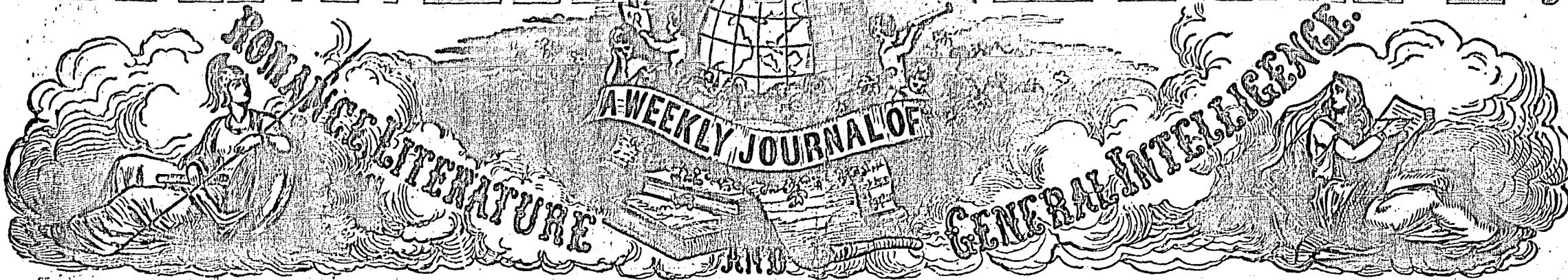


BANNER OF LIGHT.



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Written for the Banner of Light.

EDGAR.

BY PHAENQUE PHANTIQUE.

In a dungeon, drear and dismal,
Chained in misery abysmal,
Crouched a post-soul whose fetters held him help-
less to the earth.
Every thought was sorrow freighted,
For this sad soul only waited
For the foot-sounds of the falter who should bring im-
mortal birth.
O'er him crawled the slimy lizards—
At him, feeling huge and wondrous
Pointed long and skinny fingers, through the cold and
rusty grate;
And around him floundered devils
Held their bout of reckless revels,
Filling dank and dreary darkness with their sym-
bolic words of hate.
Venomed reptiles bit and stung him;
Maddened by despair, he flung him
On the cold, moldy bottom of the reeking prison cell.
Once the brave and true regarded—
Now by God and man discarded—
Worse his sin-sick, sad condition than the hottest
scorching hell!

Bright, bedimmed coruscations
Shed their grandeur o'er creation's
Gold and silver-angled cloudlets in the ether blue
above,
And the shimmering stars in gladness
Nod to us that earthly sadness
Has no name nor habitation in the courts of heavenly
love.

Seraphs, clad in pearly brightness—
Like their hearts their dazzling whiteness—
Sing the songs of souls enfranchised from all earthly
pangs and pains;
And the weak one who had squandered
All his earthly hopes, had wandered
Hither, from his passion-pylon, charmed and soothed
by angel-strains.

—And the poet, gently shrouded
On his bosom who has yielded
Hope and sorrow to weak mortals lost and chilled in
starless night,
Quaffs the nectar wine Eureka,
From Eternity's brimming beaker,
And, all longing lost in largesse, soothes his soul with
calm requies.

Written for the Banner of Light.

THE LITTLE GIPSEY.

BY J. ROLLIN M. SQUIRE.

[CONTINUED.]

Soon after the Gipsy troupe went out they fell in
with some country women, who, at the ringing of
the Ave Maria bell, had started for their different
homes in the adjoining villages outside of Madrid.
It was the custom of the Gipsies to join company
with them in order to travel with greater safety, and,
again, the old Gipsy was always in continual dread
of losing Preciosa.

Not long after this, as the Gipsy-train were
making their way into Madrid again, in the morn-
ing, they met a young gentleman in a valley about
half a mile from the city. He was extremely good-
looking, and richly dressed, the sword and dagger
which he wore glittering like burnished gold; his
hat had a jeweled band, and was tastefully adorned
with a large, graceful plume of various colors. The
Gipsies stopped at seeing him, and, standing at a
little distance, set themselves to thinking, to arrive
at some reasonable conclusion why a fine gentleman,
such as he appeared, should be out in such a place so
early, on foot, and alone. While they were thus cog-
itating he came up to them, and addressing himself
to the old Gipsy, said—

"Pray, be so kind as to favor me with an oppor-
tunity of speaking with you and Preciosa alone—it
will be for your good."

"With all my heart," said the old woman, "if you
do not take us too far out of our road, or keep us too
long."

And, calling Preciosa, they withdrew about twenty
yards away from the rest, when they stopped, and
the young gentleman began to speak.

"I come a captive to Preciosa's wit and beauty.
I have endeavored by every possible means to over-
come what I deemed at first nothing more than a
mere admiration which she excited; but I have
found every effort useless, and myself vanquished.
I, seniors, for if heaven favor my pretensions I
shall always give you that name, as you will readily
see, am a Knight," he continued, throwing open his
cloak, and exhibiting the insignia of one of the high-
est orders in Spain. "I am the only son of a Knight,
who is at present at the court in Madrid, soliciting a
post which he is fully assured he will secure, and I
expect a large inheritance. Having, then, the rank
and position of which I have spoken—and you may
implicitly rely upon the truth of it—I still can but
wish that I was a ruler, for Preciosa's sake, that I
might lift her to grandeur, and make her my equal
by making her my wife. I do not trifle with you,
for in the earnestness of the great love I bear Preci-
osa there is left no room for deception. She shall
choose for herself in what way I may serve her.
Her will shall be mine; my heart for her is a wax
which may mould, but the impression shall be as
endurable as if hewn from the marble. If you
believe me, my hopes shall make me contented and
happy; if not, I shall be miserable. My name is—
—; that of my father, —, who resides at No. —
in the Calle de —; and you are at liberty to
inquire of him and of the neighbors, or even of
strangers, for our name and station are not so ob-
scure but that you may hear of us at court, and, in
fact, everywhere in the capital. I have with me one
hundred crowns in gold, which I purpose to give you

as earnest of my intentions and what I will bestow
on you hereafter; for no man who can give up his
soul can hesitate to part with his wealth."

While the young Knight was speaking, Preciosa
watched him closely, and undoubtedly was not at all
displeased either with his language or his manner.
She turned to the old woman and said—

"Pray excuse me, grandmother, if I take it to
myself to answer this enamored Knight."

"Answer as you please, nina—I leave it all to
you," replied the old Gipsy, "well knowing you
have sense enough for anything."

"Though I am poor," began Preciosa, "and hum-
bly born, yet I cannot deny that I have quite a way-
ward little soul in me, which is always filling my
head with certain aspirations for greatness. But,
believe me, I am not in the least tempted by prom-
ises; my resolves are not to be overcome by promise;
deference is no lodestone to me, and love has no
device which can ensnare me; and although by my
grandmother's reckoning I shall be only fifteen next
Michaelmas, I am already old in intellect, and have
much more penetration than my age would seem to
warrant. This may be accounted for more as my life-
thing bestowed by nature, rather than the result of
experience, yet both have taught me how impetuous
is love, and how by its influence the mind is thrown
utterly out of its ordinary course, and wildly pur-
suing its desired object, it surmounts all imaginable
and possible inconveniences, until at last the lover,
believing he is about to realize the heaven of his
expectation, suddenly falls into a hell of disappoint-
ments. Then, again, give him the heaven he seeks,
he soon wearies with the object which attracted him,
and, reason having opened his eyes, it becomes a
source of wonder to him that once he adored what
he now regards with feelings of distaste. The fear
of these things inspires us with more than ordinary
distrust, and by it I am led to question words, and
have become suspicious of actions. One jewel I have
which I will guard with and prize more than my life—
that is my purity—and neither gifts nor promises
can make me part with it, which, thus sold, and
could it be bought, it were valueless indeed. Neither
can it be won from me by wiles and artifices, for I
shall bear it to my grave before I expose it to danger
by listening to chimeras and specious tales. It is a
flower which no breath shall sully; it has an exist-
ence with which imagination even shall not be
allowed to tamper. Pluck the rose from the bush,
and how soon does it wither! One touches it,
another inhales its fragrance, another pulls it
loose, and then it perishes at last in vulgar hands.
If this, senior, be the cause of your coming, you have
my answer; you can obtain no such booty from me
save in the ties of wedlock. If you desire to become
my husband, I will be your wife; but before this
there are many conditions which I shall demand,
and many trials for you to encounter. To begin
with them, I must become satisfied that you are
really the person you claim to be. In that case, you
must quit your father's house, and join us in our
tents, put on a Gipsy's garb, and remain in our
school two years, which will be ample time for me
to learn your disposition, and for you to become familiar
with mine; and if at the end of that time we are
mutually satisfied with each other, I will be yours.
During this probation you must regard me as your
sister, as your humble servant, and nothing more.
Also remember, senior, that during this probation
you may happen to recover your senses, which you
see I reckon as lost, or at least scattered, and may
be led to fly from the object you are now pursuing
with so much fervor, and, having gained your lib-
erty, seek pardon at the hands of your family for your
errors. But such are the conditions which I impose
on you. If on these terms you are willing to enter
our ranks as one of our tribe, it is for you to choose
for yourself; but should you fall in any one of them,
you shall never touch my fingers."

The youth was much astonished at Preciosa's view
of the matter, and stood for a time in silence, with
his eyes fixed musingly on the ground, as if consid-
ering what answer he should return. Observing this,
Preciosa said—

"This is not a matter of such little importance
that you can or should come to a resolution at once
on it in the few moments we have to spare. Return
to your home, give it all the consideration it de-
mands, and you may meet me again on this spot
during the holidays, either going to or coming from
Madrid."

"When it was so ordained that I should love you,
my dear Preciosa," said the cavalier, "I resolved
that I would refuse nothing which you might require
of me, though, I repeat, I did not imagine you
would make the request of me which you have;
nevertheless, as it is your will, and my delight to
obey, count me from this a Gipsy, and whatever
task falls to my lot, it shall be mine to prove that
you will ever find my feelings as I now represent
them to be. I am at your service whenever you
name the time. I will leave my parents on the pre-
text of going to Flanders, and provide myself with
money. I shall want eight days to prepare myself
for my journey. And for the servants who will be
ordered to accompany me I will manage in some
way to get rid of them, which they may not hinder my
project. But one thing—if I may as yet request a
favor—I would beg of you, and that is, save to-day,
when you go to town to inquire of my rank and that
of my family, you go to Madrid no more; for I would
not for all the world that any of the constantly
changing circumstances there should deprive me of
the good fortune I so much value."

"No, senior," said Preciosa, "this cannot be; I
cannot resign my liberty or my right to go where I
please; but wherever I do go, I shall not use that
liberty to such extremes but that any one may see
with half an eye that I know how to take good care
of self. The first thing, therefore, with which I
charge you, is to give over your fears, and place

entire confidence in me; and remember that lovers
who begin by getting jealous are either very silly or
exceedingly lacking in confidence."

"Surely, Satan himself is in you!" interrupted
the old Gipsy. "Why, you would out-talk a stu-
dent of Salamanca. How's love, jealousy and con-
fidence, and you know all about them. How is it?
It may be you are mad. You run on like a person
possessed, who talks Latin without understanding
it."

"Peace, grandmother, peace!" said Preciosa; "all
which you have heard is nothing to the store re-
maining in my head."

Everything that passed, all that Preciosa had said,
and her evidence of genius, only served to add fuel
to the fire which raged in the breast of the enamored
cavalier; and it was settled in his mind that they should
meet in the same place in eight days, during which
time he could arrange matters as he desired, and
they inform themselves as to the verity of his state-
ments. The young gentleman then drew out a
brocade purse, in which he said there were one
hundred crowns of gold, and handed it to the old
woman. Preciosa, however, was utterly against her
accepting them.

"Hold your tongue, child!" said the grandmother.
"The best proof the gentleman has given of his sub-
jection is this delivery of his crowns in token of his
surrender; besides, a gift, no matter under what
circumstances it is given, always betokens a generous
mind. Remember the proverb, 'Heaven by prayers,
and a young woman by presents.' The Gipsies for
many and many a year have enjoyed the reputation
of being over-fond of money, and I care not to be
outside the pale of the tribe, nor do I mean that on
my account it may be said, that one of them ever
lost this characteristic. What, Preciosa, would you
have me turn back one hundred crowns, in hard
gold, too, and all of which may be seen in the hem
of an old petticoat not worth a real, and there
remain as comfortable as the well-fed flocks that
roam in the pastures of Estremadura? Look you,
should any of our sons, daughters or relatives have
the misfortune to fall into the hands of the law, is
there any eloquence so pleasing, so moving to a
Judge, any music so sweet to his willing ear as these,
as they think one by one into his purse? For three
different exploits I myself have been three times on
the point of mounting up, as to be whipped. The
first time I got off by means of a silver mug, the
second by a string of pearls, and lastly by a goodly
number of reals. Then think of it, nina; ours is a
very hazardous calling, full of accidents and mis-
hap; and in times of distress there is nothing
which affords us surer protection than a piece of
gold quartered with the invincible arms of Philip of
Spain; there is nothing that can withstand them,
nothing that dares attempt their impregnable bar-
rier. The two faces of a doubloon will bring a smile
to the face of the sternest procurator; and as for
the other harpies of the Gipsy tribe, who have no
more mercy for our poor hides than they have for
highwaymen, it melts their hearts. It makes no
difference how ragged and tattered our garments
may be, they swear that we are like a Frenchman's
jacket—ragged and greasy, but quilted with pisto-
ls."

"For the love of heaven, say no more, grand-
mother!" said Preciosa; "you would never cease
putting arguments together to show good cause why
you should keep senior's money. Keep the crowns,
then, as you have so much regard for them, and
much good may they do you. Would you had some
spot in which to bury them, that they might never
see the light of day again. However, as our com-
panions have waited for us so long, and will surely
be uneasy, I suppose you will have to distribute
some of it amongst them."

"They shall see these crowns," answered the old
Gipsy, "just as soon as they see the Grand Turk in
his scraggle. Perhaps our good senior has a few cop-
pers or some small money; if he will divide it among
them they will be satisfied with a very little."

"I have," said the youth, and he gave each of the
three girls a real, with which they were more highly
delighted than a poet when his poem has won the
prize.

Finally it was agreed that the whole party should
meet, as before mentioned, in eight days, and that
the young man's Gipsy name should be Andrew, as
it was a name common among the Gipsies, and that
also, by way of distinction, he should be called An-
drew Caballero. Andrew (as he will now be recog-
nized), not daring to embrace Preciosa, looked at her
with his soul in his eyes, and started for Madrid,
where, shortly after, the Gipsies arrived, and in very
high spirits.

Preciosa, who was not entirely indifferent to the
handsome and engaging cavalier—perhaps more
from her great good nature, and his apparent ear-
nestness, than from any feeling of love—was very
anxious to ascertain if he were really what he
claimed to be.

After entering Madrid, they had passed through
two or three streets only, when Preciosa came upon
the page who had given her the verses and the
crowns.

"Welcome to Madrid, Preciosa," said he, approach-
ing her. "Have you read the verses I gave you the
other day?"

"Before I answer you a single question," said
she, "by the life of the girl you love best you must
tell me the truth regarding one thing."

"Go on," he replied; "though to answer you, and
truly, cost me my own life, I could not refuse you."

"Well, then, what I most desire to know is, whether
or not you have the fortune to be a poet?"

"It would be a freak of fortune, indeed, if I were
one," said the page; "but you know, Preciosa, very
few deserve the name of poet. Therefore I can an-
swer you—I am not a poet, but a lover of poetry;

yet, if it chance that I require a few verses, I neither
beg, borrow, nor steal them. Those lines which I
gave you were mine, and so are these which I now
present you. Yet I am not a poet—heaven forbid
it."

"Is it, then, such an unfortunate thing to be a
poet?"

"No, not that," he answered; "but to be a poet,
and nothing else, I do not think a good thing. Poetry
should be like a rich jewel, which is not worn
on all occasions by its owner, or shown to all people,
but displayed only at proper times. A beautiful
maiden is Poetry—chaste, quiet, discreet, and re-
served—never overstepping the limits of elegance
and refinement. She delights in solitudes; finds
enjoyment in the music of fountains; loves to roam
the green and flowering meadows; she finds a voice
in the rustling of a tree, and companionship in the
flower, and all are entertained and instructed who
seek her society."

"Notwithstanding which, it is said, her followers
are universally poor, and sometimes beggars," ob-
served Preciosa.

"It is rather the opposite," said the page; "it is
very seldom you find a poet who is not rich, because
all poets are contented with their condition, what-
ever it may be—a piece of practical philosophy at
which men arrive. But what has led you, Preciosa,
to make this inquiry?"

"Because, as I believed all poets poor, or, at least,
most of them," answered Preciosa, "I was greatly
surprised at finding a gold crown wrapped up in the
verses which you gave me; but since you are not a
poet, but simply a lover of poetry, it may be possible
that you will get through the world well enough,
though I much doubt it; for if you are rich, your
propensity for writing verses will soon make you a
bad manager; for they say a poet without a fortune
can never get one, and a poet with a fortune can
never keep one."

"But I am not one of those," said the page; "I
can write verses, and am neither rich nor poor; and
without mistaking it, or talking over it like a Genoese
over an invitation, I can give a crown or two to
whom I please. Take this paper; it has a second
crown enclosed in it, and do not be troubled as to the
fact of my being a poet. I only pray that you will
believe that he who gives you this, only regrets that
he has not the riches of Midas to bestow them on
you."

He handed a paper to Preciosa, who, taking it,
felt the gold, and said, "Ah, this paper may antici-
pate a good old age, for it has two souls in it—
one of the crown, and one of the verses. But look
you, senior page, I do not want so many souls
together; and unless you take one back, I cannot
accept the other; I will regard you as a poet, but
not as a giver of gifts, and if we settle things in
this way, our friendship is likely to last much
longer; for strong as friendship is, it may stand in
need of a crown to sustain it, much sooner than a
verse."

"Very well, since it must be so," said the page,
"and you will have it that I am poor whether or no;
you shall keep the soul I give you in the paper, and
return me the crown, which, Preciosa, since it has
been touched by your hand, I will preserve as a pre-
cious relic to the end of my days."

Preciosa took the crown out of the paper, and
gave it to him, keeping the verses, which, however,
she would not read in the open street; and the page
went away highly delighted, fully believing he had
made a very favorable impression on Preciosa, be-
cause she had talked with him in such a gracious
manner.

As Preciosa's object was to find the house of An-
drew's father, without stopping anywhere to dance,
she made her way at once to the street with which
she was familiar. Having walked about half through
the street, she saw the gilded iron balcony by which
Andrew had designated the house, and in it a caval-
ier of about fifty years or more of age, of noble
mien, with a red cross on his breast. As soon as he
saw Preciosa he called to her—

"Come in, nina—come in; we have some money
for you."

As he spoke, several other gentlemen stepped on
to the balcony, among whom she saw Andrew, her
lover, who, the moment he saw her, changed color,
and very nearly fainted. All the Gipsies entered,
and went up stairs, except the old woman, who re-
mained below to find out what she could from the
servants about what Andrew had said. As the Gipsi-
es entered the room, the old gentleman said, "This
must certainly be the handsome Gipsy girl who has
created so much talk in Madrid."

"The very same," said Andrew; "and she is
without question the loveliest creature ever seen."

"So people say," said Preciosa, who, as she en-
tered, caught the import of their conversation—"so
people say; but I imagine they set me too high by
half. I know I am not ill-looking, but not such a
beauty as they make me out."

"By the life of my son Juanico," said the elder
gentleman, "you are much handsomer than they
report you."

"And which is Don Juanico?" said Preciosa.

"That gallant by your elbow."

"In truth I thought your worship had sworn by
some pet child of two years old," said Preciosa.

"And this is Don Juanico; why, he is quite old
enough for matrimony, and by certain lines in his
forehead, I am sure he will be married—and what is
more, before three years, to the object of his choice,
if in the meantime he lose not his mind."

"Well done," said one of the company. "The
little Gipsy is an adept in physiognomy, and can
trace a fortune in a wrinkle, whether on the hand
or face."

During the conversation the other girls had with-
drawn a little side, and, with their heads to-
gether, were talking so as not to be overheard.

"To be sure, girls," said Christiana, "this is the
same gentleman who gave us the three reals this
morning."

"True, it is," said the others; "but don't let us
say a word to him of it, unless he alludes to it first.
Very likely he would not like it to be known."

While the Gipsy girls were holding their little
chat, Preciosa replied to the last remark about phy-
siognomy.

"What I see with my eyes I divine with my
fingers. I know of Don Juanico, even without look-
ing at lines, that he is somewhat in love, and is often
given to jealousy, and is hasty—ready to promise
things which seem impossible. Heaven grant that
with all this he's not worse still—a deceiver. He
is on the eve of a long journey; but the bay horse
thinks one thing, and the man who saddles him
another. Man proposes and God disposes. He may
think himself bound to Oñez, and fall among the
tribes of Gambia."

"I confess, nina," said Don Juan, "you have
guessed several things concerning me. You are
mistaken as regards my being a deceiver. I boast
that I speak the truth under all circumstances. I
do certainly, with the permission of heaven, in four
or five days expect to set out for Flanders; and
though you prophesy that I am to be turned aside
from my road, I should be very sorry if anything
occurred to disappoint me in my purpose."

"Never fear, senior," said Preciosa; "commend
yourself to heaven, and all will go well. Don't take
me for a prophet; but be assured I know nothing of
all I have been saying. I talk so very much, and so
at random, that it is no wonder I hit the mark some-
times. I should be glad if I could speak so as to
persuade you not to travel, but to overrule an idle
fancy, and remain quietly at home with your par-
ents, to comfort their old age, for I do not think
much of these trips to Flanders for a youth of your
tender years. Remain until you are grown a little
more experienced, and better able to encounter the
fatigues of war; beside, if I am not very wide of
the mark, you need not go far for war, considering
the conflicts of love which are raging in your bosom.
You should learn to govern yourself; look before
you leap; don't marry until you are quite sure you
know what you are doing; and now, as I do believe
you are well born, give us of your charity; and if,
after this, you do turn out a man of truth and loy-
alty, I for one shall be full of joy, at having been
correct in everything I have said of you."

"As I told you before," said Don Juan, otherwise
Andrew Caballero, "you are right in all you have
said, except the suspicion which you entertain of my
integrity, in which, believe me, you are entirely at
fault. For that which I promise in the field, I am
prepared, without being called on, to fulfill in the
town, or wherever else I may chance to be; for the
man who can break his word, forfeits his right and
title to the name of gentleman. As to giving you,
I shall have to ask my father, for heaven's sake and
mine, to aid you, for, to tell the truth, I gave all I
had this morning to some ladies, of whom I can
hardly say they were as flattering as you, one of
them especially."

"May I be hanged," said Christiana to her com-
panions, "if he does not speak of the reals he gave
us this morning."

"Not at all," said one of the others; "he says he
gave his money to some ladies—and we are not
ladies; and since, as you hear he always speaks
truly, he would not lie in this matter."

"As for that," said Christiana, "I do not see as a
lie is such a momentous thing when it injures no
one, and is told for the advantage and credit of him
who tells it." However, be that as it may, I see it
is not likely we shall get anything, as we are not
asked to dance."

At this moment the old woman now entered the
room.

"Come, come daughter," said she, "make haste—
time is precious. We have much to do, and more to
say."

"Well, grandmother, what may it be—a boy or a
girl?" said Preciosa.

"A boy, and a fine one," she replied.

"God grant it may not die before it has seen many
years," observed Preciosa.

"Never fear, nina—never fear; the child is a
beauty; and for the mother, she is doing well," said
the grandmother.

"And has some lady been confined?" asked the
old cavalier.

"Even so, senior; but it is a great secret," replied
the Gipsy; "and, save to myself, Preciosa, and one
more person, it is unknown. And we cannot tell
her name."

"We do not desire to know," said one of the gen-
tlemen; "but heaven help the woman who puts her
secrets into your hands, and her honor at the run-
ning of your tongues."

"We are not all bad," said Preciosa. "May be
there is one among us who prides herself on being
as faithful and as true as the noblest man in this
room. But since we are thought so lightly of, grand-
mother, let us go; we are neither thieves nor beg-
gars."

"Do not be angry," said the cavalier, whom we
have designated as Andrew's father. "No one could
imagine aught ill of you at least, for there is some-
thing in your appearance that is a guarantee for
your good conduct. Then dance for us with your
companions. I have for you a doubloon with two
faces—not to be compared with your own, though
they are the faces of your majesties."

When the old Gipsy heard this, it seemed to put
new life into her, she cried out, "Come, come,
girls, take up your skirts and oblige the seniors."

Preciosa took up a tambourine, and they all danced
with such grace and lightness, that the eyes of the

It seems that even in the seventeenth century possession
was not unknown, nor the gift of language.

• The miniature of Juan-Johnny.

spectators were riveted on their movements, especially those of Andrew, who leaped upon Preciosa as if she were the center of all his joy; but an unlooked-for accident turned his delight into anguish. In the exertion of the dance Preciosa happened to drop the paper the Page had given her; and the cavalier who had opened it, so lightly of the Gipsies caught it up, and opening it, said:

"Ah, what have we here? A song? Come, give over the dance, and listen to it, for I may judge from the first line, it isn't bad."

Preciosa, who did not know what the contents of the paper might be, was not a little amazed at this, and begged the gentleman not to read it, but give it back to her. Her earnestness, however, made them the more anxious to hear it, and Andrew was even more eager than all, and the gentleman finally read the lines in a loud voice, as follows:

Not sweeter the lyre of Calliope's son,
Though struck with divine inspiration and art,
Than the lute over which thy fair fingers run.
Making music which wins and enraptures the heart,
Not sweeter the songs of sirens of old,
Whose harmony peopled their much dreaded isle,
Nor more fatal than each of thy ringlets of gold,
Or the soft witching power of thine exquisite smile.
E'en Cupid, who sports with our hearts for his prey,
And laughs when love's nursery seems fully complete,
Leaves Psyche deserted, and hastens to lay
In homage his quiver and bow at thy feet.
One glance at thine eyes which the day-dog outshines,
The beholder is lost in a realm of delight,
While Eros is charmed, though his arrows are thine,
And through these holds his way with implacable might.

"By the mass," exclaimed he who read it, "he is no bad poet who wrote this."

"He is not a poet, sensor," said Preciosa, "but a Page, and a very handsome young man with a fortune."

"What are you saying, nina?" said the old Gipsy, in an under tone, to Preciosa; "do you not see that the praise of the Page is a dagger thrust to Andrew's heart. See where he sits, sunk down in his chair, the perspiration breaking from every pore. Do not imagine that he loves you so lightly that he may not suffer by your slights. Speak to him, for Heaven's sake, and whisper something in his ear which may touch his heart. Go on, go on! get new songs like this each day and see how it will be."

Such was the case. Andrew on hearing the song, and the praise of the Page, was assailed by a thousand jealousies, and his emotions were such as to attract his father's attention.

"Why, Don Juan, what ails you?" said he, "you look ready to faint."

"One moment," said Preciosa; "let me speak a few words in his ear, and he will not faint, you will see."

Stepping close to him, she said almost without moving her lips—

"You have a stout heart, indeed, to make a Gipsy. How could you bear torture, if you are vanquished by a bit of paper?"

Then making a few crosses over his heart she left him, after which he seemed to recover, and assured the company that Preciosa's words had restored him.

Preciosa at last received the doublet with two faces, which, she assured her companions, should be changed and honestly divided between them.

Andrew's father was exceedingly anxious that she should leave in writing the words which had restored him, as he wished above all things to know them. She acknowledged her willingness to repeat them, adding, that although they might seem to be of no more value than children's nursery rhymes, she would assure them that they would prove a sovereign virtue to keep away the heart-ache, and giddiness of the head. She repeated them, and the words were these:

Oh! vex not your head,
By wild vagaries fed,
For patience and doubt, you know, never unite;
But the heart-keep in pain,
Where love's love must reign,
And reigning would peace and contentment invite.
For base is the fear
That the one you hold dear
Is wanting in that which first made you care for her—
If thus you proceed,
Then useless indeed
The actions by which you may hope to possess her.
Think you to beguile
Her heart with a smile,
When feelings like these shall your doubting discover?
For how can she tell
How fleeting the spell,
Which colors the fanciful dreams of her lover?
Let your love be as bright
As Phœbus' first light
On bill tops that last ere there's a mist over,
Be constant and true
In whatever you do,
And confide in the Lord, and St. Christopher.
"Morely these words," she continued, "said over a person, and six crosses in the region of the heart, and if they are troubled with swimming in the head, they will become as sound as an apple."

When the old Gipsy heard the charm and saw the trick her grand-daughter had played she was amazed, and Andrew was astonished when he saw it was the invention of her ready wit.

Preciosa did not ask for the lines of the Page, because she did not like to again wound Andrew's feelings, for although untaught, she was well aware what it was to make a man really in love to feel the pang of jealousy. As they were going out, Preciosa turned to Andrew and said:

"Remember, son, every day in the week is propitious for beginning a journey—there is not a single unlucky one. Therefore hasten your departure as much as you can, for their lives before you a happy and pleasant life, if you like to embrace it."

"I hardly imagine that the life of a soldier is quite as pleasant as you would make me believe," replied Andrew. "It is not without its hardships, and its dangers; nevertheless, I will make the trial and test it for myself."

"You will see more than you anticipate," said Preciosa, "and may Heaven shield you, and grant you that success which your good intentions deserve."

Andrew was more than delighted at these parting words.

The Gipsies went away quite well contented, and divided their doublet equally; although it had been equal for the old Gipsy to take one half, owing to her seniority, and because she was the compass by which they directed their course in the wide sea of their dances, their piousities, and their tricks.

The appointed day at last arrived, and an early hour in the morning found Andrew at the old trysting place, mounted on a hired mule, and without any attendant. He found Preciosa and her grand-mother both waiting there, who gave him a most cordial welcome. He begged them to take him at once to their camp, that he might avoid the possibility of being recognized in case of pursuit, or search for him. They immediately started off, and in a short

time arrived among the huts of the Gipsies. Andrew was shown into the largest hut of the camp, and was forthwith surrounded by ten or a dozen Gipsies, all well made, handsome young fellows, whom the old Gipsy had informed of their new acquisition, without fearing to trust them, because, as he had said, secrecy with them was an habitual and unexampled exactness, observed with unfailing, uninterrupted strictness. In an instant their eyes were on the mule.

"Next Thursday, boys, we can sell this beast in Toledo," said one of them.

"By no means," said Andrew, "for there is not a mule to be hired in Madrid, that is not known to every muleteer who tramps the roads of Spain."

"By my life, senior," cried another, "though she had as many marks on her as there are precepts in a confessor's list, we will transform her in such a manner that she would never be known either by the mother that bore her, or the master that owned her."

"For all that," said Andrew, "I beg you will do as I recommend. This mule must be killed and buried where not a bone may ever come to light."

"What a sin it would be," said another Gipsy; "what has the innocent creature done to lose her life? Do not say it, good Master Andrew, only do this, study every mark on the mule until you have them by heart, and then let me take her away for two hours, and if after that you recognize her again may I be basted like a runaway negro."

"I shall under no consideration, alter my decision," said Andrew, "though you could transform her even more than you say—I am afraid of discovery unless she is under the ground. As to the profit you may think to reap by selling her, I have not come so desitute into your society but what, if it be required, I can pay my footing to the price of many mules."

"Look ye, friends, since Senior Andrew will have it so," said the Gipsy who had first spoken, "let the sinless creature die, though it goes against me on account of her youth, and because she seems a willing creature, for there are no scars on her flank, and no spur marks on her side."

The killing of the mule was, however, put off until night, and the remainder of the day was occupied with the ceremonies of Andrew's initiation. They cleared one of the largest huts in the encampment, trimmed it with boughs and rushes, and seating Andrew on the stump of a cork tree, put a hammer and a pair of tongs into his hands, and make him out ciphers to the sound of two guitars, thrummed by two male Gipsies—then they stripped his arm, and tied round it a new silk ribbon, and began to tighten it gently, after the manner of the garrotte, giving it two turns.

Preciosa was present during the whole, as were many other Gipsy girls, old and young, some of whom viewed Andrew with admiration; others with affection, and so generally good humored was he that even the Gipsy men took most kindly to him.

These ceremonies being ended, an old Gipsy took Preciosa by the hand and stood before Andrew.

"This girl," he began, "who is the flower and the cream of all beauty among the Gipsies of Spain, we give you as a wife, or as a mistress, which you may deem best, since our free and careless life is not trammelled by the niceties and ceremonies of the world. If you see in her anything which you dislike, you are at liberty to make any choice you please among our maidens here present, and she will be yours. But remember, when you have once made your choice, you cannot leave her, and must not meddle either with the married women or maids. We are careful and strict observers of the law of friendship, and no man among us covets that which belongs to another. We are free and secure from the evils and plagues of jealousy, and though we are dissolute, there is no adultery among us. If a wife or a mistress is not faithful, we do not depend on the courts of justice to punish; we are ourselves both judges and executioners, and as readily kill those who are criminal in this respect, and bury them among the mountains and in the desert places, as if they were vermin, or beasts of prey. And we are answerable to no parents for their death; there are no relations to avenge them. It is a dread of this that keeps our women chaste, and we live, as I have said, with no fear of their virtue. There are few things among us, except wife and mistress, which are not common to all, and these we require to be his alone to whose choice he may fall. Age, as well as death, is with us also a cause of divorce, and man may, if he like, leave a woman who is too old for him and make choice of another more suitable to his years. By means of these, with some other laws and statutes, we manage to live a happy and merry life. We are lords of the fields where the corn ripens, of the woods, mountains, springs and rivers. The mountains supply us with wood without price; the orchard with fruit, the vineyards with grapes; the gardens with vegetables; the springs with water; the rivers with fish, and the parks with game; the rocks afford us shade, the glens and valleys fresh air, and the caves shelter. The inclemencies of the weather are to us zephyrs, the snow refreshments, the rains baths, the thunder music, and the lightning torches. To us the hard ground is a downy bed, the well sunned skin of our bodies is an impenetrable armor of defence. Our little limbs are not fettered by chains, and to us iron bars are no obstacles, and we are not daunted by trenches or walls. Our courage is not to be twisted out of us by cords, nor choked by the gaze, or subdued by the rack. We defy all the means and contrivances of the law, and glory more in being martyrs than confessors. For us, bonds of burden are reared in the choice fields of the country, and purses are filled in the city. No eagle, or other bird of prey, sweeps down more swiftly from its revels in the blue ether, on its quarry, than we upon every opportunity which promises booty. Again, we have many qualifications which enable us to live happy: we sleep in peace, or on the rack, we toil by day, and steal by night, or more properly, we teach people the result of inattention to those things which possess any value. The fear of losing our honor never gives us trouble, nor does the ambition of increasing it ever keep us from sleep. We belong to no party, and we do not rise with the sun to attend levees or present memorials. We do not fawn to the noble, nor do we solicit favors. These huts are our palaces with golden roofs, our Flemish paintings of picture and landscape are seen at every turn among the lofty hills and snowy peaks, in the wide-spreading meadows, and leafy groves. We are rustic astronomers, for as we sleep generally under the open sky, we know every hour by day or night. We see how Aurora chases the stars from the skies, and comes forth with her companion the Dawn, refreshing the air, cooling the waters and moistening, and how after her the sun appears, and as the poet sings, touches with gold the lofty heights, until the moun-

tain walls and the hills are beautified. We do not fear to let life chilly when he is absent and his rays fall radiant on us, or of being scorched when he looks down on us from the zenith. We turn the annual face to sun and frost, to death and plenty. In conclusion, we are a race who live by industry and our wit, and that, too, without the church, the sea, or the royal family, as the adage has it. We have all we want, because we are content with what we have. I have said these things to you, noble youth, that you may fully comprehend the life you are to lead and to which you are come, and the customs you will have to profess. This is a slight sketch of it; but in time you will become familiar with many other particulars, no less worthy of your consideration."

With this the eloquent old Gipsy ended his discourse, and the novice replied that he was gratified to have been acquainted with such praiseworthy statutes, and felt highly pleased to become one of an order founded on such politic principles and such evident reason, that it was a source of regret to him that he had remained so long unacquainted with such a delightful life; that from that moment he renounced his knighthood and the empty glory of his illustrious descent, and submitted absolutely to the yoke, or more properly the laws under which they lived, inasmuch as they had more than magnificently recompensed the wish he had to serve them, by bestowing on him the beautiful Preciosa for whom he could abandon throne and empire, and could desire to possess them only that he might lay them at her feet.

Preciosa now spoke:

"Inasmuch as it has been determined by these our honorable lawgivers," she said, "in accordance with their laws that I should become yours, and under them have awarded me to you; I have, also, agreeably to my own will, the law of which is more powerful than all, decreed that I will not be yours, except upon the strict performance of those conditions which were, by us, mutually agreed to before you came hither. You must live two years in our company before I am yours, in order that you may not repent, through fickleness, nor I find myself deceived through haste. Conditions are before laws; you already know what I have imposed on you; if you choose to observe them, I may be yours and you mine, but not otherwise. Your mule is not killed, your clothes are yet untouched, and not a piece of your money has been spent; you left your father's house this morning, and it is now left for you to make use of the remainder of the day in considering what is best for you to do. Our lawgivers may give you up my body, but not my soul, which is free, was born free, and shall continue free. If you remain with us, I shall esteem you highly, and no less so if you return; for I know that the impulse of love runs at lightning speed until checked by reason or experience, and I do not desire that you should prove to me as a huntsman who, having bagged a hare, forgets it in his run for another. The eye is easily deceived, so much so, that at the first glance things appear like gold, but very soon it recognizes the difference in the metals. So with this beauty of mine, which you say I have, which you declare above the sea and more precious than gold; you might find it a closer inspection to be without lustre, and, on testing, as valueless as base metal. Therefore I give you two years time to consider and weigh well what is best to choose, and what is proper to reject. It is well for a man about to make a purchase of that which death alone can take off his hands, to do nothing with closed eyes; consequently you should have, in such case, sufficient time to view and review your choice, and acquaint yourself with its faults as well as its merits. Again I do not agree with the barbarous license of your kinsmen, when they assume a right to leave their wives or chastity them at will; and as I do not intend ever to deserve correction, I will not accept as a mate one who will abandon me at his caprice."

"And you are entirely in the right, Preciosa," said Andrew, "and, to quiet your fears, and remove any doubt you may still entertain, I will swear by any form of oath you may prescribe, or any other assurance, never to depart from your conditions or disobey your commands."

"The oaths and promises of a captive to regain his liberty are rarely canceled when he is free," said Preciosa, "and it is, I fear, much the same with the lover who, to obtain his desire, would promise the wings of Mercury and the thunderbolts of Jove, as indeed a certain poet once promised me, and swore it solemnly by the Stygian lake. No, Senior Andrew, I will have no oaths, no promises, but desire to leave all to the result of this probation. And it shall be mine to take care of myself, if at any time you should think of displeasing me."

"Do it so," said Andrew; "I only beg one favor of my comrades, and that is that I may not be forced to steal anything for a month to come, for I am sure I shall require a good deal of tutoring to make me a thief."

"Never fear you that, my son," said an old Gipsy, "we will give you a few lessons in such a manner that you will turn out an eagle in our craft, and when you are once initiated, you will find so much to like in it, that you will be ready to eat your fingers they will itch so for practice. What is finer than to go out empty-handed in the morning, and return loaded at night to your tent?"

"And with a whipping," said Andrew, "as I have seen many of your *Joragars* return."

"Well," the old man replied, "there's no catching trout dry shod. All things in life have their perils, and one who steals is liable to the galleys, the whipping post, or the gallows; but because one ship at sea encountered a gale and is lost, shall the commerce of the world flag for want of sailors? Though I agree it would be an excellent thing to have no soldiers, because war consumes men and horses. Beside, to be whipped by a magistrate, to us is a badge of honor, though true it is better worn on the shoulder than on the breast. The main point is not to run the risk of getting blame without the game, and not to be caught for our first adventure, beyond that we care no more for having our shoulders dusted, or for singeing to the heat of an ear in a galley, than we do for a rush. Therefore, for the present, my son, keep snug under our wings in your nest, and so well will we teach you how to fly, and that, too, where you shall not return without prey, that the end of it will be, that you will fairly feel your heart leap for joy at the idea of a theft."

"In the meanwhile," said Andrew, "here are two hundred gold crowns which I divide among the company as a sort of compensation for what I might bring in, during my vacation, by thieving."

The words were hardly out of his mouth ere he was caught up by several strong fellows, who hoisted him upon their shoulders, and carried him along, shouting, "Long live the great Andrew, and Preciosa, his beloved!" The women did the same with Preciosa, while Christiana and the other girls who were present looked on with feelings of envy; for

they dwelt in the tents of barbarians, and in the huts of the shepherds, as well as in the palaces of kings; and when another thief whom we seem to equal, the spirit is tried and weighed down with weariness.

After this expression and acclamation of joy, the money was equitably shared and a hearty dinner dispensed, during which the praises of Andrew were repeated, and the beauty of Preciosa extolled to the heavens. When night came on, the mule was killed and buried no deep as to leave Andrew without a fear of its leading to his discovery; and they buried with it saddle, bridle, girthing, and every article of trapping, after the custom of Indians, whose ornaments are laid with them in the grave.

Andrew was surprised at all he had seen and heard, as at the great shrewdness of the Gipsies, and he resolved to continue with them, but not mix himself in the customs of the tribe any further than it might be necessary. He resolved to liberate himself by his purse as far as possible from joining them in any acts of injustice.

On the following day he requested them to break up the camp, in order to put a greater distance between himself and Madrid, fearing to be recognized if he continued any longer where he was. They told him they had already concluded to make their way to the mountains of Toledo, and from thence scour the surrounding country, and lay it under contribution. In due time they began their march, offering Andrew an ass to ride; but he refused it, and chose to travel on foot, and serve as an attendant to Preciosa, who rode triumphantly on another ass. She was highly pleased with her gallant and graceful acquire, while he was delighted to be so near to her whom he had chosen as the mistress of his freedom.

Oh, thou art powerful indeed whom men call the sweet god of bitterness—which title thou hastest from our idleness and weakness—how certainly dost thou enslave us! How dost thou use us without pity! How scornfully dost thou bind us! Here was Andrew, a knight, a youth of excellent parts, of good education, brought up almost all his days at court, maintained in affluence by his noble parents; yet since yesterday such a change has been wrought in him that he has deceived his friends and servants, disappointed the hopes of his parents, and abandoned the road to Flanders, where he was to have exercised his valor, and increase the honor of his line; he has prostrated himself like a lackey at the feet of a girl who, though she is exquisitely beautiful, is but a Gipsy. Oh, beauty! how wonderful is thy prerogative! No resistance dost thou fear, but smile to see the strongest will bowing at thy feet and submitting to thy yoke!

In four days' march the Gipsies arrived at a small, pleasant village, about two leagues from Toledo, where, after having left some articles of silver and other valuables with the Alcaldes of the district as a pledge that they would steal nothing in his territories, they pitched their tents. This done, all the old Gipsy women, some young ones, and the men spread themselves over the country to the distance of four or five leagues from their encampment.

Andrew went along with them to take his first lessons in thievery; but though they gave him many excellent examples in the expedition, he did not seem to profit by any of them. But on the contrary, being a high-born man, every theft committed by his masters wrung his very soul; and not unfrequently he paid for their depredations out of his own pocket, unable to withstand the tears of those poor people who had suffered. The Gipsies were in great trouble at this conduct, and plainly told him it was in direct opposition to their laws and statutes, which absolutely prohibited the admission of compassion into their hearts; for if they once allowed it to sway them, they must cease to be thieves, and that could not be entertained at any rate. Andrew, finding this state of things, begged the privilege of thieving by himself, assuring them he was nimble enough to run from danger, and did not fear to encounter it, and then the prize or the penalty would be exclusively his own. The Gipsies endeavored to dissuade him from this, telling him that occasions might occur when he might require the assistance of companions, as well to attack as to defend; and that one pair of hands could not scour much booty.

Andrew, however, persisted in his resolution to become a solitary robber, intending to separate from the gang and buy with his money what he could claim to be stolen, and thereby burden his conscience as little as possible.

In this way, in less than a month, he brought more profit to the gang than any four of the most expert fellows among them.

[CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.]

Wearing Shawls.

A shawl is both graceful as a garment, and picturesque in its appearance. We regretted that the wearing of them was so soon given over, for it was evident that the fault lay with the lack of taste in the wearing. An observing writer in a New York paper sets out with a round and energetic defence of the shawl as an outer garment for men. He states that, "in the first place, the appearance of the human being, when wrapped up in it, is less rigid, the outline presenting a figure that is easy and graceful. If picturesque effect alone be considered, the shawl may be as adjusted as to more nearly resemble the dress worn by the ancients than any other article which has been introduced for years. This is at least a consideration in its favor. But the great point to be regarded is, that while easily carried and not liable to accident, the shawl may be better adapted to the weather than any other article of dress worn at this season. A little knowledge of the art of folding it will enable one to prepare himself against a cold blast, a rain storm proceeding from any particular direction, or snow, hail, etc. The overcoat is still the same, whether the day be moderately warm, keenly cold, or fiercely stormy. There is no improvement of which it is capable, nor, on the other hand, can its surplus benefits be decreased in the slightest. But the shawl may assume any conceivable shape or size, may be made to afford the greatest protection wherever this is most needed, and if none should be required, it may be thrown over the arm, slung down on the back of a railroad car seat, or otherwise disposed of without creating a disagreeable wrinkle in its vinge. It is as unassuming as it is really beautiful and serviceable. Another point in its favor is, that it can be put off and on with less damage to an undercoat than can the overcoat. Its relative cheapness is also a consideration with all except those who believe in the maxim, 'the more cost the more honor.'"

Life, we are told, is a journey; and to see the way in which some people eat, you would imagine they were taking in provisions to last them to their journey's end.

Written for the Banner of Light.

THIS SNOW.

BY FLORIA.

Drop down, oh, voiceless snow!
And thus, where'er you go,
Hypnotize brightness there:
Weave the earth's mantle white,
And lay it soft and light,
With heavenly radiance bright,
A garment fair.

We raise our searching eyes
To dull and leaden skies—
No beauty there;
But lo! from Nature's frown
There cometh slowly down
Earth's fairest, purest crown,
That she can wear.

And thus when clouds droop low
Above our voiceless woe,
We may behold
The white wings of God's love
Brightly the still air move,
Till white-robed, we may rove
In his blest fold.

East Medway, Mass., 1860.

Written for the Banner of Light.

A SPIRIT'S WANDERINGS.

LIFE-PICTURES.

BY CORA WILDBURY.

PART SECOND.

Close by the tempted heart of an unquiet sleeper, the watching Spirit stood, and showered peace and strength upon the stillness; brought to the maiden's dream-sight the angel face of the long-departed mother, shadowed by mild and sorrowing rebuke. The scenes of early childhood were before her; the very fragrance of the roses, gathered by her little hands, was wafted on the midnight air; again the golden skies of youth and promise encircled the familiar landscape; the vesper-song of birds drew tears of longing and regret from the sleeper's eyes; and, in her heart, long-tried and sorely-tempted, arose the strong and virtuous resolve; the angel conquered, and bade the false alluring voice be still. From her mother's eyes a ray of love and light celestial fell, piercing the darkness so long enshrouding the Spirit's clear and holy vision. From the watching Spirit's hand, a token flower of strength and fragrance, an evergreen of immortal bloom fell to her feet; and the faint, sweet, distant music of the unseen angel-choir promised the victory and the peace that was to be attained through conflict. Strengthened, beautified, exalted, the maiden awoke, unconscious of the angel visitant that had stood, a faithful ally beside her battling soul throughout the night.

The silence of midnight, deep, starless, gloomy, lay upon the city the rushing, moaning waters laving the deserted shores. The Spirit, heaven-commissioned to do good to all, perceived a human figure amid the darkness, creeping stealthily toward the flowing river, intent on finding oblivion for life's miseries within its dark and cooling flood. The unseen watcher approached, peered lovingly into the man's pale and agonized face; struck tenderly upon the living, quivering, and responsive chords of feeling humanity had not cared to touch so long, and spoke to him in soul-murmurs and heart-uprisings of God, the loving Father; of immortality, the blessed boon of life; of love to be restored, and happiness attainable by conflict with sorrow, and victory over trial; of the joy and glory of overcoming, until "I feel there is a God," fell reverently from the pale lips of the life-weary one.

"And he has given immortality to his children!" whispered the consoling voice.

"But I am tired of life, of struggling with adverse fate, of meeting with cold and stony hearts! I am so weary of life's contrasts; the marble palaces, the tottering hovels; the wide, beautiful, fertile valleys, and the thronging, surging cities where crime and misery resort to revel and to die! I am weary, heart-sick of the falsities of humanity; the artificial smiles, the looks of scorn, the mammon-worship, and the decoration of love's holy name! Oh, let me find peace within the flowing river, a better life beyond, if life indeed there be, the transit past!"

"No, no!" murmured musically the Spirit voice, that, penetrating to the depths within, aroused the slumbering sense of right; the dormant energies and frozen sympathies of that long-tried soul. "Go not rashly, heedlessly, into that realm thine intuitions tell thee of; in thy poetic fancy thou hast painted in magic coloring its heavenly delights; its music sounds have greeted thee; thou hast felt its paradisaean airs; inhaled its fragrant thought-comings. Oh, let not gross, material sorrow veil its splendors from thy sight! Have faith, have courage! I have hope, even in that humanity that has cast thee forth to die! Thy heart beats warm and glowing with its heavenward aspirations; other hearts as finely tempered, other souls as deeply chastened shall respond. In the illimitable universe of God lives all thy soul demands for happiness. Oh, wait a little while; suffer, be strong, be angel-like in endurance! I, the voice of God within, reveal to thee the coming morning, and bid thee wait; not enter unannounced the land of fruition, lest it change its aspect of welcoming beauty to thy changed soul; and a wide, arid waste, a gloomy, threatening sky, await thee, in place of the flower-land, the poetic realm of thy true dreams."

Thus spoke to his unfolding consciousness the voice within, urged to the timely utterance of the Spirit visitant that hovered near. A flood of saving tears gushed from the lone one's eyes; a weight of woe was lifted from his crushed heart. With an unspoken prayer of thankfulness he left the spot, and was the next day rescued from want and misery by the saving hand and sympathy of one of earth's true philanthropists.

To the assemblages of the gay and wealthy, where, long after midnight, the merry music sounded, and the dance went on, the Spirit sped; and in gay, frivolous, unthinking hearts, touched the first springs of thought, aroused the first throbs of awakening feeling and reflection. Even amid those barriers to aspiration, fashion, mirth and enjoyment, the spirits of the young and thoughtless felt the kindred chain of sympathy that bound them to the world without. Passing thoughts, perhaps soon discarded, yet pure and beautiful, and instructive in their angel-passing, amid the intoxicating whirl of fashion and worldliness.

Over the dreamer's soul the spirit shed the benign influences of the Spirit's home and joy; and from the deep, refreshing slumber, poet and painter awoke with renewed inspiration; richer glowed the pencil darts of fancy; soul-stirring, the voices of song rolled forth; the musician's strains borrowed the breathings of spirit life and melody.

The mourning mother beheld, close pillowed on

Banner of Light.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, DEC. 20, 1860.

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BERRY, COLBY & CO.

THE ONE THING NEEDFUL.

Amid the discussions that are going on about the rights of this one and the wrongs of that, it is evident to even the most careless observer that little or nothing is said about that single principle, policy, duty, or what not, which is very compactly expressed in the phrase—"Mind your own business."

We are aware how unwelcome a task it is for any man to exhort his neighbors and friends from such a text, because it is the chief of those home sins that few men like to hear talked about; while, on the other hand, he who does indeed pay the most attention to minding his own business, generally has least to say to other people about minding theirs.

But let us all sit down in a perfectly friendly temper, and agree that, if we all did practice a little more rigidly upon this wholesome precept, we should be the better off for it; how much better off, no man can presume to calculate until it has become the fashion for all to desist from meddling with others, and pay more attention to themselves.

But, shall we not interest ourselves in others, then?—ask somebody, who never before paused to think how frequently he invades his neighbor's domain. Certainly we may, good friend; and it is as certain, too, that we must, while men and women are made up of the stuff they now are; but it is wrong to call persistent meddlesomeness with another by the name of sympathy, for a genuine sympathy has just as much delicacy as it has strength, and feels convicted of having outraged itself when it has overstepped its own limitations; nothing is plainer than that it could never offend another, while on its errands of professed goodness. Sympathy is closely related to Love; how, then, could it ever think a mean thought, utter a mean word, or be guilty of a mean act? And yet we all know that, in its name, more of all these are perpetrated, and spoken, and conceived, than under almost any other name or pretence whatever.

If—to speak directly and plainly—men did not take such pains to force their goodness, they would be really better men. If they did not actually invade others' domains with their ideas of philanthropy, they would be many times more philanthropic. What if we can see without any mistake that we occupy a decided vantage ground, socially and in point of morals, in relation to our neighbor; does that furnish us—even the very best of us—any reason for assuming that we are therefore called upon, and the best persons, to go and tell that neighbor how he ought to be, what he loses by not being nearer what we are, and what he must do if he would entitle himself even to our consideration? Does not all nature openly preach against such self-righteousness and deluded views of duty? Do not our neighbor's commonest and lowest, instinctive rise in rebellion against our assumption, and refuse to be taught by force or pressure of any sort?

When men know themselves better, they will be wiser; not much before. We are aware of the extent of morbid self-knowledge that is cried up for the genuine article; but what we refer to is, that healthy knowledge of one's self that tells a person at once what are his just relations to all other men, as well as what he really is in and of himself. This twofold kind of self-knowledge is rather scarce, too. Not all men, who are sincere philanthropists likewise, understand as yet that there is a hemisphere in their natures which they have never ventured to explore. We preach against intemperance and slavery; and we are intemperate in many ways ourselves, and confess it, too; we are slaves to our own passions yet, and we even enslave others around us to those passions, and they know and feel it every day. "Telegraphic philanthropy" is not the thing, however specious and flattering may be its results. It is not our business to reform others at all—we say it boldly and plainly—but to reform and regenerate ourselves; by that single process the society, the state, the nation, the whole world is reformed already. If men continue in vice and sin, are we responsible? We may, and we must, expend a world of sympathy on them; but if that expenditure hinders our own growth, we defraud ourselves and them likewise; nature refuses to be cheated, in these matters; the perfect and harmonious life for us all to bring about is that to which we are ourselves called, and not that to which others are.

Educated as the world has been in the twilight shadows of the old superstitions, it is a hard matter to make men generally think that their true lives begin and end but with themselves. We have sorely got to Popular Sovereignty yet; it will take us a long while to reach Individual Sovereignty. The June rose is a perfect thing, and buds, blows and yields up the rich fragrance of its heart, simply because that is its happy mission and office; and in doing just that, and trying to do no more, it blesses and is blessed in the circle of its pure little life. If, now, it began to pout because it was not the lily—or if, on the other hand, it neglected its own growth to stop and talk to the morning-glory, and try to induce that dear window-climber to become like itself, it is plain that its whole life would be thrown away in trying to do what it never could do, and neglecting to do just what was intended for it.

So it is with men. No man is responsible for his neighbor; he is responsible, first and last, for himself; what may be the reflex influence proceeding from that responsibility is another matter, though it is apparent at a glance. Every person ought to resolve to stay at home with himself; what he has in surplus, he will give forth imperceptibly and naturally to those who happen to be in want; and he will impart it much more acceptably, and therefore effectively, by not interposing his own momentary

feeling of pride, or his always ambitious will. God has no man in the human heart that love conquers all other forces; and no one can indeed love another, if he persists in raising barriers in that other one's heart which are surely going to keep the profound influence of his love out altogether. It is a shallow sentimentality that all the time reaches out its open hands and prays for other people; the best prayers we can offer on their behalf are honest and sincere efforts on our own.

Somehow, mankind cannot seem to get the old Jewish scape-goat idea out of its brains; when it has fairly recovered from the fright of the beguoo superstitions, perhaps the scape-goat will trot off, too. Thus, it is a very common thing—because so cheap and easy—for persons to fancy that the curse is removed from their own heads by their laying it on others; as, if they are guilty of dishonesty, they believe they do God service by charging others with intemperance, making others' sins the scape-goat for their own; or if they have crying social evils at their doors, they put in with all their zeal to remedy some great evil they have read of in stories about the jungles of India; or they easily get rid of the grinding servitude they impose on others near home, by crying out against the wickedness of slaveholders in Alabama. The disease is the same in all these cases, but it assumes different forms. In every instance it is a cowardly and dishonest dodging of responsibility, and seeking to fasten it altogether upon others. Not only is it calling out, as boys who quarrel and fall out are wont to call out—"You're another!"—but it is worse and meaner; it is the real old Phariseism come back again, body and soul; it is simply—"Lord, I thank thee that I am not as other men, particularly?" &c. We need not be at the trouble to say that no individual was ever known to get on in his spiritual career by the riding of the scape-goat.

What a charming world is not this going to be, when everybody in it devotes his whole time simply to minding his own business! There is no computing the magnetic power of that one principle, after it begins to exert itself. Once let such a principle be only the fashion, and it will work wonders; but, beside that, let it be made a living rule of faith, and so of conduct, and the morning has indeed risen when all the wilderness will bud and blossom like the rose. Let us try such a rule, each one of us, for but a single day; the difficulty we shall find in its faithful observance is the very best proof to be had of its imperative need in our social arrangements.

A Word on Spiritualists.

The long report which was given in last week's BANNER of the experiments in Hushish eating for the deliberate purpose of abnormally acquainting their author with the mysteries of his own being, was not given from any sympathy of ours with the motives that could lead to such experiments, but rather in the ordinary course of our transcripts of a regular weekly conference. The experiments were interesting to read about, though in all cases they were dangerous to try, and in many would be fatal either to physical or spiritual unfoldment, or to both. Many other matters are reported in our columns, which we by no means endorse, and which nobody would think of our endorsing.

As for this matter of calling in mechanical, or external, aid to enable us the better to look into the laws of our complex being, we cannot countenance its practice in any way. Such insight can be but illusory and uncertain, at best, and is gained at an extravagant cost. A speaker in the Conference expressed our general views exactly, in saying that the healthful progress and natural growth made by the spirit while in the form, must of necessity be made in the normal, or conscious condition. The problem is, not how to cheat the physical out of its fair and natural influence, but how it may be made harmoniously serviceable to the wants and aspirations of the spirit with which it is married. And all experience gained in an abnormal condition, or while spirit and body are virtually dissociated, is in no sense real experience, but something so shadowy, illusive, intangible, and unreal, that the experimenter must needs return to his unnatural and self-compelled condition again, in order even to reap its conscious advantages. We do not, therefore, believe that any of our readers will be tempted to tamper with their finely-poised nature, where so much is to be learned now, in order to try to sound abysses from which they may not be able to return altogether sound and whole again.

Useful Inventions—Something New.

If there be any class of men in the community entitled to the name of public benefactors, it is the few who are constantly planning and outworking their thoughts into practical use. To such minds are we substantially indebted for many of the luxuries and refinements of civilized life, while every advance upon the old method of labor, either on the farm or the plantation, in the workshop, or in the factory, is the result of incessant brain labor, of this devoted and useful class known as inventors.

We feel it both a pleasure and a duty, as public journalists, when any new invention of a practical character meets our eyes, after having fully tested its merits, to present it to the attention of our readers.

After numerous experiments extending through a series of years, Messrs. Warren & Luden, Gold pen manufacturers, at 163 Broadway, New York, have succeeded in producing a metallic combination in the manufacture of the above named article, which for elasticity, durability, finish, and indeed all other requisites, is equal to the best quality of gold pen. In connection with this is a patent double spring slide, made to work upon an ordinary pencil as a holder. The advantage of this will be apparent to bookkeepers and counting house clerks—the pencil and pen being combined by this arrangement when not in use by drawing the slide to the center of the pencil the pen is perfectly protected, and may be thrown carelessly down without receiving injury. We can safely say that we know of no invention combining in itself so many desirable objects of use, while it is furnished at about one-third the price of the old pen.

The London Spiritual Magazine.

This monthly periodical is edited with great ability. It should be in the hands of every Spiritualist in America. Contents of the December number: Gleanings in the Corn Fields of Spiritualism, by William Howitt; No. 2—The Possessions of Reichenbach; A Few Facts Regarding "Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World; Spiritualism in Sweden in 1842; Singular Displacement of Coffins; The Captain Saves his Ship by a Dream, and the Comfortable old Ghost at the Ironing Table; The "Dispatch" and "Leader" on Spiritualism; Spiritualism in California; Correspondence—Ghosts in Costume, etc.; Notices of New Books—Spirit-Rapping and Spirit-Manifestations, by a Member of the Catholic Apostolic Church. Published by F. Pittman, 20 Paternoster Row, E. C., London, England.

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Spirituallist Register for 1861.

Reports for the Fifth Annual Spirituallist Bazaar, for 1861, must be sent in before the 25th of December, as the work will go to press the 1st of January. This Register is the only work of the kind ever published, embracing complete statistics of Spiritualism in America, the names and addresses of all known public lecturers and mediums, the number of believers, list of books and papers, brief compends of facts, philosophy, reforms, etc., counting-house and speakers' almanac for 1861, and should be in the hands of every believer, and freely circulated among inquirers and skeptics. A neat pocket manual of thirty-six pages. As none are printed except to supply cash orders, those who need the Register must send their orders, with cash, in advance. Mailed free. One hundred for \$5; fifty for \$3; fourteen for \$1; ten cents single. Address, Uriah Clark, Auburn, New York.

Written for the Banner of Light.

THE MESSENGER DOVE.

BY JOANNA CHANT.

Over the still, perilous waste
Of the wild, unstable sea,
Whither, O beautiful Dove, dost thou haste
With thy wing drooping wearily?
Ruby droplets I see distilling,
Thy bosom's peerless white,
Yet thou utterest no note of plaining,
And thy gentle eyes are bright
With a tremulous, dewy light.
Come, O come, and rest thee;
Let thy wandering find succor here,
In the heart of Love thou shalt rest thee;
And brood in the home of Peace.
And when these eager plumes
Are plumed with hope and power,
Thou shalt bear from Love's dominions
A precious token-dower.
Dawned with the blush of the wished-for hour.
To the soul that sent thee forth
From a peril-haunted bark—
If perchance a glimpse of the fair new earth
Thy love-lit eye might mark—
To the heart surcharged with yearning,
Thy radiant look shall say,
God's love the world is adorning—
Night's shadows flee away
And the Orient burns with day.
Providence, R. I., 1860.

Just Think of It!

The Evening Transcript, of Boston, has a word or two to utter on politics, now and then, and likewise a word or two on other matters; as, for example, see what it has to say on Spiritualism:

"A LAMENTABLE FACT.—The Brighton (England) Herald says that Spiritualism, instead of losing ground in England, 'is flourishing and vigorous, not only among the ignorant and insane, but among men of repute, who might fairly be looked on as superior to any system of trickery so barefaced and wicked. At this moment there are several literary circles in London who are lending their aid to the spread of the delusion, and we could name more than one eminent man who is a decided victim to it. Still, are frequent in the best circles; mediums are tolerated in the highest quarters; and even the Church does not fail to add its quota to the herd of the misguided and the deluded.' Among the recent converts are Lord Lyndhurst, Sir E. Bulwer Lytton, Robert Chambers, Mrs. Browning, and many other literary and scientific celebrities."

Now what is going to be done about it?—that's the question. If the Brighton Herald sorrows over the victims that are falling before this "delusion" in the first ranks in England, and if the Boston Transcript records any faith on the part of Bulwer, Chambers, Mrs. Browning, William Howitt, and others, as "a lamentable fact," what ought the world and the rest of mankind to do under the old circumstances? Not only this, but "the Church," too, is going that way. Pray, friends of the secular press, can something be done to stop all this? Is it not possible for mankind to advance, and still allow others to perform for them their thinking? Say.

To Subscribers.

We have sent notifications to those of our subscribers whose subscriptions have nearly expired. As the enterprise in which we are engaged requires much material aid, we trust they will continue to aid the good cause by making remittances without delay. We need the united efforts of all our Spiritualist friends in our behalf at this time more than at any previous period, to enable us to meet our current liabilities. Our friends in all quarters—East, West, North and South—are therefore solicited to form clubs in their respective localities. For terms, &c., see notice under editorial head.

Mr. Pardee's Sermon.

We print on the third page a sermon by Mr. L. Judd Pardee, on the subject of "Man in General, and Man as he was, as he is, and as he will be." The discourse is replete with original and deep thoughts, and all our readers who will bestow upon it the attention it deserves, will agree with us that it is a masterly production.

To Correspondents.

We have a vast amount of correspondence on hand, much of which it is impossible for us to put in print, however excellent it may be. Everything mundane has limits—which fact of course relates to the columns of a newspaper, consequently those of our correspondents who may think themselves slighted, must take the will for the deed.

J. E. P.—It is claimed there are three millions of Spiritualists in the States, but we have never seen any satisfactory proof of the statement. We see no indications at present of any successful attempt at organization.

Our friend at Wapuan, Wis., is informed that those "Papers" have been mislaid. Should we find them, we will do as he requests.

Spiritualism is based on the cardinal fact of spirit-communion and influx; it is the effort to discover all truth relating to man's spiritual nature, capacities, relations, duties, welfare and destiny; and it is application to a regenerate life. It recognizes a continuous Divine inspiration in man; it aims through a careful, reverent study of facts, at a knowledge of the laws and principles which govern the occult forces of the universe; of the relations of spirit to matter, and of man to God and the spiritual world. It is thus catholic and progressive, leading to true religion as at one with the highest philosophy.—London Spiritual Magazine.

How can a man keep his temper when he is quite out of it?

The Messenger.

Each message in this department of the BANNER was written by the spirit who gave it. It is not a collection of sayings, but a continuous record of the work of the spirit in the world. It is not a collection of sayings, but a continuous record of the work of the spirit in the world.

We hope to show that spirits carry the characteristics of their earthly life to that beyond, and to show that the spirits who are in the world are not the same as the spirits who are in the world.

We ask the reader to receive no doctrine put forth by spirits, in these columns, that does not comport with his reason. Each expression of such truth as he perceives, while he gives opinions merely, relative to things not experienced.

Answers of Letters.—As one medium would in no way suffice to answer the letters we should have sent to us, did we undertake this branch of the spiritual phenomena, we cannot attempt to pay attention to letters addressed to spirits. They may be sent as a means to draw the spirit to our circles, however.

Visitors Admitted.—Our sittings are free to any one who may desire to attend. They are held at our office, No. 114 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?

Wednesday, Dec. 6.—Invention: How it is possible for a man to be perfect as a spirit, and physically, morally and intellectually perfect? Thomas J. Burke, Alabama; Henry P. Vital, New York; Catherine Austin; John Olney, to Rebecca Olney.

Thursday, Dec. 6.—Invention: When comes the belief in a Supreme Being? David Spencer, Windsor, Conn.; Mable Babbs, Barrington; Henry Poole, Boston; Samuel Colledge; Paul Graham.

Friday, Dec. 7.—Why is it natural for all men to fear death, and what shall we do to destroy the fear of death? George Cooley, New Orleans; Sarah Jane Leonard, Troy, N. Y.; Richard Holmes, Belfast; Elias Sprague, New York.

Saturday, Dec. 8.—How can the spirit be called upon to men?

Tuesday, Dec. 11.—How can the Lord's Prayer be reconciled to the teaching of spirits? Kuecland Chase, New Hampshire; Emily M. Sargent, Michigan.

Wednesday, Dec. 12.—Are not sin and disease equally allied to each other? Charles Hovey, Boston; Harry Mendum.

Modern Spiritualism.

"Why is Spiritualism called Modern Spiritualism, and how are we to investigate it, in order to become satisfied of its reality?"

Modern Spiritualism has received that term because there is an Ancient Spiritualism—because these manifestations of to-day correspond with those of other days—the time of Christ and his apostles. So, then, we say it hath received the term in order that you may discern between the two, and in order that you may know it is an outgrowth of the old.

Spiritualism is a threefold truth. Truth is ever self-existent—depends upon itself, and that alone, for sustenance. It can never die—it had no beginning—it has no end. This is truth, according to our understanding of it. Now we say Modern Spiritualism is a threefold truth—first, as developed materially; second, as developed intellectually; third, as developed spiritually.

If man would become satisfied of Modern Spiritualism, he must first be satisfied that he is an immortal being; and the first step to take in order to become satisfied of this, is a material step. Judge from the manifestations given you materially, for there is the inception of all life.

After you have satisfied yourselves that you are children of the Infinite Jehovah, then go into the fields and become acquainted with Modern Spiritualism, as she becomes manifest in material objects. See her in the raps. You have ears—let them serve you. You have eyes—let them serve you. You have the five senses—let them serve you well, as you criticize Modern Spiritualism. After you have brought these things to bear, if you go out unsatisfied of her truth, we are no judges of her or ourselves. Again, bring this Modern Spiritualism into your intellectual temple. Fail not to bring every gift as contained in your intellect to bear upon her. When she comes manifesting intelligence, bring your intellect to bear upon her, and see if there is not intelligent truth lying in her. See if there is not something beyond materialism—see if it will not compare to that God hath given you in your own intellectual development. As she presents you thought after thought, see if a corresponding thought has not always been self-existent.

Modern Spiritualism will give you nothing that hath not been with you for ages. She but revivifies and beautifies that which has been given you by some mind in the past. If this is so, Modern Spiritualism presents you with truths, life-thoughts, that are self-existent, that have no beginning, and shall never end.

You are not to investigate Modern Spiritualism by one faculty of the soul alone, for you will soon pass into oblivion if you do, and the darkness with you at the morning of your search shall be more dense. But when you bring all the faculties of your soul to bear upon her, you shall seek and find; for by so doing you call to your aid higher sources, more positive truths. When Modern Spiritualism is thus investigated, you shall never pass out of her sanctuary without belief.

Again, Modern Spiritualism is a religion or spiritual fact, also. Throughout every religious creed Modern Spiritualism has been engrafted, for it is but a revival of that which ever did and ever shall exist. It is an inherent germ of all religions and faith. It is found not only in material temples, but in spiritual and religious temples, also. And to these temples you must also turn to know her, and to learn that she is not only leading you through material temples, but into spiritual temples.

Man is a threefold power of himself—he is a material fact, an intelligent fact, and a religious and spiritual fact. If this is so, then again we say, you must bring all these faculties to bear upon Modern Spiritualism.

You are not to take a passing glance at her, but you are to enter every department, and criticize her in every movement; and, believe us, if you do this entirely, you will not turn away until every jot and tittle of your unbelief have vanished before the bright and gleaming light.

Nov. 24.

Lyra.

How divine a thing it is to know that each soul in the universe of thought is permitted to mingle with its fellow-souls, and draw strength from the universe of thought! How divine to know that we are branches of the tree of life eternal which existeth everywhere. How divine to know, I say, that man has power to do this! In passing through the variety of spheres in spirit life and mortal life, we oftentimes find ourselves encompassed about with clouds of every description. But we know that we are wedded to the thought behind the cloud, and the knowledge makes us happy. Though we wander for years unseen by the friends in mortal, yet a knowledge of union will thus make us cheerful, for we know in time thought shall be united to thought, and our friends will know of our presence as we know of theirs. We may linger for years, and the veil may be thick which separates us from our friends; yet we know in time the veil shall be lifted, and we shall be rewarded.

When we hear, as we do sometimes hear, the sighs and groans of those we love in earth life, we are not often sad, and it is because we know the self-same power that has redeemed us from sorrow will redeem them also. They are but toiling up the hill of life, and when they shall reach the top of the mountain, they shall look at its base and see that the Father doeth all things well.

So sure as we pass through the veil of sorrow, so sure there is a heaven prepared for us. No soul shall pass out of the path of rest; but when sin shall have spent itself, then cometh the star of peace—then cometh the reward for all the sorrows of earth. Then is seen the bright lining of the cloud; and though we dwell in the cold shadow of a tomb, and feel that friends cannot understand our coming, we know the tomb shall not always close over us—darkness and death shall not always dwell

there. We cannot ask the Father to spare our friends one pang of sorrow, for out of each seed of sorrow is born glory, joy and peace.

If man did not pass through the realm of sorrow, he would not understand the glory of heaven. For as the midnight is essential to the day, so is sorrow necessary to make more brilliant the joy. Let this strengthen the friends who have called me back to earth; and were darkness ever so dense to close upon them, may they see with the eye of faith the glory beyond, for by penetrating beyond they shall come in rapport with those who give them life, and find themselves in the keeping of the Great Father of all.

From Lyra, to her friends.

Nov. 21.

William Bowditch.

I am sadly perplexed as to what I shall do to make myself understood. I know we are expected to give certain facts by which we may be identified; but I do not know that the things which are facts to me will be so to those I wish to speak with. But I suppose the way to know precisely where I stand is to make the attempt to reach the land; and when once I have reached it, I shall be able to come in closer communion with my friends.

It is now twenty-two years since I lost something which was very dear to me—the body. For a time I felt the loss very sensibly, being at that time very much engaged in material business, that had so far drawn upon my spiritual as to almost incorporate my spiritual with the things of the material world. In fact, it was very hard for me to cut loose from the things of the world before. But after I got loose, I experienced great joy.

The church had great influence on me—my business relations had a still mightier; and it seemed as if every portion of myself belonged to earth; and after I got rid of all these I felt free, as I never had before. But every one in awhile a something came to me demanding my return to earth. Perhaps my coming to earth is a way by which I am to be more free.

I desire to communicate with that portion of my family I have left, because I have an idea I can benefit them. I do not know what I shall say of religious matters, for I have been living so long in a community where they think so little of these things, that I fear I have not a dress which will be decent to appear in a Christian community with. I never was so happy as I have been for the last eight or ten years. It took me more than ten years to get rid of my material cloak—the little strings that kept me to earth.

I have no fixed idea of God. Though I have ascended from the flesh and have become a spirit outside a mortal body, yet I have no fixed idea of God. I suppose him to be a life-essence, found everywhere; I suppose him to contain two principles—light and darkness—good and evil. This I suppose to be God in every sense of the term. How far I have got the truth, I cannot say. I do not want them to suppose my name is registered among the angels or saints, for I am as much human to day as I ever was, and I have not become so far enlightened myself as to be able to lift my friends to the topmost round of wisdom.

I have been in the spirit-world twenty-two years. My disease I suppose they called dropsy, but I do not know, of myself, whether it was or not. I was sixty-four years old. My name was William Bowditch. I was born very near this building, if I have judged aright. Now I have one son, an adopted daughter, and grandchildren, and other relatives, that I should like to come into communion with. They are religious, exceedingly so, I have been told. So, I suppose, because I cannot come in a religious shape, I shall have hard work to overcome their prejudice; but I purpose to make myself known positively, if possible, to those members of my family who are most anxious to hear from me, and I propose to do it in this way:

There is a little one they call Ada, in the family of one of my grandchildren—a little, uneducated girl. This little one is a medium, and I am satisfied I can communicate with her; and if I do not make myself known at the first private interview, they must try me, again and again, until they are satisfied I am with them, and then I shall try to do them good. But it is no use for me to attempt to do them good until the cord of doubt is taken off from them.

Nov. 24.

Emma.

Mother dear, the moon is dawning, And the sun will soon appear. Then your loved one from the dream-land, Will draw nigh with words of cheer. Then arise to meet us— Come with heart and voice, For a welcome from our mother Will our spirit-land rejoice.

Nov. 24.

Invocation.

Infinite Jehovah! While the external world is lifting her voice in praises to thee, we will not forget that we, thy children, should praise thee. We will not forget that by praising thee, we are to receive communion with thee. We will not ask thee to bless us, for oh, our Father, we know thou art continually blessing us. We will not ask thee to remove the veil of sin from the earth, for we know it is a means to draw thy children to thee. We will not ask thee to remove those dear blossoms from their minds, for full well we know the light of thy love will revive those blossoms, and give them new life. We bless thee for life, for health, for all thou hast created, and ask thee for nothing, feeling that thy Divine mind will understand our wants and understanding, will administer in wisdom.

Nov. 24.

John Calvin.

"What do the Spirits think of John Calvin, the Founder of the Calvinistic Faith?"

We can simply speak for ourselves, and not for the vast multitude that people the spheres of unseen life. You are not to suppose that our ideas are those of all, but that we give you our thoughts, not those of the multitude. Perchance one may stand by us, and differ from us in opinion; so that what we say we shall say for ourselves, and the world, either in spirit or mortal, will have nothing to do with it.

We cannot eulogize the man Calvin. We cannot believe him to have been inspired by high and holy individuals. When we consider the man as he was—not as he was supposed to be—we shall see he was spiritually depraved, and through that depravity he recognized his idea of duty. That idea that belonged to him, belonged perhaps to none else. It was his, inasmuch as it had been born of himself. We find all the basic qualities of his nature largely unfolded. Depravity stood at the portal; all men who reasoned for themselves could see it.

Full well we know a class of Christians will denounce our answer as untrue. But we alone are responsible to our own God for it, and the world has nothing to do with our sin. How shall we prove the assertion true? Mark you: he stands calmly gazing at the tower of one of his fellow beings. True, he gazes through the window of his peculiar religion. That religion tells him that God is being served through him, and thus it was to give it. But was this God one of love, or was he one of hatred, even fashioned according to the depravity of the fashioner, as we argue?

Could the Christian of to-day stand and calmly contemplate such a scene as John Calvin witnessed? No; he would have stretched forth his arm and snatched the suffering one from woe. He would have cried out, "Stay the hand of vengeance, and leave that to the Great Author of life!"

John Calvin did much to lower mankind in their own estimation. We shall not censure him for this, for his nature, both spiritual and mortal, did unfold according to his law. We say he did much to lower man in his own estimation, much to place him on a low spiritual standard. He engrafted the doctrine of total depravity on all his religious branches; he taught man that he had wandered far from God, and that a certain portion had no right to expect a heaven hereafter. Whence came this doctrine? It was a child of depravity, and hence he gave it that name—Total Depravity!

Now, then, he gave the world a religion by and through dense error, dense darkness; and as his lower faculties were unfolded well, they were strong, and he made use of that strength to overcome the

senses of his hearers. He at all times sent forth a spiritual, a magnetic power, with his words. That was engrafted into their nature, and once engrafted, they cultivated it through fear to depart from it, notwithstanding God was crying out, "I am a God of mercy, and am not willing any should perish." And if they do perish, then in Jehovah, not God, the beginning and end of all things.

Go where you will in the religious community, and you will find each class of religionists fondly nourishing some ideas they fear to part with. Whence come that fear? From God? No. From Christianity? No. But from the darkness of their own nature—that which closes the door against the light, dare not come forth and place its foot upon new soil, for fear the Great Eternal will swallow them up in his vengeance.

While the man John Calvin was giving out his religious bread, he was daily giving strength to his lower propensities, and, as a consequence, weakening the higher element, and when he came forth before the people, he gave them the dust of depravity.

Now, then, he was a child of God, morally, intellectually, and physically depraved. The spirit alone stood free and undeveloped, because that can never be developed by the external. Man may be ever so depraved in the external, yet the spirit is always pure. God created all things, and the spirit, which is in his image, can never step aside from the correct path.

Now, the man John Calvin was spiritually pure and holy; but morally, intellectually and physically depraved.

To you who have been educated in the belief of total depravity, we would say, would it not be well for you to open the door of your souls and let in another God, and draw out your spiritual being, which has been shut by your dogmas?

You need that power of mind that pure religion can give you. You do not have it. You desire your kindred shall enjoy heaven hereafter; but your religion forces the fear upon you that they may be consigned to an endless hell. Oh, know that this fear is false! Drive it from you; and though a thousand John Calvins may rise up and seek to fill your souls with the idea of total depravity, can they separate you from your God? Never. Can they cause you to believe that there may be some truth in the doctrine of total depravity? Never. For when you have once called out these high spiritual faculties, they can never become dormant. So, then, admit only that to your souls which will correspond to the spirit, and it will give you fresh buds every hour of your life.

Nov. 24.

Laura Harris.

I was born in Oswego, New York, in 1838. I lived there with my parents seven years. I then moved to Northfield, Vt. My father's name was Joseph Harris; my mother's Abigail Foster Harris. The first year after we moved to Vermont, my father died.

I was the youngest of three children—two sons, Joseph and Henry, and a daughter Laura—my own name. It was supposed before my father's death that he was worth some property, but after he died, only a few hundred dollars were left to my mother and the children. My two brothers then went back to New York State with my mother's relations. I stayed with mother until I was between fourteen and fifteen years of age. Then I left, and went first to Manchester, to see if I could earn my own living. I stayed there awhile, and from there I went to Lowell. There I made the acquaintance of persons who desired me to go to New York; and shortly after I received a letter from my mother, saying I had done very wrong, and if I did not return home immediately, she would henceforth consider me no daughter of hers. I thought at first I would go; but I was urged to stay—and I did stay. After that I sometimes lived in New York; once I went to Chicago, and stopped there awhile. I went further west, but did not stay long. I returned to New York City. I wrote to my mother frequently after that; but received no answer to my letters. I suppose, as I did not go home, she disowned me, as she said she would.

I am not going to say here, how much I suffered in staying away, as I do not care to relate my sufferings, but to restate myself in my mother's favor, if possible. I have been told that she is residing somewhere in Massachusetts now.

About a year and a half ago I was taken sick. I first took cold by attending a ball, and then I grew sick, and had the lung fever, and from that I never recovered, but went into consumption.

I have been dead, as folks say, most five months, and this is the first time I have tried to come back. But I have been learning, so I shall be recognized by my mother. My brothers are still living—one, I am told, is in Oregon, and the other in California.

I do want to be on good terms with my mother. I do not suppose she knows I am dead. She may have kept a knowledge of my whereabouts, but I do not think she did. After writing several letters, and getting no answers, I stopped writing. My last wish on earth was that I might be reconciled to my mother in spirit-life. And when I got there, I saw my father, and he told me the only way to bring it about, was to come back. At first I thought I never could come, but the more I thought of it, I thought I would come.

Long ago my mother denounced me as bad, and the world did the same, no doubt. I am not going to say I was good, for I do not think I was. I'm not going to say I never had my regrets for the course of life I pursued, for I did have. I am not going to say I would not have changed that course of life, if I could; but it is not so easy for me to turn after they have walked in the direction they have followed.

I remember now the last words my mother ever said to me, when I left her, and perhaps they may serve to make me known, as a spirit, to her now. She said—

"Laura, you are going out into the world, and you must remember you have no father to defend you; that your mother is a poor woman, and if you should get into trouble, she would be hardly able to do much for you, if she were so disposed. Do not forget to go to meeting every Sabbath, to say your prayers every night, and to read your bible."

This was the amount she said to me. I did go to meeting, but I could not believe what I heard. I was disgusted with the church and Christian people, for I saw they were worse than I. I did say my prayers every night, and read my bible, but I did not take any interest in it. I could not believe my father dead, for something said he lived, and it was that which kept me from going home.

I cannot be happy until my mother is reconciled to me. I was never reconciled to her, though I disobeyed her. I want her to be sure I can come to her, if she wishes to make me happy, and then I'll ask her to forgive, and give me the privilege of coming to her alone, and telling that which I can never tell anybody else. I was not wholly a stranger to these spirit teachings. I believed something in them, though I had no fixed faith in them. What little I did believe, originated in my own soul.

There are others I would like to commune with in New York State—not without.

Please say this to Laura Harris, to Abigail Harris.

Nov. 24.

Charles Taylor Thompson.

"Taint my style to run round and cry for all the old women in Christendom. Catch me to run round crying for folks that don't want me; I'm not the fellow for that."

Look here, mister, I've been dead near two years. I'm not coming back to make up with everybody, but because I want to. 'Taint no fun making yourself miserable after other folks. I want to let them know I can come. I suppose I'll get some good, or do some good by coming; but I don't know. I've got an uncle round here, what's a minister. He came to me just before I died, and told me I'd better repent of my sins. I went to get a little help, and he told me to become a Christian. I told him I should not do any such thing, but I'd do the best I could if he would help me.

I was born in Marblehead. My name was Charley Thompson. I was named after my mother's folks—Taylor—Charles Taylor Thompson.

My own mother aint alive—she's dead; but she aint with me. My father is dead, but I've got a stepmother. She kicked me out of doors five years

before I died, and I'd see the devil get her before I'd come back to her good grace. I want that uncle, though, to know that the folks up high in spirit-life do n't think so much of him as they do of me, for he preaches, and is n't honest enough to practice. I died in December; and, if I'd lived to January, I'd been sixteen years old. I've been two years dead. I died of that confounded small pox—the folks in the house where I boarded had it, and got well, and I died with it.

I shan't tell my uncle's name, though I aint afraid of him. He's benevolent—yes, to follow that are in his shop; but outside, he aint. Go to him and ask him for a dollar, and he'll tell you to seek God, Christ, or religion. I went to my uncle when I had a'n a shoe on my feet, when it was cold weather, and he said, "You are a profligate boy, and ought to pay attention to your soul." My God, I had as much to do as I wanted to, to take care of my body, and he would n't give me a pair of shoes!

When folks did n't give me anything, I stole. When Christians would n't help me, I stole. They told me to pray to God. I might as well have prayed to the paving stones. Tell you to pray—a good deal I'd pray! How are you going to pray when your feet are froze, and your stomach starved? I prayed by stealing, and got sent over for it. I had a step-mother, and she was worse than the devil.

I went three or four fishing voyages, and got hard work and poor pay; but I was sick most of the time on the water. If anybody had taken me and clothed me, and put me to a trade, I should have made something; but I got only kicks and curses, and then when I went off, it was: "Oh, the ungrateful young one!"

That old uncle better get down on his marrow bones, and pray for grace.

I guess the one this is intended for will get it. The minister will tell you to pray to God, if you want anything. I tried that an once, when I was half-starved, and I did n't get a thing. They do n't get what they want by praying. We see those folks just as they are, and we do n't think much of them. I don't care whether they say it is me or not, for they will know it's me. They tell a good deal about the devil, and I guess he's reserved for the folks that think of him so much—I aint seen him.

Pray to God! I say, curse the whole population of religious. I didn't think it was right for anybody to tell me to pray.

I had my hands tied before I died, so I should n't scratch. When I got out of the body, I did n't feel it, but now I feel as bad as ever.

When I got out in the fields among the flowers and birds, I always felt happy; and I knew somebody made them that was good; and I always thanked him for it, and felt good, too. That, they tell me here, is the right kind of religion, and the only kind that is good for anything.

Nov. 24.

George Foster.

I must beg pardon for not adhering to your general rules; that of giving a particular detail of one's earthly life. I do not refuse to do because I have not the power, but simply because it is not my desire so to do. What I shall give will answer my purpose, as well as if I gave full particulars.

My name was George Foster. I practiced medicine in Chicago, and died two years and three months since of fever. I have a wife in this city, with whom I wish to commune.

Nov. 24.

Nathan Reed.

Perhaps there never was a time when religion was as low a par as at the present day. This may be on account of the great flood of new light or religious ideas that are everywhere overwhelming the old.

For forty-five years I strictly adhered to my religious faith on earth. I experienced religion when I was a little rising thirty years of age. For forty-five years I continued steadfast in the faith. I have been in the spirit-land, or apart from my body, eight or nine years, and I am as steadfast in my former faith as ever; and although the footings of the eternal city have opened upon me, and its flood turned upon me, I think I shall continue of the same faith. Moral friends have asked me to come here and tell what my views of religion are. They knew then before my death—they know them now, for I have never changed.

I say religion never was at so low a par as at this time. In consequence of this many are leaving the ranks, worshipping strange Gods; but Nathan Reed remains the same. Forty-five years in a body is not for nothing. They called me a Congregationalist. I lived in Boston.

People from all parts of the world, spiritual and natural, may rise up and reverence their faith, and hold in their hands a new banner; but again I say I am the same; and were I permitted to return and speak to the people, I should speak as a minister of the gospel.

Ans.—Most certainly I believe in a hell of endless punishment. Those who believe in Jesus Christ do not practice what they believe.

Ans.—No. Good works, without a profession, will not save you.

I have answered the questions my friends have given me. For what they have sent the questions I know not. Perhaps they wish to prove me as a spirit. If they do, they may know I have taken on no another body, and speak to them, and that I remain in the same faith as when in the body.

Nov. 24.

Catharine Cready.

I would like to speak to my mother and sister. They live in Lucas street, Boston. My name is Catharine Cready. I was in my sixteenth year. Since I learn about coming back, I think about it all the time, and have not been satisfied since.

My mother and one sister live in Lucas street, and the other sister is living out, in Boston. It's where she they'll get the letter I talk to you, while you write.

It's not myself that's forgot the Catholic religion. I like them to know I am a Catholic. I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.

I've been dead only a little time, sir. I likes to come to my mother and sister, and I'll tell them much about my father and brother, who died a long time since.

Ans.—Yes, ma'am, I went to purgatory. It's a place where your stay, thinking what you do. I'd like my sister to ask her mistress where she will go, so I may speak to her. She will tell her.

Nov. 24.

Margaret Donnelly.

My father lives in Dublin; his name is Samuel D. O'Connell, nephew of Daniel O'Connell, the Irish Patriot. I have three children living, and one with me in the spirit-land. I have two fine little boys named James and Samuel. My husband's name was James Donnelly. My parents were opposed to my marriage, because my husband was low born, but I love him dearly; he was always kind and good to me. He passed away on the voyage out, and I am not separated from him now. I was killed in the Lawrence Mills when they fell. My little Margaret is put out to service in Lawrence by the Mayor, and she is not treated kindly by the family, which makes me very unhappy.

I wish my children to be brought up in the new faith, as I find old theology to be of no account here to make one happy. There is no such place as Purgatory, as the priest taught me. I was educated and lived in high life. The little boys are treated better than the little girl.

I wish, sir, you would send this letter to my father and mother, hoping they will relent their persecution of me, and render proper attention to my children. I named one of my little boys Samuel D., after my father, hoping sooner or later he would learn of it, and take proper measures to seek out his grandchildren, and by so doing, make me happy. The little girl's name is Maggie. The little one I have with me is named Phoebe, after my aunt.

Please, sir, send this letter to Dublin, Ireland. One of my cousins takes the DAVENANT, and my parents will hear from me. My father will believe I can come back, as he loved me dearly. I am afraid mother won't believe. Good-bye, sir.

Nov. 24.

Correspondence.

From a Laborer in the West.

After a tarry of seven months in this prairie country—during which time I have been employed in dismantling the pearls found on the bright shores of spirit life—I hear voices of loved friends in the east bidding me return; so I have concluded to yield to their earnest solicitations, and spend the winter with them, and will speak the words of life and progression to them as the good spirits may dictate.

I cannot leave my numerous prairie friends without acknowledging my heart-felt appreciation of the many favors so lavishly bestowed upon me. More than all, do I prize those manifestations of sympathy and deep affection, which have characterized their reception of your humble servant; and this throbbing heart of mine will never cease to remember them, or to crave the Heavenly Father's benediction to attend them; and, dear friends, before I bid you, for the present, adieu, permit me to say, that the lessons of love you have given me shall not be lost; for with them my soul has gained strength, and now hope has bidden within me for our common humanity; so that I go forth better prepared to labor in the master's vineyard.

The fields are already "white for the harvest," but true, earnest, whole-souled "laborers are few." The people wait are calling for the bread from heaven, and the work of progress is steadily going on. Old theology is passing through its death struggle, and the western world realizes it, and are preparing a burial place for it in the swamps of the mystical past; whilst truth and bright spirits are coming, illuminating the mind, and bringing joy and consolation to the heart. I believe the "good time" has come already—for man's broken fetters are falling off, and he seems longer to bow the knee to superstition's call.

My last lectures were given in Valparaiso, and Crown Point, Porter county, Ind. I went there at request of Mr. Joseph Pierson, who has done much for the cause of Spiritualism in those places.

Pearls.

And quoted odes, and jewels like worldlings,
That on the stretched forefinger of all time,
Sparkle forever.

THE LONELY MOON IS BEATING.

The lonely moon is beating,
Drearily on the tide;
Silver waves are flying,
Highling as they slide—
Both September weather,
Ether of perfume,
Leafy covertis weeding,
Hedding o'er the thicket.

Bend above me, spirit,
Hear it that I sigh!
Shroud long since clouded,
Shrouded in the sky;
From thy home Elysian,
Vision pure and blessed,
Lean thy lips unto me,
We two, unto rest!

Murmur thy sweet presence,
Essence of delight!
All thy love and sorrow,
Morrow of my night!
Let thy cool pale finger
Linger o'er my brow;
Toll me are you weary,
Dreary for me now?

Whisper! In that Heaven
Given to the blessed,
Whisper! I shall weep
Better in our rest?
Like this river flying
Sighing to the sea,
Whisper! I am going,
Flowing fast to thee!—[N. O. Mirror.

Time is precious, life is short, and consequently not a single moment should be thrown away. A beautiful Oriental proverb runs thus:—“With time and patience the mulberry leaf becomes silk.”

THE VOICE.

Somewhere, somewhere, but I know not where,
A voice is calling me, faint and far;
It seems to come from the softest cloud;
It seems to sing from the smallest star!

I follow, and follow, and follow still—
“It is a dream, or a voice in truth!”
I sit me down by the way, and pluck
Hopes’ roses:—“These for the crown of Youth!”

I weave, and weave; but they fade, and fade—
“It is a dream, or a voice indeed?”
I drop the garland and hasten away—
“It was weaving thorns—for my fingers bleed!”

I follow, and follow, and follow on—
I wander up and I wander down;
The Voice is a promise of deathless joys—
Shall I remember a withered crown?

[Harriet McEwen Kimball.

The first pressure of sorrow crushes out from our hearts the best wine; afterwards the constant weight of it brings forth bitterness—the taste and stain from the loss of the vat.—[Longfellow.

A SUNSHINE AND A SHADOW.

I hear a shout of merriment,
A laughing boy I see;
Two little feet the carpet press,
And bring the child to me.

Two little arms are round my neck,
Two feet upon my knee;
How full the kisses on my cheek!
How sweet they are to me!

That merry shout no more I hear,
No laughing child I see;
No little arms are round my neck,
Nor feet upon my knee!

No kisses drop upon my cheek—
Those lips are sealed to me,
Dear Lord, how could I give him up
To any one but thee!

No mind is at all times overflowing; there is a tide in the sensations of the most gifted.

BLANDER.

A whisper woke the air—
A soft light rose and low,
Yet barked with abate and woo;
Now might it only perish there!

Now might it only perish there!
Now might it only perish there!
Now might it only perish there!
Now might it only perish there!

At me! a quick and eager ear
Caught up the little meaning sound!
Another voice has breathed its clear,
And as it wandered round,

From ear to lip—from lip to ear—
Until it reached a gentle heart,
And that—it broke.

It was the only heart I found,
The only heart I was meant to find,
When first its accents woke—
It reached that tender heart at last,

And that—it broke. [Frances S. Osgood.

Complaisance renders a superior available, an equal agreeable, and an inferior acceptable.

THE FUNNY TYPES.

Little Bessie D., poring over a book in which angels were represented as winged beings, suddenly remarked with much vehemence:

“Mamma, I don’t want to be an angel—and I need n’t, need I?”

“Why, Bessie?” questioned her mother.

“Humph! leave off all my pretty clothes and wear feeders like a hen!”

Dean Swift’s barber one day told him that he had taken a public house.

“And what is your sign?” said the dean.

“Oh, the pole and basin; and, if your worship would just write me a few lines to put upon it, by way of motto, I have no doubt but it would draw me plenty of customers.”

The dean took out his pencil, and wrote the following couplet, which long graced the barber’s sign:

“Have not from pole to pole, but step in here,
Where nought excels the shaving, but the beer.”

It is said that a girl in England was struck dumb by the firing of a cannon. Since then a number of married men have invited the artillery to come and discharge their pieces on their premises.

Seeing an allegorical picture of a poet on an eagle’s back, Prentice remarked, that he did not believe it was a custom of poets to ride on eagles—although he had met many a one “on a hawk.”

Hood, on being shown a portrait of himself very unlike the original, said that the artist had perpetrated a false Hood.

“I live in Julia’s eyes,” said an exquisite in Col. man’s hearing.

“I believe it,” said George, “for she had a eye in them when I saw her last.”

Success with the ladies is like violin-playing—a great deal depends on the beating.

If you doubt whether to kiss a pretty girl, give her the benefit of the doubt, and go in.

A romantic individual was asked the other day why he showed greater attachment to a very thin lady than to one who was more stout.

“It is,” said he, “because I am nearer her heart.”

Two countrymen—“Ah!” said an Englishman, the other day, “I belong to a country upon which the sun never sets.”

“And I,” said a Yankee, “belong to a country of which there can be no correct map—it grows so fast that surveyors can’t keep up with it.”

A bachelor, discovering his clothes full of holes, exclaimed:—“Mend I can’t!”

BOSTON SPIRITUAL CONFERENCE,
WEDNESDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 17.

QUESTIONS.—What is Life? What is Animal Life?

Dr. P. B. RANDELL was called to the Chair.

JACOB EDESS.—Human life is an embodied thought of God. Man is an unfolding expression of the

dwelling regent who abstracts from the concrete whole his individual qualities, and embodies their

virtue in man, the child or son of God, in such a manner as ultimately to reveal light and darkness,

good and evil, cause and effect, in an eternal at-onement with the divine Source of Life. The Divine

Father endows all his offspring with individual founts of love and affection that distinguish each

from the other, and capacitates all to work out their own salvation, while he, as the indwelling regent,

works in each and all, both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure, without increasing or diminishing his infinite attributes. The ungodly soul,

though at an eternal distance of undeveloped capacity from the absolute cause of causation is necessarily

an individual part of the great First Cause. In proportion as we approach him we go interiorly to the

fountain of life, commune with God, and transmit to the more external souls his love, light and life.

When we contemplate the more external conditions of being, we perceive that God, though omnipresent, is not in all men the same pure and holy being, because all have not the same capacity to feel, to perceive and to reflect his love, justice and truth. But the divine mind may be unfolded in its finite effects so as to perceive and reflect, in its triune being, the personal God. If we are in harmony with the inner love, we can in some sense perceive the bond of brotherhood which connects each to all, and all to God; our dependence upon each other, and upon the animal, the vegetable and the mineral that preceded us, and sustains our physical existence. Prayer, work and worship, faith, hope and charity are the organs of our spiritual being. The child is in harmony with the Father in proportion as he drinks from the fountain of life. The indwelling regent speaks through him to others in proportion as he is able to transmit and they to receive the message. The inner or spiritual body is dependent in earth-life upon the external or animal body, its mentality or capacity, for spiritual enlightenment. The mental conditions of the infant, the idiot and the insane may be such that they cannot receive the experience or virtue of earth-life necessary for soul-growth without coming in rapport with mortals here. No virtuous soul would refuse aid to the weak and erring, however depraved they might be. God speaks to us through echoing instrumentalities, the purest love, the strictest justice and the dearest truth are capable of perceiving, feeling and embodying. The Almighty God, with whom everything is possible in eternity, is limited in time and space by matter and mind—being reflected in each entity only in proportion to its spiritual refinement and culture. All have not unfolded the same degree of faith, hope and charity, consequently cannot make the same aspirational demands upon the fountain of life. No one soul can come into the perfect inheritance of all that is God-like, until all have received of the Infinite Giver all that can be bestowed. It is God’s prerogative to give; it is ours to receive and reflect.

MELANDE A. BAIL.—There is a corporate mind and a corporate heart, and individual life is but a reservoir for the great flood of thought, feeling and desire as it is impelled from out the beating, bounding heart. The individual soul-being is but a revelation of God’s will to man; and to find the point where desire and the God-will harmonizes, is to find God. In that point our wills and the will of the Infinite are in equipoise. Upon that point our souls are balanced; there they live in the kingdom of heaven—there they rest in the embrace of God. Hence I derive another thought: God, as a governing power, is the magnet whereby the universe is balanced. This is the principle that systematizes being. The tendency of all mind and matter is toward an equipoise of forces; the law of equipoise is eternal in the principles of being. This is its formula as written by science; action and reaction are equal. Watts embodied this idea of God in that moment of deepest inspiration when he said—

“There rests the earth, there roll the spheres,
There nature leans and feels her prop.
But his own self-sufficiency bears
The weight of his own glories up.”

As all justice means union, so all truth means affinity, and all affinity means charity, and all charity means devotion to the principle of universal good. Whoever sacrifices themselves to this principle, utterly regardless of the pain or pleasure it may bring to them in this life, will have a pill, more potent than that of hashish, to explore the mysteries of being, rolled up for them by God—every night. For through this principle of Divine love there is a perpetual inbirth of the spirit into the form of the Godhood, and every nerve becomes an eye to penetrate through all the realm of spirit, and touch every cause and every soul in being. This I know is the natural unfolding of the soul out of its rudimentary state into the Christ-form, as Mr. Edson terms it, or the form of Perfect Man; and although I have no objection as a principle to the use of medical men and men of sciences concerning it, but after spending several evenings in this assemblage of philosophers and savants, I am still somewhat in doubt. The question is not the relationship of the soul to others, or the development of the soul; but a clearer and more tangible one—“What is life?” In my vocation as a physician, I was once called to see a man who was paralyzed on one side, and could not move a muscle or ligament; yet he was bright in thought, and life moved regularly, and digestion was good. Finally his disease extended over both sides of his head, and he could neither see, hear, taste, feel, nor move a nerve. Yet he lived, and lived for days. Then what is life? When we talk of the machinery of the system, we are talking only of the mere curtain of life; and however that curtain is paralyzed, life may exist. I have never seen the man who possessed any mathematical knowledge of it. All we know of it has come to us through revelation.

JOHN EDESS.—We can know of life only by its manifestations. We can no more tell what it is, than we can analyze God, light or darkness. There are different degrees of life—life of animal—body life, soul life, physical life, moral life, intellectual life and spiritual life; and I do not know as we can get any nearer a definition of it than that it is the breath of God—the pulsation of his heart in nature.

Dr. CROWELL.—I don’t know as I can say anything on this question, except that I am sure I live. Brother Edson calls life the love-principle that lives and moves through all things. Miss Bail is sure that similar in her definition. Mr. Cushman treats what physiological life, and concludes there is no knowledge of what life is. Though I do not pretend to understand it, yet I believe life can be understood by mortal, finite man. I believe it to be nothing more nor less than a compounding of elements in a refined condition. To understand and answer the question, we must become acquainted with this system of compounding. I don’t believe physical existence is life; it is rather death than life; but beyond it is a real, vital, tangible life; and individuals will yet be able to understand what it is that makes life, and renders us living, moving, intelligent, tangible beings. Every individual here has said that nothing more can be known of life than man has manifested; nearly all have claimed that it could not be understood. Now there have been philosophers who doubted mortal existence, and believed they were only living in one grand and mighty dream, from which they should awake some day and find it but a dream. To declare that life cannot be understood, is more than I care to do. Some have said life can be no better nor easier comprehended than God; but I believe God will yet be understood, and that perfectly. No thought, desire or aspiration has an end; and from what the mind has achieved and is achieving, may we not predicate greater things? Millions in spirit life will tell you life has been a dream, and they have just awakened into tangible existence; and what to them was once vague and dim, now stands out in left relief. Once this knowledge of the hidden mysteries of life is not the possession of all; but that there are those in spirit life who understand how we live and why, I cannot help believing. You may continually regret, and though some may say you are regretting, I believe there can be no moving backward, but onward forever; and God himself cannot make man retrograde, more than time can turn backward. This is but the infancy of man. He is but creeping on his knees; but he will yet be brought up to the condition where he will understand the hidden things of life and God.

Mr. EDESS.—An important idea has been suggested; and I take the liberty to hope that something further will be said on the point advanced, that the soul is a part of God. I should like to have this touched upon further.

Mr. PENNY.—Life, of itself, if I understand the question, I behold with my external senses. Man is composed of three properties: matter, life, intelligence. Life is not intelligence. It is new and of its own motion, there is life. I behold God filling all space. He is all life, matter and intelligence. I can only define life as motion.

Mr. DUNN.—I thought I would erect a little platform, that all my successors, as well as myself, might stand on comfortably. We are all agreed as to one point. Those who admit that there is a God, also admit that he is impartial in his works. All our friends will agree with this idea. Then, if that is so, let us deduce a principle from it. Has he bestowed on any of his children the power of getting behind him, and knowing what his secrets are? He is impartial, and we are told he makes his sun to shine on the just and the unjust. Then does it not follow that from this impartiality he would bestow on all minds equal faculties and capacity? Then what are we capable of knowing of our own life? If we know nothing, then it is utterly preposterous to talk of the lives of others. But does the man live who knows any essence of his own life? We can discover something; but what is it? The mere manifestation, and that only. Then where are the manifestations we are capable of appreciating? We are capable of understanding fear, hate, kindness, joy, etc., because we feel them; we are conscious of them, but not conscious of any power which originates them. With all due deference to my friends, I declare the question one of no importance at all, for it is utterly beyond our scope of thought. Our friend Edson told us of the antecedent cause of life; but what does he mean by that? God only knows what he means, I don’t. But if that cause is God, he does not know what God is, and so the matter is still in mystery as much as ever.

Mr. WINTER.—One of the arguments of our very learned friend was, that if we could find out what life was, we should have had the faculty of understanding it now. If he carries his mind back to the past, he will find a time when the world was thought to be flat; and nobody could prove it was otherwise. But the mind has considerably expanded since then, and we understand the subtle laws which control many things which have been shrouded in mystery to our fathers. Now it is said if a man has the faculty of asking a question, he will sometimes have the power to answer it. I like this question, as I love Dickens’s novels—not for itself, but for the suggestive ideas it incidentally brings out. The question is as old as the book of Job, and older, for I ought to know. The patient Job says:—“Our life is of few days, and full of trouble.” I don’t know but some of my friends would find that a good answer to this question. Emerson, in his new book, says, “Life is that which holds atoms together.” If any one can give a better answer than that, I should like to hear it. That is about as near as we can get to it. It is astonishing to me that so many take pains to amass wealth, which all the pulpit prattle is of little moment to us in our eternal march. If this discussion brings us down to the facts of life, then it is useful for us to talk about it. It was said by Shakespeare, or some other minister, that our life is not sufficient for us. We are not sufficient for ourselves. A few years ago we were not; a few years to come we shall not be. Our life seems a dream. I am glad we dwell so long upon this question.

Dr. GARDNER.—I fully believe in the remarks of Mr. Wetherbee, that in the words of Andrew Jackson Davis, the power to ask a question presupposes the power to answer it—not the immediate power, perhaps, but the furnishing of the material by which it can be answered. Mind is dependent upon the forms of its organization for its manifestation.

Mr. Southworth in her “Deerheart Wife,” puts into the mouth of one of her characters—Hagar, a Moorish girl—a beautiful idea of the growth of soul. She says:—“I think that life continually ascends, never descends. It looks to me very stupid to suppose that a soul can relapse into the form of a beast. No life is never lost, but it continually changes its locality, always ascending; the various forms of life being the steps by which it reaches humanity—then heaven. I have lived so much in the wildest solitudes of nature; I have seen so much more, so much stronger life-spirit below, than on a level with humanity; I have felt struggling up, through water, stones, and clay, through lichen, herb, and tree; through insects, birds, and beasts; up to its highest visible form, humanity; and I have grown to dream that life-spirit is elaborated from matter; or if not so, that in the union of spirit with matter, spirit may be first incarnated in the lowest form of matter, and passing through its various stages, rise to human, to angelic nature. I believe there is one life-God, and many lives; the souls created in his image—that these souls might not each have been created at a word, in a moment but created, or elaborated through long ages. I believe that each soul retains its separate existence, its separate features, its individual self, unimpaired as undivided through all its incarnations; for instance, the spirit of a rose in ascending the scale of being, will never enter the form of an eagle, or a lion. To illustrate never home—here is my gentle Rosalia, whose pure spirit, ages ago, might have slept in the pale light of a seed pearl; then, in the lapse of centuries, lived in the fragrance of the wood violet; then, through many transmigrations, reached the form of the dove, then a lamb, and lastly, is incarnated in the beautiful child before us.”

Then, if that were so, why can I not remember when I was a violet, and when I was a dove? pertinently inquired Rosalia.

You cannot even recollect when you were an infant, little one—you cannot recollect all that happened last year, or last month; how should you be able to look back through a vista of past lives, that the doors of many deaths have closed behind you? Perhaps, at the close of your present life, the whole vista may be thrown open, and you may be able to look back to the beginning. Oh, Rosalia! I remember that, in the earliest years of conscious human existence, in infancy, my mind struggled as much backward for recollection, as forward for new knowledge. She was silent awhile, and then pursuing the train of thought, she said—The analogy between material and spiritual nature seems to me to be perfect in all its particulars. I never saw a human being who had not his type in the minerals, in the vegetables, in the insects, in the birds and in the beasts.”

There is truth in that idea, as in all others. Everything is born from a lower to a higher form. Mr. Crowell says life is the combination of elements. It seems to me life is the power which enables them to come together. I do not claim to be able to demonstrate what I say; but I assert “Life is God,” and until all the primates of the universe are taken in, it loses its identity, and is incorporated in itself in man.” Animal life is subordinate entirely to the power of spirit, and all the natural functions are taken place while the spirit is sometimes absent from the body. It is a question hard to be understood.

Mr. BRANT.—A spirit once showed me that every inch of air contained millions of conscious beings. We breathe them in. They are so small

that they are ten thousand times too minute to be seen by the natural eye, yet they are material, nevertheless. Life is taken in through them, as they are breathed in, and life is the effect of their impregnating power. When this power is cut off, decay ensues, and the body becomes annihilated, for these little conscious beings war with one another, and discord results in material death. But all material is eternal. There cannot be one particle outside of eternity.

Mr. TAYLOR.—The consideration of this important subject has unfolded thought for the celebration of one hundred thousand minds throughout the United States—thoughts they will carry through their earth-life to the life to come. I am deeply interested in the subject. It is the all in all; and whatever of light is reflected on it ought to be regarded with favor. Thanks said, “Know thyself”—which was considered so important that it was inscribed in Greek characters upon the Temple of Delphos. So I mean to see on the brow of every human being here, in burning letters, “Know thyself.” To know God might be to know most of life, and to know that, was to know the most of one’s self. Thought, speech and act, are the threefold elements of life, and embrace all its causes and effects. Take these away, and oblivion, inevitably ensues. In the cerebrum of his eternity God said, “Let there be light!” Light came with thought, speech, and act—thought demonstrating the reason, speech the power, and act the glory. Job asks the important question:—“If a man die shall he live again?” and he asks the question with a faith which led him to believe he should not only live again, but be possessed of greater power than this earth allowed him, in the change and unfolding of man throughout eternity. It seems to me Jesus possessed this threefold power better than any other man. He seems to have shown it when he amote the dry rock of ossification, and forth sprang pure glowing water. The faded birth of Minerva from the brain of Jove, was scarcely more glorious or interesting, than the faculties manifested through the life of Jesus.

In viewing this subject, I regard the universal race of man to be one of the most beautiful definitions of what is life—not in one condition, but in all. I realize life to be the power that thinks, speaks, and acts. God is so manifest in the flesh. For as a man thinks so is he. The man gifted with beauty and truth of thought and expression lives the most of life; but it is true that all things are life, and life is in all things. We can comprehend God just in extent as we can comprehend ourselves. He has no secrets from man man cannot know, when he unfolds the faculty of diving into the very depths of being to bring up the pure and good.

Next week the Conference will discuss the following subject:—“Is there any immutable moral law for the government of all human actions?”

SONG OF THE GOLD GOD.

Oh, my kingdom is wide, and my throne secure,
And loyal my vassals, my sceptre is sure;
And bid is the heart dare my power deride,
And cope with my millions of pomp and pride.
My ministers true, round my chair of state,
Are Crime and Oppression, Dispair and Hate;
And my subjects are those whom the noble despise,
Having bowed to my sceptre, they cease to be wise.

Oh! I firmly sit in my halls of Pride,
And issue my mandates far and wide;
And my slaves bend low, and grovel in dust,
And abjectly sue for positions of trust;
And the heart is seared and the conscience sold
To secure the smiles of the God of Gold;
But a cold and unbending brow I bear,
Nor shed o’er their ruin a single tear.

I whisper to policy’s recalcitrant heart,
Of the wealth he may gain by a traitor’s part;
And he fashions his soul in deception’s mould,
And barbers his country for love of gold.
And I dazzle the eyes of the fair young bride,
As she blindly stands by the profligate’s side,
And promises honor, and love and truth—
But a curse falls deep on her blighted youth.

Oh, my reign is dark, and the fetters strong
That I forge round the hearts of my worshiping throng;
And I crush out all soul from the lover of self,
And deaden all loves but the love of self.
I tempt the murderer’s darkened soul,
And the forger I bend to my blind control;
And honor, and home, and country demand—
And he dies of disgrace in a foreign land.

Oh, my reign is dark, my demands severe—
And I torture my subjects with crime and fear;
And I pierce them with arrows of envy and strife,
And embitter the fountains of social life;
Estranging the son from the home of his youth,
And tempting the daughter to barter her truth,
And stealing the parent’s heart the while
’Gainst the prayers of his erring, repentant child.

And I fetter the tongue of the priest—to his shame;
And he utters smooth things—in his Master’s name;
Assured that the truth independently told
Would scatter my people from out his fold.
Ah! I hold is the heart dare my power deride,
And cope with my millions of pomp and pride,
For my power is great, and the chains are strong
That I coil round the hearts of my worshiping throng.

M. E. D.
New York, Dec. 4, 1860.

Reported for the Banner of Light.

MRS. E. A. OSTRANDER AT ALLSTON HALL
Sunday, Dec. 10, 1860.

AFTERNOON DISCOURSE.

As usual, the question was chosen by the controlling intelligences from a number submitted by the audience. In this case she was called upon to explain this text: The sin against the son of man shall be forgiven you, but the sin against the Holy Ghost shall never be forgiven you.

We are somewhat at a loss, she said, to know how to introduce the Holy Ghost to an audience like this. The teachers of the past made it one of the paterency of the Godhead. But we know nothing of the Holy Ghost of the Bible. We know of a God of perfection, absolute goodness and wisdom, and one no being in existence can move from his purpose or break his law. We take for our present standpoint of thought and remarks a different view from any in the Bible. The Bible declares you must accept this truth, because it is written in the Bible, and because one of the holy mysteries, is beyond our power of understanding or right of inquiry. Such a Bible is of no use to those people to day who find their God everywhere, though there are those who have need of and should have it. Allow us, however, to declare that we have no faith in the infallibility of the Bible, or anything save God. Therefore we take your text only to meet your thought, and not to advocate its correctness. The text was in the words of Luke, and even in this he differed from the other Apostles. He seems to believe that Christ was no more than a man, when he says, “Whoever sins against the son of man shall be forgiven.” We know it is impossible for any one to sin against the Holy Ghost and be forgiven.

You will agree with me that the Apostles were spiritual mediums of their day, and each saw things corresponding to his own faculties and capacities. Luke said the sin against the Holy Ghost could not be forgiven. Understanding the Holy Ghost in our own way, we repeat the truth, that whatever wars against the laws of human nature can never be for-

given. Many errors are committed in ignorance, but the penalty is the same. Prayer nor effort can change the results of any violated law. Every law is accompanied by its penalty, which follows its violation. Ignorance is the source of all misfortune, and is constantly involving humanity in discord and inhumanity.

It has been taught that repentance brings with it forgiveness. But if you have sinned against the Holy Ghost of your nature, and repent, your future life is changed, but your past cannot be changed. Thus traces of physical and intellectual characteristics have been changed, but the scars of old wounds ever remain.

We always leave our mark on those who follow us. The defects of the mold are stamped on the image. This is a lesson bidding us be true to the laws of nature. We blame theology more than any other instrument for this perversion of the knowledge of God’s laws.

It has been taught that everything of mankind was of itself unholly. This idea has degraded mankind in the past, and we cannot bear to dwell upon its moral deformity. Man has groped through his shadow like children in the dark; but, thank God and good angels, he need do no more.

The physiology of man is full of lessons concerning sins against the Holy Ghost. In your religious, moral, social, conjugal and political relations you feel the lack of true harmonious understanding and use. Here, then, is the violation of the laws of the Holy Ghost. You feel the need of forgiveness, but hardly know how to obtain it.

Yet the ages to follow you will unfold these mysteries, and proclaim that the sin against the Holy Ghost cannot be forgiven. Be, then, full and strong to exist, living up to the highest light the age has given you. The spirit-life is made up of just such men and women as you are, carrying there with them the ideas and impressions of this life. Some believe all of evil is thrown off at death; but not so. The law requires that progression alone can be achieved by returning to earth to seek elevation. Does this not teach you that you should be true in your life to the laws of nature, and strive to unfold in all goodness and purity? What matters it if you are free as a spirit? You can escape no phase of physical and spiritual unfolding. Man in spirit-life is like a child in school—he must study well the lesson of his class; if he learns not his task, he must go back and do his labor over again. So spirits must return to earth to perfect the development they did not achieve here. Much of your nature seems Godlike, and much is far from your ideal of the Godlike. Do you think to be able to escape the result of your faculties, whatever they are? Man’s spirit progression is in accordance with his faculties. Spirituality must be the teacher, to warn you against the breach of these moral and physical natural laws of nature. The heart often wanders without wisdom. The impulses of the heart are so erratic that they often lead man wrong.

Wisdom must come as a mighty saviour to every soul who thinks to throw off the shackles of discord, and bid it live in accordance with the laws of the higher nature of God. I know there are those who are living against the laws of the Holy Ghost. Go to work to understand the laws of your being, and you will see how far God’s forgiveness is brought to man. Forgiveness comes from a change to the better; but in truth there can be no forgiveness.

Proud iconoclast, while breaking the idols of the past, be sure your efforts supply better things than you destroy, or cease your work of demolition. Respect the work of the past, for it has been a noble help to many a child of earth. Both the Son of Man and the Holy Ghost are myths of the past, and both will pass away. But they embodied great principles, which can never die. The story of the trinity we cannot accept, and when the world is prepared to part with it, it will be allowed to return where it belongs.

EVENING DISCOURSE.

The evening lecture was on the Revelation of the Bible. It was dictated by what claimed to be the spirit of Thomas Paine, assisted by others. The lecture was strong in its denunciation of the popular credulity which clung to the Bible as the infallible and only word of God. It referred pungently to the discrepancies between the gospels of the different apostles, and the vain pretensions set up for them by their followers, which they never claimed nor thought of receiving in their day. The spirit declared the apostles to be spiritual mediums of their day, and proclaimed the gospels of no more binding importance than familiar letters from travelling mediums to their friends, now-a-days. The apostles themselves made mistakes, which imperfect translators and type-setters have increased, rather than diminished. It was an inspired volume, but all thoughts are none the less so.

At the close of this discourse, “Fair-bell,” an Indian girl, entranced the medium, and expressed herself willing to talk with all who were ready to converse with her. She answered several questions, to the edification of the audience. Her language was unassuming and pretty, and her illustrations and figures of speech put all in the audience in a happy humor. Miss Murdoch then sang a song entitled the “Messenger Bird,” with good effect.

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