

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. 40.

[REPORTED FOR THE CIRCULAR.]

EXTENSION AND DEPTH.

The 'Home-Talk' in the 19th No. of the Circular closed with the idea, that Christ's object as king of nations has been two-fold—that his work upon the world has been in the line both of *extension* and of *depth*. This idea furnishes the best key I have found yet, to the history of Christianity. It is the key to my own history. I was converted by the church to Congregationalism, and entered fully into the spirit of the devoted part of that church. I came into entire sympathy with the Theological Seminaries, and the result was, my whole heart went out for the object of the *extension* of Christianity. The feeling that I was born into at that time, was one which demanded revivals. The church was regarded as an army of conquest. It assumed as its business the conversion of all men to Christ. This spirit finally took the form of missionary enterprise, and reached forth for the conquest of the world. I found myself full of enthusiasm for going to China, and undertaking my part in this work of universal extension, which then seemed easy and certain. That

was the spirit of the times; the church was full of it. The missionary spirit was the same as the revival spirit, only carried to a higher pitch. The heart of the whole church was set on the extension, in one form or another, of what we call the kingdom of God.

In process of time, as I studied the Bible more, and looked into my own experience, my attention was caught by another object. It was gradually called away from the subject of extension, and turned in the direction of *depth*. My mind became interested in my own experience, in the subject of salvation for myself and the church, here on the spot. I became a Perfectionist; and the thing that was done for me by this change, was to transfer me from one department of Christ's work to another. A good general, keeping his eye on all the interests concerned in the operations of a campaign, will have a view to conquest and active operations in the field on the one hand, and on the other, to the discipline of his army, which is an interior work; and will have officers distributed with reference to that object. He may transfer men from one of these departments to the other. The thing done at that time was this: I was entirely devoted to the service of Christ in the

field, and supposed that conquest was the highest form of operations; and just when I was about to branch out and distinguish myself in that department, Christ, as commander-in-chief, ordered me into another department—into the work of disciplining the army. He set me in the first place to look deeper into the principles of the kingdom of God, and get myself saved first, and then to become a disciplinarian to those he had placed under me, and use up my name and talents in reforming the army.

These very thoughts, in an obscure way, were in my mind at the time; and I can now read my history in them as plain as a sunbeam. I have reason to believe that a similar change took place in the best part of the church in this country at that time. There was a general change in Christ's movement corresponding to the change in me. He then called off the best spirits, the youngest life of the church, from the work of *extension* to that of *depth*; from conquest to discipline; from proselyting to self-improvement.

Let us look at the signs of this general fact. In the first place, there have been no revivals since that time: so that active operations have been suspended, at least, in this part of the field. How it is with missionary operations, I cannot speak definitely, but I have an impression that there is a great falling off in zeal and efficiency there. They have stations, and missionaries abroad in situations where they cannot very well be recalled, and are therefore obliged to be supported; but I think they are sustained with less heart and more will-work than formerly. There is one of the negative signs, showing that extension has been checked in the heart of the church.

Then to speak of positive signs; Perfectionism itself caught away many of the best spirits from the church, and put them on an entire new train of spiritual growth; turning them to new investigations, new views and experience, and stripping them of their old enthusiasm for making converts. Perfectionism itself, in Hartford, New Haven, Newark, New York, and wherever the Free Churches were planted, took out just enough of the soul of those churches to wet all their powder, and put a stop to active operations in the field. The Free Churches held the foremost position in spirituality, and from them there was a shading down of the religious body, even to dead orthodoxy. They were the advanced guard, and when they stopped, the whole stopped; and they were brought to a stand, as we have shown, by Perfectionism.

Again, the movement at Oberlin was a movement in the direction of depth, instead of extension. It was an attempt to introduce internal reform in the church, rather than to make converts and extend it. Again, the operation of the Anti-Slavery movement has been of the same kind. Though not exactly in the church, yet this movement has operated strongly upon the church. Garrison and his men stood outside and criticised the church tremendously. They have been permitted to advance new truth, and the churches have been compelled to accept it. Their agitation of Woman's Rights, Anti-slavery, &c. &c., has produced an effect; and though the churches will not acknowledge them as the source, yet they have been compelled to change their ground on these points; and this change is in the direction of depth.

The two-fold operation which we are

discussing, may be set forth by our old familiar illustration of sloop-sailing. In beating against the wind, we make our headway by a system of tacking; i. e., our desired course being north, we run first in the direction north-east, and then come about upon the other tack, and stand for the north-west. So Christ has been beating against the wind in the establishment of his kingdom; and he has operated upon the church, and the world, by alternate movements, going first in the direction of extension, and then of depth. If we go back previous to 1834, we find that the church had been steadily sailing for fifteen or twenty years on the extension tack. Every thing was stirring up zeal for revivals, and the missionary enthusiasm rose to its highest pitch. I conceive that at that time they had run this tack out, and were likely to go ashore. The orders were to come about on the depth-tack; and they have been running on this course for the last sixteen years.

There is less show of advance on this tack, than on the other; but there is just as much real advance, and if we were to make a comparison of the value of the two operations, I should say there is more real progress made on the tack of depth, than on that of extension. The department of discipline is more important than that of conquest, because the department of conquest is in reality simply providing material for the department of discipline. Your conquests are good for nothing, and worse than nothing, if they are not preliminary to a dispensation of complete salvation, which is a dispensation of depth. So that in fact the department of depth takes precedence of all others in importance, value, and dignity, and the officers who are put into that branch of

operations are of a higher grade, than those in the department of conquest. To be sure the development of a man's talents in the school of conquest, may be a first-rate preliminary to his future education, as one devoted to discipline and interior salvation. But that which goes first, is at best but auxiliary to this second position.

From these views I wish to rise into a more general speculation, concerning the history of Christianity from the beginning. It strikes me that the special function of the Catholic Church has been extension, and the special function of the Protestant Church has been depth—the following of Christianity into its sanctuary, and bringing out the completeness of the gospel. Christianity lies before us in these two aspects, Catholic and Protestant; and as we see Christ, the commander-in-chief, aiming at two distinct objects, why is it not reasonable to assume that he has given one function to one church, and another to the other? We find Popery first in the field; and this is in the right order, because extension must necessarily come first. There must be a beginning of material; then that which comes afterward—the department of depth—was occupied by the Protestant Church, and was most important.

Let us look a little closer at the actual facts in the case. The truth is, Popery deserves the credit of conquering the world, so far as the extension of the name of Christ is concerned. The most important part of the world has been put to school by Popery. There is something stupendous, miraculous, in the rapidity of the conquests of that church. We find them at an early age pushing their conquests among the barbarians in Britain, Germany, Scandinavia, Rus-

sia—putting people to school, where they obtained, at least, some obscure idea of Christ. They induced whole nations of heathen to abandon their idolatries. Looking at the world as it was in the time of the Cæsars, we see what a great work was to be done, to bring it into the shape that is now called Christendom; and yet a heavy part of this work has been done by Catholics.

They may fairly claim to have carried the missionary spirit an hundred-fold beyond the Protestants. That church produced Loyola, and the society of Jesuits, who, as Archbishop Hughes boasts in his late discourse, have penetrated with their missions into the remotest parts of the known world. They were the first to explore South America, and the great North-West—making converts every-where. They have been steadily at work in this spirit for hundreds of years. The real missionary fervor, of which our churches can only boast of showing a transient inspiration, is at least as old as the Jesuits, and in fact has been steadily at work in the Catholic Church, from the earliest ages. The proselyting spirit has not only been at work in them, but it has wrought successfully, and to a vast extent. So far, the evidence goes to show that the function of Popery has been extension.

Now let us look at the work of the Protestant Church. It has been to set people free—to emancipate the human mind—to bring every matter to the test of reason—to lay open the Bible for free investigation; and from the time of Luther onward, the most lively enthusiasm of that church has been, not for extension, proaelytism, but for *the study of the Bible*. It has been the nurse of printing, and has sought to increase by

every means a knowledge of the truth.

I say then to Protestants—let Bishop Hughes brag. Don't try to claim the credit of conquering the nations, as the Catholics have done; that is not your function at all. Bishop Hughes tells you with a sneer, that you have not extended your conquests; that you have made no headway even in Christendom, since your first outbreak; while they, on the contrary, have extended their faith all over the heathen world. Very well, let it be so; that is not your function. Your business is in the line of depth. I advise Protestants to drop at once all claim to that branch of operations. Yield that point to the Catholics. It is properly the business of a *servant* to bring boys into school; it does not belong to you. On the contrary, you should turn right about, and devote yourselves to the study of the Bible, and follow it up where Luther and Melancthon left off. This is your proper function. Search out the depths of salvation. Dig into the truth about justification, sanctification; and, with a free press, you need not concern yourselves about extension. It will come in due time. Quit your proselyting, quit your missionary operations, and all hands go in for the knowledge of Christ in his fullness. In this way it will be directly manifest—it will not be made true or proved true—but it will be *manifestly* true that Popery was made for Protestantism,—it was made to serve you in putting the world to school. And when the world has come into school, it will find that *truth* is the master of the school, not Pope Pius IX., nor the college of Cardinals. Truth is the school-master; and so the world will find when they have come into the school-house. This is the best advice that I can offer to my Protestant friends.

Additional Remarks.—We said, the advance of Christ's kingdom thus far has been like beating against the wind; but evidently the time will come when he can *'lay his course.'* In beating, we

do not steer directly toward our object ; and if we kept on either tack steadily, we should never arrive at it. So I say, the object of Christ being really a definite, unitary one, he is not steering directly for it, either when pushing the church in the direction of extension or of depth simply. His real object is a combination of extension and depth ; and the time must come when he will be able to lay his course without the alternating movement. Suppose he has pushed us through into full communication with himself and the primitive church, so that his object in regard to depth is attained ; then if he undertakes to commence the operation of extension from us, it will be not extension simply, but an extension of depth. The two objects come together ; there is no longer a division of departments ; and hence our position may be defined as *depth* in the act of extension.

NOTE BY THE REPORTER.

The discourse by Bishop Hughes, referred to in the preceding article, was a lecture, delivered before the Catholic Institute of New York, on the 'Decline of Protestantism.' The Bishop is a very able man, and presented a strong array of facts, from which he confidently argued the speedy downfall and extinction of the Protestant heresy.—The discourse naturally created a sensation among the clergy of the party attacked, and has called out several replies—though none we think that were very successful or satisfactory.

The ideas of the foregoing Home-Talk, while they do full justice to the Catholic party, also furnish a complete vindication of Protestantism. In recognizing the separate functions of the two churches, we take away at once all point from the arrogant comparisons which the Catholics are fond of making in regard to numbers and energy of propagation. But it also explains perfectly the internal characteristics of the two bodies, and in a way that leaves the Catholics no ground for boasting. Bishop Hughes undertakes to show a necessity for the decline of Protestantism in the nature of

its constitution—in the fact that it denies all authority in matters of faith, and thus continually provides for its own dissolution.—He contrasts the hundreds of conflicting sects into which it is divided, and the distracting fanaticisms which break in upon it, with the undivided, effective millions of his church, &c. We answer, this is exactly appropriate to our view of the case, and proves nothing against Protestantism, or in favor of Catholicism ;—but only proves that both parties are adapted to their separate functions, the Protestants to work in the line of depth, and the Catholics in that of extension. The Catholic Church is precluded by its very constitution from making any improvement ; its unity is secured only by its stand-still superficiality ;—and, at the same time, it is well-fitted to propagate a nominal acquaintance with Christ. Protestantism, on the other hand, is continually impelled toward self-reform and improvement. The freedom and individual responsibility which is asserted by Protestantism, stimulate progress in truth, even at the expense of disunity and all other objective interests. This is the secret of the division and subdivision into sects, which have marked the period of its transition towards central truth. The commencement of every new sect has been a push in that direction, an enlargement of mind towards spiritual things. And when the end of this transition has been attained, when the inquiring spirit finally breaks through into the real presence of God, then a unity will begin to rise out of Protestantism, that will be incomparably beyond the Catholic unity that is the boast of Bishop Hughes—one, too, that will have the faculty of extension, and will rightfully take possession, for the truth, of all the past labors of his church.

The theory propounded in this Home-Talk offers, I think, for the first time, a formula for just judgment between the two great parties of Christendom. It calls us up from the low level of sectarian antagonism, to a point where we can see *Christ* making use of both Protestant and Catholic for the advancement of his royal interests. So far as it is received and understood, it will moderate the bitterness of Protestants on the one hand, and the arrogance of Catholics on the other.

G. W. N.

CRITICISM.

HOME-TALK ON A PIECE OF POETRY.

FAREWELL OF THE SOUL TO THE BODY.

Companion dear—the hour draws nigh,
The sentence speeds to die, to die;
So long in mystic union held,
So close in strong embrace compelled,
How canst thou bear the dread decree,
That strikes thy clasping nerves from me?
To Him who, on this mortal shore,
The same encircling vestment wore,
To Him I look, to Him I bend,
To Him thy shuddering frame commend.

If ever I have caused thee pain,
The throbbing breast, the burning brain,
With cares and vigils turned thee pale,
Or scorn'd thee when thy strength did fail,
Forgive! Forgive! thy task doth cease,
Friend! Lover!—let us part in peace.

That thou didst sometimes clog my course
Or with thy trifling check my force,
Or turn from heaven my wavering trust,
Or bow my drooping wing to dust,
I blame thee not; our strife is done;
I know thou art the weaker one,
The vase of earth, the trembling clod,
Constrained to hold the breath of God.

Well hast thou in my service wrought,
Thy brow hath mirror'd forth my thought,
To wear my smile thy lips have glowed,
Thy tear to speak my sorrow flowed;
Thine ear hath brought me rich supplies
Of varying tintured melodies;
Thy hands my prompted deeds have done,
Thy feet have on my errand run;
Yes, thou hast marked my bidding well,
Faithful and true! Farewell! Farewell!

Go to thy rest. A quiet bed
The earth with sweetest flowers shall
spread,

Where I no more thy sleep may break,
With fevered dream—nor rudely wake
Thy weary feet. Ah, quit thy hold,
For thou art faint, and chill, and cold;
And still thy grasp and groan of pain
Do bind me, plying to thy chain,
Though angels warn me hence to soar,
Where I can share thy woes no more.

[The papers.

This piece of poetry is pretty, but I think it will bear considerable inspection. It is worth while to look into it, and approve what is good, and criticise what is bad.

Whatever may be the idea of the

writer of this poetry respecting the body, *our* idea is this: that the *real* body, that which tastes, sees, hears, and has muscular action in it, is as indestructible as the soul; while that which is commonly termed the body—flesh and blood—is continually changing: and all this respectful language and tenderness of feeling properly belongs not to flesh and blood, but to the real body. The leading thought or intent of the poetry, which represents the soul as feeling a respectful tenderness to the body, regarding it as a useful partner, is beautiful. The key-note and touching sentiment of the piece is this:—that the soul, instead of counting the body a mere earthly appendage, a clog, or, at best, a servant, addresses it as a helpmeet, friend and lover. This is something new to me. I do not know as I ever saw such a sentiment in the literature of the world before. It is a noble sentiment, and one that has been in my heart a great while. In the world this would pass for very sublimated poetry;—but I should say there was more truth than poetry in it. I should say there was a great deal of truth in its regarding the body as a lover and friend to the soul, and worthy of being dealt with justly and honorably. It is a sentiment that has a great deal of sanction in the Bible, and in reason.

But the fault of this poetry is, that its false theology destroys the force of its just and beautiful sentiment. The tone of the piece, and the moral that we get out of it, is a very *sad* one. It is music on the minor key—sad and doleful; and this is natural, if the case between the soul and body is such as it supposes. The soul and body, under existing theories, however respectful they may be to each other, are sure to be sundered forever—the one ascending, according to

Christian hope, to the heights of heaven, and the other descending to the earth, to be food for worms. This is a doleful, hopeless parting, and the more you excite the sentiment of respect between the two—the more the soul is inflamed with honorable feelings towards the body, the more doleful the case is.—‘There is something evil in any thing which ends in sadness; and Paul objects entirely to believers ‘mourning without hope.’ But the mourning that is brought out in this piece, is without hope;—and that is the evil in the case.

Observe that this sad doom of parting is attributed to a dread decree:

‘How canst thou bear the dread decree,
That strikes thy clasping nerves from me?’

That dread decree of course proceeds from God. It is God’s sentence in the case; and the logical conclusion therefore is, that God is more cruel to my body than I am. My soul values its body, feels respectful toward it, acknowledges mutual faults, offers and asks forgiveness;—thus placing them on an equality. In this view of the case, one is really as deserving of the sentence of death, or resurrection to blessedness, as the other; and the soul makes out the body’s case as fair as its own. But God is not so fair and respectful in the case; he is coming down on the body with a dread decree, a sentence of death, while he lets the soul ascend to glory. I say again, that the logical conclusion in the case is, that *I*, as using this language, am more merciful, just, and honorable than God.

Here we detect the real sting there is in this doleful tenderness that is so popular in the world’s literature. I have read a great deal that passes for beautiful poetry in the world, that my soul revolted at. I could hardly tell why; but

it was all of this same character—exciting compassion and tenderness, without hope. This assumption of more delicate feeling and honorable treatment towards one’s self than God has, is an accusation of him, and comes to the net result of a complaint against him for not dealing more honorably with us than he does, in obliging us to submit to the dread decree. I say it is a lie. Nobody is so delicate and honorable, or attends so minutely to things that deserve to be treated tenderly, as God.

What is the truth about the dread decree? The truth is, ‘The *soul* that sinneth, it shall die.’ The dread decree holds the soul as well as the body. God is impartial between them. I doubt very much whether any soul in the attitude of this one, thinking itself more just and honorable than God, has ever sped its flight to where angels live. ‘The wages of sin is death.’ I will not go back to inquire if that law is fair and honorable on the part of God, but assume that it is. God has no control over the causes which make it inevitable;—and it if is a matter of distress and sorrow, he is no more to blame for it than any one else. It is no dread decree of his which originated evil. But to leave that, ‘The wages of sin is death’—the wages of the soul as well as the body; and if there is any distinction to be made, it is worse death of the soul than of the body. Then, on the other hand, God has made provision for redemption from this dread decree—for the body as well as the soul. In a perfectly honorable manner he has provided for the redemption of all that he can redeem. He would provide for the soul without the body, if he could not for both; but he has taken as much pains to save the body as the soul, and it is evidently his design to save both.

And here it is proper to say, that the allusion to Christ is unfortunate for the piece:—

'To Him who, on this mortal shore,
The same encircling vestment wore,
To Him I look, to Him I bend,
To Him thy shuddering frame commend.'

I know that Jesus Christ did not treat his body in this way;—but there was a decided contrast between his treatment of his body, and this treatment. He has not particularly expressed as much respectful feeling towards his body as is expressed here, but he carried out his feelings towards it. He did not consent to any doleful parting between his body and soul, one winging its way to heaven, and the other descending to earth. He loved his body, and was faithful to that love. His trust was in God respecting it. 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.' He assumed that his soul was going to hell or hades, the place of the dead, as well as his body; that they were linked together in their descent into death, and would both share in the same redemption. His soul would not go back to heaven without his body. Accordingly in three days the soul repaired the breaches of the body, and they resumed their union. He then glorified his body, and made it his everlasting habitation. There is faithful love. There is tenderness and respect, terminating dramatically and satisfactorily; but in the poetry it does not:

'To Him I look, to Him I bend.'

So do I: I look to him as carrying out the principle completely opposite of this poetry, and take him for an example of faithful love to soul and body.

—'Our strife is done;
I know thou art the weaker one,
The vase of earth, the trembling clod,
Constrained to hold the breath of God.'

There is the falsehood that runs through the whole piece, and makes it necessary to end as it does, mourning without hope the sundering of valuable ties. It is not true that the body is 'a clod, a vase of earth, constrained to hold the breath of God.' The idea referred to here, as far as there is any true idea in the matter, is that presented to Adam and Eve after the fall. After sin came in, God said 'Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.' But observe, he does not say that the *body* is dust merely, but 'dust *thou* art;' and when the connection with God ceases, you go down into the grave, soul and body, without distinction. Observe that this piece is written by one under the Christian dispensation, looking to Christ: 'To Him I look,' &c. I deny that in the dispensation of redemption, the body is 'a clod,' or that there is any such distinction between the body and soul as this kind of discourse makes. If the body is a clod, the soul is a clod too; and if the soul is in a state of redemption, the body is too. This whole idea of their parting, and each going its own way, is a false one. Whether we look at the dispensation in which law reigns, or that in which Christ reigns, the soul and body are treated alike. For the soul to assume that it is an angelic substance, but the body a clod, is presumptuous arrogance and self-conceit.

Should it be objected that this doctrine dooms all past generations to destruction, inasmuch as their bodies went down to dust—I answer, The souls of those in Hades died as well as their bodies, and went down with them into the grave. Then if the soul is of such a nature that it can still be saved, while the body cannot, it is no impeachment of God's honor and goodness if he saves all the souls he can. If this answer is not satisfactory, I request you, as the most economical way, to read what I have written on this subject in the Berean and Perfectionist.

THE FREE CHURCH CIRCULAR.

HARRIET H. SKINNER, EDITRESS.

ONEIDA RESERVE, JAN. 10, 1851.

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

☞ We shall have to enlarge our sheet, or print it oftener, in order to keep our readers along with the studies and experience of the Association. If the Circular is the voice of the Free Church, it must certainly have more utterance, to give any adequate expression to the heart and mind it attempts to serve. For instance, we have our Home-Talks almost as regularly in the evening mail as the daily Tribune; and we like to transfer them in their freshness to these pages of the 'preserving art,' as well for family reference as for the edification of our friends abroad. So we are anticipating some movement in the line of 'extension,' when we get through with this volume.

A Word of Thankfulness.

We found ourselves in company, the other day, at a railroad depot, with several persons who were away from home, and suffering great disappointment from the irregularities of the public conveyances, and sudden frustration of their plans of proceeding. They were of that class who could not afford to buy speed at any cost;—and in their irritation at Providence, and at each other, and their bickerings with those whose offers of assistance they refused on account of the prices, we found occasion enough to pity the children of this world, and 'thank the goodness and the grace that on our birth have smiled,' and made us the heirs of a happier lot. These unfortunates seemed to us like orphans, left to themselves, to work out their own fortunes, and contend with fortune, and thank their wits for every good thing they enjoyed; while we were the children of him who owns all things, who 'knoweth what things we have need of before we ask him,' and has said, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake

thee'—of a rich Father who loves to have us enjoy the munificence of his wealth, without concern.

In our excursions, the *expense* is no deduction from the pleasure; for we always go abroad with the approbation and outfit of our heavenly Father, and we can have no fear of impoverishing him. Then, we never have any bad luck; for, besides that we recognize a special providence, preserving us in our going out and coming in, (as the history of our journeyings for many years gives memorable record,) we have the precious faculty of enjoying disappointments. In pursuing any outward purpose, there is always a quiet reserve in our minds—'If the Lord will, we will do this and that'—and then if any thing interferes, the simple question arises, What does the Lord mean by this? And we are ready to sit down, and watch his signal, or study out the lesson he has written in our circumstances. Then, we are never half so far away from home as others who go abroad. Cultivating spiritual, central fellowship, we are never away from society—never away from our business, or our books; the first is, waiting on God; and our Bible is a library in itself, with the key of the Spirit of truth to unlock its treasures. All this was such a practical reality in our experience on the occasion alluded to, that we set our seal anew to the saying of Paul: 'Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come,' and thanked God for an education in godliness.

True Obedience.

There are three kinds of obedience, that may be described—only one of which is true. On one side there is legal obedience—obedience proceeding from fear—which is not true obedience. It is worthless, except as a preliminary—as keeping things in a position for something better. Persons are liable to make the mistake of confounding this with true obedience. True obedience springs from attraction;—but here we must discriminate again, and

carefully note the *source* of attraction. Is our obedience from attraction to the thing done, or attraction to God? If the former, it is not true obedience. A mother wishes to have her child obedient, and to that end makes all its work attractive, either in itself, or by sugar-plums and specific rewards, and so manages to get obedience by attraction; but if it is secured in this way, by attraction to the thing required, or its results, it is not true obedience. This we may call obedience from downward attraction.

There is a third motive for obedience, which is different from fear, and different from downward attraction. It is *love to a superior*—affinity of nature with the superior, such as makes us feel that his will is good, and makes us love to have him satisfied. That produces true obedience; it puts us in a condition to work as no other motive can. A feeling of delight in doing the will of another, will lead us to do things that are not at all attractive, and do them without any reference to their results.

That spirit which works from attraction to a superior, will alone ensure the highest kind of obedience. If we set out to obey by getting up an attraction for the things required, or the results of our own action, it is not true obedience. Bring up a child to do your will by making the thing attractive simply, and you will not succeed at all. But secure the confidence of your child, so that he wants to please you, and does things because they please you, and you then have perfect command of him, and gain the full sweep of his obedience.

Christ says, 'I delight to do thy will, O God.' With that feeling he went forward, and did things that were very unattractive in themselves, and yet they were

his highest pleasure. The connection between him and his Father, made even the sufferings of the cross attractive.—I get a sense of the will of God in me, covering some proposed action, and that sense is a pleasure to me: and though the thing to be done may be unattractive and even cruel to my separate feelings, yet I should not be satisfied to leave it undone. It is a real pleasure to me; and after God has made his will known to me, I say, Now I would do that thing even if God did not want it done; because it is the best thing that could be done. The highest force of will cannot be developed by attraction towards objects or results merely. It can be developed only by obedience to another's will, without any reference to the repulsiveness of the service. As we value obedience, let us understand clearly what it is. It is an obedient relation of spirit to spirit. It is such a relation of spirits, that the will of one plays into the other. All external obedience—obedience to the letter and word is valuable only as it tends to and results in that relation of spirits.

The efficiency and capability of persons in the service of God, depends more on the spirit of true obedience than on talent. He will choose those whom he finds most happy and hearty in executing his will; and persons will get into office, and important positions in his kingdom, not according to their talents, but in proportion to the amount of flexibility and obedience of spirit there is in them. And the reward will still be according to their spirituality; for it is the depth and refinement of their spiritual organization that makes the obedience described, possible. The power of obedience, is indeed the highest kind of talent. It is that which presents

spirit to spirit, and brings the will into a position where another can play into it. There are many who might do glorious service to the truth, as far as talent goes, and yet cannot, simply because there is not enough obedience in their spirit; God cannot get access to their will. The highest ability, genius, self-respect and every thing we want, will be developed in us in proportion as we get this spirit of obedience; and discipline, so far as it tends to secure this spirit, is favorable to the highest manifestation of genius. Obedience and education will be found identical at last.

New Principles of Taste.

A HOME-TALK ON COLOR.

Light is white. Whiteness is a compound of the seven colors. The rainbow is simply the analysis and decomposition of light by the effect of water—an operation which books will explain. The rainbow exhibits the seven elements of light separated; and to prove that those seven colors that appear in the rainbow, together make light, or white, an experiment of this kind is sometimes made:—A circular plate, divided into seven triangular sections which meet at the centre, so that all the colors are represented on it in their order, is set whirling swiftly, and it looks white. The seven colors have a certain order in which they appear in the rainbow, and as good a way as any to remember that order is to make a word of the initials: Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, Violet. Commencing with Red, it makes the word *Roygbiv*.

The fact now to be noticed, is, that *green* is the centre. It is what the Fourierites would call the *pivotal* color. I confess to a special fancy for green.—I think it is the best of all the colors, and in its right place, the centre of all. It is associated in our minds with youth and growth in the vegetable world, and it seems that the Creator has a fancy for

green, in choosing to associate it with the beautiful ideas of youth, growth, and freshness of life. As we may say, in choosing his pattern for the carpet of the world, he selected green. I totally object, therefore, to the contemptible use of the word *green*, which is so popular. It ought to be the greatest compliment that could be paid to persons, to call them *green*, and that is the position I shall assume in the lecture this evening.

I suppose a person who is just in the flush of youth, inexperienced and unacquainted with the ways of the world, as it is said, (which means unacquainted with its evil ways,) who is honest himself, and supposes other folks are honest; who is expecting pleasure from every thing, and full of hope, is called *green*. Such a person is considered contemptible in comparison with those who have had experience enough of the world to know that it is full of mischief, and to have lost their respect for it—such as have lost their own honesty and worn out their susceptibilities, and have come into a state where they have solved the mystery of life, as they think. Here are two characters opposed to each other, and one character calls the other *green*, and laughs at him. Well, which of these two is the happiest? "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise." Which then is the greatest fool—the one who knows so much of the world that he has lost his interest in it, and found out that the devil is almighty, or the one who has some hope and joy, and instinct that there is a God and heaven over him?—I ask again, which is the fool? If happiness is the test, the green one is the wisest, unquestionably; for the green one enjoys life better than the one who is *dry*. (There ought to be a counter term to green. Those who laugh at *greenness* should confess themselves *dry*. Christ says: "If these things be done in the *green* tree, what shall be done in the *dry*." The trees in the spring of the year are green and full of life; and in the fall of the year, what was green be-

comes dry and brown. So those who call others green, in order to claim superiority in the case, should claim to be *brown*, 'done brown.' Pray, what color are you? If this man is green, and green is contemptible, then the opposite of it, which is *brown*, should be your color. Certainly those men who have got into a supercilious state towards God's creation, and call those who are unsophisticated, green, are brown—used up.) To proceed, take the pocket-book dropper:—which is the fool—he or the countryman that he practises upon? If the countryman has any honesty in him, in a good sense of the word, he is *green*; but the other is dry and done brown in a damnable sense.

Well, perhaps it is not fair to make happiness the sole test in the case; because if the views which experience has taught the brown man, are correct and truthful, and the views which the green man has imbibed are false, then as happiness preponderates on the one side, and truth on the other, we should still be obliged to give some degree of estimation to the feeling which calls a man green in a contemptible way. But how is this? Which of the views and feelings of these two men, are nearest truth?—That is the great question in the case, after all.

To put the question in somewhat more familiar shape, and one which covers the ground more fully: take the opposite feelings and views of youth and old age. See the boy just as he is blooming into life, looking forward hopefully; viewing the universe full of mystery and interest; covered with rose-color; with imaginations lively and celestial in regard to the happiness before him, and the possibilities of existence. There is the picture on one side. Then see the old man, who has gone through life and found, like Solomon, that "all is vanity and vexation of spirit;" that the days have come "in which he has no pleasure in them," and he has, as it were, pulled down his sails; and ceased to enjoy or to hope in any vivid way. The old man is

called *wise*, and the young man is called *green*. (Well, if you call the young man green, I must persist in calling the old man brown.) Now I want to know which of these two, in their theory of life, is nearest the truth, the old man or the boy—the green one or the brown?

Or take the case of a young girl at sweet sixteen, when she thinks there is a reality in love, and romance and heaven in this world; when she sees all along down the pleasant valley before her, husband and children, and home, as things which are delightful and beautiful; when she believes there is such a thing as friendship, social harmony, music of the heart; and that the world is full of delights. Then turn to the grave old lady, who has quarrelled her way through a domestic bedlam; found romance a humbug, and love a child's dream—that this is a hard world, and that the main thing is to get money.

Here are the wise ones that we call brown, on the one hand, and the green ones on the other. Which are nearest right in their views of things? Well, both are making mistakes, undoubtedly; but which is making the greatest? That is the question. The green one is making the mistake of fancying that the good which imagination paints (and paints correctly, i. e., in a way which is perfectly adapted to human nature) is *immediately* attainable, and makes no proper calculation for the difficulty of attaining it. That is a mistake. But the belief that it *is* attainable—that there is goodness—that the glorious scene before us is a reality; that belief I hold to be correct, and shall do so as long as I believe that God is almighty.—If I believed that the devil was almighty, and that the earth was his, then I should say that the belief of the green one in reference to the possibility of happiness, and the ground of hope, is false and illusive. But because God is almighty, and able to do for us exceeding abundantly, above what we ask or think, I must believe that those glorious imaginations of youth are correct, as to the

main idea of the possibility of happiness. So then the green one sees the object correctly, but is in a mistake in regard to the feasibility of getting at it. He does not calculate the difficulties between his position and the object; and in that respect the young person is green in the sense of foolishness.

Now let us see what is the mistake of the brown. The brown ones, such as I have described, who have got their wisdom only from this world, have met the difficulties in the way to their object, and found them so great that they have despaired of attaining it. They have come to regard the visions of youth a delusion. In fact they have become converted from the religion of their youth, to infidelity in reference to happiness.— They have settled into the belief that the devil is almighty, and that there is no God. I say this is the greater mistake of the two;—the error in one case amounting to something like fanaticism, in the other to cold infidelity. The green are enthusiasts, and the brown are infidels. Which is the worst? Which makes the greatest mistake? I say the infidel; because he ignores or denies the final end of existence, while the enthusiast fairly recognises the end, but miscalculates the means.

Let us compare these two states in another respect. We have balanced their merits in regard to the theory of life; now let us see which has the most correct estimate of their own state.— The green one is full of curiosity and interest, and that implies that he considers himself at the threshold of knowledge. He feels that he is surrounded by mysteries and greatness which he has not measured at all, and of course has a low estimate of his attainments in wisdom. He has a fresh and eager appetite for knowledge, and sees everything around to tempt and gratify it.

On the other side, the brown one is in a state of feeling where he is acquainted with every thing; has solved all mysteries. There is nothing curious that deserves his attention, for he is

wise; he has measured the temple of God, and knows all about it. He knows what life is; he knows theology; he is a judge of Mesmerism, rappings, and all such things, and there is no mystery about them to him. He is a finished man. Now which of these two is most correct? We say the green one, so far as he is modest, and has a true sense of his condition as on the threshold of knowledge, imagining unfathomable mysteries all around him, which is the real truth, is most correct. But the self-conceit of the other, in thinking himself to have fathomed every thing, is a monstrous falsehood. The brown one is not only at the threshold of all true knowledge, as well as the green one, but he is in a mistake about his condition, which makes it more difficult and less likely for him to ever get into true wisdom.

Then I go back to the green ones, and say, they are the happiest and wisest, and have the best view of the universe and themselves; and all that I should propose as important to them is, that they should *remain* green. The trouble is, they get sick of it as they launch forth into life. As they meet difficulties they gradually forget their visions of youth, till at last they shape their theories according to the reign of the devil. My advice would be to them, to betake themselves to God for their helper in the attainment of the glory they see ahead; to go along with full confidence in him, and have patience in the breaking up of their ideas of immediate feasibility.— Instead of losing their appetite, and getting discouraged, they should push by 'the dweller of the threshold,' and cherish perseveringly the lively, fresh imaginations of youth. I advise them to keep these imaginations through thick and thin, and as to life and hope, be forever green, and steadily push right through for the vision that they see, till they find it in God. And I advise the brown ones to hasten back as fast as they can into greenness.

It was the city that coined that word *green*, in its contemptible sense;

the city *versus* the country. The city calls the countryman green.—The city has its tastes conformed to side-walks and brick houses, until it almost hates to see any thing that is green. Artificial life may so pervert the taste, that a man may come to despise God's carpet. I find that my friends in the spiritual world, who belong to the very best society, are the greenest sort of folks. I recommend to every one to make it a matter of conscience if they cannot do any better, to be faithful to first loves, and not despise the pleasures of their youth; but believe that in them they come nearest to making true discoveries of the nature of the universe, and get back where they will see the universe through those young eyes again. I am not at liberty to look back at the tastes of childhood as foolish. I worship God in the fashion I did then, except that I know more about him, and see further through the creation to the Creator than I did then. I recognise the same glory and romance which I saw then, to be true, and more than I saw then. I know that those imaginations never overdrew God's ability, but fell short of it; and I go back to them as the first letter of the alphabet, and learn the whole language from it. There is where I expect to worship God forever, in greenness and youthfulness; and the best rhyme that I know of, is, that of *youth with truth*. Those two words should be associated in our minds: and as truth is the Spirit of God, it might be said that youth worships God without knowing it. The real advantage of faith, is, to give us a knowledge of God so that we can worship him with the understanding as well as the life. Young imaginations worship, like the people of Athens, the unknown God. Religion comes, as Paul did, not to abolish their worship, but to say to them, 'Whom ye ignorantly worship him declare I unto you.' I stick to going a fishing as one of my ordinances, and count myself faithful to my first love, in doing so. I love fishing now as I did when I was young, and have the same kind of feeling

in it; and I find it forms a very good connection between the present and the past. Instead of despising and forsaking the delights of our youth, I am entirely in favour of hunting up such kind of treasures, and reviving our taste for those which are really innocent and healthful. We shall get into fellowship with God by returning to our original playfulness and liveness of imagination, hope and greenness.

'Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' The true meaning and force of Christ's saying is this:—The green one is mistaken in regard to the means, and the brown one has lost sight of the end. They that will be saved must return to greenness, so far as to get the end in view again, carrying with them the wisdom they have gained in their experience, so that they will not labor under their original mistake; i. e., they must renounce the mistakes both of the brown ones and green ones.

Be of One Mind.

"For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."—"So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."

If we are members one of another and 'no man hateth his own flesh,' then we shall nourish and cherish one another when we come thoroughly to understand ourselves. For instance, when we see that one of the other members has edifying truth working in his mind, that he wishes to bring out, we shall try to help him in spirit and word, instead of confining ourselves in our own thoughts. The true spirit is one that lays to heart the edification of the whole body, and will therefore encourage any member in the effort to do this. Christ has a right to make use of any of his members, and it is an un sanctified, selfish spirit, in any one, that will make him feel uncomfortable, envious and cha-

ing, to see another member active and fruitful in the business of the edification of the whole body. That degree of harmony will exist in the body of Christ that exists in the natural body, which makes one member help another. Suppose that there is some thing to be done which only the hands are capable of doing, but the hands are not near enough to do the thing required; then there is that unity of purpose, and single-eyed obedience to the central will in the legs and feet that induce them to wait on the hands, and help them by carrying them to the place where they can act. This same unity of purpose will act in the members of Christ's body, when 'we all come into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.'

Paul intended to rebuke this spirit of self-reference when he said, 'Let nothing be done through strife and vain glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.'—There is no member of Christ's body but what loves to be inspired, active and fruitful. The difficulty is not that we do not love to act, but that our actions are apt to be self-originated, uninspired, and inharmonious. Christ is equally desirous of having us active and fruitful: then by as much as we hate this dormant unfruitful state, by so much as we love the healthy, buoyant feeling that inspired action produces, let us anchor our own motives for every thing we do, back in the mind of Christ—nourish and cherish and wait on inspiration in others, and discard that spirit of self-reference, which cannot do this with pleasure.

H. J. S.

Home Communications.

Kingston, Dec. 28, 1850.

DEAR BRO.—We were glad to receive a letter from you, dated Oneida. The dearest associations of our hearts are

connected with this Home of homes. Was it not for the fact, that the God of Oneida was with us, we should envy you your present circumstances.

I think this saying of Christ, 'Ye are the salt of the earth, the light of the world,' truly applicable to those you are surrounded with. Our present circumstances have driven us to an appreciation of Association. We find many sides of us are unprotected; we are like soldiers fighting single-handed, instead of in a solid square.

The exhortation of Paul we find good for us; viz., 'Take unto yourselves the whole armour of God, above all taking the shield of faith.' Such constant contact with the world has a tendency to dim my faith, and cover up the workings of my interior nature. I can sympathise with believers in isolated positions better than I ever could before. I often think of this saying of Mr. N.,—'The spirit of Christ will make us always feel that we are in the *morning of existence.*' In spite of all the pressure of unbelief I can feel that part of my nature which is open to the influence of Gods' spirit, bubble up with beauty and happiness. The mighty power that worketh in us is stronger than the infidelity of the world. Gov. Seward said, that the good sense and righteousness of the people of the north was a spring, which the pressure of southern hypocrisy and oppression would make recoil and act with terrible vengeance. So there is a spring, elasticity and everlasting endurance to the life of God in us, which will assert itself in spite of all obstacles, and even gather new force by them. 'Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.' We have had to contend with another spirit, which Louisa and I have named the *common* spirit—a spirit, which would make us drop down from our official capacity in Christ, and regard ourselves as mere men and women without any particular object before us, only to live and go the rounds of life, tread-mill like. We wish to enter our protest against

this spirit, and confess our union with the family of God; and that God is our Father. We expect the fruits corresponding to our parentage will manifest themselves in us. I never felt more truly, that without Christ I can do nothing. My own life looks hateful to me. The counterpart for it, is the unsearchable riches of Christ.

H. M. W.

Oneida, Dec. 21, 1850.

DEAR G.—I have had some exercises of mind within a few days, which I will try to give you a sketch of. They were interesting to me, and perhaps they may be to you, as helping to scatter clouds that gather around our spiritual vision.

I had been conscious for several days of an increased desire to know more of Christ, more of his salvation and of our relation to him. As I reflected upon it and expressed my feelings in prayer, and earnest petition to God, there was a spirit within me that would keep crowding me up to think, 'Now if you are in earnest about this, you must not think of sleeping till it is attained.' At first I was rather passive, but towards night I found I must decide the matter. And I believe that through a right spirit, I was able to say, 'I do not believe that God wants I should beg, and pray, and tease about it; but believing and trusting God, I may be quiet, and sleep if I can. I believe the Spirit of truth has awakened this desire in me, and that it will be answered in due time.' I had quite a conflict, but continued to resist, and insisted that I would believe the word 'Ask and ye shall receive;' and so slept very well all the night. When I awoke my first thoughts were, You have slept well, but where are your aspirations and strong desires? Before I had time to reply, I found quite an opening in my mind on the subject of my prayer. I knew and felt, that Christ loved me;—and I saw clearly in my mind, *why* he loved me, and *how* he loved, and why he wanted *we should love him*. I saw that there was no partiali-

ty in his love; he loved all alike—that is, he loved our souls. He knew better than we did the worth of our souls—that every soul was valuable, and its salvation would redound to the glory of God through all eternity. He knew his own worth—that he was the unspeakable gift of God to the world. It appeared to me, that the love that had ever existed between the Father and Son, was the origin of the great work of redemption—that thereby God could glorify the Son, and the Son glorify the Father. I had something of this view and assurance last summer. I then saw how Christ had watched over me, how he had intended to make every thing that I passed through turn my attention to him, to make me *look to him*, and fix my eye *singly* on him. He knows that there is no other name under heaven whereby we can be saved; and he knows, and *we must know*, that he is the 'chief among ten thousands, the one altogether lovely.'

The result of it all seems to be, that he wants we should believe and know that he loves us with a love stronger than death, that his delights are with the children of men; and he wants we should love him, and appreciate what he has done to save us, and what he is doing, and will continue to do if we believe his word. Gratitude and thankfulness of heart must rise like incense before him; and the love that unites us to himself, and to one another, and prompts us to keep his commandments, is all that he asks in return. Truly his 'yoke is easy and his burden is light.' P. N.

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