

BANNER



PROGRESS.

VOL. I.

SAN FRANCISCO, SATURDAY, MAY 11, 1867.

NO. 18.

LITERARY.

For the Banner of Progress. THANKSGIVING.

BY J. H. ROGERS.

A mandate from our magistrate
Now rings throughout the Golden State:
It bids us bow our heads and pray—
To banish merriment away—
And solemn keep Thanksgiving Day,
With reverence meek and low.

Great Bullion heard the solemn swells
Of melody from morning bells,
And as their music filled the air,
He laughed in his luxurious lair,
And mocked at offering a prayer
Where it would make no show.

He drew the rich lace curtains wide:
The morning sun, in all his pride,
Pours in his mellow light again,
Through many a variegated stain,
That decks each gorgeous window-pane
With all the rainbow dyes.

Old Bullion gazed with fond delight;
His thirsty soul drank in the sight—
Not of the sunbeam's golden ray:
His eager eye glanced on the bay,
Where his proud ships at anchor lay,
Then on the bank across the way,
Where his heart's idol lies.

"Give thanks!" quoth Bullion: "thanks to whom?"
He glanced about the gorgeous room,
Where Avarice, with its serpent coil,
Enveloped in its folds the spoil
Wrung from the needy sons of toil,
Till dire starvation came.

"I'll thank myself!" proud Bullion cries;
"Full worship my hand and the skies;
My faith lies in my subtle brain;
I bend the knee to golden gain;
What reck I of the thousands slain
By famine's scorching flame?"

"But now I'll to the house of prayer;
I'll in their hollow worship share;
We'll keep the tolling millions' eyes
Fixed on their homes beyond the skies;
For in our bright example lies
The source of all our wealth."

"And while their mental sight grows dim
With gazing on the obdurate
While wrapt in sweet religious trance,
Their whole soul in the heavenward glance,
Be watchful, Bullion! then's your chance
To take their all by stealth."

The rich man's carriage rolled away,
Where knaves and fools and bigots pray:
The knaves go there to use the fools;
The bigots claim their doctrine rules;
While Bullion laughs—they're all his tools,
To keep his coffers full.

He reached the consecrated pile;
He softly trod the holy aisle.
Then stepped within his cushioned pew,
And, ever to his training true,
Over his eyes he gently drew
The soft religious veil.

"Give thanks to God," the preacher said:
Old Bullion meekly bowed his head,
And echoed, in a solemn tone,
Each account of the living's moan,
While in his eye the tear-drop shone
Like dew upon a flower.

How well old Bullion wears the mask!
The Church of him no questions ask;
Each member feels the power of gold—
Each has the other bought and sold;
Religion's car has ever rolled
On golden wheels to power.

The day's sad mockery is o'er;
The servile sexton tends the door;
He flings the ponderous portal wide;
The lesser schemers stand aside,
Before great Bullion's heavy stride;
None dare to cross his path.

The great man's sweet, benignant smile
Threw sunshine o'er the holy aisle;
But now his visage wears a frown:
His pious eyes, in glancing down,
Fell on a woman of the town;
It raised old Bullion's wrath.

She meekly raised her feeble voice;
She barred his way; he had no choice;
He must this fallen creature meet,
Who asked for alms upon the street.
With fury Bullion's bosom beat,
To hear the wanton's words.

From her pale lips the sad sound fell:
"I loved not wisely, but too well;
I will not here the tale unfold,
How thou hast triumphed with thy gold—
How I, in thy vile serpent fold,
Was charmed, like other birds."

"I will not brand thy pious brow
With my soul's degradation now;
I'll fill, and starve, and all I crave,
In my dark passage to the grave,
That thou wilt raise thine arm to save
Our child from fate like mine."

High swelled the rich man's haughty pride;
He thrust the fallen wretch aside,
And then, with mingled shame and fear,
Beckoned a pious toady near,
And bade him from his pathway clear
This sore to eyes divine.

That night old Bullion could not sleep:
Dark fancies would around him creep.
He strove to fix his scheming brain
Upon his heaps of glittering gain,
The truant thoughts would not remain
Long on the stolen store.

They ever seemed to turn his gaze
Where a pale light shone through the haze,
Whose mellow radiance, soft and warm,
Enveloped one pale female form;
She showed the wreck of many a storm
On Time's tempestuous shore.

Old Bullion saw, with soul aghast,
Roll up the long forgotten past;
He heard a soft voice gently say,
"You thrust my worn-out form away;
My soul hath left the worthless clay,
And now comes back to thee."

"Thy bolts and bars and granite walls
Shall no more keep me from thy halls;
I enter with the viewless air;
I come to claim a father's care
For my poor child, her rightful share,
Which was denied to me."

"Behold," she cried, "the lovely scene!
The wild-wood, with its mantle green:
Summer still paints the hill and lea
With flowers, but never more for me;
My sun set in a stormy sea,
Where waves of Lethe roll."

"My wreck lies on Love's haunted isle;
The beach is strewn, for many a mile,
With forms of those who spread their sail
Before the breath of Passion's gale;
They listened to a traitor's tale,
Who their hearts' jewel stole."

"I little dreamed, that summer day,
When you among the blossoms lay,
To rest you from the noonday heat,
A serpent lurked in my retreat:
You vowed your bosom only beat
With purest love for me."

"Enough! what boots it now to tell
The why I trusted, how I fell?
You came with Treachery's cunning power,
Fondled the blossom for an hour,
Then cast aside the withered flower
On Time's remorseless sea."

"False heart! I bring a demon here,
To haunt thee through each coming year!
I leave the demon eye with thee!
His breath shall blight thy threshold tree!
Thy dim eye shall no longer see
The god thou 'st worshipped here!"

"He'll numb the sense, and chill the brain;
He'll rack thy shriveled limbs with pain;
The eagles thou hast loved so long
Have sung to thee their farewell song;
No magic can their strain prolong,
To greet thy silent car."

"I see a darkly rolling wave,
That bears thee onward to the grave;
Thy proud soul trembles at the thought
That all thy wealth, so dearly bought—
Thy heart's ambition—comes to naught,
And thou must meet the worm!"

"Thou hast no hope beyond the sky;
Thy couch is made—now on it lie,
Die, sordid soul! die all alone!
Let the Dark Angel claim his own!
Reap the full harvest thou hast sown,
On earth the poisoned germ!"

COMMUNICATIONS.

GOD IS LOVE.

"Creation is the Picture-word,
The Hieroglyph of Wisdom's Love;
Heaven's full outpoken thought
Of Him by whom the Worlds were wrought;
He, throned within that realm above,
Inspires that Heaven, that thought, with Love."

So sang the poet Coleridge, on the text of Jesus,
"God is Love." But so do not sing the churches
and teachers of the present day, except perhaps
some of the so-called heretical sects, who are more
enlightened and liberal in their views than the
orthodox; the latter, especially Methodists and
Presbyterians, delight more in exciting the venge-
ful and terrible, than the love idea; they take
solid comfort in old Satan; everything which does
not conform with their tenets and doctrines is at-
tributed to the "Bogy." Christ is said to have
reproved the orthodox of his day, when they ac-
cused him of casting out devils through Beel-
zebub, the prince of the devils; and he bade them
judge a tree by its fruits; but do his self-consti-
tuted ministers follow this command, or do they
not rather condemn, without praying, everything
that comes out of Nazareth—in other words, all
that does not come through the Church? Else,
why this crusade against Spiritualism? Scarce a
religious publication can be taken up that has not
some fling against it. Let any professed Spiritu-
alist make a false step, and the news is joyfully
heralded from one end of the continent to the
other, as if a truth should be denounced for the
folly of its believers. If such were the rule,
where would Christianity stand to-day? And
what is there in Spiritualism that should be so re-
pulsive to Christianity? I can understand infidels
detesting it; but why should Christians fight that
faith on which their own certainly depends? If
Spiritualism, that is, spirit intercourse, is not pos-
sible, then what becomes of Christianity? Did
Christ speak with Moses and Elias, or not? If
they admit that he did, do they not concede the
whole point at issue? I do not dogmatically as-
sert that he did; but I do affirm that if the spirit
world was open to Jesus and others in that day, it
is by the same law open to us in this. Is it not a
perverse thing that theologians, while they insist
upon all the incredible and impossible things nar-
rated in Scripture, place so little stress on or en-
tirely ignore injunctions and teachings of the
greatest importance? Now, of what consequence
is it whether Jesus turned water into wine or not?
That was a miracle, *i. e.* an impossibility. If the
liquid was water, it was water; and I think the
fable relates that it was drawn from a well. Then,
clearly, it could not be, what we understand it to
be, wine—the fermented juice of the grape; and

no hocus-pocus could make it such. Again, of
what consequence is it to us whether five thousand
were fed upon five loaves or not, except that they
must have had mighty small appetites; but the
miracle—*i. e.* the impossibility—consists in the
fragments filling seven baskets; although, to be
sure, the size of the baskets is not stated; nor is it
stated how the baskets got there—whether they
were taken empty in expectation of the miracle,
or, as might be more naturally expected, full of
providence, as is usual in camp-meetings of the
present day; but if they went full, why is the
food not mentioned in connection with the
loaves and fishes? Again, another miracle: why
was Lazarus raised from the dead? or, in the light
afforded us by Spiritualism, what crime had La-
zarus committed, that he should be forced back out
of Paradise into the decaying body he had quit-
ted—an act far more cruel, unjust, and arbitrary
than it would be to force a collegian into a primary
school, or a prince into a beggar's rags; and be-
sides, as impossible as it would be to dwarf the ex-
perience of a man back into that of a child. But
suppose it were possible—what good? Do such
puerilities prove a Divinity? Yet upon such
things do the Christian Church principally found
their claims, while the grand mission of the Re-
former is almost ignored. The wonders which at-
tended his presence were simply the attributes of
his perfect nature, not the objects of his mission,
or the proof of his Divinity; and all the works
which he did, as healing the sick, and conversing
with high spirits, were done in accordance with
laws which he understood, and which the ignorant
and undeveloped did not. And therefore they de-
fied him; and his followers thought then, and
think now, that they honor him by doing so,
against his own explicit commands. "Call me
not good; there is none good but God; worship
Him."

In numerous passages he appears to have fore-
seen the evil which would result from this idolatry
on the part of his followers, and to have warned
them against it. Probably no error has caused
more bloodshed, animosity, crime, and misery than
the breach of this one commandment; the facts
are before us, incontrovertible—hundreds of sects,
each denouncing the other, and for nearly two
thousand years, burning, slaying, and destroying
on every opportunity. Religion has arrayed brother
against brother, nation against nation, each sup-
posing that they were destroying the other for the
glory of God.

But let us suppose that Jesus had never been
deified, what would have been the result? Let us
suppose that there had been no miracles, no dog-
mas to fight about, no immaculate conception, no
baptisms, no transubstantiation, no dead-body re-
urrection; but, instead of all these, the inculca-
tion of the simple faith in that righteousness, ex-
pressed in the commandment which he gave, and
pronounced the greatest of all, "to love one
another"; for, as he said, "What greater love can
a man show than to lay down his life for his
friend?" What would have been the result? Why,
universal kindness and good-will.

If, instead of trusting to his death for forgive-
ness, mankind had sought in following the grand
example of his life for salvation, what a different
record would they have made in history! Had
they but understood that no vicarious death, even
of God's best-beloved son of earth, could atone or
nullify the effect of one sin, what suffering and
agony might have been saved them! and yet Jesus
taught that truth then, and Spiritualism teaches
it now—teaches that there is no escape from the
penalty of sin except by expiating it. Sin injures
the spiritual as disease injures the mortal frame,
and there are natural laws adapted to the cure of
each; but the Rationalist will avoid injuring
either; and to teach this, a rational religion is re-
quired.

Many of the clergy admit the phenomena of
Spiritualism, but denounce them as devilish. Do
they in such a case "judge a tree by its fruits"?
The sick are healed, the lame walk, the blind see,
and the mourners are comforted; yet they say it
is of the Devil. I, myself, have seen the mourner
throw off the mourning at the bidding of the
mourned, who came back in bright array with the
comforting assurance of a happy immortality.

PRAYERS OF THE ORTHODOX.

Do the orthodox believe God to be a just and
impartial being? I am led to this interrogatory,
from the fact that, since my first recollection of
men and things, I have invariably heard from the
pulpit and sanctuary the following sentiments ad-
dressed to the Supreme Intelligence, and dignified
by the sacred name of *prayer*:
"O, Thou great, eternal, invisible, omnipotent,
and omnipresent God! Thou that searchest the
hearts and triest the reins of the children of men!
look down with pity and compassion upon us poor,
weak, sinful, and unworthy worms of the dust!
Thou, who art the great fountain-head of justice
and mercy! we approach Thee as humble suppliants
for mercy and forgiveness, with a full sense of our
unworthiness, and our entire dependence upon
Thee! We acknowledge that we have sinned
against Heaven, and are unworthy of receiving

even the smallest of Thy favors; and if we had
our just deserts we should ere this have been cut
off; and the portion assigned us would have been
with the hypocrite and unbeliever! Yet, notwith-
standing our unworthiness and our transgressions,
we pray Thee to pardon all our iniquities and re-
store us to Thy favor! We pray Thee, O God, to
open the eyes of the blind; unstop the ears of the
deaf; strengthen the limbs of the weak, and re-
store the sick to health everywhere. These favors
we ask, not through any merit of our own, but
through the merits of him who gave himself to
the world and the cross to die, that we, poor grov-
eling worms of the dust, might live!"

The foregoing, if not the exact stereotyped form,
is the burden of the prayers of those who profess
to believe in an individualized God, and a local
heaven and hell.

Here we see the noblest and most intelligent of
created beings, the ultimate of earth's intelli-
gences—*man*—not only degrading and debasing
himself, but accusing a just and impartial God of
injustice and partiality! If they sincerely believe
that they are so abominably wicked that they are
undeserving the least of God's favors and attention,
why do they persist with so much tenacity in de-
manding such a large share of both? If their
just deserts would place them with the hypocrite
and unbeliever, will their prayers and importuni-
ties avail anything toward keeping them out of
that kind of company? It is passing strange to
me that any man can possibly believe God to be
endowed with the attributes of justice and mercy,
when they show an utter want of consistency and
common sense in the form and language of their
supplications to Him. Is it possible that men can
be found, standing in the full blaze of the light of
the nineteenth century, who believe in the efficacy
of such a prayer as above indicated? As your
valuable paper is "devoted to the investigation
and discussion of all subjects" calculated to im-
prove and elevate the character of man, perhaps
some one of the many lights (?) of orthodoxy will
condescend to answer my queries through your
columns. "I pause for a reply!"

Yours truly,
INDEX.

A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES CALLED FOR.

EDITORS BANNER OF PROGRESS.—When the
time arrives for the Spiritualists of California to
join unanimously in promulgating to the people
of our State a set of principles upon which all are
agreed, you will be more successful in teaching the
great truths of our faith. There are many who
do not understand what Spiritualists agree upon
as fundamental truths. I have heard many say
that Spiritualists have no religion, no faith. They
wished only to pull down sectarianism. What
good would that do? To set ourselves right be-
fore the people, I would suggest that, at the next
Convention of Spiritualists, something should be
done.

To be of service as a lecturer, I think, one
should understand what the views of people are
concerning us as Spiritualists. I think, also, that
when people's religion is attacked, they feel of-
fended, and will not investigate so readily. To
try some plan whereby the people can be brought
to realize their true relation toward their neigh-
bors, is the chief aim Spiritualists have in view.
Now, when a competent lecturer can be sent out
to teach, how is any one to know whether he un-
derstands his duty? To fetter a lecturer would
not do. To allow any one to misrepresent the
opinions of Spiritualists would not be right.
Therefore, it would be proper to publish in all the
newspapers a set of resolutions, declaring what
we as a body are agreed upon. Then no one who
reads could misrepresent or misunderstand what
our truths are.

I would like to know when the next Convention
will be held. The Society is young, and will pro-
gress rapidly if the proper means be taken. The
idea many entertain concerning us is, that we
wish only to destroy other creeds, and do not de-
sire to do any good. If that were the fact, what
an untold amount of misery would be caused! If
Spiritualists should rouse themselves for the pur-
pose before mentioned. There are truths to which
all can agree, and those only should be published.
We could do more good in that way than in any
other. Let a Convention be called as soon as pos-
sible.

Spiritualists have a good work before them.
There are so many reforms needed; society re-
quires it. Then, when we agitate, people will
think and act. Their views of the Creator are
puerile. Their views of our future are silly. Their
views on their own health are extremely bad.
The chief of all subjects is their future. When
we can draw their attention to that, we can to the
rest. To begin a dissertation on the future of
man, we must look at the present. How much
unhappiness there is, no one can tell. Every one
seems unhappy. But there are some who will
dispute it. Well, they must know there are de-
grees of unhappiness. Who can measure the de-
grees? To believe that all are happy is equally
difficult. There are, of course, degrees of hap-
piness.

When the time arrives for a Convention to meet,

I may give my views more clearly. Suppose a
person were to lecture, and give forth his ideas
only, and be responsible—what would be the ef-
fect of that? It would be this. People would
say that his views were not like those of some
others. Then they would say, some believe one
thing and some another; and what is the use of
troubling ourselves about their belief? That
would be a natural conclusion. To do them jus-
tice, we must be right ourselves. Then, what are
the fundamental truths? The first are these:
that the Creator is the Ruler of the Universe;
that He rules by laws or principles that cannot be
changed; that He never intended to injure any-
thing He has made; that, when we do wrong, we
put ourselves in opposition to one or more of His
laws, and that such opposition is always defeated;
that the defeat is the punishment for sin. To il-
lustrate: Suppose a man kills another; what is
the law in that case? The law is this: The
Creator made all living things, and man among
them. He did not make one man to kill another,
for the result would be annihilation. Then, this
being the law, whoever sheds his brother's blood
must also suffer. Then, what is the punishment?
some would say. The murderer fears to lose his
life, and is in constant dread. After he dies, he
feels a remorse for the act which may endure for
centuries. We get this information from those
who have gone before.

"Among the Crazy Ones."

Under this caption, Calvin B. McDonald gives,
in the *American Flag*, an account of two cases of
insanity in the Stockton Lunatic Asylum, as fol-
lows:

One of the most interesting cases is that of a man
whom they call "The Mormon Preacher." He told
me, however, that he was a "hard-shell Baptist";
but as he comes from a Mormon settlement in San
Bernardino, I guess he is one of the prophets. The
poor fellow has wasted to a skeleton, although a
prodigious eater. His peculiar crotchets are preach-
ment, these are interesting facts, which may be
under difficulties, as his hands are kept in "straps,"
or muffs. He is, without exception, the most gro-
tesque-looking man I ever saw; and notwithstanding
his attitudes and facial expression, I think the worst
evangelist would have to laugh at the recollection of
his appearance. He is an extravagant exaggeration
of an old-fashioned exhorter, and in a most eminent
degree possesses that which Volney characterized as
"a mortified countenance." When walking back
and forth through the passage, he will suddenly stop,
strike an attitude of declamation, bend his knees a
little, close his eyes, adjust his features to "sane-
monious seeming," and proceed with an exhortation
until wholly exhausted. So indescribably ludicrous
are his attitudes and facial expression, that even the
hopeless ones, who are only a little less insane, man-
ifest their sense of amusement. One of them took
me aside and told me in confidence "not to mind
him; he was crazy!" adding that the boys had a
great deal of trouble with him at meal-time, as, not-
withstanding his thinness, he was disposed to devour
everything in sight.

There are comparatively few in the Asylum from
religious causes, nor are there more than three who
have become insane through Spiritualistic excite-
ment. These are interesting facts, which may be
relied on as coming directly from the Supervisors of
the institution. The most distressing case was that
of a young man who had lost his wits at one of the
Rev. Mr. Carlo's revival meetings. He was a young
man when admitted, and though his hands were
fastened in "straps," had butted his head against
the wall, until prevented from further injury by
thick bandages. I thought of the man told of in the
Scriptures, who was "walking among the tombs,
crying and cutting himself with stones." But on
him, he was crazy!" adding that the boys had a
great deal of trouble with him at meal-time, as, not-
withstanding his thinness, he was disposed to devour
everything in sight.

"And can it be that God, with angels singing round him,
Hears our weeping any more?"

SUNDAY LAWS AND IMMIGRATION.—We pay too
little regard to the feelings and opinions of the
foreign populations whom we would fain attract to
our shores. The German immigration is probably the
very best and most desirable element that comes to
us. But this element is repelled by our puritanical
Sunday legislation. The Germans at home are ac-
customed to regard Sunday as a day of recreation
and rest. All over the continent the first day of the
week is considered in this light. The German ele-
ment in our population is one of the best we have.
Our German citizens attend to their business, do not
ostentatiously meddle with politics, they are not
office-seekers, and they did not take sides with the
rebels in the recent civil war. They are people of
culture, sense, and refinement. They make no
rows, have no disposition to massacre helpless Chi-
nese, and do not evince a disposition to govern the
country and drive all native-born Americans out of it.
But the Germans have certain tastes and notions
which they adhere to with extraordinary pertinacity.
They love their lager, and their Sunday amusements.
They love their freedom from all priestly and puri-
tanical restraints. "Sunday laws" repel and dis-
turb them; and hundreds of thousands of Germans,
who wished to emigrate to the United States, have
been induced to go to Canada or Australia in pre-
ference, because of the representations received
from Germans in this country in regard to the big-
otry and intolerance of our laws in regard to Sunday
amusements. We think the time has come for more
enlightened legislation on this class of subjects.
Puritans and pietists have had too much sway.
Common sense and human nature have been too
utterly disregarded. Let us now adopt an enlight-
ened and liberal policy in despite of the priests, and
we shall attract to these shores all the best elements
in the population of the Old World.—*Dramatic
Chronicle.*

MUSIC IN SCHOOLS.—The Germans, who are a
musical people, require music to be taught in
their schools, for the double purpose of disseminat-
ing the science and guarding against disease; and it
is a significant fact that comparatively very few per-
sons die of consumption in those countries where
music is generally taught. A portion of the lungs
in healthy persons is ordinarily inactive, and this
inactivity, without caution, would promote disease,
but vocal music brings into exercise every portion,
and tends to keep them healthy.

TAKE care when you buy that you are not sold.

A Challenge to the Clergy.

To the Clergymen of the Pacific Coast:

REV. GENTLEMEN:—I hereby extend a challenge to any one of you whom your religious organization will endorse as being capable of defending your articles of faith, to meet me either in this city or in Sacramento, San Jose, Marysville, or Napa City, in oral discussion on the following questions:

1. Do the spirits of the departed possess power to return and communicate intelligently with their friends in the earth-life?

I taking the affirmative, you the negative. Discuss two days.

2. Are the teachings of Spiritualism immoral in their tendencies, as compared with the teachings of the Bible and Christianity?

You to take the affirmative and I the negative. Discuss two days.

An early reply is desired.

Yours respectfully, BENJAMIN TODD.

The following personal invitation has also been addressed:

SAN FRANCISCO, April 2, 1867.

REV. MR. DWINELL:

SIR:—In the *Sacramento Union* of recent date, I saw the report of a discourse delivered by you, in which you speak in a manner highly derogatory of Spiritualism. I herein challenge you to meet me in an oral discussion, either in Sacramento or in this city, to continue four days, upon the following questions:

1. Do the spirits of the departed possess power to return and communicate intelligently with their friends in the earth-life?

I taking the affirmative, you the negative. Discuss two days.

2. Are the teachings of Spiritualism immoral in their tendencies, as compared with the teachings of the Bible and Christianity?

You to take the affirmative, and I the negative. Discuss two days.

An early reply is desired.

Yours respectfully, BENJAMIN TODD.

We intend to keep the above in a conspicuous place, because some have imagined that the challenge had been withdrawn on account of the temporary absence of Mr. Todd on a lecturing tour in Oregon. It will not be withdrawn for any reason except illness. M.

Womanhood Suffrage.

We place the following in the hands of our friends of the better sex, and judge that they will know what to think of it, and what to say about it:

MAN AND WIFE ONE.—Professor Lewis has settled the question for married women. He says:

"It is not inconsistent with the oneness of the marriage state that it should have two aspects—an inward and outward. In one of these the idea may be utterly desecrated; whilst it still holds, and the parties should be held to it, in the other—that is, the outward relation—when, therefore, they claim a separate political action, society may justly send them back to their agreement, as made with society itself and with every other citizen. The solemnly covenanted to be one—on all things domestic, one especially in all things public. Being one, they are not entitled to two votes, whether simply double or opposing. The cause of womanhood suffrage, whether widows or maidens, stands by itself; but in regard to those who have entered into the marriage unity the answer is conclusive. They cannot be known as two either at home or abroad. They have merged their separate individuality. They should not sue each other; they should not vote against each other. All of these acts are equally at war with the marriage idea; and when they are permitted, marriage ends."

MUSICAL EXPRESSION.—RUN MAD.—Some years since a choir, in a New England town (we refrain from being more explicit) were preparing for a special occasion an anthem in which occurred the words: "And the great sin in which we live."

The chorister happened to be a man of no ordinary breadth of intellect. He was not one to allow a golden opportunity to pass unimproved. He said to himself: "Here is a grand idea to be expressed. How shall it be done? How shall the congregation be led to realize that the 'monster sin' is actually to be 'bound in chains'?" He pondered the matter well, and in due time his course of action was decided upon. He procured a heavy ox-chain and took it into the gallery, before the services began; and when the exciting moment arrived in which the choir were to sing those weighty words, he rattled the chain as an accompaniment to the voices, that the idea might be terribly and indelibly impressed upon the minds of all the hearers. The result is no doubt that it was so, but it may be regarded an open question as to whether the "monster sin" or the children in the congregation would be the more likely to be frightened by such a demonstration. —*Pacific Musical Gazette.*

PATENT WELL.—We saw, a few days since, at Mr. Stow's place, a new style of artesian well, which it appears to us, can hardly fail to come into general use in this valley. It consists simply of an inch gas-pipe driven into the ground. The pipe is constructed in sections of six feet in length, and for convenience in driving, and may be set down to any required depth. The lower section is perforated with holes to admit the water, and has a sharpened plug in the end, the better to penetrate the earth. The men, with no other tools than a sledge-hammer, a wooden clog to prevent the battering of the pipe, and a common pipe-wrench, can put down a well one hundred feet deep in ten hours' time. For an ordinary surface or non-flowing well, a common suction pump is attached directly to the top of the well, (no further pump-pipe being required,) and the apparatus is complete. A flowing well of the above size would be large enough for ordinary purposes, and the waste of water, or the loss of water consequent upon a six or ten-inch well, is a patented contrivance, and the owner of the right for this State is now here making arrangements for the introduction of the wells into general use. —*San Jose Mercury.*

THE SABBATH DAY.—Gen. Wilson offered in the U. S. Senate, the other day, the following resolution:

"Resolved, That the Committee on Foreign Relations be instructed to consider the expediency of passing a resolution expressive of the sense of the nation that the American department of the World's Exhibition at Paris shall not be opened on the Sabbath day."

The Senator, to be consistent, should provide that all vessels bearing visitors to the Exhibition should bunk their fires (or reef their sails) and lay to, and "pipe all hands to prayers" on Sundays. But, seriously, doesn't the Senator see that we are very tardily sending our goods to a foreign capital, and in courtesy must submit to the rules established for its "Exposition?" —*The Commonwealth.*

A NOVEL PERFORMANCE.—Near the city of St. Joseph, Missouri, a few years since, the rite of baptism was performed upon a woman by immersion in the river. As it was winter, it was necessary to cut a hole in the ice, and the novelty of the scene attracted a large crowd, among whom were several Indians, who looked on in wondering silence. They retired without understanding the nature or the object of the ceremony they had seen; but observing that all the subjects of immersion were females, and getting the vague idea that it was to make them good, the Indians came back a few days afterwards, bringing their squaws with them. Cutting another hole in the ice, near the same place, they immersed each and all of them, in spite of their romances.

DON'T WANT TO MIX.—At Morrisville is an epitaph on one Sam McLaughlin *noted*, with the inscription: "If all the leading priests and politicians go to heaven, I want to get off at some other station."

The Banner of Progress.

SATURDAY, MAY 11, 1867.

OFFICE, 522 CLAY STREET, UP STAIRS.

BENJAMIN TODD & CO.,

PUBLISHERS AND PROPRIETORS.

BENJAMIN TODD, W. H. MANNING, EDITORS.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

All communications designed for publication in this paper should be addressed "EDITORS OF THE BANNER OF PROGRESS." All letters in regard to the business of the paper should be addressed to "BENJAMIN TODD & CO."

Are the Tendencies of Spiritualism Immoral?

We pass on now to speak of Bible Societies. We frankly and openly confess that we are opposed to spreading the Bible among mankind, with the understanding concerning it that religionists have, namely, that it is a *plenary* inspired book, and that the writers thereof were holy men, and hence good examples for us at the present day. If such is the true statement of the case, then Brigham Young is the holiest man in the world to-day; for he is more like David of old than any other man living; and David was said to be a man after God's own heart. Again, Brigham Young must be the wisest man to-day; for he is more like Solomon of old than any other person. For lecherousness and concubinage, Solomon excelled any individual whose history has ever been given to the world. And the bacchanalian songs that he composed, when rioting in the most lascivious manner among his multitude of wives and concubines, are found in that so-called plenary inspired book. In fact there is not a book in the Old Testament, in which language and figures of speech do not abound, which are so atrociously vulgar and licentious in their character, as to outrage the sense of propriety in the minds of all who are of good morals and true refinement. Again, we challenge the Christian world to find more foolish and egregious lies in Jack the Giant-Killer, Mother Goose's Melodies, or Baron Munchausen's Travels, than can be found in that book. Can these societies, which seek to spread abroad such baneful influences—and under the name of religion, too—be considered for a moment as public benefactors? Some portions of the New Testament, also, are but little better. One of the great (if not the greatest) writers of the New Testament gave us a pious example of morals. He deemed it right to use guile in winning people to his religious faith. He acknowledged himself to be a perfect hypocrite to win some; and, when caught in a lie, he excused himself on the ground that they had obtained more of the truth of God by it, and hence should not blame him. Now, these statements are true, and capable of positive demonstration. Must not the Christian world be totally blind in the matter, not seeing that these things are so, or else heartlessly cruel and dishonest, that they do not cease to spread their baneful influences among mankind?

A word or two in regard to missionaries, in connection with the Bible. And this is the last religious institution we will notice for the present. Millions on millions of dollars have been expended for missionary purposes, and spreading the Bible in heathen lands, so-called. Now, we challenge any person to show any heathen nation, whose moral and physical condition is superior to what it was before missionary and Bible influences were brought to bear upon them; or to show that the moral and physical improvement attained can be considered as the legitimate result of Bible teachings.

Having examined some of the objections that are claimed to be the result of a change of faith, from Christianity to Spiritualism, such as having no special regard for the sacredness of the Sabbath, neglecting prayer, setting at naught all religious institutions, etc., we come to some of the graver charges brought against Spiritualism, such as licentiousness, and being the cause of insanity. Before coming directly to the point, let us premise a little, in order to know what is the true standpoint from which to reason. Bigoted religionists are very apt to have a narrow mode of reasoning, and to make hasty conclusions, without stopping to ascertain whether there is any legitimate basis for their deductions—especially when they suppose that their craft is in danger. When attacked in their citadel, they remind us very much of a nest of ants, when their dwelling is disturbed by the plowshare of the husbandman. They are thrown into the greatest consternation, running hither and thither, dashing out their brains against each other—all for want of some regular rule or well-digested plan of action. In this manner do they reason, when their frail sophistries are met by the sound and logical arguments of Spiritualism. Instead of meeting argument with argument, reason with reason, they use sopistry—throw dust, smut, and dirt—hoping thereby to so befog the whole matter that no one can be aware of their true position. So far as they alone are concerned, they succeed admirably by pursuing such a course. But can those who thus jump at conclusions be considered as philosophers? In forming our opinion of any given set of principles, we should never judge hastily, or endeavor to reach a conclusion solely from *prima facie* evidence. One or two illustrations, selected at random, will never satisfy a philosopher of the validity or invalidity of a conclusion. Such illustrations might answer for a sophist, to hang a forlorn hope upon, but for no others.

When seeking to test the tendencies of new religious ideas, it would be far more proper, in arriving at the truth, to reason from the inherent powers, possibilities, and capabilities of those ideas in universal practice, than to judge prematurely from their apparent effect in isolated cases. Mankind to-day are indebted more to the idiosyncratic character of individuals for the manifestations of human nature that we behold, than to any religious influences brought to bear upon them. How, then, can a few illustrations, taken at random from among the believers composing any religious body in the world, be accepted as a correct criterion by which to judge of the practical workings of

their faith? It would be very unjust indeed to so judge, unless the organization and surroundings of each person were taken into consideration in making up the verdict. A man may be a professing Christian, and yet, at the same time, be the biggest rascal that ever went unhung; but would it be fair to infer therefrom, and assert, that one of the legitimate tendencies of Christianity is to make its believers rascals? Most assuredly not. Again, a person may profess to be a Spiritualist, and yet, at the same time, be the meanest man that walks God's green earth; but would it be just to infer that Spiritualism had made him thus mean? If it is unjust in the case of the professing Christian, to charge his rascality to Christianity, would it not be equally unjust to charge the meanness of a Spiritualist to Spiritualism? A man may be the veriest infidel—yep, even an Atheist—and yet be a good man; we have known many such. Would you say that the tendency of Atheism was to make men better and happier? For the good only are happy. Again, a man may be an Atheist, and be a very bad man; and the orthodox would undoubtedly say that his character was the natural result of Atheism. To us, such an opinion would be a gross error; for a very large majority of those who profess to be infidels and Atheists are also the best men in community. They have the most generous natures, and the largest philanthropy. They originate and carry forward moral reforms, and labor with indefatigable zeal for the education of the people, and the amelioration of their condition. Now, are all these happy results the fruit of their infidel proclivities? We answer, no; they are the result of the nobleness in their natures, which has developed naturally, unbiassed by sectarian creeds and dogmas. T.

Editorial Notes.

THE RIGHT WAY.

Let none who wish to become mediums be discouraged, or give up the matter without a fair trial. A gentleman in Portland, Oregon, who, by the way, was a Catholic, became somewhat interested in the subject of Spiritualism. He applied to a friend, a Spiritualist, to know what course he should pursue to obtain a communication from a wife and three children whom he had in spirit life. His friend advised him to go into his room alone, and sit down at his stand some twenty minutes or half an hour each evening, and see what the result would be. He did so. Evening after evening passed, and there were no manifestations. But he did not get discouraged; and at last, after sitting about three weeks, his perseverance was crowned with success. For, on rising to leave the stand as usual, he found it following him across the room. Although somewhat startled at so unusual an occurrence, he sat down at the stand again, and commenced asking questions, all of which were answered to his great satisfaction. The next night, as soon as it was dusk, he retired to his room again, anxious to communicate further with his spirit friends, when he became strongly influenced physically, and was shaken for some two hours. At the same time they communicated to him that they would develop him as a writing medium, and thus make it easy for them to converse with him. Go and do likewise, ye who wish to become mediums.

RELIGIOUS COMEDY IN PORTLAND.

SCENE 1. *Rev. Mr. Earle's Room.*—Present, Rev. Earle and twenty-two young girls. Rev. Earle paces around, and speaks to each one separately.

Earle.—Do you feel that you love God?

Girl.—I do!

Earle.—Have you given your heart to Jesus?

Girl.—I hope and trust I have.

Earle.—Then kiss me for Christ's sake!

Girl.—(Kisses Earle.)

SCENE 2. *The Presbyterian Church.*—Earle and the congregation present.

Earle.—Only think of it, ye gray-headed sinners! twenty-two young girls, just blooming into womanhood, came to my room and told me that they had given their hearts to Jesus! (He didn't mention the kissing!)

We do not vouch for the truth of the above, but give it as it was related to us. Will the religious papers please copy?

NOT MIND-READING.

It is often asserted that communications claiming to come from our spirit friends can be accounted for on the principle of mind-reading. A gentleman well known in Portland related to us lately the circumstances which first drew his attention to the subject of Spiritualism. And we would be most happy to be shown how it can possibly be accounted for by the principle of mind-reading. Somewhat more than a year ago, he was obliged to go to the Atlantic States on some business that required his absence for several months.

He left his family in good health, and with fair prospects of meeting them on his return. In the fore part of the month of June following his departure from home, he was stopping in Boston. He awoke one morning, and was upon the point of rising from his bed, when, all of a sudden, one of his daughters appeared to him, and informed him of her departure to the spirit world, and stated that she was well then, but had suffered greatly in her last sickness. He immediately turned to his bed-fellow, and told him what had occurred, and that he knew that his daughter was dead. Now, by what process could any one arrive at the conclusion that this was the result of mind-reading? This gentleman, up to this time, had always been a skeptic with regard to Spiritualism, believing it to be a humbug.

A BARBARIAN'S PRAYER.

During the late revival in Portland, got up by Mr. Earle, one lady, who had lost one child, and had another lying dangerously ill, went forward and requested prayers for her husband, who, at the time, was in the Atlantic States on business. The Rev. gentleman prayed that the father might return to his home *walking over the coals of his children*, if through no other means he could be brought to get religion! This is the regular old David style—kill the innocent babies, for the benefit of the sinning parents! T.

MRS. FOYE'S NEXT PUBLIC SEANCE for spirit manifestations will be held at Mechanics' Institute next Monday evening, commencing at 8 o'clock.

Changes in Development.

Our theory of the climatic development of the human race could not receive stronger support than in the following further extracts from Mrs. Somerville's "Physical Geography," which were not included in our examination of the subject last week:

"Darkness of complexion has been attributed to the sun's power from the age of Solomon to this day.—'Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me;' and there can be no doubt that, to a certain degree, the opinion is well founded. The invisible rays in the solar beams, which change vegetable colors, and have been employed with such remarkable effect in the daguerotype, act upon every substance on which they fall, producing mysterious and wonderful changes in their molecular state—man not excepted."

"Other causes must have been combined to occasion all the varieties we now see, otherwise every nation between the tropics would be of the same hue, whereas the sooty Negro inhabits equatorial Africa, the Red man equinoctial America, and both are mixed with fairer tribes. In Asia, the Roullas, a fair race of Afghan extraction, inhabit the plains north of the Ganges; the Bengalee and the mountaineers of Nepal are dark, and the Malabars are yellow. The complexion of man varies with height and latitude; some of the inhabitants of the Himalaya and Hindoo Koosh are fair, and even a red-haired race is found on the latter. There are also haired people with blue eyes in the Rudhuva mountains in Africa. The Kabyles, that inhabit the country behind Tunis and Algiers, are similar in complexion to the nations in high northern latitudes."

"A nation or tribe driven by war, or any other cause, from a warm to a cold country, or the contrary, would be forced to change their food, habit of life, and quantity, which in the lapse of ages might produce an alteration in the external form and internal structure. The probability is still greater, if the entire change that a few years ago produced in the matter of which the human form is composed be considered. At every instant during life, with every motion voluntary and involuntary, with every thought and every exercise of the brain, a portion of our substance becomes dead, separates from the living part, combines with some of the inhaled oxygen, and is removed. By this process it is supposed that the whole body is renewed every seven years; individuality, therefore, depends on the spirit, which retains its identity during all the changes of its earthly house, and sometimes even acts independently of it. When sleep is restoring exhausted nature, the spirit is often awake and active, crowding the events of years into a few seconds, and, by its unconsciousness of time, and its unconsciousness of every change of food, climate, and mental excitement, must have their influence on the reproduction of the mortal frame; and thus the causes may co-operate to alter whole races of mankind placed under new circumstances, time being granted."

"The difference between the effects of manual labor and the efforts of the brain appears in the intellectual countenance of the educated man, compared with that of the peasant, though even the latter is occasionally stamped with nature's own nobility. The most savage people are also the ugliest. Their countenance is deformed by violent unsubsiding passions, anxiety, and suffering. Deep sensibility gives a beautiful and varied expression, but every strong emotion is unfavorable to perfect regularity of feature; and of that the Greeks were so aware when they gave that calmness of expression and repose to their unrivalled statues."

"The countenances of the Fuegians brought to England in 1850 by Captain Fitzroy, improved greatly in expression by their intercourse with civilized men, but they had not returned to their savage brethren more than a year, before their whole appearance was completely changed; the look of intelligence they had acquired was gone; and when compared with likenesses that had been taken of them when in England, they were not to be recognized as the same persons."

A SUNDAY LAW THAT WE CAN APPROVE.—A law that indirectly compels the cessation of speculative business on Sunday, by rendering the bargains illegal, and the consideration irrevocable at law, is one that we heartily approve. The operation of such a law has just been illustrated in another State:

"In Massachusetts, no action lies to recover the price of anything sold on the Lord's Day. By a recent decision of the Supreme Court, an action to recover the agreed price for a horse delivered on Sunday, although the bargain was made on a weekday, cannot be maintained. But if the defendant in such a case should retain possession of the horse, he would be liable to an action for damages for converting the horse to his own use."

WHAT think our "woman's sphere" philosophers, especially those of the Christian persuasion, of the following information as to what women are doing in England? Perhaps the scoffers at woman's rights will allow the sex the privilege of preaching, if no other:

"Female evangelists appear to be on the increase in England. In addition to Mrs. Thistlethwaite and Mrs. Booth, who occasionally address congregations in London, Mrs. McFarren has been holding services at the Polytechnic Institution; Mrs. Octavia Jary has been addressing large congregations at Altherstone; Miss Geraldine Hooper, besides her usual ministrations at Bath, has been holding services at various other places; and Miss J. L. Armstrong has been preaching at Arbroath and Dundee."

A PIOUS COUNTERFEITER.—Ira Bush, of Port Jervis, Orange County, New York, has been arrested for wholesale circulation of counterfeit Treasury and National Bank Notes. He was an Elder and Sunday-school Superintendent in the M. E. Church. He would attend all the religious meetings in various places, and when they were over, make purchases at the country stores, paying in counterfeit notes. Upwards of five hundred dollars of this sort of currency were found upon him.

A POKER.—The *Dramatic Chronicle* says it pokes fun at everybody and everything, as moved by the spirit that possesses it. In every poke that we have received from that paper, we have discovered "the spirit," a young poker. What can be expected of a pig except bristles? We shall put the unruly beast in a poke that will keep him on his own side of the fence, and from poking his ugly nose into others' affairs—a practice to which he is very much addicted. M.

MR. TODD requests the friends in California and Nevada to excuse him from his proposed tour among them until September next; his pressing engagements in Oregon rendering it necessary for him to remain in that State longer than he anticipated. M.

EIGHT HOURS.—The house-carpenters will have a great procession and public speaking in this city on the 3d of June, and have invited all who are favorable to the Eight-hour system to join with them on that occasion. We accept the invitation and shall participate. M.

SPIRIT MANIFESTATIONS.—Mrs. Ada Hoyt Foye gave one of her Spiritual Seances, at Hinshaw's Hall, last evening, to a good house. The manifestations will be repeated to-night. There is something truly wonderful in this phenomenon as manifested by this lady. —*Petaluma Journal and Argus.*

CHARLESTON CIVILIZATION.—The street-car question has been settled in Charleston, and colored people are suffered to ride like other humans. With this in view, if another car is ordered in San Francisco, an example should be made of both conductor and Company. —*Daily American Flag.*

PHENOMENAL FACTS.

Writing Mediumship.

Conrad Wiegand, Esq., while an Assayer in the U. S. Mint in this city, conceived the idea of testing something besides the precious metals, and concocted a scheme, assisted by some of his friends, whereby to entrap Mr. Mansfield, and defy his powers as a writing medium. A letter was prepared, containing a request for a communication from a number of deceased persons, and this letter was then encased in leather, in paste-board, and again in India-rubber, tied with a string, and then permanently sealed, so as to be returned to the writer in the same condition. It was then handed to Mr. Mansfield, with a request for an answer. In a short time, the letter was returned unopened, with the seal undisturbed, and accompanied by an answer to every inquiry therein contained, supplemented by information not asked for, and names not mentioned in the sealed document. The test was an overwhelming proof of spirit communion, and Mr. Wiegand and his friends were compelled to admit it to be such. All the parties were strangers to Mr. Mansfield.

Mr. L. A. Gitchell one day called upon the medium, and, being invited to sit down, without any introduction or previous conversation, was astonished at receiving, in a few minutes, a communication from an old mining partner, containing reminders of occurrences known only to himself and the spirit communicating. Mr. Gitchell was a stranger to Mr. Mansfield, and the latter had no knowledge of the spirit friend. This test was followed by others, equally remarkable; and Mr. Gitchell, who had been for some time previous an investigator of Spiritualism, was favored with constant communication from day to day for many weeks.

Mr. S. Howard, of this city, also received from a dozen spirit friends, who had been for many years in the spirit world, satisfactory proofs of their continued existence, and of their power to communicate with him, through the mediumship of Mr. Mansfield.

J. R. Hardenbergh, Esq., from a most prejudiced and skeptical unbeliever in Spiritualism, and against all his mental ingenuity, exerted to confute the evidences presented through Mr. Mansfield, became suddenly and indubitably satisfied of the truth of both phenomena and philosophy, by receiving such proofs as only such a mind could appreciate. In company with Recorder N. Greene Curtis, of Sacramento, he held a number of interviews with Mr. Mansfield, during which the spirit friends of both gentlemen came and conversed of events in their lives which occurred many years before, and which they were obliged to confess were known to no other persons on earth.

The wife of President Lincoln, after the death of her son Willie, corresponded with him through the mediumship of Mr. Mansfield, while the latter was in San Francisco. On one occasion, Willie sent in answer to his mother, as a test, an account of a certain excursion at which he claimed to have been present with her in her carriage, mentioning events that occurred during the ride, so that there could be no mistake as to his identity.

Rev. T. Starr King addressed several sealed letters to Mr. Mansfield, to all of which he received satisfactory replies, some of them from his deceased father. Mr. Mansfield received from Mr. King a written acknowledgment of the correctness of the communications, and of the satisfaction experienced in their reception. After Mr. King's departure, he paid Mr. Mansfield a friendly visit in the spirit, and again expressed his obligations to him.

No less than three cases of secret murder became known to Mr. Mansfield through the accusations of spirits against the guilty parties, who visited him for the purpose of inquiring for deceased relatives. The horror of the conscience-stricken men on being so confronted with their victims, may well be imagined. One would sink into a chair, pale with fear, and implore Mr. Mansfield never to mention what he had become cognizant of; another cried like a child, and made the same request in piteous tones; and the third exacted the promise with trembling emotion, and a countenance expressive of intense pain. As these cases could not be made public so far as the persons are concerned, neither could the particulars of communications be made, under the circumstances. No benefit could have been derived to the cause of justice by informing against the murderers, because the testimony would not be taken in any court. Mr. Mansfield therefore found no difficulty with his convictions of duty in giving the required pledge, and their guilt is still unknown to all others of their fellow-men. How much crime would be forever uncommitted, if those disposed to its commission, if the conviction were universal that its discovery might be made in this way, by the interposition of the victims themselves! M.

STATE TEACHER'S INSTITUTE.—This Association has been in session in this city the past week. An able Report and Address was made by the State School Superintendent in which the progress, present state, and prospects of education in California were most eloquently portrayed. It was full of liberal ideas and noble sentiments. Professor Wilkinson, of the Deaf Mute Asylum, gave an interesting and instructive exhibition of the accomplishments of the pupils under his care. J. W. Winans, President of the Board of Education, also gave an eloquent address on the occasion. Nearly every county in the State was represented by delegates. M.

EIGHT-HOUR MOVEMENT IN CHICAGO.—There is great excitement in Illinois and Missouri on this question, and some violence has taken place in Chicago. The workmen there are resolute, and the employers inclined to be obstinate. But we think the agitation will result in benefit to the working people. Some of the employers have consented to the eight-hour system at a reduced rate of wages—about twenty per cent. Many workmen have returned to their places on these terms. M.

SPURGEON is going to Paris to preach during the Exposition. —*Exchange.*

We suppose he will make a splurge on that occasion.

PHILOSOPHICAL.

IN WHAT CONSISTS THE DIFFERENCE?

"In ancient Italy the sun was God, under the name of Anna, and the moon was Anna. In Greece, Ion was the sun. In Egypt was kept a festival at the time of the new moon of the month Phenoth, of the ingress of Osiris into the moon for the purpose of fertilizing the earth. The moon-bark is inscribed, Ship of the Creator, on which the Good Deity rides. The sun's bark is called Boat of the Sun, the Lord of the two regions, who fares in his boat to weave seasons for the house of the world. The sculptures of the temple of Apollonopolis represent the progress of the sun, called Phre-Hor-Hat, Lord of Heaven, in his bark or bari through the hours. It was a most natural idea to the mind of a Hebrew or Egyptian writer of sacred tales, that the sun-deity, Noah, should enter his ark. He did the same thing every time that his priests took his image in the bari (sacred boat), in solemn procession upon the Nile. Ammon, his bari. The boat of Pthah-Sokari-Osiris was borne in solemn procession. The ship of Osiris is mentioned by Plutarch. Osiris is both the Sun and the foundation; and therefore, in this respect, is the same as Noah, the god of the annual overflow of the Nile. The sacred bark of the Sun was carried in procession by twelve priests. Jupiter is the sun-god, become chief of the gods. He is not merely a nature-god, but also ruler of all human destinies and interests. He is a war-god besides. His name is derived from the old sun-name, Op or Ap, and Adar or Atar; Thor, the Thunderer, the name of the Assyrian Mars. The wife of Op is the Earth, Ops (Ops). Here we get an insight into the *modus operandi* of manufacturing systems of holy religion, which may suppose to be too sacred to admit of a solitary doubt; and consider it wrong to investigate, because it is the plenary inspiration of Deity, given to man for his guidance through life on earth, and to prepare him for a heaven of rest beyond the grave. From Egypt these ideas travel to Greece, and Greece adopts them as her religion; and from Greece they travel to Rome, and become the religion of the Romans. With some slight variation to suit altered circumstances, they become the faith of all the surrounding provinces, extending to Italy and Spain. This process had been in operation, as we have seen, from the opening of the Egyptian ports, 670 years before the date of the commencement of the Christian era. Although this ancient Egyptian form of religion was surrounded with pomp, ceremony, and mystery, yet we nowhere find any trace or pretensions to the business of miracle-working, or the close affinity and communion, as per Moses, with the great Jehovah of the Universe. Such ideas had other parentage in other and later ages, and other lands, with different circumstances, and among a peculiar people. The magian system of Zoroaster, the Persian, who is known as a very learned man in his day, and generally supposed to be the author of the Hindoo sacred book, the Zend Avesta, has contributed something to the stock of the form known as Hebrew-Christian religion. It is from that source we have the doctrine of good and evil. Ormuzd represents all that is good, true and spiritual; he is the Divine essence of all life, all angelic force, and supreme ruler of the unseen world of beauty and loveliness. Ahriman, on the contrary, represents the evil side of nature, being in direct antagonism with all that gives pleasure, happiness, or anything that offers consolation to suffering humanity, while under the control of this power of evil. Ormuzd is spiritual. Ahriman is material. But there is in this Persian system of theology, like the Christian and many others, a holy trinity, or god-head of three in one, and one in three, if any one can understand that *hocus pocus* method of arithmetic. Vishnu is the second in command, and, in much of that mediatorial power that is said to belong to his divine office, closely resembles the character the Christian theology ascribes to Christ; so much so, that had Jesus been first in the field of divine labor, the other (Vishnu) might well be considered a copy, so close the resemblance. Jesus might, however, have been a "posteript," as Victor Hugo says of himself, provided what the celebrated Dr. Lightfoot says is true: "This learned writer thinks he can, with great probability, settle the precise time when the Christian covenant began. He says that Adam was created on Friday morning, at nine o'clock; that he ate the forbidden fruit about one (that being the time of eating); and that Christ was promised about three o'clock in the afternoon." Here is accuracy in chronology with a vengeance! But it must be remembered that everything pertaining to chronology in matters of religious faith is entirely of modern invention. The Apostles themselves, and the most primitive fathers, who understood everything allegorically, never dreamed of giving us any more definite indications of date to the sacred story than the common preface to a fable, "And it came to pass in those days." There are no references to contemporary circumstances in the New Testament, but such as are outrageously at variance with historical fact. Justin Martyr, the first of the Christian apologists, is out in his chronology to the difference of 300 years, and makes Ptolemy, king of Egypt, and Herod, king of Jerusalem, contemporaries. An eminent author, and one whose writings, or any part thereof, has never as yet been disproved, says that he has diligently searched and scrutinized the claims of every document pretending to a plausible connection with historical facts, relating to occurring events of the first century of our era, for the express purpose of ascertaining whether there existed any credible writing produced within the first hundred years, that can in any way be tortured into a recital of the existence of such a person as Jesus Christ. In this endeavor he utterly failed. The nearest reliable authority for matters belonging to the first century of the Christian era is that of Tacitus, whose earliest production was A. D. 107. And yet see how vast and voluminous are the pretended writings in the hands of theologians, purporting to have been written all the way from the year one or two, down to the present period, furnishing indubitable testimony of the birth, life, and death of the "man of sorrows."

J. D. PIERSON.

"THE PACIFIC MUSICAL GAZETTE," published monthly, by Kohler, Chase & Co., 421 Montgomery street, has been laid on our table. Terms, one dollar per year, ten cents per single copy. It is a large quarto of sixteen pages, four of which are music. It is well printed, and filled with matter of interest to the musical public.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE.—The Legislature of Wisconsin has, by over a two-thirds vote of each house, passed a resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution, so as to give *ad personam*, male and female, over twenty-one years of age, the right of suffrage. In this movement, Wisconsin has the lead of all the States.

PUNCH says that women first resorted to tight-lacing, to prove to the men how well they could bear tight-squeezing.

IMMORTALITY.

NUMBER TWO.

So deeply rooted in the minds of those educated in Christian dogmas is the idea that from revelation alone can any correct idea of philosophy, religion, or a future state be obtained, that when any similarity is discovered existing between the rites of heathen worship and the Christian or Moslem, it is immediately inferred that the Moslem or Christian revelation was the source of their information. It is thus with the Chinese, and others who have worshipped as they do now centuries before Jesus was born; yet the Jesuit finds himself forestalled in many of the rites he would teach them to perform. The divine Plato is said to have received his ideas of the immortality of the soul, when traveling in Egypt, by (it is thought) accidentally finding the writings of Moses. Mrs. Somerville says:

"The belief in a future, so universal, shown by respect for the dead, has no doubt been transmitted from nation to nation. The American Indians, driven from their hunting grounds, still make pilgrimages to the tombs of their fathers; and these tribes alone, of all uncivilized mankind, worship the Great Spirit as the invisible God and Father of all—a degree of abstract refinement which could hardly have sprung up spontaneously among a rude people, and which must have been transmitted from races who held the Jewish faith."

And these assertions are made, notwithstanding the notorious fact that, throughout the Pentateuch, when Moses contrasts the consequences of the good and evil conduct of the Israelites, he does not extend one of them beyond this life; they were blessed or cursed in "their basket and their store"; they defeated, or were vanquished by their foes; prosperity or adversity attended them as they served or disobeyed the God of Israel; but no reference is made to either Heaven or Hell, which, according to Christian ethics, are such powerful auxiliaries to the preservation of good morals. On this subject, Dr. Priestly observes:

"I think I have also proved in my Disquisitions, that the doctrine of a soul as a substance distinct from the body, and capable of being happy or miserable when the body is in the grave, was borrowed from pagan philosophy, is totally repugnant to the system of revelation, and unknown in the Scriptures; which speak of no reward for the righteous, or punishment for the wicked, before the general resurrection, and the coming of Christ to judge the world."

And a late writer, Mr. Alger, whose work on this subject is replete with information, says:

"Professor Stuart admits that he finds only one consideration to show that Moses had any idea of a future retribution, and that is, that the Egyptians expressly believed it; and he is not able to comprehend how Moses, who dwelt so long among them, should be ignorant of it. * * * In the canonized books of the Old Dispensation there is not a single genuine text, claiming to come from God, which teaches explicitly any doctrine whatever of a life beyond the grave. That doctrine, as it existed among the Jews, was no part of their pure religion, but was a part of their philosophy."

Strange, that the philosophers of Greece, and other parts of the world, should be indebted for their ideas of immortality to a book, which, alone amid the sacred writings of the many pretended revealed religions, contains no teachings nor reference to the matter at all! Paul confirms this, when he says that Jesus brought "life and immortality to light through the gospel"; from which we can only infer that it was never brought to light before. And Paul's hope of a "glorious immortality beyond the grave" depended entirely on the truth of the bodily resurrection of Jesus; he teaches plainly that man has no inherent immortality—no deliverance from Hades only through the resurrection. "For," says he, "if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; your faith is in vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept."

That only in this life we have hope, was the opinion of Solomon, who received his wisdom directly from God. "For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast; for all is vanity. All go unto one place, all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." Then he challenges the science of his day to disprove what he affirms: "Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?" Some think that by spirit he means breath, which man by his upright position breathes upward, and the beast downward. There is a feeling of sadness in his expression: "For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope; for a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; * * * neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun." Seeing this, he advises to avoid the miserable life Paul complains of. "Go thy way," he says, "eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart," etc.; and, "wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his own works, for that is his portion; for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?"

Will the Christian Spiritualist please note the significance of these quotations. Solomon evidently did not believe in his having any interest in mundane affairs after death: "Who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?" Such are the lights which it is said enlightened Plato, and gave the American Indian his ideas of the happy hunting grounds in the spirit land!

J. W. MACKIE.

SUDDEN DEATHS always have a natural cause, and the following are no exceptions, though if an infidel (or Spiritualist) lecturer were to drop down dead upon the platform while speaking, his death would be pronounced by many Christians a Divine "judgment" upon him for the wickedness of the doctrines:

"A lady fell dead in the M. E. Church, at Bath, N. Y., on Sunday week."

"Recently, at Barnesville, Ohio, a gentleman fell dead while leading a prayer-meeting."—*Boston Investigator*.

A RARE INSTANCE.—A country paper speaks of a man who "died without the aid of a physician." Such instances are very rare.

SPIRITUALISM THE RELIGION OF NATURE.

NUMBER ONE.

Old theologians, bigoted sectarians, and even those who are in a slight degree dependent on the popular churches for spiritual development, salvation, or religious culture, are requested not to read this article. It is written expressly for the benefit of Spiritualists, progressivists, and liberal thinkers. And let me bespeak the patience and toleration of such, while I address you a few plain words upon the gist of the matter which we are holding out to the world as of paramount importance. Twenty years ago the writer left the church, because she would not tolerate the utterance of what to him appeared as vital truth. I trust he will not be forced to come out from Spiritualists for the same reason.

Probably the majority of Spiritualists regard this whole movement as simply a disintegrating power, whose end and object is to level to the ground the churches, show the absurdity of an authority in Scripture given by supernatural inspiration, and the utter unsoundness of the theology of Christianity. Having satisfied themselves by a careful study of the phenomena, that, after the change called death, our existence is continuous under the laws of our being and surroundings, they conclude there is no eternal hell, heaven is sure, and they prefer to take their own time and way of reaching that delectable place, without being at too much trouble or expense to facilitate the journey, or assist others in reaching their inevitable destiny. If it were an isolated case, it might not be significant, that friends vociferously insist, in the "Barnesville Conference," that Spiritualism is nothing but a disintegrating power, while many firm Spiritualists, with their families, resort to a free Unitarian church for spiritual pabulum.

A clear-headed writer on the Religion of Nature, says: "Do not destroy or tear down religion, if you cannot substitute a better in its place," is the cry which meets the religious iconoclast continually; as if it were his or any one's duty to manufacture a religion for the people; as if Nature, which gave us birth and sustains us, and is a sufficient guide in scientific pursuits, in our every-day labors, in health and disease, and in our political organizations, should fail us in our social, moral, and spiritual relations!"

A thorough and intelligent Spiritualist, who has given liberally of his time, his influence, and his money to the good work, put the question, as near as memory serves me, in this manner: "Do you consider the religions of mankind, as developed in history, to be an excrescence, an intrusion, foisted on the ignorant many by the designing few for their own selfish aggrandizement, or a natural, normal growth, like governments, which, though imperfect, have supplied an imperious need of humanity, and which were as perfect in every age and country as the development of the people would permit?"

It must be plain to every reflecting mind, that, if the former is true, all that is requisite for the highest interest of humanity is to utterly demolish all religions from the face of the earth; if the latter, then the more difficult problem is presented to the reformer, of showing the errors of the old and substituting a better in its place.

"The master must become the builder too." That man is a part of Nature—if we use the term to include the spiritual, the imperceptible, as well as the palpable—and that his physical, intellectual, and spiritual powers are developed, and ever must exist, under her beneficent laws and forces, is a proposition so self-evident to an instructed mind, as scarcely to need discussion. But this seems as far as most Spiritualistic writers go, ignoring the great fact that the real problem pressing upon this age, and indeed upon every age, for solution, lies beyond this. Your correspondent, after beautifully elucidating the subject up to this point, complacently stops, as if the subject were exhausted and nothing more need be said or done. To me, it appears that they have just passed the vestibule, and scarcely entered the temple of religious truth and culture. None but the exceedingly ignorant at this day doubt that agriculture, horticulture, mechanics, and other fields of human effort and achievement, are developed under Nature's laws; but so long as but a part of these laws are known, and a still smaller part controlled to man's purposes, there must be a continued progress as human intellect and will are brought to bear upon them. For a religious iconoclast, while with Herculean blows demolishing the prevalent religions, to complacently ignore any obligation upon him, or any one else, to substitute a better in its place, is much as if a writer on civil government should say to his fellow-citizens, "There is no obligation resting upon you to manufacture a government for the public, or to substitute better laws for the bad ones you are exerting yourselves to get repealed. Supernatural powers, either malevolent or benevolent, have nothing to do with governments; laws are made by men; men are a part of Nature, and Nature will take care of herself." But the question still recurs, for ages will recur, What is Nature? What are her laws, teachings and requirements? An ancient mythology represents a sphinx as propounding riddles to those who approach her. If they are able to solve them it is well; if not, she devours them. Nature is continually presenting this sphinx-riddle to individuals, to nations, to religions; if they solve it correctly, it is well; if not, she devours or at least mangles them. Admitting that man's intellectual, spiritual, and executive powers are parts of nature, it remains to ascertain what are the functions and uses of these powers in promoting the moral and spiritual development of the race and of individuals. It is a favorite theory with many, that when humanity attains the maturity of its development on this planet, there will be such a growth of the intellectual and moral faculties as to preclude the use of the learned professions; every man will be a law unto himself, his own priest, king, and physician. Some writers seem to leap over the immense chasm of time separating the condition from the present, especially when treating of the subject of religion, which may be defined as the best method and means the human intellect has been able to devise and put in practical operation for the moral and spiritual culture of the race.

Spiritualists hold that civilized nations are sadly in need of a new religion. It is true that the practical workings of the churches, (thanks to native common sense,) are better than their creeds and their theology; but the striking discrepancies can but have a damaging effect. JOHN ALLYN.

SOME LIQUOR, seized by the Massachusetts State constables in Middlesex county, was analyzed a short time since, and on a bottle which was lettered in gilt "D. Brandy," 30 cents per glass, the chemist put the following label:—"Unable to decide what the manufacturer of this article intended to imitate: it contains more or less champagne."—*Investigator*.

DIGNIFIED AND UNDIGNIFIED—A CONTRAST.—Witness: "This here feller broke our window with a tator, and he elbered on the elber as he was running on the pianer." *Magistrate*: "The conduct of the prisoner and his general character" reads "it propa that he should no longer be a memba' of society."

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