

THE

FREE CHURCH CIRCULAR.

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The Truth shall make you Free.—John 8: 32.

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except vol 4 p. 257-8

VOL. III.] ONEIDA RESERVE, JANUARY 28, 1850. [NO. I.

[It may be proper to remind our readers that the articles under the head of 'Home-Talk,' are not elaborate discourses, premeditated and written by J. H. N., but are extemporaneous, conversational lectures, thrown out by him from time to time in the freedom of the family circle, hastily, and in many cases imperfectly sketched, partly from notes, and partly from memory, by unpractised Reporters. The object of this suggestion is not to excuse the discourses, (for if they were in need of serious excuse the publication of them would be inexcusable,) but to make known the exact truth about them, that they may pass for just what they are worth.]

Home-Talk by J. H. N.—No. 27.

[REPORTED FOR THE CIRCULAR.]

QUENCHING THE SPIRIT.

It is important that we get a true idea of the thing intended in the expression, '*Quench not the Spirit.*' We must learn how to favor the action of God's spirit on the one hand, and how to put an end to the action of the devil's spirit on the other. That exhortation can be turned round against the devil. We say in reference to God, Quench not the spirit; so we will say of the devil, Quench the spirit; and the same kind of action is concerned in one case as the other. Both forms of the action are expressed by the passage in James: 'Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.'

Quench not the spirit of God, but

when it kindles a fire in us, blow it up into a flame; give it vent and circulation, and thus draw nigh to God. So when the devil kindles a fire in us, take means to put it out; quench it, and he will flee. Our salvation lies right there, in getting away from the devil and nigh to God; and it is all-important to know how to deal rightly with the beginnings of their opposite action in us. That expression, Quench not the spirit, implies that the spirit of God is an element something like fire, which can kindle in our spirits, beginning like a spark, hardly noticeable at first, and spreading into a fire that cannot be quenched. I exhort you to nurse this fire, keep it from smothering, let it have free action, and it will go on and burn out all that is opposed to it. Then on the other side, the devil's spirit, which is a spirit of sin, mischief and selfishness, is of the same active nature. It is like a fire, which if once kindled will spread and make hell for us if it is not quenched. Our business is to quench and smother it at the beginning, as soon as possible.

We know from abundant experience that such is the nature of spirits, good or evil. They are a spreading, pervading power like fire, and whenever one of their sparks gets place in us, its ten-

dency is, whether good or evil, to get unlimited possession, consume all opposed to it, and reduce all to identity with itself, as fire reduces all that is put into it. I think this is a very important and valuable definition of the meaning involved in that expression, *quench* not the spirit, which it will do us good to meditate upon, and which all our experience confirms. How many times have we gone through such a process as has been described. A mere thought, which proves to be the devil's fire, by not being quenched and resisted, gets us into horrible trouble. So, it is true on the other side, when a spark of heaven's fire lights in us, if it is nursed and has fair play, it will go on till it envelops us in a glow of eternal life. The spirit of God is not something which we are laboriously to draw into ourselves, like taking in wood or water; but it is an element which, if we do not smother it, will take care of itself. If you get a fire started in a body of fuel, you do not have to watch it. If you do not smother it, it will take care of itself, and get control of the fuel it works in, by a very natural process. What we have got to learn if we would be good spiritualists, is, how to nurse and kindle a fire, and how to put one out. It is something of an art to make a fire, especially a coal fire; and in case of a wood fire it is well worth while to know how to do it scientifically, beginning with shavings and proceeding to a large fire. On the other hand, it is a very important art, at least in cities, to know how to put out fire. And it is just as important in spiritual experience to know how to make and put out fire. We have to do with hell-fire and heaven-fire; the one must be made and the other put out, if we would be saved.

Let us look at the matter in simplici-

ty, and see how people quench the spirit, and what kind of a process it is. If we can learn how not to quench the spirit of God, we shall learn how to quench the devil's fire, because it is simply reversing the first process. Whatever measures are taken not to quench the one, if reversed, will quench the other. The former then is the process that we need to learn, and then we are equipped for service.

These two fires are certainly antagonistic to each other, and so must be to each other as water. God's spirit will quench the devil's spirit, and the devil's spirit will quench God's spirit. But the great question with us is, what is our action in the case to be?

The heaven-fire or spirit of God, kindles in our innermost, in the most refined part of our nature, in the place where honesty and faithfulness of self-examination, and desire of improvement have quarter. It is an excitement. The flame of God's spirit excites first of all, our ambition of improvement, the nobleness and heroism of our hearts, those things which make us generous and self-sacrificing, and chivalrous for truth. What there is in us of that character, is shavings to the spirit of truth, where it kindles. On the other hand, the fire of hell finds its fuel in the sensual part of our natures, in the love of the world in all its forms, love of food, or novel-reading, or any other sensual pleasure. That being the case, when the spirit of God is acting upon us inwardly, any thing that goes to bring on an excitement of the outward susceptibilities, goes to smother the fire of God. That is to say, for example, if God is knocking at the door of our hearts, trying to excite love of improvement, love of self-judgment and criticism, and so to bless

the inner man with heaven-fire, in such circumstances, for people to stuff themselves with food, and so kindle excitement in the outward nature, is to smother the fire of God. And in general, any voluntary exercise of the flesh, of the outward susceptibilities which lie round the love of the world, is to smother the spirit of God. It is quenching the life of God in the inner man, by burying it up under the exercise of the outer man. If people take to stuffing themselves, or to novel-reading, or to jaunting about, when God is trying to direct their attention to other things, they are taking the direct method to quench his spirit.

This principle has a wider sweep than can be made to appear from a single statement of it. Suppose the theory of heavenly association comes before a person's mind, and is whispering to their whole inner man; to all that part that is pure enough to ascend to God. He has sent that spirit to kindle a fire in their hearts. Now if against that fire persons rouse conscientiousness, which is in fact worldly in its character,—for it is a conscience created by an education in the world, and a worldly church,—it is just as much a rousing of their sensuality, as though they had roused it through their alimentiveness. And to go about raising objections, and searching the Bible for arguments against it, is just as sensual as to go into the buttery and stuff themselves with food. It is a more subtle, and therefore more dangerous way of exciting the outer against the inner man. Now we shall find out, when the day of judgment discovers all things, that the people of Putney were conscious that God was kindling a fire in their hearts. There were sparks enough of heaven's fire falling all around them, and God was showing

them a people that had a reverence for the truth, and were ready to sacrifice themselves for it. But they roused all their sensuality against it. They roused their conscientiousness, their amateness, their covetousness, and voluntarily stirred up all their selfish passions. They went to work with all the zeal, to excite themselves against the truth, that people used to get up in new-measure revivals. Or to come down to a still lower simile, they worked like men who wish to set two dogs to fighting, and who for that purpose, will rub their ears together and excite them to anger in every possible way. There was a great deal more conviction of the power of God, presented to those people, than they were willing to acknowledge—a great deal more than presented itself to outward eyes and ears. The fire of God was working in their hearts; and they had to do cruel violence to all that was noble in their characters—they did cruel violence to themselves, and to God to smother it. When Harriet Hall's case came before the public, there was a universal recognition throughout the town, of the power of God in that thing. Our most bitter enemies were unable to stand before it; the best they could do, was to take the position which one man did on the outskirts of the town, who said, 'Give glory to God: as for this man, we know that he is a sinner.' I know that at that time, a consciousness that God had come, floated through the town, which was unmistakeable. But they went to work with coarse brutality to quench it.

We have now seen how people quench the spirit of God. We have got that branch of the subject pretty fairly before us. The fire of God in us is like an excitement of our inner nature, and we can

quench it by getting up a counter excitement in our outward nature. A counter excitement smothers it, and draws off the consciousness. This is a principle recognized in medicine. If a man has an inward disease, the doctor puts a blister on the surface and gets up a counter excitement in another part. Life can be drawn from one part of the body to another by excitement; and if God is trying to get up an excitement in the inner man, you can draw away life from it by making a fire in your own sensual nature. Thus it comes down to the principle recognized by medical men, that the way to cure disease, is to get up a counter excitement.

If we have seen how the fire of heaven can be quenched, let us now see how it can be positively nursed and furthered in its operations. I should say in the first place, it would be helped by abstaining from the counteracting processes which have been described. But we want to know what to do positively to fan the flame. That is, we want to know how to increase the excitement of our inner nature when it begins. When God stirs up a hunger and thirst for righteousness, and all that part of our nature takes hold of heaven and truth, we want to know how to increase it and give the flame vent. Is not the solution of this to be found in that expression of Christ, *prayer and fasting*? Fasting is the abstaining from counteracting processes. Prayer is the positive action of the heart towards God. We may kindle the fire of God in our hearts, and further its operations, by paying attention to it seriously, and exciting our desires toward it. Will it and wish it to increase; pray that it may increase, and count it our salvation. When we discover a little kindling of the fire of God

in us, we have got hold of a rope which ends in heaven. Follow it up as far as possible, and voluntarily give yourselves up to it, with prayer to God, and exclude all things that go to quench it, such as fear of criticism or suffering. Come to it in a spirit of frankness that desires to know and be known; and render to it the sincerity of the heart.

The word of exhortation in my heart, in all such cases, is expressed in the homely phrase, '*Follow it up.*' If you feel a movement of the spirit of God in your heart, if you have a good sound idea—an idea that has got the element of faith and life in it, '*follow it up;*' and not count it a passing thing, that may come and go, but find out what it means. Take an illustration. You see on the surface of a ledge of rocks a glistening substance, which on examination proves to be gold. Follow it up: do not be content with simply taking off the outside scale. There is a vein there, and if you will take the trouble to knock off the rocks where you first saw it, and follow it up, you will find it runs into the bowels of the earth. So, if the spirit of God is touching you any where, the first consciousness of it is only the glistening scale of glory. '*FOLLOW IT UP.*' Be not content with the first scale, but keep your eye on it, and you will find that it runs back into the bosom of God. If you do not at the time find it easy to follow it up, form a purpose in your heart to do so at some future time. Say to yourself, There I see a vein; I have not the means of working it now, but I shall have. I will lie in wait. You will find if you take this position, that you will return to it days or weeks afterward with new interest and greater advantage. I have such veins all around me; some I work a little and some a

great deal. They never fail me, and I find wherever I have opened a vein, that there is a chance to follow it up, and get more gold. My word to you is, to refuse to forget the word of God in your hearts, but in all cases where it has begun, consider that it is a divine and immortal thing. It is not a thing to die and flash out, but is divine and immortal as God. Form a purpose never to forget it, but to follow it up as soon as you can.

There is an illustration in my own mind, with reference to this point. The subject of quenching the spirit came to my mind two days ago. I dug a little, but could not do much then. Yesterday I watched and found a little more, but nothing very satisfactory. To-night, I determined to follow it up and get all I could out of it. I said to myself, I see there is a vein, and I do not know whether I can break up the rocks or not, but I will try. Here is shown what I mean by actually nursing the spirit of God within us, favoring the operations of his spirit, instead of quenching it. In general, all working of the heart in favor of self-improvement, in favor of goodness and truth; all true action of the inner man, favors the flame of the spirit.

Now what remains is, to know how to reverse the process, so as to quench the devil's spirit. Here your true and plain way undoubtedly is, to produce a counter excitement, and draw off the consciousness and life from the part affected to some other part. Your *attention* is the *fuel*. Whatever gets your attention will keep the fire going. If the devil gets your attention, so that your blood and consciousness run in the part he is acting in, he sets all on fire. If your attention is turned away

from him toward God, his fuel is taken away, and the fire goes out. Opposite influences are excited—your attention is taken from the outer man, and turned toward the inner. Thus fire is set to fight fire.

How many diseases of the body have been cured in this way, by ignoring them and turning the attention away to spiritual things. I have cured all my diseases precisely so; by neglecting them and turning my attention to what God set before me to do—like Rodin, who gave himself to business, while his physicians were burning his breast with a hot iron. The disease in my throat would have killed me years ago, if I had not treated it thus. A fire has been kindled there twenty times, which would have burned me up, if I had let it. My throat was on fire last night; but I resolved I would not be disabled by it, and now it is well. Internal excitement cured it. Suppose a fire is going on in a pile of lumber and rubbish, and it is likely to set your house on fire—how would you put it out? You would go and pull away the stuff and scatter it; and the fire having nothing to work on would go out. Well, any excitement of mind that calls forth all the energy and vitality of your life towards it, scatters the material of disease. (Reference was here made to the article entitled, 'Immortality the Result of Obedience, Sp. Mag. Vol. 2, No. 2.')

We have shown how to quench fire by drawing off its natural supplies, and scattering the fuel; but there is also a positive action, by which we can do a great deal toward stamping it out. We can reverse the process that took place in Putney. *Unbelief* is the fire that is flung out against us, threatening to burn all before it. It shows itself in the va-

rious forms of egotism, selfishness, self-accusation, evil-thinking, and the like. That is the fire that is threatening us as individuals, and in our social capacity. Now Putney may instruct us in industrious, violent zeal. Unbelief comes out boasting against us and defying us; but we may boast to it that the God of Israel will deliver it into our hands. We may say to unbelief when it assails us in that way, 'You lie;—*Get out!*' That is like stamping fire under your feet. You will find if you watch yourself that there are a great many things that you can say and do to grieve the spirit of the devil in and around you. Watch, and find out what grieves him, and do it as much as you can, day by day. The proper use of as much ink as a fly could suck up, has at times dreadfully grieved the spirit of the devil. Certain small acts have a tremendous bearing. Mr. T. has taken the liberty to walk over here, to sit down comfortably with us, and enjoy himself—nothing very remarkable in that; but it grieved the devil, and I presume made a large sore spot in the city of N. * * * * * These little specimens show what can be done in the way of quenching the devil's fire. But we have got to have all the skill of firemen in it. We have got to have fire-engines, and hook and ladder companies; and learn to mount up and carry off burning materials. We must become able to go in and stamp out spreading flames. In short, each one has got to learn in his own experience how to put out fire.

I will conclude my discourse with remarks on the importance of confession of Christ. Testimony—confession—concentrates our consciousness on the truth confessed, and presents the truth which we confess to our minds, in a firmer fashion than can be while it is only a thought within us. And on the other hand, it presents truth to those around us in a condensed form, and gives execution to it. Our words rebound and increase the effect on our spirits. This is seen in the little, fact that a great

many persons do not understand what they read, unless they read aloud. The principle is a very simple one. The voice reacts on the mind, and gives double intensity to the idea. In multitudes of cases speech is the living birth of an idea. Men of business in crowded cities, are often noticed talking aloud to themselves. This is resorted to on the principle that there is so much clatter going that they cannot keep their minds steady to business unless they command their attention by an action of their bodies. Thus they counteract the clatter around them, and isolate themselves. In many ways confession of truth is a very important means of wounding and quenching the spirit of the devil. Speech is a very important engine to put out the devil's fire. We must learn to speak the truth against all feelings on the other side, and willfully confess Christ against the devil.

CRITICISM.

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

It is natural for Mrs. C. to make more account of *doing* than *being*—to serve God more with her body than her heart. We are all learning that nothing we have done or can do, commends us to God, only the fragrance of our spirits. Good actions reflect back upon the heart, and improve the quality of our *being*, and that is their chief value.

Those who have the natural faculty of *usefulness*, and a good deal of method and natural decorum, are apt to be self-righteous and censorious towards those whose value consists more in their social qualities. The power of making society lively and musical, or of refreshing others, by a sweet, gentle spirit, is often worth more than a great deal of industry with the hands. It is the temptation of the *doing* natures to feel like the brother of the prodigal, as if they deserved *the most*, and did not receive *so much* as some of their Father's children;

forgetting that God is better pleased with the unclaiming, child-like, meek spirit of those who know they have merited nothing by their works—who love most, because they have had most forgiveness. Our spirit is that part of us which touches God, and ministers to his pleasure, and attracts his fellowship. If Mrs C. would learn to appreciate character by this standard, and cultivate in herself the ornaments of our social nature, love, taste, sprightliness, &c., it would improve her very much. She has an excellent mind, and strong ambition to overcome the defects in her character. God has a fair chance to work in her—the soil will bear a great deal. She has that spirit of faithfulness and pur-suing zeal, which characterizes the company of believers to which she belonged,—a spirit which puts us entirely at rest about their ever failing or making troublesome delay on account of tribulation. God will put honor upon this spirit, and upon their faith.

The strong traits in Mrs. —'s character, are sincerity, earnestness, love of truth, and a community spirit—a serious determined spirit of improvement lying at the foundation of her life, and ensuring all possible good. But a hur-rying, bustling spirit, is evidently one of her temptations. Perhaps the greatest fault about her is, an undue sensitiveness to criticism and judgment, that makes her impatient with herself—impatient for improvement when she discovers defects in her character. It operates to make her desponding and ego-tistical in her thoughts, and hinders, rather than helps to effect a cure. There is such a thing as being over-anxious, as well as not anxious enough for im-provement; and we had better make sport of our faults than to get the dol-fuls over them. She might favor God's discipline, if she would consider that he requires time to perfect her, and does not wish to be hurried; and would ex-ercise the same patience in overcoming her faults that God does, and as she her-

self would exercise toward the faults of others. If we will sympathize with God's system of salvation, there is no occasion for despondency or the feeling of condemnation as we discover our defects from time to time; but on the other hand, of cheerful hopefulness, and confidence of this very thing, 'that he who hath begun a good work in us, will perform it [not in a minute, but] until the day of Jesus Christ.' Phil. 1: 6.

The true spirit of improvement is modest towards God and man, is patient, ready to wait for the accomplishment of any object, however desirable it may be, till God arranges circumstances to bring it about—never gets in a fret, but is quiet, has self-possession, never complains, is considerate, vigilant, and watches with a bright eye for inspira-tion, and steadily presses towards the attainment of its wishes—it trusts in the generosity of God, and seeks to please him. A false spirit makes a great bustle, is impatient and fretful, superficial, inconsiderate, seeks primarily *its own* interest and pleasure.

Traditional Interpretation.

"There is a tendency in the human mind to bow to tradition, and to subject others to the same yoke. This tendency is allied to some of the best feelings of our nature; but it is not therefore the less prejudicial to the cause of truth. It is a part of the most pardonable kind of idolatry, father-worship; but still it is idolatry. The bondage has assumed various forms. Among Jews, the yoke has consisted of 'the tradition of the elders;' among Roman Catholics, of 'the traditions of the Church;' and among Protestants, of traditions of interpretation. It is the boast of Protestantism, that it recognizes no human authority for its belief, but receives the Scriptures as 'the sufficient and only rule of faith and practice;' yet how prevalent is the feeling, even among the most enlightened Protestant sects, that we are bound to interpret the Scriptures as others have done before us, and that any im-portant deviation from their tradition is a criminal presumption! We are told that we must think *independently*; but then we must independently think *just as others have thought before us*. Investigation with this

result is commended as a noble exercise of the noble powers with which we have been endowed; but with a different result, though conducted in the same manner and with the same spirit, it is denounced as presumptuous if not infidel speculation, philosophy 'falsely so called,' a being 'wise above that which is written.' That such fanatical views have sometimes led to unkind feelings and personal collisions, is not to be wondered at, however deeply it may be regretted."—*Prof. Crosby.*

THE FREE CHURCH CIRCULAR.

GEORGE W. NOYES, EDITOR.

ONEIDA RESERVE, JAN. 28, 1850.

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

Change of Name.

We would introduce to the acquaintances of the 'Spiritual Magazine,' the spirit and substance of their former visitor, under the new form of FREE CHURCH CIRCULAR. This is to be taken as little other than a nominal alteration. We consider it as in fact a continuation of the Spiritual Magazine, and, as will be seen in the imprint, count the volume now commencing as Vol. 3d of the series.

We may glance at some of the reasons which recommend this change in the title of the paper.

There is not the same occasion now, as formerly, that we should make the paper a public and professed champion to the world, of the doctrine of holiness, and the first principles of Christianity. So long as circumstances required it, that was done by our press, faithfully. In the several Volumes of the Witness and Perfectionist, and finally in the Berean, the truth of full salvation by Christ was produced, and still remains in a permanent form testifying to the world. This work will not be done over again. But further than this, those doctrines and truths are now embodied in actual life, stand out in their concrete form, and live, never to perish, in an organized society and church. God is producing a fact of unity—a living epistle, which is ready to be 'known and read of all men,' and which

is now holding up the truth of salvation more effectually, than any mere preaching or printing could do. Our paper has been gradually withdrawn from the position of direct operation on the world, just in proportion as this subjective movement has advanced, and has been turned into a medium of spiritual criticism and self-improvement. It has consequently assumed more and more a private application and interest, i. e. so far as the public of the world, and even worldly Perfectionists are concerned. It is properly a Circular for believers in the kingdom of God. The word Circular has a limited signification; it means a missive designed for a certain limited circle. Our friends we think will agree that this corresponds with the nature of the paper. We do not publish for the world, but for the circle of believers.

The introduction of the name 'FREE CHURCH' into our title will give the religious claim to our school which, as it is rightful, seems also to be needed. As it has grown up and taken its associative form during the hot prevalence of socialism, it has appeared to careless observers, and been pronounced in the public prints as an offspring of that unhappy philosophy. It has again been confounded more or less with the herd of ill bred spiritualisms, which in late years have sprung up like fungi from the decaying trunk of the old church. These circumstances, the involuntary associations of the infancy of our movement, have perhaps affected our own consciousness with temptations of doubt and self-depreciation.

It is time now, that we ascend out of the chaos of socialisms and spiritualisms, into the dignity of a church. Our friends, we are confident, will heartily embrace the appellation which is selected in our title. There have appeared to us many reasons for wishing that we may win the name of the Free Church. 1. Perfectionism came out of the Free Church of old times, and is the true heir of the spiritual wealth of that church. The parent is dead, and the child has a right to assume its name without the addition of junior. 2. We are a Free Church, in a far higher sense than the parent church was—free from sin, free from law, free from the ordinances and institutions of the world, free from death, &c. &c. 3. We

claim connection with the church in the heavens, and that is expressly and emphatically named by the apostle, *Free*.^{*} Is not that a better epithet for the heavenly church than 'Primitive,' the one we have been accustomed to use? May we not close up our connection with them, by laying time out of account and calling the whole church of God, celestial and terrestrial, **THE FREE CHURCH**?

There could not be a more expressive motto, if we take in the whole meaning of it, than the one selected to accompany the new title; '*The truth shall make you free.*' In the same discourse where it occurs, Jesus repeats and intensifies the idea thus; '*If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*' Let us give ourselves up for this purpose, that God may again present the sublime idea fully realized on earth, of a **FREE CHURCH**.

The First Gun for 1850.

THE SECOND ADVENT: or, *What do the Scriptures teach respecting the Second Coming of Christ, the End of the World, the Resurrection of the Dead, and the General Judgment?* BY ALPHEUS CROSBY.

Accompanying a book with the above title we received the following note, which furnishes a pleasant introduction to the author and his work:

"*Brooklyn, Jan. 15, 1850.*

"DEAR G.—I send you a book on the Second Advent which I chanced to see advertised in the *Courier and Enquirer*, as a work evincing 'profound biblical research.' The author, Alpheus Crosby, was in College with me one year, and was afterwards tutor to my class and others. I boarded with him a year or two at Prof. Shurtleff's.—Subsequently we met again at Andover, and were members of the same class; in fact we used to study the Bible together at my room. He was an excellent scholar—the best in his class in College, and at the same time the youngest; rather too bookish, but modest and honest. He has since been, and I believe now is, Professor of Classical Literature in Dartmouth College. We read his book in our circle last night with much

* '*But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.*' Gal. 4: 26.

interest, and concluded to call it the 'first gun' for 1850. It would not be fair probably to regard it as a mere echo of the gun that was fired at New Haven in 1834, for Crosby carries himself like a man who studies the Bible in earnest for himself; and, as we do not own the truth, but the truth owns us, we may hope that the Spirit of Truth is taking the liberty to find new channels for itself since our testimony has been excluded from the churches. Yet it should be noted, by the way, that one of the Professors of Dartmouth College was for a long time a subscriber to our paper—a fact which may account for coincidences of sentiment and argument which would otherwise be quite surprising. Yours, J. H. NOYES."

To all who have had the courage or honesty or faith to step out of the world of tradition, on to the simple word of God in relation to the Second Coming, the appearance of this book is an interesting event. The author approaches his subject in a spirit which we can at once understand. He says, in his opening paragraph, "It is my wish, so far as possible, to shut myself up alone with the Bible, excluding every sound of theological controversy or speculation, divesting myself of every prejudice, and even forgetting, for the time being, my own most cherished opinions. Truth is of infinitely higher value than the excitement of controversy, the triumph of victory, the pleasure of sympathy, or even the pride of consistency."

The argument is arranged under several Propositions, a citation of which will give our readers a sufficient view of the position which Prof. Crosby has taken:

PROPOSITION I.

The Scriptures often speak of a second, but never of a third, coming of Christ.

PROPOSITION II.

With the Second Coming of Christ the Scriptures associate the End of the World, the Resurrection of the Dead, and the General Judgment with its awards.

PROPOSITION III.

Our Savior both variously intimated, and even declared, that his Second Coming (with its associate events) would take place before the death of some who were then living.

PROPOSITION IV.

The Apostles evidently expected, that the Second Coming of Christ, with its associate events, would take place before the death of some who were then living.

PROPOSITION V.

The Second Coming of Christ, with its associate events, the End of the World, the Resurrection of the Dead, and the General Judgment, must have already taken place; and all expectation of these events as still future is forbidden by the Scriptures.

PROPOSITION VI.

The predictions in the Scriptures of the Second Coming of Christ, the End of the World, the Resurrection of the Dead, and the General Judgment with its awards, must be explained in a figurative or spiritual, rather than a literal sense, and in such a sense as admits an application to what has already taken place.

Under the first four heads is presented a very full and valuable collection of proof texts, which, if they do not sustain all the points which are claimed by the writer, yet throw a perfect blaze of light and certainty on the long denied fact of Christ's Second Coming 1800 years ago. It is a peculiar merit of this treatise, that it consists mainly of scripture quotations, carefully grouped together, and compared; there is very little thrusting forward of the writer or his opinions for us to see the light through; but we are left conscious of looking directly into the word of God itself. And by his modesty in this respect, Prof. Crosby has produced a book that will plow like an earthquake into the sun-baked desert of the old theology.

There are a few points, however, that may be noticed more specifically, and one or two exceptions made, in reviewing this book.

1. The author's argument in his main propositions—the third and fourth—first, from the declarations of Christ, and second from the expectations of the apostles, that the Second Advent was to be within the lifetime of the apostolic generation, is sound Perfectionism. Those who have read the writings of J. H. Noyes on this subject, will recognize many old acquaintances among his ideas.

2. He leaves this startling demonstration of the time of the Second Advent, even more bare of all explanation providing for a future judgment, than the Perfectionists did at the beginning; to say nothing of our later developments. In his first proposition he excludes the idea of a third coming. In his second, he ties the resurrection and general judgment to the Second Coming. So that his book must make the impression that the

general judgment is past, and is more liable to the imputation of endorsing Universalism than our doctrine ever was. In fact, his position is very nearly that of Boyle and many early Perfectionists, who proved that the Second Advent with its concomitants is past, and there stopped; leaving the present world without any definite prospect of a day of judgment. This is but a one-sided view—a half-truth; and if left thus, is practically false and subversive. The second proposition of the book is too broad and categorical. The resurrection of the dead, and the general judgment, are not immediately associated with the Second Coming. A resurrection and judgment are associated with that event; but two resurrections and two judgments are predicted, and one of them, the final and general resurrection and judgment, is assigned to the end of the times of the Gentiles.

3. We notice, however, that the author, in a little paragraph at the close of his remarks on the second proposition, makes room at least hypothetically for our doctrine of two resurrections and two judgments.—Alluding to the period of a thousand years which is introduced by John in Rev. 20, as separating the two judgments, he says—

“It may not be amiss to remark, that even a literal interpretation of ‘the thousand years’ could have no effect to deter the second coming of Christ, since this was evidently to precede them; nor even to defer the commencement of the resurrection and judgment, but merely their close; in other words, to divide them, and prolong them through a thousand years.”

But this concession is swept away again in the fifth proposition, where he affirms broadly, that ‘the Second Coming of Christ, with its associate events, the end of the world, the resurrection of the dead, and the GENERAL judgment, must have already taken place, and all expectation of these events as still future is forbidden by the scriptures.’ Astounding radicalism truly! Mr. Noyes announced the truth about the Second Coming in 1834 in a form altogether more conciliatory, and yet we were then almost torn in pieces. But here it comes, naked, exaggerated, and with a scythe, like that of time, whose sweep must cut down all creeds and traditions, ‘both great and small;’ and it comes from an orthodox college, an orthodox

professor, an alumnus of Andover, &c. &c. Will it be tolerated? We shall see.

4. There are some signs in the sixth proposition, that the author is maturing in his own mind, a more positive theory of the Second Coming, than he has disclosed in this book, and that he is on the right track. He shows in his remarks on that proposition a preference for the expression, 'spiritual sense,' rather than 'figurative sense,' in which lies the real key to the nature of the transactions in question. (See Berean, pages 40, 136, 228, &c.) We infer from certain emphatic intimations in the same connection, that he will not fall into the 'bathos' of Universalism.

5. The author's development of the bearing of the views of the apostles, on their relations to property, slavery, marriage, civil government, forms and usages, &c., is altogether original and very curious. We shall perhaps make extracts on this point, and notice it more at length at a future time. It is sufficient to say that Prof. Crosby, finding in the circumstance a strong proof of his theory, not only recognizes, but plainly proves the 'indifference of the apostles to worldly interests, to civil and social institutions, and to outward religious forms and usages.' We do not see how he can avoid justifying us, in sympathizing with the apostles in their indifference to the 'beggarly elements' of this world, (including marriage,) unless he takes the ground that they were wild and fanatical, like the Millerites, which in one or two instances, he seems a little disposed to do.

We shall wait for further movement on the part of Prof. Crosby, and of the religious public with whom he is in contact, with considerable interest.

The Latest 'Revelation.'

Our readers have doubtless seen accounts in the public papers, of the 'mysterious noises or knockings,' which have become common within a year past in the western part of this state, and which are now generally conceded to be produced by some agency from the invisible world. The remarkable thing about this present development, is that the sounds are no longer allowed to be a mere circumstance of wonder,

unmeaning and unaccountable, as has been the case in former instances of the same kind, but they are proving to be a medium of intelligent converse with the spirits that produce them—with the inhabitants apparently, of the other world.

A pamphlet has lately been published at Auburn, on this subject, entitled 'Explanation and History of the Mysterious Communications with Spirits, comprehending the Rise and Progress of the Mysterious Noises in Western New York, generally received as Spiritual Communications.' It abounds in marvelous statements of what has been seen and heard of these ghostly visitors, which we do not care at present either to believe or disbelieve; but of the general fact that there is some spiritual communication involved in the affair, there can be no doubt.

We were particularly interested in the manner in which the New York Tribune treats this subject. It is entirely fair and respectful toward the *idea* of spiritual communication, and yet cautious and discriminating. In an editorial notice of the pamphlet above mentioned, occurs the following passage, which will commend itself to every right mind:—

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, stands in our Bible very closely connected with the injunction, 'try the spirits whether they are of God;' and we do not see how any are to try that of which they stubbornly refuse to have any knowledge. The subject of human intercourse with and reception of information from the spiritual world, is one of the very deepest interest to every intelligent mind, and is naturally the theatre of innumerable frauds and impostures. But not of these alone; unless History be a fable and the Sacred Record especially a tissue of fables, there have been real and momentous communications from the unseen world, as well as many more knavish pretences to it or bewildering hallucinations respecting it.—Whether the assumptions of spiritual agency in any case of mysterious or marvelous occurrence are true or false, is a question of the highest moment to

rational beings; and, even though it be conceded that nine hundred and ninety-nine of every thousand pretences to spiritual communication were and are cheats or juggles, it is still wise and rational to investigate any new claim that may be presented, with a disposition to judge dispassionately and candidly. A very small per centage of such mineral as is alleged to be found here will pay for working the hardest veins of rock, and we cannot see how any one but an Atheist or confirmed Sadducee can fail to be interested in such explorations.

"Inquiry, investigation, we therefore commend; a credulous swallowing down of whatever purports to be dictated from the Land of Souls is quite another affair. We do not hesitate to say that no theory of collusion or juggle or ventriloquism or hallucination, suffices to account to our mind for the concussions, sounds or 'knockings' which have been heard by hundreds of the most respectable and sedate citizens of Western New York. We have no faith in and hardly patience with the cool assumption that fraud or falsehood *must* be at the bottom of any phenomenon which our knowledge of Nature does not suffice to prove in conformity with her laws; but we are very far from believing in the verity of whatever may be uttered as from a disembodied spirit, because we cannot account by ascertained natural laws for such utterance. Investigation first; candor always. Implicit faith is of slow growth, and not to be accorded except after very careful and thorough scrutiny. * * * * *

"We close here with two simple remarks: If our comments as we proceeded have at times savored of levity or stubborn incredulity, they have been wide of our purpose. We have not meant to imply that any statement in this book is *necessarily* false or incredible, but only that they are of such a nature as to require a very large amount of unimpeachable evidence to sustain them. Our other remark is that we

trust no one who readily receives these revelations as solemn verities, will hereafter think it 'a thing incredible that God should raise the dead'—nor doubt that He *did* raise Lazarus and Jesus; as recorded in the Gospels."

We could hardly ask, at present, for a better attitude than is here taken by the leading paper of the country. The disposition which it manifests to deal fairly with professed communications from the spirit-world—to search out and appreciate the one true message, though it may be found in company with ninety-nine impostures—is quite as symptomatic of the approach of the age of Spiritualism as the 'Mysterious Noises' themselves.

In regard to the latter, our own remarks will be brief. It is evidently a time when the partition between the life of men and the world of spirits is growing thin. It seems to be pierced in different quarters. God and the powers of the resurrection on one side, are coming into the world through the secret door of men's hearts, and are working out in life, love and holiness. But the spirits of the dead appear also to have found a breach, and here the devil plays his card: it is a bold game to divert men from the central to the superficial—from the inward fellowship with God and heaven, to outward and curious intercourse with the prisoners of Hades. It is a counterfeit called out by the circumstances of the time; and should be a proof to those who seek after God, that there is more than a corresponding reality somewhere in the field.

Speaking of the instruction offered by these invisible communicants, the pamphlet says—

"Their general theology is that of Davis, Swedenborg, and others who have claimed to receive their impressions from spirits. They generally use the terms higher and lower spheres, instead of heaven and hell. They say that all persons pass to a condition superior to that which they occupied here, on leaving the body. Thousands of questions have been asked on these points, and have been answered by spirits who purported to be Emanuel Swedenborg, the

'Seeress of Prevorst,' George Fox, Lorenzo Dow, Galen, William E. Channing, Nathaniel P. Rogers, John Wesley, Samuel Westey, and many others."

It seems to be a grand point with them, to preach Universalism. Among others, Lorenzo Dow, they say, has taken pains to rap out the information that 'Hell is man's own body: and when he escapes from that, he escapes from bondage.' Criminals also represent that they are in a more comfortable state in their post mortem condition, than when they were in the body. But it should be remarked of those who (it is supposable,) give this information, that they have lived *after* the judgment of the Second Coming, and (though under arrest in Hades,) *before* the final judgment; So that they are in no position more than others to talk from actual knowledge about Heaven and Hell. Wait a little, gentlemen, until your characters and accounts have passed through the fiery investigations of that day, and then you will be prepared to pronounce on a subject which the Bible has already settled.

Since commencing this article, a letter has been placed in our hands, written Jan. 1st., by one of the principal superintendents of the operation at Rochester. It is in answer to the inquiries of a third person, very full and positive in details, and full of *exulting infidelity*. He remarks in it, that there are developments which have not yet been made public; and for which the world is not yet prepared; and that when this kind of spiritual communications becomes more general, 'the creeds of this land will be shaken from the circumference to the centre.'

It would not be strange if operations of this class should disturb the hearts of many. They are certainly calculated to shock and shatter the insincerities which have hitherto been trusted in, under the name of religion. What can a man with only nominal faith, a mere church member do, when confronted with ghosts? It is reasonable to expect that these increasing revelations will push many on, first to doubt and distraction, and then to recklessness and infidelity.

But there is a better thing offered to us than 'mysterious knockings.' It is too

late for us to be moved by fear, or seduced by pretension, even though all Hades should be emptied into the earth. We belong to the Free Church; the body that produced the Bible, that have passed the judgment, and who stand triumphant in heaven. Their communion alone do we care to recognize, and that teaches us, that the kingdom of God, *cometh not with observation*. But it cometh, and will prove a refuge to those who look for it, *within*.

In conclusion, if our readers are still interested in this subject, we would refer them to the criticism of Swedenborg published in the last Vol. of the Perfectionist, and particularly to a letter of Mr. Noyes in the 19th No. of that Vol.

The Promise.

The great promise to prayer is the gift of the *Spirit of truth*. It is called the '*promise of the Father*.' Peter said on the day of Pentecost, in the flow of his inspiration, 'This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses; therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received the *promise* of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.' (See also Acts 2: 33, 39, & 8: 20, *rph.* 1: 13.) Christ presented it as the glorious event of his returning to the Father, that he would send his disciples the Comforter, the Spirit of truth. For this he promised to 'pray the Father:' he 'retrieved it of the Father.' When he said 'Ask and ye shall receive,' his thoughts were evidently on this promise: 'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him.' This gift included all good things.' In a special sense it was not given till Christ was glorified. The disciples were to wait for it. 'When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men.'

The most glorious operation of the Spirit of truth, is to give us the *knowledge of God*; to fulfil the New Covenant, which promises that 'all shall know

the Lord from the least to the greatest.' Christ says 'He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.' The world, by wisdom know not God, but 'the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God.' 'No man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost.' The knowledge of God is all that we need to be saved; 'beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.' See 2 Cor. 4: 6, 2 Pet. 1: 2, 3. Paul counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, * * * that he might know him, &c. The whole train of sin came in through not retaining the knowledge of God.

'This is life eternal, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent.' In many other passages the connection between eternal life and the Spirit of truth may be traced. The Comforter was to 'abide with the disciples forever.'

The freedom and liberality of the promises to give the Holy Spirit, are worthy of the glory and beneficence of God,—worthy of that love which first gave his Son to die for us. 'Ask, and ye shall receive.' 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink; he that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.' A true prayer for the Spirit of truth can proceed only from a heart seeking improvement, for it is a spirit that searcheth the thoughts and intents of the heart, and convinces of sin and of judgment, as well as of righteousness—so that in reality, God's bounty does not cast pearls before swine.

H.

THE CLIMAX OF MODESTY—A lady out west was lately venting her wrath at the rumored indecencies of the Oneida Association. A friend suggested that the devil introduced shame into Paradise. 'Well,' she replied, 'I am glad the devil went into the garden to teach Eve decency!'

Recollections

OF MY FIRST TWO DAYS IN COMMUNITY LIFE.

Wednesday morning—Finding myself pleasantly settled in my room, I arose tolerably early and occupied myself with the little personal affairs and arrangements which are incidental to the adjusting one's self in a new home. At length finding myself more at leisure, I began to reflect on the purpose for which I had come to the community; and there seemed to be rather a blank in my feelings, for fear that I should not so pursue that purpose as to do honor to the cause which I have espoused. And here let me say that I have no confidence in being able to do so, but by being divested of everything like egotism and worldliness, and filled with the fullness of God. And although I am the oldest man in the community, (60 years of age) I feel that it will be my highest privilege to take the position of a little child, that I may avail myself of the inestimable blessings and privileges of community life, and make that improvement in a meek and quiet spirit, which shall cause me not only to think soberly of myself, but that I may have everything like self-will thoroughly uprooted, and excessive personal feelings and isolated habits overcome.

Thursday morning—Arose this morning with less care on my hands than heretofore, and consequently was sooner at leisure. On looking out from my window I saw persons passing about on various business, some going and some returning; not unlike the busy swarming of bees around their hive. There seemed to be an expression of earnestness in every countenance, that seemed to say 'This day I am determined to do something for God and community.' On farther reflection my conscience began to assail me a little, inasmuch as I had been indulging thus far in a kind of busy idleness, which was of but very little profit to any one but myself. A thought struck me that my conscience would be more at ease,

if I were to search for something to do ; or in other words were to buckle on the armour of co-operation, and put shoulder to the wheel of labor. Pursuant to this suggestion I soon found myself in the midst of a number of workers, engaged upon a new building. The day was cloudy, inclining to rain, and the work was going on with a proper degree of energy, when lo ! several young ladies appeared with happy sunshine in their looks, bringing hot coffee and other refreshments to cheer us on our way. All hands were now addressed to the work with a new impetus ; a spirit-stirring happiness seemed to take possession of every heart, and the work went on with new energy and zest, such as I have never witnessed in isolated life, and which was much better indicated by the progress that we made, than by anything that I can describe with my pen. Thus the day passed off. Its hours glided smoothly and gently away, leaving nothing to regret, but the want of more sincerity and childlike simplicity, so that I may honor God in my body and spirit which are his. I. S.

Deeds before Words.

The question is often asked, in one form or another, by those inquiring into the practical working of this Community, 'How can you detect impostors and prevent their coming among you ? We answer, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' 'A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.' There is a spirit of judgment here that is perfectly inevitable in its operation on character. It is a rule established by the uniform testimony of our own experience, that selfishness cannot live for any length of time, in this Association, and it is vain for a person to attempt to show 'the fruits of the spirit,' when the work is not done in the heart. However refined and pleasing the exterior may be, he is certain, in some way, to show the corruption that exists within. We are deal-

ing with spirits and spiritual things; and consequently, our judgment of character is entirely different from that of the world. We look at the inner and they at the outer man.

We follow the same practice among ourselves ; and do not expect the love and confidence of each other, except as we secure them by deeds. It is often the case, when persons first join us, that they come out with bold confessions and sounding testimony, apparently expecting by this means, to secure the affectionate attention of the whole Association. They are generally disappointed in this ; and then follows the chagrin of feeling, and perhaps the complaint that they are treated with coldness and indifference. In some respects, this was the case with myself. When I first came here, I knew that Christ was in me, a savior from all sin ; and that I had experienced to some extent, the regenerating power of his spirit, and I supposed, if I told the friends here what I knew to be true of myself, they would immediately accept and appreciate the fact. I expected at least that they would receive me with open hearts as a brother. The fact that they did not, coupled with my belief that they were ahead of me in spiritual experience, led me to search out the cause of this apparent coldness and indifference. Upon examination, I became satisfied that their demand, that I prove my words by deeds, in submitting to the judgment, direction, and criticism of the Association, was the only natural and proper course they could take, to discern my spirit. To illustrate : All who have ever seen *wheat* and *quack* grow together, know that it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, when they first come out of the ground, to tell by their appearance, which is the grain and which the grass. But if we dig around them we can soon tell. It is so in the broad field of spiritualism. The true and the false cannot always be distinguished by the first appearance. There must be a period of patient trial, and the formation of an interior acquaint-

tance. Now your spiritual quack will naturally object to any such searching examination as will discover its root—will prefer to be taken for wheat because it looks like it. On the other hand a true man will rejoice in the process, from the consciousness of a good radical character. This is simply the truthful method pursued by the Association. By it we are sure we shall retain the real wheat, and that is all we desire.

All rational men know that God can justly claim our love, from the fact that he has proved himself by deeds, worthy of it. The whole universe is but one vast expression of his deeds. Our highest ambition is to be swallowed up in Him, that we may bear 'the fruits of the spirit.' We expect to convert the world by silent, earnest deeds.

A. W. C.

CORRESPONDENCE.

South Richland, Jan. 18, 1850.

DEAR BRETHREN: I feel an increasing attachment to the principles of the Association, and I long to be one of the number that compose it. The late Nos. of the Magazine have proved very profitable to me. The article in the 23d No., headed 'Becoming as little Children,' is worth more than a volume of 'Orthodox' sermons; it contains the very elements of true discipleship, the very basis of Christianity. O who would not rather be a child of God than a man of this world. My heart finds rest with you. I have been wandering alone for more than fifteen years, and have never found any body or people with whom I could enter into fellowship in all that time, until I was at your place last winter. I then felt a union with that body that I never felt towards any other, and I was on the point of opening my feelings to the brethren the last evening I was with them, but I withheld, and I can scarcely tell why. I confess I had suspicions towards Bro. J.H. N. that originated in reports of Al-

fred Wells & others; but when I read his experience I became at once freed from all suspicious feelings, and I am as fully satisfied that God is with him and in him as he ever was with the Apostle Paul, or with any of the Bible writers. Not Mr. Noyes' experience alone, but all his writings, are to me the works of inspiration, and carry conviction to my mind that they are in accordance with divine wisdom. I am now willing to identify myself with the brethren, and confess to the world that I consider the Association at Oneida Reserve as the only embodiment of the church of Christ that I know of. I feel that I love you with a pure heart fervently, and that I had rather be a door keeper in the house of God than dwell in the tents of wickedness. If you are wrong, I am also; for you are the only people with whom I can have fellowship. * * * * *

I will close by subscribing myself one with you all in the everlasting bonds of Christian love and fellowship,

WM. D. HENDRICKSON.

☞ Since the renewal of the publication of the Magazine in August last, we have received from time to time money from our subscribers, which has been duly credited on our books. We resume with this No. our former practice of acknowledging our receipts in the paper.

Receipts from Jan. 1st.

J. Howard,	\$3,00	A. Barron,	\$1,00
J. B. Muon,	1,00	A. Coleman,	1,00
S. Call,	2,00	I. Johnson,	2,00
L. Holister,	1,00	W. Coney,	3,00
H. Allen,	2,00	B. Chadwick,	2,00
I. F. Porter,	1,00	T. Thurbor,	1,00
L. Pierce,	1,00	H. N. Leet,	3,00
S. Ormsby,	2,00	W. R. Insiee,	4,50

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

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