

# THE PRESENT AGE.

\$2.00 PER YEAR.

WOE UNTO HIM THAT HEAPETH UP WEALTH IN ABUNDANCE, AND REJOICETH ALONE IN POSSESSION THEREOF.—Brahmin Sanscrit.

IN ADVANCE.

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WHOLE No. 101.

## Selected Poetry.

### THE MONEYLESS MAN.

Is there no secret place on the face of the earth  
Where charity dwelleth—where virtue hath birth—  
Where bosoms with mercy and kindness will heave,  
And the poor and the wretched shall ask and receive?

Is there no place on earth where a knock from the poor  
Will bring a kind angel to open the door—  
O! search the wide world wherever you can,  
There's no open door for the moneyless man.

Go look in your Hall, where the chandeliers light  
Drives off with its splendor the darkness of night,  
Where the rich hanging velvet, in shadowy fold,  
Sweeps gracefully down with its trimmings of gold—  
Where the mirrors of silver take up and renew,  
In long lighted vistas, the wildering view—  
Go there in your patches and find if you can,  
A welcoming smile for a moneyless man!

Go look to your Church, of cloud-reaching spire,  
Which gives back to the sun his same look of red fire,  
Where the arches and columns are gorgeous within,  
And the walls seem as pure as a soul without sin—  
Go down the long aisle! see the rich and the great,  
In the pomp and the pride of their worldly estate!  
Walk down in your patches and find if you can,  
Who opens a pew to a moneyless man!

Go look to your Judge, in his dark-dropping gown,  
With the scales wherein law weigheth equity down;  
And he frowns on the weak and he smiles on the strong,  
And he punishes right whilst he justifies wrong!  
Where Juries, their lips on the Bible have laid,  
To render a verdict they've already made—  
Go there in the Court-room and find if you can,  
Any law for the cause of a moneyless man!

Go look in the Banks, where mammon has hold  
His hundreds and thousands of silver and gold—  
Where safe from the hands of the starving and poor,  
Lies piled upon pile of the glittering ore—  
Walk up to your counters, and there you may stay  
Till your limbs grow old and your hairs grow gray,  
And you'll find at the Banks not one of the clan  
Has money to lend to a moneyless man!

Then go to your hotel! No roven has fed  
The wife, who has suffered too long for her bread—  
Kneel down by her pallet, and kiss the death-frost  
From the lips of the angel, your poverty lost—  
Then turn in your agony, upward to God,  
And bless, while it smiles you the chastening rod,  
And you'll find, at the end of your life's little span,  
There's a welcome above, e'en for a moneyless man!

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rily laughing; "I wish my dog Ponto was here: wouldn't he jump! Never mind, Oscar; they will all be converted to oil yet; I'm going to stand by thy Oscar, mother Allison; you are all so dry and prosy! I he is the only fresh life of the place; I like enthusiastic folks with a solid cranium, like Oscar and our Jessie. O, I do wish Jessie was here! wouldn't we have a romp with Ponto!"

Now for friend Martindale's letter to Jane: I glad to hear from thee again. I really did not know or imagine that my letters deserve the character they give them; on the contrary when I keep one of them on hand a day or two, if I read it, it almost always goes into the fire, so that if they want to continue to like them; never read any of them more than once. I always dread sitting down to write, but once I have begun it is pleasant enough; yet, somehow when the spirit has gone off and the mind has cooled down, the product seems wild and tame, extravagant and flat. Does these letters to you? These remembrances how much was written in prose and verse some years ago on Duality? I am sure of myself that there are at least two of me and sometimes more. I am not speaking of the old Adam, and the new one, but two old Adams and two new in everybody [that is orthodox]. But in all our thinking the mind is never in one part only; however the air may stand out, there is, when we listen, always heard the sound, far or near, of more than one other part, so that there is a mystery to us in our own hearts—who are they, and how many that live there? and what are they to us, ourselves or twin spirits of ours? are they those that live, or those that do not? is it all an echo around the heart's walls of our own voice, or is the real speech of many other selves within us? or how are we to account for the many-chorded harmony and the not uncommon dissonance within?

And now with reference to a subject somewhat branching out from the above; I want to advise thee and Gavin to have nothing further to do with seeking oil, gold or anything else by Psychometry, because it can, as I think, only lead to loss. I don't mean to say anything against that which we have repeatedly proved true in itself; I have no doubt you and Jessie see accurately all you describe, and yet it is not like reading the description of a disease in a medical book. The description is clear, full of plain marks and striking signs; and yet when we meet the disease we cannot tell whether it is this or that. You see the oil or gold by clairvoyance, but it still remains to identify its place in the vision with its place in the world. Here is the difficulty, and with the best Psychometry one may spend a lifetime and find nothing; for to turn over many feet in depth, even an acre is no short business. Unless there is something which I have never heard of to obviate this difficulty, surely the less you have to do with such plans the better. Think well of it, and don't let brother Gavin lose his money on anything doubtful. Now do excuse me for speaking out so freely; I have no apology except our friendship. Doubtless the visions connected with so much gold filling the house are beautiful, and perhaps not without a certain ennobling influence; but the lowest vision are those of truth, and the highest state of mind is attained when we glitter to be gone, and give a manly welcome to severe Reality. Imagination is the noblest power we possess, and yet, the most damaging of any to the whole spirit, when misapplied. Its legitimate business is to give a spiritual form, light and color to fact, dimly seen truth, and not to deck out the earthly. Ah, this certainly condemns myself; but friend Jane, we both have imagination more than many others, and we both use it, perhaps on many occasions, below its heavenly nature; and the natural punishment for that is that we believe in the reality of what we have dressed up by its power.

While here we might as well look into the Perley Water Cure, the patients of which are all gone, but a number of persons of both sexes are gathered around the dining table, whereon is being served a sumptuous meal. What a medley of dishes! soup, fish, oysters, roast-beef, boiled beef, beef-steak pie, apple pudding, rice pudding, pies, jams, pickles, nuts, fruits, tea and coffee. Dr. Perley's face is flushed, probably with eating and talking.

"A little more beef? pudding then? It is the only basis of a true society," he observed to a lady on his right.

Now Dr. Perley did not mean that either beef or pudding was the only basis of true society, though the value of those articles in the animal economy seemed fully appreciated by all at the table, who had embraced the idea of communism with a view to its practice; to this it was that Dr. Perley referred.

"You propose Mr. Branscombe," continued the Dr. "to have the Unitary dwelling on the rise of ground near the creek, I believe?"

Mr. Branscombe was a wealthy farmer who, with those around Dr. Perley's table, had become what was termed by thousands a "Crystallization."

We are but the nucleus yet," replied Mr. Branscombe; "we number but nineteen in all, including you, your mother and sister Kate. Yes, I propose to put up on the knoll of which you speak, a building large enough for two hundred people to live in comfortably."

"Meantime we must do as we can," said the Doctor; "We'll join you in a month; I'll be your physician and business manager; I'm just the man needed; you don't exactly approve of Water Cure, but then we'll arrange all that satisfactory; there is more or less good in all systems of medicines; we are all but scholars, and hope to learn as long as we live."

This idea seemed to give general satisfaction being greeted by exclamations of "that's so!" "I hope so," etc., etc.

So Dr. Perley, or the Perley Water Cure has, "in the very nick of time," as he graphically expressed it, become a convert to Communism! Mrs. Perley, however, for the first time in our acquaintance is perfectly silent, not a remark passing her lips. It is the last hope, the last straw to the drowning man. In her heart she despised the whole scheme and every individual connected with it. Equality!—the very word was an abomination to her. "Ignorant farmers! crazy fanatics!" she thought; "if I had but a thousand dollars I would not look at them for a moment."

"But what can we do?" urged Dr. Perley, when alone with his mother; "for every bite eaten to day we went in debt; we are living on credit every day of our lives; I can't pay the rent, and can do nothing else than join them."

"Such low bred people!"

"You are mistaken mother. One would scarcely think you an American, or living under a Republican form of government; equality is the very element of the Nation. 'Low bred.' Ha, ha! I would not like them to hear you. However, they are good, which can't be said of all the world. Mr. Branscombe is a very intelligent man; I know he is a plain farmer, but he is rich and unselfish (an unusual combination,) and wishes to share all he possesses (which is considerable) with us and with those friends of his. I believe in Socialism; what could I do without it, just now? They are going to build a Water Cure, they say, though they want more than water as a curative agent; they shall have it—ha, ha! Capital idea my superb mother! you shall be mistress of the Water Cure establishment. Come, don't be so savage about those lunatics, as you call them; we shall be all right, only have patience for a while. They may not be equal to my superb mother—ha, ha! but they are some of the salt of the earth, nevertheless. I am really converted, mother, to Communism."

While we have been visiting the house on the hill, Dr. Perley and the Perley Water Cure, the pipe in the Battlement oil well has been driven into the ground thirty-five feet! What has become of the light sandstone seen by Jessie and Jane? Why, it has turned out to be light sand, minus the stone! Now what of Psychometry? Why Jane and Gavin are convinced it cannot recognize rock. The well, however, must go on, for the rock is somewhere below, and the lake of oil also; hence another length of pipe is added. Hand power, however, is too slow now, and the work too hard for human sinew; for as the depth increases, so does the difficulty of driving the pipe, a stroke which at ten feet deep would drive it an inch, now sending it down more than one-eighth of an inch. Accordingly a horse and suitable tackle is obtained, the rope fastened to the whiplike, being so arranged that by driving the horse seventy or eighty yards, the heavy block is raised about thirty feet and suddenly let fall on the pipe.

Soon they came to quicksand where it took sixteen to thirty, and in one place even sixty strokes to the inch; moreover, the half fluid character of that singular substance caused it to rush up into the pipe, thereby much increasing the labor of "sand pumping," in which operation Gavin became quite expert. He also constituted himself driver, following the horse and to day after day, sometimes gaining but five inches from sun-rise to sun-down. After passing several feet through the quicksand, they came to a stratum of a different character, and the joyful news would suddenly be called out by one of the men in the derrick, that the last stroke had sent down the pipe half an inch! "That is good," Gavin would say, and the low marshy ground around him suddenly became interesting, and the dull monotony of "toting," to-and-fro after the horse received a pleasant stimulus.

Jane and Jessie at the commencement daily visited the scene of operations, but for some time past have been satisfied to learn the result on Gavin's return home at night; but since the pipe was past the quicksand visit the well three times a week. A greasy appearance somewhat resembling a "show of oil" is occasionally manifested in the products of the sand-pump, much to the edification of gentlemen attached to canal boats who, attracted by the appearance of the derrick, and impelled by a natural interest to know what church that steep-like structure might denote, occasionally visited the derrick as their weary horses tugged along on the adjacent tow path.

"That must be an exceedingly interesting occupation," Jessie remarked from her seat on a log near the well-beaten path so often travelled by Gavin and the horse (or, rather the horse and Gavin); "how are the mighty fallen! look at his bald sun-burned head, no hat, grizzled beard, uncut since the well was commenced! 'Ha, ha! look at the mud! why he is verily baptized with it! What a wonderful oil merchant!'"

"I shall not allow young ladies," replied Gavin, "to come here to depreciate my honorable occupation; the mud will brush off, my beard can be trimmed, and when this bottom land is suddenly inundated with oil, it will be my turn to laugh."

"How deep is the pipe now?" asked Jessie.

We have gone eighteen inches to-day, so we are down sixty-one feet," replied Gavin.

Just then one of the men came out of the derrick and said that it had only moved one inch for seventy strokes.

"Why it must have struck rock," all exclaimed at once.

Now hope began to make their hearts palpitate; the driving was suspended and all gathered around the pipe. On the sand-pumps being brought into requisition the result indicated what they supposed to be hardpan.

"Probably touched a small boulder," said Gavin at last; "let us go to work again." The remainder of that day only enabled them to go an inch deeper.

Rock was supposed to be very near, "hardpan" being always next to rock, and seldom

more than a foot or two in thickness. Hardpan is said to be intermediate between rock and not rock. So that night a very hopeful letter was written home giving the "well" news. They laughed, talked and built castles as large and grand as any ever created by Oscar. The earnest, sage Gavin entered into the spirit of the occasion, and greater variety or more diversified shades, oil never made on any sunny waters than played on their mental visions that night.

"If it should be necessary," said Gavin as their merriment subsided, "we will put the pipe down one hundred feet. It is very expensive, but if as much oil is there as you say, it would pay to put down a well five hundred feet. We have gone into the oil business, and we will not give it up until it has been thoroughly tried, or until our funds have given out."

Six weeks passed away—no rock yet! The pipe is now eighty-five feet below the surface; but a quiet steady faith in the oil lying below, kept their hearts warm and their faces bright. They have not realized as soon as they expected, several months having worn away without any definite promise of a tangible result; their money, too, has dwindled considerably, but they are by no means doubters; no! they feel as confident of ultimate success, provided the pipe is as safely landed on the rock, as they are that the sun shines. Jane and Jessie often laugh at the early expectations and at the idea of their securing millions all cut and dried without any difficulties.

Their house in the village was a beautiful place. A large flower garden was on one side, roses in profusion climbing over the front and side porches; on the other was a lawn adorned with shrubs and sprinkled with flowers, a kitchen garden being at the rear. This house they intended to buy when they struck oil, because it would make such a delightful country home. Of course they would travel very extensively, and what a charming place this would be to return to as a place of rest! "Mother would like it exceedingly," said Jessie; let us send for her."

"Wait until we strike oil," replied Gavin; "then we will; I am afraid she would be too anxious if with us now."

"I think so too," said Jane; "but when oil is reached mother must come to rejoice with us."

During this period of suspense Jane's dream of philanthropy was ever present to her. She looked calmly at the obstacles pointed out by Gavin, many of which she had herself thought of; but none of them discouraged her, believing, as she did, that being anticipated they could be over come or avoided by suitable measures being taken at the outset. She would, she thought, begin with a fruit-farm and a few families including ladies married and single; the children could be readily trained to a beautiful, healthy and remunerative occupation; one or two experienced gardeners could be employed to teach and superintend; cottages should be built for the accommodation of those engaged; she would keep it in operation, paying weekly for labor, until their surplus earnings on liberal wages would enable the undertaking to become self-supporting and independent. Fruit put up in glass jars was in great and increasing demand, and it was comparatively immaterial whether the land was near a city market or not, as such fruit would bear carriage well, both in reference to time and expense, so that though it might be raised in Kansas, it would find remunerative sale, even in sea-board cities, should it be requisite to send it that distance for ready disposal. Idle and mean persons of course would creep in, but not finding a congenial atmosphere would not be likely to remain long enough to do much harm; ridicule and denunciation she expected, and was therefore prepared to neutralize by living down. It may further be added that in all these thoughts and plans, as in everything else, Jessie was her sister and companion.

"We will work together," Jessie said; "I can attend to one part of the business, the other. I have never had what is commonly called a 'hobby,' but have been wishing for one all my life, and now here it is, and just the thing, for this is something we can both do, and together." Jane realized that this union was strength, for Jessie suggested so many good ideas in the details of their preliminary operations, that Jane, with her small self-esteem felt how incomplete, how weak she would be without Jessie.

"I would have a school," said Jessie, "in connection with a fruit farm, where children might be trained aught from the commencement, physical culture being made quite as much a part of their education as the study of arithmetic, geography, or grammar. With such material as would thus be rendered available for its support, the institution would be built on a foundation so firm that not all the blasts from dwarfed bodies, and consequently dwarfed intellects with their sickly, effeminate ideas could ever destroy it."

We cannot follow those sisters through all their talks and suggestions; we cannot follow them in their country wanderings and listen to their voices, nor can we sit beside them on their rose-shaded porches and catch their silent, musings aspirations on their spoken projects, desires and hopes for humanity; but if ever a spark of the benign, loving spirit of our great Father was reflected in his children it was manifested in those two sisters.

Week after week passed away at the derrick in the same dull round; two or three

large blocks had been worn out, by constantly thumping and successively replaced by new ones. Gavin was tired of that old horse track, of which he knew nearly every inch, and sometimes felt cast down; for he was unused to monotonous physical toil, "around and around like a horse in a mill," which, though it had a beginning, seemed equally remote from either a middle or an end.

In one of these moods he was found by Jane and Jessie one afternoon, the latter having a letter in her hand. As she sat down on the accustomed log she said, "Do let that poor old horse rest while I read part of this letter to thee, Gavin; Jane received it today from friend Martindale."

"Well, I'll listen," said Gavin.

"I hope your well will be a good one, and that the oil will come in such streams that barrels enough cannot be got to hold it, nor boats enough to take it away; and that all the coopers in the country will give up in despair. Many a dialogue I have had in anticipation with you both; many a time, too, have I seen in imagination Jessie's bright hair; what a contrast to my beard which it pleases her to extol! Yes, I think her a beauty too, and quite a queen in her ways; very gracious, arbitrary—then friendly quite like the rest of us, and then again she stoops down not a few miles to talk to us. O friend Jessie, how does she manage all this? Then friend Gavin is driving the horse, and is tired of it really! I do not wonder at that, for it is not enough to keep him awake and too much to let him sleep. No matter—serves him right for not going to meeting on Sunday, and taking his share of it with the rest of his suffering brethren, who can sympathize a little more with those of us who hear sermons about as smart as his horse's performances. O, if I was only there to see him! it would be funnier by far than John Gilpin. O, to see that bushy beard and big head, that mass of innovation and philosophy, solemnly studying the horse's heels all day long! do you give him some lager beer? \* \* \* What plans have you in your heads, if the oil does not come to your satisfaction? I am glad that you take me into account if it does succeed, and that I am to visit you."

"If I can come I will, even should water turn out more plentiful than oil, for I will neither think less of you for being poor, nor for failing in the practical application of psychometry; surely neither money, nor psychometric power, nor intellectual greatness make any basis for friendship. But I suppose you mean that you will have a plenty of money and nothing to do, and that you will make me eat everything good, with a horse and buggy ad libitum for digestive purposes?"

How Gavin did laugh at this sketch of himself! "Solemnly studying the horse's heels! ha, ha!" On wanting the horse and Gavin in their monotonous duties, one of the ladies occasionally asking, which heel he was studying at that particular moment.

"I am studying friend Martindale," replied Gavin; "I rather think I discover a pre-disposition about him to \* \* \* (here he looked with pretended seriousness importance to Jessie.)"

"To what?" asked Jessie.

"Why I think I perceive a growing tendency to \* \* \* O, well! perhaps it would not be prudent to say farther."

"Thee shall say it, do."

"Well then, I think he is in love with our Jessie."

"Oh, oh! ridiculous!—the old bach in love with me! I should think thee had been studying horse's heels, and nothing else."

"Straws show which way the wind blows," was Gavin's reply.

"I respect him more than I do any other man living, but he will never be my husband."

"She has the true basis of love, then; has she not, Gavin?"

"O, nonsense!" interrupted Jessie, he will never marry any woman."

(To be Continued.)

"It is somewhere told in Eastern story That those who loved once bloomed as flowers On the same stem, amid the glory Of Eden's green and fragrant bowers; And that, though parted off by fate, Yet when the glow of life is ended, Each soul again shall find its mate, And in one bloom again be blended."

The Gentleman.

I have stated that the forbearing use of power is a rare attribute of the gentleman; indeed, as we may say that power—physical, moral, purely social, or political—is one of the touch-stones of genuine gentleness, the power which the husband has over his wife, in which we must include the impunity with which he may be unkind to her; the father over his children, and the old over the young, and the young over the aged; the officer over his men, the master of a vessel over his hands, the magistrate over the citizen, the employer over the employed, the rich over the poor, the educated over the unlettered, the experienced over the confiding, the keeper of a secret over him whom it touches, the gifted over an ordinary man, even the clever over the silly—the forbearing and inoffensive use of all this power or authority, or a total abstinence from it where the case admits it, will show the gentleman in a plain light. Every traveler knows at once whether a gentlemanly or rude officer is searching his trunk. But the use of power does not only form a touch-stone; even the manner in which an individual enjoys certain advantages over the others is a test. No gentleman can boast of the delights of superior health in the presence of a languid patient, or speak of great good luck when in hearing of a man who by habitual misfortune. Let the man who happily enjoys the advantages of a pure and honest life, speak of it to a fallen fellow-being, and you will soon see whether he be, in addition to his honesty, a gentleman or not. The gentleman does not needlessly and unnecessarily remind an offender of a wrong he may have committed against him. He cannot only forgive, he can forget; and he strives for that nobleness of soul and manliness of character which impart sufficient strength to let the past be truly the past. He will never use the power which the knowledge of an offense, a false step, or an unfortunate exposure of weakness, gives him, merely to enjoy the power of humiliating his neighbor.

Natural Religion.

BY REV. HERMAN ESPER.

A Sermon Delivered at Pines Opera House, Minneapolis, Minn., March 27, 1870.

I have announced to speak to-night on the subject of Natural Religion. In Europe and America at the present time, there is a very large body of men and women who hold that religion is natural, and that all there is connected therewith that claims to be supernatural is either deception or delusion. I do not propose to-night to give reasons for believing in Natural Religion, but only to indicate what we mean by Natural Religion.

I may define Natural Religion in these words: It is the effort which man makes to perfect himself. Not the effort that God makes to perfect him, but the effort to perfect himself by such means as nature has provided.

The Christian scheme as held and taught, is unsatisfactory to thousands of hearts. Though there are infinite variations of mine-though, there is one general scheme of religion common to all who build on the Bible as an infallible book. That scheme is this: God created the world. He made all things perfect. He made man and woman upright. The serpent tempted, and the man and woman both fell from their perfect state. As Adam and Eve were the father and mother of the human family, all mankind fell with them. Then God pronounced a curse upon all creatures of his hand. But in process of time he determined to save a portion of the race. In order to succeed he must die himself, as no one but an Infinite Being could atone for an infinite sin. Therefore God came down from heaven, took the form of a man, lived and preached in Palestine, and was crucified on the cross. By this death of Deity the atonement was made, and it became possible for man to be saved on condition that they would believe on the name of Jesus.

This scheme of salvation leads one to suppose that God was defeated in his original purpose. He intended man to be upright here on the earth, but the serpent defeated the intention. We cannot suppose that God was ever defeated. And if God desired to remedy the evil, it seems unaccountable that he should not adopt a more speedy and efficient course. Why allow Adam and Eve to live and bring forth other beings doomed by the curse of God? Why allow millions and millions to be born, only to become miserable forever? Why not even go back that and crush the serpent's head before he entered the garden? If God did not desire the fall of man and the curse of the world, why did he not prevent it in the first place? Why the flood to destroy mankind, keeping a few to re-people the earth with just such beings as were destroyed? And when, in process of time, he thought it wise to make a revelation of his will, why did he not make it so that it would be distinctly understood? Why not make it to all? If God is no respecter of persons, why choose the Jews and deal with them more kindly than with others? And how could the death of Deity atone for a crime against Deity? The crucifixion of Jesus is said to have been the greatest crime of the world; and yet by that crime the justice of Deity was satisfied. By the death of Deity, Deity became again compassionate. The whole scheme is so foreign to what we would expect of a perfect and merciful God that many minds have found it impossible to accept it. No persons on earth reject the simple teachings of Jesus. They reject this complicated and unnatural scheme which men preach in his name.

I do not know whether it is generally understood—I presume it is to this audience—that this same propitiatory scheme is taught in all countries of the world. The Mohammedan scheme is essentially the same as this, only in that, Mohammed must be received as the Prophet of God, and the means to propitiate Deity are slightly different. The Hindu system is the same. The Zoroastrian system is the same in principle. There is no country on earth where the same general system is not adopted. In all countries it is thought necessary to propitiate Deity, as though Deity were offended and could be appeased by sacrifice or penance. The Jewish system said that God would be appeased with the sacrifice of animals. Human beings are sometimes offered in sacrifice in India. The old Druids offered human sacrifices. There seems to have been similar ideas in the time of Abraham. The old patriarch himself understood God to command the sacrifice of his son. In the Christian system the offering was greater than in the others—not animals, not men, but God. In the old heathen mythology the same idea prevailed as in the Christian. Prometheus was regarded as both God and man. He came down from heaven and became incarnate for men. He was put to death; he descended into hell; he rose again and ascended into heaven. The play of "Prometheus Bound" was acted in the theatre at Athens five hundred years before Christ. Prometheus was a divine sufferer; the savior of men; a man of sorrows. In the dying moment he felt that he was forsaken; only a chorus of faithful women remained to witness his dying agonies. At his death the frame of nature became convulsed; earth shook; rocks were rent; graves opened;—the same as reported at the death of Jesus. In the Hindu religion, which is one thousand years older than Christianity, and which holds to-day one-third the human family, there is a Trinity of Gods—Brahma, the creator, Vishnu, the restorer; and Siva, the destroyer. Many times is Vishnu said to have descended to earth; become incarnate in human form; worked stupendous miracles for the good of man; and then returned to his father, Brahma.

Now, on this received hypothesis, religion is a super-natural effort by Deity to save men after they had become corrupt by nature. It is an effort expedient of Deity.

Our view is that there has never been a fall; that man was made a religious being in the first place; that religion is not an expedient to save fallen men, but a natural provision to secure their elevation, purity and happiness.

The claim which we make for religion is, that it is as natural to man as music, or invention, or science, or any other thing for which he is distinguished, or to which he has attained.

Natural Religion differs from the supernatural in regard to the present condition of man in the end to be accomplished, and the means to accomplish that end. The present condition of man is not that of total depravity, but that of a finite, imperfect being, capable of

endless growth and improvement. The end to be accomplished is the perfect and harmonious development of the human soul. Heaven will be found in proportion as improvement is made. The means to accomplish this are knowledge of and obedience to the laws of God. The motives are the penalties and rewards of nature.

When we look at a child we neither look upon a being totally depraved nor perfectly pure. In that child is the germ of perfection. Under the laws which God has ordained for its growth, it is sure to attain the perfect end of its being. It is sure to make mistakes—sure to sin; but it is equally sure to be cured of both. God's time is long enough—God's laws are perfect enough.

A man believing in the common theory of religion looks upon a little child as utterly depraved. To save that child, it must be brought out of its nature. The man believing in Natural Religion looks upon that little child as the child of God, brought into existence for happiness in this life and that which is to come. That happiness is to be secured by learning and obeying the laws of the Heavenly Parent.

To the question, Where did present religious ideas originate, if not in heaven? We answer they originated with man. As man has sought for truth in everything else, he has sought for truth in religion; and as he has been mistaken in everything else, he has been mistaken in religion. His idea of Deity has been drawn from his knowledge of man. Was a king offended? He required the imprisonment, the banishment, or the death of the offender. He would be satisfied for some offenses with a small punishment; with others nothing less than blood would satisfy. From this knowledge of man was drawn the idea of God. He would be satisfied with penance and banishment or blood. And, as human nature is the same the world over, these ideas are found the world over. Men of the same degree of culture and temperament have, in substance, the same religion the world over.

This reaching after the infinite among the finite has brought the present supernatural system. Just as all people believed, at first, that the earth was flat, and the stars near at hand, and the earth the only important object in the universe; just as they made imperfect implements, they made imperfect religions. If we found mistake in all things beside—growth in all—struggles, attempts and failures, and found religion an exception, we would have greater reason to think that it came down from heaven; or, at any rate, came from somewhere beside from human nature. But we find the same imperfection, the same growth, the same diversity of opinion in religion as upon all other subjects; and all this leads us to conclude that it comes from the same source; not heaven, but human souls struggling for light, and good, and truth.

It is, I know, a very general opinion that Christianity is just what it always was; the same yesterday, to-day and forever; the same in every country under the sun. Dr. Barnes says: "Christianity had no growth. It became fixed at once, and it has not changed. It has no doctrines now which it had not eighteen hundred years ago, and it had none then which it has not now, for it has lost none by the way. It is a fixed religion, not susceptible of change." I suppose this to be a common opinion concerning the Christian religion.

If a man were to be brought blindfolded from the heart of Asia to this city to learn Christianity, what would he learn? Does Christianity teach the doctrine of the Trinity? Some say yes; some no. Does it teach endless punishment? Some say yes; some no. Is conversion necessary? All are agreed. Are there elect men, or is the door open to all? Is private interpretation of the Bible admissible? Is baptism necessary? The Universalist Church claims to be a Christian church. The Catholic also claims to be a Christian church. Is Christianity the same in both? Indeed, the Christianity of one is as unlike the Christianity of the other as Mohammedanism is unlike Judaism. The Christianity of Calvin was as unlike that of Channing as the Philosophy of Plato was unlike the Paganism of Julian. You may find a man in China, who never heard the name of Jesus, more like a Christian in the Methodist church than two Christians of the same society will be like one another. If Christianity is fixed and rigid, not capable of alteration, then no two persons have got it. Christianity is one thing in one country; something else in another; one thing in one denomination; something else in another. It is not the same thing in any considerable number of individuals. It is true there is something which is common to all Christians. They all say: Obey the golden rule; do right; love God and one another. But this, which is common to all Christians, is also common to all men. This is no more Christianity than it is Judaism, or Brahminism, or any other "ism" in the wide world.

People sometimes are troubled to know how false systems of religion can make so much progress if human nature is good. The reason is that there are no systems false to the core. There is no religion in all, and this genuine religion is what gives vitality to all these systems. The morality, the justice, the reverence taught in all are sufficient to save. All religions are imperfect, but none are wholly false.

We look at a little child in its cradle. We say there is in that child the germ of music. The child's knowledge and enjoyment of music will depend on development. Nature has provided for this. There is in that child the germ of scholarship. The success to be attained will depend on the effort which the child shall make. Nature has made provision for this. We say there is in the child a germ of art, of invention, of taste, of all things to which men can attain. We ought also to say there is in that child the germ of religion. Nature has made provision for its religious supply. Its religion will not depend on miracle more than its education in science. Its religion will depend upon fidelity to religious wants. The child needs nothing save what can be obtained by obeying laws of nature; it will get nothing more. The struggles of the ages after religious light is like the struggle of ages after light on other subjects.

Natural Religion is the belief that God made all things right in the first place, and has never deviated from his plan. He has never had a contest with nobody. No person or power has prevented nor retarded his work. We learn of God by learning of na-

ture. The Christian scheme as held and taught, is unsatisfactory to thousands of hearts. Though there are infinite variations of mine-though, there is one general scheme of religion common to all who build on the Bible as an infallible book. That scheme is this: God created the world. He made all things perfect. He made man and woman upright. The serpent tempted, and the man and woman both fell from their perfect state. As Adam and Eve were the father and mother of the human family, all mankind fell with them. Then God pronounced a curse upon all creatures of his hand. But in process of time he determined to save a portion of the race. In order to succeed he must die himself, as no one but an Infinite Being could atone for an infinite sin. Therefore God came down from heaven, took the form of a man, lived and preached in Palestine, and was crucified on the cross. By this death of Deity the atonement was made, and it became possible for man to be saved on condition that they would believe on the name of Jesus.

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I do not know



sincerely thank you and I fully realize that the heart must have a place to rest and a home, in which it can bask in the sunlight of affection. Without this my heart would turn to ice, and life on earth become a curse. Farewell mother! now go, leave me for a time alone."

"You are a strange child but I suppose you must have every thing your own way to-day, so farewell for the present." Saying this she left the room, little dreaming that when next she looked upon her child she would be the bride of death. After the mother left the room, Ida dropped her head upon her hand and seemed absorbed in deep thought. She remained in this position for nearly an hour, then slowly rising clasping her hands and raising her eyes to heaven she said:

"I cannot change my purpose, better the sharp agony of an unnatural death, than to be compelled to drag out a miserable existence in the companionship of one that I can neither respect nor love. Oh Mother! Father! why did you insist upon this terrible sacrifice? Oh angels! why did you not stretch forth your strong arms to save? Oh God! of the helpless why have you been deaf to my cry? Pardon, pardon if I sin by opening the casket and thus let my spirit return to Thee. I cannot be false to the vow I have made. Oh! Thou who knowest life without love to be a curse, pardon and receive my spirit." Saying this, she took from a mahogany box a small vial containing a clear liquid and removing the cork she swallowed the contents as calmly as Socrates is said to have swallowed the hemlock, then placing herself upon the couch she fearlessly awaited the approach of the "King of terrors." It was a sad sight to see this young and beautiful maiden calmly resigning life; going out to try the realities of the unknown world, compelled by the strong hand of fate to break the golden thread of life and seek for a Home and true affection in the world beyond.

N. M. P.

### Abolition of Capital Punishment—Its Result in Michigan.

Capital punishment was abolished in the state of Michigan, in 1847. Nearly a quarter of a century has passed, time enough to satisfy the most conservative as to its effects, and to enable all to form a correct judgement as to the expediency of the law, and its adaptation to the demands of the state. If human life is less safe, if the horrible crime of murder has increased, as is fulminated from nearly every church pulpit; if the public mind has been demoralized, and LIFE so dear to all is sacred; let us at once retract our steps, and in accordance with the earnest prayers of the large majority of the clergy, again rear the Gallows, and invite the public to see re-enacted the horrid scenes of former years.

If, however, it be ascertained beyond question, that under this humanitarian law, crime has not increased, and human life is no less sacred, surely our successful experiment should be published to the world, that other governments may profit by our example. We find the following in the *Detroit Post*, which we publish for the purpose of inducing other states to abolish this relic of the dark ages. "The result of abolishing capital punishment in the State of Michigan fully justifies that change in the penal code of the State. All that the most strenuous advocates of severe punishment can ask is that a mitigation of it shall not tend to the increase of crime. Everything else cries trumpet-tongued in favor of humanity. If milder judgments cannot be proved guilty of murder, then the community is no worse for refusing to take life in order to establish the justice and the righteousness of its less savage mood. Prove satisfactorily and conclusively that it is unnecessary for the State to execute its criminals and those who clamor for blood, cannot in reason be longer heard. If a pound of flesh is all that the law requires for its vindication, every fiber of muscle, or atom more out of the palpitating body must, in the nature of the case, be a violation of both law and justice. Once prove that neither law, nor justice, nor public safety requires a pound, or an ounce, or a grain of flesh, and the State is morally bound to throw the knife away.

But not only has there been no increase in the convictions for murder, but on the whole a decided decrease. Out of sixty-three convicted committed to prison in 1848-49, five were committed for murder, or seven per cent. of the whole number. Out of 250 convicted committed in 1869, two were committed for murder, or eight-tenths of one per cent. of the whole. The average percentage of murderers to other convicts since 1847, when capital punishment was abolished, has been one and one-tenths per cent. But, during the first eleven years the percentage was two and seven-tenths; during the last eleven years, one and three-tenths, showing a decrease of nearly fifty per cent. in the number of murderers convicted, when the two periods are compared. In other words, the number of convictions for murder during the last eleven years has diminished nearly one-half, as compared with the first eleven years of the period that has elapsed since capital punishment was abolished. In other words again, these criminal statistics prove that murder has decreased since capital punishment was abolished!

Those who oppose that sort of punishment have a right to claim, therefore, that in Michigan not only has its abolition caused no increase of murder, but that under it murder has actually diminished. Until these statements are refuted by further experience, confinement for life in the State Prison is the severest penalty which will be inflicted upon murder in Michigan."

### Dr. Collyer's view of the Bible.

Robert Collyer, preached a sermon in Chicago, April 3d, subject *Infidelity*: In which he enunciated the following sentiments, not by any means new to Spiritualists, for such have been their teachings for the last twenty-two years, and for the bold enunciation of such views, they have had all manner of evil said of them. For the sake of truth, however, they have cheerfully worked on, until Dr. Collyer's is only one of many radical Unitarian pulpits, from which is now proclaimed not only the supremacy of reason over past revelations, but also the ministrations and communion of spirits. The work goes bravely on, and the day is not distant when the world shall come to a knowledge of the truth and spiritual freedom as brought to the world by the spiritualistic philosophy.

"Dr. Adam Clarke said, 'The doctrine that cannot stand the test of rational investigation cannot be true.' Here we touch, then, the first thing that the Unitarian insists upon in the Bible or hence. That he shall read with a good, clear, honest human insight and eyesight—shall say this is good and that is bad; this, and this is not true; this is inspired from above, and this from below; this I cannot understand, but I believe it; that I can understand, but cannot believe. So when a Psalmist said of Babylon: 'Blessed shall be he that taketh thy little ones and dasheth them against the stones' it was just as base and infernal a thing in its intention that he meant as this that our soldiers on the frontier have done in the murder of those Indian children—if that, indeed, be true, as I trust, for our good name and theirs, it is not. If it is, I stand with the philanthropist that some of our papers are sneering at, and declare it to be the basest thing that was ever done, that I know of, by the boys in blue. The Unitarian, in his acceptance of the Bible, insists that he is still a man, and as a man, is bound to judge and weigh and determine what is right and what is wrong there, as everywhere else. But what the Catholic gives up to the Church the bulk of Protestants give up to the scriptures. It is to them an infallible book. All they pretend to do is to find out what it means; and that is enough. They want no more. The dogma of infallibility, which the Bible never once claims for itself, is declared to be the condition of orthodoxy; and when we cannot receive it we are called infidels. We say this blind, unreasoning, and unreasonable worship of the Bible is, as Coleridge calls it, 'Bibliolatry'—as bad in its way as this giving in that we are witnessing just now to the infallibility of the Pope, and the chronic giving in that is always going on with the pale of Romanism to the infallibility of the Church. It takes away, we say, the free, full action of the man's own judgment. He is no longer a man, but a spiritual chattel. The Unitarian insists on being as much of a man, with as free a judgment and as honest a mind, when he reads the Bible as when he reads his morning paper."

stand, but cannot believe. So when a Psalmist said of Babylon: "Blessed shall be he that taketh thy little ones and dasheth them against the stones" it was just as base and infernal a thing in its intention that he meant as this that our soldiers on the frontier have done in the murder of those Indian children—if that, indeed, be true, as I trust, for our good name and theirs, it is not. If it is, I stand with the philanthropist that some of our papers are sneering at, and declare it to be the basest thing that was ever done, that I know of, by the boys in blue. The Unitarian, in his acceptance of the Bible, insists that he is still a man, and as a man, is bound to judge and weigh and determine what is right and what is wrong there, as everywhere else. But what the Catholic gives up to the Church the bulk of Protestants give up to the scriptures. It is to them an infallible book. All they pretend to do is to find out what it means; and that is enough. They want no more. The dogma of infallibility, which the Bible never once claims for itself, is declared to be the condition of orthodoxy; and when we cannot receive it we are called infidels. We say this blind, unreasoning, and unreasonable worship of the Bible is, as Coleridge calls it, 'Bibliolatry'—as bad in its way as this giving in that we are witnessing just now to the infallibility of the Pope, and the chronic giving in that is always going on with the pale of Romanism to the infallibility of the Church. It takes away, we say, the free, full action of the man's own judgment. He is no longer a man, but a spiritual chattel. The Unitarian insists on being as much of a man, with as free a judgment and as honest a mind, when he reads the Bible as when he reads his morning paper."

BAT CITY, Michigan, May 9th, 1870.  
DEAR AUNT—In view of my relation to the public as a spirit medium, I feel impelled to send you the following information:

Recently a man giving his name as G. J. McDougall, and representing himself as a Clairvoyant medium, stopped in Farmington, sought out the Spiritualists, and after telling how he had been swindled out of twelve dollars by a man claiming to be a spirit medium, he asked me to accompany him on his travels, he asked for money to help him (McD.) to reach Bay City where his brother, he said, resided. He obtained money and left; on the following Sunday he called on Spiritualists at Pontiac and did the same thing, next I hear of him arrived in this city, enquiring out Spiritualists, though avoiding me, and giving clairvoyant presentations of a frightful character, telling his story with the variation that his brother is in Ann Arbor, and taking money from Spiritualists to assist him to get there.

These facts directly from persons he took money from in the places stated, and I can give names in full if necessary. Now I deem it just towards all honest mediums, that every impostor, as a spirit medium, be summarily exposed. This man McDougall, nor any other person, has any right to come into the vicinity where honest mediums are laboring to bless those already persuaded of the truths of Spiritualism, as well as to persistently present and live out the principles of this glorious philosophy before a spiritual community. Please tell these things to your readers, that they may be protected from swindle by said G. J. McDougall, who is described as a man about five feet ten inches, slim, weight about 135 lbs, sandy whiskers, and apparently about thirty years of age. Several poor families might be supplied with the Aox, by the money which I know to have been taken by this man from Spiritualists.

M. A. ROOF.

We regret to be under the necessity of thus publicly calling attention to the misdeeds of any one, but justice to our friends throughout the whole country demand that such impostors as brother Roof refers to be exposed. Remember the description given. We do not like to suggest suspicion of all strangers, but we do think the time has come for Spiritualists to profit by past experiences and become more cautious in the encouragement given to persons representing themselves as Spiritualists and mediums. Particularly should they be cautious in the introduction of Speakers before the public, for in this direction not only do they suffer pecuniarily, but the cause is brought into disrepute. [Ed.]

### Branch County Circle.

We have received a letter from S. E. Giles secretary saying the quarterly meeting of above Circle will be held May 28th, and 29th, place not given, we presume Coldwater. Brother A. B. Whiting is expected to be present as the principal speaker.

### THE THREE KISSES.

I have three kisses in my life,  
So sweet and sacred unto me  
That now till death dwarest on them  
My lips shall kissless be.

One kiss was given in childhood's hour  
By one who never gave another,  
In life and death it still shall feel  
That last kiss of my mother.

The second burned my lips for years  
For years my wild heart reeled in bliss  
At every memory of the hour  
When my lips felt young Love's first kiss.

The last kiss of the sacred three,  
Had all the wo which ere can move  
The heart of woman—it was pressed  
Upon the dead lips of my love.

When lips have felt the dying kiss,  
And felt the kiss of burning love,  
And kissed the dead—then never more  
In kissing should they think to move.

Mrs. E. B. BROWNING.

### Grains of Truth dropped by the Angels for Humanity.

BY MRS. M. A. JEWETT. MEDIUM.  
The bitter experiences of the past, will yield to the soul ripened fruit to be gathered in the coming harvest.

Piteous appeals to heaven without works, will not secure happiness. Good deeds is the boat that gently glides through the channel of sorrow, to the haven of rest.

He who works for humanity builds his stairway heaven-ward.  
Truth is stranger than fiction. Spirit-land, the real, is fiction to the materialist.

Every age has its *Christ*, look well to it ye reformers that ye defy not one, or many.  
Purity is the silver cable by which angels transmit thoughts from the ocean of wisdom to the world of mortals.

Joy and Sorrow like twin sisters blend together, even as the stormy night and cloudless day clasp hands.  
The precious jewels that thy soul covets to keep, shall be safely set in the casket of Divinity, their united light will throw a greater lustre over the darkened sea of life.

Honor and Justice is man's noblest prerogative. Love and loyalty to her own soul is woman's birthright.  
We linger to remind you that the absent return for their daily bread, 'tis thy love that nourishes the spirit.

Be comforted, Oh ye parents whose darlings have been gathered into heaven's fold; the path their feet hath trod, is made clearer and brighter, that ye may see the way to follow.  
Honor and Justice is man's noblest prerogative. Love and loyalty to her own soul is woman's birthright.

## Children's Department.

ANNIE D. CRIDGE, Editor.

All communications for this Department should be addressed to the Editor, at No. 16 Philadelphia Row, 11th St., East, Washington, D. C.

Prepare thy Child early with instruction, and season his mind with the maxims of Truth.—*Antient Brahminic Sutra.*

### School.

BEFORE SCHOOL.  
"Quarter of nine! Boys and girls, do you hear?"  
"One more backstreet, then, be quick, mother dear!"

"Where is my luncheon-box?" "Under the shelf, just in the place where you left it yourself!"  
"I can't say my table!" "No, did my nap?"  
"One kiss for mamma and sweeties in her lap!"  
"Be good, my dear!" "Hurry up, '9 times '9's 81!"  
"Take your mittens!" "All right, 'Hurry up, Bill; let's run!"

With a slam of the door, they are off, girls and boys, and the mother draws breath in the lull of the noise.

### AFTER SCHOOL.

"Don't wake up the baby! Come gently, my dear!"  
"O, mother! I've torn my new dress; just look here! I'm sorry! I was climbing the wall!"  
"O, mother! my map was the nicest of all!"  
"And Nelly, in spilling, went up to the head!"  
"O, say! Can I go on the hill with my sled?"  
"I've got such a goodie!" "The teacher's unfair!"  
"Be patient, worm-mother, they're growing up fast; These nursery whirlwinds, not long to be lost; A still, lonely house would be far worse than noise; Rejoice and be glad in your brave girls and boys!"  
L. D. NICHOLS.

### WILLIE AND JESSIE.

#### CHAPTER XV.

"Here we are, mamma," Willie exclaimed as he and Jessie bounded into the sitting-room about dusk in the evening; here we are, ready for the next chapter; come mamma!"  
"Ha, ha! you have very good memories, I see," replied their mother, who looked up pleasantly at her darlings; "where have you been? what have you been doing, and who have you seen since you went out? Come, tell your mother something. Why should I tell you stories all the time and never hear anything from you?" How covered with smiles was that mothers face, and how Willie and Jessie's face smiled all over, as they stood in the middle of the floor and looked at her!

"I have been talking," said Willie, to some of the girls and boys in this row about Adam; and they say Adam was the first man, and that God made him out of dust, and that God took a rib bone out of Adam's side and then God made a wife for Adam out of the rib bone!" As Willie said this he laughed and took his seat close to his mother.

"And what did you say?" asked Willie's mother.

"I told them that was only a made up story, like Jack the Giant killer story, or Goody two shoes, and that it was not true, then they said I was a bad boy to say that, for it was all in the Bible; but I puzzled them, I asked them how they knew that the Bible was true; and then they said because God wrote the Bible; then I said, but how do you know that God wrote the Bible? Did I not puzzle them, mamma? that is a good question to ask—how do you know it is so? they do not know what to say sometimes when I ask them that."

"Mamma," said Jessie, "Tom Pain and Katy Smith said that all the little babies are wicked."

"Yes," said Willie, "all the boys and girls say that babies are born wicked, and that they are all had and born bad, and do not love to be good; and Kate Smith says that it is all because Adam's wife, that God made out of his rib-bone, ate an apple. You don't believe it, do you mamma?"

"No, my boy; I know better than to believe that story; I know that darling little babies smile more than they cry, and that nothing could be more innocent and pretty than a baby; and I know that all children tell more truths than lies, and do more kind, good deeds than bad deeds; that my Willie and Jessie, and every other boy and girl, think more good, kind thoughts than bad, unkind thoughts."

"Then," said Willie, "does not that prove that babies and children have more good than bad about them?"

"Certainly it does my boy," replied his mother.

"And so," continued Willie, "that proves the story about our being born all bad because the woman that was made out of a rib-bone, ate an apple, is not true."

"Just so, my boy," you are right, said his mother; "you blessed boy! I am glad you use your reason in this way."

"All babies are good," said Jessie, "are they not mamma? Is it bad to cry?"

"Little babies cannot talk; so how would we know when baby was in pain, if it could not cry? how would we know when it wanted anything, if it could not cry?"

"Babies have to cry," said Jessie; "that is not wicked; blessed little baby must cry when it is hurt and when it wants something."

"You are a little philosopher, Jessie," said her mother, "and I am very glad to find that neither of you believe that silly, simple story about children being born wicked."

"I don't believe that," said Jessie.

"Of course you do not," said her mother; "you both know better than believe that babies are born wicked, or that all little boys and girls love to do wrong, better than they love to do right."

"I love right," said Jessie.

member that their father was going into business with the money; very well. Just as soon as he was able he ordered a wagon—a covered wagon to be made; and then he bought a donkey, a fine large donkey; and his name was Billy. Before the donkey was brought home, they had a brick stable built in the yard. Rob and Bessie watched the men at work on the stable with great delight. Now they were going to have a stable of their own, she told the men her father had bought a donkey, and his name was Billy, she was going to have a side-saddle of her own, and sometimes she would go riding.

"At last it was finished; the door was put on, and all was done; then Billy was brought home. What a large donkey he was! Rob held him by the bridle in the yard while his father carried him all over with a curry-comb. Bessie looked on, also her mother and the baby."

By-and-by Billy was put in his fine, new stable; then they gave him some oats and hay, while Rob and Bessie patted him on the neck, and told him he was the prettiest and finest donkey that ever did live."

"What did you buy the donkey and wagon for?" asked Bessie and Rob of their father.

"I will tell you little questioners he replied; "My lungs are very weak, and I never can again attend to any kind of business that would keep me in a house or a building all the time. I must do something that will keep me in the open air. I must be out of doors; so I am going to travel with my donkey and wagon and sell dress goods, ladies shawls (dry goods) and every thing of that kind. I shall call at the farm houses along the road wherever I may go, and in this way I shall make money to buy my little Rob and Bessie shoes and boots, dinner and supper."

Then Rob and Bessie laughed, "and," said Rob, "you will take us with you sometimes, will you not?"

"Have you money enough asked Bessie, to buy every thing you are going to sell?"

"Your mother has," said her father; "it is your mother's money that is going to do all this."

"It is our money, little Bessie," said her mother; "your money, Rob's money, papa's money, and blessed baby's money; only papa is going to use it for the good of all."

"That is the way," said Rob.

"Yes that is it," said Bessie; "it is our money, and we have one hundred sovereigns. Oh, oh! we are very rich! you and papa and baby and Rob, and I am rich too; and you made us rich, did you not mamma?"

"But papa will make us richer by using the one hundred sovereigns," replied his mother.

"That is so," said Rob, "hip, hip, hurrah, for one hundred sovereigns!"

One morning, about four days after the arrival of the donkey in his new stable, their father drove up to the door with Billy and his new wagon. "Rob and Bessie were looking out of the large double window and their mother, with the baby in her arms, was standing behind them looking out too.

"Here it comes! here comes our new wagon!" said Rob; oh, oh! how fine it goes! does not Billy look grand?" then down stairs they ran to the front door.

"Here you are," said their father, "now what do you think of Billy? don't you think he lifts the wagon finely? Here Bessie let me put you into the wagon, and as he said this he lifted her on the front seat."

"I am going to load the wagon," continued their father; "then I must say good-bye to my little folks, and away I will go to sell flannel, calico dresses, silk handkerchiefs, worsted, and I know not what besides."

Then package after package was brought down stairs; little Bess was lifted to the pavement, the wagon was loaded, then good bye was said by all, and away went their father with his donkey and wagon, on his first journey as a peddler, only he was not called a peddler in England but a *hawker*."

Tought to have told you that their father left on Monday morning and that he did not return until Thursday night. That seemed a long time to Rob and Bessie and their mother. Three mornings they must awake and find no father there; three long, long days and nights and not see their father. Ah, those three days seemed very long to Rob and Bessie; but at last Thursday morning came; and were they not glad? their father would be home that day; perhaps he would bring something from the beautiful country; donkey Billy would be tired, but he should be carried all over with the curry-comb; he should have some nice oats and hay, and sleep in his new brick stable! oh, they knew Billy would be as glad to get home as their father!

About four o'clock in the afternoon, just as they were going to sit down to tea, they took one more look from the large double window; and there was their father just driving up to the door, "father is here, father has come!" Rob and Bessie shouted; oh, he has brought a goose! no, it is a turkey! no he has two geese, a gray goose and a white goose."

And in less time than it has taken me to tell you all this, they were down stairs laughing and talking with their father, and then Rob helped his father to carry his goods into the house, while Bessie came down stairs with a little open basket, which she said was going to be Billy's bread-basket, that her mother was going to put all the pieces of bread left from the table into that basket for Billy; then she took out one piece at a time and let the donkey take it from her hand with his large soft lips; and every time he did so, she would laugh and say: "Oh, how gently he takes it! Billy is a gentleman!"

Two geese their father had brought, and you would have laughed had you seen Rob carrying the large white goose up stairs.

"Let me carry a goose," said Bessie.

"Oh, you little goose!" said Rob. "You cannot do it."

"We will see said her father, as he put the gray goose in her arms; "put your arm over Mrs. Goose's back; then she cannot flap her wings in your face, Bessie. We'll done! up stairs you go; I will take care of Billy's bread-basket."

"So," said their mother, "you were right about the two geese; you have quick eyes, for I did not see them."

Down went the geese quack, quack, quack! Oh, how Rob and Bessie did laugh! then down stairs again they went, and when everything was out of the wagon, as Rob and Bessie supposed, their father lifted up the front seat and took out a large cheese, which he gave to Rob and then a small jar of honey which he handed to Bessie.

"We are rich," said Bessie as she tugged the jar of honey up stairs after Rob.

"So we are rich," said Rob; "you are right Bessie; hurrah for one hundred sovereigns! hurrah for two geese!"

"And the cheese, and the honey," said Bessie.

"Yes," said Rob, "and hurrah for good donkey Billy too."

When the donkey had been put in the stable and had been supplied with hay, and our friends had all gathered around the tea-table, then their father told them that he had done more on his first journey; that he had sold more goods than he had expected he would when he left home, that the geese, the cheese and the honey he had obtained at a farmhouse in exchange for dress goods. After supper their father took all the money from his purse and pockets and laid it on the table to count. "Twelve pence make one shilling," said their father to Rob and Bessie, as he counted the pennies and put them in piles. Then he came to the silver; Twenty shillings make one pound, or one sovereign," then he counted the gold; and all the time Rob and Bess looked on with bright faces and open eyes. "How rich you are father" both said at once. Why you have nearly one hundred sovereigns, have you not?"

"Oh, no," he replied, very pleasantly, "only about one quarter of that sum."

"One quarter!" said Rob; "why, that is twenty-five sovereigns, then. Well, we are richer and richer."

"Yes," said Bessie, "richer and richer all the time."

"Now I must end this chapter just here," said Mrs. Martyn to Willie and Jessie. Tomorrow I will tell you about something that Rob and Bessie and their father and mother said that was very wonderful; yes, very wonderful; for no person in this world has ever seen anything like it before."

### BORN AGAIN.

Dr. A. G. NEWTON of Clyde Ohio, left his earthly body at Beresba Springs Tenn, on the 27th of March, 1870; in the 40th year of his age. His funeral services were held at Seville, Medina Co, Ohio, (his former residence) on Sunday the 24th day of April, under the auspices of the Masonic Lodge of that village, and attended by a large concourse of relatives and friends. The address was delivered by the writer.

At a special meeting of the Clyde Society and Lyceum, the following resolutions were unanimously passed:

Whereas our friend and Brother, Dr. A. G. Newton passed to a higher life, March 27th, 1870, and he has been for years an earnest and devoted spiritualist and also a zealous and efficient member of this Society and Lyceum:

Resolved: That we feel it not a duty than a pleasure to bear testimony to his many virtues, Honesty in his purpose; Courteous in his manners; Just and conscientious in all his actions; he has endeared himself to this Society and Lyceum, and while we express our deep regret that we are deprived of his earthly presence, we have the most conclusive assurance that in the new life upon which he has entered he will still feel the same interest in the welfare of those with whom he associated on earth.

Resolved: That we tender to his family our Condolence and sympathy in their sudden bereavement; Also that a copy of these resolutions be forwarded to the PRESENT AGE for publication.

A. B. FRENCH.

### Special Notices.

Michigan State Association of Spiritualists. SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING.

The Semi-Annual Meeting of this Association for 1870, will be held in the city of Niles, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 10th, 11th and 12th. The meetings will be held in a grove on the Fair Grounds during the day, and in PEAK HALL Saturday and Sunday evenings. As it is presumed that those who assemble from different parts of the state, will desire to become acquainted with each other, and with the people of Niles, it has been thought best to have a social in the Hall Friday evening. Good music will be provided.

The first meeting will be on the Fair Ground Friday afternoon at two o'clock. We expect eminent speakers from abroad, whose names will be announced in due time. All speakers in Michigan are particularly invited to attend, and we shall be glad to see speakers and others from adjacent states. We expect to have a good time.

Each society in the state is entitled to three delegates. County Circles to as many as they have Representatives in the State Legislature. Officers of societies have power to appoint Delegates where no meeting can be held before the time appointed for the present year.

We hope to see hundreds of Spiritualists present on places where no societies have been organized. We want every County Circle and Local society represented. The Spiritualists of Niles provide the places of meetings free to the Association, and think they can entertain all who come. Two first class hotels in town will reduce their regular prices to those in attendance.

Do not miss this opportunity.  
J. P. AVERILL, Secretary.  
Wm. M. FOX, President.

JOHN C. DEXTER, Mrs. S. M. ROCKWELL,  
RICHARD TALBOT, E. W. BARKS,  
W. B. BARKS, B. L. DOTT,  
ALISON KINNE, L. S. BURDICK,  
Treasurer.

KALAMAZOO COUNTY CIRCLE.  
The second Quarterly meeting for the year 1870, will be held at Yorkville, commencing Saturday at 3 o'clock P. M. and continuing over Sunday. A. B. Whiting has been engaged as the speaker for the occasion. We urge our friends throughout the county to attend.

S. LANGDON, Sec., Wm. WEYBURN, Pres.  
ANNIVERSARY MEETING.  
The Spiritualists and friends of progress and free thought, will hold their 11th Anniversary meeting, at Sturgis, on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, the 17th, 18th, and 19th days of June. Eminent speakers from abroad will be in attendance to address the people. Ample provision will be made to entertain strangers from abroad. By order of the Committee.

STURGIS, May 7th, 1870.

QUARTERLY MEETING.  
BOSTWICK LAKE, April 5th, 1870.  
The Bostwick Lake Society of Spiritualists, will hold their Quarterly meeting at the Weller School House, one fourth of a mile west of Silver Lake, in the town of Cannon Kent Co, Michigan, the third Saturday and Sunday in May, the 14th and 15th, commencing on Saturday at one o'clock P. M.

Mrs. Lydia A. Pearsall, will be in attendance. All are cordially invited to attend. Those from a distance will be provided for.

Dr. D. C. PRATT, President.  
A. W. DAVIS, Clerk.

## List of Premiums.

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Six.....35  
Seven.....25  
Eight.....15  
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PACIFIC DEPARTMENT.

J. S. LOVELAND, Editor.

All communications for this Department should be addressed to the Editor, at 350 Jessie St. San Francisco, Cal.

BIRTHDAYS AND THEIR MOMENTS.

By Rev. John T. Sargent.

Oh! how do passing years impersonate Experience! Our birthdays come and go like hurrying phantoms, opening wide the gate for Time to pass! How fast the onward flow of each days dreams and doings! How august the course of ages! How the hastening hosts Opportunity forewarn us that we must be true to life!

The approaching Contest, and the Parties participating therein.

The contest between Faith and Reason, which Mosheim asserts commenced in the christian church during the III Century, has been renewed and waged with greater force during the last 300 years than ever before.

But this strife has reached its logical culmination, and the issue is fairly presented, and conduct must soon correspond thereto.

This is doing at the present. If the contest was to be decided by the zeal and activity of the parties in the contest, the lovers of truth and freedom might well despair, and especially when the professed friends of freedom are seen dis-united, and contending with each other instead of presenting a solid front to the foe.

A YOUNG LADY'S SOLILOQUY.

Uselessly, aimlessly, drifting through life, What was I born for? "For somebody's wife," I am told by mother. Well, that being true, "Somebody" keeps himself strangely from view; And if I ought to marry will settle my fate, I believe I shall die in an unsettled state.

The reason for this reaction, this apparent going-back—this return of "the dog to his vomit"—are numerous. Only a few can be indicated in this article.

They cannot. Protestantism is the theological bottle in which the experiment has been tried, and often after a most violent shaking on the part of the priests, so that a temporary mechanical mixing has been attained, the shout of exultation over fancied success has been raised; but, in a short time, "the irrepressible" oil floats on the surface, clear as ever.

But another reason for this reaction, is found in the utter failure of protestantism to vindicate its own authority on any principle except that which involves its own destruction. Its attempt to show historical continuity is proved a myth—its highest pretence reaches no farther than a heretical schism in the christian church.

Again, as the life, which was once evinced grows weak, the glitter and tinsel of form and display assume its place. To this condition has our protestantism come. It is fast apeing the pagantry of Catholicism, which it once repudiated.

But when the body is rent into contending factions, their mutual strifes and jealousies serve as a protection to more infidel dissenters. The great protestant heresy compelled such a deference to reason as has acted as a shield for all forms of rationalism, which, not without assailing superstition from without, has walked boldly into the pale of the church, and from pulpit, altar and pew proclaims the supremacy of Reason over book, creed and tradition.

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Rest of Soul. It is one of the beautiful features of the old religions, that they propose to their disciples a soul rest. And it is not exclusively in the far-off heaven where alone rest is found, for they proclaim it as the birthright—the privilege of each real child of God, here on the earth.

But it is not our purpose to write an eulogy on christianity, or its most active and successful workers, but to inquire if there remains to us a rest of soul, calm and strong, which can, not only equal, but transcend that of christianity; for, unless we can, unless we have such rest to proffer, it must be confessed that we have made no advance, but rather have retrograded in that respect.

Notwithstanding the needs of humanity are essentially the same in all ages and times, yet each age has its own special wants, which differ in form and kind from those of all other periods. Food, clothing and shelter are the common wants of all men, but even they are not the same in all ages and times.

But the purpose of this article, is to direct attention to those wants, which are peculiar, or special to our own age—those which distinguish it from all that have preceded it. So far as the mere physical necessities are concerned, there is an abundant supply.

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must find a basis deeper than spirits. We must find the law of spiritual development—the inhering potency, which underlies the evolution of worlds and destinies. No doubt exists, in any mind, as to the existence of such principle. The discrepancy in men's notions has been as to the character of that power. Unless we have ascertained and demonstrated that absolute good must be the ultimate out-come of the working of this principle, we can have no basis for soul rest.

But if such demonstration be possible; if we can show by logical arguments, founded upon conceded principles and facts, that such is the working of universal law; if we can fortify this by illustrating analogies from all departments of universal being, then, are we prepared to enter into rest.

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ened the spiritual powers while it has correspondingly strengthened those of the intellect. The old religious systems fail to satisfy man. Their pretensions are subjected to the criticism of his quickened faculties, and he finds them unsupported by any sufficient evidence.

Intimately associated with religion has ever been the question of morals. To the will and teaching of some Deity, we have always been referred as the source of moral feeling and for precepts to guide in its exercise. Without religion, it has been again and again asserted, there is, there can be no genuine morality. The skepticism which has undermined the religious faith, has also sapped the fundamentals of morality.

Most certainly the necessities of such a time, are imperative, and differ from those of other periods of history. The downward tendency of man needs to be checked by some startling event, which shall arrest and compel attention. They need to be of such a character as to challenge all the curiosity of man—task to the utmost his highest powers, and yet, yielding certain definite results in the end.

Below we give an extract from a religious paper, containing the church estimate of morality. Read it carefully. "A Christian is one who is positive. A moral man is a vine that does not bear fruit. But then it bears everything else—good leaves, a good strong stem, a healthy root, every thing that is good and nice in it, except the fruit."

Morality is here declared negative, and the little word not is used with the emphasis of unconcealed contempt. We marvel at this, when we call to mind the fact that the entire decalogue, with one exception, hinges entirely upon that same world "Thou shalt not," is its burden. It is, hence, by this writers showing, a negative document, and his God is thus proved a negationist.

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