Mary had found a father. You may be sure that I was in haste to go home, for I was afraid that he would take Mary away at once—which, by the way, he is going to do.

I cannot tell you anything about their first interview. Mrs. Green was at home, and Pa had written her a note. You know she is just the woman for such an occasion, so calm and dignified, and withal, so sympathetic. I rode over in the evening, though the mud was so deep I was afraid Sunbeam would sink to rise no more. But Mary had sent for me, and I was glad that I came. I never saw a face so radiant with joy. No wonder, for poor Mary has hitherto been alone in the world—without kindred, I mean. She never could be without warm friends.

'Would n't you like to know what my oracle, Mammie June, says about the matter? I had long ago told her the story of the shipwreck, and now when I told her that Mary's father had found his long-lost child, the good old soul lifted her hands and exclaimed—

'Bress de Lord, oh my soul! I knowed somethin' would come to pass; and now, Miss Addie, it will all happen jes' as I said. You see now dis is de fust step.'

'Oh, but, Mammie June! Pa looked as solemn as the tall old clock in the dining-room that do n't go, when he found out that Dr. Cameron was Mary's father.'

'He did, honey! Ain't he 'spectable—good family?'

'Yes, I reckon the Lincolns are; any way, you know Mary has always borne her mother's name.'

'That are n't 'spectable, no way, chile. I tell you, honey, Mammie June must see him with her own eyes.'

'That you shall; he will be here to dinner to-day, and I will give you a chance to study him, Mammie,' for I was curious to know what she would say of him.

It happened that Mary herself asked if her father might see Mammie June. You know she is quite a curiosity, with her fluent tongue, and her courtly ways—grand as if she were an Ethiopian queen.

They had a long chat together, and I was amused when Mammie June, instead of saying Miss Mary, as she had always been in the habit of doing, said, Miss Lincoln.

'Not Miss Lincoln, now,' said the doctor, and then he stopped, hesitated a moment, and continued, 'she will bear my name now.'

Mammie June was satisfied with the doctor, though I was amused when she said—

'He looks like he was strong for good or for evil.'

Pa tells me that Dr. Cameron has told him the whole history of his life, and that his frankness and true manliness of character have won him one warm friend. What this history is, I am not informed; but I shall learn it of you some day.

We are all in great sorrow here because Mary is going; but her father cannot leave without her, and no wonder. Pa came home yesterday, and had a long conversation with Mary at Mrs. Green's, but they both looked sadder than ever after it. Even Mammie June is puzzled; but she says—

'I 've faith yet, honey; that dream of a white dove meant something, and Mary was the name, as we 'll see by-and-by.'

I have finished my letter, and mean to send Jim at once to the office, hoping you will get the news from me first. Mary said she should write to you this evening. ADDIE."

The letter came duly, with one also from the doctor. The latter had learned what I thought best to conceal, and he added in his letter—

"I cannot censure Mr. Harper so severely as some might do: I think I should have had similar feelings in his place. Mary is silent upon the subject, and for the present it is well; we must have her with us. Can you imagine how happy this will make Helen? Mary is but a few years younger; they will be companions and friends."

I turned from these letters to my own sad duties—at first with a sigh, and then gradually came better feelings—sympathy in the happiness of others, and a thankfulness for friends to love. The winter passed away, as all darkness will; it had been dreary, and the effort to be cheerful, and bear my burden without showing how much it galled, was very hard. The extract from Mr. Gray's journal had the effect to make me feel less remorse for a lack of those feelings which a husband should expect from a wife, for if such were his motives in marrying, what ought he to expect from me? Poor, man! he was fast becoming an object only of pity. About this time I learned that his father had been blind for some years before his death, and I felt that I must prepare his and my own mind for such a result.

My baby came back the first of June, smiling as ever, and evidently glad to be with "Mamma Bertha" again. Mr. Gomez was dead; glad, he said, to be called home to his loved ones. He had written me regularly since Lily's birth, and transmitted a liberal sum semi-yearly for her support. Now there came this short letter from Charles Herbert:

MR. GRAY, *Dear Sir*—Enclosed you will find $100, for Lily's needs. I would, if I had words to do so, thank you for the care and attention which she has received. I feel that she could be in no better hands.

Please acknowledge the receipt of this.

C. HERBERT.

Of course the labor of answering fell upon me, and I wrote as follows:

MR. HERBERT, *Sir*—I write to acknowledge the receipt of yours of the fifteenth, containing $100. Lily is well and happy. BERTHA L. GRAY.

Four such letters passed between us. For two years we three—Mr. Gray, Lily, and myself—lived in the old farm house. I was never absent one night. I could not leave Mr. Gray, neither could I receive friends; in mercy, therefore they stayed away, the doctor and Helen only excepted. I know not what we should have done without the regular remittances for Lily—they afforded us our support.

I lived out doors as much as possible with Lily in summer, and in the warm days I would place Mr. Gray's arm-chair out on the pleasant grass plat, and he would enjoy the soft breeze and the birds, and the perfume of clover fields. About this time a change took place in him—an alteration so strange that I could hardly believe the evidence of my senses. As his blindness increased, he gradually lost that moroseness and reserve which had made my task hard. I do not know the cause; whether the system was so worn out that there was less tension to the nerves, and less resistance to disease, or whether the physical darkness led to a clearer spiritual insight, I cannot tell. But day by day I could see this change. Now he would ask me to read to him pleasant books and papers, history, travels, and now and then poetry. His face expressed more repose and inward quiet, than it had done for years. He spoke kindly to me, and would even coax Lily to sit upon his knee, and once in a great while he sung to her. I thanked God and took courage.

One day, toward the last of summer, we were sitting out of doors after an early tea. The sun was still three hours high, but Lily was tired of play and had fallen asleep. I carried her in, and returned to my sewing and my seat near Mr. Gray. He sat looking upward, as if he could discern the brightness there, when, suddenly, turning toward me, he laid his hand on my shoulder as if to assure himself I was really near him, and said—

"Bertha, I have something to say to you; it is a sad confession, but it must and shall be made. I have not been a faithful husband to you—there, now, do n't speak. I know what you will say, that you have erred, too; well, perhaps you did—it is worse than an error, it is a crime for a woman to marry a man she cannot love; but there were circumstances in your case that palliated your course. You thought your were doing God's will, working out your own salvation, and I intended you should think so. I promised to lead you to heaven; through me you have periled your religious faith—for who could have faith in the religion I profess with my example before them?

Since I have sat in darkness I have seen my whole life mapped out before me, and yours, my poor, injured, patient wife. Your life, that should have been strewn with roses, I have made hard with my thorny temper and my exacting will. (I was shedding tears—I think he knew it.) Do n't weep—but yes, yes, you may; they are not tears wrung now by my bitter words. I wronged you when I married you—I have wronged you daily since. I thought to make you completely subject to my will. God has made me a child, to be led and guided by you. I cannot tell all my faults toward you, but I wish you to read my journals; you will find it all there, and then burn them before I die, that they may not be perpetual records against me. When you have read them, tell me if you can forgive."

"No, no, Mr. Gray," I exclaimed; "not any more than I have read," and I then confessed to him the reading of Mudgett's papers, and one page of the journal.

"And could you read that, and then treat me as gently and care for me so patiently as you have done?"

"No, Mr. Gray, I have not been patient. I have struggled against my destiny, and for many months I have even doubted the very existence of God, and have walked in great darkness."

"My poor wife, my poor wife, and all through me! I too have doubted whether I could receive pardon, but all is clear to me now; God's love is boundless. I see it, I feel it, and yet I, a poor, weak mortal, would have limited it. Say once more you can forgive."

"Let it be a mutual forgiveness," I said.

"Be it so, be it so, if you wish; but I see nought to forgive."

For a few minutes we were silent. I thought he seemed paler than usual, but less haggard and distressed.

I was rising to go into the house with him, for twilight was fast coming on, when a traveler was seen approaching the house. I thought it might be a pedlar, and was going to tell him he might go on his way when something about him seemed familiar, and I stopped to look at him more closely. He carried a bundle under his arm, and a staff in his hand. One look at his face, and I sprang forward with the joyful cry—

"Joe! Cousin Joe!" and I threw my arms round his neck and kissed him. He was sadly travel-worn and weary, but he kept saying—

"Yes, yes, I 'm here, I 'm here; you wanted me, Sisy, you did!"

Yes, I had wanted him; but my mother had found him too useful to part with, and he had lived with her as a drudge, unconscious himself that he had any income of his own. I learned of it at last, though Joe told of it very reluctantly, that she had ill-treated him, and had even gone so far as to chastise him. This roused his spirit, and he ran away with the determination of coming to me. How he managed to get to us without money I could never learn; he always avoided the subject. I led him in before he went to bed to see Lily. He never mistrusted that it was not *his* Lily, and I did not tell him. It was as well to save him that knowledge.

What pleasant days we had now? Joe and Lily in the garden, where the former made himself very useful, and Mr. Gray in his seat by the window, or in the doorway, listening to them.

As Mr. Gray grew more feeble, I know not how I should have lived without Joe. God sent him to me when I needed the blessing most. At last Mr. Gray took to his bed, and we thought he could not live many days; but he was so gentle and meek, that it was a privilege to wait upon him. Peace, peace, it was all peace, now in our little household, and I learned trust in God, and hope in a future.

One trial, however, came upon me, which was very perplexing at the time. Lily's semi-annual remittance did not arrive. I thought little of it at the time, supposing there was some slight delay; but month after month passed, and it did not come. The time for the second arrived, and none came. I was perplexed, truly. Mr. Gray was very ill. I wanted to send for Auntie Paul, but I had no means. It was the first time in my life that I had experienced the actual want of a dollar. It was a new trial surely, and one that I could not reveal. The sick man needed many comforts—they were obtained as far as possible at the village, upon credit. I think Joe had some perception of the state of the case, for he gathered a lot of apples one day and sold them, bringing the money to me; he disposed of some of our numerous chickens in the same way. My whole time was now occupied with the sick man, while Joe took care of Lily, and managed the housekeeping. It was pleasant to see how tenderly he cared for the little one, putting aside the slice of wheat bread for her, for he knew the flour barrel was almost empty, and making an Indian cake for himself—then he assisted a neighbor for an hour every day, that Lily might have an abundance of new milk. The nicest and largest sweet apples were selected for her and carefully baked; the little lady certainly did not lack for a plentiful table, however others might fare. But the new laid eggs—and she was very fond of them—were now given her only occasionally, when the milk or apples were not on hand. Joe had found out that they would bring ready money at the village, and he secreted them as a miser his gold.

He was our provider and protector, and I never saw him so happy; he began to grow fleshy on his short commons, and close management.

"Oh, that Auntie Paul were here!" I often exclaimed, when some new phase of Mr. Gray's disease began to develop itself—I felt so weak, and so much need of her strong arm to lean upon.

The good pastor of the parish called on us, and his wife was a kind friend; but no one could supply Auntie's place. Even this blessing was granted to me. It was the day before Mr. Gray died—he was suffering very much, and I was rubbing his hands and feet, when Joe came into the room and whispered—

"She 's come—Auntie Paul!"

What could he mean? I soon understood, for the next moment the minister stopped at the door, and I saw Auntie Paul's black bonnet through the window. Joe had been to the minister and made him understand that I wanted Auntie Paul. He knew Auntie Paul well, for she was known in all the neighboring churches, and he at once sent for her.

"My poor child!" she said, "why did n't you send before?"

It was a mercy that she came, for the poor sufferer had some terrible struggles before life was yielded. It required strength and nerve to be with him. He was unconscious for many hours, and once only before he died, reason fully returned; then he took my hand, saying—

"God bless you, my wife! forgive my faults, and remember me as one who would gladly live to atone for his errors."

Was it strange that my strength gave away when the demand for it had been so great? I knew little what followed my husband's death for two weeks, but I remember one day that Joe brought me a cup of tea and a boiled egg, and said—

"Eat, Sisy, eat—it will do you good."

I did eat, and was better; and they told me that two weeks had passed since the funeral. I had not known the lapse of time. I will rouse myself, I said; I have still burdens that must be borne.

Joe had made great effort to keep up appearances, and not betray our poverty to Auntie Paul; he had brought out the nicest china and table linen, had hunted up a pot of preserves, and made a large draft on the poultry yard, and had sold all the eggs he could collect, to buy loaf sugar for Auntie's tea; but her eyes were too keen not to penetrate poor Joe's devices, and I believe her big, honest heart, ached for me.

"Never mind," she said, "keep up a strong heart; there are greater trials than poverty."

"I count it the least of mine," I replied.

Time passed, and we were still in the old homestead, we three—Joe, Lily, and myself. No news came from Lily's friends, and I had my fears that her father had joined her mother in heaven. I was the more confirmed in this, from receiving a note from the housekeeper at Elmwood, asking if we had heard, as they too had received no communication from him since Lily's return. She had heard that the West India plantation was sold, and that Mr. Herbert had said he should reside there no more. Her husband proposed that I should bring Lily to Elmwood and we would employ a person to ascertain about her inheritance, and into whose hands it had fallen. But I preferred to remain where I was; now, indeed, I clasped Lily to my bosom, and called her *mine*—my most precious treasure.

One day I begged the good minister to take me to B——, where he frequently went in his little wagon. The privilege was cheerfully accorded, and while there I sold *the watch* for a sum beyond what I had supposed its value, and came home, sad to part with it again, but thankful that I could purchase Lily warm flannels for our cold winter.

Joe, whose head was as full of plans as a prime minister's, had visited the only shoe store in the village, and ingratiated himself into favor by the skillful manner in which he handled the tools. They found that he was a superior workman on the finer and more delicate part of their work. On condition that he would pay them in labor, they furnished him with tools and some stock, and before I was aware of it, he carried a bench in the little kitchen chamber, and had gone to work with great zeal. His first effort at home was a pair of shoes for Lily, soft and delicate enough for a born princess. Joe had made every part himself, even to the sewing, not forgetting to line them with flannel, and ornament them with dainty little bows. The little lady was exceedingly vain of them, and was hardly willing to have them taken off when she went to bed; then followed a pair for myself, made with equal taste.

Joe's skill soon became known in the neighborhood, and orders came in faster than he could supply them. The weather was too cold for the open chamber, and I insisted upon his bringing his bench into our winter room; and now behold us for the winter—Joe's bench and tools in one corner, an elegant rosewood piano on the other side, which Mr. Gomez had ordered sent from Elmwood, as it belonged to Lily, and he thought might be a source of amusement to us; a stove in the centre for warmth and cooking, and on the other side, opposite the piano, a bookcase of choice reading, the remnant of better days.

I had two pupils in music—the minister's and the trader's daughters, and I learned to bind Joe's shoes; thus, by industry and strict economy, we managed to be very comfortable. Better than all, was the peace of mind which I possessed. I now looked back upon my trials as blessings in disguise—they had led me to a firm faith in God and immortality; but, oh! through what deep waters, and what darkness of spirit, had been the way! I thanked God for the change that had taken place in Mr. Gray before his death. I could think of him now with such softened feelings, and such hopeful trust, that when the body with its infirmities was dropped, the spirit would ascend, purified and glorious. For myself, I felt that heaven had more attractions than earth, and I often repeated these lines:—

Only waiting till the shadows
Are a little longer grown;
Only waiting till the glimmer
Of the day's last beam is flown;
Till the night of earth is faded
From the heart once full of day;
Till the stars of heaven are breaking,
Through the twilight soft and gray.

Only waiting till the reapers
Have the last sheaf gathered home!
For the summer time is faded,
And the autumn winds have come.
Quickly, reapers! gather quickly,
The last ripe hours of my heart;
For the bloom of life is withered,
And I hasten to depart.

Only waiting till the angels
Open wide the mystic gate,
At whose feet I long have lingered,
Weary, poor, and desolate;
Even now I hear the footsteps,
And their voices far away;
If they call me, I am waiting,
Only waiting to obey.

Only waiting till the shadows,
Are a little longer grown;
Only waiting till the glimmer
Of the day's last beam is flown;
Then from out the gathering darkness,
Holy, deathless, stars shall rise,
By whose light my soul shall gladly
Tread its pathway to the skies.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

CLOSING SCENES.

"You go 'long, thar, you Cynth, and Chlo! you think, 'cause Mammie June's most ninety years old, she's done knowing how to cook. Thar, I'se gwine to make ye 'have yoursel's better, or I 'll give ye no 'commendation to the new Missus. Pomp, you little nigger, do n't you go for to leave so many pin feathers in that ar' chicken; ye think, maybe, Mammie June's blind, 'cause most ole women are; but I ain't as ole now, as Cynth, thar, with her rheumatics. Clar de track, Jim, and let Cæsar come in with them ar' pheasants—nice they 'll be for Massa James, when I 've potted 'em. Now, gals, look in dat ar' oven; do ye think Mammie June's gwine to move for ye! Dar, dese loaves done—jes' a gold brown; now you take 'em out, and do n't go spiling 'em, by yer careless ways! Now I 'm gwine to pick over these yer rasins, and Chlo, you baste dat turkey You jes' stan' thar, and keep turning it—you 're feared yer 'plexion, are ye? I ain't gwine to have dinner spiled, 'cause yer delicate! When I was young, I was n't 'fraid of nothing, only spiling my cooking; but, la, gals! yer do n't know nothing 'bout cooking; 'pears to me, nothing tastes like it did then."

"Oh, Mammie June! they 've come, they 've come! We 'll have dinner in one hour," said Addie as she danced in the ample kitchen, where Mammie June sat in her great arm chair like a queen on a throne, giving her orders very peremptorily to all the other servants.

"La, honey! you do n't say! I was n't spectin' 'em dis hour. I 'm feared de roast won't be done."

"Oh, yes, no danger, Mammie June; Pa likes it rare."

"La, sakes, chile, do ye think Mammie June do n't know how he likes it? Let me alone for dat!"

"Well, come now, Mammie, I want you to make a grand toilet. I 'll help you—you must have on your new turban, and your flowered dress."

"Can't hear of it, honey, till dinner is over; ye see dese gals are a lazy set. I can't trust 'em, and I ain't gwine to have dinner spoiled to-day, no how."

"De truth is, Miss Addie," said Cyntha, a bright, pretty, mulatto girl, "her room is better nor her company. I 'se not a bit afraid to do widout her."

"Dar, now, honey, did ye ever hear the like!" said Mammie June, holding up her hands in surprise. "Dat 's jes' de way dem ungrateful niggers talk, when dey know nothing only what I telled dem!"

"Let them alone, Mammie June, and you play lady to-day."

"Can't, no ways, honey; can't leave till de dessert goes in; dare 's Pomp—he 'll need a scolding between de courses, or he 'll not go straight at all; and den, if my eyes go away, de stealing pack will eat half de nice tings before Miss Mary see 'em. Miss Mary! bless her soul! how does she look, honey?"

"Oh, beautifully, Mammie! and Pa—oh, you must see Pa before dinner; he looks so happy, and so handsome."

"Now, chile, what do you say? Mammie June was right; de white dove is here—did n't I tell you she would come?"

"Yes, yes, Mammie; Mary says your faith helped bring it about?"

"You go 'long, chile; she jes' say dat ar' to please me—she knows it was her love. I see love in her eyes, and I know Massa James's heart was full of love, too, and you know what de good book says—'Many waters cannot quench love?' Thar, run away now, honey, I must keep order in dis yere kitchen. Cynth, dat ar' gravy will be spiled, if you do n't stir it all de time. Pomp, you run and get some peaches off de best rare ripe tree, and mind that you do n't eat more dan half of 'em."

While Mammie June was presiding in the kitchen, our friend Mary had retired to her room to lay aside her traveling dress. Dismissing her attendant, and fastening the door, her first act was to kneel down and thank the Giver of all gifts, for his goodness to her. Mammie June was right. Love had conquered. There was a struggle in Mary's heart, a long struggle, but when she learned in what manner Mr Gray had represented her father, and with what motives, her heart learned to forgive, aided, perhaps, a little by her father, between whom and Mr. Harper there had grown up a warm friendship.

Mr. Harper was deeply humiliated and pained when he learned that Mary had all this time been ignorant of Mudgett's narrative. How cruel, then, had been his suspicions, and his accusation of deception. It was hard to forgive himself.

I had received a most urgent invitation to be at the wedding, and also to spend some time in Virginia with the bride. I read the letter, and then turned to my purse, where a carefully hoarded ten dollar bill lay—all the money I had in the world, and part of that must go for flour the next day. Then to my wardrobe, where a well preserved black dress would be all of outward adorning wherewith to grace the wedding festivities. I mused awhile, and then smiled at the appearance I should make in the old fashioned waist, with the leg of mutton sleeves, and one of my broad, ample collars, which reposed on my shoulders like a small snow bank. I closed the letter, and as as I did so, Joe said—

"Please, Sisy, bind these," holding up a pair of shoe tops. "Miss Carver give two dollars to-night for 'em."

"Yes, yes, Joe; I forgot. I will sew fast and make up for lost time," and my fingers moved rapidly, while I sung, to amuse Lily—

"Oh, hush thee my baby, thy sire was a knight,
Thy mother a lady both lovely and bright;
The woods and the glens from the towers which we see,
Are all belonging, dear baby, to thee.
Oh, ho ro, i ri, ri cadil gu lo,
Oh, ho ro, i ri, ri cadil gu lo."

I bound the shoes and Joe soled them, and before we went to bed he had deposited the money in the purse. Surely, we were prospering. Lily was growing in beauty every day, and was as plump and healthy a child as one would wish to see. Joe was never so happy before. God was smoothing my pathway to the grave!

SEPTEMBER 20TH. I am twenty-six years old to-day. I found two gray hairs this morning, and pulled them out; then I saw a third and let it remain. Why should I care? I am looking forward with cheerful anticipations to death; why should I care for this first sign of the decay of the body? Rather let me welcome it as an indication of that change called death, but which is to make us all glorious as the king's daughter.

I have just received a letter which shocks and grieves me exceedingly. My brother Edward has finished his professional studies. He has struggled through them, enduring much self-denial, with great honor, but a fatal disease which has lurked about his system, has now made its appearance, and he is doomed. Alas! he must die; close his eyes upon a world which looks so bright to him. I am going to him. I must work the harder when I return, for the privilege of doing so. Lily will remain at Elmwood with the housekeeper. Joe will find a pleasant home for a few days with the minister, who has become much interested in him.

OCT. 1—AT OLDBURY. Edward fails fast—how beautiful he is, even with disease upon him! No wonder his mother was proud of him. She appears strangely. I think her mind must wander, for she will not come near Edward sometimes for half the day.

"I cannot see him! no, I cannot see him!" she says. "He must not die! God will not be so cruel as to take him from me!" And she utters other similar expressions, which show that her heart clings to her idol.

Auntie Towle was here to-day, old, and worn, and white-haired, but happy and submissive as ever. God had taken her husband and three of her children since I had seen her. "But I do n't repine," she said, "for I *know* he is good, and will keep my treasures for me!"

OCT. 5. Edward died to-day—dropped away quietly, or rather fell asleep, and awoke in another world. My poor mother! She sits motionless and despairing. Whenever she moves, she seems like one in a dream. I find I was needed here; I believe my own troubles have made me stronger in spirit.

OCT. 8. My mother is calmer since the funeral. I regret to leave her now, but Mrs. Green writes me that Lily has the whooping cough, that distressing disease for little ones, and I must hasten to her.

As I was coming away, my mother handed me a package, saying—

"Bertha, I fear you may blame me for concealing this from you, but at the time I thought it was best. My conscience has often troubled me about it, and the only reparation I can make is to give it to you at this late day."

I put the package in my pocket, and so anxious was I for Lily, that I did not think of it again for many days. I found her better than I had hoped; the cough was hard, and at times she would be thrown almost in convulsions; but otherwise her health was good, and the physician assured me there was no danger.

It was a bright, warm, sunny day, when we arrived at the little farmhouse. Joe was there before us, and he came out all smiles and gestures to receives us. He had procured the rarity of a beef steak, and had it all ready to lay upon the gridiron when we should arrive. The table was set, and there was a plate of nice biscuit on it. Joe was certainly a friend in need! The biscuit, steak, and baked potatoes, with a cup of coffee, made the old kitchen seem very pleasant.

TO BE CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.

THE FIGHTERS.

BY PROF. SPENCE.

A fighter is a fighter, no matter what kind of weapons he uses. It is not a man's fists that strike the blow; it is not the bullet that kills; it is not the intellectual powers that contend and destroy. A man may fight with his fists, or a Sharpe's rifle, or his mind; but, after all, it is neither the fist, nor the rifle, nor the mind, that does the fighting; the spirit that breeds the warfare and continues the warfare is deeper than all these; it is a part of the love and the life of the man to which fists and rifles and mind are merely the weapons—the external armor. In all fighting, mind and muscle are on a par, so far as the real tone and character of the fight is concerned. What is the difference, so far as my feelings are concerned, whether my combative spirit mitigates in a contest of blows, or a contest of words, or of thoughts? The cause does not ennoble the spirit, neither do the weapons or the armor; it is still fighting—no more, no less. That which is most central gives tone to that which is superficial and outside of it. It is the life and love of a man which give character to his mind and muscles, not his mind and muscles which give character to his life and love. The world's superlative men do not fight, either with mind or muscle. Why not? Because they cannot; it is not in their nature. Then, you say, the world has no use of such men. Yes! but they are born a little too early in the world's history, and they seem out of place. Humanity is in that condition wherein strife and contention are the great levers which uplift individuals and upheave nations. Fighting must be done—it cannot be otherwise; and hence those who can fight the hardest, with a vim and a gusto, with either mind or muscle, are in the midst of their proper elements. There is plenty of work for them—work which they relish. They are having fine times. But alas for the men who cannot fight—the Christs of the age—those who deal in neither slashing intellectual contests, nor Sharpe's rifles, nor the science of fists. We cannot conceive of Christ's participating in a knock-down in any cause, let the world call it ever so good and noble a cause. In him there were no fighting elements. He could not shed blood; still less could he wade in blood for the attainment of an end. He had too much of the good and true gushing forth from every pore, to leave a single avenue open for the transmission of a contentious spirit, or a disposition to tear down and destroy. He had much to give—to give without fighting; and he gave it without fighting. Yet there are ends to be attained, which can only be attained by fighting; only do not press the Christs into the ranks and equip them in regimentals. Is it possible! must Christ shoot a man? Oh, world! I tell you he cannot fight. And the world asks: "Then what is he fit for? If he cannot enter the ranks, at least he shall exhort. We will put him in the pulpit and the rostrum, and he shall pour forth his wrath and his vengeance upon all error and wrong, and with the eloquence of an exalted intellect, inspired by the lowest feelings of a combative spirit, he shall kindle a blaze that shall consume and destroy his fellow man, and he shall exult in the prospect of the coming carnage." Oh, world! let him alone. I tell you again he cannot fight—*not even for a principle.*

JOLLY AND FAT.

A man with blue eyes and a double chin,
With a face continually in a broad grin,
Was seated, one day, 'neath a chesnut tree,
Singing a song with considerable glee.
I shall never forget him—there he sat,
And his principal words were, "Jolly and Fat."

A bright little girl, with bounding grace,
Inquired, as she looked in his laughing face,
"What makes you so merry—so full of mirth?
I declare you 're the jolliest man on earth."
But he only looked up, then took off his hat,
Whistled, and said to her, "Jolly and Fat."

Again she asked, in so sweet a way,
The man thought it best just a word to say;
So he sprang to his feet, and stood on the sod,
Opened his mouth and whispered—"Podd."
Then, laughing tremendously, down he sat,
Chuckled, and said to her—"Jolly and Fat."

"Oh, what do you mean," said the little girl,
As she twined round her finger a dark brown curl,
"Oh, what do I mean!" said the man, and he jumped
Till his head on a branch of the tree he thumped.
"I 'll tell you my maiden, both plain and flat,
And you, too, perhaps, may say—'Jolly and Fat.'

"You see, I was thin as a pane of glass,
As gloomy as fog, and as green as grass,
When I met a man who said, with a nod,
'You must take the Adventures of Jothan Podd.'
'What 's that?' said I, said he, 'its pat,
Use it, and you will be jolly and fat.'

"'It 's a Game,' he said, 'for the sport of all,
For the young and old, for the short and tall,
It tells how a man to Paris went,
Through thick and thin, full lickerty bent,
They have made up the Game of this and that,
Got one and you will be jolly and fat.'

"So I bought the Game, it was in a box—
Paid fifty cents in genuine rocks—
And took it home, called the neighbors in,
And in half an hour we were all in a grin;
In twice that time did my waistbands flout,
Buttons break off, and boots burst out.
We found the man was true in that,
He said 't would make me jolly and fat.

"I've laughed from that time until this,
Why, 't is the merriest Game, my little Miss,
It can be safe for a mortal to see;
So get one and carry it home, and be
With all your friends, from Pa to Cat,
Most decidedly jolly and fat."

This was all he said; he buried his face
In a white handkerchief trimmed with lace;
Planted his hat on the top of his head,
And settled him down like a piece of lead,
When the little girl left, there he sat,
Shouting vociferously—"Jolly and Fat."

The girl, she bought at the store of Todd,
"A TRIP TO PARIS, BY JOTHAN PODD,"
And advises all of every name,
To purchase that most laughable Game.*
It 's better than medicine—bet on that—
To make Humanity jolly and fat.

*Published by Williams & Co., and Heyer Brothers, Boston.

GOOD ADVICE.—Men should learn to be attentive to their health, and keep the body as much as possible the fit medium of the mind. A man may be a good performer; but what can he do with a disordered instrument? The inhabitant may have good eyes; but how can he see accurately through a soiled window? Keep, therefore, the glass clear and the organ in tune. We do not wish you to be finical and fanciful; to live in the shop of an apothecary, or to have a medical attendant always dangling at your heels, but be soberly and prudently attentive to the body. Rise early. Take proper exercise. Beware of sloth. Observe and avoid whatever disagrees with your system. Never overburden nature. Be moderate in your table indulgencies. Let not appetite bemire and clog the mind. —*Jay.*

Written for the Banner of Light.

ANCIENT GLIMPSES OF THE SPIRIT-LAND.

NUMBER ONE.

The realms of mystery appear ever to have been in that odylic or spiritual aura which skirts the horizon of the senses, and marks the boundaries of the mundane and transmundane worlds. We propose to sketch in outline its mode of being as manifest among the ancient of days. There was a basis of truth within the veil of those old mysteries, though overlaid in outgrowth with weeds of rank luxuriance, where craft and ignorance took refuge, and wrought their grosser superstitions.

The ancients had their double-faced religions—Esoteric, or inner, for the initiated—Exoteric, or outer, for the people. The inner culminated in one undivided Supreme Spiritual Principle, or God, in whom we live, move, and have our being—the outer, in all that gross of surface-worship which marks the status of the shrouded mind. We shall deal only with that ancient phase that finds its counterpart in the present day. We shall sketch those symptoms of the magnetic or spiritual aura whose current is fast flowing into the domain of science and theology, despite all their efforts to avoid its course. To know the law and condition of these things, it were well to be acquaint with the earlier and later days of animal magnetism. The researches of the late Dr. Gregory, of Edinburgh, in this direction, are probably as good as any, where direct facilities for examination cannot be had. Sooner or later we arrive, through the search of these secret phenomena, to the spirit-world, which has dominated the religions of all time—whether manifest in the Ark of the Covenant, the Mysteries of Eleusis, or in modern revivals.

In modern spiritual philosophy, we also have the clue to the sacrificial offerings of the ancients. Blood, freshly shed, is in that odylic state that brings it *en rapport* with the substrata spirit-world. Hence, too, the clue to so much of successful augury by fresh entrails. Here is the origin of all the "blood theologies" which wrought with libations of wine, the blood of bulls, and the fat of rams—nor in the earlier ages were human victims spared from immolation in these horrid rites.

The Phenicians who flanked the Jews in contiguity of neighborhood, were homicide sacrificers to Moloch; and a spirit, in the name of the Lord, did tempt Abraham to cut his son Isaac's throat, but relented, and took a ram instead; but no vicarious ram was present to save Jepthah's daughter from her father's vow.

This belief in the efficacy of bloody sacrifices was common to Jew and Gentile of cotemporary times, and there is analogy in much that Homer sings with the earlier Bible record:

"Up rose Achilles ardent, and began:
But haste, consult me quick, some prophet here,
Or priest, or e'en interpreter of dreams,
(For dreams are also of Jove) that we may learn
By what crime we have thus incensed Apollo,
What broken vow, what hecatomb unpaid
He charges on us, and if soothed with steam
Of lambs or goats unblemished, he may yet
Be won to spare us, and avert the plague."

* * * * * * *

"Then to Apollo, on the shore, they slew
Whole hecatombs of bulls and goats, whose steam
Slowly in smoky volumes climbed the skies."

* * * * * * *

"The priest burned incense, and libations poured
Large on the hissing brands."

And much more so nearly like the sacrifices offered to the tutelary God of Israel.

Homer also renders the ancient faith of the Greeks in a vision of Achilles, who sees the spirit of his friend Patroclus in view, according to the modern light:—

"The soul came to him of his hapless friend,
In bulk resembling, in expressive eyes
And voice Patroclus, and so clad as he."

* * * * * * *

——"Achilles stood
With large libations soaking deep the soil,
And calling on the spirit of his friend."

Jove is also made to say of Hector—

"Mine altar never missed from him
Libation, or the steam of sacrifice,
The meed allotted to us from of old."

"In no city," (says Grote,) "of historical Greece did there prevail either human sacrifices, or deliberate mutilation—such as cutting off the nose, ears, hands, feet, etc.—or castration, or selling of children into slavery, or polygamy, or the feeling of unlimited obedience toward one man; all customs which might be pointed out as existing among the contemporary Carthagenians, Egyptians, Persians, Thracians, etc."

The dreams and visions of the Gentile world were no less divine than those recorded in our Bible. We shall see that the mesmeric trance and ecstacy were not shut from the heathen, and given as an exclusive heritage to a chosen people; yet our various ecclesiasticisms have so narrowed the general mind as to make it readily receive that the Supreme God of the Universe was manifest to the Hebrews in a way not permitted to the Gentiles. It is time this ridiculous falsity and narrowness were set aside and truth be received.

"Wherever found—
On Heathen as on Christian ground."

"The Progress of Religious Ideas," a work in three volumes, by Mrs. Lydia Maria Child, is a beautiful exemplification of this larger charity for the equal claims of the ancient religions—all measured by what they were, and not by the assumption of a "Thus saith the Lord."

We propose to travel another road, whose guide-posts can be read in the light of modern spiritual discoveries. We shall endeavor to measure Hebrew and Gentile phenomena by a common rule, impartial in its bearing, where only the besotted mind will be able to see divine revelation in the one phaze, and legends and stories in the other. Each one, with a Bible at hand, may trace the parallel of Hebrew and Gentile traditions; and when we see how dreams and visions make a part of the word of Israel's tutelary God, let us also see if, in this respect as in others, the nations outside the Hebrew pale, were also visited by these glimpses of a spirit-world.

Herodotus relates that Crœsus "saw in his sleep a vision, menacing the calamity which afterwards deprived him of his son." Why is not this as credible as if related of Abram, Abimilech, or Pharaoh?

Crœsus also sent messengers to consult the medium-priestesses at Delphi, and got a test, impossible upon the narrow basis of received formulas, but easily acceptable upon the clairvoyant or spiritual plane—nor does it differ from the word of God which has a Hebrew sanction, where it is declared that to inquire of God was to consult the seer. In the case of Crœsus and the Delphian oracle, Rawlinson, in foot-note to his Herodotus, is in a strait whether to set it down as belonging to the category of money-getting or evil spirits, such as St. Paul cast out of the pythoness, or to place it among the phenomena of mesmerism; but the law and condition of these manifestations are alike with Jew and Gentile race. Both Josephus and Philo-Judaes regard the mode of being as the same, and speak of the possessions as of divine inspiration, and as of their tutelary God, in the same way as the Gentiles spoke of their gods. The names of lords and gods were not the exclusive names of invisible beings, but were applied to incarnate human beings, and to inanimate personifications. It is wholly unworthy of scientific research to ascribe similar phenomena to diverse causation. Evil spirits and mesmerism are as applicable to Jewish as to Gentile manifestations. In the great spiritual ocean, animal magnetism and spiritualism are parallel currents, whose mediumistic boundaries between are fluxed from either side in action correspondent to endosmose; and the manifestations in physical, moral and intellectual scope, will be of the measure of mediumistic capabilities, and the status of the ages in which they are made, and modified by all the various educational trainings. It was reserved for this day to take these things from the domain of mystery, and reduce them to the law and order of the universe. These are the fruits of animal magnetism and Spiritualism. Hereafter the priest can only traffic in the mysteries of ignorant and imbecile minds; and, though he cries Lord, Lord! he must show fruits of well-doing as the only genuine passport to salvation. The mysteries of all ages are fathomed in the researches of the imponderable world, and a "Thus saith the Lord" is worth nothing as authority; and when not in harmony with the spirit of universal love, is simply the arbitrary dictum of the spirit-giving utterance. Swedenborg, while yet in the flesh, had a considerable range of the spirit-world, and in some of his intromissions he claims to have met the spirits who declared to him that they had engineered or inspired Moses and the prophets in the name of Jehovah, God and Lord. So, also, were the Gentile oracles in the names of their tutelary gods. Thus Hesiod:—

The golden race of spirits—
Chaste, holy and heavenward they become,
Expelling evil, guardians of mankind."

Though this was written about a thousand years before Jesus of Nazareth, it is equivalent to St. Paul's "innumerable company of angels of the heavenly Jerusalem," and is quite a pretty counterpart of our Orthodox nursery rhymes, wherein "holy angels" are invoked to guard our beds. As early as Hesiod, Homer had written:—

——"in similitude of strangers, oft,
The gods, who can with ease all shapes assume,
Repair to populous cities."

In likewise we read how Jesus, worshiped as a God, appeared and vanished to the view of his disciples; while some, less opened in their spiritual sight, failed in the recognition and doubted of his presence.

The two worlds so infold each other, that frequently the bounds of each are passed without consciousness of change. The poet, prophet, seer, so kindred to both modes of being, find more of fancy in the things of heaven and earth not dreampt of in the formulas. In the ocean of all being—magnetic, spiritual—heaven and earth flow to each other and embrace; and the seer has visions of the Elysian Fields, the New Jerusalem, and their substrata realms. St. Paul knew not whether he was in the body or out, when he saw things transcending the power of utterance; and Epimenides, contemporary with Solon, and reckoned one of the seven wise men, was worshiped not only as a sage and spiritual purifier, but also as a poet and as a God. "Both Plato and Cicero," says Grote, "considered Epimenides in the same light in which he was regarded by his contemporaries—as a prophet divinely inspired, and foretelling the future under fits of temporary ecstacy."

"The Heathens," said Spence, "in general believed that there was but one God; but they believed in a multitude of ministers, deputies, or inferior gods, as acting under this supreme." This is the general testimony, and is equivalent to St. Paul's "ministering spirits," or angels.

That Gods, Angels, Spirits—by whatsoever names transmundane souls may be called—did often appear in human shape to the open-vision of old time, was freely admitted by the ancient creeds, that all along the ages denied by some of the philosophers. The skeptical Thucydides, almost as early as Herodotus, is incredulous of the spirit history of his own and preceding time. Still, the broader current of the human mind ran to the belief, and not to the denial, of these things—doubtless powerfully aided by ignorance, priestcraft and superstition. We only claim that the Gentile Spiritual phenomena were under the same law and conditions as those which had their growth in Palestine. When Jacob sees a ghost, he claims to have seen God face to face. When Gideon sees a spirit, he exclaims to him, "Alas, oh Lord God." And when Manoah and his wife see an apparition, they too exclaim, "We shall surely die, because we have seen God;" though other parts of the same Bible declare that no man ever has, or can, see his face and live.

We shall not cite the numberless cases of prophecy and fulfillment so abundant in the Gentile records. We give but the simplest outline, that the growing mind may seize its bearings for the structure of a broader church than that which confines itself to a "Thus saith the Lord" of a single people—a people says Grote, in his History of Greece, "of that strenuous ferocity of character which marks so many people of the Shemitic race—Jews, Phenicians and Charthagenians, enslaved by childish caprices and antipathies, and endless frivolities of ceremonial detail, they stand distinguished as well from the Egyptian life as from the flexible, many-sided, and self-organizing Greek; not only capable of opening both for himself and for the human race the highest walks of intellect, and the free, creative agency of art; but also gentler by far in his private sympathies and dealings than his contemporaries on the Euphrates, the Jordan, or the Nile."

The earliest Grecian colony in Italy, some 750 years B. C., was that of the Campanian Cumae, contiguous to the Bay of Naples. "In the hollow rock," (says Grote,) "under the very walls of the town, was situated the cavern of the prophetic Sibyl—a parallel and reproduction of the Gergithian Sibyl, near Kyme in Æolis; in the immediate neighborhood, too, stood the wild woods and dark lake of Avernus, consecrated to the subterranean gods, and offering an establishment of priests with ceremonies evoking the dead, for purposes of prophecy, or for solving doubts and mysteries."

In the seventh century B. C., says the same author, the rich and holy temple of Apollo was purely oracular, established for the purpose of communicating to pious inquirers "the counsels of the immortals." He relates, too, how Polycrates lost his life in not heeding "the warnings of his prophets and the agony of his terrified daughter, to whom his approaching fate had been revealed in a dream."

Herodotus informs us that "the Greeks," besides other ways, "learnt divination by means of victims from the Egyptians." Again: "The art of divination, as now practiced in our temples, is derived from Egypt; at least, the Egyptians were the first who introduced the sacred festivals, processions and supplications, and from them the Greeks were instructed."

When Moses went out of Egypt, he was learned in all this wisdom of the Egyptians, and according to Josephus, he had a table made after the pattern of that in the Delphic temple—if so, he may have practiced this mystery of divination, and may have received raps, and tips, or writings by "the finger of God." But Moses forbade all such practices to his people. This was in accordance with the esoteric or secret mode of withholding all such mysteries from the people. By thus keeping them in ignorance, they would be easily molded by the priesthood to external devotion, in rites and symbols. It was death to divulge the Mysteries of Eleusis, and Moses was equally severe as regards the mysteries that he learnt of the Egyptian priesthood. Nor were the Jewish priesthood less tolerant of those who would too curiously know of the Ark and its appurtenances. Even Plato would not have the inner phenomena made common to the people, denouncing as worthy of death those who should practice the "bindings"—which would seem to correspond with the modern Mesmeric manipulations. Thus the initiated and the priesthood have ever been the dark lanterns of civilization, letting only so much light be seen as could be easily submerged in superstitious rites—hence the abnormal flow of those magnetic or spiritual currents which have dominated all miracles and oracular responses—currents which sweep the religious organs in the "divine fury" of the ancient Seers, Prophets, Corybantes, and in the "outpouring of the spirit" through modern "Mediums" and religious assemblies—all from the same great spiritual ocean whose tidal laws and inhabitable modes of being embrace in order the incarnate spheres.

C. B. P.

Written for the Banner of Light.

CHRIST AND THE CHILDREN.

The soul that has not deeply loved a child, has never known the highest and purest love known to man.

Christ's blessing on the children is the severest comment ever passed on poor humanity. "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." The hearts of the inhabitants of heaven are like the hearts of little children—loving, trusting, pure. The Protestant world has often wondered that the Catholic artists have so often painted Mary and her divine child. All that was human in Christ was from Mary—was feminine. Raphael, the divine painter, gave the world his noblest effort in Mary and her child. The Madonna of the great artist was simply a beautiful Italian mother, holding in her arms a golden-haired boy. The mother leans her head downward and forward, and is too much absorbed in her divine contemplation to look at the child. She gazes modestly upward, toward the eternal. The divine child droops his head on the cheek of his mother, and clasps his hand over the bosom of Mary. This picture is loved and admired by all great souls, because this grouping is the most perfect to express love—the love of a mother for her child—the purest, holiest love known to mortals.

If the divine can only reach earth, through materiality, then woman—the mother—is the highest, holiest type of the celestial. Did you ever see a young mother at the grave, burying the body of her first-born from her sight? Then, reader, you have witnessed the sublimest, purest exhibition of all sorrow. Can a mother forget her sucking child? then will I forget thee, says the great Teacher.

In this delightful figure Christ embodies his love for his friends. I love you as a mother loves her child! How deep and gushing is that expression! But, unless you become as little children, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. Then how can man ever reach the "regions of the blest?" Selfish, hateful, murderous, full of lies and deceit; and this poor mortal must travel back to childhood, innocence, before he can reach the outer portal of the heavenly home. This world is to be reduced to the innocence of the child, or Christ cannot save it.

Reader, did you ever study the character of a little child? How pure is its love, and how sublime is its trust. Tell a little child that you love him, or her, and the eye grows brighter, and the smile on their faces becomes richer and deeper—*their souls* glow with celestial fires.

I love *all children*—love the *strange child* as I *love my own*; and I know that mothers will laugh at me and deny that such a love can exist. I stop often by the way side, by the school-house, by the brook, by the flower-bed, by the play-house built of broken china, to converse with the child, and warm my own chilled and sorrowing spirit by the celestial fires on their sunny faces. Give a little child a roll of sugar, say not a word, and he knows you love him: he knows you are his friend. And when you have thus blest him, with something sweet, how perfectly his pure little heart trusts you; he knows you are his friend—you need not reason or persuade him. Children are the gems set in the crown of life to teach us the good and the beautiful. When will this defiled world become like little children—innocent, pure, loving, trusting, like Christ's Kingdom? It cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven unless it becomes as a little child.

The mother's love for her young child flashes a deeper light into her heart than the rays of a diamond rare give to the crown of a queen.

I have seen children playing by the grave of the dead, the loved, whose tombs were gemmed with flowers, and fully did I feel that our love for the dead was very holy. The child and the flowers by the grave of the loved ones! Who will paint that *assemblage* that we may see it, that we may *love* them? The eloquent preacher said: "When a child, I painted heaven as a great city filled with palaces, glittering with domes and spires, and my *little brother* was there." His first love in heaven was for a child, a *little brother*. And now he is gray, he remembers the lambs of his flock, and counts up their names, and the memory stirs a deep tone among his heart-strings, and he says, my love for you flashes bright rays in my heart, and the diamond's rays are not so brilliant. I love you all, I shall never forget you. I remember when we worshiped in the old meeting-house, and I kindled the fires, and the bell made no music, for we had none. *The sweet Sabbath bell!* how it rings on the night air, sweet as the voice of a laughing child—sweet as the smile of the first born to the eye of its mother. George Sands's divinest picture in her Consuelo is a *fatherless child*, lovely as the opening flower. Goethe's Mignone is the central figure in his greatest book—a *lost, stolen*, unknown child, longing for Italy, for the citron and orange groves, and the flowers and birds in that elysium. Hawthorne paints a beautiful child in his Scarlet Letter, and little Eva and Topsy are the divinest images of light that shine in Uncle Tom's clouded sky. These are pure touches of art—Mary, by Raphael, with the smiling Jesus clasped to her heaving bosom. The Kingdom of Heaven is like the smiling infant.

R.

MAN AND HIS RELATIONS.

BY S. B. BRITTAN.

SECOND SERIES.

CHAPTER V.

MAGNETISM AS A THERAPEUTIC AGENT.—(CONTINUED.)

As the writer does not belong to any school in medicine, and is not otherwise employed in the practice of the healing art, he may reasonably expect the suspicion of writing to advertise his claims as a practitioner. Other motives and objects demand a further reference to my own experiments. I am reminded that when one undertakes the advocacy of new views, calculated to unsettle the general confidence in existing systems, the public has a right to demand the best evidence the case will admit of, and may justly withhold so much as even an implied indorsement in the absence of all tangible proofs. Mere theorists and philosophical speculators, who support their improbable and fanciful notions by no substantial evidence, cannot reasonably expect to inspire confidence, either in the value or the correctness of their peculiar ideas. Moreover, no intelligent, fair-minded man will be disposed to cling to his preconceived opinions when once they are plainly disproved by the discovered laws of Nature and the results of scientific experiment.

It was only after suffering for years the painful consequence of my error—the very common and often fatal mistake of supposing that health is to be sought in nostrums and purchased of apothecaries, rather than found in an intelligent perception of, and a strict obedience to, the laws of vital harmony—that the fallacies of the profession were fairly uncovered and comprehended, and the use of medicine—as ordinarily administered—was perceived to be the trial of doubtful expedients, rather than a truly scientific adaptation of means to ends. I cannot be unjust toward others without impoverishing myself; and I have certainly nothing to gain by undervaluing the learned professions. I am well aware that the medical profession has already furnished a long list of illustrious names of men, whose discoveries occupy a large space in the scientific records of our country and the world. Perhaps no profession is now dignified by a greater number of free, enlightened and noble minds; and it is precisely for this reason that I shall not be accused of treating the subject unfairly. It will doubtless be conceded that *science properly comprehends not merely a classification of particular facts, but likewise an explanation of the essential laws on which such facts depend.* Wherever this definition is accepted, it will be perceived that Medicine does not answer the description. It is readily granted that we are supplied with the necessary classification of the phenomenal effects of medicine and the superficial aspects of disease; but we wait for the discovery of the essential laws under which all physiological, pathological, and therapeutic effects occur, and until those laws are clearly recognized and duly respected, the practice of medicine at best is but a cause of doubtful experiment which may destroy the constitution with the disease.

The remedial agents employed with success in one case may totally fail in another—and even prove to be injurious—owing to the endless diversity among men, in respect to physical organization, combination of temperaments, states of the mind, and varying degrees of susceptibility to physical, mental and moral influences. Hence the same medical treatment in all cases—for the same general type of disease—without such modifications as the individual constitution may require, can never be uniformly successful. Much less can a routine practice, founded on ancient medical authorities, be pursued at this day with any reasonable hope of beneficial results. The constitutions of men; our manner of life; our pursuits and habits of thought; and even the earth and atmosphere, have all changed. We are becoming sublimated by the progress of civilization, the influence of Literature, Art, Science and Commerce, and the development of the mental and spiritual faculties and forces of human nature.

Moreover, the same kinds of food that once were readily digested and assimilated—thus freely contributing to augment the vital energies—are now burdensome to the stomach, and wholly unsuited to promote either physical health or mental activity. Similar changes have occurred in the specific forms of disease. All these should be carefully observed, and their relations to the fundamental laws of being comprehended. The wisest physicians already perceive the necessity for corresponding changes and modifications in the professional modes of practice; and hence they administer medicine with caution, in alterative doses and sublimated forms. Some centuries ago, when men were less human, and far more gross and animal than now, they survived the action of powerful drugs and a thorough course of depletion, such as would now be followed by a complete and hopeless prostration of the system. It is barely possible that the inhabitants of Central Africa and the South Sea Islands might still be benefitted by such treatment, but it is absolutely certain that the more refined nations of Europe and America require it no longer.

Before entering on a course of practical experiment, I was led, by reading, observation and reflection, to the conclusion that all forms of disease commence in the nervous system, by a disturbance or unequal distribution of vital electricity; and that the organic, functional and symptomatic effects all resulted from this derangement of the electro-motive power of the organization. Having satisfied myself on this point, it was but natural to conjecture that the specific effects of all remedial agents occur under the action of the electro-nervous forces, and agreeably to the laws of vital electricity. I had observed the surprising results produced by magnetic manipulations—had often produced those effects. Acute pains were readily removed; extreme nervous irritability was rapidly subdued; sarcomatous and encysted tumors, rheumatic and other swellings, had mysteriously disappeared under the hands of the operator. I had also marked the salutary results of the Hydropathic treatment in fevers, and the beneficial effects of poultices and other moist applications in subduing local inflammations. I had no doubt that these and all similar effects occurred agreeably to an electro-vital principle. Regarding inflammation as proceeding from a highly electrical state of the parts affected, it could only be necessary—provided I had really discovered the fundamental electrical law—to adapt the treatment to that law in its relations to the human system, and the conditions would be rapidly changed; so that in every case where no destruction of the organs or tissues had occurred, a normal state would necessarily and almost instantly supervene. I will here introduce one example from among a number of similar cases designed to subject my theory to the ordeal of a practical experiment. The surprising results that followed the application of the principle, in the treatment of external inflammations, more than realized my previous expectations.

Some years since a gentleman who lived in Newark, N. J., and had there listened to several lectures on the electrical theory of the vital functions, called on the writer and described the case of a young woman, eighteen years old, who belonged to his circle of acquaintance. The patient was vitally strong and ordinarily enjoyed the most vigorous health; but at the time she was represented as suffering intensely from acute inflammation in one leg. Her friend was extremely anxious that I should personally attend to her case; but as my sphere of action was the platform rather than the sick room, and especially as my time was much occupied, I perseveringly declined the responsibility. Several times in the course of one week the gentleman came to me and urged the peculiar claims of the case, until at last I reluctantly yielded to his repeated solicitations, and called on the patient. I found her suffering from a rheumatic fever and intense inflammation of one lower limb, extending from the extremity to the hip, and affecting the joints, tendons, and all the fibrous textures. The limb was stretched at full length and in a horizontal position. It rested on a pillow placed in one chair while the patient was seated in another, which she had constantly occupied during the preceding seven days and nights, without one hour's sleep or a single moment's freedom from pain. The leg was swelled to an amazing size, and about the joints the venous congestion gave the entire surface a dark purple appearance.

On inquiry I learned that the physician—in his attempt to reduce the inflammation—had depended chiefly on the application of a liniment, that appeared to be composed of origanum and other vegetable oils. Feeling assured that the application of such an oleaginous compound must of necessity check the insensible perspiration—which always facilitates the escape of vital electricity from the body—render the cuticle a non-conductor, and thus increase the inflammation—I did not hesitate to express this conviction—without the slightest intimation respecting the actual facts in the case—*that the inflammation had greatly increased since the first application of the liniment.* My observation was instantly confirmed by the concurrent testimony of the whole family, though all had attributed the aggravated symptoms to other causes than the doctor's prescription. The case afforded an excellent opportunity to test the reality of the supposed discovery, to which reference has already been made. If a cure could be effected agreeably to the electrical law involved in the theory, developed in this treatise, I had no doubt of its speedy as well as its certain accomplishment. It was only necessary to render the cuticle a good conductor of vital electricity, and then—by the proper application of an electrically negative body—the rapid diffusion of the concentrated agent would at once occur on the inductive principle.

I will here give the simple treatment and the surprising result. Adding an ounce of Spirits of Ammonia to a pint of cold water, I sponged the limb thoroughly, and until the oily substance was entirely removed from the surface. Then relaxing the muscles of my own arms and hands, by withdrawing the nervous forces as much as possible—thus rendering the extremities electrically negative—I commenced manipulating lightly—making the negative passes from the highest point to which the inflammation extended, to the ends of the toes. As often as the surface of the patient's limb became dry by the rapid process of evaporation, occasioned by the unusual heat, the wet sponge was again passed lightly over the surface, thus restoring and increasing the conducting capacity of the cuticle—which is always suspended in proportion as the skin is deprived of its natural humidity.* Thus the manipulations over the moist surface were continued without interruption for forty minutes. The inflammation was greatly reduced, and after the first operation the patient could move her limb and had the partial use of all the joints, not one of which had been moved in the least during the seven or eight days next preceding the application of this treatment. At the expiration of twelve hours I repeated the operation, occupying some forty minutes, when the patient was relieved of all pain, and could support the weight of her body on that limb. Once more, after an interval of twelve hours, the same treatment was applied for half an hour, whereupon the patient ran up and down stairs without the least pain or inconvenience. On the evening of the next day she walked to Library Hall, a distance of half a mile, to attend a lecture delivered by the writer—walked home again—and from that time had not the slightest symptom of inflammation.

The reader's attention is now invited to a case of a wholly different nature. Miss Sarah Elizabeth Lockwood, of Stamford, Conn., a young lady some twenty years of age, had suffered long and fearfully (according to the physicians who had treated her case for several years) from a *spinal disease*, which had resulted in a suspension of the peristaltic motion of the intestines; suppression of the catamenia; a total paralysis of the lower limbs, and complete loss of the voice. The treatment had been tropical bleeding, blisters, setons in the back, etc.; and every inch of the cuticle, from the medulla oblongata to the lower extremity of the spinal column, gave evidence of the faithful application of the professional treatment which of course had subserved no good purpose. Indeed, the poor girl—like the woman whose case is reported in the practice of Jesus—"had suffered many things of many physicians, . . . and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse."—*Mark v*, 26.

When the writer first called to see Miss Lockwood, she was in many respects more helpless than an infant. She had no power to move her lower limbs at all, or to hold up her head, and she had not spoken above a whisper in eight months.

I have not space to detail the precise process adopted in this particular case. Suffice it to say, the application of the treatment was in strict accordance with the principles involved in the writer's theory. Concerning the result, the patient may very properly be permitted to speak for herself. The following introduction to the statement of Miss L. is from the pen of Mr. Hoyt, the intelligent and gentlemanly editor of the *Advocate*, in whose paper the letter was originally published, in July, 1850:—

[From the Stamford Advocate.]

"Mr. Brittan has not only been successful in explaining the philosophy of his subject, but eminently so in the practical application of the principles to the treatment and cure of some of the most aggravated forms of disease. By permission of the parties, we publish the following communication from Miss Lockwood. It is a strong case; the facts are generally known in this community, and may be said to have occurred within the sphere of our own observation:—

* It is well known that when the insensible perspiration is arrested by cold, or from any other cause, leaving the surface dry, it occasions *fever*; the electro-thermal, chemical, and organic action, are all rapidly increased; and this derangement of the vital forces may result in an acute inflammation of some internal organ or membrane. When the natural process, whereby animal electricity is deranged or set free, is thus suddenly suspended, the vital motive power inevitably accumulates, and it is but natural that the molecular and organic motion should be correspondingly accelerated.

PROF. BRITTAN:—*Dear Friend*—Actuated by a lively sense of the great benefits conferred by your treatment, I am constrained to make the following statement:—

In the Spring of 1846, while at school, I began to be troubled with a pain in my side and head, and extreme general debility. During the ensuing year I was treated by two physicians of different schools, with very indifferent success. In May, 1847, another physician was called to attend me; but for some months I was absent from the vicinity of this gentleman's residence, and his visits were only occasional till the autumn of the same year, when, on my return home very much reduced in physical energy, and dejected in spirits, it became necessary for him to attend me constantly. I was confined to my bed for some fifteen or eighteen months, during the period from 1847 to 1850. Four or five other physicians saw me at different times, but I received no permanent relief from their prescription.

I was virtually given up my case not admitting of a rational hope of recovery. I continued in a perfectly helpless condition until April, 1850. It was impossible for me at this time to hold up my head for a single moment, or to change my position in bed. Added to the feebleness of infancy, I was unable to find much rest or sleep. I suffered constantly the most intense burning and painful sensation in my head and spine. My circulation was so terribly unbalanced that my limbs were almost as cold as death. In this situation you found me, and justice requires me to add, that from this prostrate and seemingly hopeless condition you have succeeded in raising me. For the last three or four weeks I have been visiting my friends, and you cannot imagine how delighted I am that I am able to go out once more. If it had not been for you, doubtless I should have passed many more wearisome weeks and months buried from the world and all its enjoyments.

When I think how perfectly helpless I was, when you first saw me, it seems to me almost a miracle that you relieved me so soon. I cannot find words to express my gratitude to you.

I think if physicians would adopt your mode of treatment they would be more successful than they are now, in curing some diseases, at least. It is to be very much regretted that your will not devote your time to the sick. That you personally may be blessed with health, the greatest of all blessings, is the wish of your friend. SARAH E. LOCKWOOD.

P. S.—For the information and encouragement of others, I will further remark:—While I do not profess to understand the principles of Mr. Brittan's electrical system, I may venture to speak with confidence of the results in my own case. The third time he called to see me, I was made to speak in a full voice, which I had not done in eight months; to support myself on my feet, and to walk across the room. All pain and nervous irritability now rapidly subsided, and I began to feel the energy of new life in every part of my frame. During the past month I seem to have entered on a new existence. My sleep is sound, unbroken and refreshing; my appetite good, and I am rapidly gaining strength.

I shall not cease to hold in the most grateful remembrance the kind Providence that placed me in his care; nor shall I neglect to commend his treatment to others who are afflicted.

With much respect, yours, S. E. L.

Stamford, Ct., June 24, 1850.

With a brief citation of one other case I must leave this department of my subject. I was once called to the bed-side of a young girl of some seventeen summers, who was raving with the wildest delirium. For two days and nights it had required two or three persons constantly to keep her on the bed. With my right hand I grasped both of her hands, and placed my left hand on the patient's forehead, thus forming an electro-vital circuit, by which I hoped to equalize the electric forces of her brain and nervous system. The violence of the paroxysm was subdued in less than one minute. The patient was soon quieted; the pupil of the eye contracted, and the countenance rapidly assumed a natural expression. The eyelids began to droop, and in five minutes she slept. I thereupon disengaged myself, and occupying a seat, at a distance of two or three yards from the bed, I watched the patient attentively. She slept fifteen minutes without stirring a muscle, when she opened her eyes in a perfectly sane state—*sat up, was clothed, and remained in her right mind.*

EDWIN H. CHAPIN

At Broadway Church, N. Y., Sunday Morning, December 11, 1859.

REPORTED FOR THE BANNER OF LIGHT, BY BURR AND LORD.

TEXT.—"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."—PSALMS xxiii, 1-4.

Every man has two lives. I do not speak now of successive states of being, of the life of this world, and the life of another. But I speak of two cotemporaneous existences, even amid the conditions of the present state. Every man is double-lived. There is the life which touches the outer world, and is part of its perishable substance. That is the life of appearance—the life of history—the life of which, perhaps, he knows more himself—certainly the life with which his fellow-men are best acquainted. Then there is the life within—the life of consciousness—the life of contending emotions, and solitary thoughts, and strange experiences. It may leave no visible expression upon the surface of things; it may be veiled—it essentially is veiled—from the eyes of others. And in the mysterious recesses of this life man encounters the great realities of being; and within this veil, like Moses on the Mount, he comes face to face alone with God.

I have intimated that a man, even in his own case, may know but little about this interior life. But every man knows something about it. He has joys and sorrows with which the world cannot intermeddle. He is conscious of struggles, of which those who are the most intimate with him are not aware—which come on, sometimes, with terrible force, with ingredients of heavy despondency and aching misery, hidden under the mask of serene fortitude, or constrained pleasantness. Ah! my friends, after all, how real to each of us—though it may be unreal to others, and so often so little cared for by ourselves—is this life of the soul, of which this other life of the body, and of the senses, is only the mask and the wardrobe.

Now it is the great peculiarity of many of these Psalms that they speak from, and they speak to, this inward life. There is no stamp of external history upon them, no finger-mark of age or place. They are an artesian well of thought and sentiment, that has been sunk through the crust of all centuries, whence the human soul may draw and drink, and recognize the deep under-spring of its own experience. In one word they are essentially of the soul, and so time and space are canceled by them. It follows, therefore, that we shall enjoy the reading of these Psalms, or meditations upon different portions of them, in proportion as we know our own inward life and relations, its experiences and its wants. We shall feel then that David's words are our own words. They are the language of a common humanity, whose emphasis is in every needy, or troubled, or rejoicing heart, and is fitted to all lives. If one wants expressions to convey what is deep in him, he can find those expressions nowhere so fully and so readily as here. So the Psalms live forever, and are little affected by the criticism that may break off bits of Genesis, or flaw the Book of Kings. Touching God and the human soul, they glide over all things else in the great ground-swell of spiritual truth. And, perhaps, I may say there is no portion of this Book of Psalms so appropriate to the remarks which I have been making, as this brief yet copious twenty-third Psalm, for, my friends, peculiarly is it the utterance of the soul. And in nothing like its full depth and beauty will it be comprehended, except by those who are vividly conscious of this inward life in themselves; and yet, to some extent, will it be appreciated by all, because, as I have already said, to every man this deeper and truer life is more or less real. And it is to touch and awaken those interior chords that I refer to it this morning—for the purpose of calling you in from the mere aspect of things, through external shape and movement, that I allude to it.

Under the pressure of our worldly trouble, or the whirl of this earth's enjoyment—in our serene contemplation, or our careless glances at its familiar pictures of good and evil—in times of great public excitement, involving the great yet transient and ever changing crises of the world's history, it is good to pass into this realm of spiritual consciousness, the center of which is in God and in every man's own soul—and this, too, not for the purpose of escaping from our worldly relations and cares—not to gratify any mystic depreciation of the things of time and sense, or any mystic exaggeration of spiritual abstractions—but that, considering the fountains of our most real and most substantial life, we may be refreshed and strengthened for the occurrences and vicissitudes of all life, that we may be stronger and better in both our lives—our life within, and our life without.

If I should undertake to give a name to some of the points suggested by the verses which I have selected for my text, I should say that they appear the record of a soul assurance, its progress, and its victory. Now we all feel at once that the entire meaning and significance of this little Psalm is utterly inexpressible. And, as I said just now, the deeper a man goes into the realities of his own inward life, the richer will this Psalm become to him; the more appropriate will he find it to be, and the more meaning will he find in it. And yet, I think, the epithets I have used, and upon which I propose to touch as I pass along this morning, if not entirely accurate, are sufficiently so for the occasion.

In the first place, then, let me say, here is a record of the soul's assurance. It is to be presumed that David wrote this Psalm after he had known adversity, after he had been immersed in the cares of state and of battle, after he had felt the weight of a crown, and the bitter antagonism of enemies. I think it is very affective, my friends, considering the circumstances under which this Psalm was written, that David should have referred away back to that early life of his; that from all the splendors of the court, and all the contemplation of his heavy worldly care, he should look to those hills where he used to watch his sheep, and where he took such care of them, rescuing them from the paw of the bear and the lion—I think it is very affective that he should look back to those associations, and transfer the suggestions, which they brought him, in that hour to God, and should use this term respecting the Highest—"The Lord is my shepherd"—"in the same way as I, in my own human heart, felt care for the wandering and needy sheep, so now in my trials and in my needs I feel that the great God feels care and sympathy for me."

It is a necessity for us, of course, to use something with which we are familiar, for the purpose of conveying a conception of the infinite one, who cannot be fully expressed. Incompetent as it is to do this, I say we are always compelled to use it. God must stand before us in some shape with which we are familiar. But, at the same time, we are conscious that that does not fully represent him. We are conscious, of course, by the very statement of the terms, that the infinitude of the divine nature cannot be exhausted in any presentation like that of "The Lord is my shepherd." Not, my friends, that for a moment I can fall into the conception that we cannot know anything about God, because we cannot know everything. That is a very great mistake. We can know something about God, we can know that which is true about God, though we cannot know all which is true about God, for the simple reason that in all true relations God is. All true relations are based upon the reality of God. If we call God a father, we have a true conception of God. Not the whole conception of God, because we take in, at the same time, the idea of an earthly parent. But, at the same time, whatever stands true in that earthly father's life, whatever is to be reverenced in that father's character, whatever stands authentic for us in that father's being, is in God and God is in that. And we have a true representation of God in the idea of a father, though we do not have the whole, or a complete representation of him. So—"God is a shepherd"—is a true representation of God's relation, to man, and especially to the soul of man, though it does not give the entire character, the entire representation of God.

At any rate, I say that God must be so conceived; by human relations must we bring the infinite before the mind of the finite, in order that we may at all comprehend and feel our relations to him. And, remember, that God is not degraded in our conceptions by anything that thus brings him, so to speak, within the grasp of our mind, and especially of our heart. Nothing that really presents God, though partially, yet actually true, degrades God, no conception of the kind. To call him a father; to call him a shepherd, to speak of his nearness to us—is not for a single moment to slacken the reverence we owe him, or to cast a single flaw upon the majesty of his being. It is true that there have been men in a highly ecstatic state, in a crazed state, who have approached almost to a flippant familiarity to God, and who have spoken of their relations to him in terms that, if they did not strike us with horror, would fill us really with disgust. But, after all, this is not the danger, I repeat, where we speak of God as the father, or the shepherd, or any of his true relations to the soul. The reverence we owe him is not slackened; his majesty is not for a moment obscured or eclipsed. And really in our conception of God's nearness to the soul, and his particular care for it, he is exalted, rather than degraded or brought down.

It is a very great mistake to suppose that there is anything in existence that God is above caring for, or that is not cared for. People sometimes bring the objection to special providences, by saying that it is not likely he is going to care for little minute things like these. They behold God, they say, in generalities; they behold God in the grand sweep of the whole, and not in these little minute processes, and these little minute forms in which men profess to find him. Now, my friends, God's special providence is perfectly coordinate with his general providence.

And the conception that anything is too small for his care, or so minute as to be below his ministration, is a very false conception; for, I repeat, God is magnified by his conception of his care for small things. It is not simply the idea of God as overwhelming the stupendous whole; it is not simply the idea of God as sitting on the throne of the universe with the pomp of all the worlds marching in reverent order before him; it is not the idea of a God, whose footsteps are seen in the majestic processes of nature, whose pulsations are felt in the beat of steadfast law; it is not this alone that magnifies God, but the thought that there is not a wild bird that courses through the air whose flight is not noticed by him, and whose wants are not provided for by him; that there is not a hair of our heads that is not numbered. God in the near and in the close, as well as in the vast comprehensive, really is a thought that exalts his majesty, and shows forth still more clearly his glory.

Now I wish you for a moment to consider the remarkable conceptions of God that these old Hebrew Scriptures give us, how they differ from all other nations about him: and, therefore, show their intimate foundations in the religious sympathies of the human soul, and show their proofs of a Divine origin in the fact that they stand on the great authentic instincts of human nature. Now we have not in this book of Psalms the old Greek and heathen conceptions of a Jupiter thundering and lightning upon an Olympus; we have not the oriental conceptions of a Brahma, or Buddha, or Vishnu, some abstract God, some God that the highest abstract of the mind can hardly touch as a reality, some God that they do not see, and into which the individual soul is to be absorbed. We have a relation of closeness, of nearness, and of tenderness expressed in the God of the Hebrew Scriptures, in the God of the Psalms of David, which is far above and beyond all other conceptions of God that ever were given to man in the literature and old religions of the world. "The Lord is a shepherd" is a most wonderful utterance, if we think of the conception that other nations in other lands have entertained of God. There is a tenderness and a closeness and a nearness expressed in that language that we look for in vain from them, and that which is the glory of the Psalms of David is the glory of the New Testament; the revelation of the nearness of God to the human soul, and the condescension of God. Christianity is not primarily a revelation which, you may say, lifts up man to God; it is not a revelation which puts the key of mystery into the hands of man, and points him to unlock it, and to have intimate conception of how God exists, and what are the processes of the infinite mind. But the great power of Christianity is the bringing down of God to man; it is God coming among men, and, say what we will, there is a most profound truth that can never be expelled from the heart and core of the New Testament in the doctrine of Emanuel—God with us;" God personified, God brought down, God condescending, God stooping. The glory of Christianity is not merely the lifting up of those who are low to that which is high, but the coming down of that which is high to that which is low; strength ministering to weakness, purity to impurity, holiness to sin, God to man. That is the great peculiarity of Christianity, the revelation of the condescension of God.

And I say that in close accordance to this, is the expression of the Psalmist here—"The Lord is my shepherd." It is an expression of an assurance of his care, of his nearness to each soul. And in this feeling, let me say once more, there is nothing derogatory to God, nothing derogatory in the feeling that he is near to individual souls, that in some way he consorts with their weaknesses, that in some way he touches their secret springs of action, that in some way he watches over and guides them. You remember that the Apostle says, in one of the verses that I read this morning, "The spirit maketh intercession for us." When we come near to God, God comes near to us and helps us, and lifts us up to where we are not able to climb, and anticipates what we are not able to prevent. So, I repeat, in this conception of God near to each soul, there is nothing derogatory to God; it is not mere mysticism, but it is the greatest of facts, and appears as such, just in proportion as men realize this inward life to which I alluded in the commencement of my remarks. The evil is when men get the notion that God is exclusively near to them, when they get the peculiar idea of saintship, when they say in any sense, virtually or directly, "God cares for me; I have access to God; I have communion with God, and you have not," "I thank God I am not as the publican yonder." When anything of this feeling gets into religion, then you have got a derogatory conception of God; that he is near to one man's soul and not to another man's soul, that he has an exclusive favoritism for one man, and an exclusive dislike for another. The moment you introduce partiality into the kingdom of God, and the relations of God to man, that moment you introduce anything but the spirit of true relations. There is no partialism in God, there is no respect of persons with him, there is no exclusive favoritism with him. He is not with your soul and absent from mine; he is with your soul and with my soul. And, therefore, just in proportion as the great truth in the text is realized, in proportion as we feel that God is near to our souls, to your soul and to my soul; in proportion as any man feels this closeness of God to his spiritual nature, this exclusiveness will be done away with. For when a man reflects for a moment, and takes up this truth and applies it to himself, when he says, "Is it a fact that God is near to me? that I can say the Lord is my shepherd? that of all things else that I may ascribe to his majesty, of all the reverentials I may pour out, bowing down before him as I may, still I may fall back upon a tenderer name, and say the Lord is my shepherd?"—when we ask, each of us, if this is the fact concerning my soul, we must say it is a fact concerning every soul. For who am I that God should be near me? Who am I in the crust of my sinfulnes, in my weakness and in my frailty, that God should come near me? If he comes near to me with all my sins, and my weakness and my frailty, he must come near to all souls. And, I repeat, the realization of the nearness of God to our souls, to your soul and to my soul, will break down, I think, this exclusiveness, when we look at it rightly, this feeling that God cares for one and not for another.

And in this doctrine of God's care for the soul, of his communion with the soul, of his nearness to the soul—I mean in a different sense from that in which he is near to matter—we have the great foundation of religion itself. God is in all things. He is in the pebble that lies at my feet, as well as in the star that rolls through the heavens. But God is in a peculiar sense near to the human soul; he has peculiar access to it; he touches it with peculiar solicitude. I say this is the groundwork of all religion. As I have often said, in one form or another, this doctrine of the providential care and guidance for man does not trouble, but leaves untouched any appropriate philosophical conception of God; it leaves undisputed and uncontradicted any proper scientific conception of God; all that the intellect demands to be in God is left with this conception of the soul; all that the intellect requires of infinity and absoluteness, of perfect being, of extrication, in one sense, from the human soul, not implicated merely in it, not in the pantheistic sense can we say—God is my soul, and my soul is God. The intellect, when we look sharply at the matter, demands this consideration. I say all that the philosophical intellect demands in the consideration of a God is left. While, at the same time, in this doctrine that David puts forth here, something that the soul needs and craves for itself is granted. For is it not this closeness, this nearness, this personal consideration, that we require? Else what kind of propriety, what sort of consistency appears in prayer, when a man goes to God and prays him to strengthen him in his weakness, to guide him in his work, to enlighten him in his darkness? Is that mere words, mere form? Are we simply chattering before God, going as the African does with his mumbo-jumbo before his idol? Is our prayer a polite ceremony merely, or do we mean what we say? And if we do mean what we say, and if a man who comes in the fullness of his aching heart and says, "God help me and guide me," means anything, he means that God will help and guide him, and is near in a peculiar sense to his soul. And so, too, nature is not rendered any less significant, any less important, by this idea of God's nearness to the human soul. Its laws are not for a moment disputed; its steadfast processes are not for a moment denied. We should conceive that there are two realms of existence, a realm of law and a realm of liberty, a realm of matter and a realm of spirit. There is a realm of matter where God works by steady processes and steady laws, and assures his ends by those movements which science can discover and appreciate. And there is a realm of spirit, where, arising above the necessities of matter, even as we ourselves are not all material, we come into contact with God, and feel the glorious liberty of children of God. Therefore, when I say that God is near to the human soul, I do not say that he is near in any sense that violates the laws of nature, or breaks down its material processes which he has ordained.

But, on the other hand, it seems to me that the moment we get a full conception of this expression—"The Lord is my shepherd"—nature gives a vast assurance to us. Why, who is this God who is so near to us, upon whom I can call? what is this God to whom I can cry out in my hour of darkness and in my weakness? Lo! his greatness is illustrated by the pomp and splendors of the material universe, though you can never see him; and though you can never for a moment take in his infinitude by any symbol, here is something that may at least suggest him, that vastness of the outward world, rolling with its million burning lights; these vast areas of light, and power, and splendor, that unfold forever before the penetrating vision of man; these show you what kind of a God is he, how vast is his nature, how infinite his power. His steadfast laws in the material world assure us of his steadfastness in the spiritual world; and in this order, harmony and power, we see the order, harmony and power of that God who is your shepherd. I repeat, the moment we get a true point of view, that moment nature, instead of appaling us as it does without this conception of God, helps us and enables us to see how strong, and great, and infinite, is this God. But without such a key, I say, it does seem idle to suppose that we have any of his particular care, to suppose that we are to him anything more than the mere dust upon the flying wheels of the universe, to suppose that we are anything more than worms and insects of the day. For the moment we look at the great face of nature, while God's beneficence is apparent there, its vastness appals us. But the moment I get back to the consciousness of the God contained in this expression of David, the vastness of nature helps me, and enables me to conceive how great and, therefore, how powerful and competent must be the Lord who is my shepherd.

And, moreover, out of these general grounds of assurance there arises one or two specific considerations. In the first place the Psalmist says, "I shall not want"—"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." And it seems to me that he strikes upon a deep fact in human nature, when he utters this truth. For how much misery and how much sin ensues from human want, or rather from man's idea of what he wants. "I shall not want." I think when a man with his soul can go into that state—when he can say that, and mean what he says—he has reached a very high point of spiritual attainment. "I shall not want." Look at what we call civilization; you will perceive that it it multiplies a vast number of facilities, and conveniences, and agencies, it also creates a vast number of desires. As man acquires facilities for doing things, he desires to do things more and more; and, in one sense, this is a token of his greatness and of the boundlessness of his capacities, and of his everlasting and distinguishing characteristic, that he should be continually achieving new things, and aiming at higher results. But I repeat, that, after all, it may be doubted whether for the true life of man, the real stock and substance of man, civilization gives more than it takes. I mean by this, that I suppose, as to the spiritual life of man—the real, substantial life of man, which man is placed in this world to live—Abraham on the plains of Mamre, and the old patriarchs who had no steamboats, and railroads, and balloons, nor any of our modern facilities which we glorify in such sparkling terms—I suppose they got really as near to God, in the heart and essence of true life, as we do, and as men ever will in any age. We may help forward certain great designs of God in this world; especially certain social results we may help to make, or develop history by what we call civilization. But I do not know that the human soul is bettered by it, or that it is much more elevated, or that this outward machinery makes truer men or truer women, or gives them any nobler or richer life. Therefore, I say, while it grants us certain agencies, it creates certain wants, and man cries out with the more hungry desire the more attainment that he makes. Luxury we know only increases the sense of want; and with some people the more they have the more they need, and that which in humble and simple circumstances they did not require, comes to be a necessity of their very being. Continually artificial wants are created by the advance of society, as we acquire the more processes of civilization. And then look at the wants of ambition; look at the soul when it is set on fire with the idea of worldly aggrandizement. Take some simple-hearted man, some one with right motives, right feelings, and ample love. Give him a little hoist in position, let him see a little further ahead for honor and power than he did, and see how the more beautiful humanities will begin to drop off from him, and how the higher principles which sustained him in a lower station, are regarded in his esteem, and how more and more, as he rises in the splendor of worldly power and aggrandizement, he becomes less truly a man; and more and more the want cries out within him, until, like the great conqueror of old, he weeps that there are no more worlds for him to conquer. He that would have been content, perhaps, with a garden and a simple hut, in his early life, now, standing with all the panoply of the world's glory about him—with all its crowns on his head, and all its benefits at his feet—still has that unappeasable want pressing upon him. And see how it is with men seeking for wealth. You have known men in dreadful poverty, struggling hard to support themselves and their families, and yet they were then ten times as generous as they were when they had become rich; they gave more, and were more responsive to the touch of charity when they were hardly worth a dollar, than when they had become worth their hundreds of thousands of dollars. And so with the appetites. They increase the more they are gratified. Oh, it is the awful curse, I suppose, of any kind of appetite that it cries like the horse leech, "give, give," more and more, and is never satisfied with what it gains until it bows the body and crushes the soul. Now it is unnecessary to say that, when one comes into alliance with God—as the Psalmist had when he wrote these beautiful words, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want"—all this class of wants are expelled. Man would have no vast ambitions then; he would have no sensual luxury, no false hungering and thirsting for that which is evil. He wants not these things, and he shall not want.

Then, again, there are what may be called natural wants—wants of the body—which we must feel, and under whose influence we often have to succumb. Alas! to how many are they the most pressing realities of life. It is a terrible thing to think of, that there are hundreds and thousands, almost within the reach of my voice, who are really forced to devote their whole lives to the consideration of their bodily wants alone; for whom it is the hand and power of a terrible necessity that drives them day and night, that intrudes into all their lives, and haunts their slumbers. They must think in the morning how they are going to get the bread which will keep life in them; and as they lie down in their wretched estate at night, the thought haunts them even in their sleep. And while we stand, perhaps, guarded by comforts, we can little realize the terrible temptation that comes to men and women when this want can be appeased by some little sacrifice of what we call principle; when the giving away upon some abstract point will satisfy this unappeasable desire, we cannot begin to measure the temptation. In the first place, we must remember that their sensibilities have not been educated to any peculiar fineness; we must remember that moral principle is something that, perhaps, has never been taught them directly; and we should think how it is, often, with men in higher station, richer, and more endowed with comforts. I think a great deal of charity of both kinds should be exerted—the charity that by material help, that by succor of the poor, shuts off these temptations; and the charity that endeavors to raise them up when they fall, and to consider that, had we been placed in the same condition, we might have done likewise. For it seems to me that there are hundreds and thousands—yes, tens of thousands in this world, who feel that these wants can never be utterly conquered; who feel as though there never could be any position where, with want of the body on the one hand, and temptation on the other, they could say to the want, "You are not enough, for you cannot seduce me into the evil, you cannot draw me away from the good, you are setting up a material standard of benefit;" who, upon any occasion of high principle, when they are called to stand upon the rock-fast foundations of truth, and justice, and honor, and freedom, will set up material gain on the other side, and say, "We must have that, and everything else must go;", who will duck, and wriggle, and give up all they really hold as truth and honor, clinging to the claim that these are material wants, and must be satisfied; who set up the standard of material good, and before that standard everything else must go down.

There is often temptation in this world, when man's bodily wants, when man's bodily ideals press him on the one side, and God's great requirements call him on the other. You know who it was that with a clear and awful voice, when Satan tempted him, said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." And when a man comes to that; when he says, "I will lose my business; I can eat potatoes; I can lose my potatoes, but I cannot do without my honor;" when a woman says, "My virtue I hold as the brightest jewel that God has given me; no temptation shall tear it from me;" then there is a reiteration of Christ's sublime words, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." And when one can fall back upon God and do this, he is in the condition that the Psalmist states, "I shall not want"—"I can even die for my bodily necessities; but I shall not want, for I shall hold to my spiritual truth."

But there is one want, after all, which man cannot dispense with. It is the soul's want; it is the hungering and thirsting—vague often, misunderstood often—but it is the hungering and thirsting of the spirit after God, that we cannot do without. And he who has God, who has the infinite one near him, who has the consciousness of his presence and support—he, in the sublimest sense, can say, "In him I am satisfied—I shall not want." Oh! I repeat, it is a profound experience in all human nature which the Psalmist strikes upon here, when he utters the expression, "I shall not want."

Then notice, too, another consideration, which comes out of this general ground of assurance, the consideration that "he maketh us to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth us beside the still waters." What a beautiful allusion to outward conditions, for the purpose of illustrating inward realities. Here is something that is to be felt and not delineated; that only the soul, in its own experience, can tell, how in trial and trouble, in storm and commotion, it is sometimes made to lie down in green pastures, and led beside still waters. Oh! that sublime contrast, which the trusting spirit feels, when the outward world is dark, when afflictions are pressing heavily upon it, when all things are in commotion; or that experience that it has when it says, "The outward world, it must decay and dissolve, but somewhere in the hospitality of God's universe I shall be enshrined; somewhere in the infinite mansions of the Father I shall live." I say this experience that turns all outward things away, and looks on the spiritual facts of the universe and of life, this experience that says, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth me beside the still waters."—this is a real experience; and yet it is an experience to be felt rather than to be expressed.

And there, too, is another specific consideration arising out of the fact that the Lord is our shepherd, the fact that he restoreth the soul. And here, my friends, is the connection of such an assurance, not only with spiritual but with temporal things. For even in the most tumultuous whirl and action of the outward world, in its daily care and business, what can a weary and languid soul do? A man can hold up a great while; but when his heart fails, when his spirit is broken, when all that should sustain him with lofty motives, and great hope, and of generous courage gives way, then indeed it is hopeless with a man; it is not a failure in business, it is not that he has become a bankrupt in the world's fortune, it is not the loss of friends even; it is the failure of the soul that is to be deplored. When a man has no spirit to go on, when he says, "It is all hopeless, God does not care for me, and the world grows dark, and I give it all up." Oh! that awful atheism and casting out of trust from the soul is the most terrible and weakening thing in this world. It is then that the soul relying on God, in hours of weakness, when life runs low, when hope grows dark, falls back upon the thought that "The Lord is my shepherd"—and it is restored and revived and refreshed. What power there is in a great thought to help a man. That is what one said, "Give me a great thought that I may refresh myself." Oh! what is earthly refreshment, what is the partaking of nourishment by the body, what is the seeking of bodily exercise, after all, compared to the refreshment that comes from the thought of God, from the conception of his never changing goodness; from such a thought as the Apostle expressed all glowing in that sublime utterance—"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Oh! my friends, a separation from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, is impossible. Whatever may be your darkness or your woe, height nor depth, life nor death, can separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. I say what a sublime thought is that allusion, and how it will carry a man over shoals, around breakers, and bring him safe into port, when merely trusting in worldly help and assistance and experience, he would fail and go down.

"He restoreth my soul." What a sublime and efficacious truth is that. And with this assurance of the soul, my hearers, there is also progress of the soul. "He leadeth me in the path of righteousness,"—in other words, "he leadeth me in the right path"—"for his name's sake." A man is strong for the right when he keeps near to God, when he lives with God in the world. God is at the centre of all grand action, of all courage, of all moral principle. The moment that a man feels that there is a law higher than himself, than all other laws, controlling and binding him, and bearing upon him, and he trusts it and keeps near to it as the source of all right action, he may make slips, he may make failures, but he will never go far astray. He is kept in the path of right and truth, just as the sheep in a mountainous country are kept in the beaten path, away from the tangling briars on the one side, and from the deep abyss on the other. Though such a man may, sometimes, go a little out of the way, he never fully gets out of the sight of the true path.

And here is all true growth and all true advancement. Because, my friends, what we gain outwardly is, with the individual as with society, no proof of progress. As I said just now, all the accumulation of outward facilities does not prove really a progress of humanity at large. With the money you gain come increased cares; all the distinctions that are thrust upon you do not prove that you are living as a true man—they may prove quite the contrary; they may be accorded to you for your meanness and virtual dishonor, and not for your honor and true manliness. The only peace to which you may look to know whether living a true life and following God's laws, is within, asking yourself—"Am I growing in my conceptions of rectitude, in my sense of God's claims upon me, in my sense of the demands of humanity? Am I growing less selfish, more pure, more strong in principle?" Look within; there is all the proof of progress, not your material condition without. All earthly good may have left you. Remember Christ's way is not always an easy way. The sheep are not always led through green pastures; the path is sometimes bestrewn with craggy rocks; sometimes over precipices, sometimes the storm hangs dark, the whirlwinds blow, the hail cuts and the lightnings flash; but keep near to the shepherd, keep on upward through the darkness, the storm will pass away, the rugged path will end, and the Lord who is our shepherd will lead us at last into the green pastures and beside the still waters.

And so I may say, finally, that intimately involved with this assurance and this progress of the soul, we have here the grand intimation of the victory of the soul. In the strength of this inward consciousness David cries out, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Now, my friends, here is precisely the character of the great religious faith and assurance. It does not deliver us from evil; we are no less liable to evil in many respects than before; perhaps we are more liable to it in some things. But the great thing is to be delivered from the fear of evil. Christ had all the evil, he had the temptation, the suffering, the bitter agony and the rankling thorns. And for the moment he had the fear of evil. It was that awful moment when he cried out, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me!" I suppose the agony of Christ at that moment was from the fear of evil, not simply from the evil itself, but the thought, the fear, of God leaving him. That is the terrible thought to the true soul. Then we may fear evil, for Christ feared evil, and cried out—but it was only for the moment—for he says sublimely, "It is finished; Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." And we may be so wrought up by our inward faith and assurance that we have no fear of evil; we may meet it, we may suffer from it, but we can bear it, we have no fear. What can man do to me, says the truly righteous man? Pincers may tear my frame; I may be hung, or drowned, or shot, or burned; I may be trampled under foot and scorned, but what can man do to me—to my spirit, that which is myself, and of which the Lord is the shepherd? And so a man looks at the troubles and trials of life; he hates to bear them, and would like to escape them. But when he is in a true condition he says, "Well, they cannot hurt me; they may damage my property, they may injure my bodily health, they may take my friends from me, but they cannot really hurt me; so do not fear, the Lord is my shepherd.

But I say the two great facts most to be feared, after all, are sin and death. A man does not fear sin, but it is God forsaking him, and his forsaking God, that he dreads. But if he keeps near to God, though he knows sin has a terrible power over him, he feels that there is a divine inspiration to restore his soul, and sin has no power over him there. He feels like the Apostle when he says, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." And death—it is terrible in some of its aspects; dark in its shadow. Still he who gets into the true spirit of the Psalmist says, "Even in the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil." There is something better beyond; there is a dark cloud over the mountain ridge now, that casts for a moment a great shadow on the path in which the poor sheep of God are wandering; but I know that beyond it are the valleys of a beautiful green, and the crystal waters, and the sunshine. God leads me for a moment stooping through the narrow way and the dark valley; but beyond God is still, and I am still; and there is something which is higher and better, and the soul has its victory over even the fear of death.

Oh! what a victory this is of the human soul, not won by battlefields and carnage, in open and ostentatious array, but in the resolution of some spirit that it will turn from this temptation and conquer this sin, will crush out its mean appetites, will stand out for nobler principles, and have a nobler life; wrought out, sometimes, in dark places of suffering, in cold homes of poverty, when temptation comes with deathly face and icy hands; wrought out in the noble maintenance of principle against all worldly evils; wrought out on the bed of death when friends cannot help us and lovers forsake us, and the dark shadow comes over us, and there is nothing to see but death face to face. Then the soul has its victory when it says—"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

Such, my friends, are some of the suggestions of this Psalm; all the more suggestive, I say, as you are more and more conscious of this double life, this inward life of the soul. Go into your own soul and ask whether that Psalm meets you, finds you; whether it expresses any experience of your own. Oh! is it not indeed a glorious song to sing in the night, to sing as we march through, with the beauty of its imagery, with the sweetness of its language, fully harmonious with the fact? Oh! is it not a great thing, if, lingering over its sweetness and beauty, we find it corresponding to the fact of the reality in our own souls? "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Sweet music; God's music; beautiful imagery; better still the deep fact which they represent. Better still if we can sing that song in our night, in our darkness, in our valley of the shadow of death, and show thereby our soul's assurance, its progress and its victory.

Written for the Banner of Light.

RETROSPECTION.

Back o'er the paths of guileless youth
My thoughts are straying now—
They seek the light of childhood's truth,
To gild a clouded brow:
Bright memories! than gems more dear,
Of sterner days the leaven,
Ye fall around man's waiting bier,
Like manna sweet from Heaven!

Ah! 'tis the boon of weary Age,
When life hangs cold and dead,
To close the present, dreary page,
And turn to visions fled—
There, fresh by retrospection glassed,
To solace toil and pain,
We wander where young life was passed,
And live it o'er again.

The liquid, trilling, bird-notes cheer,
As they had cheered before,
And blossoms smile with love-light clear,
As they had smiled of yore:
The gloaming frog, in green and grey,
As erst awakes his lyre,
And crickets close their holiday,
With witch-songs round the fire.

The cottage fowl their broodlings coax
Within the kitchen door,
And sights and sounds *there* please and hoax,
That please and hoax no more:
We pluck the covert berries meek,
All gushing ripe and red,
As there they play at hide and seek,
Tucked in their leafy bed.

There winds and brooks unwritten notes
Of thrilling music raise,
And on the storm's wild pinion floats,
Great Nature's hymn of Praise!
The stars there twinkle blithe and glad
From their mysterious spheres,
And chase away the grievance sad,
And charm the childish tears.

There scenes of heartfelt worship dear,
Known to the Holy Day,
Inquire, if since, of love or fear,
We've knelt as then to pray?
There, too, the glad Thanksgiving morn,
And merry Christmas bright,
Fill Pleasure's cup and Plenty's horn,
As *first* to childhood's sight.

Dear brothers there, with naught of guile,
And sisters yet more true—
A mother's love, a father's smile,
Like angels, close the view!
Sweet visions! all than gems more dear,
Of wintery Age the leaven,
Ye come with Evening shadows drear,
Like herald dreams of Heaven!

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PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL.

It is a fact pregnant with meaning, to find that the people themselves are taking up preaching and teaching, and that the press is silently coming to renovate, if not altogether to supersede, the pulpit. Not that we entertain any ill-founded prejudice against the *method* of teaching by the pulpit; but the press reaches a vaster audience, is a mightier power, never rests or tires, and, instead of troubling even an indolent man to go out of doors for instruction, persistently enters his house and declares it *will* be heard, whether or not. Discussions on the great topics that command public attention are now carried on by the press almost exclusively; and, if that press faithfully reflects the liberalism and comprehensiveness of the ideas that engage popular thought or excite popular sentiment, it cannot fail to do the desired work with a rapidity and thoroughness not now to be described.

From time to time, as we thoughtfully run our eyes over our exchanges, especially that large class that goes by the name of "secular,"—as if *all* expressions of life were not, in truth, *religious*—we meet with brief essays of a character that would have been scouted, or certainly passed over unread, twenty years ago, but such as go to define with unmistakable precision the tendency and temper of the vast movements everywhere making at the present day. Some of these articles are for, and more of them against, the free exercise of an enlightened reason, when existing systems seem to be put in jeopardy thereby; but still the very fact that such thoughts are expressed at all in public newspapers that used to treat of nothing but trade and travel and party politics—the simple necessity that exists for bringing these new ideas more prominently into a public light, in lieu of the hackneyed themes of other days, is proof enough that there is *a popular demand* that these very topics shall be discussed, and that journals will somehow spring up that shall not be too timid to advocate the largest truth, and in the largest forms both of conception and expression.

We fell in, not long since, with an article in the editorial column of the Philadelphia Ledger—a paper of wide circulation in the locality in which it is printed—bearing upon the topic suggested by our caption above; and, while it tells some truths without a sign of timid hesitation, it nevertheless indulges in certain flings, (if they were meant to be such,) not merely without basis for themselves in sense or reason, but, what is more, quite inconsistent with the ideas advanced by the Ledger itself. To give our readers the most exact idea of the views entertained by the journal in question, we furnish the article herewith entire:—

A Leading Error of the Age.—The astonishing discoveries in physical science, within the last century, have given such a preponderating impulse to studies of this description, that comparatively no progress has been made in mental science. While the phenomena of electricity have been analyzed; while steam has been subdued to the will of man; and while the results of the currents of the sea and the winds of heaven, have been explained to the satisfaction of the mariner, little or nothing that is new has been demonstrated in relation to the laws of psychology. The tendency of all this has been to give a materialistic turn to the otherwise advanced nineteenth century. Just as anatomists, in consequence of their too exclusive attention to the structure of the human frame, are apt to ignore the existence of the spirit independent of the body, so whenever a generation is principally engrossed in physical science, it has, in the nature of things, a proclivity toward materialism, and retrogrades in spirituality and all the loftier studies.

We do not oppose the prosecution of physical science, but only contend that other studies should not be neglected. We would have chemistry, geology, astronomy, meteorology, metallurgy, and every other physical science pursued with even increased assiduity. But while this is being done, let not psychology be forgot. Already the evils of this neglect of the latter science have been made manifest, in a delusion as mad as that of the Salem witchcraft, and immeasurably more extended. While the composition of the real muscle has been analyzed, while the amount of gases which a man breathes daily has been demonstrated, while the nervous matter has been traced in all its thousand ramifications through the human system, no investigations, deserving the name of scientific, have been undertaken, or, if undertaken, properly prosecuted, into the laws of mind, or even of life. Of biology, using that term in its critical sense, we know next to nothing. Hence it is that, in an age of railroads, spinning jennies, magnetic telegraphs, *delusions like spirit-rappings* have arisen. Hence it is, also, that too many, who are not atheists, *are arduous believers in the wildest religious delusions.*

The age is rendered *materialistic* in another way by the preponderating importance attached to physical discoveries. Our civilization has become almost purely material. What we shall eat, what we shall drink, and wherewithal we shall be clothed, is the great inquiry, the object that absorbs nearly all our time. History will describe this vaunted nineteenth century as inferior, in many particulars, to others less celebrated, which have gone before. The age of Luther, Xavier and Latimer, for example, was an eminently spiritual one. The age of Queen Elizabeth was an eminently heroic one. The age of Voltaire, D'Alembert and the French Encyclopædists, was an eminently intellectual one. All these several ages acted, moreover, on the higher elements of society. But this nineteenth century has done little, so far, except to advance physical science. It has enabled mankind to dress more cheaply, to transmit messages more rapidly, to travel more rapidly; and has, in a hundred ways, in short, increased the material comforts of the civilized races. But it has done nothing, absolutely nothing, to teach him, by careful instruction, the laws of his mind, or to develop the higher instincts of his nature; and in this, it has come short of its duty.

Ministers tell us that religion is declining, and moralists bewail the increase of lawlessness and crime. What wonder? We are developing our civilization *abnormally*, and must expect to pay the penalty. Not that we must abandon physical sciences, but that we must prosecute the higher sciences at the same time, so that knowledge of the body and knowledge of the mind and spirit may advance hand in hand.

Now we venture the assertion, that it is just the spirit betrayed in the sneering at "spirit-rappings," and other like phenomena, that frightens away superior minds from a patient and thorough investigation of the entire subject. Surely, the great number and variety of *facts* upon which the current belief in spirit-communion rests as a basis, may be supposed to carry a vast deal of weight with their statement, when it is known that such facts hold their ground firmly, even in the face of the slurs, vulgar abuse, denunciation, and open ridicule, which the press and the preachers have for ten years heaped upon them. And nothing is more certain than that they will continue steadily to make their way among the people, whether they are subjected to a careful and conscientious analysis, or are riddled with the scattering small shot of prejudice, ignorance, and causeless abuse. What is chiefly desired *is* investigation, by the highest and best disciplined minds of the age. It is well enough to know, however, that whenever minds of such a class *have* undertaken this labor, in the genuine spirit of philosophy and truth, they have been obliged, from the overwhelming force of the testimony, and after making the largest possible allowance for error and duplicity, to admit that the facts presented are genuine, resting on one indisputable basis, and deserving the patient application of the profoundest philosophy, and the most analytical reasoning to their elucidation. It is this very fact, we fear, that has deterred many of our leading minds from a fair investigation; they lack nothing but the courage to avow what they know beforehand they must be compelled to believe, ignorant that it rests entirely with themselves to strengthen or to overthrow the prejudices that still stand for knowledge and reason.

The writer in the *Ledger* speaks with truth, and, we are prepared to believe, with a personal conviction, too, of the truth, when he asserts that biology is a science to which altogether too little attention has been paid. In the flush of the victories already achieved by man over the material world, he has allowed his attention to be engrossed with nothing *but* the thought of material success; the spiritual has not kept even pace with the physical progress; we have overcome mountains, but of ourselves we are comparatively ignorant. Hence material wealth has been pushed forward into a position of factitious importance, which, without the necessary alliance of corresponding riches of spirit, it cannot be expected for a great while to hold. Money, therefore, has become the golden mark and aim, the touchstone, the social landmark, the general watchword and countersign; and he who was not willing to plunge with the rest into the feverish race to secure it, is publicly voted to be destitute of all ambition, energy, and individual purpose. And the man who, having a rational competence, is satisfied with the spiritual aid and independence that competence brings him, is a *rara avis* indeed, whose professions nobody seems willing to believe. It is an indisputable fact, that the matchless material wealth of the people of this country has operated to make them all lovers of money above all things else; the mischief is, that they are content to rest at that point, instead of pushing on with the accumulated power this very possession should give them.

Even in our literature, whose wider and deeper spiritual tendency is apparent to the most casual observer, the same material manifestations are sadly mixed up. It is even deemed by critics (whatever they may be,) an evidence of a morbid and diseased state of mind on the part of an author, when he deliberately attempts the dissection of the great and terrible passions of the human heart, or the cool and searching analysis of its deep and secret motives. Hawthorne was thought, and still is by some, a kind of literary owl, though nothing could be more radically spiritual than his "Scarlet Letter." He was patronizingly informed by the material critics, who wrote for journals addressed to common and material tastes, that if he would come out of his hiding-place into the light, where people could behold the entire machinery of his thought and sentiment, he might be considered *healthy*, and so secure something like a respectable audience. And Emerson has received criticism in a similar spirit, these twenty years, but is at last, thank God! coming to be better understood. All our modern fiction tends that same way—toward genuine Spiritualism; for that is the tendency of the age itself. Old granny preachers lament the decadence of the public morals; but there is no such matter to make themselves melancholy about; the popular mind has become, not less *moral* in its tone, but altogether less *superstitious*. Romantic fiction, and historical fiction, has had its day as a distinct popular teacher; the transition—as through the agency of Dickens and his school—to the domestic and the familiar, was but a natural one to that of the deeply spiritual and individual, which we are very soon to have. But it will fail to be spiritual if it be superstitious; and so, then, must it come short if it be hardened with an element of materiality.

The single, simple fact—and it is a fact that has not yet been overthrown—that spirits do commune with mortals, renders it of the first importance that the laws regulating that intercourse, which of course embrace the whole science of psychology, be studied with the same patience, devotion, and prayerful humility with which La Place and Newton launched their swift-going thoughts on the vast ocean of space on which sails an universe. If this life of ours is indeed life, we demand to know all about it that can be made known to our acutest interior sense; else we do but fractionally exist, denying ourselves to the highest and profoundest truths which it belongs to the limitless destiny of man to know. Nothing is to be set up in the spirit of charlatanry—nothing knocked down by the corresponding spirit of ignorance and ridicule. Truth is to be seized and accepted whenever and wherever it may appear, no matter whether it sustains or overthrows all our previous impressions.

We think the writer of the article above quoted is right, when he seriously advises that more equal development should be made of both physical and spiritual; yet the prejudiced fling he goes out of his way to bestow upon those who are engaged in studying the laws of spirit-communion, which comprise the whole system of biology, convicts him of open inconsistency with his own position. Charity alone forces us to infer that he thus consented to mar the healthy effect of his sentiments in obedience to what he conceives still to be a popular prejudice. But it will not be long ere he, and many more in the same category, awake to find that their meaningless sneers are not in demand; they will be hasty to drop them then, and patient investigation will come in to usurp the place of cheap ridicule and vulgar abuse. Doubtless the writer would be willing to acknowledge that the mysterious laws of spirit were in a fair and proper way to be discovered and reduced to a scientific system, if their study was distinguished by the adjuncts of learned professors and powerful educational institutions; but now, when men of mere popularity are afraid to address themselves to such a study, it is best to laugh and jeer and heap up abuse, because those who investigate do not yet wear stars, ribbons, three-cornered shovel hats, or any of the other paraphernalia that go with well-paid professorships. But let all this pass; time works its own great results, and in its own silent way. When it is discovered that we all have souls, that deserve at least as much attention as the body and material affairs engross, all this will be changed. To this end we shall continue to labor without ceasing. And our most earnest prayer for its approach is, that God may speed the day.

Gentle Influences.

Austerity and denunciation will not bring the wanderer back or move within him the springs of virtuous action. Cold indifference and neglect are not the means whereby we are to dissolve the congealed fountains of human affection, and win the wandering soul to virtue. The man who employs these as the instruments of Reform will labor in vain. They can no more subdue the stubborn heart than the rude blasts of polar skies can melt the icebergs and dissolve the mountains of eternal snow. Severe coercive measures will not reclaim the erring. Man is so constituted that every attempt to drive him from an error, either of the head or heart, tends to confirm him in his course. If there is aught that will allure the wayward from the haunts of folly, and the selfishness of a misguided ambition, it is the voice of persuasive and friendly admonition. If there be a power in the Universe sufficiently potent to soften the heart, and to draw the victim of dissipation and vice away from the scenes of his dishonor, that power is kindness. It seems to quiet the fears, to subdue the passions, to enlist all the better affections, and thus the victory over wrong is achieved.

The superior power and efficacy of Gentle Influences is beautifully illustrated in the fable of the Sun and the Wind, in their efforts to make a traveler part with his cloak. The Wind commenced a furious attack. From the dark clouds he breathed out his violent spirit in threatened destruction. At his voice the everlasting pinnacles of the mountains did tremble. The tall oaks bowed their lofty heads as he passed, and at the sound of his chariot wheels the wild beasts ran howling from the hills! But it was all in vain. The poor traveler drew his cloak more closely around him. At length the Wind retired, and the thick vapors rolled away. All was still. *Then the Sun quietly smiled on the traveler, and he threw off his cloak.* Thus mild and gentle means accomplished what all the artillery of the elements could not perform.

Moral.—If other means have failed, remember that an act of kindness, a word spoken in love, even a tear or a smile, may reclaim the wanderer.

Mrs. Amanda M. Spence at Ordway Hall.

Mrs. Amanda M. Spence, spoke at Ordway Hall, in Boston, on Sunday, December 11th. We intended to give a full abstract of her two discourses, but from an unavoidable accident, we are obliged to postpone, at least, its publication.

Mrs. Spence chose as her themes, in the morning the Masculine, or Positive Organization, and in the evening the Feminine, or Negative Organization. Everything in nature, she said, from the lowest form of vegetable life, to man, and even to the Deity himself, is dual. The sexes are distinguished in grains and flowers, as well as in man. And the individual, too, is dual; combining in a single organization, a double physical and spiritual nature. And, as in the solar systems, the equilibrium of forces sustains in their orbits the poised orbs, so, in the individual human being, and in all the organizations of society, it is the equilibrium of these positive and negative forces, which creates balance, and harmony, and health. It is the preponderance of one of these in our physical being which causes physiological disease. It is the preponderance of one of these in the social system which gives rise to all our social evils. The positive, masculine minds, have, in all ages, and always must be, the rulers. The negative mind unquestioningly receives the doctrines impressed upon it by the vigorous positive nature. To control the negative mind of the race, the masculine element of society, itself analytic and skeptical, imposed upon the people, in the earlier centuries of human existence, the idea of a supernatural power working in the elements, as in the instance of the rainbow, which was made a token of God's promise not again to drown a wicked world. The time for this passed away with its possibility, and fear has taken the place of this supernaturalism, as the engine of the positive mind, in its tyranny over the negative. But as the masculine mind becomes itself more fully enlightened and intelligent, it begets a general doubt of spiritual truths, of the existence of a God, of a future life.

To the scientific analytic intellect, there has never been presented a tangible proof of these things. Now Spiritualism appears, and by its external phenomena affords to this class of mind the proofs which it has hitherto sought in vain. It has taught us, too, not to seek from a vague, unknown Deity, by prayer, the help we need, but to study the just equilibrium of our own powers for ourselves. While engaged in those physiological questions, which are first of all needful for us if we would secure the primary condition of all spiritual health, we have our work before us, and are not to turn away to old forms of prayer and worship which are not within the scope of our immediate and pressing inquiry.

While acknowledging that woman's is essentially the negative, and man's the executive mind, the speaker insisted that each organization should be judged by its own laws, irrespective of its sex; that a man of feminine organization should, without being sneered at, assume the duties to which his nature calls him, and that a woman of executive temperament ought, without accusations of masculineness and coarseness, to be permitted to take her due part in the executive business of the world.

The Parlor Opera.

At length the lovers of elegant and refined amusements are favored with a rare novelty, in the truly artistic and delightful entertainments of Mr. and Mrs. Henri Drayton, in which the attractions of the English Opera and Polite Comedy, are combined with excellent taste and an almost faultless judgment. The whole performance is in a style—as it respects musical and dramatic execution—that at once affords intense pleasure, and invites our highest commendation.

Mrs. Drayton sings well—plays with easy grace and artistic precision, and infuses a genial spirit into every part of her performance. Mr. Drayton is an Apollo in form—is skilled in "the poetry of motion"—has a fine voice admirably managed, and the eye of an eagle. Altogether his performance was all that the most fastidious taste could demand. We are sure the Draytons will be especial favorites, and the Parlor Opera must become "a fixed fact" among our public amusements. Senor Oliveira, one of the most skillful violinists in the world, diversifies the entertainment with his truly masterly rendering of some of the finest classic compositions.

We feel assured that those of our numerous city readers, who may be induced by this notice to see and hear the Draytons, will thank us for calling attention to their peculiar claims, and for thus furnishing an incentive to visit one of the most unique, chaste, and delightful entertainments we remember to have enjoyed.

Miss Emma Hardinge.

The New Orleans Mirror of December 10th, says:—"Miss Hardinge has been in this city for a week past, and on Sunday and Tuesday evenings delivered addresses in the Lecture Room of Odd Fellows' Hall on the subject of Spiritualism. These addresses were remarkable, both in manner and matter, being characterized by a grasp of thought and felicity of expression which are seldom exceeded by the greatest of orators."

☞ Dr. P. B. Randolph lectured to the Bangorians recently, and gave great satisfaction to his hearers. The Guardian says:—"The doctor's reputation as a medium and speaker is unsurpassed, and the best comment that can be made upon the discourses which he uttered are their force, beauty, depth, eloquence, and ingenuity."

Mason's Resolution.

The resolution introduced into the United States Senate by Mr. Mason, of Virginia, and finally passed by that body, amounts to this: It makes it the duty of the committee to inquire into the facts attending the late invasion and seizure of the armory and arsenal at Harper's Ferry, by a band of armed men, and report whether the same was attended by armed resistance to the authorities and public force of the United States, and the murder of any citizens of Virginia, or any troops sent there to protect public property; whether such invasion was made under color of an organization intended to subvert the Government of any of the States of the Union; the character and extent of such organization; whether any citizens of the United States, not present, were implicated therein, or accessory thereto, by contributions of money, arms, amunition, or otherwise; the character and extent of the military equipments in the hands, or under the control of said armed band; where, how, and when, the same were obtained, and transported to the place invaded. Also, to report what legislation, if any, is necessary by the Government, for the future preservation of the peace of the country, and the safety of public property—the committee to have power to send for persons and papers.

"The Wife's Secret."

Lovell's charming drama—as rendered at Laura Keene's Theatre—has achieved a decided success; but it is at length withdrawn, to give place to other original entertainments, now in course of preparation and soon to be produced. If "The Wife's Secret," as a composition, does not exhibit the strongest marks of genius, or otherwise exhaust the possibilities of dramatic art; it is, nevertheless, well and beautifully written; marred by no striking defects, and open to no grave objections on moral grounds, or as a stage performance. The plot is free from obscurity or unnecessary complication; the characters are drawn with sufficient distinctness; the incidents and situations are all naturally conceived, agreeably diversified, and skillfully arranged.

Laura Keene's personation of Lady Evelyn, was in good taste, and effective throughout. The more impressive scenes in the last act were rendered with remarkable spirit and dramatic effect. Mr. Jordan, as Sir Walter, played his part with true feeling, and a just discrimination.

We are soon to have at this Theatre another original American Comedy, with local incidents and bearings, when a fresh interest will be excited among the patrons of Miss Keene's enterprise.

We Cannot Crush the Soul.

Human beings are worth less in the market than machines. If a machine of wood, iron or brass gives out, its owner repairs it; but if a machine of flesh and blood fails in health, it is turned aside, and another is hired to supply his place; and *why?* because human beings are robbed of their right to land, and are thus forced to toil cheap to procure bread!

There is too much truth in the above paragraph from the Investigator. If men would turn to their interior or spiritual nature, and exercise a little more humanity each with the other, such a deplorable state of things would soon cease to exist on the earth.

Let us not be unmindful of the great truth revealed by Spiritualism, viz., that the *souls* of poor, suffering mortals cannot be injured, degraded or crushed by the cold and cruel hands of the material world.

The San Juan Difficulty.

The New York Herald affirms that the position of the San Juan question as it has been left by General Scott, is one that cannot but be satisfactory to both governments. He has carried out in an eminent degree the pacific instructions of Mr. Buchanan, and all the American forces have been withdrawn from the Island of San Juan except Capt. Pickett's company, which has been left to act as a police force for the protection of the American residents of the Island. The matter is thus brought back within the scope of diplomacy, and will be treated by Mr. Buchanan in a way that, while it will secure all our rights, will not imperil our relations with England.

The State Liquor Agent.

Mr. Commissioner Burnham has worked into his annual report, as State Agent for the sale of liquor, quite a savage assault upon certain members of the legislative committee through whose indirect agency he suffered imprisonment, and, what is more, his entire statement must go upon record. It looks as if the Legislature were afraid to meddle with him any further, his twenty-five days in jail having done him no particular harm, nor themselves any particular good. A new Commissioner has been appointed, in whom the Temperance Committee profess to have perfect confidence. But the law itself should be altered.

Commercial and Nautical Institute.

The original French's Commercial and Nautical Institute, 96 Tremont street, Boston, kept by Messrs. Spear & Sawyer, presents inducements to all who may desire such an education as can be gained in an Institution, which are unsurpassed. Both males and females can avail themselves of the advantages to procure education in penmanship, arithmetic, book-keeping, commercial correspondence, navigation, engineering, Latin, Greek, French, German or Spanish.

The terms for all and each of these courses are moderate.

Messages Verified.

The message published by request of the spirit of Wm. Armstrong, last week, on our fifth page, is pronounced to be correct by a gentleman of this city.

That of Anderson Rose, published in No. 26, Vol. 5, is also pronounced truthful and characteristic. Several expressions are recognized as those he used to employ.

That of Catharine Gage, published in No. 9, Vol. 6, has been pronounced correct by a lady who knew her.

The Essays of Elia.

Wm. Veasie, No. 64 Cornhill, has recently reprinted, in superior style, the Essays of Charles Lamb. This is just the time for our readers to make up their minds what books to give their friends on the approaching holidays. We know of none we would rather recommend than this, both for its intrinsic literary merits, its high moral tone, and its open spirituality.

The "Banner" in Kennebunkport, Me.

Mr. F. S. Bryant keeps a complete assortment of newspapers, magazines, books, music, and fancy articles at his store in the above town. Parties wishing the Banner of Light, with Beecher's and Chapin's sermons, will be promptly supplied by him.

Henry Ward Beecher's Sermon on Creeds.

Our readers will thank us a thousand times for the sermon we print this week. It is full of fresh independence—more so than any sermon of this most independent of preachers we have published for many a day.

Warren Chase.

Bro. Chase is to lecture at Dodsworth's Hall, New York City, on the 8th, 15th and 22d of January. He is one of our best speakers, and we bespeak for him a warm welcome.

Nathan Maroney, agent of the Adams Express Company at Montgomery, Alabama, has been on trial in New York on the charge of embezzling $50,000 entrusted to the Company, and put into his hands for transmission. He finally admitted the robbery, but would not tell what disposition he made of the money.

BROMFIELD STREET CONFERENCE.

Wednesday Evening, Dec. 14th.

Question.—What is the cause of what we call evil, and what is the cure?

Dr. Child—

"Men speculate on right and wrong
As upon day and night, forgetting both
Have but one cause, and that the same—God's will."

What is evil? Evil may be defined as being those manifestations of life that are repulsive to the heavenly desires of the human heart. What is the cause of evil? In one word this question may be answered, viz., *nature*. Without reserve, boldly and fearlessly I solemnly give in my testimony, and swear, that evil is a natural production. The operations of nature give birth to evil, and it rises up from the workings of her mighty machinery, and, like vapor, dissipates. Nature produces everything what we call evil, no less than what we call good.

"God shows his face to us no less in darkness
Than in the light."

Every cause in the world is a natural cause, and every effect is a natural effect. Every manifestation of life has a cause; it is the same with human life as with all life. A sinner never did an evil deed without a cause that produced the deed, which deed is the effect of the cause, and every effect of every cause is legal in nature—is in keeping with nature's laws. It would be childish to say that behind the blow that murdered a man there was not a cause, the effect of which was the blow, and the consequence the murder. Nature has hidden springs. There lies a brain of peculiar organization behind the hand that gave the blow, which produced the murder. That brain was made by nature. Unseen currents of vitality run through that brain, and nature gives these currents, and makes them flow. We cannot see them; they stimulate the brain, and the brain acts as servant to these currents, according to its organization, formation and capacity. These currents of life come into the brain and run down through the feet and hands of the murderer; and they are servants, too. They use the feet to carry the murderer to the scene of murder, and the hands to do the deed of murder. And the man we call a free moral agent, kills another man that we call a free moral agent. This deed we call evil. What is the cause? Nature. What is nature? God. And is nature wrong? Is God, the great mainspring of nature, wicked? Is there that in nature which needs remedial agents to be administered by the feeble hand of man? Yes, it may be so, for man is a part of God, or else God is not infinite. Nature holds every atom of human composition obedient, *perfectly obedient*, to her laws, and in man's nature lies the acting power of Deity. The desires of men, and the inclinations of men, from whence come they? From God, direct and immediate. Every desire of the human heart runs as natural and as true to the laws of God in nature, as the stream of water runs obedient to the laws of God in gravitation—sometimes turbid, in darkness, and in miry places, and sometimes in sunshine and in crystal purity, over clean sand and pebbles. The little rivulet has its origin in nature—it is moved by nature—its windings, and its gurglings, its foamings and its splashings, are all the effects of natural laws. Dam it up, and by the laws of nature it rises above the obstruction and flows on; it mingles with other waters, and still obedient to the laws of nature, it flows on, and on, and is lost in the ocean of its destination.

The human soul is like a stream of time, destined for the great ocean of eternity. It governs itself no more than does the little rivulet of the earth; but like it, it is held perfectly obedient to *unseen laws*. The hand of destiny holds the rivulet, and the hand of destiny holds the souls of men. The stream goes zigzag—man is wayward and goes zigzag. It bears bubbles on its surface and they break; human life has bubbles, and they break. The stream dashes furiously over the precipice, and moves faster on its course in consequence of its foaming, dashing fury; the peaceful course of human life is thus broken, by what we call the damning evils; the waters of life are thereby agitated, not injured; stagnation is arrested, and progression is accelerated thereby; it moves more rapidly on to its destination in consequence of moral falls which break its peaceful flow. Then the stream flows calm and tranquil, peacefully and beautifully; so the course of human life is calm and tranquil, peaceful and beautiful. This is "good," we say; this is "holiness and righteousness," we say. But in this peaceful flow the soul moves more slowly on to its destination of eternal beauty; its earthly windings are lengthened and its destination is later reached.

Evil is the rapid falls in the stream of time; good is its peaceful flow. Evil shortens our earthly existence; good lengthens it. The stream of life flows on unbidden and ungoverned by man, but in obedience to the laws of God in nature.

What is the cause of what we call evil? Was an evil deed ever committed without a cause of sufficient power to produce the deed? No philosopher can answer, yes. Then where lies the cause, and where had it its origin? We have said, in yielding to temptation; in some deed of evil that has preceded. Go back another step—where had that temptation, and the yielding to it, an origin? and keep going back, step by step, and at last we must conclude that every cause lies in nature; in the bosom of God.

What is the cure of evil? In answer to this question, I would ask, first, Is nature sick? Does nature need any remedial agents? We talk of curing evil. Why, do we know that to talk thus, is to talk about curing God? Does Infinite Power need a cure? If so, for what? For the manifestations of Infinite Wisdom in the order of creation, which the feeble perception of man cannot see the purpose of? No; we can suggest no cure for the benefit of the already perfect order of Infinite Wisdom and Power.

Mr. Cushing—The argument of Dr. Child is logical, and, if true in any part, is true in the whole. He is to Spiritualism what Hume was to the age in which he lived. He is the only consistent reasoner I have heard in the ranks of Spiritualism. But his basis is absolute *fatality*. His position is, that all matter and all worlds are moved by the same Almighty Power; all life, and all the manifestations of life, may be attributed to one Great Cause. And, consequently, he comes across nothing wrong. From this position, he must conclude that slavery and murder are right, and all crime, and all the curses of the earth; and he has no hand or voice to raise against evil. Ask him what is evil, and he says there is none. Ask him what God is, and he answers, Nature. He says cause is nature, and effect is nature; all is right. His position claims that there is no use in trying to correct men, for there is no power to correct wrong; that man is a part of God, and God is infinite. If this position be true, he might as well blot out his manuscripts as to read them; for there is nothing to reason upon. He has made assertions without the least proof to sustain them.

Mr. Edson—I accept one idea of Dr. Child, viz., that God is infinite; but this, to me, consists in essence rather than in quantity or space. The infinitude of God differs from our ideas of infinitude. Our ideas are finite, measured by matter and space. Human will and divine will are vastly different. A truth of heaven may be let to earth, and to our dark perception become a lie—and thus good appears to us evil.

Dr. Child has stated that "cause is the will of God;" this statement seems to me absurd. I admit that there is not an evil deed without a cause; but I cannot see that evil is the will of God. That is an evil to me when I violate a known law of right. It is the will of God that I should do right; it is not his will that I should do what I know to be wrong.

Most people think that ignorance is the cause of evil. I think this is a mistake. As time goes on, I see differently. My deeds of ignorance are not, to me, evil; but when I transgress a law that I know, that transgression is evil. If I yield to temptations, knowing them to be wrong, my deeds are evil. God has given man knowledge, and from knowledge comes choice; we have the power to choose the good or the evil. We have the animal and the spiritual nature; between these two natures is a strife. It is the will of God that we rise above the animal, and set our affections on the spiritual.

Mr. Wetherbee—I am on Dr. Child's side.

"All nature trembles to the throne of God."

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is, and God the soul;
That changed through all, and yet in all the same,
Great in the earth as in the etherial frame."

There are differences in nature; all things are not alike; there is light and darkness, cold and heat, good and evil, as we say. There is a necessity for all these things; the wisdom and power of God in nature produces them. To the vegetable world darkness is just as necessary as light. So to the world of intelligence evil is just as necessary as good; without evil there could be no progress. Evil has given to us a greater part of our intelligence. In a very limited sense, there is evil in the world; but in a broad and comprehensive sense, what is called evil is an absolute good, necessary and essential to human progress. God is perfect. The perception of evil is external and material; and this evil is as transient to the soul as is the use of material things. The material world is a necessity in the early growth of the soul and so is what we call evil.

It is hard to tell what will cure evil, for it seems a healthy

manifestation in nature; a necessity in our earthly life. One thing I am certain of, preaching will never cure evil. That there is evil in the world no one can deny; no one can look around and see the wrongs of society that exist between man and man; see crime and suffering spread all over the land, and say there is no evil. And yet there are forces that press us on, and we are obliged to do pretty much as we do.

DR. GARDNER—On both sides of this question there is a chance for a strong argument. When we look from a higher to a lower plane of human progress we see evil, while that evil is good on the plane that produces it. I believe that the time will come, in our onward and upward course of progression, when what to us seems the highest good now, will be seen as a low and evil condition. [Question—When the soul becomes bright and beautiful, will not a retrospective view of the lower conditions of life, instead of appearing evil, bud and bloom in the fragrance and beauty of truth?] It would require time to answer this question. I believe that evil is comparative, belonging to a lower condition than that which is obtained by development. I believe in progress in all nature, from the granite rock up to the highest intelligences. I believe that every step, every operation in nature which has been going on for myriads of years, has been necessary; and that God has been just as much expressed in the operations of all gradations below man, as in man; in low degrees of life as in high; in childhood as in manhood. All life is adapted to the plane on which it exists. Man steps from a lower to a higher plane of life, as the vegetable kingdom steps out of the mineral on a higher plane of existence. Man has a variety of developments; each one is in harmony with the plane of its existence. I believe that it is necessary for the culprit to pass through precisely what he does—his deeds of evil and the ordeal of their consequences. But by saying this I do not believe that it is necessary for every one to pass the same. The condition of the culprit produced his deeds and the consequent sufferings.

MR. HAYCOCK—I do not consider evil and sin the same thing. Evil is a part of our nature, and sin is a transgression of the law. I believe that two natures belong to us—one is good and one is evil. I believe that God is the author of evil, but not the author of sin. [Question—Did God make man right in the beginning?] Yes. [Question—Did God create and put in man his evil nature that made him sin?] Yes.

MR. CHANEY—We have been taught that if God were to withdraw his support from us one moment we should fall. If we admit this as a fact, we must admit the truth of Dr. Child's views.

LIZZIE DOTEN—entranced—A spirit took possession, who was, when in his earthly form, something of a gardener. He said that he had a gooseberry bush in his garden, and the gooseberries that grew on it were very sour; this was early in the season; and himself and two daughters tried various experiments upon the gooseberry bush, both upon its roots and branches, to make the gooseberries grow sweeter, but all experiments were in vain. We talked and reasoned together about the sour gooseberries; we looked into nature, and through nature we came to God; and we concluded that there must be something in God that was sour. Why did he not make these gooseberries sweet, instead of sour? One of my daughters ate some of these berries and said she liked them, and that she was glad God made them sour; my other daughter liked candy and disliked sour gooseberries.

We finally concluded that the gooseberry bush came up in nature, and that we would leave it to nature, and seek that which in its time and season was agreeable to our tastes. Autumn came; and the sunny days of summer had made the gooseberries ripe and sweet.

The sour was evil; the ripened fruit was good. Nature does her work in her own good time. God has purposes, and nature works them out. That is evil to us which we do not love; that is good to us which we love.

CORRESPONDENCE.

N. OSGOOD, EAST PITTSFIELD.—I noticed, in a late number of your paper, the report of a discussion upon "Good and Evil"—a subject which appears to be attracting more than usual attention of late.

The subject was held up in so many different lights, that I do not expect to present anything new, and perhaps may not be able to strengthen any position assumed; but, nevertheless, I take the liberty to send you a few thoughts, drawn out by some of the remarks contained in the report. Mr. Newton compares intellect to the sense of sight, and consciousness to feeling; and adds, that seeing is believing, but feeling is the naked truth; and that, as the sight needs to be corrected by the sense of feeling, so the intellect needs to be corrected by the consciousness.

Now I cannot, consistently with my own appreciation of their respective offices and powers, admit that consciousness, or intuition, is more reliable than intellect; but, on the contrary, I should reverse the statement.

I am conscious that this earth is fixed and immovable, but intellect demonstrates that it is in constant and rapid motion, and I am forced to admit that my consciousness is in fault. I am conscious that the sun revolves around the earth, and that its size is small; but reason, after patient investigation, convinces me to the contrary. Perplexed at this, I am ready to admit that the moon is as fixed as the sun; but intellect, through the medium of science, proves that it revolves around the earth.

Consciousness, being based upon the evidence of perception, is liable to be overturned by the discoveries of the intellect, which, by comparing and analyzing, discovers discrepancies and contradictions, perceives and accepts what is most worthy of belief, and rejects, oftentimes, that which to the consciousness appears true and reliable.

Consciousness teaches freedom of choice, will, and thought; but intellect rejects this conclusion as overhasty and irreconcilable with the existence of an Infinite God. Consciousness teaches that man originates thoughts and actions; but intellect teaches that all causes that we perceive, are the effects of a pre-existent cause. Consciousness is very limited in its powers of receptivity, while intellect soars on tireless pinions toward the remote and undiscovered, assigning a position to stars yet unseen, and tracing out unknown causes through their known effects. Compared with intellect, consciousness is as the child to the man; and its impressions need, most emphatically, to be corrected by the demonstration of intellect. Consciousness teaches that evil is a positive injury; intellect teaches that it is embraced in the purposes of the Creator. Consciousness perceives the present; intellect prophecies of the future. Consciousness, with its limited perceptions, perceives evil only as an injury; intellect, with its more comprehensive vision, perceives it as a means to an end, and reconciles it with good."

M. L. VARNEY, SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.—"I write to express the great pleasure we derive from reading your paper. It has become a necessity with us, and I believe this feeling is general with those who have read it. It creates its own demand. There is much wisdom shown in its variety. The sermons please extensively, and *benefit* all who read—a capital idea. The ultra writers are sure to have some good fresh thoughts to inspire the world forward, for they are the priests who serve at Nature's altars, having no barrier between them and the pure fountains of thought. The trance lectures and poetry are always good; the essays and stories, by such authors as S. B. Brittan and Ann E. Porter, are highly valuable; the leaders are superb. The messenger department is fraught with deep interest—taken as a whole, it constitutes the most convincing of tests; it is a bright idea. The relation of facts of spiritual occurrences are read with convincing interest. The whole sheet is an epitome of society in its highest plane of thought, with all its diversity. For instance, Beecher represents the highest form of Orthodoxy, Chapin the highest in his department, and the ultra writers and speakers the highest in theirs. It gives the topmost round of the ladder, where earth borders on the beyond, and, reaching across the horizon, commingles with the spirit-world.

I have a wish that you may know that your Banner of Light is reflected by the "Evening Star." It is read and appreciated by very many in this city and State. There seems to be a growing interest on the subject of Spiritualism, or a tangible immortality. We want lecturers and test mediums. The other absorbing interests here allow no time for their development. We read of so many at the East, it seems a wonder that none of them take a fancy to come here, where there is so much demand. I believe a *first class* lecturer and test-medium would hazard nothing pecuniarily in coming here. Mrs. Farnham lately gave a lecture on this subject in the largest hall in the city, which was filled to overflowing with an interested audience. Our time will surely come, here on the western shore of the earth. God's last planted colony holds empire of the world."

C., NEW ORLEANS.—"We have many good and true Spiritualists here, who have adopted Spiritualism because of its beautiful and *Christian* teachings, and not because it displays some wonderful unseen power, that only for a time excites. No; its effects are lasting; the seed is sown on good soil, and is bringing forth fruit.

The Spiritualists here have no organization, beyond a conference meeting; in fact, there seems to have been a decided opposition thus far to any organization; for every attempt to organize has thus far fallen through. But that power seems to be quietly waking, both in public and in private. The cause here is advancing in the right way. In family circles the subject is investigated; and these unseen intelligences (call them spirits, or what you will,) come with their messages of love and truth, preaching peace and good will to man. In this silent and modest way, Spiritualism has already gained a firm hold on the affections of a large number of the people; and so strong is this affection, that the devil and all his angels cannot destroy it, though they may try hard to do it.

Little do the opposers of this beautiful belief know to what an extent our prominent lawyers, judges and M. D.'s are secretly believers in the spiritual philosophy. And many of the clergy would like to investigate it, and some would preach the doctrine, if they did not know that by so doing they would lose their power over that part of their congregation who oppose it.

One of our Methodist ministers preaches to his people the regular Spiritualistic doctrine, and always has a large congregation listening to his greatly inspired eloquence, for he always speaks extempore, as the spirit moves."

K., MCHENRY, ILL., speaks in the highest terms of two new trance mediums, Miss Bell and Mrs. Green, who have recently spoke in that place.

MRS. S. M. THOMPSON, TOLEDO, writes that she has given eight lectures in Herkimer, and expects to engage there for January and February.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.—The Calvinistic Baptist Church at East Sumner lately excommunicated twelve or fourteen members of their church, for disbelieving in the doctrine of endless misery—they having substituted the doctrine of annihilation instead. I think they are progressing toward the truth, but are still in a lamentable error.

A SUBSCRIBER.

An Angel Born.

LOUISE FISHER, youngest daughter of Stephen T. and Lavinia A. Munson, departed this life on Thursday, 15th instant, aged 6 years, 6 months, and 25 days.

This is the second time within one year that our friends have tasted the same cup, and the fourth time in the course of their married life. It is the prayer of our spirit that the only remaining child may be spared to them. Louisa was a very beautiful and loving little girl, with a radiant face, and a disposition genial and sunny as the fair clime to which she goes. May she be an angel of light and a minister of unfailing hope to inspire in each stricken bosom a lasting peace; and to aid all who mourn her seeming absence, to lay hold—by a realizing sense—on our great Immortality.

ALL SORTS OF PARAGRAPHS.

CONTENTS OF THE BANNER THIS WEEK.—*First Page*—"Bertha Lee;" "The Fighters;" "Jolly and Fat."

Second Page—"Ancient Glimpses of the Spirit-Land," No. 1; "Christ and the Children;" Man and his Relations," No. 5.

Third Page—Mr. Chapin's Discourse; "Retrospection," a Poem.

Sixth Page—Three Columns of Spirit-Messages; Poetry; "Spiritualism among the Early Methodists;" "Is a Soldier a Christian?"

Seventh Page—"Toleration;" Letter from New Brighton, Penn.; "Sectarianism;" "Have You Faith in God?" Poetry; "Is it a Humbug?" "A Tinge of Purity;" "Movements of Lecturers," etc.

Eighth Page—Henry Ward Beecher's Sermon.

☞ A letter from Bro. Warren Chase, dated Providence, R. I., is in type, and will appear in one next issue.

The approaching Congress of the Great Powers at Paris, together with the probable Plenipotentiaries to represent those powers there, attracted the chief attention of the press and public at the time of the sailing of the last steamer.

The Great Eastern has been pronounced a failure. But we don't think so. She is fit for one thing, and that is, to lay down the *next* Atlantic cable which is to unite us with Europe. She is big enough to carry it all, and *all* she will have to do is, to drop it down gradually as she steadily steams along. There will be no danger of the cable breaking from too much strain, as the ship could never go fast enough for that.

Ball Hughes offers to execute marble busts of the late Washington Irving, for public libraries and private individuals, from a model taken by him from life, and approved by Mr. Irving and his friends. Mr. Hughes is a sculptor well known in Europe and this country. His monument of Bishop Hobart, in Trinity Church, New York, his statue of Oliver Twist, owned by the Duke of Devonshire, his statue of Uncle Toby and the Widow Wadman, and Little Nell, in the Boston Athenæum, and his statue of Dr. Bowditch, in Mount Auburn Cemetery, all give evidence of artistic genius of the highest order. Mr. Hughes has for some time past been industriously and steadily pursuing his profession at his residence in Dorchester, and his latest works have been among his best.

SUNNYSIDE.—A letter writer at Tarrytown presumes that Sunnyside will be kept in the Irving family, and that its olden hospitality will be maintained. Ebenezer is the only one of the Irving brothers who now remains. He is the last of the large household of William Irving, senior, and his age like a lusty winter, is "frosty but kindly." He has been for a long time a resident at Sunnyside, where his children will no doubt long preserve the memory of their illustrious kinsman.

An offer has been made of a donation of a three-story house, and land, suitable for a Home for Aged Indigent Females, in Salem, as soon as funds are subscribed and arrangements made to put such an institution in operation.

If you are disquieted at anything, you should consider with yourself, is the thing of that worth that I should so disturb myself, and lose my peace and tranquility?

CARE OF THE INFINITE ONE.

Will then the merciful One, who stamped our race
With his own image, and who gave them sway
O'er earth, and the glad dwellers on her face,
Now that our flourishing nations far away
Are spread, where'er the moist earth drinks the day,
Forget the ancient care that taught and nursed
His latest offspring? will he quench the ray
Infused by his own forming smile at first,
And leave a work so fair all blighted and accursed?
Oh, no! a thousand cheerful omens give
Hope of yet happier days whose dawn is nigh.
He who has tamed the elements, shall not live
The slave of his own passions; he whose eye
Unwinds the eternal dances of the sky,
And in the abyss of brightness dares to span
The sun's broad circle, rising yet more high,
In God's magnificent works his will shall scan—
And love and peace shall make their Paradise with man!

[*W. C. Bryant.*

AN OLD CLOCK.—The Hartford Times says that a watchmaker in that city has repaired and set in running order a German clock more than two centuries old. It was built by Huyghens, somewhere about the year 1640, and though it has not run for more than half a century, is now keeping good time, and may last another two centuries. It was found by the artist, Church, in the possession of a Dutch family in Nova Scotia, while he was off on his iceberg sketching expedition.

Thunder makes the noise, but lightning does the work.

William *Haycock* has recently written a work on horses, entitled "The Gentleman's Stable Manual," wherein he treats largely on hay and horses.

A Frenchman thinks the English language is very tough. "Dere is look out," says he, "which is to put out your head and see; and look out, which is to haul in your head and not to see—just contrario!"

Troubles are like dogs—the smaller they are, the more they annoy you.

A resolution has been adopted by the Legislature of Texas to print five hundred copies of the Governor's message in Spanish, five hundred in German, and two hundred in the Norwegian language.

The Governor of Kentucky, in his annual message, discusses at some length the lamentable effect of the intermarriage of cousins, and recommends an act of the Legislature rendering these unions illegal. The Governor is right.

EX-PRESIDENT VAN BUREN.—No Ex-President has ever lived in more studied retirement than Martin Van Buren. He is seldom away from his home, and never seems to covet attentions of any kind. On the 5th inst. he passed his 77th year. He is said to be writing a memoir of his times. Mr. Van Buren is a famous trout-fisherman, and will follow the brooks with as much steadfastness as a young man of five-and-twenty.

A locomotive on one of the principal railroads has been adorned with the title, "I still live." That is more than many of the passengers can say at the end of the journey.

A Chinaman went into a fancy goods store and wanted some consistency. He had heard consistency was a jewel, and he wanted a specimen.

Instead of retaliating upon the man who calls you a villian, a liar, or a thief, coolly inform him that you have not sufficient confidence in his veracity to believe him.

The small pox, it is said, is prevalent in Boston. Those in charge of persons with this disease should keep onions in their sleeping apartments. They will thus escape the contagion.

The Boston Recorder is down on "pious raffles," i. e., raffles at religious fairs.

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."—*Ecclesiastes.*

Harvard College, at Cambridge, has, all told, 834 students; Yale, at New Haven, Conn., 814; Brown University, at Providence, R. I., 212. But Oberlin College, in Ohio, is ahead of them all in point of numbers. It has 1243, including ladies and gentlemen.

Dogs are sagacious, and understand Dutch as well as their master. Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, tells in his inimitable style, how his dog Hector got even to look so much like his master, that he would go and take his place in church, and the congregation never knew the difference. One Sunday after service, the clergyman was complimenting him upon his attention to the sermon, amidst such a sleepy congregation, when "Hector and I gave each other such a look, that I was afraid the clergyman would have observed it; but then he was a good, unsuspecting man, a very Nathaniel in whom there was no guile—when Hector, unable to hold in any longer, leaped over the hedge, pretending to have scented patridges, so as to laugh outright."

Joe Kose begs to suppose that he knows his brother Moze froze his toes and his nose in the snows. He knows his brother Moze knows that he knows he froze his nose—and when he knows he knows, he knows, I spose.

"Jim, how does the thermometer stand to-day?" "Ours stands on the mantel-piece, right agin the plastering."

If you would enjoy your cigar, and at the same time the society of the ladies, you should invite none but widows, for they will *bring their own weeds.*

In a fair and beautiful land I dwell,
Ever the sunshine lingers there;
The clouds are of purple, and crimson, and gold,
And music floats in the azure air;
I shrink from the rude and jarring crowd,
I cast far from me the mantle of care,
Freely I rove in my castles and groves,
And revel in pictures bright and fair.
Though power and wealth may pass me by,
Gayly I turn from their heartless din;
Though Fame may scorn, and Fashion may sneer,
Yet mine are the treasures they may not win.
Their souls cling fast to their worldly gauds;
They hug their fetters of gilded sin;
They grasp the *shadows* of outward pomp—
I fly to my glorious world within!

The gentleman whose lips pressed a lady's "snowy brow," did not catch cold.

"Did you know, my child, that Providence gives you bread?" "Yeth, mother—but Julian Mills makes the flour."

VINEGAR FOR PICKLES.—One part of whiskey or rum, and two parts of water.

AN IRISH EPITAPH.

Here lies the body of John Mound,
Lost at sea and never found.

SHOEING HENS.—A writer in the New England Farmer recommends the encasing of the feet of fowls in wooden bags or socks, for the purpose of preventing them from scratching in the garden. Would it not be well to do the same thing in winter to keep their feet warm? It is well known how frequently they get their feet badly frozen.

Walter Savage Landor has said: "There are women from whom incessant tears of anger swell forth at imaginary wrongs; but of contrition for their own delinquencies not one."

If twelve inches make a foot, how many will make a leg?

Why would printers make good post-office clerks? Because they understand distributing *letters* correctly. Digby added: "I hope some of 'em will be employed in the post-offices, then." Perhaps Digby wants a "sit."

"My dear," said a lady who wanted a new dress, but was somewhat embarrassed in asking for it, "will you go to-day and look at that dress pattern we saw the other night, and see if it is as pretty at night as it was in the day time?"

The Devil seems to take his walk through this world every little while, and he switches his tail in everybody's face.

There are thousands of disputes in the world that will be settled just about as soon as the old one between the Katydids and the Katy-didn'ts.

New Publications.

THE WHITE HILLS; their Legends, Landscapes, and Poetry. By Thomas Starr King. With sixty illustrations, engraved by Andrew, from drawings by Wheelock. Boston: Crosby, Nichols & Co., 117 Washington street. 1860.

The author says: "It is the object of this volume to direct attention to the noble landscapes that lie along the routes by which the White Mountains are now approached by tourists ○ ○ ○ ○ and to construct a guide to particular landscapes, and a stimulant to the enjoyment of them."

This book is magnificently got up. It is printed on fine, heavy paper. Its typographical execution is neat, clear and beautiful. Its illustrations, on wood, are fine and artistic. The cover is beveled edge, embossed, and tastefully sprinkled with gold, and gilt-edged leaves. The contents of the book are of a high order, as are all the productions from the pen of its well-known author. The book fully pictures and illustrates what its title-page presents. It is full of the poetry of nature. It is full of true religion, without using the word religion, or setting up religious pretence. It recognizes poetry in nature, religion in nature, and God in nature. Every one who has ever been to the White Mountains, or ever intends to go there, will find in this book a valuable fund of pleasing interesting knowledge, presented in a very handsome style. For a Christmas or New Year's gift, no book is more suitable.

FRANK WILDMAN'S ADVENTURES ON LAND AND WATER. By Frederick Gerstaecker. Translated and revised by Lascelles Wraxall. With eight illustrations, printed in oil colors. Boston: Crosby, Nichols & Co., 117 Washington street. 1860.

The name of the author, and the reputation of the publishers who present this book to the public, are guarantees of its merits. The book also speaks for itself. It is a volume of thrilling interest. It is beautifully executed and elegantly illustrated; and yet this beauty and elegance grow dim, and are forgotten, as the reader is led to behold the adventurous scenes and the pictures of real life written upon its pages in words. The life of Frank Wildman was filled up with wild and desperate adventures. There is an element in our natures that makes us love to read such a book as this; and it is right to gratify this innocent love, for thereby we are made better.

Notices to Correspondents.

PSALMS OF LIFE.—In answer to inquiry from a correspondent, we will state the price of this beautiful compilation of sacred music to be 75 cents, retail. Discount on that price for larger orders.

J. SMITH, OXFORD.—A friend writes that he can furnish you with complete files (except one number,) of the BANNER. We can furnish vols. 3 and 4 bound, but not vols. 1 and 2. When vol. 6 is completed, we can furnish vols. 5 and 6, bound.

E. A. R., MILFORD, MASS.—We must decline your proposition.

Lecturers.

MISS R. T. AMEDEY will lecture in Plymouth, Mass., on Tuesday evening, Dec. 20th, and in Newton on Thursday evening, Dec. 22d.

A. B. WHITING may be addressed at Brooklyn, Michigan till further notice.

☞ Information is wanted of Daniel Otto, who left Camarock, Ill., some nine years ago. He formerly resided in Wheatland, Ill., and went to California some four or five years since. Any one giving the desired information through these columns—whether spirit or mortal—will receive the grateful thanks of his anxious family.

NOTICES OF MEETINGS.

MEETINGS IN BOSTON.—Mrs. Amanda M. Spence, of New York will lecture in Ordway Hall next Sunday afternoon at 2 1-2 o'clock, and in the evening at 7 1-4 o'clock.

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

CAMBRIDGEPORT.—Meetings in Cambridgeport are held every Sunday afternoon and evening, at 3 and 7 1-2 o'clock, P. M., at Washington Hall, Main street. Seats free.

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

FOXBORO'.—The Spiritualists of Foxboro' hold free meetings in the town hall every Sunday, at half-past one, and half-past six o'clock, P. M.

PLYMOUTH.—Miss Lizzie Doten, will lecture Dec. 25th; Miss Fannie Davis, Jan. 1st and 8th.

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

SALEM.—Meetings have commenced at the Spiritualists' Church, Sewall street. Circles in the morning; speaking, afternoon and evening.

WORCESTER.—The Spiritualists of Worcester hold regular Sunday meetings in Washburn Hall.

SUNDAY MEETINGS IN NEW YORK.

Meetings are held at Lamartine Hall, on the corner of 29th street and 8th Avenue, every Sunday morning. Preaching by Rev. Mr. Jones. Afternoon: Conference or Lecture. Evening: Circles for trance-speakers. There are at all times several present.

DODWORTH'S HALL.—Meetings are held at this Hall regularly every Sabbath.

Social Levee.

A levee will be held at Amory Hall, corner of Washington and West streets, on Wednesday evening, January 4th, under the superintendence of Mr. John H. Conant and other well-known Spiritualists. The music will be furnished by White's Full Quadrille Band. Tickets one dollar each, admitting a gentleman and ladies, can be obtained at the Winthrop, Adams, Quincy and Marlboro' Hotels; at Bela Marsh's, 14 Bromfield street; at White Brothers' music store in Tremont Temple, and at this office. As this is to be a first-class assembly, no tickets will be sold at the door. From the well-known ability of the managers, and the talent of the musicians, we can prophecy a renowal of the popular assemblies of last season.

MISS ROSA T. AMEDEY will lecture in Oswego during the month of January, 1860. Friends in the South and West desiring her services, for Sabbaths, and week evenings, in the two or three months following, will please address her at 32 Allen street, prior to Dec. 28th, and during the month of January care of J. L. Pool, Oswego, N. Y. 10—tjan1.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

TERMS.—A limited number of advertisements will be inserted in this paper at fifteen cents per line for each insertion. Liberal discount made on standing advertisements.

MEDICAL TREATMENT—NUTRITIVE PRINCIPLE

DR. ALFRED G. HALL, M. D., PROFESSOR OF PHYSIOLOGY, author of the New Theory of Medical Practice on the Nutrative Principle, may be consulted on the treatment of every form of humor, weakness and disease, in person or by letter, from any part of the country. It is restorative in its effects, reliable in the most prostrate cases, and justly worthy of the confidence of the afflicted. All the Medicines used are purely vegetable. *No. 18 Temple Place, Boston, Mass.*
Oct. 1. 1y§§

DR. E. ACKER,

HEALING MEDIUM, late of Pougkeepsie, N. Y., has opened rooms for professional consultation and treatment at 157 Grand street, New York, where he will be happy to receive patients and treat disease, especially consumption and all kindred complaints, with certain cure and speedy relief. Thousands throughout the country are afflicted with disease, and would give half their fortunes to get well. To such we say, come and get healed. 4t° Dec. 24.

MRS. B. K. LITTLE

HAS POSTPONED GOING SOUTH THIS WINTER, owing to the earnest solicitatons of her numerous friends and patrons. Mrs. L. will continue to occupy the same rooms—35 Beach street. Hours—from 9 to 12 A. M., 2 to 6, and 8 to 10 P. M. Terms, per hour, for *one* or *two* persons, $1.00; clairvoyant examinations, $1.00; examinations by hair, $1.00. tf Dec. 24.

DR. A. G. WOLF,

HEALING MEDIUM and Magnetic Physician, has taken rooms at No. 2 Bond street, New York, where he may be consulted, daily, from 8 A. M. till 4 P. M.
REFERENCES:—Dr. JNO. SCOTT, 30 Bond street; Dr. W. C. HUSSEY, 155 Green street. 1p° Dec. 24.

MRS. H. ALLEOUD,
(FORMERLY OF ROXBURY,)

TEST, CLAIRVOYANT AND TRANCE MEDIUM, will be at MRS. SMITH'S, corner of Dudley and Warren streets, Roxbury, on Wednesday, (day and evening) of each week, for the future, where she may be consulted by those wishing her services. 4p° Dec. 24.

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32 HEALTH OF AMERICAN WOMEN. 32

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The Messenger.

Each message in this department of the BANNER we claim was spoken by the spirit whose name it bears, through Mrs. J. H. CONANT, while in a state called the Trance State. They are not published on account of literary merit, but as tests of spirit communion to those friends to whom they are addressed.

We hope to show that spirits carry the characteristics of their earth-life to that beyond, and do away with the erroneous idea that they are more than FINITE beings. We believe the public should know of the spirit world as it is—should learn that there is evil as well as good in it, and not expect that purity alone shall flow from spirits to mortals.

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

Visitors Admitted.—Our sittings are free to any one who may desire to attend. They are held at our office, No. 512 Brattle street, Boston, every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday afternoon, commencing at HALF-PAST TWO o'clock; after which time there will be no admittance. They are closed usually at half-past four, and visitors are expected to remain until dismissed.

MESSAGES TO BE PUBLISHED.

The communications given by the following spirits, will be published in regular course. Will those who read one from a spirit they recognize, write us whether true or false?

From No. 1752 to No. 1816.

Saturday, Nov. 5.—"What do Spirits think of Henry Ward Beecher?" "How shall man discern good from evil?" William Sebley.

Tuesday, Nov. 8.—"Is there any good in man?" James Fairbanks, Philadelphia; Louisa Davis, Cambridge; John T. Gilman, New Hampshire.

Wednesday, Nov. 9.—"How shall we know we commune with Spirits?" Eliza Chase, Buffalo; Thomas Campbell; Peter Schroudher, Washington; John T. Gilman, Exeter, N. H.

Friday, Nov. 11.—"When may we look for Christ's coming?" David Pease, New Hampshire; John Elton, Philadelphia; Abby Ann Tubbs, New Hampshire.

Saturday, Nov. 12.—"Fatalism;" Rufus Long, Portsmouth, England; Mary White, Concord, N. H.; Olive Hedge; Joseph Winship; Thomas Wainwright.

Tuesday, Nov. 15.—"Thou shalt not kill;" George Talbot; Cornelius Coolidge, Boston; Juliet Hersey, Boston; William Good.

Wednesday, Nov. 16.—"What is perfection?" George Washington Bowman, Portsmouth, Va.; Nathaniel Hill, Thetford, Vt.; Charles M. Thorndike.

Tuesday, Nov. 29.—"Was the natural body of Christ Resurrected?" Andrew J. Gavitt, Boston; Irene; Jeremiah Mason.

Wednesday, Nov. 30.—"Shall the Jews return to Jerusalem?" Hannah Moore, Roxbury; Francis Stearns; Charley Robertson, New York.

Thursday, Dec. 1.—"Are there animals in Spirit-Life?" Simeon Kilson, Galveston; Alfred Allen, Albany.

Saturday, Dec. 3.—"When and how shall there be a new Heaven and a new Earth?" William Osgood, Boston; Sarah Elizabeth Tilden, Boston; Patrick O'Brien, Boston; A Prayer.

Tuesday, Dec. 6.—"Is it right for men to buy and sell and hold in bondage their fellow-men?" Daniel M. Wilson, Sacramento, Cal.; Mary Ann Tilden, Boston.

Thursday, Dec. 8.—"What is sin, and how are we in mortal to avoid it?" Samuel H. Spencer, Thomaston, Me.; Joseph Gardner; Lucy Smith; Francis H. Smith.

Friday, Dec. 9.—"Are spheres in spirit-life localities?" Stephen Carroll, Iowa; Lizzie Cordin, Richmond; A prayer.

Saturday, Dec. 10.—Joy H. Fairchilds; Clark Mason, Rochester.

Death.

"And there shall be no more Death, for death shall be swallowed up in eternal life."

This passage, as found in the record of the Revelator, is given for our consideration this afternoon.

He who seeks, desires to know if John, the Revelator, had especial reference to a natural or spiritual death. According to our knowledge of the laws of nature, we find the Revelator had reference to a death of the body—the separation between the natural and spiritual, which men and women call death.

And there shall be no more death! Oh, what a glorious epoch in life—when all darkness shall be swallowed up in light, and the glory of God's power shall shine resplendently! As the old passes from your natural vision, behold something new and more spiritual is presented to you. Everything in nature is tending to purity; and thus it is fast outrunning death—fast emerging into a state of life—life eternal. In the days of the Revelator, natural bodies were wont to number many years. We behold them coarse in stature, strong in the physical, mighty in the natural, but puny, weak, undeveloped, in the spiritual. In those days, that spirit germ that now gives forth so much light, we could scarce discern; and could the inhabitants of the earth, at this time, be permitted to gaze upon man of olden time, they would hardly believe such an one were mortal—possessed of a spirit of Divine intelligence. But the germ was no less a spirit, the power no less a power, and the law no less a law, in those days than in the present.

The external condition of men at that time was so gross, so crude, so undeveloped, that the spirit was confined in a living tomb—a dungeon, giving forth no sound, giving out no light, that held within its depths no living waters. But as we follow the march of nature from ancient to modern times, how grand the change, how mighty the work, how Godlike the law of progress. Everything in the vast realms of nature hath become more refined, more spiritual, nearer to God. Everything in its nature is going from death's domain—fast leaving the old, and clinging to the new. And as the spiritual is superior to the natural, it will continue to rise above it, until the natural is seen no more on this planet. We are speaking of this planet earth; for behold, we find the people of earth more nearly allied to the Godhead than the inhabitants of any planet in the known world. And as years shall pass on, we find the earth passing out of its present orbit, entering a spiritual state. Then they shall know no more death; they shall have emerged from the natural, and death shall have fulfilled his mission here. He shall say no more, "Come, put on higher robes, to appear in the city of our God. Leave this crude state, and come forth into the spirit-life."

John was possessed of a superior spiritual state, and he spoke not as man speaks, but as the Almighty God speaketh; not of the present time, but of far-future time, casting death into nonentity, as far as this planet is concerned. Our questioner may call for proof of our assertions. He can find it in all nature; in every department of life he can find proof of what we are saying this afternoon. Progression, spiritual life, speaks in thunder tones in the atom at your feet—it raises its voice, in mighty power, in the elements around you; it whispers in the tree, the flower, the mighty ocean. Everything bears record of coming purity, coming spirituality—of the desolation of the King of Terrors, Death. But we find the proof nowhere so brilliantly illuminated as in the human form, the organic intelligence of life.

Behold what mighty changes are taking place in these human temples! Behold those in olden time, and look at those of to-day, and you will hardly recognize they are of the same family. Here, then, is a volume well filled with proof mighty in itself, speaking for all the departments of earth. Carrying, as it does, particles of every state of life, it represents all; and as the body shall change in immortality, so then every atom in this life shall be changed—life shall reign supreme. Behold, the sons and daughters of our God have been taught to fear death. This should not be so. They must remember that if they would become one with God the Creator, they must of necessity put off the natural and put on the spiritual; and while the elements of the external world are prone to death, they, too, must taste of death, to pass on to higher enjoyment.

When men and women put off the mortal, they cast off ten thousand cares and ills that the natural alone is heir to. There is no more pain, no disease, to pull the spirit down to earth. True, the spirit is sometimes drawn to earth by the tender magnetic cord that binds friends and relations. Spirits may drink of the joys and sorrows of earth, but the effect is different—the sting of sorrow is gone, and they who have conquered death have conquered not an enemy, but one who was at seeming enmity with them—one whose exterior was blackness, but who carried beneath a gem of great price; for death is but a messenger that comes as a guide to conduct the spirit to its better state, where tears are not known, where life is everywhere a mixture of life—not death.

The inhabitants who are in a low spiritual state at this time, are but occupying the state that the natural inhabitants of the earth shall enjoy at a future time. Many spirits contend there are many changes in the spirit-life; but according to my experience, I find no such great change as death. True, the spirit passes from one degree of life to another, until we find him lost in Godhead—merged in Deity—lifted to the highest state of wisdom; yet so gradual is the change that there is no clashing, no war between two elements—like that between life and death; for, behold, the elements are not at war in the better life.

So, then, there shall be a time when there shall be no more death on earth; when the inhabitants shall be so far purified that death shall not be necessary. They shall be so far merged in the Godhead that they shall pass to the spirit life without his aid, for they shall stand in the doorway of spirit life, and shall need no guide thither.

True, our doctrine is mysterious and strange; but when man and woman shall stand upon the plane we now occupy, they shall fully understand us, and cry "Amen" to what we have given to-day. Nov. 6.

J. G. Wyatt.

Don't you know me, Berry? I am Joseph Wyatt. You know I committed suicide, don't you, and that I told you I was wronged? So I was, and I can't get over it. I have been trying all this time to get rid of that feeling of revenge, and I cannot do it.

I felt the evidence would be too strong against me, and I said I would rather die than live as my enemies would have me, and so I died.

Yes, I had a middle name—J. G. Wyatt you may call me. Can't you contrive any way for me to go to my family? Will you lend me this medium? My God! I can't see why not—for my life I cannot. I'd find them very quick, if you would let me out. I'd walk right straight along the streets, until I found my family. Have I not as good a right to walk the streets as ever I had? I want to speak through this medium. I can't do it anywhere else so well.

Well, no matter. I no business to have walked out so quick, and then I should not have been in so great a hurry to get back. I'm not so unhappy, in reality, because I know pretty nigh where I'm coming to. As soon as I get some stains wiped out, I shall stand on different ground. I may plead in public till doomsday, and I can't get ahead.

Well, I don't see but all my visit this afternoon is coming to nothing. I'm honest—as for ever committing the deed they charged upon me, I never did. True, I drank too much rum, but that was the worst thing I did. My God! I have cursed Bulfinch street, and all its inhabitants, a thousand times over, since I have been here. But that's wrong, I suppose. Well, good-by. Nov. 3.

Martha Dwight.

Has this body the consumption? I died of it, but I know this is not my body, and I don't see why I should feel just the same as I did before death. I thought we should be forever free from anything of this kind, but I am not. I shall not stop long. I was sick eleven months. I left a husband and one child in Boston. I died in August, 1838. I was twenty-one years old. My name was Martha Dwight. I hear you receive messages from any one who wishes to come. I wish to say that I am happy, and should be more so if I could speak to my husband, my mother and my sister. I have a child, but she is not old enough to understand anything about my coming. She was only one year and one month old when I died.

I hope some one of my friends will see fit to furnish me with the privilege of speaking with them, and I hope also I shall not feel so badly as I feel now, for it makes it very bad for me to speak.

I find everything here very much like earth, but more beautiful. I should be very happy here if I could commune with my friends and could always see them happy. When I first waked up here in spirit-life, I thought I had had a sweet sleep, I was so refreshed! And then I saw my father, and my sister I had lost, and then I know I was dead; and oh, I was so rejoiced, so happy I was free, I tried to sing praises, for I knew I should suffer no more. I felt, too, that God would take care of me, and that I should go to heaven sometime. I knew nothing of Spiritualism, although I heard of it. I was a believer in the Christian religion, and I think I was ready to die and happy to go. I would like to have my friends know more of this world than I know, it will be so much easier for them when they come here. Nov. 3.

Nathan Brown.

You write, do you? Well, I'm Nathan Brown, of Toledo. I've a family there. I died of some disease of the stomach. Say I wish to speak with my friends. I was fifty-four years old, and I died in 1857, in January. I have nothing more to say. Nov. 3.

James D. Farnsworth.

Oh, thou Almighty and Divine Guide of Souls, we offer thanks unto thee for the privilege we enjoy at this time.

Thou has given us the assurance that we are thy children, and that thou art ever mindful of us; and, in return for thy kind care we would praise thee, oh God, and praise thee in behalf of the dear ones we now draw nigh. They, oh God, are clad in mortal, while we are devoid of the garments whereby we may be visible to them. We know that thou art the God of nature—that thy power is unlimited, thy mercy enduring; and that in thy own time and thy own way thou wilt bring all to a knowledge of thy truth, their condition in life, and their relation unto thee. And thus we would wait patiently for the manifestation of thy power; for the glorious time to arrive when those whom we so dearly love may grasp at truth and bask in the sunshine of thy love.

We wait for thy presence with them in thy might and glory while we draw nigh unto thee to-day. We ask thee to send a messenger of power and peace to go before and to prepare the way for the seed we shall sow to-day, that it may spring up and yield fruit to thy glory.

Oh God, when the light of thy servant went out in death, he saw thee in thy wisdom and thy glory. Notwithstanding the theological darkness that surrounded him, the light which shone within was brilliant, and he saw thee by that light, as never before he looked upon thee.

We will not ask thee, oh God, to bless our dear ones on earth, for we know thou wilt keep them and protect them, and give us power to make ourself understood by them. So we will praise thee and ask for nothing; for we know thou wilt clothe us, and feed us, and give us of thy divine light; and not only us, but those who are dear to us.

When I existed as a mortal I was happy; my surroundings were pleasant. Peace seemed to linger at my side, and I often found myself querying as to whether there was any better place than earth—if man in his spiritual condition could indeed be more happy than I. Kind friends clustered around me, and, as the light of Divine Revelation shone upon me, I am confident in saying I was made happy by it. I tasted fruits that are not often known on earth by reason of this light, and I believed in it. It was my safeguard, my shield, my raiment. I believed in a heaven, a hell, a God, and an opposing intelligence. But I cannot say I ever had any definite views respecting this opposing intelligence. I could not bring myself to believe there was such a personality as the Devil—that he existed in form; but I did believe in a personal God. And I now find that my personality is but a principle—but one of great power and glory. I have a family on earth, to whom I am much attached. Death has failed to sever this attachment. I could not find happiness in heaven, unless my abode here were lighted up with affection. I could not rest in quiet, if I supposed I should be at some time separated from those I love in mortal. Thanks be to God, I expect to be reunited with my family; that God in his own time will bring us all together; that we shall enjoy more holy communion than we did on earth—if it be possible.

What intelligence enjoys so much as that who knows its own condition and its connection with God? One says knowledge is heaven: another says it is death. I think it is heaven—for the soul that knows not of its own condition and power is unhappy; it is in an unquiet state, which is only to be relieved by knowledge. The Christian who believes in God, but has no knowledge of him, cannot be happy. "I believe in God" is not satisfactory to the soul. That spirit, that portion of God, demands knowledge, and it must have it in order to be satisfied.

I have a strong desire to see the friends who were bound to me by ties of affection standing upon a foundation of knowledge. True, they believe in God, and are partially happy. But I would have them know their God and be entirely happy.

As God is a principle constantly moving on, progressive in his own nature, so they who would understand their God must progress also. They must not stand still theologically or naturally. They must walk in the paths nature marks out, and if they have any belief it must ultimate in knowledge, if they will be happy.

Christ, our divine brother, tells us that all may know God as he knew him, that every creature may become closely allied to God as he was, that all he did they might do, that, as he was one with God, they might become one also. He doubtless spoke with reference to the natural life. As this same Jesus was a progressive spirit, would it not be well for his followers to progress also? Instead of standing in the shadows of the past, they should stand out in the sunlight of the present. If they are presented with a truth said to be from God, they should see whether it is or not. Seek to be acquainted with it, and see if it be what it purports to be, and, if so, they should move after it.

The Christian hath made himself many gods; he boweth to one to-day and to another to-morrow. If the Christian would be truly Christlike, he should worship one God, and one only; and instead of worshiping Him one day in seven, he should worship Him all days through time and eternity; and while he believes in a God of Justice, he should yield practical proof of that belief.

While Christians tell you they expect to enjoy his presence, when they cast off the mortal, they should so live that men shall see a great light, instead of being shadows to the multitude.

Then, again, they should go forth and bring into the temples of their hearts all the gems that God has cast upon the world, that their temples may be pleasant abodes both for men and angels. Now we find want of confidence in each other—dissatisfaction becomes depicted among them, and one after another cuts himself free, wandering upon the highway, because he sees more light before him. Now then, the theological leaders should go before this army, and if one comes upon the highway before them, saying, "I am Christ," they should go and hear him, and see if he be true or false. They should not shut him out from their temples, for, by so doing, they may shut out God from their hearts, and the mighty hosts of the Lord who are sent to give them wisdom.

I, as an individual spirit, will not return denouncing all classes of Christians. No, I believe it is necessity for men and women to organize themselves into different societies. I believe it is well for one class of individuals to serve God in one way, and for another to serve him in a different way, apparently; for as all cannot see him in the same glass, but each needs a glass for himself or herself, so God in his mercy has provided a countless number of glasses, that each may see for himself, and come to him in his own way.

True, this was not my belief when I dwelt in mortal, for I said, "this is the way, walk ye in it." At my present standpoint, I will point out no way, but let each one follow the guide God has placed in his heart. But I do say that the theological teachers should seek and find the way, and be not merely guide-boards, but guides. When the cry is in their midst, "There be wolves among us," they come not down from their high places to protect the flock, to see whether there be a wolf there or not. We do not find them leading their army onward; and if they do not lead, the multitude without the gates of the city think they know not the way; that they are unacquainted with the Christ they speak of; with the God they beg you to come and serve.

Spiritualism is as a wolf to the theological world. It is running wild in the midst of the flock, taking lamb after lamb; drawing those even from the foot of the cross, who have long sat there in sackcloth. Now, would it not be well for the Rabbis of this time to come down, and go forth and make themselves acquainted with this wolf, and if indeed they have power over him, let them drive him from their midst—let them cry, as did their divine brother, "Go hence;" and if they be indeed the servants of Christ, and Spiritualism be indeed evil, it will go forth from the power of their might. As they profess to be disciples of the Most High they should give their hearers positive proof of their profession; they should fear no evil, but should go forth and wrestle with it, conquering at all times—never yielding to it—for in this way shall the wheat be separated from the chaff, and the wheat be gathered into the garner of the Lord. But while they walk not in the way, the multitude will not walk after them. Oh, could I have realized these truths as I now feel them, I should have gone forth conquering and to conquer. I should have made myself acquainted with every new thought sent down to earth, for it is man's duty. If man do not his duty here, he must do it in the next life; for God calls for all that is due him. He says through all nature, "Oh, man! thou art capable of everything; thou canst comprehend me in *all* my might and glory." And if he speaks thus in every atom of nature, will he not call for his own? Verily he will; and man should work all the day long, that when the night of rest shall come, he can say, "I have finished my work, and am about to enter a state of everlasting rest."

James D. Farnsworth. I came by request. Nov. 4.

[It will not be amiss for parties who request spirits to visit us, and whose request is complied with, to inform us of it, if they can do so, without injury to self. We are aware that many questions are sent to our circle for answer, and many spirits requested to manifest here, by parties who do not feel it judicious to openly declare it. We trust such will think well of their course, and see if it be not their duty to respond in a public manner to the answers they receive.]

Simeon Adams.

You publish spirit letters, do you not? I heard of you by some of my family before I died, but I never saw you. I had seen your paper, however; but I am free to confess I never expected to communicate in this way, for I did not believe in spirit communion, though some of my friends did. But I said I would come back, if it were possible for me to; yet I had no hope of doing so. Contrary to my expectation, I am here. I am much gratified to come, and a little mortified—gratified, because I feel it to be a great privilege that all spirits can enjoy if they will—mortified at my disappointment. I died of consumption. I had ample time, and many opportunities, to investigate Spiritualism, if I had desired; but I'll here freely confess that I considered it a delusion, and I used to wonder how it was that some of my friends could believe in it as they seemed to, and find as much happiness in it as I had reason to believe they did find. But now I see as I did not see then, and I only wonder that they are not more happy in their belief, and that they do not live more in accordance with the beautiful light God has seen fit to give them.

When I first opened my eyes in spirit land, I could hardly be persuaded into the belief that I had changed worlds; but I was soon compelled to make up my mind that was the case, for I saw friends around me whom I knew had gone from earth, and I must either believe that I was permitted to see those friends while in mortal, and thus find Spiritualism was true, or that I was a spirit. And I was more inclined to believe the latter.

Considering all things, I find myself quite happy here, reconciled to my condition, and happily and pleasantly disappointed in a great many things. I find that here, instead of being compelled to do what you do not wish to do, you have the privilege and power of doing just what you wish to do. There is no law of force here, but the law of Love and Right governs everything. Every spirit who will, may come to earth and commune with their friends, for there are ways and means provided for all; and if they see fit to *persevere*, they may make their friends happy—and, as there is but one way to make ourselves happy, of course they have an excellent chance of becoming happy.

I want to tell my friends that upon some things they are mistaken. This belief that there are just so many spheres in spirit-land is erroneous, entirely so. The sphere varies in accordance with each man's condition, and if, as our friend who preceded me says, man may be one with God, there certainly must be more than seven spheres.

I have seen and conversed with spirits from the seventh degree of progression, and they seem to be gods in wisdom and truth; yet I should hardly desire to say that God is not higher in wisdom than they are. I do not think that spirits above the seven first degrees of happiness ever come to earth, and that is why you think there are but seven spheres. I find they have laws whereby every spirit may be educated but every system seems to be perfectly natural. Instead of forcing one to make himself acquainted with that which does not interest him at all, he is only instructed in that which pleases him best. When one has learned that branch which pleases him, and takes to another branch, he studies that. I think this is far better than the rules you have on earth; and if it could be introduced into some of the institutions on earth, it would be far better for some of the people of earth, certainly.

Before I leave, I wish to tell the friends I promised to communicate with, that I shall always find pleasure in beholding them seeking for true light, true wisdom. I shall always be glad to return, giving all my good Master sees fit to give me. I shall try to give this; and if I fail after trying, I am not at fault. But I would also tell them to be sure that they do not mix up any fanaticism with Spiritualism, for that is a bad article; and when it becomes mixed with the good, it tends to shed darkness rather than light, and if it does this, they had certainly better be without it. It is one of the bubbles floating upon the surface of every new doctrine, and some are apt to catch at these bubbles, and think them better than they really are. I want all my friends to be careful, and not grasp any of these bubbles; then the light about them will not lead them astray.

I don't understand why it is that I feel so very weak—so much as I did before death; but I suppose as I progress, I shall understand it as one of the features of the great law I do not understand at this time. You can say I will visit my friends again at my leisure.

I was Simeon Adams, of Franklin, Mass. Nov. 4.

Said one to an aged friend, "I had a letter from a distant correspondent the other day, who inquired if you were in the land of the living." "No," replied the saint-like, venerable man, "but I am going there. This world is alone the world of shadows; and the eternal is the only one of living realities."

If you love others they will love you. If you speak kindly to them they will speak kindly to you. Love is repaid with love, and hatred with hatred. Would you hear a sweet and pleasing echo, speak sweetly and pleasantly yourself.

Written for the Banner of Light.

LINES,

Affectionately inscribed to the memory of my dear and recently deceased father.

BY ELVIRA H. CLOSE.

Thou to the grave hast gone, my father,
Yet I wish thee not again,
In this world of sin and sorrow,
Care and carping, toil and pain;
Thou, while here, didst bear with meekness,
Trials, truly, not a few;
Now in mansions bright and beauteous,
Thou thy Saviour's face doth view.

Thou to the grave hast gone, my father,
Yet they tell me thou art near;
That thy spirit still is hov'ring
'Bout thy stricken children here.
Oh, wilt thou not o'er impress me—
Do, dear father, do, I pray!
Let me know and feel thy presence,
Cheering still my life-long way.

Thou to the grave hast gone, my father—
Cold is now thy manly brow,
Yet thy eye, so dark and radiant,
Seems o'en gazing on me now;
While thy voice, so soft and gentle,
Oft in fancy do I hear,
And thy last "good-by" at parting,
Lingers still in memory's ear.

Thou to the grave hast gone, my father,
Yet I know thou art not dead;
For I dreamed but now I saw thee,
Gently leaning o'er my bed;
Fondly I essayed to clasp thee,
But the vision quickly passed;
Truly know I that thou *livest*,
Though thou with the *dead* be classed.

Thou to the grave hast gone, my father,
Where ere long I must be laid;
Oh, may I, like thee, be ready,
For the summons when 't is made.
Then, oh then! I hope to meet thee,
Where no tear-drop o'er abides—
Where the soul is ever joyous—
Where no ill nor care resides.

Alexandria, Va., Nov. 29th, 1859.

Spiritualism among the Early Methodists.

It is both interesting and instructive to observe the frequent manifestations which abound in the history of every religious sect on the face of the earth, and which the developments of our own time furnish the most satisfactory exposition, if not the only consistent interpretation.

It is very generally acknowledged that the Methodists, from their earliest date under Wesley and Fletcher to within a late period, have been, to an unusual degree, a spiritually-minded organization. Remembering the dearth in spiritual matters which preceded their formation, we see their very origin was a legitimate outgrowth, a vital necessity, of those times. Their chief characteristic has been in believing, with Paul, "It is good to be *zealously* affected always in a good thing." But Paul says, elsewhere, of a certain class, which possibly applies to them, "They have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge." However this may be, in view of our present light, whether true or not, the Methodists of to-day, in their vitalizing power of religious influence, are but a shadow of what they once were. Having well served their purpose in their day and generation, till, having lost the essential in the ceremonial, their system must yield to the immutable law of progress—must give place to a healthier, higher, a truer and more universal faith and practice. Already many of this well known sect have embraced the philosophy, and are now living the life of true Spiritualists. This is genuine consistency. But my present object in writing is more particularly to call attention to a note-worthy instance of belief in the cardinal doctrine of Spiritualism, together with the reasons for this belief, as found in the "Life of Mrs. Mary Fletcher," wife of Rev. John Fletcher, the friend and compeer of Rev. John Wesley.

Under date of Dec. 15, 1785, speaking of her deceased husband, she says:—

"Perhaps he is nearer to me than ever! Perhaps he sees me continually, and, under God, guards and keeps me. Perhaps he knows my very thoughts. These reflections, though under a *perhaps*, give me some help; but, could they be confirmed by reason, and, above all, by Scripture, they would yield me much consolation. I will try if I can find this solid ground for them. It appears to me no way contrary to *reason* to believe that the happy departed spirits see and know all they would wish, and are divinely permitted to know. In this, Mr. Wesley is of the same mind—and that they are concerned for the dear fellow-pilgrims whom they have left behind. I cannot but believe they are; and, though death is the boundary we cannot see through, they who have passed the gulf may probably see us. And may we not suppose, if the use of sight and hearing, as well as the powers of understanding, are so improved by our birth into this lower world, that some powers analogous to the above are, at least, equally opened on the entrance of a spirit into a heavenly state—though perhaps small in the beginning—like an infant, compared with the measure that is to follow?

Nor doth it seem contrary to reason to suppose a spirit in glory can turn its eye with as much ease, and look on any object below, as a mother can look through a window and see the actions of her children in the court underneath it. If bodies have a language by which they can convey their thoughts to each other, though sometimes at a distance, have spirits no language, think you, by which they can converse with our spirits, and by impressions on the mind speak to us as easily as before they did by the tongue? And what can interrupt either the presence, communication, or sight of a spirit?

'Walls within walls no more its passage bar
Than unopposing space of liquid air.'

But may not our reasonable ideas be much strengthened by Scripture? Some encouragement on this head I have lately drawn from the account of Elijah and Elisha—though I do not offer this as a proof, but rather as an illustration."

Here follows a long, deeply interesting and elaborate spiritual analysis of this scriptural occurrence. She concludes in these words:—

"Nay, but God, who delights to confer his greatest favors on the weakest objects, can confer on us all that which he bestowed on Elijah and Elisha. And, if under that dark dispensation, why not in this gospel day, concerning which it is foretold, 'Your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.'

The apostle tells us, 'We are not come to Mount Sinai,' where Israel both saw the power and heard the voice of God; *but to Mount Zion*, where we have communion 'with the general assembly of angels, the Church of the first born, the spirits of just men made perfect with Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant;' yea, and have access 'to God, the judge of all.' And were we better acquainted with the privileges of our dispensation, we should become in a more full manner inheritors with 'the saints in light.' But, though it is allowed we may have communion with angels, various are the objections raised against the belief of our communion with that other part of the heavenly family—the *disembodied spirits of the just*.

I shall consider these objections one by one. Lord, help me in so doing! Let me at least strive to comprehend something of 'the length, and breadth, and depth, and height, of the great victory obtained for us over death;' give me to see a little into that truth, 'we are brought from Mount Sinai to Mount Zion.'"

In objection the first, she controverts the notion that, because disembodied spirits may be conscious of our mortal sins, they are necessarily rendered unhappy. We are not to believe the immutable happiness of God is interrupted by all the congregated sins of mortal existence. She says:

"Now, as the saints yet on earth are made partakers of the Divine nature, and much more 'the spirits of just men made perfect,' so I should imagine their happiness would, in that respect, remain as immutable as that of the holy angels, when so many of their once dear companions fell from their first estate.

I cannot let it enter into my thoughts that ignorance makes up any part of celestial glory, or that forgetfulness can be entered into by the nearer approach to him, 'before whom all things are open and manifest; in whom is no darkness at all.'

If there is joy throughout all the realms above, yea, 'more joy over one sinner that repenteth, than over the ninety and nine which went not astray,' how evident it is to an impartial eye, that the state both of the one and the other must be known there, together with the progress of each individual.

Objection the second. Is not a spirit divested of the body become of a quite different nature from what it was before, so as to be incapable of the same feelings? I answer, certainly not—the spirit is the man. The spirit of my dear husband loved and cared for me, and longed, above every other desire, for my spiritual advancement. Now, if it were the body, why doth it not love me still? You answer, because it is dead. That is to say, the spirit is gone from it; therefore, that which loved me is gone from it. And what is that but the spirit, which actuated the body, as the clock-work does the hand which tells the hour? It therefore appears quite clear to me that every right affection, sentiment, and feeling of mind, we have been exercised in here, will remain in the spirit just the same *immediately after death*.

* * * Whatever agrees with the nature of heaven cannot be destroyed, but increased by their abode therein. Now are not love and gratitude natives of heaven, which dwell forever there? * * * Shall not the same love, when perfected in heaven, have the same effect in a more perfect degree? The mistake lies here; we forget that Christian love and union below are the same in *kind*, though not in *degree*, with those above; and we might as well suppose, when we enter into the realms of light, that we shall plunge into darkness for want of the natural sun, as to suppose that Christian love and union must be destroyed by an abode in that kingdom, where the very element we breathe shall be *eternal love*. Doubtless we shall know, and gratefully acknowledge, the ministering spirits who have served us here, and be sensible that gratitude is immortal, and does not change its sentiments with its place. I think all this is clear, from those words of our Lord, 'Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail on earth, they,' viz., those whom you have helped, 'may receive you into everlasting habitations.'"

Objection the third. Here she considers the unreasonableness of spirits being wholly absorbed in their own delights. She says: "That love of Jesus which fills the soul with the admiration of his graces, is a love begotten by that which reigns in the heart of Christ himself; consequently it is of the same nature. But is the love of Jesus a barren and inactive love? Did it produce in our Lord such an enjoyment of his own pure nature, as to render him forgetful of his creatures? Rather did it not bring him down to 'die for his enemies, and receive gifts for the rebellious?'". So on through objection fourth, fifth and sixth, where, among other things, she says: "We are now in the body, and have senses and faculties suited thereto; therefore our human eye can at once measure the body of our child, and discern every wound or bruise, or even a speck of dirt thereon. And have not spirits faculties suited to spirits, by which we may suppose they can as easily discern our soul, as we could discern their body when they were in the same state as ourself? * * * If 'he maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire,' cannot a spirit be with me in a moment, as easily as a stroke from an electrical machine can convey the fire for many miles in one moment, through thousands of bodies, if properly linked together? * * * As similitude joins, and dissimilitude separates, so those spirits who are joined by their similitude of love and pure worship, who, having been led in one path, (and probably prepared for one mansion,) can as easily retain a peculiar union without any diminution of their love to others. * * *

I do not wonder a poor heathen should dream of a river of forgetfulness, by drinking of which all former scenes were to be lost in oblivion; but, for a soul enlightened by revelation, to forget that *a day is coming in which every secret thing shall be made known*, is indeed a melancholy proof *that darkness hath covered the earth, and gross darkness the people.*"

I know your many readers will agree with me, that Mrs. Fletcher has here foreshadowed, with wonderful accuracy and singular precision, the world's faith of to-day, in letter and spirit, as revealed in the teachings and philosophy of modern Spiritualism. Yours, G. A. B.

IS A SOLDIER A CHRISTIAN?

"Peace hath more might than war. High brows are calm.
Great thoughts are peaceful as the stars."

The Christianity of the New Testament is a beautiful reality. Popular Christianity is different. The Christian obeys what Christ has taught. The soldier obeys the laws of vindictive vengeance; resists evil by the reproduction of evil; demands an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. Popular Christianity justifies and supports war. A soldier may be a popular Christian, but not a lawful one; for it is the business of the lawful Christian to love his brother, while it is the business of the soldier to murder him. It is the business of a true Christian to forgive offences, and of the soldier to meet them with new offences, called defences; with bayonets and powder.

In the whole record of Christ there is not one word that justifies fighting, either in his words or by his deeds; while in the same record streams of love and forgiveness gush forth—the pure waters of which, I cannot doubt, will some time cover the earth.

It is a want of forgiveness in the hearts of nations that causes the murder of thousands of human beings annually by wars. It is a want of forgiveness between two young men that sets them back on airy heels of honor, to fight a duel. They are soldiers; they fight to kill each other. A duel is a real war on a small scale. Offence and defence makes war, and forgiveness the armistice. War and forgiveness are incompatible. Love and murder are incompatible. Forgiveness spoils the business of the soldier. It is a want of the forgiveness that Christ taught that makes an anti-slavery man run mad with the bitter venom of contention, and spend his life, soldier-like, warring against the sins of other men, instead of his own. It is a want of Christian forgiveness, too, that makes a State war against and kill a man that violates its laws.

If a man fight, he fights on the plane of fighting, and he must meet the consequences that exist there. John Brown was a soldier. He fought—he killed. The State of Virginia is a soldier. It fought and killed John Brown. Where is the love of Christ? Is it in either? Who is a soldier? The man who wars and fights. The man who wars with evil, fights; he is a soldier. Resisting evil is a warfare. Christ said, "Resist not evil."

Emulation is a fight,

"Where each doth mainly, vainly strive
To dim, or to outshine his brother."

Christ says, "He that is greatest among you, shall be your servant."

Self-love is a warfare against such love as Christ had for all men; against the love that he taught us to cherish for one another. "Love one another as I have loved you," says Christ.

Self possessions militate against the commonwealth and common interests of humanity. We are all soldiers, fighting for *our* dollars and cents. Christ says, "Lay not up for yourselves treasure on earth."

We fight the hand of destiny that shapes us and directs us, which is the hand of an unseen and all-wise Deity. We make our lives a warfare; we are soldiers on the battle-field of time, warring for *future* good. Christ says, "Take no thought for the morrow;" "have faith in God;" "seek first the kingdom of heaven," which he compares to a little child. A little child is unsoldier-like; it is peaceful, passive, resting in the arms of infinite trust. If anybody has faith in God, it is an infant; and if anybody is destitute of the manifest elements of a soldier, it is a baby who never thought of fighting.

St. James taught Christianity, but not so fresh and good as Christ did. No earthly teachings equal those of Christ. St. James asked, "From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not of lusts, that war in your members?" St. Paul repeatedly admonishes all to walk in love, and to let brotherly love continue. In no passage does he advocate war, fighting, or being a soldier; but everything that can be said, he says against it. And what a noble teacher was St. Paul? He taught Christianity, not the tactics of a soldier.

The gospel of opposition is the element of a soldier. Persuasion by love is the element of a Christian. It is the mission of a soldier to resist his enemy, and do him injury; to conquer him. It is the mission of a Christian to love his enemy, and forgive him; to bless him and make him happy. Christ forgave his own murderers, and asked his Father to; and he has palpably and plainly taught us to forgive always; to love our enemies. If a man strike thee, strike not again; forgive seventy times seven the offences of thy brother. What kind of a soldier, think you, he would be, who followed such teaching as this—who struck not at all, and forgave seventy times seven? Not such a soldier as Napoleon Bonaparte, nor as George Washington. The man who struck not in opposition to his enemy, but forgave and loved him, would be, as a soldier, infinitely inferior to these great generals—but, as a Christian, he would be superior infinitely.

Do you say that you can love your enemy and shoot him? or love your brother and afflict him? Can I intentionally, with the flimsy plea of *justice* and self-defence, murder the man or the woman I love, or cause them to suffer bondage and affliction at my hands? The fables of ages past are not more fabulous and wanting in reason, than the idea that I can murder, or curse, what my soul loves.

A soldier of Christ is a paradox. There is no battle in the

Christian religion. The gospel of Christ is a gospel of love, and a follower of Christ is a disciple of love—not a soldier of war.

"Christ's church militant" on earth, as the Episcopal Church to which I belong calls itself, fights, if it fight at all, under the panoply of hell. Lucifer is the leader of all who fight, not Christ. In love there can be no fighting; love forgives, and bears the fruit of peace.

Let the graveyards of battle-fields give up their dead; let bleeding soldiers come forth with their mutilated bodies, fresh as on the day of battle, with broken and splintered bones; torn and mangled flesh; some with heads off; some with legs and arms off; some with perforated brains and hearts; and some with bowels torn away by infernal grape. Let these come forth in *real, not phantom* flanks; and in regiments of legions they will come; let them speak; ask all of them who ever heard about the love of Christ, and his teachings, if the paths of a soldier's life are "ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are paths of peace?" Ask them if war is Christianity. Ask a legion of desolate widows who were soldiers' wives—whose sympathies hover over these awful scenes; and the legion orphans, who were soldiers' sons and daughters—whose destitution, tears, sighs and sufferings, have made angels weep—ask them if war is the fruit of the advent of the blessed Jesus, who is the corner-stone and the foundation of Christianity? And listen to the response bursting from myriads of lips—"Oh, God! we suffer! Where was our Saviour? Where was the love of Christ? Shame on the maniacs that governed nations; that 'professed,' and reject Christ, and plunge the people, by force, into the deepest hell of earthly woe, by wars and fightings. Where is Christianity? where is the voice of love that calls humanity to happiness and heaven? We have known only the reverse."

Let women hold the reigns of nations, and they would set all the soldiers to farming, for the reason that they are better Christians than men are; they are nearer allied to heaven; they have more Christian forgiveness and Christian love. Women would never go to war.

Christians use pruning hooks and plowshares to do the work of life with. Soldiers use swords and guns. The Christian will not, cannot use weapons of war, for his condition is above war. Popular Christianity still clings to swords and guns. Lucifer's men may keep their powder dry and bayonets sharp; it is necessary—but for the men of Christ, wet powder and plowshares are just as good. The true Christian needs, nor owns, no magazines, no guns, nor arsenals, no navies, no militias. The popular Christian *must* have all these.

As high as the heaven of peace transcends the hell of contention in power, so high the power of Christian love transcends the power of human resistance, of human force, of human fights. Love invites; war drives. Love leads us to the gardens of beauty, where angels are; where Christ would lead us. War runs at us with a pitchfork, and drives us over a precipice into hell-fire. Christianity, by love, leads us to heaven; and war, by hatred, leads us to misery and suffering.

There is not an idea extant more utterly futile, than the idea that Christ rejuvenated and reinforced the laws of vengeance taught in the Old Testament, or that his dispensation of love was promulgated in the Old Testament; his name is not once written in the whole Old Testament record. But many prophecies are therein written about that sweet and holy dispensation of Love, that centuries of time alone could develop in the progressive growth of humanity, to be ultimated and first taugibly presented to human consciousness in the holy and divine Jesus Christ of Nazareth, in whose character, teachings and practical life was no war, no vengeance, no hatred, no antagonism, no recrimination. In him was the government of love first instituted. He buried the weapons of war. He banished the accursed law—"An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth"—and substituted the infinitely more potent law, which is love for hatred. He taught humility, meekness, kindness, charity and forgiveness that have no limits; not one of these elements can exist as a part and parcel in the composition of a good soldier.

A. B. C.

Toleration.

freedom and love you manifest, will you permit me to express a few thoughts to your numerous readers?

It is a known fact that some men cannot distinguish certain colors, which are nevertheless plain to other people. Other men cannot see objects plainly at a distance. So of the intellect. Some men cannot see the truth of propositions which are as plain to other minds as the colors which some fail to see. Now, as it would be folly for him who cannot distinguish the difference between two colors—clearly different to the eye of most people—to deny that any difference existed, merely because he could not perceive it, so also it is the manifestation of folly for a man to deny the truth of a proposition which other men say they clearly see, simply because he cannot see what is plain to other minds. Positive experience must always weigh against merely negative experience; as, for instance, if one man tells me he never saw a lion, and another man tells me he has, independent of other testimony, taking each of these men to be sincere, I must believe, on the testimony of the latter, that lions exist, although the former has never seen one. So, also, if one man says he has seen the truth of a certain proposition, it seems to me that other men cannot say the proposition is not true, but only, "I have not seen its truth."

Reasoning consists in the finding of one fact by the light of another fact; as, if I have a rule a foot long, and I find a stick of just the length of the rule, I say the stick also must be a foot long. But suppose the rule which I have *taken* to be a foot long, is really fourteen inches; all my conclusions, based upon my error respecting the rule, must be erroneous, because the rule by which I arrived at these conclusions is false.

Thus it *may* be true that man has, really, but little, or no absolute knowledge, excepting of his existence and experience; and of that, even, he knows but little; so that a man becomes more modest, and careful to not dogmatize, the more he becomes developed.

It is well known that multitudes of errors prevail on all subjects. Since all men take the opinions they hold, for guides, or lights, in judging what is truth, if their light or guide is false, must not their judgment be false, thus far, also? Hence it appears that, while relating to material things, all we *know* of them is, that they affect us through our senses in a certain manner. So of intangible things, presented to the *mind*; all we absolutely know, or can truthfully say of them, is, that they affect our minds so and so; as, either producing in us sentiments and emotions of approbation or disapprobation. Hence it is not safe to take, either the experience of others or of ourselves, as a certainly infallible guide, or light; I mean so far as to pronounce it absolute truth, the results of which are never to be modified or corrected by future experience. Although a man may tell me his experience, and I may also have experience similar myself, I will not feel myself infallible while following it; simply because both he and I may have had only a false or partial light in the case, and so all our experience in the premises may have been equally imperfect.

After writing the above, in agreement therewith, I can only say, such is my present mind on the subject of *truth*; and I will simply add a few, to my mind, important deductions. If the above reasoning be correct, at least while cherishing such views, we ought to be extremely tolerant toward all men. Would it not be the height of folly to censure our neighbor, because he did not agree with us as to the color of a piece of cloth? And since all men differ from all others, can it be expected that opinions or experience will be, in different minds, precisely similar? Is it not probable that no two human minds can perfectly agree, in either sentiment or emotion? How absurd, then, must it be, to use the tongue or pen for a *whip*, to lash a fellow-being into our traces! The longer I live the more I love toleration, and the more I dislike the least appearance of one man lording it over another. It is sweet to sit in council, where each acknowledges a full peer in every other one present; where only love and mutual toleration and forbearance prevail; nay, where every one is listening to every other one, to receive some new light, to aid in expanding and developing the soul. I love you, dear BANNER, because, generally, this sweet spirit is breathed by you, and seen in you; although occasionally one, like him of Athol toward Mrs. Spence, manifests a little crisping and tossing of the head. I love the mediumistic department, and the phenomenal or experimental department, especially. The more *experience* the better; it is always better than mere theory, or philosophy. Such an article as that of Brother Child, about his minister, will make more converts to the blessed truth than an hundred philosophical essays. Personal experience, simply narrated, has qualities which produce the most striking effects upon readers or hearers, as the history of Christianity abundantly testifies. I cannot say with others, "The experience of another is nothing to me." Nay, nay—it is very much to me, every way; and I, and all other men, make it the basis of action every day of life. We are daily in the habit of believing, undoubtingly, what others tell us they see and hear; and we always do it, unless special reasons induce the contrary. And, while testimony accumulates to support the same class of facts, popular incredulity feels the weight, and is yielding fast. It will not do for the Christian to reject testimony, because the entire Christian structure is based upon faith in human testimony; the Church receiving the Bible record upon the sayings of an hundredth part as many persons as testify to Spiritualism, and yet reject the modern revelation?

DELAVAN.

Letter from New Brighton, Pa.

DEAR BANNER—I send you the accompanying slip from the *New Brighton Times*, which will apprise you of the sojourn of J. V. Mansfield among us. The tests that he is giving, of spirit presence and communication, are incontestible. No candid person can enter his rooms without being convinced of this fact. The first condition indeed, essential to the *reception* of truth, is a spirit of candor and sincerity. The egotistical, the caviling, the bigoted, know the joys that flow from a child-like willingness to accept the truth, come from whatever source it may. The true man or woman will

"Seize upon truth wherever found,
On Christian or on heathen ground."

The world is beginning to see that, if a man would be wise he must not tie up to old landmarks, and continue forever revolving in the same circumscribed orbit, content with the little knowledge thus far evolved; but he will go forth as a tireless explorer after New Worlds of Thought, of Wisdom, and of Light. In the words of Emerson: "He in whom the love of truth predominates, will keep himself aloof from all moorings, and afloat."

We are glad Mr. Mansfield is with us; and, while we cannot expect to bring light to the darkened, bigoted mind, we see its blessed results already manifested in those who have come with a desire to know the truth. Still, even the most skeptical and bigoted are often confounded; but upon such the truth does not descend with its warming and vivifying power. They must *gradually* emerge from the frozen regions of their own frigid natures.

Mr. Mansfield continues his journey to St. Louis, and probably to New Orleans.

New Brighton, Pa., Dec. 8, 1859. } Yours, for all truth, MILO A. TOWNSEND.

We subjoin, in this connection, the articles referred to above:—

J. V. MANSFIELD.

MR. EDITOR—Permit me to present very briefly a statement, involving a strong test of spirit-communication, which was given at Mr. Mansfield's rooms in this place on Monday last.

Talbot Townsend wrote on a slip of paper the following:—"Dear brother David Townsend:—Is thee present? and if so, please say what was the cause of thy death."

This was carefully concealed from the medium's sight, and was enclosed in several folds of paper.

Instead of receiving a response from his brother David, however, the answer came from his father, Francis Townsend, as will be seen by what follows:

"My Dear Son—Thee has for thy dear brother David called. He is not present; and, were he, could not communicate at present. He has not strong communicative power. The manner of the dear one's death thee well knows.

To Talbot Townsend. Thy Father, FRANCIS.

This, it seems to me, Mr. Editor, involves a test which can be accounted for on no other hypothesis than that of the spiritual. A brother is called for, but the father, who has been in the spirit-land near fifty years, comes instead. This disposes of the theory of will-power, of mind-reading, of psychology, of electricity, or clairvoyance. Mr. Mansfield was utterly ignorant of the names of Francis, David or Talbot Townsend, or the relationship they bore to each other. This is a simple fact—and only one of ten thousand. How are these things, Mr. Editor, to be accounted for? Let those, who will, be candid and look them in the face, and if they can be solved on any other principle, than that of direct, palpable spirit-communication, then let the world have the benefit of it, and thus be saved from a great and increasing error.

Mr. Mansfield is a very courteous gentlemanly man, and desires to take no advantage in any way whatever. He has given away thousands of communications to those who have been unable to pay, which have gladdened many a sorrowing and desolate heart. But, for his time and labor thus spent in promoting what to millions is a great and sacred truth, it is indispensable that he should receive a recompense. And this he does from all who can afford to aid him in his mission.

New Brighton, Dec. 6, 1859. MILO A. TOWNSEND.

A REMARKABLE TEST OF SPIRIT-PRESENCE.

manifest, on Tuesday afternoon, occurred a remarkable incident, which I beg leave to relate for the benefit of all inquiring minds. There were present on this occasion Talbot Townsend, Edith W. Townsend, Elihu T. Pugh, Amos Hamlin and Milo A. Townsend.

We were conversing upon general topics, when, suddenly Mr Mansfield remarked, addressing himself more particularly to Talbot Townsend, "I see, and have seen several times, since I have occupied this room, and especially when you Mr. Townsend are present, a spirit who presents himself as a little child, and then as a full-grown man. What it means I do not know." In a few moments Mr. M. seemed impelled to sit up to the table, and taking his pencil wrote the following, while we sat wondering what was going to be written:

"My Precious Father—Through the assistance of my precious mother, now with me—long, long have I sought to come to thee, though nearly half a century an inhabitant of spirit-land. Yet I have sought thee early and late, and never before have had the pleasure of coming to thee. Mother Eliza has better control than I have, yet she cannot communicate fully. Oh! Father! thee will soon see as we do; thy sands of life have nearly run. Be encouraged, my father, and know a beautiful mansion awaits thee. I have desired to say much to thee, and so have thy sisters. But my strength fails me now. Mother sends love.

Excuse the want of 'plain language.' I was not old enough to learn any before I left the earth.

Thy Son, MILTON TOWNSEND.

The above, addressed to Talbot Townsend, purports to come from Milton Townsend, a son by his first wife Eliza. Milton was about a year old when he left the earth-form forty-eight years ago. Will those versed in theological or scientific lore give a satisfactory solution to the above facts, independent of the spiritual hypothesis? If so, they will be the world's benefactors, and will receive the thanks of the undersigned witnesses of this remarkable test of spirit-presence and power.

MILO A. TOWNSEND,
TALBOT TOWNSEND,
ELIHU T. PUGH,
EDITH W. TOWNSEND.

SECTARIANISM.

BY A CLERGYMAN.

We think it perfectly consistent with what daily experience teaches us, that there is no evil which shows itself more plainly to be detrimental to the moral interests of society than that of sectarianism, and we cannot consider it to be a necessary evil. It is true that man possesses a number of faculties, independent of each other—as our mental organization indicates—and these have a variety of developments, also an infinite number of combinations, of which, as a consequence, only one can exist in a single individual; and, therefore, a diversity of mind and talent must be the result, and consequently arises. This, of course, will account for the many *opinions* which may exist in Christendom, but does not sanction every dogma conceived by them as *truth*.

All religious views, of whatever denominations, are considered by their advocates to be emanations of the divine dictation. The doctrine of Christ seems plain and unmistakable to each Christian, but, as we have just observed, there is such a diversity of mind in the world, that different opinions were formed in regard to it; and those differences arising at the time of Christ, have multiplied, rather than grown less, as present time, and the history of the past abundantly testify. Zealous leaders have arisen, and each have not only ventured to interpret those doctrines as he might have seen fit, but instituted their various systems of dogmas, which now hold in bondage many minds of the present day.

Calvin, Wesley, Worcester, Fuller, Murray, and many other religious reformers, each maintained their own separate, peculiar views—and no doubt conscientiously—gaining their number of followers, who, in opposition to each other, sought to influence the world by their religious tenets; and even at this present time there exists a variety of denominations of Christians who would deem it contrary to the rules of Christian propriety to admit each other into their pulpits. And so what should prove itself worthy of that Christian principle taught by him whose followers they profess to be, which is to "love thy neighbor as thyself," is converted into a narrow-mindedness—each thanking God, like the self-righteous Pharisee, that he is not as other men are. So much do they fear counteracting influences, that perhaps we might with profit compare their religious opinions, or the leading tenets of their faith, and note the difference; for, as we have before seen, all acknowledge the same great Divine Teacher, and if their tenets are characteristically opposite, one or more of them *must* be erroneous.

1. They all believe God to be the universal Father of all men. There can be no dispute arising here, of course, and so we pass on to the next step.

2. They all acknowledge that Christ came to save mankind from sin, by the promulgation of his gospel tidings. Whether he *will*, or will *not* accomplish this, is not in our present consideration, only the simple fact, that he *came* to do it. No Christian will try to deny this, for this is a freely admitted fact.

3. Virtue is *according* to, and Vice is *opposite* to, the teachings of Christ and the dictates of our conscience.

4. Virtue will invariably meet its due reward, and Vice will always receive its due punishment.

Do not all denominations of Christians agree upon these points? And still others might be adduced which are equally as common.

But, it may be argued, there are many points about which they differ, too. We might then ask if there are *any* two persons who think exactly alike upon all points? May not two persons *walk* together, because they may choose to *dress* differently?

One person may cross a lake, another may travel around the eastern, and still another around the western side; but does not one gain a given point as honorably as the other? If each denomination desire to worship under chosen though variable forms, is not one as acceptable as the other? It is not the difference of the manner of worship which we consider to be an evil, but the "I am holier than thou" characteristic, that we find existing among the several churches. It would be impossible, in any city or town, for all persons to worship in the same *house*, providing all were of the same religious creed, any more than they do now; and, furthermore, it is well known that all the churches of any sect do not adhere to any prescribed list of forms any more than do the sects themselves, therefore it is not the want of outward *forms* to which we have reference, but that of the leading *principles* of the word of God, whom they profess to venerate and address as "Our Father who art in Heaven" that we wish to consider; for if "we are his offspring," and he loves us, we ought also, as the Apostle teaches us, "to love one another."

The teachings of Christ and his apostles are contradictory to such seclusions as this principle carries forward.

The Bible, with great earnestness, (and this they take as their sole guide,) stands a bitter reproof for all such uncharitableness, and voices seem to whisper in our ears, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. Love the brotherhood. If any man say I love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen." How can the seeker after truth, in view of this, be justified when he is in direct opposition to the guide which he professes to be his duty to rigidly follow.

Our Saviour says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself," showing that the whole law is included in the two facts of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man; and yet, with all the light which has been shed and revealed in favor of Christianity, these important facts have not been yet learned by many.

But many of them say, "We are willing to *unite* with the rest; let but the *other* denominations submit to our opinions, to our rule of faith and ideas of duty, and we will consummate a union. That we have been always willing to do."

Thus says *one*, and thus they *all* say; none willing to unite with the other, unless they will all embrace their peculiar, one-sided, sectarian views; and for this reason a union does *not* exist; and while they act upon this principle, it *never* will; and as long as these ideas remain, unfriendly and therefore unchristianlike feelings will exist among mankind.

But the law of progression will act upon this, as upon other things; and as time by this law *has* wrought great changes in regard to religion, we firmly believe that still *greater* are destined to be made; and we look forward to the time, which we believe is not far distant, (if we judge from the change that has been wrought in the past,) when such religious notions will be done away, and all shall seek, in the language of the Apostle, "to be of one mind, comforting one another."

Written for the Banner of Light.

"HAVE YOU FAITH IN GOD?"

BY MRS. L. M. WILLIS.

"Have you faith in God?"
I have faith in God, but my heart grows chill
As I turn to the battle and din,
For the victor that wins, and the conqueror's will
Is for wrong, oppression and sin.

"Have you faith in God?"
I have faith in God, but I see not the light
That shines from his luminous day;
I have faith in his promise, and trust in his might,
But my vision is shut from the way.

"Have you faith in God?"
Oh, ask me no more; I can trust in His love,
But the faith that gives all to Him,
That says on the earth, as in heaven above,
His will is ever supreme.

That faith in God, oh, would it might come
To all who wait and who pray,
That with steadfast eye, mid the din and alarm,
They might trust His eternal day.

From the Natick (Mass.) Observer.

Is it a Humbug?

MR. EDITOR—Seeing a notice of the wonderful doings of one of our citizens in the way of delineating character from handwriting, I called on the person, Mr. H. L. Bowker, with a letter of John Quincy Adams, and received the following, which I took down at the time. It is proper to say that the letter is dated Nov. 16, 1842, and was written to me as Secretary of the Natick Lycoum, in answer to an invitation to lecture, which Mr. Adams accepted, and also that Mr. Bowker did not know of my having such a letter, and I did not allow him to see the writing until after he had given the delineation, but gave him the letter folded. He took the letter in one hand, held it for an instant to his forehead, and said:

"A man of strong vital powers—strong power of endurance—round, plump built, well made, full, hard muscles, and possessed of great endurance, physical and mental. Has considerable tact and art—can plan well—is very systematic—fond of debate, argument and contention—takes hold of subjects with great force and comprehension—prefers to attack an antagonist by strategy, but will not shrink from an open assault when strategy won't avail. Is lively in conversation, and enjoys company and society. Has strong attachment for friends and enmity to foes—has a great many enemies, who are such from interest or prejudice, and not from any injury he has done them. Is not very wealthy, and devotes but little time to money making—has much work to do, and does it, but is sometimes desponding and disheartened—was not pleased with the method and circumstances of his early education—not suited. A man fitted for great undertakings—a leader—a man well qualified to govern—to meet opposition and overcome obstacles. Would make a good governor, on account of his strict integrity and moral honesty, and his comprehensiveness of mind and cool judgment. Has great moral courage, and if cornered will fight like a tiger. Is like his father physically, but possesses the mental characteristics of his mother. At time of writing had a great deal on his mind, and apprehends disaster, though things look bright for his future. Will occupy posts of honor, and be sought for as counsellor or adviser. Is a great reader—a reader of character and events—comprehends the relation of events—foresees—has an intuitive perception of coming events, which he often ascribes to reason. Is an antagonist to be dreaded—has had much to do with the world—has operated on a wide and extensive field—I have the impression of vastness, breadth and extensiveness, connected with his operations."

The above was given off by Mr. Bowker without hesitation, while pacing the room, the letter lying on the desk before me, folded, and it being utterly impossible for him to know by whom it was penned.

I send it to you as a curious exhibition of mental phenomena, and your readers can judge of its application to the character of Mr. Adams. Youre, J. B. MANN.

Only a Tinge of Purity.

MESSRS. EDITORS—A noted clergyman in your city was unexpectedly called upon, at the close of his Thanksgiving day's discourse, to perform the marriage ceremony. A leading Boston paper, in speaking of the affair, says:—

"The ceremony was performed in a very graceful manner by Rev. ——, who imparted a fresh interest to this familiar but always interesting rite, by the eloquent remarks with which he prefaced it. "The marriage tie," said he, "is the holiest of all human relations. The first union in the garden of Eden was between hearts as pure as angels; *and ever since the fall, a TINGE of this purity has clustered around and clung to the nuptial bond.*"

The above nonsensical twaddle—not to say *insult* to humanity—hardly requires comment. It was doubtless very gratifying to the parties concerned, to be informed "in a graceful and eloquent manner," that the union they thus sought publicly to solemnize, had in it a *tinge*—just a tinge—of the purity of their first parents! Comforting assurance, indeed! Very *providential* that the Fall of Man left even a *reflection* of a moral tinge!

But will the reverend gentleman explain how the marriage tie "is the HOLIEST of all human relations," and yet "only a *tinge* of the purity of our primitive parents clusters around it?" If we have so far fallen below them as to have only a tinge of the original purity of this "holiest of human relations," then, indeed, the sooner we have done with that relation the better.

The idea that such clerical nonsense as that quoted above should "impart a fresh interest to the marriage rite," is altogether *too fresh* to be *palatable*. The audience must have dispersed well nauseated *morally*, and if delicately organized must have sat down to their "Thanksgiving dinners" with even their *gastronomic* powers in a somewhat unsettled condition.

N. T. L.

Lawrence, Mass.

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Containing HENRY WARD BEECHER'S and EDWIN H. CHAPIN'S SERMONS, may be procured at this office. Mail orders promptly attended to.

Upon matters which are affected by feeling and sentiment, the judgment of woman surpasses that of man; her more sensitive nature carries her to heights which his coarser nature cannot reach.

MOVEMENTS OF LECTURERS.

Two lines, under this head, will be inserted free of charge. All over two lines must be paid for at the rate of *six cents per line for each insertion wanted.*

Lecturers will please remit, after the first insertion, at the above rate. The increasing demand upon us in this department renders this step necessary. Changes in appointments will be made free of charge, at any time.

MRS. AMANDA M. SPENCE will lecture in Boston, 4 Sundays of Dec.—Norwich, 4 Sundays of March. Taunton, 2 Sundays of Jan.—Willimantic, 2 Sundays of April. Foxboro', 3 Sundays of Jan.—Philadelphia, 4 Sundays of May. Providence, 4 Sundays of Feb.

Address, the above places, or Station A, New York City.

WARREN CHASE lectures Dec. 25th, in Waltham; Dec. 27th, 28th and 29th, in Windsor, Ct.; Jan. 1st, in Hartford, Ct.; Jan. 3d, 4th and 5th, in Winstead, Ct.; Jan. 8th, 15th, and 22d, in Dodworth's Academy, New York; Jan. 29th, Newark, N. J.; four Sundays of Feb. in Philadelphia. Address for January at our office, 143 Fulton street, New York.

MISS EMMA HARDINGE speaks in December, in New Orleans. For Southern cities address care of N. C. Folgar, Esq., New Orleans. In January and February, Miss Hardinge speaks in Memphis and Cincinnati, and in March in Philadelphia and the East. Postoffice address generally 8 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

JOHN MAYHEW, M. D., will visit Grand Haven, Grand Rapids, Lyons, Ionia, and other places in Northern Michigan, where his services may be desired. Friends on this route will address him before the end of this month at Grand Haven. This will probably be his last journey in Michigan. From the middle of January to March 1st, he will labor in Indiana, and from thence, to April 30th, in Illinois, and the eastern part of Iowa. Letters from the three last named States may be directed, if before the end of the year, to the care of S. Brotherton, Pontiac, Mich.

F. L. WADSWORTH speaks Dec. 25th, in Attica; Jan. 1st, in Delphi; 8th, in Elkhart; 15th, in Sturgis, Mich; 22d, in Adrian. He can be addressed as above.

ANNA M. MIDDLEBROOK will lecture in Providence, Dec. 25th, Jan. 1st and 8th. Applications for week evenings will be attended to. Address, Box 422, Bridgeport, Conn.

DR. P. B. RANDOLPH'S address, till further notice, will be Boston, care of Banner of Light. Enclose stamp for return letter.

MRS. CHARLOTTE M. TUTTLE'S address will be at West Winsted, Ct., during the winter, and the time of her present sickness, which is very delicate, and any messages from friends to aid to cheer her, will be thankfully received.

MISS ELIZABETH LOW, trance speaker, of Leon, Cattaraugus Co., New York, lectures at Ellington and Rugg's Corners, (Cattaraugus Co., N. Y.,) every fourth Sabbath. She will answer calls to lecture in Chautauque and Cattaraugus Counties.

MISS A. W. SPRAGUE will speak in St. Louis, Missouri, through the month of Dec. Her address while there will be care of James H. Blood, Box 3391, where those who wish her to call, as she returns eastward, can address her accordingly.

MRS. M. S. TOWNSEND will speak in Marlboro', December 25th.

LINDLEY M. ANDREWS, superior lecturer, will visit the South and West this fall and winter. Address him, either at Yellow Springs, Ohio, or at Mendota, Ill.

H. P. FAIRFIELD will speak in New Bedford, Mass., Sunday, Dec. 25th. Those who may wish to engage his services on week evenings will address him at the above named places.

MRS. MARY MACOMBER, Carpenter street, Grant Mill, care of Z. R. Macomber, Providence, R. I. She will speak at Willimantic, Conn., Dec. 25th. Mrs. Macomber contemplates visiting California in the Spring.

LEO MILLER will answer calls to lecture in any part of New England, on "The Facts and Philosophy of Spiritualism." Address, Hartford, Conn. 10—10t°

MRS. FANNIE BURBANK FELTON will lecture in New York and Brooklyn in Philadelphia the fourth Sunday of Dec. and first two of January. Address, until Dec. 20th, No. 12 Lamartine Place, 20th street, New York; and until January 10th, No. 510 Arch street, Philadelphia.

J. H. RANDALL intends to travel through the central and western part of New York, during the months of January and February, 1860, and will answer calls to lecture, to the friends of truth, during those months, through that section. Address Northfield, Mass. 11—6p°

MRS. J. W. CURRIER will lecture in Lawrence, Dec. 25th and Jan. 1st; in Huntington, 8th; in Modus, Ct., evenings of the 10th and 12th; in Chicopee, 15th, 22d and 29th; in Putnam, Ct., Feb. 5th; in Foxboro', 12th and 19th; in Marblehead, 26th. Applications for the Spring should be sent in as early as possible. Address Box 815, Lowell, Mass.

MISS SUSAN M. JOHNSON, trance speaker, may be addressed at Clinton street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

MISS M. MUNSON, San Francisco, Cal.
MRS. SARAH M. THOMPSON, Toledo, Ohio.
A. B. FRENCH, Clyde, Sandusky Co., Ohio.
F. T. LANE, Lawrence, Mass.
L. K. COONLEY'S address during December will be Memphis, Tenn., care of J. E. Chadwick.
MRS. J. W. CURRIER, Lowell, Mass., box 815.
CHARLES H. CROWELL, Watertown, Mass. Address, BANNER OF LIGHT office.
WILLIAM E. RICE, 142 Harrison Avenue, Boston.
MISS A. F. PEASE'S address will be New York City, till further notice.
MISS ELLA E. GIBSON, Barre, Mass.
MRS. H. F. M. BROWN, "Agitator" office, Cleveland, Ohio.
J. H. CURRIER, Lawrence, Mass.
DR. JAMES COOPER, Bellefontaine, Ohio.
CHARLES W. BURGESS, Inspirational Speaker. Box 22, West Killingly, Conn.
REV. JOHN PIERPONT, West Medford, Mass.
MISS SARAH A. MAGOUN, No. 33 Winter street, East Cambridge, Mass.
MISS LIZZIE DOTEN, Plymouth, Mass.
H. L. BOWKER, Natick, Mass., or 7 Davis street, Boston.
BENJ. DANFORTH, Boston, Mass.
ELIJAH WOODWORTH, Leslie, Mich.
C. T. IRISH, Taunton, Mass., care of John Eddy, Esq.
A. B. WHITING, Providence, R. I.
MRS. BERTHA B. CHASE, West Harwich, Mass.
E. R. YOUNG, box 85, Quincy, Mass.
LOVELL BEEBE, North Ridgeville, Ohio.
MRS. S. MARIA BLISS, Springfield, Mass.
PROF. J. E. CHURCHILL, No. 202 Franklin street, near Race, Philadelphia
MRS. J. B. SMITH, Manchester, N. H.
DR. C. C. YORK, Boston, Mass.
J. C. HALL, Buffalo, N. Y.
CHARLES P. RICKER, Lowell, Mass.
A. C. ROBINSON, Fall River, Mass.
LORING MOODY, Malden, Mass.
MRS. J. R. STREETER, Crown Point, Ind.
N. S. GREENLEAF, Lowell, Mass.
MISS SUSAN M. JOHNSON, North Abington, Mass.
MRS. A. P. THOMPSON, Raleigh, N. C.
MRS. FRANCES O. HYZER, Montpelier, Vt.
MRS. M. H. COLES, care of Bela Marsh, 14 Bromfield street, Boston.
H. A. TUCKER, Foxboro', Mass.
GEORGE ATKINS, Boston, Mass.
DR. H. F. GARDNER, 46 Essex street, Boston, Mass.
LEWIS B. MONROE, No. 14 Bromfield street, Boston.
DANIEL W. SNELL, No. 6 Prince st., Providence, R. I.
CHRISTIAN LINDY, care of Benj. Teasdale, box 221, Alton Illinois.
DEXTER DANA, East Boston, Mass.
JOHN C. CLUER, Residence, No. 5 Bay street, Boston.
J. J. LOCKE, Greenwood, Mass.

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N. B.—No notice taken of letters unless they contain the fee for examination. 3m Nov. 26.

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Dec. 24. tf

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HENRY WARD BEECHER

AT

PLYMOUTH CHURCH, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Sunday Evening, Dec. 11th, 1859.

REPORTED FOR THE BANNER OF LIGHT, BY T. J. ELLINWOOD.

TEXT.—"These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews; for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him."—John ix, 22, 23.

What were the words that, for fear of the Jews, these parents spake? They consisted of two truths, one lie, and a device. The case was as follows: A blind man had been healed by Christ's miraculous power. It was a very remarkable instance. The man had been blind from his birth. It was therefore a hopeless case. It was not, then, within medical relief. Of course natural means could not cure him. That which did cure him was in danger of being thought divine; and that was a thing which they could not afford to have take place.

It seems that the neighbors first took the matter in hand.

"The neighbors therefore, and they which had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him"—they were cautious; they did not mean to commit themselves—"but he said, I am he. Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?"

A gaping, staring, curious crowd they were, that questioned him thus.

"He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus, made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash; and I went and washed, and I received my sight. Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not."

Now the thing was so curious, was so remarkable, and was exciting so much attention, so much thought, so much feeling, so much speculation, that it could not be allowed to pass. The man was therefore brought to the Pharisees who had in charge the religion of the times.

"They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind. And it was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see."

He began to be a little stirred up, and therefore he made his reply a little more curt and brief than when the neighbors asked him.

"Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them."

But next witnesses were called.

"The Jews did not believe concerning him that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? How then doth he now see? His parents answered and said"—and now you have an exquisite specimen of worldly wisdom; now you will see how a man can lie, and yet speak the truth all the while; now you can see how men will dodge and evade, for fear of responsibility, a very small matter—"his parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him; he shall speak for himself."

So it slipped off, and they got out. And it is added: "These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews; for the Jews had agreed already"—for the purity of the faith, you know; for the maintenance of sound belief and good order in the church; for the vindication of the authority of ecclesiastical affairs!—"for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ"—no matter what the evidence might be—"he should be put out of the synagogue."

In those days a man had to go out of the synagogue to be an honest man!

"Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him."

Then the questioning was renewed.

"Again they called the man that was blind, and said unto him"—with remarkable piety; because you know that often when selfish, obstinate, headstrong men are determined to do wrong, they fall into most profound moods of piety; nothing is so pious as worldly men are [illegible] "give thou glory to God: we know that this man was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner."

Now they could not have said anything more wounding to the heart of this grateful, truth-telling, fearless man, and he strongly resented it. He said:

"One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. Then said they to him again"—for that rather opened the controversy once more—"What did he to thee?"—*anyhow*, as it were—"how opened he thine eyes?"

His patience had quite failed. He could not stand this catechizing any longer.

"He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again?"—as much as to say, Are you so curious because you are going to be his disciples—"will ye also be his disciples? Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses's disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses; as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is."

The man, having got his temper up, was not disposed to let the matter rest there, and replied to them. He said:

"Why, herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes"—as much as to say, It is strange that you, who are religious teachers, and know so much, do not know from whence he is, that has done such a wonderful thing as to open my eyes. "Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshiper of God, and doeth his will, he heareth him."

The man had considerable knowledge, when they got him down to it.

"Since the world began, it was not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing."

Well, there did not seem to be any very good answer for them to make, so they replied as follows:

"Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out."

And that—the casting out—was an irrefragable argument!

There is but one pleasant scene in the whole case, and that is the simple fidelity of this grateful man to the truth, and the unflinching witness borne to Christ, to his own damage. There is no question that at the time the event under consideration took place, this man cut the worst figure of all who had to do with it. The synagogue stood, all the officers and the parents were in good favor, everybody smiled, and everything was pleasant and brotherly, except so far as this one man was concerned. He, poor, miserable fellow, ran his head against authority recklessly, and was kicked out of the synagogue, and stood all alone! And that is the whole history of what occurred at that time. But there is another part of the history which we must read.

"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him"—for it seems that he went out to hunt for him—"he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said"—and with the same simplicity and unpretending truthfulness which had characterized his replies to the other questions that had been put to him—"Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee."

And there was some Divine power in those words of Christ, for the narrative goes on to say:—

"He"—the man—"said, Lord, I believe. And he worshiped him."

Happy man! Blessed expulsion, that put him out of the synagogue that he might go into the arms of God! It was a day in which not only his eyes were opened, but his heart likewise, so that everlasting life entered in.

Let me look, however, a little more at large at this case, now that we have gone through it by the text.

I. Christ, in the exercise of Divine sovereignty in mercy, had opened the blind man's eyes in a way not expected, not authorized, and not likely to reflect credit upon the Jewish church. It was an entirely uncanonical, irregular act. This council of the Pharisees resented it. We believe now, what they did not then believe—that God was a Sovereign, and had a right to administer his mercy in any way which pleased him best. God administers his mercy yet in the same way. He reveals himself to men under all church administrations. There are good men to be found in every organization, and there are good men to be found outside of all organizations. Men are Christian men under all creeds, in all churches, and out of churches, and away from all creeds. There are some men in every sect that are found of God, and saved by the power of Christ's love; and yet every sect is very apt to arrogate to itself the only way of salvation, and to doubt the genuineness of any work of grace performed without its permission or privity. Those of each sect think, or are apt to think, that God loves them chiefly, as being the purest repository of the best truths, and that he loves others, if at all, only remotely. We are apt to suppose that God bestows his promised mercies upon that part of Zion to which we ourselves belong, and that only his uncovenanted mercies come to other parts. The sun for us, and only the moon for those that disagree with us—that spirit is as much alive today as it was in olden times; for it is not a Jew spirit: it is human nature. In the Papacy it is organized and systematized; but human nature is essentially Papistical. Its disposition is to be despotic, and arrogate to itself superiority, and despise and condemn those that do not agree with it.

God's liberty and mercy are vastly larger than man's instrumentality or recognition of them. God blesses the truths that men hold, but there are a great many truths blessed of God that men do not hold. God blesses truths held in particular ways, and he blesses other truths that are not so held. In the spiritual edification of men, and in their souls' salvation, God accepts instruments of usefulness which men set up in their ecclesiastical forms; but then, he goes beyond that: the stream of grace is not limited to certain channels. It flows in them, and outside of them: it overflows them.

The spirit of sect, of party, of ecclesiasticism, is not simply selfish: it is audacious, and clouds and degrades the grandeur of the Divine sovereignty—the freedom with which God dispenses his mercies over all the earth, saying, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and whom I will, I will harden," reserving to himself, and not entrusting to the care of any organized body of men, the right to do as it pleaseth him.

II. The Jewish priests had fallen into the following mistakes:

They had made their own minds the measure of all truth; in other words, they had assumed that the truth which they had at that time was to be the measure of all truth.

They had come to consider the synagogue as the indispensable means of truth. All things were to be judged, therefore, as true or not true, by the simple circumstance of their agreement or disagreement with, their favorable or unfavorable influence upon, the welfare of the synagogue. Whatever tended to promote its peace was presumptively good and true; and whatever tended to lessen or destroy its peace, was presumptively mischievous and false. They had come to believe that it was more important to maintain the authority and dignity of the synagogue, than it was to ascertain truths that had not been known or felt.

To do this they thought themselves justifiable in refusing to receive evident truth—to receive what men not so committed perceived to be true. They would not receive anything which had not already been believed. They attempted to pervert an ingenuous and honest nature, and to persuade the man to be false to his own moral convictions, for the sake of agreement with the establishment; and they did not consider the mischief of making a man dishonest to his own conscience, and treacherous to his own understanding for the sake of preventing disagreement with the ecclesiasticism of the synagogue.

But one of the most striking exhibitions of moral obliquity is here made, when they deliberately hold up a mere canon or artificial observance, in comparison with a great humanity. For instance, Christ had healed this man who was born blind. He had shown the power of God in himself, not merely in the miracle of healing, but in this more remarkable thing—the Divine kindness of it. But in their judgment the moral nature of this deed was nothing when weighed against the fact that he did it on Sunday. It was done on the Sabbath day, and they put this fact in the balance against the fundamental principle of humanity; and they esteemed the violated canon more than that principle. Their moral sense was so undeveloped, or so perverted, that they could not see the superiority of this great moral fact over a mere instrumental arrangement. They attempted by all intimidations and persuasions to make this man bear false witness. They expelled him from the church, finally, simply because he was true to his convictions; not because he was a disturber—he had made no disturbance; not because he was bad—there is every evidence that he was good; not because there was anything in him whatsoever, except this: that he was a living witness to the grace and power of God upon him, body and soul, in such a way that he would be a rebuke to their synagogical procedures.

Now in all this the Jews were not wrong in trying new things by the standard of old things; but they were wrong in trying them in a blind and obstinate spirit. We are obliged to learn new things by a comparison of them with old things. They were not wrong in being slow to run after novelties; but they were wrong in refusing to know and recognize a true moral basis, in new developments. They were not wrong in looking carefully after their disciples and members; but they were wrong in regarding it as more important that they should be good members of the synagogue, than good men. It was not wrong for them to wish to keep up the authority and dignity of this institution; but it was wrong for them to do so by ways which blinded the eye, rendered the conscience narrow, and excluded the truth, substituting for it mere ecclesiastical legislation. They were not wrong in giving importance to ecclesiastical regulations; but they were wrong in making ecclesiasticism superior to moral truth itself, of which it is to be a mere instrument and servant. They were not wrong in laboring with men, to bring them to see as they saw; but they were wrong in thinking that a man was safer or better who had renounced his secret convictions for the sake of church fellowship. It was not wrong that they should expel a man from the church who was at hopeless disagreement with it, or a cause of discord in it; but they were bitterly wrong in having such an organization that honesty, fidelity, gratitude, and artless simplicity, had to be laid aside for the sake of concord. The peace of the church is a very good thing; but it is a shame to have a church in which peace can be had only by moral obliquity. It is indeed a sad thing for a church when good men cannot stay in it. It is a sad thing for a church when it may be said of the offending members which it has cast out, that they are better than those that abide within. It is a dreadful thing for a church to be so narrowly organized that it cannot receive whom Christ does.

There are a great many things in this history which our own times might look at with profit. But few of them, however, can I mention this evening.

1. There is great danger in holding religious creeds in such a narrow way as that they shall blind the conscience, hinder the truth, and prevent intelligent religious life, instead of promoting it. I am not of those who believe that creeds are useless. I do not think it to be a question of option with a man whether he shall have creeds or not. I think they are an indispensable necessity. There is no man that thinks distinctly; there is no man that perceives the connection between his ideas; there is no man that is bred to draw conclusions from premises, who is not obliged to have some settled forms of belief. Whether you write these forms of belief down, or whether they are unwritten and you live them, they are creeds. Every thinking man, intelligent, or civil, or philosophic, or moral, unavoidably weaves some substantial and definite form of belief, and that is his creed. The mischief of creeds has never been the fact of their existence. That is a fact which cannot be helped. The mischiefs of creeds have arisen from the peculiar uses to which they are put.

Now I hold that it is desirable for a man's own sake, for charity, distinctness of thought and purpose, that he should understand, as far as possible, the great elementary principles of religion. They are also good for purposes of instruction in the household, in the school, and in the congregation. The principal facts and heads of doctrine, established as the basis of instruction, are very important helps in the marking out of the line of religious development. In them are gathered together the judgments and discoveries of good men in different ages. We reap the benefits of past experiences and accummulations in religious things, as well as in social things.

Creeds are also good as a means of drawing men into communities, and giving homogeneousness to organization. Where men have defected in the truth, and gone backwards into decline, creeds are excellent as points for rallying—as trumpet-points, where men may begin to call persons back from apostacy. But then, they are liable to the following perversions:

They are liable to inspire the notion among men that their creeds cover the whole ground of truth, and represent substantially, in outline, the whole moral system of God's universe. Now there is no warrant in the Bible for any such notion, and the moment any man says there is, he is convicted either of arrogance on one side, or ignorance on the other. The whole drift of God's Word is this: How shall a man be reconciled with God? How shall a man be redeemed from the power of sin? The whole Bible, including the Old Testament and the New, is concentrated on this practical point: such good training of the individual man that his moral nature shall be purified, and that the heaven of the soul shall be begun on earth, in order that it may be perpetuated hereafter. The whole drift of this Book is to teach practical holiness of life and character. It does not claim to sweep the compass, and give the great outlines and demarkations of the whole moral system of God's universe. That there are many disclosures of good in the Bible, that it contains many features of moral government, that it affords us all that is necessary for the development of the individual character, is not to be denied; but it does not include the whole of truth. There are many indications that truths set forth in the Bible are broken off from their connection with the whole moral system of administration. The apostle distinctly states that this is so. He declares in Corinthians that our best knowledges are fragmentary. Indeed, he goes further, and gives intimations that there is no such thing as perfect knowledge in this world respecting spiritual truths. He teaches, in regard to our moral developments, that we are like children in this world, and that we shall only ripen into full manhood in the world to come. His words are these: "We know in part, and we prophecy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things." The purport of these and the accompanying words of the apostle is, that we are under the dominion of faith in this world, but that when perfect love shall come in the future, we shall be men grown, shall have more complete ideas of manhood, and shall see and know even as we ourselves are seen and known.

God leaves moral truths to be found out through evolutions of human life, just as he does social truths, civil truths, and scientific truths; and much must be added to what is given us before we can form the connections of a whole moral system. There is in the world enough moral truth to enable every man to know how to be an honest, pure, faithful, believing man; there is enough to reconcile man to God; there is enough to cause immortality to dawn before the human soul; there is enough to lift a man above the power of the present; there is enough to enable a man to resist temptations; there is enough to make a man a Christian; there is that on which hang all the law and the prophets. The whole law is fulfilled in the one command, *Thou shalt love.*

When, therefore, a creed presents itself as being a completed system, symmetrical, balanced in all its parts, it is to be rejected at once. In presenting itself thus, it transcends its proper function. When it makes itself an arbitrary judge and measure of all truths which come up and seek admission, it is hateful to God, and ought to be hateful to man; for it puts itself in the place of God. As if truth had been crystallized; as if the bounds of truth had been established; as if our knowledge of truth was as perfect as the truth itself!

When creeds are employed so that men of blameless lives, of holy and pure dispositions, cannot abide in the church, unless they assent to them against their convictions, then they are anti Christian, despotic, and most mischievous. For no creed can be rightly held which condemns a man whom God loves, whose life is redolent of Divine grace, and whose good will and rectitude are open before God and man. If any creed is not large enough to take in such a man, it is the worse for the creed, and not for the man.

If it be said that men have a right to organize upon the basis of any belief they choose, and to exclude all who have no agreement with them, we assent to it: they have a *right* to do it, in the eye of the law. It is the same right that men have to live in caves, instead of houses; to eat roots and acorns, instead of bread; to wear skins, instead of cloth; to drive herds, instead of following improved husbandry. No doubt men have this right. It is not the civil right of men to form organizations on the basis of any belief they choose that we question, but the moral elevation of such organizations; their relations to God's kingdom; their agreement and sympathy with that Divine Providence which, in every age, is carrying the world forward.

I hold not only that creeds are to be made, but that the great trouble is, men do not make enough of them, and do not change them often enough. The people of a hundred years ago could not think with the comprehensiveness and depth with which we of the present can think; and we of the present cannot think with the comprehensiveness and depth with which the men of a hundred years to come will be able to think. Every age, with all its multiplied discoveries, is enabled to think more comprehensively and more deeply than the age which preceded it. I therefore hold not only that creeds are good, but that there are not enough of them. Every year—I had almost said every day—should gather its own manna. I hold that every generation ought to think again, and change its phraseology; for words are living things, and signify not merely what they are etymologically, but what there is clustering around them. The thoughts and habits, and associations, and feelings of men, are perpetually changing the style of the language they employ. Language consists not merely of what is grammatically, but of what the heart puts into it. And religious truths ought to be re-stated according to the experience of the age. Every church ought to change its creed as often as new developments of truth are made. If every church would change its creed in every decade of years, it would be less contracted, and more able to do good. For we can change our form of stating the truth, without changing its substance, just as a physician can change the proportions of the remedies he administers, without changing their nature.

It ought, however, to be understood that the subject of creeds, not only, but the matters of which they are composed, can never again have the same relations to human life and the church that they once have had. Christians are in danger of getting into habits of credulity, and of worshiping abstractly-stated creed-beliefs. When creeds were the sharp, defining lines between an artistic heathenism and an undeveloped Christian, ethical life, then they were of transcendent importance. There have been times when the ignorance of men made creeds indispensable. There are cases recorded in the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians, in which men had to be told that incense was incompatible with Christian experience! But after men have come out of the Egypt of heathenism; after all the more general questions relating to Christian experience are settled, then these defining lines are not so necessary. While men are surveying, the chain, the spy-glass, the quadrant, the theodolite, and the other surveyor's instruments may be used; and after the lines are drawn, and the stakes are driven, they may be used to verify the measurements made, or to modify those measurements; but after the work is done, the necessity for these instruments ceases. And while men were being brought out of heathenism into the ethics of Christian experience, it was important that they should have specifications and applications which cannot be of any use to them now, when that work is done.

When belief was not separated from civil conduct, as was the case in early times, there was a potency in creeds that they cannot have again. In early periods men look at things in a lump, and the tendency is to reduce *genera* into species; and every man in social life is his own tailor, his own lawyer, his own shoemaker, his own doctor; but, as society progresses, the various callings are distributed, and he gives his tailoring to one man, his law business to another man, his shoemaking to another man, and his doctoring to another man. When society began, men regarded everything as property which they touched. They even regarded a man's wife and children as his property. At length the line of property came to be more marked and distinct, so that no man that was white was regarded as property. All human beings, with the exception of nigritious persons, were looked upon as superior to property. And so, in earlier periods, there was no distinction between belief and conduct. Truth and character were developed together. When such was the state of things, believing wrong was just the same as acting wrong: not to believe right was a crime. And then, when a man was obliged to maintain himself intact by both civil law and faith, creeds had a significance and importance which they cannot have now, when we have made discriminations, and determined that civil law shall touch a man's conduct only.

These times having passed away, how many sources of knowledge have opened, and are opening! All the things that were believed in the past may now be believed, in substance, but not in form and proportions. They have been changed, and will be further changed. Truth does not grow, but our knowledge of it does. Truth does not change, but our statements of it must. Therefore there can be no such thing as fixity of creed. Where there is not apathy of mind, and where there is thought-life in a church, there will be continual changing in its creed-forms.

For example, do you suppose that an age when men believed that monarchy was the only heavenly-appointed government in the world; when men, from their infancy, were taught that the king represented God's favorite idea; when men were taught that the priest was God's favorite symbol of interpretation—do you suppose that such an age could interpret the character of God, who is not only a Judge and a King, but a Father? I speak it with reverence—an age of pure and universally-believed monarchy, furnished an analogue of God in which his personal and private and domestic character could not be adequately balanced against his governmental character. When such an age passes away, and is followed by one in which God is regarded as a father instead of a monarch, with this simple change will come an entirely different system of inferences. The whole question of Divine influence, and of personal connection between the soul and God, depending upon whether he is a mere sovereign, or a Being possessed of attributes like our own, will divide the world into two systems. We are fast approaching a day when there shall be an administration, not to repeat, but to re-interpret, the words of the Bible in respect to what the Divine Nature is. As men's ideas are enlarged, and rendered fuller and more accurate, they will come into more intimate relations with the Divine Being. Nothing will be taken from God's power, but it will be placed on a basis where it will be more efficacious and more beneficial in making men holy.

An age in which it was understood that celibacy was the chief virtue, that the family was an infirmity, and that fatherhood was a blemish, was not an age to interpret God, who teaches us to come to him, saying, "Our Father." The Lord's Prayer, which is the gate to the very presence of God himself, is far from being designed to teach us to throw fatherhood into the secondary catalogue of truths.

But we have passed on from those periods. We have in social life better interpreting mediums, and in civil life there has been a great change going on in the minds of men, in the right direction. The changes have been more rapid there than in the forms of church creeds. A new party always protests against the cramping influence of the old party. The advancement of the church is often manifested in this way. A change is continually going on in the thoughts of men in the church all over the world, in respect to moral government, grounds of responsibility, etc., and they are asking for an expression of their enlarged ideas in their respective creeds. The conflict between the old forms of creed, and the new forms of belief, has been going on, is going on, and will continue to go on; and in the end the truth will always insist upon having the garments of creeds cut to its form.

The application of scientific methods to the investigation of moral truth is just in its infancy. I hold that in years to come there is to be a clarity and an efficacy of moral teachings based upon exact scientific processes, which were not known in times past.

The interpretation of the Bible is in two parts: the interpretation of the letter—the grammatical, exegetical interpretation; and the interpretation of the spirit. In respect to both of these interpretations we are in the midst of very great advancement. There never was a period of the world in which there was so much progress made in the knowledge of the whole spirit of the Bible. Scholarship, at least, is bearing fruits worth plucking. Pedantry is giving way. We are in just that period of the world where we can reap the benefits of the gathered treasures of thousands of years—where we can enjoy the light that has been thrown on the text of the Bible during past ages.

We have interpreted the text, but that which is more important yet remains to be done; namely, the work of interpreting the spirit. When the Bible says "rock," the dictionary may interpret the Hebrew word, so that we can understand what it means, and we may go to nature and study the qualities of rock; but when the Bible says "goodness," we have got to go to life to understand what that means. When the Bible says "house," or "mountain," or "river," or "tree," or "apple," or anything else which has respect to physical things, we can understand what is meant by the interpretation of the text; but when it says things which have respect to the heart, we are obliged, in order to understand what is meant, to go from the text, and study the heart. In regard to the natural objects spoken of in Scripture, we can find out what is meant by reference to nature; but in regard to the interior processes of our being of which it speaks, we cannot find out what is meant without referring to our interior being. In order to know what is meant by *holiness*, by *moral character*, and by *right and wrong*, we are obliged to go to the human soul itself.

In the providence of God, men are coming to a more perfect knowledge of individual life and collective life, and of family relations and civil relations. These are so many rays of light cast upon the pages of God's Word, out of which shall come a larger conception and a better knowledge of God and his ways, and of man and his duties and possibilities. We stand on the eve of augmentations of truth. This is shown by the shaking and breaking up of men. We see one and another running out in dissent. These things alarm many men, but they do not trouble me at all. I regard them as needful. The days of March always bluster between winter and summer, as if it blew both ways. And in periods of transition, when men are passing from lower to higher conceptions of truth, we must expect that there will be disturbances among them. Whenever God called the camp of the Israelites to break up, and they packed their chests, and got together their bundles and effects, in making ready to march, there was tribulation and turmoil in their midst; but when the trumpet sounded, and tribe after tribe swept off, they made another advance toward the promised land. And these shakings and breakings up in the church, promise to advance her one step toward the promised land.

[illegible] dacity of men's minds; but after the lapse of a score or a hundred of years, these things become idolized. Augustine, who was considered as an innovator by men who were cotemporaneous with him, was worshiped by those who came after him. Zuinglius, Melancthon, Luther, Calvin, and many others, who were looked upon as innovators by men of their own times, were looked back to with the greatest gratitude by men of after times. When Jonathan Edwards, the brightest lamp of centuries on these shores, stood forth, ten thousand bats flew round him, and myriads of moths and millers tried to put out his light, and he was regarded as a great innovator; but in our time there is no lack of men who worship Jonathan Edwards. And, strange to say, the very men who worship these bright examples of Christian heroism, take their old bones, as Samson took the jaw-bone of an ass, and stand in the way of the truths which they sought to establish. In the name of these righteous men, they try to keep back those who mean to follow their examples. For to follow their examples is not to rest satisfied with the beliefs which they held: it is to act toward your belief as they acted toward theirs. To gather seed-forms of truth, and plant them, and nurture them, is to act in imitation of them—not a blind imitation of their deeds, but rather an imitation of their spirit, which led them to tell the world that the wisest and truest men were they who looked where dawning truth was, that they might accept it at the hands of God.

Thus much for creeds.

I need not tell you, who are accustomed to sit here, which side I belong to, and to which side my ministrations will always be devoted. As long as I maintain my present feelings, I shall be forever on the side of the new truths; not because they are *new*, but because they are *truths*. Every new claim is not a truth. Every novelty is not something to be reckoned in the creed. But I live in sympathy with that which shall advance any truth. I hail and rejoice in every opening that seems to throw light on the nature of man, on moral obligation, and on Divine providence in human affairs. At the same time, I would not deride old forms of belief. I revere them; I use them; but I will not be domineered over by them. I will state what things I know without fear. Whether men accept them or reject them is not so much my business as theirs. You are as as free as I am. You are not bound by my speaking, in your belief, but I am bound by my conscience and my fealty to God, to say the things I do believe, and not to pretend to believe what I do not believe, or to withhold increasing light, if he may please to make me the medium for its transmission to the world. If I am not in sympathy with the church of the past, I know I am in sympathy with the church of the future. By the simple means of evolving new truths, God has always led his people forward, from generation to generation, to church liberty. He is the great Teacher, and he will continue to evolve these truths, whether the synagogue like it or not. And all men who hold up old beliefs to check the growth of new ones; all men that stand on tiptoe to say to the sun, "Thou shalt not come up," will be where the old scoffing Pharisee and the old deriding Jew are. When we think of what they did to prevent the development of new truths, we look upon them as contemptible.

2. The same view may be taken of the effect of the conduct of institutions upon the minds of men, in subordinating truth to institutions, instead of making institutions mere servants of truth. Men are liable to infuse their own selfishness and personality into institutions, in such a way as to make them a hindrance to the truth. There is a very strong tendency in men to inject into any church or institution of benevolence to which they may belong, something of their own personal selfishness. They add themselves to it, and then look upon its history and power and glory as a part of their own.

Civilized life, or uncivilized life, in any community, is indicated by the number of its institutions. In a community where there is civilized life there will be found institutions. They are the instruments for the dissemination of advanced ideas. They are the means by which God incarnates truths, and gives them power. They are for instrumental purposes. But it does not follow that they must have one form or one spirit. It does not follow that they are of the nature of sacred things, because they are venerable. It may be right to venerate them, but it is not right to worship them. Institutions should always be made secondary to the truth.

Now when men so administer church institutions that the integrity, the existence, the peace, and the harmony of the institutions become more important in their eyes than the great truths which they were established to serve; when they exalt the instrument from the secondary rank to the primary, then they have become idolaters. The process by which men are led into the idolatry of institutions, is insidious. Let a man be the president of a theological seminary, and he says, "God has given me enlarged views of truth"—for such men have a hallucination that the truth was not understood till they were born—"God has given me enlarged views of truth, which I am endeavoring to convey to the world through this institution. It will send forth the genuine preachers of the Gospel; and it is exceedingly important to the cause of truth that it should be maintained, and that its power should be augmented;" and so the success of the truth itself comes, in his estimation, to stand on the perpetuation of this institution. When the question arises in his mind, "Is it best to give liberty of discussion, so that men may think for themselves, instead of being cramped by other men's thoughts?" he says, "It would be an injury to the credit and usefulness of the institution; and whatever injures the credit and usefulness of the institution, injures the truth;" and so, with him, the maintenance of the institution becomes identical with the truth itself.

The spirit of Satan has entered in and possessed every such institution. It is more mischievous in some than in others; but the moment any church or theological seminary, or benevolent institution, has become so important in the eyes of its supporters, that they will withhold the truth, or in any way whatever sacrifice the moral element for the maintenance of the institution, that moment the institution is perverted. The Scribes and Pharisees thought so much of the synagogue, that for the sake of saving it, they put out of it this faithful, truth-telling man, whom Christ had healed.

Not a great while ago, in Cortlandville, a man went to hear Mr. Phillips and Mr. Curtis. I have since made inquiries concerning the man, and learned that he stood second to no man in that place, in respect to piety, and manhood, and upright conduct. His church—whose particular name I will not mention—sat in judgment upon him, and excommunicated him, for exercising his right to hear other teachers besides those whom they recognized. The case was appealed, and the court above confirmed the decision of the lower court. The case was again appealed, and the decision was again confirmed; and the man stands—happily for him—excommunicated. It is the old synagogue business over again. This man, about the only honest thing in the church, was put outside of it; and probably that was the case when the man was put out of the synagogue—probably the church was put outside of its own walls. It is possible for a church to put itself out of its own walls, so that only the organization remains within, and the piety is without!

Now wherever any organization of this kind finds it needful to exclude vital piety; wherever it finds it needful to exclude any man whom Christ loves; wherever it finds it needful to withhold its testimony to the truth; wherever it finds it needful to do otherwise than to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; wherever it finds it needful to identify with its work personal selfishness, and low, earthly, secular, narrow ideas—wherever any organization of this kind finds it needful to do these things, for the sake of peace, or for any other reason whatsoever, its day has come, and the condemnation of God rests upon it.

Let me say, in closing: Men are directly responsible to God for their beliefs, and not through creeds, or churches, or ministers, but through their own personal conduct. Here is a man who goes to the judgment, and claims to have been a man of unexceptionable piety. He bears witness that he never violated the Sabbath day; that he never spoke loud or laughed on Sunday; that he never did any secular work on Sunday; that he never blacked his boots, or shaved, or cooked on Sunday; that he never rode in the cars or on the boats on Sunday. He was always very scrupulous about what he did on Sunday. On any other day he would not hesitate to take advantage of his fellow men; he would not hesitate to gouge the poor woman that put his carpet down; he would not hesitate to cheat his customers; but, then, he kept Sunday. Although he has broken every law of manhood, he goes before God and puts up his strict observance of Sunday as one defence of his piety. Then he brings forward his confession of faith, and says, "I believe in every article of the faith. I was sound in the faith. Indeed, I fought for it. I hated men that did not believe in it—did I not hate them with a perfect hatred!" Then he brings up his catechisms—the greater and the lesser; and the daylight and the eternal fire of God's eye glances through them, and the man lies quivering and crackling like paper in a flame! God says to him, "Thou wert a man of an unholy heart, an unloving nature, and a proud and selfish disposition; and this being so, all thy catechisms and articles of faith, and observances of Sunday, are of no avail." The comfort [illegible] less than the heart will satisfy him.

Now, if a creed will help you—and it will, if you use it aright; if a church will help you—and it will, if you use it aright; if an institution will help you—and it will, if you use it aright; if these things will help you, then they are blessings. But if you stop with creeds, and churches, and institutions; if you make them in the slightest degree the ground of hope for anything except that which may be wrought by the power of God, you may depend upon it you will pervert them and destroy their usefulness. It is more important that you should be right toward God, than that you should be orthodox; it is more important that you should be true to your convictions, than that you should have the favor of men; it is more important that you should be fearless, truth speaking, full of manhood, abundant in self-denying labors of love and gentleness, and meekness, and humility, than that you should be written down in the books of men as being sound in the faith; it is more important that you should, like Christ, go about doing good, than that you should sit in the chief places of the synagogue. For, remember, Christ himself hath said it—that when many go up and knock, without a thought but that they will have an honorable admission, he will say to them, "I know you not;" and that when they plead, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophecied in thy name? and in thy name cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" the answer will sound out with terrible retribution, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity!"

Now, I beseech you—by the grace of God, by the love of Christ, by the certainty of immortality, by the hope of heaven, and by the fear of hell, I beseech you—acquit yourselves before God honestly and truly; be right with your own conscience; be true to your moral convictions; test everything, not by what men think of it—except so far as their opinions may help you to form correct opinions of your own—but by the Word of God; and interpret that Word itself, through prayer, by the witness of the spirit of God in your spirit.

And when, at last, we stand before the throne of God, even then we shall not be received because we have reached such purity and such goodness, but the gate through which every one of us shall enter—if we enter heaven—shall be this: Christ loves us not from works of right which we have done, but from his own mercy. From his own mercy he will save us, if at last we are saved. And if even through the mercy of God, those that are the most faithful, and the most true, and the most conscientious, are but scarcely saved, what shall the end of them be who are insincere; who are treacherous to their consciences; who are false to the light given them; who live without holiness, without purity, without faith!