

# THE AGE OF PROGRESS.

Devoted to the Development and Propagation of Truth, the Enfranchisement and Cultivation of the Human Mind.

STEPHEN ALBRO, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

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## Miscellany.

From Wolfert's Roof.

**The Widow's Ordeal—or a Judicial Trial by Combat.**

The world is daily growing older and wiser. Its institutions vary with its years, and mark its growing wisdom; and none more so than its modes of investigating truth, and ascertaining guilt or innocence. In its usage, when man was yet a fallible being, and doubted the accuracy of his own intellect, appeals were made to heaven in dark and doubtful cases of atrocious accusation.

The accused was required to plunge his hand in boiling oil, or to walk across red-hot ploughshares, or to maintain his innocence in armed fight, and listed field, in person or by champion. If he passed these ordeals unscathed, he stood acquitted, and the result was regarded as a verdict from on high.

It is somewhat remarkable that, in the gallant age of chivalry, the gentler sex should have been most frequently the subjects of the rude trials and perilous ordeals; and that, too, when assailed in their most delicate and venerable part—their honor.

In the present very old and enlightened age of the world, when the human intellect is perfectly competent to the management of its own concerns, and needs no special interposition of heaven in its affairs, the trial by jury has superseded these superhuman ordeals; and the unanimity of twelve discordant minds is necessary to constitute a verdict. Such a unanimity would, at first sight, appear also to require a miracle from heaven; but it is produced by a simple device of human ingenuity. The twelve jurors are locked up in their box, there to fast until abstinence shall have so clarified their intellects that the whole jarring paucal can discern the truth, and concur in a unanimous decision. One point is certain, that truth is one, and is immutable—until the jurors all agree, they cannot all be right.

It is not our intention, however, to discuss this great judicial point, or to question the avowed superiority of the mode of investigating truth, adopted in this antiquated and very sagacious era. It is our object merely to exhibit to the curious reader, one of the most memorable cases of judicial combat we find in the annals of Spain. It occurred at the bright commencement of the reign, and in the youthful, and, as yet, glorious days of Roderick the Goth; who subsequently tarnished his fame at home by his misdeeds, and, finally, lost his kingdom and his life on the banks of the Guadalete, in that disastrous battle which gave up Spain a conquest to the Moors. The following is the story:

There was once upon a time, a certain duke of Lorraine, who was acknowledged throughout his domains to be one of the wisest princes that ever lived. In fact, there was no one measure adopted by him that did not astonish his privy counsellors and gentlemen in attendance; and he said such witty things, and made such sensible speeches, that the jaws of his high chamberlain were well nigh dislocated from laughing with delight at one, and gaping with wonder at the other.

This very witty and exceedingly wise potentate lived for half a century in single-blessedness; at length his courtiers began to think it a great pity so wise and wealthy a prince should not have a child after his own likeness, to inherit his talents and domains; so they urged him most respectfully to marry, for the good of his estate, and the welfare of his subjects.

He turned their advice over in his mind some four or five years, and then sent forth emissaries to summon to his court, all the beautiful maidens in the land, who were ambitious of sharing with beauties of all styles and complexions, from among whom he chose one in the earliest budding of her charms, and acknowledged by all the gentlemen to be unparalleled for grace and loveliness. The courtiers extolled the duke to the skies for making such a choice, and considered it another proof of his great wisdom. "The duke," said they, "is waxing a little too old; the damsel, on the other hand, is a little too young; if one is lacking in years, the other has a superabundance; thus a want on one side, is balanced by an excess on the other, and the result is a well-assorted marriage."

The duke, as is often the case with wise men who marry rather late, and take damsels rather youthful to their bosoms, became dotingly fond of his wife, and very properly indulged her in all things. He was, consequently, cried up by his subjects in general, and by the ladies in particular, as a pattern for husbands; and in the end, from a wonderful docility with which he submitted to be reined and checked, acquired the amiable and enviable appellation of Duke Philbert the wife-ridden.

There was only one thing that disturbed the conjugal felicity of this paragon of husbands—though a considerable time elapsed after his

marriage, there was still no prospect of an heir. The good duke left no means untried to propitiate Heaven. He made vows and pilgrimages, he fasted and he prayed; but all to no purpose. The courtiers were all astonished at the circumstance. They could not account for it. While the meanest peasant in the country had sturdy brats by dozens, without putting up a prayer, the duke wore himself to skin and bone with penances and fastings, yet seemed farther off from his object than ever.

At length, the worthy prince fell dangerously ill, and felt his end approaching. He looked sorrowfully and dubiously upon his young and tender spouse, who hung over him with tears and sobs. "Alas!" said he, "tears are soon dried from youthful eyes, and sorrow lies lightly on a youthful heart. In a little while thou wilt forget in the arms of another husband him who has loved thee so tenderly."

"Never! never!" cried the duchess. "Never will I cleave to another! Alas, that my lord should think me capable of such inconstancy!"

The worthy and wife-ridden duke was soothed by her assurances; for he could not forget the thought of giving her up even after he should be dead. Still he wished to have some pledge of her enduring constancy:

"Far be it from me, my dearest wife," said he, "to control thee through a long life. A year and a day of strict fidelity will appease my troubled spirit. Promise to remain faithful to my memory for a year and a day, and I will die in peace."

The duchess made a solemn vow to that effect, but the anxious feelings of the duke were not yet satisfied. "Safe hand, safe hand," thought he, "so made a will, bequeathing to all his domains, on condition of her remaining true to him for a year and a day after his decease; but, should it appear that, within that time, she had in anywise lapsed from her fidelity, the inheritance should go to his nephew, the lord of a neighboring territory."

Having made his will, the good duke died and was buried. Scarcely was he in his tomb, when his nephew came to take possession, thinking, as his uncle had died without issue, the domains would be devised to him of course. He was in a furious passion, when he was produced, and the young widow declared her fidelity, the inheritance should go to his nephew, the lord of a neighboring territory.

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finding no room even for a surmise. Never was ordeal more burdensome, or more enduringly sustained.

The year passed away. The last, odd day arrived, and a long, long day it was. It was the twenty-first of June, the longest day in the year. It seemed as if it would never come to an end. A thousand times did the duchess and her ladies watch the sun from the window of the palace, as he slowly climbed the vault of heaven, and seemed still more slowly to roll down. They could not help expressing their wonder, now, and then, why the duke should have tagged this superannuated day to the end of the year, as if three hundred and sixty-five days were not sufficient to try and task the fidelity of any woman. It is the last grain that turns the scale—this last drop that overflows the goblet—and the last moment of delay that exhausts the patience. By the time the sun sank below the horizon, the duchess was in a fever that passed all bounds, and yet though several hours were yet to pass before the day regularly expired, she could not have remained those hours in durance to gain a royal crown, much less a ducal coronet. So she gave orders, and her palfrey, magnificently caparisoned, was brought into the court-yard of the castle with palfreys for all her ladies in attendance. In this way she sallied forth, just as the sun had gone down. It was a mission of piety—a pilgrim cavalcade to a convent at the foot of a neighboring mountain—to return thanks to the blessed Virgin, for having sustained her through this fearful ordeal.

The orisons performed, the duchess and her ladies returned, ambling along the border of a forest. It was about that mellow hour of twilight when night and day are mingled, and all objects are indistinct. Suddenly some monstrous animal sprang from out a thicket, with fearful howlings. The female body-guard was thrown into confusion, and fled different ways. It was some time before they recovered from their panic, and gathered once more together; but the duchess was not to be found. The greatest anxiety was felt for her safety.

The lady mist of twilight had prevented their distinguishing perfectly the animal which had frightened them. Some thought it a wolf, others a bear, others a wild man of the woods. For upwards of an hour did they beleaguere the forest, without daring to venture in, and were on the point of giving up the duchess as torn to pieces and devoured, when, to their great joy, they beheld her advancing in the gloom, supported by a stately cavalier.

He was a stranger knight, whom no body knew. It was impossible to distinguish his countenance in the dark; but all the ladies agreed that he was of noble presence and captivating address. He had rescued the duchess from the very fangs of the monster, which, he assured the ladies, was neither a wolf, nor a bear, nor yet a wild man of the woods, but a veritable fiery dragon, a species of monster peculiarly hostile to beautiful females in the days of chivalry, and which all the efforts of knight-errantry had not been able to extirpate.

The ladies crossed themselves when they heard of the danger from which they had escaped, and could not enough admire the gallantry of the cavalier. The duchess would fain have prevailed on her deliverer to accompany her to her court; but he had no time to spare, being a knight-errant, who had many adventures on hand, and many distressed damsels and afflicted widows to rescue and relieve in various parts of the country. Taking a respectful leave, therefore, he pursued his way, faring, and the duchess and her train returned to the palace. Throughout the whole way, the ladies were unwearied in chanting the praises of the stranger knight, and many of them would willingly have incurred the danger of the dragon to have enjoyed the happy deliverance of the duchess. As to the latter, she rode pensively along, but said nothing.

No sooner was the adventure of the wood made public, than a whirlwind was raised about the ears of the beautiful duchess. The blustering nephew of the deceased duke, went about, armed to the teeth, with a swaggering uncle at each shoulder, ready to back him and swore the duchess had forfeited her domain. It was in vain that she called all the saints and angels, and her ladies in attendance into the bargain, to witness that she had passed a year and a day of immaculate fidelity. One fatal hour remained to be accounted for; and into the space of one little hour sins enough may be conjured up by evil tongues, to blast the fame of a whole life of virtue.

The two graceless uncles, who had seen the world, were ever ready to bolster the matter through, and as they were brawny, broad-shouldered warriors, and veterans in brawl as well as debate, they had great sway with the multitude. If any one pretended to assert the innocence of the duchess, they interrupted him with a loud hal! ha! of derision. "A pretty story, truly," would they cry, "about a wolf and a dragon, and a young widow rescued in the dark by a stately varlet, who dares not

show his face in the daylight. You may tell that to those who do not know human nature; for our parts, we know the sex, and that's enough."

If, however, the other repeated his assertion, they would suddenly knit their brows, swell, look big, and put their hands upon their swords. As few people like to fight in a cause that does not touch their own interests, the nephew and the uncles were suffered to have their way, and swagger uncontradicted.

The matter was at length referred to a tribunal composed of all the dignitaries of the dukedom, and many and repeated consultations were held. The character of the duchess, throughout the year was as bright and spotless as the moon in a cloudless night; one fatal hour of darkness alone intervened, to eclipse its brightness. Finding human sagacity incapable of dispelling the mystery, it was determined to leave the question to Heaven; or in other words, to decide it by the ordeal of the sword—a sage tribunal in the age of chivalry. The nephew and two bully uncles were to maintain their accusation in listed combat, and six months were allowed to the duchess to provide herself with three champions, to meet them in the field. Should she fail in this, should her champions be vanquished, her honor would be considered as attained, her fidelity as forfeit, and her dukedom would go to the nephew, as a matter of right.

With this determination the duchess was fain to comply. Proclamations were accordingly made, and heralds sent to various parts; but day after day, week after week, and month after month, elapsed, without any champion appearing to assert her loyalty throughout the darksome hour. The fair widow was reduced to despair, when tidings reached her of grand tournaments to be held at Toledo, in celebration of the nuptials of Don Roderick, the last of the Gothic kings, with the Morisco princess Exilona. As a last resort, the duchess repaired to the Spanish court, to implore the gallantry of its assembled chivalry.

The ancient city of Toledo was a scene of gorgeous revelry on the event of the royal nuptials. The youthful king, brave, agile, and magnificent, and his lovely bride, beaming with all the radiant beauty of the east, were hailed with shouts and acclamations whenever they appeared. Their nobles vied with each other in the luxury of their attire, their prancing steeds and splendid retinues; and the haughty dames of the court appeared in a blaze of jewels.

In the midst of all this pageantry, the beautiful, but afflicted Duchess of Lorraine made her approach to the throne. She was dressed in black, and closely veiled; four duennas of the most staid and severe aspect, and six beautiful demoiselles, formed her female attendants. She was guarded by several very ancient, withered, and gray-headed cavaliers; and her train was borne by one of the most deformed and diminutive dwarfs in existence.

Advancing to the foot of the throne, she knelt down, and, throwing up her veil, revealed a countenance so beautiful that half the courtiers present were ready to renounce wives and mistresses, and devote themselves to her service; but when she made known that she came in quest of champions to defend her fame, every cavalier pressed forward to offer his arm and sword, without inquiring into the merits of the case; for it seemed clear that so beautiful a lady could have done nothing but what was right; and that, at any rate, she ought to be championed in following the bent of her humors, whether right or wrong.

Encouraged by such gallant zeal, the duchess suffered herself to be raised from the ground, and related the whole story of her distress. When she concluded, the king remained for some time silent, charmed by the music of her voice. At length: "As I hope for salvation, most beautiful duchess," said he, "were I not a sovereign king, and bound in duty to my kingdom, I myself would put lance in rest to vindicate your cause; as it is, I here give full permission to my knights, and promise lists and fair field, and that the contest shall take place before the walls of Toledo, in presence of my assembled court."

As soon as the pleasure of the king was known, there was a strife among the cavaliers present, for the honor of the contest. It was decided by lot, and the successful candidates were objects of great envy, for every one was ambitious of finding favor in the eyes of the young widow.

Misadventure sent, summoning the nephew and his two uncles to Toledo, to maintain their accusation, and a day was appointed for the combat. When the day arrived, all Toledo was in commotion at an early hour. The lists had been prepared in the usual place, just without the walls, at the foot of the rugged rocks on which the city is built, and on the beautiful meadow along the Tagus, known by the name of the king's garden. The populace had already assembled, each one eager to

secure a favorable place; the balconies were filled with the ladies of the court, clad in their richest attire, and bands of youthful knights, splendidly armed and decorated with their ladies' devices, were managing their superbly caparisoned steeds about the field. The king at length came forth in state, accompanied by the queen Exilona. They took their seats in a raised balcony, under a canopy of rich damask; and, at sight of them, the people rent the air with acclamations.

The nephew and his uncles now rode into the field, armed cap-a-pie, and followed by a train of cavaliers of their own roving cast, great swarriors and carousers, ardent swashbucklers, with clanking armor and jingling spurs. When the people of Toledo beheld the vaunting and discourteous appearance of these knights, they were more anxious than ever for the success of the gentle duchess; but at the same time, the sturdy and stalwart firmness of these warriors, showed that whoever won the victory from them, must do it at the cost of many a bitter blow.

As the nephew and his riotous crew rode in at one side of the field, the fair widow appeared at the other, with her suite of grave gray-headed courtiers, her ancient duennas and dainty demoiselles, and the little dwarf totting along under the weight of her train. Every one made way for her as she passed, and blessed her beautiful face, and prayed for success to her cause. She took her seat in a lower balcony, not far from the sovereigns; and her pale face, set off by her morning weeds, was as the moon, shining forth from among the clouds of night.

The trumpet sounded for the combat. The warriors were just entering the lists, when a stranger knight, armed in panoply, and followed by two pages and an esquire, came galloping into the field, and, riding up to the royal balcony, claimed the combat as a matter of right.

"In me," cried he, "behold the cavalier who had the happiness to rescue the beautiful duchess from the peril of the forest, and the fortune to bring on her this grievous calamity. It was but recently, in the course of my errantry, that tidings of her wrongs have reached my ears, and I have urged hither at all speed, to stand forth in her vindication."

No sooner did the duchess hear the accents of the knight than she recognized his voice, and joined her prayers to his that he might carry the list. The difficulty was, to determine which of the three champions already appointed should yield his place, each insisting on the honor of the combat. The stranger knight would have settled the point, by taking the whole contest upon himself; but this the other knights would not permit. It was at length determined, as before, by lot, and the cavalier who lost the chance retired murmuring and disconsolate.

The trumpet again sounded—the lists were opened. The arrogant nephew and his two ducal uncles appeared so completely cased in steel, that they and their steeds were like moving masses of iron. When they understood the stranger knight to be the same that had rescued the duchess from her peril, they greeted him with the most boisterous derision.

"O ho! sir Knight of the Dragon," said they, "you who pretend to champion fair widows in the dark, come on, and vindicate your deeds of darkness in the open day."

The only reply of the cavalier was, to put lance in rest, and brace himself for the encounter. Needless it is to relate the particulars of the battle, which was like so many hundred combats that have been said and sung in prose and verse. Who is there but must have foreseen the event of a contest, where Heaven had to decide on the guilt or innocence of the most beautiful and immaculate of widows?

The sagacious reader, deeply read in this kind of judicial combats, can imagine the encounter of the graceless nephew and the stranger knight, who was like a hawk upon a dove, and man, and horse to horse, in mid career, and sir Graceless hurled to the ground, and slain. He will not wonder that the assaults of the brawny uncles were less successful in their rude encounter; but he will picture to himself the stout stranger spurring to their rescue, in the very critical moment; he will see him trampling one with his lance, and cleaving the other to the shin with a back stroke of his sword, thus leaving the trio of accusers dead upon the field, and establishing the immaculate fidelity of the duchess, and her title to the dukedom, beyond the shadow of a doubt.

The air rung with acclamations; nothing was heard but praises of the beauty and virtue of the duchess, and of the prowess of the stranger knight; but the public joy was still more increased when the champion raised his visor, and revealed the countenance of one of the bravest cavaliers of Spain, renowned for his gallantry in the service of the sex, and who had been round the world in quest of similar adventures.

The worthy knight, however, was severely wounded and remained for a long time ill of his wounds. The lovely duchess, grateful for having twice owed her protection to his arm, attended him daily during his illness; and finally rewarded his gallantry with her hand.

The king would fain have had the knight establish his title to such high advancement by further deeds of arms; but his courtiers declared that he already merited the lady, by thus vindicating her fame and fortune in a deadly combat to outrance; and the lady herself hinted that she was perfectly satisfied of his prowess in arms, from the proofs she had received in his achievement in the forest.

Their nuptials were celebrated with great magnificence. The present husband of the duchess did not pray and fast like his predecessor, Philbert the wife-ridden; yet he found greater favor in the eyes of Heaven, for their union was blessed with a numerous progeny—the daughters chaste and beautiful as their mother; the sons stout and valiant as their sire, and renowned, like him, for relieving disconsolate damsels and desolated widows.



## The Greatest Evil that Afflicts Humanity.

What is it? This question will be answered according to the experience of the person to whom it is propounded. If it be one who believes that the whole human family inherited eternal damnation, on account of the alleged transgression of Adam, and Eve, in the garden of Eden, the answer will be: "Original Sin." If it be a widow whose husband has been slaughtered, whose house and substance have been destroyed, and whose children have been made fatherless, homeless and dependent upon the cold charities of an unsympathizing world, by an invading foe, she will answer, without a moment's hesitation: "War." If it be a wife and mother, whose husband has been injured, by his own evil propensities, or bad associations, into revelry and drunkenness, till his substance is all wasted, his morals depraved, his mind vitiated and debased, his faculties destroyed and his temper so soured that he abuses and beats her, and her whole condition and that of her family, are as wretched as destitution, misery and hopelessness can make them, the ready answer will be: "Intemperance." But if it be propounded to the capable, thinking, far-seeing and comprehensive mind, which can run through the history of all nations and ages, and trace the connecting lines between causes and consequences, through the whole, the positive and emphatic answer will be: "Avarice."

Avarice is the progenitor of nearly, if not quite, all other evils that humanity is heir to. But for the avarice of kings, potentates and nations, there would be no wars, no devastation, no human carnage. One crowned head, or governing power, covets the territory, cities, harbors, navies and property generally, possessed by another power, and seeks for cause of war, as a justification for meditated aggression, seizure and confiscation. The impulse is the same as that which sends the dirk of the highwayman into the vitals of the traveller, who is suspected of having money in his possession.—Kings and nations who go to war for conquest, are highway robbers on a large scale—assassins who commit murder by thousands and tens of thousands, for what their victims possess. It is the same avarice which prompts man to robbery and individual to rob individual.—The principle is the same in both cases—the difference is only in the magnitude of the criminality. The nation is superior to all human law, commits its murders in defiance of justice, and all human retribution. The individual commits his assassinations under cover of darkness, only because he is too weak to defy the power of the community of which he is a member, and to whose laws he is forcibly held amenable. All depredations upon property, from petty larceny to burglary and bank robbery, is the legitimate offspring of Avarice.

Avarice imports alcoholic poisons from foreign countries, and manufactures them at home, from that which should be the staff of life to pauperized thousands and scantily fed hundreds of thousands. It makes merchandise of those poisons, selling them by cargoes, by pipes and hogheads, by barrels, by gallons, quarts, pints, gills and half-gills. It displays them in bottles to all passers by, to lure them into the habit of drunkenness, for the sake of the sixpences which they carry in their pockets, and which they need to supply them with the necessities of life. It thus makes drunkards of thousands and tens of thousands; and then it contributes from its hoard to carry on a war of defiance against all prohibitory statutes enacted for the preservation of the rising generation from the heaviest of all secondary curses. Who, then, will presume to assert that Intemperance is a greater evil than its father, Avarice?

Avarice sends ships and men to Africa to catch and purchase men, women and children, and bring them away in irons, and sell them into life-long slavery, which is entailed upon their posterity forever. It sends emissaries to the chiefs of African tribes, provided with rum and worthless trinkets. Those emissaries first incite tribes or nations to war against each other, and then exchange their poison and gewgaws for the prisoners of each. By these and other means, American planters are supplied with slaves to do their labor, without reward and without hope of rescue or of any thing but labor, hominy and the lash. Avarice holds them in slavery, denies them all cultivation, and buys and sells them like oxen and horses, although each one has a soul that will live forever and progress to the estate of an arch-angel. Avarice, therefore, is the progenitor of human slavery, that great black spot upon the escutcheon of America.

Avarice takes as much as it can possibly grind and squeeze out of the earnings of the laboring poor, leaving them with hardly enough to sustain life from day to day, and frequently turning them adrift, without employment, in winter, caring nothing whether they live or die. And this it does to hoard up great heaps of wealth, which it worships as a God. Thus Avarice oppresses and robs labor, spurs the hungry from its gates, withholds charity upon pretence of fearing that it will encourage idleness and vice, and frequently makes prayers in affliction of piety, whilst the real devotion of its dwarfed soul is paid at the shrine of Mammon. When Avarice is applied to for a contribution to aid some worthy but unfortunate person or family, it excuses itself with the plea that it has poor relations that need all the aid it can afford; but it takes care that no dollar shall ever pass from its full coffers to their

empty pockets. Thus it proves itself a hypocrite, a miser and a knave. Avarice shuts up all avenues to the affections of its devotees, and, eventually, extinguishes them entirely, leaving their hearts emotionless, save when there is game to be brought down. It smiles upon no one but its intended victims and the ingenious locksmen. It lives for the sordid part of itself; thinks but one set of thoughts, which run in a single channel; moves and acts, but to gratify its craving disposition, and dies the death of a miserable wretch, to remain in the lowest sphere of spiritual existence, still clinging to earth and yearning in agony for the heap of dross which it could not take with it.

This, as far as it goes, is a true picture of full-grown Avarice. Those who are afflicted with that all-engrossing and all-debasing passion, only in degree, will feel its effects only in degree; have their souls corroded by it, only in degree, and manifest its heart-freezing and soul-distorting qualities to the world, only in degree. But it is a plant of exceedingly rapid growth, and the most noxious weed in the interior garden. It requires no cultivation—it needs only to be let alone, and it will overtop, poison and blast every seedling of virtue within the reach of its roots or the fight of its pollen.

Let our spiritual friends understand that true spiritualism and Avarice cannot possibly be tenants of the same interior temple, at the same time. Where Avarice dwells in its maturity, true spiritualism cannot enter; nor can Avarice enter where true spiritualism holds supremacy. A mind may be convinced, by irresistible evidence, of the reality of spiritual intercourse with mortals, and even admire the moral and religious teachings of celestial visitants, and still harbor and cherish the passion of Avarice in its extreme. Such ones can never embrace spiritualism in its purity, or be in any wise benefited by it. To believe in the truth of spiritualism, and to practise the precepts which it teaches, are two things, between which there is a wide distinction. James said: "Thou believest in one God: thou doest well: the devils, also, believe and tremble."

It is not required of spiritualists to refrain from accumulating property, in any legitimate calling. Indeed, it is necessary to them as a means of defence against the attacks of the external world of materialism. In order to withstand the efforts which are made to crush and overwhelm them, it is necessary that they should avail themselves of the kind of weapons which their adversaries use; and these are not to be had without means to procure them. But although the honest accumulation of property is justifiable, under the circumstances in which we are placed, the utmost caution is necessary to prevent the love of gain to grow into an absorbing passion, which will blunt all the finer feelings of the inner man, and shut the heart and tighten the purse-strings against the imperative demands of common necessities. Spiritualists, in order to sustain themselves and their cause, must be liberal individually, in inverse proportion to their numbers. Otherwise the cause must suffer for the want of able advocacy, and they must suffer reproach for the tardiness of its growth and the scarcity of its fruits.

## Husband and Wife.

If we except the vicious and debasing habits of many husbands and some wives are prone to, there is, probably, nothing which causes such discordant and alienating feelings between husbands and wives, as difference in religious sentiments. And, strange as it may appear to those who have not entered into the conjugal relation, those discords seem to be more deep rooted, irradicable and irreconcilable than any others. Is there any good reason why this should be so? We think not. What are the obligations and duties which the parties to a matrimonial contract take upon themselves, towards each other? They engage to live together, love each other, do all in their power for each other's benefit and comfort, and abstain from sexual intercourse with all others, as long as they both live. This is the whole amount of their reciprocal obligations. In all other things, they remain separate, distinct and independent individuals. And, at the demise of either of the parties, the bond is cancelled, the legal knot is untied, and the surviving one is as much at liberty to form a new alliance and enter into a new covenant as he or she was before any such compact was formed.

On the occurrence of any difference of sentiment, whatever may be the subject upon which they differ, it is the duty of each and of both to refer immediately to the terms of the compact and see if either is committing, or about to commit, a breach of them. If not, no just cause of dissatisfaction has been given, and no cause of disagreement exists. They take each other, when they enter into the conjugal relation, with the religious sentiments which they then respectively entertain, and with the unreserved right of repudiating those sentiments and embracing others, whenever the mind is convinced that its former faith is erroneous, and that the one which it is about to embrace, is more in accordance with reason and the divine law as it is written in the book of nature. That liberty of conscience which the whole world of mankind holds the most sacred of all human rights, having never been surrendered by either of the parties to the other, any direct interference with it, or any determined opposition to its exercise, by the one or the other, is an unwarrantable usurpation; and he or she who does it, strikes a dangerous blow at the vitals of conjugal felicity, and lays the foundation of a separating wall which love may not be able to penetrate or to leap over, and which may be the cause of

not only a temporal, but an eternal alienation. Any husband or wife has a right to demand of the other party the grounds on which he or she bases a religious faith, whether it be new or old. But this demand should be made in a spirit of kindness and toleration, and not in bitterness, with reproachful voice, or with sneers or sarcasms which are calculated to wound the feelings and alienate the affections. For, let us warn such parties, that every word of unmerited reproach, and every act of unkindness, which one party receives from the other, is as cold water thrown upon that conjugal love which, instead of cooling and subsiding into indifference, should constantly and unintermittently increase in fervor, though it do not flame as in its incipency. Conjugal love, though naturally a healthful and luxuriant plant, cannot long survive the frost of religious intolerance, nor thrive where the winds of petulance, irascibility and reproach are continually assailing it. It is not so tender as to require continual nursing; but it must be watered by such kindness, charity and sympathy as naturally flow from soul to soul of those who wish and endeavor to save it from decay and promote its growth.

That conjugal love can be successfully cultivated, even when the parties find that they were mistaken in the genuineness of what they took to be such, when they entered into the conjugal relation, we have not the least shadow of a doubt. And we feel it our duty to warn every one, not to enter into that relation with one who has made one choice and failed to live harmoniously, unless the other party had become demoralized and debased by rank vices, contracted subsequently to their connection.

## An interesting Lecture.

We are promised, for our next issue, a lecture from the spirit of AARON BURN. Having had many lectures by elevated spirits, who were too elevated, at the time of their transition, to enter the lowest sphere of spiritual life, we felt desirous to receive a communication from one whose personal experience would enable him to give us a full account of his entrance into the totally undeveloped spiritual condition; the pains and pleasures of life there; the manner of sustaining the spiritual body, which must necessarily be gross, in that condition; and the process, labor and pains of progression, from degree to degree of elevation. In casting about for such a spirit, that of AARON BURN came into our mind, as one in every way qualified to give us the desired narrative, knowing, as we did, from reliable information, that he had entered the spirit world in a very low condition, and had progressed to the fourth circle of the second sphere. We, therefore, requested a guardian spirit who is constantly with us, to go in quest of him, and invite him to come and give us a lecture on that subject. She complied, and soon returned with the spirit of the no table statesman, to the presence of Miss BROWN, the medium. She announced his presence; and he promised the lecture for our next paper, and gave the following as his subject:

"My entrance into the spirit world, and my upward progress to my present condition."

## "The Inauguration of the Millennium."

From the venerable philanthropist and reformer, ROBERT OWEN, of England, we have received two copies of a pamphlet, containing the reported proceedings of a great "preliminary meeting," recently held in St. Martin's Hall, London, preparatory to the advent of the Millennium. 'The life of this great reformer has been devoted, almost exclusively, to the betterment of the human race; and, although there is little probability that his earthly life will be continued till any essential change shall result from his philanthropic efforts to propagate philosophical truth, we have faith that his long life of arduous labor will prove to be good seed sown, which will yield a rich and abundant harvest in time to come. And now that the advent of modern spiritualism has convinced his great mind of a life of immortality, at activity and progression, when his period of incarnation shall terminate and his spirit shall be enlarged, he will be looking forward to an eternal germination, with emotions of soul which have hitherto been strangers to him. And here the idea strikes us, that there is superior merit in the life-long labors of one like Mr. Owen, who has devoted himself to the amelioration of the condition of oppressed and depressed humanity, without prospect of present, or hope of future reward, as compared with those who feel assured that every philanthropic effort, though unrewarded by good results in this life, adds to the store of treasure which they are laying up in heaven.

That our readers may understand the object of the movement of which Mr. O. is the head, we copy, below, his introduction to the report, which we feel assured will be read with much interest by all those who are familiar with the character and antecedents of the man:

## INTRODUCTION.

The interest of the human race, without one exception, is, that the Millennial state of life upon earth should now be introduced. All the materials, requisite for its commencement are abundantly prepared, and are to be found or obtained in all parts of the earth necessary for human habitation.

The knowledge, hitherto unknown, of the conditions which must constitute the Millennial state, has been discovered, and will speedily be made obvious to the public in ample detail.

To prepare society for this change in its spirit, principle, and practice, the preliminary

meeting was held on the 1st of May, as narrated in the first report here given. This meeting prepared the public for the Great Meeting on the 14th of May, of the *World's Convention of Delegates of the human race*, when the Millennium was inaugurated, and the public for the first time was made conscious that the Millennium is a reality, and was informed of the outline of the practical conditions which will give it a speedy living existence. At this eventful meeting, those present were briefly informed of its religion, government, and laws, and that none except those stated can exist in the Millennial state,—that they will beautifully combine to form a new system for the human race,—and that they will for ever act in uninterrupted harmony, keeping the population of the world in perpetual peace, forming one brotherhood, ever cordially united, and possessing in perfection, liberty, equality and fraternity. At that meeting it was also stated, and it is now reiterated in the most emphatic manner, that none of the existing religions, governments, laws, classes, sects, parties, or institutions, are in accordance with the spirit, principles, or practices of the Millennium.

The conditions which these Institutions have created for their support are all irrational and repulsive, and are necessarily productive of ignorance, poverty, dissension, crime, punishment, and misery. While the conditions which will arise from the spirit, principles, and practices of the Millennial state, will of necessity produce knowledge, wealth, union, and goodness, and will secure the progress and happiness of all, without punishment or the existence of any angry feelings throughout the entire population of the world.

While men, by proposing petty reforms, attempt to improve systems based on falsehood, and which can be productive only of evil and dissension, they will labor in vain; as they have done through all the ages which have passed. While this insane proceeding shall continue, whatever may be the progress of science and art and material discoveries the result will be, as heretofore, disappointment and dissatisfaction, and this will forever continue until that accursed false fundamental principle, the source of human evil,—that man forms his own character, and is responsible for its formation,—shall be openly abandoned by all nations, and shall be superseded by the true fundamental principle,—that nature and society form man,—and until all conditions of human formation shall be made in conformity with that divine principle. It is only while the human mind is in a low stage of development that it could anticipate the attainment of truth, goodness, love, wisdom, unity, or charity, from a false fundamental principle, or while the institutions and conditions of society emanated immediately from a principle so opposed to all known facts, and to the divine laws of nature, or the obvious word of God, written indelibly throughout his earthly creation. The result of this error, in spirit, principle, and practice, is that which reason would anticipate—a world of lunatics, opposing each others happiness and their own, contending and fighting for that which can never be attained by contest and violence, and continually rejecting the only spirit, principle, and practice, which can give them that which they are striving after,—that which alone can make them rational in thought and action, consistent and reasonable beings, and secure their universal and perpetual progress, well-being, and enjoyment of life upon earth.

The public press in the most free countries, especially in Great Britain and the United States, is beginning to use considerable influence, in opposition to Religions and Governments, in forming the character of the populations whom they address. But the writers proceed in their endeavours upon the same false fundamental principle, and therefore they can never attain their well-intentioned object. They serve, however, to make all parties discontented with the present system of error, and that is a useful preliminary measure to prepare for a change. Their great want of knowledge of human nature is exhibited when they attempt to suggest remedies for the evils which arise solely from a false principle and its necessary errors in practice.

Without knowing the cause of evil, their proposed remedies are the most futile and childish. Having no principle to direct them their imaginations run wild in error.

The English prominent daily and weekly papers, which assume the task of leading the public mind at present, are the *Times* daily, and the *Leader* weekly. The writers in these influential journals perceive clearly many of the more obvious evils of the existing system, and with some moral courage and considerable common place ability expose, those evils. But they do not know the cause of those evils or, if they know them, they are deterred by worldly considerations from stating them openly and honestly. The probability is, they do not know the cause of the universal error of society, and therefore have no conception of the only remedy which can remove the cause. But while they recommend false and futile remedies, they lead the public mind far astray from its true course, and are therefore inflicting serious evil to a great extent on the public welfare as far as the sphere of their circulations.

Little do the writers in these newspapers imagine, that none of the Religions, Governments, Laws, or Institutions of the world, are calculated for a rational state of human existence,—that it is vain to expect a language of truth with a commerce for money profit, or anything approaching to charity and love, or real goodness and wisdom, with private property or the despotism of one human being

over another. As well attempt to drain the ocean with a sieve, as expect charity and love, or truth and common honesty among men, under a system of private property, with the inequality and bad and inferior feelings which it necessarily creates.

Private property is the demon which arises from the absurd belief, opposed to all facts, that man forms himself, and not God and society. However divinely true is this statement respecting private property, and although the perpetual happiness of the human race depends upon this knowledge being universally known and well understood, the *English Times* and *Leader*, and the *United States Tribune*, (another journal attempting to teach and lead the public), dare not yet openly advocate a system of public property, which can alone exist in the Millennial, or truly good and happy state of human existence upon earth. A slight reflection, by a well constituted or rational mind, would at once perceive that truth and honesty, or goodness and happiness, could never exist with the injustice and cruelty of private property.

Until their knowledge shall be enlarged, and their moral courage increased, let not the *Times*, *Leader*, or *Tribune* attempt to instruct the public, except in the errors of the present system; and as that system is erroneous through all its ramifications, from centre to circumference, they are most useful in the department of finding fault, and are excellent preliminary assistants.

But unless they intend to perpetuate evil and misery, they will refrain from proposing remedies, as they have done hitherto, on a false principle. And they will be silent respecting their crude notions of remedies, until they know and well comprehend the only principle which can lead to an effectual and permanent remedy for the evils of the human race. In the spirit of real kindness to the parties, and love for humanity, it is earnestly recommended that those immediately interested in conducting the *Times*, *Leader*, and *Tribune*, should without loss of time acquire a knowledge of the cause of and remedy for human evil, and learn the difference between the present babel confusion of society and the Millennial State, with the means by which the latter may be made—by wise foresight, quietly, peaceably, and most beneficially for all—to supersede it in such manner that the populations in all countries would be scarcely conscious how this great change for the better in their condition was effected.

The *Times* in Europe and the *Tribune* in the United States, by their position, and by their property acquired and in progress of accumulation, are in a most enviable condition to effect the greatest immediate good for humanity, and at the same time greatly to increase their partnerships gains, as long as private property can be desired,—which, however, now cannot be a long period. These parties could, if they were to set their minds to the pleasing task, soon understand the cause of existing evils, how to remove the cause, and how to acquire correct knowledge of the spirit principles, and practices of the Millennial or true and natural state of man upon the earth, and how peaceably and most beneficially for all to effect this change, and to make a commencement of it worthy of the glorious and heavenly results which the change will produce. The *Times* could easily begin this change from evil to good in Europe—perhaps near London, as its present real metropolis. And the *Tribune* near New York, as the real metropolis of the continent of America.

If these parties will now enter upon this all-glorious cause, for them and the human race, I will assist them with all the knowledge which I have acquired during a long life devoted to the subjects.

If these parties desire to lead the public mind aright, and to accomplish the greatest results ever attained for all of human kind, the path is plain and opened for them. MR. HORACE GREELEY, the founder and chief proprietor of the *Tribune*, is now, I believe, in this country or in Paris. Let him and the proprietors of the *Times* consult together, and agree to assist each other, as a beginning of the universal unity which the Millennium will create; for without universal union there can be no Millennium. And let it not be forgotten, that with private property there can be no union of mind and feeling such as the Millennial State requires. If these parties have a desire equal to their means to benefit their fellow men, they have now the power at their disposal to do more than has ever yet been done for the human race. Can they overcome their educated prejudices, and altogether abandon them for the great and glorious truths which can alone establish the Millennial State, of universal happy existence of man upon earth?

It will now be put to the proof whether these two organs, of present high profits and unequalled high popularity, possess the comprehension and elevation of mind and purpose which their commanding position is calculated to create,—or whether they will continue mere wordy journals, to maintain old errors and practices, under varied terms, as useless and senseless as those which have brought the most advanced nations into their present fearful predicament, leaving it doubtful whether barbarism and violence, falsehood and fraud, shall not again overwhelm the population of the world, when a slight effort in the right direction would redeem mankind from error and evil, and would introduce the Millennial State for the future life of man upon the earth, and fit him for the life to come in progression, knowledge, excellence, and happiness.

To conclude. The undeveloped, ignorant, and artificial state of man is the past and present system, with its artificial laws, religions, governments, classes, and parties, as they have

existed, and as they now exist over the earth. While the natural state of man, for which his natural faculties are especially adapted, and for which they are perpetually longing and striving, is the Millennial State, in which there can be but one Language, one Religion, one Code of Laws, one Government, one Class, one Party, one Interest, one Feeling, one Education, and one individual Desire to promote each others excellence and happiness. There is no halfway between these two systems; for the one is based on falsehood, and is throughout all its divisions and ramifications artificial and opposed to human nature; while the other is based on eternal truths, which will lead to universal unity, the natural, and therefore the happy state of human existence.

Folly, deserving the name of lunacy, will alone desire the continuance of the false, ignorant, and artificial system, or attempt to unite it with the true and natural system.

Let the *Times* therefore continue to thunders as loud as all its powers will admit in favour of any change based on this falsehood, and let the *Tribune* continue its earnest and sincere efforts in favour of its educated sectarianism, based on the same falsehood,—and both will waste their valuable power to no other purpose than to change one set of evils for another, equally as grievous as those now suffered over the world, or perhaps more so.

Be it then remembered, that these two journals have now the power at their disposal, if the proprietors were rational, to immediately introduce the Millennium into Europe and America, in its divine spirit, principle, and practice.

But although they are thus powerful for good, they will prove powerless for evil. The Millennium is inaugurated. The knowledge of its spirit, principle and practice, is gone forth to the world. The world will now lay fast hold of it. And let the *Times* thunder to its utmost extent, and the *Tribune* preach sectarianism throughout the United States,—the populations of Europe and America will soon cease to listen to the one or the other, and will soon consider both as of the past, and as quite useless for the future.

The Millennial spirit, principle, and practice, will now inaugurate the New Existence of Man upon the Earth.

No one having a knowledge of human nature will expect truth, honesty, goodness, or common sense, under a system based on a principle leading to individual responsibility and to the practice of private property and individual opposing action.

ROBERT OWEN.

SEVENOAKS, 26th May, 1855.

P. S.—In further explanation respecting Kossuth and Mazzini, of whose proceedings I have spoken in my address to the world's convention, it will be useful to add, that these two well-meaning, self-sacrificing but short-sighted men, are leading a large part of the population of Europe astray, by continually directing attention to war by nationalities, without considering what these nationalities have been trained to become. Their education and position necessarily train them to be a mass of imbecility, continually occupied with competitions, contentions, and conflicts, governed by Mammon, and quietly permitting less than a dozen Imperial and Royal Families to tyrannize over them,—although they constitute the population of Europe and Asia. Were the power to-day in the hands of these populations, they would immediately quarrel among themselves, and would throw Europe and Asia into utter confusion.

The populations on the continent of the Americas are in a similar state, and war would increase their ignorance and violent feelings. Even the population of the United States is a mass of contending confusion, although it is the most advanced of modern nations.

## Practical Prayer.

In the vicinity of B—lived a poor but industrious man, depending for support upon his daily labor. His wife fell sick, and not being able to hire a nurse, he was obliged to confine himself to the sick bed and family. His means of support being thus cut off, he soon found himself in need. Having a wealthy neighbor near, he determined to go and ask for two bushels of wheat, with a promise to pay as soon as his wife became well enough to leave, that he could return to his work. Accordingly he took his bag, went to his neighbor's, and arrived when they were at family prayers.

As he sat on the door-stone he heard the man pray very earnestly that God would clothe the naked, feed the hungry, relieve the needy, comfort all that mourn. The prayer concluded, the poor man stepped in and made known his business, promising to pay with the avails of his labor. The farmer was very sorry he could not accommodate him, but he had promised to lend a large sum of money, and had depended upon his wheat to make it out; but he presumed neighbor A—would let him have it.

With a tearful eye and a sad heart, the poor man turned away. As soon as he left the house the farmer's little son stepped up and said:

"Father, did you not pray that God would clothe the naked, and feed the hungry, relieve the distressed, and comfort the mourners?"

"Yes—why?"

"Because, father, if I had your wheat I would answer that prayer." It is needless to add that the Christian father called back his suffering neighbor, and gave him as much wheat as he needed.

Now, Christian readers, do you answer your own prayers?

Oh! how we do dislike to dun people!



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Rev. C. Hammond is now sojourning in this city, for a short time, and will lecture for us on Sunday next, at the usual hours, morning and afternoon.

## Harmonical Association.

A special election, by the Association, was held, on the 8th inst., to choose a Vice President and a member of the Executive Committee, both in place of our worthy brother, WILLIAM E. LOWELL, who has removed to Wisconsin. The result of the balloting was the choice of IRA A. STONE, for the first office, and GUY H. SALISBURY, for the second. Both ballottings were unanimous.

## Manifestations at Davenport's.

We went with some friends, on Saturday evening last, to witness the spiritual manifestations at DAVENPORT'S room, with the purpose of reporting what should be done there.

Our readers are aware that there has been much doubt expressed, not only by skeptics, but by some believers in the spiritual phenomena, of the reality of some of these manifestations. It has been doubted that the mediums are taken up to the ceiling, by spirits. Why it should be doubted by those who have witnessed manifestations equally wonderful, we cannot see; but suspicion, like the plague, is contagious, and will infect many in whom it does not originate.

We intended to be so certain of the fact that there should be no circumstance to hang a doubt upon. Therefore, we asked Mr. DAVENPORT to procure a piece of red chalk to put into the smaller boy's hand, that he might make a mark with it, on the ceiling of the room, if he should be taken up. This request he readily complied with; and, at about half past eight o'clock, we sat around the table. Before the light was removed, we put a chair on the table and asked the medium who had the chalk, to stand on the chair and see if he could reach the ceiling. He did so, and, by stretching himself on tip-toe, and extending his fingers, he could not reach the ceiling by at least a foot. This being the only available means, in the room, of reaching the ceiling, and this being inadequate, it necessarily followed that, if a mark was made, it must be by spiritual assistance. After some other manifestations, the medium was elevated to the ceiling and came down pretty heavily upon the floor. On alighting, he observed: "I believe I have made a mark on the ceiling." The light was then brought in and we examined the ceiling, when a plain red mark was seen, about a foot long. Every one in the room knew that it was not there before, for all examined carefully. Another convincing circumstance was the fact that the mark was made so that a perpendicular line from the end of it nearest the table, to the floor, would not come within two feet of the nearest part of the table, which proved it impracticable for even a full grown person to make it, though elevated by the height of a chair, standing on any part of the table where his weight would not throw it over. These circumstances amount, as we conceive, to proof positive that the mediums are really carried to the ceiling, as they and the spirits say they are. Let it be understood that the table is a large, round one, with the top far projecting beyond the legs.

Whilst sitting around the table, and before the light was removed, there were various manifestations, such as answering questions by tipping the table, turning it down upon its side for those present to lift it up, whilst the spirits held it down, &c. We lifted it with the hands of the mediums against the face of it, and found it not less than ten times its real weight. Again, when it was standing on its legs, one of the mediums observed that the spirits would hold it so that no one could turn it round. The hands of the whole circle were lying lightly on it when we made an attempt to turn it. We exerted all our strength, but could not move it. We observed that we thought we could move it, thought every hand on it was borne with all the power of its owner. All the hands were then removed from it, excepting those of the mediums, which lay flat and lightly on it. We then made several efforts to turn it, but did not succeed in stirring it any more than we could if each leg had been firmly rooted in the floor.

The violin was carried around, over our heads, with great velocity, and sounded continuously as it seemed to fly. As it passed over our head, at several times, so near that we could feel the wind of it, we kept one leg extended so far as we could reach, and kept it swinging, so that if any one in the flesh had been carrying it, we must have hit him, because it takes both hands to carry it and sound it at the same time, which must bring the person within the reach of our extended leg. Whilst this was done, the hand bell was ringing in another part of the room, apparently near the ceiling, and the voice of the smaller boy was heard at the same time, at the table. This account, we think, will be corroborated by all that were present, as far as they were aware of the facts.

We shall have a communication in our next number, from Mrs. HEMANS, received in an extraordinary manner.

## Continuation of the series of spiritual communications, on the burned ed plate, through Rev. C. HAMMOND.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS. PHILOSOPHY OF LOW COMMUNICATIONS.

### LESSON XII.

ROCHESTER, Jan. 11th, 1854.

All effects are true to the causes which induce them. Nature in her diversified operations, in her uniform tendencies, is true to the life which animates it. That life is the ever-living, never-dying Infinite—the Cause of all causes, the postulate of all sequences, the unshakable, measureless, incomprehensible Spirit of life, from whom came all animated beings, whose breath is ever in your nostrils and whose power exceeds all limit. The theory of the universe, who shall understand? The philosophy of nature, who can comprehend? The vastness of the Infinite, who can describe? What profit hath a man, who launches forth into the immensity of creation, and thereby loses the path which he has pursued, not knowing whence he came, nor whither he is going? Lost in the boundless sublimity and wonder, he neither profits by the recollection of the past, nor dares to avail himself of the advantages of the future. Unlike this is the man who, steady in his purpose, forgets not the path he has trod, nor loses himself in the labyrinth of conjecture and speculation upon improbabilities and fanciful imaginings, but pursues the path he knows to be safe and secure, content with the blessings it yields, although no startling discoveries elicit the applause of ignorance.

My friends, be not impatient for wonders from heaven, which will startle the ignorant and arouse the stupid. You little know the disastrous consequences which would necessarily accompany such manifestations. Perdition indeed would be the effect upon those whom you wish most to serve. Such is the covetousness of passion around, that it is far more harmless to awaken a lion in his bed than to arouse the passions of the ignorant, ungoverned as they would be by the wisdom necessary to a calm investigation of the philosophy of nature. Were we to grant all which even advanced spiritualists desire, there would come such consequences as they would have reason to deplore. We desire you to understand, that extreme passion, no matter by what cause induced, is dangerous to the individual, and detrimental to society. The welfare depends, not upon the excitement of passion, but upon the consideration of the human soul. Marvelous man manifestations inspire, and what? They who possess an understanding feel, their understandings quickened. They who have not understanding but have passion, feel passion kindle into a flame. There are desires to govern men by the understanding, we desire not to control them by passion, lest passion reign a despot, and crush the rights of man. As man is progressed to a understandingly receive and profit by manifestations from the spirit world, so it is useful and consistent with nature to present them—not otherwise.

My friends, another thing is worthy of particular attention. Whenever you meet to receive instruction from spirits, be cautious and considerate, avoiding all vain trifling. Permit me to say, that greater mischief has been introduced into circles through incautions and inconsiderate speech, than even mediums themselves are aware of. Trifling with spirits, as it is called, is a serious misnomer. They who abuse under circumstances in which circles meet, abuse the good sense and understanding of reflecting minds; they trifle not with us, but with their own vanity; and let it be known, that at the circle of spirits interested in the disclosure of this series of lessons neither sympathize nor communicate under circumstances which forbid all appreciation of the sentiments which we teach. All communications, therefore, addressed to the passions of men, gratifying the levity, the vanity, the ignorance, the superstition, and the man-worship theories of human wisdom, emanate from a source corresponding with the mask which is on the face of the communication itself. And are even such spirits censurable for the offences which they fill? How could they fill them unless solicited to do so, and vessels were offered in which to drop the supplies for those who desire? I communicate not this information because it is new to you; but because it is truthful and applicable to many circles, convened ostensibly for elevated and valuable communications. Place any medium in a circle where nothing but the worthless is desired, and nothing but the worthless will be received. Why? Because that is all that such conditions will appreciate; and that circle of spirits, who have higher and holier duties to discharge, will not descend to any point inconsistent with, and antagonistic to, their sublime purposes.

My friends, understand me. This circle desires no affected gravity of countenance; no cheerfulness is reproved; but the inconsiderate levity and trifling, indulged in the name and under the banner of spiritualism, are inconsistent with candor and progress.

We cordially express our warmest thanks to such of you as have patiently attended and faithfully recorded the utterances of the spirits, during this season of lessons. Long may you cherish the sentiments we have unfolded, and carry the same with you through the journey of your pilgrimage on earth, so that, in your transition, we may receive you as good and faithful servants, who "have fought the good fight," with weapons peaceful and attractive, and that you may wear the crown of dignity, and admiration, and loveliness, which shall not be taken from you.

Will our distant friends avail themselves of the facilities of the mail, and send us the answers which we so much need?

## Lecture No. 16.—By Stephen R. Smith. THROUGH MISS BROOKS, MEDIUM.

## CHARITY IS KIND AND CEMETH OFTEN.

Philosophy leads the inquirer into the living and interior principles of whatever is presented for investigation; and the highest form of philosophy—a form which embraces all the modifications and perfections of preceding forms, is that philosophy which teaches men to be charitable, tender and gentle toward the entire embodiment of mind, in earth or in heaven. The interior part of the nature of man, is the supremely important part to understand and cultivate, as all of his outward creations depend upon the interior for their existence and beauty. Man needs to understand the sympathetic and homogeneous tendencies of his own spirit, and how to unite those tendencies with corresponding ones concentrated in his brother, before he can base the complete harmonization of mind, of interests and wishes upon individual sympathy. From the parental fount of all form and order—all that beauty and perfection which environ the intelligent individual, comes charity in all its gentleness, while, in its beautiful form, divinity marks its birth mission among the uncharitable of earth. Convolving circumstances and inner and outer influences act upon and mould, the individualism and form of mind and body, the moment they enter upon the stage of being, and through all succeeding stages of a human or spiritual being. Charity constitutes a part of the life of Deity, and is disseminated and diffused through all things in existence. Every thing, according to its capacity, is a receptacle of this principle, is moved and sustained by it, and there is nothing it does not penetrate. The gross materials which compose physical nature, are associated and vitalized by the principles charity teaches. No principle without life, can assimilate with the human organization, but the visible and palpable part of nature will associate itself with similar substance in the constitutions, as man is outwardly constituted of everything found in the construction of nature. The invisible and impalpable, or spiritual, part of all things, will gravitate to a corresponding principle in spiritual forms, and attract kindred elements which are contained in every form of spiritual organization. Charity is love and is the great central spring which unfolds, protects and develops the individual mind, because it not only contains every other higher element and attribute undeveloped, but gives force and active energy and motion to all the minute and various modifications of feeling and sentiment. The mind is mapped out by passions and sentiments, and there must be a philosophy of principles that will harmonize these passions and sentiments of the outer with the interior individuality.

Unconsoled and unsolicited, the human construction is ushered into a physical nature, while there is an infinite contrariety of physical developments, each representing the various elements, which act upon and enter into and disseminate through each respective constitution. Thus we find man physically and inwardly dependent upon the charity of finer elements, which, through the palpable and visible laws of God, refine his being. It is incontrovertibly demonstrated that man is the noblest work of God, and that, in his physical, and in the individualized action, of his spiritual organization, all the innumerable processes of nature were instituted; and science compels men to this conclusion, that man is in and of the divine mind—that he is a microcosm—that he lives and has his being in the unbounded expanse of His spirit. Then, can man be born without a spring of action—without a divinity—without an affection—a more empty vessel, through which goodness or evil may flow in a wide channel and forcible current, as his will determines? The reasoning mind knows that, by the mysterious workings of the elements of the interior self, that impulse, change, progression and desires, were born with the spirit and human body, into the material existence. By various processes of change, the matter composing the body and spirit, at their birth, falls off, commingling with the gross elements of finite being. So it is with the universe you inhabit; the refuse material will fall back, and new structural worlds or universes will be developed; but an eternity of time will glide away, and your universe will still roll on in its silent majesty, unmolested by the external actions and forces of outward nature, before this reconstruction will be complete. Every individuality being formed upon earth, is replete with the finer elements originating from your universe; and every physical body takes so much matter from your world, while finer matter, from the central universe, supplies its place. Thus you have a being and an individuality formed, while at the same time, there is a new birth somewhere in your universe. And, in every constitutional change of the physical being, matter is eliminated from your world and infused into that organization, and its loss is supplied and it is made still more perfect and complete, by finer matter rolling from the deep ocean of eternity into the bosom of your own universe.

Then we discover that the entire embodiment of matter into physical nature, is wholly dependent upon the laws and power of God—upon the charity He offers to man, in all the beauty of its divine goodness. Spirit is refined and interior, but matter is gross and external. And, to create a spirit replete with goodness, amiability, charity and kindness, the parent spirit must have its mental constitution illuminated by the virtues and characteristics of the Divine Parent. If material worlds cease to give birth to new creations, no mind can logically conclude where the myriads of human individualities can exist in the solitude of immensity. There is no final destination—no dying out of elements of matter or spirit, for they are progressive from eternity to eternity. If material creations of universes should disorganize and fall back into their original vortex of chaos, or chaotic condition, mind will be led to inquire where is the spirit gone which once illuminated the world. There must be a habitation for the spirit; and after passing through its final material transition, it undergoes an angelic discipline, by which every bad impression or deformity made by the physical being, upon the spiritual self, is removed, and perfect beauty reigns where deformity once physically existed.

We find the laws of structural arrangements—of association and gravitation, to be the first laws acting upon being. Then comes the law of progression or refinement; and the law of development is next in train, and exhibits its power in new creations. All inductive sciences and philosophy refer the mind to what is the first cause, which caused this Mighty Cause. These interrogations are ever welling up from the troubled depths of the philosophic mind; but I judge from interior cause and effects, that there is no mind, separate as an individual from God, that can, from external and internal indications, know what caused God. The man may, from experience, know the cause of his birth; but he cannot give you the principles of it. This is an abstract subject, and spirits can never inform mortal man of the cause of God. Thus it is but a momentary thought, when man argues who made God. For he returns at the close of his argument, to the point whence he first started. It is equally as useless for spirits to try to grasp this incomprehensible subject as it is for man to strive to grasp it, for it is as far from his reach spiritually, as the stars are remote from the physical grasp. Then it is essential that man should be charitable towards spirits, when they bring forth what man may call *infinite ideas*; for have not spirits been privileged to study and investigate by the same laws that privilege mortal man to know for himself?

If poor undeveloped spirits, who are mentally deformed by grossness, come to you and use imprecations and assume false names, or if they tell you they will harm you, let the angel of charity fold its white wings over your fearful bosom, and teach you the lessons of angelic or spiritual discipline. Repulse not such spirits from your immediate presence, for it is as uncharitable as it is for you to curse the drunkard or desert the friendless. Be charitable towards the immortal, and forget not that time will soon wait your spirit to the land of refreshing glory, when you may seek your earthly friends to assist you in your spiritual improvement. Charity, whether pulsating in cold magnificence, or chained by material bonds, in the cells of the dungeon, or imprisoned in the misers dark and selfish heart, or whether its influence is felt on the shores of the inner world, where, in peace, rolls the ocean's tide, and immortal angels sit on the yielding wave, chanting songs to mortal man; charity is the same. It is of God—it is love. It is meek and peaceful—tender and gentle. It throws its influence out upon the world, like the fragrant breath of heaven, as it heaves the bosom of nature with emotions and elements flowing through a peaceful channel, from the springs of immortality. Let charity fill your souls with a calm trust and a solemn and serene joy. Look deeper into the inherent promptings and follow it forth in its unbounded meanderings. Let it not meet a chilly reception. Let the miasma that shrouds the real man in fatal darkness, leaving him a skeleton of what should be, become removed by the angel of charity, and baptize the human soul in the gushing fount of immortality. Charity is a lesson to be learned. Man must bring it home to illuminate the deserted soul, and to give it hope of its life beyond the valley of change. Why should God, the great Infinite Parent, send immortal spirits, whose bosoms burn with demon hate, to the deluded mortal mind? Here let me pause and say to you kindly, in my unworthy tone, here is where charity tries to come. If mind cannot analyze the component parts and specific relations of any fact, whether spiritual or physical, while the undeviating and majestic influence and power of change marks the instrumentalities procured to advance and promote the interest of every truth, let it pause and become self-educated, that it may better appreciate the wonderful works of God. When mortals say, 'tis the devil, 'tis the devil, they utter the vilest aspersion against not only their glad immortal friends, but against Him to whom they kneel and pray for assistance in the hour of voiceless anguish. Bold in deed is the sway of spiritual influence. It sleeps not; but silently as the tides of an eternity roll on beyond the visible world, from the volcanic peak to the lowland valley—from orient morn to the sunset hour, it traverses and extends to the unmeasurable depths.

The uncertainty of human life and the uncertainty of a happy condition in the world on high, is but the adaptation of the spirit to higher principles. The out-flowings and influxes of man mark the distinctive exponents of his being, and can be traced to proportionate causes in the fulness of those undeviating laws which shadow forth unpeaking grandeur from the Charitable Parent—God. Charity is like the breath of morning, winged, as it were, by the gentle re-echoings of celestial souls. The relationships of men are forever enduring. A monument of trust and joy towers heavenward, reaching far, far into the utmost regions of the eternal world, rolling heedlessly on through the whole universes of refined matter, up to the clearest and nearest attributes of the Deity. Why strive to smother the fire that burns so brightly on your native hearth stones? In

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warmth is not the influence of vapors arising from the misty waters of the material world, but it is a power rising to the far off heaven, in solemn beauty. Some there are who feel this, hear it, and kindly receive it. It is incorporated in heaven and unlimited by time, and embraces the widest stretch of human knowledge in its grasp. The enchanting strains, from sweeter lips than mortal ones, fall on the ear of friendship and steals sweetly into the silent chambers of the soul, sending their electric thrills far into the regions of mortal nativity.

When dark and mighty powers overshadow the fate of man, the fair cerealian sky, the lightnings flash and thunders roar, speak their genuine acknowledgement that earth is impregnable with the elements of nature; and when man looks back upon the trophies acquired by the laws of nature, he will see the God within himself. No man is free from misgivings that act inconsiderately upon his mind; hence we all should be charitable towards one another, and rejoice when one brother rejoices, sorrow when he is steeped in crime, and be charitable in all our acts towards weak humanity. This is our hope for human minds. Charity often comes concealed, beneath mysticism often, and towers far above the monstrosities of the past. Charity is of God. Then let there be a universality of feeling, a ponderous weight of heavenly sentiment, that may sink the stoutest infidel heart into the unknown depths of his own existence. Receive charity from heaven; embrace it within the living temple of your own being, that you may speak its intuitive impressions from the world of eternity.

## Yours,

STEPHEN R. SMITH.

## Buffalo Weekly Price Current.

Flour, extra,	per bbl.	\$10.50/11.00
" com. to good, West'n,	"	9.50/10.00
" poor, do.	"	8.50/9.00
Buckwheat flour, per cwt.	"	4.50
Indian meal,	"	2.12 1/2
Pork, new,	"	\$17.50
" prime,	"	15.00
Dressed hogs, per cwt.	"	\$5.00
Fish, white,	"	10.00
" M.F.	"	5.50
" trout,	"	10.00
" hlf.	"	4.25
Salt, fine,	"	1.53
" coarse,	"	2.25
Eggs,	per doz.	17 @ 20
Butter,	per lb.	16 @ 20
Honey,	"	12 1/2 @ 15
Cheese,	"	9 @ 12 1/2
Blackberries, dried,	"	18
Plums,	"	18 1/2
Cherries,	"	18 1/2 @ 25
Currants,	"	6 1/2 @ 8
Corn,	per bush.	85 @ 87
" feed,	"	1.00 @ 1.35
Oleiver,	"	6.50 @ 10.00
Timothy,	"	3.50 @ 4.00
Oats,	"	55 @ 60
Apples, dried,	"	20 @ 22 1/2
" green,	"	50 @ 75
Potatoes,	"	87 @ 100
Onions,	"	75 @ 8
Dressed Chickens per lb.	"	15c
" Turkeys	"	15c

## HOUSES AND LOTS FOR SALE.

BRICK VILLA and two acres of Land, on Delaware street. Price, \$7,500.  
House and lot on Delaware street, lot 50 by 324 feet. Price, \$3,000.  
House and lot on Erie street, between Hospital and Georgia street, lot 37 1/2 by 134 feet to paved alley. Price, \$2,000.  
House, lot, and Barn, on Sixth street, lot 32 1/2 by 100—has gas and water, bath room, &c. Price, \$4,000.  
Brick house on Niagara street, centrally situated. Price, \$5,000.  
Brick house, Barn and lot on Swan street, lot 25 by 115 to a paved alley—the main part is 7 1/2 x 100 ft. Price, as it now is, \$5,000.  
Brick house on East Eagle street, with lot 25 by 100 feet to paved alley, gas and water in the house. Price, \$4,500.  
Brick house on South Division street, near Washington street. Price, \$3,000.  
Brick house on Elliott street, near South Division street, lot 30 by 120 feet, gas and water in the house. Price, \$4,000.  
Brick house on East Swan street, with lot from 25 to 32 feet. The house will be sold for \$550, and the land at \$45 a foot.  
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