

THE

FREE CHURCH CIRCULAR.

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The Truth shall make you Free.—John 8: 32.
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VOL. III.] ONEIDA RESERVE, AUGUST 2, 1850. [NO. 13.

Home-Talk by J. H. N.—No. 40.

[REPORTED FOR THE CIRCULAR.]

REPOSE OF CHARACTER.

• In watching the workings of evil spirits, I am often led to the conclusion, that a great deal of the fault we find in character generally, does not arise so much from intention of evil, or from actual perverseness of will originally, or from any rebellious passion of any specific kind, as from a more general cause, viz., *the hankering for action*—the uneasy desire to be doing something—the want of that balance and quietness of spirit that does not need to be active in order to be comfortable. That repose of spirit which makes it pleasant and easy for a man to do nothing, but to yield himself quietly to God in a passive state, is a very rare and great attainment. It is different from laziness, and, in fact, to a man of ordinary character and habits, it is the hardest work that he can do; the labor of the hands is but sport in comparison.

The truth is, it is not natural to life to want to be still. Laziness is not natural; life wants to be active, and those persons who corrupt themselves with luxury, and are in the relaxed, dissipated state, and lack of purpose, which wealth

brings, are not after all in a lazy state. They generally betake themselves to some mode of excitement, to gaming or drinking, or, if more elevated, to politics; in some way or other they refuse the distress of having nothing to do. We need not fear people will be lazy in the sense of not doing something, for there is in every body an eager thirst for doing something. It has been said that 'idleness is the devil's workshop;' but there is no such thing as idleness, in the sense of withdrawal from doing. There is that in man that will work in one way or another. There is very little to be feared from actual laziness and inactivity. The principal danger arises from misdirected activity, from excessive, uninspired doing.

The spirit that I wish to aim at, is that uneasy spirit in men that wants to be doing, and because God is not quick enough to suit them, they set themselves to work. This uneasy spirit cannot wait on the Lord. This spirit is very strong in active, business men, men who have cultivated the will above every thing, and who are out of their element, like a fish out of water, if they are not busy in action. Such men find themselves continually tempted out into uninspired action. They are full of

life, and they do not feel right unless it is in full outward play.

The great objection to this uneasy spirit, and the main fault to be found with it is, that it thwarts inspiration. It does not let God have a fair chance with us, to set us going right. In every thing we shall find there is a way to go right-end-foremost; but if we follow our short-sighted theories we shall be sure to go wrong, because as the world is, the flesh has everywhere the start of the spirit. As men are brought up, they are in a state where the cart is before the horse; and if we let things drift, and do not wait on the Lord, we shall be sure to move in this false way.

There is nothing more necessary to our getting a firm hold of God than repose—quietness of heart, and a ridding ourselves of that spirit that would be busy in a fleshly way. The discipline we are called to in this respect is for the time severe, crucifying to the life, and was well represented by the cross of Christ. The cross was a great upright timber with a cross-beam, and on it the man, living and breathing, was fastened with nails, and held there for a long time. The misery of this position, aside from the pain of the nails, is, that the man is immovable—cannot stir—in a position where the life would be very anxious for action, in the way of helping itself. It would be glad to get its hands round and rub the parts that pain the most; but it cannot stir; it is a complete asphyxia of the will. So all uninspired life will have to come to the spot where it will be wound up, and cannot stir; and the person will be held there till things begin the other end foremost. When the resurrection gets the start in us, and we come into right relations to God, he is first, and we second. Pre-

vious to that, in all we have to do with God, we are first, and he second.

A great deal of the business going on is as much from love of activity as from a love of money. This love of activity is a generic passion; it is a central passion. It may be surrounded by other passions, but after they are all civilized, if this central one is left, the man will still be continually running off the track. A man cannot rise into inspiration, however civilized his other passions may be, if he has not been through a crucifixion of this. We shall find that this repose of spirit is as essential to that tone of character that will go into study and investigation, as it is necessary to inspiration; for love of activity presents an impossible barrier in the way of knowledge, and makes it very hard for men to turn back into that quiet spirit which can sit down and patiently take hold of study. I am a great part of the time without employment, and without books, and yet my spirit has a good, healthy tone, and is always ready for action; and it is because I have got into the habit of waiting and standing still. I get into activity the other way, through invisible activity. Inspired action is a glorious thing; this love of action when it is wholly subdued will be glorious. I love practical men—men that have strong wills, and are full of energetic action; for the very essence of enterprise lies under this passion I am crucifying. I do not want to limit it. I only want to drive four nails into it, and hold it still till I can have the resurrection in it. If that can be fairly done in three days, then I do not care how much activity there is in it—the more the better. But until it has died and risen, it is a great impediment to inspiration and education.

Rest of character is a great thing to attain—a thing I prize very much, and am looking for with great desire. We want rest and quietness of spirit, as the basis of enterprise,—then we shall have enterprise that can be trusted, and that will work as omnipotently as God's. We want rest that takes in inspiration. Let us labor to enter rest. God will bring us into a state where we shall be the most quiet, and the most enterprising folks in the world. People complain of me, that on the one hand I do nothing, and on the other, that I am turning the world upside down. The world will talk about you just so. They will call you slack and lazy, and at the same time will be compelled to admit that you do more than they do.

The Terms of Salvation.

The first great condition of salvation is, that we forsake every thing for Christ. Christ said, 'There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, houses, &c. ; and in the world to come eternal life.' Again, 'Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.' If persons find themselves in trouble—feel that they are poor, and 'feeding upon husks,' it would be well for them to see if there is not something which they have not given up for Christ. Christ requires *all* that we have ; and if we do not find the promises fulfilled to us, we may know assuredly that it is because we have not complied with the above conditions, and we may be sure that we shall never find rest to our souls till we do. He says, 'Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' God is in earnest in making us perfectly sincere, and he will not let us off till we are so.

To illustrate this subject :—Suppose you employ an agent to collect money, who should collect \$1000, and only pay over to you \$100, and say that that was all ; and, by carelessness in keeping his accounts, mixing up the money with his own, and refusing to thoroughly examine his affairs, should make himself believe that this was a fair and honest settlement. He would, for the present, have a kind of satisfaction in finding himself so well off and his duty discharged. But in a short time some circumstance comes up which shows you that he has collected more money, and by investigation you are able to prove that he has collected another hundred dollars, which, after a good deal of trouble to yourself and him, he is compelled to give up. He again says, *now I have given up all*, and I hope to have no further trouble with this affair. But soon the truth begins to stare him in the face, and he sees that circumstances are coming up which must inevitably show that he has not been honest. This puts him into suffering ; and when the defalcation is proved, in addition to paying over the money, he has to suffer all the mortification of having it known that he has not been honest. He will feel a kind of relief each time that he gets out of the hands of the lawyer, and hope that it is the end of it ; but suppose it goes on in this way till the whole thousand dollars is paid over, one hundred dollars at a time. We can see at once that that man would have a great deal of trouble and expense. He might call on his friends to sympathise with him, and wonder that his lot was so hard, when the simple truth is that the fault is all his own—he has not been honest.—Had he paid the money over promptly and honestly when called upon for a settlement, he would have saved all this trouble and expense, and gained a reputation for honesty, and, what is better, a good conscience.

Is not this precisely the way many people deal with God? I believe it is, and that this kind of insincerity is the

cause of a great share of the troubles we hear complained of from time to time. If we are ever to be saved, it will be by being perfectly honest—honest with God, with each other, and with ourselves; and God will hold us to it till we are thoroughly honest, if it takes ever so long, and costs us ever so much suffering.

We cannot expect to receive the glorious promises of the gospel, until we have complied with the condition. God is not a hard master: he requires nothing of us which we are not able to perform. He simply requires us to give up *all* we have to him, for the great reward of present and everlasting happiness. And this is an easy thing, when we are in earnest and perfectly sincere. God does not require some great thing of us, which we cannot do; and we receive all the promises by giving up to him what we have, whether it be much or little.

When Christ saw the poor widow cast her two mites into the treasury, he called his disciples and said to them, 'Verily I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury. For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.' How beautifully this case shows the goodness and mercy of God.

Again, in the case of Ananias and Sapphira on the day of Pentecost, when those who had lands and goods, sold them and brought the money and laid it at the Apostles' feet, the judgment of God did not follow them because they had no *more* to give, but because they kept back 'part of the price of the land.'

Suppose a benevolent sea captain should say to the starving people of Ireland, who were anxious to come to this country, where provisions are plenty and cheap, I will carry you there for what money you have got, but you must be honest with me and give me all; if you have only one penny it will be

accepted, but I must have that. How ungrateful it would be in these circumstances for a man to keep back part of the price—and how dishonest.

What we all want is happiness—present happiness, and the security for everlasting happiness. This is *all* we want; for the wealth of the world is worth nothing to us, only so far as it adds to our happiness. God simply says to us, 'Give up every thing to me, and I will secure this for you.' How reasonable, and kind; and how perfectly unreasonable to refuse to accept gladly and thankfully this generous offer.

J. R. M.

A Meditation.

We see that love is the great centre of creation, visible and invisible; it is the principle of unity between spirit and matter—the organizing principle through all space. As long as love casts the deciding vote, all the measures of the devil will be defeated. Our faculties and passions will become organized, and will work righteousness by the power of attraction. True love to God and each other makes the great gulf between us and the world. Love is not the product of human nature, but the special gift of God to man; it constitutes the great distinction between the sons of God and the sons of men.

God is dual; so is man. But the devil is singular; therefore he cannot love, for love implies duality, or a twofold reciprocal life; it involves a negative as well as a positive action; and this we see in God and ourselves. 'God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness.' The primary object of God in creating man appears to be this: that man on the one hand should love him supremely, and, on the other hand, he made man that he might love him himself. Hence, we see the object

of our *existence*, which is to *love and be loved*. Every thing that contradicts this fact, however plausible or like truth it may appear, is false. All must sometime come under this yoke of Christ, which he and we also declare to be easy, and its burden light; or be cast into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

God makes all creation contribute to our happiness; nothing is wanting to make our home pleasant and comfortable. In looking at the external, we cannot but exclaim, if the creature is so beautiful, what must be the Creator? And yet he is with us all the time. Our body is his temple. He walks, talks, eats and drinks with us, and we with him, and he is the spring of all our joys. Over our head he has stretched the blue curtain of heaven, adorned with the sun, moon and stars to give us light; under our feet is spread a beautiful green carpet, variegated with flowers. The endless variety and quality of trees supply us with fruit that is pleasing to the taste, satisfying and blessing the body and soul. The birds give forth their cheerful songs, and join with all nature in praising the Lord, 'who is good, and whose loving kindness endureth through all generations.'

G. MALLORY.

CRITICISM.

[SELECTIONS FROM REPORTS FURNISHED BY OUR SYSTEM OF CRITICISM.]

CHRIST IN THE PLACE OF DEATH.

Mr. T. allows his business and his obligations to his family to take the place of his obligations to God and the church. By this course, he is a weight upon the church, instead of being a helper to it. He pleads want of courage

to pursue an independent course, being evidently in bondage to a sense of worldly honor and human obligations. They criticise men in the army for unsoldierlike behavior. This does not suppose them guilty of what would be called bad behavior, but want of bravery. We must be patient with folks who have not been bred to a soldier life; but we must train them to a soldier spirit as fast as possible. One of the generals in the French Revolution, on finding that some of his soldiers, who were quite enthusiastic at first, were frightened and disposed to wheel about at the enemy's fire, rushed among them, exclaiming, 'Damn you, do you expect to live forever?' It was the very business of these soldiers to be ready to die; they had voluntarily placed themselves in circumstances where they expected some would be killed, and it was absurd in them to turn and run when some *were* killed. And we might with propriety ask T.,—'Do you expect to live forever?' We believe in Christ crucified, and take Christ in the place of death, and, as far as worldly interests are concerned, we are dying men all the time. We are in a spot that a man is who is making his will, and we are called to stay there, not for a minute, but for a life-time, at least until the world is conquered. Paul lived there, and he was glad to, and he thought the wages good, and the sufferings not to be compared with the bounty that was to follow. We can have peace right there, and be sure of it, as an increasing and permanent thing, but in no other way. We shall have no success, no comfort in any other life, than that we get by losing our own life, and that is eternal life.

This way of salvation by Christ crucified ought to be popular with us; it

ought not to be looked upon as something odious, exacting and offensive. The fact is like this: we are in a ship that is sinking, and sure to go down; the waves are tossing, and we are in a frightful and dangerous position. A man comes out from the shore in a boat, and calls all hands on board to get down into his boat, and save themselves with him. They are afraid; they see great perils and labor in the way of getting ashore, and the proposition looks odious to them. But they ought to consider the other alternative of staying where they are, with good sense enough to know that the ship is going down; and they will find that this position requires more fortitude than the other. To get into the boat, as compared to staying on the ship, is safe, eligible, and ought to be popular.

Christ crucified calls on us to surrender ourselves to God—calls on all that belongs to self to die, and give place to God's life, and let that be the soul of our life, and act itself out in us. Do you say that it is odious to suffer the loss of all things? But all have got to suffer this loss sooner or later, and the difference between you and others is, that they are going on without any foresight or favorable proposal, while you are invited to go on in advance, and do what is necessary in order to be saved; you can make the inevitable hazard (if it must be called so) by daylight, while they go forward to the loss of all things in the blackest circumstances. The loss of all things is before them, as well as you; but you know it in season to make the best of it, while they put off the knowledge of it till all is lost, and their condition is ten times worse than yours can be now.

It is a universal law that all life which has not God's life as the soul of it, must

die. It is a law as inevitable as the law of vegetation. A plant may grow a few seasons, but in the very nature of things its life is limited; it must die. This is a law that is universal and inevitable, and God himself cannot alter it in regard to life that is not grafted on to him. For this reason: any form of life, either human, or animal, or vegetable, that would thrive and grow and be successful without the life of God, would absorb all things to itself; it would go on till it dethroned all other life, even God himself. Herein lies the inevitable necessity that all life outside of God should lose all things.

The salvation that is offered by Christ is a proposal to save us, in the way of opening an escape consistent with this inevitable law. The operation has commenced by our taking into our life another life that is immortal. That can only be done by our recognizing ourselves as secondary beings, made for God's pleasure—not primary beings made for our own pleasure; and we can only realize that we are secondary beings, and rejoice in it, but by suffering the loss of all things. The whole process of grafting is one of reducing us to a secondary position. God does not willingly afflict us; he only inflicts punishment enough to reduce us to this position; there will be no more suffering after that; and until this is done it is mercy in him to make us suffer. His proposal is this: if you choose to be a vegetable or a beast, and die as they do, go on and meet your fate; it will come as sure as the sun rises; and if it will be any alleviation of it, it may come in a fashionable way, as Gen. Taylor's has. He has just suffered the loss of all things. We should have had war and bloodshed if any body of men or system of truth

had come up and demanded his wife and property, yet he has lost it all in five days. He has had to meet the universal law that demands the loss of all outside life, i. e. life that has no immortality in it; and we know not what is beyond in his history, but we know that he will have to suffer even in Hades, until he is grafted into God. God says, You can take your choice: if you choose to go with the multitude to do evil, do so, your fate is sure. But you have the offer to go in an unfashionable way. 'Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it.' I say this should be popular, and we should account it a mercy and a blessing, instead of a necessity, to accept the loss of all things in advance, in a way that will graft us on to eternal life.

The two alternatives are expressed in this way:—If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.' The original meaning of the word mortify, is to put to death. If we through the spirit put to death the workings of bodily life, that is, of individual life,—life that has not received God into it; if we through the spirit put *that* life to death, we shall live. That life has got to be put to death in one way or other, and we may go on and try to save it as long as we can, yet at last it must die, as the beasts, or the vegetables, or as Pres. Taylor died. If we persist in the theory that this life is savable, and so resist the inevitable law until the last, then death will come at last in the face of our wishes and will in the matter. But if we recognize the true theory in the matter, and consent to the operation, and go through it handsomely, we live. There is where

we come into union with God, who is immortal; and the process there begun of seeking life through the spirit, and putting the body to death, can go on a point where we enjoy all the happiness of God.

'If the spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you.' The two things go together; resurrection follows death. The spirit puts to death the corrupt life, and in doing so it gets possession of our bodies. 'If ye through the *spirit* mortify the deeds of the flesh;' it does no good to mortify the body in any other way than through the spirit. It is said of Christ, that 'through the eternal spirit, he offered himself to God;' i. e. by the power of the eternal spirit his spirit brought his body and offered it on the cross, and put to death the deeds of the body. Our spirits must effectually put our bodies to death, i. e. they must put the workings of all that life which is beastly to death. It does not follow, necessarily, that our bodies will have to be dissolved. But the will and life of the body has got to be crucified by our spirits, and when that process is perfected there will be no occasion for the dissolution of our bodies. Our bodies are good in themselves considered; it is only the will and spirit in them that must be crucified.

We never get out of difficulty except by a twofold process: first we are reduced to brokenness of heart, then rises the heroism of Christ. Suffering induces brokenness of heart, softness, fluidity, so that God can flow in; then, in that reduced, fluid state, the spirit of the cross rises. That is the spirit of true heroism. Then the interior gets the lead of the exterior at all hazards, and we are ready for desperate measures.

It has been said, that "common souls pay with what they do; nobler souls with that which they are." And why? Because a profound nature awakens in us by its actions and words, by its very looks and manners, the same power and beauty that a gallery of sculpture, or of pictures, addresses.—*Emerson.*

THE FREE CHURCH CIRCULAR.

GEORGE W. NOYES, EDITOR.

ONEIDA RESERVE, AUGUST 2, 1850.

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

Our Books in New York.

In connection with the work of publication, which we see before us, it has always seemed important that a depot for our printed matter should be established in or near the city of New York. We are able to announce that this object is now substantially attained. For the present, all the publications of the Community may be obtained in South Brooklyn, near the South Ferry, No. 41, Willow Place. The Second Annual Report of the Association is also for sale by Fowlers & Wells, Nassau St., N. Y.

☞ Sixteen years ago, at the time of the revival period, the spirit of Orthodoxy was manifestly triumphant. Since then Universalism has been gaining ground, and Orthodoxy has not been able to cope with it successfully; for it had rejected its deliverer in the doctrine of perfect holiness, and could not avail itself of the truth on the subject of the origin of evil. Such men as Joshua Leavitt, the Tappans, and a host of others, succumbed to the soft, 'sugary benevolence,' which is the essence of Universalism and Unitarianism. This spirit of Universalism has now received a signal rebuke in the case of Dr. Webster. In him was developed the fruits of that system of which Harvard College is the centre. And the almost unanimous decision of the Court, Governor, and Council, for the execution of the extreme penalty of the law, indicates the revival of the old Puritanical love of God's justice, which was the fountain of Orthodoxy. ¶

Home-Talks.—Repose.

It is a peculiarity of the Home-Talks, generally, that they come just in the right time. Whether it is true with friends abroad or not we cannot tell; but here they succeed each other in an order exactly adapted to our state of preparation. Though novel and striking, yet the truth they present is never foreign or far in advance of our existing wants. They oftener seem simply to give maturity and the birth of expression to experience that was already latent and laboring in the heart of the Community. Thus they always produce an effect. The door which they open to us is filled, and what was at first a matter of study and hope, becomes afterwards better understood as a clear and full statement of things we have realized.

The first article of the present paper on Repose of Character is instructive, sounding one of the lowest depths of experience. The tendency of all our discipline of late, has been towards the result indicated in that discourse. We can at least appreciate the idea of Repose, and may take this presentation of it as the signal for moving into its full attainment.

It is an inward condition that may well be striven for. We conceive of it as the consummation of the spiritual man. It is a state of perfect attention to God. The great obstruction to this state of attention consists in the atheistic, unorganized action of our passional nature. Every separate passion needs to be converted to the knowledge and love of God, as much as there needs a conversion of the moral nature. The mistake of the old church was in being contented with the primary, partial conversion, which brought the moral man only into a state of worship, while the passions were overlooked, or for the time put to sleep. But there was no security in this; there was, on the other hand, a certainty of life-long double-mindedness and defeat. With us, that work of conversion is carried through the whole nature. By the coercion of suffering, by the conviction of reason, and finally by the omnipotent charm of God, every thirst and passion is made to bow and take in the light and life of his presence. So he has our whole attention,—the passions

are organized into one chorus of harmonious worship, and the miserable train of godless wants and loves and burdens and responsibilities that oppress the heart, give place to undisturbable repose.

We have spoken of the conversion of the affections in general, which forms the condition of repose. It is an important suggestion of the Home-Talk that a *hankering for action* is the generic and inclusive term of all the other passions. It is the last-reached evil—the ultimate pole of the uncivilized character.

An additional word may be said of the influence of this attainment, as it regards action itself, and energy of character.—If the idea of *repose* seems to the ordinary mind inconsistent with vigorous exertion and accomplishment, it is because persons have no proper conception of the thing spoken of. To us it seems identical with the perfection of energy, and success in execution. The stillness of a thunder cloud is no evidence of imbecility there. So of the forces in human nature; the lions are tamed, but they are set free. Their gnawing, suppressed savagery is converted into beneficent, uncaged strength. And vastly more than this, they unite in the enthusiasm of loyalty, and are in a position to receive the inspiration and blessing of a loyal universe. No man knows what he is capable of until he has gained the conscious repose which waits on inspiration.

Doubters and Doers.

The following note was handed in to be read at our meeting a few evenings since. The writer, who lives in Canada, was introduced to our views and acquaintance through Mr. De Latre, and is now on a visit here:

TO THE ONEIDA RESERVE ASSOCIATION:—

I am fully satisfied that this Association is the beginning of God's kingdom on earth, and that Mr. John H. Noyes is appointed of God as its rightful leader. I have read your publications and Reports, and am satisfied that they are God's truth. I have confessed Jesus Christ before the world, and I now confess him before you all, as my Savior from sin, my life, and resurrection.

Sincerely believing this, makes me wish

to be one of you, if you will receive me as a member of your Association. I shall hold myself at your disposal, and shall be willing to remain in Canada, or here, as you may think best. I am in good circumstances in the world, and clear of debt. I consider myself, with all I have acquired in the world, as belonging to God. I acknowledge God as the rightful owner of all things. I wish to give my thanks to the Community for the kind reception and brotherly feeling I have met with since I have been here. My bodily, as well as my spiritual health, has been improved, which I attribute to the good spirit around me, and the power of God in the Association. CHARLES ELLIS.

Oneida Reserve, July 26, 1805.

¶ We employ the above simply as an introduction to some remarks, which are demanded at this time, on the position of the Community, and its relations to believers abroad.

A good many Perfectionists have stood, up to the present time, in an attitude of observation, interested in our progress, and desirous of the fellowship and approbation of the Community, but who have yet thought it a risky business to identify their outward interests with ours, by merging their property in the common stock. While they have wished us well, and believed with more or less sincerity in our principles, it has yet been a question whether they should or should not sometime devote themselves and their possessions to the cause which we claim, and which they have consented, is the Kingdom of God. And while debating the question, it has been assumed, more or less consciously, that whenever they took such a step, it would be a commendable act of sacrifice and self-denial, which would merit the profound obligations of those who are already committed.

We have no particular objections to persons standing in this attitude—that is just as they can afford. But it is right that we should apprise them of the attitude of this Community, which has naturally somewhat changed with the increase of faith and the progress of events. What at first seemed

like recklessness and a plunge in the dark, as to outward interests, is fast proving to have been the wisdom and economy of faith; and if it still requires heroism to join the enterprise, and forsake all for the kingdom of God, that heroism finds its own ample reward in the act, and confers no special obligation on God or on his people. Clearly, in our minds, the risk is getting shifted round the other way. If there ever was an appearance of hazard in our connection, that hazard is now doubly impending over the world. Isolation and selfishness, in this day, are marks for judgment, and furnish the field on which death and destruction are rioting all around us. And every argument of reason and observation teaches that this state of things will go on till there will be no outward comfort, or safety even, except in the protection of God. We are glad to have accepted this protection, and consider it cheaply secured by simple abandonment to him, without reserve or conditions. Whoever comes into sympathy and connection with the Community must of course assume the same ground.

All that is necessary is that the situation of things and of parties be sincerely estimated, and a great deal of anxious and useless thought may be saved. The simple issue is, Has the day of Judgment and the Kingdom of Heaven commenced?—and is the community of believers the representative and exponent of those facts? We beg of all to discard any idea open or secret, that they can confer a special favor at this time, by entering into full partnership, and investing their interests with the community. Such a feeling neither does justice to our position, nor to their own. We are glad of such partnership and co-operation in the business of publishing the free gospel; but after all, the weight of favor leans toward those who are invited to the work. It is a mercy that God has provided a safe place for the deposit of our interests—that he offers us refuge from the tempest-driven world in a commonwealth of Christian hearts. It is a favor that he offers to help us out of the darkness, narrow-mindedness, and idolatrous poverty which belong to exclusive possessions.

We wished to set this matter right now,

because a little misunderstanding on this point would have been quite natural heretofore, and is probably sticking to some of our friends yet. If they look at the matter in the light of simple sincerity, they will see that the position taken is the only possible one, and their reason will be freed from the bewildering influence of mercenary and doubtful questions.

An Evening at Brooklyn.

REMARKS BY MR. N.

There is a quality in certain characters which I cannot express in any better way than to call it *narrow-mindedness*. A something which is an obstruction to intellectual progress, and thereby to spiritual progress. In their thoughts on this matter persons are apt to confound things which essentially differ. An *ignorant* person is not necessarily a narrow-minded person. A child does not *know* but little, but that child would not therefore be narrow-minded, because its ignorance would not be an obstruction in the way of its knowing more. What I call narrow-mindedness or liberal-mindedness does not lie in the amount of knowledge a person has, but in *their state with relation to knowledge*, i. e., in their state of liberty or bondage with regard to what they know. A person who is as wise as Solomon, or as the wisest philosophers of modern times, might yet be a narrow-minded person. On the other hand, a child who has just begun to learn might be a liberal-minded person. The amount of knowledge or ignorance in the case does not measure the quality I am speaking of.

It seems to me a narrow-minded person is one who has come to a stand-still in respect to progress in knowledge of truth. Some obstruction has arisen in his mind, so that he is not free to go on

and learn. No matter how the obstruction came—perhaps it came by the person's having learned so much that he became puffed up, and wise in his own conceit, and so ceased to learn. This is one way by which the proper child-like action of the mind toward truth may cease. Again, a person may connect himself with a church or sect which has a fixed doctrine or belief, and so identify himself with a system that he is not in a condition to meet the questions that come up from time to time in collision with that system. The action of his mind has ceased in that direction, and the range of his thought is obstructed. A person may identify himself with public opinion in such a way as to obstruct his mind. He may have liberty in one direction—for instance, he may be free in his inquiries and understanding of physical science—while there may be a total obstruction in his mind in regard to spiritual science: but whether the obstruction is total or partial, if the man's mind is not free to go forth in all directions in a childlike spirit of inquiry, he is a narrow-minded person.

I suppose egotism in some form is the universal cause of narrow-mindedness. Egotism, that is, self-esteem, shuts us off from a knowledge of ourselves; it shuts us off from an examination of the truth that is most important to us, i. e. a knowledge of human nature; for if we are unacquainted with the inner machinery of our nature, there is a positive obstruction to the progress of truth in us. If self-esteem has got possession of us, and works in us so as to keep us from discovering our imperfections, then we love ourselves better than we love the truth, and the door of truth in a very important direction is closed against us

—an obstruction has arisen which holds us in a narrow-minded state. This seems to me an exact idea of narrow-mindedness. I might go on and enumerate many other causes which prevent the free action of the mind. Perhaps a person has been brought up in a way in which the body has been educated chiefly—there has been an over-action of the animal, and too little cultivation of the intellectual, which makes it irksome to the person to go into a manly exercise of mind on any subject. His mind is weak and feeble, instead of being firm and strong; this is doubtless one cause of limitation and obstruction which makes persons narrow-minded.

What is the opposite of a narrow-minded state? I have said that it is possible for one to know a great deal, and yet be narrow-minded if he has come to a stand-still. The opposite of this state is one in which a man's mind is free to act in all directions. His mind is in a state of docility and inquiry and activity, without any fixed system of thought to obstruct. Such a person is free from the binding of any sect or society, free from the binding of public opinion, free from the binding of egotism and animalism, and is on good terms with the universe of truth, and open to it. One who is in that state, whether he knows more or less, is in conjunction with the universe of truth, and is as good as omniscient; for he is in a state of progress without end.

There is no such thing as a state of mind like this, without the spirit of God. The spirit of truth, which is the essence of universal truth, is the only influence which can really hold the mind in a state of liberty, inquiry and progress. The spirit of truth is of course the wisest of all spirits; there is universal

knowledge in it; yet doubtless it has more fellowship with the mind of a little child than with any other class of minds. A little child has not learned enough to feel wise: he feels that he has all things to learn; he is docile and inquiring; curiosity is the very element of his existence. That childlike state is in direct opposition to narrow-mindedness, and in perfect fellowship with the spirit of truth. No natural child, however offers more than an approximation to the true thing; but it is the best illustration we have. The child's mind is not a perfect specimen, because, altho' unobstructed, yet it is feeble and inactive. It is required of a liberal mind not only to be free, but to be active and powerful; and that is only attained by fellowship with the spirit of truth.

To be simple-minded is the opposite of narrow-minded. Persons generally confound the two. Many persons seem to think that simplicity consists in the absence of knowledge; they do not imagine that one who is in a state of simplicity may be also in the highest state of progress. But the opposite of the common idea is true. A person who should check the action of his mind, and content himself with his past attention to knowledge, and thus come to a stand-still, would show that he was self-conceited, and really more puffed up with knowledge than one who knew a great deal more, but was still pressing on. I seriously believe that I have a more humble estimation of my own attainments than — has of her's, and am less contented with what I know than she is with what she knows. I have more fellowship with the mind of a little child than she; that is to say, I am more simple minded, more free from self-conceit, more free from the idea that

I am wise, and consequently less puffed up. Because, however much I know, I have got no fence around it, but see infinite expanses of knowledge beyond, and that reduces my present knowledge to a small point. Let a person put a high fence around what he knows, be it ever so little, and it will be all the world to him. A simple-minded person is, as was said before, on good terms with the universe of truth: he has not conquered a little territory which he calls his own, which he appropriates and rests satisfied with; but he counts all truth as the property of God, and seeks after it as after his daily food. I know that I do not feel any repugnance to ignorance in itself considered; there is no repugnance in me to lack of science and wisdom; there is nothing in me that feels above that state, nor any difficulty of fellowship with persons on account of that lack. But there is in me a very rigorous repugnance to what I have defined as a narrow-minded state—a stand-still state—a state in which one has lost the simplicity which makes him love to enter the field of inquiry. I cannot help an aversion to this state, for it is death to me. My aversion is not to the poverty and ignorance of the state, but to the dead condition which induces it. I hate it, because it puts the mind not only in a condition of ignorance now, but in a state to perpetually renew that ignorance. However ignorant a mind may be now, if it is a state not to remain ignorant, but is going right on in the expanse of God's truth, that mind is sweet and good, and I have fellowship with it, however impoverished it may be.

Mr. M.—It is not the amount of money a man has which gives him the most pleasure, but the amount he is getting. Men who have a spirit of

enterprise are better members of society than those who have retired from business, and are living on their capital, producing nothing. What is true in this outward sphere is also true of a spiritual man. A state that puts a man in the condition of a learner, in which he is constantly finding out new truth, pleases and edifies himself, and all whom he comes in contact with.

Mr. N.—A person who has ever so much money, if he has stopped business and is living on his capital, is really poor; because in reality all things belong to him as a son of God, and whatever amount of private fortune a man may have, it is a small affair compared with what he might enjoy if he had the faculty of progression.

Mr. H.—The idea of the fence is a good one. The universe is full of truth, open to all. On the subject of love, for instance, we have learned new truth, but it will not do to surround it with a fence, and think we have got the whole.

Mr. N.—Yet we will not say it is necessary in order to be liberal minded, that we should get into a spirit that is drifting about like P——, ‘ever learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth.’ No; we will have a clear, fixed distinction between falsehood and truth, together with a spirit of progress. In reference to love, for instance, we have made great advances on the world—have greatly extended our views, and, in comparison with the world around us, we are liberal-minded; but if we should shut the door now, and fence in the truth that we have gained, and say there is nothing more to be learned, then I should say that we are as narrow-minded as the world around us. But because there is a great deal more to learn, it is not necessary

that we should stand in the state of mind where we distrust what we know now. If we have sought truth honestly, we may be sure that what we have is good, and will not be altered; but there is room for more on the same subject. So we will be free to hold on to what we have, and go on in all directions. To assume that we have attained all the truth on that or any other subject, is a proof of narrow-mindedness.

The importance of this subject lies here: we are going to be saved by fellowship with the spirit of truth; and we cannot have fellowship with that spirit, if we are in a narrow-minded state. Ignorance alone is not a barrier to fellowship with that spirit, but a fixed contraction of mind on any subject is a great barrier. All that the spirit of truth can have to do with us, if we are narrow minded, is to criticise us and break it up, and get us into a state where he can lead us forth into the green pastures of God, easily and comfortably, and not have to fight with us every time he attempts to start a new idea in us. He will not live with us if we are in a state in which, instead of going along quietly with him, he has to take us up and lug us along every step. If we are in a condition where the spirit of truth finds it difficult to deal with us, it will have to employ its strength in breaking up that difficulty.

Mr. T.—Some time ago my mind was in a fruitful state, which was a great delight to me; but of late, I have found an obstruction in me, which I could not account for. I feel barren.

Mr. N.—It is very important that we should have faith, and believe that we can look into ourselves, and see what is the cause of our being narrow-minded.

Mr. I.—My difficulty seems to arise

from an over-action of the body. I have a taste for mental cultivation, but I realize the fact that by exercising any part of the physical system, the part thus used becomes strong, and its action becomes easy and natural to us; if we neglect any part it becomes weak. I find this is true with regard to my whole system. My body is strong, but my mind is weak. I cannot apply my mind to study as readily as I can my body to work. I find it difficult to manage my mind, because I have devoted more energy to bodily than to mental exercise.

Mr. H. spoke of want of memory. He said that he was satisfied that the spirit of truth was the remedy. He did not regard with the veneration he used to the old Phrenological process of strengthening the memory. He rested on what Christ said, 'He, the spirit of truth, shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.' If one's heart is fully open to the spirit of truth it will make him prolific in every part of his nature. He will grow up a great deal faster than under the old system.

Mr. N.—That is a true view of the case. *Mr. I.*—need not settle down into a discouraged state, because the physical has more energy than the mental part of his nature. If he has come into a beginning of the knowledge of God, there is a new force at work in him that will get ahead of the animalizing process, and make the interior more fruitful than the exterior. It is a force that asks no favors of circumstances, and if fairly tested and trusted will make to itself circumstances, and certainly invert the whole nature; it will make the spiritual and intellectual predominant over the animal, and that is

salvation. Salvation comes by grace and not by works.

Mr. H.—The idea has come home to me with great satisfaction, that the spirit of truth never forgets any thing. I would rather come into fellowship with that spirit than to have the most strong and tenacious memory.

Mrs. N.—*Mr. L.* said once when we were talking on this subject, that the old system of memory obliged us to carry about with us all the time a heap of baggage, whereas if we depended upon the spirit of truth, what we wanted would be brought to our minds just in the right time.

Ms. N.—'Knowledge shall vanish away.' But the simplicity of mind which puts us in communication with the spirit of truth shall never pass away. I suppose the most perfect state is that in which a man knows nothing in the way of appropriating knowledge; a state in which a man has no memory, but God's omniscience is open to him, and takes the place of memory: so that it would be said of him 'ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.' In one sense the man knows nothing, that is, in an exclusive, appropriating sense; but putting the omniscience of God into him, he knows all things; and that is just as good as though he had studied and laid it all up. That is the way that knowledge shall vanish away, and no other way. A wise man who has got a great mass of knowledge appropriated as his own, is to be thought of like the caricatures we sometimes see of a great head, as big as a pitcher, on little miniature bodies and legs.

Mr. I. described Rev. Dr. Cox's great powers of memory. Dr. Cox said that Dr. Johnson insisted that a man

must be willing to give the most dogged application to the cultivation of his memory. Mr. I. spoke of this as discouraging to those who had no leisure for such a process.

Mr. N.—I don't care any thing about memory; the question is not, how much money have you got, but how much capability of making money is there in you? that's your wealth. Simplicity of mind, fellowship with God, is your capital for making money. If you attain full and clear fellowship with the spirit of God, you have got access to the wealth of the universe; you have more truth open to you than any isolated memory can ever hold.

Mr. H.—I had a new view of obstructions to Jay; instead of being discouraged by them, I see that they are of service to me. It seems to me that the spirit of truth goes as far as it can in me till it comes to something that obstructs, and as it were dams it up. I then find myself shut up to faith, and the result is I rise above the obstruction, and get more acquainted with the spirit of truth than ever.

Mr. N.—The idea would be that the spirit of truth is an active force, and if it meets an obstruction it accumulates. For instance, if you dam up a stream of water the channel below will be dry, but the water is accumulating above, and when the dam gives way it will appear that there was just as much force acting all the time. So the spirit of truth will go on with us till it meets an obstruction, and then it will turn all its strength to stirring us up to have the obstruction removed; and however long the process may be, the exertion of removing it is worth more to us than any progress we can make in a more ostensible way. Obstructions fairly surmounted are real

advantages to us. This is the way it works with me. The higher the obstructions rise, the higher my courage rises; It nerves me, like a trumpet to the wars. I say to myself, now here is a chance to try faith; a new chance to see what God can do. [Read the article on 'Graduated Obstructions,' Sp. Mag. Vol. 2, p. 169.]

Confessions.

MR. EDITOR:—Through the medium of your paper, I wish to make a full confession of Christ to the world, and to the Community. About eighteen months ago I began to read the Berean and other works edited by John H. Noyes. The doctrines therein propounded recommended themselves to me as truth—truth that bore the impress of God's seal. From that time to this I have lingered and halted, while Christ was knocking at the door of my heart,—refusing him admittance, while the devil was supping within. My mind, during the mean time, has been in a complete state of dissatisfaction with myself and the world. But the time has now come for me to decide between life and death—to accept Christ, who is life eternal, or reject him, which is damnation forever. I feel willing in the face of the world to confess Christ a perfect Savior from all sin, trusting him for sincerity of faith, and believing that in him alone I shall find perfect salvation.

CHAUNCEY HAMILTON.

Syracuse, July 29, 1850.

MR. EDITOR:—Having been a member of the Oneida Association for more than a year, and having never yet made a public confession of Christ before the world, I would take this opportunity to do so. I was formerly considered what is called a 'hard case' in the world.—But through the instrumentality of Mr. George Cragin, I was led to read the article in the Berean entitled 'Salvation from Sin;' and, after a struggle of two or three months, I found peace by

uniting myself to the doctrine by faith. I now confess Christ in me a whole Savior from sin. I wish also to express my confidence in this Association and its principles. I believe it is the only true church of Christ on earth, and that John H. Noyes, its visible head and leader, is a man who is led by the spirit of God.

G. W. HAMILTON.

Oneida Reserve, July 29, 1850.

I write these lines for the purpose of confessing Christ in me a savior from all sin. I have long witheld a confession, 'waiting for sight and supper before opening the door,' and thinking to shun the reproaches of the world by so doing. I will do it no longer. I am willing that the world should know my position, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." I am in sympathy with Mr. Noyes and the Oneida church, believing it to be the commencement of the Kingdom of God on earth, which shall break in pieces and destroy all other kingdoms. I wish to become identified with you, and united to Christ as the branch is to the vine. Yours in the love of the truth,

ALMIRA KENT.

Belchertown, July 26, 1850.

Letter from Oneida.

Oneida, July 3, 1850.

DEAR S.—The great lesson which we are learning here at present, and which God is manifestly urging us to more and more as an Association, is, to *know the mind of God, and walk in the Spirit*, in all our movements, whether in business or in our social intercourse. And our faith is growing stronger, that this is not an impracticable nor a hard thing, for those who will be *sincere*. God is ready to give us the knowledge of his will, and to direct and prosper us, if we will wait on him, and in all our ways acknowledge him. Some interesting facts and remarks were brought out in our meeting last evening, by persons engaged in the different departments of

business—facts trifling by themselves, yet important as showing God's purpose to learn us to walk in the Spirit. The men had found, in different kinds of work, that when they got into a hurrying, worldly spirit, hardly any thing would go right—they did not have 'good luck.' They would hurt themselves some way; or their tools or machinery would get broken, &c. But when they turned their minds toward God, in a spirit of quietness and faith, and went to work: in his inspiration, every thing went on well and pleasantly; good luck and freedom from ill accidents attended them. Is not this encouraging to faith?

J. L. S.

☞ The late storm appears to have been very destructive through a large section of the country, and on the seacoast. We experienced but a trifling injury from the overflowing of our meadows by the Creek. We have the following in a letter from Brooklyn:—

'The fine, fast-sailing sloop, Rebecca Ford, arrived in port Sunday morning. Her gullant captain and crew gave a thrilling account of the incidents which befell them during the late tremendous gale. Suffice it to say, for the present, (until Lieut. Waters makes a full report,) that the sloop weathered the storm triumphantly, sustaining no injury, and all hands returned in fine health and spirits. Most luckily Mr. Miller, one of the crew, who was attacked with symptoms of cholera, was put ashore with Mr. Hamilton at Poughkeepsie just before the storm commenced. Mr. M. and Mr. H. arrived safely in a few hours by railroad. Three cheers for the Rebecca Ford. Captain Smith is evidently a 'man of luck.'

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☞ Letters may be addressed to 'Editor of Free Church Circular, Oneida Castle, N. Y.'

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