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Krishna Upon the Head of the Serpent.

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## THE SERPENT.

### SERPENT SYMBOLS IN RELIGION.

BY PROF. ALEXANDER WILDER.

"Among all peoples that hold the gods in veneration," says Justin, the historian, "the serpent is the great symbol and mystery. Repulsive as this animal may be to many, remarkable as the statement may seem, the serpent has been regarded as the

"Father of all; in every age, in every clime adored."

He has been everywhere the revered dweller in temples, sacred shrines and groves. He was the privileged one in every Eden, generally receiving without dividing the honors bestowed upon the genius or divinity of the place. Whatever the ancient faith whose mysteries we explore, the serpent appears prominent among its symbols. Our own American aboriginals cherished the Rattlesnake, the Egyptians venerated the Royal Asp, and the Eastern Indians the hooded Cobra. In ancient Assyria, the great red Dragon, the Seven-headed serpent of Akkad, surrounded with a circle of rays or horns, was borne on a standard before the armies. The god of fire, life and the healing art, Æsculapius, was represented as a serpent, whose eyes would charm to sleep, whose breath gave life, health and joy to human beings.

The employing of symbols in worship may need a word of explanation. They constitute the very language of religion. Indeed, signs or symbols are the ground-work of all language. The words which we use in daily intercourse are only sounds which have been adapted to signify the thoughts and ideas which we desire to express. Such words as *ripple, murmur, roar, crash, rattle, hush*, when uttered, bear a certain resemblance to the meaning which they are used to convey. The animal tribes communicate their emotions in such a way by sounds and gestures. The human races, however, are not so limited. They employ sounds to express conversational meanings, and afterwards make use of written characters to represent sounds. Man is above the animals, because he can talk; because he uses words as symbols of thoughts, and written signs as symbols of words. In all his culture, symbolism has been his necessary instrument and auxiliary; and as all culture in the past has been intimately allied with religion, the same fact exists in regard to worship.

Mankind has always believed in immortality. The Ancient World was passionately religious. The present life was regarded as a drama in which each individual took part; and this drama was the dropping of the curtain and the forsaking of the theater in order to enter upon the real life of the Eternal Region—the great mystery which opened the way to the understanding of every other mystery. In no sense was it supposed to be extinction.

When the head of a people or family died, he was believed to be still in existence, and able to protect those over whom he had presided. The Tomb was consecrated accordingly as the "Everlasting Home" in which the disembodied soul was

housed (See Ecclesiastes 12:5; Job 3:14). It was a sanctuary to which offerings were brought and where worship was rendered at stated periods (See *Virgil's Æneid*, V.) Hence, too, in ancient times, the family altar was erected; the family hearth-fire was kept aglow for the worship of the Ancestors and for offerings with which to nourish and propitiate the spirits of the dead. "All must honor the mighty dead," said the Pythian oracle to Solon; "the chiefs of the country who live beneath the earth." Thus every house was a sanctuary, every feast a holy communion, every burial-place a precinct for religious rites.

It is easy to perceive that symbols peculiar to such worship would be adopted. Accordingly the eidolon or image denoting the ancestral guardian spirit was cherished and venerated. There were often several of these at family shrines. This custom is the origin of the practice of decorating houses with pictures. In the temples, likewise, symbolic figures were placed to represent divine personages; sometimes in the human form, and sometimes in the shape of other objects. The ancient worshiper believed that somewhat of the essential nature and quality of Divinity was present in the symbols. This has been called *fetich-worship*, and pronounced barbarous; yet the current notion, or perhaps "superstition," in regard to wedding rings and other keepsakes, are of the same character. The forms may change, but the essentials continue.

The Apollo of classic Greece was sculptured with a facial angle of ninety degrees to denote that the ideal of a god was that of a perfect man. More generally, however, some animal or physical symbol represented the divinity. Fire was everywhere adored as figuring or embodying the principle first receptive of the Divine Energy; afterward imparting it universally as the vehicle of Life. It was so esteemed upon the sacred family altar; and the goddess Vesta or Hestia (the Briggita of the North) herself was indicated by the fire always burning, the "eternal fire" of the sanctuary. Thus at the temple of Moloch, the Bacchus or Hercules of Tyre, the sacred fire on the altar was the only visible symbol of the god. This was the case generally in Phœnician temples, as was also afterward of the Temple at Jerusalem, which Tyrian workmen are said to have built for King Solomon. Philosophy consecrated this worship by its own dogmas. All things, it taught, were the outcome of the Fire; all things that exist and subsist are incarnations and embodiments of the vital warmth. As a Living Principle it was, therefore, the Very God; and accordingly, in the ancient World-Religions, the Supreme Being, whether Indra, Ahurmazda, or the mystic Jehovah, was described by the text: "Our God is a consuming Fire."

The serpent was prominent in every realm and continent as the favorite symbol of the Sacred Flame. It was common to both hemispheres, to the principal races of mankind, to the opposite conditions of savagery and civilization. In ancient and modern times it has received veneration and homage. The Old World and the New have been in this respect in wonderful accord; the European and Peruvian, the Indian of Asia and the red tribes of North America, Brahmins and Buddhists, Semitic and Hamitic peoples, Negroes and Tartars, and even Israelites and Christian sects have participated in the peculiar cultus. We have no occasion to sneer at this, and an honest love of truth will not permit denunciation. The wisest student will explore the matter critically, and investigate the worship itself,—its origin, scope and outcome,—in the modest but resolute assurance that it involves a wealth of knowledge which he cannot afford to overlook.

Jacob Bryant, in his *Analysis of Ancient Mythology*, expressed the desire that some one would set forth at full length the history and nature of the Worship of the Serpent. He observed its universal prevalence among the most cultivated nations as well as degraded tribes, and made frequent allusions to its intimate association with the various religions. While the reptile itself often received but a qualified veneration, or was even abhorred, its image and likeness have obtained a greater honor and even devotion. "No nations were so geographically remote, or so religiously discordant," says the Rev. John Bathurst Deane, "but that one—and only one—superstitious characteristic was common to all; that the most civilized and the most barbarous bowed down with the same devotion to the same engrossing deity; and this deity either *was*, or *was represented by*, the same SACRED SERPENT."

It not only entered the symbolic and ritual service of every religion in which the worship of Sun constituted the principal feature, but we find it in countries like ancient Sarmatia, Skandinavia and the Gold Coast of

Africa, where that worship was comparatively or altogether unknown. "Temples constructed thousands of years prior to Moses," Henry O'Brien declares, "bear the impress of its history."—(*Round Towers of Ireland*.)

So universal has been the serpent-cult as to have possessed the dimensions, if not the importance, of a world-religion. Its reign has been as wide-spread as the dominion of night, extending from the most familiarly-known dawn to the hidden regions of the earth. The cobra and the massaugar, the hooded snake and the rattlesnake, are even now revered and worshiped, with analogous rites, in the Eastern and the Western Hemispheres. The idea and motive, so far as we know, are substantially the same.

The symbolism, however, was remarkable for its seeming diversity. The sacred animal typified the Sun as lord of the heavens, the several planets, the circle of the zodiac, the cosmos itself, and the Divine Creator. It comprehended all the sanctities of archaic life. It represented the fire on the altar and the lightning in the sky; life eternal and deliverance from calamity; the Lord above all, and the regent of the world of the dead. It denoted universal space and perennial time—arcane knowledge, energy, and the imperious Necessity. It was the symbol of the Supreme Intelligence, the unswerving truth; and hence it was applied, in a subordinate sense, to those traditional teachers of mankind whose invaluable benefits entitled them to extraordinary distinction. Cities, communities, tribes, nations, and even races of men, have the name of the serpent; kings made it the badge of their authority; and astronomers mapping out the face of the sky, conformed to the general sentiment, and placed it in various characters, among the constellations. It was revered as the guardian of whatever was sacred—whether of knowledge, holy rites, the spirits of the dead, or valued treasure.

We must except, however, to a certain degree at least, the early Aryan peoples of India and ancient Iran. They appear to have cherished none of this veneration. No serpent-god appears in the *Ævesta* or the *Vedas*; and the Aryans, wherever they went, destroyed both serpent-divinities and serpent-worshiping peoples. In the religious lore, the Hindu books place the great lightning-serpent Ahi in the heavens, where he withholds the rain; Indra overcomes him and causes the waters to flow.

The Persian or Eranian mythology describes the serpent as always a potency of evil. Araman, the Evil Spirit, is represented as sending a serpent and winter, the work of *devas*, to ravage the primitive country of the Aryan people. Again, the three-headed serpent, Zohak or Azdahaka, is recorded as having conquered the country which Yima, or Yemshid had ruled as a paradise, and as having reigned over it a thousand ["ever so many"] years, destroying truth and goodness among men. From Persia we probably derive the traditional notion of the serpent as a symbol of Evil.

Vedic India eventually became Brahman India; and then the aboriginal Siva-worship, with the Takshak religion of the Skythian invaders, restored the serpent to somewhat of its ancient favor. Hence we may note the contrasts; that while in Parsi literature Zohak dominates and destroys the Paradise of Yima, the later Hindu books make Takshaka, the king of the serpents, a form of Yama, the Lord of the world of the dead. Indeed, one of the notions cherished in India is that serpents are the embodied souls of the dead; and hence serpents and their king are duly worshiped and propitiated.

The kings of Assyria and Babylon carried the effigy of the Fiery Serpent, the "Great Red Dragon," upon their military standards, as the ensign of their authority. Cyrus caused it to be adopted by the Persians and Medes, and it was also an ensign of the Emperors of Rome. Our British forefathers had similar standards; and tradition states that Uthyr, the father of King Arthur, had a vision of a star in the form of the Fiery Dragon, which foretold his exaltation to the throne. Probably this suggested the later legend of the vision of the Emperor Constantine. The dragons derive their designation from the sacred dragon. The Tartar chieftains of Asia have the tradition of a serpent parentage, and carry a dragon standard. Even now the serpent on the pole or cross is the astronomic symbol of the planet Jupiter, and the coiled reptile at the base of the phallic pillar represents Satan; thus serving as reminiscences of the old idea.

Especially is the serpent the Keeper of the Tree of Knowledge. Other treasures are of secondary importance, whether of the sky, the earth, or even of the deep. Wisdom is superior to all. The parable of the serpent in the Garden of Eden is very old, and was constructed out of material that had been quarried from legends that possessed an immemorial antiquity. In the folk-lore of the Ancient World were many such gardens, each with its man and woman artlessly simple, and each with its mystic Serpent-Guardian. All that was desirable to know and so to possess, was in the custody of the serpent and to be obtained through his favor. The drama, however, always takes a new phase; the act always ends, when the serpent guides to the mysterious treasure, and the fruit is plucked.

In the story of the book of *Genesis* we are told of a Tree of Life, and a Tree of the

knowing of good and evil. I am of opinion that the allegory is here very arcane, and that the trees represented one idea—differing, however, according as the view is taken. "You will not die," says the serpent to the woman; "but in the day you eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall become as God, knowing good and evil." Upon a stone in a French church was a sculpture which has been reproduced in several books. The original design is said to have been found in Southern India. It is full of interesting suggestion. It represents the tree in the centre; the various animals standing below. On one side stands the hero-god Hercules holding his club or baton in a conspicuous manner. The helmeted goddess Pallas-Athena is on the other side with the serpent. This is, as will be seen, an old classic illustration wrought over, as the practice was, into Christian symbolism. Around the whole, in old Hebrew character, was the text: "The woman saw that the tree was good for food, delightful to the view, and a tree to be desired to make one intelligent."

The explanation of this picture is probably the true interpretation of the drama and allegory of the Garden. The story goes on—that the woman took of the fruit and eat; that giving it to her husband there with her, he also eat; that their eyes were opened, as the serpent had predicted; so that the "Lord God" declared that man had become as God, in that he knew good and evil. What this power of knowing was, is intimated by the anonymous writer of the *Epistle to the Hebrews*: "Strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those that by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." By comparing these passages we may perceive that the serpent in Eden had told the truth; the eating of the tree of knowledge closed the period of infant probation, making man as a God and law for himself.

Thus in the Garden of Eden, as elsewhere, the serpent appears as the possessor and disseminator of knowledge. He was the divinator, and by ophiomancy—the nahash, or serpent-art, Balaam foretold the fortune of Ismail, and Joseph read the future art of his cup. The ambassadors of Ben Hadad visiting Ahab, took their answer from his mode of reply. In the mythology of India the Buddhistic serpent possessed the treasures of knowledge and pure religion, and the Krishnavic Eagle had to fly far to procure them.

In the *Apocrypha*, mention is made of "the ancient serpent, the Devil and Satan," and he is represented as a Dragon, red or fiery, with seven heads, surrounded by a nimbus or halo of ten horns or rays of light.

This name *Satan* is a Hebrew perversion of the older term *Set* or *Seth*. This was the designation of the divinity worshiped in Northern Egypt, Palestine, and by the people known as Hittites, who appear to have extended here and there over Middle and Western Asia, from ancient Kathay or China to the Archipelago. *Sedek* or *Zadok* and *Sutech* are forms of the name. In the Bible this divinity is known as Baal, and once as Baal-Zephon, or Typhon; but he is also euhemerized into Seth, the progenitor of the Semitic and Hamitic races of mankind. Change of rulers made change of Gods, and their degradation into evil potencies. It was so in Egypt; Seth and his serpent Hof were transposed into adversaries. The Jews who came from Babylon brought with them a new theism; Seth became Satan, and Baal Zebul, the Phœnician Æsculapius, was made Beel Zebul, prince of demons and mortal pestilences.

Many-headed serpents were traditional creatures of remote antiquity. In an Akkadian hymn "the huge serpent of seven heads" is noted; and in Egypt the snake Rahak is tricephalic. The Indian serpent, Vasouki, has also seven heads; and many of the Naja-sculptures of Buddhistic India exhibit the same endowment. Even one form of Bacchus was that of a "many-headed dragon. The unknown author of the *Apocalypse* evidently got his seven-headed, ten-rayed Diavolos from the Assyrian country. Even Saturn, the ancient Italian divinity, was probably named from Set or Satan; and one writer calls him a serpent.

That the ancient Israelites worshiped the serpent-divinity is affirmed in their own Scriptures. "They worshiped serpents void of reason," says the writer of the book deputed *Wisdom of Solomon*. It is also recorded that when Hezekiah became king in Jerusalem he removed the high places, broke the *stelas* or phallic pillars, cut down the groves or Venus-symbols, and "broke in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made." "Till those days," we are told, "the children of Israel burned incense to it."—(*Kings II*, xviii.)

The prophet Isaiah when endeavoring to declare his divine commission relates the account of a vision which he had of the Supreme Being sitting, as he is represented in the Assyrian Sculptures, upon a throne high above. Around him were the seraphs, each with six wings. In the Hebrew text of the Book of *Numbers*, the Brazen Serpent, is called a seraph, or fiery serpent. When the Christian sects began in the second century, to emerge distinctly from the various religions of that period, we find the serpent-symbol employed by them. In Egypt gems were worn as amulets, often engraved with human-headed serpent-figures, called sometimes Abexas, and sometimes Iao or Jehovah. Tertullian, writing at that period, declared that the serpent was worshiped as equal or equivalent to the Christ—

in other terms, as God or the Word made flesh. The Holy Supper appears to have been a rite adopted from the worship of Mithras; though a similar observance existed in other religions. Epiphanius, a competent, though hardly a trustworthy writer, describes it as observed in the sect to which he had belonged. A tame serpent was kept in an ark or coffer. When the supper was celebrated, a loaf of bread was placed on the table, and a prayer or hymn chanted. The snake then came out of his receptacle, glided to the table, coiled round the bread, and then retired. The consecration being thus completed, the communicants partook with great rejoicing.

Similar, in many respects, is the account of the filial sacrifice of Æneas at his father's tomb, (*Virgil's Æneid*). Bowls of wine, milk, and blood had been poured on the ground, when a huge snake came from the shrine of Anchises, moving in seven coils, glided to the altar, tasted the libation and returned. The serpent in the coffer or basket, however, was common in Greece.

The doctrine of the Gnostic Christians appears to have been based upon the Babylonian Theosophy. It represented the serpent as the genius of the divine wisdom, sent from heaven to persuade man to eat of the tree of knowledge and so become able to know the true wisdom. The more common and popular notion, however, represented the serpent as the spirit of an ancestor, and to be propitiated as such. In this character, the reptile has been worshiped everywhere. In the different tribes of America the rattlesnake is venerated by the name of Great Father. Quetzalcoatl, the "Fair God" of Cholula was symbolized by a winged or feathered rattlesnake. I think, however, that this was a hieroglyph or occult symbol, to express the name of the divinity by the two forms. The great temple of Moctezuma at Mexico was called the House of Serpents, and innumerable rattlesnakes, it is affirmed, were fed there with human blood. The Mound-Builders of the West, judging from their remains, were a serpent-worshiping race. The wandering tribes are such yet.

Africa seems to maintain the same cultus in its grossest forms, which existed in very ancient times. At Whydah, the Serpent-god Dangle is revered as "the chief bliss of mortals." He has a thousand wives, or women set apart to him by religious consecration. Some of these have been "touched by the serpent," but most of them are girls vowed to him before birth, or soon after. They are marked by a peculiar tattoo; and fulfill specific offices, like the nautch-girls of India, and the magdalen, or temple-women, of ancient Syria. Similar customs exist in other parts of the Dark Continent. "From Liberia to Benguela," says Sir John Lubbock, "the serpent is the chief divinity." Bruce affirms that the Shan-Gallas of Abyssinia were serpent-worshipers.

The term *obeah* which many people apply to the priests of this worship, we find also given to such persons in the Hebrew text of the Bible. This may be an evidence that they were of common race and origin. Saul, the Israelitish king, is represented as visiting an Ob-woman at En-Dor. The name signifies, a well and enclosed circle, and, of course, denotes also a shrine of the aboriginal worship.

The *condurites* which are kept up among the colored population of South America and the West Indies, may have been learned from the earlier Indian population, but were more probably brought from Africa. It will be remembered that Tituba, the slave-woman in the family of Mr. Parris of Salem village, in Massachusetts in 1692, who began the performances known as "witchcraft," was brought from the West Indies. The Haitians still maintain the peculiar rites, and become infuriated while engaged in the orgies. It is then dangerous for a spectator to be near; his life would pay the forfeit.

In modern India, the cobra or hooded snake is still the favorite divinity; every hamlet has one. The Mahratta women go every year at stated periods to the snake's hole, join hands and dance round it in a circle somewhat after the fashion of the "Witches' Dance" of European story. They chant songs and finally prostrate themselves, praying to the Divine Creator for whatever they may desire. There are pictures of serpents in every house, which are honored by offerings. The living snake is revered everywhere; but they have only his sculptured form in the Temples. It is twining round the lingam or lingham-yoni, the symbol of the Maha Deva (Siva) or the Devi-Devi (two in one); or it may be seen significantly in the form known as the Esculapian Rod.

There was anciently a fierce combat between the Dravidic Serpent-worshipers of India, and the Aryan conquerors. But in time the Buddhists became devotees of the Naga; and the other Hindus acceded to the Serpent-myths. Hence Vishnu, the Brahman god, is represented as lying on a couch in a boat consisting of the folds of the world-serpent Ananta; while from his navel springs up the mystic lotus (*Nymphaeæ nelumbo*) from whose cup Brahma, the Creator, is born. Krishna, too, who is only Vishnu incarnated to redeem the world, is pictured sometimes as being enveloped in the coils of the serpent Kalaya, upon whose head he is treading; while other cuts show the serpent biting his foot. All this is figurative.

Siva, or Maha Deva, is the god of the Æthiopic aboriginal peoples, and really has no place in the Brahman system. He has a serpent round his arms; and is worshiped as the Creator, Destroyer, Regenerator, Savior, Father of Life, and Upholder of all

things. I suppose that this is the chief god under other names in the various other countries. Doubtless such gods as Bacchus, Sabazios, Seth, Sev, Kronos, were such personifications; and both the phallic symbols and serpent-rites of the world, centre in Siva-worship or the *Sakeya*.

The Buddhist religion of Northern India began with a Naga, or serpent-worshiping race. Trees, however,—especially the Peepal, which branches out into a grove, were first esteemed by them; but, as has almost always been the case, the new faith amalgamated with the old. Some centuries before our era, all India was ruled by Buddhist kings; and the rites were illustrated with the symbols of the tree and serpent. Plainly the Great Reformer had discarded the ophidian worship; but later on it regained its foothold.

China has its Holy Dragon and imperial Dragon-Throne; and the Tartars, like the ancient Assyrians and Egyptians, carry the effigy of the red serpent on their military standards. Indeed, if we accept the opinions of Quatrefages and other savants, the Serpent-worship of the world was disseminated from this region.

Herodotus relates that Herakles (Hercules) coming into Scythia, above the river Borythenes was entertained by a maiden in a cave, whose body in the upper part resembled a woman, and below was that of a snake. Her progeny became the kings of the Skyths from the country of the Baltic and Middle Europe, into the heart of Northern Asia. However we may interpret this myth, it is certain that the worship which the Serpent-mother represented, has been maintained in that region clear down into modern times. It has even interblended with Christianity. In Poland serpents and trees were worshiped together; but the Samogitians venerated the serpent alone as their divinity. Every landholder kept a snake in the corner of his house, feeding it and yielding it homage. When misfortune came to hand he imputed it to some negligence in serving the snake.

The worship was kept up in Lithuania as late as the fifteenth century. Prague offered sacrifices to numerous serpents, and in Livonia, the most beautiful captives, clear down to the Middle Ages were offered to the Serpent-gods. The same cultus existed in Norway in 1555, and in Finland and Estonia down to the limits of the present century. The cradles of our "Caucasian race," whether in Europe or Asia, were in regions hallowed by this peculiar worship.

The old crosses of Ireland had serpent-figures coiled about them. Probably no people ever took more cordially to idolatry than the Irish. Similar symbols existed in Scotland; and in France religious processions were common for many centuries, in which the effigy of a serpent or crocodile was carried in procession. Of course there was a legend with it, of a serpent killed by a missionary saint, as in the case of the mythic Patrick of Ireland. This last story may be true; but the three essentials are evidently fictitious. There were no snakes in Ireland, except the images of them on the posts and crosses; and these remained till recent time; besides St. Patrick himself was a fictitious personage. The name is Latin, and signifies *father*. It belonged to Liber, the Romanized Bacchus, whose festival occurred on the seventeenth day of March. (*Ovid: Fasti*, lines 713, etc.) The ancient gods very generally were transformed into Saints in the Christian Calendar; the former religion merging into the new form without much friction.

Grecian mythology had similar tales of hero-gods overcoming Serpent-divinities and succeeding to their worship, and even to their ophidian forms. Kadmos, the Foretime oriental-god, was said to have slain a dragon at Thebes, and afterward to have become himself a serpent. Apollo killed the Python at Delphi, and succeeded to his oracle. Esculapius, the god of the Art of healing, was both fire-god and serpent. Every temple consecrated to his worship obtained a serpent from Epidavros to be its divinity; and the knowledge of medicine over which he presided was regarded as the wisdom of the serpent.

Even to this day, whether in our modern civilized society aping Old-World fashions, or with Brazilian Indians, the snake is the symbol of the medical art. The inventors of Christian legends, as if to furnish a parallel of Michael the archangel contending with the dragon, not only gave us the legend of St. George overcoming one, but also coined the story that St. Hilarius had slain the Æsculapian or Kadmean serpent at Epidavros.

In the Samothracian Mysteries, which were Æthiopic originally, the worshipers paid homage to the serpent. In the Sabazian orgies of Greece and Asia Minor, a snake was placed in the bosom of the neophyte, and emerged at his feet. Myrtale or Olympias was one of the Mainads officiating at these frantic rites and went in the mystic search for the slain god on Mount Hæmos, raving and singing, her arms girt about with living snakes. She used to say that her famous son was the offspring, not of Philip, but of the Bacchic Serpent. The mother of Octavius Caesar affirmed the same thing of her son, and actually exhibited in corroboration, a mark upon her body similar to the one upon the bodies of the women in Dahomi that have been "touched by the snake." One legend represents the philosopher Pythagoras as having been begotten by the Python, and another makes Plato the son of the Pythian Apollo. The father of King David, or rather of his sister, was

(Continued on third page.)



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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 27, then at No. 27 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 28, then you will get four more copies; if 29, 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.

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Why do we attach so much importance to "25 cents"? Why do we advertise so liberally for trial subscribers? Why do we make 16 weeks the superstructure on which to rear a magnificent publishing house? Simply because the whole spiritual pathway is filled with the wrecks of newspaper enterprises, and the Spiritualists, always liberal, always generous, will not, as a general rule, advance more than that sum until they see some legitimate fruits. Commencing with the Religio-Philosophical Publishing House, of this city, The Progressive Age, and The Universe, all started with the most honorable intentions, and so conducted, the loss to some Spiritualists, who invested therein almost beggared them! We have started on an entirely different basis. No stockholders to lose anything, and no bequests to be squandered.

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Dr. Fannie C. Dexter Miller, of Bellevue, Pa., writes: "As I read your paper, I think how good it is to you to stand for the right. Your Home Circle gives you true nature every time. My soul wells up and thanks you. Mrs. Britton's remarks are right to the point. There are many who have had the marvelous experience of C. D. Chaffee. We get strength by reading others' experiences."

## The Ethics of Hypnotism.

Dr. Geo. M. Gould has become alarmed at the rapid extension in the practice and belief in hypnotism, and written an article for the Open Court in denunciation. One point has been gained: The admission that there is reality in the claims of Mesmer. The doctors have derided and denied, until recently they have found such treatment indicative, not of learning, but of ignorance. They admit the reality of the phenomena of Mesmerism, under another name, and that this power is alarmingly dangerous. Dr. Gould confounds the hypnotic and somnambule state, which he thus defines: "Stripped of verbiage, the essential nature of the somnambule state consists in the focalization of consciousness on vacuity, and supplying the usual contents of the same with exotic ideas and ab extra denominations."

Not content with this, he again defines: "Hypnotism is a diseased sleep with a mechanism not dissimilar in essentials from that of normal sleep, except in the addition of morbid exaggeration and factitious creation." Had the author "stripped" these sentences of a little more "verbiage," and made his meaning apparent, we should not have been left to conjecture, as now. Persons in the hypnotic, somnambule or mesmeric state, constantly perform acts, as in speaking, writing, or answering profound questions, entirely above their waking comprehension. The "concentration of the mind on vacuity" appears to have a wonderful stimulating effect, and "diseased sleep" to give a greater mental activity than wakefulness!

Dr. Gould thinks no physician has the right to use hypnotism in the cure of disease, for it is a disease itself, and no physician has the right to create a disease. This is a wonderfully conscientious confession, when it is remembered that allopathy means another pain, created in antagonism to the pain of the disease it would cure. Why do these doctors apply blisters, if not to create a disease? or administer an hundred poisonous drugs, the operation of every one of which produces diseased action of the tissues?

Furthermore, he sees in the control of the will of one person by another the means of untold crimes. He wants the exhibition of this power prohibited by law. He is not choice in his use of words, but the bitterness of his soul piles up the bitterest epithets and rolls them into sentences which sound like the explosion of heavy artillery; but it is all explosion and sound, for there is no shot or ball. He approaches the subject from the wrong side, with crochety theories, and "shudders with horror" over the man of straw he creates.

"Medically, it is simply a disease," and "individually," "hypnotization is a wanton playing upon the already diseased person, by one who has no right to the power." "It is the very essence of vice to willingly undergo mental degradation and animalization." Dr. Gould would not hesitate to use chloroform to produce unconsciousness in case of a surgical operation. What difference would there be in placing the subject in hypnotic sleep for the same purpose? A great many horrible crimes have been committed by the use of chloroform; shall it, therefore, be discarded, with all its beneficent influence? Hypnotism may be abused and perverted, therefore shall it be made a crime to employ it?

The discovery of this power of mind over mind has not created it. It has always existed, and will continue to exist. It will be turned to ignoble uses, and made participant in crime, just as it has been, consciously or unconsciously.

Dr. Gould would have us bind a bandage over our eyes, and declare ourselves blind. The true scientific method is to go into life with eyes wide open, seeing everything and preparing for it.

## On a Higher Plane.

Wilson Duncan, an honest, intelligent, conscientious gentleman, is having some trouble with the Presbyterian church at Council Bluffs, Iowa. Mr. Duncan is thoroughly progressive, and having risen on to a higher plane than that occupied by the Presbyterians, his being ex-communicated will not interfere with him in the least. He is above the people he has left, as he has at last found the truth, and grasped it. On account of his heresy, Mr. Duncan was summoned to appear before the Church for trial. The charges were: The defendant disclaimed the atoning power of Christ; secondly, denied the inspiration of the Bible; thirdly, did not believe in regeneration. The session at once organized itself into a Court of Inquiry and the trial of the member was commenced. The charges were read to Mr. Duncan and he presented to the elders a written defense in which he admitted the charges by claiming a later and superior revelation from the Spirit-world, which was far beyond any biblical teachings. He virtually admitted Spiritualism as his religious faith, and of course he was found guilty of heresy.

## Our Rostrum.

We propose to retain its high standard.

None of the high-priced magazines have articles in any respect superior to those we publish under the head of "THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER'S ROSTRUM." January 3, 1891, Edwin A. Rice, a scholarly young man, will discourse on the subject: "The Ancient Egyptians and Their Religions." January 17, Benjamin F. Lee, President of the Mantua Association of Spiritualists, Ohio, will illuminate Our Rostrum with a fine address on: "Who is your God?"

January 31, Mrs. Sarah C. Ittner, a leading spirit among the Unitarians of St. Louis, Mo., and a lady of fine culture and attainments, will be the attraction in Our Rostrum. She will discuss this question: "Evolution of the Idea of Immortality."

## Eclipses Them All.

A. J. Case, of Waverly, Iowa, writes: "I hope your subscription list may run up to millions, and would if the world could 'appreciate the good THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER is doing. I have been reading 'spiritual papers forty years, and I consider that yours eclipses them all, considering contents and price, and hope every subscriber will make an effort to send in at least two subscribers, and then how soon you would have 100,000 on your list. Do not rest until we get that number, and then it will take care of itself. I would like to have some one give us a condensed history of the origin of the 'Bible that is used by the Christian world.'"

THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER has accomplished what no other Spiritualist paper ever did—having paid expenses from the first issue,—and now we desire to extend our field of usefulness. We don't see how a Spiritualist, especially if he has a thimbleful of brains, can do without a Spiritualist paper. If he thinks the high-priced papers too expensive, for only a little over one cent per week he can secure THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER, and be brought in contact with the leading minds of the age. There are, however, a few Spiritualists who are well off financially, who will not take a Spiritualist paper at any price; who will not even pay 14 cents per week to learn what is going on throughout the world in the ranks of Spiritualism. Such people are as narrow spiritually as they are in their efforts to spread the light before the world, and they will eventually find a vacancy in their souls that must be supplied sometime.

## The Best Paper.

Wm. H. Hoag, of Peculiar, Mo., writes: "I have read THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER with great satisfaction for nearly sixteen weeks. I have been a Spiritualist for seventeen years, and have read many of the leading Spiritualist papers, such as the Religio-Philosophical Journal, and others of lesser magnitude, but THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER, though small, contains more sound reasoning and light on the spiritual philosophy than all the rest combined. I have been living for the last thirteen years in a land where churches are in the ascendency, hence my spiritual rations have been short and very crude, till I chanced to get hold of one of your soul-cheering messengers, THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER, and now I want to hold on to it till I pass over the river to that bright and better land."

It is gratifying to know that THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER has struck a responsive chord in the nature of Mr. Hoag. No one can read the paper from beginning to end, who does not find something therein worth far more to his spiritual nature than the pittance he pays.

## A Prominent Physician Subscribes for Five Years.

Dr. R. Greer, a prominent physician of this city, and whom we never had the pleasure of meeting, subscribes for THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER for five years, and sends the following soul-inspiring letter:

"My sixteen weeks' trial subscription to THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER being about to expire, and wishing the paper continued, and in order to help sustain it, I herein inclose \$5 for five years' subscription; and for your encouragement I will remark that I cannot say too much in praise of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER. Its fundamental aim, I see, is to reflect in its pages a new world of advanced thought, and in perfect keeping with its title, this is being ably done, by the hundreds of 'subtle intellects, and prolific imaginations' included, among the multitude of its contributors. If THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER is not in reality the very best spiritual journal in existence, it is a splendid and most important addition to our spiritual literature, and is a graceful tribute to the 'spiritual public' Bro. Francis, I congratulate you, as its founder, for its excellence, and I can heartily recommend it to all investigators of occult phenomena."

Such soul-cheering words, coming from those whom we have never seen, are to us a constant incentive to continue the grand work we have so auspiciously commenced. Though furnishing our paper at so low a price, and not relying on advertising for any assistance, we still have prospered, and we cordially invite critical thinkers everywhere to compare THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER with the high-priced spiritual papers. Indeed, the various high-priced magazines, The Forum, Popular Science Monthly, etc., though grand indeed, perfect gems of literature, cannot boast of any superiority over Our Rostrum articles, which are the generous offerings of grand minds, of philanthropic souls, of those who wish to make the world better, and who see in THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER an avenue to reach the masses who are yearning after the truth. Spiritualists everywhere, aid us in our work of love.

## Beats Them All.

Dr. Adam Miller, whose advertisement has appeared in THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER, says that he obtained more responses therefrom than from the same advertisement in the Boston Globe, Detroit Free Press, or Baltimore American. Spiritualists, isn't that pretty good for a paper only twenty-four weeks old.

## A General Survey.

The Spiritualistic Field—its Workers, Doings, etc.

Mrs. De Knevet, an excellent medium, called at this office this week, and saw a brilliant future for THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER.

Dr. J. M. Peebles will probably attend the Sturgis, Mich., meeting in June, and deliver an address there with his old-time spirit and enthusiasm.

Miss Jennie B. Hagan, of South Framingham, Mass., lectured to good audiences at East Randolph and Steamburg, N. Y., April 23rd and 24th, 1890. Robert R. Jones speaks of her as follows: "Picture to your mind's eye, a handsome young lady, 29 years old, with black hair, dark gray eyes; height, five feet, seven inches; weight 127 pounds; of Scotch and English descent; high forehead, Grecian nose; fine and cheerful countenance; dressed in a splendid-fitting brown dress, covered over with superb black lace; on her bosom a beautiful bouquet of flowers; handsome diamond finger-ring; gold watch set in diamonds; graceful and easy on the rostrum; and you have a pen-penitence of the refined and cultured Miss Jennie B. Hagan, who lectured to a good audience in the large Skating Rink at East Randolph, N. Y., April 23, and to a fair audience, at Steamburg, N. Y., April 24, in the Union Church of that place. Miss Hagan is gifted, genial and refined—a very rose in the thorn-path of life, whose sweet fragrance of character inspires and ennobles all who have the honor of her acquaintance. At East Randolph, she spoke upon six subjects the audience gave her, in a scholarly manner, holding their closest attention for an hour and a half. At Steamburg, N. Y., she addressed the good people of that place upon eight subjects, which gave entire satisfaction. Friday, April 25, accompanied by president Gaston and wife, of Meadville, Pa., she took train 12 at Randolph, for New York City, with the best wishes of her many friends, all hoping for the success and happiness of the young lady. We expect Miss Hagan and Nellie J. T. Brigham, to lecture here Friday, June 13, 1890. Miss Hagan was entertained by Mrs. M. A. Jones at East Randolph, and Mr. and Mrs. B. Kent at Steamburg."

A Watertown N. Y., correspondent writes that the society there is flourishing. Mrs. Mary C. Lyman, nee Knight, the present speaker, is giving the greatest satisfaction. The Temple is well filled at the first service, each Sunday, and in the evening it is crowded. An entertainment consisting of music, declamations, reading of selections, etc., was held on Wednesday evening, a small admission being charged. The Temple was not only well filled but extra chairs had to be extemporized. Mr. John Gifford, the president of the society, exhibits great executive ability.

H. M. Gaut, of Hilton, Vt., writes: "Our Methodist minister made a confession, I am told, that he believed that we can communicate with our departed friends."

B. F. Fuller, of McMinnville, Or., writes: "Our city has been especially favored (spiritually), the last few days, by having in our midst Mrs. Flora A. Brown, inspirational speaker and test medium, of Portland. She gave us on April 20th, two grand lectures, following each with tests that were recognized. Her morning subject was: 'What does Spiritualism Teach, and what Good is it Doing?' The subject for the afternoon was: 'Evidences of Immortality, Biblical and Modern.' After the tests she produced independent slate-writing, under the scrutiny of a skeptical community, all which had to admit it must come from the source it purported to, as it was impossible for her to have produced it. She remained with us three days, giving private sittings that were pronounced perfectly satisfactory. Oh, the Spiritualists feel to bless her and her noble guides for her visit here; she has been the means of sowing seeds that will bring forth good fruits in the future."

Mrs. Rose L. Bushnell, a prominent Spiritualist of California, writes: "While I am writing I must speak of our lovely colony, Summerland. Within one year it has grown to a village; all of its residents seem to be happy. There are many pretty homes now under cultivation, and all are sanguine of success. Every platform of spiritual faith is progressing on this coast. Our mediums are genuine."

Titus Merritt, of New York, writes: "Mrs. Williams has had some distinguished arrivals from the spiritual sphere, through materializations—Ponce De Leon and Gen. Hamilton—of whom we will give a more detailed account in the future. I have resided at Mrs. M. E. Williams' and at Mrs. Gray's, and I can affirm positively that neither party need or require confederates."

Henry H. Warner, the talented young inspirational trance lecturer and test medium, may be engaged for camp or grove meetings and for lecture season of '90 and '91, by addressing him at 441 Shawmut avenue, Boston, Mass., where he has permanently located. Mr. Warner has just closed a satisfactory engagement with the First Society of Haverhill, Mass.

Mrs. S. E. Bishop, the veteran worker for Spiritualism, who has been discoursing so eloquently for the People's Society at Banner Hall, Monroe and Peoria streets, Chicago, has left on a western tour. She may be engaged for season of '90 and '91, by addressing at 53, Campbell Park, Chicago, or Madison, Nebraska.

## We Are Delighted!

Yes, delighted with our paper this week.

It is worth its weight in gold. Prof. Wilder is a complete encyclopedia, containing at least 100 volumes. He is one of the grandest men of the present age. Other contributors follow him, with something to say to interest the people. With such a paper we are not compelled to offer a dictionary as a premium to induce people to subscribe.

## CAN SPIRITUALISTS UNITE WITH UNITARIANS?

BY ALLIE LINDSAY LYNCH.

The above is one of the questions of the hour. In other words, can we as Spiritualists absorb a creed? Can we step backward with honesty of hearts? Every one has a right to act as they please in the matter, but can the two unite without the more advanced becoming unworthy (hypocritical) to be fellowshiped by honest Unitarians? In so far as Unitarianism goes it is in advance of all other religions—excepting Spiritualism, if that may be termed a religion—but do not Spiritualists know they must go backward to become Unitarians, for are we not some steps, at least, in advance of them? As for me, I cannot harbor a thought of again accepting a creed (article of faith) or entering a church.

Organization would be an advantage, and we must come to it, but upon a broad platform. We narrow if we form creeds. The only way I see by which we, as Spiritualists, can band together as an organized people, is by simply taking the platform. We know that spirits have the power, under proper conditions, to return to us and manifest their nearness, thus giving proof of immortality; and we are determined to endeavor, at all times, to live up to the higher dictates of individual conscience.

That is broad enough for Spiritualists and too broad for creed-worshippers. May I never see the day when, as a body, Spiritualists unite with the church or prescribe to any creed that has a God or Christ therein. It is absurdly foolish for Spiritualists to try to cling to these fossils. He whom the world calls Christ was—if at all—only a man, and books as authentic as the Bible show him not more perfect than many men—taking his life up to his crucifixion or age of thirty-three. The Bible God was, is, a personal being full of faults. Theology and Spiritualism cannot, however much they try, change this Bible fact. When we have grown too broad to believe in this personal Bible God, why try to combine our growth with such folly longer? We have only to stand by our convictions and continue truthful and progressive.

It wears me to have some of our Spiritualists forever trying, trying to establish a brotherhood with the churches. Either let such remain honest orthodox, or let them stand apart as those who have outgrown the churches. There are good people in the churches, honest people (some), but when they have learned the fallacy of their creeds, and remain, they cease to be honest.

Read, read, men and women read! Lay that old hull (Bible), whose kernel is rotten, upon the shelf. If you cannot find its absurdities by a perusal of its pages, read after minds—like Paine and Ingersoll—who have, and shown them up, too!

Alone I shall stand by my disbelief in Bible Gods and myths if all the vast number of professed Spiritualists forsake truths reason has established and drift back into churches. There I record my vow. If ever broken, know that reason has fled its throne in my organism. If Spiritualism could be proven all fraud, reason would never again let me bow before an Orthodox god. If Spiritualism is ever proved an hallucination, then I will take my stand a little in advance of Ingersoll, because more radical, and defy the heaven or hell of theology to ever have possession of my soul. I'll die, and that forever.

No one who has failed to look for the other side to Theology, whose mind is only imbued with the explanation put by Theology—and handed down from an ignorant age—is competent to be teachers of advanced thought, nor is the policy Spiritualist who would supply his purse. Alas! how many.

## THE TEMPLE OF SCIENCE.

The anniversary dedication of the Temple of Science at Whitewater, Wis., the 25th, 26th and 27th of this month, was a grand success. Too much praise cannot be said of Bro. Pratt's noble efforts in Whitewater for the promulgation of spiritual knowledge and progress. The Temple of Science is a magnificent structure, and combines within its artistic walls not only an elegant Temple for lectures and instructions on spiritual science, but its capacity is sufficient for the use of a healing institute and medium home, which it is designed for in the more complete unfoldings of his plans.

Bro. Pratt and his noble wife have so far been to all the expense, not only in the erection of the building, but he has from his own resources paid all bills for speaking and sustaining meetings in his place. Mr. Pratt intends to call a meeting of the Liberalists and Spiritualists of Wisconsin, and deed over the property, to be used for the benefit of the Cause of Humanity. Prof. Lockwood, of Ripon, Wis., and Mrs. Colby-Luther, of Crown Point, Ind., and myself were the principal speakers of the occasion and a very rich and interesting time was enjoyed, with uninterrupted pleasure and profit to all present. Prof. Lockwood is a keen, incisive reasoner, and from his thorough understanding of his subject gives pleasure and profit to his listeners. Mrs. Colby-Luther, who has lectured there some months the past winter, gave two very powerful addresses, and made a profound impression. Under her inspirers she is the most impressive speaker on the spiritual rostrum to-day, and although criticised by some of our sensitive Spiritualists as too radical and aggressive in her convictions, yet the time demands these startling presentations of the truth. The future will accord this logical, woman and medium with the meed of praise she richly deserves.

Your correspondent lent his voice in song and praise on the occasion, and gave psychometric readings and spirit tests, which were recognized and acknowledged. I have returned to my charge here, to remain until June, when I go to Eau Claire, Wisconsin, to serve the society there, and return here in July, to hold a grove meeting, between the two cities of St. Paul, and Minneapolis, Minn. BISHOP A. BRALS.

M. M. Touney, of Honesville, N. Y., writes: "I am sure, dear brother, in your efforts to disseminate a knowledge of the truth, you may find THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER, the child of your matured years, live to benefit and bless a great multitude of the weak and weary. May God strengthen us all to lead our heavy burdens."

"H. H. Kelley, of Utica, Mich., has taken other leading spiritualists' papers, but says: 'I must say that THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER is the best, the cheapest and most instructive.'"

## CAMP-MEETING.

A VERY IMPORTANT MOVEMENT.

To THE EDITOR:—Herein find a letter from W. S. Wandell, which speaks for itself. Please let it appear in your paper, as the move is a good one, and seems to mean business in relation to organizing a permanent Camp-meeting for all Spiritualists through the entire North-western country; and why may we not have an educational institution connected with the camp. Now, I hope and trust some liberal friends who have some spare funds will act promptly in this matter and secure some eligible real estate on the banks of the little lake while it may be had at a nominal price. A site suitable for our use is sure to advance in price.

D. BOYNTON, Riverside, Mich., Apr. 30th.

## AN EXCELLENT PROPOSITION.

MR. D. BOYNTON, RIVERSIDE, MICH., Dear Sir:—Seeing your article in THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER, headed "An Important Move," and being interested somewhat in the movement of Camp-meetings, I was impressed to write you and see if we could make arrangements to hold one there this fall, in the first part of September, just after the meeting closes here, and have it well advertised in Chicago; and during the meeting organize a company to hold, fit up and manage the meetings hereafter. It seems as if it could be made a success if properly managed. I have an entire outfit for holding Camp-meetings—tents, cots, torches and chairs, and have a partner, D. M. King, of Mantua Station, Ohio. If the good people of the North-west have interest enough to furnish us the grounds and raise about \$35 for advertising the meetings, and assist us on the committees at camp, we will come there and hold a session, commencing with the first Sunday and holding two weeks—over three Sundays, and take our chances on getting our pay out of the meeting. I have managed the Vicksburg meeting the past three years and have to manage it this year, which will commence the 8th of August and close the 1st of September. We have an excellent corps of speakers: Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond for the first Sunday; Mrs. A. M. Gladding and Frank C. Alderton for the second Sunday; Mrs. Gladding for the remainder of the meeting, assisted by L. L. Moulton, Mrs. D. E. Smith, Mrs. Carrie Firth, Mrs. Lena Bible and others. We hope to make this meeting one long to be remembered by every one. If the good people want to establish a camp on the lake shore, I feel they will never have a better opportunity to start one than this. Please let me hear from you as soon as possible. If they decide to hold a meeting I can insert an advertisement in our Camp-meeting Advance, which we are going to have printed ere long. I hope I may hear from you soon. W. S. WANDELL, Vicksburg, Mich., Apr. 25th.

## American Theosophists.

The American Section of the Theosophical Society met in convention in this city April 27th, at the Palmer House club-room. Among the delegates present were: Wm. C. Judge, New York; Arthur B. Griggs, Boston; Dr. J. D. Buck, Cincinnati; Dr. J. W. B. La Pierre, Minneapolis; Dr. Borglum, Omaha, and W. E. Gates, Cleveland. The following resolution was proposed by Arthur B. Griggs, of Boston, and adopted by the convention:

Resolved, That this convention deplores the absence, as it does the late severe sickness, of Madame H. P. Blavatsky, but needs no assurance that her thought is and ever will be with the cause of theosophy and its workers in America; also that this convention desires to express its allegiance and earnest loyalty to her as their benefactor and guide, and recognizes that through her efforts has come to it and to the world one of the mightiest impulses toward truth that have ever transformed despair into aspiration and hope; and it is directed that the substance of this resolution be cabled at once to Mme. Blavatsky by the General Secretary.

## BUFFALO, N. Y.

Last Sunday, April 27th, closed our series of eight months of splendid lectures. In that time we have had: Edgar Emerson, Mrs. Lillie, Lyman C. Howe, Mrs. Carrie E. S. Twing, J. Frank Baxter, Miss Jennie B. Hagan, and Mrs. Adeline M. Gladding,—all of them first class. This course of lectures on our spiritual platform has been the best that Buffalo has had for many a year. We closed with an entertainment and in peace and perfect harmony. There has not been one dissenting voice heard in the past year, nor has a single sound suggested a change from the original programme, as laid out by the Board of Trustees and President, over fourteen months ago. Can any other town or society say as much? At the closing hour, Mrs. A. M. Gladding was by the President, in the name of our society, presented with a beautiful sun umbrella, and a fine bouquet of flowers. Mrs. Gladding in turn presented J. W. Dennis, the President, with a large bouquet of beautiful roses. J. W. DENNIS, President.

## Spiritualists Sunday Meetings in Chicago.

A medium meeting at 8 o'clock at Lodge Hall, 11 Ada street, near Randolph street. Seats free.  
The Spiritualist Mediums' Society in Apollo Hall, 2730 State street, at 2:45 p. m.  
Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond lectures in Martin's Ada street hall, near Madison street, morning and evening.  
The People's Progressive Society of Spiritualists meet at 116 Fifth avenue at 3:30 p. m.  
The People's Spiritual Society meets at Bricklayers' Banner Hall, 93 South Peoria street, at 2:30 and 7:30 p. m.  
The Spiritualists' South Side Society meets at 3 p. m. in Patriotic Order Bona of America Hall, 144 Twenty-second street.

Dr. J. K. Bailey has spoken—parlor and public meetings—during his present trip at Elmira, N. Y., Elgin, Ill., including Anniversary night and Easter Sunday, Dubuque, Strawberry Point, Fayette and Castalia, Iowa. His permanent address is P. O. box 123, Scranton, Pa., where he may be addressed for engagements.



## SERPENT SYMBOLS IN RELIGION.

called Nahash, or serpent (Samuel II. xvii. 25).

Mari, the Gnostic teacher, declared that Christ was the incarnation of the Great Serpent that glided over the cradle of the infant Mary. The Rev. Mr. Deane affirms that the worship of the serpent did not, either in Egypt or Phoenicia, fly before the faith of advancing Christianity.

In Egypt every god of note was represented with a snake-form. Sob or Se, the Egyptian Siva, was a Serpent-divinity; and the Royal Asp or Ouralos, was symbol alike as the crown of the king and the head-band of the priest.

The famous Kleopatra was not done to death by an asp, as has been the traditional story; but she had caused the phant or Serpent-crown of Egypt to be placed upon her head at the supreme moment, as if to testify to the haughty Roman conqueror that she had not been dethroned. Even in death she was a queen.

The symbol of the serpent, not to say his trail, is still to be found in Christian usages. The tressure of the priest belongs to pagan rites. The cup at the Eucharistic supper is an imitation of the cup of the "Good Daemon" that concluded the sacred repasts. The cities of Asia minor, including those of the Apocalyptic "Seven Churches," were notorious for their serpent-rites; and Mr. James Ferguson, remarking upon this fact in his great work *Tree and Serpent Worship*, p. 21, considers it by no means an accidental coincidence.

"The presence of such a form of faith," he declares, "may have influenced the spread of Christianity in these cities to an extent not hitherto suspected." This supposition is probably based upon the fact that the Serpent-worship was characterized by pilgrimages, protracted religious services, chanting of prayers, enthusiastic frenzy and other emotional excitements, hypnotic visions, mantic divination, and other features of a modern "revival." (REV. S. BARKING GOULD.) It may be injudicious to dilate further on this matter, but the statement is hard to controvert.

The Sabbath, or seventh-day of the week was consecrated by the various archaic serpent-faiths. The priests of Apollo at Delphi in Greece, celebrated every seventh day with the offering of prayer and the chanting of sacred hymns. Bastian relates concerning the Raja-Naga, or Serpent-King of Cambodia, that he devoted every seventh day to prayer. Colonel Low confirms the statement: "Every seventh day," says he, "the mighty Raja-Naga issues forth from his palace, and having ascended a high mountain, pours out his soul in ardent prayer."

Ancient Assyria had the strictest regulations for the observance of this day. The week was marked out by the seven planets—the sun and the moon—Nebo or Mercury leading the other five, and Saturn's day completing the circle. The orbit of this planet inclosed all the others, and was regarded as the boundary between the world or cosmos and the upper heavens. Probably, therefore, a day being set apart to each divinity, the seventh as comprising all, was considered the most sacred of all. So the Akkadians and the Assyrians, and other Semitic tribes, seem to have considered it. Each week in the month had its own divinities. We learn from a cuneiform inscription that the seventh day was the festival of Merodach and Zib-aniet (Succoth-Benoth); the fourteenth that of Nergal and Belta; the twenty-first of Sin (the moon), and Samas (the sun); the twenty-eighth that of Hea and Nergal.

On the eve of the Sabbath the king was required to erect an altar, make a sacrifice, and lifting up his hand, worship in the high places of his God.

The mode of keeping the Akkad or Assyrian Sabbath would satisfy the strictest Sabbatarian. It was prescribed as a "holy day, a Sabbath for the ruler of great nations; sudden flesh and cooked food he may not eat; his clothes he may not change; new garments he may not put on; sacrifices he may not offer; the king his chariot may not drive." Nor was he permitted to sit in or establish a place of justice; "take medicine for the ailments of his body," or "make a measured square."

So, the serpent, the sabbath, the Holy Repast, are common alike in the shrine of Merodach, the wilderness of Sinai, the grove of Epidaurus, the hut of the Sarmatian, and among the Naga-tribes of the farther East. It was an evangelic comparison: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so the Son of Man too must be lifted up, that all might have everlasting life;" and an injunction to be as "wise as serpents."

The meaning of this symbol addresses itself to the profoundest sentiments of our nature. All knowledge relating to life and human benefit, was associated with it. Snachunath depicts the animal as being most spiritual in its nature, and the similitude of fire. In the philosophic language, fire was understood to mean that occult principle which imparts life and existence to all things. We employ such names for it as spirit, electricity, magnetism. It is all this, and more. It is that occult something that passing from Divinity, sets the universe into action; passing from the father to the mother begins the existence of the offspring. This mysterious principle, being always manifested by animal warmth, was denominated *fire*; and so fire became its symbol. Again, too, very generally, the innumerable emblems that characterize us, both male and female, from rude stones and trees to the high steeple conjoined to the dark cavernous nave of the church, and the dot or letter inside the radiated triangle, were adopted to symbolize that polar principle in its twofold manifestation, by the agency of which the universe exists and all creatures are placed within it.

The serpent-form appears to be the most beautiful, and at least among the most primitive in the Animal Kingdom. It is foremost among vertebrate creatures. All other vertebrates seem to be its outcome. The lizard-races are but serpents with visible organs. The feline tribes, which we admire for their lissiteness and grace, owe this charm to their serpent-resemblances. In our own divine-human form the serpent-likeness is everywhere. No wonder is it that the ancestral man has been regarded as a serpent. The African races, several

of them, call the alimentary canal a snake. The head and spinal cord have the like analogy. The Gnostic form of Abraxas with radiated head and serpentine body was in keeping with it. Disguise it as we may; blink over it too; the tendency of all perfect motion is to the spiral form, and indicates the serpent-nature.

So true is it that life, love, sex, knowledge, everything indicative of elevation to a better or happier condition, we find typified by this animal that without visible organs moves rapidly as it pleases in spiral coils.

"Serpents are revered in India as embodied souls of the dead," says Professor Gubernatis. In Scandinavian Mythology, Odin also assumes the form of a serpent in the same way that Zeus [the Grecian Jupiter], becomes a serpent when he wishes to create Zagreus. In Rockholtz and Simrock we find indications of the same worship which is given to the serpent in India, where it is regarded as a good domestic genie. Milk is given to certain domestic little snakes to drink; they are put to watch over little children in their cradles. . . . It is fabled moreover that a serpent, . . . procures for good and beautiful maidens husbands worthy of them. According to a popular legend, two serpents are found in every house (a male and a female), which only appear when they announce the death of the master and mistress of the house; when they die the snakes also cease to live. To kill one of these serpents is to kill the head of the family. Under this aspect, as a protector of the children, as a giver of husbands to girls, and identified with the head or progenitor of the family, the serpent is again a phallic form."

I do not quite accept this last statement. It is a matter, however, which every individual regards with his own eyes and after his own mode of comprehending. Yet I have not the common notion of phallicism and sexuality which considers them as base and vile in their essential quality. There are pure souls as well as prurient ones, and what Divinity establishes in its own likeness they behold as pure. Nevertheless I consider the serpent-symbolism as transcending the current notion, and while on a lower plane perhaps representing the corporeal nature, yet in its true and higher sense, denoting life as a unit and undivided.

Thus to avail myself of the summaries of my excellent friend, Mr. C. Staniland Wake, the serpent has been viewed with awe and veneration from prehistoric times, and almost universally as a re-embodiment of a deceased human being; and as such there were ascribed to it the attributes of life and wisdom, and the power of healing. From this arose the notion that all mankind sprang from a serpent; and finally, that the Intelligence that presides over the sun, was the Serpent-Father. Most emphatically is this symbolized in the Caduceus or Esculapian rod. As by a common instinct, therefore, the serpent has been venerated as the parental type of all things; and so, as symbols are necessary for the voicing of all ideas, this one symbol has been universally adopted to denote every faculty, function and essential attribute of our existence, whether physical, psychic or spiritual.

## Mrs. Lizzie Bangs in Her Own Behalf.

To the Editor:—If you will grant me a little space in your widely read paper, I would like to call attention, in the interest of Spiritualism as well as of myself personally, to the singular position taken by one who has the means of reaching a limited number of readers of spiritual literature. Many articles in different secular newspapers have been published detrimental to the character and mediumship of the Bangs Sisters, all of them receiving their chief inspiration from the *Religio Philosophical Journal*, or enemies of ours, with whom this spiritual editor seems to have conspired.

Why a Spiritualist, who may and should in a legitimate manner discountenance fraud in so sacred a cause, should devote so much of his time to hunting up fraud, and endeavor by innuendoes as well as unfounded positive statements to reflect on the moral character of mediums, is one of the strange anomalies of life that can be explained only on the basis of supreme selfishness and love of notoriety.

Time and honest investigation will show to all Spiritualists and the public generally, that the articles in the *Religio Philosophical Journal* have been written less in defense of Spiritualism, than for some other purpose.

Notwithstanding all this, I still continue to satisfy all honest inquirers into spiritual phenomena, all of whom are as fully capable of judging, if not more so, than the editor of the *R. P. Journal*.

Chicago, Ill. LIZZIE BANGS.

## GOD.

Grand the expanse of the heavens, but grander the thoughts they suggest;  
Lovely the blush of the morning, the crimson and gold of the west;  
Bright are the stars of the midnight, floating in measureless space;  
But deeper and grander the secret we strive 'mid their brightness to trace.  
Fair is this beautiful planet. Its carpet of verdure, its seas,  
Its mantle of life-giving air, its sunshine, its mists, and its breeze;  
Deep the emotions that nature quickens to life in the soul,  
But deeper and grander the glimpses we catch of the infinite whole.  
Cunning the hand of the artist, a study his thought-chiseled face;  
Bewitching the smile of the maiden, entrancing her beauty and grace;  
Perfect the cup of the dilly, sweet is the breath of the rose,  
But deeper and grander the spirit that vainly they strive to disclose.  
Wonderous the symbol of being spread out on every hand;  
Wonderous the secret of nature, of sky, of the sea, of the land;  
Vast is the outward creation, undiscovered by man and untold,  
Yet ignorance in its presumption familiarly prates about God.  
—Ethan Lamb Martin in Boston Globe.

## PSYCHOPATHY:

—OR—

## SPIRIT HEALING.

A series of lessons on the relations of the spirit to its own organism, and the inter-relation of human beings with reference to health, disease and healing—accompanied by plates illustrating the lectures—by the spirit of Dr. Bessie Anne Ryan, through the mediumship of Mrs. Cons L. V. Richmond. Price \$1.50. Published by William Richmond, and for sale by him at Rogers Park, Ill. May 3.

Written for The Progressive Thinker.

## Some Fraternal Words With L. A.

Fisher.

BY J. WHITTEMORE, M. D.

I am not certain whether L. A. Fisher is a man or a woman. But imply that my critic is a man, because intelligent women seldom, I think, judge of an article without a pretty thorough reading of it. I will venture to write, Brother Fisher, subject to needed correction.

The question which stands at the head of his article—"Is the Spiritual Philosophy Yet a Dream?"—is one, in substance, which I have often sorrowfully pondered. I fear that only a small minority of Spiritualists have even yet dreamed of the heights and depths of the intellectual and ethical grandeur within the compass of the spiritual philosophy.

The spirit of Bro. Fisher's article is inspiring and elevating, and manifests a wide range of thought and probably when definitely expressed, of a more definite and accurate nature than the present outline article would seem to indicate.

The main object of this article is to correct an evident misapprehension of my views as he finds them expressed in No. 11 of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER. I am not over-sensitive under criticism and never respond unless it touches some vital point. But I confess this hits me in a very tender place, although I have no idea of any intention to misrepresent me. Yet evidently the mistake ought to be corrected. I cannot afford to be put before the public in my old age as a teacher of "doctrines equally supernatural with the mythologies of the aboriginal races, when the imagination supplied the place of knowledge, and superstition constituted the acme of wisdom." No, the writer has mistaken his man; he must turn his battery in another direction. It has been no uncommon thing to be called an infidel, a fool, irreligious and godless; and these things have hardly moved me. There is some approach to truth in all this; but Bro. Fisher's attempt to register me in the category of believers in supernaturalism and mythological superstition is rather too much. I think it the first time I was ever considered over-much religious. Indeed, the main idea of my former article, "Spirituality of Spiritualism," was to antagonize the idea that spiritualism was in any proper sense a religion, or was dependent upon any spirits or powers outside of proper humanity, when elevated to its highest possibilities. I know nothing of supernaturalism, nothing of the origin of the universe of mind or matter, and cannot conceive that they ever had an origin. I have never met any reasonable or satisfactory theory of original cause, creation or origin. These things for years I have taught publicly and from house to house as opportunity has offered. I have felt, and still feel fully convinced, that what Spiritualism needs more than any other single thing is to free itself from all antiquated and fabulous encumbrances of deities and religious superstitions.

Brother Fisher seems, I cannot see how, to base his accusation upon one short quotation from my article. Here it is: "I am no advocate or believer in the materiality of spirit—nothing material or semi-material goes into the Spirit-world." Now, what that has to do with the charge of supernaturalism and all the vagaries of ancient or modern superstition perhaps Mr. Fisher can tell, but all is mystery to me. True or false it has no bearing on the question that I can see. Yet I do regard this as a question of importance in itself considered, and am ready at a proper time to defend it.

While writing a word in self-defense it may not be amiss to notice Bro. Fisher's plan of examining questions involved in spiritual philosophy, or to use his own words, "A programme involving the main topics in logical sequence." These are important questions. Perhaps the author with a closer analysis and with fewer words might differentiate them more clearly so that they might not so overlap each other and merge into each other quite so much as they now do.

Now, in order to bring out discussion by able writers, I will attempt to provoke their full examination by giving a concise reply to each question as they now stand without argument. Of course it will only express my present opinion briefly, to be "altered or amended" when proved to be erroneous.

1. I have no knowledge of "the source or origin of the human being—body, soul or spirit." The phrase, "other than material," seems to assume a material source; but this has only been assumed—never demonstrated. It stands fully as destitute of proof as does the assertions of the various schools of Theists, that human souls are "offspring of God," in some blind way, as "emanations from Divinity," "sparks from Infinity," "atoms of the Divine essence, or portions Deific Being," and such like medley, seeming to the writer absurd.

Should the creation, evolution from nature, or any other first cause or origin of souls be demonstrated, we must, perforce, relinquish our hope of immortality. A beginning implies an end.

2. "What is the nature of the soul or spirit, and what its relation to the material elements?"

The implied identity of the soul and spirit is manifestly erroneous, and causes much confusion of thought. The soul is a unit—it is the ego self, uncompounded and indivisible. It is an entire entity by itself. It may never be separate from spirit, but is still distinct in essence. A disembodied soul is a dream of religionists, all unreal. Man in his essence is neither trine or dual. It is not strictly correct for a man to say I have a soul, any more than to say I have a body; but all material and spiritual; but they are only our present envelope; the first, the house we live in while confined to earth, and the last, so far as I know, our eternal habitation, but no part of the soul any more than that my brick house is a portion of myself. All we can say of the nature of soul is derived from soul consciousness and its expressions through either matter or spirit, or both. This is a wide field of thought upon which I cannot within the limits of my design more fully enter. As regards my views of the mutual actions and limitations of mind and matter, I refer the reader for

the present to my article in No. 11 of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER.

3. In notice of this question I have only this to say: I have not a shadow of evidence that "Spirit is an inherent or latent property of matter;" much less that soul is. I regard them as truly distinct as are my coat and myself. I wait for proof to the contrary.

4. Hence, the fourth question is already answered. Spirit cannot be "an outgrowth of the material." And it follows that no questions as to process or to time of "outgrowth" need be noticed, as nothing of the kind is yet proved have occurred.

5. To question fifth I reply. Yes, I do regard "the spiritual as indispensable to the fructification of the material world." So it always has been and always must be; it could never have been absent from it. So spirit and matter must be co-eternal; hence the one could never have been produced or evolved from the other.

6. The sixth question is based upon the assumption already noticed that soul and spirit have been created or evolved from matter, and as that remains to be demonstrated, all its subjoined and dependent queries go for nothing until the main implied statement is substantiated. That must be first in order.

7. The seventh question is also based upon the same assumption, that the spiritual has been evolved from matter and remains entirely material. Now, it is plain, not another intelligent step in argument can be advanced until this assumption shall be demonstrated.

8. The eighth question is a little obscure; but seems to contain a half admission that mind and matter are co-eternal—at least co-existent. Possibly Bro. Fisher believes in creation—creation of matter. He asks if the spiritual elements have been set free by nature in the past? Set free from what? Of course "from nature" and by nature; and what is nature? Does he mean materiality alone? This I infer from the spirit of all the questions, and it seems to be the basis of his criticism of me for "divorcing the spiritual from the physical." It is evident enough that our friend teaches that the spiritual is only an element of the material "set free" to perform some special office; and at some "stage of its development will become sufficiently refined to be intrinsically unchangeable, immortal." This is involved in the seventh question.

Then, it is asserted that nature "must have a definite purpose in the transaction;" that is, in "setting free the spiritual elements" from herself. Does not this imply intelligence before the spiritual element had been evolved or set free? How can that be? Now, is it not more reasonable to conclude that mind and matter have always, in name, borne about the same relation to each other they now do, and that mind is alone intellectual—able to form a purpose.

The remaining four questions contain many interesting suggestions; but they are only remotely connected with the main question at issue, and have nothing to do with my supposed heresy and supernaturalism. I care not to discuss them.

The whole matter of practical interest is contained in the third question. It is this, is man wholly material? Is the spiritual-mind, soul or spirit, either or all, simply modifications of material substance. I believe that this hypothesis can be proved erroneous, without involving superstition or supernaturalism. I have no love for polemic debate, and will leave the question, and all questions involved, to able hands.

Written for The Progressive Thinker.

## THE SPIRITS OF ANIMALS.

Mr. Hudson Tuttle has given his views in the negative. I wish to relate an incident that would seem to reverse such a conclusion. I will withhold the name of the party who related to me the circumstances I am about to tell for reasons I will not mention here. Suffice it to say he is a personal friend of mine, and I would willingly vouch for his truthful speaking. He is a resident of the Western States, and was mainly engaged in R. R. construction at the time the circumstances about to be told took place.

My friend and his son, a young lad, were strolling through the timber along the bluff bordering a river, during which time there came up a severe thunder and rain storm. Discovering a large tree still standing that had been burned on one side and formed a hollow, they took shelter therein. During the storm a large limb, which contained a hollow also, was broken off and fell a few feet from the body of the tree; and on striking the ground several flying squirrels ran out of the limb. His son rushed out in the storm and caught two of them which he took home with him. A short time after one of them died, but the other one was tamed and became a great pet, following the boy wherever he went and desired him so to do. Finally this one died also. Later on the son was taken sick and passed the change called "death," which, more properly speaking, is another birth to a higher condition of life. Following this the father returned for a short time to his native home in the East, and being fond of trout fishing, resorted to what is called in Northern Pennsylvania the Starrucca Creek. Passing along the stream as it meanders through the then almost unbroken forest, he noticed a chipmunk running along the border of the creek and acting in a very singular manner. It would turn about and act as if having an encounter with another of its kind; would then run as if pursued and then turn about and act as if offering resistance. The only thought presented was, is he crazy? Here the circumstance passed from his mind and probably would so have remained were it not for the sequel that follows this so far unimportant narration.

Many of your readers may remember the trip Dr. Slade made to Russia, his arrest and trial in England, etc., etc. Well, it was on his return home and during his passage through the West that my friend met the sequel to this story. Learning that Dr. Slade was stopping in close proximity, he resolved to make him a visit. Arriving in the city he purchased a folding slate and placing a piece of pencil between the two parts locked the same and placed the key in his pocket. The merchant then folded it with paper and bound it with twine. All being secure, he proceeded to Dr. Slade's room at the hotel where he was stopping.

After meeting the doctor, he placed the slate as already described on the table and engaged in conversation otherwise than pertaining to the spiritual. Presently there came a sound from inside the slate as proceeding from the act of writing. After the writing ceased the doctor asked to have the slate opened that he might see what was written, to which my friend replied: "No! you have not had your hands on this slate and it has not been opened in your presence. It is locked and the key is in my pocket. I will go to my hotel and there open it and read it alone." This is the substance, in part, of what was written:

"DEAR FATHER:—This may be somewhat of a surprise to you, but I am going to convince you this is from your son F."

The communication referred to the circumstances already related and said that after his entrance into spirit life he came across his pet squirrel, and said animals had spirits and lived on. He then referred to the circumstances connected with his father's trip East, and his fishing on the Starrucca; said that he was present with him and had his spiritual squirrel along and set him on the chipmunk, which was the cause of his acting so strangely.

Now, as there were no questions asked on the slate, and Dr. Slade could not by any possibility have known anything about the circumstances here related, none of which was present in the mind of my friend at the time, and allowing this to be a truthful narration, in what way would Bro. Tuttle account for the same than that some animals, at least, have immortal spirits? Does the proof of it in this case not depend upon the chipmunk being objectively taken? If not, then my friend must have been mistaken and did not see the quadruped at all; that it was an impression made with the object in view to assist in some future identification.

But why could the circumstances, if subjective, not have been made for the purpose of identification without the statement that animals have souls and are immortal? Capae, Mich. O. W. TENNANT.

## SOME OLD SCHOOL-BOOKS.

I have been back to my home again,  
To the place where I was born.  
I have heard the wind from the stormy main  
Go rustling through the corn;  
I have seen the purple hills once more;  
I have stood on the rocky coast  
Where the waves storm inland to the shore;  
But the thing that touched me most

Was a little leather strap that kept  
Some school-books, tattered and torn.  
I sighed, I smiled, I could have wept,  
When I came on them once more;  
For I thought of the merry little lad,  
In the mornings sweet and cool,  
If weather was good or weather bad,  
Going whistling off to school.

My fingers unrolled the strap again,  
And I thought how my hand has changed,  
And half in loving, and half in pain,  
Backward my memory ranged.  
There was the grammar I knew so well—  
I didn't remember a rule;  
And the old blue speller—I used to spell  
Better than any in school;

And the wonderful geography  
I've read on the green hill-side,  
When I told myself I'd surely see  
All lands in the world so wide,  
From the Indian homes in the far, far West  
To the mystical Cathay;  
I have seen them all. But home is best  
When the evening shades fall gray.

And there was the old arithmetic,  
All tattered and stained with tears.  
I and Jamie and Little Dick  
Were together in by-gone years.  
Jamie has gone to the better land;  
And I get, now and again,  
A letter in Dick's bold, ready hand  
From some great Western plain.

There wasn't a book, and scarce a page,  
That hadn't some memory  
Of days that seemed like a golden age,  
Of friends I shall no more see.  
And so I picked up the books again,  
And buckled the strap once more,  
And brought them over the tossing main:  
Come, children, and look them o'er.

And there they lay on the little stand,  
Not far from the holy book;  
And the boys and girls with loving care  
O'er grammar and speller look.  
He said: "They speak to me, children dear,  
Of a past without annoy;  
And the Book of Books in promise clear  
Of a future full of joy."  
—Harper's Weekly.

For The Progressive Thinker.

## SPIRIT MATERIALIZING.

On the fourth page of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER of March 29 is a communication from W. H. Chaney, of St. Louis, Mo., and of what is contained in his last paragraph, and in a preceding one, I wish to say that, with him, I do not believe that spirit and matter are convertible or the same, only one of finer grade than the other; and I, too, object to the term "spirit matter." I do not sympathize. He states it thus:

"There is another reason why I object to the term 'spirit matter.' For years we have been harassed by persons claiming to be Spiritualists, who hippodrome the country from the Atlantic to the Pacific, with a 'spirit materializing' circus, duping and robbing the ignorant and credulous. I have seen spirits; have felt the clasp of a spirit hand, but never of a 'materialized' hand. And what is more, I never knew of a 'materialized' ghost being caught but it proved to be flesh and blood, from which the normal spirit had not yet departed."

If one or more credible witnesses testify that they have known a fact, opposed to views as expressed by another who has "never known" that fact, of what force is the latter's assumption? None whatever. Cases have been credibly reported of so-called materialized spirit beings dissolving in the hands of spirit grabbers after being grasped, and at the same time the cabinet door where the medium sat was burst open in pursuit of the medium's confederate, and no confederate found, but the medium was found fastened as at the beginning of the seance, and in a trance, with blood bursting from the pores of the skin, like sweat in perspiration. One would infer from Mr. C's writing that he thinks spirit must be convertible with matter, to affect spirit materializing. Our present bodies are material, distinct from spirit. It is claimed by spirits and by clairvoyants and spiritual philosophy, with abundance of proof to sustain the claim, that we have dual bodies, one of finer material than the other, and the spirit is distinct from either, although a body is necessary as a medium of spirit expression, either in terrestrial or celestial spheres. A leader of a band of spirits of a materializing medium said to me through the organism of his medium while entranced, "I furnish the material," (meaning proper conditions with the medium and cir-

cley, "for the spirit chemist of the band, and he makes material bodies for the spirits that manifest, and puts them on and off them, as you put a coat on and off your boy." Representing materializing seances of traveling mediums as hippodromes or circuses without distinction of the genuine from the fraudulent, and in effect charging that all are frauds, may convey an unworthy stigma on many genuine mediums. Permit me to ask Mr. C. if he knew that spirits could be aided of chemistry with proper conditions make and clothe themselves with material bodies for a limited time, while the conditions lasted, and was acquainted with the medium whose magnetism spirits used for the accomplishment of such a purpose, and the medium's spirit band should select him (that is Mr. C.) as their agent to manage seances, telling him to go to such places as he was invited, and only to such places as Spiritualists invited him, and hold seances at the times and places designated by them, would he accept the agency of the spirit band, and if thus invited to hold seances at intervening places all the way between the Atlantic and Pacific, would he follow the directions of the band for the education of people, or would he determine rather that the spirits should follow his directions in an opposite course? From personal experience whilst acting as such agent, and holding over 100 seances with a genuine materializing medium, during which time I saw more than 1,000 materialized spirits, I am prepared to predict that the chief opposition and persecution he would meet while acting as such agent, would be from those holding the views he has expressed of spirits materializing. A. C. BARNES.

Dorsey, Neb.

Written for The Progressive Thinker.

## STRAY THOUGHTS.

I never read an article in THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER without feeling a stirring within me to do something more than I have before done for myself, for the press, for my friends, and for everybody. Surely that is one of the many good influences which THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER is throwing broadcast through the land, without money and without price, and unless we heed these promptings, of what use is the inspiration, which is the greatest lever of progress—is it not? Did ever a rational being exist, who did not at times cry out in anguish of spirit for proof positive of that we hope for beyond the boundary limit of this earth-life? For assurance indisputable, and all-satisfying, that we shall again meet those who, by nature's inexorable law, had to journey from us alone, and sad that it must be so? Can we ever forget the still lips which never before were mute at our questionings; the closed eyes, which never before failed to return the love-lit glance; the patient hands, for the first time unresponsive, which we clasped in an agony of despair at the last, praying in a whirl of despairing thoughts, that when those lately divided hands should meet again, all would be well, for we should know each other there? And the heavy loneliness that follows is not to be written or talked; 'tis only alas! to be felt, and feeling, I fear we often fail to think enough, with wet eyes of thankfulness, "of blessings that remain." Said a sorrowing skeptical friend: "I tell you they are dead to us, and if there is anything beyond, it is so far that they know not of us, and we may never find them." Banish the thought. And yet this friend recounts dreams or visions, voices and noises, for which she cannot account, only saying: "It is no proof of Spiritualism to me."

A greater or less degree of faith, must be as much our birthright as the color of an eye. It takes more to convince one, than another, and we cannot learn faith like a lesson; it must have a rational and reasonable basis on which to build our structure fair.

Said a neighbor who had lost her mother: "Oh! if I only knew I would find her sometime, I would not ask that she might be near me now. I would feel content."

Said a dying one to me: "I know I shall be with you, but whether I can let you know it or not, I cannot tell; but be brave and patient and you will find me waiting somewhere."

And with bursting heart I wait for his tidings; should they never come, "yet will I trust in him;" believing it was through no fault of his, but something I cannot understand yet. Such is my faith, because it is natural for me to trust, while some, with far more proof, would hesitate on that verge of tantalizing doubt. But it is hard to separate the spirit from the body, although we know that still thing we laid away beneath the violets and daisies, was not, could not be the spirit we had loved; we would never have loved that clay without the life that made it an instrument to win and keep our affections; it is not there now, but where, where is it, it was so like, and yet so unlike? Pitying angels, help us up toward you, for there are times when troubling heart, straining eye, and longing soul, fail to catch a gleam of their light of hope, which must be burning for us steadily and true, where we shall no longer be homeless and lonely.

I dreamed of my lost one. I seemed to be walking through a fair meadow, beside a sweetly purring stream; the air was sweeter than I have ever known, full of unwritten balminess and melody. He looked sad and sick, as when I saw him last, but he was waiting and biding his time; waiting for me, and I love to think of it, but I would have him glad, not sad, and of course it was a dream only. And the world jogs on while we watch and wait, struggle, hope, and pray. May heaven help us to do good, and be good; and patient; and true to ourselves, "our loved and our own."

There are voices in the silence  
Which we faint would claim we knew,  
Gently chiding us for doubting  
Their remembrance, fond and true;  
There are loving repetitions  
Of sweet home names, loved of old,  
And a wealth of tender feeling  
Which has never yet been told.  
Hush my heart and wait. And waiting  
Learn to calm and patient be.  
We shall find our loved and longed for  
Where the many mansions be.  
St. Wallingford, Vt. MRS. A. R. AMES.

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## THE MYSTERY OF THE POSTERN GATE.

A Remarkable Narrative Illustrating Spirit Power.

Marvelous Occurrences, as Given by Emma Hardinge Britten.

[NOTE.—This most wonderful narrative is taken from *The Two Worlds*, Manchester, England, an excellent paper devoted to the dissemination of Spiritualism, occult science, ethics, religion and reform. Its editor, Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, stands pre-eminent as an orator, author, medium and seer, and the weird narrative which she publishes under the head of "The Mystery of the Postern Gate," would never have been given to the world had she not felt deeply impressed that every word of it is true. The circumstances of the narrative were communicated to Mrs. Britten by a descendant of the family whose fortunes they detail, and the curious episode connected with them was only permitted to be repeated on condition that the real names of the actors should be concealed, as well as the scene of the occurrence, under fictitious titles. Emanating from so high a source as Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, we shall follow her by publishing the narrative in *The Progressive Thinker*. It will run through eleven numbers of the paper.]

## CHAPTER II.—BLACK MAGIC.

It was a curious little many-colored shop, in the small town of D—, some twenty miles from Prague. On the outside was marked: *Johan Kalozy, Watch and Clock Maker, inventor and machinist. All kinds of odd jobs undertaken, and everything repaired but broken hearts.*

"I work for those who pay me best, When I get time I work for the rest."

Inside the shop embellished with these curious legends, were specimens of the artist's work, from eight-day clocks under repair, a few—but a very few—new cuckoo carved clocks, and old-fashioned timepieces, to mouse-traps, self-working miniature ploughs, models of all sorts of inventions, and one awful looking touch-me-not galvanic battery, a lately-discovered invention that, according to the inscription over it, would cure all, make all, and revolutionize all things in creation. It was an odd place, full of suggestions of impractical genius and inventive fancy, and the creature moving in and around the heterogeneous collection, dusting, arranging, displaying the goods to advantage for a New Year's show, was just as odd, and thoroughly in keeping with the objects which he was so sedulously trying to display to extra advantage. The only living being in the place in fact, at that time, save mice and beetles, was a poor, hump-backed dwarf. To look at his external form, and worn, all too shrunken and seedy habiliments, he might have come straight out of Noah's ark, and been the only specimen preserved from those antique days; but when the observer's eyes traveled up to the stunted form and unsightly hump to the face, few—if any—would be the spectators who would not love to dwell on that sweet, patient-looking, and attractive countenance. Those who had ever looked on the beautiful face of Constance Kalozy would at once recognize its counterpart in that of her two years older brother Frederick, commonly called Fritz. The chief difference between the features of the brother and sister, however, consisted in the darker shade of brown which colored the youth's clustering, curly, but nobly-formed head, and the deeper hue of his large, thoughtful, appealing dark eyes. Otherwise, the brilliant complexion, sweet smile, and finely cut features were the same, and many were the popular remarks on this curious and anomalous mixture of deformity and rare beauty in the brother of Constance Kalozy.

How could such a heavenly head and countenance have found its way upon such hideous shoulders and dwarfish limbs? There they were, however, and as there were none to answer the questions laid to the charge of unkind Nature, the few customers, and the still larger number of idle loungers that frequented the shop of Johan Kalozy, contented themselves with looking straight into the patient, loving eyes of poor Fritz, and never suffering their glances to stray any lower.

It was evening now, and the little dwarf was flitting around at his work of decoration for the morrow New Year's celebration by the light of two dim oil lamps, the flickering rays of which, now falling on his own grotesque form, gave it the appearance of a satyr, and now illumining faintly his beautiful head, upturned to see if he could not make something on the dusty shelves look more slightly, cast a halo about the place like the nimbus gleaming round the head of a saint or angel.

It was just as the little fellow had perched himself on the counter in the midst of a heap of heterogeneous wares, of which the oddest of all was the apex, that the shop door burst open with an impulsive ringing of the little bell, and Constance, the "Rose of the Bohemian Wald," as she was popularly called, danced into the little bazaar repository, and clasping the dear brother by the outstretched hand, cried, "Come down, you little darling, hillman, you nix, you brownie, Constance's own blessed one, and hear the news I have to tell." The hillman, nix, brownie, and blessed one, evidently well accustomed to this sort of salutation, gravely descended, pressed his pretty sister into a wooden chair, which immediately set up playing a tinkling musical-box tune, and planting himself on a low stool opposite to her, asked in his usual placid way, without taking the least notice of the tinkling music—

"Well, Fairy, and what's the news?"

"News, Fritz!" she cried, in a tone of triumph. "Wonderful, glorious! But first guess where I've been, and who's coming here to-morrow?"

"I don't know, Fairy," said the youth in his usual dreamy way, calling his sister by one of the many pet names the admiring neighbors bestowed on her; "all I do know is, that whosoever comes besides our Rudolph—your Rudolph, you know—won't do any of us much good."

"And why, pray, Mr. Prophet? Have you, then, been dreaming again?"

"Yes, Constance," he replied sadly, "I have been dreaming. This very morning, just before I finally waked up—indeed, I hardly know whether I wasn't even then awake—I dreamed that I saw you enter, exactly as you did just now, and, following after you, came a great, huge serpent, a thing that reared itself up right above your head; and then, as it stood behind you, I saw it shoot forth a great flash of lightning, which struck some one—I can't tell who, but it was a veiled figure, tall as a man, and the moment the lightning struck it, it fell

down with a terrible thud to the ground. It was the sound of that fall that awoke me. Now, Fairy, what do you make of that?"

"Why, nothing at all, Fritz—only a dream, and you know you're always dreaming."

"And you know, Fairy, that my dreams always come true, though, of course, you won't own it." But tell me, where have you been, and who's coming to-morrow—Father Muller, I'll be sworn, coming with his son and your Rudolph—eh, Fairy?"

"Nothing of the sort, Fritz. I've never seen Father Muller; and you know he's blind and never goes anywhere. However, as I know you'd never guess, I'll just tell you. It's Uncle Paul, the Baron Kalozy, our father's elder brother; and father told me to go and ask him, and how to get in, and all I was to say."

And then, without noticing her brother's downcast look, she went on recounting the interview she had had with the grim old miser, and wound up by a laugh of triumph, which rang through the dingy little nook like the music of birds. But she had the laugh all to herself, for Fritz was silent for some time after she had concluded her story; then, drawing his stool closer to his sister's knee, and taking both her hands tenderly within his own, he said: "Sister dear, father, mother, and the children, are all out at the market; and just on account of what you've said, and because we may not be alone again for some time, I'm going to tell you some things which I'm sure you don't know, but ought to know. I never saw my uncle, Baron Paul, but when I went for my health some five years ago to Prague, and stopped with poor old blind Herr Muller and his widowed sister, Dame Reinhold, once my nurse, these good friends told me many strange things, amongst others, what I am going to relate. They knew the baron before I was born—more than twenty years since. They said he was always a harsh, gaunt, hard-looking man, and just as harsh and hard in his temper and ways as he looked. As to father, Dame Reinhold said no one that sees him now, broken down by poverty and hard work, could imagine how handsome he was, and just as sweet-tempered as he is now, and that you know sister, is being next door to angelic. Well, it seems that all the young women in Prague thought our dear father splendid, as we know he still is, so it's no wonder they liked him, and nurse said he might have had the pick of any of them, only that he'd set his heart upon a sweet, pretty girl, but one unluckily, who was betrothed to his brother Paul. It seems her father had set his heart upon the match, but that was more than the young lady had, for the very night before the appointed wedding day, she got out of the window of the room where her father had locked her up, and climbing down by a rope ladder, was received into the arms of—who do you think, Fritz?"

"Baron Paul's younger brother, and our father, Fritz. You see, I know that much of the story already."

"Very good, Fairy. Then you know also how they went off secretly and got married, how her father cut her off without a shilling, and how our uncle stormed and raved, and turned his brother out of doors, swearing he should never enter the castle gate again. Well, Fritz, then it was that our father took his bride off to Herr Muller's shop. Father and Muller were foster-brothers and fast friends. Poor father, he had only a very small inheritance of his own, and had always looked to his brother Paul to put him in the army, or some good profession. However, father, as you know, had always a great turn for clock-making and mechanical inventions, so he just bought his friend Franz Muller out, and kept him along as his shopman and teacher, while his good wife, Frau Muller, offered to stay with the young couple awhile to teach them housekeeping. Just one twelvemonth after the marriage poor I was born. Our mother had but indifferent health then, and the good Frau Muller took entire charge of me. A few days after my birth father met his brother in this very street. Dear father, you know how full and good his kind heart is, and so, when he saw his brother he must needs pour out to him the whole story of how he had become a clock-maker, and had the sweetest little baby in the world (alas! poor me, Fairy), and then, wouldn't his brother just step in for once and see the baby? Baron Paul had to stop, and had to hear all this, but though he looked, they say, like a double-edged sword, or a trebly-black thundercloud, he only said he came to fetch Johan Muller, for he was a clever workman, and he wanted him to do some work for him. Father was quite pleased and invited him in, but at that time he would not come any further than the shop. Now, Fairy, I suppose you know that father is a great Freemason, and very high up, they say. Well, Baron Paul and Johan Muller were also Freemasons, and what they had to say no doubt had something to do with that craft. Certain it is that father and Muller had to go up to the castle many times to do some work there, and though the stern old Baron kept his word, and never so much as once let father enter the castle—that is, through the gate, or into the dwelling part—I fancy from what Dame Reinhold told me they went in and out of that postern gate that you went to, and she thinks too, that what the work was they had to do was something about that gate; but being all Freemasons, as I have said, they were sworn to one another, and never told, and never will, perhaps, what it was that was done. Now here comes in the bad part of my story, Fairy. Are you listening?"

"I catch every syllable, Fritz."

"Well, then, everybody says, as well as Dame Reinhold, that this same uncle of ours is deep in what they call black magic. Heaven only knows what that is, or what it does, except that, of course, there's no good about it. Be that as it may, that's what they say."

"But who are they, Fritz?"

"Oh, everybody, sister. They mean all those who talk about one—and don't mind their own business. So that's what they said, and that's why our mother, who, you know, was always weak and sickly, and even as a young woman, was very timid, never could bear father to go to that castle, or have anything to do with Baron Paul. However, one very, very dark day, as my mother was sitting nursing me, it was just such a gloomy New Year's Eve as to-day, right in the twilight, and whilst father had gone to market, who should enter the little parlor there behind the shop, but her tall, grim, harsh-featured old lover, Baron Paul. Mother was horrified, but rather than run out, through the door opposite the one at which the Baron had entered, and along the passage, thinking to make her way into the kitchen. The baron did not follow her, but called in his loud, imperious way, several times, 'Katrine! Katrine! come back! I want to see your baby!' But mother wouldn't go back; she said she dared not, and she was all the more frightened, because there came from the parlor strange sounds. She could never tell what they were, or describe them otherwise than it seemed as if they were like the mutterings of distant thunder. Poor mother! whilst she was flying farther and farther away from the voice still calling 'Katrine! Katrine! I want to see your baby,' who should she meet but good Frau Muller, who was coming from the kitchen to inquire what the matter was. It was a terrible moment for mother, and a mortal fear overpowered her. All she could do was to stammer out, 'Take the baby, Anna; he wants to see him!' Hastily placing me, then a tiny creature of three months old, in Frau Muller's arms, our mother ran away and hid herself. What followed, she never clearly knew. During the ten minutes that she did remain alone, she not only heard the thunder rolling, and that seemingly, too, beneath and not above her room upstairs, but she distinctly saw several vivid flashes of lightning, and these, singular to say, appeared to be reflected into the little court at the back of the house from the parlor window—the very window of the room in which she had left the Baron, and to which she had sent Frau Muller and the baby. A dreadful terror possessed her; one that as Dame Reinhold says, has never left her since, and makes her so nervous and fretful now. But this sense of dread was broken at last by the voice of a man saying in piercing accents, 'Help! help! help, for the love of God!' Without a moment's pause, mother rushed down-stairs and into the parlor, where a terrible sight awaited her. On the floor lay Frau Muller dead—stone dead, and almost crushed beneath her weight, was the baby—not dead, sister, but worse, perhaps—destined to crawl through life a deformed and stunted humpback."

"You! my darling Fritz!"

"Yes, my Fairy. I was that baby, and no doubt, the stroke or fall, or whatever it was that crushed me then—made me—what I am now!"

"My own loved brother!"

"Yes, yes, dear. So much for me. But alas for the rest! Listen; it would appear that when Baron Paul passed through the shop, it was empty. Johan Muller had just gone into the cellar for the shutters, and only knew there was some one in the parlor, when he heard the voice calling 'Katrine.' Freeing his hands from the shutters he opened the parlor door, and just then he heard a heavy fall on the floor. A man whom he has since known to be Baron Paul Kalozy, was standing like a giant, at whose feet lay a prostrate form. The man, the giant—or, as he then thought, the fiend himself, was completely enveloped in luminous lights flashing around him. Just as the unhappy Muller opened the door, and caught sight of this terrible apparition, the man raised his arm, and from the fingers seemed to stream forth flashes, sparks, flames, he knew not which; what he did know was, that they were directed all at his eyes—they came rushing in upon the balls, a torrent of flames, and then—darkness—and silence—silence even as the grave—darkness never again to be lifted—never more to admit one ray of the blessed sunlight. Darkness on the earth forever!"

"Alas, alas!" murmured the sympathetic and horror-struck listener. "Then poor John Muller did not even know that it was his wife that lay dead at his feet. Was that so, Fritz?"

"No, not until they told him the truth at the inquest, Fritz."

"There was an inquest, then. What was the finding?"

"That the one was struck dead, and the other blind by the lightning. What else could they say?"

"And Baron Paul Kalozy, where was he?"

"No one knew. He did not come forward at the inquest; and few, save mother, Herr Muller, and his sister, Dame Reinhold, ever knew he was there. Muller and his sister think—well, no matter what they think—they can prove nothing. At last they both agreed, that from the position of Frau Muller's body, she had but just entered the room, and that the baron mistook her, with the baby in her arms, for the Katrine he had been calling—his false betrothed Katrine, and so—it is enough, Fairy. We may all think whatever we please. Enough that the lightning which killed Frau Muller and struck her hapless husband blind, also served to crush me into a pitiful humpback. They say, Fairy—bend down your head, sister—that same they say again; that such lightnings as did all this are often seen up in the tower of your old castle, where Baron Paul and his familiars are supposed to work spells and keep high revel; but this is only a they say, you know, sister."

"And all this is why, I suppose, you dreamed this morning, that I came in with a huge serpent behind me, eh, Fritz?"

"Yes, dear, no doubt; but then it was but a dream, after all."

[To be continued.]

## LIBERAL LECTURES.

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## THE REV. SAMUEL WATSON.

## "RELIGION OF SPIRITUALISM."

It is some time since we received a copy of this estimable work, from the well-known author, Samuel Watson, who was a minister of the Methodist church for thirty-six years. When he came to a knowledge of the truth of Spiritualism, and so declared himself, his church was loth to give him up, but he pressed forward in his investigations resolutely, cheerfully, prayerfully and successfully. With him it was not idle curiosity nor self-aggrandizement that prompted his search over in the spirit-world for truth. He was well versed in the principles of religion and of Christianity and of the Bible, and was thus eminently prepared to receive truth from the higher spiritual sources, whence it has been given to man all through the ages. He was in a proper frame of mind, and so preserves that condition now.

In Chap. III. of this book, under the head of Biblical Testimony, the author says: "Christianity, as we understand it, stands upon precisely the same basis as Spiritualism, and whatever destroys modern manifestations must, with unprejudiced minds, do the same with ancient, though they may have become hoary with the veneration of antiquity." Of the teachings of Jesus, he says: "They are laden with the rich fruitage of spiritual philosophy, requiring only a knowledge of spiritual things to be understood. No Spiritualist can afford to cast aside these teachings, because they contain lessons of wisdom and inculcate principles of action which will bear the most rigid scrutiny of every phase of skepticism."

Again in Chap. XII., "Religion of Jesus," he says:

"Spiritualism has its phenomena, its philosophy and its religion. The evidence that man exists after the physical organization is dissolved must be demonstrated. This is proven beyond a possibility of a doubt, by unimpeachable testimony as to the identity of spirits who once inhabited this planet, who now come and communicate with mortals in various ways, susceptible of scientific demonstration. While these facts are of scientific or logical demonstration, they do not touch the most important phase of the subject—its religion. They are but the steps by which we may ascend the temple of truth in order to reach the inner sanctuary of man's nature. In this lies the most far-reaching and important truths connected with the whole subject of the inter-communication between the world of matter and the world of spirit. If the creeds of the different sects of professed Christians will bear the searching scrutiny of the teachings of the Founder of Christianity, and they can give a sound reason for their faith, then their foundation is sure and steadfast. If they are built upon the declaration of some council away back in the darker ages, the sooner they are remodeled the better for the churches and for the world. If the creed on a Scriptural analysis proves to be, as I think it will in many cases, a human invention, dishonoring to God and pernicious to man, then every honest person should substitute for it something nobler and better suited to man's wants, and the earnest cravings of the soul in search for truth in regard to his eternal welfare."

Page 333, Chap. XXVII., "Opposition to Spiritualism Unreasonable."

"I have been for many years searching diligently for truth, with all the facilities at my command. I have been willing to receive it, from whatever source it may come, knowing that truth is eternal, however it may be misrepresented, and it will ultimately triumph over all opposition. I know of nothing that has been assailed with more virulence than has Modern Spiritualism, so-called, and yet it has been known and acknowledged in all ages, and among all nations, so far as we have been able to learn from history."

"It is the voice of God speaking to man through his appointed ministering agencies, on subjects of the deepest interest, with a fullness and frequency which has increased as generations have come upon the face of the earth, until in these days the veil has been almost withdrawn between the two worlds. It is the practical exemplification of the doctrine of the 'ministry of angels,' recognized by the Church in all ages, but by some in the present age treated only as a beautiful poetic theory. It illumines with celestial light that which many regard as enveloped in impenetrable darkness."

"It bridges over the deep, broad, gloomy chasm which separates this world from other spheres of conscious, intelligent life in the universe, and inaugurates an era of regular communication between embodied and disembodied spirits. Thus, dealing with matters which intimately and externally concern all men, and supplying, as it declares itself able to do, abundant and satisfactory evidence in support of its claims, one would have supposed that it would command respectful attention from all, and evoke a universal desire to examine its claims to meet the acknowledged want of mankind in regard to immortality."

These extracts will give a clearer perception of the mind of the author and the spirit of the book than we could give in a review notice, however extended. The whole work is pervaded with a spirit of love. Another feature of the work is that the larger part of the truth in it was received in the home of Mr. Watson, in his family, or comparatively private circles. We wish that every Christian family in the land would get and read this book. They would at least receive a clear declaration of the philosophy of Spiritualism from an honest, pure-minded, religious Spiritualist, in whose views and declarations they should have confidence.

## THE TIGER-STEP OF THEOCRATIC DESPOTISM.

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## THIS WORLD.

Spiritualism has disclosed the fact that humans grow into fitting conditions for the next phase of existence by having right surroundings and living right in this. I do not mean that this idea never was entertained by any except Spiritualists, or till Spiritualists taught it, for I know this is not the case, but the idea got no respectable foothold in Christendom, till Spiritualists found evidence of it in those who had passed on, and were born into spiritual conditions. The idea is a great one in importance; the greatest in potential power for the regeneration of the earth and the heavens.

The belief in the atonement is the greatest enemy to the happiness and progress of the human race that they have to contend with. Of the other idea, "total depravity" it goes along with it in perfect natural harmony, and the consequence is there is no inducement left for such as really entertain that faith to struggle to develop true nobility of character. But when we fully comprehend that the whole question of happiness or misery is regulated by the laws of cause and effect; that we, partly as individuals and partly as communities, work out our own salvation, and make happiness or misery by the line of conduct we follow; that the character is what counts for weal or woe in the long run; that the character is the result of a growth or development mainly projected by our ancestors, having a reach back in the dim distance to the beginning, or to the first life germs having a manly tendency, and holding an influence which has no end short of the end of immortal human existence,—we shall feel the responsibilities of life, and if anything will induce lofty aspirations, and impel us to work towards our truest and purest ideal this view of life will do it.

Spiritualism has demonstrated the fact that the nearer correct we are in our manner of living (I speak in the broad sense, including all there is of life, physical, intellectual, moral, emotional and aspirational), the nearer to complete happiness we attain. I say this has been demonstrated as a truism, but Spiritualists have not generally appropriated the idea and assimilated it so it has become a part of themselves, a real factor in their existence. And this must be done before it will have its due weight in the economies of life. This idea alone will not insure a true life. No one can live it, from the knowledge that it is best, coupled with the desire to be perfect in thought and action, unless he has more wisdom than any of his fellows, and also a higher organization, a better self-control. We are all very imperfect, both through a defective inheritance and false, imperfect education, to say nothing of the temptations of evil associations. But we shall live a very much higher life with the full recognition that our future weal and the weal of all who come within the circle of our influence, including our prospective progeny, if the future give us any, depends largely on us, than we should with the other view, that no virtue belongs to us, and no good act proceeds from us, but are only reflections of the "grace of God," manifested through a chosen few because of his partiality for them. The truth that we must work out our own salvation and be our Saviors, gives us a foundation on which to build, and ambition to build wisely; and we can progress as we gain in knowledge and acquire self-control. The old dogma makes people narrow in their aims and contracts their sympathies. In the future we shall know that self is best served by serving humanity, and that no philosophy or policy is worth considering which are intended to be limited in their good effects to localities, to classes and to individuals. Humanity is one, and individuals are only the component parts of that one. A seeming personal or local gain, if made at the general loss, is a loss indeed, which will count with its greatest effect on the parties that think they have made the gain. The accumulation of wealth is useless to the individual who accumulates it, but if he consecrates it to the good of his fellows, he gains by such consecration, for that helps build a noble character, and character is the only thing vitally real. We are all measurably ignorant of what character should be. It is continually forming, but is forming in most cases in comparative recklessness and ignorance.

Teachers generally know but little more than the masses they teach, and in some cases less. Equal intelligence and equal honesty does not insure uniform teaching. Each teaches from the knowledge he has, but knowledge is only partial, and each sees but the side or phase of truth turned towards him. If we could see through the truth, as through clear glass, perceive it on all its sides and surroundings, so as to take it in its entirety, we should not need to be groping in the dark as we now do. Those who comprehend the deepest and most are the least appreciated, because of the few who can sense the pearls even after presentation. It is hard to tell which is needed most, advanced teachers or those who can be taught by them. Without the teachers we remain in ignorance, and with them we do, if our mental calibre or spiritual condition is far below theirs. The deficiency in both the teachers and the taught, makes the ascent of humanity slow indeed. But we are going up in spite of the adverse conditions, and without doubt shall continue to go as long as there is a general aspiration upward. We now know that the individual atoms that compose the human race are not antagonistic and hostile to each other on the higher planes of being, but are all bound together in self-interest like the members of one family; that the general interest cannot be adverse to the individual good. If we have an idea that we think may be made useful, let us present it in the name of humanity and with becoming humility. If really useful, we have done a service, and if containing a preponderance of error, there will still be good, from the agitation which it will cause.

To not agitate is to not live in any progressive way. Of one thing be sure; now is all the time we have, and this life is the only life we can directly affect while we live it. Philosophizing about the next world will neither help us here nor there, except as it incites us to work in and for this. What relates to the now relates to the hereafter, but what relates to the hereafter and does not connect with the now, is only a dream and a myth.

SAMUEL BLODGETT.

## THE PSYCHOGRAPH

## DIAL PLANCHETTE!

This instrument has now been thoroughly tested by numerous investigators, and has proved more satisfactory than the planchette, both in regard to accuracy and correctness of the communications. It is a means of developing mediumship. Many who were not aware of their mediumistic gift have, after a few sittings, been able to receive astonishing communications from their departed friends.

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Tracts of land adjoining Summerland, containing from five to ten acres each, adapted to the growth of all temperate and semi-tropical products, including bananas, oranges, lemons, figs, grapes and strawberries and garden products all the year—can be bought or leased at low prices, and on easy terms. A map of Summerland and the subdivisions of the Rancho, with a pamphlet giving all particulars, will be mailed to any address. Summerland faces the south and ocean, gently sloping to the latter, where as fine bathing grounds exist as can be found anywhere. A fine view of the city of Santa Barbara, and the city of Santa Barbara, back and two and a half miles to the north, extends the Santa Inez range of mountains, forming a beautiful and picturesque background. A beautiful view of the mountains, islands, ocean, and along the coast, is had from all parts of the site. The soil is of the very best.

The size of single lots is 25x50 feet, or 25x130 feet for a double lot, the latter fronting on a fine wide avenue, with a narrow street, and the price of single lots, \$300—\$250 of which is donated to the town. By uniting four lots—price, \$1200—a frontage of 50 feet by 130 feet deep is obtained, giving one very commodious building site, with a fine view of the grounds for flowers, etc., and securing a front and rear entrance.

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Reference: Commercial Bank, of Santa Barbara, Cal. Send for plat of the town, and for further information.

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