

THE  
FREE CHURCH CIRCULAR.

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The Truth shall make you Free.—John 8: 32.  
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Home-Talk by J. H. N.—No. 37. He made it out that God had not dealt fairly by them.  
[REPORTED FOR THE CIRCULAR.]

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QUARRELING WITH GOD.\*

The Bible represents man as in a quarrel with God. It is the business of Christ to reconcile man to God. We will go back to the beginning to see the nature of the quarrel. There is a plain, familiar account of the first man and woman's being instigated by the serpent to find fault with God. The devil put them upon evil thinking—suggested to them that God's ways were not good—that he had not dealt liberally and generously by them, but had played the tyrant. The devil impudently and presumptuously rejected allegiance to God—setting up his own judgment in contradiction, without modesty. God had said to the man and woman, 'In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' The serpent flatly denied this, and went on to tell what he pretended God had concealed, and infused into them his own spirit of evil thinking.

\*We may properly state that this discourse was given a good while ago, during the first year of the Oneida Community. But, though it has lost some of its immediate application with us, it contains principles of universal truth, which will be extensively useful.

This was the beginning of the quarrel; and it is a sample of all the quarreling from Adam down. It is a sample of all the difficulties in this Association. No one will allow that they quarrel with God—not one but has a plausible conceit in favor of his course. Adam and Eve did not intend to quarrel with God: they wanted to eat of the tree—had their eye fixed on an apparent good; and in their eagerness for it were careless about their relations to God, and thus let in a spirit of evil thinking of his ways and dealings. Here lies the whole secret of quarreling: persons fix their eye on some specific, temporary good—something tempting and desirable which they cannot have, or on some evil which they are afflicted with, and which a true, far-seeing reason will recognize as brought upon them by God for their benefit, and so admit a spirit of evil thinking. They have no deliberate intention of doing so, but they give themselves up to that spirit that is always quarreling with God, and thus get into a state of enmity with him.

This then is the amount of the charge to be brought against those who are quarreling with God:—They are either

carelessly thinking evil in regard to the deprivation of some good which they want, or in regard to the infliction of some evil which they do not want; their sensibilities to personal good and evil are paramount to God's judgment of what is best for them. The devil would take possession of these susceptibilities, and exaggerate their importance, and bring about an entire separation between man and God. As the opposite of this false action, see the exhortations of Paul: 'Rejoice evermore; in every thing give thanks;' 'Rejoicing in tribulation, also;' 'My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.' It is essential that we take the great view that God's hand is in all things. However adverse and trying our circumstances may be—however dark God's providences, yet it is evident from all our experience that if we understood what is best for us as well as God does, we should choose these very things as our greatest favors. 'All things work together for good.' We need liberal minds and hearts to see things as they really are. With the growth of experience and mature spirituality we shall discover that the things which have wounded our sensibilities the most have done us the most good; shall justify God in using any degree of decision in taking away our idols, and shall perceive that all these afflictions are working out our good. This is the only rational state of mind; and we shall sometime see how little and foolish we have been, and how insensible to the abounding manifestations of God's faithfulness, and shall be very much ashamed of it. Let us take our stand on rejoicing: every state of mind contrary to that is quarreling with God. With this definition, there must be a great deal of such

quarreling. God trained me year after year on this point of *reconciliation*. There is no one point on which he labored with me so much, as to cure me of evil thinking. For years it was a habit of mind with me, whatever came, whether distress, or persecution, or perplexity, no matter what,—to say, *That's good*.

I will not quarrel with or complain of persons who are quarreling with God. It is a distressing situation; and I want to help them. I will concede, on the one hand, that they have no intention of quarreling with God; and, on the other hand, *they* must concede that if they allow themselves to complain of their lot, they *are* quarreling with God. I will save them by putting in with them; I will rejoice with them, and so help them. The spirit of Christ ascended while yet he was going down to death. Christ went down to the grave *rejoicing*, saying, 'My flesh shall rest in hope; because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption:' and he rejoiced and gave thanks to the end. In coming into the world, he said, 'Lo, I come to do thy will;' and the last call of that will was to suffering greater than any ever endured—to drink the bitterest cup the devil could prepare. It was to the deprivation of every possible comfort of an outward kind—to death and the overwhelming pressure of a baptism of the devil's spirit. He carried the spirit to do the will of God cheerfully into all temptation; and the spirit of Christ in us will carry into this world of war, a spirit of always rejoicing—a spirit impregnable to evil thinking. Christ beautifully reverses the process of the fall; and his obedience stands in the widest possible contrast with man's

original unfaithfulness. Adam and Eve had only a slight temptation—a little forbidden fruit was sufficient to make them let in a spirit of evil thinking. This was very small. Christ's temptation was a *million* times stronger than the one Adam and Eve fell by. It was one in which it was almost reasonable for him to criticise God's ways. He was almost ground to powder in the engine, yet he found no fault. With such a Savior we can go forward; with his heart we shall not criticise; with this armour of righteousness, we may say with Paul, 'We rejoice in tribulations also.'

There is no better idea of a Christian than that of grafting the heroism, endurance and patience that becomes a soldier, on to the meekness of the saint, in the usual sense of the word. The world consider the character of a Christian to be opposite that of a soldier. But Christ had the spirit of a soldier—a Napoleon—a spirit that could never be discouraged, or diverted from its free, cheerful, onward course by any amount of trials. Christ was a Lamb in one view of his character, and a Lion in the other. 'Now then,' says Paul, 'we are ambassadors for Christ; as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God.' We beseech all to come and partake of the spirit which reconciled Jesus Christ to God in the midst of the agonies of death—come up out of the evil thinking and murmuring, the darkness and foolishness which leads them to criticise God's ways.

To carry home this entreaty, I will try to show the perfect uselessness of quarreling with God. There is nothing that will kill a spirit of evil so quick as despair. Cut off from any spirit or

imagination all possibility of *success*, and its resources are all dried up, and it will die. After presenting the hope of Christ's heart, and the resurrection energy that will enable us to rejoice in any evil, we will then go about to cut off and dry up the resources of that opposite spirit that quarrels with God.

There are two considerations calculated to do this: one is, that aside from any recognition of the purposes of God controlling our circumstances, if we take the world as it is, and reckon up all existing facts, and search out the actual experience of men, we shall find that suffering is the unavoidable lot of men in the world. There is no escape from it by change of circumstances—no possible escape from it only by getting into this very spirit of contentment—this spirit of Christ, that can rejoice in the midst of suffering; aside from that spirit, there is nothing but a life-long agony. 'The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.' Facts are stone walls. It is hard to kick against facts. We must take things as they are—be practical men—not try to make the world different from what facts show it to be. And the fact is, the world, aside from salvation in Christ, is properly the suburbs of hell—just far enough out to leave people a chance to think. If they were actually in tophet, in the lake of fire, their sensibilities would be so absorbed with their miseries, that they would not have the ability to *think*; but here, in the suburbs, they are released from actual suffering enough to give them a chance for thought. There is enough variation and alternation from happiness to misery to set them upon thinking. How useless, then, it is to find fault with what exists, with circumstances, whatever they are,

which we cannot change, especially, if we have an outlet such as we have in the spirit of Christ, where we can find peace. Quarreling with the state of things which exists in the world, is the same thing as quarreling with God.)

But, secondly, if we understand and know that God has arranged all our circumstances, that *he* has a hand in every thing which happens, and then quarrel with him, its perfect uselessness will appear from the consideration of his character, as to strength, reach of purpose, and perseverance. A good many, who have tried it out and out, will testify that quarreling with God, in this sense of the word, is the poorest business that can be done. It does not pay. God holds out longer than they can. If he manifests his will, and they revolt, and try to escape from him, they find there is no let up, no drawing back. He is able to circumvent them. If they undertake to run away, he will go round them; if they dodge, he will head them. He can play with the wisest and strongest of them as a cat plays with a mouse. I have seen over and over again this strong, persistent, cunning providence surrounding persons who attempted to quarrel with it, in such a way as showed their utter helplessness before it; and if my sympathies were not excited by their sufferings, I should often feel disposed to laugh; it would be a matter of real amusement. A cat knows its power, and lets the mouse run; and sometimes the mouse verily thinks it has got away; but just at the right moment the cat has it again. I have seen God, through the medium of events, operating in that way; not for the purpose of tormenting the sufferer, but of saving him. A cat does not play with the mouse to torment it, but to show its own power, and exer-

cise its skill and action. So God means to show us his power, and ultimately convince us that there is no hope of escaping from him. He will let us exercise ourselves, and wear ourselves out, till we find there is no use in trying to get ourselves out of his hands. We have known persons, when they had come into a hard pinch, and were tempted to rebellion, God carrying them one way, and their fears and wishes another, say, at last, 'it is of no use to strive with God;' and it will be God's constant object with all who have not proved it out, to convince them that it is of no use to strive with him; and he will hold them in distressing circumstances till they learn that lesson, and learn that in Christ we can rejoice in every thing, and quit evil thinking entirely.

I make up my mind *wilfully*—with a will that has all the energy of an oath—a will that is perfectly desperate, to be contented—contented with the past, the present and the future—to think no evil. I submit to all God lays upon me now, and submit in advance to all he ever will lay upon me. He will do nothing but what is good for me. All he has laid upon me has been for my good. I have abundant reason to rejoice in the hardest suffering I have ever been through; and I submit in advance to every possible trial, in the way of loss of good, or infliction of evil that may come upon me—nothing shall make me quarrel with God. /

It is necessary to make a discrimination between the righteous reproof of evil in ourselves, or in others, and complaining against it, considered as the operation of God. In every thing that takes place, evil as well as good, God has a hand and a meaning; but in order to be redeemed from evil, we must be

free to reprove and rebuke it, and must know how to distinguish between disapprobation and reproof of evil, and the spirit which complains of it considered as God's dispensation. If we make a mistake there, and let in an accusing spirit, we shall come into a quarrel with God through our very zeal for righteousness. Though there is a wide distinction between the two acts of mind, between righteous disapprobation and an egotistical complaining of evil, they are still liable to be confounded; and thus people may get into evil thinking by what seemed a love of righteousness; but if we give up our minds to the spirit of God, we shall find this distinction always in action. If our disapprobation is inspired, it will still have an element of rejoicing and thanksgiving in it. True repentance is one of the sweetest, most heavenly states of mind—there is real rejoicing in it. Where reproof and disapprobation of evil in others is inspired by God, it will still have in it a cheerful, buoyant, hopeful feeling—nothing of a complaining, quarreling spirit—nothing that makes one feel sore and acrid. I am resisting evil all the time, according to the ability that God gives me, and the responsibilities laid upon me; but I have no evil thoughts—nothing of a blaming, murmuring feeling towards those with whom I am at war. I say to all, whatever the evil is which I rebuke, You have not injured me at all, and you have not, and you shall not, hinder my rejoicing in God. 'Altho the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet will I rejoice in the Lord: I will joy in the God of my salvation.'

It is God's desire to bring about a union, a marriage between us and himself; and it is essential to union that we be at peace with him, and appreciate his goodness. It is not possible a heart-union should take place while we are in a spirit of complaining and quarreling with him. He is seeking earnestly and perseveringly to recover us to himself—to give us a true idea of himself—to ~~love~~ us to appreciate him. Now it is not necessary that a person should have a perfect intellectual understanding of all the heights and depths of his wisdom—not necessary to have polish of manners and outward cultivation, in order to this heart union with God; but it is absolutely necessary that we should have a contented heart—be free from evil thinking, and at peace, as he is: and as a condition of this, we must take every thing from him, and believe that all things are well done. If we conceive of our circumstances as *bad*, unless we say with the Atheist that they came by chance, we must rise into the inference that God has placed us in bad circumstances, and, of course, that he has mal-treated us, and is cruel. But what kind of love could exist where there is such a state of feeling? Very slight things interfere with love: we know how small a thing between ourselves will interfere with it. Any little sliver of distrust or complaint that comes in, how soon it poisons the feelings, and destroys love. So of our relations with God; the coming in of evil thoughts and complaints is just enough to throw our hearts into a state where there is no fellowship, and to make, what may be called, a lover's quarrel. When we complain of our circumstances we abuse God, either atheistically by not recognizing his superintendence of every thing, or, if

we allow that, then directly, by charging him with unkindness in the disposition of our circumstances. In one case, we abuse his power and wisdom, in the other, his goodness; and in either case, we fail to appreciate him in the character of a husband, and that is enough to breed a quarrel. If persons in love impute wrong doing to each other, and begin to complain, they are directly in a quarrel; and it is very distressing—distressing in proportion to the value of the connection between them—in proportion to the happiness which belongs to their fellowship with each other. So, evil thinking in any way is enough to bring on distressing relations between us and God. It is the devil's malicious monstrous nature to steal in between parties, and stir up jealousy, and cause a breach.

God is seeking to be an husband—he is trying to win and bring us home to his heart. But the only possible way to give us the blessedness of unity with himself, is to cure us of evil thinking and discontent. How abusive to turn his courtship into a matter of complaint. We never shall know how to keep the peace with each other, and love each other right, till we know how to keep the peace with God.

#### Life—A Dialogue.

*S.—(In a pensive mood.)* I don't know why it is, but none of my plans succeed. I mature them at my leisure, but half the time I cannot propose them, from a conviction of their unfeasibility, or if I do, nothing turns out as I expected.

*N.—*Very likely your heart is not quite large enough yet to make plans on the liberal scale that suits God. You must get into more sympathy with him, and then your plans will meet with

success. Get into sympathy with God's mind. Do you recollect the story of the boy who invariably won all the marbles from his companions at the game of 'odd or even?' On being asked the secret of his success, he said that 'he fixed his face in an attitude and expression as near as possible like that of his opponent, and then waited to see what ideas would come.' In this way he got possession of the other boy's mind. It is a great thing to get possession of other minds, but a still greater thing to fix the mental face so as to find out what is passing in God's mind. It is something that I continually exercise myself in.

*S.—*I do not quite understand the game. I find myself exposed to anxiety and uncertainty.

*N.—*\* \* \* Life is like the art of navigation. In going to sea, you do not indeed expect shipwreck; but there is just enough danger of it to keep you active and vigilant, and give zest to the thing. So in the game of life to a man of faith; there are trials and perplexities, but there is also a great deal of sport and healthy excitement, which make it attractive. And it is ungrateful to God after he has given us so much wisdom and experience, and shown us the end of the game, to think that we have a hard time of it. With me life is sport. \* \* \*

It will not do for us to want to get ahead too fast. If God had nothing else to do but to take care of us, he could push us forward very fast. But he has the concerns of the whole world to attend to. He has a great vessel to steer. We are only the cut-water of the vessel, and it is not best that we should get so far ahead as to leave the world behind us at a helpless distance.

S.—I want *execution*; and I feel pressed up to discharge the responsibilities devolving on me as a private man.

N.—God says, Take care of *my* business, and I will take care of *yours*. He says, 'Take no thought for the morrow;' 'Seek first the Kingdom of God and all things shall be added.' This is the principle on which he deals with us all the way: I will tend to your private affairs if you will tend to my public affairs. And why so? Why should not we attend to *our* affairs, and he to *his*? Why not do as the world do? Because, he is bent on securing community of hearts; and one good way of promoting this, is for persons to take charge of each other's interest. If each takes care of his own, they draw apart. If they take care of each other's, they draw together. The beauty of this crossing over in our relation to God is, that it breeds in us a spirit of *loyalty* towards him, and a spirit of *trust*, and both these operate as a *binder*. \* \*

I have an ambition for great execution, but I have less and less confidence in doing, and more and more in the silent workings of God's spirit, which goes on without any show whatever. I see plain enough that talk is not going to whip the devil out of the world. There has got to be a mighty spirit. Paul says, 'Now thanks be unto God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place. *For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ* in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are *the savor of death* unto death, and to the other *the savor of life* unto life.' There is where the power of his victory and execution lay. His faith made a long stretch into Christ, and was a savor of death to evil.

His execution lay in that silent, invincible power that went forth from him in Christ. It was a sweet smell. And if we want to be kings and priests, and reign on the earth, and be victorious, everywhere and in all places, and triumph in Christ, we shall have to withdraw somewhat from execution, and *become mighty in spiritual life*. Then we shall act without words or external deeds.

Our habits of education are such that we are disposed constantly to a centrifugal tendency. And we may remember when our minds are looking round for some object of attention and action, that the point that God wants our attention fixed upon is often nearer home than we imagine. We are ambitious to do our duty, and are looking about to see what it is; but, as I said before, the tendency is to look away from home too far.

S.—(*Trustfully*.) I will stop thinking in a private way, and throw all my personal responsibilities and planning into common stock with the general interest.

N.—We may call it good execution, if we do nothing but surrender ourselves to God's training in quiet assurance.

#### Extract from a Letter.

DEAR H—: Your article in the Circular upon Prayer, found a response in my heart. I feel that I can go to God, and ask him to do great things for me, as I never could before. All my experience has been tending to this communication with God, for some time past. I have felt increasingly the need of a strength to overcome the spiritual difficulties which crowded thick upon me. I studied upon the riches, wisdom and power of God, and saw there was nothing lacking on his part; but I needed

faith to make them available to me. I finally found that *faith, too*, was a part of his riches, and I was to receive that as his gift. I was praying for faith when I went to Oneida. I dwelt much upon God's being a rewarder of those who diligently seek him, and G——'s talk Sunday about the Lord's prayer, and the conversation I had with you about God's magnetising your mind, were a great help to me. I feel encouraged now when I am criticised, because I can go to God to be cured of my faults with an assurance that he will hear me. I have reason for great rejoicing.

H. A. N.

### THE FREE CHURCH CIRCULAR.

GEORGE W. NOYES, EDITOR.

ONEIDA RESERVE, JUNE 21, 1850.

☞ Correspondents will bear in mind that our Post-Office address is—"ONEIDA CASTLE, Oncida Co., N. Y."

☞ Miss Catharine Beecher has issued a book for circulation among the Clergy, entitled 'Truth Stranger than Fiction,' in which Dr. Taylor and the principal men of New Haven Theological Seminary are exposed as the abettors of scoundrelism. The story grows out of the dealings of a theological student or licentiate with a young lady of New Haven, the sister of Rev. Dr. Bacon of that city. The story is long and very curious, and told without giving names in full; but as the affair has made a great noise in New England, we have means of knowing that the personages who figured in it, are those we have indicated. Dr. Taylor and the association of ministers, whose proceedings are showed up in this book, are the men who black-balled J. H. Noyes in 1834 for his faith in Perfect Holiness; and as the great motive with them then was to save the reputation of the Seminary, the same motive seems now to have led them into a snare which will make a miserable end of the whole concern. Truly, the Heavens are just!

☞ Some of the principal dignitaries of New York city, including doctors of divinity, distinguished physicians, and literary characters, have lately had an interview with the 'Rappings.' According to the report published by one of them, the demonstrations were unimpeachable, and, by their own admission, baffled all attempts to explain them upon natural grounds. It must begin to be a question with the learned world whether unbelief in the supernatural is so very dignified as has been supposed; and then perhaps they will be led to review the orthodoxy of the maxim that 'the age of miracles is past.'

### The Decisive Position.

We should like to urge upon our friends the importance of a clear faith in the Kingdom of God. This is the vital question, the real keystone of our position; and every thing depends upon a correct and decisive settlement of it, by all who are interested with us. So long as this movement is regarded as human, or partly human, in its origin, so long as it is approved of by *sympathy* merely, without a positive and intelligent confession of its divine birth, so long faith will be on the wrong side of the summit—persons will have up-hill work in their fellowship, and be liable to stumble. Let them pass the decision of that point, and a thousand minor questions are disposed of; they will naturally become whole-hearted, and will find in every new circumstance an accession of strength.

We are glad to see the issue between faith and unbelief coming more and more distinctly on this point. Has the Kingdom of God and the day of judgment commenced? This is the issue which we feel empowered to present, and we do not care to wrangle with disputers on points of secondary importance. We can afford to stand quietly on the affirmative of this question, and abide the decision of events. Such, also, should be the position of every one who has confessed union with Christ. But it is a point over which the spirit of darkness will specially brood, resisting the action of faith to the last. At the present stage of things, at least, it requires a tenacious hold of unnoticed facts and a pretty close recurrence



to our interior perceptions, to keep the mind always clear. To help others in this respect, and set their thoughts upon the right track, we will make allusion to a few of the facts which bear upon the subject.

The *birth of the movement*, in 1834, was out of the most advanced religious body in the world, and at the period of its highest stage of spirituality. It was precisely at the time when the churches were burning with a presentiment of the millennium,—when all hearts were praying for and expecting it.

The *thing then developed*, was the Gospel of the New Testament—the testimony and experience of Salvation from sin and death. The great truths of the Second Coming and, subsequently, of the Origin of Evil, were uncovered, preparing the way for the full advent of the Spiritual Age.

The power of Salvation, which was at first received and applied individually, has now moved forward to the *scale of Social Life*. The existence of this Community, triumphing over selfishness, and advancing into the unity for which Christ prayed, is a collective demonstration of the vitality of the truth which was opened in 1834. This Community is the product of an invincible spirit; it is the practical consequence of a faith that let God into the world.

The *power of spiritual criticism* which dwells in this body, and which is more or less with believers everywhere, is entirely superhuman, and, we may say, super-angelic. It is deeper than the revelations of Davis, or any of the clairvoyant dealers with frontier spirits. Its action with us has had the solemnity and penetration and effectiveness of the last judgment.

The evidence of a *resurrection process*, accompanying faith and criticism, is accumulating year by year. It is seen as much in the restoration of our hearts to the innocence and freshness of youth, as in the victorious health of our bodies.

The *superior providence* which has guided and protected the Free Church from the beginning, indicates that it is the central interest of earth in the mind of heaven. It is every way a central, integral Kingdom. It is the reconciling medium and meeting-point of jarring theologies and theories. It is proved to be central by its harmonious

interpretation of events. Those who are placed within its circle find themselves standing upon the axis of all surrounding movement, where every thing is explicable, and all human affairs, whether material or spiritual, are seen gravitating toward one object, conspiring for the elevation of the Kingdom of God.

These facts, though not of a glaring and obtrusive character, come within the scope of all, and are sufficiently to the point for every wide-awake, earnest man. There are other lines of argument, and rapidly succeeding facts of every kind which tend to the same conclusion. To us the news of the world wears an uncommon aspect—more suggestive of spiritual forces and a judgment purpose than ever before. Even the faithless must begin to feel cornered up to the necessity of seeking God. The present notorious outbreak of the spirit world, while it must shatter unbelief, is also exposing men to unknown mischief, that nothing but the Kingdom of God is sufficient to suppress.

We close by again urging the importance of a definite settlement of faith on this point, and such a reference to the interior perception of facts as shall keep this faith bright.

### Externals—Labor, etc.

The scenery of the Community domain at the present time, is very beautiful. The outward show—the green luxuriance of this ‘leafy month,’ is unusually fine, and such as is often described; but who can describe the spiritual beauty of the landscape? Who can speak one’s impressions of these western summer sunsets?

The labor of the season has commenced with us in an excellent spirit. The various departments of building, farming, gardening, and manufacturing, are in busy operation, and probably with a more free and frictionless energy on the part of all engaged than ever before. The monotony of application to any one thing is occasionally dissipated by a general ‘bee,’ or a picnic with the children.

Two young men, Fourierists, from Baltimore, visited us the other day for the purpose of inspection and inquiry. Having been connected with one or two experimental

'Phalanxes,' one of their first questions was, What system of accounts we had in the labor department--what regulations we had for stimulating labor, and securing to it a just reward? They seemed considerably astonished to learn that there was no system of accounts, and no formal regulations on this subject in the Association--that every one was free to labor as much or as little as he chose, and that there was no reference in our work to cash-settlements and a written scale of rewards.

And yet, there is none the less in operation among us, an accurate distribution of rewards. We stand on the guaranty of God, that 'he will reward every man according to his works;' and finding ourselves in the day of judgment, when this promise is being actually fulfilled, we want no better assurance of justice, or inducement to well doing. It is becoming immovably settled in our consciousness, that as we sow, we reap.

The Fourierists claim to have led the way, in theory at least, into the dispensation of exact justice, where 'Every man shall be rewarded according to his works.' Their plan is to keep a minute record of all the labor performed in the Association, and credit to every worker so much an hour,--so much for this kind of work, so much for that, and so much for idle capital; then, on the basis of such data, the grand equation of justice is attained by periodical cash-payments and dividend of profits.

But is money or merchandise the suitable reward for a true man's labor? Can it be represented to him by these things? We think not. These represent only the very lowest circle of his interests. Peace of heart--spiritual wealth--the pleasure of blessing others--the love of those around us, and all the great, just demands of the soul, cannot be secured to us by any calculations of mere mutualism. A man's best work is not of an outward nature, but it is the radiation of a pure, beneficent spirit, and this cannot be estimated by any known formula, or recompensed in an outward way. What then does the 'justice' which Reformers clamor for amount to?

We turn away from all attempts at evoking justice, either temporal or spiritual, by looking to each other, or to constitutions

and laws. We wish for something more inevitable, and more accurate than human machinery can work out; and this we have found, by mutually referring our accounts to God, who we know is above all interference, and liable to no mistakes. In doing our work as unto him, we have a sure paymaster, and avoid the trouble of all other accounts.

### A New Discovery.

[We give below a brief notice, furnished by a friend, of the great discovery which is reported to have been made by Henry M. Paine of Worcester, called the Hydro Electric Light. Considerable doubt is expressed by some as to the reality of the invention, and it is soon to be publicly tested on a large scale in the city of New York. We look with great interest to the result of the trial, and are inclined to have faith in it, as being well conformed to God's general designs and the inspiration of the times:]

Mr. Paine's discovery of a cheap and easy way of decomposing water by means of electricity, if genuine, is one of immense importance, as it affects the relations which mankind bear to the physical world, and will produce a revolution in the arts hitherto unparalleled. Water is composed of two gaseous fluids, Oxygen and Hydrogen, combined in certain proportions. It has often been decomposed or separated into these original elements by chemical processes, which are, however, difficult and expensive. The two gasses, Oxygen and Hydrogen, are, in certain circumstances, highly combustible. If when separated they are again brought in contact, they will burn, and passing into combination will become water again. The heat produced by this combustion is very great, nearly equal to the highest that can be produced by any known method. Furthermore, by submitting the Hydrogen to a process called carbonization, which Mr. Paine claims to have discov-

ered, its combustion is made to produce a most brilliant light.

It has long been known that *Electricity*, which is a powerful decomposing agent, could be made to separate these elements from water; and hitherto the only objection to using them as fuel has been the expense attending the process of their production. Mr. Paine now claims to have discovered a new application of electricity, and to have invented a machine, which, through this agent, and with only the trouble of winding up a weight occasionally, will produce a continual supply of these gases from water, sufficient to take the place of wood, coal and oil for purposes of fuel and light; and this he does at a mere nominal expense. If this discovery proves genuine, the day seems to have come when nearly all the great uses of life, except those which minister immediate pleasure in the performance, will be provided for by those refined and imperishable elements, fire and water. And it is evident that such a consummation only comports with the destiny which belongs to the children of God, and with his glorious designs in the earth.

H. J. S.

### Community Common-places.

—To be able to enjoy every thing, and yet be dependent on nothing but God for happiness, is the perfection of character. A person that is dependent upon outward circumstances, such as physical accommodations, society, &c., is as much an appendage to them as a bureau or chair is to a room. To be dependent upon God makes us an appendage to him.

—Because we have a fair wind to start with on a given course, it is not to be presumed, that we can go to the end of our course *without taking in sail*. Here is the cause of many difficulties; we begin right, but neglect to take in sail, and get going

too fast, and then before we know it, we are aground. The lesson we should learn by our blunders, is, to take frequent observations—once a day in *clear weather* certainly. We should know where we are, and how the current sets, whether toward God and heaven, or elsewhere. Never take observations in cloudy weather, neither steer by last year's observations; but steer by the compass of inspiration, faithfully consulted every fair day.

—An interior person sees the matchless glory of God's grace, not in its removing him immediately from temptation and the pressure of evil, but in its sustaining him there. We consider that a tame appreciation of salvation, which used to make us long for exemption from burdens and difficulties. We rejoice rather in a consciousness of power to outlive and overcome evil. *Eternal life* is most truly commended to us in the opposition of death. Salvation is a state in which we ask no favors of the devil, and imagine none.

—*Life which is life*. Not youth and health, but life that stands on faith. The old have a better chance to get this than the young, because they have the sentence of death in themselves, that they should not trust in themselves, but in him that raiseth the dead; while the young trust to flattering appearances of life. Death preys under the cover of youthful beauty. Our 'mortal bodies' in their best estate are as the grass and the flower that fadeth. It is only by the spirit of Christ, dwelling in us, quickening our mortal bodies, that we have life which is life, let us be young or old.

—We have done pitying ourselves, and done pitying others. Whatever of sympathy is useful to strengthen persons under affliction, and to extricate them from suffering on the side of improvement, we gladly exercise; but to the faith which recognizes God's infinite care and tenderness over us, mere concern at suffering and blind pity is impossible.

☞ The Circular is now printed on our new Power Press. It does its work beautifully, and at the rate of 700 impressions an hour.

**Judgment—Instinct—Feeling.**

*Inquiry.* Shall I wait for instinct and attraction in all cases of action ?

*Answer.* I should say that when one is conscious of an incubus of spiritual death, that makes a true, natural instinct impossible, it is better to go by the judgment. The spirit of God will work through the judgment, and insinuate itself in that way into the feelings.—Be guided by good judgment—judgment which coincides with the bent of God's administration—without regard to feelings, and count that true instinct. I 'take an observation,' (in sailor's language,) and then set my will in the direction of my judgment. That I call setting the helm. Suppose a sailor has his helm set for a point five miles off, and for the time being the wind is light; he will scarcely see that he makes any headway; but he would be foolish to throw up the helm, and say 'it is of no use to try to reach the port.' A will that has the will of God for its basis, is a helm that the ship will mind; and one who has such a will, whether he sees it or not, is making headway toward the object. Set the helm right, trusting in God to carry you through, he will see that you attain it; and it is nonsense to be discouraged. I set my will against my feelings. When I have got an observation, and my feelings are on another track, I follow my judgment, and confidently expect that God will give me an opportunity to act out my will in opposition to my feelings, and he *always* does: and I begin to find out by little and little that my feelings are changing; and by patient waiting on the helm, I find that I have made progress.

**Passages**

*From Carlyle's 'Model Prisons.'*

Indeed, it is wonderful to hear what account we at present give ourselves of the punishment of criminals. No "revenge"—O Heavens, no; all preachers on Sunday strictly forbid that, and even (at least on Sundays) prescribe the contrary of that. It is for the sake of "example" that you punish: to "protect society," and its purse, and skin; to deter the innocent from falling into crime; and especially, withal, for the purpose of improving the poor criminal himself—or, at lowest, of hanging and ending him, that he may not grow worse. For the poor criminal is to be "improved," if possible; against him no "revenge" even on week-days; nothing but love for him, and pity, and help; poor fellow! is he not miserable enough? Very miserable—though much less so than the Master of him, called Satan, is understood (on Sundays) to have long deservedly been!

My friends, will you permit me to say that all this, to one poor judgment among your number, is the mournfullest twaddle that human tongues could shake from them; that it has no solid foundation in the nature of things; and to a healthy human heart, no credibility whatever? Permit me to say, only to hearts long drowned in dead Tradition, and for themselves neither believing nor disbelieving, could this seem credible. Think, and ask yourselves, in spite of all this preaching and perorating from the teeth outward! Hearts that are quite strangers to eternal Fact, and acquainted only at all hours with temporary Semblances parading about in a prosperous and persuasive condition; hearts that from their first appearance in this world have breathed since birth, in all spiritual matters, which means in all matters not pecuniary, the poisonous atmosphere of universal Cant, could believe such a thing. \* \* \*

I take the liberty of asserting that there is one valid reason, and only one,

for either punishing a man or rewarding him in this world; one reason, which ancient piety could well define: That you may do the will and commandment of God with regard to him; that you may do justice to him. This is your one true aim in respect of him; aim thitherward, with all your heart, and all your strength, and all your soul; thitherward, and not elsewhere at all! This aim is true, and will carry you to all earthly heights and benefits, and beyond the stars and Heavens. All other aims are purblind, illegitimate, untrue, and will never carry you beyond the shop-counter—nay, very soon will prove themselves incapable of maintaining you even there. Find out what the Law of God is with regard to a man; make that your human law, or I say it will be ill with you, and not well! If you love your thief or murderer—if Nature and eternal Fact love him, then do as you are now doing. But if Nature and Fact do *not* love him? If they have set inexorable penalties upon him, and planted natural wrath against him in every God-created human heart—then I advise you, cease, and change your hand. \* \* \* \* \*

To reward men according to their worth—alas! the perfection of this, we know, amounts to the millennium! Neither is perfect punishment, according to the like rule, to be attained, nor even, by a legislator of these chaotic days, to be too zealously attempted. But when he does attempt it—yes, when he summons out the Society to sit deliberative on this matter, and consult the oracles upon it, and solemnly settle it in the name of God—then, if never before, he should try to be a little in the right in settling it! In regard to reward of merit, I do not bethink me of any attempt whatever, worth calling an attempt, on the part of modern Governments, which surely is an immense oversight on their part, and will one day be seen to have been an altogether fatal one. But as to the punishment of crime, happily this can not be quite neglected. When men

have a purse and a skin, they seek salvation at least for these, and the Four Pleas of the Crown are a thing that must and will be attended to. By punishment, capital or other, by tread-milling and blind rigor, or by white-washing and blind laxity, the extremely disagreeable offenses of theft and murder must be kept down within limits.

And so you take criminal catiffs, murderers and the like, and hang them on gibbets “for an example to deter others.” Whereupon arise friends of humanity, and object. With very great reason, as I consider, if *your* hypothesis be correct. What right have you to hang any poor creature “for an example?” He can turn round upon you, and say, “Why make an ‘example’ of me, a merely ill-situated, pitiable man? Have you no more respect for misfortune? Misfortune, I have been told, is sacred. And yet you hang me, now I am fallen into your hands—choke the life out of me, for an example! Again I ask, Why make an example of *me*, for your own convenience alone?” All “revenge” being out of the question, it seems to me the catiff is unanswerable, and he and the philanthropic platforms have the logic all on their side.

The one answer to him is, “Caitiff, we hate thee; and discern for some six thousand years now, that we are called upon by the whole Universe to do it. Not with a diabolic, but with a divine hatred. God himself, we have always understood, ‘hates sin’ with a most authentic, celestial, and eternal hatred. A hatred, a hostility inexorable, unappeasable, which blasts the scoundrel, and all scoundrels ultimately, into black annihilation and disappearance from the sum of things. The path of it as the path of a flaming sword: he that has eyes may see it, walking inexorable, divinely beautiful and divinely terrible through the chaotic gulf of Human History, and every where burning, as with unquenchable fire, the false and death-worthy from the true and life-worthy; making all Human History, and the Bi-

ography of every Man, a God's Cosmos, in place of a Devil's Chaos. So is it in the end; even so, to every man who is a man, and not a mutinous beast, and has eyes to see. To thee, caitiff, these things were and are quite incredible; to us they are too awfully certain—the Eternal Law of this Universe, whether thou and others will believe it or disbelieve. We, not to be partakers in thy destructive adventure of *defying* God and all the Universe, dare not allow thee to continue longer among us. As a palpable deserter from the ranks where all men, at their eternal peril, are bound to be—palpable deserter, taken with the red hand, fighting thus against the whole Universe and its laws, we—send thee back into the whole Universe, solemnly expel thee from our community, and will, in the name of God, not with joy and exultation, put with sorrow stern as thy own, hang thee on Wednesday next, and so end.”

Other ground on which to deliberately slay a disarmed fellow-man I can see none. Example, effects upon the public mind, effects upon this and upon that—all this is mere appendage and accident; of all this I make no attempt to keep account, sensible that no arithmetic will or can keep account of it—that its “effects,” on this hand and on that, transcend all calculation. One thing, if I can calculate it, will include all, and produce beneficial effects beyond calculation, and no ill effect at all, any where or at any time: What the Law of the Universe, or Law of God is with regard to this caitiff? That, by all sacred research and consideration, I will try to find out; to that I will come as near as human means admit; that shall be my exemplar and “example;” all men shall through me see that, and be profited *beyond* calculation by seeing it.

The only subject for grief, and one for which we may well weep, is the sufferings of Christ for us. If we weep, let it be for another's sorrow—not our own.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### Putney Letters.

[If there are some unpleasant reminiscences connected with Putney, there are also those which we love to cherish. If that place has been a gethsemane of spiritual oppression and diabolical power, there has also been a divine, ever-springing faith there, which overcomes the world. We have many refreshing letters from the remnant of believers in P., and we think the following extracts will be read with interest:]

*Putney, May 26, 1850.*

DEAR FRIEND: In your late and interesting communication, you spoke of faith as increasing in the community, and hoped it was with me. This is the case. Never since 1847, when skepticism and infidelity received its first shock, has faith flourished so perceptibly with me as at the present time. My situation of late has repeatedly been such as to require the exercise of faith; and I am happy to say, I have found invariably the supply to equal the demand. Heretofore, I have found it difficult to exercise faith; but I find I can exercise it if I possess it; and I can possess it just as fast as I can destroy unbelief. Faith and unbelief cannot co-exist, no more than life and death; for faith worketh life, and unbelief death. When I first confessed Christ, I was full of unbelief—faith had hardly any foothold; the consequence, you well know, was, that on the first trial, faith was overcome by the then stronger antagonist, unbelief. But ‘the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.’ So it proved in this case: altho’ completely victorious for a while, yet that enemy has at last been routed, entirely, and I trust, eternally routed.

Yours &c.,

D. J. H.

*Putney, May 19, 1850.*

DEAR MRS. N.: At Mrs. R——’s, seated by her bedside, I find leisure to communicate some of my thoughts to you. I told her I had brought my pen and paper to write, hoping she would

be able to dictate something. She seemed pleased, and nodded assent, but must rest first. I have thought it possible that she might recover till within a week. I have visited her often, and found it good for me. Such meekness, quietness, patience, and cheerful resignation I never saw manifested under such circumstances. All who know her are constrained to acknowledge the greatness of her salvation. She rejoices in prospect of her deliverance, and so do I. Although I shall be deprived of the luxury of her personal presence, yet she assures me she shall still be with me and the dear ones at Oneida. I feel that I have been learning something more of this blessed fellowship of late. If it is a delusion, or a freak of the imagination, it makes me very happy, and its effect on my spirit is salutary. I desire that it may be more and more manifest to my consciousness, till it becomes a reality that I cannot doubt any more than I can personal communication; for this reason I love letters, and think them an excellent means of facilitating fellowship.

Your kind communications to the little band at Putney have not been in vain. A baptism of love with its attendant blessings, and an ambition to become whole-hearted in sincerity and earnestness, seeking to be made complete in Christ, and filled with all the fullness of God, has been the result of your labors of love in communicating by the paper and letters. Realizing as I do the power of truth on paper, I rejoice in the plan of a free press. 'He that hath ears to hear let him hear.' I never felt so ambitious to help publish the paper.

Mrs. R.—has roused up and talked some. She says, 'she wishes to express her gratitude for the many favors and instructions she has received through the Perfectionists, her firm belief in Mr. Noyes as a teacher and leader inspired of God, her belief in his doctrines, especially the doctrine of salvation from disease, old age and death.' She says,

'the gospel found her with a worn-out constitution, and surrounded with circumstances very unfavorable to the development of new life.' She feels that for her to die will be gain. She sends her dying love to the Oneida Association, especially to all she knew. F. L.

Putney, May 17, 1850.

DEAR FRIENDS; \* \* \* I receive constant edification and benefit from the Circular. The criticism of the mouth cut me very deep. I long to have my tongue converted to the use of the truth. The new Plans and Prospects correspond to my feelings and judgment in sincerity and truth. I have had quite a change since I visited you at Oneida. I have been delivered of that restlessness in regard to my situation here, and my desire to live in the Association; not that I love you less, or esteem not the great and blessed privileges you have to enjoy, but because the *truth* possesses me more, and makes me delight to do the will of God, let me be placed where he will have me; for it is not my will but *his* that I wish done. Although I stay long with the pots, yet I shall be as the dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.' I fear no evil, for grace is sufficient for me in any place the Lord is pleased to have me. I enjoy a good degree of calmness and serenity in waiting on the Lord for instruction in love and righteousness. I am much closed up from the world, fully believing that she that tarried at home, in her own heart with God, divideth the spoil.

I had the pleasure of spending last night with Mrs. R.—. She thinks her departure is near, and her prospects very pleasant, far surpassing all she is called to leave. She said she had wanted to write to the Association, and tell them of her sympathy and union with your faith. P. P.

Shelburne Falls, Mass., May 12, '50.

BELOVED:—\* \* \* We are compelled by a certain knowledge of

facts to confess that God has raised the standard of his Kingdom; and the gospel of Jesus Christ will gather the people unto it as fast as they are willing to be saved from infidel licentiousness, false religion and anarchy. Hence, we are thankful to recognize a relation to the Free Church at Oneida, as the center of operations for the spread of a knowledge of the facts of God's kingdom, and heartily lay ourselves upon the altar of that kingdom, and desire to be used in any way which may be thought expedient for the furtherance of its purposes. We also are glad to find that the message we have received is entirely in accordance with our recent reflections and clear perceptions of the will of our Father, concerning us; but had it been otherwise, we have good hope that the trial of our faith would have resulted in obedience to the calls of Christ. We are some involved, and are surrounded with many perplexing circumstances, and have to meet all the bitterness and contumely everywhere poured upon believers; yet we daily rejoice in the care, protection and prosperity of our Father, and feel that we are led continually to separate ourselves more and more from all that is of the world, and have taken on an intelligent purpose to do so, in all the relations in which we stand.

Our faith, in some sense, annihilates time and space, so that we behold the perfection of your social order, and are gradually made partakers of your gains, as really as if present with you; and in fact by the same means our selfishness is nailed to the cross, and we are joined to you in a new and living way. Thus we are taking the kingdom here, and hope to possess it forever and ever.

Dearly beloved, we do feel the elements of the everlasting dominion in our own subordinate position at this moment; and know that the arms of love that compass us, would as willingly embrace all honest hearts. You can see with considerable clearness that no perfect social relation can be attained,

except upon the plan of unity, which Paul presents and illustrates by the human body. The idea implies the cognizance of a head, having a direct channel of communication to all parts of the body. Here we have found the cross of Christ, and learn of him who 'always did those things that please the Father.' It appears to us that very little is done towards salvation from sin until this principle is recognized; and yet nothing appears so foolish to the wise and prudent as the idea that God has in these modern times chosen apostles and ministers, in whom he will be acknowledged, and received unto salvation, and not elsewhere. The devil is exceedingly disturbed by this doctrine; and it is evident that all the enemies of God's gospel and reign, are more irritated by the exercise of authority and judgment, and the consequences, than from all other causes put together. We daily experience confirmation of this fact. Thence we infer that the devil knows that the gathering of God's people into *one* is the certain precursor of his final destruction.

Some believers in this vicinity have not fully acknowledged allegiance to the truth; but I hope they are advancing to the day of decision. I am honestly willing they should speak for themselves; and however much I wish to see the truth honored here, I can only wait on the Lord, and hope for the effectual operations of his grace. Dear brother, pray for us that our hearts be enlarged, and filled with improving grace.

Yours in love, L. & E. HOLISTER.

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