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THE IMPROVISATORE:

TORN LEAVES FROM LIFE-HISTORIES.

BY EMMA HARDINGE.

PAGE EIGHTH, AND LAST.

A coroner's inquest is at all times a dreary scene; but never more so than when bright summer air, beautiful surroundings and wealth spread out their luxurious pages of contrast to the deep and solemn mystery of death. We may bid the aged God speed in the exchange of the old worn out garment of clay for the bridal robes of immortal youth. We see the dark angel bearing away the half famished children of poverty, or the sinking mariners in the sea of criminal temptation, and say, Thank God their weary life-pilgrimage is over! And yet violence in the means, the sacrilegious hand of man raised against the only gate which the Creator has inscrutably veiled from his prying eyes—that of life—always awakens a feeling of awe and hopeless grief which no other sight can kindle up. And that violence against the young—oh what a fearful mistake! Against the rich and happy—what a mockery of the power of wealth, to protect, or of fortune's gifts to confer happiness.

Such was the sentiment that unconsciously spread the pall of gloomy silence over the Hall where a large and wondering throng was assembled to consider the means by which Gabrielle, Countess of Ravensworth, the high, noble, beautiful, and wealthy lady of one of the fairest Earldoms in England, had come by her death. True there was little or no cause for this inquiry in the external circumstances of the case. The beautiful young lady had somehow sickened in the atmosphere of splendor; languished beneath the weight of her coronet. 'Twas enough to gaze into her mournful eyes, to know that she was not happy. Every one knew this; and every one formed his own conclusions as to the cause. The cold, proud peer at her side, and the dream-like gaze of those wandering eyes of her's looking into the far, far distance, perhaps on the red battle plains of Hungary or into the dark dungeons of Austria—"Ah! well-a-day!" said the busy world—"they are an ill-assorted couple, and good cannot come of it." But now she was dead, why not of a broken heart? "Pshaw!" The man of medicine knows nothing more about hearts, than as huge lumps of flesh which do not crack without *physical* causes. "Spirit hearts!" and the effect of spirits on fleshly hearts! "Stuff!" There is no such thing."

The Lady had changed much of late—hollow cheeks, tottering steps, eyes now blazing with fever and anon sinking like paling stars, are all suggestive—but all and every possible and impossible cause for the rapid and premature death was silenced by a report of the tremendous charge made by a foreign soldier, on the night when the *disconsolate husband* returned to find his wife a corpse—two strangers in foreign uniforms standing beside the gloomy bier, and one of these in the presence of his own servants, greeting him with the ominous words, "Welcome, murderer!"

At first, indeed, the compassionate nobleman would not condescend to resent this frantic expression. "The poor creature who used it had been an old lover of the lady's in by-gone days, and under the influence of long captivity had lost his wits." But his companion was noticed to be singularly self-possessed, gentleman-like, and composed in his bearing—anything but crazy; and when he in calm yet resolute phrase told the steward that he had evidence to show that Lady Ravensworth had died of poison, and that the author of her death was the Lord of the castle, and that he, Lieutenant Augustine A——, intended to make his charge good, then indeed, things began to wear a somewhat portentous aspect. His Lordship was most respectfully informed he must be detained under guard to refute this monstrous charge; and despite his sneers and indignation, detained he was. The nature or rather details of the accusation against him did not at first appear; but when after a careful post mortem examination of the body, it was clearly ascertained that death resulted from the administration of a violent and most deadly poison, those details were called for in the imperative name of a Coroner's inquest.

None awaited the result of these proceedings with so much indifference as the Earl himself. He had ascertained that the soldiers did not arrive till the very instant that the countess died. He had no fear of her having made any confession to Mrs. Martin; for she was as much astonished as any one at the assumption of death from poison. He therefore inferred that the whole charge was but a supposition on the part of her unhappy lover. But when the young Lieutenant Augustine A—— proceeded to explain the nature of the accusation, the confusion of the Earl became infinitely greater than the astonishment of the Jurors.

He had travelled with his friend Ernest Rossi, he stated, from L——stadt to England for the purpose of visiting La Signorina Gabrielle. Both were unaware of her marriage till recently; and when the witness (Augustine) heard the news, he strove to conceal it from his charge, lest he (in very precarious health,) should suffer by the intelligence. Accustomed to receive many strange but truthful revelations through his friend's gift of *Clairvoyance* (a word which made the jurors start and glance over their shoulders) he had heard him describe on a certain night the castle of Ravensworth in accurate detail—the appearance of the Countess, her action in wandering into the gardens at midnight, her gathering the laurel leaves, concocting or distilling from them a deadly poison, the return of the Earl, his sleeping apartment—the stealthy visit of the wretched wife, and the attempted substitution of the cup of poison for the night draught—the sudden act of detection on the part of the justly exasperated, intended victim, and his cruel retaliation in forcing the miserable woman to be her own executioner.

The confirming testimony of this miraculous story was the witness of innumerable persons that the two strangers had only arrived on the English shores just as the countess's expresses had reached them; that they could therefore have had no previous knowledge of the castle and its details before they arrived at the hour of Gabrielle's decease, since which, to the period of the Earl's return, the testimony of every domestic was equally positive concerning the impossibility of their having seen one single spot so accurately described, or communicated with one of the inhabitants of the castle.

The whole strength of the charge, then, lay in the unquestionable fact that the Seer had pronounced the lady poisoned before the medical examinants knew of the fact; and had moreover so minutely described the condition of the remains under the action of the poison that the whole of the medical staff were fairly bewildered; whilst every scene and even the minutest articles of furniture connected with the localities where the tragedy was enacted, was given with a fidelity which placed the intelligence (come from where it might) beyond all question.

The scrutinizing cross-examination of Augustine, and the castle domestics, closed this part of the testimony. But when the jurors were sitting in absolute perplexity, what to do or say next, it suddenly occurred to the coroner, that it might be well to question the subject of this strange revelation in person; and after some objections on the part of Augustine, overruled by the awakened curiosity of the Court, it was decided that the Improvisatore should be summoned to appear.

How wonderful is the influence which attaches to each human being, stamping with an individuality far exceeding all effect of place, time, or circumstance, a character on every member of the human family which never can be masked by hypocrisy, or simulated by effort. *Spirit* is the only reality in all creation. Forms and mere externals are shadowy changing things, impressing each beholder with a painful sense of something hidden, something transitory, and unreal. But spirit is a truth, *the only truth*, a portion of the changeless being of God. Smiles, tears, speech, and deeds, may all be so many masks to cover the real thought or purpose; but that nameless something which each human presence brings, is the magnetic scale in which external forms when robed in falsehood, are weighed in the balance and found wanting.

Ernest Rossi came. Those who had seen the noble soldier two short years ago—strong, vigorous, and active,—the mountain air glowing in ruddy health upon his cheek, the light of youth and gladness dancing in his eyes—would scarcely have recognized the pale, sad stranger who now stood in court.—While still and impassive as the sculptured marble was that most noble face; large and lustrous as the lonely evening star those mild dark eyes; and slightly bowed as with the shadow of a long and weary life, that once tall, graceful form.

"What a wreck they've made of my beautiful, my brave!" thought poor Mrs. Martin, as with swimming eyes she looked upon her favorite.

And yet as he entered that gloomy hall, and stood before the curious gazers, so still, and abstracted from the passing scene—he brought with him the potent presence of his truthful mind, his pure, unselfish nature, and that inborn dignity which repels the shafts of lower minds as ocean's might absorbs the drops of rain.

Before he came, the very name of Clairvoyance suggested to the ignorant minds of self-conceit, nothing but charlatanism or the dreams of lunacy. In his presence something like respect mingled with awe prompted every tongue to hush the sneer or change it into admiration. To every question he gave such simple, yet straight-forward answers, that the testimony of his friend Augustine seemed to loom out in obstinate defiance of all power to shake. And once more the nonplussed jurors gazed at each other with looks that clearly asked, "What's next to do, or say?"

Up to this point Lord Ravensworth had remained in profound silence, and half concealed by the drapery of a window from the searching eyes of the curious. Now, however, bending forward, he asked with a quivering lip and voice which shook despite his efforts to conceal his agitation beneath a sneer of absurd indifference, "If the gentleman expects to convict an English Peer of murder, upon the faith of his magical powers, may it not be fair to demand some evidence that his wondrous facility for prying into other people's concerns is not the result of collusion with my servants, or even my late unhappy lady?"

A murmur of assent ran through the court, emboldened by which the Earl proceeded: "Pray, Mister Ernest Rossi, could you (being as you have shown, at that time at Dover) see where I was yesterday at noon?—*exactly, mark! at noon?*"

"In Bevis wood," replied the Seer, "and tying up your horse to the third oak tree on the left of the forest gate."

The Earl changed color, yet proceeded: "Where is that horse then now, may I ask? for, truth to say, I had forgotten him, and left him there."

"Then you did so tie him up, my Lord, and at that hour," interrupted one of the keenest jurors.

Lord Ravensworth's counsel started, whilst the Earl (though conscious of the mistake he had made) coolly added, "What of that? Does it require an angel from heaven to reveal a fact which any passing boor might have seen and reported?"

"We have the fact," replied the juror. "Let your lordship produce the passing boor; if not, the witness at least speaks truth."

"Granted," replied his lordship. "What next, most wondrous Seer?"

"Your Lordship has forgotten to change your dress since yesterday at twilight, when in tearing through a thicket, so rough, that never human foot except in wild unrest like yours would seek its shelter, you tore the wristband of your sleeve, and left the fragment hanging on a bush just where the sodden ground bears three distinct imprints of your advancing footsteps."

"This is too absurd!" cried Lord Ravensworth, starting up with ashy pallor on his cheeks and lips, "am I to be thus insulted!"

"My Lord! who injures you?" quietly demanded the Coroner.

"Officer; examine his lordship's dress. Nay, you yourself demanded the test of this man's power; and justice requires the test of his truth."

Ashamed to struggle, yet with sullen anger on his brow, Lord Ravensworth had the mortification of disclosing the torn wristband of his shirt, hitherto concealed by his coat-sleeve in such a manner that it was impossible the keenest eyes could have detected it. From mere respect to his rank, no remark was made at this seemingly superhuman evidence, slight as it was, of a spirit-police in the midst of the human justice-room; but when by order of the Cororner, servants were dispatched to search the thicket; and under the guidance of a map of the way hastily traced out by the Improvisatore, the Earl's footprints were found, and measured, and the scrap of torn linen actually discovered hanging as the Seer had described it, in an almost impenetrable part of the thicket—when this, compared with the Earl's dress and found to match, was considered, in addition to conclusive testimony that the witness was at the very time of the occurrence two hundred miles away, and never could have had an opportunity of visting the spot in question, and no other footprints than the Earl's were found, clearly demonstrating that no human watcher could have passed that spot—the investigation, complex as it appeared to grow from the admixture of the supernatural in its details, gained in interest, what it lost in comprehensibility.

"Would that the dead could speak!" exclaimed one of the harassed jurors. "Lieutenant Rossi, could you not tell us something of the Lady? some surer token by which we might connect this most mysterious and unhappy death with him whom you accuse?"

"The dead! There are no dead. She lives and stands amongst us." Such was the startling response which fell from the lips of the Seer, as with fixed eyes and rapt unnatural glare, he seemed to gaze on vacancy.

The twilight was now fast thickening round the court; the waves of gloom seemed pouring over the high carved ceiling of the vast dim hall; stags heads, and branching antlers, loomed from the walls like fabled goblins; the flickering light came fitfully from huge high gothic windows, falling on the suits of armor ranged against the panels until they looked like frowning phantoms of the knights of old, ready to step from their dark recesses, and do battle for the murdered lady. Around the long hall table which had so often groaned with the weight of jovial hospitality, sat the twelve grave men, booted and spurred like country Squires; and far in the back ground, the crowd of anxious, terrified domestics, peasants and retainers of the castle. The folds of a heavy crimson curtain on the right, fell round the tall and rigid form of Ravensworth, as with folded arms and lips compressed he stood like a picture, grim and yet defiant, shrouded in its masses. Opposite to him, a fine, arched, painted window reflected the last gleams of the sinking orb of day. All else was gloom but this one spot; and there in its golden glory stood the noble Improvisatore. A halo of yellow and purple light fell on his form; his marble features caught the ruddy glow, and round his lofty brow the refracted rays lingered as in some picture of a saint traced by a Raffaelle's genius. The eager listeners gazing spell-bound on him, bent with straining ears to catch the solemn tones of his sweet but plaintive voice as once more he murmured, "She lives and stands amongst us. Poor broken flower! Unhappy Gabrielle! See, now, she raises her small, pale hand. Alas! one slender finger's broken—bent and disjointed like a bruised reed. *He did it*—Ravensworth—when with rude and cruel grasp, he tore the plain gold sign of her betrothal from her finger. I see him now, and her, poor, writhing lamb! Her tender hand is disjointed, yet no cry escapes her. My first gift, and my last; what has he done with it? Tell me, fleeting shadow, Gabrielle; oh show me! Where is my ring!—The swamp;—go seek it there. Beneath the third soft footprint, her cruel murderer hid it. My spirit-Love, I thank thee! Fare thee well—farewell!"

The spell was over; the Seer was silent; and the deeply moved jurors resumed their painful task. On farther inquiry it was remembered that Lady Ravensworth had worn another plain gold ring, besides her wedding one. This on the corpse was missing; yet although her attendants, Mrs. Martin, and all who had approached her since the night of the alleged tragedy, had failed to remark anything particular in her right hand—though she had never complained or mentioned the injury to a single creature—upon the suggestion of the above recorded broken sentences, the right hand of the unfortunate Lady was examined, when it was found that the third finger had been recently dislocated, while the skin was torn and scathed as if by violence. The discovery of the missing ring too, just where "the third soft footprint" revealed the presence of the Earl in the deep and swampy thicket, completed the chain of this most marvellous evidence. And yet, what did it all amount to?

Lady Ravensworth was dead, poisoned; that was clear.—But the old adage that "the dead tell no tales," was not to be set aside for the ravings of a "crack-brained visionary"—especially when the honor of a rich and noble Lord, a statesman, landlord, and a powerful Peer, were all to be called in question. What if his Lordship did spend the day from noon to eve in wandering in deep thickets—hiding his lady's former lover's ring—and late at night returning so abstracted that he left behind him his favorite, fleetest horse, tied to a tree at least some ten miles from the place where he must have wandered on foot? What if ambitious maids of low degree wed haughty lords and die like blighted flowers—crushed out of life when their purchasers are weary of them? The broken finger, like the poisoned cup, were secrets belonging to eternity. Dreadful only and most presumptuous was that mysterious power by which the privacy of souls could be unveiled, and the voiceless air reveal the mystery which should slumber with the silent dead.

And thus did *justice* reason, till at last the populace, attracted by the strange reports which everywhere like wild-fire spread from the inquest room, began to take a fierce and threatening tone against the unfortunate Improvisatore.

His Lordship's lawyers were shrewd and active men.—*Of course* they knew, as all the world *must* know, that the Earl of Ravensworth was innocent. They were fully confident no blame, not even the lightest shadow, could attach to a nobleman "so good and so distinguished." But the fact that any foreign vagrants should dare to pry on English Noble's privacy—and worse than all that they should dare to tell such startling facts that clumsy juries and the common people were forced to believe their truth—this was the most atrocious part of all. At first the villagers, who loved the generous lady and were deeply struck by the noble bearing of the strange but truthful witness, were sullen and discontented, and instead of rejoicing when they heard that their landlord and patron was fully and "*honorably*" discharged of all blame, by the verdict of the jury—namely, of "*felo de se*,"—were disposed to vent their indignation in muttered curses and half uttered threats. Before the day succeeding the close of the inquest was fully ended, however, the tone of the whole community was changed. The taverns were full; every ale house for miles around was thronged with drunken revellers; while his Lordship's friends, lawyers, men of business, and retainers, were every where remarkably busy, haranguing half intoxicated and highly excited listeners, his lordship's gold flowed through the streets like water, and his lordship's name was cheered and shouted, with golden and drunken zeal.

'Twas in the midst of such a scene as this, that late at night the announcement rang like a thunder peal that the strange witness and his companion had been arrested on the charge of "conspiracy." From ten o'clock till nearly twelve, knots of men might be seen standing at the corners of the various streets and lanes that led from the Castle (where 'twas said the Court was sitting, before which the new criminals were being examined) to the village gaol, where they might be expected to be detained. 'Twas remembered afterwards, how many strangers were abroad that night—how many, too, that passed from group to group, seeming to whisper something then pass on. And still the gold, the castle gold, flew through these groups like trash. Why was it that without any apparent concert or given signal, without a leader or the least attempt, that any could detect, at order or design, the scattered groups, just as the bell chimed midnight, seemed as by some universal impulse to draw towards a common centre—that centre—that castle road? On they went, larger and stronger masses, until they lined the path; and though none manifested any special purpose, or spoke of why they gathered in that spot, their silent concentrated purpose told some understood but hidden meaning more certainly than speech. And there they stood, or seemed to linger rather, in stern but sullen silence, like a brooding thunder storm. On they come; more and yet more they come; and these, too, pause; no questions asked; no other object gained than there to congregate in massive lines and wait. What are they waiting for?

In one of the foremost groups a low whisper might be heard, from one who seemed almost afraid to trust his voice with the the question, "Where is my lady buried, can you tell?"

"Hush! Be still. They come!" was the sharp reply.

A moment's pause, and then the tramp of horsemen and the roll of carriage wheels. The night was very dark, but the foremost horsemen carried pine torches, which for a short space lit up the scene with a dull, red, fiery glare. First rode half a dozen mounted constables; and then a troupe of the castle domestics, surrounding two carriages, the first of which contained the magistrates who had been assisting at the late examination, and the second the two Hungarian officers—the presence of a fresh troupe of mounted constables surrounding this vehicle, clearly intimating that its inmates were prisoners under a judicial escort.

No sooner did this part of the procession come into view by the light of the torches, than the main object of the gathering appeared to be gained. With a yell like that of the wildest savageism, the lingering masses rushed upon the carriage, dashing the horsemen aside; and either through their feeble resistance, or taking advantage of their astonishment—with curses, cries and execrations of "Down with the wizard!" "Tear the magician into pieces!" strove to obtain forcible possession of the person of the prisoners.

How far this movement was the result of preconcerted order—whether such order was the arrangement of the desperate Earl, bent on the destruction of his dreaded enemy, fearing to let him go free, yet fearing still more to trust him again before a judicial court—or treachery amongst the trained rioters,—the spirit power that reads the human heart, alone can tell. 'Twas evident that most of the villagers, although excited by partial intoxication, were equally unprepared for this savage movement, and indisposed to further it. Most of these drew back in terror; whilst the magistrates, and *some* of the constables—not all—proceeded to render prompt assistance to the helpless prisoners. It was amongst the strangers chiefly (some of whom, with slouched hats and besmeared visages, wore the evident appearance of disguise) that the cries and uproar came. It seemed, too, as if they hoped, by shouts, frantic gestures, and an appeal to the superstitious feelings of the people, to goad them to attack the prisoners: the whisperers were nowhere to beseen; but now the effect of their words was clearly to be tested; for while the chiefs of the ruffian mob began to drag the captives from the carriage, and even to attack their defenders with sticks and stones, the villagers (especially those who had been present at the trial) repeatedly exclaimed, "I don't believe one word of it." That fine young fellow only told the truth; and if there's magic in it, 'tis nearer home than with that noble foreigner."

The crowd was divided then; and perhaps a reaction among the better thinking of the mass might not only have protected the prisoners, but even have set them free,—when, a sudden flash from a distant clump of trees lighted up the scene with a momentary glare;—then a loud report, and Ernest Rossi springing from the ground, fell back on his friend Augustine's arm—his last earth battle fought.

The strife was hushed; a deathly stillness reigned; when in the midst of the affrighted group, Lord Ravensworth, white as his dying foe, appeared upon the scene.

"In the name of the king and justice," he cried, without a falter in his loud, harsh tone,—"I command you, one and all, to point out to me the man who fired that shot—Ralph, Morton, Leonard!" he added turning from one to the other in stern appeal, "Who was it? Speak! In the name of our liege lord and justice, I require you to yield up the rash, bad man."

Who was to speak? No one had seen the murderer, hidden by the woods; and until the Earl appeared upon the scene, although it was natural enough to infer that an uproar so near his castle might have drawn him forth to enquire the cause, still no one had till then remarked him, much less any one amongst the groups was there who carried arms at all. All were silent then—*but one*. Raised upon his faithful friend's strong arm, the dying eyes of Ernest fell full upon the cowering, shuddering Earl.

"*She* forgave you, Ravensworth," he murmured, "and so do I. Can you forgive yourself? Augustine, dear companion, faithful friend—farewell! I'm going home." . . . .

They laid the Countess in her stately vault. The deep bell tolled; the midnight torches flashed; the solemn requiem rolled its echoing tones in many a proud cathedral aisle and chapel, in many a solemn priory and convent, in grand high masses for the sainted soul of Countess Gabrielle. The long array of dark funereal pomp consigned her to the splendid mausoleum, where Ravensworth's proud ancestry were laid.

They reared a fair white marble tomb above her, with sculptured angels and fine chiselled arms. They said "she slept beneath." Alas for mortal truth! Her soul was waking in the air of paradise and floating through Elysian fields of light with Eulalie and Ernest. Never she in that cold, marble tomb, a risen penitent and humble spirit, lay one hour imprisoned; but like a little child, her spirit life began from where that cold white marble closed above her clay.

On the lone hillside where high above the ocean wave the wild, free sea winds swept, one wretched heart-wrung mourner, followed the humble shell that held the broken casket of the good, the brave, and loving Ernest Rossi. No priest was there to mutter formal prayers. "He needs them not," his lonely comrade thought. "For such as he the heaven of rest was made. His loving lips are pouring forth the waves of song in happier, brighter climes; or immortality is all a fiction."

The mariners who brought him to that shore, dug his quiet grave and laid him in it. The wild winds sang his funeral requiem. The lone stars kept their silent watch by night, and fluttering sea-birds hovered near by day. The very daisies loved to cling around the pure and peaceful ashes of the good.

The fishermen and timid village maids, who shrank from mournful churchyards in affright, when evening hours stole on, and moonbeams slept upon the gentle minstrel's parting dust, came lovingly and sat upon the stone, and listened through the livelong night to hear the angel music which full often stole in thrilling cadence far across the sea. None thought of him with fear or heard the air vibrate to viewless minstrel's melting tones when near that grave, with terror. Sometimes they said they saw, when moon and stars made glorious pageantry of summer night—when all things lovely smiled, and happy thoughts came in the hallowed radiance of such nights—two glancing forms more splendid than the dreams of poets' wildest visions, float on the waves of balmy summer air, or gleam like flashing meteors through the night. A third was there, more shadowy pale and sad, like the last gleam of fading morning stars, attendant on the lustrous queen of night. They said 'twas Ernest and his spirit bride, leading the soul of Gabrielle the erring, up to her home in heaven.

NOTE TO THE IMPROVISATORE.—Since sending the concluding pages of the above sketch to the publishers, I have been equally perplexed and amused by the receipt of numerous letters, commenting in the spirit of exceeding discontent upon the deaths of my hero and heroine; while two of my correspondents express a hope almost amounting to a command that they should see Lord Ravensworth duly consigned to the world's shame, or an equivalent amount of retribution in the inevitable hereafter. To the first class of murmurers, whilst I express my gratification at the interest with which they have followed the story I beg to remind them of one of its titles, namely, "Torn leaves from *life* histories." These leaves, though not all extracted from the same volume, are at least rent from the immutable pages of *life*, where, except in the fictions of novelists or the merely temporal rewards and punishments promised by the Mosaic dipsensation, we seldom see real instances of that poetical justice which assigns long life, honor, fame and wealth as the inevitable results of good action, and fable-like, condemns the tyrant to die, and the bad man to the temporal sufferings of a human tribunal.

Let those who have kindly and lovingly followed my poor Gabrielle and the Improvisatore to the abrupt termination of their earthly career, study the facts of Spiritualism, and while they simply discover the scene changed, the first rudimental act of the Drama alone played out on the stage of mortality—they will have no occasion to mourn for the suffering lady battling unsuccessfully with human passion, being removed even through the gates of such stormy lessons as she drew on herself, to a more congenial though of necessity retributive sphere of action. Let them remember *this life is not all*. Here we sow the pen; and we the sowers gather it in, here or hereafter—what matters it which? What though the curtain may be dropped between the vision of the mortal and the immortal? The true Spiritualist need not be told there is no death. And when earth-life's fitful fever is burnt out *we know what we are*, by the exact measurement of what we have done. When we can guage the depths, heights and breadths of eternity, find out the flood gates which hedge in the onward waves of progress, and halt before the crystal wall of perfection, we may undertake to say *what we shall be, and no more*. Until then, conceive of the sad grey shadowy form of the erring Gabrielle growing brighter and yet more bright until the glorious vision fades in the rosy sunlight of God's eternal love, in which the spirits chastened by human suffering, and striving by *persistent effort* to attain the good, are bathed in a flood of growing sunbeams.

One such as Ernest Rossi lived on earth. He walked amongst men ever like a spirit. And though we missed his kindly tone, his ever ready smile and loving ways, none grudged his soul its early flight to heaven. Kindred with the skies he ever was. Would we had many such! Earth would be a heaven; and such as he would not be called away as if they found no place in this gross, sensuous life; but in the earth their kindly natures love, they'd walk as ministering spirits, instead of whispering through the spirit veil *as he does now to us*.

Lord Ravensworth—why who can question what his future was? or doubt that Senatorial honor, place and rank, attached like needles to the loadstone, wealth? Lord Ravensworth has so many types in life's o'er true page, that it may seem doubtful whether I selected one of the species to individualize or not—yet I did so, and my peer is a reality; and the leaves of his life history hang flattering banners of pomp and circumstance upon the honored walls of England's great, even to this very day. Lord Ravensworth held rank as one of England's legislators. He was rich. Who so well qualified to make laws whereby he could grind that wealth from the poor? He was high in station.—Who knew so well how many humble rocks he must tread on to constitute the footstool of his greatness? He knew what *crime* was; and so, better than most men, was fitted to legislate for criminals. The world said he had killed his fair and hapless wife; and yet hundreds of fathers, mothers and guardians sought his alliance for their young and tender daughters. He never married again, however. Thousands there were who would have offered themselves or their children victims upon the shrine of this priest of Mammon, but the high, honorable wealthy and influential peer, had such a thing as an *individuality*, and into its secret depths mortal eyes never looked again. Some might have guessed at its nature, from the cold chill which his stern presence ever brought, and the loveless life of utter isolation in which the envied child of fortune passed through the busy world. Some wondered why the stately castle always remained untenanted—why its very neighborhood was so studiously avoided by its noble owner—why the sweet voice of music would send the Earl to the solitude of distant places, from which he would issue forth with swollen red eyes that made the beholder's soul run cold to look into their agonizing depths.

Psychometry! it is a favorite theme with me! It brings such hidden wonders to the light, and unveils such a vast scheme of compensation and retribution carried about in the very deepest recesses of the human soul. If love be the kingdom of heaven, how much did Lord Ravensworth carry about with him, when even his very dogs *feared*, but never loved him? Psychometry! what lake of fire couldst thou not have revealed within the bosom of the cold, stern Earl, so marble-like in surface, but oh, within!—Why wilt thou never die, thou worm of memory? Tradition says he offered castle, houses, lands, all his vast wealth, to the physicians who stood around his bed, if they could find the means whereby the long, long life he clung to could be prolonged one single day beyond the waning hour of death which closed at last around him. Not that he loved that life:—he never smiled; and dogs and little children, village maids and pious men shrank from his path, in that which marked his life—the rule of FEAR. And yet, when earth's thick curtains fell in folds around him, he shrieked, and screamed for life, and cursed his God, and swore he would not die; then slept, and with a start awoke in spirit-land. What was he then?—Life and death like Old Testament teachings, are the novelist's and novel-reader's conceptions of happiness or misery. We know of no end to the one, no meaning for the other. Our world's issues lead us into spirit-land; and there, my guides tell me, Lord Ravensworth was nothing more nor less than a very little child, with life to begin again, and no stock to trade on but memory. His wealth and castles, rank and name, were gone,—all these, misused, he had invested in the bank of earth, not heaven.—With earth the account was closed. He had no funds in heaven, and so he had no interest to receive.

Love!—his passion for Gabrielle, was a sensuous fire, born of the earth, consuming, like the dust on which it fed. Hate!—what could his hate do to his happy rival? Far, far away, amongst the choiring stars, singing to the listening worlds of light, where never sunset comes to dim the eternal day, the bright Improvisatore sped bird-like through all space, linked hand in hand with those he dearest loved—his heaven, to shed the dews of happiness and comfort on those who, like himself, were toiling up to his bright happy home.

Nothing but memory, then, for Ravensworth. The bitter past with all its dreadful failures,—rank, wealth, and talent,—all dead, barren trees,—possessions, home or place, love, friends or kindred, he'd none in spirit land. He had not sent his treasures on before, but left them all behind; and so he stood once more a little child, the memory of the past his sole possession—the fatherhood of God his only hope. *Only hope!* The wisdom that can make a thousand worlds—the love that destines them for happiness, and power that can sustain them—is it not sufficient for a single soul's salvation? The new-born spirit of the hapless child of earth came wailing back into his Father's bosom, and forth was sent again to practise life anew—the lessons of the past a constant teaching; the loving angels growing good themselves by helping on the wanderer to his home; and one strong arm around his feeble frame, one bold, unerring footstep guiding his, one tender voice in soothing accents saying, "Brother, fear not, one God and Father made us, one common tie unites us all, 'tis love. You've died to sin, now live again to God." The voice that spoke was Ernest's, the Improvisatore. Perfection was not his, nor any finite being's; and when the angels bend in solemn worship, and ask the Father of all Spirits to teach them to be good, a voice from out the heaps of buried Zion, quivers on Calvary's Mount, and sighs through Palestine, mounts on the winds, and breathes at heaven's gate; sings through each star and glitters in each sun, writes on the walls of all created worlds and echoes through all space—"Forgive each other's trespasses as ye would be forgiven."

The Spiritual Age.

Progress is the Common Law of the Universe.

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SATURDAY, MAY 28, 1859.

"DANGERS OF SPIRITISM."

Under the head of "The Acknowledged Dangers of Spiritism," our cotemporary, *The New Jerusalem Messenger*, has an article against sensible communication with the spirit-world, which seems to us singularly lacking in logical consistency and practical good sense. It opens with this broad admission:

"That sincere and well-disposed persons may be led to investigate the phenomena of Spiritism, and thus become interested in them, without sensible injury, and even perhaps with benefit, where there is great previous ignorance of the life after death and the laws of the spir-

Very good; and surely the *Messenger* will not deny that the religious world in general, (a very small body of the disciples of Swedenborg only excepted) and the community at largo, at least up to the commencement of the modern manifestations, were in an almost profound "ignorance of the life after death and the laws of the spiritual world"—the general tendency being to an utter skepticism on the whole subject. And as to being "sincere and well-disposed"—we never advise anybody to investigate any subject, except in such dispositions. The *in*-sincere and *evil*-disposed are always and everywhere liable to error and injury, whatever they may be interested in or inquire into—and that in proportion to the importance of the subject. Our first counsel to such always is to become honest, truth-loving, reverent and pure-minded.—The article proceeds:

"But the writings of the New Church make it clear to any one who will read, that every attempt to come into open or sensible communication with the spiritual world must be attended with great danger. This, we are pleased to see, is now virtually conceded by some of the most experienced and intelligent advocates of Spiritism."

But it needs not the writings of any Church, New or Old, to make it clear that open communication with *this* world, in which we all live, is also "attended with great danger." There are ignorant and deluded people, liars and deceivers, errorists and sensualists, on every hand; and the vast majority of all who are born fall under the influence of such. Would it be better, therefore, in view of such "dangers," that we should never be born into conscious existence in such a world?—or that we should be born deaf, dumb, and blind?—or be carefully shut out through the earth-life from all open intercourse with men as they are? Either conclusion, to say the least, would seem to impugn the Wisdom and Goodness which have placed us in such surroundings.

As a "virtual concession" of this great danger of spirit-intercourse, the *Messenger* cites from the SPIRITUAL AGE the following remark which we had occasion recently to make:

"That there is a *kind* of spirit influence tending in this direction, [i. e., to corrupt the moral sensibilities, and prove disastrous to its victims] and operating upon such minds as are willingly open to it, most intelligent Spiritualists have been aware from the first."

From this the *Messenger* deduces the following extraordinary conclusion:

"This, it appears to us, ought to be sufficient to deter all who acknowledge its truth from further advocacy of Spiritism."

With as good reason should we be deterred from advocating acquaintance and intercourse with men in this world, because there are persons whose influence, on such minds as are willingly open to it, tends to evil and error; or we should refrain from eating and drinking at all, because there are *kinds* of food and drink that are poisonous and disastrous to the health of those who indulge in them!—But the question is argued at length, and set home to the conscience, in the following strain:

"By the laws of the system, 'mediums,' or those who communicate with spirits, attract to themselves spirits of their own quality. Thus an intelligent and virtuous medium will attract intelligent and well-disposed spirits, while an ignorant and vicious 'medium' will attract those of his own character and quality. As a reforming influence, therefore,—as a means of making men better,—and, if we understand the ablest advocates of Spiritism, it is on this ground mainly, if not wholly, that they defend it, and commend it to the attention of their fellow-men—it confessedly fails where its beneficent and reformatory influence is most needed. For those whose moral and spiritual *status* is so high as to make intercourse safe to them, could hardly be benefitted by it; while those who are most in need of elevation would be far more likely to be made worse than better by such association with spirits quite as ignorant and depraved as themselves. How can those who profess to desire the elevation and moral advancement of others,—and we do not question their sincerity,—conscientiously commend to their fellow-men practices which, by their own admissions, are so fraught with danger, and so little to be relied on for anything good?"

To our "New Church" brother, this seems conclusive and overwhelming, no doubt; but we regard it as only a sample of that *special pleading* which fossilized religionists are wont to apply to this subject. The same argument is equally good against church-going and sermon-hearing, "as a reforming influence." People are *attracted* to hear preachers of their own opinions and quality, and preachers are attracted to and often gain a powerful influence over those who accord with them. Thus they mutually confirm each other in whatever errors or immoralities they may adopt, and hence the practice is "fraught with danger." Besides, if there is really any salutary influence in any of our churches, the most vicious and depraved are not *attracted* to them, and hence they "confessedly fail where their beneficent and reformatory influence is most needed." Shall then all preaching and hearing be abandoned, all churches be closed up, and all intercourse between mankind cease?

We never commended indiscriminate intercourse with spirits, nor regarded it as necessarily beneficial, irrespective of the *motives* and *aspirations* of the participants; nor would we commend promiscuous and familiar association, regardless of an elevated purpose, with such people as are to be found in this world. We never encouraged the "ignorant and vicious" to become mediums without first abandoning their vices; nor have we knowingly sought spirit-communications through the agency of such. We never advised our fellow-men to have anything to do with Spiritualism, either as mediums or inquirers, except as honest, sincere and devout seekers of Divine truth and good, earnestly desirous of being purged from all their own errors and evils. This latter is plainly the *first* duty of every man and woman; and none are safe anywhere, unless they cherish such aspirations. The *Messenger* itself readily admits that such persons may investigate "without sensible injury, and even perhaps with benefit." And will it deny that such, when they become convinced of the reality of a spiritual world, and understand its relations to this, and the laws of spiritual influx, may become receptive of influxes which shall give them clearer views of God's truth, quicken all the germs of good, and raise them to higher states?

Spirit-communion, like all other intercourse of mind with mind, may be a powerful aid to growth in wisdom, goodness and purity; or a prolific source of error, folly, superstition, fanaticism, pollution and crime—*just as people are disposed to employ it*. This accords with common sense, and is coming to be common experience. Ignorance of this important fact has been the chief source of danger. Numbers have denied that influences of any kind can come from the spirit-world, though themselves all the while more or less subject to them. Numbers more have imagined that none but good influences could come from thence; and hence have been disposed to "believe every spirit," and regard to all "inspired teachings" as authoritative. If that world is of such a nature, and has such relations to this as Swedenborgians hold, and if its influence upon us depends upon our *states*, it is important that these facts be known, even at the cost of some severe experiences. Safety lies not in ignorance.

It is furthermore obviously true, as a general principle, and from the nature of our mental constitutions, that a firm conviction of spirit-presence and cognizance at all times, such as Spiritualism gives, has a powerful restraining and strengthening tendency over most minds, in hours of temptation and weakness. When they have conclusive proof that they are encompassed about by a "great cloud of witnesses," and especially that the eyes of their loved and sainted ones are bent on their every step, most people receive a new impetus to lives of purity and nobleness, if anything will give it. If here is not a practical "beneficent and reformatory influence," we know not where to look for one—though possibly some may be too gross to feel its power, and others too firm in the right to need it.

Much more might be added on this point, but enough has been said to show the absurdity of rejecting all spirit-comunion, because, like every other instrumentality of good, it is liable to perversion by the ignorant and vicious, to their own injury.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY for June is on the counters. The time has gone by for any expression of opinion on the general merits of the magazine. It is now conceded to be *the* autocrat among periodicals—the elephant in the great menagerie—always sure of its share of attention, whatever rival attractions there may be. The number before us has been excelled by some of its predecessors, in vivacity and interest for the multitude, but is nevertheless full of instruction and solid entertainment. Spiritualism gets two or three rough hits from some writers who have evidently seen but one side of the matter, and that the wrong one. But we can afford to remain good-natured about it, and not "flare up" as have several of the sectarian journals at the good-natured criticisms of the "Autocrat." Truth is, no "invalid," and can bear a little rough usage.

THE ANNIVERSARIES.—The present is anniversary week in Boston, when the various societies which have taken in hand the work of redeeming this world are to report progress, and lay out their future campaigns. We shall be on the look-out for indications of advancement; and if we find any evidences that "the kingdom of God is about to appear," shall apprise our readers in due time.

The meetings of Spiritualists at Harmony Hall, 419 Washington St., will be a new feature of the occasion, and we trust they will be creditably sustained. Mr. BRITTAN speaks on Monday evening, Mr. PEASE on Tuesday evening, Mrs. BROWN of Cleveland, on Wednesday evening, and Miss AMEDEY on Thursday evening; besides which, meetings will be held forenoon and afternoon, in which various speakers will take a part.

The following item, which has been going the rounds, is about as near the truth as the anti-spiritual press usually gets in anything relating to Spiritualism:

"Mrs. Ada L. Coan, a 'detective medium,' charges Mrs. Andrew Jackson Davis with procuring sundry old books, committing her lectures to memory from them, and then delivering them in a 'trance state.'"

Mrs. Davis is not a trance speaker, and, we venture to say, never was nor professed to be "in a trance state" in her life.

S. B. BRITTAN will receive calls, for two or three weeks, to lecture in the vicinity of Boston on week evenings. Address at this office.

SPIRITUALISM IN EUROPE.—The letter from Dr. GARDNER, now in London, which will be found in another column, will be read with interest.

SWEDENBORG'S WRITINGS.

ARE THEY SUFFCIENT FOR THE WORLD?

Perhaps the most remarkable portion of the article from the *N. J. Messenger*, commented on elsewhere, is the following:

"It is just and proper that men should desire to baotin some knowledge of the life after death, and of the laws and conditions of the spiritual world. But far more accurate and reliable information on these great subjects than spirits can now communicate is already in the world, and may be obtained without danger from writings which are calculated to encourage all that is good, and to put to shame all that is vicious and degrading in man. In fact, one of the most difficult problems to be reconciled is, how men who profess to be so deeply interested in the life after death, and so desirous of living an angelic life upon earth, should feel so deep an interest in the crude and incoherent messages concerning that life obtained from 'mediums,' while they can hardly be induced to read a page in those writings of Swedenborg which so clearly, so fully and so vividly describe and demonstrate not only the life after death, and the life of angels, but all the laws and phenomena of the spiritual world, as well as the manifold states and conditions of its inhabitants. Some few of the Spiritists, it is true, have obtained a partial knowledge of Swedenborg's writings, and thus have greatly improved the quality and consistency of their own. But even of this few we know of no one who does not virtually place the poor, flimsy or inflated communications made to himself or to some other 'medium' by spirits, far above anything that Swedenborg has made known."

This is the old story of sectarian exclusiveness: "Come into *our* enclosure; learn of *our* prophet; *we alone* have all the truth, and all the good; what isn't in *our* sacred books isn't worth knowing; God has exhausted himself and cannot, or will not, reveal anything that isn't written there; nor will he speak through another; follow with us, or we forbid and anathematize you." We should suppose that receivers of Swedenborg's revelations had had the same assumptions, in substance, thrown in their own faces by the Old Church, long enough to have learned better than to throw them at others.

It is, indeed, "a difficult problem," why some people prefer to use their own eyes and ears, and their own truth-determining powers in general, rather than rely altogether upon those of others;—also, why most men are more deeply interested in visiting a country for themselves, or in conversing directly with a friend who has been there, than in merely reading the descriptions of an unknown traveler, however truthful, who claims to have journeyed that way two hundred or two thousand years ago;—and again, why many persons have a keener relish for provisions fresh plucked from the ever-teeming earth, than for those which were gathered and preserved by former generations; and why anybody should prefer to drink from an ever-gushing fountain on the hill-side, rather than from the turbid streams and muddy pools of the plain. It is also very perplexing that people should place more value upon what is adapted to their present mental states and comprehensions, than on what is quite beyond their understanding. These are puzzling questions, truly,—growing out of perversities (?) in human nature, which backward-looking churches in all ages have tried hard to root out, but with poor success! We recommend that the effort be abandoned,—that this appetite for fresh food, for personal knowledge, and for living inspiration, be recognized as legitimate, and be properly cultivated and directed.

We would by no means undervalue the writings of Swedenborg, nor, indeed, of any other illumined teacher of spiritual things in the past. For our own part, there are few works on spiritual and theological questions that we study with more interest and profit than those of the Swedish Seer. But, judging from our own experience, the meaning and value of those works can be understood and appreciated by the world at large, only as the world becomes somewhat familiar, from personal observation, with the facts of spirit-manifestation and of spiritual experience. Though Swedenborg wrote upwards of a century ago, yet his details of his own experiences, and his accounts of the spirit-world, etc., have been generally regarded as the dreams and vagaries of a monomaniac. His readers have been few, and his "receivers" a mere handful. Now the case is changing. Only recently *The Messenger* was jubilant over the fact that "New Church" writings were beginning to receive greatly increased attention from religious minds. What has caused the change? Unquestionably, the modern demonstrations from the spirit-life, which show that life to be substantially as Swedenborg described—and modern examples of spiritual or psychical experiences similar to his—which together are producing a wide-spread impression upon candid minds that the dreaming Swede may have been no lunatic after all. Our own conviction is, that this illuminated seer went more profoundly into the great problems of life, spirit-existence, Deity, etc., than most modern seers and communicating spirits are yet capable of going; and for that very reason he has been misappreciated and undervalued by the masses. He is quite beyond their comprehension, and hence they require proofs and teachers more nearly adapted to their present mental states. We have no doubt the modern demonstrations and the current communications, as a whole, are providentially designed to meet this want.

As people become satisfied with "crude and incoherent messages," "poor, flimsy or inflated communications"—(though these terms by no means justly describe the better class of modern inspirational productions)—they will call for more substantial food. And they will be supplied according to their aspirations, both in fresh gushes of inspiration from the higher spiritual realms, and through the newly illumined pages of the seers, apostles, and evangelists of past times.

But supposing the extravagant claims here set up, to be true,—that Swedenborg has given us "far more accurate and reliable information than spirits *can* now communicate,"—suppose that he has correctly described "*all* the laws and phenomena of the spiritual world, as well as the manifold states and conditions of its inhabitants,"—how are we, how is the world, to know these facts? Shall we all take them for granted, because our "New Church" friends say so? Shall we believe them even on the claim of Swedenborg himself?—though we are not aware that he made any such claim.

It seems to us that this is asking a little too much of rational men in the nineteenth century. Such dogmatism is no better than that of Rome. We can have no rational, well-founded faith in the truthfulness of Swedenborg, or any other revelator, without at least some personal knowledge and experience in the same direction. And the receivers of his doctrines have greatly damaged his credibility by the extraordinary and exclusive claims they have set up for him as the sole revealer of God in these latter days. Would they but allow that his experiences and perceptions were only such as other men may enjoy under similar conditions,—and would they but accept the analogous experiences of others as interpretative of his, and corrective of his possible mistakes,—instead of putting him forth as altogether an anomaly, and infallibly authoritative,—they would far more readily command the attention and credence of mankind.

SUBLIMATION OF MATTER.

Some people find it difficult to understand the idea of the progression, spiritualization, or sublimation of matter—it being a fact that eludes the analysis of the chemist, and has been generally overlooked by the science of the past. The following condensed statements from a late lecture by Prof. J. J. MAPES, the scientific agriculturist, of New Jersey, go to illustrate the doctrine:

"Every substance in nature, when taken up by organic life, undergoes a change which neither chemical analysis nor microscopic examinations can discover. One grain of potash obtained from the ashes of a double rose has more fertilizing power than a pound of potash from the ashes of wood or one thousand pounds of pure potash obtained from feldspar rock. Substances taken from a higher class of organism are of more fertilizing value to the farmer than those from the lower orders of nature. One grain of iron taken from the blood of a man will act as a tonic more powerfully than one pound taken from iron ore.

At Hurdstown, N. J., there are large deposits of phosphatic rock, that are analytically the same as phosphate of lime, obtained from burnt bones. Several years since, some gentlemen thought it would make an excellent fertilizer, and so obtained the certificates of Dr. Jackson and forty other chemists, that it was of great value, after purchasing the mine. Prof. Mapes was solicited to take hold of it, but he declined, telling the owners that no quantity from a pound to a ton contained any fertilizing matter. It was shipped largely to England, endorsed by the first chemists there, and sold at £7 per ton. Now it would not sell for seven shillings per ton in any port of Europe, and is only used at the Liverpool docks as ballast. No chemist by analysis can discover any difference between this pulverized rock and pulverized burnt bones. The one as a fertilizer is worthless, the other valuable. One comes from the lower orders of nature, the other from higher organisms. No plant feeds on anything in the soil until it is in solution in water. A man who is compelled to feed upon lower organisms, has not the ability to comprehend a higher course of thought.

The farmer of Vermont and New Hampshire, whose soil is the debris of the granite rock, and contains seventeen per cent of potash, uses wood ashes as a fertilizer, not because there is no potash in his soil, but because the potash of the ashes has progressed, and been in organic life before. The higher the organism, the better the fertilizer. The iron of an ordinary horse shoe nail has higher functions than those not manipulated. An old casting when broken is beautifully crystalized, while a new one in the same condition is only a gray mass. The first product of a mountain soil is usually the lichen or moss. These decay and higher organisms succeed. Progression is an eternal law and matter is immortal."

WHAT ARE GOOD BOOKS?—The literary critic of *The Atlantic* for June, expresses the opinion that "good books" are an antidote for "what is called Spiritualism." Wonder if he would exclude from the catalogue such books as Bushnell's Nature and the Supernatural, the writings of Stilling, Fox and Wesley, The Scots Worthies, the Old and New Testaments, and all other books which record superhuman interpositions in the affairs of this world, and teach spiritual truth? We hope he will give us his *Index Expurgatorius*.

PROF. GRIMES IN BUCKSPORT.—A Bucksport, Me., correspondent informs us that the distinguished exploder of Spiritualism, Prof. Grimes, has recently visited that place for the purpose of enlightening the people. His last announcement called out, on a fine evening, a crowded audience of *three* persons. The cause is progressing finely in that place, and was never in a better condition than now.

BATH, ME.—A friend who has recently left Bath, Me., informs us that Miss Gibson was giving a course of lectures in that place with great success. Crowds of the most intelligent people of the place flock to hear her nightly.

MRS. H. F. M. BROWN, the talented editress of the Cleveland *Agitator*, and an able advocate of the emancipation of Woman, will speak at Harmony Hall, 419 Washington street, Boston, on Sunday afternoon and evening next.

Various Items.

....A writer in the Examiner states that the American and Foreign Bible Society last year incurred an expense of *sixteen thousand dollars* in collecting and appropriating *eighteen thousand dollars* for the benevolent work of the organization.

.... Charles Wilson, a music teacher, at Rochester, N. Y., dropped dead on Thursday, while purchasing at the Democrat office several copies of the paper containing an obituary of his mother, who was to be buried the same afternoon.

.... A missionary paper says, there is a piteous demand for "more missionaries," among the Fejees; but whether it comes from those who have just cooked and eat "two citizens," is not stated.

.... A Spanish proverb says that the Jews ruin themselves at their passovers, the Moors at their marriages, and the Christians at their lawsuits.

.... The ring around the sun which was observed on Thursday, was alluded to at the meeting of the Second Adventists, at Newark, on that evening, as another evidence of the approaching end of the world.

.... A late arrival at Chicago, from Green Bay, Wisconsin, reports the Bay clear of ice, and the Devil's door open. We should suppose *that* locality was one of the few exempt from ever freezing.

.... Rev. William Cathcart, of the Second Baptist Church at Philadelphia, has published a sermon against union prayer meetings. He sees in them "a dangerous tendency to further union among Christians," and deprecates the idea that his flock should ever sit down to the table of the Lord with "unbaptized Christians," as he calls all who do not belong to his denomination.

.... The Rev. Dr. Haskill, who was formerly a wandering juggler, known as the Faker of Siva, has been engaged at a salary of $1000, as a clergyman, at Mount Pleasant, Ohio. His preaching there is said to have consisted of harangues, stories and anecdotes, and his manner of conducting meetings to have been so disgusting that the most aged and experienced of the church were grieved, and ventured to state their grievances, whereupon he came down upon them in the most vituperative manner in the pulpit. Such has been his course and conduct that the church is quite broken up. It is rumored that the preacher and conjurer had eloped with a young lady of Lafayette, Indiana, and the Western folks seemed inclined to brand him as an imposter.

.... Miss Sprague, the medium, was robbed of $110 last week by the servant girl at the house of Nath'l Warren, Esq., where she was stopping. The girl at first denied all knowledge of the matter, but when the police began to search her, owned up, and the money was found nicely quilted into one of her under garments.—*Portland Transcript*.

.... A Mr. Booth, of Rhode Island, wants the Mayor of New York to employ him to drive the devil and all his imps out of that ungodly city. He says he is gifted with divine power to drive the devil from the face of the earth, and to wipe out from existence all vagabonds, thieves, and rascals. Let him begin on the Common Council, Mr. Mayor, and if he succeeds there, the rest will be an easy task.

.... A family residing at Haverstock hill, England, contained among its members twin sisters, both wonderfully similar in face and person. A year ago, when they had attained sixteen, both began to complain of illness, loss of appetite, and strength. Their condition became gradually worse. They were affected with precisely the same symptoms, and at length it became apparent that both were slowly dying of atrophy. Medical skill could do nothing for them, and they died within three minutes of each other, on the day on which they had attained their 17th year. They were buried in one coffin.

.... The Louisville *Journal* says that a German woman in Cincinnati has become deranged in consequence of a confession which she made to a priest. Her husband states that he had been married to her seven years, and they had two children living. He noticed the first insanity in his wife on Sunday evening the 10th ult., from which time her mental derangement increased, until she became perfectly uncontrollable. On that day she had been to the confessional, and when she returned she told her husband that the priest had told her she was inevitably lost, and that when she died her soul would descend into hell to dwell with devils in everlasting torments. It was evidently the fear of this that had shattered her reason.

New York and Vicinity.

Conference at the Lyceum, Clinton Hall, Astor Place,

TUESDAY EVENING, May 17th.

Before taking up a new question, Mr. Fowler desired to make some additional remarks on the old one, *the influence of our feelings on one another.*

Mr. FOWLER: He wished particularly to speak of the influence of our feelings on *health*, and as a cause of *death*. In his opinion the state of feeling of those having care of the sick, and of parents when their children are ill, is often the cause of their death. He had known cases of children, one in particular, where as he believed, the anxiety of the mother procured the death of the child. In the sick room, it is all important that we encourage the *faith feeling*, the belief that the patient will recover. When this is gone with nurses or physicians, they are no longer of any use there. On one occasion he went into a room where an individual was said to be dying. His physician and friends had given him over, and he supposed himself at the last gasp. The speaker accosted him cheerfully, and told him he was not going to die now. In half an hour the patient was laughing; in three hours the fever was broken; the vomiting which no medicine had been able to control, ceased, and the gentleman got well. One sick person should never take care of another. In a case of this kind which he watched, the pulse of the patient was increased every time the sick attendant came into the room. On the contrary when he (the speaker) went into the room, with a different feeling, the pulse went down. This was true whether the patient knew he was present or not. This is a power we can all use. Our presence with the sick one is not indispensable. We can visit him in mind. Persons have been healed in a dream. We come in rapport with each other in different ways; sometimes by a mere effort of the will, and sometimes by speech or touch or magnetic passes.—

But it is not necessary to be in the room with the patient in order to be able to apply our magnetism. Again, he has often noticed while talking with persons, that if they did not understand him, he lost his power to go on. Their state of feeling flows in upon him, and is felt there as a request for more time to consider, or as a protest against his proceeding at all. The psychometrical readings, by means of letters, placed on the forehead, or held in the hand, also illustrate the law of transfer of feeling. He had experimented but little in that direction himself, but enough to satisfy him of the truth of psychometry.

Dr. ORTON: The remarks of Mr. Fowler had brought to mind some experiences of his own, tending to throw light on the intimate connection of mind with mind, soul with soul. His experiments with psychometry, by means of letters, had been slight. On one occasion, however, Mr. Fishbough placed a letter in his hands, and asked him to psychometrize the writer. Immediately there became visible to the mind's eye, an individual swaying to and fro like the waves of an angry sea; and he replied to Mr. Fishbough, that the writer was insane, or the next thing to it; and such indeed was the fact. In forming a rapport simply by an effort of the will, he had some years ago, experimented largely. For instance, some one of his family would say to him, I wish to describe an individual I have in my mind. Immediately on becoming passive, a characteristic figure would form in the mind, visible, but differing in this from images called up by memory, that the feelings and intellect are visible, as well as the form. In one case, the figure was that of a square built man, standing with right hand raised; could speak, and to the point, but not a professional speaker; firm, energetic, of great love for human kind, etc. This was Isaac T. Hopper. Another, a man standing writing at a desk, strong, versatile, generous, etc. This was Horace Greeley. Of course he had no clue to these persons until subsequently told who they were. One remarkable feature of this power is, that he was able to describe himself without knowing it, as accurately as he would another person. This transparency of mind to mind and heart to heart, toward which the race is travelling, may alarm some. It should not. When we can no longer conceal our peccadilloes and crimes from one other, very shame and the fear of punishment, will compel a new social state.

DR. REYNOLDSON: He had spent sixteen years in the study of the influences that may flow from one man to another. Animals, the horse and the dog, come under the same law. If from any cause you are unable to sustain the vital action of any organ, your healthy brother can take your hand, and pointing to the diseased part, can sustain it for you. The law of love underlies this power. The connection once established, it may continue for days. In this we have a power capable of regenerating the whole human family. The passing of forces from his fingers, is just as perceptible to him as the passing of food over his palate. These forces are operative at the distance of miles—ten miles, fifty miles. Is it not important to distinguish where the natural powers end, and the spiritual begin?

Mr. CETLINSKI: Can the intellectual faculties thus be increased?

Dr. REYNOLDSON: Only perhaps stimulated into greater activity.—He had noticed that certain diseases were generally accompanied by certain deficiencies in the development of the brain. For instance, neuralgia is usually accompanied by deficient veneration. In London he employed a lady as a clairvoyant, who was married and had one child. During the time she remained his assistant, she became *enciente* again, and bore another child from the same father. The last one was in every respect greatly superior to the first.

Mr. D.: No doubt the action of mind on mind is universal; and the influence of one single mind, no one has the power to estimate. As before stated, he is in the habit of communicating once a week, through a medium, with an old friend, who was an eminent teacher. On a recent occasion while thus engaged, his friend informed him that he must conclude, as an importunate spirit was present interrupting him at every moment, in her anxiety to communicate herself. The strange spirit accordingly gave her communication, and requested it to be read at the Conference. In substance it was as follows:

I hope the friends will not censure me for my over anxiety. Do spirits communicate with individuals for the purpose of injuring them?—There was a time when I came to earth for the sake of injuring those who had injured me. I was a medium and received injury at the hands of another. I came back for revenge, and succeeded. I turned others away from him; I destroyed his peace of mind. My state of mind is now changed. The smile of the Father induced me to look up, and to rise above my passions. But injury will return upon him who has inflicted it. Farewell, I have now done with all discordant things.

The first spirit then commented on the circumstance as follows: It may be taken to illustrate several points. 1. It shows you that we are subject to annoyances and interruptions the same as you are. 2. That the mind of an injured party can inflict injury on another. 3. The possibility of reform, of a change of heart, after passing death. 4. It dissipates that fatal panacea that there is no such thing as an evil spirit. But deal justly, love mercy, and you shall find happiness and peace.

DR. GRAY: How far, independent of words do we influence one another? Much, both as individuals and as communities. When Paul saw the man of Macedonia, who cried, Come over and help us, his reading of the passage was, that the Macedonian brother was full of the desire, and that the two came in rapport so that Paul saw him.—He once came in such rapport with a patient of his, who was dying in New Jersey. He saw his patient dimly, the patient saw him clearly.—Such cases are numerous. There are thousands of them on record, where a dying person, anxious to see some individual, comes in rapport with him, and thus announces his decease; and this will account for the numerous apparitions seen on such occasions. Contagion is spread by the same law; and by the same is a health sphere disseminated. A gentleman of his acquaintance telegraphed a message sixteen miles by impression. The man's wife, at the end of the line, was a medium, and choosing the hour when he supposed they would be at dinner, he exerted his will to impress her. They were at dinner; and the wife turning to her husband, said, Mr. —— says you need not hire those men, etc. The husband wrote down the message and noted the time, and the next day came to inquire about it. Two-thirds of the misery of society, and all of the pleasure, arise from this law. Two persons will get half through a quarrel before they speak at all. When they do speak, it is found that one is a match and the other powder.—All political commotions are transferred in this manner. They are contagious. Every reformer in this room comes in contact on the soul plane with every other reformer, and altogether they stand opposed to the tyrants of Europe. There is no such thing as soul distance.

Mrs. SPENCE: She thought it in her power to demonstrate the influence of feeling, and its extent. [She called attention to a suffering family, for whom a small purse was at once made up.]

Mr. L.: An uncle of his recently died, an old man between seventy and eighty. He dropped off without any apparent disease. There was something remarkable in his death which he would state. He was a quaker. He had been sinking some time when he apparently died.—After a little while, he opened his eyes and began to talk. He said death was not as painful as he supposed. What they had taken for painful struggling, was only muscular contraction. etc. He talked freely of the Spirit-world, in which he seemed to be, and remained in this condition without external food, for *seven weeks*. When pressed to eat, he would reply, that he had just eaten of delicious milk, fruits, etc. They moistened his lips occasionally with fluids, but this was all. He suffered no pain, and finally passed away so quietly that the time of his departure was not noticed. J. R. O.

Correspondence.

Letter from Dr. Gardner.

Spiritualism in Europe—Mr. Owen's Forthcoming Book—New Mode of Communication—The Harvard Committee—What makes the Raps? Return, &c.

LONDON, MAY 5, 1859.

EDITORS OF THE SPIRITUAL AGE:—Presuming that you, in common with the readers of your paper, among whom I can count many near and very dear personal friends, would like to hear of my present whereabouts, and of my journeyings since I left Boston on the 23d of March last, I have concluded to ask of you a brief space in your columns, through which to inform them and you, not only in regard to matters personal, but also in regard to the progress of the great truth of intercommunication between the mundane and spiritual worlds, in the countries of Europe.

It may seem strange to you and your readers, to write of the progress of *Spiritualism* in Europe, when, but a few months since, through the columns of the *immaculate*, *liberal* and *truth-telling* Boston *Courier*, Prof. Felton, on his return from a brief visit to these shores, informed the readers of that paper in general, and the citizens of America in particular, under the imposing head of "The last Gasp of Necromancy," that Spiritualism was absolutely dead and buried in Europe, and that it was in its dying struggles in America. Yet, in plain contradiction to the learned savan's assertion, I affirm, from what I have personally seen, and from information derived from gentlemen occupying high positions in society, both here in England and in France, that there has never been a time when so much attention has been given the subject as at the present. True, it is not loud-mouthed in its manifestations, and there are no public efforts put forth, by public lecturers or mediums; but, like the still small voice, it is working its way into the hearts of the people, particularly of the upper classes of society; and many persons who occupy very high and responsible positions in governmental matters, both in England and in France, as I am assured by those who know, are deeply interestsd in the subject. Indeed, learned professors in the highest institutions of learning in this country, do not consider the subject either a "stupendous delusion" or its advocates "impostors or fools," or that its tendency is to "destroy the truthfulness of man or the purity of woman;" but have, on the contrary, manifested an earnest desire to give the whole subject a careful and candid investigation, whenever opportunities for so doing have been presented.

Shortly after my arrival in London, I had the pleasure of forming the acquaintance of the Hon. Robert Dale Owen, late United States Minister at the court of Naples; and I was happy to learn from himself, what I had before heard by report, that he "is about publishing a work upon Spiritualism." The work is to be entitled, "The Probabilities of Ultra Mundane Communication." But this work will only include, incidentally, a notice of the spiritual phenomena of the present day. Mr. Owen has had no opportunity to witness the more startling and convincing phenomena denominated spiritual, as he has been absent from the United States some five years; and we have been much more highly favored than any other people with these manifestations in all the variety of forms in which they are presented. In the conversations I had with him upon the subject, I learned that the work he proposes to publish will take a very wide range, and will be chiefly of a historical character. He has been studying in connection with it the physiology of the Nervous System; also such subjects as Insanity, Hallucination, the Mental Epidemics of Europe, and the doctrines of Mental Physiology as published by Abercrombie, Holland and Bishop. A main portion of his work will relate to the question of the reality of Apparitions, and of Dream-revealings, independent of modern spiritual phenomena. It will also contain an inquiry, based on actual narratives, running back through the entire last two centuries, whether there are any actual phenomena underlying the popular ideas in regard to haunted houses. It will treat further upon the various phases of Sleep, Dreams, Somnambulism, Hypnotism, Ecstacy, and of the alleged possessions and obsessions of the Catholic Church.

Mr. Owen has witnessed some of the phases of Phenomenal Spiritualism; and I have no doubt he will treat the subject fairly, candidly and impartially, so far as his observation has gone. But in Naples, where he has been for the last five years, it is not probable (as above stated) that he could have witnessed the most convincing phases; and even in London and Paris, where he has spent the past winter, he can have seen little compared to what he might have witnessed in his own country. Mr. Owen also seems to me to be of that severe and somewhat skeptical cast of mind which often requires, for anything contrary to preconceived opinions, evidence of a character which from the nature of the case it is exceedingly difficult to furnish. Yet I am satisfied he will use every effort to make himself thoroughly acquainted with all the multifarious phases of the modern phenomena as soon as he returns to America. Mr. O. told me that nine tenths of his book would consist of matters of fact which he has collected with much labor and expense, and which will always be of great value as a book of reference, independent of all theories. His familiarity with the French and German languages has given him access to many sources of information with which we in America are little familiar. From my conversations with him I should judge that his religious opinions have either been misunderstood or that he has materially changed them within the past few years. I venture to predict for his work a very large sale, particularly among the opponents of Spiritualism; and I hope also the friends of the cause will give it a careful perusal, as from it much valuable information may be obtained, tending to throw light on the subject of the miracles (so-called) of the past as well as those of the present. I have no doubt but the forthcoming volume will be productive of much good, if only by encouraging inquiry and promoting discussion. It will be published in November, in the United States.

In Paris I witnessed a method of communication of which I had not heard in America. The instrument used by them they call a *Planchette*. It requires two mediums to use it, and the method of communication is by writing. In order to give you some idea of the interest taken in the investigation of the subject in Paris, it will be only necessary to state that I called upon the manufacturer of the above-mentioned instrument, to purchase one to take home with me, and he informed Mr. Owen, who was with me, that he had made and sold *several hundred in Paris alone*. And when it is considered that each instrument requires at least two mediums to operate it, and one answers for a circle or entire family, you will at once perceive that thousands in that city alone, are in constant intercourse with the spirit-world. So much for the assertion of Prof. Felton before referred to.

Not being able to speak the French language, I could not enjoy the society of the household of faith as I could have done under more favorable circumstances; yet on visiting in a family where the *Planchette* was used, the invisible intelligences found no difficulty in writing in my own native tongue, bringing forcibly to my mind the recorded doings on the day of Pentecost. In England I have met with several mediums in private families and find that the unseen ones who have gone before, have opened many channels of communication through which they can come to the loved ones of earth, bearing messages of love and good will, and the assurance of a more glorious hereafter.

By the way, I came near forgetting to advise the far-famed Committee of Investigation of Harvard College—Professors Pierce, Agassiz, and Dr. Gould—to purchase Mr. Owen's book; as peradventure they may, through his researches, learn how *those raps were made* through the mediumship of Mrs. Brown and her sister, Miss C. Fox, at the Albion rooms, in June, 1857, and which Prof. Agassiz pledged his word to fully explain to those present before the close of the investigation, but which, it is needless to say, he failed to do—as all other learned (or ignorant, I care not which,) pretenders have, who have allowed themselves to make such rash promises. *How were the raps made?* and where is that report that was promised to soon follow the *immortal* award? are questions that are often asked by the public, and to which no one has a better right to demand an answer than myself.—Gentlemen, as a representative of the four or five millions of American citizens whom you so grossly slandered in the concluding sentence of your award, I do demand an answer. Shall I have it?

I will add that the above questions would not have been propounded in this letter, had not the subject been so often brought to my mind since I have been in Europe, by intelligent persons putting to me the same questions.

I will only say in conclusion, that since I left Boston my health has been *very* much improved; and I expect soon to return, renewed in strength and inspired by a strong confidence in the heaven-appointed ministry of Angels, to do battle in the future as I have done in the past, against the combined powers of learned ignorance, bigotry and sectarian intolerance, by doing all in my power for the advancement of the cause of Spiritualism in its true and divine sense.

I expect to sail from Liverpool, either in the Cunard Steamer America, for Boston, on the 21st, or in the City of Washington for New York, on the 25th inst—probably in the latter. Possibly I may not be able to finish my business so soon, and be obliged to await the sailing of the next steamer for Boston, on the 4th of June.

Fraternally yours, H. F. GARDNER.

From Canada West.

EDITORS AGE:—We love a generous enthusiasm—that force of character which imbues a man with magnanimous zeal in all aspirational efforts. What odds to us his profession? if honest in his convictions, and independent in their observance, that man is made in heaven's truest mould. He is our brother in Truth, and all else are fawning sycophants. This is our mete-yard of a true soul—mutual honesty to God and self. It implies justice to each and all. Our ideal man is not ultimate perfection, for that is beyond our measurement. But he *aims* at the complete rounding of character—for "we should study to be as perfect as possible."

To be content with what is already attained is to fold our hands and irresolutely sit in the dead past; to look into the yesterdays with a blank, unmeaning gaze. But still more repugnant is the idea of spending an *Eternity* in sluggishness. No heroic impulses to warm the soul into deeds of noble daring, and but an isolated hope to gratify *endless negative happiness*. As we believe in enthusiasm, so we hold to *action* as the main-spring of life.

With earnest John Wesley, we hold that "there is a real influence of the spirit of God," and also an imaginary one. The one produces dignity of action; the other, dogmatism and narrowness. One liberalizes, the other formalizes. Need the false enthusiasts be pointed out? They who with oracular lips pronounce their creed perfect, and all else untrue, who see the skies beyond shrouded in darkness, and no longer fresh inspirations lighting the way of our humanity. They dread innovation. And every great soul, struggling for a still higher altitude has had to encounter the attacks of such. To quote the words of Wesley, as particularly applicable to our own time: "Many suppose themselves to be under that influence" (the spirit of God,) "when they are not; when it is far from them. And many others suppose they are more under that influence than they really are. Of this number, I fear, are all they who imagine that God dictates the very words they speak; and that consequently, it is impossible they should speak anything amiss, either as to the matter or manner of it. It is well known how many enthusiasts of this sort have appeared during the present century, some of whom speak in a far more authoritative manner than either St. Paul or any of the Apostles."

No true man will allow another to stand 'twixt him and his God. Of this class was John Wesley, and it is to be regretted that so many of his pretended followers have so radically mistaken his character. It seems to me the creed is no part of the true man's aspiration—rather his limitation. It localizes—forms his boundaries. Unless his creed takes in the vast universe, he must needs go beyond it to satisfy his aspiring nature. And SPIRITUALISM, above all other organizations, if such the new dispensation may be termed, seems best calculated to give the fullest development to individual character, and thus purify the life-current which throbs in the SOCIAL WHOLE.

THE NEED OF TRACTS.

We need missionaries to awaken the mass to a newer life. And inasmuch as there are so few who feel inclined or prepared to devote their energies to the work of evangelization, other instrumentalities must be made to supply in a measure this deficiency. Few pamphlets have been issued. Books are too expensive for the many who are yet unacquainted with Spiritualism. There should be more cheap tracts published. Cannot a tract Society be organized to aid in the dissemination of liberal principles; giving, in brief, the facts,—and treating of the philosophy of the New Movement? By such simple means one hundred may be reached where ten are now—and the good work progress as it should. There is no lack of condensed matter to supply material for this sort of cheap reading. I might specify "The Philosophy of Inspiration," "Observations on Fate and Free Agency," "Management of Circles," "Spiritualism and its Corrollaries," "What is the True Philosophy of Reform," "Spiritualism as an agency of Reform," (all of which have appeared in the AGE), and many others well adapted to introduce rational ideas and uproot irrational ones.

TITHING.

The organ of one branch of the Methodist church in the Provinces, advocates in very pointed terms the system of tithing—"believing that his (God's) claim upon AT LEAST ONE TENTH of the product of our labors, is just as absolute as upon one seventh of our time." And to make a still more positive "impression," cites the "terrible visitations of Providence upon the ancient Jews for their skepticism in this matter. "More than once," says this print, "it brought upon them blasting and mildew, the locust, the caterpillar, the canker worm and the palmer-worm—the armies which God marshalled against them, and by which he took vengeance upon them. In the same style, the American Bible Union appeals for funds to forward the publication of the New Version, to wit: "in the name of the Lord." I put these on record as queer specimens of Christian (?) propagandism.

TAXATION OF AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS.

The question recently came before the House relative to imposing a duty upon books and periodicals published in the U. S., and which were brought to the Provinces. There was a unanimity of sentiment except upon religious books—some in favor of exempting all such from duty—and others, only the Bible—all however agreeing that it should be free from taxation. What magnanimous legislators! living in a world of manifold scientific and religious truths, they are able to give a "free pass" to merely a *pocket edition* of "His Will and Testament to Mankind."

PROPHECY OF DEATH, PREMONITIONS, ETC.

It is related of Mrs. Margaret Taylor, lately deceased in Toronto, that she died in the precise fulfillment of the time prefixed by her daughter (then a child of five or six) fifteen years since.

An elderly lady "dreamed" of the death of her granddaughter which occurred a few days afterward. The child was apparently healthy at the time of the prevision.

A Mrs. ——, now living with her third husband, saw in a vision the death and burial of her first husband, which occurred about one year after.

Mrs. S——, of Detroit, an English lady, gave me the following (to her) singular premonition of death. She had shortly returned from a visit, some sixteen miles distant, to her afflicted mother. At the time of their last earthly parting the invalid was convalescing, and promised to return the visit as soon as able. *She punctually fulfilled the promise.* On the night of her mother's decease, as subsequently ascertained, Mrs. S. was summarily raised twice in her bed by something beyond her own control, and made to assume a sitting posture, each time having an infant babe in her arms. Addressing her husband, and saying she was sure this indicated a death, he advised her to go to sleep, as it was a mere fancy. But it proved otherwise.

HOW THE ANTI-SPIRITUAL PRESS STULTIFIES ITSELF.

I send you the *Ladies' Repository* (Cincinnati), a magazine which, as you will see, with others of the "religious" press, takes radical ground in opposition to Spiritualism. But in the same number Spiritualism is both enforced and abused. The well-written chapter on "Guardian Angels" covers in brief much of the ground of spiritual intercourse.

The beauty of our doctrine is also forcibly illustrated in this sweet little incident which gently rebukes the infidelity of the paper I clipped it from. I found it in the Toronto *Christian Guardian:*

"'*We'll all meet again in the morning!*'—Such was the exclamation of a dying child, says the Newark *Mercury*, as the red rays of sunset streamed on him through the casement. 'Good-bye, papa; good-bye! *Mamma has come for me to-night;* don't cry, papa! We'll all meet again in the morning!' It was as if an angel spoke to that father, and his heart grew lighter under his burden."

Spiritualism is false or it is true. We believe it is true, and are not willing to *rudely dismiss the angels*, to suit the caprice of any class. The *Repository* and *Guardian* reject the *heresy* but *entertain the angels*, evidently unawares. We laud the *virtue* of their mistake, and pity the error of their inconsistency. With much respect,

Yours, &c., CHAS W. RICHARDSON,

HOWARD PLACE, Kent Co., C. W.

Miss Doten at Springfield.

EDITORS OF THE AGE:—That effective and very acceptable trance speaker, LIZZIE DOTEN, occupied the platform at Hampden Hall, on Sunday, May 8, and also on the Sunday succeeding, speaking four times on as many different subjects, increasing in interest to the last. Her subjects in the order of delivery were: Human weakness, Retribution, Progression and Spiritual gifts. Her utterances throughout, whether self-prompted or poured through her organism by other intelligences, came from a source richly imbued with charity, truth and goodness, exhibiting an earnestness such as can only flow from a profound conviction of the truth and deep-felt importance of its acceptance by mankind; revealing a heart warm and palpitating with world-wide philanthropy, embracing the whole of humanity; not forgetting the beaten and bleeding slave in the rice swamps of the South, nor the miserable being in our gutters at home here in New England.

That the lecturer labored to be logically accurate throughout the protracted discussions was evident: and it was equally evident that the labor was not in vain. The language was uniformly well-chosen, and the accompanying gesticulations quite unexceptionable. The listeners were made to feel that all wrong doing was bad investment, and that to escape the consequences of our acts was utterly impossible—that no vicarious atonement could help us in the least; that sin was no cheap affair, and that retribution was as inevitable as the ocean tides; that all seeking for 'spiritual gifts,' except for *use* and *good*, for spiritual elevation and benificent purpose, was abortive and mischievous; that man's past was the prophecy of his future; that there could be no prophecy without a previous history; that human improvement all along the pathway of the ages indicated prophetically the greater improvements yet to come, until man, though he may have, through weakness or wickedness, gravitated to the 'lowest hell,' yet the shining way of upward progress was ever open above him; and when the aspiration stirred within him, as sooner or later it must, to attain to a higher and better life, and he hears the Father's voice from on high calling to him through the hosts of intervening media to 'come up hither,' he will begin to climb the glorious, though sometimes rugged ascent, until he reaches the sublime heights, whose summits lose themselves 'amid the splendors of the empyrean.'

The effort had the clear ring of the true gospel metal in it, and produced a most salutary effect. Especially was this true of the closing lecture, which was given to quite a full house.

One ingredient of great importance in the sum total of the means of LIZZIE DOTEN'S effectiveness as a public speaker, is the predominent influence of the *religious* element in her ministrations.

Nothing is more obvious to me, than that man is constitutionally a religious being; and no one who desires to influence his fellow men to make progress in moral and spiritual culture, can afford to ignore, or lightly esteem this fundamental element in the human constitution.—Notwithstanding the objections which philosophy can raise against what, for want of more knowledge and a wider comprehension, we call a Supreme Individual Intelligence, and Universal Parent, the swelling heart of humanity impelled by its *intuitions*, will, either through philosophy and reason, or *over* them, leap to grasp the idea, all incomprehensible as it is, of an eternal self-existant GOD, possessed of infinite perfections; the great Parent of all, full of that love to all, which is constantly drawing as with a magnet the affections of all intelligent beings to their wondrous source.

So it seems to me. But I have no idea of going into a metaphysical discussion on this subject. I have no adequate qualification therefor.—Still less do I wish to dogmatize. I took my pen mainly to tell your readers that LIZZIE DOTEN has just given us a series of lectures on spiritual matters, very much to our edification and comfort; and also to say, that though we have heretofore had able lectures from gifted media on spiritual subjects, yet for general coherency, logical strength, style of delivery, effectiveness of appeal, and practical importance of the subject-matter of discussion, the lecturer in question, has not been excelled. Yours truly, for a useful Spiritualism,

SPRINGFIELD, MASS, May 17, 1859. E. W. TWING.

Spiritual and Psychical Phenomena.

Why am I a Spiritualist?—No. IX.

A PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCE.

Fourteenth day of December, eighteen hundred and fifty—how well I remember that day! It gave into life my darling Mary. It was a cold day, cheerless and uncomfortable. I was riding across the prairies of northern Illinois, between Dixon and Mount Carroll. All at once I felt a strange sensation steal over me, unlike the usual sleepiness of a ride in the cold. There was a sort of stupor on me that seemed to benumb my nature. I became alarmed, and got down and ran on the ground. In fact I tried every possible means to throw off the lethargy, but to no purpose. I then put whip to my horse and hurried through to Mount Carroll. As I drove up to the door I met the Landlord, who asked with some surprise what was the matter. I made but little answer; but called for a bed and retired.

Soon I was asleep. I dreamed that I was at home, and that my wife gave me a beautiful little girl. I dreamed that Dr. H., Mrs. C., and my mother and sister were present. In fact, every particular connected with the birth of my child was presented to me as tangibly as though I had been present. The usual congratulations were passed and the mother was complimented by her friends.

I awoke from my dream. I slept again and dreamed the same thing over, with this addition—that there was a serious unpleasant feeling cast over all present, and then a deathly paleness passed over the features of my wife; and great uneasiness was manifested for her welfare. I awoke again, and looked about the room to see if I was alone. Soon I slept for the third time and dreamed again the same thing but with another addition, which was this—I thought the spirit of a fair being I once knew in the earth form stood by, and assured me that there was no danger; but that my wife would recover and live for many years.

The dream was so vivid and clear that I had confidence in it, and wrote home the next morning how all things had terminated, and that my wife had given birth to a daughter.

On my arrival at Galena, some four or five days after, I found letters from home confirming my dream in every particular, save the deadly paleness and extreme sickness. The next day I went on to Mineral point, Wisconsin. It was a wet, cold, snowy day—just such a time as one dislikes to be out in. On my arrival I put up with Bro. Skinner; and while sitting by the fire, with all my faculties in a reasoning condition, and thinking at the time of matters foreign to my family affairs, all at once I saw myself entering Abbot's Hotel, Platteville, Wisconsin (some twelve miles from Mineral Point). My apparition or second self went forward to the fire, took off my over coat, shook the snow from it, handed it to the porter and turned back to the fire. At this moment a man entered the Hotel and enquired if Wilson, the book agent, was there. "Yes," I said, "what do you want?" "Here is a telegraph for you; and it brings sad news." I saw myself take and open it, and then I read as follows, calling the attention of those in Mineral Point to what I was reading at a distance of twelve miles, as follows:

"Mr. E. V. Wilson;—Come home at once. Your wife is dying.

W. W. DANENHOWER."

This telegram was from Chicago, and forwarded by Mr. D. I ordered my horses at once, and drove as rapidly as possible to Plattville, entered the hotel all covered with snow, took off my Coat, shook it and gave it to the porter, and turned round to speak to Mr. Abbot, the landlord. I heard my name called by a stranger who at that moment entered the office. I responded, and he said, "Here is a telegraph for you."

"Yes," I said, "and it contains news that my wife is dying." And then I read the message, as written above.

It was opened in the presence of many witnesses, and found to be a verbatim reading of the dispatch.

I then replied, "It is all well. My wife will live; but I will go home."

On my arrival at home, I found my wife very low, and her life despaired of by her friends. Yet I knew that she would get well; and she did; but it was after an illness of six month's duration.

What is this most potent power, that brings the soul out from the temple in which it dwells and conveys to the brain a matter-of-fact communication, at a distance of hundreds of miles, vividly and truthfully portraying every circumstance, seeing with the Spiritual eyes as though the natural organs were present? What is it, but the spirit triumphing over the physical—the spirit moving independent of the physical man,—demonstrating to a certainty that man is dual in his nature?

E. V. W.

THE SPIRITUAL AGE.

BOSTON, NEW YORK AND CHICAGO, MAY 28, 1859.

LETTERS RECEIVED.—H Cummins, T Marshall, J W Willard, J C Matthews, M Johnston, F L Wadsworth, A W Hall, W Chase, E W Twing, E H Goulding, J C Wallace, L Jay, L Moody, E Hardinge, C Martin, T Bingham, A C Entwerk, J H Rhodes, A F Chatfield, J F Hoyt, M Sperry, J Weller, S Niles, B Cuthbert, L Washburn, A Howell, J C Patterson, S Cook, H B Ingalls.

SPECIAL AND PERSONAL.

Note from M. V. Bly.

EDITORS SPIRITUAL AGE.—Having read a note in your paper of May 14th, from Mrs A. L. Coan, concerning an exhibition which I gave in connection with her at the Melodeon, Boston, a short time since, I feel "impressed" to give a brief and truthful account of the affair alluded to, believing that many of your readers desire to know the truth and have all *humbugs* exposed.

A day or two before the exhibition alluded to I visited Mrs. Coan, at her rooms, and desired to have a "sitting." She said "conditions" were not *favorable*. I then commenced a conversation with her, after giving my name. She said she had given up spiritualism, and that if she appeared before the public again it would be as an *exposer*. I suggested that *we* should give a combination exhibition in the Melodeon, as it would be likely to *draw*. She was much pleased with the idea, consented, at once, and suggested that provided it worked well we should run it two nights, and on the second evening she would publicly *renounce* and then accompany me to New York, where she was sure *we* would draw large audiences. The exhibition at the Melodeon was well attended, and the following morning I paid her *twenty-seven dollars*, (one-half of the nett proceeds) though I performed all the *labor*. She was more than *pleased*, and asked if she did not play it well! I said "yes." and that if she did as well the next night she should have a *leather* medal. She assured me she would be on hand. Although in her note she intimates that she did not intend to appear the *second* evening, yet at the close of the first exhibition she assured the audience she would be present the next evening, and sent a note that she was "indisposed," as a reason for non-appearance; that I could do more than herself or any other medium, &c. As I did not desire a *partner* in business, (especially one so liable to become "*indisposed*") and believing that an *expose* from *her* would not be palatable to either spiritualists or skeptics, I declined farther connection with her, and hence her note that she will continue to operate as a "medium." I should not have related the particulars of my *private* interview with "Ada," had she not been so extremely unkind to me in her *note*. After I had procured for her, (in time of need) twenty-seven dollars, but refusing to co-operate farther with her, she says she was "disgusted" with the exhibition. She did not appear "disgusted," the morning after, when I paid her the *twenty-seven dollars!* I cannot believe that the "note" originated with *her* alone.

I will say, in conclusion, to the readers of the *Spiritual Age*, (the only spiritual paper, I believe, willing to give a hearing to a skeptical brother) that I am still a believer in the spiritual *philosophy*; believe it to be the most consistent and rational with regard to a *continued* existence, but am opposed to "bogus mediums," who perform for a *price*, and, "conditions" being favorable, I will pursue them and expose their iniquities, until they retire in "*disgust*" from the field. Yours, respectfully,

BOSTON, May 23d, 1859. M. V. BLY.

S. B. BRITTAN will lecture in Milford, N. H., Sunday 29th; Lowell, Mass., Sunday June 5th; also Monday evening 6th: in Taunton, Mass., on the second and third Sundays in June (12th and 19th); and in Putnam, Conn., the fourth Sunday in June (26th).

Mr. Brittan is expected to remain in each of the places named above, from three to five days, next succeeding his appointment, during which time he will continue his lectures in the places mentioned, or visit other places in the several neighborhoods wherever his services may be engaged.

WARREN CHASE lectures in Kalamazoo, Mich., May 29th; Grand Rapids June 2d, 3d, 4th and 5th; Grand Haven, 9th and 10th; Milwaukie, Wis., June 12th; Chicago, Ill., 19th and 26th; Berlin, Ohio, (at a Grove Meeting) July 1st, 2d and 3d; Geneva, O., July 10th; Conneaut, Ohio, 13th and 14th; Buffalo, N. Y. 17th and 24th; Rochester, July 31st. The friends in New England who want him to lecture in the Fall should write him soon at the before-named times and places.

L. JUDD PARDEE may be addressed at the Fountain House, Boston. He speaks at Milford Sunday the 29th; at Newburyport June 5th; and at Plymouth June 19th.

A. B. WHITING may be addressed at Brooklyn, Mich., till further notice.

GEO. ATKINS will speak in Orleans, Mass., on Sunday, May 29th.

LORING MOODY will lecture as follows—Marlboro, Sunday May 29th; Feltonville, 30th; Berlin, Tues., 31st; Clinton, Wed., June 1st; Leominster, June 2d and 3d; Fitchburg, Sunday June 5th; Lunenburg, Tues. and Wed., 7th and 8th; Shirley Village, 9th and 10th; South Groton, 12th; No. Chelmsford, Tues. and Wed. 14th and 15th; Tyngsboro', Thursday and Friday. 16th and 17th; Milford, N. H. Sunday 19th. He will act as agent for the AGE and BANNER; and also answer calls to lecture. Address, Malden, Mass.

Miss EMMA HARDINGE will lecture for the rest of May, at Worcester, New Bedford, Lowell, Concord, Newburyport, and during June at Portland and Oswego. Miss Hardinge's engagements are completed for the Summer months, and in September she commences her tour West, North, and South; applications for these sections to be addressed to her residence, 8 Fourth Avenue, New York, until October and November, which months she has promised in St. Louis and Memphis, Tenn

H. P. FAIRFIELD, Trance-speaking Medium may be addressed at Greenwich Village, Mass.

F. L. WADSWORTH speaks May 29th at Taunton; June 5th and 12th at Quincy; 26th at Marlboro. Those desiring his services during the week can address this Office.

H. L. BOWKER, Natick, Mass, will give lectures on Spiritualism and its proofs, from intuition, for such compensation above expenses as generosity may prompt.

Mrs. J. W. CURRIER will answer calls to lecture. Address Lowell, Box 815. She will speak as follows:—Milford, N. H., May 15th; East Stoughton, May 29th; Foxboro, June 5th and 12th; Springfield, June 19th and 26th; Putnam, Conn., July 3d and 10th. She will stop a few days in each of the above places, and will sit for *tests* of spirit power, by trance, clairvoyant, and physical manifestations.

G. B. STEBBINS speaks on Sundays through the year at Ann Arbor, Mich.; and will answer calls to lecture in that vicinity in the week.

N. FRANK WHITE can be addressed until the middle of May at Beloit, Wis.; he will lecture through the month of June at St. Louis; from there to Cincinnati, then east. Any calls for week evenings can be addressed to him there; calls east of Cincinnati should be addressed him at St. Louis to give time for the appointments.

Mrs. M. MACOMBER, trance-speaker, will receive calls to lecture. Address at Otneyville, R. I. 17—3m*

Mrs. M. speaks at Putnam Ct., May 29th and June 5th.

Mrs. FANNIE BURBANK FELTON will lecture in Baltimore, Md., the five Sundays of May. Friends in the vicinity of Baltimore wishing to engage her services for week evenings, during her stay in that place, will address Willard Barnes Felton, Box 944, Baltimore, Md.

Miss A. W. SPRAGUE speaks at Portland, Me., the first four Sundays in May. Her address through the month of June will be Plymouth, Vt; through July and August she will speak at Oswego, N. Y.

Rev. JOHN PIERPONT will receive calls to speak on Spiritualism. Address, West Medford, Mass.

PRIVATE COURSE OF INSTRUCTION

In Vital Electricity, Electro-Physiology, Animal Magnetism, Psychology, Mental Telegraphing, Etc.

The rapid progress of Spiritualism in this country has awakened a wide-spread and constantly increasing interest in those sciences which are founded on an observation of the phenomena and laws of the Imponderable Agents, and especially on their Relations to Vital Motion, to Sensation and to Thought, as well as to the several physiological and psychological changes they are capable of producing, illustrations of which are daily occurring in the ever-varying conditions and aspects of Human Nature.

In the judgment of the undersigned the present time calls for *A Course of Familiar Instruction* in which the important facts and essential principles involved in the subjects referred to may be properly classified, and so explained as to render them familiar to the common mind. Thus we may render our knowledge useful by such a practical application of the same as shall preserve the physical, mental and moral harmony of the individual.

To this end the undersigned will organize and instruct *Private Classes* wherever his services may be engaged for this purpose.

The course of private instruction will comprehend the Relations of Vital Electricity to the Organic Functions; Philosophy of Health and Disease; how to distinguish, by the observation of External Signs, the Positive and Negative forms of Disease; *how the mind may renovate or destroy the body;* how to apply this power to the treatment of the sick; how to resist frost and the atmospheric changes; how to guard against Contagion; how to relieve pain and remove Disease by equalizing the Nervous Forces and the Arterial Circulation, without waiting for the slow process, and the doubtful results of the ordinary methods; the scientific application of Electricity and Magnetism as Remedial Agents; influence of physical, mental and moral states on organic formation and character; the *modus operandi* whereby the senses of one person may be controlled by another; the process of inducing the Magnetic Sleep and the Clairvoyant Vision; how to perform all the so-called Psychological Experiments, including Mental Telegraphing at a distance, &c. &c.

Address S. B. BRITTAN, New York City, or Newark, N. J.
</ant

Interesting Miscellany.

A CURIOUS INCIDENT.

A gentleman of fortune and station, in Ireland, was one day walking along the road, when he met a very old man, apparently a peasant, though well dressed, and looking as if he had on his Sunday habiliments. His great age attracted the gentleman's attention the more, that he could not help wondering at the alertness of his movements, and the ease with which he was ascending the hill. He consequently accosted him, inquiring his name and residence; and was answered that his name was Kirkpatrick, and that he lived at a cottage, which he pointed out. Whereupon the gentleman expressed his surprise that he should be unknown to him, since he fancied he had been acquainted with every man on his estate. "It is odd you have never seen me before," returned the old man, "for I walk here every day."

"How old are you?" asked the gentleman.

"I am one hundred and five," answered the other; "and have been here all my life."

After a few more words, they parted; and the gentleman, proceeding toward some laborers in a neighboring field, inquired if they knew an old man by the name of Kirkpatrick. They did not; but on addressing the question to some older tenants, they said, "Oh, yes;" they had known him, and had been at his funeral; he had lived at the cottage on the hill, but had been dead twenty years.

"How old was he when he died?" inquired the gentleman much amazed.

"He was eighty-five," said they: so that the old man gave the age that he would have reached had he survived to the period of this rencontre.

This curious incident is furnished by the gentleman himself, and all he can say is, that it certainly occurred, and that he is quite unable to explain it. He was in perfect health at the time, and had never heard of this man in his life, who had been dead several years before the estate came into his possession.—*The Night Side of Nature.*

The Prisoner's Experience.

The following passage is from Count Gonfalniere's story of his imprisonment:—"Fifteen years I existed in a dungeon ten feet square! During six years I had a companion; during nine I was alone! I never could rightly distinguish the face of him who shared my captivity in the eternal twilight of our cell. The first year we talked incessantly together; we related our past lives, our joys forever gone, over and over again. The next year we communicated to each other our thoughts and ideas on all subjects. The third year we had no ideas to communicate; we were beginning to lose the power of reflection. The fourth, at the interval of a month or so, we would open our lips to ask each other if it were possible that the world went on as gay and bustling as when we formed a portion of mankind. The fifth we were silent, the sixth he was taken away—I never knew where, to execution or liberty. But I was glad when he was gone; even solitude was better than the pale, vacant face. One day (it must have been a year or two after my companion left me) the dungeon door was opened, and whence proceeding I knew not, the following words were uttered:

"'By order of His Imperial Majesty, I intimate to you that your wife died a year ago.'

"Then the door was shut, and I heard no more; they had but flung this great agony upon me and left me alone with it."

The Labeled Reformer.

The labeled refomer can be found otherwhere than at anti-slavery anniversaries. We meet him in the street, and in society sometimes, where he may be recognized not only by the peculiar cut of his coat, and the peculiar look in his eye, but by the acerbity of his tones, and the venom of his words when he speaks of church, state, or individuals. He is on very bad terms with the universe, and he believes it to be his especial mission to set it to rights. Nothing suits him except his own great theory of reform. As a theorist he is expansive, benevolent, philanthropic, perhaps,—as an individual, he is narrow, dogmatic, self-conceited, selfish and wild, for certain. In the establishment of his system of reform he sees the only salvation of the race. If they reject his theory, they may be damned for all he cares. He can build up philanthropic plans on a universal scale, which may redound greatly to his glory; but the little and obscure ways of doing good,—by making life a blessing to the wayfarers whom he meets in his daily path,—is altogether too small business for him. But he is always talking of benevolence, philanthropy, liberty,—these being the amiable names which he gives to his own all devouring egotism.

Summary of the Parsee Religion.

The whole foundation of the Sacred or Religious works of the Parsees is built upon three significant terms, viz: *Homute, Hookhte*, and *Vuruste*, which mean *purity of speech, purity of action*, and *purity of thought*. This is the moral of the Parsee religion, and on it the whole structure of the Zend Avesta is raised. The first point of the Parsee religion is to recognize and adore Ormuzd, the master of all that is good, and the principle of all righteousness; and the second, to detest Ahriman, the author of all moral and physical evil. The charge brought against the Parsees, that they worship the sun, water, and air, is not true; and they themselves repel the charge with indignation. They worship *before* fire, considering light as the purest emblem of the Deity, and they therefore do not really deserve the title of "fire-worshippers;" but the Parsee, in accordance with this idea, is directed to turn his head toward the fire or the sun, as the most proper symbol of the Deity. Therefore the Parsees are not idolaters; they are pure monotheists, worshipping one God.

Solomon's Judgment.

Some time since, one of your correspondents desired to know a parallel to Solomon's judgment. One occurs in Gesta Romanorum. Three youths, to decide a question, are desired by their referee, the King of Jerusalem, to shoot at their father's dead body. Only one refuses, and to him as the rightful heir, the legacy is awarded.

In Harleian is a similar story, told as occurring in the kingdom of Pegu; one woman's child was carried away by an alligator; she and another woman claim the child; they are desired to pull for it; the infant cries, and one instantly quits her hold, and the judge awards the child to her.

The former incident was frequently quoted in the pulpit. The Emperor Claudius, when a woman refused to own her son, ordered them to be married. The mother confessed her child at once. Probably this is the incident for which the inquiry was made.—*Notes and Queries.*

A Mass Fit for a Pope.

At the convent of St. Laurent, about a mile out of Rome, there is a privileged altar—that is to say, every mass said at this altar has the privilege of drawing one soul completely out of purgatory. It consequently enjoys a great reputation, and is much sought after by the faithful. One day the abbot found his convent six thousand masses in arrears—that is, he had received payment for six thousand masses at a crown each more than had been said. He repaired to his holiness Gregory XVI., and begged him, since he was omnipotent, to grant that a single mass should draw the whole six thousand souls out of purgatory. The pope considered awhile, then wrote a rescript to the desired effect. The abbott embraced the feet of holy father, expressed his gratitude, and was about to retire, when Gregory XVI. called him back, saying—"A mass of six thousand crowns; such a mass is fit for a pope; I will say it myself;" and, in verity the following morning he repaired to the convent of St. Laurent, performed the mass, and the abbot had to hand him over the six thousand piastres, equal to about six thousand dollars.

A sick man, slightly convalescing, recently in conversation with a pious friend congratulating him upon his recovery, and asking him who his physician was, replied, "Dr. Jones brought me through."

"No, no," said his friend, "God brought you out of your illness; not the doctor."

"Well may be he did, but I am certain the doctor will charge me for it."

For the Family.

THE GARDENER'S DAUGHTER.

You have all, doubtless, heard of Frederick the Second, of Prussia. He is known among the people of that country as our "old Fritz," and his statue on horseback, stands at the entrance of the noble Linden Avenue, in Berlin. Frederick had a wife, Queen Elizabeth Christina, of whom the following anecdote is related:

On a beautiful summer's day, as the queen was pacing up and down the beautiful walks in her palace garden, enjoying the perfumed air, and from time to time pausing to look at the lovely flowers, or listen to the singing birds, she saw upon the grass a little child, playing with the long stalks and clover heads. This was the daughter of one of the gardeners, a little girl about five years old.

The queen approached the child silently, watched her play a few moments, and finally spoke to her. The child replied modestly, but fearlessly, to all the questions asked her. She was, besides, a very lovely-looking little girl. The queen was so much pleased with her that the very next day she sent one of her ladies to bring her to the palace.

The parents were quite astonished; but they dressed the child in her Sunday clothes, and gave her into the charge of the queen's waiting-maid.

When the little girl reached the palace the queen was just about sitting down to dinner. She, however, gave orders that the child should at once be brought to her. Stroking her fresh, rosy cheeks, she had her placed upon a chair by her side, whence she could overlook the whole of the glittering and abundantly laden table.

The kind, good-hearted queen wanted to hear what the child would say when she saw the costly gold and silver vessels, and all the other pretty things adorning the royal table. She enjoyed in anticipation the delight of the innocent girl, which she presumed would be displayed in ordinary childish fashion, and joyful, wondering exclamations. But all turned out very differently from what she expected.

The little one sat a moment quite still and solemn. Then she cast her eyes over the glittering scene before her. But no cry of astonishment followed this survey. On the contrary, the child looked quietly down upon the table, folded her tiny hands, and, in tones sweet and childish, but loud enough to be heard throughout the whole dining hall, recited a prayer with a simplicity and devotion that affected the whole party.

Surely the good old custom of asking a blessing at table must still have been practised in the pious gardener's house, and this little verse had been the daily prayer of the good little girl. As the food was already placed upon the royal table, and all eyes were turned upon her, the child naturally thought they wished her to say the blessing, and devoutly repeated her touching prayer.

When she had finished, no one spoke for some time. All present were greatly surprised. It really seemed as if God himself, through these innocent lips, had spoken to this brilliant assemblage of high-born lords and ladies.

One very old lady was the first to break the silence, saying: "O! the happy child! How much we may learn from her!"

From that day she was richly provided for. The ladies and gentlemen present sent her from time to time valuable gifts, and the queen herself took pains to see that she received such an education that the good seed sown by her excellent parents ripened and brought forth most precious fruit.

A Miscalculation.

Last Sabbath evening, a gentleman of this town had made arrangements to spend the evening with a friend, but on going home, his wife insisted upon his accompanying her to church, and taking with them their child, a boy of three years. As a matter of course he went, but, was much dissatisfied with the arrangement, and while on the way was busy conceiving ways and means to dodge. At last he hit it. During the first prayer he would pinch the boy—the boy would squall, then, as a matter of course, he would be obliged to take him home, and then he would be free the remainder of the evening. It worked to a charm, with one trifling exception. He pinched vigorously, the lad bawled lustily, and his progenitor started out hastily, but unfortunately, just as he was leaving the pew, the infant shrieked in a tone sufficiently loud to be heard half way across the church, "*Mamma! Papa is pinching me!*" The look of commingled cuteness and satisfaction, on the face of the pincher, changed in an instant to one of painful sheepishness as he subsided into his seat and braced himself for the coming sermon.—*Bucyrus Journal.*

YOUNG PHILOSOPHY.—A little girl showing her little cousin, (a boy about four years of age,) a star, said:

"That star you see up there is bigger than this world."

Says he, "no it ain't."

"Yes it is."

"Then why don't it keep the rain off?" said the little fellow.

Try to let everybody's faults be forgotten, as you would wish yours to be.

Poetry and Sentiment.

THE REFORMER.

All grim, and soiled, and brown with tan,
I saw a Strong One, in his wrath,
Smiting the godless shrines of man
Along his path.

The Church beneath her trembling dome
Essayed in vain her ghostly charm:
Wealth shook within his gilded home
With strange alarm.

Fraud from his secret chambers fled
Before the sunlight bursting in:
Sloth drew her pillow o'er her head
To drown the din.

"Spare," Art implored, "yon holy pile;
That grand, old, time-worn turret spare;"
Meek Reverence, kneeling in the aisle,
Cried out, "Forbear."

Grey-bearded Use, who, deaf and blind,
Groped for his old accustomed stone,
Leaned on his staff, and wept, to find
His seat o'erthrown.

Young Romance raised his dreamy eyes,
O'erhung with paly locks of gold:
"Why smite," he asked in sad surprise.
"The fair, the old?"

Yet louder rang the Strong One's stroke,
Yet nearer flashed his axe's gleam;—
Shuddering and sick of heart I woke,
As from a dream.

I looked: aside the dust-cloud rolled—
The Waster seemed the Builder too;
Up-springing from the ruined Old
I saw the New.

'Twas but the ruin of the bad—
The wasting of the wrong and ill;
Whate'er of good the old time had
Was living still.

Calm grew the brow of him I feared;
The frown which awed me passed away,
And left behind a smile which cheered
Like breaking day.

The grain grew green on battle-plains,
O'er swarded war-mounds grazed the cow;
The slave stood forging from his chains
The spade and plow.

Where frowned the fort, pavilions gay,
And cottage windows, flower-entwined,
Looked out upon the peaceful bay
And hills behind.

Through vine-wreathed cups, with wine once red,
The lights on brimming crystal fell,
Drawn, sparkling, from the rivulet head
And mossy well.

Through prison walls, like Heaven-sent hope,
Fresh breezes blew, and sunbeams strayed,
And with the idle gallows rope
The young child played.

Where the doomed victim in his cell,
Had counted o'er the weary hours,
Glad school-girls, answering to the bell,
Came crowned with flowers.

Grown wiser for the lesson given,
I fear no longer,—for I know
That, where the share is deepest driven,
The best fruits grow.

The outworn rite, the old abuse,
The pious fraud transparent grown,
The good held captive in the use
Of wrong alone—

These wait their doom, from that great law
Which makes the past time serve to-day;
And fresher life the world shall draw
From their decay.

Oh! backward-looking son of time!
The new is old, the old is new,
The cycle of a change sublime
Still sweeping through.

So wisely taught the Indian seer;
Destroying Seva, forming Brahm,
Who wake by turns earth's love and fear,
Are one, the same.

As idly as, in that old day
Thou mournest, did thy sires repine,
So, in his time, thy child, grown grey,
Shall sigh for thine.

Yet, not the less for them or thou
The eternal step of Progress beats
To that great anthem, calm and slow,
Which God repeats!

Take heart!—the Waster builds again—
A charmed life old goodness hath;
The tares may perish, but the grain
Is not for death.

God works in all things; all obey
His first propulsion from the night:
Ho, wake and watch!—the world is grey
With morning light!

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

THE GRAIN OF MUSK.

I dropped a single grain of musk
A moment in my room;
When years rolled by, the chamber still
Retained the same perfume.

So every deed approved of Truth,
Where'er its lot be cast,
Leaves some good influence behind
That shall forever last.

Our sorrows are like thunder-clouds which seem black in the distance, but grow lighter as they approach.

It is as easy to deceive ourselves without our perceiving it, as it is difficult to deceive others without their perceiving it.

THE SPIRITUAL AGE:

FOR 1859!

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 of Reform. In a word, it is the design of the publishers to give their patrons, in the fullest sense,

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The Miscellaneous Department, without presenting any of the trashy "sensation" literature now so much in vogue, will be enriched with spicy, stirring and instructive tales and sketches from the most popular sources, original and selected; with a variety of choice matter designed to meet the wants of both the heart and mind. Good taste and a high moral tone will always be observed.

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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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H. L. BOWKER.

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P. S. A good Spiritualist for a tenant would be preferred.

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