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TOWANDA:

Saturday Morning, July 26, 1851.

Selected Poetry.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SPORT.

BY CHARLES MACKAY.

Bear lightly on their foreheads, Time!
Strew roses on their way;
The young in heart, however old,
That prize the present day,
Are wiser than the pompous proud,
And wise enough to play.

I love to see a man forget
His blood is growing cold,
And leap, or swim, or gather flowers,
Or busy with children in their sport,
Nor think that he is old.

I love to see the man of care
Take pleasure in a toy;
I love to see him row or ride,
And tread the grass with joy,
Or hunt the flying cricket ball,
As lusty as a boy.

All sports that spare the humblest pain,
That neither maim nor kill—
That lead us to the quiet field,
Or to the wholesome hill—
Are duties which the pure of heart
Religiously fulfill.

Though some may laugh that full grown men,
May frolic in the wood,
Like children led astray from school—
Nor mind the scornful mood;
I honor all their happiness,
And deem it gratitude.

And though, perchance the cricketer,
Or "Chinaman" that flies
His dragon-kite, with boys and girls,
May seem to some unwise—
I see no folly in their plays,
But sense that underlies.

The road of life is hard enough
Bestrewed with slugs and thorns;
I would not mock the simplest joy
That made it less forlorn,
But fill its evening path with flowers
As fresh as those of morn.

'Tis something, when the noon has passed,
To brave the touch of Time,
But say—"Good friend, thou harm'st me not;
My soul is in its prime;
Thou canst not chill my warmth of heart—
I care not for thy climb."

Give us but health and peace of mind,
Whatever thy claim or clan,
We'll take delight in simple things,
Nor deem that sports unmanly;
And let the proud, who fly no kites,
Depise us if they can!

THE MINIATURE; A TALE OF CALIFORNIA.

In the year 1849, during the hot month of August, I left Sacramento City, with a party of six, including myself, for the remote regions of Feather River. I had tried several of the other rivers, without much success, and as some friends whom I met in town, endeavored to convince me that this was the only true and legitimate spot where the "gold" could be made, I very willingly gave my consent to make one of their party.

We settled all the arrangements to our satisfaction, and then bought provisions enough to last us six months, hired a six mule team, packed our stuff on their backs, and, one afternoon, about six o'clock, took up our line of march for the above named place, distant about one hundred and fifty miles from Sacramento City. One among their company played upon the bugle decently well, and as the soul-inspiring notes rang out through the valleys, we all imagined ourselves worth at the least calculation, fifty thousand dollars—or soon would be.

Alas! where are they, and their hopes and expectations now? All but one have laid their bones in a strange land. Famine, disease and murder have taken them, one by one, until I alone am left, a monument of God's mercy.

But I am digressing. Nothing worth noticing occurred on our route, and after four days' hard travel we arrived, with blistered feet and aching bones; everybody unhappy and everybody as disagreeable as six men could conveniently be.

After awaiting the team, and taking a good bath in the clear, cold waters of the river, we pitched our tent, cooked supper, and then, as men generally do in such cases, fell better. All retired early, and enjoyed a good night's sleep, for upon the next day we were to commence our labors, but, somehow, nobody seemed to broach the subject of work; so we spent the day in visiting, while few people there were camped in the immediate neighborhood of ourselves. They did not talk very encouragingly, and after surveying the different "bars," I came to the conclusion that my fortune was some way from me yet. However, it would not do to get discouraged so quick, and I took a stroll along towards the store, as it was called. The store consisted of a large brush tent, where they retailed everything that was likely to be wanted among a set of hard working men, including a plentiful supply of all kinds of liquors, retailed at the rate of seven dollars a bottle for brandy, and five for gin. By such rates as this, the store-keeper managed to put about two thirds of the miners' earnings into his own pockets, and consequently was becoming enormously rich.

When I arrived at the tent, I found some twenty or thirty people assembled, drinking, smoking, and playing cards. Their day's labor was over, and they were now spending what they had earned. I perceived some few were already in a happy state, and were trying to kick up a row with somebody, no matter who. There were one or two Frenchmen, one or two Chilians, and the rest were made up of the overland and Oregon men.

As I stood leaning against a barrel, watching the different expressions that played on their countenances, a young man of about twenty-eight years, came up and inquired what part of the country I was from. I informed him, and after a few more

words, he informed me that he was from New York city, and asked me to drink with him which I respectfully declined. He did not appear to relish my refusal very well, and turned abruptly away, and commenced betting on monte.

"What did that fellow say to you, Mister?" inquired a large, broad shouldered man, who went by the name of Jones.

"Only asked me to drink with him, that's all!" I replied.

"Well, stranger, I am from Oregon, and my name is Jones; I have been on the river about five months, and some people call me the alcalde of these diggings. But that has nothing to do with him. Let me advise you as a fellow countryman to have nothing to do with that man. I have had my eye on him for some time; and if he ever does come under my discipline, I will serve him out I warrant you."

"Of what offence has he been guilty?" I inquired, looking at the man more closely.

"Well, we have not been able to prove anything against him as yet, but there has been a good deal of the dust lost out of our tents whenever they have been left alone, and you will never see this fellow at work, if you should stay here ten years. He has not got it in him. Yet he has always money to lose at the gambling table every night. Why, before the fellow came here, I could go out and leave a dozen pounds of the real stuff in my tent, and come back and find it safe; but it won't do to do it now." He said sorrowfully, as though he was grieved to find so much dishonesty in the world.

Jones bade me good night, and walked towards his tent, while I stepped nearer to the suspected person, and had a good opportunity to examine him as he stood at the card table.

He was, as I have said, twenty eight years old, with small dark eyes that never seemed to rest heavy beard and moustache, and very white teeth, which he took a good deal of pains to show. He was about five feet eight inches high, affair rather strongly built, with a certain reckless appearance about him that denoted the lowest class of gamblers. He went by the name of Morgan. I finished my examination of him, and then repaired to my tent, where, after smoking and relating the news I had heard, I turned in, and was soon dreaming of the dear friends whom I had left in old Massachusetts.

The next day we put our cradles together and commenced operations, opposite Bidwell's ranch, but I cannot say that we made the amount daily that my sanguine friends had anticipated. At any rate, we worked easy and managed to lay up a little; but if we had been obliged to buy provisions the rate they were selling for at the store, we should have had to send home for money to pay our debts with, or else taken the benefit of the bankrupt act.

All went smoothly for a week. We made the acquaintance of most of the miners in the neighborhood, and found them to be all pretty good fellows; their worst fault appeared to be drinking, but then they worked hard, and pleaded as an excuse that the climate was so bad that drinking was beneficial.

One morning just as day was breaking, our accustomed hour for getting up to breakfast, we observed a large crowd gathered round the store, and curiosity getting the better of us, we started to see what the matter was, leaving one to cook the breakfast. As we drew near, I could see the tall form of Jones mingling with the crowd, and gesticulating violently. I inquired of him what had brought so many together, thus early in the morning.

"Master enough," he replied. "Here's that scoundrel of a Morgan stole no less than three thousand dollars from Dory, the storekeeper."

"Is he taken?" I asked, astonished at the robbery.

"Yes, we have him safe enough, and the money also," chuckled Jones.

After some inquiries, I found that about two o'clock in the morning Dory was awakened by a slight noise inside the tent. In an instant all was quiet, but thinking that all was not right, he took his revolver from under his bed, and commenced a search about in the dark. All at once his hand came in contact with a man's head.

"Who is this?" he asked and received for answer a tremendous blow which nearly stunned him, but instantly rallying, he discharged his revolver repeatedly at a form that darted past him, and then followed as swiftly as possible in pursuit, shouting, "stop thief!"

Some dozen or two turning out, gave chase, and succeeding in capturing Morgan, after a desperate resistance, in which he had used his knife rather freely. About sixty yards from the store he had thrown away the two buckskin bags which contained the dust, and they were safely delivered to the owner. They were now about forming a jury to try him for the robbery, and twelve Americans were accordingly chosen, with old Jones as Judge. The trial was soon over, and the Jury were not out more than half an hour before they returned him worthy of death, leaving it to the Judge to decide in what manner he should die.

"Well, boys, you have acted wily, and as I am a merciful man, I decide that at ten o'clock this forenoon he be tied to a tree, and six of our best marksmen load their rifles and have a crack at him, and may God have mercy on his soul. Mr. —," he continued, "I appoint you, with as many assistants as you want, to see that the law is carried into effect."

I intimated to the honorable judge that I should like to be excused from performing so disagreeable a duty, but with a savage look, he ordered me to perform the task he had imposed upon me, and make no more words about it.

Morgan had had a fair trial. His guilt was too evident, and as he lay in the store, with his feet and hands bound with strong cords, looking dirty and ragged, with the blood dripping slowly from his arm, where a ball had lodged from the revolver of Dory. I could not help pitying the poor wretch. He must have read compassion in my face, for, making an effort to sit upright, in which he was

not successful, he asked me for a drink of water.— I instantly handed him some, and after drinking he appeared to feel relieved. I asked him if there was anything else that I could do for him, when he motioned me to come closer to him. He remained silent for a moment, and then said: "The Judge has appointed you to see, that the sentence is carried into effect, has he not?"

"I am sorry to say that he has, Morgan," I replied.

"Well, never mind. I had rather it were you than others here. But I have a particular favor to ask of you. Perhaps you will laugh and think it is a weakness, but I can't help it. Have you a Bible at your tent?"

I told him that I never traveled without one, and that I should be happy to read it to him.

"Thank you," he said. "I have not looked into one for years, more shame to me; if I had followed its precepts I should not have been here. I left him, and walked to my tent. How I hated myself for the part that I had got to play in the murder, for I could call it no better. It was in vain that I pondered plans to escape from my task. I could see no remedy, and the idea that I must assist in the execution almost drove me frantic.

It was now about nine. Morgan had one hour more to live. I went the head of my bed, and taking my Bible, left the store, where the prisoner was still confined. A large collection of people had assembled from the different bars, and were passing the time away in taking one or two drinks, to give them an appetite for the tragedy that was soon to be enacted.

"Make way for the Sheriff," shouted one or two noisy fellows, as I endeavored to force my way into the presence of Morgan.

"Looks a blamed sight more like a minister.— Don't you see his Bible?" said another.

I passed into the store, where I found Morgan seated on a box. He looked pale and thoughtful, but a smile illuminated his countenance when he saw that I had brought the book with me.

"I had almost given you up," he observed, as I seated myself by him.

I made no reply, commenced reading a chapter in a low voice. In an instant every head was uncovered within hearing, and all was still within the store. Morgan listened with great attention, but by the time I had finished the third chapter, the loud voice of Jones called out:

"Time's up, bring out the prisoner."

I slowly closed my book and arose. Morgan also arose. I cut the cords that bound his feet, and he stepped towards the entrance of the store. He was now very pale—whether from loss of blood or anxiety, I did not know.

While I had been reading to him, they had drawn lots on the outside, and six of the best marksmen on the river had the chance of shooting at the poor fellow. Their rifles were taken and loaded by a third party; and of two of them with nothing but powder, so that it should not be known who shot him.

We walked along with the prisoner to the spot that had been chosen. It was a high plain just back of the store. I asked Morgan if he was ready.

"Cut these confounded cords, and take my jacket off, so that I can stand up like a man," he answered.

I unbound his hands, and commenced removing his jacket, when something fell to the ground. I stooped to pick it up, and found that it was a miniature. It represented a young and beautiful female, holding in her arms a babe, apparently only a few months old. The mother was looking at the child with such a look as only a mother can give, while the child appeared to be making a playful effort to reach a ringlet of her hair which fell in long curls about her neck. I looked up and asked, "Morgan's whose portrait is this?"

He then for the first time, noticed that I had it. "That is the portrait of my wife and child whom I left in New York," he said, and burst into tears. "Bury it with me, for it is all that I have now."

I felt as though a good crying spell would do me good about that time, and if a drop fell on that beautiful face that was gazing so sweetly at her child, let me hope that it did not tarnish the bright colors of the picture.

In the meantime a large crowd had assembled, and were gazing over my shoulder at the picture, with evident delight. I passed it round to them, and every one of those rough men appeared to have a spark of human feeling in their breasts that only needed to be touched to produce good results.

"I had never made a speech in my life, but a new feeling seemed to flow through my veins. Springing upon a large log, I commenced a rambling address. I alluded to this poor wife and infant child, their dependence on him for support; and the anxiety and sorrow they must feel, should they never hear from him again. Before I had finished I heard the loud voice of old Jones, exclaiming:

"Damn it all, boys, let the fellow go. I have got an old woman myself, and half a dozen children, and I kinder guess how they would feel, if I should pop off."

"Yes, let him go," said half a dozen of the most influential men on the river.

"Put it to vote, boys, put it to vote," said another.

"To vote it is then," said I, overjoyed at my success. "All those in favor of letting Morgan go will please signify it by saying yes."

"Yes! yes!" roared nearly every voice in the crowd.

I now turned to look at Morgan. He had sunk on his knees when the result of the vote had been declared, and I sincerely believe that he made a short acknowledgment to heaven for his wonderful preservation. He arose from his knees, and taking my hand, he thanked me for the interest I had taken in his trial. I walked along with him towards my tent, and observed that it would be best for him to leave, and go to some other mines immediately.

"I shall leave to night," he replied, "but there is one thing that I should like to obtain from you, and that is your Bible."

"Willingly," I replied, "and may it do you as much good as it has me."

I gave him some supper, and when he arose to go, I put the Bible in his hand. He squeezed my fingers, and then taking his wife's miniature out, he forced it upon me saying, "keep that to remember me by," and was gone before I could reply.

I have the miniature now. And each day when I gaze at it, a sweet smile seems to play upon the lovely countenance of that young bride, as though she thanked me for helping the partner of her bosom to escape from such an ignoble death.

As for Morgan, I never heard of him afterwards. Whether he is alive or dead, I cannot tell, and my object in writing this sketch was to obtain if possible some tidings of him.

The Family Opposed to Newspapers.

The man that don't take his country paper was in town yesterday. He brought his whole family in a two-horse wagon. He still believed that General Taylor was President, and wanted to know if the "Kamashations" had taken Cuba, and if so, where they had taken it. He had sold his corn for 25 cts.—the price being 31 cts.—but upon going to deposit the money, they told him it was mostly counterfeit. The only hard money he had was some three cents pieces, and those some sharper had "run on him" for half dimes! His old lady smoked a "cobb pipe," and would not believe anything else could be used. One of the boys went to a blacksmith-shop to be measured for a pair of shoes, and another mistook the market house for a church. After hanging his hat on a meat hook, he piously took a seat on a butcher's stall, and listened to the auctioneer, whom he took to be a preacher. He left before "meetin" was out, and had no great opinion of the "sarrmint."

One of the girls took a lot of "seed onions" to the post office to trade them for a letter. She had a baby, which she carried in a "sagar trough," stopping at times to rock it, on the side-walk.—When it cried, she stuffed its mouth with an old sock, and sang "Barbara Allen." The oldest boy had sold two "coon skins," and was on a "bust"—When last seen, he called for a glass of "soda and water," and stood soaking gingerbread and making wry faces. The shop-keeper mistaking his meaning, had given a mixture of salt soda and water, and it tasted strongly of soap. But 'he'd' heard tell of soda and water, and was bound to give it a fair trial puke or no puke." Some "town fellow" came in and called for a lemonade with a "fly in it," whereupon our "soused" friend turned his back and quietly wiped several flies into his drink.

We approached the old gentleman and tried to get him to "subscribe," but he would not listen to it. He was opposed to "internal improvements," and he thought "larin'" was a wicked invention, and cultivation nothin' but vanity and vexation.—None of his family ever learned to read, but one boy, and he "taught school awhile, and then went to studying divinity."

ANECDOTE OF GEN. JACKSON.—The Hon. and Rev. _____, who as a Baptist preacher and lieutenant governor, had at one and the same time been in the service of the Lord and of the State of Illinois, becoming dissatisfied with the honors or profits of both of the posts he held, determined to resign them, and devote his time and talents to the assistance of the administration in carrying on the general government of the country. Accordingly, he came to Washington, and laid his case before the President. He stated his pretensions and his wishes, narrated at some length all the prominent events of his political life, dwelling especially upon his untiring devotion to the democratic party, the sacrifices he had submitted to, the exertions he had made in its behalf, and its consequent indebtedness to him, but said not a word of what he had done for the cause of religion. Gen. Jackson heard the clerical aspirant through in silence, and after musing a moment, put the following question to him: "Mr. K., are you not a minister of the Gospel?" "I am sir," was the reply. "Then sir," said General, with his usual quiet dignity, "you hold already a higher office than in my gift—an office, whose sacred duties, properly performed, require your whole attention; and really, I think the best I can do for you will be to leave you to devote your whole time to them; for, from what you tell me, I fear that hitherto they have been some what neglected."

REAL AND IDEAL.—Dow, Jr., is one of his disciples, in which he describes the contrast between semblance and reality, hits off a ball scene.

"A woman," says he, "may be an angel, though she glides through the mazes of the dance, like a spirit clothed with a rainbow. The young man may behold his admired object on the morrow in the true light of reality, perchance employing a wash tub in the gutter, with frock pinned up behind—her cheek pale for want of paint—her hair matted and mossy, except what lies in the bazaar; and her whole contour wearing the appearance of an angel rammed through a brush fence into a world of wretchedness and woe!"

POOR WEAR WOMEN!—A Miss Susan Nipper, who lives in a small tenement, a lone woman, was quite "prostrated" the other morning by the early call of a bachelor neighbor.

Formation of Dew.

The air contains at all times more or less of moisture, though in a state so rarified as to be imperceptible. To prove this it is only necessary in a summer's day to fill a glass with cold water, when, dry as the atmosphere may seem, its moisture will be condensed, and made visible, in the form of small pellucid drops upon the outside of the glass. This condensation of moisture is caused by the water's reduction of the temperature of the glass below that of the surrounding atmosphere. On this principle distillation is conducted; and in the same manner dew is found. No sooner does the sun sink towards the horizon, than the blades of grass which clothe the earth's surface give out the heat they have been receiving during the day, and consequently they become so much colder that the atmosphere, that they condense in the form of dew part of the rarified moisture immediately surrounding them. Dew, being thus formed, is, of course, more abundant before and after rains, when the atmosphere is moistest. Calm and clear nights are essential, also, for the copious deposition of dew; for then the glassy blades emit their heat freely, and it is dispersed through the atmosphere without any equivalent return. On the contrary, however, if the night be cloudy, then the clouds, by abstracting the heat from the atmosphere, contribute, in some degree, to keep its temperature on a level with that of the grass blades, and thus so nearly equalise the two as that little dew is deposited. It is, in addition to clouds, a high wind is blowing, no dew will be formed, for the temperature of the grass is prevented from sinking by the agitation of the air continually bringing a warmer current to succeed the colder current, by which it is surrounded; or, it may be, that the night winds, being generally cool, so rapidly reduce the air's temperature as to bring it below that of the grass.

As substances differ in their power of losing their heat so do they differ in their attraction for dew.—On grass, straw, and other filamentous substances, which readily part with their heat, dew copiously condenses. The mechanical condition of objects likewise affects the formation of dew, as shavings attract it more than wood. Dew is more plentifully deposited on meadow ground than on open lands; and cultivated soil are refreshed with abundance of dew, while barren rocks and sandy deserts, not needing, do not receive this general moisture. Indeed, every plant, possesses, according to its kind, the power of condensing as much dew as is necessary for its peculiar and individual exigencies. Thus, not even a dew-drop seems to have been formed by the blind actions of chance, but gathering together by the hand of Infinite Wisdom for a definite and benevolent end.

A WORD TO LITTLE GIRLS.—Who is lovely? It is the little girl who drops sweet words, kind remarks, and pleasant smiles as she passes along—who has a kind sympathy for every girl or boy she meets in trouble, and a kind hand to help her companions out of difficulty—who never scolds, never contends, never teases her mother, nor seeks in any way to diminish, but always to increase her happiness. Would it not please you to pick up a string of pearls, drops of gold, diamonds, or precious stones as you pass along the street? But these are the precious stones which cover can be lost. Take the hand of the friendless—smile on the sad and dejected—sympathize with those in trouble—strive every where to diffuse around you sunshine and joy. If you do this, you will be sure to be loved.

A WESTERN EDITOR thus sums up the peculiarities of a cotemporary: He is too lazy to earn a meal, and to mean to enjoy one. He is never generous but once, and that was when he gave the rich to an apprentice boy. So much for his goodness of heart. Of his industry he says, and the public may be the better judge, when he states that the only day he was ever worked, was the day he mistook castor oil for honey. Complimentary that.

COURTSHIP.—An institution made up of flutes and moonlight—a period that brings discretion to a full stop, and marks with a star the morning of our hopes. Courtship converts women in to angles, mouths into honey-comb the heart becomes a great hive of sweet—while kisses are the bees that keep up the supply. Again we ask, did you ever hold the head of a blue eyed girl?

CHICKENS AND EGGS.—Mr. Spriggins in a Dilemma—"My son," said Mr. Spriggins to his little boy, who was devouring an egg—it was Mr. Spriggins' desire to instruct his boy—"my son do you know that chickens come out of eggs?"

"Ah, do they, father?" said the young hopeful.

"I thought that eggs came out of chickens?"

The elder Spriggins drew back from the table and gazed on his son, then put on his hat and went to work.

MICHAEL having done a mean action says he felt as if the Devil had been throwing dice for his soul, and just turned sixes. If we are not much nitaekened, this is the way every body feels who stoops to duplicity. A person never sets a smaller value on himself, than the day he undermines somebody else.

Three days uninterrupted company in a vehicle, will make you better acquainted with another than one hour's conversation with him every day for three years.

Whether it is worth while to keep any body's company for three days without interruption, for the sake of making his acquaintance, is a question for debate. We take the negative.

Did you ever know a man with a shocking bad hat and a long beard and a ragged coat, who could find a respectable hotel that was not full.

Melancthon was reproached by some one with changing his views. "Do you think, sir," replied he, "that I have been studying assiduously for thirty years without having learned anything?"

Killing a Whale.

One bright, calm morning, on the coast of Japan, whales were discovered about four miles distant from the masthead of the ship Brighton. Instantly every one was in motion; there being no wind to bring the ship nearer to them, three boats were lowered to give chase. The captain remained on board, as two of his boat's crew were on the sick list. When the boats were about three miles off, a large whale was seen from the ship not more than thirty yards distant. The only boat now on the davits was lowered and with a crew of four, all we could muster, proceeded to tackle the monster. He lay perfectly still, spouting the water out of his huge nostrils at long intervals. We approached within ten feet, when the captain, in a whisper, ordered the harpooner to stand up and dart. This being his first attempt to strike a whale, his iron passed harmlessly over the leviathan's back. The captain jumped forward, and hauled in the harpoons and threw one into the whale's hump. The boat was directly over the whale's flukes, and when the iron entered his back, with seemingly no effort they raised, smashing the boat, I might say in a hundred pieces, throwing the captain full thirty feet in the air. With me to keep him company. We both fell close to the remains of the boat where the two other men were hanging on. No one was hurt by the accident. The whale had gone about five rods from where he had stove the boat and lay as if waiting for further attack.

Floating close by the captain found a lance made fast to a piece of the wrecked boat; being a good swimmer he said he would soon make that fellow spout blood, and it would be something worth talking about, to kill a whale without a boat. Taking the lance in his teeth, he swam close to the whale, and plunged it into his heart. The next spout blood was sent up from his nostrils twenty feet high, and he commenced lashing the water furiously with his flukes. So close were we to him, the water was thrown over us every splash. One poor fellow could not swim, and as we struck out for the ship, he implored us not to leave him to be killed. But what could we do? The whale was in the death flurry; whirling round us, and every turn coming nearer. The men were busy on board clearing away one of the spare boats, but it would take them half an hour to launch her. Taking the poor fellow between us, we swam towards the ship.—When almost near enough to catch a rope thrown to us, we felt ourselves drawn down by his weight. To save ourselves we had to let him go. Blood, which soon rose to the surface, told us in plain language the fate of poor William; he had been caught by a shark. After getting upon the side we soon launched the boat and went in search of the captain, who had not been seen since he lanced the whale. The monster was now dead with his side turned up. Close to him was the captain's hat. Our commander had killed his last whale. Signals, mean time, had been made to the boats to return.

The whale was taken in 1844 by the ship, he was a monster, turning out one hundred and fifty barrels of oil.—By J. Cooper, A. S. S. O.

The Moon.

Professor METCAL, the great American astronomer, has been delivering a course of popular lectures in New York, on his favorite subject. From a report of these lectures in the New York Tribune, we select the following relating to the moon, which strikingly illustrates the harmony of the universe.

"By a comparison of the accounts of eclipses by the ancients, particularly the Babylonians, with modern observations, it appeared that the Moon moves swifter than she did three thousand years ago. The increase was small, to be sure;—her place having only advanced three diameters in that time. But what was the cause, and what would be the result? The problem was solved by Laplace. The Earth's orbit round the Sun, though elliptical, is minutely opening through the attraction of extraneous bodies. The orbit being thus enlarged, and the Sun's influence diminished, the Earth's influence over the Moon becomes proportionately greater, its orbit is diminished, and its speed increased. Through the whole disturbance is so slight it has been accurately calculated. The Earth's orbit will continue to increase through millions of centuries, till it shall become a circle, and then will slowly return again to its present shape, swinging a back and forth, like a pendulum, striking the string seconds of eternity back."

But, though sixty or seventy different sources of disturbances have been discovered and calculated, and the Moon's orbit set out of her place. It will not answer for the minute and hour-hand of the world's time-piece to be wrong. If she hides a particular time to day, we must know exactly when she will do so again. Hence, a most indelible German astronomer, has calculated several of the disturbing forces, and will probably conquer all difficulties remaining. One of those overcome is the Venus, which moves more speedily than the Earth, for one hundred and forty years tends to bend the Earth's orbit one way, and then the same length of time counteracts the influence. The Earth in turn affects the Moon, so that it has advanced in 219 years a 100th part of its diameter.

So perfect are the calculations at present that the place can never be more than one or two thousand miles of their diameter from that assigned her in the tables. But it is important that the tables should be perfectly accurate, and this will probably be accomplished.

The Professor then described the physical appearance of the Moon, as seen through a telescope, being brought within a range of 240 miles, and showing all its craters, lakes, mountains, plains and valleys. He explained the fact that the Moon, more lustrous than the other planets, never shows but one face to us, revolving on her axis in the same time which she occupies in her orbit. The fact that her revolution had never been accelerated, was even deduced that no comet, or other body, had ever disturbed the harmony which existed through out the entire system.