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“ Know

The Gnostic

Thyself.”



Vol. I.

July, 1885.

No 1.

Published and Edited by
George Chalmey and Anna Kimball,
1003 1-2 Broadway,
Oakland, - - California.

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Though for the present I am lecturing every Sunday in San Francisco, it is my purpose, when my work is done here, to make a tour through the entire country. Correspondence is solicited with all who would like me to visit their respective towns or cities. For terms and particulars, address,

GEORGE CHAINEY,
Oakland, Cal.

TESTIMONIALS.

COL. ROBERT G. INGERSOLL says: "Mr. Chainey is one of the best thinkers in this country. He has a wonderful command of language, is full of imagery, comparison, antithesis, logic and beauty. He feels what he says with his whole heart, and perceives it with his entire brain. He is perfectly honest, and for that very reason is intellectually keen. Downright honesty in such a man is genius. He gives a true transcript of his mind, and gives it with great power. His lectures stir me like trumpets. They are filled with the loftiest spirit. Eloquent, logical and poetic, they are as welcome and refreshing as the breeze of morning on the cheek of fever."

"Mr. Chainey is a large, well-formed though round-shouldered man, wears no beard, and in these days of crops would be called a long-haired man. He has a big head and a broad face. He is an orator. His eloquence is his chief fascination. His periods are models of oratorical beauty, and though ordinarily unimpassioned, he occasionally becomes intensely strong in his dramatic effects. He is singularly graceful of gesture. His methods inspire one with a conviction of his honesty. His elocution is masterly. His voice is magnetic, powerful, flexible, very pleasing. He would make a famous actor."—*Scranton Daily Republican.*

"Mr. Chainey has great ability, a most vivid imagination, and a vast poetical capacity, a marvelous power for word painting, a command of the choicest flowers of rhetoric that language can furnish, together with high moral culture, a generous disposition and a loving heart."—*Charles Watts.*

THE G N O S T I C.

“Learn to know all and keep thyself unknown.”

VOL. I.

JULY, 1885.

No. 1.

WALT. WHITMAN.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: The subject of this lecture has been now for many years the object of the highest praise and the deepest censure.

Revered and worshiped as a God by some; feared and hated as a devil by others.

Let me confess to you at once that I speak to you as one of his friends and most ardent admirers.

The purpose of this lecture is neither to detract nor villify, but to interpret and justify.

I wish, however, to perform my task without prejudice. To do this, I must present the position of foe as well as friend.

The great work of his life has been the production of a book of poems, called “Leaves of Grass.” Various attempts have been made to suppress the publication of this book, in the interest, so called, of common decency and morality. The *London Critic* says: “Its author deserves nothing so richly as the public executioner’s whip. The depth of his indecencies will be the grave of his fame.” The *New York Criterion* says: “We leave this gathering of muck to the laws, which certainly, if they fulfill their intent, must have power to suppress such obscenity. It is impossible to imagine how any man’s fancy could have conceived it, unless he were possessed of the soul of a sentimental donkey, that had died of disappointed love.”

The *Boston Intelligence* says: “This book should find no place where humanity urges any claim to respect, and the author should be kicked from all decent society, as below the level of the brute.”

The *Boston Post* says: “Grass is the gift of God, for the healthy sustenance of his creatures, and its name ought not to be desecrated by being so improperly bestowed upon these foul and rank leaves of the poison plants of egotism, irreverence, and of lust run rampant, and holding high revel in its shame. It is a blasphemous deification of self, and a defiance of Deity; its liberty is the wildest license; its love the essence of the lowest lust.”

The *Cincinnati Commercial* says: “Its author has undertaken to be an artist without learning the first principles of art, and has presumed to put forth poems, without possessing a spark of the poetic faculty.”

The *London Literary Gazette* says: “Of all the writers we have ever perused, Walt. Whitman is the most silly, the most blasphemous and the most disgusting. If we can think of any stronger epithets, we will print them in a second edition.”

Some one by the name of Peter Bayne, writing in the *Contemporary Review* says: “The book is inflated, wordy, foolish; its originality a knack, a trick; that it is extravagant, paradoxical, hyperbolic, nonsensical, indecent, insane, dull, vile, nauseous drivel; brainless—a poor piece of mannerism wretchedly worked—rant and rubbish—a jingle—linguistic silliness—verbiage—quackery, and hopelessly bad writing.”

Much more of the same kind of condemnation might be given; but remember that these detractions were mostly written by penny-aliners; literary hacks, pot-house scribblers vile in heart and life, who, probably, were too obscure in their own lives to understand the nature of purity when they saw it, and never

dreamed that art and poetry take on new forms in brains of every original genius.

Let us look at the other side of the picture: Joaquin Miller, in a lecture in Washington, said: "Here, in this high Capitol, there was once a colossal mind; an old, and an honorable old man, with a soul as grand as Homer's—the Milton of America. He went up and down at work here for years; you mocked at him when you saw him. At last, stricken with palsy, he left the place, leaning upon his staff, to go away and die. I saw him but the other day—dying, destitute—grand old Walt. Whitman. Even now he looks like a Titan God. Don't tell me that a man gives all his youth and all his years in the pursuit of art, enduring poverty in the face of scorn, for nothing. That man shall live—he shall live when yon mighty dome of your Capitol no longer lifts its rounded shoulders against the circles of time."

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote: "I am not blind to the worth of the wonderful gift of 'Leaves of Grass.'" I find it the most extraordinary piece of wit and wisdom that America has yet contributed. I am very happy in reading it, as great power makes us happy." A long letter continues in this strain, at the close of which he says: "I greet you, at the beginning of a great career."

Leonard Wheeler writes: "O pure heart-singer, of the human frame divine, whose poesy disdains control of slavish bonds; each poem is a soul incarnate, born of thee, and given thy name. Thy genius is unshackled as a flame that sunward stars, the central light its goal. Thy thoughts are lightnings, and thy numbers roll in nature's thunders that put art to shame. Exalter of the land that gave thee birth; though she insult thy grand gray years with wrong of infamy, foul branding thee with scars of felon hate, still shalt thou be on earth revered, and in fame's firmament of song thy name shall blaze among the eternal stars."

Frank W. Walters writes in papers for the *Times*, London, England: "At last, he for whom we looked has come. America has found voice—the teeming life of that wonderful new world has risen into song—the infant civilization can now boast a true born poet of its own. If Greece had its Homer—if England had its

Chaucer—so, now, America has brought forth the first born of, we believe, a long line of glorious bards such as the world has never seen before. This American singer brings us a new Gospel which transfigures flesh into spirit—changes mechanical duty into living impulses, and makes life rhythmic as the tides, pulsating as the heart, moving in its orb like a star. A gospel which reveals time's full atonement for all the sin and suffering of the world, which takes the darkness from mortality and shows death as a beautiful white-robed angel—a gospel which baptizes our changeful existence into one perfect and abiding life—and points, for every life, to the vast heritage of immortal progress."

Mrs. Gilchrist, of England, writes: "I had not dreamed that words could cease to be words and become electric streams like these. Wives and mothers will learn through this poet that there is rejoicing, grandeur and beauty there, wherein their hearts have so longed to find it; where foolish men, traitors to themselves, poorly comprehending the grandeur of their own or the beauty of a woman's nature, have taken such pains to make her believe there was none."

Bronson Alcott says of him: "He is greater than Plato." Thoreau, after seeing him, said; "He is Democracy." Tennyson wrote him words of cheer and an invitation to visit him at his home in England. Buchanan, Arran Leigh, Joaquin Miller, Swineburne, and other poets, have written beautiful verses in his praise. It is utterly impossible to find any man or book that has been at once so cried up and down, as Walt. Whitman and "Leaves of Grass." Is day, night? White, black? Gold, dross? Honey, sour? Music, discord? Wisdom, folly? Truth, false? Good, bad? Beauty, deformed? One certainly must believe all this before he can, in the face of such praise, coming from the greatest and best, give credence to the vile slanders of his detractors. But, now, let us turn to the book itself. At the commencement I read:

"I strike up for a new world;
Creeds and schools in abeyance retiring back
awhile,
Sufficed at what they are, but never forgotten,

With accumulations, now coming forward, in front, arrived again, I harbor for good or bad—

I permit to speak, nature, without check, with original energy.”

When a man announces his mission to the world in such words as these, he deserves audience of every one who has thrilled to the hope that life is full of untried possibilities.

Walt. Whitman deserves our attention because he is the poet of to day. It might seem nearer the truth to speak of him as the poet of the future. But he has come to his own and they received him not. The world still builds the sepulchers of the prophets whom their fathers stoned. No poet of our time has been so coldly received, and yet there is no heart that beats so full and respondent to the life of the living present, as that of Walt. Whitman. The critics, as they always do, refuse to acknowledge him a poet, because he wrote by no rule of rhyme or verse, made legal by hoary antiquity. He dared to write in his own way. Instead of asking what the books taught, he sought to find out what the great teacher—Nature—had to say. He read his lines beneath the stars, in the presence of the mountains, misty-topped, and to the far-sounding, immeasurable laughter of the sea. I think he must have learned his style principally from the sea. For though in his verses there is all the irregularity of the waves, yet through their greatest turbulence and gentlest whisper runs a sweet and solemn strain of music that stirs the heart to its innermost depths.

There is an order of truth, of thought, in Whitman's lines that transcends all mere beauty of form or expression. There seems to be no order in the stars above us as we gaze upon them with the naked eye, and yet, as astronomy teaches us, there is the most wonderful harmony and precision in their movements. But though to our sight they seem to have been scattered haphazard over the sky, yet are they not as a grand poem—an epic, thrilling us with unutterable emotion? Are we not weary of the forms, creeds and ceremonies imposed upon us by the past? Does not the true heart of to-day yearn to express itself in its own way? Millions still bear the manacles of yesterday, but,

beneath the most petrified conservatism, methinks I hear a smothered cry for liberty. Where is there any enthusiasm for ancient customs? Walk along the streets and observe the people going to their several churches. Is there any sign that their hearts outstrip their feet? Do they look like people filled with the expectancy of glad tidings? When did you see a minister enter a pulpit or hear him proclaim his doctrine as though he had the remotest idea that he actually had a message of hope to deliver to mankind? Nearly all the devotees of the church are bound by a law that does not satisfy their desire. They present their creeds and ceremonies to a weary world as a salvation from hell, when what they proclaim is often hell itself. Hell is bondage—Heaven is liberty. Hell, means to be held down, Heaven, to be heaved up. To illustrate: A circus has come to town. Your wife has told your little girl she can go—see her fly along the streets—she is made of down, you would think she had wings; her feet hardly seem to touch the ground; her tendency is upwards—the sky attracts her—she is heaved up. In other words she is in heaven. You meet her, and, on learning where she is going, command her to go home, and forbid her going to the circus. Where now is her lightness? See her, as she turns toward home. Her head hangs down, a weary load to carry. She can hardly lift her feet off the ground—she is held down—in other words, she is in hell. Behold the people going to church or the minister entering the pulpit—observe the bowed heads, and the feet that cling to the ground as though loaded with irons. They are in hell. They are slaves to forms and ceremonies that bind them to the dead past, while their hearts are craving liberty. I find a beautiful significance in the very title of this work.

Other poets had sung of the pomps and shows of courts and chivalry. But Walt. Whitman has taken up the common, unpoetic realities of every-day life—its roaring democracies, its secular avocations; its roughs and outcasts; its passions and imperfections, and shown their relation to all that is high and grand in the life of humanity.

Even as we tread the grass lightly under

our feet, without thinking how much of our happiness is mixed up with its humble life, so has he shown us how all the plants of our life and joy strike root into, and depend upon, the tabooed parts of ourselves and the despised portions and conditions of society. I do not mean that his sympathies are confined to these. He rejects no one, high or low. Humanity, to him, is a brotherhood. He deals with the same *en masse*. Hence he exclaims:

"I am of old and young;
Of the foolish as much as the wise;
Regardless of others, ever regardful of others;
Maternal as well as paternal;
A child as well as a man;
Stuffed with the stuff that is coarse, and stuffed
with the stuff that is fine."

Is not this the true lesson set us by to-day? Are not the hearts of all men being knit together in the widening sympathies of common fellowship of want and injustice? Are not aristocracies shrivelling into ashes before the warm glow of the heart of the people? The conviction that is slowly coming into power, ever growing stronger with the widening sympathies of our hearts, is that the poor fellow down there in the deep coal mines would enjoy a sight of the blue sky as well as any Czar, King, or President; that the poor seamstress up there in the garret, might, perhaps, better appreciate the opera, than the wife of the millionaire, whose heart, through the worship of the golden calf, has become as echoless to music as to flint; that, while a Czar has the power to kill any one of eighty-five millions, it may possibly be the duty of one out of that eighty-five millions to kill him.

This is the gospel of to-day. If some of you know nothing of God, you can see and know men and women. Our hearts are made to love them—we can share their joys as well as sorrows. How full for us, of unrealized possibilities, are the words, love, friendship, brotherhood and humanity. How beautiful is life when devoted to the happiness of others. What is there in the whole range of human thought worthy to be considered equal to the happiness of one human heart? While this is the lesson that is being set us in a thousand ways to-day, it will only be fully learned to-

morrow. Think of the millions that still listen to the preachers who drone into their ears the threadbare arguments that are supposed to prove the infallibility of the Bible, and the divinity of the Christian religion; as if truth was anything that could hang for two thousand years on a balance of probabilities.

The real, essential right and truth is that of which you cannot, by any possibility, entertain a doubt. Does any one doubt my right and yours, each, to be happy in our own way, providing we do not infringe upon the same right of some one else? Can you stand beneath the stars and believe that this infinite universe was ever spun on the loom of time, out of the fabric of nothing? Can you go into the fields in spring and gather the first violets, and still believe in hell? Can you gaze upon the unspeakable beauty of the mountains bathed in purple light, or listen to the music of the sea, and then go back to church and sing:

"I am washed in the blood of the Lamb."

Or,

"Hark! from the tomb a doleful sound."

Whitman is not only original in manner, but equally so in matter. He is the first poet of true democracy. He believes in the right of every one to be and belong to himself. Hence he says:

"I say discuss all and expose all, I am for every topic openly.

I say there can be no salvation for these States without innovators;

Without free tongues, and ears willing to hear the tongues.

And I announce, as a glory of these States, that they respectfully listen to propositions, reforms, fresh views and doctrines from successions of men and women.

Each with its own growth—

With one man or woman (no matter which one) I even pick out the lowest—

With him or her I now illustrate the whole law.

I say that every right in politics or what not shall be eligible to that one man or woman on the same terms as any."

He demolishes all the distinctions drawn by the church between saint and sinner, and by the state between man and man, voicing that

inarticulate yearning of the human heart for love and friendship that shall finally blossom into universal devotion of all to each and each to all.

Democracy, with Whitman, means something far different than it does with the politicians. With them it means, you do all the voting and we'll do all the ruling—you shout yourself hoarse over liberty and we'll enjoy it, and amuse ourselves with seeing how near you will become our slaves without knowing it—you make the money and give it to us to spend. With Whitman it means that if there are any that are wise they are to use their wisdom for the good of all. It means that if there are any strong it is their duty to defend the weak. It means that if there are any who can see what is beautiful, or create it out of themselves, they are to consecrate that power to the happiness of mankind. It means that if there are swift-winged angels of light who can see into the future, or work miracles of deliverance from evil, that it is their bounden duty to do it. It means that it is the highest duty of God to love and serve us, instead of its being ours to love and serve Him. The mountains of the earth receive the rains and hold the snows, that they may pour them down into the parched valleys in the summer. The mother is wise and strong to care for her child, not the child for the mother. The orthodox church puts the babe in the place of the wise and strong parent.

In demanding that man serve God instead of himself, orthodoxy makes God like those lazy, vicious people who send their little children to work in the factories or to beg on the streets, in order to support them in idleness. If repentance and belief will save us why does not God repent and believe for us as well as die for us. The command of the church—believe or be damned—is, to many, like chaining a starving man within sight of food, but out of reach of it, and then cruelly beating him for not eating it. Taking from us all power of being good and then condemning us for not being good, is aptly illustrated in the boy who, having killed his father and mother, pleaded with the judge for mercy, on the ground that he was a poor orphan.

Whitman teaches us that the world is to be

saved *en masse*, or not at all. Hence he says:

“Why should I pray?
Why should I venerate and be ceremonious?
In all people I see myself,
None more and not one a barleycorn less,
And the good or bad I say of myself I say of
them.
I know I am solid and sound,
To me the converging objects of the universe
perpetually flow,
All are written to me, and I must get what the
writing means. * * *
I chant the chant of dilation, or pride.
We have had ducking and deprecating about
enough,
I show that size is only development.
Have you outstript the rest?
Are you President?
It is a trifle, they will more than arrive there,
every one, and still pass on.
I am not the poet of goodness only,
And I do not decline to be the poet of wicked-
ness also.
What blurt is this about virtue and about vice?
Evil propels me and reform of evil propels me,
I stand indifferent.
My gait is no faultfinder's or rejecter's gait,
I moisten the roots of all that has grown.”

He not only stoops to the lowest of the human, but even descends to the animal world, exclaiming:

“I think I could turn and live with animals,
They are so placid and self-contained.
I stand and look at them long and long.
They do not sweat and whine about their con-
dition,
They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for
their sins;
They do not make me sick confessing their duty
to God;
Not one is dissatisfied,
Not one is demented with the mania of owning
things,
Not one kneels to another nor to his kind that
lived thousands of years ago,
Not one is respectable or unhappy over the
whole earth.
So they show their relations to me and I accept
them,
They bring me tokens of myself,
They evince them plainly in their possession.”

These lines are so pregnant with thought, so full of the greatest and most important truth, that I feel as though it would be an insult to you to stop and commend them to your hospitality.

Whitman preaches a practical gospel, though

he believes more firmly than any one in the soul and its immortality, yet he does not lose sight of the great fact that you must be saved physically, before you can be fully redeemed spiritually. This is why he says:

"If any thing is sacred, the human body is sacred,

And the glory and sweet of a man is the token of manhood untainted,

And in man or woman, a clean, strong, firm-fibred body, is more beautiful than the most beautiful face.

Have you seen the fool that corrupted his own live body?

Or the fool that corrupted her own live body? For they do not conceal themselves, and cannot conceal themselves.

I believe in the flesh and the appetites;

Seeing, hearing, feeling, are miracles;

And each part and tag of me is a miracle.

Divine am I, inside and out,

And I make holy whatever I touch or am touched from;

The scent of these armpits, aroma finer than prayer;

This head more than churches, bibles and all the creeds."

Many good people under the teaching of the church, thinking the soul is all, have been thoroughly shocked at such extravagant laudation of the flesh. I find also a disposition on the part of some Spiritualists and reformers to slight this all-important truth. What cadaverous, nervous, wheezy, dyspeptic saints some of them are through this neglect.

Now, if Spiritualism teaches me anything, it is that, before we can have a healthy spiritual life, we must be sound and sweet physically. I do not think we can enter into our full spiritual inheritance until we have built a perfect body.

I believe that those who go out of this world imperfect, will have to return in some way until they have made atonement or at-one-ment between body and soul. There is a soul-body as well as a physical body, and that soul-body will correspond with the physical. It is the recognition of this truth that leads Whitman to say:

"Was somebody asking to see the soul?

See your own shape and countenance;

Persons, substances, beasts, the trees, the running rivers, the rocks and sands,

All hold spiritual joys and afterwards loosen them.

How can the real body ever die and be buried? Of your real body, and that man's or woman's real body, item for item,

It will elude the hands of the corpse-cleaners, and pass to fitting spheres,

Carrying what has accrued to it from the moment of birth to the moment of death."

I said just now, no man has more faith in immortality than Whitman. I have talked with him long on this subject, when I, myself, was in doubt, and found that he was perfectly indifferent to the thought of death, looking upon it as a luckier thing to die than to be born, feeling quite sure that all life continues. This faith is so lavishly and strongly expressed in his poems that I cannot forbear quoting some of these victorious strains:

"I need no assurance, I am a man who is pre-occupied of his own soul.

I do not doubt that, from under the feet and beside the hands and face I am cognizant of,

Are now looking faces I am not cognizant of, Calm and actual faces.

I do not doubt interiors have their interiors,

And exteriors have their exteriors,

And that the eyesight has another eyesight,

And the hearing another hearing,

And the voice another voice.

I do not doubt that the passionately-wept deaths of young men are provided for,

And that the deaths of young women and the deaths of little children are provided for.

Did you think life was so well provided for,

And death, the purport of all life, is not well provided for?

I do not doubt that wrecks at sea,

No matter what the horrors of them,

No matter whose wife, child, husband, father, lover, has gone down,

Are provided for to the minutest points.

I do not doubt that whatever can possibly happen anywhere, at any time,

Is provided for in the inherences of things.

I do not think life provides for all, and for time and space,

But I believe heavenly death provides for all.

O living always, always dying!

O the burials of me, past and present.

O me, while I stride ahead, material, visible, imperious as ever.

O me, what I was for years, now dead.

(I lament not, I am content.)

O to disengage myself from those corpses of me, which I turn and look at where I cast them.

To pass on (O living! always living!) and leave
the corpses behind.
As I watched the ploughman ploughing,
Or the sower sowing in the fields,
Or the harvester harvesting,
I saw there too, O life and death, your analogies.
Life, life is the tillage, and death is the harvest
according.
Pensive and faltering, the words, *the dead*, I
write.
For living are the dead,
Haply the only living, only real, and I the
apparition, I the spectre."

But to me, Whitman's supreme service to the world is his lofty defiance of the prurient tastes and immodest modesty of this conventional age.

In his sight, no part or passion of the body is to be slighted or regarded as vulgar. In doing this he finds it impossible to leave out of his poems the element of sex. I know of nothing that we need to pay such heed to as to what he has to say on this subject. Never will the world be saved from its sickness, pain and despair, until we take up this element of human life, and treat it as frankly, purely, and reverently as he has.

As he says:

"Sex contains all, bodies, souls, meanings,
proofs, purities, delicacies, results, promulgations;
Songs, commands, health, pride, the maternal
mystery, the semetic milk;
All hopes, benefactions, bestowals;
All the passions, loves, beauties, delights of
the earth—
These are contained in sex as parts of itself,
and justifications of itself."

Of course, in the treatment of such a subject, there must be expressions used that impure minds will prostitute to impure uses.

The fairest, purest, and most beautiful things on this earth are so violated.

As Hamlet said to Ophelia: "Be thou as chaste as ice and pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny."

We all know that depraved passions sometimes break down all the barriers of virtue, and do violence to the most maidenly chastity. It is the same low order of morals that seeks to drag into the mire the noblest thought and purest purpose of one of the best benefactors of humanity.

The spirit and purpose of Whitman are clearly revealed in the only reply he has yet made to his maligners and persecutors.

He tells us that this subject of sex has hitherto been treated of only in two ways.

The first, the conventional one of total repression and silence of good folks, creating the feeling that what cannot be spoken of must be vile, and so, by covering over disease and depletion, increasing the world's woes.

The second is the coarse, vulgar way of speaking of these things that obtains current in many masculine circles, wherein men lose their respect for woman and hold in low esteem their own manhood through learning to take delight in vulgar stories.

Alas! We all know that this is true. Thus the parlor and the bar-room have formed a partnership for the propagation of vice.

The first doubt lodged in my mind against the claims of the Christian church and ministry was the first time I spent an evening in the company of three ministers. I expected, innocently, that the conversation would be on the subject of religion and touching the advancement of the church. To my surprise and horror they spent the whole time in regaling one another with smutty yarns.

I never was made to blush so much for the company I found myself in, before or since. I soon found, however, that this was quite a common practice in the ministerial profession. At camp meetings, while one or two of their number are thundering at men and women better than themselves to repent or go to hell, the rest are secluded in their private tent regaling one another in this choice fashion.

Thinking what he might do to reform these perverted tendencies, Whitman concluded that the time had come for a full and frank statement, in loftiest and most earnest manner, of the relation of sex to the health, sanity and purity of the human race. He desired to connect it with the highest ethical expression of nature and humanity.

How nobly and grandly he has done this, none but those who read and love his poems can feel.

Most wisely does he say in this defence of himself:

"Might not every physiologist, and every good physician pray for the redeeming of this subject from its hitherto relegation to the tongues and pens of blackguards, and boldly putting it for once, at least, if not more, in the demesne of poetry and sanity, as something nothing not in itself gross or impure, but entirely consistent with highest manhood and womanhood, and indispensable to both? Might not every wife and every mother and every babe that comes into the world, if that were possible, and all marriage, the foundation of the civilized state, bless and thank such service?"

"Leaves of Grass" has long been to me a sacred and inspired book. I never received from it aught save inspiration to be true to the highest and best.

When, under the instigation of that saintly scoundrel, Anthony Comstock, an attempt was made to suppress its publication, I felt my blood burn as though my mother had been insulted. I hastened at once to speak hot words of defiance against such injustice. I read in public and printed some of the condemned portions of the work. Postmaster Toby, of Boston, acting in concert with Comstock, tried to keep that issue of the paper out of the mails. I telegraphed the case to Col. Ingersoll, he called upon Postmaster General Howe, and before Mr. Toby was fairly awake he was confronted with an order from headquarters politely informing him that he was transcending his authority and commanding him to remove the embargo. The last time I saw Whitman I was glad to learn from his own lips that this action of mine had done more than anything else to help the sale of "Leaves of Grass." I shall always be proud of that service.

I readily admit that there are passages in this book not to be read in public. So there are in Shakespeare, the Bible and many other good books.

The trouble is not with Whitman or what he wrote, but with those who read. No writer ever wrote with a loftier ethical and less passionate purpose than Whitman. Read in the right spirit there is not a line in "Leaves of Grass" that is not as pure as snow.

The principal mission of a true Liberalism is to so develop the human mind and race that we can discuss all things, not only without

prejudice and bigotry, but equally without reserve or danger of arousing impure thoughts or feelings.

All honor to Walt. Whitman, the good, grey poet and nurse, who in field and in hospital tended and nursed thousands of soldiers both blue and grey, who in the face of all opposition has so bravely shown us the way.

THE IDYL OF THE WHITE LOTUS.

PROLOGUE.

Behold I stood alone, one among many, an isolated individual in the midst of a reunited crowd. And I was alone, because, among all men, my brethren, who knew, I alone was the man who knew and taught. I taught the believers at the gate, and was driven to do this by the power that dwelled in the sanctuary. I had no escape, for in that deep darkness of the most sacred shrine, I beheld the light of the inner life and was driven to reveal it and by it was I upheld and made strong. For indeed, although I died, it took ten priests of the temple to accomplish my death, and even then they but ignorantly thought themselves powerful.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

Ere my beard had come to a soft down upon my chin, I entered the gates of the temple to begin my noviciate in the order of the priesthood.

My parents were shepherds outside the city. I had never but once entered the city walls until the day my mother took me to the gates of the temple. It was a feast day in the city, and my mother, a frugal and industrious woman, thus fulfilled two purposes by her journey. She took me to my destination, and then she departed to enjoy a brief holiday amid the sights and scenes of the city. I was enthralled by the crowds and noises of the streets. I think my nature was always one that strove to yield itself to the great whole of which it was such a small part—and by yielding itself, to draw back into it the substance of life.

But out of the bustling throng we soon

turned. We entered upon a broad, green plain, upon the further side of which ran our sacred, beloved river. How plainly I behold that scene still! on the banks of the water I saw the sculptured roofs and glittering ornaments of the temple and its surrounding buildings shining in the clear morning air. I had no fear, for I had no definite expectations. But I wondered much whether life within those gates was as beautiful a thing as it seemed to me it must be. At the gate stood a black-robed novice speaking to a woman from the city, who carried flasks of water which she urgently prayed one of the priests to bless. She would then have for sale a precious burden—a thing paid dearly for by the superstitious populace. I peeped through the gate as we stood waiting for our turn of speech, and beheld a sight that struck me with awe. That awe lasted a long time, even when I had entered into almost hourly familiarity with the figure which so impressed me. It was one of the white-robed priests, pacing slowly down the broad avenue towards the gate. I had never seen one of these white-robed priests before, save on the single occasion when I had before visited the city. I then had seen several upon the sacred boat in the midst of a river procession.

But now this figure was near me, approaching me—I held my breath. The air was indeed very still, but those stately, white garments looked, as the priest moved beneath the shadow of the avenue, as if no earthly breeze could stir them. His step had the same equable character. He moved, but it seemed scarcely as though he walked in the fashion that other and impetuous mortals walk. His eyes were bent on the ground, so that I could not see them; and, indeed, I dreaded the raising of those drooping lids. His complexion was fair, and his hair was of a dull gold color. His beard was long and full, but it had the same strangely immovable, almost graven look, to my fancy. I could not imagine it blown aside. It seemed as though cut in gold and made firm for eternity. The whole man impressed me thus—as being altogether removed from the ordinary life of man.

The novice looked around, his notice at-

tracted probably by my intense gaze, for no sound reached my ears from the priest's foot-fall.

"Ah!" he said, "here is the holy priest, Agmahd, I will ask him."

Closing the gate behind him, he drew back, and we saw him speak to the priest, who bowed his head slightly. The man returned, and taking the water flasks from the woman, carried them to the priest, who laid his hand for a second upon them. She took them again with profuse thanks, and then we were asked our business.

I was soon left alone with the black-robed novice. I was not sorry, though considerably awed. I had never cared much for my old task of tending my father's sheep, and of course I was already filled with the idea that I was about to become something different from the common herd of men. This idea will carry poor human nature through severer trials than that of leaving one's home forever and entering finally upon a new and untried course of life.

The gate swung to behind me, and the black-robed man locked it with a great key that hung to his waist. But the action gave me no sense of imprisonment, only a consciousness of seclusion and separateness. Who could associate imprisonment with a scene such as this which lay before me?

The temple doors were facing the gate at the other end of a broad and beautiful avenue. It was not a natural avenue formed by trees planted in the ground and luxuriating in a growth of their own choosing—it was formed by great tubs of stone in which were planted shrubs of enormous size, but evidently trimmed and guided most carefully into the strange shapes they formed. Between each shrub was a square block of stone upon which there was a carved figure. Those figures nearest the gate I saw to be Sphinxes and great animals with human heads; but afterwards I did not dare raise my eyes to gaze curiously upon them for I saw again approaching us, in the course of his regular walk to and fro, the golden-bearded priest, Agmahd.

Walking on by the side of my guide I kept my eyes on the ground. When he paused I paused, and found that my eyes fell upon the

hem of the priest's white robe. That hem was delicately embroidered with golden characters. It was enough to absorb my attention and fill me with wonder for a while. "A new novice?" I heard a very quiet and sweet voice say. "Well, take him in to the school; he is but a youth yet. Look up, boy; do not fear." I looked up, thus encouraged, and encountered the gaze of the priest. His eyes, I saw, even then in my embarrassment, were of changing color—blue and grey. But, soft-hued though they were, they did not give me the encouragement which I had heard in his voice. They were calm, indeed, but they made me tremble.

He dismissed us with a movement of his hand, and pursued his even walk down the grand avenue; while I, more disposed to tremble than I had been before, followed silently my silent guide. We entered the great central doorway of the temple, the sides of which were formed of immense blocks of uncut stone. I suppose a fit of something like fear must have come upon me, after the inquisition of the priest's eyes, for I regarded these blocks of stone with a vague sense of terror.

Within I saw that from the central doorway a passage proceeded in a long direct line with the avenue through the building. But that was not our way. We turned aside and entered upon a network of smaller corridors, and passed through some small, bare rooms on our way. We entered at last a large and beautiful room. I say beautiful though it was entirely bare and unfurnished, save for a table at one corner. But its proportions were so grand and its structure so elegant that even my eye, unaccustomed to discern architectural beauties, was strangely impressed with a sense of satisfaction.

At the table in the corner sat two other youths, copying or drawing, I could not see what. At all events I saw they were busy, and I wondered that they scarcely raised their heads to observe our entrance. But, advancing, I saw that behind one of the great stone projections of the wall, there sat an aged, white-robed priest, looking at a book which lay upon his knee.

He did not notice us until my guide stood deferentially bowing right in front of him.

"A new pupil?" he said, and looked keenly

at me out of his dim, bleared-looking eyes. "What can he do?"

"Not much, I fancy," said my guide, speaking of me in an easy tone of contempt. "He has been but a shepherd lad."

"A shepherd lad," echoed the old priest; "he will be no use here, then. He had best work in the garden. Have you ever learned to draw or copy writing?" he asked, turning upon me.

I had been taught these things as far as might be. But such accomplishments were rare, except in the priestly schools and among the small cultivated classes outside the priesthood.

The old priest looked at my hands and turned back to his book.

"He must learn sometime," he said, "but I am too full of work now to teach him. I want more to help me in my work, but with these sacred writings that have to be copied now I cannot stay to instruct the ignorant. Take him to the garden for a while at least, and I will see about him by-and-by."

My guide turned away and walked out of the room. With a last look around at its beautiful appearance, I followed him.

I followed him down a long, long passage, which was cooling and refreshing in its darkness. At the end was a gate instead of a door, and here my guide rang a loud bell.

We waited in silence after the bell had rung. No one came, and presently my guide rang the bell again. But I was in no hurry. With my face pressed against the bars of the gate, I looked forth into a world so magical that I thought to myself, "It will be no ill to me if the bleared-eyed priest does not want to take me from the garden yet awhile!"

It had been a dusty, hot walk from our home to the city, and there the paved streets had seemed to my country-bred feet infinitely wearisome. Within the gates of the temple I had as yet only passed down the grand avenue, where everything filled me so deeply with awe that I scarce dared look upon it. But here was a world of delicate and refreshing glory. Never had I seen a garden like this. There was greenness, deep greenness; there was a sound of water, the murmuring of gentle water under

control, ready to do service for man, and refresh in the midst of the burning heat which called the magnificence of color and grand development of form into the garden.

A third time the bell rang, and then I saw, coming from among the green leaves, a black-robed figure. How strangely out of place did the black dress look here! And I thought with consternation that I should also be clothed in those garments before long, and should wander among the voluptuous beauties of this magical place like a strayed creature from a sphere of darkness.

The figure approached, brushing with its coarse robe the delicate foliage. I gazed with a sudden awakening interest upon the face of the man who drew near, and into whose charge I supposed I was to be committed. And well I might, for it was a face to awaken interest in any human breast.

(To be continued.)

OCCULT PHENOMENA AT HOME AND ABROAD.

MIND-READING.—M. Prosper Van Velsen, aged twenty-two, student of medicine at Malines, on holding the wrist, as in feeling the pulse, of a person, can tell his thoughts or where he may have hidden anything.—*Le Messager*.

MAGNETIC HEALING.—Herr V. Zimmermann, councillor of Chemnitz, Germany, has bequeathed to the municipality half a million of marks, on condition that it authorizes the foundation of a professorship, with clinical school attached, of the theory and practice of magnetic therapeutics, or treatment of disease by the natural or magnetic method.—*La Spiritisme*.

CURES BY HUMAN MAGNETISM.—Dr. Ashburner, physician to a London hospital, wrote thirty years ago, that in his own experience magnetism had eased agonizing suffering, cured cancer, rendered patients insensible to the surgeon's knife and to the sufferings of parturition, and had raised patients from typhus fever; that his own life had been saved by it after medical friends had, in consultation, pronounced him beyond recovery.

A gentleman of St. Louis, U. S. A., gives, an account of slate-writing in the light in which persons not only hear the writing but see the words as they are written—so that the progressive production of a long message could be witnessed by all present. He says: "I have often seen the medium take the slate and stand by a light, only holding it by the tips of his fingers while some one else held the other side, and long messages would come there in full view." Progress, here, as elsewhere, makes the idea of a long stay in this world the more interesting!

CLAIRVOYANCE.—Rev. Dr. J. P. Newman says: "After medical men had failed with me, my wife took a lock of my hair to a lady in New York, said to be endowed with clairvoyance, for which she received no payment. This lady, my wife told me, held the hair in her hand, went into an apparent sleep, and presently murmured, "Gall stones; he must take sweet oil and seidlitz powders." Persuaded by my wife, I swallowed a quantity of sweet oil and took seidlitz powders with the effect of passing twenty-eight gall stones. This cause of my troubles had never been diagnosed by any of my doctors. I was soon well, and am now a hearty man. When the lady who brought me this good service died, objection was raised by some clergymen to performing the rites of burial over her body. I gladly accepted the duty, and over her coffin I publicly acknowledged my debt to her. No man can explain such a mysterious mental power; but that this woman had been given some force not possessed by most mortals I do not doubt."

About a week ago, so says the report, as Miss Carrie Nutting was sitting at a small table in her father's house in the little village of Steamburg, four miles east of Randolph, N. Y., with her hands resting idly upon the edge, suddenly the table began to move, compelling Miss N., as she says, to follow it about the room. It came to a halt directly in front of a picture of her grandfather, who died some years ago. The spot at which the table stopped was exactly that in which it formerly stood when the old gentleman used it as a writing-

table. The next day, at about the same hour, the young woman was gazing out of the window, thinking over the peculiar circumstances of the previous day, when, as she explains it, a gradual lassitude took possession of her, and although she had never been known to sing, she began chanting some weird, sweet melody, which the family say they never heard equalled. As the music died away, she began repeating a poem, the words of which none of those present had ever heard. Shortly after 3 o'clock the next afternoon, while the sun was shining brightly into the window, the young woman seated herself at the table, looked steadfastly at the picture of her grandfather, and the table soon moved, and was gradually raised from the floor. After the table had ceased its wanderings, a gold ring, worn by the young woman, was mysteriously removed from her finger and dropped upon the window-sill; a series of rappings followed, and some of those present say that they received, through the medium, messages from departed friends and from people whom she could never have known.

The *New York Tribune*, whose founder was a Spiritualist, in a recent number gave the following curious statement: "Dr. Leland, who recently died in Georgia, was a great sufferer from asthma, and, to all appearances, died several times before the final dissolution took place. On more than one occasion, his family made preparations for his funeral, and a day or two before his actual death he told a remarkable story of how he witnessed the arrangements. 'Unable to lie down, I passed all my time in an easy chair. My body died several times. I, that is, my spirit, would go away from it, and, standing in an opposite corner of the room, would look back at the flesh and blood in the chair and wonder how I was ever induced to pass so many years in its company. Poor old body,' I thought, 'your troubles are nearly over. They will soon put you away under the ground, where you will be at rest forever. I saw my family gather about my old frame as it leaned back, dead, in the chair, and it gave me pain to see them weep. Then I would feel something pulling me toward my body again; I could not resist it, I was

powerless, and in a moment I had taken possession of it. Then there was an instant of pain, and I opened my eyes and breathed. Each time this was repeated I was more reluctant to return to my body."

TESTIMONY TO MR. EGLINTON'S POWER.—
To the Editor of "Light:" Sir: I think I ought to let your readers judge for me as to whether I am right or not in accepting without question "slate-writing," as done in Mr. Eglinton's presence. I have been at eight seances with Mr. Eglinton—one in public, the others in private with one other person and myself. At two out of the seven private ones absolutely *nothing* occurred. At one other only the word "No" was written to my verbal question as to whether "they" would write. The "No" was very feebly written, but I felt and heard the pencil moving about inside the slates on the table *under* my hands. At the four remaining seances I had ample writing. At three of the seances I had replies given to questions which no human eye had seen. I had writing in the hand of a deceased relative. I had slate after slate written on, *held in the air* between Mr. Eglinton and myself, and while I was *watching* the slates, I had a *slateful* written in this way in a few seconds. I had writing and replies to private questions on the locked slate, *with my hand on the top of it while the writing was going on inside*. I had writing on new slates, *never cleaned*. At one seance I had thirteen or fourteen different slates with different writings. One piece of information was not true. I was told, "There is someone here who knew you in —," a place I have never visited. All the private seances took place in the day and in full light. I was in full possession of my senses. I had seven or eight slates by me to prove that the phenomena really occurred. I can offer no explanation, but only state *facts*. Am I, after evidence like this, to say I do not believe? I cannot. I have given slate-writing a fair and ample trial, and it *is* a wonder of wonders, and worthy of the deepest and truest investigation.—I am, sir,

AN ASSOCIATE OF THE SOCIETY FOR
 PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

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GOOD IN EVERYTHING.

Nothing exists in this world alone. Each is related to all, and all to each. To-day is colored by every yesterday; while each tomorrow lies pregnant in the womb of to-day. No man acts entirely from himself. In all our thoughts, words or deeds we are influenced by the thoughts, words, and deeds of others. In the pride of our independence and individuality we say: I did it! Or, I think so and so!

The truth is, that each deed that is wrought, and each new thought that is evolved, is the combined act and thought of the entire human race.

Even then we cannot say we did it, or we think so and so, though our *we* includes all the inhabitants of this globe.

We are, beyond doubt, constantly being influenced by the inhabitants of other worlds and spheres.

Of course it is difficult to express all this in our common conversation. Still it is well sometimes to sober our egotism by taking a larger survey of the conduct of life.

If you will look closely into the motives that underly your most praiseworthy actions, you will find that they have been often caused more by your foes than your friends; or, that they owe their existence to the qualities of life in

others which you most despise and execrate.

I have often been applauded for leaving the narrow dogmatism of Methodism.

As I look back upon that eventful period of my life, I see that the credit of it is by no means all mine.

I did my best to stay in the church.

I still had more or less of faith in theology. I thought I could reform the church from the inside.

I drew to my preaching liberal-minded people.

I liberalized one church, so that the entire audience gloried in the heresy of their boy minister.

I was then, after the itinerant plan, sent to another church. Although I drew in the liberal and progressive people of the town, the church-members were too thoroughly fossilized to grow.

They scented the heresy, and appointed a private prayer-meeting in which to pray for the conversion of their ungodly pastor.

I condemned the excitement of revivals, and tried to teach them that religion was not something that God kept bottled up like drugs, to be given whenever you could get up an annual spasm or fit, but a steady and slow growth of character through the right use of all our faculties.

The first thing I heard was that a request had been sent to the Moody and Sankey meeting, in Chicago, for prayers for a revival, and the awakening of their cold and back-slidden minister to "an awful sense of his dangerous condition.

I was next waited on by the officers of the church, with the information that a union revival meeting was about to commence, and that I must take part in it.

I tried to make a virtue of necessity by resolving to keep down all excitement. Every night, when it wasn't my turn to preach, I rose to my feet as soon as the sermon was finished to give them an additional thought or two.

Those who wanted a revival, said:

Brother Jones or Brown gets the people all ready to come to Jesus, and then Brother Chainey gets up and keeps them away by making them think they are good enough already.

I kept this up until I was half dead.

I then had to be absent a few nights, but before I returned they had out a half-dozen sinners who had been converted every winter for a number of years.

I felt ashamed to walk the streets and look intelligent men and women in the face. I blushed with chagrin every moment. I was conscious of my own existence. I could stand it no longer, and resolved that, "sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish," I would make a break for liberty.

The last sermon I preached in an orthodox pulpit was in that revival to an audience that crowded the church to overflowing. It was also the last of the revival.

You see by this it was the very things I most despised that helped me out of the pit.

So I have found that sometimes those who think and speak ill of us do us more good than those who love and praise us.

MADAM BLAVATSKY.

During the last year some parties by the name of Coulomb, for a long time in the employ of Madam Blavatsky, have turned traitors and sold to certain missionaries, the enemies of Theosophy, letters purporting to come from the Madam, showing that she produced her occult phenomena by fraudulent methods. Madam Blavatsky says they are forgeries. In India those who are best able to judge still believe in her.

Now, whether true or false, these charges have done good. They have enabled the leaders of the organization to put the work of the society in its true light.

Both privately and publicly they have advised people not to pin their faith to individuals or to phenomena.

This enforces the lesson. Many who have become interested in the subject in this country are wedded to phenomena. As soon as any one appears who professes to be a Theosophist, they say, show us your powers.

They breakfast on Mahatmas, dine on Adepts and sup on the wonders of occultism. The true Theosophist, while studying the occult, will make his own culture the first end and aim

of life. The ideal of Theosophy is no doubt far in advance of its realization. Still, so far as I can see, the leaders have done their best to reach the heights.

They certainly have done great good in India. They have arrested, almost entirely, the demoralizing work of the missionaries. They have united the natives and Europeans into one society. They have awakened fresh interest in the Aryan literature. They have for the first time in the history of the world united members of all faiths into one society. They have done much, by the publication of "Isis Unveiled," "The Theosophist," the "Occult World" and "Esoteric Buddhism," to enlighten the world. They have established and maintained in India many schools for the study of the Sanscrit language and literature.

Col. Olcott on his various lecture tours has cured hundreds of people by the power of mesmerism.

I challenge any one to point out a society that has accomplished more good, and won more disciples among the best and most discriminating minds. After giving thousands of dollars to this work; after four scores of a strange and eventful life; after writing works, without which, any library hereafter must be incomplete; after being the principal founder of a society that has now upwards of two hundred branches in various parts of the world; after editing for years the "Theosophist,"—the most scholarly and profound, as well as interesting, magazine in the world; worn out with labor for her great Human Brotherhood; Madam Blavatsky has gone away into retirement, in order, if possible, during the few remaining months she has to live, to give to the world a revised edition of "Isis" under the title of "The Secret Doctrine."

A dealer in scandal and filth, a cowardly assassin of reputations, a man who, when a brother editor and Spiritualist was in prison for services to liberty, and unable to defend himself, bought up and published certain foolish letters he had written to a woman who went into his employ for the purpose of blackmailing him, and failing to do so, sold out to his enemy; a man who conducts his newspaper on the principle of blackmail; who speaks of his

brother editor in Boston, who has grown gray in honorable service to a good cause, in language that would put to shame the lowest black-guard in the country; takes great pains to import from India all, and more than all, than has been published against her. Sickening himself at the job, he has to send it all the way to San Francisco in order to have it dished up by a certain jackall, whom he generally employs to hunt carrion, and who, evidently, if that were possible has still less in his composition, of the instinct of humanity, than his master. This same creature has, since I came to San Francisco, attended every one of my lectures. I was told at first that I was highly honored by thus attracting the attention of a man of intellect; but I have long since come to the conclusion that nature produces no worse abortion than an intellect without a heart.

From the first time I saw him here, I knew he came merely as a spy. In a recent contribution to his master's Gatling gun for the wholesale murder of reputations, he tries to administer a dose of deadly poison beneath a sugar coating of praise. The most spiritual lecture I have given," he says, "is nine-tenths bosh," and glories in the discovery that the chairman of the Executive Committee coincides in this view, and thinks the boards I stand on prostituted by such lectures. Not satisfied with trying to cover Madam Blavatsky with infamy, he strikes a cowardly blow at the reputation of the lady associated with me in the publication of this journal, whose years of service to Spiritualism, and whose snowy locks certainly ought to protect her from an impure thought in the mind of the lowest and most depraved creature that bears the shape of man.

I wish to offer a word or two of advice to this person: Let me say, first, that what I have said is in no spirit of revenge. I look for just such offences. I do not think he is alone to blame. He also is subject to environment and idiosyncracies of organization. The taste of the public in its love of slander helped to call forth this unsavory dish. If the paper had contained a eulogy of the same persons it would have been in less demand. That this is so "'Tis true—'tis, true 'tis pity, and pity 'tis, 'tis true."

This person has done this thing because his organism is of the nature to invite such service—like attracts like. I would first advise him to shut up his books and study men and women for a year or two. Next I should advise him to try and get himself in flesh. He reminds one too much of Cæsar's request to Mark Anthony: "Let me have men about me that are fat; sleek-headed men and such as sleep 'o nights; Yond' Cassius has a lean and hungry look. He seldom smiles, and then in such a sort as if he mocked and scorned his spirit, that could be moved to smile at anything. Such men as he, be never at heart's ease while they behold a greater than themselves, and therefore are very dangerous."

If this living Cassius would reform himself, I would therefore counsel him to get himself in flesh. I should think by his looks that he was dyspeptic, or lived on shrimps and water-cresses.

Does he think he is without sin, and so justified in casting the first stone? I think he would be a better man if he would go and sin a little. The very filth of those who sin in good earnest would probably wash him cleaner than he is.

ANNA KIMBALL.

Not content with thus joining the hue and cry of false accusation against Madam Blavatsky, these same intellectual abortions have tried to drag into the mire and slush of their own dirty thoughts the fair life and character of the lady who has become our associate and fellow-laborer in the production of this magazine.

I have already chastised one of the offenders in the presence of a large audience until thunders of applause pressed home the brand of shame. We live in hopes that the whirligig of time will yet bless us with an opportunity to do a like service for this one's master. In the eyes of all who know her Mrs. Kimball needs no defense.

But as these words of venomous slander and false accusation have been scattered among strangers, I feel called upon to publicly explain why we are thus laboring together.

As I have before stated, I was convinced at a Spiritual camp-meeting, by numerous phe-

nomena, that life had its invisible and spiritual side as well as its material and *ov b* interests.

The question arose : Should I change the whole current of my life, and devote it to this newly discovered truth. It stirred me to the profoundest depths of my being.

I had long been in the use of more or less of stimulants. I was smoking five or six cigars daily. I threw them away at once. For the first time in years my mouth was free from a bitter taste of life.

I had long, from various causes, thought that life was not worth living, but now I was born into a new world.

The sky seemed brighter, the landscape lovelier, the flowers more beautiful, and the songs of the birds sweeter than before.

I was no longer alone. When I stood on the platform to lecture, or lay down to sleep at night, I felt gentle touches on my forehead from an invisible presence, while sweet thoughts and lofty aspirations seemed to be called forth at every touch.

Could I share this joy with others? Was this an evangel to preach, or was it only to be found through phenomena. I looked around. I saw many beautiful and lovable people. I saw, also, many repulsive and unlovable. I saw many who were evidently just as fond of whiskey and tobacco as they could be, and at the same time be tolerated in good society. I heard no end of gossip and scandal.

I found lots of bigotry and ignorance. I saw forms of mediumship that would unmake more Spiritualists than it could possibly make.

I could hardly stir away from my tent without being button-holed by some crank with a message for me from Jesus Christ, or the sun-angel.

Though my joy was beyond description, I was by no means clear as to how to order my future life.

Even after I had given in my testimony to the truth, I had many troubled thoughts as to devoting my^s life to this cause.

Could I give up old friends? Could I be willing to be numbered with the insane? Could I preach Spiritualism, and, at the same time, be perfectly free and progressive?

In looking around for help and guidance, I was led to Mrs. Kimball who had given me the most inspired and spiritual thought, as well as convincing phenomena.

She had summoned me to this work of spiritual teaching like the voice of a god.

She seemed to be the embodiment of spiritual truth and power.

I presented her all my doubts and questions. They dissolved in her presence like mist before the sun. She told me how she healed the sick in body and mind, and inspired many at a distance to reform and purify their lives.

I heard from the lips of many people how they had been redeemed from almost every form of iniquity by her inspired teaching.

She gave me sensible and rational solutions to the many difficulties I found in the various orders of mediumship.

She gave me books, and told me of the work done by the Theosophists in India, and the authors of the "Perfect Way," in London.

I saw at once that Spiritualism was only the first fruits of a great harvest of spiritual life and power, and that much of its phenomena were the fruit picked from the tree long before it was ripe; and so, instead of being good for food, simply gave people a kind of spiritual colic.

Attracted by her interpretations, I sought her presence often.

Before I knew it, the poisoned tongue of scandal was busy with our names.

I stood on the platform and rebuked it, and you might have seen it wriggling like a serpent out of sight.

From many different sources of communication from the unseen world I learned that we were ordained to work together.

A thousand unseen hands seemed to point us to one goal. Had I been false to this I should have been compelled to reject the light altogether.

I said, let us work together as comrades. Let us combine our forces for the greater good we can achieve.

We saw that offense must come thereby, but woe unto them by whom it comes.

We saw, moreover, that this is also God's plans. It is by contrast of night with day that we value the light.

It is by contrast of purity of thought and purpose, with impure thoughts and lives that purity wins.

Scandal would, no doubt, make many a dainty meal with our reputations, but it had better gorge itself with imaginary than real offences.

We knew that such had been the fate of Madam Blavatsky and Col. Olcott; of Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland; but even thus the world is saved. It puts its sins on the innocent, and then by the contrast of purity with impurity sees its own.

PROSTITUTION.

I have been charged by the chairman of the Executive Committee of prostituting the platform of the Metropolitan Temple with my Theosophical utterances. Now, prostitution is selling one's self for gold.

I have twice left a secure competency for absolute uncertainty, rather than so sell myself. While an Agnostic, I sacrificed my own financial prospects, because I was not for sale. Since I have been in the Spiritual field, I have again injured myself, financially, through my devotion to the more advanced interpretations of Theosophy. On my first return to Boston, after being convinced through phenomena, that life has its spiritual side, I was greeted with packed audiences. In my first lecture, I announced myself a Theosophist, as well as Spiritualist. At the first mention of this word many fled as though they feared I was about to inoculate them with the small-pox or leprosy. Since I have been in San Francisco, I have been constantly advised that it would pay, financially, to withhold all mention of Theosophy. I have steadily refused to do so. Whoever, therefore, says I have prostituted the platform, lies. I never yet sold myself, and, so help me God and all good angels, I never will.

INCARNATION.

"We have existed from all eternity; and hence do *not begin existence* when the body is ushered into this life. A man is not derived from a door because he enters the house thereat. A

mother is only a door through which we enter this life. We may have some peculiarities of form, expression, disposition, etc., which she or the father may have, but this proves nothing. All humanity are similar to each other, in every respect; and have, or are *liable* to have, the same misfortunes or diseases. Besides, many children are as different from parents as from other people. It seems to us that we derive strength from the food we eat. But all the power we get comes from the harmony of the body, which harmony digests that taken into the stomach, and assimilates the air we breathe, the water we drink or the light which shines upon us. Our inner self is connected with the Infinite, the source of all life, all power, and all good; and our exterior self with that which stimulates or coaxes out that which is within us, lying in a darkened or nascent state. But inharmony closes the inner door through which life comes, and food taken into the stomach of such has no life in it, and cannot impart any. All the happiness that we can have comes from health; which comes from harmony.

"To leave a part of our natures unused produces inharmonious action, which is disease. This is evil. There is no other evil in existence but this. Nothing else brings pain or sorrow and weakness. There are none weak but the inharmonious. There is no noxious or malarious air, no poisons, no deadly serpents, nor accidents for him who has the "Kingdom of Heaven" or *Harmony* complete and entire within himself.

"And this idea is corroborated by the experience of every person who has developed clairvoyance; for the angels appear subjectively, *i. e.*, from within. They are all there where God resides, in the human soul.

"All that we need is there, with bands of angels to minister to us, bringing sweet, rare flowers, and harps breathing sweetest melodies playing always before us, not before *any God, but Us.* For he who enters into the "Kingdom of Heaven" is a God, and angels minister unto him."—*F. B. Dowd, in "Mind Cure."*

In confirmation of Mr. Dowd's thought, on this subject, we have seen many cherub and seraph souls, and held them in our arms,

months and years before embodiment in matter, beautiful soul mothers accompany them and never sever the bond that unites and relates them to the soul of the child, no matter how dense the shadows around the little physical form—or how imperfect life's fruit is. They are *Light*, and illumine the physical body, as the sun does our planet, if we live naturally in harmony with our fourfold nature. There are soul mothers here whose love environs these cherub babes—clothes them with elements that prepare the way for this outermost court of our Father-Mother's Home, a new embodiment in matter. Such children are always Seers, mediative, open doors into those upper chambers of the earth where our wise ones are ever in council.

A. K.

LEAVES FROM MY LIFE BOOK.

I was a somnambulist from my earliest remembrance. Awoke often in the night standing in the dark, conscious of having had "such a lark" with invisible children. One of them was always a nut-brown, forest maid, "Menonita" or "Silver Light" as she is now named by my invisible Master. She grew up with me, and so shared her tastes with me that I was frequently costumed in scarlet, with as many bright beads on me as could be put on and escape my dear mother's notice. I was never quite happy unless I had a scarlet or "Turkey red" costume. She was ubiquitous then as now, would reveal the contents of letters, important business correspondence written in distant cities to my mother, and always correctly. From the moment they were written she knew all about them. I would get up and go down stairs the darkest nights and tell mother, and recall it all as a dream in the morning. When I had lessons to learn that puzzled and taxed me she would learn them and recite them in the class while I knew nothing of them. She could so readily blend her soul with mine she did much of my lesson learning. I could see evil, disease and falsehood as through a glass in all natures, and had not learned how the world hates truth so never concealed it and in consequence was always in hot water.

My dear mother could not understand such a child so consulted the clergyman who visited us, who always declared I was the daughter of Satan and must be punished to release me whenever I had such "spells." This she had not the heart to do, as a sleeping child was scarcely responsible she thought, but still she felt in some way this Satanic influence must be driven out, so she gave me cream of tartar and

jallop almost weekly until I was twelve years old to expel the devil.

I speak of these experiences in order to call the attention of mothers to the importance of understanding the psychic laws which underly them. Many such children are coming into the world at the present time. If rightly understood and trained these gifts might be made of untold value to the world. They are the windows through which the stars of heaven shine into our dark night of materiality. They are the instruments which, when rightly tuned, might report to duller ears the sweetest music of paradise. In olden times when the children of earth and heaven, the mortals and the immortals, communed often together, such children were received with royal honors. They became the sybils and chief oracles of the temple. Wars and dangers of all sorts were often avoided by their soul prescience to feel and report the shadows of coming events. The story of the White Lotus, commenced in this number will give some idea of the value once set on these spiritual gifts. It will also show how they were destroyed by a corrupt and selfish priesthood. The present priestly class is alike opposed to such powers because they well know that all such are the true priests, and that if these gifts should ever be generally recognized at their true value the mask would be torn away from their sham and make believe.

It is our work to help mothers understand and rightly educate such children, and so we invite correspondence with any one whose household contains such treasures.

A. K.

A REMARKABLE CURE.

I called on Miss S. B., at 26 West Sixteenth street, New York City, one morning in June, in 1881—had never seen her before—found her unable to speak, and her friend told me she was voiceless, every summer, for three or more months, suffering much pain in the throat and chest all the time. Dr. Flint, the celebrated lung doctor had said she could not be healed—must go to the mountains and bear it as long as she lived, which would not be long. She was preparing herself to go, but with a heavy heart. I felt in a moment I could cure her, so asked her to permit me to put my hands on her chest. She passed into a back parlor, undid her dress, and I laid both hands on her throat, while my whole soul was uplifted in prayer that she might be healed. In a moment she almost screamed, "Oh I can talk," and has never lost her voice for one hour since. The doctor said, when asked what cured her, "It is one of those strange psychic experiences, I know they happen, how I know not." A. K.

SOUL PRESCIENCE.

I was at the California State Camp Meeting, June 12th, 1885, and attended the medium's meeting, giving Psychometric Readings, from gloves, watches, etc., handed me from entire strangers in the large audience. Dr. Hudson, of Stockton, handed me a watch, I saw a black cloud approaching him and some terrible calamity that would befall him in the near future. It made me so uncomfortable I gave him his watch, saying, I don't want to interpret it further, but be on your guard against accidents the next few days. He returned to his home that day, the next, while leading a colt, it threw him down, trampled upon him, so mangling his leg that it had to be amputated.

A. K.

OUR LETTER BOX.

MY DEAR WELL-WISHER: You have deeply impressed me, your kindness has touched my heart and filled my eyes with tears. In this world man cannot speak frankly, man cannot praise heartily, man cannot express his gratitude, without a charge of flattery or exaggeration; but, dear friend, believe me, when I say that you and Mrs. Kimball are rare examples of humanity and sympathy. God bless you both.

GOPAL VINAYAK JOSHEE.

DEAR SISTER AND FELLOW PUPIL OF THE MASTER: Your kind letter from East Oakland, Cal., reached me during absence from home, and to-day I received prospectus of the GNOSTIC. All hail to the new light from the Occident which is destined to reflect and add lustre to the light from the Orient that has illumined the souls of the mystics of all ages. You have my ardent psychic force and desire for success in this new enterprise, and I trust the congenial influence surrounding you will aid in development of soul power and light sufficient to draw many up to your standard and altitude.

Yours fraternally,

G. G. WITCOMB.

June 8th, 1885.

MRS. KIMBALL—DEAR MADAM: The prospectus of the GNOSTIC was duly received with pleasure. I hope and trust you will make it a

success. Tell Mr. Chainey to keep up good courage, for, to reach that he is in pursuit of, costs trials and tribulations, but when once obtained is priceless.

I suppose you are aware of the meeting in Paris yesterday. We had a friend come in last eve and a representative of the Luxors came to us and made himself known as did also our friend J. C. Street. He came into the room in a silvery cloud, and then took on shape and form, and our friend, who had met him, recognized him at once and he bowed in recognition. He gave us no message, but the other party did—I only speak of this that you may know we are still alive.

Yours Truly,

T. D. PEASE.

DEAR FRIEND: Your lectures are doing a good work. I notice they are eagerly looked for by subscribers here. I've heard from most of those at a distance whose names I sent. They are all well pleased. There are only three Spiritualists on the list. Among the others was a long-faced old Presbyterian who subscribed, I knew, just because he disliked to refuse. I had known of him ridiculing Spiritualists, calling them humbugged fanatics. I met him the other day and what do you think he told me. Said he liked the lectures and in an *undertone*, to my greater surprise, informed me that he had a private circle in his home and got manifestations. Another one, a very good man but one of those stubborn materialists who scoffed at Spiritualists says he enjoys the lectures very much, wants to investigate, and would like to become a Spiritualist, adding, "Chainey is able and honest, and there must be something in it. So it goes. The seed you are sowing is taking root and will bear fruit.

S. M. C.

DEAR SIR: Ever since my first reading of your lecture delivered at Cassadaga last year, I have had a strong desire to write to you and welcome you to the uplands of our spiritual philosophy. And later, your letter to Mr. Ingersoll seemed to make me personally acquainted with you. But I have never obeyed my inclination until now, when it seems quite fitting that I should add to my words of welcome to our faith, a most cordial welcome to the Golden

State and to our spiritual rostrum in San Francisco.

Of all persons in the world, I would have chosen you to minister to my dear people during my absence, and for whom, did circumstances require it, I would willingly abdicate my throne in their warm and generous hearts! Your coming is most opportune and I feel certain you will do a great and needed work. You have what I am lacking in—culture of the highest order; I am crude, and only an imperfect instrument in the hands of a higher power. At times I despair of ever doing a *great* work, and nothing but the continual assurances that I am “doing them good” keeps me in my place before the public. To be a *spiritual teacher* in the highest sense is to occupy the proudest position on earth. Only a few are worthy or have the gift, and love of doing good is the best inspiration, the most perfect guide. I believe you have this—and I rejoice in your intellect, your enthusiasm, your grace—God and good angels help you to realize our fairest ideal! I trust your stay in California may be of great benefit to yourself and all who hear you, that my people will turn their angel side to you as they ever have to their “little minister.”

Sincerely yours,

ELIZABETH LOWE WATSON.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER: I have to thank you for your lectures which I have read with pleasure. I have no criticism of your plans to make, and hope they may all mature and come to good fruiting. You have a splendid, fiery spirit of zeal and enthusiasm; its potency is great; it needs no urging; it is its own spur and stimulus.

I admire this enthusiasm, and am glad to know how much it has already accomplished. Guided aright, it cannot fail of much higher accomplishment of loftier goals in the future.

I should be glad to see established such a publication as you propose.

You have my best wishes and cordial sympathy in all your efforts to discover and disseminate Truth. Your love of Truth is a magnet to attract and disclose it to yourself. Let wisdom guide your endeavors to attract others to it, and teach you that few there be who can

bear to look upon the naked, blessed truth—so that its due and discreet drapery becomes your aim and object on all occasions. The veil of Isis stirs not by the hand of others than adepts in Theosophic arts, and illuminati in the divine WISDOM, whose practices are those of the Magi, the Mystics and Occultists, till the development of the psychic sense brings the soul to seership. Sincerely and fraternally yours,

ELLIOTT COUES, F. T. S.

GEO. CHAINEY, ESQ.—DEAR FRIEND: Replying to your favor of the 2d inst., would say I firmly believe that you would meet here the encouraging response your advanced ideas so richly merit. I cannot help but think that the Mormons settled in these valleys for a purpose, the outcome of which I have watched and waited for these many years. I came here in 1859, a young boy full of enthusiasm, fully believing that I had found the straight road to eternal life, remaining with the church until Spiritualism, now some eight or ten years ago, led me into broader fields of thought. The Mormons are all anxiously looking for a “Deliverer” to come, according to promise, but, such a one, taking their word for it, must come through their regularly constituted priesthood.

Just now the United States Government is pressing the polygamy question. Pressure from without must come to help settle this much vexed question and destroy those delusive hopes of the people in their present rulers who have been, and are still, ruling the honest-hearted and unsophisticated with an iron rod of superstition. May it not be Theosophy that will step in and make a peaceful solution of this, to many, of our legal luminaries, “monstrous problem.” Yours sincerely,

FRED. C. ANDERSON.

MY DEAR MR. CHAINEY: Your letter is received. I had read “your new venture into journalism” before these copies reached me that you have just sent. I could have seen you and listened to your lectures in Chicago on several occasions but did not care to do so. I never could tell why you or Ingersoll had the heart to try and destroy the people’s hope unless you had a better hope to offer them. I

gained a truer appreciation of your motives when I read "*Why I became a Spiritualist*," and the desire to give you the loving clasp of true-hearted fellowship came to me for the first time.

I see from your writings that you are an honest soul, guileless of prejudice; a gigantic baby, truthful and innocent, and these are the qualities of the gods. The world already acknowledges your intellect, so I will not speak of that. But even if you were a hundred times less intellectual, your possessing the traits I have named would shove you up the plane to the encompassment of all there is—in other words, to the making of a god.

Now, I'll tell you, I don't like "liberals." They are the most illiberal of all human beings. They have encased themselves in an eternal vacuum, and are swearing that the atmosphere does not exist. Their theory of nothingness cannot stand. Their position is a sort of transitorial resting place—gloomy as the desert of Sahara, and as unproductive—lying between the old death in life, religious creeds, and the universe of the new that is opening upon us. Brave, loving, innocent souls only tarry here for a night, but many remain to perish. I was there once myself, but not long. One breath of the hopeless influence of the place was enough for me. I backed out. "The old creeds are better than this," I said. Then I felt my way cautiously around this awful place, and the angels guided me.

The doctrine of NOTHINGNESS, as I call it, can never find a lodgment in the hearts of the people. Thank God the people are too *loving* to entertain it.

Wishing you the greatest success, I subscribe myself most affectionately,

Your Sister,
HELEN WILMANS.

"Arcane knowledge misapplied is sorcery, beneficially used, true magic or *wisdom*. Races of men differ in Spiritual gifts as in color, stature or any other external quality. Among some peoples seership naturally prevails, among others mediumship. Some are addicted to sorcery, transmit its rules of practice from generation to generation, with a range of psychical phenomena more or less wide as the result."—*H. P. Blavatsky, F. T. S.*

PROGRESS.

Let there be many windows in your soul,
That all the glory of the universe
May beautify it. Not the narrow pane
Of one poor creed can catch the radiant rays
That shine from countless sources. Tear away
The blinds of superstition; let the light
Pour through fair windows broad as truth itself
And high as God.

Why should the spirit peer
Through some priest-curtained orifice, and grope
Along dim corridors of doubt, when all
The splendor from unfathomed seas of space
Might bathe it with the golden waves of love?
Sweep up the debris of decaying faiths;
Sweep down the cob-webs of worn-out beliefs,
And throw your soul wide open to the light
Of Reason and of Knowledge. Tune your ear
To all the worldless music of the stars,
And to the voice of nature, and your heart
Shall turn to truth and goodness, as the plant
Turns to the sun. A thousand unseen hands
Reach down to help you to their peace-crowned
heights,
And all the forces of the firmament
Shall fortify your strength. Be not afraid
To thrust aside half-truths and grasp the whole.
—*Ella Wheeler.*

TO THE STRAW IN THE HORSE-CAR.

Once you waved in fields of beauty,
'Neath the arch of blue,
Now you come to do the duty
Men have given you.

Oh, how sweet the breath of spring was
As it kissed each blade,
And the white clouds drove across you
Drifts of sun and shade.

And beneath the smile of summer,
How you rustled then,
As the mower came and cut you
For the use of men.

And to-night, when cold and tired
Of the throngs I meet,
I espied your nodding plumage
Lying at my feet.

How I thanked you for the pictures
That you gave to me,
Of your billowy, blooming beauty,
Lovelier than the sea.

Though men trample on your sweetness,
I remember still.
Let them thoughtlessly deface you,
Soil you if they will.

Memory shows me all your beauty
That you used to wear,
And I never can forget it,
Though down-trodden there.

—*Edith L. Willis.*

NOTES AND NEWS FROM THE FIELD OF WORK.

The *Carrier Dove* is the only distinct Spiritual journal published on the Pacific Coast. It is well edited by Mrs. J. Schlesinger and should have the cordial support of all earnest Spiritualists. The last number contains a full report of our lecture "Through Day to Night and Night to Day."

Gopal Vinayak Joshee, is a native of Bombay India, from whom we print a note in our letter box. Mr. Joshee is a gentleman and scholar, and most interesting lecturer and conversationalist on the manners, religion and social customs of his native country. We earnestly commend him to the sympathy and co-operation of all Liberals, Spiritualists and progressive people.

The *Harbinger of Light* of Melbourne, Australia published by W. H. Terry, is one of the best Spiritualist journals that comes to our table. The last number contained our lecture "Through Day to Night and Night to Day." Each number bears evidence of great activity in the investigation of spiritual and occult phenomena by our brethren at the Antipodes. When we came to California it was under the expectation of taking the steamer this month for Australia. Though at present we are compelled to postpone this visit, we hope to make it before long.

As soon as our Journal is thoroughly established so that we can leave the business management in other hands—edit it through the post-office—we contemplate a voyage around the world, for the express purpose of investigating and studying Spiritual phenomena. The present interpretations of these manifestations of power from the invisible side of life are by no means satisfactory. To many who have placed implicit confidence in them they have been both deceptive and destructive. Reminding us of the reflection of Hamlet. "The spirit that I have seen may be the devil, and the devil hath power to assume a pleasing shape; yea and perhaps out of my weakness and my melancholy, as he is very potent with such spirits, abuses me to damn me." Surely we all need grounds more relative to reason and

common sense than the prevalent ideas concerning these phenomena by the majority of professed Spiritualists. We therefore propose to make this tour of the globe, and study this subject far and wide for the benefit of our readers. The results of our investigations will be published in the Gnostic, and in book form on our return, under the title of "Adventures in Ghostland." The first chapter of this month will begin in Gnostic number two and contain the result of personal experiences with our San Francisco mediums.

From the reports in the *Truth-Seeker*, Charles Watts and S. P. Putnam seem to have carried on a vigorous and successful campaign in the interest of the Liberal League, or proposed American Secular Union. We have often admired the infinite variety and freshness with which friend Putnam has clothed his reports. He seems to be as wealthy in flowers of speech as California is in those of nature. Every sensible man or woman must wish them good speed in their work of demanding justice and equal rights for every form of religious opinion, through the total separation of Church and State. We wish them all joy and success in their work, and hope that the time will come when they will widen out their gaze so as to sweep the entire horizon of human thought and feeling.

When traveling with Mr. Watts, we often heard him make this statement: "There are several hundred different religions. For the sake of argument suppose we say there are one hundred. The Christian rejects ninety-nine, I go him one better and reject the whole hundred."

I would change this and say: I accept the whole hundred. Religion is essentially one in all its many forms. The need of the age is not the triumph of either, or denial of any one faith over all others, but the harmony and reconciliation of all, through finding out their essential and rational truth. This is to be found through our subjective or spiritual faculties revealing the esoteric truth that is hidden like a sweet nut within the hard shell of the exoteric or external dogmas. The Iconoclast is doing good by cracking open some of the shells. It is true sometimes he strikes so hard as to smash the nut. Still the starved heart within his own breast will feed on the fragments and teach him hereafter to strike to open and save, rather than to crush and destroy.

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
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