

NEW-ENGLAND SPIRITUALIST.

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"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT STILL!"—GOETHE.

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For the New England Spiritualist.

IS INTERCOURSE BETWEEN THE NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL WORLDS ANY LONGER NECESSARY?

By DANIEL PARKER, M. D.

With respect to intercourse between the natural and spiritual worlds, Mr. Beecher said that the only reason was that of it as well as the new; that if it occurred then, it occurred under the operation of a law and that law was as fully in existence now as it ever was. The necessity for such intercourse did not seem to be great at the present time, with all our advancements, our printing presses and accumulations of knowledge, but the law and possibility remained the same.—H. W. Beecher, as reported in the New York Courier.

It seems by this, that Mr. Beecher admits the possibility of spiritual intercourse, but that the necessity for such intercourse did not seem to be very great at the present time. Let us see how the case stands with regard to the necessity of the matter. When men like him publicly recommend the use of the *Sharp's rifles* as moral suasionists, better than all Bibles, tracts or sermons; does there seem to be small necessity for any thing which shall tend to arouse and quicken man's consciousness of spiritual realities? When he admitted the possibility, did he duly consider the probability and necessity for such intercourse? Did he duly consider how "all our advancements, our printing presses and accumulations of knowledge," had taken us mammonward and devilward, and into all manner of impossibilities of God-worship? When men, manners and customs are, as he graphically portrays them, as impervious as wild "buffaloes" to Bibles and Testaments, and only pervious to moral arguments in the shape of ground steel and rifle-bullets,* is it not a suitable time for spirits to thunder and lighten knock persecutors off their horses, bring them to some sense of propriety, and set them to laboring for holier things? If the Bible fails to christianize, or even to make men good and moral, is it not time for the spiritual world to institute some measures to lead to such a desirable result? It seems to me that spiritual intercourse was never more necessary to harmonize and enlighten the world; and, than the present, there never was a more fit, appropriate and necessitous time.

Admit all we can of the progress of the species; the world is but feebly illuminated yet. Thick and dark clouds, still impenetrable to the spiritual sun-light of the heavens, float over humanity, and screen intercourse with the spiritual world.

When men cannot bear to be told of the marriage of the material and spiritual worlds; that there is unspeakable joy, ecstasy and life-expansion in the commingling of men and angels; they should see the hand hear the voice from heaven."

When dark and cheerless materialism fixes a great and impassable gulph between heaven and earth, over which no eye can reach or winged messenger float from realms of life and light; when the glimmerings from the spirit-land are so faint that only the poorest semblance of a material God is visible; when clergymen argue that harkening to "what the spirit saith," implies folly, insanity and fanaticism; when our practical men and woman discard all faith in inspiration less than two thousand years old; when the dollar-and-cent philosophy becomes "the one thing needful," and the future an unimaginable something or nothing; is it not time for the spirits to rap loud and long?

Surely, when men sneer at the idea that spiritual beings walk the earth and "keep watch and ward" whilst we are sleeping, and call such but the offsprings or creations of visionary brains and overwrought fancies, all nonsense and moonshine,—it seems to me there is some "necessity" for spiritual communications to counteract their misconceptions, and bring them to a knowledge of the truth as now proclaimed from all the Sinais in the universe.

To them, whatsoever comes not under the cognizance of some one or more of the five senses (and not always then), has no existence. To them the past seems very good, and such they would have us let alone. It had its inspired prophets, and wise men, and greater than these there need not be. Its history of great empires and conquerors, costly heathen temples, gorgeous worship, huge pyramids and palaces, great sages and saints, they think good enough for all time. What better need we have? Inspiration commenced and ended there, and the record is our master. Humanity therein was all developed, and such no more can be.

Not so. The like of whatsoever has been, can be again. If spirits could speak to Paul, they can speak to Channings, Beechers, Edmondsons, Hares and others, with equal propriety and benefit. Surely humanity is to-day sufficiently in need of Saviours and revelations, notwithstanding what it may have had of such in part times. Discord is everywhere uppermost, and humanity is trodden under foot, and disgraced. Humanity as a whole has not yet lived—has scarcely begun to live—and its ascension is in the future. Knowledge will come and take the place of its blind faith. It will yet have its day and development, when it will not have to ask its taskmasters for permission to think, or for ginger-bread-money for a holiday. It will not always be crushed and crippled by "divine-right" rulers who claim its over-servitude. No! Let the spirits rap, and move and "break things," if need be, till Humanity is liberated from thraldoms worse than death was ever supposed to be.

Though this is an age of "printing presses," "advancement and accumulations of knowledge," with steam power and electrical communications, yet the chains of slavery and servitude still dwarf the souls of the masses, and they are not men. Rulers are not yet wise and honest, nor are governments for the governed, good. Parties are selfish and unprincipled, and philanthropy weeps whilst place and power shift from one flock of commorants to another.

Long enough has been tried the slow and uncertain process of renovating the earth by church-establishments, alms-giving, tariffs and cotton-jenneys. It will never do. Poverty, with its parched mouth, will throng the soup-houses with ever-increasing clamor, whilst from its dark, damp and dismal abodes, will spread pestilence and death. Denying relationship, and tossing shillings to the poor, confers small benefits. The law of love must exhibit itself in quite other forms than these. When Church and state can furnish seats, privileges and honors only for the rich, spiritual and perhaps other manifestations become necessary to open prison doors and let the oppressed go free.

So too, when millions lie powerless in ignorance, groaning in nightmare sleep, with the bandogs of slavery seated upon their souls, what else can rouse our rulers from their torpid and death-like conservatism? What else can arouse them to a sense of duty towards the dark minds of ignorance so audibly groaning under multitudinous despotisms? Moral suasion, with all its appliances, has failed thus far. The multitude is yet jubilant and abject in its hero worship and praise of selfish and unprincipled demagogues, and with cap in hand, shout lustily their praises of men-butchers and stealers. Would not a voice to it, like unto the one that a Balaam heard, be of some service? Is there not equal "necessity?"

Do not the practical workings of society show that its faith is weak, and that its reverence for the old is inefficient? Do not the multitudinous absurd and conflicting theological opinions of society show that voices from heaven might come as appropriately now as ever? Indeed could such ever come amiss? Has any thing, but the ignorance and superstition of men, ever prevented a free and uninterrupted intercourse between the material and spiritual worlds, in any age or stage of human development? Such intercourse is according to "natural laws," and of course always operative under suitable conditions.

Then, to the clergyman, reduced to the necessity of recommending *Sharp's rifles* as a basis for moral suasion, doubting the "necessity" of such intercourse? Think of it!

Blessed be God, we say, for any speech from the spirit-land which tells of change for the better; for any revelation to do away the idolatrous worship of the world, and bring it to a knowledge of the great positive God, the Supreme, the All; to bring man to a knowledge of himself and his relationship to men and things. Let the spirits rap till they knock off the scales that have encrusted men, like the ore in the mines, and bring out the lustre of the real metal. Let them rap and talk till they dispel all fear, that terrible foe to all progress; that impelling power that has forever driven mankind every way but the right; that has collected mighty armies, concocted revolutions, deluged the earth with blood, fire, and a hell of grievances. Let them come and rap, till love and truth are revered, and men cease to crucify their Redeemers,—till there comes a blending of humanity with truth and righteousness, and a harmonious sojourning together, ever ready to assist in storm or sunshine, sickness or health, with purity and manliness of heart, such as everywhere finds, and enjoys communion with God,—till men can stand under the broad canopy of Heaven unmolested, and undisturbed by mythology, and there under the influence of the electricity of God's Truth learn that Nature's Divine Revelations are too numerous and mighty to be all contained in books, ancient or modern, and that

Christ; the creation of the earth; the destiny of man; the resurrection of the body; salvation by grace; penance; the torments of purgatory; about the efficacy of prayers and pilgrimages; the efficacy of oil, water, "winking" madonnas and wooden crosses; about the origin of evil, total depravity, infinitesim, the atonement, and whatever else can excite stupid and blind concession and reverence, and keep the soul forever languishing in "mumps and measles?"

Have the angels not wept long enough in silence over the terrible life-battle of the over-burdened millions, dustily and wearily groping their way to rest in unhonored graves? Is the light sufficiently luminous from "printing presses" and pulpits, when "Uncle Toms" are whipped to death, and great multitudes languish in servility to the biddings of despots; when those are toil-worn and crushed, ministering to the caprices and whims of the idle and pleasure-seeking few; when godless taskmasters legislate men into bondage, and unrequited sweat, and groans, and tears; into heart broken and despairing prostration? All the beloved say no, and seek instruction from discourses on the "Higher Law," by the "just made perfect."

Some months since I had a medium at my house, for the purpose of seeing what would happen in a family circle, of which all the members but myself were entire strangers to her. A son of mine, about seventeen years old, who was then preparing to enter college, was present, and the first address was made to him. The speaker commenced by a brief recital of the studies in which the young man was engaged,—said that he had gone over the same ground himself,—that he understood perfectly all the difficulties and discouragements he had encountered, and would still have to meet and overcome, and in a most eloquent discourse, occupying about half an hour, gave him the best advice and instruction that I ever heard or ever read. The only thing any of us regretted was, that it had not been written out.

Subsequently the same young man was troubled with serious doubts whether he was in the right path, whether it would be better for him to leave the academy and pass a vacation, and then re-enter it, or to meet us again. Her state of health to remove the spirits could not speak through him to my father, generally follows, in writing. I think you'd in my father, generally will agree with me, that if such a came from a bad spirit, it will be well for mankind, if these bad spirits continue their teaching. I think they will also agree with me, that if this paper is the production of the medium,—a gentle, diffident young woman, of no more than ordinary abilities, and but a common-school education, written, too, as it was, with a rapidity and ease seldom attained by the most rapid penman, is rather more of a marvel, than if considered a spiritual production. Come from whence it may, the advice it contains, and the noble sentiments expressed in it, seem to me worthy of a circulation wider than a small family circle.

The second letter is from a brother of the young man, who died in infancy, and who would now be about fourteen years of age. It followed the other immediately, and makes a pleasing and harmonious contrast.

MY DEAR BOY:—You have asked the question, "Shall I continue my education?—shall I still study?" I say, most emphatically, yes. Study ever while you remain upon earth—but study not one class of subjects alone. Study all subjects, everything. Learn all you can from books—these are the thoughts of other minds thus expressed to you—but as you read them, use your own judgment about their fitness and use. Learn to think for yourself. Read and then reflect; with reflection will come the power to use to advantage—make the best use you can of this path opened to you by other minds. Study men, also; not in a way to weary you and make it a task—but learn to understand Human Nature well; how to adapt yourself to it; and what are its various wants. Know thyself—learn to read thy own heart—learn to cultivate the virtues thou dost find there, and make the flowers in the garden of thy soul bloom with ever-increasing beauty, that they may shed their fragrance on all around thee, and gladden thy hearts, and refresh them. And if thou wilt look well, perchance thou mayest find some weeds there—for no garden is perfect. Pluck them up gently, and in their place plant more seeds of thought, yet to bloom with more fulness, in their place. Thy whole earth life, yes—thy spirit-life even—is a school. Thou hast thy teachers on earth, and they lead thee well in the path of knowledge; and thou dost gaze with joy on scenes they point thee to. And, boy, thou hast also thy teachers and guides in the Spirit-land—ministering angels, sent to thee to teach thee, and lead thee to yet more beautiful scenes of spirit-life and wisdom. Let us lead thee in ways of pleasantness and peace—let us scatter flowers on thy pathway, not as earthly friends do, but as we see thy need. Go on, young man, in thy search after truth. Not in the outward sense of the word shalt thou be a medium to earth, but in thy life we will aid thee to use our mediumship.

Show thy daily walk that angels guard and bless thee. Be mild, be gentle, be kindly affectionate to all, and thou shalt receive deep love as thy reward. No, never cease to learn. Still in thy manhood, as in thy youth—learn. In old age—if thou shouldst have that length of life—forget not to learn, and thy hoary head shall be as a crown of glory to thee.

We will say more to thee anon—when we can speak, for we can control the medium better in that way. But receive thou our blessing—not from ourselves alone, but from the Heavenly Father through us. We will watch and guard thee ever in thy earth-life, and when thou hast finished thy work and come home, we will greet thee with joy; and even then thou wilt learn, and we will be thy teachers still. We come not to one, and then leave him to grope his way alone; but we care for and watch over him. Manhood is before thee—prepare for it; for its duties are manifold, and we would have thee meet them with all in the true spirit of manliness. Thou hast many gifts—use them all to the best advantage—use them well—grateful to the good Father that thou art thus blest.

When thou dost meet with error, never yield to it, or turn aside from it; for it will always fade away before the sun of Truth. Truth is mighty and will reign triumphant throughout earth, though error sometimes clothes herself in the garments of truth, to mislead.

Let thy soul always be pure—be ever aspiring in thy nature—love all goodness, and seek for it. This is our work to thee—to aid thee in thy search. We are thy guides—we will not lead thee astray. Our blessing rest upon you now and ever.

WILLIAM BELLEVY.
HENRY WARE, JR.

Yes, dear Brother, Caro will say a word. If the others teach thee in all that is strong and good, I will shed a halo of light and beauty around thy path that shall cheer and strengthen thee.

Dear Brother, how much I love thee, and ever shall. I will sing to thee sweet songs of spirit-love and harmony, and will make thee feel the presence of us bright ones even when thou art on earth.

Yes, and I love you all, and ever shall. I wished to speak to you last evening, but the medium was weary and I could not.

I love you earth-music, father, but our music is still sweeter. Don't you long to hear it?

To a young lady present, a writing medium:

H..... I will come to you and mother whenever you will let me write; but don't urge me to stay if I wish to go—for I have duties here as well as you of earth. Adieu for now; I cannot say more.

[From the Baltimore Patriot.]

SPIRITUALISM.

When Shakspeare, by the lips of the philosophic Hamlet, declared that "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy," he enunciated one of those profound truths which meet with a sympathetic response from the great heart of the world. All science teaches us that the essences of things are eternal. The material form that disappears to day is but resolved into its component parts, and either continues thenceforth in its primeval elements, or reappears in some other form of beauty or homeliness. The mouldering leaves of forest trees yield food to the parent stock from which they have fallen, or enter into combination with the wild wood flowers they shelter and sustain. The trimmings of the vineyard give new vigor to the roots of the vine from which they have been dropped. The fermentation of refuse matters yields that ammonia to the air, which, descending in the summer rains and the winter snows, give strength and fruitfulness to the glowing plant, or enriches the soil preparatory to the springing of the dormant germ.

The blood of forty thousand men saturated the soil of Peru, and the bones of the same people which subsequently gave food to the Belgian people. Guano which has become of late years so valuable an article of commerce, consists of the salts and phosphates which once entered into the structure of myriads of fishes the prey of ocean birds. All life tends to decay, and from all decay new life springs. "Nothing is ever lost, stranded, or cast aside," says Carlyle, but all works together, with all undergoes ceaseless mutations, and is renewed through endless births. "Even in the dead leaf," he adds, "there are forces at work—else how could it rot?"

Analytic chemists can take a grain of wheat, a blade of grass, the section of a tree, the petal of a rose, or a fragment of rock, and tell us the elemental substances of which it is composed, but beyond this their philosophical researches are baffled. Of the spirit that pervades organic matter, and constitutes its principle of life, they are as ignorant at this day as were the earliest dwellers on the banks of the Euphrates thousands of years ago.

Puncture a living animal, and it is sensitive to pain in proportion to the perfection of its organization. It is not, however, the flesh that feels, but the spirit which permeates it, for when the spirit leaves the body the latter may be cut, hacked, hewn, or torn into fragments, without exhibiting any consciousness of the mutilating processes to which it has been subjected. Its conservative properties are also gone. Expose it to the sun, and it will poison the air with noxious exhalations. Bury it in the earth, and it will return to impalpable dust. No human hand can reconstruct it. Clothe it with warm flesh, restore the circulation of the blood, bid the heart inject it into the arteries, the lungs to aerate it, set the brain to thinking, and clear the film from the dimmed eyes—that which was a living creature becomes, at the flight of the spirit which sustained it, an inert mass, speedily tending to corruption, and utterly incapable of being revived save by the power from which all created things emanate, and to whose immutable laws they are subjected.

But when the spirit is released from its fleshly thrall, whither does it go? Herein lies the profound mystery connected with the "Hereafter," and we fall back reverently, not daring to attempt to lift the veil. Enough for us to know that if the essences of all material things are immortal and indestructible, even so must be that spiritual essence which we call soul. It was a popular tradition through many ages, that the spirits of the departed were occasionally permitted to revisit the earth, and to exhibit themselves in hazy indistinctness before the eyes of the living. Nor has this belief been confined to the illiterate. Men of strong minds and of profound intellectual attainments have given credence to it. Even Dr. Johnson was a believer in ghosts. Swedenborg boldly asserted that they still people the earth as of old, are around us and about us every where, though invisible to mortal eyes, and moving in spiritual spheres in which time and space is annihilated; where to will to be, is to be, at once, and where they converse with each other, not by audible language, but by perception of each other's thoughts.

More recently we hear of them manifesting their presence in a variety of ingenious ways. They have adopted the alphabet by means of which prisoners in adjoining cells were once accustomed to converse, and rap out their communications with a distinctness and facility which are absolutely startling to timid minds, and which have sometimes created strange sensations even in the more resolute. Pencils have been seen to

write, untouched by human hand; tables to float in the air unsupported by any material power, rings to suspend themselves by a fine thread of light three inches below the finger, following the movement of the hand in the same manner as if attached to it by a tangible cord. The body of a piano is said to have separated itself from its supporting frame, and to have kept time to the tune which was being played upon it. All these and many more marvels are related by credible witnesses, occupying prominent positions in society, of sound minds certainly in other respects, not unfrequently well educated, and above suspicion of any intentional design to deceive either their friends or the public. Professor Hare, of Philadelphia, ex-Senator Talmadge, of Wisconsin, and Judge Edmonds, of New York, attest that these things are true, and have boldly braved public opinion in defence of their opinions. Reichenbach, a German writer of eminence, has put forth a book, in which he relates the discovery of a singular phenomenon in the physical world, which he designates "Od" or "Odic force" and which is possessed almost exclusively by individuals, and has some properties in common with magnetism, but in other respects differs from it essentially.

President Mahan, of Oberlin College, who has entered into a serious examination of some of the phenomena of what is called Spiritualism, declares them to proceed from the power of one mind to project its thoughts into that of another; and that the answers of mediums to questions put to them by investigators into the truth of their spiritual powers invariably corresponded to the reply previously willed mentally by the questioner.†

But there is yet much in this new doctrine, or heresy, or by whatever name it may be called, which needs elucidation. It is asserted that the manifestations exhibited to the initiated show that there are forces at work the operations of which are not to be explained by any natural laws at present known to us, and as the number of converts is largely increasing, not only in other cities, but in our own, it would serve, we think, the ends of truth, if well-informed men would undertake to investigate the subject thoroughly, and make a public report of the result. When Mesmer was at the height of his reputation, at Paris, a commission, consisting principally of French savans, but in which our Franklin was included, was appointed to examine into the validity of his pretensions. The report is still extant and proves that, as by mesmery, the charlatanism with which Mesmer himself had clothed the new power, there was certainly a mysterious influence exerted for which science could not adequately account.

It may be equally the case in the present instance, and as the disciples of this new sect claim that the phenomena designated as Spiritualism not only have their origin in the invisible world, but bring men into actual communication with intangible existences, it becomes a matter of great public moment to ascertain whether their testimony is based upon satisfactory evidence, or whether it is wholly a delusion and a lie.

* This writer would do well to give Reichenbach another reading, so as to gain a more intelligible idea of this "Od."

† But it is well known that the Rev. President's statement is seriously wide of the truth.—Ed. Spiritualist.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

We find the following Bible argument in the Oneida Circular, one of our religious exchanges, which we believe does not recognize modern Spiritualism. We commend it to the perusal of all Bible believers:—

Are we authorised to look for the spiritual gifts which the Primitive church possessed?

We answer this question in the affirmative for the following reasons:

1. When Christ commissioned his disciples to preach the gospel to every creature, he said, "These signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

Mark 16, 17, &c. Again, he said, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these; because I go to the Father." John 14: 12. This language plainly refers to all believers; and can by no fair means be limited to the primitive church.

2. The very nature of the relation between believers and Christ puts them in communication with the mighty power which raised him from the dead. See Eph. 1: 19, 20. If they are thus admitted to partnership with him in the greatest miracle which God ever wrought, is it to be believed that they will be excluded from partnership with him in works of less importance?

3. The church is the body of Christ. The gifts of the Primitive church were simple manifestations of the power of Christ, dwelling in that church as the soul dwells in the body. Of course, since all power belongs to him, those gifts are to be regarded as the appropriate, natural powers of the Christian church, i. e., of a body having Christ for its soul. And as Christ is the same now as then, and the Christian church (if there be one on earth) is still his body, why should we not expect that that body will exercise all its natural functions?

If it be said in support of the doctrine that "the age of miracles is past," that the object of the supernatural manifestations in the Primitive church was to attest the divine origin of Christianity, and that we have no occasion for them, we reply, the best of the spiritual gifts enumerated by Paul, in 1 Cor. 12: 8—10, indeed all of them except perhaps one or two, were given obviously not for signs but for the edification of the church; and we have Paul's own authority for this assertion. See 1 Cor. 14: 22. Is the age of edification past?

* See Independent in answer to New York Observer.

Spiritual gifts were in the beginning, and will be in the end, the concomitants of PERFECT HOLINESS. [We would suggest the enquiry, since no very substantial claims can be set up in behalf of the "perfect holiness" of such ancient mediums as Saul, David, Balaam (his beast might also be included), Jonah (the fish also), Peter, Paul, and Barnabas (who had "sharp contensions" among themselves)—is it not quite possible that some of the "manifestations of the spirit" may be granted to imperfect people now-a-days?—Ed.]

The Spiritualist. A. E. NEWTON, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER. "Have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot hear them now."—Jesus. BOSTON, SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 1856.

SPRITUAL PERCEPTIONS.

In a recent article in The Congregationalist, of this city, Rev. Dr. Kirk uses the following language: "Man is made to be conversant with spiritual just as much as with material objects; and yet the daily and hourly exercise of the senses makes man more familiar with the latter than with the former; and thus our susceptibility to impressions and to evidence depends upon our habits. A mere mathematician becomes exceedingly keen in his perceptions of mathematical evidence; but he is exposed to overlook a kind of evidence immeasurably more important for him."

It may be presumptuous in us to think of offering a suggestion to our former and much esteemed pastor, on a topic which lies within the special province of his profession; but the above statement excites a query which we wish to submit to his consideration.

He doubtless believes in the reality of "spiritual objects,"—at least in the existence of spiritual beings as objective realities; and that the human spirit has within itself the faculties which, when developed, will enable it to perceive the presence of other spirits, to hold converse with them, etc. If we have no such faculties, then the spiritual state must be a dreary condition indeed, isolated from all external knowledge.

Now, if, as Dr. Kirk states, any one class of perceptions may become "exceedingly keen," as a result of exercise, is it not possible that these spiritual perceptions may also become so "exceedingly keen" (even before leaving the earthly body), as to take cognizance of spiritual beings and other objects that may be within the range of their vision? We do not think he will deny its possibility—for the Bible abounds with statements of such perceptions having once been in exercise.

But how can it be known that some persons have the exercise of these keen perceptions, while others do not? By their own testimony, of course, together with corroborative evidence when that is available. Mr. Kirk, doubtless believes the statements of John the revelator, of Peter, of Daniel, etc., that they saw such beings, even without corroborative evidence.

Now there are numbers of persons living in the body, whose testimony he would take unhesitatingly on other subjects—some whom he once considered sufficiently credible, as relating of their own spiritual experiences, to be admitted into his church.

Will our quondam spiritual shepherd, whose kindness, condescension, and valuable instructions, in years gone by, we acknowledge with unfeigned gratitude, be so good as to give us a rational reason why we should not believe these persons? We want "more light" on this question.

AN ANTAGONIST WANTED? We have received the following letter, under post-mark of Portland, Me.:

Mr. Editor:—In your paper of to-day, April 6th, I find your Prospectus for a new vol. of your paper, and also a very able editorial, headed "Mission of Spiritualism." With both of these articles I am highly pleased,—with the Prospectus more especially. You close your editorial with the following sentence:—"Will any one venture to deny these positions, and attempt to show that any other agency existing among mankind is competent to equally beneficial results?"

I answer, by the term "positions," I suppose you to mean all the positions taken in the article, but especially the five which are numbered. 2d.—By the term "any other agency," I take you to mean any agency not legitimately involved in Modern Spiritualism as defined in your Prospectus, and also in this general statement.

Presuming, then, that I understand you, I will take issue in both parts. 1. I will "venture to deny your positions," and (2) to show another and better agency, now existing among mankind, outside of Modern Spiritualism, than you can show to be legitimately found within it,—or than itself is,—in order to the "beneficial results" to which you evidently allude.

Now, my dear sir, here is a fair opportunity for you, as an Editor, to test every essential question in Modern Spiritualism, those contained in the first four general propositions of your Prospectus more especially. If you will accept my offer, and join issue with me, you may assign to me the laboring oar, or lead in the discussion, to whom it legitimately belongs. And you can signify this to me, either by a private letter, or by publishing this card, and publicly joining issue in the premises; or you can do both. I will forward an introductory communication as soon as advertised of the fact that you have joined issue with me, and are ready to receive it.

I am the person referred to in a communication from M. F. Whittier, of this city. By the way, Mr. W. has done me great injustice, and himself no credit, as the sequel, will most undoubtedly show. I shall notice him in due form, in due time, provided you will permit me so to do in your columns. I have not treated Dr. Hare, nor any living man, nor any serious and important subject, as Mr. W. intimates that I have. I have made these remarks lest his communication should prejudice you from joining issue with me as I propose. I profess to understand the rules of scientific debate, and solemnly promise either not to violate them, or to patiently suffer the penalty of such violation. Permit me to say, I am quite familiar with the controversy on both sides between yourself and wife and the Edwards Church. I will adopt and follow your method of reasoning, at least, so far as candor, fairness of argument, kindness of spirit, &c., are concerned. Again, I will abide the rules of your Prospectus, laid down for your own guidance, and that of others.

Now, if you accept my offer, please publish this, and send me a half dozen papers. And let this be a memorial between us in an ensuing discussion. Very respectfully, Yours, JOHN LORD.

show—and we doubt not our readers generally sympathize with us. An article, or a series of articles, affording anything like a probability of unfolding such an agency, will be most welcome to our columns. There need be no preliminary flourish of trumpets, or brandishing of lances, in the way of challenges, acceptances, elaborate defining of "positions," adoption of "rules," etc. These may be very important where mere dialectic display is intended; but we have neither time nor taste for anything but earnest conference with a view to eliciting truth. If, therefore, Dr. Lord merely wants an antagonist, for an exhibition of pugilistic exercises, we cannot accommodate him; but if he has, or thinks he has, an earnest truth to present, he may be sure it will receive attention according to the best estimate our perceptions enable us to place upon it.

As to the alleged injustice of our esteemed friend Whittier, towards the Dr.'s book, we shall be slow to believe any was intended. The two persons unquestionably look through very different eyes upon the same object, and it is no strange thing that they should differently estimate its value. And the work having now been quite extensively advertised through our columns, and the representations of the reviewer counteracted by the disavowals of the author, we think the merits of the book will be more satisfactorily decided by its perusal (on the part of such as feel an interest in it), than by any extended discussion in our paper.

We would only add, that we have no expectation that the questions involved in Modern Spiritualism can be properly tested by discussion, either in newspapers or elsewhere. Its questions of fact must be decided by appropriate evidence; and the questions of philosophy, morals or theology, growing out of them, must be by each referred to the interior light which lighteth every man, and which shines in varying degrees of clearness in every soul. All that can be hoped for is, to bring out evidences of fact, or suggestions of thought, that may aid individual minds in forming their own conclusions.

EVANGELICAL.

The New York Evangelist thus philosophizes about the Spiritual Manifestations: "Several facts go to prove that the cause is physical rather than spiritual. For example, in very cold weather a highly sensitive medium refused to act. So when the hands were plunged in cold water, the communication was stopped, and was restored only when the temperature was increased. This looks very much like an influence dependent on the nerves of the patient. If it were a current of magnetism or electricity, it might be subject to such physical changes and interruptions. But are the spirits of the dead unable to communicate in cold weather? The idea is absurd, and renders the whole theory of spiritual agency ridiculous."

Not quite so fast, dear Mr. Evangelist. If spirits use mediums as instruments of communication, they are of course dependent on the conditions of the instruments. There is no question, but they are dependent on the "nerve aura" or rather nervo-vital emanations of the mediums; and whatever disturbs or interferes with these will be equally unfavorable to communication either in "cold" only to those who know little or nothing of the vital processes in their own constitutions. But the Evangelist proceeds:

"Indeed the belief in such interposition is a piece of pure assumption, assigning to a super-natural agency what may be yet fully explained by physical causes. It is the presumption of ignorance. We do not know what produces certain motions and noises, therefore they are caused by spirits! The inference is a wonderful example of a gigantic conclusion from a very small and insignificant premise. Such facility in swallowing marvels and prodigies we have rarely seen."

This is simply caricature and mistatement. Spiritualists do not assign "supernatural" agencies for any of the phenomena. They insist that all are purely natural. Nor do they argue that because they do not know the cause of certain phenomena, therefore they are caused by spirits. On the contrary, having investigated the phenomena and traced them to their source, they know them, or some portion of them, to be caused by spirits. But hear him further:

"Thus the testimony of the Bible is at once set aside, and instead of that great Sun, which has illumined the pathway of mankind for sixty generations, every man is left to the candle-light of his own philosophy. There can be no doubt that the tendency of these revelations is to sow the seeds of infidelity all over the land."

All wrong again! The testimony of the Bible is confirmed by occurrences now taking place precisely similar to those recorded in its pages, making its marvels credible even to the most material minds, giving a rational interpretation to its teachings, and thus opening these minds to all the light that can shine from its pages,—together with a present and ever-living inspiration, which is capable of guiding into all truth. The only "infidelity" which it tends to promote is infidelity to those "blind guides" whose crude and irrational theological teachings have to so great an extent involved the thinking portion of the community in skepticism and materialism.

Our profound friend of the Olive Branch thinks the above-quoted crudities and caricatures very "sensible." We cannot agree with him.

LOST MAN FOUND BY SPIRIT-DIRECTION.—Some months since, a man in Hardwick, Mass., from some cause became insane, and left his home in that condition, to the great distress of his family and friends. He was a man much esteemed by his neighbors, and a very general interest was excited in his behalf. A hundred men were soon in search for him, and the search was continued for three days and nights, without success. Application was then made to the spirits, through the mediumship of Mrs. Almada Dexter, of Ware, who had never been in the place, and knew nothing of the locality. The spirits stated that the man was not far from home, but was concealed in a certain ledge of rocks, which was described so accurately as to be recognized by the man who made the application. This man was told to take four other men with him, and proceed directly to the spot—that they would find the object of their search, and that he would be restored to his right mind. They did as directed—the man was found precisely as described, was restored to his family, and to his reason. We have these statements from Mrs. Dexter herself.

CORRECTION.—We observe in the Puritan Recorder, a letter from Rev. James Hoyt, formerly of Stamford, Ct., denying that he has become a convert to Spiritualism. So much the worse for him, then.

MRS. BUTLER'S TRANSITION.

In our last paper was briefly announced the transition to the spirit-life of Mrs. SOPHRONIA B. BUTLER, which occurred at Melrose, Mass., on the 3d inst. Few females in New England have been more widely known in connection with Spiritualism, or more deeply and tenderly beloved by those who truly knew her, than was Mrs. B. We therefore give place, contrary to our usual custom, to a somewhat extended tribute to her memory and her virtues, prepared by one whose heart was evidently in his work. It contains references, as might be expected, to matters concerning which differences of opinion doubtless to some extent exist; but on such an occasion as this the affections should be allowed to have free utterance. It also refers to achievements and productions with which the writer is unquestionably much better acquainted than is the public at large; but of these the public will doubtless be better informed in due season, and when thus informed will be able to place upon them a more correct estimate than at present it can be expected to. The following is the tribute to which we refer:

For the New England Spiritualist.

MRS. SOPHRONIA B. BUTLER.

Few labors are more grateful, and at the same time more difficult, than to duly chronicle the virtues of a true, faithful and loving soul. Such in an eminent degree, was she whose name is the subject of this notice. Being the first-born and daughter of that widely-known and pure-minded philanthropist, JOHN M. SPEAR, she was an intimate sharer and sympathizer in all the trials, struggles and misinterpretations, which he has been called to experience, during the last three years. Of a timid, retiring nature, she shrank from participation in public performances; but when duty called, she would do her part, with that same sweet, unconscious grace that the bird pours its song. She was a model of child-like simplicity, combined with a womanly dignity of manner, and a rare discretion. She was affectionate, confiding, intuitive, with scarcely a trace of vanity. Her nature was too fine to enjoy the contests of mere intellect; and anything like strife or difference among those who were engaged in a common cause would fill her with sadness. Wherever she went, she won universal love, from the pine lands of Maine, to the banks of the Ohio.

Though scarcely twenty years old, when called to participate in the labors of her father, yet she entered cheerfully into co-operation with him; being often called to leave husband, home and friends, and journey to distant regions, on unknown errands, and purposes hidden in mystery. Yet the felt assurance that these requirements were made in wisdom, and urged in love, gave confidence; and the known purity of her father's purposes, his unselfish love of man as man, were ever dear to her heart; and fidelity to them and him, was "the most immediate jewel of her soul."

As has already been said, during all the years of her father's misunderstood and misappreciated labors, Sophronia was his constant companion and loving supporter; and when at last, the hour of slander, calumny and desertion of old friends was to come; and with it not only the scorn of the multitude, but the sarcastic sneer of professed co-workers in the harmonial movement, poverty and utter isolation, or abjuration of the soul's deepest faith in the divine love and providence,—then it was that this noble daughter, seemingly so fragile, from the woodland violet, displayed the elasticity and strength of the forest oak—and instead of hiding herself from the storm, stood up by the father and uttered these memorable words:—"Do, father, what you feel to be right, and I will stand by your side. Nothing but wrong shall ever part us." No one who has ever seen or heard the expressions of the father's and daughter's mutual love, will need other confirmation of what they were to each other.

Of one instance, in particular, of this beautiful devotion to her idea of right, the writer cherishes a vivid remembrance. It was under circumstances of great trial, and was a severe test of her possession of the "most immediate jewel of her soul," which they possessed in common, and which was it to the sense of justice and goodness, in each. It is what sums as gratitude might prompt. Sophronia expressed, in whatever might be offered, keeping an exact record of the same, in a book provided for the purpose, and called "Book of Encouragements." After paying expenses of the room, rent, &c., the surplus, if any, was to be wholly at her disposal.

For several months, their rooms were thronged by persons who came for various purposes, and who often received great aid. But as often as any way, it happened, that persons with ample means would call upon them for services, or make their rooms a constant resort, and go away without leaving so much as their thanks for admitted benefits. At no time was there a sufficiency of means to give a comfortable support to either; but whatever surplus there was, over expenses, the daughter always put it into the hands of the father, reserving nothing for her own needs, while she gave up domestic quiet, and cheerfully labored for others.

On one occasion, the month came to an end, and with it came the rent bill; but no means to meet it. It was Saturday afternoon. In the midst of their perplexities, and while casting in their minds what to do, the mother comes unwittingly to intensify their sorrow by telling the father that there was no food in the house for Sunday—thus compelling them to make the mother a sufferer in turn by telling her, on the other hand, that there were no means of supplying it.

The trial was severe. With showing eyes, and anguish which shook all her frame, Sophronia looked upon her father's agony, and her mother's despair. Here had been months of loving, unselfish labor for man, required only with indifference and neglect. She saw the parents whom she loved about to go out of the city, to their humble rural home, after the toll of the week and the day, supperless, and without means to buy sustenance for the next day, when from ten thousand pulpits of the land, thanks would go up in behalf of their congregations that they were not as other people, and this land not as other lands. Then questionings came. Shall we give up the rooms? Is there no goodness, no tenderness in man? Are love's labors to go unrequited, while fraud thrives? "I was a scene one never wants to see but once. Yet over and through all, Sophronia faltered not, either in fidelity to her father or her own sense of right. And when her father said, "The world can only starve us, as it does other millions of our fellow-beings. Let us keep the rooms open in Humanity's name!"—she replied, "It shall be so, father, and I am with you to the end."

At that moment a friend came in, who, learning their condition, gave them a small bank-note. Gratitude flowed forth, extinguishing the anguish of that memorable moment. How sublime was that example of devotion to truth! And how rarely are any found equal to such a test!

But out of all these sorrows and misconceptions, that devoted child has seen developed the details of a stupendous system of philosophy, which penetrates the secrets of Nature and Life, and makes of their hitherto hidden mysteries an open book;—a philosophy which demonstrates the dual unity of life, of worlds, motions, forms, principles,—pervading all things, discreting all things, from the generation, conception and birth of a planet or human being, down to the agglomeration of material atoms, or the formation of an insect,—which teaches of new mechanisms impelled by the same forces, and in harmony with the same laws which control sidereal movements, and of the social destiny of man,—which teaches the great truth of a permanent divine influx, and of the laws of reception and transmission of life; all tending to, and culminating in, a new and divine social order, wherein the noblest and grandest of all the sciences,—the science of MAN-CULTURE,—shall be studied and applied.

She lived to see her own and her father's faith vindicated, by hearing the testimony of scores of the coolest business-men, scattered from Maine to Louisiana, to the wisdom, utility, practicality and simplicity of a scheme of philanthropy which is destined to lift the nightmare of ages from the bosoms of earth's toiling sons and daughters, and put them upon a plane of brotherly co-operation.

Her earth-labors were now done; and, taking a flower from her bosom, in the opening spring-time, she planted it in the earthly mould, under chilly skies and contending influences, to be watered by angels' tears, and nurtured by angel-hands, till the hour of its transplanting,—just at the moment when she herself, the parent stalk, was to be transplanted to the upper Hesperides.

The father returned from a long absence just in time to see his daughter, for a few last days, with her mortal life. A few days before her departure she called her husband, parents, brothers and sisters to her bed-side, and addressed each one personally. The whole interview occupied nearly two hours. With joy she

looked upon her coming change, and talked of the realities of another life with the wisdom of a philosopher. She gave all directions as to her funeral, requesting that no parade be made, and no formal clerical services be had; but a few friends were invited to be present, and were requested, if so impressed, to speak at length, or converse together, upon the nature of the spirit life, its labors and relations to the present life. The spirit-name by which she had for years been known was FIDELITY.

It was our privilege to be present on the occasion of consigning the mortal remains of Mrs. Butler to the tomb—which took place at Melrose, on Saturday, April 5th. It was conducted in compliance with her request, as stated above, and was one of the most rational and cheerful funeral occasions we ever attended. At the commencement a joyful hymn, recognizing the presence of the freed spirit, was sung by the friends, when the father of the deceased arose and calmly stated some particulars respecting the closing hours of his daughter's earthly life, her request respecting the present occasion, and her charge to remember that it was only her body that was to be placed in the tomb—she herself would be risen and be among them. He then proceeded to read, as expressive of his own views and feelings, a letter written by that clear-sighted philosopher, Benjamin Franklin, eighty years ago, on the occasion of the decease of a brother. The following is the letter:

PHILADELPHIA, 13th February, 1766.

"I condole with you. We have lost a most dear and valuable relation. But it is the will of God and Nature, that these mortal bodies be laid aside when the soul is to enter into real life. This is rather an embryo state, a preparation for living. A man is not completely born till he be dead. Why, then, should we grieve that a new child is born among the immortals, a new member added to their happy society? "We are spirits. That bodies should be lent us, while they can afford us pleasure, assist us in acquiring knowledge, or in doing good to our fellow creatures, is a kind and benevolent act of God. When they become unfit for these purposes, and afford us pain instead of pleasure,—instead of an aid become an encumbrance, and answer none of the intentions for which they were given, it is equally kind and benevolent, that a way is provided by which we may get rid of them. Death is that way. We ourselves, in some cases, prudently choose a partial death. A mangled, painful limb, which cannot be restored, we willingly cut off. He who plucks out a tooth, parts with it freely, since the pain goes with it; and he who quits the whole body, parts at once with all pains and diseases, which it was liable to, or capable of making him suffer. "Our friend and we were invited abroad on a party of pleasure, which is to last forever. His chair was ready first, and he is gone before us. We could not all conveniently start together; and why should you and I be grieved at this, since we are soon to follow, and know where to find him? Adieu.

Signed, B. FRANKLIN. "Written to Miss E. Hubbard, on the death of his brother John Franklin."

Mr. Spear was followed by Mr. Goddard, who gave a fervid and glowing expression to the hopes and joys which are inspired by a present and living demonstration of immortality, such as is granted in the modern spiritual unfoldings.

Rev. Charles Spear, (uncle of the deceased) expressed his feeling that a funeral, though solemn, should not be a mournful occasion; and stated his faith in the testimonies recorded in the New Testament, as furnishing sufficient ground of belief in the fact of a resurrection and an immortal life—which testimonies, moreover, he considered as the only reliable ones, with

controlled by spirit-influence to make a somewhat extended address. The speaker first touched upon the fact that the gloom which had so long hung over the grave was being dispersed in the light of present evidences of immortality,—spoke of the superiority of these evidences over those of an ancient date to meet the wants of the human intellect,—and then proceeded to address in a very feeling and appropriate manner, successively, the father, mother, husband, brothers and sisters, and other relatives of the deceased, congratulating them that, unlike many others, they could find abundant consolation for the visible absence of the loved one, in the recognized fact that she would ever hereafter be to them a ministering angel, more able to subservise their highest good than when in the earth-form.

Mr. Orvis followed with some appropriate observations on the insignificance of physical death, as an event in the existence of a human being—the most important thing being a true life—an earnest consecration to labor for the good of humanity, whether in the earth-sphere or in the spiritual spheres. He felt assured that our departed sister, who had devoted herself so faithfully to such labors here, would experience no intermission of them on her advent into a higher existence. He also adverted to the equal and greater value of modern testimonies to the fact of spirit-existence, as compared with those of remote centuries—these modern evidences being necessary even to render the ancient credible in the majority of minds.

During these exercises, and more especially while Miss Sprague had been speaking, the enfranchised spirit of Mrs. B. had succeeded, according to her expressed intention, in manifesting herself to a clairvoyant who was present. She appeared in a most resplendent form, and communicated words of love and cheer, most grateful to the hearts of such as could receive them. She had also manifested herself, the evening previous, quite unexpectedly but unmistakably, to a lady in Boston. Learning these facts on testimony which was to us of the most satisfactory character, we stated them to the company assembled—expressing our gratitude for all evidence to be derived, whether from the statements of the New Testament, or from the records of later times, that human spirits survive the death of the physical body—and especially for the testimony of persons of our own time, on whose intelligence and integrity we could place the fullest reliance, who, by the exercise of the same senses that were employed by John, Paul and Peter of old, are now able to see and converse with those who have entered the spiritual state. On the strength of such testimony we could, more confidently than on any ancient authority, assure the friends of her whose mortal tenement now lay vacant before us, that she "was not dead, but was alive," nay, more, that she "had been seen,"—that she had been "in the midst of them" on that occasion, with words of peace and encouragement. After singing the doxology, "Be thou, O God," etc., the now useless body was removed to the tomb, and thus closed an occasion which enabled us in some good degree to realize the fulfillment of an ancient prediction, that a time should come on earth when there will be "no more death," and when "tears shall be wiped from all faces."

Falseness strips the mind of its conscious dignity, keeps a man in perpetual fear, and puts invention continually on the rack to prevent the means of detection.

MR. PUTNAM'S LECTURES.

The discourses on Mesmerism, Spiritualism and Witchcraft, given on Sunday last at the Music Hall, by ALLEN PUTNAM, Esq., were among the most interesting, able and effective that we have ever listened to in Boston. Commencing with the admitted facts of mesmerism, and narrating such as had fallen under his own observation in a long course of inquiry—facts which demonstrated a power of control by one person over the organism and mental powers of another, under certain conditions; and also a power of accurate vision beyond that of the external eye—the lecturer proceeded to erect, round by round, a ladder (to use his own figure, but we think his hearers will generally concede it to have been a staircase of solid masonry, built of stubborn facts, and cemented with strong logic) on which to ascend gradually but firmly to the realm of the spiritual. He made it clear that the power exhibited in (one class of) the spiritual phenomena is one and the same with that exhibited in Mesmerism—with this difference only, that in the latter case it is the power of a mind in the body, while in the clearly defined spiritual phenomena it is the power of a mind disembodied. Abundant facts of the most conclusive character, from his own experience, were recited to show the connection of the intelligences in the current manifestations. Turning to the history of Witchcraft in New-England, the lecturer adduced numerous statements going to show, in the light of Mesmerism and modern spirit-manifestations, that the "bewitched ones" were simply mediums or impressible persons, and that the "black man," or "devil," who so frightened and tormented our forefathers, and who so frequently appeared "in the form of an Indian" (to use Cotton Mather's words,) as well as in the forms of departed relatives, was nothing more nor less than the disembodied spirits of Indians and others, seeking to manifest themselves, either for good or evil, to the blind and mistaken devotees of a gloomy theology.

Such is a mere outline of the course of argument pursued—the strength of which cannot be perceived without a full rehearsal of the facts. We trust Mr. Putnam will be able, and be called upon, to repeat these discourses in all the principal towns of New-England. They cannot fail to have a powerful influence upon thinking minds, especially in communities where Mr. P. is known.

SPIRITUALISM IN ROCHESTER GREAT FALLS AND DOVER.

BRO. NEWTON:—Since I last wrote to you, we have been progressing finely. At Rochester, a little handful of the disciples of truth have just succeeded in gaining a foothold. There have been mediums developed who have been the instruments of much good; but being children, and meeting with much opposition from their parents, have been obliged to abandon it, thus leaving those that were free, to struggle alone.

Of all places for bigotry and superstition we might well seek in vain for the equal of this. The people talk of sending the light of revelation to the heathen, while from their own hearts they shut out entirely, as it were, all spiritual light. But one good omen which is manifesting itself, and which we hope will be the beginning of a subject. Said the pastor of one of the churches here, to one of his members, speaking of Spiritualism, "There is a tangibility about this matter that cannot be explained,"—thus admitting what is most essential. This church-member has embraced Spiritualism, and is doing good for the cause. Thus they bless us unconsciously. God bless them, and give them honest, candid minds!

In Great Falls we have gained such ground that the opposition begin to open their mouths, and say, "I think it must be of God, for it flourishes beyond the prosperity of the churches." Our hall, on Sabbath evenings, is always filled to overflowing, when we open free doors, which we cannot often do, for want of "more room;" and while the work is deepening within, it is spreading without; and the people are still asking for "more light."

Dr. Geo. H. Clapp has been delivering a course of lectures on the subject here, to crowded audiences, in the Town Hall, which will hold from 700 to 1000 people. Upon the same evening with one of the lectures, the two Methodist churches held a Sabbath School exhibition, (the like of which have been the order of the day,) but it was very poorly attended, while the lecture was crowded to overflowing. One of the ministers, I am informed, advised the doctor to discontinue his lectures, but they are still to go on. The Spiritualists of this town advocate freedom in all pure and holy principles, as well in thought as action. The truth will prevail.

The city of Dover numbers about 1000 inhabitants; and among the various tenets advocated by the liberal and candid, is, of course, Spiritualism. There is no definite organization here, but we hear of it in all parts of the city. Some of the first citizens are numbered among its believers. I believe they are preparing to enter upon some system of organization, that they may be able to procure and sustain some of the best lecturers. Systematic cooperation is very much needed here, not only in efforts for the presentation of the truth, (for the people are well prepared to receive it) but to bring about a state of greater harmony. This accomplished, and Dover is safe. MORE ANON.

UNION.—The Spirit Advocate, heretofore published by Dr. Geo. Haskell, at Rockford, Ill., has been united with the Orient, at Waukegan, in the same State. Dr. Haskell is now associated with Mr. Huginin in conducting the Orient. This is shortly to be changed from a monthly magazine to a weekly paper. May the union result in added strength and usefulness.

HEAR ONE SIDE ONLY.—The Advent Herald of this city copies from our columns the letter of Rev. Mr. Dean, of Newbury, Vt., to Mrs. Battles, but does not venture to give her unanswerable reply. Was it too much for its readers?

How lovely, how majestic is simple truth! It seeks no retirement, stands in need of no defence, is ever consistent with itself, ever inspires with courage him who practises it.

The music of birds was the first song of thanksgiving which was offered on earth before man was formed. All their sounds are different, but all harmonious, and all together compose a choir which we cannot imitate.

The riches you impart form the only wealth you will always retain.

