



WITH GRIP'S CONGRATULATIONS TO REV.
MANLEY BENSON.

ON THE ASTRAL PLANE.

BY OUR THEOSOPHIC CONTRIBUTOR.

AT midnight when my mortal frame
In bed is lying warm,
I love to rise and roam afar
Encased in astral form.

The body rests in death-like trance,
The spirit's uncontrolled;
O wondrous are the sights I see,
The half cannot be told.

We travel fast in astral form,
We do not fly or walk,
As quick as thought we find ourselves
In Paris or New York.

Or far beyond the mundane sphere,
Through realms of space profound,
Mid star-depths lying far outside
The planetary round.

Nor time, nor space to us is aught,
No substance bars our way,
We read unspoken thoughts, and night
Is light to us as day.

Green dragons with red bulging eyes
May vainly at me glare,
I know they're merely placed on guard
Rash neophytes to scare.

I've but to make the mystic sign,
And speak the word of power,
And they become obedient slaves
And in my presence cower.

I meet with elementaries,
A crude and half-baked kind,
Distorted and misshapen forms
And destitute of mind.

Such oft appear at seances,
Where spirit circles meet,
And pose as spirits of the dead—
A palpable deceit.

And gnomes and sylphs that region throng
As thick as summer flies,
Which need not cause enlightened minds
An atom of surprise.

And other astral forms I meet,
Of people whom I know
And daily see upon the street
Down in the world below.

I met a tailor yesternight
While near the planet Mars,
"Hello," said I, "I didn't know
You soared among the stars."

"Why, yes," he said, "and by the way
That little bill you owe—"
"I'll pay you now in astral coin,"
He firmly answered "No."

Indeed my proposition seemed
To him a source of mirth,
I fear his mind is fixed upon
The grovelling things of earth.

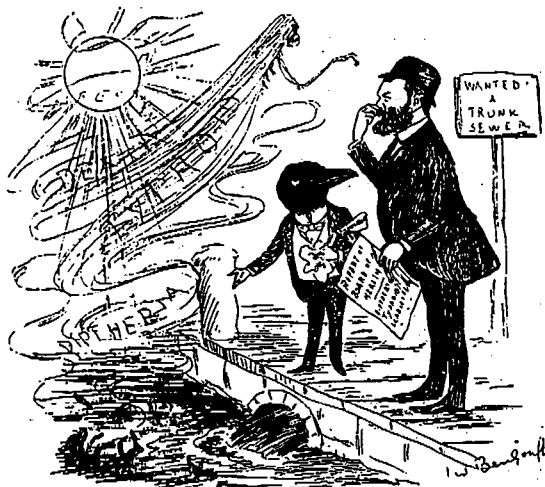
A maiden lady who on earth
Is formal and precise,
I saw while hovering round Cashmere
No longer cold as ice.

For by her stood an astral shape
In loving converse sweet,
A well-known deacon of the church,
On—never mind the street.

"Ah there, Matilda!" I exclaimed.
The angry deacon said,
"You mind your own business, or I'll break
Your blooming astral head."

Such sights are merely commonplace
Upon the astral plane.
I could fair stranger tales unfold,
But I had best refrain.

Or else perhaps some people might
My statements disbelieve,
And fancy I had spun a yarn
The public to deceive.



TORONTO'S DANGER AND DISGRACE.

GRIP—"And now, your Worship, I want to know what you're going to do about it?"