The Spiritual Age.

DEVOTED TO RATIONAL SPIRITUALISM AND PRACTICAL REFORM.

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Spiritual and Reform Literature.

ELSIE THE MANIAC;

OR, BRIGHT DAYS.

BY EMMA H. COTE.

I suppose everybody has seen bright days, marked by some peculiar beauty, stamped upon the memory by some joyous event, some thrilling incident, or blessed to us by some grave, but significant lesson destined to impress itself upon the whole life. I have had many such—they are my landmarks in the voyage of life, whose beacon-lights shine out amid the storm and darkness with an unfailing brightness. I date from these days in the inner life, and all the common events of everyday life group themselves around them.

One of these bright days was that on which I became acquainted with the widow W——, an aged woman who lives on the banks of the Monongahela; and I propose to relate an incident in her life, which, to my fancy, well deserves to be recorded. I shall relate the circumstances of my visit to her precisely as they occurred, well assured that no rhetoric of mine could enhance their interest.

The widow is still living, but there is little danger of her being shocked at the sight of her name in print, for she takes no newspapers, and even if she did, and were to read every word here set down, I doubt whether it would ever enter into her mind to imagine that she was herself the heroine of the story. She would probably be struck by the resemblance of the incidents to those of her own life, but she would simply set it down as a remarkable coincidence, nothing more, so unconscious is she, hid away in that nook. How beautifully, how sublimely she has fulfilled that life of charity living in the heart of Christ. I had a friend residing in a dilapidated little village on the banks of the beautiful Monongahela not far from the great "Iron City," and accepted one day, an invitation to visit him, in company with a lady friend.

It was an autumn Indian summer air, and the motive for the invitation at this particular time was the uncommon beauty of the weather, and the almost miraculous coloring of the foliage on the hills bordering the lovely stream. Our friend the presiding genius of his village, a wit, and a genius, with natural endowments enough to have furnished respectably at least a dozen ordinary men, was also the most incorrigible of slovens and do nothings, and the village was the very epitome of himself, and seemed to have grown out of him, and to dangle on him as naturally as the long ragged grey moss on the wild scraggy branches of the autumn pine.

His house and grounds which were once, and still are, beautiful in neglect and premature decay, are situated on an eminence which overlooks the town. Nature seems to have lavished her choicest gifts on this favored spot—every line of alternate hill and dale is of exquisite grace and delicacy, and the river, darkened under the shadow of a projecting cliff, or sparkling in the open sunlight, presents every variety of loveliness. I fancied as I looked down upon the lazy little town, that its untidy community, with its gifted but hair-brained genius was bewitched and spell-bound by the spirit of beauty, for it seemed to lay there basking in the sun, and dreaming away its life, apparently as totally untouched by the spirit of the age, and as innocently unconscious of power-presses and steam-engines as was La Mancha of old and its Quixotic Don.

On the second day of our visit, having occasion, as he informed us, to visit a widow, living about five miles distant, on some business of hers (he being her legal adviser), proposed to us to accompany him, promising us a pleasant drive through an interesting part of the country, and a hospitable reception from his client. There were at first many serious apprehensions with regard to our mode of conveyance, for the village contained nothing so complicated in the way of machinery as a double carriage; but after a deal of discussion and any amount of scampering of men and boys in all directions, two nondescripts in the way of buggies made their appearance, and we set out. Our gentleman escort drove my city friend in one, while I, as the bravest of the ladies present, undertook a second Rosinante accompanied by his wife.

The singular antics of this amiable animal might form the subject of a separate chapter, but as my space is limited, I do not propose to immortalize him in this narrative. The afternoon was glorious, but we make use of this word on every trivial occasion, and I am apprehensive now that it can convey no adequate idea of the bewildering loveliness of the earth and sky on this memorable day.

It was Autumn, as I have said, and though still early, the hoary old magician, Frost, had been there before us—had waved his enchanted wand over hill and dale, and lo! the forest of sober green had blossomed like a parterre. Owing, I presume, to the peculiar favorable disposition of the various kinds of trees on these hills, and partly, as our friend suggested, to the early appearance of the frost this season, the display was unusually splendid; certainly I had traveled a great deal through our western forests, and I have seen nothing like this.

There was also on this day a radiance in the atmosphere, a life and significance in every object, a spirit in every leaf and blade of grass, that seemed but waiting the utterance of some magic word to embody itself in human form, and speak. I asked myself in vain for the explanation of the mystery of this beauty. Was it only some favorable mood of my own mind that thus invested everything around me with a supernatural glory, or had we indeed chanced upon a spot where benignant spirits in mighty conclave discussed some question of human destiny? The air seemed full of listening ears, and halting often in order to enjoy the stillness unbroken by even the slight sound of our wheels on the level road, we sat speechless, or whispered only in monosyllables, from the startling conviction that an invisible concourse surrounded us. The road, winding between hills rising on either side, presented at every turn some new beauty, and the gorgeousness of the coloring no words could describe; every shade of red, from the delicate rose to the deepest crimson; all the yellows, from the palest straw color to the darkest orange; then the green; some still fresh and tender as in early spring; others of the richest olive; not one of the brown tints was wanting, and all distributed as by the hand of an artist in the hour of inspiration.

It was indeed the hand of the Supreme Artist before whose perfect work we stand in wonder, and which we vainly strive to paint in words. Passing slowly on, we finally entered a small beach grove, and emerging on the opposite side from the road, found ourselves in front of a plain, long, farm-house.—An orchard, and a few grain fields surrounded the house, and a porch extending along one of its sides was full of flowers in pots; but a small garden with a half-open gate at the side of the house instantly attracted our attention, and the widow, who made her appearance at the door as we paused before it, seeing our eyes fixed in that direction, asked us to go in and help ourselves to flowers,—we did not hesitate to accept and profit by her offer, for flowers are rare in the smoky city, and we learn to appreciate them accordingly.

The little garden was delicious, full of little fall flowers, and fragrant shrubs and herbs, common enough in country gardens, but which I had rarely seen since my childhood. I gathered my hands full of lavender and gold drops, and went into the house. The widow had retired to some private apartment, to transact the business with the lawyer, and my friend and myself seated ourselves in the parlor or sitting-room. It was of the very plainest; a rag carpet on the floor, and every other article of furniture in keeping. There was a door ajar, apparently opening into a bed-room. Sitting quietly, arranging our flowers, and chatting in low tones, our attention was suddenly attracted by some very strange sounds, issuing from the chamber with the door ajar. We listened, and every moment more intensely, for those strange, unearthly mutterings, we felt could only come from the lips of an insane person. We were breathless with a mixture of surprise and interest, and the kind of awe inspired in most persons by the spectacle of a human being in this condition. We were entirely alone, and after listening a few moments, I ventured to approach the door—pushed it a little open and looked in. The room was scrupulously clean; the bare floor well scrubbed; two very common bedsteads, and two chairs. This was all the furniture the room contained.—One of the beds was occupied, but by what was only to be conjectured by the voice.

All that was visible to the eye was a something coiled up in the middle of the bed, entirely covered, so that it would have been difficult to tell where the head lay. But now the mutterings became more audible; passages from Scripture, mostly sayings of Christ, generally incoherent, but occasionally with perfect distinctness, as "Come unto me, all ye that are heavy laden," and others of a similar character. There was something inexpressibly touching and solemn in the expressions, so uttered, and we returned to our seats with countenances thoroughly sobered, and quite disinclined for further talk.

We had hardly seated ourselves when there was a little stir in the chamber, the door opened, and there glided swiftly through the room, disappearing through another door, without once looking towards us, a little, withered old woman; her grey hair was cut short, and her face had that anxious pre-occupied look, so common to the insane. She was come and gone before we had time for an exclamation. The widow soon after returned, and I was immediately struck by the musical tones of her voice, and the benignant and elevated expression of her features. She was very plainly, but becomingly dressed, and though a simple country woman, had unmistakably in her person and bearing, what the French call "l'air noble." I little thought at this moment what a life-long exercise of the purest benevolence, what an untiring succession of self-sacrificing benefactions, had stamped themselves upon that venerable countenance—what an unextinguishable glow of charity in her heart had shed its radiance over her features. She held some lively talk with our gentleman friend, reminiscences of old friendship, and anecdotes of early times. The old Bible was brought down from the top of an antiquated great grand-mother looking cupboard, to show exactly her own and children's ages, and settle some disputed dates. She was just a little past seventy.

And now the supper was announced, and we were shown into the kitchen, where the table was spread. The room was large, and exquisitely clean, and the autumn day cool enough to make the fire in the large chimney even acceptable. The meal was delicious—poultry delightfully cooked, cream and fragrant coffee—in short, just what one would desire after a cool drive on an autumn day. The supper over, the party all retired again to the sitting room, excepting the widow and myself. She lingered about the hearth, and I with her. I was thinking about the apparition of the little grey woman, but not venturing to broach the subject, when again another door opened in a farther corner of the room, and she appeared. This time she darted in, glanced suspiciously around, cast, I thought, a threatening look upon me, and began making the circuit of the table, grumbling in a querulous tone, something to the effect that she had eaten nothing in many years.

A maiden daughter of the widow, who had superintended the supper arrangements, now came forward, and filling a plate abundantly seated the unfortunate at a little table apart, where she quietly commenced eating, keeping up, however, the incessant mutterings, and casting, occasionally, furtive glances at the widow and myself.

I said, turning to our hostess, "That unfortunate woman is deranged, apparently."

"Yes, poor Elsie, she has been a long time in that condition."

"A relative of yours?" I inquired.

"Oh no, not at all."

"Ah, how long has she been with you?"

"Well, she has been with us now nearly forty years."

"Forty years!" repeated I, in unfeigned amazement, "but not all the time insane!"

"Yes, she only came to me after she was taken in this way."

"But you say she is no relative of yours, how"—I stopped short, not knowing how to proceed—there was perhaps some secret.

The widow, seeing how much my curiosity was excited, said quietly, "I can tell you her story in a few words. Poor Elsie came to this country from Ireland, when she was quite young. I remember," said the widow abstractedly, as if recalling the long past, "when she was as pretty a creature as you could wish to see; blue eyes and bright curling hair, and the most beautiful complexion; she couldn't have been more than eighteen when I first knew her—she soon after married a countryman of hers, by the name of Wilson. I didn't know much about him. They settled in a little village close by, and seemed very happy for about three years, though they said he was sometimes gloomy and discontented, and not always very kind to Elsie. Suddenly he left her to return to Ireland on pretence of business, promising to return soon. Time passed on, and he did not come. Elsie worked very hard to support herself and her two little ones, but seemed very anxious, and depressed in spirits. Finally, after an absence of five years, he returned. Elsie seemed rejoiced to see him, and brightened up, quite like herself again. He gave her some plausible reason for his long stay. Elsie was too glad to see him to inquire very particularly—he had come at last, and Elsie seemed so fond of him, and so thankful for his return, that matters were easily arranged. Only a few weeks had passed when a man came to the door and inquired for her husband. He was at his work; the stranger took a seat, saying he would wait until his return.

"I didn't know he was married again," said he, simply, "until I inquired about him in the village yonder. I knew his first wife well."

"His first wife!" echoed Elsie, with a blank look.

"Yes, surely you knew he was married before; she died about a year ago."

The truth burst upon her; his long absence, his fits of gloom and despondency previous to his departure! A few questions and it all came out. He was a married man when she first saw him—had deserted his first wife and in turn abandoned her! I think Elsie was never quite right after this first shock. She lived with him a few months after, but there never was a moment's peace between them. She left him, and he soon after returned to Ireland again. She got some people in the village to take in her children, who were old enough to begin to be useful about the house, and she wandered about, washing out by the day generally, but getting gradually worse and worse until she came to be what you see her now."

"Well," said I, for the widow seemed inclined to stop, and she had not told me how she came to be there. She read my thoughts and continued, "Elsie had worked for me a good deal during her husband's absence; knowing how much she needed work, I used to send for her to sew, or wash, or clean; in short, to do whatever was to be done, and so being here so much she got used to us, and so felt more at home here than anywhere else, and when she grew worse she kept on coming and would stay first, days, then weeks, until she seemed to forget to go away. Poor creature! what could we do? However, my husband became tired and dissatisfied about it, complained a great deal, and so at last said he would not have her about any longer, so he sent for the poor-master, and they came and took her away by force to the poor-house, ten miles distant—poor Elsie! But she hadn't been gone more than a week, or ten days, when my husband and I were awakened one morning just at dawn of day by some strange sounds in the kitchen, and a low voice talking, and a sort of scraping on the hearth; I got up softly, opened the door just a little, peeped in, and there sat poor Elsie on the hearth, trying to scrape the embers together to make a fire—such a distressed looking object, so neglected, worn, bedraggled, and travel-stained. She seemed to have grown thin and old in a week. "So you see," concluded the widow, "we could not turn her away again, and she has been with us ever since."

"But," said I, almost too much astonished for utterance, "what a care, what a trouble for forty years!"

"Well, yes, she was sometimes very troublesome. She used to get away from us into the fields, tear off her clothes and lose them; but she is quieter these few years past, only at night sometimes she is very restless."

During the whole of this narrative, Elsie sat at her table, but as the widow spoke in low tones she could hardly have heard more than perhaps now and then a sentence. She was besides talking to herself all the while, quoting passages of Scripture which sometimes struck me as singularly apropos, but uttered so apparently at random, and in such an incoherent way, that it was impossible to suppose she had any design, or was herself at all aware of their profound significance.

At the moment when I said to the widow, "What a care! what a trouble for forty years!" I glanced at her; she suddenly looked up and said slowly,—"Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these, ye did it unto me."

The effect of these words at this moment was electrical!—They thrilled me to my finger-ends! Had an angel spoken through her lips? or was this unfortunate being vaguely conscious of the sublime and Christ-like charity, of which she was the object? I scrutinized her face—it was impossible to tell; there was but the unmistakable expression of hopeless insanity stamped upon every feature. I stood before this woman, so unconsciously good, so simply great, mute with emotion! What could I say? Poor worldling that I was, could I presume to utter ordinary praise of such a deed as this? Words seemed impertinent; but I thought as we left the house, what a meeting awaits these two women in Heaven! I fancied the angels gathering round to witness it. As we wended our way homeward, the shadows of evening were falling around us; the brilliant colors on the forest leaves looked dim; their glory had departed with the sun; and I thought, how transitory is all external beauty, and how short-lived the pleasure arising therefrom; but the light of a good deed shall still shine on when the earth and all it contains shall have crumbled into dust.

HAPPINESS.

How cheap
Is genuine happiness, and yet how dearly
Do we all pay for its base counterfeit!
We fancy wants, which to supply, we dare
Danger and death, enduring the privation
Of all free nature offers in her bounty,
To attain that, which, in its full fruition,
Brings but satiety. The poorest man
May taste of nature in her element,
Pure, wholesome, never cloying; while the richest,
From the same stores, does but elaborate
A pungent dish of well-concocted poison.

J. N. BARKER.

MAKE WAY FOR THE PEOPLE.

You know, if you are sailing the Atlantic, and all at once find yourself in a current and the sea covered with weeds, and drop your Fahrenheit over the side and find it eight or ten degrees higher than in the ocean generally, there is no use flying in the face of facts and swearing there is no such thing as a Gulf-Stream, when you are in it.

You can't keep gas in a bladder, and you can't keep knowledge tight in a profession. Hydrogen will leak out, and air will leak in through India-rubber; and special knowledge will leak out, and general knowledge will leak in, though a profession were covered with twenty thicknesses of sheepskin diplomas. By Jove, Sir, till common sense is well mixed up with medicine, and common manhood with theology, and common honesty with law, *We the people*, Sir, some of us with nut-crackers, and some of us with trip-hammers, and some of us with pile-drivers, and some of us coming with a whish! like air-stones out of a lunar volcano, will crash down on the lumps of nonsense in all of them till we have made powder of them like Aaron's calf.

If to be a conservative is to let all the drains of thought choke up and keep all the soul's windows down,—to shut out the sun from the east and the wind from the west,—to let the rats run free in the cellar, and the moths feed their fill in the chambers, and the spiders weave their lace before the mirrors, till the soul's typhus is bred out of our neglect, and we begin to snore in its coma or rave in its delirium,—I, Sir, am a *bonnet-rouge*, a red-cap of the barricades, my friends, rather than a conservative.—*Dr. Holmes.*

He that is choice of his time, will be choice of his company and choice of his actions.

BAYARD TAYLOR ON THE CRIME OF CITIES.

In a letter to the New York *Tribune*, Bayard Taylor gives many interesting particulars respecting the Foundling Hospital in St. Petersburg, Russia; after which he proceeds to moralise as follows:—

Let us not be so dazzled, however, by the splendid liberality of this city, as to lose sight of the moral question which it involves. No other nation has yet instituted such a system; few other governments would dare do it at present. What effect has it had on public morals? It has existed for nearly a century, and whatever influence it may exercise, either for good or evil, must now be manifest. One fact is certain,—that the number of children delivered into its keeping has steadily increased from year to year; but this, as I have already shown, is no indication whatever. The growth of its resources, the perfection of its arrangements, and the liberal education which it bestows, sufficiently explain this increase. In the absence of reliable moral statistics, we are obliged, simply, to draw a parallel between the condition of the Russians in this respect at present, and the accounts given of them in the last century. Judging from these data, I do not hesitate to declare that the effect of the system has *not* been detrimental to the general morality of the Russian people. On the contrary, they have improved with the improvement in their condition, and the gradual advance of civilization. When I compare the chronicles of Richard Chancellor and of Sir John Chardin, two and a half centuries ago, with what I see now, I can scarcely realize that they are the same people.

"But," cries a Pharisee, "this hospital affords an easy and secret relief to the sinner. By saving her from public shame, it encourages her in private vice! It removes the righteous penalty placed upon incontinence, and thereby gradually demoralizes society!" I do not deny that the relief here afforded *may* increase the number of individuals who need it, but I assert, in all earnestness, that the moral tone of "Society" would not be lowered thereby, seeing that, where one licentious act *may be* encouraged, one awful crime is certainly prevented. *In Russia, infanticides and abortions are almost unknown.* In America, you need but look at what is *discovered*. God only knows how many additional cases of the crime most abhorrent to human nature are perpetrated in secret. And yet, if some benevolent millionaire should propose to build such a foundling hospital in New York, pulpit and press would riddle him with the red-hot shot of holy indignation. Oh, no! Let the subject alone—your fingers, of course, are white, and were not meant to handle pitch. No matter what crimes are eating their way into the moral heart of society, so long as all is fair on the outside. Let the unwedded mother, finding no pity or relief for her, and no place in the world for her unlawful offspring, murder it before it is born! This is better than to stretch out a helping hand to her, and so prevent the crime. Ten to one, the act is never found out; appearances are preserved, and our sanctified prudery is unruffled.

It is a great mistake to suppose that the moral tone of society can only be preserved by making desperate outcasts of all who sin. So long as we preserve a genuine domestic life—so long as we have virtuous homes, liberal education and religious influences—we need not fear that a Christian charity like that which I have described will touch our purity. It will only cleanse us from the stain of the blackest of crimes. The number of illegitimate births would be increased by the diminution in the number of abortions. Who will dare to say that the reverse is preferable? We boast, and with some justice, of the superior morality of our population, as compared with that of the nations of Europe; but we should know that in none of the latter is infanticide (both before and after birth) so common as with us. We should remember that a morality which is uncharitable, cruel and Pharisaic, inevitably breeds a a secret immorality. The Spartan holiness of the New England pilgrims was followed by a shocking prevalence of unnatural vice, which diminished in proportion as their iron discipline was relaxed.

At any rate, we can never err by helping those who are in trouble, even though that trouble have come through vice. I have never heard that the Magdalen Societies have increased the number of prostitutes, and I do not believe that a foundling hospital would encourage seduction or adultery. To change one word in the immortal lines of Burns:—

"What's done, we partly may compute,
But know not what's *prevented*."

RELIGION.—Prof. Huntington, of Harvard College, makes the following ingenious analysis of religion:

"First, it is an idea; and, as an idea, held by the understanding, its need is to be cleared; its nurture is instruction; its expression is doctrine. Perfect this, and you rid the church of intellectual error. Secondly, religion is a faith, and as a faith held in the feelings, its need is to be purified. Its nurture is spiritual communion, its expression is worship. Perfect this, and you rid the church of superstition on the one hand, and unbelief on the other. Thirdly, religion is a life, bred in the practical force of the will; its need is freedom; its nature is action; its expression is righteousness. Perfect this, and you rid the church of its indolence and mammonism."

The Spiritual Age.

Progress is the Common Law of the Universe.

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SATURDAY, JANUARY 15, 1859.

TRANCE-SPEAKING.

Our incidental expression of opinion on the subject of trance-speaking a few weeks since, has sadly disturbed the equanimity of two or three good friends,—we hope not more. One zealous brother "comes down" on us in three pages of foolscap, bristling all over with astonishment marks, and spiced with such complimentary passages as the following:

"In your last AGE, you seem to come out in a 'new garb.' You now begin to denounce the cause that you have been advocating so boldly and fearlessly for several years. In few words, you pitch in generally upon 'Trance Speakers,' as being of a low gift and of no account. I think you are doing the cause a great injury, and if you intend advocating the 'communion of spirits' with their earthly friends, you would do well to take a better way of so doing. We are trying to bring out a trance-speaker, and have been for the last two years, a lady of our place, and she is now about ready to come before the public, and in comes your denunciation of such speakers being of any benefit—nothing more, nothing less."

In addition to this our quondam weakly cotemporary in the Green Mountain State suffered itself to be wrought into a state of dangerous excitement by our alarming heresy; which excitement, melancholy to relate, it was unable to survive. Listen to its expiring protest:

"You have struck at one of the strongest and most reliable phases of Spiritualism. Trance speaking in an unconscious state, is the most exalted, the most reliable, the most convincing as to its origin of any manifestation connected with the human organism."

"I am fully satisfied you are on the wrong track in this respect, and will receive from the spirit-land an inferior class of instructions if any. How much advice do you expect to receive from the spirit world of an exalted character to be disregarded and judged of by inferior minds here. How much advice would you urge upon a lad of inferior capacity to be treated with neglect or disrespect. Not much; nor would exalted spirits urge wise and valuable lessons of instruction upon such egotistic minds as set themselves on the highest eminence of human intellect.

"Your patrons in this State have, as a general thing, been converts of trance-speaking, and you, I think, pay those laborers a poor compliment."

Besides these, even our philosophic friend Miltenberger, whose letter we print entire elsewhere, is "considerably exercised" on the same matter.

Now all this distress is quite needless. Had our good friends clearly perceived our meaning—which, we must conclude, was left somewhat obscure—they would have been saved this anxiety and consternation. At all events, we have adopted no new opinions on the subject; we have donned no "new garb." Our heresy, if such it be, is one we have entertained from the first, and that, too, in common with all intelligent Spiritualists we have ever conversed with on the point.

We did not say that the trance was in itself a "low" condition—nor that trance-speaking was of "no benefit"—nor did we "sneer at" it. Our language was that it is "comparatively a *lower* condition." Lower than what? Not necessarily lower than the subject's ordinary waking condition, but, as the context plainly shows, *lower than that of conscious, wide-awake* INSPIRATION.

We do not question that the trance (we refer to the state of external unconsciousness, generally so denominated) may be and usually is a more exalted, because more spiritual, condition than the subject's ordinary conscious life. But it does not follow there is not a still higher state which he or she may attain. If persons imagine it to be the highest, and rest satisfied with it, they will be likely to go no farther.

In the unconscious trance, a person may be susceptible to spirit-influence, or controlled by spirit-power, and thus be used to furnish evidence of spirit-existence and presence, and to give utterance to spiritual truths, to the great joy and profit of those around. But in a more advanced and spiritualized condition, one can do all this and more, and yet be fully awake and conscious. Then both internal and external senses are opened together, so that one can enjoy mental illumination and inspirational influx—and at times can see, feel, and converse with spiritual beings—preserving all the while the full exercise of the external faculties. This state is as much superior to the former as manhood is to infancy. This seems to us so nearly self-evident that we will not stop to argue it.

Our friend Miltenberger uses the term trance-speaking as synonymous with Inspiration. We regard it as partially so, but not fully. It is merely *one form* of inspirational manifestation. In all cases that we have observed, unconsciousness pertains to the earlier stages of spiritual growth. As the person advances in spiritualization, or "developement," he or she *grows out of* this; and the condition of conscious mental illumination, or inspiration, (often accompanied by a general opening of the spiritual senses,) succeeds. The same friend regards trance-speaking as coming from disembodied spirits who are wiser and purer than we. It may, and it may not. Each must judge for himself of its wisdom and purity.

Our Vermont brother thinks it egotistic and impious for us to use our own judgment on what is spoken in the trance. In our view, it is a crime against ourselves and an insult to Deity who has endowed us with discriminating and truth-determining powers of our own, to neglect to use these and abjectly submit to the dictation of any other being in the universe. This brother also thinks we pay a poor compliment to the trance-speakers of Vermont. The most prominent of these,—Mr. Simmons, Miss Sprague, Mrs. Townsend, and we may add Mrs. Huntley (now departed)—have each and all expressed to us sentiments coinciding with our own. The first-mentioned has repeatedly lamented to us that he had not been able to outgrow the unconscious condition, and the three latter have rejoiced with us that they had done so. Mr. Simmons wrote one of the most pungent criticisms on trance-speakers, including himself, that we have ever published. We have no fear of complaint from that quarter; nor, indeed, from any of the truly *growing* speakers of this class in the country.

The trance-condition, like every other human capability, has its uses, also its abuses and dangers. Of some of the latter we may speak in a future article.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., Dec. 25, 1858.

DEAR READERS:—My last letter, though written at Battle Creek in this State, was confined to matters at Sandusky, O., where the spirits are now entertained in some of the most respectable families, without being required to have "their credentials" under seal of Br. Walker's church. Perhaps there is no place in *this State* where liberal feeling and the increasing light of the New Time exert a stronger influence than at Battle Creek, where it is estimated that the spiritual and progressive classes embrace at least one-third of the entire population. That they represent a fair proportion of the wealth, intelligence and moral influence of the place, no one pretends to deny. And yet even there the blind hydra of Sectarian Intolerance lifts a smitten and wounded head, and discovers the fangs from which it has ejected so much poison into the hearts of men and the great body of society.

The occasion of our late visit furnished an opportunity for instructive observations in this direction. The citizens generally had formed themselves into a Literary Association with a view of sustaining a course of popular lectures, having given mutual pledges—expressed or implied—that no sectarian prejudices or proclivities should be permitted to direct, divide, restrain or otherwise influence public patronage to the neglect or injury of any party. The external aspects of the arrangement were all fair, and the evidences of fraternal feeling were remarkably *promising*. The first lecture of the course was delivered by Dr. Lord. It elicited unfavorable editorial comments in the columns of the *Journal* (a highly respectable local paper), and in the judgment of many it exhibited an undue aversion to progressive ideas. The Spiritualists all turned out and formed not less than one-third of the entire assembly. Though the lecture was not in all respects suited to their tastes, yet their patronage was generous and cordial. Some who reside at a distance attended the lecture, regardless of all considerations of personal convenience, and rather against their inclinations, in order to carry out, in a generous way, the compromise between the living spirit of Progress and the dead body of Conservatism. But how this manly integrity and liberality was met and reciprocated, remains to be put on record in this connection.

In pursuance of an arrangement prompted by good motives and productive of good results—but involving *a compromise* rather than either compliments or compensation—the undersigned was invited to succeed Dr. Lord in the course before the Literary Association. The subject—*The Positive and the Negative Man; or the Relations of the Human Mind to the Body and to the External World*—was wholly disconnected from the recognized facts and doctrines of Spiritualism. But no sooner was it announced that your humble servant was to be heard in the Lyceum Course, than Sectarian Bigotry and Popular Conservatism were aroused from their dark and dusty lairs, and began to growl their disapprobation. The whole arrangement was at once presumed to be a device of the Spiritualists to ensnare pious people, and to indoctrinate the young with their subtle and specious principles and forms of infidelity. One lecture—not yet delivered—was put through the cool hydropathic treatment; and "the Lord's People" with one accord resolved to entertain the lecturer with the ample provision which is usually furnished to unwelcome guests, namely, "*the cold shoulder.*" It was a season of trial all round, involving a sacrifice in more ways than one. However, it is worthy of observation that *the bills were saved.* The weather being rather stormy, the committee probably thought it inexpedient to post them out of doors where they might be damaged by the rain. But it must not be inferred that this species of economy diminished *the cold-water applications* to the lecture. Those were frequent enough to be agreeable, and, withal, sufficiently copious. The members of the committee, *with one honorable exception*, were quite too irresolute and timid to do anything to secure an audience, and so the thing was mainly left to manage itself. It is written, "As a man thinketh, *so is he;*" and many of the professedly religious people of Battle Creek may possibly have discovered the reflection of their own minds and hearts. They were very naturally alarmed at the sight, and fancied they saw spectral shapes with frightful horns and cloven hoofs. Of course they prudently resolved to stay away, and then, with great unanimity, they acted on their resolution.

On the night set apart for the lecture the progressive classes were out in their strength, together with such other persons as had an honest purpose in the interchange of mutual pledges to pursue a just and impartial course; but beside the committee—who, yielding to an unpleasant necessity, attended as a matter of ceremony—there were probably not more than twelve persons from all the churches. I must not omit to record the fact that the Baptist clergyman was one of that limited number. Those who were present readily discovered that the lecturer had no disposition to seize the opportunity to drag in offensive ideas or sentiments that might be distasteful to his hearers. Such small devices were left to be practised by those in whose minds they are so readily conceived, and whose hearts may possibly furnish homogeneous elements and the required conditions.

How far the friends of liberal principles are required to expose themselves to such insolence and injustice, by continuing to co-operate, in similar enterprises, with those who have so often treated them with manifest indignity,—betraying their highest interests, and pouring contempt on their most divine ideas and sacred memories,—may be a delicate and important question which every one may appropriately consider and answer for himself. If, in all similar cases, we are only to be *used* to our own injury, and for the advancement of what we conceive to be error, it will be far better to go our own way, though we may be obliged to go alone and at our own cost. Hitherto we have had the thankless task of serving those who have had *axes to grind*, until this species of subordination and servitude is becoming distasteful, oppressive and degrading. Union of feeling and concert of action are purchased at too dear a rate when reason, conscience and manhood are demanded as the price. Henceforth we shall be happy to lecture before Literary and Scientific Associations—on subjects which are strictly compatible with their professed objects—*whenever we can do so on such terms and conditions as are usually made with other lecturers.* But where Literature, Science and Philosophy consent to creep like reptiles in the dust, and their professed friends are willing to wear sectarian shackles, and to pay the most servile homage to the gods of titled ignorance, ancient superstition, and popular prejudice,—in all such places we shall expect our claims to be overlooked or dishonored. Indeed, while our muscles are in working order, we shall be very slow to solicit the favors of such men and institutions as defile the livery of learning, and commit sacrilege in the temples of Art and Science, by leading them away from their own beautiful altars to the great masquerade of pious shams!

The reader must not construe anything we have written to the disparagement of the friends of Spiritualism at Battle Creek. The sun, in all his journey, does not shine on a nobler band of earnest and truth-loving men and women; and this would seem to render the conduct of the opposition the more aggravated and inexcusable. At the same time, our friends in that place are so affluent in all the generous impulses of human nature—so rich in love and light, and so vigorous in the imperishable strength of conscious rectitude and a manly independence—that they can scarcely afford to feel offended. Much less should they relax their efforts to enlighten and redeem those craven souls who shrink from the light, while they tremble under the responsibilities of manhood, and even pause to take counsel before they venture to speak or to hear the truth.

Having written what the occasion seemed to demand, Battle Creek will hereafter and forever—in the mind of the writer—be associated with pleasant memories of such as are pure in heart, exalted in spirit and brave in active life. I have learned to cherish all things that are most agreeable, while the unpleasant experiences of this world are speedily forgotten. I will entertain the former as a perpetual guest; at the same time the latter shall be dismissed as unwelcome visitors. The word of kindness is to me the echo of an angel's voice, while *the generous deed* is a revelation of the Divine in the human. The simple flowers that friendly hands have scattered along the pilgrim's path, are beautiful representatives of hopes and joys that live and bloom in the gardens of the soul. The evergreens suggest the imperishable realities of the great Hereafter; and *the pansies* that blossom beneath the snows of December, are fragrant and living symbols of tender thoughts that spring up in the wanderer's bosom, when from afar he dreams of kindred and home.

I came to this place by the way of Detroit (to avoid a long stage ride over a rough road)—a journey of some 275 miles, arriving on Thursday evening, 23d instant, and am quartered at the National Hotel. The city of Grand Rapids—situated on both sides of Grand River—is sprawled out like a loosely organized child, whose growth has been rapid, mainly for the reason that there is no other accessible town of any great importance within a distance of fifty miles in any direction. The place is left to draw its support from the broad bosom of the Grand River Valley, which will, doubtless, at some future time, be to Michigan what the Connecticut Valley is to that State. At present, however, it is comparatively a wild, uncultivated region. The city, which contains some ten thousand inhabitants, will be a large and populous place if it is ever finished. But it is still, most emphatically, a "city of magnificent distances," and the national capitol must resign that title. It is a fact that not long since a family lived here, *in the city*, whose residence was *out of sight of their nearest neighbors.* Moreover, the wild animals from the adjacent forests still venture occasionally within the corporation limits, and within a period of not more than two or three years, deer and bears have claimed the freedom of the city, and have been shot down in the streets. To be sure we hear that there are "*wolves and bears*" in New York, and that they constantly prey on the more innocent creatures that venture near the Wall-street jungles. But it is not so surprising that such beasts inhabit the great wilderness of Manhattan, where they are under municipal protection. In this city there does not appear to be any law to insure their safety and they have no special license to promenade with the ladies, or to haunt the avenues along which the genius of Civilization is beginning to rear the monuments of Art, the halls of Science, and the temples of Religion.

I expect to leave this place for Elkhart, Ind., on Thursday morning, 30th instant, and shall have a long stage-ride of some seventy miles across the country, to the St. Joseph. With the salutations of the season, Yours cordially, S. B. B.

"Hoist by His Own Petard."

It is singular what an attitude opponents of Spiritualism exhibit in playing the executioner upon themselves, and even furnishing the rope with which to do it. For a fresh illustration, look on this picture:—

"NEWSPAPER VERACITY AND INTELLIGENCE.—It is with a sort of shame that we are so often compelled to acknowledge the untrustworthiness of our newspapers. * * * Instead of being, as they ought to be, vehicles as well of correct information as of sound principles, they are, too commonly, through carelessness, ignorance, or from some motive of self-interest, neither safe as counsellors, nor instructive as sources of knowledge."—[*Boston Courier, Jan. 5th, 1st page.*

Then or this:—

"But there never yet was a case of pretended clairvoyance, which, when brought to a real test, did not prove a contemptible failure."—[*Same paper, same date, 2d page.*

This last sweeping statement lets us into the Feltonian opinion (hitherto carefully withheld) respecting the pretended clairvoyance of Peter, James and John, who are said to have seen spirits when on the mount with Jesus; also that of Stephen, Paul, Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Elisha, etc. For if these are expected from the category of "contemptible failures," must it not be only because they were never brought to a real (i. e., Harvard Committee) test?

"CONSISTENCY."—A correspondent over this signature, makes an amusing and telling article by placing in juxtaposition the sayings of Dr. Randolph on *both sides* of several topics, during his late lectures in Boston. It strongly reminds one of the history of an ancient medium who was sent for to *curse* the people of God, but the "spirit of God came upon him" and compelled him to *bless* them instead! As our readers have been already well informed of the Dr.'s numerous and extraordinary somersets, and as he seems to have desisted from the work of exposing Spiritualism, we think best to give our space to other matters which press upon our hands.

ORTHODOXY ALARMED.—The *Puritan Recorder*, speaking of Henry Ward Beecher's liberal tendencies, and consequent popularity, says:—

"His utterances so bold and defiant of all restraint arising from the existing love of truth in the church, are, as it were, an alarm-bell appointed by Providence to be rung out to awake us from our dream of security—to awake us to the reality that our churches abound in minds approximating to Universalism—the alarm-bell to awake at least the slumbering *watchmen*, that the gospel trumpet in their hands may speak again and give a certain sound."

CREDULITY OF THE RELIGIOUS PRESS.—*Zion's Herald* startles its readers with the following "astounding" announcement respecting the late miserable performances of Mr. Bly in this city:

"A Mr. M. V. Bly, a notoriously successful Spiritualist, has been exposing the tricks of the operators to Boston audiences of late, revealing 'natural magic' and jugglery almost equal to any related of the Hindoo jugglers. His 'revelations' are astounding."

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

No observing person can have failed to notice the unusual prevalence of social disorders, and of crimes committed in the most intimate relationships of life. These, as will be seen by some instances lately mentioned in our columns, are by no means confined, as some would have it believed, to Spiritualists, nor even to the avowed advocates of a sensualistic philosophy. Practical "Free-Love," so-called, is probably quite as common among professed Christians as among any other class of the community. Certain it is that restiveness and discontent in the existing marriage relation is a widespread characteristic of modern society.

Nor is this state of things confined to this country alone. The newspapers state that the courts of England are literally thronged with applications for divorce, under a new and slightly more tolerant law than has heretofore existed.

Thoughtful minds are beginning to inquire, What means all this commotion? There are those who are ready to attribute it entirely to a sudden irruption of Satan and his emissaries into our world. No doubt the devils of lust, selfishness and love of domination have much to do with this state of things. But is there not something deeper and diviner behind all these? We opine there is.

The truth is, unquestionably, that the existing marriage institution, or at least, prevalent marriage customs, are fearfully corrupt and false to man's higher nature. This highest and holiest of human relations has been prostituted to the basest and most unworthy ends. It has been degraded into a mere matter of bargain, convenience, or sensual pleasure—both church and state have lent their sanction to the performance. But the universal Heart of Humanity is uttering its protest against such prostitution. The Head of society—governments and legislators—will be made ere long to heed this protest, and to recognize the fact that a union must have its seat deep in the *affectional* nature, and be sanctioned by the highest and holiest *internal* monitions, to be genuine marriage.

Where a *true* marriage exists, alienation, desertion and crime are impossible. These painful results of false marriages will continue and abound more and more, till the lesson they are designed to teach is learned,—and learned effectually for ages to come. Society is now passing, or at least approaching a transitional period of the greatest moment. Old institutions are being questioned and shaken to their foundations—those only whose base is in eternal truth will remain. Marriage and the domestic relations, which lie at the basis of society, must necessarily first feel the shock; and they must be purified and remodelled before society can be re-constructed.

These remarks, let it be understood, offer no apology for domestic infidelity, sensuality or crime. Though offenses must and will come, there is still a woe to them by whom they come. But our purpose is to show that thoughtful and candid men—real reformers—will not waste their time and breath in mere denunciation of these legitimate fruits of human frailty and false customs. They will look for the *causes*, and set themselves manfully to their removal, by the construction of better institutions.

ATHEISM—WHAT IS IT?

HOPEDALE, Milford, Jan. 2d.

MR. EDITOR:—While we expect to transplant into the Spiritualistic field many of the crimes and follies of Orthodoxy, is it too much to ask that in its high places we meet with comparative purity in this matter?

You set out in a generally unexceptional prospectus in your leading article, in the progress of which we come to a tramp upon "Atheism," by placing it in the vile company of "*sensualism and every evil work.*" Why is this done? Universalists preserve a certain religious position or character by denouncing "infidelity." Republicans denounce "haters of the Union" for political position and reputation. So Edmund Burke to pay for his maiden speech in Parliament in favor of the American Colonies, thought to acquire reputation for loyalty by running mad upon the French Revolution. Lord Erskine, to atone for his defense of the publication of Paine's "Rights of Man," made silly haste to take sides against the subsequent publication of the "Age of Reason."

In these illustrations are betrayed the concessions made by a growing, hopeful man, or institution. To gain the last of majorities they look around for some Jew, Dutch, Irish or Atheistic pelt-stock, upon which to pour out contempt or odium; so that the most heterodox may denounce something unbelieving. Hum! "we own a dog."

Now I object to this from those as usually liberal as are the conductors of the "AGE." Remember those who have borne the name of Atheist, Robert Hare and Owen, of the first magnitude, around whom revolve many who are libelled in the same connection. I quote from your paper. You will find the meaning of Atheism and sensuality very well expressed in Webster's Unabridged Dictionary; but nothing connects the two but the most arbitrary dogma. Yours in earnest,

IRA STEWARD.

Our friend is all wrong. 1st. Neither Dr. Hare nor Robert Owen was an Atheist, in any sense of the term. Both were Theists, as their works before us abundantly show. 2d. We do not denounce Atheism for the purpose of acquiring reputation, or securing anybody's favor; but we reject it because we think it a great error and utterly opposed to true Spiritualism. 3d. It indicates extreme sensitiveness to complain of our use of the term, in the connection in which it was employed; since we were enumerating some things which have been charged upon Spiritualism, in our opinion erroneously. Can our correspondent deny that Atheism has been so charged?

Again, when we come to define what *real* Atheism is, we think our friend will have little disposition to object to this classification. In our view, all believers in miracles, (that is, in suspension or violation of law)—in vindictive punishments, human or divine,—in an arbitrary "scheme of salvation," devised as an after-thought—in the popular notions of vicarious atonement, forgiveness of sin and Divine favoriteism—as well as all who ignore the distinction between right and wrong and throw off all sense of moral responsibility—are *real* and *practical* Atheists, however devoutly they may profess to believe in God. According to this definition (which we believe is the true one, whatever Webster may say,) most persons of intelligence and probity, who call themselves or are called Atheists, really believe in *more of God* than most Christians do. That is, they believe generally in the immutability, eternal justice, impartiality, wisdom and benevolence, which are essential attributes of Deity, though theoretically they may be unconvinced of His personality and fatherhood. On the other hand, the Christian world in general, while it theoretically acknowledges God, really denies Him in so far as it makes him changeable, partial, irrascible, and arbitrary, repudiates present inspiration, and usurps His prerogative by undertaking to *punish* wrong doing.

We submit to our correspondent whether this *practical* Atheism is not fit to be put on a par with sensualism and every evil work.

A writer in the *Boston Investigator* attempts to make capital against us out of this same expression. The above is a sufficient answer.

B. F. Hatch and Judge Edmonds.

B. F. Hatch, M. D., addresses a long letter through the New York *Tribune* to Judge Edmonds, who was one of the arbitrators in the differences between himself and Cora. He attempts to be very satirical upon the Judge's decision, and makes it appear that he had purchased a piece of real estate for Cora with the profits of her lectures and his management, and expended $1400 dollars in clothes and jewelry for her during the two years which he "most happily spent with Cora." He alleges that the reason why she desired to separate from him was his refusal to purchase a house for her mother.

Judge Edmonds replies through the *Tribune* and furnishes that paper with a copy of the letter he wrote to Mr. Hatch, in which was a statement of a vice admitted by him. The *Tribune* has the following in regard to that letter:—

"We have examined the complete copy of the letter to Dr. Hatch, Judge Edmonds sent us with the above communication; and we agree with him that the charges against Dr. H. which are contained in the portions omitted by that individual, are not only too gross for publication, but that, if they are true, they form an ample reason for the separation of the parties."

IS THE INTEREST DYING OUT?—On the occasion of Miss Hardinge's last lecture in St. Louis, no less than four hundred persons had their ticket-money returned, for the reason that they could not find a standing place in the house.

Correspondence.

A Word from the West.

[The following is one of several communications which have been sometime awaiting room in our columns.]

HILLSDALE, Mich., Dec., 1858.

EDITORS AGE:—If space will admit, allow a few lines to be inserted in your good paper, relative to the wants of the people, as I have observed. My time since Nov. 17, has been spent in Michigan, as follows: On the Northern route from Detroit to Grand Rapids, I visited Lyons, Ionia and Lowell, all thriving towns and alive to the work of humanity. Speakers seldom pass that way, yet they are needed, would be welcomed, and reasonably recompensed. H. De Garmo at Lyons, S. B. Brown at Ionia, and Dr. D. Cowles at Lowell, will respond promptly to such applications as may be made. They, like all others, want the true and competent, and no others.

The friends at Battle Creek welcomed me to a course of lectures, which were well attended. This place is known by all. J. M. Peebles gives them the Light of the New Gospel semi-monthly; to which is added the warmth of his generous soul and the strength of his unwavering *manhood.* Aside from this, occasional speaking is had from those who may call upon them having the wherewith to edify.

Albion invites those who are supplied, to speak in that place. The friends have purchased a house formerly occupied by the Presbyterians, thereby keeping the channel constantly open, that the people may see and hear. Address Reuben Green.

Adrian is a favored point. Good speakers can spend a Sunday there to good advantage, as well to themselves as to the many warm-hearted friends. Address L. Martin.

Next is Hillsdale; here the friends are few, but the *thoughts* are many and penetrating. My first visit to this place was in September last. Few lectures had been given up to that time, but they had been such as one might expect from Warren Chase and G.B. Stebbins. They fell like good seed upon good ground, and roused the life-currents of reform. I gave three lectures to large audiences, and at the close had an encounter with Prof. Dunn, (spiritual adviser of the college in that place). The excitement was great, and David and Goliath were the principal characters before the minds of the people. It was necessary for me to leave to attend to other appointments, and the Prof. and a Methodist parson poured their venom upon Spiritualism and Infidelity generally, each making it a subject for the following Sunday. They were foolish enough to suppose they were undoing what had been done. I made a proposition for them running in this wise:—The Professor should choose a subject either philosophic or theologic in its nature; study it for three months in all its bearings, when I would return and on ten minutes' notice meet him before the public and there discuss the topic with him. The three months have expired; I have returned, delivered two lectures to audiences larger and superior in intellect to the first—which speaks in unmistable tones that Spiritualism is not dead, but liveth and flourisheth. But the Professor, the Goliath of Hillsdale, I know not where he is. All I can say is, I have called, but there is no response. In this condition the friends of Hillsdale wish to be remembered. R. L. Andrews will attend cheerfully to those whose capacities warrant success, and a good audience will attentively listen.

Ten copies of the AGE are taken here and distribute much, very *much* food and light. 'Tis heartily welcomed and eagerly perused, and pronounced the best.

To-night I lecture at Janesville, five miles distant, a thriving reformatory place. I go by invitation of I. B. Taylor, a man who loves to do as he would be done by. Wishing all well, I speak for the West when I say, "We go for reform." F. L. WADSWORTH.

Trance-Speaking—The Raps, etc.

MR. EDITOR:—We of the West are considerably exercised just now with wonder at what has got into you eastern people. To commence with yourself, you say that you are "satiated with marvel-seeking and sentimental communications, and even with simply beautiful discourses from favorite *trance* and other speakers."

It is pardonable in the skeptic to sneer at "trance speaking" (as we technically term it), but is unpardonable in one who understands it and the laws that govern it. When we use the word *trance*, we mean INSPIRATION; but as that word has been badly used in the olden time, it is always considered as coming from God, we are compelled to use some other word to denote our claim, which is, that our trance speakers are *inspired by the spirits of men and women wiser and purer than ourselves.* Surely, we can never tire of that, or we must give up progress and forever stand still; for I think it can be shown that all great men in any age that have ever stepped forward in advance of the world have been thus inspired, *whether they knew it or not.* And to *know it* is to increase, multiply and *improve it.* Instead of getting tired of it, we shall want it more and more every day; and better and better it will come, as fast as we are capable of receiving it.

Look at the trance-speakers of ten years ago, and compare them with those of to-day. Is Mrs. Hatch and Emma Hardinge no advance upon the earlier crude and scattered fragments that we then thankfully received, because we believed in *progress*, and knew that it would surely come? It has come, and it will keep coming forevermore.

To skip over to New York; there we find the Conference turned into the manufacture of *gas* from Coles. That learned gentleman has but to step a few squares to see Mrs. Brown, and there his ears will hear rap, rap, raps that have confounded wiser heads than his, and ever will; and which neither he nor Mr. Paine, Von Vleck, nor anybody else can *imitate by any mechanical contrivance whatever*, to say nothing of the intelligence communicated by them.

Why, I have had myself a table pulled from me in a position that gave me the advantage of leverage, so that I *calculated* the force used against me was equivalent to eight hundred pounds; and that while merely tips of the fingers of the medium were on the top of the table and would assist me in my efforts, rather than the spirits. Talk about such facts being explained by a hole in the carpet! Surely the man that says so must have had a hole in his head not creditable to his brains.

It is all gas—pure gas, from *poor Coles*—for I venture the assertion that nine out of every ten Spiritualists in this country have been made so by the *physical phenomena accompanying the mental.* That was and is the lever of the whole movement. That makes us call it modern Spiritualism. For ages had spirits tried it; only here and there a few knocks were heard, and men and women trembled and fled; but never were they successful till David Fox in the cellar of that old house in Hydesville asked the spirit to spell its name by the alphabet with the raps, AND THE SPIRIT DID IT. Then was modern Spiritualism born, never to die again.

God bless the raps, for they have conquered death!

ST. LOUIS, Mo. A. MILTENBERGER.

New York and Vicinity.

Conference at the Lyceum, Clinton Hall, Astor Place,

FRIDAY EVENING, Jan. 7th.

Question: The Trance, what is its rationale, and its relation to Spiritualism, and spiritual manifestations?

Dr. HALLOCK: There is little new to be said on this question here. Before the advent of Spiritualism, trance was supposed to be generally the result of magnetism. Since then, it is considered a spiritual phenomenon, and we are met with the question raised by Dr. Gray, whether it is not in *every* case due to spirit agency. He was inclined to agree with Dr. Orton, that it is a natural power of the individual—the manifestation of the normal spiritual faculties, while still in the body. There are several reasons going to establish this view of the question, and one is, the imperfections of the state. It is too subject to error to warrant the admission that it is always controlled by spirits. The Bible cases cited by Mr. Wilson, merely show that spirits were present that is, that spirits were seen—which is a natural sequence of the state, and does not prove at all that they were active agents in the production of the state. However, he had not yet fully solved the question to his own satisfaction. The trance is the easiest and most universal method of communication with the spirit-world. Its beginnings are in the "brown study," or soliloquy. These are common to all, and are the umbilical cord connecting the two spheres; and from this it will be seen, that trance is the most important because most general mode of inspiration, and stands at the base of the progress of the human race. But as a demonstrable proof of spirit-intercourse it is altogether uncertain. A friend of his, not a Spiritualist, sat writing at a table, and in the same room was his little child sleeping in a crib. In a room adjoining was his wife, also asleep. The wife is called a medium. Suddenly the voice of his wife was heard, speaking of herself in the third person: "Mary wishes you to cover the child." On examining he found the child naked. Now whence came that intelligence? Was it simply clairvoyance on the part of the wife? If so, why did she speak of herself in the third person? The better theory is, as the intelligence claims, that it was his spirit sister speaking through the lips of his wife. But the case can not be regarded as proof of anything. Trance, however originating, is a spiritual phenomenon, because it is spirit acting independently of the body, and when we see the body brought nearest to death, then do we witness the most wonderful displays of spirit power. Clairvoyants who examine disease, Cora Hatch, and other like speakers, are only in a degree of trance—not deep trance. In old times while he was a materialist, as every man would be who stopped with the discoveries of Gall and Mesmer, among his patients was a Baptist lady in Brooklyn, whom he was in the habit of putting into the trance state. On one occasion when he was about to wake her, he found she had slipped from his fingers. He could get no reply from her; and on examination he found that a wonderful change had taken place. She was death-like and rigid as iron. He did not believe she could have been bent—she might have been broken—and he could discover no pulse and no action of the heart. He was obliged to take off his coat, and work over her half an hour, in order to restore her to the state of trance from which she had so suddenly lapsed. Then, when the connection between them was restored, he asked her where she had been, and she told him to Heaven to visit her mother. Of course, at that time, he gave no credit to the statement, but now, he believed she told the truth. Still he could not prove it. But how came she in that state at all—how was she wrested from his hands? It is impossible with certainty to determine.

Dr. ORTON: Trance is simply a result of the loosening in a greater or less degree, of the bonds of connection between the natural and spiritual parts, so that the spiritual faculties can look out and act on the spiritual plane. It may be induced by the action of drugs, by disease, by mesmeric passes, by the magnetic power of spirits, or by any cause capable of producing a partial separation between the body and the spirit which inhabits it. Some states of sleep furnish a ready entrance into it. Some enjoy it consciously by what would seem to be a natural and orderly process of development. It exists in a great variety of grades, ranging from the simplest forms of inspiration, when we retire in deep thought within ourselves, to that conscious opening of the soul placing us in conjunction with the heavens, which is its highest and most desirable manifestation; and is, as Dr. Hallock remarked, the real basis and lever of all human development. The trance includes clairvoyance and much more. It may comprise the opening of all the senses to the spiritual world; and if we are to comprehend the rationale of the exercise of its powers, a careful discrimination will be necessary.

The speaker was surprised at the positions assumed by Dr. Gray, and others, at the last session. It was held by them that the faculty of clairvoyance could not be exercised without the direct aid of a spirit; and Mrs. French in explaining the modus of her clairvoyant examinations, stated that her attendant spirit made the diagnosis of the case, and impressed it on her mind. Now this is not clairvoyance—it is a communication by impression. Clairvoyance requires a *clear seeing* on the part of the individual who exercises the faculty. It is a part or division of trance, and grows naturally out of deep thought and habits of abstraction; and that the capacity of the individual himself is sufficient for its exercise, is sustained both by an analysis of facts and our knowledge of the powers of the mind. The Mesmerist begins by manipulating his subject. Gradually he induces the trance state, and an exhibition of the faculty of clairvoyance. He tells her to look about and see if she can see any spirits. She looks around, turning her head to the right and left, and up and down, though her eyes are firmly closed.—Finally she reports that one is approaching, the very one he desired to see, and acts as interpreter to a conversation between the man in the flesh and the one in the spirit. Now what evidence have we that spirits had anything to do with the matter, farther than to answer and come when called to on their own plane? Or, take the case of a somnambulist—a person who gets up in his sleep, and with his eyes closed, can read through an inch board, and write with facility in the dark. Here no Mesmerist has been at work, and no spirit, so far as we know; and the natural and sufficient solution of the problem is, that by some means the spiritual part of the person has become partially detached from his body—has for the time being risen into the ascendant—so that he stands and acts on the spiritual plane, and uses his spiritual senses, in obedience to laws corresponding with those by which he ordinarily stands and acts on the physical plane. The relations of the trance to Spiritualism, and to communications with the Spiritual World, are important in the extreme. It opens the wonders of that hidden realm to our gaze, and brings us acquainted with its inhabitants, their opinions and modes of life. In its popular manifestation it is susceptible of three divisions. *First*, we have the state illustrated by Mrs. Hatch, where spirits induce the condition, control the organism and use it as a machine. This mode is not unattended with danger. It is liable to great abuse, and exposes one to spiritual company which may be neither advantageous nor agreeable. *Second*, we have the state where a single spirit places himself in rapport with ours, bracing and intensifying our powers while we remain in full consciousness. This too is liable to misdirection and abuse. *Third*, we have the state where a man stands in conscious or unconscious rapport with the Spirit World and its knowledges, without the intervention of any particular spirit—except it may be in very special cases—and speaks and acts with the combined energies of his own mind, backed by all the force which his affinities, *good or bad*, and the status of his development will enable him to lay hold of in the Spirit World. This is the natural order, and highest and safest condition of trance. It is also the most universal. It is in this state that the inventor invents, the poet writes, the musician sings; and that all the great thoughts and discoveries of the ages, as the general law, have been ushered into the world.

Mr. HUNT: As spirits approach us on our spiritual side, is it not reasonable to suppose that they give us their aid whenever that side comes into the ascendant?

Dr. ORTON: In his view, they may or they may not. When our earth side is in the ascendant we walk and act alone, or in conjunction with others. He supposed the law of the two planes was the same.—Dr. Hallock would recollect some experiments made at his house with a very excellent clairvoyant, Miss Simonson. Usually in her explanations in the Spirit World, she was accompanied and directed by a spirit claiming to be her father. On one occasion, however, she was directed not to submit to this tutelage; and after something of a contest with the spirit she apparently sailed off alone on an untrammeled voyage of discovery. The observations she then made were of unusual interest.

J. R. O.

MRS. CORA L. V. HATCH lectured at Cooper's Institute on Friday evening, 7th inst., to an audience of fifteen hundred.

Boston and Vicinity.

Bly's Rope Feat.

Though not quite up to time in the agreement mentioned last week, Mr. Bly rallied in a few days and came up to the scratch in good condition, bound to show himself game. The preliminaries were arranged between him and Dr. Gardner, and the trial of skill was appointed to take place at the Tremont Temple, on Saturday evening, 8th inst., under the following conditions:

Mr. Bly to select ten men who have tied the Davenport boys; Dr. Gardner to select ten men who have tied them; the same or similar apparatus procured as used by the Davenport Boys, and the same conditions, as far as possible; Mr. Bly and his assistant to be tied as the twenty men decide the boys have been usually tied, then placed in the box, tied to the seat the same in every respect as the Davenport boys had been. If he (Bly) succeeds in releasing himself, and performs the other usual feats of the said boys, then one half of the nett proceeds shall be given him, and the balance be given to any society for the relief of the poor he (Bly) may designate. If he (Bly) does not succeed, the nett proceeds to be given to any society for the relief of the poor Dr. Gardner shall determine. In case of disagreement on the part of the Committee, the receipts to be disposed of by a vote of the audience.

At the appointed hour a crowd of four hundred, mainly of the masculine persuasion, gathered about the ring—we ask pardon!—assembled in Mr. Kalloch's place of worship, where the exercises commenced with a properly devotional voluntary on the organ. The champion then made his appearance and called for his seconds and bottle-holders—we should say, read the names of his committee of ten—Prof. Horsford, Dr. Wyman, Mr. Lunt, etc., and requested them to step forward. Ominous silence. No response.

"There appears to have been some misunderstanding," said Mr. Bly; "the gentlemen don't appear to be present." [Laughter.] "But I shall submit to be tied." [Cries of Good! you're enough for 'em! etc.] "If there are any gentlemen present that have tied the Davenports, and aré skeptics, I wish they would come forward."

Mr. Rice of Charlestown and another gentleman mounted the platform. "Now I'm all right," said Bly; "I have a body guard that I can rely on."

Dr. Gardner now came forward and read the names of his committee, all of whom were present except one, who had sent an apology for his unavoidable absence.

Mr. Bly: "You see it's much easier to find believers who have tied the boys than it is to find skeptics. Will the audience accept these two gentlemen against two from Dr. Gardner's ten?"

Dr. Gardner: "I first proposed a small committee, but Mr. Bly would not accept less than ten. Finally he came down to six. I will, however, waive the conditions of the agreement and allow him to select any persons he may choose from the audience, to make up his number."

Mr. Bly, to the audience: "Don't place any dependence on what these believers may say, as to how the Davenports have been tied. They are not to be trusted."

Dr. Gardner: I am sorry Mr. Bly commences the same course he pursued on his first evening at the Melodeon, by insulting the committee, who are all men of truth and honor; and at least three of them, whom I have selected, are skeptics."

Mr. Bly: "I meant no reflection on the committee; I speak of Spiritualists generally. There is no dependence to be placed on their statements."

Another appeal was made for gentlemen to serve on Mr. Bly's side; and after half an hour consumed in this manner the number was complete. The twelve retired to the ante-room, and shortly returned, having selected Mr. Armington as chairman of the meeting, and a subcommittee of three from each side to perform the tying. Mr. Bly accompanied them, holding in his hand some pieces of new stiff bed-cord, or clothes-line. Mr. Dole, of the committee, brought also a coil of supple cord.

The chairman briefly stated what was to be understood by "the usual feats of the Davenports." He said: "It is expected that Dr. Bly [A voice: He's no doctor!] and his assistant will be tied in the box here on the platform,—that they will release themselves; after which they will re-enter the box and tie themselves as firmly as before." [Cries of No! no! Yes! yes!—Go the whole hog, Bly! etc., with great confusion.] "I trust," continued the chairman, "that order will be preserved; that all have come for one purpose—to get the truth."

A voice in the gallery: "Are you a Spiritualist?"

Mr. Armington: "I am not; I am a skeptic."

From the gallery: "Did you never call yourself one to any man?"

Mr. A: "No; I never did."

Gallery: "That's enough."

Mr. A: "Will the committee state to the audience whether that box is like the one used by the Davenports?"

Mr. Rice: "It is not. There are holes bored in each end of it, which were not made in the Davenport box." [Confusion.]

The committee decided in contradiction of Mr. Rice's opinion.

Mr. Bly: "Will Mr. Watson, the recently-developed medium, step forward?"

A fine looking, slight-built young man stepped on the platform, and was announced as Bly's assistant.

Mr. Bly, holding up the rope: "The Davenports always choose their own rope. I have provided here four pieces, each twenty feet long."

Mr. Dole and others of the committee demurred. The rope was new and stiff; whereas the rope they had used to tie the Davenports was worn and pliable. The point was yielded to Bly, and the tying was commenced—Mr. Dole taking Bly in hand, and one of the skeptics Mr. Watson.

Mr. W. to the tyer: "That's most too tight."

Mr. Pierce, examining Mr. W.'s wrists after they had been loosely bound: "Here, gentlemen—do you call this tying?"

Mr. Bly, holding up his hand with the cord tied on the wrist: "I ask the audience if it is proper to tie a man in that manner?"

Two or three of the committee: "That's the way the Davenports were tied."

Mr. Bly: "Is there a physician in the house? I want him to say whether it is proper to tie a man like that?" [Cries of Dr. Gardner! Dr. Gardner! No! No!]

Dr. Gardner: "I have left the whole matter in the hands of the committee, and do not wish to interfere on either side."

Mr. Bly: "The Spiritualists are trying to have the matter all their own way. The tying is done by Spiritualists, and they have got a Spiritualist chairman to favor them." [Hisses.]

Mr. Armington, amid much confusion: "I did not take this position to be insulted or accused of falsehood. I have stated to this audience that I am *not* a Spiritualist. [Applause.] If Dr. Bly desires a physician to superintend the tying, I have no doubt the committee will consent." Dr. Broadbent was invited upon the platform.

Mr. Bly, *sotto voce*: "That's too tight; I can't feel anything."

After half an hour of tying and untying, tightening and loosening by one side and the other, the wrists of the two performers were secured; they stepped into the box, where, we believe, their ankles were fastened to the seat and the wrist ropes tied on the inside. The committee were then requested to state their opinion as to the manner of tying.

Mr. Dole: "They are not tied as securely as I have tied the Davenport boys; [Hisses and shouts.] and I will tell you why; [Cries of Shut up! Sit down! Put him out! Bag his head! etc.] because we have not had sufficient rope; and this new rope is stiff, so that we can't tie a close knot with it."

Mr. Pierce: "Mr. Bly is tied as tightly as he could be with the rope furnished."

Mr. Rice: "I think they are tied tighter than ever the Davenports were. The ropes were never tied on the outside of the box." [You're wrong.] The box-door was closed, and the committee left the platform.

Bly, in the box: "I think conditions are good. The first thing the Davenports do is to bolt the door (inside)." But the door swung partly open, and Bly was seen stretching forward and striving to catch the handle of the bolt with his teeth. His nose, however, was the most prominent feature of his face, and it rebelliously persisted in pushing the door beyond the reach of his mouth. He cutely diverted the attention of the audience by calling for music on the organ; and the policeman, who was the sole occupant of the platform, shut the door for him.

In about ten minutes a scraping was heard on the violin (which, with other instruments, had been placed in the box), and the crowd fairly yelled in applause. In five minutes more he came out of the box wrapped in a white sheet, with his face concealed, [Shouts, huzzas, and cries, A ghost! A ghost! Humbug! Show your face!], and went to work diligently to untie the knots on the outside. To do this and release his assistant required nearly an hour. At last the two appeared with rope in hand, and were received with shouting, yelling, whistling, and every other noisy demonstration.

Just before they appeared, Dr. Cheever, who is an occupant of Tremont Temple, and acquainted with the building, informed the audience that he had seen the whole operation from the loft above, where he could look down into the box. He was stopped from exposing the secret by the shouts of Bly's friends.

The committee were called on to report. Mr. Pierce said he had been four times to see the Davenports. They would instantly, on being tied and shut in the box slide the bolt to and fro; the six instruments would be heard; and opening the door instantaneously they were still tied; they would become released in two or three minutes; and in two or three minutes more would be found tied again so tightly that he could not untie them.

Bly, interrupting: "If the gentleman wants to deliver a Spiritualist lecture, he'd better hire the hall and pay for it." [Applause and hisses.]

Mr Pierce added: "If Dr. Bly will now tie himself as the Davenports—[Confusion which drowned his voice.] He went on: "I have examined the ropes and find they are not as long as what they were before the trying."

Mr. Bly: I furnished *two* long pieces and two short ones." (Compare with statement above.)

Mr. Pierce placed the ends together and found *three* of a length and *one* considerably shorter. [Confusion.]

Mr. Rice: "I have been to see the Davenports and have caught them in their tricks. I have caught their hands when they were playing on the fiddle. I think Dr. Bly's performance beats theirs," etc.

A gentleman was called on the platform to rebut Mr. Rice's statements, but the gas was suddenly shut off, and his speech with it. The lights went out and the audience also—the latter very noisily; and the confused walls were left a little more than an hour to demure themselves for the approaching Sabbath.

The reader of the above will doubtless pronounce the performance a ridiculous affair; in which opinion we shall more than agree with him. Not often will our valuable space be given to such matters.

MELODEON MEETINGS. In consequence of the illness of Mr. FAIRFIELD, the platform on Sunday was occupied by L. JUDD PARDEE. We were able to hear him only in the evening. On that occasion the small audience present enjoyed an intellectual treat of rare excellence—surpassed, indeed, by few to which we have ever listened in that hall. The topic of discourse—The Development of the God in Man—was such as to lead the speaker to grapple with some of the profoundest problems of human existence; yet the style was simple, lucid, terse and chaste, avoiding almost wholly the erratic and uncouth phraseology in which Mr. P. sometimes indulges, and often rising to lofty eloquence which thrilled and electrified the auditors. An unusual demand upon our space in this department forbids even an abstract.

Mr. N. FRANK WHITE, of Conn., a trance-speaker unknown in this vicinity, but who comes with high recommendations, is announced for next Sunday.

MISS ANDREW was unable to accept the invitation to speak at the Melodeon last Sunday on account of an engagement in Cambridgeport. The friends in that place were unwilling to dispense with her services; the occasion being one of special interest to them, on account of the recent departure of a loved sister to the spirit world. Miss A. by special request conducted the funeral ceremonies, and on Sunday gave a touching discourse appropriate to the occasion.

Various Items.

SOMNAMBULISM.—An Ottawa paper says that on Friday night last a young French Canadian, boarding at a hotel in that city, got out of bed while asleep, and walked through two rooms to a window, from which he fell into a paved yard below, a distance of thirty feet. He was taken up insensible and removed to the Roman Catholic Hospital, where he lies in a very precarious condition, having broken his back and shoulder bones.

FOLLOWING GOOD ADVICE.—Some pious people in Kingston, Ulster county, N. Y., have recently been holding prayer meetings in the county jail, with a view of converting the prisoners. On Wednesday last, a Mr. Hamblin, who "led in prayer," earnestly exhorted the prisoners "to flee from the wrath to come." That night six of them followed his advice and broke jail! A reward is offered for their recapture. It is not certain that the praying and exhortations helped them out of jail, but it is quite certain that praying won't fetch them back.

THE SPIRITS AGAINST TOBACCO-CHEWING.—Mr. R. H. Tripp writes from Hampden, Wis., to the *Spiritual Telegraph*, that the spirits have broken his habit of chewing tobacco. He says that on a certain occasion he was riding across the prairies in his carriage alone, when his quid of tobacco was taken out of his mouth by the invisibles, and his mouth made to taste as though it was filled with copperas; and that he has never been able to take a quid since. The same writer relates that a medium, who was under spiritual control, wanted a drink of water, and that the spirits took him down into a well twenty feet, to the water, and brought him up with a dipper two-thirds full.

ILL BEHAVIOR UNDER THE GALLOWS.—"Albert Myers was hung at Columbus, Ohio, on the 17th ult., for the murder of Bartlett Neville.—Both had been convicts in the Penitentiary. Myers exhibited the most hardened indifference to his fate, scoffing and swearing at the clergymen who endeavored to prepare his mind for death; and when upon the scaffold he hurled apples and oranges at the crowd, and swore at them, and indulged in various blasphemous expressions. After prayer by a minister he seemed somewhat affected, but repulsed the minister when he spoke to him. His conduct excited general horror."

Couldn't the people of Ohio put that culprit to a better use? And that minister, too?

A BODY DISINTERRED UPON THE EVIDENCE OF A GHOST.—A new settler by the name of Van Wart, a relation of one of the captors of Andre, who had taken up his quarters in a house recently occupied by a widow then deceased, testified to the nocturnal visits of an apparition, whom the neighbors supposed to be no other than the woman's ghost. From what transpired during these visitations, it was supposed she had been murdered by her brother-in-law for the sake of concealing some crime committed some years before. The matter was made the subject of legal investigation, and Van Wart's testimony taken in full, under oath, by the magistrate, before a jury. The grave was opened and the body examined, to ascertain if her death had been caused by poison, probably the only instance in this country, at least of a corpse being disenterred upon the evidence of a ghost. The appearance of the dead was startlingly like the description given by the ghost-seer, who had never seen her living, but nothing was found to justify the condemnation of the accused, who was accordingly released, and left the country. The physician who attended the woman in her last illness, and was supposed to be implicated in the deed, also quitted the community.—*Mrs. Ellets' Pioneer Women of the West.*

MADE WORSE BY IT. —There is a point in the following incident in the *Trumpet:*

"A gentleman who had been a believer in universal salvation in a town not far from Boston, was carried away in one of the sectarian excitements, and professed to renounce the faith he had hitherto held. He came out a flaming Baptist. A former friend of his met him one day in the street, and said, 'How is this? I hear you have been proselyted. Is it true?'

"'Oh,' he replied, 'I wish you could feel as I do, I wish you could feel as I do.'

"'Why, how do you feel?'

"'Oh! so happy! so happy! I never was so happy before in all my life.'

"'Well,' said his friend, 'have you had any change in your views?'

"'Oh, yes, blessed be God, I saw the error of my ways, I renounced my old belief, and I now believe the truth.'

"'Well, well, neighbor, we now understand you. You formerly hoped that all mankind will be saved, and you were immeasurably happy; but you believe a part of them will be miserable forever, and you are so happy you can hardly contain yourself. Really, I don't think your conversion has given you a very benevolent disposition; and I must say to you, as Jesus said to the Jews, 'the last state of that man is worse than the first.'"

Is not the reader, whatever his creed,—ready to respond, Amen?

Compend of Facts.

Were They Mere Coincidences?

Mr. J. Jones, of Peckham, Eng., communicates the following to the British *Spiritual Telegraph:*—

On Friday the 27th of September last, I called upon a lady who is a rapping medium, residing some six miles from my house, and whom I had not seen for sometime. In passing, I may say the lady was developed about three years ago to her own amazement,—does not know what to think about it; in her presence articles are conveyed about the room by invisible means, rappings, conversations by the alphabet, are continually taking place; and in her natural state sees issuing from various persons lights of different colors, and she can by these lights judge of the mental and moral character of those she comes in contact with. Having made these observations, so that the reader may clearly understand the following incidents, I proceed:—

On sitting at the table opposite to each other, the medium saw strings of light issuing from my fingers, and bands of light circling my head. Said the medium, "How curious; I see a band up and down with purple lines on each side, and red letters one under the other; they are getting distinct—the letters are *h t a e d* how curious;—I cannot make anything of it."

I suggested that the letters be read backwards; we did so, and it read "Death."

The medium then saw other letters: *e f i l w e n a s i.* On reading this also backwards it made "is a new life."

Surprised, I said will you tell me anything about it?

Rappings then came on the table, and the letters were *h c r a e s.* Pursuing the old method, we found it "Search."

Where shall I search?

"Try the fourth book."

The fourth book—what book? I thought of several books having volumes, and named them.

"*No,*" was the answer. At last it was rapped out: "*In five days your knowledge will be greater.*"

Here was news! something definite. "Death is a new life. Try the fourth book. In five days your knowledge will be greater."

Many communications came during the evening by rapping, but I forbear relating them. On reviewing the scenes of the evening, the word "Search" seemed ever to come up in the mind as I was journeying home. The fourth book!—What book can it be? Well, five days will settle it.

The following Sabbath morning Mrs. Jones said: "John, you have never heard the Rev. D. T., of Stockwell, preach; it is a fine morning, suppose you go and hear him."

I replied, "I have no objection;" and with some difficulty found the church, some two miles off. The preacher gave out his text—St. John Chap. 10, verse 10—"I am come that they might have life." The preacher proved that Christ was Divine. He came for a purpose. "I am come." Why? "That ye might have life." Then followed illustrations of the bodies of men, birds and flowers, while possessed of life, defying, controlling the surrounding element;—extract life, and the elements then surround and control them, &c. I was much interested with the sermon. At night in bed I was thinking of the past scenes of the day, and it flashed in my mind, Why! St. John's Gospel is the fourth book of the New Testament and the sermon to-day was all about the "new life" and the text was from the fourth book. How strange! then the word "Search" came into my mind, and "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me;" but after vainly endeavoring to remember what part of the Bible it was in, I fell asleep. Next morning, the incidents of the previous day were vividly on my mind. I took up the Bible, turned to St. John's Gospel, and suddenly felt the influence in my hand as of old. It passed the finger of my right hand over the page and stopped at a word which I found to be "Search." The verse was, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." *Search*—it is the Scriptures I am to search. The combination of incidents was so strange, that I determined to commence reading the "Fourth Book," so as know more of the "new life," and I assure my readers that they will be amply compensated if they carefully read that Book. I found it fuller of references to the "new life," the eternal life, than any other book in the Bible or elsewhere I ever read.

Now look back, and ask yourself the common sense solution of these two questions—1st, Were they lucky hits? or, 2d, Did they show mind? Were the words over my head a lucky hit? Were the rappings a lucky hit? Was my wife's suggestion to hear a strange preacher a lucky hit? Was my finger moved to a text I knew not where to find, and to the very word, "Search," a lucky hit? Nay, verily, mind was shown—foreknowledge was shown—and if a spirit can forsee, is it any marvel, that the Creator of that Spirit can see our every thought and intended action and so by a way we know not "direct our goings."

Test Facts.

The following paragraphs are from a letter received from Mrs. M. S. Townsend:—

Last week I had the pleasure of spending two or three days in company with Mr. and Mrs. Currier. I met Mrs. C. on Monday evening, Dec. 27th, for the first time in my life, and had not been in her presence an hour before she was influenced by a cousin of my father's, who told me his name without my asking it, and the names of some members of his father's family.

His mother passed to the brighter side many years ago, leaving a helpless infant to meet the cold, unsympathizing world, as he struggled up to manhood. This son left his native State for the city and its terrible influences and temptations, and ere many years was found among those who are called criminals. He was aided, and again walked among those who call themselves freemen, but to fall again. I heard of his case and wrote him a long letter, right out from my heart, and received one from *his* heart in return.

The spirit controling Mrs. C. said,—"You don't know how much good your letter did poor H——. Each word went to his poor, lonely, erring heart, like a sweet dew-drop upon a thirsting flower. Do go and see him as soon as you can!" I asked where he was, and was answered correctly.

Now, I want to know how Mrs. C., who knew no more of my relatives and friends than a person in the Indies, could tell the names and locations correctly, and referred to a letter written two years ago, which was known to only three or four individuals, and had very nearly escaped my own mind. This test came to myself; consequently I *know* it. I witnessed many more, equally good to others, but in these times we must let each person testify for himself. I saw (in her presence) a large table loaded with eatables, around which eight or nine persons were seated, hop up and down four or five times; and I do not believe any three persons at the table could have lifted it in like manner, with their hands under it, so as to take the best advantage possible. No hand was under it. These are facts which can be attested to by at least twenty reliable persons.

They who understand the philosophy of Spiritualism cannot disbelieve; and they who do not may as well turn back and review the lessons they have passed idly by. It is an education that must be gained sooner or later, and happy those who improve the precious moments as they flit by, in gathering into their storehouse for knowledge, principles as they unfold in accordance with our good Father's harmonic law.

A CARD.

PAPER MILL VILLAGE, N. H., Jan. 8, 1859.

To the friends of Mrs. H. F. Huntley:

For the kindness, sympathy and liberality which have been manifested by Mr. S. A. Sinclair and the other Taunton friends of my dearly beloved but lately departed companion, Mrs. H. F. Huntley, I would express my deepest gratitude and sincerest thanks, which are welling up from the fullness of my deeply afflicted heart.

To the home friends who have shown so much respect to the remains of my beloved, and who have given so much aid and sympathy in these trying circumstances, I here acknowledge my heartfelt gratitude.

The large number of friends who assembled, both in Taunton and Paper Mill Village, to witness the funeral ceremonies, and the kind words of consolation which were spoken by Mr. Fairfield in the former, and Mrs. Wiley in the latter place, and by others who took part in the services,—all contribute to lighten the burden of my affliction.

May the spirit of her who has so suddenly been called to the spirit-home still be allowed to guide and guard her tearful son and lonely husband, in accordance with her happy belief on earth, and still be more able to impart truthful teachings to all who would learn of the nature and destiny of man.

Truly, LEVI HUNTLEY.

THE SPIRITUAL AGE.

BOSTON, NEW YORK AND CHICAGO, JANUARY 15, 1859.

LETTERS RECEIVED.—H Thatcher, O Porter, J Pray 2d, M A Townsend, J W Kinnaman, W Norwood Jr, C Malliken, W H Olin, G W Stuart, J A Chase, J J Taylor, A Couse, A Dunshee, M S Wentworth, J J Mc Fariand, O Perry, B Blood Jr, H W Twing, C H Colburn, S W Bullock, J French, J J Davis, M S Townsend 2, W Reed, H Jewett, E S Smith, W Sheldon, J Bogardus, J V Mather, G W Beckwith, J Spencer Jr, H J Wiley, Strickler & Bro, C S Whitney, H Smith, O Hall, I S Hitchcock, B Hardinge, P B Parker, J S Thomas, A Bishop, L Huntley, H Esty, E Page, Higgins Bros 2, E B Wheelock, F L Wadsworth, L Rice, L Bisbee, J Grillin. C Brigham, A Bishop, N K Sargent, W H Plank, H Love, E Titus, H Taylor, C G Taylor, A Kent H Dean, E A Van Fleet, B Rhodes, T Van Tassel, B F Newhall, J B Husted, C Keene, S Tarbell, J Lake, G B Stebbins, J A Wright, J D Babbit, S W Shaw, J L Cambridge.

NOTICE.—Persons who get up clubs for the AGE, in accordance with the terms of the circular sent them, will please indicate when they forward the list what work, if any, they will have forwarded as commission for their services.

SPECIAL AND PERSONAL.

MRS. M. S. TOWNSEND will speak at Waltham, Jan. 16th and 23d; Quincy, 30th; Cambridgeport, Feb. 6th and 20th; Waltham, 13th; Clinton, 27th.

The Boston Editors of the AGE, A. E. NEWTON and LEWIS B. MONROE, will answer calls to lecture in the vicinity of the city.

L. JUDD PARDEE will speak at Taunton, Sunday, Jan. 16th, and at Mansfield, Sunday, 23d.

MRS. J. W. CURRIER, trance speaker and test medium, continues to answer calls for lectures. Address, Lowell, Mass. 2—tf

Dr. H. F. GARDNER will answer calls to lecture in the vicinity of Boston on week evenings. Address at the Fountain House.

JAMES H. HARRIS, impressional speaker, will answer calls to lecture on Sundays. Address Box 99, Abington, Mass. 1tf

E. S. WHEELER, inspirational speaker and improvisator, will lecture in Norwich Conn., Jan. 16th, and may be addressed till Jan. 15th at New Bedford, Mass.

MRS. MARY M. MACOMBER, trance speaking medium, will answer calls to lecture in any direction the friends of Progress may desire. Address Obeyville, R. I. 2—4t

A Convention of Spiritualists will be held at Perryan, Yates Co., N. Y., on the 21st, 22d and 23d days of Jan. inst. Spiritualists from abroad are invited to attend, especially speakers. Arrangements will be made for the accommodation of those from abroad. Persons coming from the east by the N. Y. Central Railroad, will leave the cars at Geneva and come by way of Gorham.

MRS. FANNIE BURBANK FELTON will lecture in Northampton, Mass., Jan. 16th; in Norwich, Conn., Jan. 23d; in New York, Jan. 30th, and in Binghamton the month of February. Should the friends in the vicinity of Binghamton desire it, and make early applications, she will spend a few months with them. Address, till Jan. 22th, "Willard Barnes Felton, Northampton, Mass."

MISS EMMA HARDINGE will lecture at the West in January; in Febrtiery at Boston; in March, at Philadelphia; in April, at New York; in May and June at Worcester, Mass., Providence, R. I., Portland, Me. and Oswego, N.Y., together with such adjacent places, on week-day evenings, as her time and strength will allow. Those who do not know how to address her at the various cities she visits, should send letters to her residence, 194 Grand St., New York, from whence they will be punctually forwarded.

LORING MOODY will lecture on Spiritualism and its relations in Mattapoisett, Sunday, Jan. 9th; New Bedford, Sunday, 16th; and on intervening evenings in neighboring towns or villages. ☞ Will friends of truth see that all needful arrangements are made?

GEORGE STEARNS, author of "The Mistake of Christendom," will answer calls, 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.

LECTURES ON SPIRITUALISM.—The following are among the topics for the discussion of which the subscriber offers his services to the public:

1. Objections against Spiritualism by believers in the Bible.
2. Spiritualism defined and proved from the Bible to have existed during the first 4000 years of the world's history.
3. Modern Spiritualism a revival of Primitive Christianity.
4. The Philosophy of Communion with Disembodied Spirits.
5. The Uses of Spiritualism.
6. The Abuses of Spiritualism.
7. False and injurious views of the Bible.
8. Inspiration, general.
9. Human Reason the ultimate authority in matters of Faith and Practice.
10. God, Man, and the Devil.
11. Philosophy of Religious Revivals.
12. Spiritual Growth.
13. Our enemies our advocates.

Lectures on the above topics will be furnished singly or in courses of five and six lectures each. 1—4t Address, office of *Spiritual Age*, JOHN HOBART.

MEETINGS IN BOSTON.

MISS N. FRANK WHITE, of Conn., will probably will speak at the Melodeon, on Sunday next, at 2 1-2 and 7 1-2 o'clock, P. M.

MEETINGS AT No 14 BROMFIELD ST.—A meeting is held every Sunday morning, at 10 1-2 o'clock.

A Conference Meeting is held every Monday evening at 7 1-2 o'clock.

MEDIUMS IN BOSTON.

Dr. G. A. REDMAN has arrived in the city, and will receive visitors at his former residence, 45 Carver street. Hours—9 to 12 A. M., 2 to 5 and 7 to 10 P M. A Public Circle will be held every Thursday evening, from 7 1-2 to 9 1-2. 1—tf

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 $3 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

Miss M. MUNSON No. 13 Lagrange Place, Boston. 34

Mrs. WATERMAN, Healing Medium by laying on of hands, and Miss WATERMAN, Trance and Test Medium, 12 Eliot street. Hours, 9 A. M. to 9 P. M. Terms 50 cents per sitting.

Mrs. DICKINSON, No 23 Eliot street, Seer, Healing and Trance Medium, gives communications concerning the Past, Present and Future.

Miss R. T. AMEDY, 32 Allen street, Boston, Trance Speaking Medium, will answer calls for speaking on the Sabbath and at any other time the friends may desire. Address her at 32 Allen street, Boston. ☞ She will also attend funerals.

Mrs. R. H. BURT, Writing and Trance Medium, 24 1-2 Winter street—Room 12 Hours from 10 to 1, and from 2 to 7. 2—3m

Mrs. LIZZIE 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 or Medical Examinations, and 2 to 5 and 7 to 9 P. M. for Manifestations, at No. 30 Eliot street.

Mrs S. S. RUSSELL, Inspirational Medium, B St., So. Boston, next door to Universalist Church, cor. Broadway. Hours 9 to 12 and 2 to 5. Terms reasonable.

PHILADELPHIA BOARDING.

M. A HENCK has opened a fine large house for permanent and transient boarders, at No. 202 Franklin street, opposite Franklin Square—a beautiful central location, with the comforts of home. 2—tf

NEW BOOKS!

Twelve Messages from the Spirit John Quincy Adams: through Joseph D. Stiles, Medium. To Josiah Brigham. Price $1.50.

The Philosophy of Life: By E. W. Loveland. Price $1.25.

The above books are just published and for sale by BELA MARSH, No. 14 Bromfield street, Boston. Orders are solicited. 52—tf

THE PROVIDENCES OF GOD IN HISTORY.

By L. Judd Pardee. Price 10 cents. Just published and for sale by BELA MARSH, No 14 Bromfield street. 52—tf

JUST PUBLISHED.

ANOTHER IMPORTANT BOOK BY A. J. DAVIS!

The subscriber has just issued a new work, written a few weeks since by Mr. Davis. In preparing his matter for the Philanthropic Convention at Utica, he wrote out several suggestive ideas respecting the Cause and Cure of Evil, or how to "overcome evil with good," which was the great question before that memorable gathering of thinkers and philanthropists. This new production is entitled

THE HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF EVIL;

WITH SUGGESTIONS FOR MORE ENNOBLING INSTITUTIONS AND PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEMS OF EDUCATION.

Some idea of this little volume or pamphlet may be obtained from the following table of contents:

1. The unity of truth.
2. The ante-human theory of evil.
3. The inter-human theory of evil.
4. The super-human theory of evil.
5. The spiritual theory of evil.
6. The harmonial theory of evil.
7. The causes of civilization.
8. The world's true saviour discovered.
9. The harmonial cure of evil.

These important subjects are all comprised in about 120 pages octavo. The work is printed on good paper and well bound, both in pamphlet covers and in muslin. Single copies at

Interesting Miscellany.

SOMETHING ABOUT MAGNETISM.

At no great distance from Constantinople, is the ancient town of Magnesia, once a city, and the residence of the great Ottoman rulers of the East, and the centre of Oriental splendor. A pleasant ride from this old Magnesia brings us to the vicinity of the most remarkable iron mines in the world; remarkable not for the quantities of metal produced, but for the peculiar properties of the ore. The mineral here obtained has the specific name of leadstone, or (as now corrupted,) loadstone. If a strip of this stone be balanced on a point, it will turn on that point till it takes a direction which is opposite to the motion of the earth, and as the globe revolves from west to east, so, therefore, does the loadstone stand in a direction north and south.

According both to history and tradition, round about Magnesia, dwelt, at a very remote period, a civilized people. Men of thought and science naturally had their attention directed to the astonishing and almost life-like property of this stone. Nearly all of us have read, or intend to read, the story of Sinbad the Sailor, in the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments." How long it is since that tale was written it is difficult to say; but it is certain that it was as popular before the Christian era as it is now. The loadstone of the tale is the Mountain of Adamant, which drew the nails out of the wonderful navigator's ship. We read in the legend, that "about noon we had come so near that we found what the pilot had foretold to be true, for we saw all the nails and iron in the ship fly towards the mountain by violence of attraction, with a horrible noise; so that the ship split and sank into the sea."

Since the Crimean war, navigation has been much extended in the Black Sea, and here is a confirmation of the Arabian fable by a recent traveler: "Ships have lately run ashore on the coasts of the Black Sea near Sinope; and the captain of one that narrowly escaped wreck suspected that the compass had been deflected by magnetic influence. This suspicion led to an investigation, which has issued in the discovery of a valuable mine of iron ore or loadstone on those coasts, the danger of which is calamitous." Now if this, or the mines near Magnesia, (and both are not far apart,) be not the identical Mountain of Adamant referred to by Sinbad, it is certainly a very remarkable coincidence.

The power which we call magnetism derives its name from Magnesia, because of this loadstone; and as the subject is an old one, we ought perhaps to know all about it; but nevertheless, it still mystifies the most profound philosophers. What we do know has been discovered by men of our own age.

As we have before said, if a piece of this adamant or loadstone be balanced, it will turn till its direction is north and south, and then remain stationary; but this is not all, for the loadstone has the power to impart the same quality to a piece of steel, which it does by mere friction, losing by the operation not the slightest power itself, yet giving to the steel no less an amount of power than itself possesses; and steel thus treated is said to be magnetized. But this power of placing itself at right angles to the motion of the earth is not the only quality that a magnet possesses. The attractive influence it exercises over iron and steel is no less wonderful, and indeed so much so that considerable force is necessary to remove the object attracted when once brought in contact with it.

A number of mechanicians are now engaged in solving the problem—how to make this power useful for locomotion—and there is great probability that they may eventually succeed. Although we are not able to explain the cause of magnetism, yet we have ascertained that it is intimately connected with electricity, for we can produce the one from the other. The mariner's compass consists of a piece of steel shaped like an arrow, that has been rubbed with either a loadstone or magnet. When thus treated, it is called a magnetic needle; it is then fixed to a cord on which are marked all the points of the horizon; in this way it becomes useful to the traveller by land and by sea, as he can direct his course to any point he pleases, knowing well that—

> The obedient steel with living instinct moves,
> And veers forever to the pole it loves.

Hence the old name leadstone is correct.

Another remarkable property inherent in the magnet is that of having a power, which we call the repulsive or repelling power; this is no less active than its attracting power. In this way the chemists have given to the mechanics two horses—one that pushes and one that pulls; and it is for them to solve the means of harnessing them to a vehicle—a feat probably beyond the horse-taming powers of Mr. Rarey himself.—*Scientific American.*

THE HERMIT AND THE VISION.

It is told of a religious recluse, who, in the early ages of Christianity, betook himself to a cave in Upper Egypt, which had been a depository for mummies, that he prayed there, morning, noon and night, eating only of the dates which some neighboring trees afforded, and drinking the water of the Nile. At length the hermit became weary of life, and then he prayed still more earnestly.

After this, one day he fell asleep, and the vision of an angel appeared to him in a dream, commanding him to arise and cut down a neighboring palm-tree, and make a rope of its fibres, and after it was done the angel would appear to him again. The hermit awoke, and instantly applied himself to obey the vision.

He traveled about from place to place many days before he could procure an axe; and during his journey he felt happier than he had for a long time. His prayers were now short and few; but what they wanted in length and number, they outmeasured in fervency.

Having returned with the axe, he cut down the tree, and with much labor and assiduity during several days, prepared the fibres to make the rope; and after a continuance of daily occupation for some weeks, completed the command.

The vision that night appeared to the hermit as promised, and thus addressed him: "You are no longer weary of life, but happy. Know, then, that man was made for labor; and prayer also is essential to his well-being. Arise in the morning, take the cord, and with it gird thy loins, and go forth into the world; and let it be a memorial to thee of what God expects from man if he would be blessed with happiness on earth."

THE DIFFERENCE.—A Baptist minister being about to testify in a law case, a certain lawyer, began his examination with:—"What are you?" To which the clerical gent. replied. "I am an humble candle of the Lord, of the Baptist persuasion." "Ah! I perceive," said the disciple of Blackstone, you are a *dipped*, not a *wick*-ed one!"

MYSTERIOUS WARNING.

Not many years since, Captain S—— was passing a night at the Manse of Strachur, in Argyleshire, then occupied by a relation of his own; shortly after he retired, the bed-curtains were opened, and somebody looked in upon him. Supposing it to be some inmate of the house, who was not aware that the bed was occupied, he took no notice of the circumstance, till it being two or three times repeated, he at length said, "What do you want? Why do you disturb me in this manner?"

"I come," replied a voice, "to tell you, that this day twelve-month you will be with your father!"

After this Captain S—— was no more disturbed. In the morning he related the circumstance to his host, though, being an entire disbeliever in all such phenomena, without attaching any importance to the warning.

In the natural course of events, and quite irrespective of this visitation, on that day twelve-month he was again at the Manse of Strachur, on his way to the north, for which purpose it was necessary that he should cross the ferry to Craigie. The day was, however, so exceedingly stormy, that his friend begged him not to go; but he pleaded his business, adding that he was determined not to be withheld from his intention by the ghost; and, although the minister delayed his departure, by engaging him in a game of backgammon, he at length started up, declaring he could stay no longer. They, therefore, proceeded to the water, but they found the boat moored to the side of the lake, and the boatman assured them that it would be impossible to cross. Captain S——, however, insisted, and, as the old man was firm in his refusal, he became somewhat irritated, and laid his cane lightly across his shoulders.

"It ill becomes you, sir," said the ferryman, "to strike an old man like me; but, since you will have your way, you must; I cannot go with you, but my son will; but you will never reach the other side; he will be drowned, and you too."

The boat was then set afloat, and Captain S——, together with his horse and servant, and the ferryman's son, embarked in it.

The distance was not great, but the storm was tremendous; and, after having with great difficulty got half way across the lake, it was found impossible to proceed. The danger of tacking was, of course, considerable; but, since they could not advance, there was no alternative but to turn back, and it was resolved to attempt it. The manœuvre, however, failed; the boat capsized, and they were all precipitated into the water.

"You keep hold of the horse—I can swim," said Captain S—— to his servant, when he saw what was about to happen.

Being an excellent swimmer, and the distance from the shore inconsiderable, he hoped to save himself; but he had on a heavy top-coat, with boots and spurs. The coat he contrived to take off in the water, and then struck out with confidence; but, alas! the coat had got entangled with one of the spurs, and, as he swam, it clung to him, getting heavier and heavier as it became saturated with water, ever dragging him beneath the stream. He, however, reached the shore, where his anxious friend still stood watching the event; and, as the latter bent over him, he was just able to make a gesture with his hand, which seemed to say, "You see, it was to be!" and then expired.

The boatman was also drowned; but, by the aid of the horse, the servant escaped.—*Catherine Crowe.*

AN INCIDENT.

A touching case, says the New Orleans *Delta*, was presented the other day to the consideration and charity of one of the Good Samaritans who now take care of the sick, relieve the destitute and feed the starving. A boy was discovered in the morning, lying in the grass of Claiborne street, evidently bright and intelligent, but sick. A man who has the feelings of kindness strongly developed went to him, shook him by the shoulder, and asked him what he was doing there.

"Waiting for God to come for me," said he.

"What do you mean?" said the gentleman, touched by the pathetic tone of the answer, and the condition of the boy, in whose eye and flushed face he saw the evidences of fever.

"God sent for mother, father, and little brother," said he, "and took them away to his home, up in the sky; and mother told me, when she was sick, that God would take care of me. I have no home, nobody to give me anything; and so I came out here, and have been looking so long up in the sky for God to come and take care of me, as mother said he would.—He will come, won't he? Mother never told me a lie."

"Yes, my lad," said the man, overcome with emotion; "he has sent me to take care of you."

You should have seen his eyes flash, and the smile of triumph break over his face as he said, "Mother never told me a lie, Sir; but you've been so long on the way!"

What a lesson of trust, and how this incident shows the effect of never deceiving children with idle tales! As the poor mother expected, when she told her son "God would take care of him," he did, by touching the heart of this benevolent man with compassion and love to the little stranger.

A Curious Case.

Madame de Genlis tells of a girl who had lost the use of her leg for five years, and could only move with the help of crutches, while her back had to be supported. She was in such a pitiable state of weakness, that the physicians had pronounced her case incurable. She, however, took it into her head that if she was taken to Notre Dame de Liesse she would certainly recover. It was fifteen leagues from Carlepont, where she lived. She was placed in the cart which her father drove, while her sister sat by her supporting her back. The moment the steeple of Notre Dame de Liesse was in sight she uttered an exclamation, and said that her leg was getting well. She alighted from the car without assistance, and no longer requiring the help of crutches, she ran into the church. When she returned home the villagers gathered about her, scarcely believing that it was indeed the girl who had left them in such a wretched state, now they saw her running and bounding along, no longer a cripple, but as active as any among them.

A Singular Will.

In a book called "Notes and Queries," we find an account of a singular will made by an inhabitant of Montgaillard, who died in the year 1822. In it the following provisions occur:

"It is my will that any one of my relations who shall presume to shed tears at my funeral shall be disinherited; he, on the other hand, who laughs the most heartily, shall be sole heir. I order that neither the church nor my house shall be hung with black cloth; but that on the day of my burial the house and church shall be decorated with flowers and green boughs. Instead of the tolling of bells I will have drums, fiddles and fifes. All the musicians of Montgaillard and its environs shall attend my funeral. Fifty of them shall open the procession with hunting tunes, waltzes, and minuets."

Poetry and Sentiment.

"AS THE LOVE, SO IS THE LIFE."

As the love is, so is life.
Lovest thou the beautiful?
Earthly roads are filled with strife;
Earthly skies are gray and dull.
To the beautiful awake,
Thou shalt walk in sheltered ways,
Seeing through the cloud-roof break
Heaven's all-glorifying rays.

As the love is, so is life,
Dost thou truly seek the true?
Error is a fatal knife
Cutting every heaven-link through.
Truth is noble, falsehood mean;
Thine the choice to crawl or fly.
Shut out self, and live serene
In the sunshine of her eye.

As the love is, so is life.
Art thou wedded to the good?
Beauteous bride and faithful wife,
When her "ay" was understood
Truth's deep heart was sealed to thine;
Beauty in to bless thee stole;
And the joy of the Divine
Is the hearth-light of thy soul.

LUCY LARCOM.

TO A SEA-GULL.

White bird of the tempest! O beautiful thing!
With the bosom of snow and the motionless wing;
Now sweeping the billow, now floating on high,
Now bathing thy plumes in the light of the sky;
Now poising o'er ocean thy delicate form,
Now breasting the surge with thy bosom so warm;
Now darting aloft with a heavenly scorn,
Now shooting along like a ray of the morn;
Now lost in the folds of the cloud-curtained dome,
Now floating abroad like a flake of the foam;
Now silently poised o'er the wár of the main,
Like the spirit of charity brooding o'er pain;
Now gliding with pinion all noiselessly furled,
Like an angel descending to comfort the world;
Thou seem'st to my fancy as upward I gaze,
And see thee now clothed in mellowest rays,
Now lost in the storm-driven vapors that fly
Like hosts that are routed across the broad sky,
Like a pure spirit true to its virtue and faith,
'Midst the tempests of nature, of passion and death.

Rise, beautiful emblem of purity, rise!
On the sweet winds of heaven to thine own brilliant skies,
Still higher! still higher! till lost to our sight,
Thou hidest thy wings in a mantle of light;
And I think how a bright spirit gazing on thee
Must long for the moment—the joyous and free—
When the soul disembodied from nature shall spring,
Unfettered at once to her Maker and King;
When the long day of service and suffering past,
Shapes fairer than thine shall shine round her at last,
While the standard of battle triumphantly furled,
She smiles like a victor serene on the world!

GERALD GRIFFIN.

SELF-RELIANCE.

Nor do I now despond. All my life long
I have held with most respect the man
Who knew himself, and knew the ways before him,
And from amongst them chose considerately,
With a clear foresight, not a blinded courage;
And, having chosen, with a steadfast mind
Pursued his purposes. I trained myself
To take my place in high or low estate,
As one of that small order of mankind.
Wherefore though I indulge no more the dream
Of living as I hoped I might have lived,
A life's temperate and thoughtful joy,
Yet I repine not, and from this time forth
Will cast no look behind.

Whoever strives against truth and nature will lose the race.

"Labor is worship"—the robin is singing:
"Labor is worship"—the wild bee is ringing;
Listen! that eloquent whisper upspringing,
Speaks to thy soul of nature's great heart.

MRS. OSGOOD.

The religion that costs us nothing is worth exactly what it costs.

Nothing goes for sense or light
That will not with old rules jump right;
As if rules were not in the schools
Derived from truth, but truth from rules.

BUTLER'S HUDIBRAS

Reason, like polished steel, must be kept bright by use, or it will rust.

Oh! there is nought on earth worth being known,
But God and our own souls.

BAILEY.

Utility is a prominent characteristic of truth. Whatever is true becomes of some use even when imperfectly developed; whereas error only serves to mislead, however ingeniously it may be propounded.

THE SPIRITUAL AGE:

FOR 1859!

A new volume of the SPIRITUAL AGE commences on the first of January, 1859.

NOW IS THE TIME TO SUBSCRIBE!

No pains will be spared to make the AGE in all respects a most valuable family paper. Every effort will be made to add to the high reputation which it already enjoys as an exponent of Spiritual Truth and a Pioneer Reform. In a word, it is the design of the publishers to give their patrons, in the fullest sense,

A FIRST CLASS PAPER!

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On the whole we fully intend to make a journal which every Spiritualist will be *proud* to put in the hands of skeptic or believer and say, "There is an exponent of my principles!"

The *Spiritual Age* will be published every Saturday, in a large and elegan folio sheet, at $2 per annum, *invariably in advance*. One Dollar will be received for six months. To clubs, five copies for $8; ten copies for $15; to Boston subscribers, when served by carrier, $2.25. Specimen numbers forwarded *free* to any part of the world.

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New York Office at Munson's Book-store, 5 Great Jones street.

Address SPIRITUAL AGE, 14 Bromfield street Boston.

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