

The Progressive Thinker

Progress, the Universal Law of Nature; Thought, the Solvent of Her Problems.

VOL. I.

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The Progressive Thinker's Rostrum.

To be Occupied by Eminent Divines, Scientists, Philosophers and Teachers.

AN INTELLECTUAL FEAST FOR THE READERS OF THIS PAPER.

A Department that Would Prove an Attraction in any of the Leading Magazines of the World.

Writes for The Progressive Thinker.

THE QUESTIONS OF QUESTIONS.

Whenever we accept the sponsorship of some distinguished name as sufficient evidence of the truth of any proposition or concept, we frequently fail to submit the latter to our ordinary modes of investigation, and generally set it apart in our minds as fully proven if not incapable of further elucidation.

This is especially the case in all metaphysical relations where proof lies beyond the pale of scientific demonstration and is obviously attainable through mental processes only. And as these latter can be dealt with pictorially or through the medium of language alone, we should carefully test every word and thought brought to bear upon them.

Had this been our practice hitherto, we should possibly not have fallen so frequently into the traps set so assiduously for us by some philosophers, and so thoughtlessly placed in our way by others. And what I mean here is, that if people of ordinary sound intelligence communed more frequently with Nature, and took a leaf now and then out of her book, there would be less place in their minds for Materialism, so called, or for its velvet-footed conqueror, Agnosticism.

True, that there looms up against this proposition some of the opinions of such able men as Mr. Herbert Spencer and the late Mr. George Henry Lewes; but when the lens is brought to bear upon these we are astonished at the want of coherence which obtains among their particles, so to speak, and how some of even our very great men blunder as they approach the line which divides mind from matter.

Take, for example, the propositions of these two eminent thinkers and writers on the "Origin of Life," and note how inconclusive and unsatisfactory they are. That the origin of life is one of the most important questions that can engage the human understanding will be readily admitted. Hence any erroneous or false conceptions regarding it becomes dangerous in the extreme, as, to minds incapable of analysis, it would strengthen the false claims of Materialism, and tend to obliterate from the universe not only design, but all the operations of the Divine Will. This would, of course, be ruinous to the best interests of those who might fall a prey to an idea so illogical and untenable as that of denying the existence of a Great First Cause; and as the Origin of Life is in reality the true battle-ground on which Materialists and those who believe in an after life must fight it out, the field and the claims of both parties ought to be scrutinized with the utmost caution and rigor.

I have often thought that were it not for the polytheism and insensate exactions of creeds, both ancient and modern, we should have but very little Materialism or Agnosticism in the world to-day. Had those early beliefs presented as a central rallying point monotheism pure and simple, deducible from the works of Nature, there would have been but very little grounds for opposition to them. But having arrogated to themselves supernatural powers and privileges, and having paid no attention to the promptings of natural philosophy and common sense, the latter, wherever it existed, took flight at the usurpation and, unfortunately, sought refuge on a lower plane. No doubt, however, this assumption of supernatural powers was in a sense necessary to the establishment of the first creeds among men; but it was, nevertheless, the sowing of those seeds of failure which have since manifested themselves so widely throughout the religious world in results destructive of all superstition,—seeds that were to bear at once sweet and bitter fruit in the sunlight of after ages, when man began to comprehend his physical surroundings on a rational and philosophical basis, and to grapple intelligently with cause and effect.

From the earliest dawn of human intelligence down to the present hour, the thinking portion of our race have been influenced, either directly or indirectly, by one grand central idea or question, namely: "If a man die, shall he live again?" However habitual it may be with a certain class of thinkers to ignore this question before men, no confidence whatever is to be placed in their seeming indifference to it, as down deep at the very bottom of their souls it underlies all others, and when perhaps least expected, will rear its terrible crest above them. No sane man can escape from its inquiring, melancholy eyes; for to shut it out wholly would be to establish, beyond a doubt, partial aberration of intellect. And although the two-fold proposition may not stand between us and the sun hourly, it nevertheless forms a sort of unconscious

atmosphere in which we live and move and breathe continually. This latter should have a salutary effect upon our lives and morals; and hence we should combat and defy unsparringly that Materialism or Agnosticism which would set our hopes and speculations at naught in this relation, or seek to undermine them by declaring that Life itself is but a mere result of certain activities of matter.

Life, as set forth by Mr. Lewes, is "the connexus of the organic activities." This is his sole position, and is in the interest of Materialism of course. But may we not inquire here, where does Mr. Lewes get his "Activities"? The proposition is an absurdity; and the wonder is that so able a writer and thinker ever allowed himself to be betrayed into it. An activity of matter is a living activity; hence we have here life as the connexes of life—a species of logic ably demolished, not very long ago, by the Duke of Argyll in an address delivered to the Students' Representative Council of the University of Edinburgh, where the name of Mr. Lewes came up. Was it not extraordinary that while formulating this proposition Mr. Lewes did not borrow a hint from his own Aristotle, p. 231, where the grand old Stagerite tells us that "Every natural body partaking of life may be regarded as an Essential Existence," and that life itself is "the primary Reality of an Organism." This noble and logical definition which has descended to us intact down through the ages is now found to coincide exactly with all biological science, which has at last been compelled to the conclusion that organization is not the cause of life, but that life is the cause of organization.

Nor has Mr. Spencer been more fortunate in dealing with the subject, for he assures us that "Life is the definite combination of heterogeneous changes both simultaneous and successive in correspondence with external coexistences and sequences." All this blank verbosity comes of attempting to analyze an element. Obviously the "Activities" of Mr. Lewes, and the "heterogeneous changes" of Mr. Spencer must find their origin in the same source—life.

In view of the admirable work done by both these men, it is most mysterious that they should have fallen into this cart-before-the-horse exposition. Surely if any importance is to be attached to the opinion of Professor Tyndall on this subject, they might have learned something of him, and especially where in his famous Belfast Address he declares, that "As matter is laid down in our scientific text-books for generations, the notion of any form of life whatever coming out of it is wholly unimaginable. And again,—'Whenever we endeavor to pass from the phenomena of physics to those of thought, we meet a problem which transcends any conceivable expansion of the powers which we now possess.' There can be nothing more simple or emphatic than this, and nothing more destructive of the two propositions just quoted.

Mr. Darwin, too, does not seem inclined to endorse these materialistic views, in relation to the origin of life; for he confesses to a mystery nearer home, when in his "Origin of Species," p. 150, Ed. 1873, while descending on the electric organs of certain fishes he observes, "It is impossible to conceive by what steps these wondrous organs have been produced." And no wonder that he should be amazed and confounded at the building up step by step, out of animal tissues in the body of a fish an electric apparatus composed of heterogeneous materials, and with a definite purpose to be made available on the completion in the future, of the machine, if such it may be called. The evidence of a supreme power and guiding will was here so palpable and impressive, that this great philosopher was constrained to lay down the implements of his craft as utterly inadequate to a solution of the problem.

There never was a true place in any thoroughly analytical mind or exalted philosophy for Materialism, inasmuch as it has no idea of the fitness of things, and sets a limit to man's intellectual advancement, in denying his heirship to a future state of existence and his eternal progress as a sentient individuality. And here, accepting for argument sake that there is no Great First Cause underlying any or all the operations of nature, and that all the works of the visible universe had originated themselves, what of the wondrous harmony that characterizes them, and the provision they invariably make for the morrow? If mind is a natural outgrowth of matter, why not the immortality of man also? If matter is eternal, why not mind, which is capable of controlling it and moulding it into myriad forms not native to it? Time and space must obviously obtain to all eternity; and shall not the power or capacity which is able to comprehend both obtain forever, also? Assuredly all the works of nature were created with direct

reference to man or some such sentient entity. Blot him or it out of creation and nothing remains in any intelligible sense whatever. All is rendered utterly valueless because of there being nothing intellectual or appreciative in existence. Surely there is nothing in the sublime and harmonious economy of the universe that would suggest an idea so preposterous as the annihilation of the intelligence that is capable of enjoying all the works of the great cosmos and of setting a true value upon them. Here is man the leading factor in the whole plan of creation so far as it pertains to this world, and he, according to some profound thinkers, is to be swept into nothingness before he has well opened his eyes to all the glorious works that surround him, and of which he has in a measure, been constituted the supreme judge, with a capacity for comprehending and enjoying them throughout endless ages. The doctrine is alike degrading and suicidal that it is difficult to comprehend how any wholly sound mind can entertain it. This persistent dwarfing of the status of man in his most important relation, is unaccountable and militates sadly against all religion and morality—the only two links or elements which truly bind society together, or which unite civilized nations to-day.

The wonder to me then is, that Materialism, after all its signal failures to establish itself either physically or metaphysically on any immovable or logical basis, does not take fright at its own incapacity, and step up into some "ism" that is based upon a better and more rational analysis of things. It appears to exist only among ponderables, although, had it keener eyes it could perceive that imponderables are the motive power of the universe and of all physical being. In considering that physics is capable of explaining everything, it fails to grasp the great and incontrovertible truth, that the invisible always underlies the visible, in the sense of cause and effect; and that, consequently, any theory that confines itself solely to physics is earth-bound, and is, however unwittingly, the enemy of all true mental progress. To be sure, it has a sort of insidious way of elucidating its value in decrying all alleged superstition, and advising a strict and faithful adherence to our interests in this world, as that which concerns us more immediately; but then, it is of itself a *cul de sac* with no outlet for our aspirations beyond what obtain in the lowest forms of intellectual life—if these aspirations do obtain, and with no hope for an existence beyond the brief span which characterizes our present mundane lot.

Were nature, that cunning dame of perfect fingers, to commit a *faux pas* so egregious as to originate this condition of affairs she would present us with evidence the most indubitable that she created a perfectly organized universe, capable of existing so long as time and space were conceivable, and yet bestowed but a very brief period of existence upon the most, or one of the most important portions of it. In the production of mind there is nothing more miraculous than in the production of matter. The rosebud peeping through its emerald bars in reality as great a mystery to us as would be an archangel standing in our midst. The mere fact of our being here and our comprehension of that truth are filled with eternal possibilities and the infallible evidences of our immortality. If matter is impossible of annihilation so is mind also. Both are elementary and consequently beyond all change as to essence. However modified by circumstances, whatever exists exists forever; nor can all the logic of Agnosticism or of Materialism make it otherwise. Change of form? Yes. Change in essence? No.

When one comes to dwell upon the thousands of noble men and women who profess to have no hope of a hereafter, and who seem sincere in this terrible belief, one wonders at how the intellectual mishap came to obtain in the face of all the promptings of nature and the alleged experience of all ages, of all climes, and of all tongues. It were useless to dwell upon all the threadbare methods of Materialism, or the adroitness with which it lays hold of all Christian and religious creeds to sustain its position. In truth, one of the greatest elements of its success is some of the untenable beliefs of the churches universally. It sees at a glance, for example, that the doctrine of a future state or the immortality of the soul among all religious sects, and especially among those of Christendom, is based wholly upon tradition or questionable documentary evidence, and that it is consequently incapable of verification through ordinary scientific methods. Hence it assumes the right of discrediting it altogether and of cutting the very heart out of the "glorious destiny which pertains to the whole human family."

But in this latter relation it has seemingly reckoned without its host; for it is now advanced in very high quarters, and is received very widely, that proof positive of the existence of man after death is within the reach of every honest and intelligent inquirer. Evidently this is the "Question of Questions," and one which at the present moment unbalances the whole intellectual world. That it will be settled ultimately and at no distant date there can scarcely be any grave doubt, inasmuch as the methods now brought to bear upon the subject bring immortality, or the existence of man after the death of the body, within the range of the experimental sciences, so that the fact can become as surely recognizable as any other within the compass of physics. This is what is to

kill Materialism, and purge the churches of such of their beliefs as are superstitious and untenable. Once produce indubitable and wide-spread evidence that a human being who had died can return to this world and manifest him or herself beyond a shadow of doubt, and Materialism is as dead as a door-nail.

Now the question is, can we have full and conclusive evidence of this momentous fact, and on a basis that will sweep away every shadow of doubt from the mind of any person possessed of plain common sense? Numbers of highly intelligent and highly honorable men and women say we can; and the ranks of these embrace many personages famous in literature, science and art. Let it be observed, however, that in looking for this evidence, we must be on our guard and rigidly eschew a certain class of teachers and experimenters who are simply unprincipled jugglers or illiterate fanatics, who fall a prey to the love of gain, or their own morbid fancies. The name of these is "Legion," and their operations and teachings have recently done more towards preventing the inquiries of common sense into the possibility of the existence of an after-life in the light of what is called modern Spiritualism, than the so-called logic of Agnosticism or Materialism has yet accomplished.

But as just intimated, there are numerous honorable and intelligent persons in all the professions, and in the upper and middle walks of life, who have not only adopted this spiritual belief, but who profess it openly, although not in any very aggressive form. In fact there has been, and there still is, so much downright fraud on the part of many of those who assume to be its apostles, that common prudence prevents thousands from boldly avowing their belief in a doctrine that had been made so unpopular through the greed, the dishonesty and the illiteracy of whole tribes of "mediums," as they are called—persons who are dead to every noble sentiment, and who outrage the holiest and most tender feelings of which the human breast is capable. Notwithstanding this and other great drawbacks, however, it is alleged persistently that the existence of a future state need be no longer a mere matter of speculation, inasmuch as it is as verifiable as any fact attainable in the laboratory of the chemist. A little honest and intelligent inquiry or research in this relation will, it is said, satisfy even the most skeptical that the spirit of a man does not lie down in the dust with his body. Nor will it do for Materialism or Agnosticism to simply pooh-pooh this statement. In no department of human learning do the professors of either transcend in ability or profound analysis, or in any of the characteristics of mental greatness or acquirements the leading lights of this "new philosophy." Between the methods of these latter and their materialistic opponents there is besides, this wide and important difference—the one demonstrates, the other speculates only. Neither Mr. Tyndall nor Mr. Huxley has ever come forward to dispute openly and squarely through the medium of the experiences, the importance or the genuineness of the phenomena set forth by the late Professor Zollner in his "Transcendental Physics."

Here was one of the greatest and most widely-known scientists of the age—a professor of Physical Astronomy in the university of Lepzig, surrounded by his colleagues—investigating the claims of Spiritualism, in the broadest light of science, and under conditions that did not admit the possibility of delusion, illusion or collusion. Every element of error or misapprehension was eliminated from his processes. The experiments were made in open day, and the phenomena produced were of a character utterly beyond the range of human possibility in the present state of our knowledge. He belonged to every distinguished institution of learning in Europe. His tests were mainly of his own construction, and were made apart from the public, in the privacy of his own house, his colleagues only being present. When it was possible to photograph the results, his own photographer and camera were there to seize upon them, and they stand in his book to-day engraved with the utmost distinctness, and presenting phenomena palpably beyond the compass of human ingenuity or human thought. Why did not those great lights of Materialism or Agnosticism come forward and dispute, in the fullness of their boasted knowledge, the propositions and demonstrations of this great man? Simply because they had not that higher order of intellect which enables one to grasp physics on one of its highest planes, and consequently turned away and wrapped themselves up in their splendid stupidity. How different the course pursued by Mr. Alfred Wallace or Mr. William Crookes—both scientists and philosophers of the first order, who in the investigation of the scheme of creation and the fitness of things, stepped beyond the boundaries of their laboratory. But why instance these gentlemen when there are numbers of scientists of all but equal celebrity, and philosophers without not a few, who tell the less inquiring portion of mankind, that they live forever, and that the palpable evidence of the fact lies at their very doors?

But, after all, and for weal or for woe, this great tide that had set in not very long since in such a small way, is said to be steadily if slowly submerging all opposing elements in this country, and doubtless in many others also. Princes and potentates,

rich and poor, high and low, are beginning to think of purifying their skirts, and washing themselves clean of superstition in it. It has found its way into some of the churches, and is constraining them to modify their beliefs and practices, although they seem unwilling to trace the fact, or rather accredit it to its proper source, while many Christian pulpits have been abandoned by their incumbents, so that the ranks of the true apostles of this philosophy might become more numerous. In verity, our theology has heretofore been of too abstract a character to be of any service to us, inasmuch as it has been in utter antagonism with our reasoning faculties. We have for ages been trying to believe that which was incapable of proof, and completely beyond our comprehension, as well as really repulsive to the instincts of humanity. Hitherto we have been so wedged apart from the teachings of nature, that we have never been able to harmonize light and shade. Until we are sufficiently advanced to recognize that the divine impress is upon all things, differing in degree only, we shall always be groping our way through fogs and darkness. If we would be taught, we must sit at the feet of that true Gaius, Nature, and learn of her. We must pause between the foreground and the background of things, so to speak, and then we shall be able to comprehend the expression of Bailey: "Evil and good are God's left hand and right," if these be the precise words. We must be able to feel and understand that the leaves of that exquisite little breviary, the lily, are inscribed with more inscrutable wisdom than were all the papyrus or stone of the ancient world, and that the crimson offering of the rose before the gates of the morning has a more sweet smelling savor than ever characterized the most costly sacrifice of old. It were worse than useless to sit down and count pain and pleasure on our finger ends, as a test of the true value of our existence or of this world. There are no finalities here, in a truly philosophical sense. We speak of the destruction of life without knowing what life is, and without suspecting that we confound it with form. Let us take into consideration the vitality of the grains of wheat found in the hand of an Egyptian mummy, or that of the desert snail that had been glued for four years to a card in the British Museum, and which subsequently recovered all its powers on being immersed in warm water. Let us dwell upon the fact that a creature of this same species, after having lain dead, or apparently so, for fifteen years among the collections of a certain naturalist, was restored to life again; and further, let us consider the strange and important circumstance that when subjected to the most intense frost, or when baked in an oven till they had the semblance of a grain of sand, the eggs of this snail proved to be productive subsequently. Let us dwell upon all this, I say, and the probability is we shall begin to suspect that to what extent soever forms may change or disappear, *life per se* is indestructible.

Theology has been needlessly hobbling along for ages on shaky metaphysical crutches. Strike the line between all harmonies and discords, and there we find God. Were it not for harmonious antagonism, as it were, we should have no intelligent mission to perform, or means of judging correctly in any relation whatever. When, therefore, an opportunity is said to be afforded us of testing in the face of open day, and under the eyes of a tribunal impossible of error, the validity of this new philosophy, are we to shrink from availing ourselves of the privilege, because, forsooth, some iron-bound scientist or Materialist has no inner life, and is unable to bray soul or spirit in a mortar, or because the churches still blindly refuse to set their seal to this doctrine? Were there as much pluck as there is common-sense in this world, we should soon be able to make short work of the unreasoning opponents of this grand and consistent revelation. As the case stands, the schools, the pulpit, the press and materialism are leagued against it, whether through a lack of analysis or a love of gain, I shall not venture to say. Of the final and complete overthrow of their opposition there can be but little doubt, as all their theories are but speculative, while this Spiritualism asks for its acceptance upon an array of hard facts, obtainable on a basis that compels the recognition of ordinary sound intelligence. If this latter is the case, should not the churches at least make common cause with a philosophy which has for its object the demonstration of an after-life for man, the very central idea upon which they themselves are founded, but of which they have never yet been able to furnish satisfactory proof? This doctrine appears to present a platform upon which all religious sects and parties possessed of any logical powers or liberal sentiment, may properly unite, and where Materialism and Agnosticism, under the pressure of the experimental sciences, will be constrained to lay down their arms. Materialism has been too long engaged in the threadbare game of setting up and then knocking down the ninepins of Christianity, and presenting the feat to us as evidence of the non-existence of a God, and of the purely material character of all things, visible and invisible. In this sense, its logic has been a trick—has been a libel upon common sense—and we are weary of it. It simply disports itself on the surface of things, and when assailed vigorously and learnedly takes refuge in Agnosticism. Let it abandon its special pleading and hackneyed methods, and step into the laboratory with

some acknowledged light of science or philosophy who comprehends the conditions necessary to the production of a new class of phenomena, with a view to the establishment of this theory on an immovable basis. All the paper bullets and oratorical outbursts by which it is constantly assailed are utterly valueless. Those who would investigate must condescend to "weigh the fish," instead of wasting their mental energies in a hand-to-hand struggle with infamous pretenders, or in bombarding at a safe distance the strongholds of the impregnable truth itself. Despite, then, all opposition, of lay or clerical, it behooves every proud, every honest man and woman in the land to investigate this question of questions for him or herself. The means of ascertaining the absolute facts concerning it are open to all, and appeal alike, and with equal distinctness, to the simplest reasoner, and the most profound logician. JAMES M. CARROLL.

New York, 99 Clinton Place.

THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER.

A late PROGRESSIVE THINKER—No. 16—is alive with inspiration. The vigorous address of Bro. J. G. Jackson is a key note on the question of justice to woman. How any Christian can fail to see it is a "mystery of Godliness." Frances Willard is a large-souled, sharp-eyed reasoner, and glows with philanthropic sentiment. Can she be so dazed by Christian psychology that these strong facts do not impress her? From the standpoint of liberals it seems impossible; but a deeper study of the laws of habit and heredity broadens our charity for the blind who cannot, because they will not, see. But every such blow as Bro. Jackson strikes will give impetus to free thought, and help to modify the authority of king custom.

These are times for frankness and fearless expression—not for rabid railing, but radical reasoning and unswerving fidelity to conviction. "The ephemeral growths in our country of Mormonism and its like are but sickly suckers from the rotten root of Bible-supported Judaism," may shock sensitive saints, and Miss Willard may shudder at such "blasphemy;" but she cannot deny its truthfulness; and by repeated shocks she may be shaken out of her sentimental dream, and awake to a sense of the inconsistency of her position. Hudson Tuttle's article on mediumship should be read by all mediums as well as by all investigators. No one is better qualified to enlighten and instruct on that delicate and complex subject. I thank God and the angels for Hudson Tuttle. Long may he wave. Bishop A. Beales sings a lullaby of sad reflectiveness in his poetic melody.

Mediums are moody, and moods mark the antithesis of poetic sentiment, and hold inspiration for genius.

Emma Rood Tuttle always leaves a diamond where she sets her pen. Cold prosaic natures cannot appreciate the delicate riches and profound wisdom wrapped in poetic vesture. The beautiful tribute to Love is not only rhythmical and sweet, but logically spiritual and morally divine. Mr. Hudson's "Religion and Idiotcy" should be read twice or more, and then marked and preserved for reference. I am a little cranky on the Roman question. "Danger Signals" should be heeded before it is too late. Every reader of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER should peruse these articles and watch the "signs of the times." Some 17 years ago there was great rejoicing in the Protestant world at the signal victories of Prince Bismarck over the aggressive insolence of Rome. To-day the German Empire trembles before the pope, and demands are made by the Ultramontane party for a restoration of the lost power of the Vatican, and the great Chancellor is reported to be seeking a compromise with Spiritual Dictator at Rome! If an empire with all the concentration of power and military discipline which characterizes Germany, directed by one of the most ingenious and far-seeing statesmen of the age, is unable to cope with Rome, or hold an advantage fairly gained and maintained for 17 years, what can a free Republic expect to do against such an unscrupulous foe, if once Roman Catholicism gets a political grip upon this country? Let us be wise in time. THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER is doing its duty on this line. Let every reader remember that "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." LYMAN C. HOWE.

Cleveland, Ohio.

"UNCONSCIOUSNESS."

EDITOR PROGRESSIVE THINKER:—In your issue of March 29, a question is asked by a correspondent and answered by A. S. Hudson, M. D. The question is: "Why must we pass to a state of unconsciousness during our hours of sleep and rest to become refreshed?" The assumption is taken for granted, and answered accordingly. Now allow me to ask: Do we pass to a state of unconsciousness in sleep, or at any other time in life? Is lapse of memory any evidence of *real* unconsciousness? Are there not several "planes of consciousness," and are not these differently related to memory? Hypnotic-Somnambulism shows that consciousness may be present, with or without memory, as the operator chooses; and so with many trance states. This is a very important and fruitful field for investigation. Open it up. J. D. BUCK.

Cincinnati, Ohio.

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SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 1890.

SUBJECTS TO BE CONSIDERED.

THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER will be devoted to Spiritualism, Biology, Electro-Psychology (as formulated by the celebrated Dr. Dods), and its differentiations, Mesmerism, Animal Magnetism, and Hypnotism; Somnambulism, natural and self-induced, as presented by the celebrated Dr. Fahnestock; Telepathy; Visions, while awake, in sleep, or in trance; Psychometry, as ably presented by Professor Buchanan; Cremation, a Spiritual and Sanitary Necessity; Brain Waves, Psychic Waves, or Soul Force; Ethics as a Factor in Religion, and as announced by the Philosopher and Seer, Hudson Tuttle; the Various Stages of Death, in the Transition of the Spirit to the Higher Spheres; the Signs of Death; The Danger of Premature Interment, etc., etc. All these subjects as well as many others equally important will receive careful, critical and comprehensive examination from time to time in THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER.

Carefully Examine the Little Tag.

From time to time examine the figures on the little tag at the end of your name on the wrapper of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER. They have a significant meaning. They tell in plain language the number of the paper at which your subscription expires. If the figures are 22, then at No. 22 of the paper, the time for which you have paid for expires, and you will get only three more numbers of the paper, unless you renew. If the figures are 23, then you will get four more copies; if 24, five more copies.

Although our terms are \$1 per year for THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER, each one who so desires, can renew on the trial terms, and the subscription will be thankfully received. The trial terms will extend throughout the year, 1890. It would be better, however, for each one to send a dollar, as it will save the trouble of renewing so often; but the subscriber must consult his own convenience as to that. While we shall most cheerfully welcome all trial subscriptions, the dollar subscriptions are more strengthening to us in our efforts to present a first-class Spiritualist paper.

Quarters will come safely if placed in a hole in a card, and paper pasted on each side. Not one so fixed and properly directed, has failed to reach this office. Can you not, when renewing, induce your neighbor to join with you, and thus enlarge our list, and strengthen our hands to carry forward a work in which we are engaged? No one can afford to be without THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER as it costs only 14 cents per week, bringing each one in contact with the leading minds of the country. By renewing now, you will not miss a single number.

Dr. J. K. BAILEY gave us a call last week. He proposes to lecture in the West.

Funeral Folly.

"No survival of pagan superstition," says the *Chicago Times*, "in man more distinctly marks the progress of the human race than fashions in funerals. The most degraded savages in the islands of the South Pacific are as ceremonious and as absurd in their modes of laying away the empty human caskets that once inclosed life as are the self-flattering Western Europeans who assume that in their etiquette of death they have attained the perfection of dignity and decorum. No satirist has yet seized upon the paradox of mortuary pomp. The hiding of their dead in the leafy boughs of forest trees to prevent animals from routing the bones out of the earth seems to certain tribes of Indians as moral as the Christian infatuation of hired mourners, as is done in England, or of hitching four or even six horses to a huge catafalque on wheels and dragging the corpse through public thoroughfares, as done with even common clay in France. The war-dance around the scalped remains of their defeated chiefs by reds on the plains is not less fantastic than the metropolitan mode of turning a private grief into a florist's festival for public delectation. The climax of contradiction and absurdity is reached when penniless widows and shivering children are found at the head of a procession of a hundred hacks imploringly following to his little cell in a cemetery a poor devil who never had a second suit of clothes to his back nor thrift enough to cover his family with a roof. The rich may make fools of themselves if so they will and it is nobody's business. But the extravagance of burials among the poor is a pitiful as well as a grotesque rite which Christianity should long since have been at pains to end. In a few cities of the United States the bishops have contributed materially to a mitigation of the evil by forbidding the attendance at a funeral of more than five carriages. In Chicago the abuse has proceeded until its limits are at last intolerable."

Custom has in the the course of time established a law that is quite difficult to evade. The opinion is entertained that, as a matter of course, an elaborate funeral must take place in case of the death of any member of the family. No thought for a moment is generally entertained that the cast-off body is wholly worthless to the living only so far as its various constituents return to the elements whence they emanated. The lifeless remains of a horse or ox just as much entitled to an elaborate and expensive funeral as the lifeless body of a human being, so far as the actual gross material contained in each is concerned. The dead ox that weighs five hundred pounds is more valuable to nature than the remains of a man which weigh only seventy-five pounds. By the death of the ox the elements of nature are replenished to the extent of five hundred pounds while the death of the man only returns perhaps one hundred pounds. All things lifeless are on a common level, and an expensive and elaborate funeral accomplishes nothing, so far as benefiting the same is concerned. A fitting tribute of respect to the dead is, however, desirable, for human affection finds expression there in commemorating a worthy life; if not altogether worthy, then that portion worthy of commendation, for no person is wholly bad.

A Pathetic Scene

"If there was any doubt in my mind of a hereafter, of a heaven, and of a Savior," said a member of the Cogburn Club, at Utica, N. Y., recently, "it would be utterly dispelled by an incident which occurred recently under my observation. The happy family of Edward W. Hill was entered by the angel of death, and both his little ones carried off. The first was Lillian, a sweet, plump, pretty baby. Within a month her sister, Harriet, a lovable, handsome little girl, barely turned four years of age, was stricken down. On her death bed, while the little limbs were growing colder and colder and the dew was gathering on the white forehead, the little face took on a look of calmness, transfiguring it, the blue eyes opened with a smile, and the child, in a voice fairly ringing with joy, cried: 'Oh! mamma, look at them coming! See the angels coming! And look, there's Lillian in the front. Mamma, I am going to meet her,' and the soul went out into a brighter, better country with Lillian and the shining host of heaven. It was a balm to that mother's bleeding heart, and the assurance, the knowledge that she has treasures in heaven did much to reconcile her to the severe loss. Don't you believe that the gates of the golden city were opened to that little one's eyes as a comfort to that mother? Can any one with such a proof doubt the existence of a home beyond the grave? I tell you it dashes to pieces all the castles of oratory built by the Paines of the past, and refutes the eloquent sophistries of the Ingersolls of the present."

Refused to Kiss the Book.

A stylish young woman had been sworn and had partially given in her testimony before Judge Arnold, of Philadelphia, lately, when one of the jurors objected on the ground that she had not kissed the Bible. After a breezy discussion between counsel, Judge Arnold cut the matter short by ordering the witness to be sworn by the uplifted hand. "I am not surprised," said the Judge, "that this witness did not kiss the book. I would not do it, either—a dirty book like that. This custom is a relic of idolatry, and the sooner it is abolished the better it will be. I don't think this witness objected to kissing the book because she intended to lie, but because it is a dirty book. I respect her regard for her person and her health."

J. Woodruff, of Ripon, Wis., writes: "As a trial paper, it has pleased me very well."

Spiritual Structure.

By science and art we have thus far developed wonderful forces in the crudest things. We have made minerals and metals, sands and water voice the gospel of practical miracles. Is it not true that perfectable qualities come of structure? Whence the sweetest beauty of the rose? The soul of it is in the plant; but will it ever exhibit its soul when neglected or distorted by misuse? No! The soil must be fitted for its reception, and the plant must otherwise be fed and cared for with the most vigilant assiduity. The same law holds with the animal kingdom. The "fittest" results from scientific applications of life-forces in breeds, in feeding and housing, and attentions exactly suited to improved conditions. Environment is the molder of form, and form, though the expression of soul, is the developer of soul. Under the same law, with adaptable treatment, is not the human susceptible of organic form and character far ahead of the most exalted idealism of the past? The angel within only asks for room, for the right to live and love, and act true to principle. If the spiritual organize the material, does not the material, in turn, embody the spiritual, or rather modify it to be the perfect image of the spiritual? The twin are one in uses. Heaven is not a far-off remove from the earth earthy. Maybe, and our philosophy teaches it, that, in the ages to come, human specimens will possess more real excellence than immortals in invisible spheres; for the earthy will then have blended with the heavenly its own physical and moral virtue, like the diamond that makes the rainbow colors in its more beautiful for the purity of its crystal. It is a question whether spirituality is ever attainable, except by fitting our physical and social life to its receptivity and natural evolutions into improved form and use. Does not the sun shine into our dark rooms when we have glass windows? We do not have to ask the shine to come in. All we need to do is to employ the right medium. The infinite fact is ours that there is a spirit-world sphere of life causative to this; that we are all its heirs, to receive and enjoy, "when we are worthy." Are we therefore, to bring that world to this, or open this to that? Many of us seem to act as if we could take it by violence, and make its angel inhabitants obey our behests.

What has the spiritual movement accomplished? Has it absolutely revealed anything new? No! Angel ministry is old as human creation. But it has emphasized immortality. It has largely analyzed the phenomena that bridges over the river of death. It has developed to us unseen forces. It has emancipated millions from the fetters of creeds and dogmas. It has taught what conditions are necessary to open reliable communications with our departed friends. Much, then, is to be credited to the movement as the initial of a better civilization. But have we learned the lesson yet of conditions? Are we more charitable than before we believed? Are we self-disciplined to "entertain angels unawares"? Have any of us brought accusations against the ministering spirits, on the charge that they are "evil-minded, and bent on mischief," when some of our media indicate questionable habits? Had we inquired more closely, analyzed more scientifically, searched our own inner life more thoroughly, we might have discovered that the main fault is in ourselves, and not so much in spirits who come at our call; that we have misused the sensitive natures of our media and produced the very adulterations and deceptions we so bitterly execrate and deplore. If never written in human history, it will be and is written in spiritual history, that men among us, professing to be leaders in the spiritual movement, have persecuted our media with the relentless rigor and cruelty of a Torquemada, scattering abroad, instead of uniting our spiritual forces, for the reception of heavenly influences. But it is not a time to criminate; it is a time for reflection over our delinquencies and our great responsibilities, that we may speedily emancipate ourselves from brooding doubts and unhappy isolations, and like the early Christians, come together, still and prayerful, to actualize the day of Pentecost?

There is no agency so potent to lift up the drooping soul when bereft of all earthly hopes, as angel ministry; no agency ever put into the hands of mortals that can be wielded so efficiently for the rejoicing of mankind. Let us not chain nor hurt the medial nerves, nor the spheres, whose feelers of love and thought reach forward into the unseen, and draw the risen ones so near we can hear familiar voices again speaking through those living phonographs of angel appointment. J. O. BARRETT.

Brown's Valley, Minn.

A correspondent writes as follows from Denver, Col.: Mr. W. A. Mansfield, the well-known medium for independent slate-writing, has been having a season of great success in Denver. He came to this city Jan. 8, at the solicitation of prominent business men, and his seances have been attended by many of the most wealthy and prominent citizens. The cause of Spiritualism has received a marked impetus as a result of Mr. Mansfield's labors here, many remarkable tests having been received in the communications written upon closed slates. Mr. Mansfield's gentlemanly behavior and his success as a medium here won for him scores of warm friends in the "Queen City of the Plains," and his fame has gone out to other places in the State. He was tendered a reception on Feb. 28, at his parlors, 1624 California St., on which occasion many of his new-found but earnest friends congratulated him upon the good work being done through his instrumentality. The reception was planned without the knowledge of Mr. Mansfield, by Mrs. Boyle, M. D., and Mrs. Bartholmes, of Denver. Mr. Mansfield is now in Boulder for a few days. From there he expects to go to Colorado Springs and Manitou. After April 1st Mr. Mansfield may be addressed in care of Mr. S. H. Caldwell, Manitou Springs, Colo.

Mrs. R. M. Borthwick, of Kalamazoo, Mich., writes: "I think your paper a good one; in fact the best paper there is."

FULLY ENDORSED.

THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER MEETS THE APPROVAL OF ALL CLASSES.

It is Meeting With Unparalleled Success.

Yes, THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER is on a tidal wave of success. It is needless to say that it has stepped to the head in circulation, and accomplished that in eighteen weeks. We challenge investigation. We will cheerfully convince any one of the truthfulness of what we say who will take the pains to investigate. We publish a few only of the many letters received, but all are alike appreciated by us.

The eminent author and Theosophist of Cincinnati, J. D. Buck, M. D., writes: "THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER is not a misnomer; it thinks, and is progressive."

That veteran worker, Lyman C. Howe, writes as follows from Cleveland, Ohio: "I am delighted with your splendid success. THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER strikes the keys that vibrate to the hearts of the people and echo the gentle spirit of heaven. There is inspiration in the love that pours a blessing on all. It is not necessary to compromise with sin, because you bless the sinner; nor is it necessary to hate or abuse the sinner (who is morally sick) because you rebuke his sin. 'Charity covereth a multitude of sins.' But it does not follow that it approves or shelters the sinner from moral criticism and reformation in behalf of the victim. I admire and approve the clean cut distinctions that severe critics make, but I do not admire the system of savage, vindictive punishment that so universally prevails in modern Christian methods, the spirit of which corrodes the better nature and aggravates criminal proclivities."

I. A. Walters, of Dayton, Ohio, writes: "Although I take several liberal and spiritual papers, yet I am so pleased with yours as to add it to the number."

George S. Moss, of Gowanda, N. Y., writes: "Your paper has been through in my way, and I like it."

Mrs. E. Durkee, of Lake Geneva, Wis., writes: "I hope you will prosper in your good work."

Mrs. L. A. Campbell, of Stony Fork, Pa., writes: "I like your paper very much, and find it a great comfort to me in my lonely hours."

S. P. Stone, of Holly, Mich., writes: "We think THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER just fills the bill."

Mrs. Mary A. Fisher, of South Deerfield, Mass., writes: "I like the paper very much, and shall try my best to help circulate it."

Mrs. H. D. Homsted, of Palmyra, Mich., writes: "I think your paper very interesting and instructive, and one of the finest spiritual papers published."

H. G. Kelly, Sayre, Pa., writes: "Your paper is far ahead of any other paper."

John Sprows, of Toolsboro, Iowa, writes: "I like your paper very much; it is the best Spiritualist paper I know of."

W. B. Packard, of Mansfield, Pa., writes: "You can reckon me as an avowed subscriber."

Mrs. Sarah A. Wakeman writes: "Your new paper grows in interest so rapidly, and is so full of good things it almost takes away my breath."

Nancy Ross, of Rousseville, Pa., writes: "I think it an excellent paper. It suits me the best of any spiritual paper I have read yet."

Mrs. Ann Hall, of South Brewer, Me., writes: "I think THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER is splendid."

George Harper, of Anchorage, Wis., writes: "THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER is an excellent paper, full of suggestive ideas on all subjects of highest interest, and is constantly improving, and deserves to be well supported by all friends of humanity and progress."

A subscriber writes: "I send twenty-five cents for THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER, and although they (the quarters) come hard to us, it brings it within the reach of us all." Thanks, many, even for the quarters. Each one must be his (or her) own judge of financial circumstances. Some of the noblest of spiritual papers I have read yet.

J. W. Howlett, of West Dedham, Mass., writes: "Your paper fills a niche in the journalism of the present age that is required, in order to meet the exigencies of the times."

L. D. Nickerson, of Appleton, Wis., writes: "The light is breaking in on the minds of not only Spiritualists, but on the minds of the general public, and the darkness of superstition and bigotry disappear."

Dr. A. A. Davis, of Ottumwa, Iowa, writes: "We have been reading your paper for some time, and have found it most successful in the grand work before you. The commendation of the public is so universal you must succeed."

L. K. Wells, of Atchison, Kan., writes: "I have been taking THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER since it started, and am very much pleased with its style, boldness and arguments."

C. F. Hoff and H. G. Tinsley, of Clarkfield, Ohio, unite in saying: "We must have your paper, if we have to take twenty-five cents worth at a time, until we get forehanded enough to send a dollar."

W. H. Blair will be remembered by many in Chicago as an able lecturer, and most enthusiastic in behalf of the cause. Not only so, but as a Spiritualist, but his oratory was in great demand in times of political excitement. At present he is out West, and writes to us as follows, giving his views of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER: "I am just in receipt of your paper, and I think it is well. May it continue to come the nearest to my ideas of a spiritual paper of any I have ever seen. Please keep a copy of each issue for me."

W. L. Thompson, of Kookuk, Iowa, writes: "I have been reading your paper for some time, and have become so interested in the matter contained therein, that when I get through with one number I can hardly wait for the next issue, for it is so full of noble thought calculated to lead the mind onward and upward to the truth. I have read every issue of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER, and I have found it to be a most valuable paper. Every page and every column is filled with something that is calculated to inspire man to a higher life, and every true Spiritualist ought to stand by you in your grand effort to lift Spiritualism up and place it where it belongs, for I am sure it will do so."

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A General Survey.

The Spiritualistic Field—its Workers, Doings, etc.

The Hon Sidney Dean, late pastor, editor and critic, has addressed the Norwich Spiritual Union for the past two Sundays. Although over seventy years of age, he has lost none of his powers as an acute thinker and a bold and logical advocate. He was listened to by good-sized audiences. *The Bulletin* (Norwich, Ct.), March 10. Yes, Bro. Dean is one of our ablest platform speakers; therefore it behooves spiritual societies all over the country to keep him at work enlightening the ignorant, gratifying the educated, and demonstrating a knowledge of immortality to both.—*Banner of Light*.

Frank T. Ripley, lecturer and platform test medium, is now in Boston, and can be engaged for the last Sunday in March and the whole of April and May. Address, 9 Bosworth street.

Mr. S. Wheeler, of Philadelphia, Pa., lectured in America Hall, Boston, during March.

Mr. J. Frank Baxter will, on the first and last Sundays of April, address audiences in Lowell, Mass., and of the intermediate Sundays the 13th will be in Brockton and the 20th in Salem.

Mrs. Edith Harvill, of Camden, Maine, writes: "I have seen spirits of all classes. Once I saw a group of young ladies, dressed in white, with banners, and they were marching in line and had some kind of music with them. I have seen fields, houses and many spirit forms."

C. J. Waterson, N. Y., writes: "It is expected that we will celebrate the anniversary of Modern Spiritualism here, although not in such an elaborate way as some, owing mainly to the fact that our society is small and in its infancy; it will have to grow into such good things gradually. Our able speaker, Mr. Oscar A. Edgerly, goes to Saratoga Springs for the month of April, and to deliver an anniversary address, but the friends there will receive a treat that will amply pay us for our temporary loss; we say temporary, because we intend to have him with us again soon. Mr. Edgerly is the best test medium we yet have had the opportunity of hearing from our platform, giving from twelve to eighteen tests in an evening, besides a grand lecture."

THE BIBLE.

THE BIBLE.

THE ENEMY TO PROGRESS IN MANY RESPECTS.

It seems to me the greatest hindrance to civilization (another name for progress), in the material and spiritual growth and activity, is the false and unreasonable religions, which like an incubus, are binding the masses of men.

Falsehoods tend to servitude, stupidity, and blindness if not absolute blindness, shortsightedness, which hinders progress and growth, while the truth makes free, which means activity, energy and life. All the most popular religions which assume to be the basis of civilization and have a controlling influence in all our institutions are, in reality, founded upon falsehood; and as a result all structures growing out of that falsehood must be false; upon the principle that every seed or germ produces its kind.

Christian religions rest upon the idea of the infallibility or the infallibility of the Bible. Until less than five hundred years ago the church believed, as the Bible plainly taught, that the earth and universe and man were in a perfected state were made in six days in twenty-four hours each. That the earth was the only world God had created, and the moon and stars were for the enlightenment of the day and to decorate the nights. Through the revelation of the telescope and the inquiries of Galileo, Copernicus and others, it was demonstrated that the ideas of Moses were false, narrow, shortsighted and childish. After many years of opposition and persecution, the church yielded to common sense and explained by saying they understood Moses; that, in fact, Moses never said the earth was flat.

The churches and pope being driven to this, they had been mistaken was a severe blow to the infallible idea. Soon after independent minds began to question the authority of the church which led to cruel persecutions, tortures and burnings. Early in this century man commenced geological researches, and soon began to whisper that Moses was mistaken as to the time taken to make the universe; the church combated the revolutions of science, but the French revolution, our revolution and independence had broken down inquisitions and murder for entertaining truths not recognized by authority of the church. And since the days of Voltaire, Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin, religious dogma have only been allowed to ostracize and condemn to a threatened punishment in the after life.

At present no intelligent Christian, Protestant or Catholic doubts that the church of Moses were sadly mistaken the second time. Other inquiring minds began to ask if the earth was evolved by long processes, sustained by millions of years, is it not possible that man as well as the earth, animal, vegetable and animal kingdoms, are evolved in a similar way? Darwin, Wallace and many more commenced investigations, and demonstrated a fact, so reasonable and logical, that to impartial and unprejudiced minds needed no demonstration. The church, however, combat with the destruction of a forlorn hope, Darwin's demonstration; as they can see no way of changing their interpretation only to surrender the last essential idea of their religion, viz., the statement. It is apparent if the idea of man's original perfection and fall is a fable or myth, the improbable, ineffectual and clumsy plan for his redemption is unequalled for fallacious.

I will not attempt any lengthy discussion of the fallibility of the Bible. I will, however, invite the church and all its members to read it unbiased by popular belief, assent and tradition, and judge of its merits, as of any other book. See if the account of creation, the fall of man, Noah's ark and the flood do not sound like a blind fable. Ingersoll says people who say they believe the Bible to be a revelation of infallible truth directly from the Infinite, are the ones who have not, in a critical and thorough manner, read it.

It seems to me time men commenced reading with open eyes, and minds, judgment and reason in full activity. If they will it will clearly appear that like all men's writings there is a mixture of truth and errors; in other words, find valuable gems covered up and intermixed with worthless, disgusting and doubtful history and biography. They will be rewarded abundantly by gems of poetry and pearls of wisdom; as faithful members for gold and precious stones are paid for handling indefinite quantities of mud and other worthless substances for the sake of what is valuable. We have in one of Christ's miracles a justification, were it needed, for reading the Bible on a similar plan. "The kingdom of heaven (which means the truth) is like a net cast into the sea, which, when it had gathered of every kind, was drawn to the shore and the good saved in baskets, and the bad cast away." As an illustration we read in one place "wine is a mocker and strong drink raging;" in another, "look not upon the wine, for at last it bit like a serpent and stingeth like an adder." These words correspond with experience, and we know them fearfully true.

The following advice of Solomon and St. Paul is the essence of mischievous advice. Solomon says: "Give wine to him who is of a heavy heart, and strong drink to him who is ready to perish." The very spirit of these words leads to intemperance. Paul writes to Timothy: "Take a little wine for your stomach's sake, and your often infirmities." Do you think Miss Willard or any body at her gospel meetings would take wine to look up and read the above sentences? It seems to me that Solomon's advice, Paul's words, some of Christ's examples and the drunken debauch of Noah, the senseless acts of Lot, stimulated by wine, and many more that might be referred to, make the Bible a very poor campaign temperance document.

They pose a young man away from home, and with some disappointment or misfortune, and is overtaken with the blues. He reads the Bible his mother has placed in his hands, hoping it will be an amulet of protection. He reads: "Give wine, etc." Don't you think he will start for a saloon at once? He will not every one see he has entered upon the demon's enchanted ground?

We might illustrate and remind your readers how the Bible was urged as an excuse and justification of slavery, the sum of all villainies. How from Moses to St. Paul, and from Paul until to-day, it has hindered all progress; especially has it been a great obstacle to woman's progress and freedom. To this day none but Quakers and Spiritualists fully recognize the rights and equality of women. Nothing can be more direct, narrow and unjust than Paul's teachings in reference to women's rights. How any woman who hopes and expects to ever have her freedom and equal rights can hold on to the church and the infallible idea, is more than I can see.

The church, true to her history, from Moses to the present hour, is a unit in opposing, denouncing and trying to hinder the grandest and most glorious discovery and revelations of any age, modern Spiritualism, the only religion that corresponds so fully with all that is of any spiritual significance in either the Old or New Testaments. It came in accord with evolution, as naturally as the telegraph. The telegraph and telephone exhausted the field of material investigation, and the spiritual came in accord to a demand in man's nature.

I presume that critics will object; still, if I am understood, my ideas will stand. I only mean, in the natural order of progress the telephone came square up to the line between the material and spiritual realm. It was not heralded by any church, pope or kingly potentate. The institutions of men were passed by. As in all past history, the weak things of the world were chosen to confound the wise. It did not come with a blaze of light that at once established the truth everywhere. A man was convinced of its truth here, another there, to become targets for the jests of infidels, and the denunciations of the church. True to nature and all revelations, the work advanced, in accordance with what might have been expected in an age of steamships, railroads and telegraphs.

The actual believers in Spiritualism are found in every civilized town all over the world. Some of its earliest converts, Emma Hardinge-Britten, among one of the ablest, most enthusiastic and successful writers and lecturers, is yet living, in full vigor of intellect and health. She has spoken once or more in every town of considerable size in our vast country; also in Australia, India, and everywhere the English language is spoken, besides Great Britain, her home. Its adherents, who have become so from actual knowledge and experience, are numbered by millions, among the most thoughtful, intelligent and true men and women the world has ever known. No one can question, if the teachings of Spiritualism had corresponded with their doctrines, the church would have gladly received it; but no! it denounced the church as pointedly as Jesus denounced the religion of his time. Were it not that the way had been prepared for its peaceful advent, its apostles would have shared the same fate as Jesus, and all who have assailed error and superstition until this century. The proud and learned opponents of Spiritualism reject and despise us because we are so credulous, and because many communications are evidently false or worthless.

No intelligent Spiritualist claims much more than the fact that communion between the two worlds is established. This, millions of us know, as well as Columbus knew when he discovered America. All communications come intermixed with errors, and always percentage of truth. We are told to receive the good and reject the bad, and wait for the explanation of the mysterious and vague. Is our experience different from the experience of all religions and all sciences?

The church is the last that should criticize us because we have not given the world unadulterated truth. Theological controversies have been as bitter and as contradictory as any class of writers. With them, the only sensible course is to do as St. Paul dictated: "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Every Spiritualist, from Jesus and St. Paul to the present, says there is no higher standard than individual judgment, guided by history, experience and reason. Christ said, when his disciples weaned him by asking questions: "Why judge ye not of your own selves what is right?" Paul says: "Be able to give a reason for the hope within you. Prove all things, and hold fast what is good." Spiritualists exhort all to be "satisfied with nothing but facts. Seek for them until you can truthfully say you know. The infinite field of truth is before us. We may not be able to lay our hands upon but a very few facts, and still be justified in saying we know them to be true. We have discovered the next, or spiritual realm, as certainly as Franklin discovered electricity. Candid Spiritualists will not claim that we know much more about it than scientists know about electricity. We know streets are lighted and messages sent around the world by aid of electricity. We know as well that millions of men and women have had intelligent communications with intelligent beings who according to the evidence of all the senses, confirmed by reason and logic, have been denizens of earth, and once walked by our sides. This may seem too marvelous a claim to be true. Is it any more marvelous than life here and now? Any more marvelous than an acorn becoming an oak? or the transformation of a caterpillar to a butterfly? The hatching of a swallow, or the simplest fact in nature?

We believe that the discoveries of Spiritualism will enlarge the sphere of man's knowledge of his spiritual nature, in something the proportion the revelations of astronomy have broadened man's views of the universe. Does anybody suppose man could have attained to his present eminence as an inventor and discoverer, if the telescope had not given us larger and broader views of the universe?

All material life, compared with the inner or spiritual, is as the outer shell or rind as compared to the inner fruit. A knowledge of Spiritualism is being born into a new life, when we become conscious of a life beyond. Also conscious that we are indeed and in truth heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus, and the good and great of all times and all worlds, to an inheritance undefiled, and that passeth not away. It is our impression, and firm conviction, that the present generation will see the essential ideas of modern Spiritualism

reduced to a science as unquestioned as the telegraph. Then we may look for social, political and religious reforms, wider spread and more beneficent than the most materialistic dreamer has ever conceived of.

"A little we discover, and allow
That more remains than eye hath seen."
The man who sits upon a throne
And wears an ugly thing upon his head,
And dresses in a gown
And claims to speak in God's stead,
And bind in hell or save in heaven,
And those who put us to a task
Written by weak and sometimes savage man,
And say between the two we'll find
All we need to know to save our souls
And make us wise and free,
Know less about our needs
Than wise astronomers of ancient times
Knew about the boundless universe,
Who said the world was flat,
And all the universe beside this little world
Were made as pens to light the day
And decorate the night,
And all was bounded by their own short sight.

WM. HENRY.
Farmersville Station, N. Y.

A VISION.

I stood one eve on the golden shore
That borders the lake of Peace,
And rapture my soul ne'er knew before
Bade my earthly sorrows cease.
The "better land" as 'neath magic wand,
To my vision grew aware,
And fragrant bowers of choicest flowers
Adorned the sacred place.

To my left was a wall like of marble made,
That stretched to the water's edge,
And on it twined blossoms of heavenly grade
Like stars on a rainbow ledge.
On the pathway fair beamed a childish pair
My heart had long yearned to see,
And in bounding grace of delightful dance
Came the darlings forth to me.

One was of form I had laid in the mould,
When the shrill winds whistled past;
But the radiant light in her eyes now told
Of eternal life at last.
The other, an infant in tenderness reared,
His lovingly held in the hand;
And robed in white texture of beauty appeared
Impelled by a sister's command.

Tranced to the spot, enthralled by God's love,
That opened my eyes to the sight,
I gazed and gazed, and the glory I store
For the children of men who do right.
What token of bliss compares with a kiss
From lips of the pure undefiled?
If aught here on earth can inspire one with worth,
'Tis the kiss of a sweet sainted child.
—As seen and written by J. H. MacDougall, in *The Two Worlds*.

WM. LLOYD GARRISON TALKS OF A. J. DAVIS.

Jan. 29, 1889.

In looking over my old *Liberators* to-day I came upon the following testimony regarding Andrew Jackson Davis, from the great reformer who never compromised with wrong and injustice, Wm. Lloyd Garrison. It appears as an editorial, under date of Sept. 1855, and is so true and pertinent that I transcribe it with pleasure for your columns, feeling that other admirers of these noble men will be gratified to read it. I give it verbatim, capitals and all. What he says of the "despotism of opinion" is as true to-day as it was at the time this tribute to our illustrious seer and co-worker was written.

JAY CHAAPPEL.
"We listened with much pleasure to a lecture delivered at the Melodeon, in this city, last Sunday forenoon, by Mr. Davis, on the various existing despots in the world,—particularly THE DESPOTISM OF OPINION which characterizes our own country. Opinion was described as having an illegitimate origin, and acting the part of a vagabond as well as an usurper—the product of ignorance, tradition, superstition, presumption, assumption, inference, misconception, mistranslation, etc., etc. It is imperious, dogmatic, unreasoning, besotted in regard to the past, a clog in the present, and uninspired as to the future—having no solid basis, and governed by no absolute law. Its mastery is complete over Church and State; over sects and parties; over creeds and institutions. As the mind grows in knowledge it ceases to be opinionative; it looks into the nature of things; it traces causes and their effects; it builds up the demonstration. Authorities, commentaries, books, parchments, formulas, precedents, usages, all are subordinate to its fearless spirit of inquiry; its search for the truth, its inquiry after the eternal law. To know is to preclude opinion; what is settled is no longer within the domain of speculation."

"The lecture was thoroughly practical, eminently suggestive, and finely expressed. A personal acquaintance with Mr. Davis enables us to judge of his 'walk and conversation,' and the spirit by which he is animated. We regard him as eminently pure-minded, incapable of intentional fraud or deception; without vain pretense or foolish display, characterized by rare gentleness and modesty; actuated by no sordid or selfish considerations, earnestly seeking to know the truth, and to advance the right, religious in the most comprehensive and reverent sense of the term, cosmopolitan and universal in his philanthropy and in his feelings."

"Of course, to him attaches the fallibility of judgment, impression and conception, which marks the whole human race; but whatever may be the discrepancies and errors which a carping bigotry may assume, or an enlightened critical reason really discover to exist in his voluminous writings, we believe him to be inflexibly true to his own highest convictions of right and duty; and while firm and unequivocal in bearing witness to what he believes to be the truth, as far removed from the arrogant dogmatism and bloated self-conceit which distinguish his Cleveland traducer 'as the poles asunder.' In consequence of the extraordinary phenomena attending his mental development, he has made himself the wonder and admiration of multitudes on both sides of the Atlantic; and if he had been egotistical or self-seeking, or unscrupulous, he might have stood forth as a leader, claiming superhuman power and endowments, and gathered around him a host of awe-stricken followers, ready to accept him as an infallible oracle,—the Messiah of the nineteenth century. But he has been proof against a temptation which few could have the firmness or the virtue to resist; and instead of being unduly lifted up, or made criminally ambitious by the astonishment his case has everywhere excited, and the flattering notices bestowed upon him, he has uniformly evinced the most unaffected simplicity in his daily life, and pursued the even tenor of his way, 'as one to whom the opinions and praises of men are as dust in the balance in comparison with the claims of justice, humanity and right."

"Of humble parentage, raised in abject poverty, and deprived of all educational ad-

vantages, he has given to the world a series of works ranging widely over the illimitable fields of geological, astronomical, medical, physiological, psychological, and religious science, which, whatever their defects, have excited the astonishment of the learned, for their reach of thought, their marvelous insight, their poetic beauty, and their profound analysis. An earnest, reformatory spirit pervades them all; and with much that pertains to the ideal, there is more that is of the most practical character."

Written for *The Progressive Thinker*.
POEMS.

[A galaxy of progressive poems, by JOHN W. DAY, Pp. 72; music. Boston: *Cutty & Rich*.]

Mr. Day is well known to all readers of the *Banner of Light*, with which he has been associated from almost its beginning, commencing as an apprentice at the case and rising to associate editor. The veteran chief of that steadfast journal has found in him a strong staff of support, always equal to the emergency, and the heaviest responsibilities. The only break in Mr. Day's connection with the *Banner* was occasioned by the civil war, in which he served as lieutenant in the infantry and captain of cavalry, from 1861 to 1866.

During his busy life he has found time to court the muse, and has contributed many excellent poems to the *Banner* and magazines. If all held the high ideal which is said in the introduction to this volume to have been his guiding motive, the world would have reached the dreamed of millennium. It is therein stated that: "His wish and ambition has been to prove true (as far as imperfections in our common humanity allow) in all the trying emergencies that have arisen in the midst of varying experiences; and this desire to be found doing his whole duty, wheresoever his lot may be cast, when the Angel of Change shall draw nigh to him, is the stay and religion of his manhood." Here is the key to his character and to the poems composing this beautiful book.

The score of poems that have been bound in this bright sheaf are so complete in themselves that they do not allow of brief quotations. A few passages, therefore, must suffice to give a taste of the whole.

Who has not experienced the thought expressed in the following lines?

Oh! Soul! thou art a stranger to this land!
Didst thou not look in ages long ago—
Like the bold Genesee—through some ocean grand,
Where the bright star-islands in their beauty glowed,
Seeking some new world's glory for thine own?
And wrecked where time's remorseless surges pour,

Wast bound by savage hands, a prisoner lone,
As Aples sons, on wild Sahara's shore
Seize on the storm-tossed wretch who 'scapes the
Atlantic's roar!

So doth it seem; for oft against the bars
Thy plumes are back in angel choir keep time,
And oft as twilight brings the marching stars,
Thou hearest the watchword from the ranks sublime!

Again, the poem, "Lady Franklin," commences with the following beautiful stanza:

Oh, the human spirit naught can chain—
Nor time, nor tide, nor the lowering sky;
As the fire-god gives the lightning rein,
Its steeds through the golden life-sands fly;

It has fearless wrought through the battle's rage
On the rocking plain and the sounding sea,
But the toll of deeds on its storied page,
Each age hath graven sweet Love for thee!

HUDSON TUTTLE.

Written for *The Progressive Thinker*.

THE GOSPEL OF NATURE.

TO THE EDITOR:—This is a book of 480 pages, written in Chicago in 1871, by M. L. Sherman and Wm. F. Lyon, since deceased. It is printed on good paper with clear type, and very readable. The ideas were given in a series of lectures through the organism of Mr. Sherman, one of the authors. It is an exhaustive treatise on the laws of nature in their relation to man; and to the student who has reached this point it is so interesting that he cannot leave it till, like Solomon, he has reached "the conclusion of the whole matter."

Since I became an independent thinker, which was many years ago, I have been laying up thoughts and principles as I was able to get them by persistent effort, and it is no slight satisfaction to me to find them all here in consecutive order and elaborated to a degree which I could not do if I lived a hundred years. The authors take the ground that, "in all the boundless universe there can be nothing above, beyond, outside or in any manner independent of nature; hence the idea of a supernatural realm is mythical and a vain delusion. All nature must be perfectly natural and sufficiently extensive to afford ample scope for every possible condition of existence from the lowest or crudest material to the most refined and progressed spiritual."—this is the very ground taken by the most advanced thinkers. Of course this does not apply to the conservative element. Of it they say: "The brilliant intellects that grace our modern pulpits, and who attract crowds of earnest listeners, are wandering in a maze of doubts, uncertainties and shadows, because they have no proper conception of the soul essence of things. When this divine knowledge bursts upon the mass of human minds with all its illuminating power, it is not too much to say that the world of thought will be revolutionized, and that man will throw off the shackles which have so long held him in abject durance."

The book is strong and radical throughout and keeps close to its text. In the chapter on intelligence it says: "Ignorance is damnation, and all the beliefs and faiths in the world will never save a simple soul from that damnation." It gives to evolution the prominence it occupies in all advanced thought. The chapter on "Discords" is worth the price of the book and will surprise any one who has never studied that subject. The chapter on Justice should be preached like the gospel to every creature in all the world; it would encourage the poor and downtrodden, and make the tyrannical hypocrite tremble in his boots. "The Science of Death" is a gem; but the chapter on the "Confounding of Language" throws Palne's Age of Reason in the shade. The book ends with a chapter on "Spirit Biography" which is calculated to strike terror to the heart even of one who believes nothing of the kind, but hopes to get to heaven through a vicarious atonement.

The book has to be read and studied to get the marrow of it; and I advise all who

can get hold of it to read it carefully; for though, like myself, they may not be able to comprehend or endorse it all, they will find much in it that is instructive and edifying. It is a terrible arraignment of old superstitious religions which must be superseded by the knowledge of nature.
Chicago, Ill. R. NEELY.

OUR JOURNAL OF CREMATION.

Cremation a Spiritual and Sanitary

NOTE.—Under appropriate headings we propose publish, from time to time, journals on subjects of deep and abiding interest to Spiritualists, as well as to all other classes. Each one will be continued for a time varying from three months to a year. They will prove veritable encyclopedias on the subjects treated. Spiritualists, Free Thinkers, physicians, ministers of the gospel, and progressive minds generally will find them of great value for reference.

CREMATION OF DAMON Y. KILGORE.

The body of Damon Y. Kilgore, the lawyer and Spiritualist, was reduced to ashes in the new crematory at Washington Lane and Stenton avenue, near Germantown, Pa., last year. It was shortly after 5 P. M., when the funeral procession, which consisted of three carriages and a hearse, turned from Washington Lane into the drive that leads to the crematory. Although it had been announced that the cremation would be strictly private, that did not deter a score or more of morbid curiosity seekers from crowding into the building and noisily criticizing every feature of the ceremony.

As soon as the procession halted in front of the crematory the casket was carried into the rotunda-like room and placed on a trap-door in front of a dais. The latter was mounted by Spiritualist J. Clegg Wright, who immediately began an oration on the revival of the ancient custom of cremation. As soon as he began speaking a black pall was thrown over the casket, which then began to slowly sink through the floor. Then there was a rush to the little spiral stairway that led to the room and furnaces below. The casket was carried to a small room in the corner of the cellar where the last preparations for the cremation were made. The lid of the casket had been unscrewed and the steel cradle in which the body was to be placed was in position, when there was a stir in the little knot of men at the door and the widow and her two infant daughters entered the room. The coffin lid was removed, the widow knelt and kissed the dead face twice, and then folding her hands nodded to undertaker Heacock to proceed. Several gentlemen tried to induce her to leave the room, but she said quietly: "No, we will see it through."

PREPARING FOR THE FURNACE.

A sheet saturated in alum water was placed in the bottom of the long steel cradle and the body was laid on it. A few locks of the long, iron-gray hair was clipped off of the dead man's forehead by the undertaker, then another sheet soaked in alum water was spread over the body and carefully tucked in on all sides and the body was ready for the furnace. While these preparations had been making in the undertaker's room the instructor had examined the fires and found that the temperature in the oven was 2800 degrees. He signaled to Dr. Troutman and undertaker Heacock that all was ready. The steel cradle was carried into the furnace-room and suspended by heavy iron hoops to a long crane that projected from a platform on wheels. The platform was not sufficiently weighted and instructor Beansderfer methodically piled some bricks in a box under the platform until the equilibrium was established to his satisfaction. He then applied his eye to a peep-hole in the door of the oven and announced everything in readiness.

A signal was made to the orator through the hole in the ceiling and he stopped speaking. The choir, composed of Mrs. Decker and Mrs. Lee, sang "On the Sweet Eden Shore" as the heavy iron door swung back on its hinges and disclosed the oven from which issued a puff of blinding heat. The interior was rosy-hued around the firebrick walls and a delicate purple in the centre. These colors, the instructor explained, indicated the terrific heat of the interior. The crane, with its burden, was thrust into the oven, a crank on the platform was given a few rapid turns that lowered the steel cradle to the bed of the oven and the crane was rapidly withdrawn. The alum-soaked sheets that were designed to protect the body until the door could be closed did not fulfil their mission. Before the body could be lowered from the crane two tongues of flame shot up from the feet of the corpse and spread rapidly to the head, and before the doors could be closed the body was wrapped in flames. A volume of smoke rolled out and floated through the two rooms like a ghostly incense.

That concluded the ceremony. The people loitered about for a half hour and listened to the enthusiastic explanation of instructor Beansderfer. The door of the oven was locked and sealed and was opened at noon the next day in the presence of Mrs. Kilgore. The ashes were placed in an urn and turned over to the widow, who, it is said, will keep it at home. It is estimated that in two hours the body was reduced to ashes.—*Philadelphia Press*.

THE FIRST THEOSOPHICAL CREMATION.

The *Two Worlds* has the following: Amongst the first members of the American Theosophical Society was a Bavarian nobleman well known in the literary world—"the Baron de Palm." A full account of this gentleman's decease and funeral obsequies, given under the direction of the Theosophical Society, will be found in Mrs. Hardinge-Britten's book, "Nineteenth Century Miracles; or, Spirits and their work in every Country of the Earth." The full account is in itself a literary curiosity, and here is another relating to the same subject, namely, the invitation sent out to attend the cremation ceremony, this being the mode in which the baron's remains, at his own request, were disposed of—and that at a time when it was a bold thing to undertake any such post-mortem work in America, common as it has become now:

NEW YORK, November, 1876.
DEAR SIR:—Upon the 6th of December, proximo, at Washington, Pa., will be cremated the body of the late Joseph Henry Louis, Baron de Palm, Grand Cross

Commander of the Sovereign Order of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, Knight of St. John of Malta, Prince of the Roman Empire, late Chamberlain to His Majesty, the King of Bavaria, Fellow of the Theosophical Society, etc., etc., in compliance with the wishes expressed to his executors shortly before his decease. This ceremony you are respectfully invited, either in person or by proxy, to attend.

The cremation will be effected in a furnace specially designed for the purpose, and erected by F. Julius Le Moine, M. D., as an earnest of preference for this mode of sepulture.

The occasion being one of interest to science, in its historical, sanitary, and other aspects, the executors of Baron de Palm have consented that it shall have publicity. This invitation is accordingly sent to you in the hope that you may find it convenient to be represented, and in case the general subject of cremation should be discussed, take part in the dispute. The University of Pennsylvania, the Washington and Jefferson College, the New York College of Physicians and Surgeons, other institutions of learning, and the Health Boards of Boston, Philadelphia, Washington (D. C.), and other cities, have already signified their intention to send representatives. It is believed that the occasion will draw together a very large number of highly competent and influential observers. Addresses appropriate to the occasion will be delivered.

The audience-room of the Crematory being quite small, it is necessary that the number intending to be present should be known in advance. You are therefore requested to signify your determination by mail or telegraph to either of the undersigned at your early convenience.

HENRY S. OLICOTT, } Executors,
HENRY J. NEWTON, } etc., etc.,
Box 4335, New York City.
Or F. JULIUS LE MOINE, M. D.,
Washington.

FOR THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER. SAW HER SPIRIT MOTHER.

Some years ago it was our custom to spend the summer months at a farmhouse twelve miles from our city home. It was a great delight to us to leave the noise and bustling activity of the metropolis, and seek nature in all her quiet beauty in sylvan haunts, and by rippling streams. It was a log house, this country home of ours, almost hidden from view by the sturdy oaks that stood as sentinels around it. On every side were cultivated fields and gardens, and a quarter of a mile distant, the roof of a neighbor's house was plainly visible. In the course of the summer we formed an acquaintance with this family, and a little dark-skinned, brown-eyed girl of four years became a playmate of our children. One day sickness entered this humble home, and the Angel of Death bore away the tired, weary mother to heavenly rest and peace.

We had noticed that our Gypsy seemed stolid and indifferent to her great loss. The next day after the funeral she looked out of the window in the bright sunshine, and exclaimed: "Oh! there is my mamma, all dressed in white. Don't you see her?" Again at night she had the same vision. Now what did our Gypsy,—this unsophisticated child of nature see? We knew nothing then of spirit return, and we pondered long upon this strange phenomenon. From that time we date the awakening of our souls to spiritual light and truth. E. B.

Written for *The Progressive Thinker*.

An Address at the Grave of Mrs. C. L. Morgan.

Mrs. Morgan passed to Spirit-life a short time ago at Albany, Wis. She was a woman of marked ability, as her late contribution to *THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER* shows. At her grave Mrs. Summerl spoke as follows:

We gather to-day to pay a tribute of respect to a sister whose life was a labor of love. The angel of death has kindly taken to dwell amid fairer scenes, one of rare worth. She loved the beautiful, the harmonious, the pure. She communed with nature. If flowers are the alphabet of the angels, how well she interpreted their language. "How rich the other world is growing from the losses of this. Day by day, hour by hour, many a beautiful spirit drops its encumbering garment of clay and dons its royal robes for higher life. What stupendous fields of research and exploration lie before them." How eagerly will the cultivated mind of the sister partake of the mental feasts to which she has been invited, and was so well prepared to share. How she rejoiced in the thought of eternal progress; believing this but the stepping-stone to higher and grander possibilities, all her energies were devoted to do good. Her religion was humanitarian, liberal; her creed, love. She was a beautiful example of what woman should be; an opponent of slavery and every form of oppression; an advocate of temperance and suffrage; a deep thinker, a close student, fluent and logical, and intensely earnest in all her efforts to emancipate and educate womanhood. In her home she was a continual inspiration to her loved ones, urging and encouraging them in all that elevates and ennobles manhood and womanhood. In all her relations of life, she was faithful. Is there higher praise for any? To her, motherhood was a sacred trust; wifehood the highest, holiest of ties. In the words of a talented authoress, she believed true marriage was to strengthen each other in all labor; rest on each other in all sorrow; to minister to each other in all pain; to be one with each other in silent, unspoken memories at the moment of the last parting. After many years of mutual confidence, respect and love, the parting has come; words are inadequate to express the anguish, the pain, the loneliness which even a short separation implies to the bereaved hearts of the husband and children who so truly appreciated the excellence of her daily life. May they be comforted in this thought: there abided with her the knowledge of the continuity of life, of the certainty of reunion as deep and unfading as the Divine life and love from which it proceeded.

ONE DEPARTMENT alone of *THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER*—"The Progressive Thinker's Roster"—will be more than worth the price of subscription. Just think, for only 14 cents per week you can have the paper visit you regularly.

THE GRAND REALITY!

Experiences in Spirit Life of a Celebrated Dramatist.

"The Grand Reality," being experiences in spirit life of a celebrated dramatist, received through a trance medium and edited by Hugh Junior Brown, author of "The Holy Truth," "Rational Christianity," "The Conflict Between Authority and Reason," "The Religion of the Future," Etc.

(Continued from last week.)

LECTURE XIII.

I cannot here refrain from congratulating you upon the freedom from despotic sway, on the part of rulers, which you of this generation now enjoy, compared to which man's existence a few centuries back was wretched in the extreme, when oppression, ignorance and superstition were rampant throughout the nations—the fiat of whose monarchs was law. This happy change is a good omen of the eventual banishment of ignorance and superstition from the world, when despotism of all kinds will be a thing of the past.

While waiting in the ante-chamber, into which we were shown, the following soliloquy came into my mind: "O ye kings, princes, and queens! Decked in all the splendor of earthly robes to whom precious stones were brought, and thrown as dust at your feet by your ignorant vassals! Lives have been scattered as chaff before the wind to gratify your insane ambition, souls were cut away to satisfy your demands; those lives, however, sacrificed there by you, flower in glorious profusion here. Thousands are still spiritually pressed and bound here who were fettered by you on earth. They cannot be liberated at once from the effects of the thralldom, or the unnatural deaths, entailed upon them by your wickedness."

From the ante-chamber we were led up a flight of steps, the summit of which was the precinct to the grand hall, into which we were ushered after some delay. There were a throne and a crown in this hall, and presently I saw one who never was a credit to England. His name I shall not mention, as names are best kept back, but we will glance briefly at some portions of his reign upon earth, which was fraught with so much misery to his subjects. His identity will be gained by the allusions which I shall make regarding him. There he stood, the picture of what I had imagined him, his upper lip curling in the same haughty way that it did upon earth; the quick agitation of the spirit-hand as it moved from one thing to another; the nervous and rapid strides when moving—all the same peculiarities which had characterized him in his earth-life, and as I stood and looked upon him I could not but conclude that his state was not an enviable one. I noticed that a sort of tremulousness came over him as he spoke. I addressed him and said, "I see thy frame doth quiver; thou needst not fear me, for I am not thine avenger. Still, thy uneasy conscience, which I can see, is not at rest." In a moment there occurred such a scene as I never beheld. He staggered back, his whole frame vibrating with fearful emotion, and sank into a chair. "What, friend, dost thou see?" I hastily asked. "I will tell you," he gasped. "It was horrible. The greatest curse I ever had were these clairvoyant powers, which force upon me the sight of thousands of souls that I sent into eternity. I see the field of battle. I see all the foul and villainous wrongs perpetrated by me in the different stages of my earthly life. I cannot wipe the vision from my sight. It is true—it is not mockery—it is reality!"

My own spiritual eyesight now opened, and I witnessed psychometrically a scene which I hope never to see again. I heard a distant groan or cry for mercy, when I saw a sight so horrible that I, also, was compelled to seat myself in a chair for support. The feeling of stupor which had seized me having passed away, I saw a woman whose purity was spotless. I could hear her sigh, yet could not draw near enough to help her and tear her murderer away. I saw the whole thing quicker than I can pass words through the medium's organization to relate the scene. I saw her very soul wishing to break away. Around her arms were chains, fastened to ring-bolts in the gloomy dungeon, whose dismal surroundings were revealed by the imperfect rays of a dull light, which only served to impart additional gloom to the somber scene, and make it ten times more horrible to behold. From this dungeon I saw her dragged into the courtyard of the castle, whose walls had witnessed many a foul scene of murder. I there saw them sever her head from the body, which became convulsed for a moment, quickly succeeded by the cold pallor of death o'erspreading the form as well as the countenance of the now severed head. I saw the spirit rise and depart from the scene of such an atrocious murder. And here was the monarch who wore the golden crown, and who was now before me robed in gorgeous raiment, magnificent to behold. Thus he said: "Would to heaven I had the power to shake the vision from my sight, for I cannot rest either day or night. I cannot breathe. It was a horrible death I passed through; but this is worse than such a death, for the torments are of a still more horrible description." I then spoke, saying: "Not the smallest part of this terrible torture will be remitted until you consent to cast off that robe and crown." He sank down and instantly vanished from my sight, thus abruptly terminating my address.

I shall now draw my lecture to a close for this evening. I have to request, before relieving the medium from the trance, your attention for a few moments. At the seance succeeding the one following upon this I shall treat of a particular portion of Nature's laws, during the expounding of which perhaps it would be better for the ladies to be absent. The ladies, if they choose, may read the description, but I would rather convey it to the male portion only of the circle. The subject is the birth of infants into the spirit-world. I told you in one of my former lectures that I should return to this particular matter again.

I will here repeat to you, as far as I can, the words which passed between another monarch I met and myself. "Oh friend," said he, "if thou art one, tell me, say, where is, right, where is day? I have traveled o'er dismal scenes; I have struggled through swamps dark and dreary, through

woods and valleys also, but cannot find my people or my country. Canst thou tell me where to find them? When upon earth a golden crown did deck my head, and thousands of my subjects used to bow down before me. The thing I have left behind they bless, they adore; while I, poor miserable being, lack even nourishment." "Friend," I asked, "if thou hast been so long traveling, hast thou not found what thou seekest?" "No," he replied, "when upon earth I tried but to satisfy my many selfish appetites, I studied not the happiness of the people I was called on to govern; but I thought them fools, instead of feeling grateful to them for supporting me in the manner they did." "Then," returned I, "fools they would be, indeed, to associate now with you, and doubtless another is now wearing your crown, while you have none. But, friend, I will tell you what to do. If you will come with me, I will show you the place where you can live at ease; and if you only choose to cultivate the spiritual life that is within you, it will adorn your spiritual brow far more brightly than all the crowns or treasures you ever dreamt of. Instead of thinking of these treasures past and gone, deck thyself in these flowers of wisdom and make thyself a crown of them; and having placed it upon thy brow, see how ridiculous is thy vain desire to exact worship from thy fellow-beings." Spirit cannot worship spirit, although there are some I have just left behind who really do worship their king, but at what a sacrifice!

[To be continued.]

(From the Grand Rapids (Mich.) Daily Democrat, March 2, 1890.)

A MYSTERIOUS TALE.

OLNEY H. RICHMOND TELLS HOW HE BECAME A MEMBER OF THE MAGI.

His Experience at Nashville and Hatcherbush, Esq., During the War—His Philosophy, His Religion—An Oath-Bound Society With Signs and Passwords—Can Prove All that he Claims—A Craft Which Flourished Twenty Thousand Years Before Christ—Descriptions of the Temple.

Much talk has been caused by several articles that appeared in *The Democrat* recently regarding occult astronomy or astral magnetism, of which Olney H. Richmond, the South Division street druggist, claims to be a student and expounder. Heretofore Mr. Richmond has refused to give a full account of the manner in which he became possessed of his mysterious knowledge. So much comment has been made on previous articles on the subject that Mr. Richmond was again called upon the other day and asked to give his story in full. His reason for refusing to give the information heretofore was, as he said, because his superiors had not yet given him permission to tell. When accosted by the reporter the other day he answered cheerfully: "Come back here by the stove, where it is warm, and I will tell you the strange story of the manner in which I became acquainted with this wonderful philosophy." This the reporter willingly did, and on getting comfortably seated Mr. Richmond proceeded as follows:

RICHMOND'S STRANGE STORY.
"During the war I was a soldier in the Fourteenth Michigan infantry, and in the Spring of '64 our regiment was quartered at Nashville, Tennessee. One night, about 8 o'clock, when I was on camp-guard duty, I saw a man approaching. I thought at first that he might be a spy, but immediately after I first saw him he spoke to me. I concluded that he could do me no harm as I was so near the camp, and so I answered his salute. He came up to me and said, 'your name is Richmond.' 'Right,' said I, supposing that some of my comrades had given him my name. 'And your other name is Yenlo,' continued the stranger. 'There you are wrong, for that is not my name.' 'Yes, it is,' said he, 'at least that is the name given you by my authorities, who have sent me to you; spell Yenlo backward and see what you make of it.' 'O-l-n-e-y, Olney, why yes that is my name.' 'Yes, and you were born on February 22, in the year 1844,' said the stranger. 'How did you find that out?' 'By the wonderful philosophy which I wish to communicate to you. I do not know you, but was guided to you. I am a member of an order, which has been lost to the public for many ages; I am a member of the ancient order of the Magi, which flourished in Egypt thousands of years ago. I feel that I am about to die, and am bound by the powers that rule me to convey the marvelous secrets which I hold to another, who shall live after me. You are that successor, and I wish you to call on me at No. _____ street some evening, and very soon, for I am sure that I shall not live long.' My curiosity was aroused and I promised to do as he wished me.

A VISIT TO THE STRANGER.

The man was a tall, thin, hollow-cheeked individual, and was very earnest in his conversation. I called on him as I had promised, and he initiated me into the high order of which I have the honor to be a member. He also gave me different articles which are necessary in the study. He was a Frenchman and told me that he had been told the secrets while in India.

"I did not understand but very little of what he told me at the time, but I am now able to understand it all, and the signs, passwords, etc., that he gave me really amounted to initiation into the higher degrees of the craft. 'I am much obliged to you,' said I to him, 'for the information you have given me,' but it seems to me, inasmuch as the object is to transmit this knowledge in an unbroken line, you are leaving it in bad hands." "How so?" said the Frenchman. I answered, "How long the war will last, I have no means of knowing; I am liable to be killed long before the war ends, and could not transmit this knowledge to another person." He said: "I am not acting without knowledge; you need not fear; you will pass through many battles hereafter, but without injury; not a bullet will touch you."

HIS NARROW ESCAPES.

"I must confess that I did not believe what he told me, for before every battle that I ever took part in, I felt that I was about to be killed. But, sure enough, not an enemy's bullet touched by body, notwithstanding that my clothes were perforated in

several instances. Something always seemed to move me just enough to escape a bullet. At Kennesaw, for instance, I was standing with my head above the breastworks, looking at the enemy's batteries on the mountain. Suddenly and involuntarily I ducked my head below the head-log just in time to escape a rifle ball from a sharpshooter, coming from a direction in which I had not been looking. He had evidently been taking deliberate aim at me. On another occasion I was sitting on a bank, and by some unaccountable impulse I suddenly arose, just in time to escape a twenty-pound shot which whizzed past right beneath my coat tails. This was at the siege of Atlanta. I might relate many similar instances of this character, but this will suffice to show you that some unseen power constantly protected me.

IN THE HANDS OF FATE.

"At the close of the war I came North and opened a store at Cedar Springs. I resided there for several years, and then removed my store to Pierson, a small town a few miles north of Cedar Springs. I was at this place in 1871, and it was in this year that I took an unaccountable notion that I wanted to go to Chicago; I did not know why I wanted to go, but something made me desire to do so. My wife asked me if I was going there to buy goods. I told her no, that I could buy all the goods I wanted in Grand Rapids, but that I needed relaxation and had made up my mind that I would take it in Chicago. I went, and as I intended to stay for some time, went to a private boarding house, at I think, 172 State street. I do not know why I went to this particular house, but I was attracted to it. There were several boarders in the same house, and at the first meal I took there I met a gentleman with whom I immediately formed an attachment. His name was Dr. Hamilton, from Charleston, S. C. After we had finished the meal we had a cigar together and got to talking. He invited me up to his room, and while we were there he showed me some books, among which was an old book, which he said was a family heirloom. He had no idea why he had brought the book along with him when he came to Chicago to seek his fortune. I opened the book and was surprised to see some of the mysterious words which the Frenchman had given me at Nashville seven years before.

THE MYSTERIES UNLOCKED.

"My curiosity was at once aroused, and I concluded that I could spare as much as \$25 to buy that book if it could be bought for that sum. I asked him how much he would take for it. 'I have no use for it,' said he, 'take it along if you want it.' I brought the book home with me, and it cast a flood of light on my studies, which I began to prosecute with great vigor. It took from that time to this, over eighteen years, of profound study for me to gain the valuable knowledge which I now possess. I have books which have cost me \$700 to get up. It took me years to get these books up; for I printed them myself, with rubber stamps. 'Are you a mason?' asked he of the reporter.

"No sir, I am not."

"I was going to say, if you were I could give you a much better idea of my philosophy. The Masonic order claims to have had its origin among the ancient priests of Isis. My philosophy is the true Masonry; that which existed among the ancient Chaldeans 20,000 years before Christ. Every Mason will admit that a great change took place in the order at the time of the building of Solomon's temple. The 'word,' which is so often mentioned in the Bible, was lost at that time, and the 'word' is the great secret of this order. To this day, no one outside of the Magi knows what this word is. My philosophy is really my religion."

"Does this religion include a Christ?"

CHRIST WAS A MAGI.

"Most certainly it does; my religion is the true Christianity. Christ was a member of the Magi and received his education at the hands of the order when he went down into Egypt. Why is the fact of Christ receiving his education in Egypt so little spoken of in the Bible? Simply because as it now is, it reached the present generation, with many books suppressed. It is because of the church that the arts of the Magi have been suppressed for so many hundreds of years. The exponents of the craft have been burned at the stake by the church, and tortured to death in many other ways, so that the order has been kept very secret, no one but the members dreaming of its existence. One proof to Christians of the truth of astrology is the fact that the three wise men who found Christ in the manger at Bethlehem were guided thither by a star. These three wise men were a committee from the Magi. The old prophets mentioned in the Bible were members of the Magi, and foretold coming events by the stars and planets.

"My religion does not require that its believers shall have faith. Everything that I believe I can prove. Where Christians, that is Christians in the common acceptance of the word, believe in a heaven, and have faith that there is one, I know and have absolute proof that there is one. By heaven, I do not mean a place where winged angels sit about on clouds, playing golden harps, but a practical hereafter, a heaven such as a man makes for himself. A man of high and refined tastes certainly would not be happy in a heaven where he would be classed with men of naturally low tastes."

AN OATH-BOUND ORDER.

"Mr. Richmond, what pecuniary benefit do you realize from having this knowledge which you claim to have?" asked the reporter.

"I can truthfully say that it is more of a nuisance to me than a profit, speaking in a financial way. Men come here to my store every day and want me to tell their fortunes, or prophesy how certain matters in which they are interested will pan out. Almost without exception I refuse these requests, as I do not care to degenerate my philosophy and religion to such uses."

"Now that the church has been wrested from its throne of temporal power, so that it cannot materially interfere with worldly affairs, it is time that the ancient order of the priests of Isis should be revived, and within the past year I have been directed by the powers who rule me to communicate my knowledge to others. Accordingly I have formed a class, which already include 30 members, many of them prominent and

influential men and women, who are cultured and refined people."

"Then you admit ladies to your secrets?" was asked.

"Yes, sir; in the ancient days such was not the case, but women now stand on a level with man, and they are admitted. It is not an easy thing to become a member of our circle, and many applications have been denied. Members must stand well, intellectually and socially, and withal be virtuous, else they will be unable to grasp the great ideas of this philosophy. An oath-bound order is the result of the formation of my class, several members of which reside in other parts of the state, and one lives as far away as the state of Alabama. We have a room all fitted up for our temple, which is located on this street (South Division street). We have our signs, passwords, etc., and symbols and articles similar to those used by the priests of Isis, way back in the time of the Rameses and Pharaohs. We have elected officers, and no outsiders are admitted at our meetings."

A VISIT TO THE TEMPLE.

At Mr. Richmond's invitation, the writer visited the temple. The first thought that strikes the mind of the visitor on entering the place, is that he is in an astronomical study, and such is the case, except that the place is devoted more to the occult branches of the study rather than plain astronomy. In the center of the ceiling is a large elliptical diagram, which includes the signs of zodiac, and from the center of the figure is suspended a large white globe, which represents the sun. Within this globe are several incandescent electric lights, one or all of which can be turned on, and any shade of light can be obtained which is desired. Around the sun, at relative distances and locations, are suspended the planets. By means of the system all manner of astronomical phenomena can be plainly illustrated. The walls are hung with charts of the heavens, and illustrations of planetary movements. Four chairs, evidently for the officers of the temple, are stationed opposite each other, on the four sides of the room. Against one of the chairs, presumably that of the highest officer, leaned the symbol of his office, the three-pronged spear of Neptune. Mr. Richmond explained that this trident was

THE OLDEST SYMBOL KNOWN.

on the earth at the present time. It was the emblem of the ancient lost Atlantis, and was derived by them from the form in which the stars now composing the great dipper of the north occupied 22,000 years ago, as he has demonstrated with the spectroscopic by mathematical calculation, based upon the motion of the seven stars composing the tail and part of the body of the great bear. As descriptions have heretofore been related of Mr. Richmond's mysterious performances with cards, etc., it will not be necessary to describe seeming miracles which he performed during this visit to his temple.

Mr. Richmond says he does not mean to antagonize prevailing religions with his philosophy; all that he antagonizes is their dogmas. His philosophy, he claims, gives a much clearer insight into true Christianity. Several masons are among his most ardent students. Mr. Richmond claims that his studies show that the order of the Magi existed and was started on the continent of Atlantis, which existed in the Atlantic ocean, too many ages gone by for man to trace back. This is where he thinks the Garden of Eden was located; on the continent which he believes sank beneath the waves ages upon ages before the time that the first page of history begins to record the accurate story of mankind.

THE PHYSICAL AND ASTRAL BODIES.

I usually find so much to admire and commend in the *Twentieth Century* that I rarely wish to criticize, even when I do not fully agree with the editor's views; but in his Sunday address there are some statements which seem to call for my friendly comments. I refer to certain statements concerning immortality, or the future life, which are as follows:

"When I say immortality . . . I mean the conscious continuance of the individual in separate personal life after the body is dead. . . . I do say, very emphatically, that everything that we know of in this universe of which we, ourselves, are a part, goes to prove that we, when we die, will fall as the trees do, as the roses do, never to live again, as the same separate conscious personalities. . . . I defy you to explain how a person can think, and feel, and love—how a person can live—after the body is dead. . . . I deny that there is one scientifically proven fact to show that there is any such future life in store for us."

The mistake, it seems to me, lies in the conception that the physical body is the all in all, and that therefore when it dies the conscious indwelling spirit, the Ego, the I am, ceases to exist, whereas I deem the truth to be that the physical body is but the humble servant of the conscious indwelling personality or spirit, which uses the body as the instrument whereby it (spirit) comes in contact with and cognizes matter and all forms of material existences, from mineral to human. The spirit, therefore, is not dependent upon the physical body for its continued existence, but can and does exist independently thereof.

Again, I assert that this indwelling spirit possesses a more etherealized yet substantial form, composed of a far more sublimated form of matter than the physical body, (even while the earthly body is still living,) and that the conscious personality, the spirit, the Ego, inhabits this astral or spiritual body during the whole period of earth life, which astral body is intimately united, by subtle magnetic forces, with the physical one. Also that the indwelling spirit has the power, under certain conditions, of detaching this astral body from its close association with the mortal one, and of causing that astral form to appear in places more or less remote from where the mortal body lies in an unconscious or trance condition.

After the death of the physical body (or the outer shell of aggregated material atoms), the conscious personality, still in closed or dwelling within its astral or spiritual body, becomes a dweller in spirit-life or the spirit-world, and from that sphere of

existence has the power and does return to earth, communicates with friends still in earth-life, informs them concerning its spiritual environment, its life of continuous activities, giving unmistakable evidences of its identity and individuality, and demonstrating its power over ponderable matter, through a knowledge of the laws governing the electric and magnetic forces of nature, whereby various psychical manifestations are made, which extend from the simple rap through the long list of phenomena until the important phase of materialization of spirit forms is demonstrated.

Hundreds of thousands of such manifestations have taken place during the past forty years in many countries, under the strictest scientific test conditions, which have been attested to and fully described in almost innumerable books, pamphlets, tracts and magazine articles, as well as essays and letters published in the daily and weekly papers all over the world, contributed by scientists, judges, lawyers, doctors, bishops, ministers, authors, poets, level-headed business men and women, all of whose testimony would have to be admitted by intelligent and impartial critics as being the truth, honestly told by honest and competent witnesses. Unimpeachable testimony from the most trustworthy sources can be furnished *ad libitum* to anyone desiring to thoroughly examine these important facts, by which the continued existence of each conscious personality, after the death of the physical body, is satisfactorily proven.

Paul's motto, "Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good," is as valuable now as when written centuries ago, and all who wish to gain more knowledge than they now possess concerning these interesting truths, can always have the opportunity of proving the truth of all the statements I have made, by the results of their own investigations into the realms of occult phenomena, when they earnestly and faithfully pursue their inquiries according to truly impartial and scientific methods.—Dr. John C. Wyman, in *Twentieth Century*.

Written for The Progressive Thinker.

SAFE ADVICE.

BY EMMA HOOD TUTTLE.

Have you philanthropic dreams?
Would you make this old world better?
Do you long to liberate
All who wear sin's galling fetter?
Have you sometimes reached the point
Where you'd be a missionary,
Daring death by cannibals?
That would be unnecessary!

I've a plan far pleasanter,
And I think a safe deal surer,
Which, if duly carried out,
Would be sovereign evil-curer.
Work to elevate yourself;
Let each person set about it.
Do not for a moment think
That 'tis selfishness 't' and flout it.

Confidently I affirm
That whoever is self-wronging
Deals to others injury;
Wreck the health to you belonging
And you cannot others help.
Though they falter for assistance;
Blunt your sense of knowing right
And you give wrong less resistance.

Black your character and see
How your influence will weaken,
Whether you be coast or ship.
Infidel or staid church deacon,
Others lose when you have lost,
Others gain when you are gaining,
So the common weal demands
Self be kept in strictest training.

Give yourself the food to grow
And you soon can help feed others;
Feed your mind and strengthen it
That your thoughts may feed another's;
Take advantage which wait
Your disposal and extend them;
Use the good things of the past
But be fearless to amend them.
Berlin Heights, Ohio.

If you receive a sample copy, it is intended to do missionary work, and with your co-operation it will do it most effectually. After reading it, send it to a Spiritualist friend and request him to tell all his Spiritualist friends that *THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER* is being published in Chicago, and that they should subscribe for it. Let each one who hears the good news, spread it far and wide, and it will not be long before we have 100,000 subscribers.

PASSED TO SPIRIT-LIFE.

At Albany, Wis., March 18, 1890, Mrs. C. L. Morgan. She left her earthly home to dwell with those who have gone before, in that "Home not made with hands and eternal life." Mrs. Morgan was 61 years old, and had been a resident of Green county, Wisconsin, thirty-two years. She was an advanced thinker and a worker in all reforms of the age. Owing to the dangerous illness of a sister, there was no service at the house. Kind friends gathered at the cemetery to which the form was tenderly borne by her sons and sons-in-law. An appropriate hymn was sung by her life-long friends, the Whitcomb brothers, after which Mrs. Morgan read an address which she had been requested to prepare for the occasion.

L. H. WARREN.

Mrs. Sarah Addams, of Orient, N. Y., passed to spirit-life on Friday, March 14. By her death, her family and friends suffer a great loss, for she was the embodiment of the spiritual sentiment of doing all for others, utterly unselfish and unswerving in her sympathy. Aside from that she was one of those quiet, unobtrusive mediums, who, with gifts as rare as the violet's perfume, cast their influence around them and do incalculable good. She was in middle life, and ought to have remained to bless her friends for many years; this was not to be, and she ascended to meet the angels she had so long delighted to converse with. The last scene was most impressive. She called her husband to her bedside, and putting her arms around his neck, kissed him and said: "For the future, will you do I am going to heaven." Then she called her youngest child, a boy of seven, kissed him and gave him a parting adieu. After a little time she fixed her eyes upon the wall, raised her right hand and said, "Up! up! up!" raising her hand higher with every exclamation. Throwing up both hands, she spoke as though recognizing them: "Della, Susie, my children; Grandma Brown!" and dropped back on her pillow unconscious. That was the morning of the 14th; she lived until 10:30 that evening, but did not revive, only passing slowly away. The names she spoke, and seemed to recognize those to whom they belonged, were of near departed friends, with whom for years she had almost daily conversed, and of all others would be present to welcome her. She indicated not only that Spiritualism is good enough to live by, but also to die by.

Mrs. Louisa Geddes departed this life Tuesday, March 18, 1890, aged 88 years, 11 months and 21 days. She was the daughter of Charles and Nancy Hays, and was born at Great Barrington, Berkshire county, Mass. She was of a quiet, philosophic, unobtrusive and retiring disposition, and though through life in fairly comfortable circumstances, she was an ever busy, industrious woman, joining her hands with a great heart in all the efforts of her husband in facing and performing the responsibilities and duties of life. Their home, by acquaintances most intimate, was reputed to be a veritable heaven on earth to themselves and to those who were the pleasure of its hospitality. The writer was called to officiate at the funeral, which was very largely attended by people of diversified opinions. They listened very attentively and respectfully to some ideas that were new on the problem of life and the nature of death, its naturalness, and the great hope in a future with which a great human life inspires us. They undoubtedly returned to their homes thinking that though the services were philosophic and unceremonious, a calm dignity and profound affection surged through the hearts of the mourners, and that the teachings of the discourse were calculated to induce every thoughtful person to live with a noble purpose, have a high object in life, help the unfortunate, weak and oppressed; that he or she who does this has no cause to fear death, and that on no occasion is to be other than resigned.

J. H. RANDALL.

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