

BANNER



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LITERARY.

To Josephine.

BY ELIZA A. PITTSINGER.

Little fairy, elfin queen—
Tiny, roguish, laughing sprite—
Silken-haired Josephine!
To me thou art a beam of light,
Shedding silver hues between
The shadows of each darkness night!
O, thou dark-eyed, sweet gazelle!
Come and sit awhile by me!
Child thou art, but softly tell
What mine older eyes might see,
Were it not for that sweet spell
That enchains me so to thee—
What is hidden, come and tell,
In each motion wild and free,
That enchains me so to thee?
Spirit beauty, fond and shy,
Like some little shooting star
Art thou in our evening sky!
Darting down each silver ray—
Making most mischievous war
In thy darning, dancing play.
Little shooting-star so bright,
Dart thy silver rays on me!
Dart them sweetly through the night—
Dart them fondly through the blight
Of each lonesome wintry day,
Softly, gently down to me,
Dart them quickly, for this lay,
That I'm singing now to thee,
Only wakens to their light!

PHILOSOPHICAL.

(COMMUNICATED.)

IN WHAT CONSISTS THE DIFFERENCE?

NUMBER NINETEEN.

That those peculiarities spoken of in my last article respecting the Egyptians were partaken of by the Hebrews, is clearly evident to the mind of any one who will take the trouble to read the 21st and 23d chapters of Leviticus, which run thus: "For whatever man he be that hath a blemish, he shall not approach; a blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or anything superstitious, or a man which is broken-footed or broken-handed." "No man that hath a blemish, of the seed of Aaron the priest, shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the Lord, made by fire." "Or whosoever toucheth anything that is unclean by the dead," etc. "The soul which has touched any such shall be unclean until even, and shall not eat of the holy things unless he wash his flesh with water." "And when the sun is down, he shall be clean, and shall afterwards eat of the holy things, because it is his food." "When the plague of leprosy is in a man, the priest shall shut him up seven days; if the plague spread not in the skin, the priest shall shut him up seven days more." "He is a leprous man, he is unclean." Among the Persians a similar state of feeling exists in regard to the disease of leprosy; a leprous person is not permitted to enter a city, nor yet allowed to have communication with any of his countrymen; believing, as they do, that the individual thus afflicted has committed some offense against the Sun. When Æschines in his travels stopped at Delos on the way to Rhodes, the people of that island were greatly disturbed by the appearance among them of leprosy—known as white leprosy. They believed it to have been sent by the anger of Apollo (the Sun), because, contrary to the custom of the place, they had buried there the body of a man of rank. Among the American aborigines the idea was very prevalent, that the Moon was the wife of the Sun. Indeed, Sun-worship and Fire-worship is to be found everywhere, as well as traditions of an ancient worship of the Sun in the United States, Peru, and other portions of this continent. Mounds were constructed for sun-worship as "high places"; compare the mounds of Assyria and Palestine, and the "great high place" or mound of Gibeon. "The people sacrificed in the high place because there was no house built unto the name of the Lord (Jahv) until those days." "And as Saul and his servants went up the hill to the city, they said, Is the seer here? And they answered: He is; for there is a sacrifice of the people to-day in the high place. And Samuel said, I am the seer, go up before me unto the high place. There shall meet thee three men going up to God to Beth-El." "Samuel called unto the Lord, and the Lord sent voices (thunder) and rain that day; and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel." The Hebrews seem to have had various names for their God at different times. We find in Hosea, 2d chapter and 16th verse, "That thou shalt call me Ishi; and not Baali." "We also Mount Baalah; compare Allah, Elah, Elohi, Elohim, Alalah, Elos, names of God." The valley of Elah (Alah). "And the children of Israel made Baal-Berith their god." The Canaanite Indians worship the Great Spirit, the Sun, the Earth, and the Moon, as gods. In Greece the Pelasgi worshipped the Heaven and Earth, Sun, Moon, and Stars. The Peruvians worshipped the Sun and Moon. The Sun-god is Creator. Pachacamac, the Great Spirit of the Peruvians, produced the world out of nothing. When King Atahualpa was told that our Lord Jesus Christ had created the world, the Inca responded that he did not believe that any being but the Sun could create anything; that he held him for God, and the Earth for mother; that for the rest, Pachacamac (Sun-god) had drawn the great world from nothing. Among the North American Indians, who have inhabited this continent a greater number of years than we are apt to suppose possible, or any historical writer has as yet given credit for, the Sun-god is generally the Great Spirit, or the Great Spirit resides in the Sun. When we come to a proper

and just definition of the meaning of the term *sun*, we find that it is in close connection with not only our religion, but our existence as well. "The Sun gives life to all things, to all beings." "Ani is the Sun; Ani-ma is the life, the soul; Ani-mare means to animate." "At the great Kaimic festival which the Peruvians celebrate at the summer solstice (standstill), at the same time as the Cherokee, the fire used in the solemnities was given to the Inca priests by the hand of the Sun. The rays were concentrated in a focus, and cotton set on fire. When it was bad weather they were obliged to obtain it by the friction of sticks. For three days previous there was a general fast, and no fire lighted in the dwellings. The sacred flame was intrusted to the care of the Virgins of the Sun; and if by any neglect it went out, the event was regarded as a calamity that boded disaster to the monarchy." "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out." (Leviticus, 6th chapter and 13th verse.) "The Indian tribes burn tobacco instead of incense as a propitiation to the Sun. The fire in the temple of Vesta was renewed every year by fire produced from the rays of the sun. The Romans had their Vestal Virgins, who kept up the sacred flame, and hence they were virgin priestesses of the Assyrian Artemis. Among the Greeks human victims were offered to Dionysius (the Sun) as they were to the Hebrew Moloch." The introduction of the serpent among the symbols of Freemasonry, originated in the story of the disobedience of our first parents; this, we are informed, was for the purpose of commemorating the unhappy event of the fall of man from a state of innocence and purity to sin and wretchedness. Serpent-worship derived its origin from the same source; and even the name, applied with a transmitted authority to the destructive power, has reached our times. "Thus the Deva or Dive of the East, who was the serpent-tempter; the Diu of ancient Hibernia, the Armoric Duc, and the Gaelic Dhu, was no other than the Diabolus of the Greeks and Latins, and the English Devil." The most eminent writers on the subject of Masonry, tell us Freemasonry is a system of Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty; and that this definition was adopted by our ancient Grand Master, King Solomon, who called the science Wisdom; which, by the cabalists, was subsequently denominated Baphomet. And he defines it thus: "Wisdom is the worker of all things; she is the brightness of everlasting Light; the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of His goodness. She is more beautiful than the sun, and above all the order of stars, and before the light."

J. D. PIERSON.

(COMMUNICATED.)

IMMORTALITY PHILOSOPHICALLY CONSIDERED.

Let us see what rational thoughts, if not positive evidence, we can bring to support our convictions or belief of the fact of immortal identity. If it could be proved that the material universe was formed without intelligence or design, and that the human mind or spirit is but the result or effect of organization of matter, then there could be nothing on which to build a hope, even, of a continued life beyond this. But there are evidences of intelligence in the formation of everything, that compel us to look and search deeper for the First Cause, than in any of the known organic laws of Nature. Then comes the great unsolved question, Can this First Cause, or Intelligence, exist independent of matter? or can the great Positive Mind know and act without an organization? The conclusion of many deep thinkers is, that Spirit (and mind as its organ) is refined substance, inseparable from matter, on which it depends for outward expression, and that the material universe is as a vast laboratory, in which to unfold and incarnate spirit germs, offsprings of this Infinite Mind.

Some, however, have thought that this idea involved the impossibility of two distinct and self-existent entities; but I see only the great dual law which unites the Visible with the Invisible. Now, if the possibility of the individualization of spirits, as being the grand ultimate for which all other formations are but the necessary processes, be admitted, then comes the next great question to be solved: For what great end, commensurate with this incomprehensible display of Almighty power and goodness, were they produced or created? This has been answered in many ways, some of which would not be much to the honor or wisdom of their Author; but the most rational and intelligent is, that it was for the happiness and unfolding of intelligent beings to all eternity. But, to this, has come up the question, If we are the offspring of a Divine Mind, shall we not be again absorbed into it and return to nonentity? And if we are only cast up into the realm of organic life, retaining no knowledge of a previous state of existence, like a bubble on the ocean, what surety have we that we shall not sink back from whence we came, and virtually cease to exist? To this question there have been many elaborate answers given; yet none of them seem to satisfy the skeptical mind; and I do not think that any theory can fully demonstrate what is the absolute truth. Some have maintained that there can be no other immortality but that of reproduction, this being the only conclusion that external laws and reason can arrive at; and I see no possibility of solving it, only by facts presented from a future state of existence. If clairvoyance is true, and this testimony can be admitted into the domain of science and philosophy, then it can be readily solved in the negative, so far as the

immediate future is concerned, and the proof of continued existence and identity after death. But as to the finale of an eternity, or grand cycle of existence, we need be in no hurry to solve a question so remote. It may be that what has been called God is only the chemical law of affinity inherent in matter, and that the special Providence believed in by many is only the action of those created intelligences that have become able to control the laws of events, etc., which have been heretofore thought to be under the direct superintendence of the Divine Mind; and that this Divine Mind finds its expression only through the forms and intelligences unfolded by the involuntary as well as voluntary laws of Matter and Power, since Motion must exist whenever these exist; and then comes the inevitable evolution of all else; but of the intelligence and attributes of that Power, we can only know by its effects. Some philosophers claim that every atom moves by inherent volition.

There is another theory, that may be true, of immortal existence, which is: that this state is alone to be reached by those who shall live or are born after the laws of organic life have been fully understood and wisely controlled; when the world and its physical and social conditions have reached that state of perfection wherein man shall be able to stop the waste and decay of the material form, and preserve the equilibrium between composition and decomposition. It has been supported from the analogy of the tree and its fruits, that several years or cycles of its existence were necessarily unproductive of the end to be attained, and that the several generations of leaves, which prophetic of fruit, were first subject to decay, not possessing the elements of individual existence, although these had first to live before fruit or the higher and ultimate existence was attained. According to this theory, the Tree of Immortal Life, on this globe, has produced but one or two, if any, real fruits. Christ and Elijah may be such, and perhaps some others, if the theory be admitted, which also claims that such are but as it were fruit prematurely gathered, "whom the heavens must contain until the restitution of all things," or until the earth has reached that perfect state wherein spirits may be re-incarnated and dwell again in material forms.

The reasoning I mostly employ, to satisfy my mind as to the proofs of a future state, is much like that which Thomas Dick employs in his philosophy; or, rather, I may be said to use his reasons, with the additional spiritual or intuitive testimony that we are possessed of many faculties which are not unfolded in this life; and those that are, are seldom fully developed, or but partially satisfied here.

L. H.

(COMMUNICATED.)

SPIRITUALISM THE RELIGION OF NATURE.

NUMBER THREE.

Religion, like every other department of human achievement, is progressive. As in agriculture, mining, manufactures, and the natural sciences, new principles are from time to time discovered, and new methods adopted; so should it be in religion. Spiritualism is a humanitarian, and not a Deistic religion. It denies that God has revealed himself authoritatively in a book, be it Vedas, Shaster, Bible, Koran, Swedenborg's Arcana Celestia, Book of Mormon, or A. J. Davis' Divine Revelations. It takes this position because these claims never had any foundation in truth; and the people are fast finding it out. Whatever excuse there may have been in the infancy of the human race, to treat mankind, in regard to religion, like children, by a plausible deception, that excuse no longer exists. Religion is not for the glory of God, but the benefit of man. We do not claim to know more of God than can be inferred from so much of the finite outworking thereof as comes within the scope of our limited capacities. Since all the forces and elements of nature, at least on our planet, have, for inconceivable ages, converged to develop man, and to bring him forward to his present condition, we may infer that whatever tends to man's improvement is pleasing to Deity. Still, as to the qualities and mode of the Divine Being outside of nature's unfolding, we are not ashamed to confess ignorance, and address ourselves to comprehensible principles and practicable efforts. Religion, then, is simply public or social exercises, whose object is the culture and development of the moral and spiritual faculties of our nature. At the foundation of the subject lies the fact, that these faculties are a part of nature, and, as such, amenable to the law, that proper and legitimate exercise conduces to growth, as in the intellectual or muscular system.

Religion, as an associated movement of men and women, proposes to provide for the proper culture of these faculties. In the current theology, it is made a prominent feature of religious teachings, that God punishes sins committed in this life by a positive infliction in a dismal locality in the next. This idea is dwelt upon so much that a large proportion of religious people regard it as the object of religious observances to escape this punishment. Hence Spiritualists, who have been educated in the old theology, often fail to appreciate the importance of religious culture, when taught by Spiritualism that God's moral government is substantially the same after death as before, and consists in the natural results of inharmonious with moral laws. Many do not readily perceive the benefits of bringing individuals to a clearer consciousness of these laws, and thus bringing the life more in harmony therewith.

Another idea of the current religious teachings is, that by prayer and pious deeds God is conciliated so much as to render supernatural assistance even in daily avocations. Deity is the infinite Father of all life and being, and will not deviate from his perfect relations with the ever-unfolding universe, even at the most fervent solicitation of his children. Religion, then, being the spiritual development of human beings, is purely a human work, in accordance with practical, common-sense principles. California is paying fifteen thousand dollars a year for a geological survey of the State. Some think this amount entirely too small; and few thoughtful men consider it a misapplication of the people's money, thus to bring to light something of the geological formation and mineral resources of the State. While a dissemination of spiritual truth would be no less valuable, it must be done by voluntary efforts, as there is a great variety of opinions as to truths and methods; and the history of the Church has taught the world the value of religious liberty.

True, the religious development of a people cannot rise much above their physical condition and intellectual status. Excessive and continued toil unites the mind for effective effort, and must becloud the spiritual perceptions. So long as the present industrial condition of civilization continues, spiritual darkness will prevail. While labor and the fruits of labor are so unequally distributed, it is vain to expect a high order of religious enlightenment in general. But how shall this condition of things be improved? Archimedes could with ease move the world, if he only had a fulcrum on which to rest his lever. Without claiming religious culture as the only means of human improvement, does it not come nearer to being this fulcrum for the elevation of man, when judiciously used, than any other means? But how shall this spiritual culture be secured? How but by a diligent use of the best means within the reach of each vicinage or religious association. While there is so much land uncultivated, or poorly cultivated, it is a pity if a plat could not be devoted to so noble a use as a site for a house for enlightened, untrammeled spiritual culture. Let each association have the best music they can afford, the best lectures they can procure, the best conference, and make use of any other means that the best judgment and enlightened reason of the people may suggest. We have formed our own government, we have established a system of public education, there now remains to inaugurate a practical religion on the basis of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. And this is a work that will never cease to be required. Philosophical writers anticipate a time in the distant future when man will be so harmonious in his relations as no longer to require governments, laws, prisons, judges, or policemen. But, so long as man begins his existence without knowledge, but with a growing capacity for acquiring ideas; so long as there is use for a daily press and a public school, so long will there be need of the Sunday lecture and the religious conference. I once heard an intelligent Spiritualist say that Spiritualists were the worst people he ever knew; for while they know the most they do the least. However true it may be, there are many worthy exceptions of noble workers, who relax not their efforts, though envied by circumstances of unparalleled discouragement. JOHN ALLYN.

(COMMUNICATED.)

IMMORTALITY.

NUMBER FOUR.

Who can fully realize all that is contained in the single word—*immortality*?

There is a grandeur in the idea that we shall live forever, with continually improving opportunities for the development and enjoyment of all our faculties, that thrills our entire system, as it increases our self-esteem and gives impetus to our nobler aspirations. Who can read the words that Bulwer puts in the mouth of one of his heroines, without sympathizing with the hopes therein expressed, even if they should not command belief?

"And to what numerous stages of being; what paths, what duties, what active and glorious tasks in other worlds may we not be reserved? perhaps to know and share them together, and mount age after age higher in the scale of being. For surely in Heaven there is no pause or torpor; we do not lie down in calm and unimprovable repose. Movement and progress will remain the law and condition of existence, and there will be efforts and duties for us above, as there have been below."

Is there one who would rather cease to exist than pass into a higher state of being, with his individuality, and all his unsatisfied hopes and desires, which have been the bane and pleasure of this present existence? But in combating the arguments that are sometimes brought forward in proof of immortality, the skeptic does not do so because he dislikes the doctrine, nor that he desires to destroy a single truth, he is ever so unpalatable; yet he is determined to uphold no faith not based on reason, or cherish a hope which will not bear the closest investigation. His desire is, to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh him a reason of the hope that is in him"; an answer that will not only silence the caviler, but will satisfy, to the fullest extent, himself.

The patient investigator, the honest inquirer, rigid skeptic though he may be, is well satisfied no amount of faith can make a falsehood true, nor unbelief or doubt make a truth false. Neither one nor the other can alter the real condition of things; and while we dispute, wrangle, and engender all sorts of inharmonious feelings, on account of our egotistic determination of having our own idea of things maintained, facts, stubborn facts, still remain what they were, perfectly indifferent to all that can be said in the matter. We may believe the moon to be made of green cheese—of nothing, when the stars were brought into being—according to the development theory, or any other theory which fancy may create or reason dictate; and all the while the Queen of Night will continue to shine and revolve around the earth the same. Regarding the argument for immortality, based on our intuitive perceptions, our hopes and desires, I am free to confess that I have not yet ascended high enough the "Mount of Pisgah" to see the "Promised Land"; never higher than to acquire an unbounded faith in Nature. Believing her principles to be eternal and unchangeable, beyond the capricious interference of any mind whatever, I have confidence that she will continue to operate as heretofore. Job says of God, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him"; so I say of Nature. If, when my body is laid in the grave, I shall wholly mingle with the dust, to be known no more, I have yet this comfort: Nature has taken me to herself, and I am one with her; and all that I am, and have been, will still be used by her. If I continue my identity in another state, still there will Nature preserve me and receive my undivided worship and study. Nothing can be lost. Every atom in the universe has been eternally doing its duty—eternally doing all it could. Each atom of which I am composed, spirit atom and physical atom, has been eternally at work; as full of intelligence a million of ages ago as it is to-day—as it will be millions of ages hence. To some, this no doubt will appear only mere assertion; to me, it is a self-evident truth. I have no doubt but that our organisms have, in their gradations through matter, done their duty in flowers and in trees; in the rock and the mineral; in the mighty reptiles and saurians of Geology; in all animated Nature; in earths, comets, and suns. The power that sustained and propelled us through all these changes will continue to do so, and make of us just what the economy of Nature has determined for us.

Philosophy in vain attempts to pry into the secrets of a future life. To the philosopher the heavens are as brass, and the earth, iron; from the tomb not even a doleful sound salutes his ear; his science destroys his faith, and only reveals the inexorable facts connected with the materials of our present existence. How can it be otherwise, even granting the hypothesis of a future existence? We find all animated beings, in their formation and organic functions, adapted only to the elements in which they live. Fish living in places like the Mammoth Cave, where there is no light, have no eyes, the only sense through which light can be perceived; no more can man have any perceptions of a state which, as yet, he has not reached, and with the elements and conditions of which he has only a prophetic connection. He is of the earth, earthly; and can only analyze and comprehend earthly things. That does not, however, prove that spiritual existences do not exist; nor does it warrant a blind faith in everything we do not comprehend, which may be presented for our acceptance. There are undoubtedly many things in the universe of which we cannot even have the most distant idea; forms and conditions of existence which have no parallel in our experience. It becomes the skeptic, then, not to be too presumptuous in his denials; the supra-mundane theorist, not to be too dogmatic in his assertions. It becomes all, in discussing the subject of immortality, to be candid and patient—receiving all things with caution and rigid investigation—rejecting nothing without a fair examination.

J. W. MACKIE.

CHRISTIAN AND PAGAN.—Ideas occasionally fall from the pulpit which are in perfect harmony with the religious spirit of the age. The Unitarian Church is not considered evangelical, and may not perhaps be properly regarded as the exponent of Christianity, but it is a question if it is not more in sympathy than other churches with the most professing intellectual lights of the world. The ruling idea of the Orthodox Evangelical Church is that there is but one true religion; all others being false lights leading to final destruction. The Creator, in descending to earth in the person of Jesus Christ, invested the teachings of the latter with a sanctity and authority that raise them far above all other schools of philosophy, constituting them alone the truth from which humanity could take no appeal. This view of the Scriptures shuts out from nations to whom they have not been given all hope of salvation, as no one can justly profit by a means of grace of which he is entirely ignorant. It also makes imperative the work of sending missionaries to preach Christ to the heathen, since the latter must live in sin and die without hope until the light of the missionary shall reach him. This absolute aspect of Christianity has caused many good men who were searching honestly for truth to disregard its pretensions. Why had God so favored Christian nations that they only possess the truth without which all must die? Why were pagans to have a slow leisure of a struggling church for that emanation from the Creator which is so absolutely essential, and which God might have imparted directly, thus saving unnumbered millions from death without a Christian's hope? Why was one portion of God's household suffered to remain in darkness while another was reveling in the effulgence from the heavenly throne? These questions have never been satisfactorily answered by Orthodox divines. At most, when pushed, they have said that such was the will of God, and the presumptuous man might go no farther in his questioning. *Golden Era.*

"WHAT do you mean by a cat-and-dog life?" said a husband to his angry wife. "Look at Carlo and Kitty asleep on the rug together. I wish men lived half as peacefully with their wives." "Stop!" said the lady, "lie them together and see how they will agree."

CORRESPONDENCE.

LETTER FROM VERMONT.

WOODSTOCK, MARCH 27, 1867.
ABSENCE FROM CHURCH.

Three-fourths of the adult population in this civilized and Christianized New England stay away from religious meetings. Is it wise or foolish—moral or immoral—pious or impious? A question of great importance, so long as we have so much wealth invested in meeting-houses and their fixtures. Then the great expense in running and sustaining all these churches—the cost of rearing “regular ordained ministers”—is enormous. The aggregate amount for sustaining them and their families is from five hundred to ten thousand dollars a year. With this great outlay, this enormous expense all the time, it becomes quite necessary to institute an inquiry into the cause of so few attending religious service upon Sunday.

There must be something radically wrong somewhere, with all this great wealth expended in erecting, beautifying, and making comfortable and attractive these houses of worship, that so small a number give their attendance. Then the men of talent, erudition, superior wisdom, (or who ought to be, as the highest advantages our country possesses are within their reach and contribute to their assistance), called by God to expound His will and wisdom to His children.

“If a man die shall he live again?” Can there be a subject of greater interest to poor, suffering, dying men and women? I again ask, Why is it that so few attend our Sabbath gatherings? I can answer only for one. And I do it with the love of God—not fear—and my fellow-men as witnesses. I am too poor, too needy, to waste or squander time as it is done at all our religious meetings at present.

“Time is money,” is an old proverb. It is more than that to me. It is happiness or misery; it is salvation or damnation—life or death. There is no exaggeration here either. Horace Mann, when at the head of the Massachusetts Educational Department, affirmed that nineteen-twentieths of all the crime and suffering in this world was wholly because of ignorance. In my opinion, had his courage equaled his wisdom, there would have been no fractional exception made. I most truly believe and solemnly affirm that ignorance is the sole cause of all our sorrows, wrangles, and bloody wars. Ignorance of what? ask many. Ignorance of God’s universal, unchangeable laws—man and his relations to those laws.

I said I was too poor to attend church one-seventh of the whole time, under present rules and restrictions. The pulpit has been of very little service in warning our Nation of the wickedness and danger of chattel slavery. Nearly all the ministers south of Mason and Dixon’s line went in for the Rebellion, and far too many were in deep sympathy in pious New England. O, the past record of our ministers and churches, in all the great practical reforms, will appear in a bad light to the purely honest followers of Jesus and all great reformers!

How can a true follower of the great Representative Man attend upon any of our regular church services? They are built upon the one-man power and wisdom—purely monarchical—the opposite of all of Jesus’ teachings and practices—no freedom of speech, except to flatter the self-righteous and vain ministers. No matter how inefficient, dogmatic, and boastful they may appear to their auditors and true worshippers of Truth, you must submit without a question or a protest. This has been the rule throughout the past ages of all Christendom. Hence, in my judgment, here lies the whole cause of so large a number staying away from Sunday religious meetings. Men and women love improvement, reform, new truths, and feel guilty and condemned if they are remiss in giving counsel and aid to the misled and frenzied ones, whenever there is an opportunity. It is like witnessing a heinous crime, and not using our God-given strength to prevent it. Hence, in attending upon meetings of any Christian order, and hearing great stress laid upon the sectarian rules of church government, and seeing so little zeal for the great practical truth of brotherhood, “Love thy neighbor as thyself,” we become disturbed—even disgusted—and resolve that we will not waste so much of our time and be witnesses to the propagation of error, not being allowed to give a warning voice against such usurpation. We all know and feel, that to be passive and witness error, false teachings, deception of any kind, and not raise our voices against it, makes us participants, guilty and condemned by the civil and moral law.

Beecher, in one of his sermons not long ago, was speaking upon this subject. He said “the herd would always be found where green sweet forage grew; they needed no urging or goading. But when fed upon rye straw, that had been cut five hundred years, they knew enough to stay away; and he honored their taste.” Here lies the whole secret. A rehearsal or rehearsal of the loves and sensual life of Solomon and David has become stale and unworthy of the time and attention of good, sound, thinking men and women. Beecher remarked further, in reference to congregations getting drowsy and nodding in service-time: “When I discover any of my hearers inattentive and sleepy, I want no messenger-boy, or sharp rebuke, sent among them. It is the preacher that wants awakening and reprimanding. He is in the fault, not his audience. He, or his subject, is out of place and taste. The people know where the ‘green pastures are.’ Yes, as of old, ‘the people hear him gladly.’” This is all true, and ever has been. When and wherever you find a minister or teacher superior to his hearers, like Parker, Beecher, Chapin, and Starr King; as Beecher says, “the herd will be there,” and they can’t stay away. All hanker for information and wisdom. But such ministers are rare. Nineteen-twentieths of the professed Christian teachers are far below their hearers in moral standing and intelligence.

Thus said and wrote Theodore Parker many years ago. He could call together one of the most refined, moral, and elevated societies in all New England, and was himself cultured as no other man in that region. At the same time, he felt that many of his hearers were far superior to himself in many things pertaining to man’s happiness

here and hereafter. He was not willing to assume the whole responsibility, and be the sole teacher. He said there was scarcely a religious society in all New England but possessed from twenty to one hundred members or hearers, superior to their settled ministers. And, with the present church rules, these superior members had no voice—no opportunity to say a word for their starving brothers and sisters. These things should not be; and he strove to institute a more liberal and democratic course, and give an opportunity to all his hearers to speak and make inquiries. His meetings were devoted one-half the time to conferences and free meetings. The members’ rights were recognized, and all, male and female, were heard. This comports with the rules that Jesus laid down: “Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” “Prove all things.” “Be ready always to give an answer to any one that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you.” “Why not even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?”

The time has come for new rules and regulations in our churches. The masses are too far advanced to be cheated by the self-righteous priest any longer. The honest lover of the simple doctrine of “Love thy neighbor as thyself,” (without regard to race or color), will not aid or abet the sectarian religious churches. They are becoming transparent to all lovers of truth and brotherhood, and a hideous picture they present. Nothing will save them but greater toleration, and a more liberal course toward their brother man. Men and women must and shall be heard individually, in all religious assemblies, or they will withdraw their attendance and support. This is honest, and I hope to see it carried out in regard to every religious association. I have for many years refused to aid in the erection of any church, or support any religious meeting, where freedom of speech is to be prohibited or curtailed. I believe in human rights—equity to all men and women.

NATHANIEL RANDALL, M. D.

The Banner of Progress.

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BENJAMIN TODD & CO.,
PUBLISHERS AND PROPRIETORS.

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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Woman’s Rights.

Much has been said and written upon this subject, but as yet with apparently little result in comparison with the amount of labor bestowed. Viewing the matter from the standpoint of the unprogressive portion of the world, woman has no rights that the lords of creation are bound to respect. If shown any favor by the male sex, it is not from duty or right principle, but is merely gratuitous on their part; and woman should be particularly careful to consider it as such, and to show no more than a due amount of gratitude therefor. The philanthropy of a certain portion of mankind has run wild over the wrongs of the poor Indian and the African, but has failed to discover the horrors of that bondage under which woman has suffered indescribable torture her whole life long, carrying thousands of her sex annually down to a premature grave. Many shrink from the discussion of the subject, from the fact that it is so intimately connected with that so-called holy institution—marriage. True marriage is holy, and was instituted by the Father and Mother of the universe. But the marriage institution of to-day is rotten to the core; and Heaven pity the ignorance of those who call it holy. It is the Inquisition, by which woman is daily tortured. It is the bloody altar, where her heart daily dies. It is the Juggernaut, whose ponderous, bloody wheels daily run riot over its crushed and groaning victims. It is a hell far more terrific in its torture than the fabled Tartarus of old, or the sulphureous, fiery world of Christian Theology. It is a perfect cesspool of vice and crime. There is a far greater amount of licentiousness committed in the marriage-bed than out of it. In seven-tenths of the number of cases, marriage is but another name for legalized adultery. Talk about the corruption of our political institutions! They are purity itself, in comparison with the social relations of life. Is it strange, when the fountain of life is so impure, that the little streams flowing therefrom should be not much less than fiends incarnate? To us it does not appear strange that fiends should be born in hell! And since we realize from what source a large portion of humanity flows, we only wonder that the children are as pure as we find them. But this so-called religious or holy institution—marriage—is like the majority of the holy practices of mankind. Not a crime is mentioned in the Decalogue, nor one at which the soul of every true man and woman instinctively revolts, that has not been committed at some time in the name of religion, or been sanctioned and practiced by some one who stood high in religious estimation.

The religious teachers of the world have ever insisted that woman should be subjected to the whims and caprices of man. Under the God-sanctioned (?) religion of Moses, a man could marry a woman, take her to his home, use her a while, and then, if not satisfied with her, had only to give her a piece of paper, with a few words written upon it, and send her out of his house, and the poor woman had no redress. But nowhere do we read in the book that women could send their husbands away, however contemptible, mean, and abusive they might behave. They might come home drunk, and in a shameful manner expose their nakedness, like Noah; they might bring home a flagrant, and make her their mistress, like Abraham; they might slay a whole nation of fathers, mothers, and sons, and bring home all the virgins, and give themselves up to general prostitution in their tents, in the presence of their wives, as did the Israelites; they might

have harems, wherein their wives and concubines could be numbered by hundreds, like Solomon; they might go on a “regular bender,” as David did, and strip themselves stark naked, and dance with the young maidens—and yet there was no redress for the unhappy wives. And if one of them dared to give a curtain-lecture to her wayward lord and master, it was at the peril of her future happiness, as in the case of David and Michal.

In New Testament times, Paul being taken as authority, woman’s condition was not much improved. Paul makes man the supreme tyrant over his wife and family, without any redress. In fact, he commands them thus: “Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands in all things.” The Christian world has held tenaciously to the letter of Paul’s teaching; and when the wife does not submit willingly, she is made to yield by physical force. A small proportion of such cases continually appear in our Police Courts.

Many men—in fact, most men—have been accustomed to look upon their wives as property. They own them as much as they do their horse, dog, or any other kind of property. They buy them of the priest, and pay five, ten, or twenty dollars for them; hence they claim that they have a right to use them at their own pleasure, in any manner, cruel or otherwise. As the result of such treatment, lingering disease and pain haunt the brief hours of the married life of woman, until a premature death puts an end to their physical sufferings. It would, perhaps, be more proper to call it a lingering death from the beginning; for it is so to many of them. But it is all right; it was done in a holy manner; the murder perpetrated was a legal one, and had the sanction of the holy marriage law! The physician said the disease was consumption; and the priest said God had done the deed, and, of course, no one was to blame. And away goes the tyrant, and takes to himself another victim. Yet, such is the state of public opinion, that, if a woman finds herself in such a domestic hell, and makes an endeavor to escape the chains of her tyrant, in order to free herself from a thralldom worse than death—holding her body and soul in perpetual bondage—fastidious, fashionable society arrays itself in the panoply of Mrs. Grundy, and starts after the panting victim, and hounds her back to her master. What is the remedy for all this? The answer is, Restore to woman her rights and privileges, so that she may be equal with man. But, you inquire, how is this to be brought about? We reply, by constant agitation of the subject. Let every true reformer speak boldly on his or her opinion of the question. Throw fastidiousness and bat-blind conservatism to the winds. Let not such a barrier stand one moment in the way of a reform so much needed as that in behalf of woman. Push forward the car of Progress; let nothing hinder. If the old fossilized grumblers are crushed beneath its ponderous wheels, it will be all the better for the world.

Editorial Notes.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

“Benjamin Todd writes in his paper from Portland, that during one of Brother Earle’s revival meetings, all the ladies who wished to have better husbands were requested to rise. The uprising was instantaneous and unanimous. Where does Brother Todd expect to go to when he dies?”—*Daily American Flag*.

We rather think that the editor of the *Flag* slightly exaggerated our assertions; nevertheless, he is so good a friend of ours, and seems to extend his anxiety for our welfare so far—in fact, beyond the grave—that we will answer his question. We do not anticipate going anywhere when we die, for the simple reason that we do not expect to die at all. That the tenement we now occupy will be found vacant some of these odd nights or mornings, we have no doubt. And, wherever that may occur, we hope we shall not be then obliged to witness the results of these contemptible religious revivals. If we do, we will follow the same occupation then that we do now; namely, going about and tearing down as fast as their authors build up.

NOT THAT KIND.

“Rev. Mr. Benjamin Todd, editor of the *BANNER OF PROGRESS*, a paper devoted to the promotion of insanity, free love, and table-tipping Spiritualism, challenges any Minister of the Gospel to a two-days’ discussion of Spirits. Should we ever feel inclined to discuss spirits, we should prefer a different kind of Todd from Benjamin. The name is at least suggestive.”—*Humboldt Register*.

We think the editor, when he wrote that article, must have been discussing “spirits” extensively, and that he must have had an stray brick in his hat at the time. It sounds just like a drunken man’s twaddle.

A MEAN DOG SHOULD BE WATCHED.

“Mr. Todd, the lecturer on Spiritualism, gave the city folks a course of his lectures last week. His lectures are rather pleasant to hear, making about the same impression on the mind that the illustrated title-page to some of the monthly magazines do. There are a few common words in the middle, almost obscured by flourishes, with a border of angels and Cupids hanging to grape-vines, apparently endeavoring to decipher the meaning of all the extra flourishes within.”—*Unionist, (Salem, Oregon.)*

Let the citizens of Salem keep watch and ward over the editor of the *Unionist*, if they care anything about retaining him on this side of death; for, unless his nature be changed very much, he will wake up some morning and find himself so dogged mean, that, Judas-like, he will take a “grape-vine,” or the first piece of hemp he can find, and go and hang himself.

OUR esteemed friend, DR. P. W. RANDLE of this city, has been appointed Assistant Surgeon of the United States Army, and is now stationed at the Presidio.

DR. CHEEVER’S CHURCH, in New York, has been converted into a magnificent jewelry store. It is not the first time the “house of God,” so called, has been made a “den of thieves.”

A COLORED SPIRITUALIST LECTURER.—Mrs. Wilson, a trance speaker of great power, has created a sensation in Charlestown, Mass., where she is lecturing to crowded houses.

THE first official copies of the Declaration of Independence were printed by a woman—Mary Catharine Goddard—in 1776.

MET HIS DOOM.—Justus C. Haynes was married at Beckwourth’s Valley to Martha Ann Doom.

More Pulpit Ethics.

A BRIEF BUT PITTY SERMON.—Here is the pitthiest sermon ever preached: “Our ingress into life is trouble and care; our egress out of it we know not where; but doing well here we shall do well there; I could not tell more by preaching a year.”

The above has been going the rounds of the press for some time past, without credit. We cut it out of the *Daily Times* of this city, whose clerical editors no doubt thought it a fine piece of preaching. We have been trying to extract the “pith” which it is said to contain, but as yet without success. Let us see if we can put some “pith” into it, which will bear the analysis of common sense at least. “Our ingress into life is naked and bare.” It needed no pulpit orator to give us the astonishing information that Nature does not furnish us with ready-made clothing, wherein we may be ushered into this “breathing world.” It is a fact patent to every eye in all increasing families. It is, in truth, the “naked truth.” Our clerical friends need not have been so indelicate as to twit us of the fact. We couldn’t help it; for how could we know it was the fashion here to wear clothes? The Second Adventists have improved upon Nature in this respect; for they furnish “ascension robes” to those who are to be “born again”—that is, “resurrected” into the heavenly state of existence. The Pharisaic doctrine of a bodily resurrection, we suppose, first suggested the idea of clothing, embalming, and mummifying the dead. But reason now revolts at this old superstition. Let us look again at this “pithy sermon.”

“Our progress through life is trouble and care.” And what would life be worth without them? That which costs us no trouble and requires but little care is but lightly esteemed. It is the very trouble to acquire and the care to preserve that give all the value to everything we possess. What we care nothing about gives us no trouble, and is soon banished from our thoughts. Our desire is no longer toward it. We part with it without regret. All the whining about trouble and care comes from the pulpit, which first makes the trouble, and then offers its own patent panacea for its cure. We strongly suspect that the clerical profession is as much addicted to quackery as the medical. Its practice is certainly worse; for it first creates the disease by wholesale in society, that it may afterward sell its nostrums at a heavy profit, and gain credit for its pretended cure besides. All the trouble which men have is the best thing for their development, or the all-wise Creator would not have instituted it; and all the clerical prescriptions in the world will not remove it from the world.

“Our egress out of it we know not where.” If it is not quite certain what locality we shall occupy when we cease to live in the body, it is less doubtful whether we can make our egress from life at all. We believe, on what we consider good evidence, in a continued existence; and so does the pulpit and its adherents pretend to believe in it, though they do not seem to understand what sort of an existence it is, nor how it is entered upon. To discuss this point here, however, would make this article too great length. We shall have ample opportunity for future articles devoted exclusively to this part of the discussion.

“But doing well here we shall do well there.” Where? Having just declared that they know not whether they are going, how is it possible for them to know what conditions are pre-requisite for “doing well” in the future state? “There” is very indefinitely used in this case. It may mean anything but a locality where happiness is experienced. But this is not the only solecism the pulpit and its adherents pretend to believe in, though they do not seem to understand what sort of an existence it is, nor how it is entered upon. To discuss this point here, however, would make this article too great length. We shall have ample opportunity for future articles devoted exclusively to this part of the discussion.

“I could not tell more by preaching a year.” Scarcely less could have been told in the shortest time possible. What is self-evident in the above extract need not have been told at all. That which is assumed in it had better never have been said. Mere assumption adds nothing to the amount of the world’s knowledge. Proof is what is required. “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” After assuming that we do not know where we shall go at death, to prescribe conditions of attaining happiness there, it strikes us, is the height of the “foolishness of preaching.” If the world is to be saved by such foolish arguments, addressed to rational beings, the sooner we abolish common schools the better. They can teach us nothing that will be of any benefit to us hereafter. It is only the pulpit and the foolishness spoken from it that is or will be of any value.

MRS. FOYE’S LAST PUBLIC SEANCE will take place next Monday evening, at Mechanics’ Institute Hall, Post street, near Kearny, commencing at 8 o’clock. We learn that Mrs. Foye will not hold sittings in public again in this city for the present. This will therefore be the last opportunity of the kind, perhaps, for many months, to witness those remarkable manifestations which occur in her presence. She will, however, continue to sit daily for visitors at her residence, 124 Sutter street.

ACKNOWLEDGING THEMSELVES DEFEATED.—Some orthodox preachers in Illinois having been invited to discussion with Spiritualist lecturers, upon the plenary inspiration of the Bible, and kindred subjects, declined, giving as a reason that all public debates concerning the origin of the Bible invariably increase the number of infidels, and never increase the number of believers.

“PATIENTS’ HOME.”—Mr. and Mrs. F. Gould continue to receive patients suffering with acute and chronic diseases, at No. 30 Silver street, where they will be treated by electro-magnetism, baths, human magnetism, and botanic remedies. Rooms and board are included, in the charges for treatment, which are from ten to twenty dollars per week.

Relics of Bigotry.

AN OLD MANUSCRIPT.—We were yesterday shown a manuscript which may be considered quite ancient. It is a curiosity, not so much from its great age as from the notes of several sermons delivered by the Rev. Timothy Edwards, a member of the first graduating class of Harvard College. One of the sermons was delivered at East Windsor, Connecticut, October 5th, 1718. The Rev. Timothy Edwards was grandfather of the famous Jonathan Edwards, whose reputation as a theologian is world-wide. The manuscript before us is small, and the writer’s characters upon it are almost microscopic, while every portion of the parchment is thickly covered. The writing was thus fine on account of the exorbitant price of paper at that time. Like most of the sermons of that period, these are models of accurate and logical reasoning; the intellect, not the feelings, were appealed to. More inductions and thorough scholars than those old divines have never lived, and they have bequeathed to subsequent generations a vast fund of ideas and arguments, which, in new and changed forms, are from day to day presented to us. This curious and valuable manuscript is owned by Mr. S. E. Alden, of this city, who is himself a descendant of Jonathan Edwards. He has a treasure which will increase in value each year that it is preserved.—*Oakland News*.

The readers of controversial and theological works will easily recall to mind who Jonathan Edwards was, and what was the character of his theology. He it was who asserted that hell was paved with the skulls of infants not a span long! We should think such ideas would need to be presented to this generation in “new and changed forms,” to be acceptable to us in our present humanitarian development. It would be better for our opinion of poor humanity in the past, if the “price of paper” had been sufficiently “exorbitant” to have wholly inhibited the writing of such abominable doctrines upon its pure white surface. The “industry” of those old divines, not to mention their “scholarship,” seems to have been exclusively devoted to proving God a monster, beyond even human conception. Contrary to the opinion expressed in the above extract, we see no present value in such works, and do not think that time will work any enhancement of the estimation in which they should be held.

A Couple of Notices.

“THE BANNER OF PROGRESS.—We cannot class this among the religious journals, and do not doubt as to what species it properly belongs. But certainly it is very *irreligious* in its tone and general character of its doctrine, hence we place it in that division. Its special mission seems to be to denounce everything good and holy.”—*Pacific Gospel Herald*.

The above contains a notable typographical error, and we hasten to correct it. The word denounce is evidently a misprint. As corrected, it should read, “Its special mission is to announce everything as good and holy.”

As to our religious character, we will attend to that matter ourselves. We allow no man to dictate what our religion shall be. Neither do we plead guilty to the charge of being irreligious; difference of opinion in religious matters, we believe, is a right guaranteed protection by the Constitution of the United States. We believe all men are by nature religious—even the Digger Indians.

But here is what this Pharisee says of its Presbyterian contemporary:

“THE PACIFIC.—We have seen a few copies of this ultra-political-religious journal. It does not visit us, and we are not sorry for it.”

“Let brotherly love continue.”

THE SABBATH.—The original meaning of the word Sabbath, “to rest.” The seventh day of Creation was called Sabbath, for on that day God rested from His labors. The Jews were required to keep holy the seventh day. When the Lord of the Sabbath was here on earth, the first day of the week was made the day of rest and worship, instead of the seventh, that the resurrection of our Savior might be commemorated weekly, until time should be no more.—*Pacific Gospel Herald*.

The above is palpably a pious falsehood, as everybody conversant with religious history knows. The seventh day was not observed as a Sabbath by the Christians until Pope Gregory ordered it so to be. When Jesus—whom we suppose to be the person called the Lord of the Sabbath by the veracious and very religious paper above quoted—when Jesus was upon the earth, he trampled upon the Sabbath of the Jews in every possible way, and showed his contempt for religious observances in the most unmistakable manner. Read your Testament, neighbor.

WISE MEN DISAGREE.—While our friend MacDonald, of the *Flag*, adduces the annual rings of the “Big Trees” as negative proof of the Mosaic account of the Creation, the savans of the California Academy of Natural Sciences have been discussing the question whether these rings are annual, and whether they are any evidence at all as to the age of trees. Some think they are not, and some suppose they are. Positive proof is what we want, gentlemen, and that you cannot give. Indeed, your geologists furnish us with abundant evidence that the Mosaic account is incorrect, and in some particulars even absurd.

SIXTY Roman Catholic priests arrived in New Orleans recently, to open schools for the freedmen.—*Exchange*.

Well, we suppose religious history is to repeat itself in the case of these poor colored people. They must pass through the same old midnight darkness of superstition as the whites have in matters of religion, before they will see the dawning light of rational belief. The transition, though, will be shorter, in their progress, because of greater general enlightenment all around them.

REV. MR. EARLE is at Virginia City, reviving religion, which has died a thousand deaths in that region. Mr. Earle is getting to be the great miracle-worker of the Pacific Coast. He goes about “raising the dead,” and, as the *Daily Tresspass* has it, “melting stalwart men.” The same paper says that “many submitted to Christ on the spot”—whatever that may mean. Seriously, if there ever was a “jargon” made use of in religious literature, these canting revivalists are masters of it.

HE’S BEEN AND GONE AND DONE IT.—The hitherto unmarried partner of J. J. Owen, editor of the *San Jose Mercury*, has jumped the fence, and is now in clover. By the chuckling in the marriage notice column, we should judge he had a better thing than the office of State Printer, to which Owen aspires. To complete the luck of the establishment, Owen should get said office. We suppose, however, if he does get it, it will be owing to circumstances.

PHENOMENAL FACTS.

Writing Mediumship.

It may be stated without hesitation, that, in this particular phase of mediumship, so far as tests of spirit manifestation and identification are concerned, no medium has hitherto been developed who exhibits the spiritual phenomena in so wonderful a manner, as Mrs. Ada Hoyt Foye, now of this city. Could a history of every exhibition given by this lady be written, with each particular manifestation and test minutely specified and substantiated, it would form a volume of evidence of spirit communion invaluable to all seekers of truth, and irrefragable by its enemies. While Mrs. Foye was present at a Spiritualist gathering at the Melodeon, on one occasion, discovering Prof. Felton, of Harvard University, in the audience, she arose and publicly challenged him and the whole Faculty of that institution to a public or private test of her powers—or, rather, of the powers of the spirit intelligences for whom she is the instrument. It is needless to say the challenge was not accepted. A committee of that Faculty had been previously formed in an investigation with the celebrated "Fox girls." Prof. Felton was chairman of the committee, and Agassiz was also a member of it. A report by them was never made, although they were appointed for that very purpose, in order that the public might know what those scientific savans thought of the (at that time) new and strange development. And, to this day, the "wise men" of all the Universities have deemed it wise to ignore the spirit manifestations altogether, thinking, perhaps, that, without their authoritative endorsement, the doctrines necessarily resulting could make no progress among the people. But appealing to authority has become obsolete in a great degree in our days, and people form their opinions more independently than formerly. They prefer living testimony to ancient tradition—rational religion to dogmatical assumption and authoritative interpretation. The result is, that the evidences afforded by spirit manifestations of the real state of man after the death of the body are being rapidly accepted as the only solution of the question of our destiny.

Mrs. Foye's speciality as a medium consists principally in what is called the "ballot test," although tests by other modes are frequently given by her both in public and private. The mode of procedure is as follows: The medium sits at a table, if in public, with a committee of two, chosen by the audience, whose duty it is to watch every proceeding and report to the audience at the close of the sitting whether all has been conducted fairly and without deception. The committee is generally selected for their acknowledged skepticism; though it is always desirable that unfair and prejudiced bigots should not be chosen to that position. Folded slips of paper are then collected or passed up to the table from the audience, each containing the name of some deceased friend of the party writing it. Mrs. Foye then takes them up one by one, and, while holding each, still folded, asks for the spirit whose name is in the paper. If the spirit happen to be present, a response is received by three loud and distinct raps upon the table or upon the platform on which the medium sits. She then asks if the spirit will write the name contained in the paper. The answer in the affirmative is returned as before, by three raps. Mrs. Foye's hand and arm immediately become rigid, and are involuntarily moved to write. The writing is performed in a singular manner, from the right side of the bottom of the sheet, toward the left, so that it appears upside down to herself while to the committee-men opposite or beside her it is written in the natural position. She is thus obliged to turn the sheet round in order to read what is written. She then hands the folded ballot to one of the committee, who invariably finds that the name written in it corresponds to that which the medium has just written upside down. Sometimes whole conversations are written in this way—the spirit giving instructions to friends still in the form, with as much apparent interest as when on earth. The name is frequently written by the medium first, and then the ballot is selected from the heap on the table by raps as before, and handed to the committee for inspection. In either case, the names are always found to correspond with each other. The person in the audience who sent up the folded ballot to the table is then requested to ask any question of the spirit, to which an answer is given sometimes by raps and sometimes by writing in the same way as before described. The questions asked are such as would suggest themselves to any friend or relative of the deceased;—such as the age at the time of departure; number of years or months deceased; number of children living on earth; total number of children; names of surviving friends; names of children; events known only to the deceased, and the inquirer; nature of the fatal disease; how long the sickness lasted; general questions as to the present state of the spirit communicating, etc.—all of which are answered with a readiness that astonishes all who hear. Sometimes the person making the inquiries, while sitting among the audience, will write several names on a slip, and among them his own, and, pointing at each separately with a pencil, ask the spirit to rap a response when the name of the inquirer is reached; and this is invariably accomplished, without a mistake. The same thing is done with the spirit's own name, with dates, ages, events, or any subject upon which the inquirer may desire information. The spirits frequently are so desirous of communicating with their friends, that they crowd in upon the medium by writing their names by her hand before the spirit already in possession gets through; thus bringing two communicating spirits before the audience at once. It then requires some presence of mind on the part of the medium to prevent confusion.

On several occasions during her seances in this city, spirits have announced themselves present who were not called for by their friends, and unexpected tests of an indisputable kind have been given by them. One instance of sudden, unexpected communication was by a little girl, who wrote that she desired her mother not to grieve for her as she had done, for she was there present alive and well, and signed her name in full. The mother was much affected, and acknowledged that the name was that of her little daughter; she then proceeded to ask several questions of the

spirit, all of which were responded to correctly. At the seance on Monday evening last, a nephew of Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet, announced himself, uncalled, by writing; his name was Wm. C. Smith; there was but one person in the audience who knew him; this person came to California with him on the ship *Brooklyn*, in 1847; he questioned the spirit, and received correct replies. The most remarkable thing about this manifestation was, that another Wm. C. Smith had been called for by another person in the audience, and did not make his appearance; but this one came and answered to the name contained in the ballot, and identified himself as the nephew of the founder of Mormonism.

Interesting replies are frequently received in relation to spirit life, and the present religious faith of the spirit communicating, as compared with his belief on earth; and these replies are sometimes the source of much amusement. Remarkable as these public manifestations are, it is in private sittings with the medium that the inquirer obtains the most indubitable proofs of the presence of his or her friends in the spirit.

In our next article, we will give a few examples of communications made and tests given by Mrs. Foye at her own residence, when sitting for persons by special appointment. These far surpass anything that has been or ever can be obtained at a public seance.

THE CALIFORNIA BIG TREES GROWING FROM SEED, IN NEW YORK.—The N. Y. Times of April 16th says:

"It is an interesting fact in natural history, which we imagine, is not known to everybody, that the celebrated 'Big Trees' of California are now being successfully grown in this State, and are increasing in magnitude, according to the proper order of things. It is now thirteen or fourteen years since a gentleman, resident near Rochester, made plantations of these gigantic trees from seeds procured in California; and the progress they have already made gives proof that in two or three thousand years they will attain their full growth and cover an empire with their shadow. When we consider that they reach a height of 300 or 350 feet, and a circumference of 50 or 100, it is evident that this country will not be as destitute of lumber in the far distant future as some people have feared. The experiment of introducing these trees into this part of the world has excited more interest in Europe than among ourselves, and the proprietor is constantly receiving inquiries from England as to the procuring of seed for use there. The 'Big Tree' on General Wadsworth's estate, on Genesee flats, under which the Indians in early days held their councils, used to have a good deal of celebrity, but that was only thirty feet in circumference, and is completely dwarfed by those gigantic wonders of the West."

Two or three thousand years is not a very long time, but it is too long for us to wait for these trees to "get their growth." We shan't wait.

POETICAL READINGS AT MECHANICS' INSTITUTE HALL.—Miss Eliza A. Pittsinger will read selections from the Poets on Wednesday evening, May 29th. Among the productions selected will be some of her own pieces, such as the "Tribute to Woman," and the "Tribute to California." Miss Pittsinger's claims as a poetess have been long since acknowledged by the reading public, and her poems need no encomiums from us. The price of tickets has been fixed at one dollar for a lady and gentleman. Single tickets, fifty cents. We copy the following notice of the Readings of Miss Pittsinger from one of the interior papers:

"Miss Eliza A. Pittsinger, the talented Poetess of the Pacific Coast, gave a most charming and entertaining performance at the Metropolitan Theater last evening, which transcended anything of the kind we have been permitted to hear. Miss Pittsinger has but few, if any, superiors in the art of elocution. 'The Yankee Ballad,' and 'March to Moscow,' kept the audience in a roar of laughter. 'Foe's Raven' was delivered in an exceedingly impressive and tragic manner—but by far the grandest feature of the Readings was her own magnificent poems, which show her wonderful command of language."—*Albion Lake Sun*.

PLAIN TRUTH PLAINLY SPOKEN.—What a number of proselytes the Spiritualists make if the invisibles would only teach those with whom they communicate how to make or find gold. The streets of the New Jerusalem are to be paved with gold, and the streets of the old Jerusalem are to be paved with gold. Many persons would pay if they felt sure that they would be paid for doing so—in gold. Glorious Gold!—*Californian*.

If the above had been printed in letters of gold, it could not have been more impressively said. We thank the *Californian* heartily for so much truth, even if jocosely uttered. There is many a true word spoken in jest.

A GLASGOW PUBLISHER has got up a splendid edition of the Bible, of which only twelve copies are to be printed, and the price is six hundred dollars each.—*Exchange*.

Perhaps the purchasers of copies of so costly an edition will think they have fairly bought their ticket for heaven. And perhaps they will discover their mistake when they find that the possession of a Bible, ever so costly, or even the reading and believing it, will not insure them eternal happiness.

THE IMPENDING EPOCH is the title of a monthly Spiritual paper in Augusta, Georgia, published by Henry J. Osborne, and edited by him and Miss Lydia A. Baker, medium. Terms, two dollars per year. We welcome it to our table with pleasure.

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Any of the above list of books will be furnished to those in the country who desire an application at this office. The money for the books, and postage, must invariably accompany the order.

PROPHETIC DREAM.—A few days since Miss W. of this city, dreamed that she had called on Mrs. B., whom she found in the nursery, wearing a scarlet jacket and attending on her child, sick with the measles. Miss W. related the dream at the breakfast-table as singular, and said it reminded her that she had not called on Mrs. B. for some time, so she must visit her that day. She went, and was somewhat astonished at being invited into the nursery, where she found Mrs. B. in a scarlet jacket, attending a sick baby. Miss W. asked what was the matter with the child, and the mother could not tell; she had not seen a physician and thought it was a fever. Miss W. said nothing of her dream; but she was satisfied the disease was the measles, and for fear there might be on her clothing some infection that might be communicated to her little niece and nephew, she spent several hours in the street, and in paying visits to adult friends, before going home. A week after, she met Mrs. B. and inquired about the baby; the reply was that he had the measles, but was nearly well again. She foresaw the visit, the reception in the nursery, the dress, and the nature of the disease—the last being at the time entirely unknown to any person. When she told the dream at the breakfast-table she did not imagine that it would be verified. She is not a Spiritualist, neither does she pretend to have any powers as a medium.—*Alta, May 11th*.

PLACID COMMUNITY.—As related by the *Trespass*, Brother Earle hadn't very good luck in Virginia City. The obdurate sagbrush didn't "revive." The exemplary editor explains that "Our people mix their religion so evenly along in their everyday affairs, that they leave no wickedness to answer for in big lumps, and keep everything on, and offer their condolence and sympathy to those who do feel secure in a title to mansions in the skies. Brother Earle did not imagine that it would be verified. She is not a Spiritualist, neither does she pretend to have any powers as a medium.—*Daily American Flag*."

LECTURE.—Last evening Mr. Benjamin Todd, of the "Friends of Progress," closed his first course of lectures in Salem. The court-room was crowded; notwithstanding the fact that all could not be seated, scores of our citizens were forced to stand up night after night and hear him through. Mr. Todd, apart from his ability as an occupant as a lecturer, is a member of the newspaper fraternity, being chief editor of the *BANNER OF PROGRESS* published at San Francisco. He has made many warm friends during his short sojourn among us.—*Salem (Oregon) Weekly Review*.

IMPROVED.—The *Times* has discontinued its Saturday double sheet, and has become a seven-day paper. That is a great improvement, in addition to a valuable facility. It will enable the apostolical editors to write and publish the Sabbathical exhortations which they ought to be addressing to infatuated sinners, who are going to the diabolical Old Scratch as hard as they can.—*Daily American Flag*.

A WRITER who has had much to do with Indians, says that *four and Christianity* will kill them off quicker than a war of extermination.—*Daily American Flag*.

We never heard whisky called by that name before.

DR. R. MCLEAN is requested to call at this office, and settle his bill for advertising.

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9:30	10:40	11:20	11:30
11:30	12:40	1:20	1:30
2:30 P. M.	3:40 P. M.	4:20 P. M.	4:30 P. M.
4:30	5:40	6:20	6:30
6:15	7:20	8:00	8:10

SUNDAY TIME.
SAN FRANCISCO. ALAMEDA. SAN LEANDRO. HAYWARD'S.

9:00 A. M.	9:00 A. M.	8:45 A. M.	8:30 A. M.
11:00	11:00	10:45	10:30
9:00 A. M.	9:10 A. M.	1:20 P. M.	1:00 P. M.
4:30	4:40	4:20	4:00
6:15	6:20	6:00	5:45

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6:45	6:55	7:45
7:50	8:00	9:00
9:00 A. M.	9:10 A. M.	

