

The Agitator.

"Every plant that my Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up."—JESUS.

"Such is the irresistible nature of Truth, that all it asks, and all it wants is the liberty of appearing."—THOMAS PAINE.

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WHOLE No. 27.

LONG AGO.

Oh, a wonderful stream is the river Time,
As it flows through the realms of tears,
With a faultless rhythm, and musical rhyme,
And a broader sweep, and a surge sublime,
And blends with the ocean of years.

For the winters are drifting like flakes of snow,
And the summers like buds between,
And the year as the sheaf—so they come and go,
On the river's breast with its ebb and flow,
As it glides mid the shadow and sheen.

There's a magical isle on the river Time,
Where the softest of airs are playing—
There's a cloudless sky and a tropical clime,
And a song as sweet as a vesper chime,
And the ferns with the roses are staying.

And the name of this isle is the Long Ago,
And we bury our treasures there!
There are brows of beauty and bosoms of snow—
There are heaps of dust, but we loved them so,
There are trinkets and tresses of hair,—

There are fragments of songs that nobody sings,
And a part of an infant's prayer,
There's a lute unswept, and a harp without strings;
There are broken vows and pieces of rings,
And the garments sure used to wear.

There are hands that are waved when the fairy shore,
By the mirage is lifted in air!
And we sometimes hear, through the turbulent roar,
Sweet voices we heard in the days gone before,
When the wind down the river was fair.

Oh! remember for aye be the blessed isle,
All the day of our life until night.
When the evening comes, with its beautiful smile,
And our eyes are closing to slumber awhile,
May the "greenwood" of soul be in sight.

JUDGE NOT.

"The greatest of these is charity."

Bridle your virtue,
Tether the tongue;
Pity the fair vine
Blighted so young!
Why not the tomb?
Sad, shattered life;
Think of her doom—
Widow, yet wife!

Tears, like sad rivers,
Roll through all time;
He his heart-torrent
Poured for its crime.
Billows of sod
Swell o'er his rest;
Pleading with God—
There let him rest.

Still to another
Life is as death;
Home and its idol
Gone with a breath!
Blood on his hands,
Stain on his bed;
Pity them all
Living and dead.

Thou whose life current
Flows calm and quiet,
Whose love and whose passion
Never ran riot,
Judge not too harshly;
Few fall by design.
Pray for the erring—
Their fate may be thine.

Bridle your censure,
Tether the tongue;
Charity's blessings
Ever are young,
He knows the temptation
Who measures the sin;
May His mantled mercy
Shield all of our kin!

C. H. WEBB.

AGITATOR COMMUNICATIONS.

THE BIBLE.

IS IT OF DIVINE ORIGIN, AUTHORITY AND INFLUENCE?

BY S. J. FINNEY.

Is it a miraculous collection of miraculous books, every word chapter and book of which, was written by an inspiration from God, so perfectly full and complete, that the writers thereof delivered the truth, nothing but the truth, and all the truth which humanity needs or which it can get on religious and moral subjects? Must man, must the human soul with all its noble powers of intuition, reason, and the innate religious sentiments, bow to the Scripture—the Jewish and Christian Scriptures?

Is the "Bible" superior to nature, master of reason, greater and more God-like than conscience? Is it the only revelation from God, as an *infallible rule of religious faith and practice*? If so, then man ought to bow implicitly to its dictum, without a question or a doubt. Human reason is nothing unless it runs parallel with the letter of the Book, if this idea be true. Or rather, it is a rebel against God's government. If it do not kiss the book, it must be damned. The religious sentiment in man, too, must be subject to the word of Moses, Ezra and Jesus. If this idea be true, our only business is to "believe or be damned."

I need hardly say that Christians generally so regard the Bible. We hear this doctrine preached from nearly every pulpit of Christendom. We are solemnly told by our self-constituted religious teachers, that we must believe this or be forever lost. And then we are cautioned against allowing our reason to come in contact with the "Bible;" for we are told—"the carnal mind is enmity against God, is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

It cannot be denied, the "Bible is assumed to come to us in the name of God, as a Divine Law, claiming entire mastery over the whole world, social, political and religious. In this character it is claimed that it has, and of right ought to have, perfect and entire control of all human affairs, individual, domestic, national, universal. Even science and philosophy must bow to the dictum of Moses and Paul. Geology—God's history of worlds writ in rocks—must bow to the gesenaicle cosmogony of the Pentateuch. And astronomy, God's history of solar and stellar systems, written in starry flames on high, too, must be second and inferior to the letter of the "Word," on parchment or in print.

Legislatures are opened by the reading of the "Scriptures" immediately before and after the repeal of "Missouri Compromise lines" and the passage of "fugitive slave laws," to bless the glorious work of making Barbary States out of God's free soil. Catholics and Protestants carry it to war in their hands against "heathen dogs," sending the souls of their murdered enemies to hell by "Scripture;" and when no outward enemy presses, hurl it at each other's heads to settle their eternal war about the legitimacy of their respective organizations. Nicholas of Russia goes to fight the allies with "Scripture" for his authority, and the allies do the same against him. The South quotes it to sustain slavery with all its damning sins; and the North helps the South to do it; only a few raise their voices against the lie. It has figured largely in the affairs of this lower world, and if true, its influence decides the eternal fate of all this world, i

the world to come. Its teachings are mixed up with all our institutions of learning. Men and women get married by Scripture, live and die by Scripture, and go to heaven or hell by the same. The mother sings Scripture into her baby and that baby grown up to be a man, sometimes blesses, but alas! sometimes curses his mother in Scripture language, damning her to hell.

A book of such wide spread influence must have something in it, and in its history, worthy of close and candid investigation. All these results could not come from nothing. This book, to say the least, must be a very remarkable one. A strange infatuation seems to possess Christians about it. The idea that we are either to be saved by the Scriptures or damned by them is prevalent in all the churches in Christendom.

Now the Bible either is, or is not the only and *infallible rule of religious faith and practice*. It either is, or is not of Divine and miraculous origin, authority and influence. If it is, it ought to be susceptible of proof, of positive proof. Who, that has any manhood or reason in him, can receive such an extraordinary, such a large statement on probabilities, or on mere hear-say evidence. It is too great a matter to be so received. Such claims are too astounding to be taken for granted. Our eternal destiny is, by the popular theology, biased upon our reception or rejection of these claims. To believe is to be saved, but to believe not is to be damned, says this theology. It may be well to ask in the outset, if faith is our only ground of hope for "salvation," may it not be well to investigate the true grounds of faith?

Suppose kind reader, that this proposition was made to you for the first time, by a Mahometan for all the Koran. What kind or amount of evidence would satisfy your mind on this point? Would you believe it because he told you so, or because the Koran made such claims for itself? Could you believe it without adequate evidence of the fact?

But what is evidence, and what is belief? Evidence, says Webster, "is that which elucidates and enables the mind to see truth; proof arising from our own perceptions, by the senses, or from the testimony of others, or from the inductions of reason." Our senses take cognizance of matter and its qualities; the declaration of a witness furnish evidence of facts to a court or jury, and reasoning, or the deductions of the mind furnish *evidence* of truth or falsehood. Belief is the result of evidence, distinct from personal knowledge. A man may *believe* a proposition and not *know* it to be true. Belief then being the result of evidence, as man cannot believe without evidence, he cannot have an adequate belief without adequate evidence. Now as we do not *know* the Bible to be what it is claimed to be, we must look for the proof for, the evidence of the claim.

And where shall we find it? Before answering this question let me make a few remarks on the nature of evidence. We have our senses for external things, reason for logical things and intuition for spiritual things. In other words, testimony or evidence, should always correspond in character, to the thing to be proved. There are but three sources or fountains of evidence—1st, nature; second, the verbal or written testimony of our fellows, and lastly ourselves—our own consciousness. Nature furnishes us only with natural phenomena, laws and principles; our fellows with historical testimony, and our consciousness with reason, which is the exponent or expounder of nature, and the judge and jury of our fellow's testimony. Our consciousness is the final court of

appeals. All natural facts are judged by it. It is the only ground of the most demonstrative of all sciences. Mathematics rest upon certain axioms—self-evident truths—which are in the consciousness of man. For instance; the axiom that the whole is equal to the sum of all its parts. The truth of this axiom rests upon no external proof. You cannot prove it by logic. Every attempt so to do drives you back into your own consciousness. It is a cognition a-priori—a pure cognition—pure knowledge—and the first and purest of all scientific knowledge.

But the truth of these claims is not axiomatic—is not self-evident, for if it were all men would believe them as soon as announced. But all men who hear the statements do not believe them, even after reading whole libraries of works written to prove them. The evidence, then, in favor of these claims, cannot come from our consciousness, from our intuition or reason. Neither can it be drawn from nature, for the very claims are of a supernatural character.

The Bible is claimed to be a supernatural revelation of God's will to man miraculously given. If it be of a miraculous, a super-natural origin, then according to the laws of evidence, it can be proved only by miraculous and super-natural testimony, that is, a continual miracle—or the constant repetition of the original miracle which first gave it to the world, is essential to each individual, to whom these claims are made, to convince him of the fact. It will not do to say there are miracles in the Bible. There are no miracles there, but only stories or records of miracles. If those records are true, those miracles were miracles only to those who saw them, not to us who read the stories of them in this late day. The common argument from the miracles recorded in the Bible, is all a begging of the question. It stands about thus: None but God. It stands thus: the Bible is a miraculous revelation from God. This is the proposition. Now for the proof:

A book which contains miracles must come from God. The Bible contains miracles; therefore it came from God. Now let me apply this process of reasoning to the Koran.

A book which contains miracles must come from God. The Koran contains miracles, therefore the Koran came from God. And so of every other book which contains miraculous stories, or records of so called miracles. This kind of reasoning would prove all the "Bibles" of the Pagan world divine. The fallacy of this process is found in the grand blunder of mistaking the account of a miracle for the miracle itself. All the Bibles of the heathen contain stories of miracles. Are all divine then? This argument is as good for the Pagan as for the Christian, and so proves too much by a great shot. Again, says the Christian, the writers of the Bible were honest men, and so would not tell lies, and therefore these stories of miracles are true, and hence the Bible is divine. I ask how does he know they were honest men? Suppose they were, do not honest men make mistakes and often believe untruths, and so state them to others? But again: There are no miracles today affirming the truth of these claims for the Bible. This is a notorious fact. Having shown that two sources of evidences, viz: nature and our consciousness, are cut from the support of these claims, are precluded by their nature from such support, we turn to the last source of proof, the testimony of man. This testimony may be divided into two parts—first, the eternal historical testimony, and the internal testimony of the book itself. Our jury, our tribunal, is nature and reason, our judge is our consciousness—our cognitions a priori.

Let us turn to these two points; First, the external history of the world's origin, and second, the contents and character of the book itself. Now if the miraculous claims can be proved at all, they can be so proved from these two sources; and only from these two.

Now for the first fact in the external history of the Bible. It is limited, circumscribed, local, finite in its presence. It is more limited than the human race which it is claimed it was given to save. It is not, and it never has been in the hands of one thousandth of the human world. This is a notorious fact. It is potent to the observation of every one.

How can it be an "infallible rule of religious faith and practice," to those who never saw it and never heard of it? No sane mind will for a mo-

ment pretend it. Of course if God were to give the world a revelation of his will, that revelation would not be supererogatory, it would be necessary and useful for that race. If it were necessary for the whole race, for each individual thereof, of course he would make it as wide in its presence, as is the necessity for it; and hence he would place it before each individual of the race, or at least within his reach. Now the popular theology assumes the existence of a universal necessity for the Bible as a miraculous revelation from God; and this necessity is farther assumed to be in the assumed fact of man's inadequacy to discover by the light of nature that moral and religious truth necessary and indispensable to his eternal "salvation." And this natural inadequacy of man, is based on the assumed fact of the "depravity" of human nature; and this depravity is rested again on the doctrine of the "Fall"—original "sin"—a woman eating an apple—in consequence of the talk of a snake walking on his tail; and this last story on the "Bible," the very book whose authority we are discussing, and thus begging the whole question at once.

'Tis thus people often reason in a circle, and so end just where they began. Thus it is, that the doctrine of the necessity for such a revelation as the Bible is claimed to be, stands. Theologians sometimes quote the wickedness of the world as proof of the "fall," and sometimes quote the "fall" as a proof of the wickedness of the world. In both cases they beg the question. To quote the wickedness of the world is no proof of the "fall;" for all human history proves man progressive. Progress is a law of nature. Man is only a part or portion of a universal system of things. He cannot get out of nature, nor out of the tides of universal Life which are ever flowing fast from the Infinite Fountain of Being. Progress is carved in the tables of granite, and writ on the face of the midnight sky. All things grow up toward the light. The beautiful flower turns its head to keep the course of the life bestowing sun. The oak grows with its top toward the sky. So human nature tends in the ultimate ever Divineward. I have no sympathy with that cold materialism, which believes in a body without a soul, a world without a God, and a here without a hereafter. It is a cold negativism, which robs the "flower of fleeting life of all its color and perfume." I believe in God, LIBERTY and IMMORTALITY. That is my creed.—God—a name which to me, stands for Life, Love and Wisdom; and which signifies Justice, the Infinite Conscience; Love, the Infinite Power; and Beauty, the Infinite Perfection. So far as any individual, is, in thought and life, an embodiment of these principles, in so far is he an Incarnation of Divinity. God, then, is in matter and in man, as their Life, Power and Destiny. But I cannot stop to enlarge upon this beautiful topic.

If a perfect God were to give mankind a revelation of His will, which was necessary for their moral and religious wants, he would make that revelation as extensive as the demand which it was given to cover. This is self-evident. But the Bible does not cover one tenth part of such demands; therefore it is not a revelation from God. But the question comes—does not man need some revelation from God? I answer, he does. Mankind needs a constant, and world wide revelation of God's nature and laws, physical, moral, spiritual. Man has such an one always before, around, above, below and within him. God speaks to man from out his holy temple—Nature, whose dome is the star-bejeweled sky, whose altar is a pure soul, and whose priest is Reason, Intuition.

The Bible was confined to the Jewish church for more than 4000 years. It represents God as loving the Jews and hating other nations. Now let me ask, does God have pets? Is he partial to his own creatures? Did He give the Bible for the good of all; or only for the good of a few Jews and Christians? Does He love the greedy Jew better than the wandering Arab, or the untutored Indian? Who affirms these questions, denies the divinity of God. Who can believe in such a conception of Divinity? Who but a bigoted sectarian can love such an idea of God—a God who loves his friends, his pets, and hates his enemies? The God of Jesus's noble soul, said—"Love your enemies."

But now let us come direct to the external argument in detail. We have but two ways of proving the divinity of the Bible;—first by a direct appeal to the external history of its origin, and second by an appeal to its contents. I take the external argu-

ment first, because it is the *direct* method of proof, and internal last, because it is the *indirect* method of proof.

The authority of the churches as inspired organizations, on this question, is not evidence, for they disagree; and the conscience or consciousness of a Christian, is no more proof of the divinity of the Bible, than the consciousness of a Mahometan is proof of the divinity of the Koran.

Third and last Response to A Humanitarian.

I again greet you! Having heard the echo of your voice, I will reply to such portions of your article as are relative to the subject of discussion. But will first premise that you are the most intangible of all the beings that I have yet met with; and change your position with the ease of an airy phantom; assuming a new dress, or again habiting yourself in the one previously discarded.

"On land a beast,
A fish in the water."

In your first article you appeal to Spiritualists, and invite organization in the several townships, and a General Conference by delegates. In your second article you distinctly declare, that it "is not intended as a Religious Organization." You "intended to strike through the ballot-box." And now in your last, you have got a party-colored garment of *Church and State*. You also seem to think that my opinion, or belief in regard to the existence, character and attributes of God, have much to do in settling the question of the utility or inutility of organization. It may suit your convenience to leave the subject of organization, and *catechise me church-fashion*, upon my belief upon other subjects. Whenever I think that my belief in relation to God, will be interesting or instructive to the readers of the Agitator; I will send it to the Editor for publication. But for yourself, I would recommend the Bible maxim, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." First dispose of the question between us, before seeking for new ones. Another maxim I would recommend to your notice, "That a weak or fallacious argument gains no new nor additional force by being repeated." Most of your argument in your last article is but a repetition of that which you use in the second. You have applied it to other things, but the principle is the same, whether applied to the planetary worlds, the vegetable, the animal kingdom, or to the several parts of an engine or railroad. But you talk about thoughts and ideas being organized before they can perform their office, or be expressed. It is but talk; for if organized, which presides?—Which is secretary and which treasurer? Which dictates or prescribes the office or duties that the others shall perform?

But, Sir, they must be harmoniously associated; each performing its own proper work, or fulfilling its own mission, and leaving the others to do theirs in their own way. You have mistaken Association in that instance for Organization. Ideas flow spontaneously, and not by coercion. No idea or thought could ever be recalled, or event again remembered when once passed, but for association. The science of Mnemonics is but a systematic mode of associating thoughts, so that when forgotten they may again be recalled. But what would your arbitrary mode of organization do? It might resolve and re-resolve and commend and re-commend, but it would be without effect. But the method of association is pleasing and agreeable, one thought induces another upon the plane of affinity in all harmonious actions of the mind; and opposites or repulsions in inharmonious action. So that attraction and repulsion govern thought as well as gross materialities.

But, sir, I fear that the readers of the Agitator will become tired of reading those *wordy* articles of yours, as well as my comments upon the un-

soundness of your logic and the inapplicability of your illustrations. I think that if you had any plan or organization, different from what is understood by that term, you ought to have told us what it was in your *grand "invitation."* But from the vagueness of your ideas, it is evident that you have no well defined object in view. That from being a General in command you are but a subaltern; that you advance or retreat in obedience to your superior. For, having repudiated the idea of a religious organization in your second article, in your last you talk about the Church of God. Mr. Tiffany, in the mean time, (Feb. No. of his Monthly) having thrown off all disguise, announces to the world that he is laboring for the establishment of a Church; I will give his language, "And it is for the establishment of such a church, Free, Liberal and Catholic, that we are most earnestly and most ardently laboring." Hence I must conclude that you are but following in the wake of a superior. But what a solecism "a Free Church;" did you or Mr. Tiffany ever see a *free slave*? "a Liberal Church?" The creed of the church, the extent of its wisdom, and the standard of morality. "Catholic Church."—Those only who hold on to the tail of old orthodoxy. So Mr. Humanitarian and Mr. Tiffany, go ahead, you have thrown your colors (which are sectarian in every aspect) out to the world's view. That is more manly than to sail under false ones. But in your tactics I think that you have pursued the policy of the pirate most too much. You kept your friendly colors flying until you thought your prize could not escape, then you deliberately pulled them down and hoisted the black flag of Sectarianism. And what is the prospect of your success? I think that a large sect will be formed composed of the *orthodox element* among Spiritualists, with many of the dissatisfied and disappointed among the old organizations. It may be an improvement upon the old organizations; as in your last article you show that there has been an improvement, all the way down from Judaism under Moses, to the last sect of the present day. But you did not seem to understand the cause of this improvement. I think it is plain; and it is because the less there is of organization, and the more they partake of association the better for the people. Those who are too indolent to do their own thinking, and those who think it easier to pay a priest for taking care of their souls, than to do it themselves, will join your congregation.

But the free, vigorous, active minds will never! They must have the pure atmosphere of freedom, while the asperational of their own soul will be sending forth the prayers of love, accompanied by willing hands to aid in accomplishing such prayers desires; while the members of your organization will pray by proxy, and preach by proxy, and expect to be saved by proxy. You say that man in Association is without definiteness, without power, without expression, without efficiency, &c. When has organization, either Political or Religious, (and it seems yours is to be both) ever added to the definiteness, power, expression or efficiency of the individual. But on the other hand; are they not both designed and instituted for the purpose of restraining, limiting, confining and abridging individual powers and capacities within the limits prescribed by the organization. It is a surrendering up his religious welfare into the keeping of the Church, and his political welfare unto the rulers of the State. Experience has proved that the more the people hold the power of government in their own hands, or in other words, the more that individual sovereignty is recognized and acted upon, the wiser and better and happier the people become. You admit the same, but appear to be unconscious of it, when you say, "Organizations tyrannical in character, forcible in action, oppressive in endurance, blighting in re-

sults, have been formed to subserve the ambition of the Pope." And you, by implication say the same of all other sects. But you say "it culminates and the work of disintegration commences;" very true but what does it prove? It proves that all improvement, all advance, is outside of and in spite of the organization. Of what use then is the organization? It is to count noses, and receive the *brand* of some sect, so that an estimate can be made of the number of *Drones* that can be quartered upon their bounty and credulity. Again you say, "We have seen that according to the principles of organization so 'it was; now if organization is founded upon progressive principles will not the adherents be continually progressing?"

You might as well say that if night was day it would be light, or if standing still was walking then when we stood still, we should be walking—a thing in contradiction to itself. It is like Mr. Tiffany's "free-church"—a solecism. I have shown in a former article the nature and tendency of organization. Why not meet my positions with argument and not attempt to dodge them with an "if."

Where we most need light you leave us in the dark. Show us the *principles* of an organization that can be progressive? But, sir, your folly culminated when you appealed to the rules and forms of the Law, to make that certain which was before uncertain; namely, your argument in favor of organization. "*The glorious uncertainties of the law,*" is an expression too familiar to all ears for any one to place confidence in such an appeal. But error alway assumes the abstract and metaphysical mode of argument, and some of your readers may say of you as the congregation did of the Priest, "what a learned man he is, for we could not understand half he said." Truth is always simple and needs no borrowed garments to give it currency with truth loving minds; but error is usually dressed in fashionable attire.

I used the term *Religion* as expressive of a bond of union uniting man to God, and think it equally applicable as expressive of the bond of union between man and man. Your definition is correct enough, but I think that every free thought of the Deity is a re-binding of man to God. You can repudiate Religion in that sense if you choose; I do not. That, I think, finishes all the points you have attempted to make, and I am very glad. I think it is wasting time and occupying space in a valuable paper that might be better filled. I was in hopes, when you drew your sword and flourished your battle-ax so furiously, the issue would be argued so that there would be an end of the discussion during the present generation, but that hope has departed, for you revolve in a circle. I will, with all kindness, and with a sincere desire and prayer for your spiritual progress, take my leave of you. I may write more upon the subject of organization, but I have no desire to pursue your vagaries, and will not occupy the columns of the Agitator further in showing the untenableness of your arguments. Undoubtedly you have brought forward the best that the nature of the case admits of; but I am too generous to pursue a foe when his ammunition becomes damaged or exhausted. Adieu.

H. BARNUM.

BRACEVILLE, April 3d, 1859.

INDEMNITY.—The amount of indemnity to be paid by China to England and France is thirty millions of francs.—Ex.

Singular Christianity! to go to war with China to force open her ports and secure a market for your stupifying opium, and then, after you have conquered, make the vanquished nation foot the bills! If it is true that God rained fire and brimstone on Sodom, England and France as well as our own country, have cause to fear a like visitation.—Pleasure Boat.

"STATE OF MAINE," April 11, 1859.

DEAR H. F. M. B.

I find myself really "down East," surrounded by snow, ice, and mud, as the lay of the land will permit; thus *ice-olated* and *mud-ulated* to rather a low key. I will try and say a few words of myself or others, as the case may be. Very happily have I performed the duties placed before me, as far as I could comprehend them (perhaps without comprehension there is no real duty), in my travels eastward. I observe that in every place where it has been my lot to tarry, "reform" has its foothold. Sometimes supported by hundreds, sometimes by the "sturdy few," who must toil alone for a season, until interest fires are kindled to warm the cold—perhaps discouraged—hearts to action. I think we can very safely compare "humanity" to-day with insect life all winter long—they have been stowed away in their respective homes, chilled and inactive, because of winter's temperature. The sun's rays are becoming more and more intensified; one by one the insects are warmed to life—some, even now, are quite active, others are dragging themselves slowly forth to catch a warming ray, others timid and instinctively shy, are pleased to wait for better prospects. Thus with human beings. But Spring has dawned; the sun's course is upward; Summer is coming; every insect will be busy. So with life. Reformatory movements to-day seem like Spring-time, its foothold is everywhere, its influence everywhere felt. Summer will come and the world be active, warmed into love towards one another.

The subject matter of Spiritualism in N. E., as in the West, is treated with candor, settling down closer and closer to the hearts of men and women; no longer a matter of speculative wonder, with its thousands of friends, but a fixed, immovable, reality, one to be sought, found and loved for its worth, its practical beauties. Denunciations and claimed expositions have been made by rogues and pigmies, (intellectually,) real frauds have been exposed by its (Spiritualism's) true friends, (*none by its enemies—a fact worthy of notice,*) yet it is the same, moving onward like a ponderous weight—slowly, yet steadily and surely.

Yesterday (April 10) I did not lecture (the first Sunday in 60 that I have not), but went and made a visit to the home and scenes of my childhood, and I dare say that not many *heard* more eloquent sermons than did I. The old hills, the high rocks, the broad-faced ledges, the well-known trees, the old mill by the stream, *all* seemed to fold me to them and whisper softly, tenderly to me, until my soul was full, and I realized, if never before, that Nature, of all preachers, is most eloquent, can most inspire and instruct: that he or she who sees, and seeing, *feels*, the most of Nature's power, is nearest unto God.

FRIDAY, 15th.—I return to Mass. to continue my labors in the "Vineyard." 17th speak at Marlboro', 24th and May 1st at Waltham, 8th, 15th and 22d at Lowell. The summer months will be spent in N. E. (probably). My address is "Age Office, Boston," and will so continue for months, unless otherwise noticed. I trust you are still laboring on in the same *good* way, striving to heal the crushed hearts, and raise the down-trodden portions of humanity to their legitimate places, at the same time forgetting not to tell false dignity (which abounds in this country) that it hath no place with *men* or *women*; selfish dupes alone can wear it, and *they*, like the ass that proudly donned the lion's skin, will oft betray themselves. Tell them, *all plainly*, we *know* you—you have brayed more than once.

Wishing you prosperity, I am thine,

A co-laborer,

F. L. WADSWORTH.

THE AGITATOR.

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Mrs. H. F. M. BROWN, Editor and Proprietor.

Mrs. FRANCES O. HYZER, Corresponding Editor.

OFFICE ON SUPERIOR ST., A FEW DOORS EAST OF PUBLIC SQUARE.

CLEVELAND, O., MAY 1, 1859.

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SINGLE COPIES of the AGITATOR, will be sent by mail for five cents.

PEN-O-GRAPH OF J. B. CONKLIN.

JOHN B. CONKLIN was born in the city of New York on the 24th of Sept., 1825.

Like most boys in great cities, he had large ideas of the world and supposing himself just the person to make its acquaintance, he took a freak to cross the sea and shake hands with John Bull, and some few of the South Sea Islanders. Seven years at sea gave him a tolerable good idea of the storms and calms of ocean life.

After canvassing the earth, by sea and by land, he concluded to explore the religious world. He was "converted" and connected himself with the M. E. Church; purchased the Articles of Faith, Life of John Wesley and Dr. Adam Clark's Commentary. These were his chart, compass and Log Book—with these he expected to navigate the sea of life; to shun the shoals and to cast anchor in the harbour of Rest. To use Mr. Conklin's language, for three and a half years he was a zealous and pious defender of brimstone and total depravity.

In the winter of '52 he commenced the investigation of Spiritualism. If it was a deception, he wished to expose it; if it contained aught of truth, he wanted to appropriate that truth to his fund of spiritual wealth. In a few months he was developed as a writing, tipping and speaking medium. Since that time he has been a faithful laborer in the Spiritual vineyard.

In 1856 Mr. Conklin commenced in New York city the publication of "The Principle," a monthly Journal devoted to the exposition and elucidation of the Harmonial Philosophy.

Mr. Wm. Lanning of Baltimore, Md., assisted him in his editorial labors one year. With this exception, the care of editing and publishing the paper has devolved upon Mr. Conklin. No one, perhaps, has done more to convince the skeptic of the truth of the soul's immortality and of spirit communion, than he has done. No one will be more deserving of the "Well done, good and faithful servant."

SYMPATHY.

A striking demonstration of female sentiment here, took place last night, when George Sickles, father of the prisoner, was surprised by a visit at his hotel of some twenty ladies, who came in a body to express their sympathy for his son, and to say, that if he thought it would be of any advantage to him, or would give any comfort to the accused, they would freely present themselves, with many more, at the Court House. The person at the head of the deputation, was a venerable woman of some three score years, and she used the strongest expressions of commiseration for the prisoner. "We demand his discharge," she said, "in behalf of our sex. Let him be convicted, and the libertine obtains new license. Let him be vindicated, and virtue acquires a new guarantee."

Mr. Sickles, Sen., made a feeling acknowledgement in reply to the ladies. He said he would not take upon himself the responsibility of answering their inquiry, but he would make known to his unfortunate son, this spontaneous act of sympathy by a band of noble women, and was sure it would be most grateful to his feelings.—*Ex.*

What wonderful sympathy! How anti-Christian! yet it is just the thing for the times. Who ever heard of a company of ladies going to express their sympathy for a "dishonored woman?" Oh, by the way, there is no such thing as a woman's being dishonored by a rake of a husband. But who will go and tender Mrs. Sickles sympathy? She has needed it this many a year;—she has need of charity, love, counsel and sympathy. She should have these, all these, for hiding from the world the crimes of the man she called husband.

She knew and felt, as all sensible souls feel, the degradation of being life-linked to a man who has unblushingly boasted of the number of women he has ruined. Are there no followers of the carpenter's son to go with gentle words to the

unfortunate woman—none to lend a hand to lift a fallen mother and daughter, a ruined, lost wife out of the gulf of misery? Who are they? Where may they be found?

SLANDER CASES.

Pittsburgh juries have just administered pretty severe lessons to neighborhood gossips. The chastity of a Mrs. Allison having been unwarrantably talked about, she brought slander suits against a Mrs. Bratt and a Miss Mills for damages, claiming injury to the amount of \$20,000. The reports put in circulation by them were so outrageous and untrue, that in the case of Mrs. Bratt, the jury returned a verdict for plaintiff of \$1,500, and in the case of Miss Mills for \$1,125. Both defendants have considerable property, and Miss Mills is on the wrong side of forty. Pittsburgh scandal-mongers will be apt to bridle their tongues a little closer in future.—*Leader.*

It is a terrible truth that there is a class of women who lay claims to respect—women whose gear and tinsel are passports into good society—who will plunder their sisters of their precious possessions and send them forth, with blackened names and broken hearts to brave the storm tempest of persecution. These women would not, perhaps, rob you of your purse, would not burn your house or take your life; but open to them the door of your heart, or allow them to cross your path and wo be unto you. They will condescend to deeds, the thoughts even of which would put to the blush the basest bar-room loafer. These unfortunate women are comparatively few, for humanity's sake, let God be thanked. We trust the fate of their sisters—the Pittsburgh reputation robbers—will induce them to beware how they give run to their lips.

WHO WROTE SHAHMAH?

Can you or any of your readers inform us who wrote "Shahmah in Search of Freedom? Certainly the author should not be ashamed of the production.

We are not able to state who the author of that most excellent work is. If we were to be asked who would be most likely to write just such a book, we should say that we know of no one of whose characteristic style it partakes so much as Lydia Maria Child. She has been in the habit of giving her name freely to the public, and, but for this, we should run the risk of "guessing" it was from her pen. The style, the choice of Oriental character, the inner impressions, the glimpse of Swedenborgian faith, are all very much like her. We repeat the question—who wrote Shahmah?—*Chester County (Pa.) Times.*

We can inform the Times who wrote Shahmah. We know the author well, and "our children" love her for the dear good stories she tells them. Mrs. Child is not the author, though it is just such a book as she might be expected to write.

The author is a quiet little woman with a large soul brim full of love and genuine goodness. We would write her name but it may be better that the book stand on its own merits. Had Shahmah been in the hands of some scheming, puffing publisher, it would be regarded as the most readable and meritorious book of the season.

She writes for the Agitator. Who can guess her name? She writes for bread. Her book is for sale at our office.—Who will aid her and humanity by purchasing Shahmah?

THE FELONS.

The names of the "Felons," as the indicted Oberlinites delight to call themselves, who are now in jail, are as follows: James Langston, John Watson, Simeon Bushnell, Lorin Wadsworth, Robert Windsor, Jacob R. Shepherd, John H. Scott, Ansel W. Lyman, W. E. Lincoln, Henry Evans, Wilson Evans, David Watson, Eli Boyce, James Bartlett, Mathew Gillett, O. S. Wall, Daniel Williams, Henry E. Peck, James M. Fitch, Ralph Plumb.—*National Democrat Cleveland.*

Call these men "felons" to-day if you will—send them to prisons—blacken their fair names—scout the "higher law," and denounce the sympathizers with the "felons;" but the day will come when God's holy law will not be held in derision. The time is coming when it will not be a crime for a man to steal himself—the time is coming when judges and jurymen will not dare convict men for aiding their brothers in escaping out of the hands of the task-master. "Felons!" Would to heaven the world had a few more just such felons. These brave men are yet to be numbered among the world's Messiahs.

L. B. WRIGHT, editor of the *Michigan City Enterprise* has ceased from his editorial labors. We regret this freak of Mr. Wright, for his enterprising paper has come to us as fresh and original as Spring blossoms. T. Jernegan, Esq., takes his place. If he is the original of a picture that hangs upon Memory's wall, we shall still look for an excellent weekly journal.

Blessings on both brothers.

Mrs. Hyzer's communication arrived too late for this issue.

H. F. M. BROWN will speak in Rochester, N. Y., May 1st; in Springfield, Mass., May 22d; in Boston, Mass., May 29th. She may be addressed, Rochester, care of Mrs. S. A. Burtis. At Salina (instead of Syracuse), care of Mrs. John Hutchinson; at Utica, care of Dr. Caroline Brown; at Springfield, care of G. L. Randall; Boston, care of Bela Marsh.

"THEOLOGICAL QUESTION."—A correspondent, who subscribes himself "A great admirer of the Gleaner," says:

I noticed among the gleanings in your last, that "The best capital for a young man to start in life with, is industry, courage, and the fear of God." Now, if it should not be considered too much of a "theological question," I would ask if reason and common sense does not teach us that the love of God would be far better capital than the fear? For my part I see nothing in the character of God to fear, but everything to love.

For the information of our friend, who, we trust, is seeking knowledge, we reply, that Webster's Dictionary, which is full as good authority as the Gleaner, says: "In good men, the fear of God is a holy awe or reverence of God and his laws, which springs from a just view and real love of the divine character." And the Bible, which is far better authority than the Gleaner, says, "The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom." We would therefore advise our friend, as soon as possible, to learn to fear him, that he may love him.—*Valley Gleaner, Lee, Mass.*

We know that books are made by man, not even excepting that which is called the "Holy Bible."

Now, if there is a blessing beneath the sun transmitted to us direct from our Maker, it is Reason. Who but Him gave it us? Reader, think! What but this raises man above the brute? Shall we so far divest ourselves of this Heavenly attribute—of all manliness—that through fear of the taunts of a perverted public sentiment, or a blind, wilful love of propagating own pre-conceived opinions, and the heathenish notions of ancient times, we can willingly surrender this divine gift? NEVER!! Like the noble, but misrepresented, THOMAS PAINE, we have too much reverence and love—not fear—for God, to accept the authority of men in preference to that of our Maker.

The correspondent is right, notwithstanding the supposed authority the Gleaner has found in Webster and the Bible. Fear is nothing more nor less than dread, which usually arises from guilt or cowardice; in it there is nothing desirable—everything in love. If a good ruler has the love of his subjects, he desires not their fear. Reason tells us it is so with God. Love is not, cannot be, the offspring of fear. It is true one may fear, and afterwards love, but not till fear is gone. A "holy awe or reverence" is quite a different thing; and, although we consider Webster better authority than many parts of the Bible, written in ancient, heathenish times, still how far popular opinion influenced his definition is a question in one mind.

That there are many good things in the Bible we know; that much of it was written by good men—the most of it by the best of the times—we have no doubt; yet we judge each branch of the tree by its fruits—by what else can we judge them? If a schoolboy ten years of age should write a composition at the present day as senseless, or half as obnoxious, as some passages which we can point out in the Bible, he would be whipped, as he would deserve to be; or should a man print and offer for public sale some parts of it, in the form of yellow-covered literature, he would soon find himself snugly lodged in a county jail. This, no man who has read the Bible thoroughly, can deny. Yet such is the superstition attached to that book, that people will believe their own natural good sense, and when closely cornered in an argument, resort to the old, worn-out expedient of crawling out, viz: "We are not made to understand it all." And yet such a miserable, ridiculous method of choking down their own senses is insufficient to satisfy even the lisping child, who naturally asks of what use it is there if we are not made to understand it, or why call it holy?

Now, if others will look upon all within the covers of that book as holy, why, then, they must; but to impute some portions of it to direct inspiration from Him, is a base and shameful libel on the Great God who made the universe; and if the Gleaner, itself, is not better authority than these, it authority is poor indeed.

There are thousands of this opinion, but through

fear of public censure, dare not speak their minds. This idea of a tyrant God of fear rather than of love is fast becoming extinct in Puritanic New England, and Reason is taking the place of Superstition, but no faster than it should.

A LOVER OF TRUTH.

A PAMPHLET.

We have frequent calls for the papers containing our views of marriage. In looking over the articles we are dissatisfied with their desultory character. Many points and some important facts have for want of room, been omitted. We have concluded to revise, re-write, add and extract, and then publish a pamphlet, entitled, "The True and False Marriage, the Cause and Consequence."

The cost of publishing will be \$50. It will therefore be needful to sell them. Those who may feel disposed to aid us in exposing shams and in raising humanity to a plane above Washington Tragedies and "Matrimonial Brokerage," will do us a favor by sending orders and cash. It is ready for sale.

Price, single copy, postage paid, 6 cts; 20 for \$1.00; 45 for \$2.00; 70 for \$3.00; 130 for \$5.00.

All orders should be sent to the Agitator office, Cleveland, Ohio.

NOTICES.

JAMES COOPER, M. D., will speak in Akron on Sunday, May 15; Copley the 17th and 18th. Persons wishing to secure his services can address him, Bellfontaine, Ohio.

Dr. Cooper will receive subscriptions for the Agitator.

FOR SALE AT THIS OFFICE.—The Principle for two years bound in one volume, \$1.00; one year, bound, 50 cts.

Mrs. S. MARIA BLISS will lecture on all the various subjects that have been presented before, together with Physiology and Phrenology, entranced by Spirits, and will examine diseases.

Address her at Springfield, Mass.

Warren Chase lectures in Adrian, Mich., May 15th; Battle Creek, Mich., May 22d; Harmonia, Mich., 26th and 27th; Kalamazoo, Mich., May 29th; Grand Rapids, June 2d, 3d., 4th and 5th; Grand Haven, June 9th and 10th.

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS.

One more unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care,
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements;
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving not loathing,—

Touch her not scornfully;
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanely;
Not of the stains of her,
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny,
Rash and undutiful;
Past all dishonor,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still for allslips of hers,
One of Eve's family—
Wipe those poor lips of hers,
Oozing so clamily.

Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses;
Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home?

Who was her father?
Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
Had she a brother?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one,
Yet, than all other?

Alas for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun!
Oh! it was pitiful
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
Feelings had changed;
Love by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence;
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood, with amazement,
Houseless by night.

The bleak winds of March
Made her tremble and shiver;
But not the dark arch,
Or the black flowing river;
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
Swift to be hurld
Any where, any where
Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly,
No matter how coldly
The rough river ran—
Over the brink of it,
Picture it—think of it.
Dissolute man!
Lave in it, drink of it,
Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly
Young, and so fair!

Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly,
Decently:—kindly,
Smooth and compose them;
And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring
Thro' muddy impurity,
As when with daring
Last look of despairing
Fix'd on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurr'd by contumely:
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity
Into her rest,—
Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast!

Owning her weakness,
Her evil behaviour,
And leaving with meekness,
Her sins with her Saviour.

CONMOM POLITENESS.

People have a perfect right to reject a newspaper and to ignore the doctrines it advocates; but those who have enjoyed the advantages of a school of good manners, will treat with respect those who chance to differ from them in religious opinions. Apropos to these remarks, we have a subscriber in Chagrin Falls, and so of course send the paper. We had not the most distant idea that it was misdoing in that doing. But to-day the paper was returned with the following written upon it:

"Chagrin Falls, Ohio. G. S. Bell is in Mich. and has been for four years. Don't send the thing any more."

AGITATOR RECEIPTS.

E. Edmonson, \$1; A. F. Randall, 25c.; R. J. Taylor, \$1; Charles Levy, \$1; A. Miltenberger, \$1; Dr. A. T. Crow, \$1; Dr. E. Thorne, \$1; O. E. Gray, \$1; Wm. A. Butts, \$1; Mrs. H. Mephram, \$1; E. R. Mason, \$1; T. B. Ellis & Bro., \$1; C. Merry, \$1; W. B. Lawrence, \$1; O. Sturatt, \$1; W. A. Whitney, \$1; R. White, \$1; A. Iiter, \$1; C. Whitmore, \$1; Pet Rhea, \$1; J. H. Blood, \$1; Dr. D. McRue, \$1; E. W. Knight, \$1; H. B. Vincent, \$1; M. O. Randall, \$1; A. A. Carter, 25c; M. Davis, 25c; J. D. Fielding, 25c; R. B. Dorchy, 25c; J. H. Rogers, 25c; E. Samson, \$1; S. G. Rowley, \$1; E. Knight, \$1.

THE CODE OF HONOR.

Sickles killed poor Key from a sense of honor. The act was required of him by the Code. What we should do without the Code, Beelzebub only knows. Do without it, perhaps. Its chief function is to regulate the killing of people, and make it respectable. Not only respectable to kill, but respectable to be killed. A man who is killed according to the Code has no right to complain. He can tell of it as he crosses the Styx without blushing.

Had Sickles followed his instincts, his victim might still have been alive. But the Code would not let him follow his instincts. It don't believe in instincts. They are vulgar. And, moreover, are apt to be manly. It deals—the Code does—in nothing but honor. Wounded honor! This is its staple. Sickles's feelings were all right; they were not wounded, in the least; but his honor had been touched. So the Code had its back up at once, and insisted that he should become a murderer, and then all would be well. His honor would be satisfied, and Mrs. Sickles—but no! Mrs. Sickles wasn't taken into account. She was only a woman. She might go home and die. What could she know about honor?

Sickles didn't want to murder Key, but the Code made him do it; wrote him anonymous letters, and insisted on his doing it; in fact, stood by and saw him do it. And Mrs. Grundy, who believes in the Code—in fact, believes in nothing else—says it's all just as it should be, and that if Key didn't want to be killed he had no business to be found out. The Code never troubles people till they are found out. It has no objection to seduction, to adultery, to treachery, or to any other crime, till they are publicly exposed. Then the Code is wide awake, and on its mettle.

But for the Code, Mr. Sickles would be hung. Hung by the Opposition Code. As it is, he will go unpunished. He stuck to the Code, and the Code will stick to him. If he behaves himself the Code will allow him to return to Mrs. Sickles. He wants to now, we are told, but the Code won't let him. If he stays away a little longer she won't let him. And she would be right, though the Code don't think so. The Code made Sickles perform the little farce of taking away his wife's wedding-ring. It was very Codish, that. And Sickles did it with great *eclat*. "Well done," everybody said, "Bravo!" He did not return his ring—the Code would have been shocked at that—he only took back hers. Took it back indignantly, and made up a great virtuous face about it, as if he had done something sublime, and the Gods were applauding him for it. Poor, Code-stricken Sickles! The next day he wanted to send the ring back to his wife, but the Code wouldn't let him, unless he first broke it in twain. So he broke it and sent her the pieces. Another farce. There's nothing pleases the Code like a good farce. Anything simple, straight forward, and honest, offends it. It is contrary, in fact, to its principles. That is, if it have any principles. But the great difficulty with the Code is, it hasn't any. It simply represents the lowest state of public sentiment for the time being. Hence its popularity in Washington, which is the moral cesspool of the nation.

Whatever a man does spontaneously, from the promptings of his nature, even from the activity or vehemency of his passions, is entitled to a certain degree of respect. It is at least honest. But whatever he does in obedience to a Code, or from fear of public ridicule, is entitled to nothing but contempt.

And the same with woman; for she, too, has her Code. The Code-Grundy. All her life-time, and down to her very grave, she stands in mortal fear of Mrs. Grundy. It is Mrs. Grundy just now who makes her persecute Mrs. Sickles. Her natural instincts would lead her to fly to her sister's rescue. But Mrs. Grundy won't let her. Mrs. Grundy insists that she shall shrug her pretty shoulders, pout her pretty lips, lift up her pretty hands, denounce Mrs. Sickles as the vilest of creatures, and thus do what she can to break her heart, and send her, crushed and bleeding, to the tomb.

But we have no patience to pursue the subject. If men and women will allow themselves to be made fools of by society, and its miserable Codes, we suppose there is no help for the matter. It may be well, however, to call attention to the fact.—*Saturday Press.*

PALMYRA, Wis., April 7th, 1859.

MY DEAR AGITATOR.

After a short trip in the east, accompanied by my brother, A. J., we both returned to Chicago. I have come to Palmyra to the home of my parents, and am enjoying the birds and flowers in the country. Not many flowers yet, but the little fresh buds are bright tokens of their coming. I am very happy here, and feel at rest from the busy cares of life. Truly I am *free*, for I have donned my bloomer which always disappears as I leave home to go out as *teacher*, and remain in the closet until I return. In the morning I am off for a romp, to see how much new strength I can find. But this is such a prudish world, and old Mrs. Grundy hists me to hide when the neighbors come in. Perhaps the reason may be called the *respect* she has for them, and therefore does not wish to shock their *modesty*. But, 'tis sweet to have a fine free run and frolic, and manufacture an imaginary *gymnasium* all by yourself once, twice or thrice a year. This I do when I visit the "old folks," as they are not prudish nor orthodox now, as they were a few years ago, but are very happy in the enjoyment of new light and life. Three *Spiritual papers*, aside from the New York Tribune and the American Agriculturist, grace the home table; numbered amongst them is the Agitator, which they prize very highly indeed, for its bold, noble spirit.

By the way, my father asks me a question, which I will repeat to you for an answer. He asks why Helena Miles calls herself by the name of the man she so much disliked, and therefore is unable to abide with him? It cannot be that one so good and true as she is a *man's mistress*, and yet she follows the custom of calling herself so. We think, dear Agitator, that a Miss is *always* a Miss just as much as a Mr. is always a Mr., and we feel that it would be decidedly becoming in your Editress to agitate the question of woman's *identity*, and the propriety of representing herself from the cradle to the grave by the use of her own *single name*, and thus never take a man's name because he is her husband. So that if she cannot remain with him for dear humanity's sake, let her return to herself and to her own name, and like the prodigal son, determine to "*sin no more*." I have something further to say to you, (if you and your readers would like to listen,) upon this question of *identity*, but not now.

I am to be in the beautiful Forest City the 1st of May. Previous to that time it is my intention to visit some places in Michigan.

When once again in C., I think I shall persevere in seeing how many good people I can collect together who will pledge themselves to be true to the "*Child's Cause*," and lend their aid in carrying on the Sabbath School already begun. The children *now* can sing. I trust with such a beginning, they may be organized and teachers selected, together with a proper superintendent, and the work be carried on. It is my prayer, that I may find this all done when I return. If so, I will certainly not be found dilatory in performing my part.

L. HIGGINS.

REMARKS.

Mr. Higgins asks why "Helena Miles" still retains the name of the man she called husband. We suppose she keeps the name as a punishment for the wicked deed she did in resigning herself, name, &c., at the altar. We see no good reason why a woman should resign her father's name, nor any reason why a child should not be called by the blessed name of its mother instead of the father. When we change our name we will take our mother's maiden name and pray to be worthy of it.—Editress Agitator.

"Wrong ever builds on quicksands, but the Right To the firm center lays its moveless base."

PHILOSOPHY OF SPIRITUALISM.

NUMBER ELEVEN.

In this communication we are to consider the second cause of evil, or error arising from spiritual communications.

Ignorance of the laws which govern the spiritual as well as the physical world.

The idea of special communications from the Infinite—that is, of communications given to one individual for the benefit of another, or of all other individuals, presupposes one individual to be nearer infinite than all others, which we have shown to be a false position. We do not deny that the Infinite could communicate to one individual, that of which all others would be ignorant, but we claim, that in order to do this, infinite power must be extended to prevent all others from knowing it. Now we claim that such an exercise of infinite power, would be contrary to the idea of infinite justice, and would constitute infinite injustice; for the fact that all finite intelligences are equal in their infinite relations, is what constitutes infinite justice. Now the will of the Infinite is the law of finite existence, and consequently also of finite condition, and to say that He wills a thing to be is equivalent to saying that the thing exists. The assertion, then, that the Infinite has told our finite intellect, that which He wills another to know, and which this other does not know and cannot know, until told by the first, is an absurdity; and not only an absurdity, but if it is a thing which is essential to the happiness of the other to know, or for which he is to be punished by the Infinite if he does not know, the doctrine is a blasphemous charge, or denial of infinite justice.

But all finite intelligences are not equal in their finite relations, and consequently one finite may know that of which another finite is ignorant, and the knowledge of which he is unable to impart to him; for being subject to the law of the finite he is also subject to the law of finite condition, and however much he may will to impart his knowledge, his will cannot create the necessary conditions.

We arrive, then, at this conclusion: That a finite intelligence can only impart information to other finite intelligences when the requisite conditions already exist, but cannot create the conditions. It follows, then, that a finite intellect can impart knowledge to some other finite intellects, but cannot impart knowledge to all other finite intellects, and the conclusion inevitably follows:

That when any spirit, directs one individual to inform other individuals, of what he wills in regard to those individuals; such declaration or instruction, is equivalent to an acknowledgement or declaration on the part of the spirit making it, that he is not infinite. It follows, then, as a matter of necessity growing out of the law of finite existence and infinite justice, that all communications made by spirits to man, either ancient or modern, have been made by finite beings. And that the evils which have always arisen from spiritual communications, have arisen from not understanding this law. Now every finite being is wanting in these attributes which the Infinite alone possesses, viz:

He is located in space, or not Omnipresent; He is limited in knowledge, or not Omniscient; He is limited in power, or not Omnipotent. Now spirits being finite, and wanting in the above attributes, it follows, that they may be mistaken in things which they claim to know, or fail in ability to impart to others that which they do know, or those to whom they attempt to impart it, may not be in a condition to receive it.

Is it not, then, rather a matter of surprise, that a person possessed of an ordinary amount of common sense, should without question believe every thing told him by a spirit? Are we to give up all exercise of our reason and common sense, to be led

like idiots, by beings, who, however good may be their intentions, are liable to be mistaken, or to fail in their efforts to accomplish their ends? Is it not more consistent that we should treat them as finite beings, and follow their direction just so far as reason and common sense will justify, and no farther?

This brings us to the consideration of the third cause of evil resulting from spiritual communication, viz:

Unqualified belief in whatever purports to be spiritual communication, without instituting any enquiry into the character of the spirit communicating or the character of the medium through which the communication is made.

Perhaps there is no weakness more to be guarded against, than credulity. It leads persons into the most ridiculous positions, and not unfrequently into dangerous ones. It is the net of every imposter in which he ensnares the simple minded. This believing whatever is claimed to be of spiritual origin, or even whatever a spirit may tell us, without any enquiry into his character or the character of the medium, is a most outrageous abdication of our manhood, and certainly deserves punishment if anything does. A lamentable example of the danger of blindly following the dictation of spirits, occurred some time since, when a person starved himself to death through the dictation of spirits, who promised him a higher state of development, as a reward of his abstinence. He might have been deceiving himself and no spirit was giving such advice, or he may have misunderstood the nature of the development promised, and the spirits may have meant by higher degree of development, the separation of the spirit from the body. It has been asserted that the spirits who gave these directions were lying spirits. If so, how much more need is there of the exercise of our reason and common sense, in inquiring into their character, and carefully examining the purport of their communications. But the spirits are not always lying spirits when they fail to accomplish their promises. They fail from the same causes that other finite beings fail, not from a want of good intentions, but from a want of power to produce the required conditions. In other cases the difficulty appears to be, that persons do not understand the meaning of the communication, or the nature of the development promised; and being led astray by the idea that there can be no danger in relying on the promise of a spirit, they follow directions without so much as bestowing a thought on the nature of the result.

It appears that some media have united with the Catholic church through the direction of the spirit of St Ignatius Loyola, and St. Francis Xavier. Now who was St. Ignatius Loyola? a wild fanatical religious enthusiast and the founder of the order of Jesuits. And who was St. Francis Xavier? He was a religious maniac, the disciple of Lazola and missionary to India. When he set out on his mission the road lay near the house in which his parents lived; but he would not so much as turn his eyes in that direction lest the sight should so operate on the weakness of the flesh, as to induce him to take a last farewell of his mother, when he knew he was never more to behold her face on earth; but he continued his journey barefoot and penniless. That he was really insane is the opinion of all sober writers both Catholic and Protestant.—We have no objections to persons uniting with the Catholic church or any other; but when they offer as a reason for so doing the command of the spirits of such men as St. Ignatius and St. Francis, we must say that they give to the world the best possible evidence of their just right to a lodging in an insane asylum.

But if it shows a weakness of mind so unpardonable that persons, who, like Eve, know nothing and

are absolutely incapable of judging of the character of any spirit either good or evil, are subjected to even penalties for their folly; how much more culpable ought they to be considered, who, being possessed of common sense, wilfully ignore it all, and believe without examination whatever may be told them by a medium? There are good reasons why no faith should be put in what media say, without the most careful examination. First, the medium may deceive you and lie, claiming to be under spirit control when he is not, and he knows it. Second, he may be honest and suppose himself under spiritual control when no spirit is interfering with him; he may suppose himself under the control of a certain spirit, when in fact he is under the control of some spirit of a very different character from the one which he imagines it to be.

There is a story related in the first book of Kings, 13 chap., which beautifully illustrates the first of these positions. It is the story of the man of God sent to Bethel to prophecy against the altars of Samaria, and the old prophet of the Lord, of Bethel.

In this story we have the account of one prophet of the Lord telling a wilful lie to another prophet of the Lord, when the first was not under spirit control, and afterward when he was under spiritual control telling the truth. There are certain facts in this story which should never be lost sight of.

First: That prophets are no different from other men, and that the fact of being controlled by a spirit does not in the least alter the character of the medium, any longer than during the time he is under that influence, no matter who or what the spirit may be who controls him. Second: That it is no evidence that when a medium has been guilty of wilful lying and deception, that he will never again be controlled by a good spirit, or that he never was controlled by a spirit.

All the confidence, then, which we ought to have in the teachings of media, depends upon the same rules which apply to the teachings of other persons, viz: Is the medium a person whose character for truth and veracity is such as ought to entitle him to be believed? Is he an interested witness to such an extent that his interest constitutes a powerful motive for deception? Are his relations in society such as would induce him to speak and act falsely for fear of the displeasure of his friends and companions? Is the communication such as does not conflict with the known laws of finite existence, or the fact of infinite existence? If these questions are satisfactorily answered, then the communication may be true. But if it does conflict with the laws mentioned in the last question, you need go no farther, it is false. For it is an axiom that no two truths are in opposition to each other. But if it does not conflict with any known law, nor agree with any, still it may be true, and we are then bound to enquire if there is not a law competent to govern this effect, and which has not yet been discovered, before we are permitted to assert its truth or falsity.

This brings us to the second statement, viz: That the medium may honestly suppose himself under the control of one spirit, while he is under the control of another of a very different character. This is illustrated in the account of the death of Ahab, King of Israel, related in the first book of Kings, 22 chap. We have not room in this communication to relate this story and must request you to read it from the Bible. It appears that Ahab had a number of prophets who were all under the influence of a lying spirit, and that there was one, and only one who was under a truthful influence. There is no disputing the fact that the prophets of Ahab spoke as the spirit directed and were conscientiously speaking what they supposed to be the truth, and were highly incensed at being told that

they were not, but all their confidence did not alter the case, the spirit lied notwithstanding.

Another feature which should not be overlooked in this case of Ahab's is that it is a case of fortune telling. When Ahab had been told by Micajah what would take place, he endeavored to avoid it by wearing disguise, but failed as every one must fail, who endeavors to prevent that which any one knows will take place. I care not who or what the intelligence is which knows that an event will happen, it is out of the power of any being, either finite or infinite, to prevent it. For he either knows that the event will take place, or he only knows that it may take place. For no being can know that, that will take place, which will never take place; and if he only knows that it may take place, he knows no more about it than any one else, for the contingences which may prevent it are hidden from his view. The only use, then, which prophecy can be, is to give evidence of the immutability of the Divine government, and establish the fact beyond the possibility of a doubt that the Ruler of the Universe governs this world by no special providences. But the question of a future state is a question of what is, and not what will be, and is a reasonable inquiry.

We will proceed in our next to the examination of our fourth cause of evil arising from spiritual communication.

Chagrin Falls, Feb. 24th 1859.

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER.

MARY GREEN has sent the young people three sweet poems. Here is one of them. I am glad she has taken it into her head to send them to our children for they are so good and dutiful and beautiful and—so abused.

THE ARTIST BOY.

BY FANNY GREEN.

I twine a wreath for the Artist Boy—
A wreath of immortal fame—
And he will bear it forth with joy,
And twine it around his name;
There's a gift of beauty, a gift of power,
In this young spirit's God-like dower.

I see a bold and rugged height,
Crowned with a temple's dome of light;
And drawing up from light to life,
Is a cord wrought out from the film of strife;
It is a clue both safe and strong,
That will lead thee far, and lead thee long.

Not thine is an eagle's wing to soar,
But to climb and strive for the open door—
To battle bravely with nameless ills,
'Mid summer heat and winter chills—
And to clothe each step from the outer night
With the potent will of a conqueror's might.

Contesting thus each point that lies
Between thee and yon cloudless skies—
Ascending at each impulse strong,
With an eye of light, and a soul of song—
Unsated ever—still aspire,
While thy whole life is chanting, "Higher!"

Covington, March 11th, 1859.

MY DEAR CHILDREN:—

The quiet street in which I live, with its low-roofed, old, brown homestead, invariably built to the ancient French fashion, the roof projecting sufficiently in front to cover a gallery, around whose supporting pillars are twined the wreathing honeysuckle, or Cherokee rose, or some other of the many graceful vines, which are indigenious to the soil, and the embosoming trees, of many varieties, now in bloom, or, having cast their old leaves, are now putting on their dress of lighter green, to be worn through the spring time, (they get it dyed a darker hue in summer,) with its back ground of solemn, stately pines, and its foot washed by the silent gliding waters of the Bogue Falaya, would perhaps seem to you to lack life, or indications of more active life, than a superficial glance would at first de-

tect. And so it has, I own, sometimes appeared to me; but I have found a gay young spirit, who, flitting here and there, sometimes elaborately garlanded with flowers, to gather which she has journeyed across the picturesque bridge, which leads at once into the merry green woods; and, sometimes, dancing gaily with her young companions on the soft Bermuda grass which borders the street, sometimes stepping for a minute into her grandmother's cottage to see if the love-light is burning, and sometimes, with her dear spiritual brown eyes, looking earnestly into the evening sky, as if she would read there the angelic lore of love and beauty, which is the atmosphere she lives in. This young creature has illuminated the dull old street for me. I wish I could give you a picture of the exceeding beauty of this child, but I can only define to you the ornament she invariably wears—it is that rare jewel, Love. Step with me a moment into the tidy cottage of her grandmother, whose lonely life has but this one ray of sunshine, which her dying daughter bequeathed to her when only five months old. Observe the bed in one corner, with its hangings and coverings of snowy whiteness, its neatly-sanded floor, its cheerful blaze upon the tidily-swept hearth, and the old dame herself sitting in the chimney corner, all form a pretty picture of humble domestic comfort. The old lady will inform you that she is troubled with rheumatism, and the particular remedies she has made use of. But she will not speak of her Sunbeam's mother, her only child, who died in her young beauty of a broken heart.

I am sure, my dear children, that you will realize more fully the blessings of the reformed mode of education,—which, I doubt not, you enjoy,—when I tell you where I first found my little favorite and that you will endeavor to be more loving and true, thus assisting in the great reformatory work in which the wise and good are now engaged. It was one of those clear bright evenings (at the north we would say afternoons) which frequently shine cloudless upon us here, in the month of Feb., I visited the village public school. The room was crowded with suffering, imprisoned children, and the teacher—a tall, athletic, powerfully-built man, with rod in hand,—was doing his best to drive the God image out of the trembling little wretches. Even such an atmosphere could not extinguish the spiritual light which continually plays around this lovely creature—whose life on earth eight years will count. I involuntarily selected her from the others, and have not, from that moment, ceased to regret that a child so delicate, so sensitive, so susceptible to the finer influences, should ever be subjected to such rule.

Yours, affectionately,

FRANCES E. HYER.

MISDIRECTED EFFORT.

How empty learning, and how vain is art,
But as it mends the life and guides the heart!
What volumes have been swelled, what time been spent,
To fix a hero's birth-day or descent!

THE SPIRIT KNEW BEST.—Appollos Munn (now deceased,) on the occasion of his first visit to a "medium," in a city over three hundred miles from his residence, and where he was quite sure no one knew him, asked a number of questions which were answered with what seemed superhuman perspicacity, until he finally asked,

"Who are you that answers me?"

"I am your sister Lois."

"I never had such a sister—my sister's name was Louisa."

"No, my name was Lois."

He left the matter thus at a dead lock, and on returning to his home, said—

"Mother, can I be mistaken as to the name of my deceased sister? Though I never saw her I supposed I could not be mistaken as to her name."

"It was Lois," quietly responded the mother.—*Springfield Age.*

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