

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. 20.

[REPORTED FOR THE CIRCULAR.]

CONSCIENTIOUS UNBELIEF.

There is ever so much unbelief in the world, which claims to be *conscientious*. I am learning not to be deceived by it. I am learning not to take unbelievers' judgment of themselves. It does not answer for such people to judge themselves, and then tell me what to think. All persons who have been in a wrong spirit, and have not a broken and contrite heart, will judge of themselves that they have done pretty well. They say they have been *conscientious*. But the truth is, they have *not* done pretty well. As long as Christ gives this tremendous judgment, '*He that believeth not shall be damned*,' I am compelled to judge that there is terrible iniquity wrapped up in unbelief. Persons are found for a long course of time opposing the truth, and pretending to be *conscientious*. This pretense is only a covering for unbelief; it is all cant, however they may persuade themselves that they are *conscientious*. We all know, and perceive that there is a spirit there which would destroy God. There is universal murder in a spirit of *conscientious unbelief*. Because a person in this position thinks himself inno-

cent, am I to take his judgment of himself? His cold, malignant spirit forces me to form my judgment of him from my own standard. He does not know himself. It will not answer to allow a person who is destitute of whatever is generous, noble and kind, and possessed of a cold, dark spirit, one who is out of fellowship with God, and in a state of hardness unknown to themselves, to influence our judgment by a pretense of conscientiousness.

We must look into this matter, for we are often in contact with this spirit. I can feel that there is coming a deadly clinch with it. We cannot long stand and parley with this spirit, and treat it as if it were rational, and take its own judgment of itself. It will bring us to a spot that is decisive—where *it* will have to fall, or *we* shall. It may feel respectable, but it is rankly offensive to God, to heaven, and to all that is noble. If there is any mingling of God and man, if there is any fruit of his spirit among us, any thing that is generous, noble, and truthful, there is a mortal issue between these fruits and that spirit. The two cannot co-exist with us.

This kind of unbelief is a disease, as bad as the cholera. A man comes to me with a contagious disease, say the

small pox. He says it is a misfortune—that he cannot help it. Well, I say to him, if it is a misfortune, you have no right to involve me in it. If you must die, it is no reason why I should. I must treat conscientious unbelief in that way. It is perfect poison to my life; it is deadly enmity to my soul and body. Make what excuses it may, self-preservation says, it has no right to cover me with the pall of death, and sink me down into the same pit with itself. Persons may say they have a right to be unbelieving—they have a right to their own opinion—a right to think freely. If it was a matter of opinion merely, it would not be of so much importance. But thought and spirit are identical, and as such, our thoughts have an effect on all around us, and involve the rights of others. The question is, have you a right to be insensible to the goodness of God—to be cold, selfish, cruel, isolated, spider-like? If you have a right to be thus, or to think in accordance with such a state, then you have a right to indulge in universal crime. I say that any person who has looked on the works of God at Oneida and at Putney, who is still unbelieving, and unfriendly to the Association, must be conscious of being separated from God, and have no sense of reconciliation with him, or nobleness, or truthfulness. If a state of unbelief is identified with a state of selfishness, barbarous cruelty, and barrenness, as I know it is, then what becomes of conscientious unbelief? We may as well talk about conscientious murder, or conscientious lying. There is no such thing; I don't believe in it. I put skepticism against skepticism. I am totally skeptical towards conscientious unbelief. I don't believe there is any goodness in it, or any excuse for it.

I don't believe it deserves any thing better than damnation. Unbelief is pitted against unbelief. I have borne with it until it has forced me to this position; it has worn out all my respect for it.

I call on all to give their opinion of unbelief; not in the abstract only, but in respect to all the cases which are gaping after us, like crocodiles ready to swallow us up. I call on all to form their opinion, not from the world, but from the Bible, and from sound reasoning; to form their opinions correctly, and then stick to them. Things esteemed high among men are an abomination in the sight of God. I want to feel, and speak, and act according to his mind. I do not want to form my conclusion of things from public opinion, i. e. human opinion, of human character. This would be like taking a criminal's own judgment of his own character; and most criminals think that the world judge them pretty hard. But God is a righteous judge, and I would form my opinion from the Bible. There it stands out clear, that that spirit which rejects God's manifestations in the world, is regarded by public opinion in heaven, as abominable unbelief, which is worthy of damnation. To that public opinion, I shall square my opinion, and judge the world by that standard.

Let us look at what this spirit is doing, and then form an estimate of its quality. At Putney, we presented to the world, abundant demonstrations that there was a spirit of truth and righteousness among us; that we had a generosity, civilization and refinement which was not to be found any where else; that a spirit of health which overcame tremendous disease, and which offered salvation for soul and body stood out prominently among us. But

the whole town were *conscientious* in their unbelief. This spirit not only stood out against these manifestations of God's goodness, but dog-in-the-manger-like, wished to destroy the source. We peaceably withdrew to Oneida.— There we published our principles, which took away their only excuse.— We demonstrated our position by scripture, so that worldly men were compelled to say it was truth. We have there manifested a peaceable, righteous, truthful spirit. Health has been with us. Out of the great number who have been together for two years, only three infants have died; and these died soon after they came, and from causes which were upon them before they came. Many who were sick before coming among us, have recovered. We have faced the cholera in the city and in the country. Indeed the demonstration of the power of God among us, has been carried out more extensively than at Putney. And yet Putney does not change; it would shut out from the world, the spirit which offers it salvation from sin and disease. I ask if that is not murderous? I do not believe that people have a chance to see such things, and *innocently* go on and attempt to destroy the work of God. But I ask no favors of them. I do not complain. In one sense they have a right to do what they can. In the end, as Carlyle says, Might is one with Right. I am glad that I know that the righteous God has the most might. The spirit of unbelief may do its best, and destroy the Association if it can. I ask no favors. If it comes to the question of power—if each party appeals to its power—I will only say, Fair play. I will do my prettiest to put down unbelief as an accursed thing, the destroyer of all good. I

hate it worse than cholera, a great deal; and I shall act accordingly. If the devil is almighty, unbelief will kill me; it has come to that issue—it will kill me, or I shall kill it.

How long, friends, will you be hoodwinked by the pretences of conscientious unbelief? Has not the time come, to look at folks as they are, and have done taking their own opinions of themselves? You are swallowing poison as long as you let folks judge for you, and you consent to think of them as they represent themselves. A passage in the third chapter of Romans, describes, not special sinners, but *all unbelievers*, thus:

“ We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable: there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

This shows forth the character of conscientious unbelief. That description applies to the best of those who are destitute of faith. The same poison is in every unbelieving spirit, that there was in Judas and Herod. Herod was conscientious in killing the infants in Bethlehem. He reasoned thus:—The Jews expect a king out of the regular succession—this will lead to anarchy, to breaking down law. It is my duty as king to show my patriotism by suppressing insurrection. I will step forth and heroically crush it in the egg. It will be for the public interest. No doubt he had such a train of reasoning; and the Herods of Putney might have reasoned

in the same way. It is perfectly easy to find conscientious reasons for any thing, where one has selfish reasons for it, that are fixed and urgent. Judas showed his conscientiousness, when the woman came to anoint Christ's feet. He said, Why is this great waste? why was not this sold and given to the poor? I suppose also he thought he had patriotic reasons for betraying Christ. Unbelief has found its strongest and most subtle hold, when it has got behind conscientiousness. Mr. Finney is there. He could not do right himself, for fear as he pretended, that he should get ahead of the church and lose his good influence. Yet the real inner secret of Mr. Finney's unbelief is his desire of making a figure in the world; a dishonest regard for the praise of men more than the praise of God. It will not do for conscientious individuals to say they did not see, for the reason why people do not see, is because their heart is not right with God. When they come to see things in the light, which the prospect of death will place them in, they will then probably confess that they knew better. People should think constantly, as candidly as if they were going to die the next moment. If they do not, they are inexcusable.

In the game that is going on, the move of the world has been to say, 'You are licentious.' To say in reply, 'We are not,' would be simply acting on the defensive. Our true answer is, to say 'You are unbelieving.' They say again, 'You are horribly licentious.' We answer, by charging back the awful nature of unbelief as described in Romans. They say, 'You are violating the laws of society around you; you are disorganizing in relation to social laws.' Our reply is, 'You violate the laws of

God; you are disorganizing in relation to spiritual laws.' We will see which shall be judge; the struggle between us is as to which is the culprit. Our opponents ask us to sit down as culprits; but instead of that, we will put them to the bar, and see whether or no they are godless men. God is determined to bring them to trial; and the true way for us to equip ourselves for the accomplishment of his design, is to get a true conception of the nature of unbelief, and not be fooled by it, but treat it as it deserves. Let us load down unbelief, and give it no quarter. It will give us no quarter, but would make us a pack-horse for remorseless enmity and accusation. It is the duty of every man, who does not wish to see heaven swallowed up by the great serpent, to have no charity for unbelief. Be reckless, where a question of allegiance to God comes up; be a godly desperado.

We see persons whose consciences are very active and sensitive in respect to certain outward forms of morality, who yet have no conscience toward the claims of God. There is self-deception in such conscientiousness, and unbelief of the most damning kind. A true conscience would dictate to all, repentance toward God, and vital reformation. Any person who does not make repentance the business of his life in this world, is without excuse. The matter is perfectly plain—any one who has common sense, let him be heathen or whatever else, can see that the world as it is, is a prison. Else what do disease and death mean? It is plainly a prison: and what is your business in prison, if it is not reformation?

The first chapter of Romans brings to view the character and consequences of unbelief, or neglect of God. There the

case is made clear that none have any excuse for neglecting God; for the heathen, Jews and Christians, can all see his power manifested in the creation. But one of the first consequences of not acknowledging God there specified, is the abuse of amateness. There are cases coming out from time to time, which show that the description there given, of the consequences of neglecting God, is not too bad for the general character of this nation. The place of true charity, is not to cover up guilt, but to understand the true character of the guilty, and then labor to save them. It is quack charity which would seek to disguise and cover the disease. Nothing too bad can be conceived as the necessary results of the spirit which neglects God. It is a spirit which would destroy the universe. I repeat, the true way is not to attempt to cover it up; there is no hope in justifying it. Our hope is in letting in the light upon it, and betaking ourselves to belief, that God is able to deliver us from it. He is able to conquer monstrous iniquity.

Those first three chapters of Romans reveal the depth of Paul's mind. He was living in a world whose combined force was operating to bind his understanding of their character to their judgment of themselves. He stood with all the power of Judaism pressing on the one side, and of the heathen world on the other, and judged the world truthfully. We need his help to strengthen our decision, even with all the light we have. I thank God that he found a man strong enough to stand up and judge the world. Let us stand by Paul's judgment of the world as given in the passages alluded to, and not allow ourselves to be swerved by the impulse of quack charity. I know God would give me grace to lay

down my life for my worst enemies to save their souls; but yet I should not ignore what they have done. If I know a man has a cancer, and believe he can be cured, and am willing to cut it out to cure it, I have more charity for him than if I tried to make him easy, and to think it was not much of a sore. More hope is offered of his cure. I have more charity for some who are unfriendly to us than they have for themselves, or can have. The world want we should think it is respectable; but we cannot think better of it, than we would of a state prison. We cannot think better of the most distinguished persons, than we would if they were in prison about to be hung; for all are under sentence of death. The idea that things are respectable under the universal conditions of sin and death, must come to an end. The best way to escape from prison, is to turn state's evidence. Our only hope is in getting into favorable relations with the government, and becoming reformers as fast as possible. It is God's purpose to convert the prison into a mansion house. The spirit of truth is charitable, and we need not undertake to be more charitable than it. Truth does not ignore our faults, but saves us from them.

CRITICISM.

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

HOW TO RECEIVE CRITICISM.

It is very important that we should have a clear idea of the right kind of spirit in which to receive criticism, so as to make it an occasion of practical improvement and advance. The difference between a right and wrong spirit in this case, is the difference there is be-

tween manliness and childishness. A childish spirit frustrates the power and operation of truth in two ways. In one form, it meets criticism with indifference, carelessness and sluggishness—it hears and forgets. It is not really pricked to the heart and stirred to manly action. Another almost opposite manifestation of the childish spirit is a spirit of impatience, a hurrying spirit—one which is too anxious to receive, too personal. This spirit will break forth in crying on one hand, and rush into hurried action on the other; showing that its eye is on escape from criticism—on getting into a comfortable state, instead of on the truth. A real lover of truth will not only take pleasure in the accomplishment of good, but in the process by which it is accomplished—he will not only love the meat, but love to crack the nut. If we have our eye on the result alone, the process will be disagreeable to us. A man who paints a picture for the money merely, is no artist—he has no taste for the art, if he does not enjoy the process. A lover of truth will enjoy the process as well as the result of criticism—he will have a quiet satisfaction in seeing the beauty of truth working in the process, and not be impatient for the fruit.

This childish spirit, in a person who has great hope, becomes excited and impatient, and sets to bustling about in a way which does not accomplish any thing. In a person who is naturally sober and hypochondriac, it produces discouragement and despair—he finds no pleasure in the process of perfection—he is only pleased with the result, and is in despair because it is not accomplished at once. Suppose you were set to thread a needle; if you were all in a bustle, or if your eyes were full of tears, you could not do it. You will do it only by being cool, and quietly in earnest, and having your eyes clear. The operation of joining ourselves to the

truth is some like threading a needle—it cannot be done in the agitation of either hope or fear. The more trouble we are in, or the more difficult and tremendous the thing to be done, the more need there is of a calm, patient, self-possessed spirit; i. e. a manly spirit, free from childishness.

Let us see if we can analyze what takes place when we meet the truth which is to change our character, in a right spirit. I know the change is to be effected by the power and grace of God, on one hand, and his power working in me on the other. So far as I am concerned, it is through a *purpose* formed in me. A purpose is the result of matured desire. When desire has canvassed the whole range of my nature and has obtained a vote, it becomes a purpose. A purpose puts into form the various desires agreed upon and expressed in our hearts. I canvass my desires, electioneer and reason with them, till they vote for any measure I wish to put through; and I get the consent of my desires by prayer. I see what ought to be done, and then go and pray. I do it not merely to move God, but to gather my desires in a harmonious vote for the measure. We must first have a right conception of the power of God, and then exercise faith and hope. A purpose cannot be formed without hope—without hope our desires will not get together in town-meeting, with expectation of success. If, with hope and faith, and what we know about God, we pray to him, we shall find our desires brought to an issue. We are then in a position to develop a purpose. When it issues forth from hope, it is a bright, clear will; it is not a gross, muscular, forced will, like that which the impatient, bustling spirit gets up on the spur of the moment, but a bright divine flame of will. It is immortal, and will never be quenched, and yet it is patient and quiet. A will generated in that way is worth more than all the fruits of it, just as the seed is more important than all that grows out of it. You want a change of your

whole character on some point of taste. When by such a process as I have described a will is formed, you have got the substance of what you want. Because God values the seed-purpose more than fruit, he will try our patience, and have us wait for the promise—wait for our purpose to spread out in our characters. It is his policy to let the germ of any change or improvement stand by itself, and strengthen itself. A manly spirit is calm and rational, and to get at the change desired, will lie in wait with the same purpose bright for years. For example, I have an ambition to understand the science and art of playing on the violin. I do not know as God could give me my desire at once. I have the purpose to attain it, lying in wait in me like a person fishing, and once in a while I catch a fish, and like a good fisherman, I will patiently sit all day and watch for one. So of every improvement in our external character—we must be willing to wait for it. God patiently waits for it, and we must learn to wait. The Bible speaks of men who 'lie in wait to deceive;' we must lie in wait for the truth, like a cat that watches for a mouse—the cat lies perfectly still, not a muscle stirs; but her eyes are all on fire, shining with a bright keen flame; and that flame indicates her purpose, while her stillness indicates her patience. This is the way to watch for improvement. There is nothing pleases God more, than to see us lie in wait for improvement, with a keen bright eye, without any flurry. However far we may be from what he wishes us to be, if there is this purpose in us, he is pleased with us. In hunting, the sportsman has glorious sport in running down the game, as well as in overtaking it. An old fox-hunter does not care so much for the fox, as he does for the excitement of the chase. We want this manly purpose formed in us, by the process we have described, and then lie in wait, ready to seize any opportunity which offers in the direction of our object—not expecting to jump instantane-

ously at an end; not fret and hurry, or be discouraged, but watch with patience. God works on us with all long-suffering and patience; it is impolite and unkind for us to trouble him with our impatience, when he is not impatient. That spirit which seeks improvement with reference to the satisfaction of the immediate result, is the essence of pleasure-seeking. When pleasure-seeking is cornered up, its last resort is to turn round and want to make improvement at one jump. Some persons fret to get a neek and quiet spirit. When we are under criticism, the devil is uneasy because he finds he must go out of us, and he makes us uneasy because we cannot jump.

To show the difference between a childish and a manly spirit, suppose we should propose to a company of children to build a house. We can imagine that some of them would think in a presumptuous, crude way, that they could do it, and begin immediately to fly round and be all in a bustle, expecting to perform it in a very short time. Others would say, it was such a monstrous job, they never could do it, and so refuse to try. But a man like Mr. B——, would calculate his materials, and go about it with an unwavering purpose, coolly expecting it would take him six months to do it. The great works in the city, like the Dry Dock for instance, may justly inspire our reverence, as exponents of a manly purpose—of a bright will stretching through years, cool and self-sustained. In that view, they are sublime. We must learn to form immortal, self-sustaining purposes, that do not depend on immediate fruitfulness.

Observe that this idea of lying in wait, is not on the one hand, to keep perfectly still, nor on the other to bustle about; but we must watch. Christ and Paul both said a good deal about watching. This faculty of watching, with fire in the eye, is a great secret of power. It requires a perfect balance of spirit between eagerness and self-control.

THE FREE CHURCH CIRCULAR.

GEORGE W. NOYES, EDITOR.

ONEIDA RESERVE, FEB. 27, 1850.

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

Straws in the Wind.

The editor of the Herkimer Journal, (as quoted by the New York Tribune,) makes the following statements, in the course of some remarks upon the late 'mysterious noises!'

"We can well conceive with what difficulty the majority of minds will be able to tolerate any thing savoring of faith in these strange accounts; nevertheless, there is nothing in all which has yet fallen under our notice, too incredible for our belief.—We have been familiar with matters in this direction for the last seven years, and have borne about, closely looked from every human mind, a perfect self-consciousness that the race of mankind were rapidly approximating a period in which the spiritual portion of man's nature would be more closely unveiled to his understanding. When, in a sense, he would be raised from his grovelling stupidity in relation to his own being, to apprehend more definitely his relation to the spirit world, and to learn to some extent the great Scriptural truth, that he is 'fearfully and wonderfully made.' * * *"

"We are satisfied, and have been for some months past, that the world has entered the judgment day—so called, and that the resurrection is taking place; and that while some are being raised to 'everlasting life,' others are coming up to 'shame and everlasting contempt.' We are ready to give our reasons, scripturally and rationally for our faith, but, knowing the strong prejudice which environs all such transcendental ideas and opinions, we have not hitherto, nor do we feel that we could profitably discuss these matters in a public journal like ours."

Whereupon the Tribune asks—

"Is the world running mad, or getting sane?—stricken with judicial blindness, or only just beginning to see? We must take time to consider and investigate, one of these days."

REMARKS.

1. The editor of the Herkimer Journal, Mr. Squires, was formerly concerned in the Millerite agitation, and was afterwards for some time a subscriber to our paper.

2. His conclusions of course are not surprising to us, but are just such as we have expected would become common, before long.

3. But his course of action thereupon, is certainly curious. Believing that the judgment day and the final resurrection have commenced among us, he is still too modest to say any thing about it to the readers of the Herkimer Journal. We should like to know what are the subjects that he can 'profitably discuss' in the face of such tremendous times and events as he admits he is consciously aware of. Is not such untimely deference to 'prejudice' the reaction of past fanaticism?

4. We are glad to see the editor of the Tribune disposed to move along with events, and keep open to the impressions of to-day's facts. But in order to do so successfully, he will have to give more time to the inward and less to the outward world. And we would suggest, in regard to the points which startle him, that if they are worth investigating at all, they are of *immediate* importance. He had far better defer some of his interest in political trifles to 'one of these days.'

A Chapter Omitted.

That remarkable compilation from Perfectist writings, and Polak's 'Course of Time,' with foolish remarks and exclamation points by Rev. H. Eastman, called 'Noyesism Unveiled,' is again brought to our mind by the correspondence given below.

A word in regard to this book. If we have ever said any thing derogatory to it as a whole, we must ask pardon of our present feelings; for we have spent occasional moments of relaxation in its perusal with high satisfaction and delight. It is perfectly *unique* in execution and effect. The frequent transitions from the serene and central wisdom of the extracts, down to the querulous simplicity of the author's comments, produces the agreeable exercise of mind that one gets in reading Don Quixote or Shakspeare. It is a fortunate fact, that Mr. Eastman managed his selections very well; and contrived to get into his book some of the rarest passages of profound and heavenly truth, that could be found in all

the publications of our school. The glow of life and inspiration that shines out from these, is decidedly heightened by contrast with the dusky, leaden setting of the opposing remarks. Then, the reverend author's excruciating attempts to be forcible, are among the richest comicalities that we have ever found in print. Those fierce capitals and terrible exclamation points are truly irresistible. It is true, that our old friend 'E.' tells a good many lies, and intended to destroy us with slanders; but we think these must be generally neutralized by the transparent malice, the palpable dishonesty, and stupidity of this part of the performance. On the whole, we have enjoyed the book uncommonly well, and can assure the distinguished author that a considerable portion of it at least, 'the world will not willingly let die.'

Now to the matter in hand. In order to get materials for his promised *expose*, Mr. E. addressed letters to various individuals supposed to be unfriendly, and capable of furnishing information of the desired character. His efforts in this line might well be ranked as an example of 'the Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties.' In one or two instances previous to the present, his letters straightway passed into our hands. The publication of the following specimen of his correspondence, may be amusing to our readers, and is perhaps due to the position of the persons implicated in it.

Vernon, Ct. Feb. 17, 1850.

MR. EDITOR:—Our inference on seeing Mrs. Field's card was, that perhaps MR. EASTMAN, in his book, (which we have never seen,) had made some reference to us, as well as Mrs. Field. We would clear ourselves from implication, by sending you a true copy of his letter to us, and our answer to the same.

Yours, J. B. LYVERE.
A. LYVERE.

LETTER FROM REV. H. EASTMAN TO J. B. LYVERE.
Putney, Vt. Sept. 21, 1848.

MR. LYVERE, DEAR SIR:—Although an entire stranger to you, I take the liberty to address you a few lines. I suppose you have some knowledge of what has transpired in this place respecting JOHN H. NOYES and

the society of Perfectionists, within the present year.

It was thought the most important facts ought to be given to the public, and for that purpose I am preparing a work for publication. Having reason to believe you are in possession of some facts which might be interesting to the public, and presuming you would willingly contribute something to the mass of information which ought to be communicated to the public, I write, and would be glad of any information adapted to the work I intend to publish.

Enclosed I send you a prospectus of the work I intend to publish, and will leave you to communicate such facts as you may judge suited to the character of the work. Any information calculated to throw light upon the character and conduct of Mr. NOYES and his society, would be considered valuable. If you will give me the direct information I shall consider it a great favor, and will see you suitably remunerated.

Very respectfully yours, H. EASTMAN.

ANSWER.

Vernon, Oct. 16, 1848.

MR. EASTMAN, SIR:—I do not know what information you would call adapted to the work, the prospectus of which you sent me, but I should think the character of any work should be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, in reference to the character and conduct of any man, or society of men.

I know but little about what has transpired at Putney within the past year, or in fact since 1843, excepting from your own account in a Methodist paper published at Boston. But from the intimate acquaintance I have had with MR. NOYES, from 1837 till 1843, I am ready to testify, that though I belonged to the Corporation in Putney seven months and lived in MR. NOYES's private family during that time, I never saw any thing licentious, or any thing approximating to it; but that he and every member of the Corporation, opposed every appearance of lewdness or licentiousness. The reserve on this subject was even greater than with virtuous people in general. From my earliest acquaintance with MR. NOYES till we separated, I always heard him most vehemently declare that he would have no fellowship with fornicators and adulterers; and I have known him break fellowship with several for licentious practices.

If you will read the whole of MR. NOYES's writings with impartiality, you will discover a vein of this nature running through them, notwithstanding the virtuous people of Putney were so shocked at the publication of them, that they could not endure the exist-

vence of such a licentious press in their community.

If you have that charity that rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth, you will be gratified with the information given above; but if you have not that charity, you will be *disagreeably disappointed*. Remember that your book will stare you in the face at the Judgment. 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.'

I infer from your application to me respecting J. H. Noyes and his society, that you and the people of Putney think I am an enemy to him, and have turned away from the doctrines contained in his published testimony; but this is a mistake; for although now there seems to be a misunderstanding between us, why it is so I cannot see; but God will clear it up in his own time. I believe his views of the gospel are the truth as it is in Christ Jesus; and deprive me of them and I should be like a ship on the ocean without rudder or compass. I love them better than I do my own natural life.

Yours respectfully, JOHN B. LYVERE.

It is right that we should inform Mr. and Mrs. Lyvere, that Eastman occupies part of a chapter in his book in trying to state the circumstances under which they left the Society at Putney. If they choose to answer his childish prattle on this point, and repudiate his sympathy, we shall offer them what facilities we can.

FOR THE FREE CHURCH CIRCULAR.

A Card.

Having for some months past, had my attention called to a faithful, and I trust an impartial examination of the subject and cause of the separation and want of fellowship, which for a long time has existed between myself and John H. Noyes and many others whom I once loved with my whole heart. I was led to 'ask wisdom of him who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.' I have taken a view of my past and present position as a believer, and have settled the question in my own mind, that, by the love I bear to God, to Mr. Noyes, and the church made free through his instructions, I should make the following statement:

From my first acquaintance with him as a teacher of righteousness, he had my entire confidence up to May, 1845, when in three several letters addressed to me, he so sharply rebuked some believers here, that I felt called on to reply, and in earnest stand up in defence of the accused—feeling fully persuaded then that Mr. Noyes 'was to be blamed' for the course he pursued.

But through the faithfulness of Bro. Cragin, in a letter to me some time since, I have given the whole matter a candid and prayerful re-examination, with a full committal of myself to the judgment of God; and have to my satisfaction discovered that under the influence of spirits at war with Mr. N., I was blinded, and thereby led into error of belief and judgment, and therefore did not see the bearing of his letters, (as he then wrote me,) and of course could not sympathize with him as otherwise I should have done, in his 'jealousy for the purity of the church at B.' And having become convinced of my error, I do most sincerely confess my fault, and acknowledge, that in all those things which produced this separation, Mr. Noyes was *right*, and I was wrong; believing that his 'eye was on the cause,' and that he acted without a desire to injure any one. And while I never for one moment had it in my heart to abuse brother Noyes, still I have no doubt but his feelings have been much tried, on account of the injury done the cause of holiness in this section; although unintentional by me.

My views and belief of the Truth, as far as I then had received it, have not undergone any change; but that I have not made that attainment in spiritual knowledge that I should have done, had nothing arisen to disturb my

peace, I am fully sensible. And now with godly sincerity, would I return to the simplicity of my first love, believing as I heretofore have believed and testified, that John H. Noyes has been called of God, an apostle to the Gentiles, and that the church or company of believers over which he is in charge, is a vine of our heavenly Father's right hand's planting; and that all who array themselves against him or them, will eventually have to confess their error, and find in their persecution of Mr. Noyes, that 'it is hard to kick against the pricks.'

May I ever possess 'the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God, of great price,' and be knit together in love, with all those who love in sincerity, and in truth.

JOSHUA LONGLEY.

Belchertown, Mass. Feb. 18, 1850.

The 'Free Church of Old Times.'

No. 2.

In the first article under this head, we presented a brief sketch of the rise and progress of the Free Church movement, leaving unnoticed however, many particulars connected with its history.— We are induced to continue the examination in one or two more numbers, for the purpose of bringing out more prominently the *causes* of its fall and overthrow. The object of these disclosures will be magnified, when we consider that the period we are reviewing was peculiarly a time of *seed-sowing*. Never was there a greater activity witnessed in the commercial world in supplying the demand for any of the commodities of trade, than was presented in the religious world during the times of the great revivals. There was evidently a legiti-

mate demand for living Bible faith, for a more complete salvation in Christ, and union with God. But no sooner was it noised abroad that a revival was crowning the efforts of the Finney school, and great masses were rushing to hear the new preaching, than all the religious sects, from Papal Rome down to the last and least off-shoots of Protestantism, began to bestir themselves by holding protracted meetings, and doing what little they could, in however awkward a manner, to supply the demand. And for the purpose of having their preaching resemble as much as possible that of the new school, they were obliged to rack and stretch their antiquated creeds and doctrines most seriously, to adapt them to the case. The Finney school, however, was the principal one patronized by the multitude.

After a period of nearly twenty years, we may say the present is peculiarly a time of harvesting, or judgment. And Mr. Finney, as the representative of that school and its central mind, must not complain if he is called upon to accept the doctrine that 'whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.' We shall endeavor to do strict justice in apportioning to him the fields he then claimed, and in which he scattered seed with a liberal hand.

For the purpose of presenting a connected chain of *facts* to be studied and interrogated by minds better able perhaps to analyze them than the writer's, it will be necessary to follow the history rather more consecutively than was at first contemplated. In the former article, we left Mr. Parker successfully laboring at the lower part of the city. A church was at once organized under his lead as pastor, and called the First Free Church. Nearly at the same time the old but capacious theatre in Chatham St., was purchased, and a few slight alterations made, leaving all the galleries

and tiers as they were when occupied as a play house; and without further delay Mr. Finney with a body of substantial working converts, took possession of it under the name of the Second Free Church, or Chatham St. Chapel. Altho' the building was sufficiently large to accommodate several thousands, it was densely crowded with anxious and listening hearers day and evening. Simultaneously with the second, a third Free Church was organized, and selecting, for its field of operations, a portion of the city very much abandoned to all kinds of dissipation, went into operation under the pastoral care of Dr. Lansing. This church when organized consisted of only thirty five members, early converts of Mr. Finney, and all of them unmarried. The writer, and subsequently his wife, were among the number. We had been daily and diligently instructed by Mr. F., that the way to keep our hopes bright and our souls happy, was to labor constantly for the salvation of sinners, and not hesitate for a moment to go out into the streets and lanes of the city, and lay hold of every sinner we met and tell him he must repent and give his heart to God, or he would go to hell. Willing to do any thing to keep bright hopes, not a few followed his advice. Persons would allow themselves to be addressed in a rather rude way, provided the spirit of the language was gentle and persuasive. This band of young zealots organized themselves into committees of two each, to take their turn in visiting the parlours of theatres, ale-houses, and the like places; and not without success. Instances occurred where dissipated fathers of poor families would be picked up, taken to the meeting where others of our band were praying, converted, and then sent home rejoicing in God, to the perfect astonishment of their families. Such were among the motives urged, to keep alive the spirit of proselyting among the Free churches. But we must return from this digression, and keep to our purpose of following the history of Mr. Finney.

The opening of Chatham St. Theatre, as a free-church, was regarded as a great event, foretoking the surrender of the whole city to God. This occurred in the spring of 1833. It may be well to state at this period in Mr. F.'s history, that although he was the centre of attraction and power at Chatham St. chapel, he was not its pastor, having declined, from the commencement of his labors, to be settled over any particular church; giving as a reason, that he had determined in his heart to live constantly in a progressive revival state; and that whenever he failed to persuade the churches in which he labored, to do the same, he should abandon them, and go into new fields. Mr. F. held himself free therefore, to go wherever his services were demanded. At this juncture, free church revivals had already broken out in great power, in N. Haven, Hartford, Newark and Paterson, through the labors of Mr. F. and his associates. In some respects, these fields furnished deeper soil, in which the revival spirit could take root and bring forth fruit to maturity, than the city of New York. Particularly was this true of New Haven. The paramount influence of its Colleges and Theological seminary, furnished a decided intellectual and religious element there, which afforded better facilities for a thorough study of the scriptures, and for the consequent development of the gospel of holiness, than the city of New York. The temptation in the latter place, was to compromise with the mercantile spirit, which is the all-controlling influence in that city, and rubs all other interests with a rod of iron. It is not difficult therefore, to see from these facts, the reason why God selected the *Free Church of New Haven* to become the mother of Perfectionism. At the same time, all the free churches in the places we have mentioned, were affected more or less with Perfectionist tendencies. The preaching that characterized the new-measure school, had taken effect, and wrought up the churches to the highest.

the point of preparation, and extensively predisposed them to the preaching of the new faith, and full salvation which was ready to be revealed.

We have now come down in our history, to the fall of 1833. The revival was still progressing with unabated power in every direction. In the city of New York, the second free church had sent off a colony and established a fourth. The third free church had erected a large commodious house of worship, (now known as Thompson st. church,) added such as they hoped would be saved, to the number of 500 members, and sent off a colony and organized a fifth free church. In the mean time, the fame of Mr. Finney, as the chief apostle of this great work, had penetrated into the staid and circumspect city of Boston, kindling in the bosoms of some, the feelings of the publican, 'God be merciful to us sinners.' Mr F. repaired thither in answer to their Macedonian cry; submitting however on his way, to the importunities of Providence, to tarry a while and preach the word to those of that city also; and in both places, revivals followed his labors. At the close of this professional tour, Mr. Finney left the country to find repose, and to recruit his health.

It is proper that we should pause for a moment here, and take a retrospective view of the fields we have surveyed, and post up the account created by the Finney-administration. We have traced revivals resulting from his labors, in no less than seven of the principal cities in New York and New England, embracing not less than 500,000 inhabitants, leaving out of the account entirely, innumerable streams flowing from these cities into all parts of the country, and creating demand for the labor of the revivalists, to such an extent, that no attempts were made to supply them. It may be asserted without fear of contradiction, that Mr. F. at this time held as a revival preacher, the balance of power throughout the

eastern and middle States. By his zeal and devotion to the work of saving souls, by his purpose and determination to know nothing among his followers, but the love and cause of Christ—by his constant assertion that young converts could retain their first love to Christ, and perpetually grow in grace; by his vehement indignation against the contrary idea of the old churches—by his hatred against all sin, and his defense of holiness, all which positions he defined and defended in public and in private—hopes were revived in the hearts of thousands, that the dawn of the millennium had appeared. How far he fulfilled their expectations, and supplied the demand he created, our succeeding number will reveal. ~~U.C.~~

Letter

TO MR. A. G. CRANE, DEACON OF THE CHURCH OF THE PURITANS, N. YORK:

Oncida Reserve Association,
February 20, 1850.

Sir:—As you manifested much interest and care for me while a member of your church, and as about a year ago I suddenly left it to join this Association, and was followed by your efforts to rescue me from what you called a great snare of the devil, I feel inclined to give you some account of my experience here, and of my present spiritual state. And that you may more fully appreciate it, I will first give you some account of my former experience.

At the age of 13 I experienced religion, and joined the Congregational church, and continued for several years to be what was called an earnest, zealous Christian. I was very anxious for the salvation of my fellow creatures, and labored much for this end. When I was about 20 years old I thought a great deal about eternal death, and the thought that any one was exposed to it, was very painful to me. I was led to search the Bible very diligently to see if it was true; and I found I could not avoid the conclusion that God would surely

punish sin with everlasting destruction from his presence. 'This led me to see that God hated sin exceedingly; and I thought it could not be his will that his children should live in sin. I was led again to search the scriptures to know his will about it; and I became fully convinced that there was no truth in the Bible taught more plainly, than that God had provided full salvation from sin in this world. What else could I infer from such passages as this?—'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.' There was no human being concerned in bringing me to this conclusion; I came to it by searching the word of God on my knees, asking him by his Spirit to teach me the truth, as I had been taught to do by the ministers.

I well remember then covenanting with God, that if he would only show me the truth, I would follow it through evil or good report, even if it should lead me to the stake. I now feel that he has answered my prayer, brought me to a test, and enabled me to bear it.

When I had received this truth intellectually, and had begun to love it and drink in the spirit of it, I was very much surprised to find that the church considered it a very great error, and opposed it strenuously. From this time I began to lose my confidence in the churches; and just at this point the non-resistant Abolitionists were making a great stir in the land. They spoke of the corruption of the churches in a way which I felt was true. And now the enemy came in like a flood. First, in the person of a pious minister, who labored with great energy to persuade me out of the doctrine of holiness, and succeeded in confusing and darkening my mind, and turning me away from the truth, so that I began to feel that religion was all a farce; and then, thro' the influence of Garrison, Wright, and others,—an influence so subtle and insinuating as to deceive if possible the very elect—I imperceptibly lost all confidence in the Bible, lost sight of Christ entirely, and a horror of great darkness

came upon me. I found myself in a very wretched state.

But deep in my heart there was love for Christ, and the Bible, and I thought I would return and put myself under the influence of the church. In this state I united with the Church of the Puritans. I diligently observed all their ordinances, and every means I could, to find my way back to Christ. But all the testimony and preaching of your church was a dead letter to me; there was no life or power in it; and when I heard you say in a Bible class one Sabbath, 'The Lord deliver me from sinless perfection,' I felt that religion was indeed all a sham. As a member of the church, I thought it best to go to Dr. Cheever and lay open the state of my mind to him, that he might have an opportunity to instruct and help me if he could. But all he did was to make darkness more visible. I resolved not to perplex myself more about these things, but to think as little, and get along as well, as I could; and I virtually and in spirit left the church again, and my feet had well nigh slipped forever.

But our extremity is God's opportunity. Just at this time, I was almost miraculously thrown in Mr. Noyes's way; and his testimony was salvation to me. Through him, God spoke to me and said, 'Awake, arise, and Christ shall give thee light.'

Dr. Cheever told me to go to God; and I believe God sent me to Mr. Noyes. I believe he was the only one to be found whom God could use as an agent to break the horrible snare of the devil, which was drawn so firmly around me.

Words are inadequate to express the life, joy, and strength I now have in Christ Jesus my Lord. My feet are on the rock; and though the floods of sin and hell may dash against me, they cannot harm me. I shall not fall, for I am founded on a rock. I know that I have eternal life abiding in me, and none can pluck me out of my Father's hand. It has been a great work to rescue me, and bring me back to simple-hearted

faith in God, and belief in his word ; but it is done. I love and honor Mr. Noyes as the instrument of this work, and as the man chosen of God to establish his kingdom on earth, of which, I fully believe this Association is the beginning ; and I have abundant evidence that such is the fact. I believe that Christ's prayer for those the Father had given him, is being answered in us,— 'That they might all be one ; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they all may be one in us : I have given them thy word ; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.' I believe in Christ as a whole and perfect Savior from every evil, not only for my spirit, but for my body also. I am conscious of the resurrection power and life of Christ in my body, overcoming disease and death, and making me free to serve him with my whole spirit, and soul, and body. O for a mouth and wisdom to praise him, and speak of his wonderful works, and goodness to the children of men.

I should like to speak of the social principles held by the Association, which are so exceedingly offensive to you. I do not wonder at all, that they are so offensive to superficial observers. I confess that I am not ashamed of them, but endorse and love them. I believe they are an emanation from the mind of God, and that when his will is done on earth, as it is done in heaven, society will be governed by these principles. I do not believe there can be any society found on earth, where there is such purity in the social relations as there is in this Association.

I should advise you, and all others who are accustomed to pray that the will of God may be done on earth, and done in you, as it is done in heaven, to examine yourselves, and see whether you are really willing it should be done.

I have confessed my eternal union with Christ ; and I believe my identification and union with this, his church, is as eternal as my union with him. I

endorse all their principles intelligently and heartily ; and I consider it a privilege and an honor to do so.

HARRIET MATHEWS SMITH.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Bristol, Wis., Jan. 15, 1850.

DEAR FRIENDS:—I received your Annual Report in due time. It was cheering to know you had successfully sustained your Association at Oneida. I should like to take up my abode with you, if the Lord should so direct. I feel the need of the help you are receiving from each other in self improvement. I feel that I am alone, and find no one like minded. There are a number about here who have professed to know the truth, but their light seems to have become darkness. The spirit that rules here, is a money-making spirit ; and all are more or less affected by it. My own spirit is not free from it, and I am very much tried in consequence. I find I have not strength to stand against it ; and though I know that in the Lord is everlasting strength, yet I do not get hold of that strength. There seems to be an influence intervening between me and God, that takes me captive and leads me away from him. I am not satisfied to remain in this situation. I long to be free from this spirit of bondage. It seems to me it would be good to have fellowship with some of the pure spirits at Oneida. Can you not, some of you, come over to Wisconsin and help me ?

I feel that I am exhausting my energies by hard labor, and care. I find in my nature many defects which I have not the power and strength to overcome. I think if I could be associated with a community of the children of God, I should overcome and stand complete in him who is head over all things to the church. * * * *

Yours in love,
SIMON LOVETT.

Our brother who writes the above, was prominently associated with the first

kindling of heaven's fire, and the testimony of holiness in 1834; and as such is always remembered with interest. In his present condition, he probably represents a pretty large class of persons who have once seen 'the heavens opened,' and have thereby become forever spoiled for this world, but who yet have been turned aside from their simplicity of heart, and have fallen into the snares of worldliness. His letter tells the result.

To such, the word is, 'Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead; and Christ shall give thee light!' Awake from the devil's dream of unbelief, to *facts as they are*. Our brother feels tied down and surrounded by cruel, inexorable circumstances. The tyranny of seeming facts is dragging the generations of men one after another down to death. But is this so? Are the real facts of God's universe of this remorseless and destructive kind? No! the imputation is a lie. It is the *denial* of facts,—it is the horrible nightmare of unbelief which does this work.

We are devoted in the name of God to put an end to this monstrous impost on that is murdering the race, body and soul; and perceiving the truth ourselves, we would be its ministers to arouse those who will hear.

We say then, turn away from the dreary canvas of the devil's painting, to the truth of God which you practically deny. He does not ask you to believe in poetry or fine talk, but to believe in simple facts. The deed of your salvation is done. It is a fact that Christ the Son of God has given himself to you; that he has triumphed over death, and 'ascended far above ALL principalities and powers.' Who is it, then, that talks about want of strength? Where are the evils that claim existence and power against this word of God? We tell you they exist only by your consent. 'Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find.' Have these promises ever been proved false? The only real thing that operates our ruin, is the power that *shuts our eyes against facts*.

Our brother is 'exhausting his energies by hard labor and cure.' If so, it is because he gives heed to phantoms and not to realities. 'Seek first the kingdom of God

and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.' 'Take no thought for the morrow.' 'The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.' The kingdom of God is a *fact* which offers to those who seek it, repose for soul and body. If unbelief appeals to facts and testifies of evil, it is right that somebody should appeal to facts and boast in God. And that the Association of believers here can do.—Not long since, in one of our unpremeditated evening meetings, it was unitedly testified that with our family an end had come of trouble;—that our labor had become sport, and that earé was scarcely known. We are surrounded and held captive by goodness; and see no prospect of our getting away from a blessed experience.

We do not speak lightly of the difficulties of a situation in the world because we do not know them; but because we *do* know them, and have felt the terrible pressure and contagion of unbelief which perpetuates the bondage. But having found deliverance, we can now see clearly how *imaginary* were the necessities which ruled over us, thro' unbelief, as with a rod of iron. And from the fullest experience we know that nothing is necessary in such cases but to follow the simple exhortation of Paul to awake from dreams to realities, to come out from the world, and seek first the kingdom and righteousness of God. Good luck and every prosperity are inevitable to such a course.

Receipts from Feb. 18th.

John Clark,	\$ 2.00	S. Eichelberger,	1.00
E. Ingersoll,	1.00	S. Lovett,	5.00
A. Douglass,	1.00	Mrs. Carpenter,	1.00
J. R. Thomas, 2.00.			

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