

THE

FREE CHURCH CIRCULAR.

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The Truth shall make you Free.—John 8: 32.
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VOL. III.] ONEIDA RESERVE, FEBRUARY 18, 1850. [NO. 3.

[The following discourse on the 'Importance of Revenge,' gives us a different view of the subject from that which is common in the world. The spirit of it has no affinity with the unclean and worthless benevolence which it is becoming fashionable to regard as the sum of all righteousness. The importance of avenging evil is urged in this article in strong and direct terms. Those however who read it from our point of experience need not be told, that the language used has reference to a *spiritual transaction* exclusively. To us, the realities of spiritual existence are more palpable and serious than any thing outward, and it is in that sphere only, that the exhortations of this article are intended to apply. Our position is precisely that of Paul, in the declaration—'The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down of imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; and having in a readiness to *revenge* all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.' 2 Cor. 9. 4—6. The language of the article, like that of Paul in many instances, is such that those who recognize only external and visible things might interpret it wrongfully, unless we suggested the limitation, which our theory imposes.

Bearing in mind then the *spiritual* significance of this article, we commend its truths to our readers as of the very first importance. If there is one thing needed more than another at this time, to save the world from

sinking into hopeless perdition, it is to wake up *somewhere* the spirit set forth in this Home-Talk. A spirit that sees the infinite moment of good and evil—that acts sincerely in the belief of a heaven and hell—that 'loves righteousness and hates iniquity.'

The effect of receiving and applying the truth embodied in this discourse, has been life to the Association here. Revenge has been let loose upon evils in our own characters, and against our past misdeeds.—The confessions and self-clearings which have lately been published, are illustrations of the spirit which burns in all bosoms, to betray the devil, and revenge ourselves for his abuse of us. It has been the triumph of the spirit of truth, and the casting down of 'the accuser';—bringing truly, salvation and strength. We leave the subject with our readers:]

Home-Talk by J. H. N.—No. 29.

[REPORTED FOR THE CIRCULAR.]

IMPORTANCE OF REVENGE.

"Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what REVENGE! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter." 2. Cor. 7: 10, 11.

In enumerating the characteristics of repentance, in this passage, Paul includes '*revenge*.' There is something

meant in that term, which must come out in us, if we would ever get deliverance from evil. By referring to the case of discipline which Paul was commenting on when he used this language, we shall see, that it had a very special meaning. It was the case of a corrupt man in the Corinthian church, who had committed fornication. The whole body were poisoned with his spirit and involved in his iniquity, when the Apostle, in his first epistle, severely rebuked and called them to repentance. He said to them, 'Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.' He called them to deeds—to a practical thing; and their repentance went that length, that they expelled the wrong doer and cleared themselves of his spirit. They cast him out, and avenged the church on him. Their repentance in this case is described in the passage quoted above. You see that it not only wrought carefulness, and vehement desire, and zeal, and fear, and clearing of themselves, but deeds of destruction. It was like taking a man out to execution.

Revenge is one of the characteristics and elements of true repentance, as much as vehement desire. We cannot satisfy our understandings thoroughly, unless the repentance of our natures extends so far as to revenge the evil that has been done. To get at the matter in a way to satisfy our understandings we must settle down upon the great principle that underlies the universe, that 'God will reward every man according to his works.' If we see the reasonableness and truthfulness of that principle, then we find that revenge has also its legitimate place and operation. 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' 'They that destroy shall be destroyed.' Death

follows sin. Here are hints which we cannot overlook, showing the ultimate tendency of God's plan, with which we must learn to sympathize.

We cannot satisfy the feeling of justice, if there is not even in the atonement of Jesus Christ, revenge as well as goodness and mercy. And the two elements will be found to exist there in perfect development. Although the atonement is full of mercy, yet God is free to maintain revenge. He says, 'I will *avenge* myself of mine adversaries;' and again, Paul speaks of Christ's 'taking *vengeance* on them that know not God and obey not the gospel.' 'Shall not God *avenge* his own elect, which cry day and night to him?' 'Those under the altar cried for *vengeance*; and the answer was not a refusal, but a demand for patience only; the principle of revenge was not set aside. God only wished to hold them to patience until the proper time. So when the seventh trumpet sounded, that time had come; and the word went forth 'to destroy them that had destroyed the earth.' You can see it is in God's heart to revenge the destruction of evil doers, notwithstanding his mercy in Jesus Christ. The mercy manifested in Christ is a sort of parenthesis in the government—an interior transitional affair, which does not interfere with the principle that 'God will reward every man according to his works.' It only stays the course of justice for the purpose of giving persons an opportunity to *avenge* themselves, repair the evils they have done and get out of the way of *vengeance*; it does not shut off *vengeance* from its proper action at last. Paul was in fellowship with God, and stands as an exponent of God's kingdom; and he stands in that attitude where he could say, 'Having a

readiness to *revenge* all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.' He, with all his mercy and goodness, manifested a secret purpose of revenge in his heart. He only wanted the church to *clear themselves*, and get out of the way of the blow, and then he was ready to call upon them to *avenge* all the disobedience of the wicked. He did not go for the suppression of revenge, but simply for restricting the action of it until the right time.

All this ought to be true of us. There ought to be fire and indignation against evil. We should connect *SIN* with *DEATH* as God does; and that will make us desire the destruction of evil. And on the other hand, if we are in sympathy with him, we shall be restrained according to his mercy. But we must not give ourselves up to any undue tenderness of spirit. This is Universalism. It is a manifest fact that God *revenges*; it is in his character. Paul had this element in his character; and he commended *revenge* as the fruit of true repentance. With these facts before us, we had better consider of it, understand it, and equip ourselves for fellowship with it. We must get in love with the character of God in this respect; who has *mercy* on one hand, but a far-reaching purpose of *revenge* on the other. When I say that God loves that spirit in a man which is elastic, which when it falls rises again, and says, 'The devil shall pay for this,' I mean that quality or action of spirit in him which is properly called *revenge*. It is a spiritual instinct, not wanting in cool calculation, but which will instinctively fire with indignation against evil doers, and be ready to execute just vengeance upon them. We have an instinct of *revenge* just as much as of *love*. You have a natural instinct to

love, and you think that will be saved and cherished; but it is just as appropriate that destructiveness should be saved and cherished, that it may *avenge* itself when wronged. That is sacred too. Destructiveness is as good as conscientiousness, and it is just as desirable for God's kingdom's sake, that we should have a proper spirit of destructiveness and *revenge*, to co-operate with him, as of benevolence. God says, 'I will destroy them that destroy the earth;' and I call on every one to sympathize with God, and to stand ready to take sides with him, not merely in the disposition to save, but also to destroy. We must have hearts big enough to take in this twofold idea.

God is not dealing in respect to this matter in a petty, retail way, but on a large comprehensive scale. He is waiting long—first avenging himself on his adversaries by getting all out of them that he can. When his *mercy* acts, it is often *vengeance* turned one way. Take for instance, the Jews' crucifixion of Christ. God purposed to *revenge* it upon that whole nation. What did he do? He held up before that nation what they had done, until he obliged them to a great measure to turn traitors to it; he brought them all under conviction. This was a terrible blow against the agents of the crucifixion, and all concerned in it. Here *mercy* was *vengeance*. The same act which saved three thousand souls on the day of Pentecost, and poured out *mercy* and goodness to them, also struck a spear into the heart of the Jewish nation; and the result was, they rose in final desperation and wrath, and were all cut to pieces. Do not take it as all *mercy* to those who were saved by the outpouring of the spirit; it was also *vengeance* on those who had cruci-

fid his Son; and he did not stop there, but followed them in the destruction of Jerusalem, until he hurled the whole nation into perdition. He first rescued all that he could—disembowelled the nation, and then destroyed it. God's purpose through the whole was revenge. He destroyed them that destroyed good.

Now take these two principles together, and there is nothing incompatible between mercy and revenge. Mercy carried far enough is the first and best way to revenge evil. Then, beyond that it is ready to destroy. It will first get all it can out of the devil's hands, and then crush him. Never forget that he is to be destroyed, and all with him; and have in yourselves a readiness to revenge all disobedience. You cannot be true and patriotic, and have real matter-of-fact righteousness, if you suppress the spirit that wants to see 'every man rewarded according to his works.' If you have a soft, tender spirit that cannot exercise justice, you cannot exercise true repentance nor love. When I see an evil done, I say to myself, That shall be paid for; there will be destruction where that came from. I wait patiently to see *where* it came from. I make all distinction between the *authors* and the *victims* of evil; but there shall be vengeance. If there has been wrong done, there shall be destruction. The real perpetrator shall be found out and destroyed. 'God will render to every man according to his deeds.' 'Every man shall receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done.' If a man can clear *himself* of evil, then it goes back on to those behind him. But every wrong shall be revenged.

Here is a man who has done wrong; has misused God and the truth. He stands to me as the representative of that wrong. If he clears himself, and satisfies me that he has repented, I will go back and inquire still, where the author is. But until he does this, *he* is the representative of that evil to me;

and the avenging blow must fall there where the mischief is done, unless the man clears himself; and he can only do that by separating from the evil, and being ready to *deal the blows himself*. My sense of justice, my destructiveness demands gratification, and in sympathy with God it shall have it. It is a good part of my nature, and shall not go unregarded. You will find you will not get rid of evil until you go clear over, to plotting against it at least. Determine to be revenged on the devil for every evil you have ever been in, and calculate to square accounts with him at last in one way or another. I advise all persons not to lose sight of the quality of revenge, in their repentance. Do not lose sight of any mischief done, either by yourself in the past, or by others; but have a memory long as an Indian's. I keep watch, and I know there is a spirit in me waiting, and ready, and willing to strike a blow where mischief has been done. If innocent persons stand in the way of the blow, I will go to plotting for them. Every thing in my history has gone to encourage that spirit in me, and been steadily urging me on. The assertion of the rights of that spirit, stands out in my published letter to Weld. I knew that such positive sincerity would make people cringe; but I felt bound to put it forward and give it expression as I did. God held me to that spirit that had 'a readiness to revenge all disobedience.'

Vengeance is a part of God's nature; and I call on all to co-operate with him in it. I will tell you what you can all do to cultivate that spirit of co-operation in yourselves, in a practical way. You can *expose* the devil. Make up your minds to betray iniquity. Nothing cuts worse than the treachery of friends. I have been so often betrayed, and hunted down by a spirit that makes use of friendship to get into confidence and then betray, and have been so surprised and confounded by treachery, that I know how it feels. Bring in all your truthfulness then and betray the devil.

One influence to strengthen *truthfulness* is desire of vengeance; and as God gives us means and sagacity to detect evil, we have also means to avenge it by exposing it. We will not suffer the element of revenge to come in and swallow all others; but come in as a stimulus to truthfulness, and just as desirable a stimulus, as benevolence. I should like to see a people with memories that will let no facts be lost, and with the patience of God, who would co-operate with him, and with a zest too, 'in the time of his wrath,' when he shall take vengeance on evil doers, and shall 'destroy them that destroy the earth.'—Read here Isa. 63.

There is no strength, no body to your repentance, or your righteousness, or your talk, until you have some revenge in it. It is watery stuff. Nothing short of revenge will unlock the grasp of evil from your spirits. Suppose a man does me a mischief, and afterward pays me for it, so that I am whole. That of itself, is not sufficient; it does not satisfy my heart; and nothing ought to satisfy it, short of the man's repentance or destruction. Something must quench the evil in its source. Until that is done, I am exposed to the same thing again. Restitution merely for damage done, does not satisfy the great Judge, or a just man. There must be vengeance in one form or the other; either the man's entire redemption from the spirit that caused him to commit the wrong, or his destruction. God proclaimed himself to Moses, as 'the Lord, merciful and gracious, but who will by no means clear the guilty.' He 'visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children.' He follows the spirit from father to son until he can destroy it, without respect of persons. Evil spirits are transmitted by contact and propagation. If a pestilence has broke out among your friends, you have them removed to the hospital without respect of persons. I want to carry out God's patriotism in the destruction of evil, wherever I find it. I do not want to be shielded myself. If I have inher-

ited evil from my father, I am willing to suffer that it may be destroyed.

You may lie down and groan under evil till doomsday; but till you get up, and avenge yourself on the devil, you will not get clear of it. Not fight uncertainly, but find out when and how to strike a blow that will reach his heart. The effectual way to co-operate with God in the destruction of evil, is to form ourselves at once into a committee of the whole, as God's police for its detection and revenge.

CRITICISM.

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

"Grown wiser for the lesson given,
I fear no longer, for I know
That where the share is deepest driven,
The best fruits grow."

CARELESSNESS.

H. is naturally careless, has small caution and secretiveness; and she has indulged in the feeling more or less that it was so constitutional it was almost excusable, and has not had a sense of its evil. But we are seeing more and more that in the judgment, carelessness will not be considered a misfortune, or venial; that it is something which cannot enter in through the gates into the city, but is without with the unjust and filthy, the dogs and sorcerers and whoremongers; and if we would not be excluded with it, we must give it up to the severest criticism of the spirit of truth, and renounce forever all excuses and coverings for it. It is not a mere habit attaching to character, but a *spirit*, a 'ruler of the darkness of this world,' and it is a spirit not only gross and obtuse, but positively *unjust*. Another name for carelessness is unfaithfulness or *injustice*.

If we take a Concordance and run through the passages under the heads judgment, justice, just, &c., we shall find that justice is one of the strongest attributes of God, and of all goodness. A just weight is his delight. His law was very nice about balances and measures, and just restitution for wrongs.—

'Life for life—an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' And we notice particularly that sins of ignorance and carelessness, were not passed by as guiltless, but atonement was provided for them as for other sins. If a person kill another unwittingly, as by the felling of a tree, he was to flee to a city of refuge, where the avenger of blood could not pursue him; but he was not allowed to leave that city till the death of the high priest then in office; and the instruction was—'Ye shall take no satisfaction for him that is fled to the city of his refuge, that he should come again to dwell in the land until the death of the priest; so ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are; for blood, it defileth the land, and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it.' The law concerning 'sins of ignorance,' was not less significant: 'If a soul sin and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the Lord, though he wist it not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity;' he must bring an offering, and the priest make an atonement for him, and he shall be forgiven; 'It is a trespass-offering; he hath certainly trespassed against the Lord.'

The sound doctrine of the gospel carries out the justice of the law, in many such passages as these:—'Whosoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them.' 'Every man shall be rewarded according to his works—receive according to the deeds done in the body—be judged by his own judgment, and rewarded with his own measure.' Here is no favor to carelessness; it will reap of what it sows. And as the sacrifice of Christ covered all the offerings of the law, his blood was shed for sins of carelessness and ignorance; and not for our forgiveness chiefly, but to cleanse us from these sins, and strengthen us to fulfill the righteousness of the law.

'Love worketh no ill to his neighbor.' It finds a way then to avoid careless-

ness, for carelessness is often as injurious as malice; its consequences involve as much misery. It murders and robs and bears false witness, and lends itself to the devil in a thousand ways. If idleness may be called 'the devil's workshop,' carelessness is the devil's sport; by which he scatters firebrands, arrows and death. What better is it to be a tool of the devil to work his mischief through careless action, than to be an intentional evil doer. For instance, in the late explosion in New York, what an avalanche of horror and misery was suddenly precipitated by the undoubted action of carelessness. In the *spirit* of carelessness a person is constantly liable to the most wholesale crimes. Carelessness crucified Christ. Peter says—'And now brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did this, [that is, desired a murderer to be granted to them, and killed the Prince of Life] as did also your rulers.' We can see from the account, that Pilate, and those that cried 'Crucify him,' had not carefully examined Christ's cause, and were not careful to do justice. Pilate, and probably many of the mob, were not personally malicious, but inconsiderate, *unjust*.

'He that is unjust in that which is least, is unjust also in much; if therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who shall commit to your trust the true riches?' The principle brought out here evidently is, that if we are not habitually careful, faithful persons, even in small things, we shall be untrusty in spiritual things; we shall have mental unfairness and superficiality, indiscretion and wastefulness, that will unfit us to be stewards of the mysteries of God; but the good and faithful servant who is *faithful over a few things*, is judged fit to be made ruler over many things. The genuine faith-condition of the heart, implies a spirit of precision and order, which does not leave things at loose ends, but completes and finishes in all its details, whatever it undertakes, and considers any thing once done, as done for good. A

careless spirit, accustomed to mistakes, expects to do its work over again, and in matters of faith, will be always laying again the foundation principles—letting the truth slip, and falling into the condemnation of the devil. It is a good motto of the careful, 'whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing well.' A careless person's mind and spiritual treasures may be compared to his outward affairs; they will be likely to be in similar disorder, and often unavailable when most needed, because not in proper arrangement—too chaotic and unfinished for use.

In an article in the Berean, entitled the 'Moral character of Unbelief,' intidility is proved to be the offspring of superficiality; and superficiality is ascribed to laziness, sensuality and worldliness. These three things, *laziness, sensuality and worldliness*, are all closely connected with the spirit of carelessness. Every one knows how much laziness has to do with unfaithfulness; indolence and slowness go together. Sensuality produces an obtuseness, cloudiness, drowsiness of spirit, that directly exposes to blunders and oversights. In warning his disciples to watch for his coming, Christ says, 'Take heed that ye be not overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.' 'Watch and be sober.' Watchfulness and sobriety are natural companions. Bright-eyed watchfulness is never married to a sensual, sluggish nature. The cares and perplexities of worldliness—the interfering and distracting calls which a worldly person is tormented with, lead to carelessness. The haste of worldliness tends to heedless action.

Carelessness is often the result of absent-mindedness, or rather double-mindedness—a state in which our thoughts are occupied with one thing, and our action with another. We are not a whole person to one thing at once. Under inspiration we shall be able to give our whole heart, and converge all our senses to the matter, which engages us,

and then we shall not make mistakes. When we do all that we do, *heartily*, as unto the Lord, every thing will be done well. Half-hearted action is likely to be careless action. 'If thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light.' If we have but one master, and but one purpose of heart, we shall be clairvoyant in our sphere.

The Spirit of Truth is essentially nice and discriminating; it is 'full of eyes,' like the four beasts, keen and piercing. Our hope is, that if we yield ourselves to it, it will take possession of us, pervade us, and become an inflexible instinct in us; an instinct of *consideration*. 'Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.' Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fall into careless action. Careless action is emphatically uninspired action.

Professing to be members of Christ, shall we make Christ a minister of carelessness? God forbid.

WORLDLY REFINEMENT.

The fact that we find it difficult to criticise E--- is perhaps a ground of criticism. She hides her heart; she is not simple and childlike enough to act out her nature. She has a superficial refinement and outside prettiness, that is not of Christ, but of the world. External refinement is good in its place, but it is often deceptive and self-righteous. She needs to turn inward, and covet earnestly the deep spiritual refinement that is pleasing to God, who is a spirit, and loves spiritual excellence in every thing. The gentility we receive from education in the world, is sure to betray us; it will not pass with God, nor in his kingdom. Nothing but the charity described by Paul, will stand trial; that will enable us to act just right, and express genuine politeness in *all* circumstances—it *never faileth*. But a superficial refinement fails in unpropitious circumstances, and may always be detected by its inconsistencies, and partialities. For instance, it will be over-nice and assiduous in pleasing superiors,

and perhaps careless and unkind to equals and inferiors. It is a respecter of persons, and lets familiarity breed contempt. The cure for this evil is to think less of pleasing men, and more of pleasing God. If we please God, we shall be sure to please all who can appreciate beauty in character.

E. belongs decidedly to the class of improvement-seekers and the earnest hearted among us; and as her activity and obliging nature, as well as her nicety and good taste become subordinate to Christ, and are inspired by charity, she will make a valuable and lovely woman.

THE FREE CHURCH CIRCULAR.

GEORGE W. NOYES, EDITOR.

ONEIDA RESERVE, FEB. 18, 1850.

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

☞ We wish to express our thanks to the Reporter who furnishes the Home Talks for our paper; and in order that the readers of them may have the same intelligent pleasure, we would mention that Mrs. M. E. CRAIG is the person to whom they are indebted. Nearly all the Home Talks that have been published since the middle of the last Vol were reported by her, besides a mass of them now on hand. Those who are acquainted with this kind of duty, will appreciate the amount of labor that has been bestowed, and the ability with which the reports have been executed.

☞ We can say to the subscribers of the Circular, for ourselves and for the united circle here, that we have a new appreciation of the relations existing between us and them. Since the criticism and clearing of our list at the close of the last volume, we feel that these relations are a reality, and not a sham—that there is something sacred, vital, and permanent in our connection. And we think this impression is reciprocated by our friends. Many of the

letters which we receive now, show something more than superficial approbation—tell of deep interest, attraction, union. Our correspondents frequently speak of the paper in terms of regard which we do not choose to publish. Will they not drop a little of that, or at least add to it their views on subjects which will be of general interest?

Things Abroad.

Those who read the political papers will have observed that a pretty serious crisis in government matters, is now impending at Washington. The Northern and Southern interests, the two great wheels in the political machine, have been seen grinding and grinding each other for several years; and they seem now to be getting into a dead lock. If Mr. Clay can succeed this time in staying off the peremptory collision, (which is hardly probable,) it can be only a temporary relief. The interests of the two parties are wholly incompatible, and we consider a dissolution of the union at no distant time altogether certain. As the nation grows larger, it also manifestly grows weaker—the strain on its cohesive element is increased. We do not care to predict, but in view of the possible confusion and distress which may attend the disruption of this national government, we think a good example at least has been set, by the transfer of our interests to another basis.

'Westward the Star of Empire takes its way.' Truly: but there is a limit, where that saying must be fulfilled and become obsolete. The march of human empire has been from the extreme east—successively from Asia to Rome, thence to Germany, England, New England, New York, the great West; and now it is seen crossing the Rocky mountains, with the rushing tide of human enterprise, and settling upon the shores of the Pacific. This certainly is the last expansion of the human race, so far as territory is concerned. The 'Westward' limit has been reached; we have come to the jumping off place.

Now is the time if ever, when God will come in and take a positive lead in the game. He has been content up to this time, to secure his designs of gradual improvement and preparation, by pushing the progressive,

fresh life of the race out into new fields, where it would be unfettered by old institutions and ideas. Every westward advance has been the birth of truth and freedom out of old darkness. God reserved a large territory, (the whole of this new world at least,) unoccupied by what we call civilization, and the inferior Christianity of the East, for the very purpose of educating by successive, migratory movements, the point of development necessary to his purposes. His policy has been, not so much to oppose error directly, and in its ancient seats, as to draw off again and again, the progressive spirit, and each time to free it from some of the dregs of the past.

We see not but that this operation must now close. The world is now occupied. The western wilderness is teeming with civilization. The advance movement, which God has so long stimulated and superintended, has reached the farthest shore of the last continent; and he must now turn back, and go over the ground again. For 1800 years he has pursued the policy of a seeming retreat; but he can retreat no longer. He must turn and push directly upon the enemy. Here is a crisis—a total change of policy, called for by the providential consummation of events. Is it not the natural, unavoidable inference, that this is the crisis which commences the perfect kingdom of God?

Inquiries Answered.

[The following correspondence may serve to correct the impression of some, that this Association is an experiment of Fourierism, or of ordinary Communism:]

*Drummondville, Canada West, }
Jan. 17, 1850. }*

MR. J. H. NOYES—

DEAR SIR:—Knowing but little of your Association, but rejoicing to find that the faithful begin to see more generally that they are bound to cultivate one another's acquaintance, for the sake of the unity to be one day manifested to the world, (and that we hope soon,) I hope it will not be asking too much of you, to give me a short sketch of the plan of your Society's temporal operations;

—whether or not you have adopted any of Fourier's suggestions, whose complicated system, though certainly necessary for a community of unsanctified individuals, would not be required where the heavenly element of love bears sway. My attention had been for some time directed to the Socialist question; but having no confidence in the flesh, I continued a mere spectator, until the *Spiritual Magazine* came to hand, advocating and exhibiting in the Oneida Association the practice of communism among true believers. I have a strong impression, that the day has arrived for the saints to possess the earth. The systems of this world are fast wasting away, having no bond of love to hold them together,—and while the house which has been so long divided against itself is falling, it is our time for co-operation.

Your views on this subject coincide entirely with my own. I believe that the grand outline of Fourier's scheme, will be carried out by the people of God. It is a vast and soul-stirring conception—but much of the detail is unworthy of a holy nature. I shall soon see the Berrian, (one of our community having sent for it,) when I shall acquaint myself with the progress of your society in heavenly things. At such a time as this, we need to be very careful whom we receive (in this we are warned;) but I am sanguine in the hope, that Oneida Reserve is one of those blessed spots on earth, where the Son of Man is now revealing himself. Pray dear sir, write soon and inform me if you can, of any other Association of the kind, you may have heard of. I mean strictly religious Associations.

As I have a great desire to visit you, (should the proposal be acceptable,) will you inform me where to leave the Albany and Buffalo Rail Road in my way to your place.

Hoping that we may meet before long, I remain in the mean while,

Very sincerely yours,

R. S. DE LAZER.

REPLY TO THE FOREGOING LETTER.

Oneida Reserve, Jan. 29, 1850.

MR. R. S. DE LATRE —

DEAR SIR:—I take the earliest opportunity to acknowledge your letter of Jan 17, and in behalf of the person addressed, (who is absent,) and of the Association, will briefly represent to you their reply.

Our 'plan of temporal operations,' has thus far grown into form without any reference to Fourier's philosophy. Ours, starting from an *entirely spiritual* basis, there can be no real identity between the two systems; and the resemblance, if there is any, between our results and his theories, must be only an incidental one. The correspondence and the difference, between this body and the Fourierists as Social Reformers, may be stated in the language of Paul, with a little alteration of terms, thus: 'The Free Church which followed not after Socialism, have attained to a perfect Society, even the vital organization which is of faith. But Fourier who followed after the law of Socialism, hath not attained to the law of unitary life. Wherefore? Because he sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.' With the mode and the motives of professed Socialists—their barren scientifics, and their aching philanthropy, the Community here have little to do. Our hearts are absorbed in studying, recognizing, and devoting ourselves to, the *Rights of God*; and in proportion to our progress in *this* direction, we find all our horizontal relations naturally *crystalize* into the heavenly order. We have thus far succeeded, by neglecting all formulas and mechanical rules in our organization, and by giving only indirect attention to the material interests which were so prominently

put forward by Fourier. We trust the 'organization of industry,' and the universal 'harmony of interests,' to be developed out of our perfected relations to God.

For instance: Let us completely realize the idea that we are his children—that he as our Father, *owns all things*. This is a proposition that needs no scientific demonstration; it appeals directly to the heart of every lover of the truth, and is one that will be ever present to a spiritual mind. But we also know that it is the only sufficient foundation for social organization. If a formula is required—a theoretic statement—for the solution of the Social Problem, we have found it simply expressed in this:—*God owns all things*. In our experience, this vivid truth levels down the obstructions, and answers all the difficulties, which without it, would be practically insurmountable. It requires however, for its complement, a theory of *actual inspiration*. If God owns all things, and we feel our absolute dependence on him for every good, then inspiration must come in to distribute and arrange, and organize.

Under the operation of these simple truths, every thing becomes a gift.—The old feeling of rights, with its cares and complaints, is supplanted, and there is left us only the perception of God's generosity, and the feeling of gratitude. It was in the spirit of these truths, that the disciples met on the day of Pentecost; 'No man said that aught of the things which he possessed was *his own*, but they had all things common. And breaking bread from house to house, they did eat their meat with *gladness and singleness of heart*.'

You will see that with these radical

principles, this movement, as an *associative* one, cannot be measured or calculated by any of the theories of others. We know not ourselves the details of the future, but are content with daily progress, under the guidance of daily inspiration. We believe it is the growing *Kingdom of God*, which will unfold in all material as well as spiritual good, and will 'break in pieces all other kingdoms.' Like yourself, I have been formerly dazzled with Fourier's conceptions. They are perhaps the highest poetry of the *materialized* mind, but they have passed away with me, before the higher poetry which I see in the working power of the Eternal Spirit of *Life*.

Our industrial organization, though in its infancy, is operating well. The prospects in the material department are entirely favorable, though it engages but a moderate share of attention. It is not the object to show off in this respect prematurely. We feel called rather to a school of spiritual manliness; to cultivate unity with the Spirit of God, which is a spirit of inspiration, of *organization*, and will fit us to do *any thing*. We believe it is more important for us to *prepare* ourselves to enjoy, than to seek enjoyment directly. In short it is the peculiar characteristic of this school, which I think distinguishes it from all others, that our attention has been long directed, and is still held, away from the outward to the central. As individuals, and as a body, we find life, light, and assurance, in home improvement, which forbids any concern about external success.

But beyond the satisfied consciousness of the *truth* of our position, we have also abundant evidence of the direct care of God; and this perhaps is the

best ultimate test of all pretensions.—With the will of God in its favor, any enterprise will move irresistibly forward. Without it, though their truthfulness and success may appear perfectly demonstrable, yet the best will fail. We feel amply authorised to depend on this fact; on the presence of God's might, as well as his right.

In answer to your last question, I may say, that I presume there is no other Association in the world, at all like this. There are a considerable number of scattered believers who are identified in heart with this Community, and who will undoubtedly move together into other unions as soon as the way shall be opened.

We have been free to answer your letter thus fully, because an introduction to your circle seems to have been providentially thrown in our way. * * In regard to a visit from yourself, it is left to your own discretion. It would be right for me to say, that the Community do not encourage premature visiting, as it gives but a superficial acquaintance, and is sometimes productive of disappointment. It is true that the most direct method of becoming acquainted with the position of the Association here, and of *intelligently* discerning its spirit, is by a thorough understanding of the published works of J. H. Noyes, who is its central mind. No one can take other than a limited and imperfect view of it, except through this channel. Still we would leave the matter of a personal interview to your own instincts and reflections.

Yours truly,
GEORGE W. NOYES.

☞ Be on the watch to please the Spirit of truth, and it will bring you every blessing. You will always find it your *best friend*.

The Promised Comforter.

The words of Christ to his disciples in his last interview with them, previous to his crucifixion, as related by the Apostle John, are replete with promises and hopes, of a character well calculated to sustain them under the severe trials and temptations they were soon to pass through. His personal ministry among them was about to terminate. Their attachment to him as a man and companion, as well as a teacher, must have become deeply rooted in their sympathies; and a disclosure of the fact, that all the endearing ties and affections growing out of such intimate intercourse as had existed between them were to be suddenly cut asunder, would have produced insupportable grief, had not Christ prepared their minds, by promising that he would pray the Father, and he would send them another Comforter that should abide with them forever; 'even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. John 14: 17. The whole of this chapter and the three succeeding ones abound in words (which are spirit and life) of the deepest encouragement, well calculated to strengthen and anchor the hopes of every believer in Christ beyond things seen and temporal. To have the promise and assurance of a comforter in a fellow mortal, to cheer one for a limited period in this world, is indeed a great blessing. But who can estimate the value of a comforter that can enter the very sanctuary of our hearts, and be the loving companion of our being and consciousness forever? The very idea of attaching the words eternity, forever and ever, to a blessing however small, at once raises its value above all estimation.

Reflection upon the truths set forth in that remarkable discourse of Christ, has proved very fruitful to my faith of late, increasing greatly my love for the Spirit of truth. The object of his discourse appears to have been, to turn their minds from things seen and temporal to things unseen and eternal—from himself as a man, to his successor, the Spirit of truth, the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, 'whom the Father [he

says] will send in my name; He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.' The time had come for the offering up, and nailing to the cross of all their hopes and expectations of outward-bound aggrandizement and prosperity, that they might have a 'better resurrection.' Something corresponding to this probably takes place now in every believer's experience. A process that tends to loosen all attachments to every thing that is not the fruit of resurrection life, the union of the spirit of truth with our hearts. The fact that the spirit of truth is a comforter—a perpetual, ever abiding comforter in every Christ loving heart, present at all times, to cheer and administer consolation in every battle with evil, every trial under discipline, correction, criticism, &c., is a sufficient reason why we should 'rejoice always,' and 'in every thing give thanks.' It is the work of the devil, the everlasting accuser, to make us suppose that the spirit of truth, though it is to be desired while searching our hearts and judging all evil in our characters, yet cannot be loved and enjoyed. If we are perfected through suffering, I think I have arrived at a degree of perfection on this point, that has forever closed the door against the temptation of the accuser.

Is the spirit of truth uncovering the deep secrets of a past life of unbelief and sin? Be not afraid; it is the work of a comforter too, seeking to give you relief by unbinding the heavy burdens with which the devil had laden you while ensnared in his spirit of unbelief. Are you urged by the spirit to the work of confession, self-clearing, and vengeance against evil with which you have been involved? Be of good cheer; it is for the sake of giving you the comfort of a better inheritance in the kingdom of truth. The Comforter in the heart fills the two-fold office of Chaplain and Surgeon in the army. If your spiritual health requires the cutting off of a right hand, or the plucking out of an eye to remove an offense to your true life, the Comforter, with the sword of the spirit, is present, lays bare the evil, lets in the light, and the separating process goes on; and, at the same time, the Spirit maketh intercession for us according to the will of God. 'And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.'

G. C.

The Resurrection.

The power of Christ's resurrection is expressed to me, most energetically, in these words—'Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.' I perceive the same glorious energy in Christ's declaration—'I am the resurrection!' He is the *Prince of Life*. In other descriptions, he is 'a quickening spirit,' a priest made after the 'power of an endless life,' a 'well of water springing up into everlasting life.' In all, the idea is conveyed of an extinguishable, irrepressible, ever-springing life.

This life is in our hearts, as a germ; unbelief is the winter or grave in which it sleeps. But let the gospel shine into our hearts, and we could as easily stop the spring of nature, under the attraction of the ascending sun, as stop the expansion and heavenward ascent of the life of the Son of God. We know that in union with that life, we shall be carried to the bosom of the Father, from whence it proceeded, and whither it returns. Christ was never presented so beautifully to me as in the last Home Talk—'He is the *beginning life*, the first bright link between the universe and the eternal life of the Father; through him a fountain of perfect life gushes forth from the Father; he is the first exercise and perpetual flow of the life of God.' This glorious thing—this eternal life, is given to us all, without money and without price. Truly might the Apostle exclaim, 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?' H.

Experience.

There is a passage in the article 'Practical Faith,' that has been so rich in blessing to me, I am disposed to commend it particularly to others. It is this:—'In time of trial *fall back on Christ*, on generous confidence in him, and his life and light will ooze through, and remove the cloud.' The act is simple, and the beautiful promise sure. If

we are in any perplexity, in any snare, if we have any burden, or any unsatisfied desire, our way is to stop all anxious working of the brain—this struggling but impotent thought—and fall back in *generous confidence* on Christ, and his life and light will ooze through and charge all our consciousness with a delicious peace, in which we shall see clearly, feel truthfully, and act nobly. This act is no more or less than *faith*; and the promise is the Spirit which they that believe shall receive; as it is said, 'out of their belly shall flow rivers of living water.' We cannot learn too soon, that in returning and rest shall we be saved, in quietness and confidence is our *strength*. H.

A Letter, and the Reply.

[The genuine expression of a sincere heart is always refreshing and attractive, under whatever form it is presented. Our readers will detect a tone and spirit in the correspondence below, which redeems it from a mere private value.]

Verona, January 23, 1850.

DEAR BROTHER,—As I will venture to call you, though years have passed since either of us have known whether there was any affinity existing between us or not. For as the evil one was permitted to sow the tares with the wheat, and the edict of the Lord was, that they should grow together till they were ripe, lest the wheat should be injured by the premature destruction of the tares, so we, who received the precious seed, *the Unction from the Holy One*, have suffered much, and been torn apart—have waited and waited long in 'duration vile' shall I say? No; it is not so in waiting the Lord's time. I have not found it so. In the end of every dispensation of his I have found confidence and strength for myself, and charity and generous forbearance for others. And now I think I begin to see the precious fruit being gathered, and the sheaves standing, if not gathered into the storehouse of our great husbandman.

Could I tell you how deeply interested I am in the doctrines disseminated in the Spiritual Magazine, as well as in its scorching criticism, and indeed its contents throughout, you would not think it strange that I accept without hesitation or apology the generous offer made in its terms, and desire its continuance. Are there any among your number who feel a smart sometimes under the cutting criticism that goes forth? I would say to such for their encouragement, humble yourselves, and thank God that he has raised up any and qualified them to discriminate between the tares and the wheat, for they must be separated before we can have substantial and unbroken rest. I believe there are many, who are not with you, whose hearts are reached by these things, and who feel them as keenly as you do. For one I do, and I grow more and more thankful for every thing in the form of rebuke that I meet with; and I feel myself clinging more and more closely to the Lord for it, knowing better and better that it is ordered by him in the deepest wisdom and love. I remember having often seen little children rebuked sharply by their parents; and they invariably turn and cling to them, knowing instinctively that in them is centred their all, come what will. How much there is in this, as well as in many other things of common occurrence, to teach us our true relation to God.

I understand that in your circle are several individuals with whom I have been acquainted in former years. Will you remember me in regard to those, and receive my best wishes for your spiritual happiness and prosperity, both associatively and individually. When I commenced writing I thought only to ask for a continuance of the Magazine, but I have made out quite an epistle of what seemed to arise in my mind without effort on my part; and may it be received on yours with good will and charitable acceptance.

Yours in Christ's love and sorrow,
ELIZA PORTER.

ANSWER TO THE FOREGOING.

Oneida Reserve, Jan. 31, 1850.

DEAR SISTER: The spirit of your letter leads me to accept with pleasure the appellation given to me, and to respond to it with the frankness of a brother.

I have just been reading yours. Its allusion to the past brings to my mind many associations of good and evil, of joy and sorrow in my own case. I rejoice with you that we are here realizing the true harvest, which separates the tares from the wheat, the precious from the vile. I like the spirit in which you speak of the subject of criticism. I like it because it seems to be the outspaking of a heart acquainted with, and loving the chastenings of the Lord. I am also pleased with it for the reason, that it stands directly opposed to that egotistical touch me-not spirit which, to the present time, characterizes the great body of professed believers in the doctrine of holiness in this state. Judging from the tone of your communication, I should expect you to fully sympathize with me when I tell you, that I look upon the testimony and doings of the above named class, as a whole, (since the ascendancy gained by Hiram Sheldon at the Canastota Convention,) as but the extreme outgrowth of that very anti-christian confusion, which they themselves talked so much against in the churches. I think Mr. Sheldon, at the time alluded to, became the head and leader of a false spirit of independence, the fruits of which have been anarchy and confusion. Out of it grew every thing that was evil.

Perhaps it is needless to say here, that I recognize previous to this a precious seed sown in many hearts; but the devil through the channel of egotism, choked the word of life—spiritual prodigality, error and starvation, have been the results. I do not draw this picture to wound unnecessarily, I know it will not. The time was, when I could not look at the desolating influences upon myself without sorrow of heart and

dark forebodings; but the scene is changed. I have learned how precious the truth is, that if we judge ourselves we shall not be judged of God. He regards with tenderness the humble victim to evil, and will move heaven and earth if necessary to the rescue; but to the author of evil (who is the devil) and all who adhere to his works, is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

You say in your letter, that you are growing more and more thankful for every thing in the form of rebuke which you meet with. In this sentiment I most heartily sympathize with you. I will use still stronger language: I love most sincerely the severest criticisms and judgments of God, because they are righteous. I love to unwind the ball of the past, and ask God's scrutinizing judgment of every act of my life, because it is my salvation. The truth which makes haste to the quick, is the food on which I live, and shall continue to live when the wounds it makes are forever healed.

Dear sister, I wish to say to you, that we are realizing here in deed and in truth that the judgment of the heavens is set; as we pass it we are passing into fellowship with the primitive church. Our business is not to proselyte, but to attend to the work of home purification and judgment; still our hearts are open to all whose spirits are what you seem to express. The errors of the past, where there is a renunciation and self-judgment of them, are not a barrier to our sympathy and fellowship. I can but think with you, that there are many who now keep silent, that will find themselves in sympathy with us when they know our true position.

When I took my pen, my thoughts were, that I would respond to you from the ready flow of my heart. I have done so; if it proves a comfort to one whom I used to love, and still do as a sister from whom I have been long separated by trying circumstances, I shall be thankful. I am aware that your trials and spiritual sufferings must have been

great, and this makes me more happy in the thought of conveying to you this expression of fellowship.

Yours &c., J. BURT.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Brooklyn, Jan. 2, 1850.

DEAR FRIENDS:—To-day we went up to the Trinity Church, and from there to the Art Union. Both of them surpassed my expectations. I can hardly see how any man could take within his mind the outlines and details of such a building as the Trinity Church, so as to give orders for the construction of it. At the Art Union I was highly entertained. I cannot express my feelings as I feasted my eyes on those highly finished works of art. The Turkish Scene was, taken altogether, the most enchanting picture that I ever saw.

After gazing on these best efforts of the most cultivated men in the country, and comparing my own ability with theirs, I felt my great deficiency, how much I had dwelt on the surface of things. I struggled for a moment with self-depreciation. I am not, and will not be satisfied with unte admiration alone. Christ says, 'It has not entered into the heart of man the things that God has prepared for us.' If man can conceive and paint a thing so beautiful as to charm us, what shall be the reality? If such is the shadow, what will be the substance? I know too that God values obedience to the truth more than any and all things else; and I will not let these things, though grand and beautiful in themselves, divert my mind from our central object. I feel that I am married to the truth, and that my greatest honor is to serve it. We have examples in the Old and New Testament that show how God values things in comparison with the interests of the truth. The cities of Tyre, Sidon, and Jerusalem were beautiful beyond description; cities which millions of human beings had spent the labor of their whole lives in

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erecting and decorating with objects of art; but they were disobedient to the truth, and God swept them off with the besom of destruction, and razed them with their glories to the ground. On the other hand, the disciples, Christ's little ones, who possessed nothing, escaped. God is love; and whoever has true love in his heart, has what in its outgrowth will produce every beautiful thing.

For truth, yours, H. M. WATERS.

—
Oswego, Jan. 25, 1850.

BROTHER:—I feel thankful to God at all times for special privileges and blessings; and among these I rank the satisfactory and pleasant visit I had at the Association last fall. It pleased me much to see the order and freedom, the cheerfulness and simplicity, the love with the determination to overcome, impressed in the countenances and manners of the friends associated there. It pleased me more, to feel that what I saw was not affectation, but the natural upbursting of a loving seed in the heart, giving ease, grace and freedom to its subjects, and that gave to me while there edification, consolation, and I had almost said redemption; and so in a limited sense it was. Remembrance of those with whom I had acquaintance before, is always grateful; and to those with whom I then for the first time had the pleasure of a personal acquaintance, I find my heart and mind flow out freely, as unto brethren and sisters in fellowship of the same household. My short interview with J. H. N. was in the highest degree instructive, and demonstrative of a mind separated by wisdom in the order of heavenly things, to manifest and accomplish mighty results.

I wish the Circular sent to me as usual, knowing it to contain the cream of the Word; through which the Association at Oneida Reserve, and the lovers of truth and holiness scattered abroad, manifest their earnest of love and faith to me. * * * * *

Yours in truth and love,

BENJAMIN DEVOE.

Gracham, Md. Jan. 5, 1850.

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER: * * *
I have read your paper with great interest, and find myself much benefited, as it contains nothing but the truth as it is in Jesus—especially the last two or three numbers, which were of great service to me and others who have read them. And I hope and trust by the grace of God, that the coming Vol. may be still more beneficial to all who are interested in their souls' salvation. I have also read your first Annual Report, and was much delighted with the theory and plans of the Association, Methinks I could see them, how truly and harmoniously they live together there. Often have I thought, were it God's will, that I would gladly be one of you. Therefore I commit myself into his only care, and pray that I may be enabled to do his will—that sooner or later, I may join the heavenly Association, where nothing reigns but joy, peace, and love. Let this suffice for the present. I hope, if God is willing, to correspond more in future.

You will now accept my own, and my wife's best wishes for success,

FREDERICK WELLER.

☐ The Spirit of truth is the spirit of memory. If we go to work right, we can learn any thing we wish to easily, and never forget it. The reason why we forget things is, that we jump in acquiring them, and leave the space between our actual, present knowledge and what we learn, not cleared up.

Receipts from Feb. 6th.

P. W. Page,	\$1.00	George Mix,	1.00
Mrs. Howes,	1.00	S. P. Hopkins,	1.00
F. Weller,	2.00	Menate Johnson,	1.00

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

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