

THE

FREE CHURCH CIRCULAR.

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The Truth shall make you Free.--John 8: 32.
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Home-Talk by J. H. N.--No. 48.

[REPORTED FOR THE CIRCULAR.]

FEELING AND UNDERSTANDING.

Feelings are the thoughts of the heart; and I use the word *thought* here in a more literal sense than it is generally used in this connection. Thought is an act of the mind, affirming some proposition;—we think something to be true: this is its meaning as applied to intellect. When we say feeling is the *thought* of the heart, we mean that it is an act of the central life, affirming something to be true. We think with the heart as really as with the brain, that is, we feel things to be true, as well as think or see them to be true;—and by narrowly scrutinizing the feelings, we shall see that they resolve themselves into thoughts, opinions, declarations of truth, on all sorts of subjects.

Now we know that the thoughts of the understanding are very often false, and we, in our minds, affirm things that are true or false according to the state of knowledge or ignorance we are in. A very uncultivated, dark mind, thinks falsehood almost exclusively; then in proportion as the understanding becomes cultivated, the thoughts become correct, and as it becomes thoroughly enlight-

ened by the Spirit of truth, its thoughts become exclusively true. But the mere fact that we think a proposition true, is no evidence that it is true. It depends entirely on the spiritual position of our minds, and the point in the scale of intelligence which we have reached, whether what we think is true or not; and all this may be said of the thoughts of the heart,—that is, of the feelings. The fact that we *feel* things to be true, is no evidence that they are true. Here again, as in the other case in respect to the understanding, we know that our feelings are many times false; for example, we have all once *felt*—not merely thought—but *felt* that there was a peculiar sanctity in the sabbath, and any breach of the fashion of the churches on that day, would offend not merely our understandings, but our hearts and feelings. The time has been, when if we had met such people as we are, in respect to freedom on the sabbath, we should have been offended with them; but we certainly know now that our feelings would have been false, and that the thoughts of the heart of those who wounded our feelings would have been true. There is feeling against feeling, one wounding the other, and one false, and the other true. So it appears that

as the thoughts of the understanding may be conformed or not to the reality of things, so the thoughts of the heart, may be conformed or not to the reality, and the mere fact that we feel a thing to be true, is no evidence that it is true. We are bound to assume in the case of the heart, as in the case of the understanding, that an uncultivated, dark heart, thinks falsehood almost exclusively, i. e., its thoughts are not conformed to the reality of things; and the harmony of feelings with the reality increases as we ascend in the scale of cultivation: and when we are in harmony with the pure Spirit of life, then our feelings are true, and not till then.

We must, then, in order that we may put ourselves in the way to be right, begin by being modest and teachable; and must assume as a matter of course, that so far as we are short of free, full communion with the Spirit of life, so far our feelings are to be distrusted, as well as the thoughts of our understandings. I would put this rule to myself, and all others, as the best and most summary method of judging our feelings:—Do I feel God? I am sure life is capable of feeling life, and of all beings in existence, God is most palpably manifest to pure life. ‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.’ Do I see God? That is, does my heart distinctly perceive his beauty and glory? If not, I am bound to assume that my feelings are all wrong; for if the first feeling is not right, all the rest will partake of the grossness which prevents my seeing God. ‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.’ Why! Because there is a refinement in them that brings them into sympathy with God, and makes his spirit, refined as it is, palpable to them; and the reason why we

cannot see God, and the refined existences about his throne, is simply our grossness. We have no right to account ourselves pure, or trust our feelings in any other direction, if we are not pure enough to see God. We are certainly bound to conclude that we are radically gross, if we do not perceive the central glory: and if we are radically gross, then all the feelings that branch out of the centre of the life, must partake of that grossness, and so be more or less false. The thoughts will be true thoughts, when they take their tone and direction from life that is pure enough to mingle with the Spirit of truth.

The Spirit of truth is a perfect vital combination of the thoughts of the heart and the thoughts of the mind, in God—it is living truth—God’s thoughts and feelings absolutely combined. God’s image is male and female—Father and Son—and they are to each other as man and woman; and we say that the Spirit of truth is the efflux from that combination or duality of Father and Son. It is common to distinguish the sexes as the respective representatives of heart and mind. Woman is said to be the embodiment of feeling more particularly, the affections—the thoughts of the heart; and man is more particularly a manifestation of the thoughts of the mind, or intellect. These two things in God’s spirit are combined, and the Spirit of truth is a perfect manifestation of these two elements, male and female—the thoughts of the heart, and thoughts of the mind; and it is required in order to our receiving the Spirit of truth, that harmony be brought about in ourselves between these two, feeling and understanding. As the Spirit of truth is a perfect spirit, and perfect because it is a combination of the two elements, so

the perfect spirit in us, is one in which the thoughts of the heart, or feelings, flow freely through the understanding and can give a reason for themselves. They are not unintelligible feelings which have no reason in them, but they can assert themselves through the understanding and tongue, logically and correctly; and vice versa, the perfect spirit is one in which the thoughts of the understanding, and conclusions of the reasoning faculties flow promptly and easily through the feelings, and become at once practical parts of our life. The thoughts of our understandings immediately establish themselves in our life, and the thoughts of our life immediately work themselves out through the whole reasoning faculties, and there is a perfect reciprocal play between them, each supporting the other, and each correcting and refining the other.

I do not know whether it is *true* that women are, as the popular theory asserts, more strong and complete in the department of feeling than man. I am inclined to think that the reason why that is thought to be the fact, is, that woman is more exclusively an *expression* of feeling than man. Her understanding does not interfere with her feelings to regulate them so much as man's does. I judge that so far as there is any difference between the sexes, it is more in that than any thing else. In man there is more of a combination of the thoughts of the heart, with the thoughts of the mind, than there is in woman; and in woman the thoughts of the heart are developed in a more exclusively pure state. This is a matter of thought and study as to the distinction between the sexes, and one I am not exactly prepared to fathom; but I am not ready to admit yet that woman has more feeling than

man. I do not know as I have any pride of sex in the matter, but I confess to having a little jealousy for a correct idea of the God-head. I am unwilling to admit that the Father, who is certainly the representative of the male, is the representative exclusively of the intellectual department, and the Son who is the female, the representative of the vital or heart department. It seems to me that the heart is the principle element of being, and that secretly the assumption in this theory that woman has more heart than man, is really an assumption that she is superior; and we shall have to admit that she is superior, if man, while he has the largest understanding, has the smallest heart. And if we admit that woman is the superior of man, we are forced at once to the conclusion that the Son is superior to the Father; and though I could consent to put man under woman, I cannot consent to put the Father under the Son. My impression is, that there is very little difference between man and woman as to the proportion between understanding and heart, in a right state as God made them. There cannot be a perfect man or woman either, without a good development of the understanding and the heart, in each. Each must have rational feelings and a clear understanding, in order to have a harmonious character. I think that by nature, woman in her understanding and spirit is a *smaller pattern* of man.

They say that woman has more heart than man, because she is a bundle of feelings, and governed by instinct and impulses. I should say if that was an evidence of her superiority, that children are superior still, for they are more completely the creatures of impulse and feeling than woman. What is V---. but

a bundle of feelings? In this he is superior to his mother, certainly. And to what do you ascribe it? To his sex? No; you ascribe it to his youth and lack of cultivation. You have no idea that God designed he should always be in this state; but you say that in the order of existence life grows first, and the understanding afterwards. That is the way you account for the phenomenon in his case; and precisely in that way I account for the phenomenon in the case of woman. I say that God did not design woman to be a bundle of feelings—that is not the pattern which he cut them out by; and the reason why they are like children in this respect, is, that, (as in the case of children,) the life is developed first, and the refinement of the understanding is a subsequent process, which will never take place without proper schools and instruction. The doctrine of the world is, that it is not designed by God that women should cultivate their understandings, but that they were made to be creatures of impulse and feeling, and of course must remain children all their days. I think that so far as woman differs from man in being irrational, and allowing feelings to govern her of which she can give no account, so far she is a child. She is not a development of true, normal, integral womanhood. I ask woman to look into her rights in this case.—There is a great deal of talk about woman's rights in these days. I should like to have women assert their right to be rational beings, as well as men. The world that has so long abused them, has boldly assumed that to be rational belongs only to man. I say to the women, Rise in your might, and assert your rights; it is not true that you cannot be rational. It is as base a system

of oppression as that doctrine of slaveholding which forbids the slaves to learn to read. Men look on the difference between women and themselves with complacency, and talk as though it was ordained of God that women should be—What? Why playthings—feelings—mere impulses that man can play upon; and they tickle and flatter women with the idea that their glory and the perfection of womanhood is to be irrational,—that is, children. I would venture to say, that if men were placed under the same doctrine, and left with the same amount of education that women are, they would be irrational, impulsive creatures; and in fact, in semi-barbarous nations the men are precisely what the women are here—creatures of feeling. This will be found to be true among the Indians, and at the South; and I call the Southern states semi-barbarous. They do not inquire whether a thing is right or not, but they act right out of their heart, without having it come through the understanding; they are flashy. There is just the difference between the North and the South, as there is between men and women as they now are.

I don't know how it came to be understood that women have more heart than men, except in the way I have suggested, because it is manifest that men are fiercer lovers than women; so far as amateness is concerned, men are more devoted, and foolish than women. The novelists love to represent women as cool and calculating in such matters, and men heedless and crazy. On which side is the heart there? It is generally admitted that woman has more affection for children than man—but on the whole, I should say that the balance of passion and affection is on the side of man, and

that the real difference which people have their eye on, when they say that women have the most heart, is not on the difference of the degree of heart in the two cases, but on the difference of the quantity of understanding. In woman the heart is more unadulterated, unmixed, so to speak; in men, as a class, it is steadied and sobered more by the understanding, than in women.

The difference between man and woman, is some like the difference between the machine that generates electricity, and the wire that carries it. Man has the most to do in generating the thoughts and feelings that are circulating in society, and woman more to do in the office of circulating them. She is more like the wire; and he like the machine; and the idea that woman is not to develop her understanding, is putting her in a position where she cannot carry the influence of man abroad. In order to be a perfect conductor and distributor of man's intellect, she must have a cultivated intellect herself. The wire must be prepared, as well as the machine.

If it is objected that this will give women liberty to preach in opposition to Paul's injunction, I answer, We are going to have no churches. The right idea of a church is that of a family; and woman is called upon to perform all sorts of functions in the family circle, and the end of our condensation will be a reducing of the whole to a family state. I take it that some considerable part of the instructions of Paul, had reference to that transition state in which the church or family circle was surrounded by a hostile circle. It may be illustrated thus:—Suppose an army in an enemy's country, and women performing their proper functions within the camp—certain regulations would be

necessary for the conduct of the women when they went without the camp, which would not be necessary, supposing the enemy destroyed.

There is no question but that woman has a perfect right to three positions in regard to man, permanently; first, that of daughter; second in order, that of a companion, when she is married; and third in order, that of a mother. She will always have a right to those three positions, and it is nothing against a man that his wife is a mother to him in some things, a daughter in others, and a companion, in others. A man ought not to be ashamed to be a son. The principle development of woman in her relations to man will be in these three forms, and she will combine them so as to present herself to man appropriately in each of them. Where she is a daughter, she will yield herself to him in a docile spirit; where she is a companion, she will stand up with him as an equal; and where she is a mother, there she will rightfully assume the dignity of a superior position toward man. Then man has three corresponding positions, as a son, a brother, and a father; and the fact that all three of those characters are developed on both sides, does not interfere with the general fact that man is superior to woman. But because man is the head of the woman, it does not follow that woman cannot be the mother of man. Suppose the idea that man is the head of the woman, should be carried to such an extent that it should come to be considered a degradation for a man to be born of a woman, and when a child is born, it should be allowed to lord it over his mother, on the ground that man is the head of the woman.

To sum up the matter, we are seeking

perfect amalgamation with the Spirit of truth—to see God, and feel God; and as we know that the Spirit of truth is a perfect combination of the thoughts of the heart and the reason, so one main operation by which we shall attain our object, and come into full fellowship with that Spirit, is to be constantly exercising ourselves in the harmony of heart and reason. I consider those two powers in us like our two feet, by which we walk into God. We first put one forward, and then the other, alternately; i. e., our attention is called to a feeling, and immediately we analyze it, and subject it to the scrutiny of the understanding, so that it becomes rational and sound, and we can demonstrate it to be correct; then on the other hand, the thoughts of the mind are carried into the heart, and it is insisted upon, that the feelings shall accept them, and conform themselves to them. Thus the process is kept going; the heart constantly working into the understanding, and the understanding working into the heart, and a marriage brought about between them by means of which we shall come into perfect unison with the Spirit of truth.

CRITICISM.

[REPORTED FROM BROOKLYN.]

ORIGINALITY.

In a late conversation with Mrs. —, I said that she was too masculine to be attractive. She wished to know precisely what I meant by this remark. I tried to define it to myself, and finally came to this idea: There is in her life too much individual activity—too much self-originated motion, and not enough of delicate sensitiveness to the feelings and wants of spirits around her. She is not social and sympathetic enough. She may be compared to a person who should undertake to make music in a choir, whose voice and ear for music is

good, who sings loud—a little too loud perhaps—but whose mind is not on the other singers—not sufficiently upon the general effect. So Mrs. — is not in rapport with the choir, but too much in the circle of her own activity.— This is what I mean by the masculine state, as distinguished from the feminine. It is self-originated motion, as distinguished from receptive. Now in reference to society around us, every member is of right, properly feminine, subordinate; a lesser party of the two. In the social partnership, every individual is a junior member; and bound to be not a man, but a woman, in his relation to society. He should be not self-originating, individual, and leading, but receptive. He is bound to attend, as they say in music, not only to the *melody*, but to the *harmony*; i. e., to sing with the rest of the choir.

Well, this is the universal fault, almost with us all, as we come up out of the world. The world trains people to excessive individuality; and this fault must be worn out by new circumstances. We must be socialized and harmonized by a power corresponding to that which worked its opposite in the world. It is not reasonable to expect to see the effect of this training pass away in a moment; but it is well for us to know the real state of the case. It is the defect of persons who are smart and original, and who have prided themselves on being so, that though able to make tunes alone, they are not able to sing in a choir; i. e., they have not the social capacity to perceive what others are singing, and catch the pitch, and keep time. That state of exquisite attention to other spirits, which will subdue attention to our own individuality, is the only condition in which we

can become social beings. Individualism is not to be suppressed, but to be glorified; but it must first be subdued, and become subordinate to the social claim. It must learn to keep time with society around it, and attune itself to universal harmony.

In looking for an example, I think of one that I have criticised a great deal in the same way, i. e., M——. She is remarkable for originality and activity of mind and will. She is a powerful woman, and always makes things busy around her. It is in her to be at work in an original way all the time. This quality has been so excessive in her, that no person I ever knew could so unconsciously jar with every thing around her, as she. In conversation with her, frequently you were as likely to get a slap in the face, or an answer like a pail of cold water, as a harmonic response. This peculiarity was good for her in the world, as a chestnut-burr is for the nut in squirrel time. While we are in the world—when we are likely to be eaten by squirrels, God has to put a burr over us. It is good for that time—but the burr cannot be eaten; and when the eating time comes, the burr must be taken off. This individualism—the power of making discord—is to be cleared off from our characters. We cannot be social beings with a chestnut burr over us. M—— is a first-rate example of the class we are speaking of. I am not speaking of her as she is, but as she was; there has been a great improvement in her. She may be entirely free from the faults which have been described.

One branch of this subject which I have been studying to-day, I have not quite satisfied myself upon yet; but it may be well to start it for discussion. I notice that while there is individualism which is deaf to the discord it makes, there is at the same time in both the cases mentioned, a nervousness, which leaves them naked to the discords of others. There is a very false and tormenting kind of sensitive-

ness in both of them. M—— has been tormented to death with nervousness; and Mrs. —— has also suffered from a naked state of the nerves, which often makes her feel on nettles with things around her. Now what is the connection between this masculine individualism, and this tormenting sensibility? We want if possible, to cure both.—It is as desirable to get rid of this false sensitiveness, as to acquire the true; for this nervous disease which puts us on nettles, and exposes us to discontent with every thing around us, is a very great evil, and one which has occasioned much jarring and distress in the Association. We must understand and get rid of it, in order to carry out what we have said about Christ's being King of Peace; for there can be no such thing as peace with such naked nerves.

I advise my nervous friends not to pride themselves on genius which individualizes them. Originality, genius, as those terms are understood, however they are a mark of distinction in this world, are not the prime jewels in the heavenly world. Susceptibility to music, is the diamond. Your genius is all destined to run in that direction. If you have genius for society—for making harmony—then you have the true genius which will fit you for the kingdom of God.

In the world it is generally supposed that men of genius, are of this nervous sort—tormented by every thing around them. If this is really so, who would be a genius? I would rather be a contented clod-bopper, than a miserable genius. I advise you to change your theory on this point, and come to despise that kind of eminence. These irritable geniuses are at least only second best. The very best sort have all your genius, but not your egotism, and awful sensibility to discords. Shakspeare was a vastly greater genius than Byron or Poe, and yet he was an equable, serene, and companionable man.—Paul also was an example of this

highest kind of genius. If you want distinction, let it be in the line of love. Let the fire of heaven that is in you, take this direction, and it will come into a shape that is consistent with society, and your own happiness.

Mrs. C—— is an example in contrast; she has genius—though it does not stand out so prominently in her, she has plenty of it. But she is one in whom the harmonic faculty is developed in the highest degree—the faculty of loving, and being loved—the faculty of resolving herself into the community spirit. Her nature must overflow and give stamp to our society in that respect. Such kind of spirits must determine the circulation, and not these bright individualisms.

We need to understand the connection between this keen individualism, and what is called nervous disease. There is doubtless a physical connection somewhere. But we know it is not necessary that there should be such discord in the kingdom of heaven, and may assume at once that nervousness is not indispensable to superior character in heavenly society. Persons sometimes cultivate their individuality by thinking their own case is different from that of every body else—that their experience is altogether an anomaly which others do not understand. For instance, I know very well that every individual, or almost every one, who is going through the process of discipline in God's kingdom, has a time of imagining that his case is *peculiar*, and that he has suffered more than every body else—as Jeremiah said, 'What sorrow is like unto my sorrow?' I have been through that; myself, and thought for a time, that I suffered more than any body else; but after getting acquainted with society and the nature of things, and coming into sympathy with other's feelings, I know that there was no truth in it. So we must get our ideas of our sufferings and genius reduced to a due proportion in comparison with others. If we live wholly within ourselves, and

know only our own experience, and sufferings, and wisdom, and genius, it is indeed wonderful. But it is not wonderful when we get acquainted with other persons. We find plenty of just such experience and genius and wisdom in them. Peter says, 'Think it not strange, concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: * * knowing that the *same* afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.' It is just as important that I should appreciate other's genius and experience as my own. It is common property. I am not my own, but am bought with a price; they too are not their own. We are members one of another. We must take in the sympathetic element,—that which goes out of I, and gives attention to others as well as self.

I must beg the nervous class again, not to imagine that they suffer more than every body else. The fact is, get that imagination seated upon you, that your case is peculiar, and that no one knows your sufferings, that your experience is clear beyond the bounds of comprehension, and though that imagination for the time being relates only to the clod-hoppers around you, you will find at last it extends to Christ, and you will feel that he don't understand you. You will come to feel that there was nothing in the sufferings of Christ equal to yours, or that qualified him to understand you. It is a denial of the possibility of sympathy, such as we find always in a proud heart. It is a denial of sympathy, on the ground of not being understood. You may call it genius, or what you please; it is pride, denying sympathy. It is best for us all to sink down into pretty common sort of beings, for though we are in reality all wonders, wonderfully and fearfully made, yet there is no very wide distinction between us. The all-wise God that made one, made another. There is so much resemblance that the points of distinction are very small, and we shall have

to all be satisfied with being common miracles.

Cure for discontent.—The egotism that seeks for happiness by eminence, instead of seeking milk and honey, would not be contented short of being God himself. There is no satisfying limits below this. You can have your fill of milk and honey, but the question of eminence must necessarily be settled by God himself. If you are not content with this, then egotism must torment and wear itself out, until existence even becomes a burden, and you are ready to die. When you get to this point, then a superior spirit comes down and takes possession of you. When you die, God takes possession of the property, and it is his contentment that satisfies you. He is contented with you as you are. It does not hurt him if you are very small. So our contentment at last is God's contentment; and there is no other. 'Thy righteousness is of me saith the Lord.' When I am tempted to discontent, I look up and ask if God is contented. If he is, I give it up and let him take the field.

THE FREE CHURCH CIRCULAR.

HARRIET H. SKINNER, EDITRESS.

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

Refined Freedom.

We make it a favorite object in our education as individuals and as an Association, to get out of routine. 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit'—which implies, as we conceive, that those who are born of the Spirit, are as free as the air; they have no habits to interfere with instincts and evolutions as sudden and unaccountable as the changes of the wind. The very idea of spirituality implies subtilty, rareness, un-

confnibility; and habits are like the limits of solid bodies. We are aspiring to attain this state of fluidity—this 'character without impediment;' and we find the Spirit leading us into constant change—not only with a view to the improvement of our habits, but to free us from all habits. We are ambitious to learn the fashions of heavenly society—but we are aware that the first fashion of heaven is to be like little children, without fashion.

One virtue of Association is its incompatibility with habits. Habits make great discord in Community. Those persons are the happiest who are the most versatile and sympathetic—who have the fewest personal habits. The results of Association in this respect, have been very interesting here. The attraction of Unity has prevailed over a host of habits: even the aged, who have submitted to their tyranny longest, find there is a great deal of sham in their pretensions to power—that they can do as others do, in spite of habits, and enjoy the variety of our young life. It does not 'put them out,' to play a new tune.

So, we recommend to any of our friends who are tried with the fickleness of God's providence, to remember it has been the favorite discipline of his children, from the call of Abraham; and learn to say to every change, as we do, 'Well, it will break up routine, and that is good.'

Angels.

It was with a thrill of horror that I read in a late Home Journal, the flippantly expressed sentiments of a fashionable French writer, respecting the angels. He frankly avowed 'an invincible aversion to their blonde perfection—their transparent immortality'—and their consequent exclusion from 'terrestrial felicities.' I believe this is a revelation of the feeling that lurks in the hearts of all lovers of pleasure in the worldly sense, though all have not this free and easy way of confessing it.

But what will be the chagrin and despair of these gay scoffers, when God makes manifest to all the world, that he alone possesses the key to all terrestrial, or celestial felicity—that 'in his presence is fulness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures for-

ever more? And that to the bright throngs of angels and glorified spirits, who surround his throne—'perfection' and 'immortality,' are the indispensable conditions of true pleasure—imparting to it a zeal and ripeness undreamed of by their gross imaginations.

On further thought, I see that this perverted notion that angels are joyless and passionless shadows, has its origin in the belief and teachings of the church; and that in truth, they share with the open infidel, in a secret repugnance to the heaven which their theories of purity compel them to anticipate. The theory of the churches and that of the pleasure-seekers being the same respecting angels, and the society of heaven generally, we find that both classes unite in grasping at the shams which pass for happiness in this life, dreading of all things, the change which ushers them into the spiritual world. C. A. M.

Righteousness before Peace.

Most, if not all of our readers, have read J. H. N.'s judgment letter to C. H. Weld, published in the first volume of the Witness, and republished in his Religious Experience. Perhaps they have been tried with its severity, and felt disposed, as many in our Association confess they were formerly, to lay it one side for the time unsigned; so that it has been, more or less, uncurrent paper, even among Perfectionists. Our attention has been called to this document recently by communications from A. C. Smith and Elizabeth G. Hawley—two persons acquainted with all the circumstances it relates to—fully endorsing its decision. The object of these witnesses is self-clearing—to break the enchantment of Weld's Universalism, which has poisoned their spiritual experience for years. The influence of his spirit was to take away their love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity, and give them a repugnance to judgment truth, which discerns between good and evil, and the righteous and the wicked;—and through the channel of his fellowship, they drank in despair and death. Not deeming it essential to publish these communications entire, we will make such extracts as will give the parties the benefit of open, public separa-

tion from the evil spirit they have been under.

MR. SMITH'S ENDORSEMENT.

"Mr. Noyes was led to examine into the case of Weld while with me, and came to the conclusion that he was a reprobate, and separated himself from him, showing by facts in the letter that has since been published that he was not mistaken. I felt called on to do the same, but I was so much under Weld's magnetism, I did not—and hence a door of entrance was left open for him to come in at will; and I have been much affected ever since with his gloomy, despairing, proud, insubordinate spirit, and have proved to my full satisfaction that my only course of deliverance is to endorse Mr. Noyes' judgment of him. And how much I have caused others to suffer, by reason of being possessed of that gloomy spirit at times, I know not; but this I do know, that all the guilt and responsibility shall go back to its origin; yea, it has, and I am forever separated from the spirit of C. H. Weld, and do most fully subscribe to the letter written by Mr. Noyes which denounces him as an enemy of God and man. His mildness in presenting truth enchanted me; now I know that he took off its edge and turned it into a lie."

MISS HAWLEY'S EXPERIENCE

"Weld claims to be King of Peace, but I have proved his spiritual dominion to be the contrary. I have found in him, and his disciples, distrust, disunion, pride, arrogance, envy, wrath, malice, hatred of rebuke, in fact, any thing but the peaceable fruits of righteousness. On the other hand, I have found in J. H. Noyes, righteousness and peace, and in his school are abundantly manifest the fruits of the Spirit. They receive the most cutting criticism, not in anger and evil-speaking, but as bread to the hungry, and as the life of Christ; and their unity corresponds to the prayer of Christ. I have been in close contact with both spirits, and God having brought me to the point of decision, I must decide in favor of J. H. N. and the truth that he has preached, that 'without holiness no man shall see the Lord.' I have been weighed in the balance and found wanting, but Christ yet invites me to learn of him, for he is meek and lowly."

We think the true issue between J. H. N. and Weld, is recognized in these letters;—that reference to the history of their relations contained in the Religious Experience, will show it is just the issue between *loyalty to the truth and benevolence*, as candidates for the primary; or between the true fear of

God and Universalism And the interest at stake, is no less than the possibility of discipline, i. e. *truthful criticism*, in the family, in association, in the church, in the state, &c. The fruits of the two principles have been maturing and manifesting themselves, in our Community on one side, and in such experience as is above related, on the other.

In the old New-Haven Perfectionist there is a letter from T. R. Gates, in which he obscurely predicted the ultimate exaltation of Weld; and though Gates was self-convicted again and again of false vaticination, yet Weld has buoyed himself up on this prophecy. Miss Hawley says that Gates set the time of Weld's resurrection at sixteen years from the spring of 1835, which will be fulfilled next spring. If the spirit stirring in these communications may be taken as a sign of the times, Gates was as shrewdly false as the witches of Macbeth—and Weld should have heeded Macbeth's warning:—
'Be these juggling fiends no more believ'd,
That palter with us in a double sense,
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope.'

Hints to Believers.

During a late visit among our friends in New England I was led to recommend to them, and particularly to parents, a plan for spiritual improvement, which perhaps may prove an available hint to the readers of the Circular.

It is known to our friends generally, that the Oneida Association have had, ever since their organization, regular evening gatherings for intellectual and spiritual instruction. The origin of the plan, however, dates back to the time that Mr. J. H. Noyes commenced his confession of the doctrine of perfect holiness in his father's family in Vermont, fifteen years ago. Instead of consuming the evening in an indifferent way, as is usual in the country, and especially among farmers, I proposed to a number of families that they make the experiment of setting apart every eve-

ning as a general rule, to be devoted to the cultivation of their minds, and especially to spiritual improvement. To those who have always followed the old beaten paths of their ancestors, employing their evenings in attending to the real or imaginary wants of their families, it may at first appear impossible to make a move of this kind. But as it is said 'where there is a will there is a way,' and as this maxim has been already verified on the point in question, and that too, by some whose circumstances were as unfavorable to the experiment as it is possible to conceive, no one need be discouraged till they have tried it. We are informed that the plan works admirably, to the agreeable surprise of those who have ventured to adopt it.

After securing the evening for such purposes, perhaps the anxious question after all would be,—Can this time of one or two hours be occupied in a manner that will be attractive and entertaining? I think it can be done by all who have a heart for the work. I would suggest however the idea in the beginning, of regarding the proposition as an *evening entertainment*. By viewing it in this light, you avoid the feeling of constraint that attaches to the idea of a school or a formal religious meeting. To us, dear friends, salvation is *every thing*; it is our every-day business to seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness. To hunger and thirst after truth, as our meat and drink, is the truthful idea of seeking Christ and salvation, which should be presented to our children. Now the range of subjects for thought, conversation and discussion is very extensive indeed, and cannot fail to offer something entertaining and instructive every evening, from the

fact that our view of seeking salvation covers the entire field of life, and presents every desirable good to our whole nature, by looking for it through Christ.

Suppose I am situated with my family among the farmers in Vermont; our evenings are at our disposal. After tea we invite our children to set down with us for the purpose of spending from one to two hours, in reading, writing, conversation, or whatever else the occasion may suggest. Our desire is to improve ourselves, and interest our children. They are growing up around us, and our sincere prayer is, that they may become partakers with us of the grace of God. To secure such results, we know very well that they must be *attracted* to Christ by the truth—not forced—and not so much by precept, or preaching, as by our own example; that is, the very course we adopt for our own improvement, will also prove the best means of benefitting our children. If our hearts are devoted to the truth, their hearts will likewise be affected by it. If we regard the time spent in this way as more profitable than *work*, they will grow up with the same feeling.

Let us survey the fields, and see what resources we have for gathering manna for the minds of our family circle. We could take up for instance the subjects of the Second Coming of Christ, Salvation from Sin, The Cross of Christ, Justification, &c. &c., and invite our children to unite with us in finding all the passages in the Bible that relate to each question, explaining and simplifying the subject under consideration at the same time. In this way all the leading doctrines which have been discussed and published in our periodicals, could be investigated from time to time, and explained to the understandings of our

children, in the light of the Bible and the teachings of Christ—and but few persons are aware how easily youth comprehend the whole system of faith, i. e., the practical, living faith, presented by Christ and the Apostles. Besides these subjects, there would be the Circular every fortnight, offering at least two or three entertainments a week.

Again, the fact that the believers at Oneida, Brooklyn, Manlius, Newark, Kingston, and other places, are all now engaged in setting apart the same time, for the same purposes, would give additional interest to the plan. Another source of edification would be secured by corresponding with believers in distant parts, so that in a short time each family would have the pleasure of receiving frequent communications from some one or more of the members of the household of faith. Believers located in the same neighborhood could often unite their families, and hold meetings alternately at each other's houses.

There are many more subjects that properly belong to the discussion of the family circle, which I have omitted, that are yet of vital importance. One of them however I cannot pass by without alluding to it. It is the subject of obedience to parental authority. The spirit of *obedience* is the spirit of Christ. The spirit of *disobedience* is the spirit of the devil, and the source of all evil. The spirit of disobedience seeks refuge in what Carlyle calls 'sugary benevolence.' It is hatred of the truth. True obedience is love of the truth. If parents truly love their children and desire their salvation, they will secure in them the spirit of obedience at whatever cost. In conclusion, I would invite all friends who sympathize with the ideas thrown out in the foregoing, to make the Spirit of truth a welcomed guest to their entertainments. G. CRAIG.

Means of Grace.

[The following form of self-discipline is a memorial of those early days of discipleship in Putney, referred to in Mr. Cragin's communication. They were inscribed above the mantle-piece in our consecrated school-room, and transferred by daily observance to the tablet of our hearts. We can heartily commend them as a guide to beginners in the way of holiness, and, indeed, never expect to outgrow them ourselves:]

I. *Consideration*—inward meditation and self-examination, whereby the eternal things of God are laid to heart.

II. *Searching the Scriptures*—not for curious learning, nor as though they were a substitute for Christ; but that we may know the mind of Christ.

III. *Confession with the mouth*, of the whole truth concerning ourselves, whether we be saints or sinners: judging ourselves if sinners, glorifying God if saints.

IV. *Prayer in the Spirit*; which is a strong exercise of the desires of the heart toward God, not necessarily accompanied by any outward expression.

V. *Watching for the leadings of the Spirit*, both in respect to inward and outward works, in a child-like and quiet spirit expecting God's counsel and assistance in all things.

VI. *Doing good to all men* as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith: but in this always avoiding ostentation and vain-glory.

☞ *Look much at the Hope of your Calling.*

A Law of Fellowship.

[The following is part of a Home-Talk, reported for the special benefit of our children's department, but universally appropriate. We will add that the application of these principles has been very successful in the Association; that the youthful class and children are growing in sincerity and the community spirit, and becoming harmonious subjects of the leading influence here, and of all the good influences coming down upon us out of heaven—for which we praise God.]

There are two guiding principles which we have worked out in the expe-

rience of the older classes, which can be applied at once to the children.—One is, that all darkness and secrecy is to be excluded, that the spirit and actions of persons are to be exposed, and brought out to the light where they can be criticised. The other is, that in order to keep fellowships wholesome, they must be kept as much as possible looking upward;—that a preponderance of horizontal or collateral fellowship in the present state of things, is not profitable, i. e., it is not good for persons in the same spiritual condition to mix too much with each other. There should be an ambition in all to acquaint themselves with the class above them—a leaning towards the ascending fellowship; as we are not benefitted simply by things coming from our equals, but by things which come down from those above us. These two principles can be carried down through the children, as easily as they have been through the older classes; and the older class must get into fellowship with the children, and seek to produce in them a gravitation of heart in the ascending direction, for this is the only way in which purity and sweetness can be introduced among that class.

Children are governed by their feelings, instead of their intellect. They are as a class what the world regard women, a bundle of feelings—but as I have said before, feelings talk as much as the thoughts do. We *think* things to be true sometimes, and again *feel* them to be true: but as we often think things to be true which are not, so we often feel things to be true, which are not true. Feelings must be put into the same category as thoughts in that respect; we must not assume that because we feel things to be true, they are true; hearts take false impressions, as well as the brain. A thorough understanding of this will make people modest in regard to confidence in their feelings, although they may think them to be true. It is the tendency of egotism to assume

that things *are* true which are *felt* to be true; and it requires great self-control to assume that our feelings may be talking wrong. But children can be *modest* if they cannot reason. It is a trait that belongs to their condition, and renders them beautiful and attractive to their superiors. I feel like beseeching them to be modest in regard to their feelings, and remember that they are very likely to feel wrong. I believe that children can understand this. God has not made any class which cannot be true to their nature, and it is a beautiful state for those who are not wise, to be modest; this is suitable advice for those who are wise; but there is a special appropriateness in children's being modest and true to their nature. It is becoming to them in the first part of their lives to know that their parents are wiser than themselves, and *modesty*, in conjunction with *confidence in their parents*, which are feelings, constitute *the righteousness of children*. They can be beautiful in their condition as children, if they are modest and confiding.—Among the other feelings of children is fondness for sport, in a variety of ways—*this is a feeling*. Now suppose this feeling comes in collision with these other feelings towards those older than themselves; which shall prevail? I ask the children, which ought to prevail,—the fondness for pleasure, or the modesty and confidence? I say, and I think they will agree with me, that their modesty and confidence should prevail over their other feelings, and when the two come into collision, they should use all the power they have, to give the *right* feelings the victory over the others. They can vote, as well as older folks, to have the right prevail in themselves; and this is *children's faith*—it is looking upward, and is the attitude of mind which will eventually let them right into fellowship with God and his family.

I do not expect that the children will understand all the movements of the Association. It is not possible for them

to do so, until their minds are enlarged. Now, how are two persons to be at peace with one another, when one is a great deal wiser than the other? It is not possible, if the inferior insists on understanding all that the superior does; and if you insist that I shall do nothing that you do not understand, then I must come down to being a boy or a child, or else, if I go on I shall offend you. What if I should say, I cannot have peace with God without understanding all his ways. That would not be a happy state of mind for me. God says—'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.'—Isaiah 55: 9. How then shall I be at peace with him? Why, by dropping the idea of understanding all his ways, and having a spirit of confidence and modesty towards him. Then no matter how high he is above me. Love can flow, and hearts can come together, if one is entirely above the reach of the other, if the inferior has this spirit.

I felt as though I had found the whole of salvation almost, when I had settled that principle of the possibility of fellowship between the superior and inferior. I have had to make use of that principle in every instance, where people have quarreled with the truth, as *people* did, refusing to believe any thing that he could not understand. That principle would make fellowship impossible on any extensive scale, so long as there is such a difference of intellect.—There is great inequality of intellect between God and myself, and no possibility of my understanding his ways, except gradually, and at a long distance off. How then shall I be at peace, and have fellowship with him, so that there can be unity and organization? There is but one way. It is by summing up what knowledge I have of him in my heart, and getting the idea established within me, that he is right. I will endorse God as a whole. He presents me the chart of his omniscience, and infi.

nite counsels, of which I can understand a very little; but I understand enough to jump the rest. I will sign it at a venture, and say it is right without reading it; for it will require the endless ages of eternity for me to read it all. In this attitude of mind, I am at peace with his whole omniscience, and all the infinite counsels he ever devised, or ever will. I submit in advance, and go before the universe, ready to stake my all on the assertion that he is right. 'Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?'—And we can in the same way get acquainted with men, so inspired of God, that we may sign safely any bill they may present, without reading it. After knowing enough of a man to find him out to be true, we may rationally conclude that we know enough to jump all that we do not know, and put our whole name to his character and conduct. It is very desirable to find such men, whom we can endorse, and it is one of the greatest blessings that God can give us—men whom we can endorse without reserve, and without understanding them.

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Our doctrine of ascending fellowship, which demands the gravitation of the lower classes toward the upper, is very offensive to a worldly spirit—to those who have horizontal interests at stake, and the feeling of ownership in love; but if a man will only wait and look through, he will see that no interests are attacked that are really valuable,—for if he is a true man, he will come within the beneficial influences of this theory. If it calls away from him something which the world regards as private property, by the same rule, it calls up to him the love and service of a class below, if he is fit to receive it. Let a man only wait patiently for the results of the theory, and he will find it will give him a hundred-fold for all it requires of him—he will find that he has come under a system that will eventually fill him with the richness of God. It has placed me in an invidious position—but I have felt bound to introduce

this principle into the church—and felt willing to be the victim of the offense which its introduction would cause, to any extent necessary.

A Friendly Letter.

Brooklyn, Oct. 20, 1850.

DEAR BRO. DANIEL: I recollect when I left Oneida you asked me to write to you, and to-day I feel like doing it, and trying to help you on in the 'highway of holiness which has been cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in.'

You want to be *loved*; it is what we all want. This desire in all our hearts seems to be as natural as the air we breathe. How to be loved, then, is a question worthy of much consideration. It is very clear that we must find some way to make ourselves attractive; and I know of no way of making ourselves attractive in the church of Christ, only by a real *spirit of improvement*, which shall make all our words and deeds edifying to those with whom we associate.

Why is it that Mr. —'s society and conversation are always so attractive to those who are seeking improvement? Is it not because he has a spirit of improvement himself, and always has some *new truth* to present, or shows us some truth in a clearer light, which makes all his conversation edifying and profitable? I think it is. His conversation, I am sure, would soon lose its charms if we found nothing new in it, and his society would be no more attractive than any one's else.

I recollect the first time I saw a parrot, and heard her say 'Pretty Polly,' I was perfectly charmed;—but when I found that day after day it was the same everlasting 'Pretty Polly,' and nothing more, I became disgusted. She had no spirit of improvement, and her talk was not *edifying*!

Before me hangs a beautiful map of the world. I love to look at it, and study it, because it tells me a great deal of *truth*: but it will soon lose its at-

fractions, because it does not present to my mind the *new* truths which the constant changes in the world are daily bringing to light. It does not keep up with the times, and has no spirit of improvement. What to-day may be edifying, next year may be quite unedifying to one who has a spirit of improvement.

When I get up in the morning I find the daily 'Tribune' very attractive, because it gives me a great many *new facts*; but if the same one should be presented to me to-morrow morning, it would be quite unattractive,—there would be nothing new in it;—while another sheet with new truths stamped upon it, would be quite attractive.—So the *Daniel* of to-day should not be exactly the Daniel of to-morrow, but the spirit of *improvement* should be constantly beautifying his character.

I think I have said enough to show you that a *spirit of improvement* is what makes us lovely and attractive.

Your brother in Christ, J. R. M.

CORRESPONDENCE.

N. Cambridge, Vt., Dec. 5, 1850.

DEAR FRIENDS:—I have for a long time, felt that it would be a great privilege to take a seat with you in your evening meetings, and be a witness of your order and stedfastness in the faith of Christ. God, in great kindness, has been scattering the clouds of unbelief which have so long darkened my spiritual vision, and I praise his name for it. It was shown to me long ago, that if any man would do the will of the Father, he *should know* of the doctrine, whether it be of God; and it was in vain for me to try to know of the doctrine of Christ, as taught by your Association, while I neglected to do the will of the Father. And here I was held in bondage. I saw the right way, but had no strength to walk in it. When I read the Home Talk on Alimentiveness, and The Spirit of Truth king of the Passions, I felt that God had heard the cry of my distress, and had sent his 'angel of mercy' to help me.

For I had found, and often said, that here was the great inlet of evil with me, and yet I had no power over it. The 'Criticism of the Mouth' also, and the idea of 'Temperance, a fruit of the Spirit,' has been a great blessing to me.—These things combined with others, too numerous to mention at this time, have opened my eyes to see, and my heart to *feel*, the position that J. H. N. occupies as a teacher and leader in the kingdom of God. I feel assured that I have received a *little* strength to do the will of my Father, and as far as I have done his will, I have known of the doctrine, that it is of God. I wish to express my thanks to M. L. Worden, for his faithful 'Letter to a Friend';—I received it as written to myself, for I needed it.

I enclose \$1, and wish the Circular for this year sent to Tertius Strong, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Yours in the love of the truth,

RHODA MUGGET.

Lyons, Mich. Nov. 24th, 1850.

DEAR FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST:—

I will take my pen once more to thank you for your continued kindness, in sending me your publications. I find rich food in them all. I miss the criticizing department in a few of the last numbers.—I always seek that first. Your mode of criticism was the first to convince me, that you were in the right way. [We are happy to gratify our sister's taste in the present number.] When I received Mr. C——'s letter, it set me to thinking and searching to see what manner of person I was of. And I find my faith increasing or increased ten-fold. By faith in Christ, fear of all kinds has departed. *I find him a Saviour from all sin.* I can now *trust him* for all things. Christ is my all, and if he is for us, who can be against us?

Your sister, LAURA B. SMITH.

☐ We heard a letter criticised last evening, as '*too long* to be dictated by inspiration.' This is not the fault of the two letters above—albeit they are from the 'gossiping sex.'—*Editress.*