The Spiritual Age.

DEVOTED TO RATIONAL SPIRITUALISM AND PRACTICAL REFORM.

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Spiritual Philosophy.

DEATH AND DEATH-SCENES.

We take the following instructive passages from the Autobiography of Rev. Theodore Clapp, recently noticed in our columns. It exhibits the views of a candid and thoughtful clergyman, who has had more experience in death-bed scenes than most of his profession. It should be remembered that Mr. Clapp commenced his ministerial labors as a Calvinist, but gradually was led to embrace a more hopeful faith.—Ed. Age.

In all my experiences, I never saw an unbeliever die in fear. I have seen them expire, of course, without any hopes or expectations, but never in agitation from dread, or misgivings as to what might befall them hereafter. I know that clergymen generally assert that this final event passes with some dreadful visitation of unknown, inconceivable agony, over the soul of the departing sinner. It is imagined that in his case the pangs of dissolution are dreadfully aggravated by the upbraidings of a guilty conscience, and by the unwillingness, the reluctance of the spirit to be torn with ruthless violence from its mortal tenement, and hurried by furies into the presence of an avenging Judge. But this is all a picture of superstitious fancy. It is probable that I have seen a greater number of those called irreligious persons breathe their last, than any clergyman in the United States. Before they get sick, the unacclimated are often greatly alarmed; but when the enemy seizes them, and their case is hopeless, they invariably either lose their reason, or become calm, composed, fearless and happy. This fact is a striking illustration of the benevolence of our Creator. If men's minds were not disturbed by false and miserable teachings, they would not suffer in death any more than they do when they fall asleep at night. Death is called a sleep in Scripture. "Death is the sleep of the weary. It is repose—the body's repose, after the busy and toilsome day of life is over." Even the convulsive struggles of the dying are not attended with pain, any more than the sobs and groans with which we sometimes sink into the slumbers of nightly rest. This is proved by the testimony of those who have been resuscitated after they became cold and pulseless, and restored again to life and breath. Their agonies were all seeming, not real, they tell us.

Persons without religion often die uttering words which indicate what are their strongest earthly loves or attachments, their "ruling passion." A young man of my acquaintance was once in that stage of the yellow fever superinduced by the beginning of mortification. Then the patient is free from pain, sometimes joyous, and very talkative. The individual I am speaking of was perfectly enamored of novel reading. One of Walter Scott's romances was daily expected in New Orleans. Not many minutes before his death, it was brought to his bed by a friend whom he had sent to procure it. It was placed in his hands, but he was no longer able to see printing. The pages of the book, and the faces of his friends, were growing dim around him. He exclaimed, "I am blind; I cannot see; I must be dying; must I leave this new production of immortal genius unread?" His last thought was dictated by his favorite pursuit and passion. Men must carry into the other world the character which they possess at the moment of death.

It would be well were all to remember that great, glorious thoughts, habitually cherished, spontaneously fill the mind in a dying hour, to bear it aloft and buoyant over the dark gulf.

In all my experiences in New Orleans, I have met with no dying persons who were terrified, except church members who had been brought up in the Trinitarian faith. Let me not be misunderstood. I do not mean to insinuate that these individuals were not good Christians. They were perfectly sincere, and this very sincerity was the cause of their fear and apprehensions. One, to whom I allude, embraced the Calvinistic doctrine of election. He was a just, conscientious, most excellent man. I knew him intimately. His last words were, "I have no hope; all is dark. There is a bare possibility that I may be saved." This was the language of honesty. For he held that salvation would be conferred upon only a part of mankind, elected to this destiny by a decree of God—eternal, immutable, and altogether irrespective of character and works, and all the remainder would be doomed to eternal woe, without any regard to their merit or demerit. No honest man, with such a creed, could die without the greatest dread and anxiety. For if God has inflexibly determined to destroy a portion of his children, however pure and good they may be, no one can know absolutely, from his character, that he is among the saved; no one can feel certain of enjoying final, everlasting happiness.

When I first entered the clerical profession, I was struck with the utter insufficiency of most forms of Christianity to afford consolation in a dying hour. Paul says, the revelation of Jesus was given "to deliver those, who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Ancient pagan literature invariably represents death as the greatest calamity of human existence; it was denominated the stern, terrible, insatiate, cold, bitter, merciless "foe." It was the avenue to an eternal night; where the fair, the venerated and the loved would be lost beyond recovery. If all this were true, we might justly say, "Speak not to us of consolation; there *is* no consolation; there is no support for such a lot as ours; nothing but dullness can bear it; nothing but stupidity can tolerate it; and nothing but idiocy could be indifferent to it." Jesus came into the world to announce the sublime doctrine that no one ever was, or ever will be, injured by death; that death is not so much as the interruption of existence; that death, indeed, is only death in appearance, while in reality the spirit's life is progressive, ever continued, and immortal.

Whoever, then, advocates those views of death, the belief of which tends to make its recipients afraid to die, ignores the messages of the gospel on this momentous theme. The great prominent truth of the Bible is, that, in every instance, "the day of one's death is better than the day of his birth." All these efforts to make death a scarecrow, to frighten men into the church, are as low and debasing as they are irrational and anti-Christian. Death is not the enemy, but the friend, of man.

Not the blue sky, not the richest landscape, not the flowers of spring, not all the charms of music, poetry, eloquence, art, or literature, present to our contemplation anything so lovely and magnificent as death and its consequences, viewed through the telescope of the New Testament. Yet almost all the clergy, for fifteen hundred years, have employed their utmost genius, learning, and oratory, to portray, in colors so appalling, that nobody who believes them can think upon the grave but with the deepest dread, dejection and horror. It would be quite as wise to bring up our children atheists, as to [illegible] of the body may conduct them to everlasting evil. It would be better, safer every way, for our children to believe in annihilation than in endless misery.

SPIRIT-VISION AT THE HOUR OF DEATH.

In the progress of my round on this occasion, I met with a case of cholera whose symptoms were unlike anything that I had before witnessed. The patient was perfectly free from pain, with mental powers unimpaired, and suffering only from debility and moral apprehensions. From his looks, I should have supposed that he was sinking under some kind of consumption, such as prevails at the north. He was an educated man, whose parents, when living, were members of the Presbyterian church. His will had just been made, and he believed himself to be dying, which was actually the case. I have said that his mind was uninjured; more, it was quickened to preternatural strength and activity.

When I took his hand in mine, he said, "The physicians assure me that I must soon die; I am unprepared; I look back with many painful regrets upon the past; I look forward to the future with doubts, fears, and misgivings. What will become of me?" I replied, "What, sir, is your strongest wish?" He answered, "That it may please God to forgive and save me, for Christ's sake." I added, "If this is the real wish of your heart, it will be gratified, no matter how wicked or unworthy you may be. Is your father living?" I inquired. He said, "No, sir; I saw him breathe his last in my native home. He died happy, for he was good. Never shall I forget that last prayer he uttered in behalf of his surviving children." "Suppose," I continued, "you were absolutely certain that death would introduce you into the presence of that beloved parent, and that he would be empowered by the Infinite One to make you as happy as he pleased, and to receive you to his bosom and embrace forever; would you not most willingly, joyfully, and with perfect confidence, commit your fate for eternity to the decision of such a pure, kind, affectionate father?" He answered in the affirmative. I said, "Is it possible that you have so much confidence in an earthly parent, and at the same time can hesitate to commend your spirit into the hands of that heavenly Father, who loves you as much as he does himself,—whose love is transcendent, boundless, infinite, everlasting,—who cannot allow you to perish, any more than he could destroy himself?"

"I see I am in an error," he exclaimed. "O God, help me and strengthen me!" I then made a short prayer.

* * * * *

Every word of this prayer he repeated after me in a distinct and audible voice. At the close, he exclaimed, "It is finished;" then gazing with a fixed eye, as upon some object on the ceiling over him, he said, "God be praised, I see my father." Doubting as to what he meant to say precisely, I asked, "What father do you see, your heavenly or your earthly father?" He answered, "My earthly father. Can you not see him? There he is, (pointing upwards,) smiling down upon me, arrayed in splendid garments, and beckoning me to follow him to the skies. He is going,—he is gone." On the utterance of these words, his arm, which had been raised heavenward, fell lifeless, and he breathed not again. There was a smile and expression of rapture on his face which lingered there for hours. It was the only good looking corpse which I saw in that epidemic. His form was magnificent, his breast large and arched, his whole appearance that of statue-like repose. There he lay before me, as beautiful as life itself. His countenance wore such a smile of ecstasy, I could hardly realize that his immortal spirit had fled. I laid my hand on his heart. It moved not.

This incident made a lasting impression on my mind. It deepened, it strengthened, immeasurably, my belief that the soul survives the body. "Who knows?" said I to myself, "but every one of these hundreds that are dying around me, when they draw their last breath, are greeted by the disembodied spirits of those whom they knew and loved on earth, and who have come to convoy them to the scenes of a higher and nobler existence?"

Shortly after this, I was standing by the bed of a young lady in her last moments, when she called to me and her mother, saying, "Do you not see my sister (who had died of yellow fever a few weeks before) *there?*" pointing upwards. "There are angels with her. She has come to take me to heaven." Perhaps these facts are in harmony with the doctrines of modern Spiritualists. One thing I know. There is not a more delightful, sanctifying faith than this—that as soon as we die, glorified spirits will hover about us, as guardian angels, to breathe on our souls their own refinement, and to point our way to the heavenly mansions.

[Original.]

BEAUTY DEATHLESS.

BY G. S. B.

Only yesterday the hills were bare,
And the dull sky hung, a leaden arch,
Where the banners of the misty air
Trailed like routed armies in their march.

"All its beauty buried in the grave;
Leaf and flower, and grasses, all are dead,
Bound in ice-mail that they cannot wave!"

Lo, the morning, with unconquered beams,
Treads his marches to his golden throne;
All the hills are flashing with his gleams,
Million-jeweled—a Sultana's zone!

O, the soul of Beauty never dies!
All the fetters on her children bound,
Her immortal splendor glorifies,
Till new triumphs every loss have crowned.

So the beauty of the soul and heart
Still survives in suffering and care,
Which at last new glory shall impart,
Flashing triumph through the clearing air.

So the dawning of eternal good
Shall transfigure our encumbering ill,—
As the ice-chains glorify the wood,
Raining diamonds over vale and hill.

For the Spiritual Age.

IS MAN UNIAL OR DUAL?

Messrs Editors:—With, I trust, all proper deference to the opinions of spirits and of Spiritualists, who affirm the doctrine that the Soul, as the real and immortal man, is an ultimate unfoldment of Nature,—I beg permission respectfully to record my dissent, and ask a hearing on the question whether man, as a disembodied and immortal spirit, is not an association of two distinct and identified living conscious self-hoods.

I have recently read with care a lecture on the free agency of man given through the mediumship of Mrs. Hatch at Newburyport, and also heard from her an exposition of the supposed distinction between our interior, immortal and divine, and our external, mortal and human nature. However plausible and ingenious may be the arguments thus presented, I confess I cannot concede consistency to the logic embodied therein. If *her* reasonings are carefully analyzed, it will be found they are based on the assumption that the Soul—our most interior, divine and immortal *esse*—is a development of and in Nature, and is the acting identity which expresses itself alike in our moral feelings and teachings and in our animal and selfish appetites. This assumption involves, as not only possible, but also as rational, that you or I can at one and the same time give earnest and intense expression to two directly opposite, antagonistic and contesting wills and desires,—that we can simultaneously love and hate,—resolve to act and not to act, to affirm and deny, to obey and to disobey,—for it recognizes the universally conceded fact that our desires for selfish ends are oft warmly combated and protested against by our sense of right and duty.

The theory is, substantially, that ignorance and knowledge qualify and modify the action of the soul; hence our selfish appetites and animal propensities, indulged in to excess, is declared to be the action of the Divinity within us, corrupted and perverted by our ignorance; while our truthful aspirations and desires are said to be the action of the Soul expressed through the medium of our knowledge, free from any modification thereof because of our corrupted condition.

This is a very pretty poetical idea; but I submit that it is not equally truthful. Knowledge and ignorance are characteristic conditions of an individualized and conscious identity or mind; and not in themselves personalities. If the Soul as an identity does, as is conceded, oft protest against the gratification of impure desires, it therein, according to the theory, does display the knowledge which implies an absence of ignorance, and precludes its being, as is alleged, engrossed by the ignorance affirmed to explain indulgences in impure desires. The fact of our oft being *intensely* agitated with impure selfish desires, and condemning moral resistances, I presume all will admit; and all such conditions when analyzed seem to exhibit the contesting action of two opposing wills—each expressive of the desires and feelings of a conscious identity and self-hood, seeking to consummate its own purpose.

Apart from the theory that the Soul is a spark or emanation from the great central Heart or Soul of all existent being, and therefore partaking, though in a finite degree, of the constitution and attributes of its fountain Source, it seems to me irrational to suppose a conscious identity, endowed with will-power as a means to express or manifest itself, could at one and the same time thus project or give forth two directly antagonistic desires or purposes, involving prolonged and uncompromising contests. But, in addition to this, I beg to submit that if the Soul is a spark, emanation or part of God, then *it is in itself innately incorruptible;* and *being so, cannot be prompted by impure desires, or be actively engaged in the attainment of impure selfish ends.*

The dogma that man is unial and not dual; that his interior and external, his human and his divine nature, are characteristics of one selfhood, rather than the manifestations of two distinct identities, is, I beg to submit, worthy of careful consideration, as it cannot be rationally reconciled with logic. Spiritualism must meet these questions fairly, if (as I admit) it is based on truth.

Philadelphia.

The following article from the first number of Mrs. Brown's (Cleveland) "*Agitator*," embodies important truth, as well as pungent sarcasm.—Ed. Age.

"It may be a truth, but the world isn't prepared to receive it."—Ex.

Strange thoughts are finding their way from lips unused to uttering new ideas. These thoughts are startling the drowsy, dreaming world. They come like the voicing forth of terrible yet beautiful prophecies. For a time the human heart stands still, listens and wonders. A voice, like the voice of God, is heard, saying, "Be not afraid, for I am speaking." The brave and true souls take heart and thank heaven for the breaking light; but the cowardly listeners turn away saying, "These new doctrines may be truths, but the world is not prepared to receive them."

Was the world ever ready for a new truth? Has there ever been a time when the world did not condemn and crucify those who have been forth in the Spiritual Wilderness, crying, as did the outcast Nazarine, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites?" Will there ever come a time when the truth-seeker may learn of Nature and translate her laws, without the fear of stones for bread, the scorn of the multitude, and the fagots and flames of persecution?

But the world isn't ready for new things, though they may be God's eternal truths, sent, by his servants, to feed his famishing children. The Seers and Saints of to-day ought to be warned by the martyrs of the past, and not risk their reputations and their lives by dealing in uncanonical creeds, and by gainsaying what is written in the ritual and the law books. They certainly ought to know

> "That many have lived and are ranked as mad,
> And placed in the cold world's ban,
> For sending their bright, far-seeing souls
> Three centuries in the van."

Half the world is surely "mad," for they pray that the kingdom of heaven may come to earth; but the moment one stirs a hand to give it room, or lifts up his voice against the wars and slaveries, and other abominations, that help to dethrone righteousness and to establish the kingdom of hell upon the earth, these same good souls will stop their praying to cry, "Stop, brother, these are evils you decry, but the world isn't yet ready for peace, freedom and purity."

Well, fight on, and sell human hearts, until the world, in the language of Shakspeare, cries, "Hold! Enough!"

Old Socrates told his thought too soon. The Athenians were not prepared to put away their Gods and worship the Unseen. A mandate, therefore, went forth to destroy him "who was *corrupting* the youth by teaching them heresy." Had the philosopher waited a thousand years or so, the world would, perhaps, have tolerated his teachings.

The philanthropist, Jesus, spoke the truth quite too soon for the good opinion of the Jews. Had his words been a little more fitly chosen when talking to the Scribes and Pharisees—had he been amiable and relenting when brought before Pilot, the Judge—had he been less the God and more the cowardly Time-server, he might have lived respected to a green old age, and died as the rich man dies, been splendidly buried, and—*forgotten*.

Galileo subjected himself to the scorn and derision of the religious world—to the dungeon and to death—by not waiting the world's time. True, these prudent people did not start old Sol a single inch, nor stay the revolving earth; but they did what they had the power to do—gagged the utterer of new thoughts.

Luther sowed the seeds of sedition too soon. The Mother Church was not ready to hear her darling child denounce Papal indulgences.

The Puritan Fathers lived too soon; they acted rashly. Had they quieted conscience, and glided along with the wind and waves of public opinion, they might have escaped the perils and the persecutions to which their want of prudence subjected them.

The Quakers, the Baptists and the Methodists, all preached their new doctrines too soon.

John Murray, like John in Jesus' time, went into the wilderness preaching, "Prepare ye the way for a new gospel, even the glad tidings that God will not cast off forever the children of his care." Universalism may be *true*, but the world isn't prepared for it. The fear of Hell *must* be kept before the people, else there is no safety in all the land.

Strange that fanatics will disturb the quiet of the world! They see a gleam of light in the distance, and believing it to be the watchfire upon Truth's eternal hills, they rush madly thitherward, trusting *alone* to the protecting heavens.

Young America, a rattle-brained youth, declared independence long before John Bull was prepared for the avowal. "All men are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness;" but to Old England such sentiments, coming from this side of the sea, were crimes only death could expiate.

Franklin sent forth his kite and questioned the lightnings; they told him that his feeble hand could stay the thunderbolt. Poised in his wrath, had destined for the fire? Pity Franklin had been born so soon by a hundred years. Had he waited till now, all the lightnings of heaven would be running along the wires, praising and glorifying his name.

Fitch and Fulton were fanatics. They told steam-stories long before men could comprehend them. If they were now living, people would listen to them; for they are ready now for steam navigation.

A few years ago, while the world was napping, dreaming, perhaps, that the curse of fanaticism had passed away forever, Spiritualism, like the Sinai thunders, burst upon the world, causing the great human heart to stand still with terror. The soul instinctively knew the spirits' mission was to demolish all the various crafts and isms in the wide world. They have been already terribly shaken; but the end is not yet. Our private sanctuaries are being invaded; our golden Gods are being demolished; our darling dogmas will be taken away, and the soul, unmasked, will be compelled to stand face to face before God, and listen to new laws and receive new commandments.

The world isn't ready for this terrible overthrow. Perhaps spirits do communicate; but we are not ready to listen to their teachings; besides, it is not *popular* to be a Spiritualist; there are too many "*fishermen*" and "*carpenters*" among them.

What, then, is to be done? Why, hush the voice of the Eternal; be *false*, live a *lie*, and bow, like the veriest menial, before the merciless task-master, Public Opinion. Put on the straight-jacket of the law; put fetters upon the lips and a seal upon the soul, and sit down quietly and contentedly to await the world's time for the advent of Peace, Justice, Mercy, Freedom and Truth.

THE QUALITY OF LIFE.

The *saintly* is beyond the heroic mind. To get good is animal; to do good is human; to be good is divine. The true use of man's possessions is to help his work; and the best end of all his work is to show us what he is. The noblest workers of our world bequeath us nothing so great as the image of themselves. Their *task*, be it ever so glorious, is historical and transient; the majesty of their *spirit* is essential and eternal. While to some, God gives it to show themselves *through* their work, to others he assigns it to show themselves without even the opportunity of work. He sends them transparent into this world; and leaves us nothing to gather and infer. Goodness, beauty, truth, acquired by others, are original to them—hiding behind the eye, thinking on the brow, and making music in the voice. Such beings live simply to *express themselves*. With fewer outward objects than others, or at least with a less limited practical mission devoting them to a fixed task, their life is a soliloquy of love and aspiration; the soul not being with them the servant of action, but action rather the needful articulation of the soul. Not of course, that they are in the slightest degree exempt from the stern and positive obligations of duty, or licensed, any more than others, to dream existence away. If once they fall into this snare, and cease to work, the linaments of beauty and goodness are exchanged for those of shame and grief. Usually they do not *less* but rather *more*, than others; only under somewhat sorrowful conditions, having spirits prepared for what is more than human, and being obliged to move within limits that are only human. The worth of such a life depends little on its *quantity*, it is an affair of *quality* alone.—*Martineau.*

"The discipline of life is in our silent and unwitnessed hours; in hidden paths, sheltered beneath God's deep shadows."

The Spiritual Age.

Progress is the Common Law of the Universe.

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DR. DURAND'S CRITICISMS.

[CONCLUDED.]

The question of the spiritual existence of animals, though one of much interest to the philosopher, is yet, perhaps, of little practical consequence, and we shall therefore dismiss it with as few words as possible. Our correspondent is mistaken in supposing that our present opinion on that subject was "suggested by prejudice." On the contrary, it has been adopted after much investigation and "reasoning," and in opposition to our prejudices—for we previously entertained a different conviction, as do many Spiritualists now.

He also mistakes our meaning, if he understands us as denying immortality to whatever of "mind," or "spirit," any animal possesses. We admit that the essential nature of all faculties possessed in common by men and animals, is absolutely the same in both, and equally indestructible. Hence, if the question were put in this form: "Do the *essential spiritual principles* which produce the animal forms of earth, continue to exist after the dissolution of those forms?" our answer would be as emphatically, *Yes*, as in the other case it was *No*. But it does not follow that they continue to exist in the same identical and individualized *forms* as on earth. Our present view is that all animals have their ultimates *in man;* and *in him*,—i. e., as constituent parts of his wholeness, they enjoy immortality,—not as existences external to him. In other words, we conceive that man absorbs into his own nature, the spirit of *fidelity* from a faithful dog (that is, the *spiritual essence* whose manifestation is *fidelity*), the spirit of *shrewdness* from the cunning fox, the spirit of *patience* from the enduring ox, the spirit of stateliness or majestic motion from the noble steed, of inoffensiveness from the gentle lamb, and so on through the whole catalogue of zoology,—and that, in his complex nature, as the epitome and highest embodiment of all these principles they attain the summit of their expression and the ultimate of their use.

We apprehend, moreover, that man is something more than an embodiment of these complex principles or essences evolved through Nature. We conceive that he possesses an element which is *interior to* and *underlies* all these essences, and which is distinct from and more than they all,—namely, the *Celestial* or God-element, the *inmost* principle of being which is, in fact, the germ,—an element in which resides the germinal power of an *eternal unfolding*, an *immortal progression*. To this part of the human being we are accustomed to apply the term "soul," in distinction from both *spirit* and *mind*. We think that no form of existence below man has this germinal or eternally unfolding element—and hence none of these forms are capable of progression or cultivation beyond certain limits. Each genera and species in time exhausts itself and becomes extinct; while man is capable of indefinite progression, of infinite unfolding. Hence man, by virtue of this element, has tendencies inward and upward,—aspirations toward the purer, the higher, the immortal,—consciousness of exhaustless capabilities,—which do not appear to characterize any lower form of existence.

Such, at least, are our conceptions of man's nature, though we shall not now attempt to demonstrate their accuracy by any strictly logical process. Holding these views, we cannot, of course, accept our correspondent's argument as conclusive. He appears, if we understand him, to regard the spirit or germ of a dog as in no way different, in its *essential* constitution, from the spirit or germ of a man; and deems that the only reason why the dog does not manifest capabilities equal to those of man is, that the *dog-spirit* is not, in its external *form*, provided with *organs*, or tools, through which it can manifest all its capacities. On the contrary, it seems to us more probable that each spirit-essence or germ-principle, whether of dog, fish, horse or man, *forms for itself* external organs suited to the expression of *all its inherent capabilities;* and hence that the only reason why man has a more complete organism than the dog, fish, or horse, is that his *germ-principle* is more complete—so complete, indeed, that unlike the others, it is an *image* of the Universal Spirit, embracing all lower principles, animal, vegetable and mineral, together with an individualized spark or germ of the Divine Essence. We leave the reader to make his own choice between these diverse theories.

The *appearances* of animals in the spirit-world, to both clairvoyants and to spirits, are, we think, readily explainable in consistency with our view; but we propose not to enter upon that branch of the subject here.

On the relations between spirit and matter, our correspondent has not defined his terms with distinctness sufficient for a clear treatment of that point. To say that matter is "an *objectivation* of spirit" conveys to us no other idea than that it is *one form* of the same *substance* which in *another form* is termed *spirit*. If matter is the *objectivation* of spirit, then, is not spirit the *sublimation* of matter?

We prefer that analysis which considers all things as *substance* (or *matter*, if any prefer the term), existing in higher and lower, or finer and coarser, or more and less sublimated, conditions. Both "spirit" or "mind," and "soul," (using these terms as defined above) with all its faculties, must surely be *substance*, else how could it *act on* substance? To produce action, there must be *contact*, and *something* cannot come in contact with *nothing*. Soul must, moreover, be the most *substantial* of all substances, because of its immortality. Hence, we recognize no such thing as *positively* inert matter; inertness is comparative. All matter is *in motion*, in its degree and condition, and capable of responding to *attraction*—thus manifesting something of *life*. The more highly sublimated, the more of life, activity and power does it exhibit. Existing in three prominent degrees—natural, spiritual and celestial—the higher or finer pervades the lower and coarser, as a positive principle acting in conjunction with the negative life of the lower. Thus subtle spirit pervades, controls and modifies grosser matter; and thus spirit, itself, is pervaded, controlled and modified by a still subtler and more powerful Element, commonly called the Divine or Celestial.

Whether the identical atoms now existing in the natural degree can advance by a process of sublimation, to the spiritual, and from the spiritual climb up to the celestial, may be a matter of question; but if, as is the theory of a large class of philosophers—(and we presume of our correspondent among them, else what does he mean by an "objectivation"?)—if the natural world is in some way a *projection* from the Infinite Mind and Soul,—a formation out of *substance* proceeding from the celestial through the spiritual to the natural plane,—then what is to hinder each identical atom from traveling back by the same road? We leave the metaphysicians to answer at their leisure. A. E. N.

IMPORTANCE OF STRAW.

The proverbial philosophers have not been wholly unmindful of the immense value of *straw*. They have admonished us that straws enable us to determine "which way the wind blows," and likewise "the direction the tide runs;" two pieces of information of great practical utility to mankind in general and to some people in particular. The man who would achieve a large success, according to the doubtful definition of the times, must be a careful observer of the facts and a close student of the philosophy of winds and tides. Of course all who value present ease, or chiefly aspire to a lazy immortality, know better than to attempt to *row up stream* or to resist the "tides in the affairs of men." It is more convenient to go the other way; or, having availed themselves of all the favorable currents, they come to an anchor when the tide is in the wrong direction. The politician trims his sails to the popular breeze, and when there is no breeze at all he contrives to raise one on his own account. The man who would buy and sell with unusual success must manage to steer clear of the adverse winds of fortune. If one has a profession, and would secure a large patronage—wholly disproportioned to his intrinsic merits—he must be prudent enough not to raise a storm by expressing unpopular opinions; while the old sinner who aspires to the possession of youth, beauty and innocence, pours the anodyne of soft speech (words are wind) on the listening ear, or stimulates the imagination by vague promises of prosperous gales and tides that lead to fortune.

On the points suggested by the aforesaid philosophers, the voice of an angel is scarcely more reliable than the testimony of straws. The slender grass waves in the gentlest breeze of summer, while the sturdy oak will not bend. The tempest-smitten pinnacles stand firm amid the war of elements, while light things are borne along by the ærial currents. The stately ship, however important in the commercial economy of the world, cannot so readily indicate the course of the ocean tides as the smallest thing that floats on the surface of the wave. O ye time servers and moralists under *the india rubber code!* repent of your ingratitude and respectfully acknowledge your obligations to *straw;* for without this infallible guide ye would all mistake the way to fortune and to fame.

If the functions of straw were limited to what is already expressed or implied, it would still appear to be a staple production, very essential to the gilded economy of our modern civilization, and quite indispensable to the galvanic operations of respectable society. Indeed half the business of the world adaptation of straw to the learned professions and the business pursuits of men. The young advocate, whether of law, politics or religion, would have no suitable materials of which to construct the images created and upheld by his fancy only to be stricken down to gratify the hero of imaginary conquests. But the men of straw are not all creatures of the fancy, nor is the logician's glittering rapier likely to extinguish the species. We find men of straw in every profession, and being usually well-dressed effigies, they frequently find their way into very important positions. They differ from normally constituted men in having *no spinal column*. It does not require a professor of anatomy to perceive the difference. Just lean a little on one of them—impose upon him the weight of a great idea or the pressure of a generous enterprise, and while he will naturally seek a horizontal position, you will inevitably discover what he was made of.

Not only is straw indispensable in fancy stocks and the credit system, but it is the chief material of which many showy reputations are ingeniously woven. Automatic forms of substantial men sit in the halls of science and perform their work with as much precision as patent sewing machines. The genius of learning seems complacent while his servants scoff in set and scholastic phrase at the annunciation of each new idea. For convenience, and especially for *confirmation*, they have the images of the old forms, hypotheses, and institutions painted on the glasses they are accustomed to look through. Whenever the imposing figure known as the *professor* proposes to examine the claims of a new and unpopular subject, he graciously condescends in the first place to adjust his spectacles, whereupon he has a vivid perception of his old and vague ideas—nothing more. In his peculiar view we miss the subject altogether, and straightway the automatic individual complacently ascribes our whole system of philosophy to sensational illusions or a heated imagination. When the facts—the phenomenal illustrations of the essential idea itself—are subjected to a scientific inspection they disappear behind the opaque images on the glass. The reason why the learned Professor does not see the Spirits when they come into his presence may thus admit of a rational explanation. He may either have a live beetle in his eye at the time, or be engaged in preparing a paper on the physiology and natural history of the American insect known and distinguished as the "humbug;" or, possibly, the fossil elephant may be standing in the way. Of course the learned *savant* only sees what the vitreous medium is fitted to represent. If you wonder at such stupid blindness, the Professor very complacently ascribes your astonishment to your ignorance. While you reason and remonstrate, the automatic apology in the chair is precise and cold in his negatives. If you urge the subject he rises with offended dignity and mechanically bows your witnesses out of doors. You have been informed that profound learning makes men calm and candid, and you more than half incline to dispute your senses. You would corroborate the testimony of sight and hearing by *feeling*. You rise with the dome of your spirit's temple uncovered so as to admit light at all the windows; you approach most respectfully—you extend your hand, and—what then? Nothing, only if the effigy is "*felt-on*," it will be found to be a man of straw.

It is suspected by many that the departments of general literature and public journalism, especially in America, require for their support large quantities of "*the raw material*." Unlettered aspirants for literary honors—like Monsieur Millaud, the French millionaire, who purchased *La Presse* in order to gain a position in society which neither his money nor his manners entitled him to occupy—purchase the necessary materials and instruments and hire some literary genius—at half what his services are really worth—to make him a reputation before the world. The poor *literateur*, whose own coat has been threadbare for the last year, sets up a well-dressed effigy and calls it by the name of his employer, who is pleased to know that the people have confidence and readily mistake a respectable looking image for himself. All the while the literary draper keeps behind the scenes, pulls the wires, acts as prompter, is a ghost or inspiring spirit, or, if necessary, plays the first fiddle in the uniform of the strong-handed individual who beats the bass drum. All this is done that the ambitious proprietor may secure public attention and a small corner in the temple of fame—secure the same by a right as indisputable as that of any other intruder, who, on entering a sacred place, proceeds to inscribe his name with a *jack-knife* among the carved memorials of genius and heroism.

The straw philanthropists constitute an interesting class, and are somewhat numerous. Their philanthropy is syllabled in the papers and in the air. Instead of practising the unwarrantable secrecy of not allowing the right hand to know what the left hand is about, the philanthropic man of straw is ever open and undisguised. Secrecy is presumed to imply deception and mischief, but he never incurs the suspicion. To avoid this he occasionally publishes in a paper what benevolent institutions he belongs to; not of course to induce the conviction that he is sufficiently taxed already, and must not be called on for other charities; nor yet that the world may know how much he is devoted to humanity, to the end that he "may have glory of men." O, no; he only mentions the subject *incidentally*, by way of apology for neglecting to give special attention to other people, who, but for that, might have remained in blissful unconsciousness of any neglect whatsoever. When he proposes a liberal donation for the benefit of the heathen (he is especially generous in proposals) he folds his bill together so that the denomination may not appear (some one may conjecture that it is a ten pound note), and then, rising to his full, normal stature, he takes it by the extreme end; when his hand is over the appropriate receptacle, he relinquishes his grasp with becoming grace and moderation. There are other notes in the box, and no one ever ascertains who deposited the genuine one dollar bill *on the broken bank!*

If our benevolent man of straw is a merchant he advertises to sell goods at ruinous prices; (ruinous to the purchaser, perhaps;) he is very obliging, and gives long credits, (philanthropy is a great thing) compounds his interest and takes a mortgage just to accommodate you. He loves to oblige his neighbors to the extent of his ability (all are neighbors who have unincumbered real estate). When a commercial crisis occurs and the financial pressure becomes severe, he naturally feels it very sensibly. At first he politely intimates that merchants as well as other people are liable to meet with "an untimely end" (in business) for the want of a free, uninterrupted *circulation*. Being disposed to look after the interests of his neighbors, he will do what he can to grant a still further indulgence. Accordingly, he goes to Solomon Coppershell and Earnest Dimeholder, the only moneyed men in town, and borrows all they have on hand. But the amount is insufficient to discharge immediate obligations. He is reluctantly obliged to foreclose. Accordingly, your homestead is advertised for sale, terms *cash*. The Coppershells and Dimeholders having their said. Our philanthropist does not want the property, but it should not be forgotten that he is disposed to be obliging. He is even willing to give (there being no one else to buy) a little more than any other man. In closing up the business, if other parties are interested, our straw philanthropist employs in the inventory an original *sliding scale*, whereby, as the profits slide up *the assets slip down*.

Where such men reside there is usually a growing demand for straw. Indeed, the fashionable world would be at least partially depopulated if the men of straw were all removed. Their departure would change the election returns, cut down the tax-list, limit the importation of fancy fabrics, and ruin the prospects of French tailors, hair-dressers and perfumers. But this not all, nor is it the worst. Would not widows and fatherless children be indefinitely multiplied, the manufacture of *fustian* suspended, and congress obliged to adjourn for want of a quorum? Ay, such are the momentous issues depending on *straw*, that all these disasters, and others we dream not of, might very probably be evolved from the destructive ordeal. Possibly several parishes might be left without ministers, and the Nebuchadnezzar family be suddenly increased in the rural districts.

MORAL.—The little things in the conduct of men are the straws that reveal the currents of feeling, thought and purpose. A seemingly great deed may after all be prompted by a selfish ambition; but the unstudied words, thoughts and deeds of every-day life infallibly disclose the real character of the individual. From these sources we may derive far more comprehensive and reliable views of man than it is possible to form from the greatest mental achievements and the most imposing events. The vulgar mind may be arrested and attracted by whatever startles and dazzles the senses; but the little things that make up the sum of life and the world, furnish to the philosophical historian the most suggestive and significant elements in human history. S. B. B.

DECLINE OF SPIRITUALISM.—The *Courier* affects to believe that, as a result of its stupendous efforts at exposure, "the delusion [of Spiritualism] is passing away." We think it would perplex our veracious cotemporary to furnish any substantial evidence of such a fact. We have never known the time when calls for lecturers and mediums, throughout the country, were so numerous and urgent as at present; nor has there been a time when so many competent laborers were in the field—though the demand greatly exceeds the supply of this class. We cheerfully accord to the *Courier* a large share of the credit of producing this result, but its labors have obviously told in the reverse direction from what it supposes.

FACTS.—We hope to give the fact department due prominence in future issues. It has been our intention to do this from the beginning; but we have found other matter monopolizing the space, almost against our will. A little experience in sailing our new craft will enable us to steer clear of these obstructions.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY.—The February number of the Atlantic is out. Dr. Holmes' article, the only one we have yet had time to glance through, is full of sound sense and philosophy. He knows how to be serious without insipidity. His theological notions are in advance of the sects, and will please all who like to see rationality in religion.

When one advised Lycurgus, the famous lawgiver, to establish a popular government at Lacedæmon, "Go," said he, "and first make trial of it in thine own family."

ANTI-SPIRITUAL "INDECENCIES."

We briefly alluded, two weeks since, to some scandalous gossip put forth in the *Springfield Republican*, relating to alleged sayings and doings of Spiritualists in Boston. So preposterous were these stories, that we deemed them hardly worthy of serious notice—not supposing that an enlightened and sensible public would give them the slightest credence, at least until backed up by some shadow of evidence. But it seems that there is a portion of the conductors of the newspaper press for whom our estimate was somewhat too favorable. We mean those (and the *Republican* is in some measure an exponent of the class) who appear to regard it as the expecial function of the newspaper to serve up daily or weekly dishes of all sorts of "horribles," "criminalities," "startling developments," "astounding disclosures," etc., the *truth* of which is of small consequence in comparison with the pennies they bring to the pocket. The foul garbage referred to was too choice a morsel to be overlooked by these watchful caterers; and it has been caught up and reproduced throughout the country, by papers of this class, from the New York *Tribune*—the model of the "intense" school—up (or down) to the Boston *Courier*—the very incarnation of "respectability," the oracle of Science, the the organ of the Professor of Greek, and the only competent "guardian of the public morals," ever yet instituted. In some cases the filth has been dealt out without addition; in others it has been duly spiced and seasoned with editorial comments, or *condiments*, to suit the requirements of different localities.

The paper last named, which had, for a time, "subsided" into comparative silence on its favorite theme of "delusion and imposture," seizes with an especial gusto upon this delectable morsel. It gulps the whole story, notwithstanding its Munchausenish proportions, without the least wincing, and returns thanks most devoutly to the *Republican* for the "aid" afforded by this welcome dispensation; it intensifies the details with italics, and proceeds, with both hands raised and eyes upturned in holy horror, to recite an additional chapter of "dreadful realities," closing with congratulations that the "delusion is passing away, the imposture is becoming stale, and its pretensions, in a few months, will be universally discredited." (*Query:* Should these latter prognostications prove true, what will become of Othello's occupation?)

None of these presses appear to have thought of calling in question the truth of the *Republican's* statement. No; the scandal was directed against the adherents of an *unpopular* ism; and it tallied well with the "award" of a certain learned *Scientific* Committee, who months ago fulminated oracular warnings about the "truth of man and the purity of woman;" and of course it must be true!

We ventured pleasantly to hint to the Springfield editor that he was in all probability the victim of a *silly hoax*, and refrained from any expenditure of "indignant denunciations," until we should have some evidence that there was the slightest occasion for them. We supposed this would bring out from the scandal-monger either some show of proof, or some sort of apology for his easy credulity. But instead of either, our amiable cotemporary is pleased to construe our coolness in the matter into a virtual admission of the facts, and very charitably insinuates that we personally know its foul aspersions to be true! Here are its crafty and contemptible words:

"The Spiritual paper of Boston affects to doubt our statements under the above head, in relation to the gross personal exposures of certain Spiritualists. It does not deny the statements. We have reason to believe ally has the ability, if it were so disposed, to confirm all we have stated."

On the contrary, *we* "have reason to believe" the utter *falsity* of these statements, as we *know* the absolute untruth of the mean and dishonorable personal insinuations conveyed above. We will now notice these charges in detail. The *Republican* originally alleged that

"Within the past year there has been a community of Spiritualists organized under the direction of John M. Spear, and lately disbanded, the history of which is carefully suppressed by the spiritual papers. But that history is instructive and monitory, and we are promised an authentic account of it from one familiar with its details. One of the propositions made by 'the spirits' through this 'seer,' was that the company should cease to use clothing for the purpose of concealing their persons, and trust to the purity of each other. The proposition was not accepted, but on the contrary it startled the brethren and sisters into the consciousness that Spear's spirits were not safe counselors, and it was one of the causes of the ultimate dissolution of the community."

This statement we pronounce false in every important particular. While we do not assume to defend the sayings and doings of any medium, or of any "spirit" through any medium, any farther than the same commend themselves to our best judgment—much less of one so peculiar and seemingly erratic in his proceedings as is Mr. Spear—yet truth and justice require us to brand the above allegations with their real character. From our personal knowledge of the movements of Mr. S. before he left this city in October last, and from the information we have received relative to his proceedings since, we can affirm without fear of successful contradiction, that *no community has been organized under his direction*, and consequently that *no such community has been disbanded, either for the cause alleged or any other*. So much for the "instructive and monitory history," we are charged with having "suppressed." Such "history" has existed only in imagination.

It is well known that Mr. Spear has been for years used as the mouth-piece of what purports to be a society of spirits, who have undertaken to unfold through his instrumentality the principles of a system of social re-organization which they wish to introduce on earth. A large quantity of "papers" communicated relative to this movement, have within the past year been collated and printed in a volume under the editorship of the present writer. That volume, entitled "THE EDUCATOR," so far from being "suppressed," has been published to the world, and advertised in our columns, and is for sale by Spiritualist booksellers generally. Any one who imagines that it has either "fanatical" or "sensualistic" tendencies is advised to correct his mistake by carefully reading the work. The reader who does not find in it a theology far more rational, and a morality infinitely more pure, than generally accepted and *practiced* throughout Christendom, will read with different eyes from ours.

It should be noted, however, that comparatively few Spiritualists have as yet taken any special interest in this scheme, or in any way identified themselves with it; while many have from the first strongly discountenanced it. (How long will it require for our opponents to learn that Spiritualists are *individuals*, not a "*sect*;" and that each one takes the liberty to have *his own* opinions about all such matters, taking no responsibility for those of others?) Of those who have regarded this peculiar "movement" with favor and hope, some have been fluctuating in their attachment, and have from time to time withdrawn; but no attempt that we can learn, has yet been made to "organize" a "community," much less has there occurred a disbanding for the ridiculous reason set forth, nor has anything transpired in connection with the enterprise, since the issue of the above volume, which in our judgment has been of sufficient importance to the public, to call for mention in our columns.

As to the "proposition" said to have produced the truly "startling" effect of causing the dissolution of a community *never yet formed*, the only shadow of a basis we can discover for the allegation is in the sentiment which is expressed in the following paragraph from the work above referred to:

"Spiritualism comes, then, to call out a few persons, who shall be all that is idealized here [i. e., so pure that low and lascivious thoughts cannot be generated in their minds, or indulged in their presence], and more; women who shall be divinities or goddesses in human form; who shall know no shame; who shall seek no fig-leaf coverings; who shall be so pure that garments shall not be used for purposes of concealment, but only for comfort and convenience."—*Educator*, p. 621.

Substantially the same sentiment, we are told, has been uttered by Mr. Spear in different forms, but always to the effect that the sense of shame is the concomitant of conscious impurity, and that if men and women were as pure as they are capable of becoming, clothing would no longer be needed for the mere purpose of concealing "the human form divine." This is a very different thing from a proposition that any "community should cease to use clothing," in the present state of things.

But whether commendable or "indecent," this sentiment did not originate with modern Spiritualists or spirits. If it be an indication of "sensuality," the whole Christian world is equally involved in the imputation. We have been taught from our infancy, in primers, pictures, bibles and sermons, that the progenitors of our race, so long as they were *sinless*, "were naked and were not ashamed," and that, when Eden is restored in the promised "millennium"—a consummation for which all churches are professedly praying and laboring—a similar state of things will again come about. *There is not a clergyman in Boston, who believes in a coming millennial day of universal purity, and labors to hasten it, but has as really proposed to dispense with clothing, as have "Spear's spirits."*

And who is there, capable of a pure conception, that has not assented to the truth of this sentiment? Who does not know from the bible written in his own consciousness, that the sense of shame and the desire for concealment are born of conscious impurity? Who does not also know the meaning of blushes, and smirks, and averted eyes, when a promiscuous company unexpectedly confronts the Greek Slave, or Dubufe's Eve? Who has not learned that all such modesty is of the spurious stamp? Of the same character is that which professes to be shocked by the sentiment above quoted. And the filthy-minded wretch who could construe such an expression into evidence of "sensualistic tendencies," clearly belongs to that class whom an old apostle charged with turning "the grace of God into lasciviousness."

Thus much for the first statement. The other is as follows:

"We hear also from the best authority that there are actually companies of Spiritualists in Boston who sit in circles, perfectly undisguised with clothing, that is to say, in *puris naturalibus*—men and women indiscriminately! We should not credit this statement did it not come to us directly from those that know the facts."

If the *Republican* has any such authority, let it be produced. After much inquiry, we have been unable to find the slightest trace of foundation for this statement; nor did we ever hear anything of the kind intimated, or its desirableness suggested, from any source. It appears to be *a whole-cloth fabrication, without a shred of honest material in its composition*. But if there be any such circles, they have managed their proceedings so secretly as to elude the knowledge of the best informed among us, and hence the Spiritualists as a body can in no way be responsible for them. Will the *Republican* do us the justice to print our disavowal, and thus rebut its groundless imputation upon our "frankness and honesty"?

But suppose—what we do not for an instant admit—that this statement is true; for our testimony is only negative. Out of the ten or twenty thousand Spiritualists of Boston, we can claim personal knowledge of probably less than a thousand. We are not omniscient, and never elected ourself to the corps of "Moral Detective Police," choosing to leave that onerous and responsible duty to the sharp-sighted "observers" of the *Courier*, and to the alert spies of our "enterprising" cotemporary in Western Massachusetts. It is not our habit—as it is that of some editors—to positively affirm or deny what is beyond the circle of our personal cognizance. Suppose, then, the allegation be proved true; what shall we say of it?

Simply this, (aside from considerations of comfort and health) either that there are Spiritualists in Boston who have made attainments in purity *beyond* what we had supposed; or that there are those whose advancement is *less* than we had hoped. In the former case, then, the "millennium" may be nearer at hand than we or our Christian friends had anticipated, and let God be praised for the knowledge! In the latter case, the painful fact will evince that the "good time coming" is farther off than we could wish. But in either event, we are none the less sure that *Spiritualism is a divinely appointed instrumentality for bringing about man's redemption from all sensualism and all sin*, without which no millennium or perfect social state can ever dawn on earth.

The mere belief or practice of intercourse with spirits does not of itself make a person *necessarily* either better or worse; any more than does intercourse between the people of America and those of Europe. All depends upon the purposes for which such intercourse is maintained, and the classes between whom it is carried on.

The vile and the sensual who visit London or Paris, find there those who are vile as themselves, and are thus perhaps drawn down to lower depths of degradation. But who questions the general utility of international intercourse, nevertheless? All know that the immense advantages derivable from the interchange of commodities, and of the goods of knowledge and wisdom, among those who are moved by lottier purposes, immeasurably over-balance all such incidental evils, and tend eventually to remove them altogether.

So is it with intercourse with the spiritual world. Sensualists may, if they choose, come into communion with spirits like themselves, and indefinitely worse, and thus be dragged down to the lowest depths of earthly pollution; while the pure-minded, the aspiring, the truth-loving and sincere, may be led by angel-hands up the shining pathways of eternal progress and unspeakable joy. And so surely as every vice will meet its due corrective, and every virtue its proper reward,—so surely as good must triumph over evil, and light dissipate darkness, so surely will the influx of wisdom and love from the upper spheres in due time overcome the follies of ignorance and the insanities of lust, and raise mankind to a loftier plane of life. A. E. N.

ABOUT HALF RIGHT.—The *Illuminati* has not received the *Age* in exchange, and surmises the reason to be the "billing and cooing" incident to our recent matrimonial alliance. Of the cooing we say nothing; but that we have *dun* an extra amount of *billing* is most true.

A GLEAM OF SANITY ABOUT INSANITY.

The Massachusetts State Lunatic Asylum at Taunton, reports recently to the Legislature that 207 persons have been admitted to that institution during the past year. In the table of "causes," we find *one* only out of this number classified under the tasteful and *scientific* head of "spirit-rappings." The Superintendent of the Asylum, (Dr. Choate), thinks, however, this single case sufficient to call for some special comments, and he indulges in the following profound observations:

"Spiritualism, an old delusion under a new name, affording food for a class of credulous marvel-seekers, who formerly were fed with the mysteries of animal magnetism, mesmerism, witchcraft and fortune-telling, and who, after this delusion has faded away, will find some new form of wonder, brings us an occasional subject. But its influence in the production of mental disease has probably been much exaggerated. Anything operating strongly upon the mind, and fixing its attention for a long time to the exclusion of other objects, may produce insanity, whether it be religion, love, sorrow, or the excitement of any of the sentiments or passions."

The first part of these remarks will serve to reveal to the intelligent people of Massachusetts the competency of this official for the important public station he has been appointed to fill. A physician who, at this late day, can treat "Spiritualism, Animal Magnetism and Mesmerism" as an "old delusion," affording food merely for "a class of credulous marvel-seekers," thus ignoring all the momentous facts relative to mental manifestations, both normal and abnormal, which these departments of inquiry have evolved—facts which belong peculiarly to his specialty as guardian of the insane,—we say such a man, whatever his professions, can be but poorly qualified for so responsible a position as Superintendent of a State Lunatic Asylum. We trust the new State administration will do itself the honor, and the Commonwealth the justice, to obtain the services of a more competent officer.

The latter portion of Dr. Choate's observations, however, possess a slightly redeeming feature. They stamp with falsehood those slanderous charges which have so often been rung through the land, of a special and "frightful tendency to insanity" accompanying a belief in Spiritualism; and clearly though tardily admit a truth which all candid and reasonable people have seen from the outset. Let those editors and preachers who have taken special satisfaction in appealing to imaginary "statistics of insane asylums," against Spiritualism, take note of the above remarks, and hereafter govern their pens and tongues accordingly. A. E. N.

Mr. Brittan at Louisville.

The lectures of our associate at Louisville, Ky., appear to have produced a profound impression upon intelligent minds in that city, judging from the notices of the press. From the *Daily Democrat* we clip the following paragraphs:

"PROF. BRITTAN'S LECTURE.—We do not know that we have ever been so thoroughly delighted and interested with a lecture as we were last night with that of Prof. Brittan, at Mozart Hall. It was a model of beauty, elegance, and excellence—rhetorically and logically. Indeed, his logic is superior to anything of the kind to which we have ever listened. He leads you on by gradual steps, from a point where you naturally agree with him, to a position from which, when looking back, you are astonished. You recognize every step you took in following him, and yet can find no false footing—no dangerous ground. One is almost forced, in spite of his skepticism, to admit the Professor's conclusions, because the train of reasoning he has followed leads directly to those conclusions, and there is not open to his mental vision any other path. The subject last evening was the Philosophy of Inspiration. In its treatment the lecturer divided the subject into several heads—the inspiration of genius—that of the old time seers and prophets, and others we have not time nor room to mention, adducing illustrations from the lives and works of the great poets, painters, and musicians, and from the lives and works of prophets and priests. We do not believe there was one of his audience who could not contentedly have listened another hour."

"As a candid critic, who has always been a skeptic in reference to spiritual manifestations, we are bound to say that we have not yet been able to detect in the lectures any argument that may not have reason and philosophy for a basis."

"The subject is certainly one of profound interest, whatever views may be entertained in regard to the theory. It has excited the attention and aroused the investigation of some of the first minds of the age. If the dream of the enthusiast and the vision of the poet, that the departed hover o'er our living pathways and inform us of events transpiring in the world of spirits, is to be realized—let it even be so! But if the tenets of the doctrine be false, they may delude mankind for awhile, but cannot escape the searching scrutiny of truth. At all events, let Mr. B. be fairly heard. He is eloquent and earnest and captivating, and his lectures are well worth their price."

Extracts from Correspondence.

Mr. and Mrs. Davis at St. Louis.

A valued correspondent at St. Louis makes the following mention of the recent visit of these teachers:

A. J. and MARY F. DAVIS have just closed a course of eight lectures in St. Louis, which were delivered to large and appreciative audiences, and seem to have given pleasure to all parties.

Mary Davis is a pleasing speaker as to manner, while her matter shows a depth of intellect in research, a polish in its expression, and a depth of feeling that is hopeful for the great future.

Jackson never looked better, nor delivered himself more like a philosopher than he does now—evidently improving, as to manner, at each lecture. But what surprised us most was that his lectures were not a re-hash of the "Harmonias," but young, fresh and vigorous, as the Philosophy of the Harmony of all truth.

His first lecture on the "Fraternity of Ideas," was the grandest effort I ever listened to. It was heard by a large audience, who appreciated it. They go hence to Alton, Peoria, Chicago, etc., while T. Gales Forster, of your city, will be with us Sundays the 24th and 31st insts.

ST. LOUIS, Jan. 18, 1858. Yours, M. A.

Warren, Mass.

From a letter from this town dated Jan. 18, we gather the following items:

The people of this place, who have been slumbering as to the glorious cause of Spiritualism, now appear to be arousing from their slumbers, and are taking hold in good earnest.

Last night I attended a public lecture at the Town Hall, given through the instrumentality of Mr. JOHN L. POTTER, a trance speaking and healing medium. It was an able and interesting discourse—one well calculated to arouse the people to new life and exertions.

The light appears to be spreading. Ware, that deserted and benighted place, has caught a gleam, and it is like the rays of the morning sun upon the distant hills. May it continue to shine until all feel and enjoy its genial beams!

Many thanks to Brother Potter for this dawning, as it is by his labors that it has been brought about. He is one of the best healing mediums among us, as many can testify who have been restored to perfect health through his treatment, when all others considered them incurable. He is doing a great work in this vicinity, and may he realize a rich reward, is the desire of one who wishes the cause and all who are engaged in it prosperity and progression. Adieu. L.

REV. HERVEY ELKINS, formerly of Glover, Vt., has removed from that place to Williston, in the same State, under engagement to preach in the latter place for one year. In a note to us he says:

"I preach the modern and only true philosophy and theology; and if men cannot sustain truth, they must employ some one besides me to preach falsehood and superstition. Our Universalist Societies in Vermont are uneasy under the old fogy theology; the modern suits."

Boston and Vicinity.

The Melodeon Meetings.

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace."

These words formed the subject of discourse through Mrs. Henderson's mediumship on Sunday afternoon last. The main idea advanced was that an influx of spiritual life is as necessary to man as the air he breathes. There is a spiritual atmosphere which is constantly inhaled, and without which man would not be an immortal being. Acting with this law of reception is the law of impartation. He who receives must give; hence the office of ministers and teachers. The impartations of spiritual life and truth will correspond in purity to the elevation and purity of the individual; they will be more or less mixed with the outward, imperfect man. This applies as well to the prophets of old as to all others. It is our duty, then, to seek constantly to refine, elevate and purify our natures, that the spiritual life which streams to us from the Everlasting Fountain may flow out unadulterated to our fellow-creatures. Thus we may bring good tidings in the form of principles of truth, and publish that peace which is the fruit of a true life.

A short and inspiring improvisation closed the lecture; after which various questions were proposed and answered. As they treated of topics which have been repeatedly discussed in this paper, a report is unnecessary.

In the evening the question proposed for consideration was this: Was the crucifixion of Christ essential to the salvation of man; if so, in what light should the conduct of Judas in betraying and of others in murdering him be viewed?

In answer to the first part of the question the medium said the death of Christ was necessary as a result, not as a cause. It was essential for the salvation of the world that he should live the life that he did; and such a death was the necessary consequence of that life. New and unpopular doctrines always stir up the spirit of bigotry, and that spirit is ready to pursue the innovater to the death. Jesus knew this; he knew that his doctrines would arouse prejudices and call out persecution which would only end in his death; yet he dared to pursue that higher path with this inevitable result before him.

With respect to the conduct of Judas and the murderers, it was said their conduct was the natural result of their own evil promptings. They are not to be regarded as special instruments of God or of the evil one to bring about certain pre-determined results. Their conduct was prompted by the same evil propensities that dwell in the hearts of other wrong-doers, and is to be judged of by the same laws—by the same laws does it incur its penalty.

Mr. Fitz's Lecture on Mediumship.

On Tuesday evening of last week, Mr. ASA FITZ, of this city, gave in the Hall at 14 Bromfield St., an exposition of his new and professedly scientific system of medium development, with a view to the formation of classes for its practical application.

Mr. F. (who has been well known to the public in this vicinity as a successful teacher of vocal music, and author of elementary works in that department,) stated that he had been for several years an investigator and firm believer of Spiritualism, though known as such to but few persons. He had pursued his inquiries in a quiet and private way, and thus had enjoyed some facilities in his particular line of investigation which otherwise would have been closed against him. He had found that numbers of the best and most highly gifted mediums existed among the higher classes of society,—persons of culture and refinement, who are not known to the public in such a capacity; and he could state from personal knowledge that there are hundreds of mediums and thousands of believers in Spiritualism, in quarters where the public little suspect they exist.

His attention had been turned specially to the analysis, classification and systemization of mediumship. He had found that it is governed by laws as definite and invariable as is any other department of human capability. The different kinds and phases of mediumship are not the result of chance, but may be pre-determined in any case, by a proper knowledge of the constitutional organization of the individual.

In his researches in this matter, he had learned that there are forty-nine organs in the human brain—being seven groups of seven each—which are several more than Phrenologists have usually recognized. In order to produce any phase of mediumship, certain of these organs are brought into requisition. Spirits play upon them somewhat as the musician does upon the key-board of the organ, or the telegrapher upon his instrument. For example, in a tipping medium the organ of *motion* only is used;—the electrical element, or spirit of electricity, which is more powerful than electricity itself, is passed through this organ, in which process it becomes animal magnetism, and is rendered sufficiently gross to come in contact with and move gross matter. In a seeing medium, the organs of *ideality* and *form* are exercised; and so on. The organs are quickened by the touch of the fingers' points; but their activity is lessened by the application of the palm of the hand.

Hence by ascertaining the exact condition of phrenological development and activity, the kind of mediumship of which a person is capable may be determined; and by classing together in a circle those having similar capacities, and in similar degrees of unfolding, the special kind of spirit-influence required for their complete development may be brought to bear upon them unitedly to the speedy advancement of all. Thus, classes of drawing mediums had been developed in six sittings, so as to execute beautiful heads and other drawings, and to be able thereafter to be used when alone.

He believed that spirits and associations of spirits were ready to assist in this work when the proper conditions were observed; that the spirit-world had been organizing for this and similar purposes; that the spheres of wisdom were approaching more nearly and effecting more powerfully the earth-sphere than ever before; that the combined power of associated mind in the higher life can be brought to bear, not only for the development of mediums, but for the removal of diseases and of sinful propensities, by our coming into rapport with higher grades of being; that diseases are often caused and aggravated by the influence of recently departed friends, who are by their infirmities drawn to relatives left behind, and ignorantly throw upon them their unhealthful magnetism; that gross and wicked spirits also cause diseases by infestation, and that all persons who breathe foul air, and indulge in gross habits are liable to such infestation; that by keeping the system in the highest condition of health, and the mind open to influxes from the higher spheres, persons may become impregnable to disease, even though surrounded by contagion, and may be able to impart to others a positive magnetism that will expel both disease and infesting spirits. In this way Jesus "healed the sick and cast out devils," and the apostles could handle vipers without harm.

Numerous other topics connected with Spiritual Philosophy were touched upon, and the lecture was replete with novel and interesting suggestions, to which we have not room to allude.

Conference at Spiritualists' Reading Room,

THURSDAY EVENING, JAN. 21.

Dr. GARDNER was called to the chair, and announced the topic of Progression as being yet under consideration; but the entire evening was consumed in a not specially edifying discussion respecting the propriety of opening the Conferences with reading the Bible and oral prayer.

One gentleman had come to the meeting charged by his spirit friends with this special duty, and thought he ought to obey their advice, but did not wish to proceed without putting the matter to vote. Some, while protesting against a slavish obedience to spirits, expressed a willingness that there should be entire freedom in the matter—if any felt moved to give utterance to their thoughts, aspirations and emotions in that way, they might be allowed to do it as freely as in any other. It was urged that true prayer did not consist in the utterance of vocal words, but in the sincere desires of the heart—hence that all who came to the meeting with sincere desires to gain truth and good, had "united in prayer," in the very act of coming, and if their minds were in a receptive condition, they were in fact praying all the time while present. Others seemed to think that there could be no prayer without formal vocal utterances; and while some were earnestly in favor of this practice, others were disposed to regard it as savoring too much of formality and externalism to be introduced among Spiritualists. The subject was finally disposed of by an indefinite postponement.

The following topic was proposed for consideration at the next meeting:

Has anything been developed by Spiritualism or Phrenology which may be made of practical service in the education of children, and in family discipline?

New York and Vicinity.

THE CONFERENCE on Tuesday evening, the 19th inst., was opened by Mr. WHITMAN reading several communications received by him at a circle of which he is a member, proving conclusively to him, the reality of spiritual communion and the identity of spirits.

Mr. COLES desired the Conference to take up the question which had been previously discussed, in relation to the proofs of spiritual intercourse and the identity of spirits afforded by "Trance Mediumship." The result of his investigations was that there were clearly to be recognized three kinds of spiritual influence:—*First*, the influence of an individual spirit, by which the identity of the spirit might be established and the medium made to utter sentiments in opposition to the sentiments entertained by such medium in the normal state. *Secondly*, a general spiritual influence enabling media to utter their own best thoughts. *Thirdly*, an influence proceeding from persons in the form. We are as essentially spirits now while in the body as we ever shall be, and can, of our own will, act as independently of spirits in or out of the form, as the spirits themselves. Father Matthew, Gough and others act upon man by the force of their own spirits,—by the power of their own unaided and impassioned eloquence.

The speaker cited several instances illustrative of these different kinds of influence. He mentioned, particularly, cases of persons in the body seeing, identifying and conversing with each other, while at the same time they were, physically, far apart.

Dr. GRAY related some interesting facts in his own experience going to prove that persons in the body might impress each other, and that such impressions may be and often are mistaken for those of spirits. It might be claimed that these impressions required the intervention of disembodied spirits. He held it to be a sound maxim that, in the solution of any problem, no more elements were to be taken into consideration than were necessary to the solution. Nothing is more demonstrable than that spirits in the form can enter into rapport with each other. He would not deny that spirits do communicate through trance mediums, but he deprecated as foolish and pernicious the indiscriminate reference of everything uttered by trance mediums to disembodied spirits. The rule laid down by Dr. Warner is a safe and sure one to be governed by,—"When the question is,—Do spirits communicate?—it is of no consequence *what* is said. When the question is—What is communicated?—it is of no consequence *where* the communication comes from." All utterances through mediums or others are to be accepted or rejected according to their own intrinsic merits. The Doctor related some facts to show that the *consciousness* of mediums is not to be relied upon as evidence of the source of the communications.

Dr. WARNER related a fact, corroborative of the above views, that occurred recently at a social gathering in this very room. A gentleman pointed out a medium on the opposite side of the room to his friend, and said,—"Now I will make that woman come to me." He became silent and willed her to approach him. In a few minutes the medium crossed the room and came up to the gentleman saying the spirits had sent her to him, but she knew not for what purpose. Such experiments were very numerous, and could be performed by any one at all conversant with the subject. All history teaches us that men may be influenced in their spiritual intercourse by their own preconceived notions—"psychologized" by an idea. The time was when all the communications came from God. Then men found out there were such things as "ghosts." Ghosts have at last been resolved into the spirits of common men and women. Although we know that spiritual intercourse has occurred in all ages of the world, yet the *idea* of universal intercommunication has never been put forth until now. At present persons ignorant of mesmerism attribute all the phenomena they cannot comprehend to the agency of disembodied spirits, just as formerly, persons ignorant of Spiritualism, attributed all communications to God.

Dr. HALLOCK said a medium was relating, in a public meeting, some incidents connected with the death-scene of a child. The mother of the child being present, was so painfully affected that she strongly desired and mentally willed the speaker to stop the narration. The speaker did stop, and said—"the *spirits* will not allow me to proceed." The Doctor, from his knowledge of mesmerism, contended that the mind of the mother, unaided by spirits, was competent to produce this result.

Dr. CHAMPLIN asked—Does it make any difference whether impressions upon mediums proceed from spirits out of the form or from spirits in the form; are they not spiritual in either case? His wife is a seeing medium, and sees constantly the spirits of her children and other friends, whether they be in the form or out of it, present or absent.

Mr. QUERU thinks the phrase "spirit in the form" is incorrect. Man acts by the power of his own mind or will. He can magnetize and psychologize his fellow-man and the lower animals; but he does so through his powers as a man and not as a spirit. Spirit is the result of the death of the man. It was not born with him and does not live with him, but has its birth when the man dies. When the spirit returns to earth it proves its identity by giving names, dates, incidents and peculiarities in the life of the man. It tells us it was a man, and is now a conscious spirit. Spirits come at our bidding and leave at our request. Man can control spirits as well as spirits can control man. In the case mentioned by Dr. Hallock, the woman did undoubtedly control, mentally or magnetically, the man.

Mr. ALLEN, of Ohio, said it had long been a recognized fact that spiritual or mental relations and affinities exist between man and man. Both psychology and Spiritualism prove this. Spiritualism proves more. It proves that spirits out of the form can and do influence those still in the form. It proves, too, that physical death does not destroy the human affections. The inhabitants of the spirit-world feel even a deeper interest than ever in the progress of their earthly brethren. The grand mission of Spiritualism is to bring man into true relations with his brother man, with spirits and with God. It is to bring about a union of the heavens and the earth, to elevate and ennoble man, and to inspire him with freedom of thought, action and speech. Let us not refuse to receive those pure and beautiful teachings so lovingly offered us.

Mr. PARTRIDGE has continually called for facts in Mesmerism and Psychology which could be explained independently of spirit intervention, and has failed to find them. He thinks all the phenomena called mesmeric are attributable to spirits. No man can psychologize or control the mind of another without the aid of spirits. In the case related by Dr. Hallock he thinks the speaker was stopped by spirits, and not by the mind of the woman.

Bro. R. P. AMBLER's lectures at Dodworth's Academy on Sunday last were, as usual, attended by large audiences. In the morning, after the first singing, Dr. Warner, in coming forward to read, according to custom in these meetings, said he desired to occupy the attention of the meeting for a few moments in relation to a matter of some interest to the audience, and of personal interest to himself. When the Association under whose auspices these meetings are held was formed, he was instrumental in having introduced into the articles of association a provision for monthly meetings of the Association. The object of such meetings was to secure a full and free interchange of ideas in relation to the general interests of Spiritualism in this city, and particularly in relation to the sustaining and management of these meetings. He desired the committee to feel their responsibility to and have their action freely criticised by the body that appointed them. Such a course, he thought, would be calculated to promote the efficiency of the committee and increase the interest of the people in the cause. He regretted that only three such meetings had been held. In neither of those, however, had any objection been made to any of the measures adopted in the management of the meetings. It was only within a few days that he had been informed that "many Spiritualists" objected to the *reading* as it has been practised in this place during the last year. He had never, until now, heard but one sentiment expressed in relation to it, and that was of unqualified approbation. He doubted if many Spiritualists objected to it. The committee, from first to last, had been perfectly unanimous in instituting reading as one of the preliminary exercises of these meetings. As practised here, it was in accordance with the catholicity of Spiritualism. Our object has been to present *truth*, whether found in ancient or modern scriptures. The selections for the most part had been made from the Bible and from the writings of orthodox theologians; with the view of showing that many of the doctrines advocated by Spiritualists are also maintained by earnest men and women of the orthodox school. The practice was not only instructive, but it had a harmonizing effect upon the audience. Formerly we had neither singing nor reading. The lecturer would commence in the midst of a universal buzz of whispering, and it was sometimes several minutes before he could be heard. Since the practice of reading was adopted, every lecturer who had occupied the desk here, had expressed the most unqualified approval of it. He (Dr. W.) had endeavored, as far as possible, to have the reading done by the lecturer. It was not always convenient, however, for lecturers to read, and they were often glad to have a substitute. He had never occupied the time for the purpose of reading except by the unanimous desire of the committee and the special request of the lecturer. In view of the assertion that the practice is objected to, he would thank the audience to give him an expression of their views in relation to it. The Doctor then requested those who were in favor of continuing the practice as one of the preliminary exercises of the meetings, to manifest it by rising. Nearly the entire audience rose. He then requested those opposed to indicate it by the same sign. No one responded. He then said there appears to be but one opinion. If there had been but one dissenter he would not have proceeded without the consent of that minority. He then read a brief extract from a work written by an eminent clergyman of the Church of England, Dr. Macnaught, against the assumed inspirational infallibility of the Scriptures, and followed it by a portion of the 23d chapter of Matthew.

The lecture which followed we could do no justice to, except in the exact words of the speaker. It was a most elaborately finished production,—not a word too much nor a word too little. The subject was—"The Dream and the Reality of Life." The thirst for gold, the devotion to pleasure, the ambition for power, the struggle for fame, were shown to be the merest phantoms, made such by the false relations which we assume towards the beautiful universe in which we are placed. The soul is the real man; the body only the shadow. We live in the inwardly and dream in the outwardly. Spirit is more substantial than matter. All that the soul can aspire to is the real. "Let us remember the realities that will stand before us when the outward forms have passed away. Then we shall realize that the 'things which are seen are temporal and the things which are not seen are eternal.'"

Dr. O. H. WELLINGTON, the well-known Spiritualist of 34 East 12th st., N. Y., has advertised that he desires an associate in his business, or else to dispose of his whole interest and furniture.

Though this house has been known as a Water Cure, yet in consequence of its location, the character of the house and the Doctor's known interest in Spiritualism, it has long been the resort of many of the most intelligent Spiritualists, who prefer stopping there whenever they visit New York.

We regret much that the Doctor's health compels him to take this step, but we shall regret still more if so fine a house—so centrally located and now having so good a reputation, and so much business, shall pass into the hands of any but a Spiritualist.

Though known as the New York City Water Cure, Dr. W. has had a clairvoyant with him much of the time, we believe, for some years, and sometimes two or three healing mediums. There is every requisite for a perfectly fitted Healing Institute, including arrangements for Electro-Chemical baths.

As it also draws much transient company, the present is a good time for any one who desires to labor in a Healing Institute, or Boarding House and Home for Spiritualists.

LAMARTINE HALL, corner of Eighth Avenue and 29th street, is rapidly becoming a point of great interest to the Spiritualists residing in that part of the city. Meetings are held there every Sunday, morning and evening, and sometimes during the week. Mrs. French lectured to a large audience there on Monday evening, the 17th inst.

The Hon. EDWARD EVERETT is to repeat at the Academy of Music on Tuesday evening, Feb. 2d, for the benefit of the "Woman's Protective Emigration Society," the same lecture recently delivered in Boston for the benefit of the "Provident Association."

Mr. R. P. AMBLER will continue his lectures in Dodworth's Academy on Sunday next at the usual hours.

Facts and Remarks.

Signs of Progress.

A Boston correspondent of a New York religious paper complains of the Congregational churches in the former city, that—"There is a melancholy deficiency of spiritual life, and a sad departure from the preaching of the Gospel, among the Congregational clergy in Boston, and in New England generally. *There is but one church in Boston that we can attend, and feel sure that the sermon will not be on some secular subject.*"

When it is recollected that by "the Gospel" this writer means the theoretical and abstract doctrines of the "evangelical" creed,—and by "secular subjects," those which relate to the practical duties of every-day life,—the bearing of this statement will be clearly seen. Pity it were not more fully true! A "Gospel" which does not come down to secularities is of very little use to anybody.

ANOTHER.—An ecclesiastical council was recently convened at North Woburn, near Boston, for the purpose of ordaining a graduate of Andover Theological Seminary, who has been preaching at that place. After a protracted and exciting discussion, the council adjourned for a fortnight, and finally refused to ordain the preacher—alleging among other and comparatively unimportant reasons, that his theological views were "not in all respects satisfactory to the Council." It is asserted that the main point of unsoundness had reference to infant salvation. The young man had too much humanity to admit that infants could be "damned" eternally for "original sin," although his philosophy did not enable him to see exactly how they were going to be "saved" in accordance with the rest of the "orthodox" scheme.

But notwithstanding the refusal of the ecclesiastics, the church has determined to sustain their chosen preacher, and either get him "ordained" by clergymen of a more liberal stamp, or run the risks of listening to unordained lips. They would do well to remember that he who speaks the Truth is thereby ordained by a holier unction than man or synods can impart.

Andover Theology has evidently suffered a great deterioration from its ancient severity, since Moses Stuart so incautiously opened the door of "German Neology," and especially since it pleased the Higher Powers to remove to another sphere that fossilized expounder of a fossil creed, the former "Professor of Dogmatic Theology." Where this "degeneracy" will end, it is not difficult to foresee.

STILL ANOTHER.—The *Congregationalist* vigorously repudiates the doctrine of "infant damnation," denies that it was ever held by its sect, and argues the possibility of children being "renewed in the cradle," and "sanctified from the womb." Possibly it may yet come to see that they may be "sanctified" from a still earlier period, provided parents will "sanctify" themselves, by proper knowledge of and obedience to the divine laws under whose operation children are ushered into being, in the violation of which is to be found the great source of depravity, disease, crime and misery.

SPIRIT PROFILES.—The *Clarion* informs us that Dr. James Cooper, of Bellefontaine, O., has lately been controlled to draw pencil profiles of persons who have departed to the spirit-world. The outlines are very rapidly executed, seldom requiring more than five minutes. This is an interesting and convincing phase of mediumship.

PERSONAL AND SPECIAL.

WARREN CHASE has been lecturing in Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin, since he left New England in October, and is engaged in Lafayette, Delhi, Attica and Crawfordsville, Ind., in February, to deliver a course of lectures in each place. After that he visits Richmond, Ind., Cincinnati, Dayton, Columbus and Cleveland, Ohio, returns to his home in Michigan in April, and comes to New England to spend the summer. Such is his present arrangement and intention.

The undersigned is prepared to devote a small portion of his time to lecturing on "Spiritualism." His object is to present an impartial and careful statement of the facts and arguments on the subject, as they now stand,—with especial reference to the Cambridge investigations.

For further information as to his method of treating the subject, he would refer to those who have heard his lectures in Portland, Portsmouth, Montreal, and elsewhere. T. W. HIGGINSON, Worcester, Mass.

GEORGE STEARNS, author of "The Mistake of Christendom," will answer calls, in any direction, to lecture on the various Impositions of Ecclesiastical Authority, as well as on the Rational Evidence of Life after Death, and Prospective Happiness therein. Address, until further notice, West Acton, Mass.

R. P. AMBLER may be addressed at No. 8 Fourth Avenue, New York, for a few weeks.

THE SPIRITUAL AGE.

BOSTON AND NEW YORK, JANUARY 30, 1858.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—Several inquiries from correspondents relating to various topics connected with Spiritualism, will be attended to at our earliest opportunity.

"A FAST FRIEND OF THE CAUSE," will accept our thanks for his complimentary opinions, and rest assured that no effort which health will permit, and judgment approve, will be wanting on the part of the undersigned to meet his wishes. A. E. N.

JUBILEE AT NORTHAMPTON.—The Spiritualists of Northampton, Mass., will hold a social gathering, or jubilee on the occasion of the opening of their new hall, on Friday afternoon, Jan. 29th, at Central Hall, commencing at one o'clock. Trance and other speakers from abroad are expected to be present.

The undersigned anticipates the pleasure of meeting the friends in that section of the State on that occasion. A. E. N.

LETTERS RECEIVED.—R. Read, C. D. Foster, T. A. Jackson, W. G. Tarbell, R. Whipple, Z. C. Parent, J. A. Hyatt, F. L. Fairfield, E. W. Knight, J. Richards, P. J. Connelly, L. T. Warner, H. Elkins, S. Haskins, C. R. Merrill, G. Severance, L. Cook, "M. A.," M. H. Tuttle, M. Ewen, M. Biglow, N. Hill, C. Hubbard, J. Chantrell, A. Hinckley, J. W. Moulton, J. B. Hastings, T. J. Wheeler, W. L. Gay, L. J. Pardee, A. Miltenberger, J. H. Dewey, C. W. Judd, V. Nicholson, —Stratford, W. W. Rogers, J. D. Pierce, E. S. Fairfield, J. Monk, F. Watkins, C. B. Peckham, M. E. Tebb, R. C. Gleason, L. Burt, J. Safford, L. C. B., C. H. French, D. Wingard, A. Kent, L. Jones, I. Churchill, A. Mott, D. H. Weeden, J. L. Cambridge, F. C. Bailey, A. Graham, J. H. Randall, F. Day, M. W. Campbell, E. Marble, J. Livesay, E. F. Doane, W. B. Porter, A. O. Ecles, J. Witt, H. Squier, L. S. Holden.

MEETINGS IN BOSTON AND VICINITY.

SUNDAY MEETINGS.—MRS. A. M. HENDERSON will speak in the MELODEON on Sunday next, at 2 1-2 and 7 o'clock, P. M.

SPIRITUALIST MEETINGS will be held at No. 14 Bromfield St., every Sunday afternoon. Admission free. A CIRCLE for medium development and spiritual manifestations will be held every Sunday morning and evening at the same place. Admission 5 cents.

WEEKLY CONFERENCE MEETING, every Thursday evening, at No. 14 Bromfield street, commencing at 7 1-2 o'clock.

THE LADIES ASSOCIATION IN AID OF THE POOR,—entitled "Harmonial Band of Love and Charity,"—will hold weekly meetings in the Spiritualists' Reading Room, No. 14 Bromfield Street, every FRIDAY afternoon, at 3 o'clock. All interested in his benevolent work are invited to attend.

MEETINGS IN CHELSEA, on Sundays, morning and evening, at GUILD HALL, corner of Bellingham and Hawthorne streets. D. F. GODDARD, regular speaker. Seats free.

CHARLESTOWN.—Meetings in Evening Star Hall, 69 Main St., every Sunday forenoon, afternoon and evening. The forenoons will be occupied by circles; the afternoons devoted to the free discussion of questions pertaining to Spiritualism, and the evenings to speaking by LORING MOODY. Hours of meeting 10 A. M., 2 1-2 and 7 P. M.

IN CAMBRIDGEPORT.—Meetings at Washington Hall, Main street, every Sunday afternoon and evening, at 3 and 7 o'clock.

IN QUINCY.—Meetings in Mariposa Hall every Sunday.

MRS. HENDERSON'S APPOINTMENTS.—Mrs. A. M. Henderson has engagements as follows:—Tuesday, Jan. 26th, at Franklin; Wednesday, 27th, at Lowell; Friday, 29th, at Woburn; Tuesday, Feb. 2d, at South Dedham; Wednesday, 3d, at Weymouth Landing; Friday, 5th, at Easton. On Sunday next, Jan. 31st., she speaks in Boston for the last time. During February, she will speak on Sundays in Providence.

REV. CHARLES SPEAR will deliver an address in the First Universalist Church next Sabbath evening, at 7 o'clock. Subject—"The Church, the Home, and the Prisen."

LORING MOODY will deliver a course of lectures on the scientific relations of Spiritualism, in Acton, Mass., on Monday eve., Feb. 1, with magic lantern illustrations. Friends are requested to cooperate.

MEDIUMS IN BOSTON.

J. V. MANSFIELD, Medium for answering Sealed Letters, may be addressed at No. 3 Winter street, Boston (over G. Turnbull & Co.'s dry goods store).

TERMS—Mr. M. devotes his whole time to this business, and charges a fee of $1 and four postage stamps to pay return postage, for his efforts to obtain an *answer*, but does not guarantee an answer for this sum.

Persons who wish a guarantee will receive an answer to their letters, or the letter and money will be returned in *thirty days from its reception*. Charge for guarantee, $3.

No letters will receive attention unless accompanied with the proper fee.

Mr. Mansfield will receive visitors at his office on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Persons are requested not to call on other days. 39 tf

Mrs. R. H. BURT, Writing and Trance Medium, 163 Washington, opposite Milk street. Hours from 10 to 1, and from 2 to 7. 2—5m

Mrs. KNIGHT, Writing Medium, 15 Montgomery place, up one flight of stairs, door No. 4. Hours 9 to 1 and 2 to 5. Terms 50 cents a seance.

Mrs. BEAN, Rapping, Writing and Trance Medium. Hours from 9 to 1 A. M. and 2 to 5 P. M. No. 295 Washington street, opposite Hayward place.

Mrs. B. K. LITTLE, (formerly Miss Ellis) Test Medium, by Rapping, Writing and Trance. Rooms No. 46 Elliot street. Hours from 9 to 12 A. M., and 2 to 6 P. M. Terms $1 per hour for one or two persons; 50 cents for each additional person. Clairvoyant Examinations for Diseases and Prescriptions, $1.

Mrs. D. C. KENDALL, ARTIST, No. 7 Morton Place, Boston. Flowers, Landscapes, etc., painted under Spiritual Influence. Circles Monday and Friday evenings.

Mrs. DICKINSON, No. 16 Boylston place, Seer, Healing and Trance Medium, gives communications concerning the Past, Present and Future

Mrs. O. J. PUTNAM, Healing, Writing and Trance Medium; at No. 14 Montgomery place, Boston. Hours from 9 A. M to 6 P. M. Examinations and Trance, $1 each. Writing, 50 cents each.

Mrs. L. B. COVERT, Writing, Speaking and Personating Medium, No. 35 South st., will sit for communications between the hours of 9 and 12 A. M. and 2 and 10 P. M., or, if desired, will visit families. Terms 50 cts. 34—3m

Mrs. L. B. SMITH, Writing and Healing Medium, Spirit-Seer and Delineator of Character, No. 45 Harrison Avenue. Hours from 9 A. M. to 1 P. M., and from 2 to 9 P. M. Terms 50 cents; Medical examinations and aid $1. Regular circles on Tuesday and Friday evenings; admittance 10 cents. Mrs. S. will also receive calls to lecture.

SPIRITUAL BOOKS AND PERIODICALS.

CENTRAL DEPOT, NO. 5 GREAT JONES STREET, NEW YORK.

Office of the Spiritual Age.

S. T. MUNSON & Co., Agents, second door East of Broadway, opposite the LaFarge, keep all the Reform Publications, together with a splendid assortment of Spiritual Books, all of which will be sold at the lowest publisher's prices for cash. All persons who wish to purchase the class of Books mentioned, will find it for their advantage to send their orders to Munson & Co., who will give instant attention to the demands of their customers. Subscriptions received for all

Spiritual and Reform Papers and Serial Publications.

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All Spiritualists and Reformers who visit New York, are requested to call, immediately on their arrival, at Munson & Co.'s, for the purpose of *registering their names*. By this means they may become known to the friends in this city, and thus their interests and pleasure may be essentially promoted.

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KIND WORDS TO THE PRISONER.

The following extracts from a letter written by a prisoner in Portsmouth, (N. H.) jail, to Mrs. M. S. Townsend, and kindly furnished us by that estimable lady, will be read with interest:

"CITY PRISON, SUNDAY, Dec, 27, 1857.

DEAR MADAM:—I cannot account for it, but I feel lonesome since you came to visit this place. I feel as though I had lost something, but cannot tell what! I suppose it is the momentary influence of a kind word, spoken to me in my hour of trouble, now, when all appear to humble me. Humble me? impossible! In the wayward, foolish life I have led, few have been the kind words that have greeted my ear, and I am doubly sensitive to anything like true kindness. But to those gaping fools who come here to gloat upon my infirmities to satisfy their morbid curiosity, with hollow-hearted, dirt-cheap sympathy, they have my silent, unmitigated contempt. An instance of this kind occurred soon after you left. A woman said I was a desperate wretch because I would not show her my face. One consolation: it is not a very attractive one. But she was not gratified. You must excuse me if I tire your patience with my petty troubles, but I am of a fretful, wayward disposition, and can little brook direct insult. You have never been a prisoner? I think I hear an emphatic, no! May God in His goodness watch around and over you, keeping you in happy ignorance of the anguish that fills the lonely heart of the outcast of a cell.

My own history can be summed up in a few words. I have no deep sorrow. I have robbed no one, fear no one, love no one, but despise many. I have been five times in similar circumstances to this. I have escaped the State's prisons, and am lucky. I have been rich three times; poor three thousand times. I have slept in the street, the prison and the palace. Have been in seven pitched battles. * * Am not an angel nor a devil; but can appreciate the good heart that can appreciate me. I like those who treat me well, I hate those who treat me ill. I am a chip on the stream of life, and am now in an eddy. I have eaten of the ear of life, but am now feeding on husks. I let to-morrow look out for itself, and at present the "county" looks out for me. I sleep, perhaps, on my coarse, hard, prison bed, as sweet a sleep as the justice does upon his hotel feather-bed. * * Please excuse the many faults of this letter, its "wishy washy" style, remembering only, that it came from a prisoner. I shall always be happy to see you and your friend. Yours respectfully, H. N. W.

Sunday eve. I have found another sheet of paper and know of no better purpose than to send it to you with my thoughts upon it. It is such a beautiful evening that it seems a curse entailed upon me to be here. There is just enough snow to mantle the earth like a bride, and the moon crossing the Pleiades to-night makes it one of surpassing beauty. Was there not a sister Pleiade lost from Heaven? How many are lost on earth? I have always loved the stars! When night has overtaken me in the mountains of California, and I have been forced to ask hospitality of dame earth—on those nights I have watched the stars and wondered if the good souls of the earthly dead were allowed to visit them. In some parts of California the climate is as fine as that of Italy, and there in those lovely places, Heaven appears to be nearer earth than in this cold land of ours. When I look back upon my past career, and see what risks of life and liberty I have taken, for nothing, I am surprised that I am here to-night. Whatever is in store for me, I must meet it like a man. What other people think me is of no consequence. I flatter myself that I am the best abused man in the community. Is it because I cannot comport myself to the stereotyped usage of what is miscalled society—those clods that burden the sod a few short years and then rot unnamed beneath it, or am I really depraved? And if so, who made me what I am? Was it nature? no! Perhaps it may have been the chain of circumstances that surrounded my youthful days, for I was educated in a ten-pin saloon. At fifteen years of age I found myself in New York city without a penny or a friend. My own master in a wilderness of people. God knows that my journey through life has not been decked with flowers. I wonder if any of my friends will give me the credit of ever doing a good action. I expect none would be so charitable.

Yesterday a missionary visited the prison. He appeared to me to be a man entirely out of his calling. There was not a shred of the mantle of the meek and lowly Jesus about him. There was no heart in his voice, and no soul in his eye. He was accompanied with the usual monody or dirge to the opera of misery, the whole to conclude with the serious farce of "I'm sorry to see you here." The farce he retailed at the door of every cell, with the usual resonant intonations. There *is* a belief that when one of us dies, another is born, and that the soul of the dying enters the body of the new-born. When *that* man was born, nobody died.

I know this letter will meet with a warm reception, for I am half inclined to throw it into the fire myself, but I *will* you the task of being its executioner. At any time when you feel disposed to visit the prison, it will give me pleasure to see you."

Mrs. Townsend adds:

"I do not expect that *I* can reform those whose lots have been cast in the stony ways of life, but I *know* kind words will do them good, and make them better. They cost me nothing; and will make me stronger *to do right*.

SPIRIT MANIFESTATION IN JAIL.

"I have also," says Mrs. T., "a sketch of a spirit-manifestation experienced by the same one who wrote me the letter. He says:

"There is a legend or story, that this cell which I now inhabit is haunted. I am not superstitious, nor do I give the story much weight. I fear no spirits, dead or living; but last night when the city clock was tolling the "*dead* hour of midnight," at the moment when its last vibration was mingling with the air, a sudden, inexpressible chill, like unto the hand of death, came o'er me. Merciful heaven! I mentally ejaculated; can it be that invisible spirits haunt this place as well as I? I staggered to the window for air, and as I am a living, breathing man, and hope for a hereafter, I felt a grasp like to a human hand upon my shoulder as palpable as flesh itself. I cannot account for this! It may have been nervousness, or the *strong coffee*, I had drank previously, that engendered the feeling. Singular that when I went to my iron grated window that night, a star, a single star, *bright as my trust in God*, was all that I could see. Long I watched its heavenly journey until it disappeared in the far west, and was lost to me perhaps forever. Can it be possible that there is hope for me in Heaven? There is more in Heaven and on earth, than is dreamed of in our philosophy. If departed spirits are allowed by the all-pervading Goodness of Heaven to revisit their former haunts, to follow us in our daily avocations, watch over over us in our sleeping moments and whisper to us in our dreams, how do they come unseen? Do they wander through the thin crevices of the air, impalpable to sight or touch? I leave conjecture to answer. Strange disclosures have taken place of late that stagger our philosophy and take the reason prisoner."

In conclusion, Mrs. Townsend justly remarks:

"Oh, that we could learn to search for virtues and good qualities in our brothers and sisters, instead of continually magnifying faults, and thus forgetting the God within! No person is so far lost but the immortal spark will kindle neath the gentle breeze of true and loving kindness. God help the prisoners, and may angels in Heaven and on earth lend them a kindly hand."

THE MISSION OF WOMAN.

We hear a great deal in these days about the rights and the mission of woman. In the multitude of words there is a great deal of nonsense, as well as sense. The mission of man or of woman results from his or her nature. Her rights and his rights spring from his or her duties. There are two gross and lamentable misconceptions on this subject, equally false, though diametrically opposed the one to the other.

The one considers woman as identical with man, and recognizes no essential and specific difference between them. According to this view, whatever is fit for man is fit for woman, and no one should, therefore, object to female dragoons, to she-constables, hack-women, and lady-butchers. But this view though supported by the authority of no less a name than Plato, is utterly refuted by the experience of all ages, and by the *a priori* argument that Nature has a meaning in whatever she does, and does not repeat herself. This view, if carried out, would be a violation of the law of Nature, would ruin woman, and injure man. It is an undoubted fact, of so stubborn a nature that no abstract theories can overthrow it, that the intellectual no less than the physical organization of woman is different from that of man; that consequently woman is not man, and man not woman, and that neither was meant to be the other. It is not the interest of either sex, and least of all is it the interest of woman to forget this distinction.

"For woman is not undeveloped *man*,
But *diverse*; could we make her as the man,
Sweet love were slain, whose dearest bond is this,
Not to be like, but like in *difference*."

But there is another view, more popular, and, if possible, still more injurious to man and to woman,—a view whose pernicious consequences are daily and hourly thrust upon us,—the view, that woman, because different from man, is therefore inferior. According to this notion, woman is a kind of miniature man, a toy, a doll, ingeniously constructed, with the wonderful peculiarity of sensation and locomotion, invented for no purpose but to amuse the lord of creation in his idle hours. Having no destination but that of ornament and pleasure, there is no use in giving her any higher culture than is comprehended in dancing a polka, playing a waltz, or talking bad French and reading silly novels. She is excluded from all intellectual activity. She must never be troubled with any serious word concerning the great interests of humanity, God, nature, life, death, liberty, truth; in short, she is a perennial infant, who can never outgrow her taste for toys and sugar-plums, and whose every whim and caprice must be indulged. As a compensation for being deprived of her inalienable rights as a human being, she is made the object of an idle gallantry, which degrades while professing to honor.

The mission of woman results from the nature of woman; her rights spring from her duties. Her nature being different from that of man, her mission is also different,—different but not inferior. Man's nature is centrifugal, it tends towards the periphery of life. His mission is to spread himself over the earth in all directions, to hunt, plow, fight, trade, &c., to subdue reluctant matter, and rebellious spirit, and to make them co-operate in the service of the Divine. He impersonates the principle of repulsion; he is a born fighter; liberty is his dearest good, dominion his highest aspiration; strength, courage, justice, independence, are the qualities he prizes. His aims are far-reaching, his goal is in the distance; and while following out the radii of life to their utmost bounds, he is apt to forget and neglect the centre from which they all spring, and into which they all return. While engaged in subduing and possessing the earthly, he is apt to become forgetful of the heavenly.

Here, then, correcting and supplying the deficiencies of man with the compliment of her own specific nature, the missionhood of women properly begins. Woman's nature is centripetal; it symbolizes that elemental power of attraction which compels the isolated individual atoms to unite in one harmonious whole. As we value strength, courage, independence, learning, genius, in man, so we prize in woman, above all things, delicacy, purity, charity.

The genuine mission of woman, then, is to bring unity into the various pursuits of man, by connecting them with the center of the natural and moral universe, God; by directing his wandering, earthward thoughts to a heavenly goal; by softening, purifying, spiritualizing his strength, and giving to his work of valor the consecration of love. While man is engaged in the rough but necessary work of negation and repulsion, she admonishes him that to deny error is but half the work of truth, that the holier part consists in affirmation, and that the highest glory is not to know "that spirits are subject unto us, but that our names are written in heaven."

If man is the warrior, woman is the priestess,—the priestess *par excellence*, the only true and God-ordained one. She stands by the altar, whose horns afford a safe asylum to every victim flying from the wrath of man. She knows no parties, political or religious, no sects, no castes with their narrow prejudices and fiercer passions; she knows only the one Father in heaven, and the one human family on earth. She binds together what the pride and passion of men are forever dividing. "She is the true poet, or rather poem; for of that beauteous harmony after which, in all his many-rayed activity, man is forever, consciously or unconsciously, striving, as after his ideal, she presents him a constant type in the beautiful harmony of her being."

It has often been said that as woman is, so man will be. The elevation of man presupposes that of woman. He will never realize the perfection of his own nature, until he has aided woman in gaining that eminence from which her specific power of attraction may operate as a stimulus to progress, and which will compel him, if he wishes to be level with her, to rise and not to descend.

In the last words of that astonishing production, which closed an eighty years' life of the deepest thought and the richest experience, the master mind of the age just passed (who was also a prophet of the future) has left it as a legacy to future ages, that the elevation of man is dependent upon woman; that

"The Ever Feminine draweth us on."*

We often hear the lament, from such as mistake the ephemeral manifestation for the permanent essence, that the golden age of chivalry is over, and the whole order of knighthood is extinct. God forbid! Knighthood, the noblest flower of manhood, belongs to no particular age; it is not a transient phase, but a stated condition of human development; it will last as long as manhood itself. True, the enemies to be encountered are no longer the giants, minotaurs, and dragons of the olden time, but other monsters equally fearful remain; the thousand-headed Proteau monsters of ignorance, intemperance, superstition, unbelief. Valor and heroism have still their work to perform in the world, and still, as of old, they will find their strongest encouragement and dearest guerdon in the sympathy and approbation of woman. However circumstances may change, the man true to the mission of manhood may still be a knight, and the woman who is true to her own heart may still realize the proud satisfaction of inspiring, stimulating, and rewarding noble deeds.—*Prof. Scherb.*

*The last words of Faust.

Recreation.

Can anything be more lamentable to contemplate than a dull, grim, and vicious population, whose only amusement is sensuality? Yet what can we expect, if we provide no means whatever of recreation—if we never share our own pleasures with our poorer brethren? As for our cathedrals and great churches, we mostly have them well locked, for fear any one should steal in and say a prayer, or contemplate a noble work of art without paying for it; and we shut people up by thousands in dense towns, with no outlets to the country but those which are guarded on either side by dusty hedges. Now, an open space near a town is one of nature's churches; and it is an imperative duty to provide such things. Depend upon it, that man has not made any great progress in humanity, who does not care for the leisure hours and amusements of his fellow-men.—*The Claims of Labor.*

Young Ideas.

A little five-year old friend of ours was the other day puzzled, as many an older head has been, in trying to form an idea of the *spirit* as distinct from the *body*. We endeavored to explain.

"You said you loved me, just now?"

"Oh, yes—*best!*"

"What do you love with? your forehead?"

"No."

"Your hand? your foot? your cheek? your eyes?"

"No—No—" and the inquiring hand fluttered from one member to another as they were mentioned, pausing at last over the *heart*, with a triumphant, "O I know *now* what I love with,—it's—it's—its *the piece that joggles!*"

"Louis, the well beloved," said the Priest who announced the death of Louis the Fifteenth, "Sleeps in the Lord."

"If such a mass of laziness and lust,', growls Carlyle, in reply, "sleeps in the Lord, who, think you, sleeps elsewhere?"

He is no friend to me who is a friend to my faults; and I am no friend to myself, if I think him my enemy who tells me of them.

Truth is born with us; and we must do violence to nature to shake off our veracity.

"I slept—and dreamed that life was beauty;
I woke,—and found that life was duty.
Was my dream, then, a shadowy lie?
Toil on, sad heart, courageously;
And thou shalt find thy dream to be
A noonday light and truth to thee."

PROSPECTUS.

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