

(For the Christian Spiritualist.)
A REFLECTION.
BY S. B.
The healing thought is ever near
To thrust the sorrow by,
And all the ills which these await,
Before its influence fly;
Keen sorrows come and crush the heart,
Man sinks beneath the blow,
And then despairing looks around—
The healing spirit then flows.
A word will all the spangled drops,
And hidden fountains reveal,
And the gushing springlets flowing
Sorrow's source can heal,
Where are the fountains that thus shall cleanse
Wee despairing cries?
We look on the world and all is dead,
That most we love—it dies.
Our woes they are the lessons given
To wean the soul from clay,
For were all peace, serenity,
Life were life's only day,
But with the wee its salute, too,
As painted on the heart,
And they commingled intimately,
In each heart each has part.
And when the throes of anguish gush,
Darkening with their terror,
When first these fountains of life are o'p'd,
These floodings are but pain,
Then slowly stealing on the sense,
The comforter moves on,
And one by one the sorrows pass,
And peace at length is won.
Truth then is forced upon the heart,
That those HF loves are they
Whom he hath cherished in love,
To walk in wisdom's way,
Sorrows are sent to wean the heart
From the frail things of earth,
Sorrows the gems whose sparkling sheen
Mirrors the second birth.
'Tis the triumphant holiday
On which the angel's gaze,
The glorious beams of holy love,
The burden of their lays,
Fell pain it is the salt of life,
By contrast we but know,
When man his lesson truly learns,
The hidden fountains flow.
New York, April 8, 1855.

Y^e ARE OUR EPISTLES KNOWN AND READ OF ALL MEN.

The great world will judge of Spiritualism by Spiritualists. Many find neither time nor ability to penetrate the arcana of the Spiritual doctrines unfolded through Davis, Swedenborg or Harris, but character speaks a universal language. A silent influence radiates from each of these centres of modern illumination, attracting and informing a distinct class of minds, according to the plane and sphere of each. Each receives a portion of the central thought of the system to which it adheres, and becomes henceforth its representative. It is therefore incumbent upon Spiritualists to make thorough their purgation from the dead works of the past and arise to newness of life. Spiritualists must be spiritually minded or their professions are not less vain than the bigoted sectary's whom they so unqualifiedly condemn. To have seen tables moved and heard Spirits rap, to have received messages from departed friends, or even to have been intruded in dream and vision into the invisible world beyond the grave, may be as fruitless as were the miracles of our Lord to those who merely witnessed his divine power or fed upon the bounties of his hand. Not what we have eaten, but what we have digested gives strength and vigor to the body; not what we have beheld or read, but what we have improved and laid to heart imprints true wisdom.

Spiritualists who have deeply at heart the wise and permanent success of their cause and the genuine improvement of their fellow man, can in no manner better secure their aims than by themselves becoming living witnesses and special illustrations of the excellence of the teachings they enjoy. Spiritualism has challenged orthodoxy in the most prepotent manner to bring forth her strong reasons, her cherished treasures and shining jewels, and measure and weigh and compare them with her own. Let the former therefore look to it that her own be pure and shining, polished after the similitude of a palace. Coming upon Spiritualists do from every plane of thought, every shade and phase of religious belief, there is a great work to be done in remedying past neglect, in rooting up inveterate prejudices, and acquiring habits of receptivity and reverence in place of scorn and denial. Many an honest Spiritualist finds that his whole moral and religious nature has been so uncultivated or misdirected that he must commence with the very alphabet and elements of his true education. And there is no more hopeful sign among Spiritualists, none for which I love them better or esteem them more, than a childlike willingness and disposition to be taught. We must indeed enter this new school as little children if we would be truly instructed and made wise. I endeavored thus to leave all behind, to offer up the cherished idols of my heart upon the altar of Spiritual truth. And like the Patriarch of old, I find restored and doubly endeared all I had devoted to the sacrifice. He that leaves all saves all. He that selfishly or timidly conserves suffers loss where he most dearly prizes it.

Thus far in Spiritualism the radical destructive element has prevailed, so much so that in many communities "infidel" and "Spiritualist" are deemed synonymous; the constructive and religious elements wait to be evolved. The higher elements like seed will soon fall into the broken furrows. Much of the external of Spiritualism will pass away; the germ only has life, the rest is merely its sheath.

Still, as there are confessedly many theories and systems, many shades and phases of belief, both outside of Spiritualism and within its ranks, it would perhaps be well for us all to recall the counsel of LESSING'S *Nathan the Wise*, in the story of the three rings. It loses somewhat in the translation but still retains somewhat of its oriental charm.—It runs thus, and we leave the reader to make his own application. The Sultan has asked Nathan, the wise Jew, which of the three religions, the Mohammedan, the Christian or Jewish, is the true. This is the tale in answer:

NATHAN. In days of yore, three dwell in East a man. One had a valued ring, a ring of gold and silver, the stone of it an opal. This was an extraordinary thing; moreover, it had the hidden virtue him to render Of God and man beloved, in his own view, And this possession, now, was it strange? The Eastern man he drew it off his finger, And suddenly provided to secure it For ever to his house.—Thus he bequeathed it; First, to the most beloved of his sons, and then to the most dear among his children;—and that without having told the favorite son, In truth, the ring he should always wear. Remain the lord of the house.—You hear me, sultan? At length this ring descended to a father, Who had three sons, alike beloved to him; Whom he divided, could not but love alike. As years rolled this, now that, at times the third, (Accordingly as each part rec'd it,) The evening ring he held the most worthy To bear the ring, which with goodhearted weakness, He privately to each in turn had promised. This went on for a while. But death approach'd,

And the good father grew embarras'd. So To dissipate two sons, who trust his promise, He could not best divide the ring. He sends In secret to a jeweller, of whom Upon the model of the real ring, He might bespeak two others, and commanded To spare the cost, and make them like, Quite like the true one.—This the artist manag'd. The rings were brought, and 'e'en the father's eye Could not distinguish which had been the model. Quite overjoy'd he summons all his sons, Takes leave of each apart, on each bestows His blessing and his ring, and dies.—Thou hearest me?

Now let us return to our rings once more. As said, the sons contain'd. Each to the judge Swore from his father's hand immediately To have received the ring, as was the case; After he had long obtain'd the father's promise. One day to leave the ring, as also was The father, each asserted, could to him Not have been false, rather than so suspect Of such a father, willing as he might be With charity to judge his brethren, he Of treacherous forgery was hold to accuse them. The judge said, if ye summon not the father Before my seat, I cannot give a sentence. Am I to guess on whom? Or expect ye That the true ring should here unseal its lips? But hold—ye tell me that the real ring Enjoys the hidden power to make the wearer Of God and man beloved, let that decide. Which of you do two brothers love the best? You're silent. Do these love-exiting rings Act inward only, not outward? You're deceivers. None of your rings is true. The real ring Perhaps is gone. To hide or to supply Its loss, your father order'd three for one. And (the judge continued) If you will take advice in lieu of sentence, This is my counsel to you, to take up The matter where it stands. If each of you Has had a ring presented by his father, Let each believe his own the real ring. 'Tis possible the father chose no longer To tolerate the one ring among you, And certainly, as he much lov'd you all, And lov'd you all alike, it could not please him By favoring one to be of two the oppressor. Let each feel himself in this line, and each Unward of prejudice, let each endeavor To win with both his brothers in displaying The virtue of his ring, as well as his. With gentleness, benevolence, forbearance. With inward resignation to the godhead, And if the virtues of the ring continue To show themselves to your children's children, After a thousand thousand years, appear Before this judgment-seat—a greater one Than I shall sit upon it, and decide. So speak the modest judge. S. E. B.

DREAM LAND AND GHOST LAND.
VISITS AND WANDERINGS THERE
IN THE
NINETEENTH CENTURY.

CHAPTER I.
GHOST, OR NO GHOST.
It must be admitted, as indeed truly, that many of the forms and superstitions of the old Grecian mythology, many of the wild and poetic fancies of Scandinavian or Saxon worship, and religion, contained truths which man could but poorly express, but which in his poor way he did express—truths which lay in the depths of the soul—truths not for that time, but for all time, for man is constantly endeavoring to construct a revelation in the ruins of his nature. "He sees through a glass darkly," things which the Scriptures of Truth were intended to present in stronger colors at once to his understanding and affections. Crowded as the heathen temples are, and have ever been, what are all their falsehoods and exaggerations of truths? what are they all but the figures and fancies of another life, dimly perceived and expressed. Superstition becomes one of the strongest arguments for the existence of a Spiritual nature in man.

A Spiritual World around us! it surely ought not to surprise us to find it to be so. Is it possible that any of us could wish it not to be so? Does not everything, does not all consciousness within us, does not all Scripture intimate to us that the "die of human nature, as to form and figure, is to be used again in a new world?" Do not many among us—do not most believe that, in the history of the world, Spirits have been seen, and have communicated important intelligence to man?—Why then should the belief asserted in its modern form be the foundation of so much ridicule. About the fact of existence in another state, or about the occasional flitting here of some beloved or terrible Spirit before the eye, there gathers everything but a ludicrous association. We cannot assert that it is so; but who can assert that it is not so? What Sadducee Spirit has penetrated all the secrets of matter so thoroughly that he is able to say there is no essence, there is no Spirit? while on the contrary, every age and every clime, with all their religions, with all their priestcrafts, with all their terrible mummery or tremendous secrets; the rhapsodies of poets, and seers, and prophets; the awful forms of fancy in the dingle or on the mountain;—Man! with all his infinite resources of cruelty and crime, his dread of death, his longing for the life to come—Science with baffled and broken wing, attempting to scale the causes of things, and finding everywhere the shadow of a higher law falling upon the laboratory, and the instrument. All these do affirm for us the existence of another world of other Spirits, and would perhaps furnish demonstrations too.

The mind of man needed a reaction from the slavery of a debasing superstition, an unintelligent homage to natural or supernatural power; the age before the last beheld the mind of man in such homage; a strong skepticism was needed to burst the bands and tear him away from the false shrines of his infatuated and blind devotion. We know how wide-spread were the delusions, we know how cruel were the exactions of credulity; it was not fruit, it was folly, whose black and horrible net-work spread over the human mind, bogies and fairies haunted every nook, and witches croaked or strode their broomsticks in every village; all men were looked upon as influenced by a terrible fatalism working and silently dooming them in the ordinances of Nature. The domestic history of those days is a most deplorable record of the power of ignorance to pervert all natural scenery, emotion, and faculty, to the most malignant purposes;—scholarship was engaged in torturing the metals, and commingling all kinds of chemical fluids to discover the philosopher's stone or the elixir vite. Statesmen and lawyers were engaged in the most dreadful acts of bloody cruelty recorded in the book of time, indelicately exposing youth and beauty first to the rude gaze of coarse men, and then to the mercies of the flames, or the scaffold, or the whipping-post; or extracting from the lips of poor old dying women, confessions, the meaning of the very words of which they were too imbecile to comprehend; while the more favored and ordinary portion of the population stood shivering in the church porch to see future husbands or wives, or the future dead pass along. The country was given over through all its borders to the reign of terrible superstitions. It needed some strong principle of human nature to be appealed to, to bring about a reaction from all these faiths or follies, whichever they might be, so firmly rooted, demanded a very strong corrective, and it might be expected that the corrective would carry us almost too far in the opposite direction. From the extremity of credulity, we have passed right on to the extremity of skepticism. At one time our island was crowded with ghosts, now there is not

to be found one from one end to the other. At one time the world of Spirits stood in very near relationship to all men, and all or nearly all were suspected of some communication with it; but now, that same world is supposed to be so remote and distant that he is but an impostor or a knave who dares to assert the possibility even of some message from it.

It is now many years since, enlightened and reduced to a state of rational and philosophical incredulity by the sober science of Dr. Ferriar and Dr. Hibbert, we bade a sorrowful farewell to all our faith in ghosts, that "last lingering faith of the brain." We felt ourselves reluctantly compelled, one after another, to relinquish each strange tale, to open our eyes to the cold and dismal realities of observation and induction, and to consign all the spectres of our earliest faith to the dreary regions of romance and fiction. Nay, we may as well confess, that with the exception of a few rare occasions, on which we happened to find ourselves alone, at unseasonable hours, in churchyards, or houses that were really known to be haunted, we had almost forgotten that there were such beings as ghosts. We had been looking at objects with microscopes, and dissecting them with scalpels and needles and analysing them with acids and alkalis, and spirit-lamps, and peeping at them through the far distance with reflecting telescopes, and, in short, as if we were looking at objects with our own eyes, and the torch of science blazing bright in our hands all the time; so that we never dreamt that anything so familiar as a ghost could possibly have escaped our scrutiny; indeed, we had gradually fallen into a state of utter oblivion and hopeless skepticism on the subject. In this sorrowful condition, what was our delight to be called back to the contemplation of a series of veritable ghost stories,—not idle tales of phantoms seen by a disordered mind or a romantic lover, but a record of real ghosts, seen and heard and attested by dry matter-of-fact lawyers and sober men of science, and placed upon a proper footing with accredited facts and theories. To find true scientific ghosts—physiological ghosts—ghosts that could stand an examination by the theories of the nineteenth century, and take their place alongside of the fifty-five elementary bodies, and form as intelligible and consistent a part of one's philosophy as any theory of light, heat, or electricity, which we know of; this was amply sufficient to keep us awake until the midnight taper burnt dim and blue, and make us creep hastily under cover of the blankets, even when the grey dawn, that erewhile brought us some courage, had begun to dissipate the shadows of the night; for here we had bold, honest raps of ghosts—ghosts that seemed to defy the cock-crowing, and even to court investigation in the very light of day.

Yes, it may be hoped that we are now approaching the period of a philosophical verification and analysis of popular faith; and, as we have already intimated, skepticism has served us in this. The doubting skeptic has voyaged on until he has touched the shores of the world of Spirits. Who could have thought that these men of the electric rod and the battery, the magnet and the retort, would have kindled for humanity a new torch of belief, and thrown a light from a new lamp into the world of Spirits? We wait in anxiety and awe for the results of future investigations; meantime enough has been ascertained to assure us, by the probing instruments of science, of the independent existence—the immateriality and the immortality—of the human soul. Infidelity may, in this as in other instances, well say to science,— "What hast thou done unto me? I took thee to curse my enemies, and behold thou hast blessed them altogether!"

That astounding scholar Sir William Hamilton, in his recently published most important volume of "Discussions on Philosophy and Literature," makes the following remarks on the "Recognition of Occult Causes" by science.—"We will quote them.—"In fact, the causes of all phenomena are at last occult. There has, however, obtained a not a unnatural presumption against such causes; and this presumption, though often salutary, has sometimes operated most disadvantageously to science, from a blind and indiscriminate application; in two ways.—In the first place, it has induced men lightly to admit asserted phenomena false in themselves, if only confidently assigned to acknowledged causes; in the second place, it has induced them obstinately to disbelieve phenomena, in themselves certain and even manifest, if these could not at once be referred to already recognized causes, and did not fall in with the systems prevalent at the time. An example of the former is seen in the facile credence popularly accorded, in this country, to the asserted facts of Craniology; though even the fact that hypothesis, first and fundamental—the fact most probable in itself, and which can be most easily proved or disproved, by the widest and most accurate induction, is diametrically opposite to the truth of nature; I mean the asserted correspondence between the development and hypothetical function of the cerebellum, as manifested in all animals, under the various differences of age, sex, of season, of integrity and mutilation.—This (among other of the perpetually asserted facts) I know by a tenfold superfluous evidence, to be ludicrously false. An example of the latter is seen in the difficult credence accorded, in this country, to the phenomenon of Animal Magnetism; phenomena in themselves the most unambiguous, which, for nearly half a century, have been recognized generally and by the highest scientific authorities in Germany; while for nearly a quarter of a century they have been verified and formally confirmed by the Academy of Medicine in France. In either case criticisms were required and a wanting.

So true is the saying of Cullen—"There are more false facts current in the world than false theories." So true is the saying of H. Martineau—"There are more things in heaven and earth, than are dreamt of in your philosophy." But averse from experiment, and gregariously credulous, "L'homme est de glace aux vertes. Il est de feu pour les mensonges."

Surely these words, from a philosopher so sagacious as Sir William Hamilton, will, upon some of our dogmatic skeptics and materializing Christians, who are quite afraid lest a Spiritual world should be demonstrated to them, induce a more Spiritual faith; but, in truth, we shall have occasion, in the course of our little look, to show that from innumerable sources the rays of a better faith are shining upon us. It may be confidently asserted that materialism has done its worst; for a century in philosophy it has thrown the soul of man into dark eclipse. At last we are cheered with the intimations of a more benignant, and whole-minded age, and to save from all doubt, the form of science leads the way.

And in this connection we ought not to forget how in our day POETRY, true to itself, has entered, and glowingly described, the mysteries and won-

ders of Dream Land and Ghost Land. It is by the power of a vision and a sensitiveness, stronger and clearer than those of other men, that the poet is what he is. It is his mission to converse perpetually with the beings of the mind. The true poet has always been surrounded by a phantom world, in things and in men. He has seen more than could be seen by ordinary eyes; and he has found in this power, vision, his consolation and his work. From his urn of faith the lesser minds of the world have drawn their light. He has been surrounded constantly by a host of Spiritual characters of fire and horses of fire. How well has Otway Curry, the young poet of Cincinnati, in his "Armies of the Eve," described the envioning host girding round the sensitive Spirit, with light and memory, and ad inspiration and power:

"Not in the golden morning shall faded forms return,
For languidly and dimly then the lights of memory return;
But when the stars are gleaming their radiant way on high,
And each wind whistles back the music of the sky,
Oh, then those starry millions wander the Armies of the Eve.
The dim and shadowy armies of our unquiet dreams,
Their footstep bruise the dewy fern, and print the shaded streams;
We meet them in the calmness of high and hoarse climates,
We greet them with the blessed names of old and harpiter times,
And moving in the star-light above their sleeping dust,
They freshen all the four winds of our undying trust;
Around our every pathway in beauteous ranks they roam,
To guide us to the dreary rest of our eternal home."

And who has not, especially if ever bereaved, felt the power and sweetness of Longfellow's "Footsteps of Angels?"

"Ere the evening lamps are lighted,
And the shades of twilight fall,
Shadows from the rifted fire-light,
Dance upon the parlor wall.
Then the forms of the departed
Enter at the open door,
The shadows of the past are there,
Come to visit me once more.
They, the holy ones, and weakly,
Who the cross of suffering bore,
Folded their pale hands in prayer,
Speak with us on our earth no more.
And with us on the being Beatenness,
Who unto my youth was given,
More than all things else to love me,
And is now a saint in heaven.
With a slow and noiseless footstep,
Comes that messenger divine,
Takes the vacant chair beside me,
Lays her gentle hand in mine.
And she sits and gazes at me,
With those deep and tender eyes,
Like the stars to still and star-like,
Looking downward from the skies."

The best of our literature may be described as a return to faith. And the literature of the next age will be characterized yet more by earnest, bright-eyed Spiritualism; for our faith in nature, even in the best of our great poetic teachers, has not been interpenetrative. It has been a faith like that of the old Grecians. We have, indeed, beheld clearly the subjectivity of nature—the experimental teaching—the profound beauty—the inscrutable wisdom; but it is nature teaching us a great impersonality. How wide is the difference between Wordsworth and Tennyson, whose minds both partake of the Greek inspiration and model, and Mrs. Browning, to whose fervid and lofty Christian soul, far higher than the revealings of mute and passive nature, have presented themselves! Thus there yet remains to be written the literature of the world of Spirits. The few pages of some of our writers, who might be quoted, are fragments showing to us how rich such a literature would be; for may we not conceive that innumerable of these mysteries, to which a reference will be made in this volume, shall be explored, and their power felt by some one capable of giving utterance to the several marvels and wonders of the mind, of the age, or of the eye? or shall we rather say that, in that age, there will be no need of a poetic literature? Shall we not find that, when experiences are rich and lofty, and the moods through which the mind passes are profound and deep, it does not need the aid of the vision of other men, but lives contented with its own? If the time should ever come when we shall be more conversant with Spirits than we now are, our poets will be, we may suppose, useless, for our own emotions and visions will perhaps equal theirs, or at any rate, furnish us with sufficient self-occupation.

(From the Christian Repository.)
SPIRITUALISM.

EREND BALLOU: I find in the ever-welcome Repository of Saturday 27, a leading editorial, evidently from your own pen, advising your readers to let alone what is called "Spiritualism" giving as a reason, that one or two persons had become insane upon the subject. Were this true, it were to be lamented, but I doubt whether one, out of every hundred cases that are reported of persons who have become insane upon the subject, the subject are true. Several cases which have come under my own observation, on investigation, have proved to be no insanity at all, others were caused by influences which had no more connection with modern Spiritual manifestations or their investigation, than from any other of the current topics of the day.

What is most remarkable, is, that there are no more cases than there really are, for in five years this faith, this belief has spread from hamlet to city, from ocean to ocean, *all nations, kindred and tongues*. In the United States alone over a million is a moderate estimate of those who believe that "Spirits who once inhabited this earth, do communicate with mortals." This belief, this faith, must be either right or wrong, true or false, if false, it is one cannot duty to examine its claims upon us, never giving up to this or any subject our reason or common sense, in this way you and I, all can prove for ourselves its truth or falsity. It has silently but surely entered the houses of the high and the low, the rich and the poor, bond and free, oftentimes an unwilling guest, and conceals still, pleading in the name of a loved one for notice, for investigation.

I have been called "crazy," because this truth came home to my heart, as it were, "like the lightning flash," that our loved friends that we mourned as lost were near unto us, sympathizing in our sorrows, partakers in our joys, often giving us wholesome and much needed advice in relation to our duties in our earth-life.—Friends came to me with their own loved ones to give up my faith, urged me to do so, not because they were ignorant of this great truth, and patient investigation—no—at that time (more than two years ago) it was then an unpopular truth, and required a good deal of moral courage for one to defend it—even when they felt its potent influence. Instead of making mankind insane it comes to the sick and sorrowing; to those who have more than they can well bear of life's burdens, like healing balm to the wounded Spirit—giving to all who heed its teachings *higher and nobler conceptions of earth-life, and preparing the soul of man for the future world beyond the tomb, taking away the fear of death—* for this faith looks beyond the grave, and realizes the presence of the Spirits of the departed; proving to man's own senses, not relying on the eye of faith alone, his own immortality. Showing that the Spirit-life is but a continuation of life; that we enter the other life precisely as we leave this; preserving our affections, our dispositions, our individuality. You say, "If the phenomena in question are really produced by Spirits in the higher spheres, what utility is there in the subject, seeing that communications are not reliable, they contradict each other, and therefore cannot be true." Men, often in the investigation of this subject, lose sight of an important fact of Spirit-teaching; that is, that we pass into the other life as we leave this; consequently there must be there, all conditions of intelligence, honesty and moral advancement, as well as on earth; each soul seeks its own affinity according to its fitness according to its condition or advancement in this life, developing the higher attributes of the soul. The same law gov-

erns all Spirit-communications or manifestations, no matter of what form or nature. The undeveloped Spirit (or as you would say untruthful) having better opportunities for controlling or using mediums than the more advanced Spirits, as its attractions, its affinities are with earth. Were all of the teachings of our Spirit-friends to be implicitly relied upon; were they all alike they would be of little benefit; *we must exercise our reason and judgment in our dealings with Spirits, and treat what they give us as well as with those of the same name of intelligences as we would with those of a higher order.*

All Spirits, whether of a far advanced or undeveloped condition, whether apparently manifesting the greatest evil towards us, or teaching the purest wisdom, agree upon this great truth, "The progression of all Spirits eventually in the other life." Is not this beyond the teachings, the manifestations, of eighteen centuries ago? Is it not in advance of popular theology? Is it not rational? Does not the heart acknowledge its force? *Does it not feel its truth?* We have been taught that when Christ came and died, that God's revelation to man ceased, that men were no longer inspired. Spirits come to us, they tell us that God is revealing to man now as then his will and laws; that the world needs such inspiration; such revelation. They tell us that we have lost sight of what Christ taught in the manifestations of human conduct. They teach us to look up to ourselves for inspiration and revelation, not to the Church or its ministers—

that our Heavenly Father is with us always. That they are sent by him from the Spirit-world, as "ministering angels," to prepare us for that Spirit-life that we are so rapidly and surely journeying to; proving to us by the most convincing tests that they are with us, teaching us as our thoughts and lives are pure, so are we surrounded by pure and holy Spirits, giving us pure and holy aspirations; or as our thoughts and lives are evil, or degraded, we are surrounded by corresponding influences from the Spirit-world.

"What utility?" They prove to us man's immortality, which the Church for eighteen centuries has failed to do. They show us, that when we follow to the tomb a father, mother, brother or sister, or a fond mother a darling child, that death is but the passage to a new birth; that the Spirit, freed from its earthly tenement is ever near, is not lost, is not separated, but ever with us; what a comfort to the mourner, what a solace to the dying! Truly can the Spiritualist exclaim, "O! death where is thy sting?" I give you an extract from a communication received by the writer recently. I give it as showing some of the teachings of Spirits.

"We want you to labor, and that right manfully, for our good work and purpose, we want your cooperation, we want your hand to be upon the plow, to connect the grasp between heaven and earth, we want you to show mankind the chain of purity and power, the links fastened on each other. In proportion as your intellectual soul grows, we want you to throw it out. Will you not do this? I want the response to be heard at home. Will you take the influx of light and truth that shall flow into your soul and pass it on to men, will you pass it on with usury? Live for the love of life. Be a faithful steward, you have the power, you have the light of heaven, convey it to thy brother man. Bright reason, that ever attendant angel of the soul, will guide you aright. Remember there is an entrance through love to the hearts of all, then comes Faith, then Reason, then Philosophy. Let the numbers you have brought to this light be a great multitude, that shall chant melody to your soul when you come home. Remember that you have the power to work; stand between heaven and earth, a willing recipient of life. Remember well the relative terms of good and evil, the varied relation that we bear to our Maker; no positive evil dwells around thee, but a gradation from good. Be thou a guardian of other forms, and I will stand next to thee; be thou a guardian still to those of a lesser light, and so keep that bright interchange of holy light mingling forever."

But I must close; this communication is no longer than I first intended; but when I realize that the Church is, even liberal Christians—reject this great truth, and its teachers present against it, advising their hearers to keep away from it, I feel as if soon "the very stones will cry out."

Yours for all Truth,
S. B. N.
Burlington, Feb. 12, 1855.

DESPOTIISM OF THE CHURCH.

In the first place, we cannot but consider a large number of our ecclesiastical organizations as so many restraints upon the freedom of the mind. Founded upon dogmas which admit of no possibility of truth beyond their own formulas, they discourage inquiry in the largest and most important domains of thought. We agree with Kant, the great German philosopher, who, in one of his valuable minor writings, discussing the question whether any association is justified in building itself to certain immutable articles of faith, in order to exercise a perpetual and supreme guardianship over its members, and indirectly through them over the people, contents that a compact of this kind, entered into, not as a simple bond of union, but the interchange of common sentiments, but with a view to preclude the human race from further enlightenment, is a crime against humanity, whose highest destination consists emphatically in intellectual progress. "A combination," says he, to maintain an unalterable religious system, which no man is permitted to call in doubt, would, even for the term of one man's life, be wholly intolerable. It would be, as it were, to blot out one generation in the progress of the human species towards a better condition, to reject the air of the world, the interchange of common sentiments, but with a view to preclude the human race from further enlightenment, is a crime against humanity, whose highest destination consists emphatically in intellectual progress. "A combination," says he, to maintain an unalterable religious system, which no man is permitted to call in doubt, would, even for the term of one man's life, be wholly intolerable. It would be, as it were, to blot out one generation in the progress of the human species towards a better condition, to reject the air of the world, the interchange of common sentiments, but with a view to preclude the human race from further enlightenment, is a crime against humanity, whose highest destination consists emphatically in intellectual progress. "A combination," says he, to maintain an unalterable religious system, which no man is permitted to call in doubt, would, even for the term of one man's life, be wholly intolerable. It would be, as it were, to blot out one generation in the progress of the human species towards a better condition, to reject the air of the world, the interchange of common sentiments, but with a view to preclude the human race from further enlightenment, is a crime against humanity, whose highest destination consists emphatically in intellectual progress.

"This is the book where each his dogma seeks,
And this the book where each his dogma finds."
—we must still suppose, that a revelation from the Infinite will contain infinite resources of truth. Neither its alleged origin, which is from the perfect God, nor its alleged destiny, which is the final redemption of mankind from error, will allow us for a moment to treat it as an ordinary message, soon told and as speedily comprehended. It must conceal inexhaustible riches, or not be what it purports, and yet to attempt to disclose its treasures in the frail and rickety caskets of words which men quarrel on, or for bottling the air of the whole heavens in one's private cellar. Nor is the attempt less pernicious than it is absurd; for it erects each little consistency into separate popeedom, issuing its inflexible decrees and denouncing its interdicts with all the arrogance of its Roman prototype. As an inevitable consequence, two things result justly, that the supreme control of the religious sentiment of nations falls into the hands of the priesthood, who are consecrated by position and training—and secondly, that the energies of the churches are absorbed in controversy or sectarian propagation, at the expense of a free and earnest inquiry after new truth, and the culture of genial, hopeful feelings.

The history of our American sects, for instance, is an almost unbroken record of fierce and bigoted disputes. New England has been a kind of theological Golgotha, and the fields are covered with battered skulls. The clergy have been the ruling powers, not only there but everywhere; and the people have dared to laugh only with the consent of the deacons. We are aware of this aspect of things, also, what is not so generally known, that the energies of the churches are absorbed in controversy or sectarian propagation, at the expense of a free and earnest inquiry after new truth, and the culture of genial, hopeful feelings. The history of our American sects, for instance, is an almost unbroken record of fierce and bigoted disputes. New England has been a kind of theological Golgotha, and the fields are covered with battered skulls. The clergy have been the ruling powers, not only there but everywhere; and the people have dared to laugh only with the consent of the deacons. We are aware of this aspect of things, also, what is not so generally known, that the energies of the churches are absorbed in controversy or sectarian propagation, at the expense of a free and earnest inquiry after new truth, and the culture of genial, hopeful feelings.

—even those who do not professedly wear their colors. They too often testify the ardent reformer, whose bright hopes they change by the magic of fear into dread spectres; they too often strike the uplifted arm of science when it would arrest from the rock or open out from the bowels of the earth some precious fountain of use;—and they too often array themselves in the armor of the traditions and mouldy abuses, when they should be pressing forward under the ever-living inspiration of hope and freedom. It is said that Justinian, when he had completed his Institutes, issued a decree, no comment should be written upon them, which aimed at more than a sketch of their contents or a transcription of their titles; well, the sects are apt to copy this imperial and arbitrary example,—they impose on others, as exclusively right and authoritative, their own slender selections out of the vast complexity of truths, the few pearls they have fished out of the measureless sea, fancying that they have banished error, when they have only extinguished the independence of thought. Indeed, it is scarcely too much to say, appropriating the figure of Mirabeau, where he compares truth to the statue of Isis covered by many veils, that they teach their followers to lift a single one, whilst they fling their clubs and battle axes at the heads of all who would remove the others.

PHILOSOPHICAL ESSAY ON PHOSPHORUS FOR THE BENEFIT OF STUDENTS.—The discovery of this singular yet simple compound, is no less strange than singular. To the alchemist and hunter after the philosopher's stone—to the midnight experimenter who would turn baser metals to gold, are we indebted for it. To this class of visionaries are we indebted for many of our most important discoveries. Brass, Bell metal, and German Dope, have all come from this source. This is Brand's Chemist of Hamburg, that we are indebted for the discovery of Phosphorus. As everything else had been tried; Brand was seized with a lucky idea that the bones of a Millionaire might, by chemical action of fire, be reduced to the precious metal, and his experiments resulted in the discovery of Phosphorus. Brand thought that the bones of the genus of animals, classified by Cuvier under the generic title of "homo," would alone produce the luminous article, but recent experiments have shown that the bones of all other animals will yield the same invaluable article of commerce; indeed bones are little else than the phosphate of lime.—*Trout*, a contemporary of Brand, gave him \$300 for the secret, and he traveled through Europe exhibiting Phosphorus to Kings and Nobles. Phosphorus is self-luminous. In appearance it looks like bees-wax, but in truth, it is more like butter. In the open air, it gives out a greenish lambent light—consumes itself and vanishes into air. It can only be kept under water, and the heat generated by cutting it in the air, sets it to smoking and burning up.—Without Phosphorus, we could have no matches, and the flint and steel would have to be resorted to, to make fire. What is most singular in reference to the search after Phosphorus, is, that man's brain is said to have more of it than anything else. Hence the expression, "a brilliant intellect," a "luminous mind," "burning sentiment," that come from the Phosphorescent sentiment. It is calculated by one who delights in mathematics, that a good round head, of full capacity, is equivalent to one and a half gross of Indian matches, in the amount of Phosphorus it will yield.—*Widely Comet.*

THE PEDLER'S BARGAIN.—One day a tin pedler with an assortment of nick-nacks, arrived at a village in Maine, called at one of the houses to sell his wares. After disposing of a few articles to the lady of the house who seemed to live in the midst of her children, she declared her inability to buy more for the want of money.

"But, marm, a'n't you got any rags?"

"None to sell, Sir."

"Well," said he, "you seem to have plenty of children. Will you sell me one for tin ware?"

"What will you give me, Sir?"

"Ten dollars for one of them."

"In good tin ware?"

"O, yes, marm, the best."

"Well, Sir, it is a bargain."

She then handed one of the urchins to the pedler, who, surprised that the mother would not part with her boy, placed him in the cart and supplied the woman with the tins until the sum of ten dollars was made up.

The man felt certain that the mother would rather raise the money than part with the child, seated himself by the side of the boy, who was much pleased with the idea of having a ride. The pedler kept his eye on the house, and expecting to see the woman hasten to redeem the little one, he had off a sleep. After proceeding some distance, he began to repent of his bargain, and turned back.

The woman had just finished ornamenting her dresser with her tin, when the pedler returned.

"Well, I think the boy is too small; I guess you had better take him back again, and let me have the ware."

"No, Sir, the bargain was fair, and you shall keep it to it. You may start off again as soon as you please."

Surprised at this—

"Why, marm, how can you think of parting with your boy, so young, to an utter stranger?"

"O, Sir, we should like to sell all our town papers for ten dollars a head."

The boy was dropped at the door, the whip cracked, and he never forgot his pauper speculation.—*N. Y. Revue.*

DEATH BY LIGHTNING.—The French Academy of Sciences have received some interesting observations on the effects of the lightning stroke upon human beings. The following facts are the result of patient observations made by M. Doudin, surgeon in chief to the Hospital du Roule:

The number of people yearly struck by lightning in France averages 200. The region where lightning had been the most fatal is the central plateau of France, comprising the departments of Cantal, Puy-de-dome, and other departments which are mountainous or present elevated ground. Out of 101 persons struck, 4 were struck in March, 6 in April, 8 in May, 22 in June, 15 in July, 19 in August, 14 in September, and 15 in October. One-fourth of the people who have been struck might take the misfortune to their own imprudence, in taking shelter under trees, which attract the electric fluid.

M. Doudin called attention to two curious facts in connection with this subject. The first was that dead men struck by lightning had been found in exactly the upright position they held when killed; the second was, that other bodies bore upon them faint impressions of outward objects, probably somewhat resembling photographic shadows.—Brutes, however, are much more exposed to the influence of lightning than men, and suffer more by its destructive properties. More than once a single flash of lightning has destroyed an entire flock of sheep, and according to M. D'Abbadie, flocks of 2,000 in Ethiopia.—*Exchange.*

In an imaginary conversation between Petrarch and Boccaccio, from the pen of Walter Savage Landor, there is the following passage:—"The damps of Autumn sink into the loaves, and prepare them for the necessity of the Fall; and thus insensibly are we, as years close round us, detached from our tenacity to life by the genial pressure of recorded sorrows."—*Duffield Republic.*

THE MOTHER.—It has been said—"The first being that rushes to the recollection of a soldier or sailor, in his heart's difficulty, is his mother. She clings to his memory and his affection, in the midst of all the forgetfulness and hardship induced by a roving life. The last word he leaves is for her, his last breath breathes her name. The last light she sees in his eyes, and the last effort of his will, is to see her face. The last thing that he hears is her voice, and the last thing that he feels is her hand. She may drop into the grave—but she has left behind her influence that will work for her. The bow is broken, but the arrow is sped and will do its office."—*Portland Transcript.*