

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. 32.

[REPORTED FOR THE CIRCULAR.]

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH OUR BEST FRIEND.

We are in a spiritual school. The Spirit of truth is our master. We are getting an education, under the instructions of the Spirit of Truth emanating from Christ. In order to come into this school, it is necessary that we clear ourselves of the law. We cannot serve two masters, or go to school to two instructors. 'The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ;' but having brought us there, Christ himself took charge of us.

While we are passing from the legal to the spiritual school, the first position we assume, is that of Paul, '*All things are lawful.*' We no longer refer to the law as our guide, but to Christ. 'That in a great measure is the purpose of our discipline; and in one sense, the greatest lesson we have learned up to the present time, that 'all things are lawful.' It is in this line of the truth that our social theory stands out most prominent, to the present time. We have parted from the customs of the world and from the laws of the churches; and our visible separation in this respect, is only an index of the change that has come upon us in regard to other things. We have passed from

under the law, into the school of Christ.

But Paul's doctrine is something more than that 'All things are lawful;' he adds, 'All things are *not expedient.*' He repeats the idea twice afterwards, and with such specific variations as to furnish his own definition of what he means in the last part. Thus: 'All things are lawful, but all things *edify* not:—All things are lawful, but I will not be *brought under the power of any.*' So then, he would say that what edifies not or what ever brings us into bondage, is not expedient.

We then having parted from our first instructor, the law, and come under the instruction of the Spirit of Truth, the thing which the new master has in view, and which we, as good scholars, should have in view, is, to learn the second part of the lesson. We must not count it learned, when we have only settled it in our hearts that 'all things are lawful.' That is only the introductory, negative part—the operation by which we set aside the old master, and prepare ourselves for the new. To stop at the negative step, and not proceed to the positive advantages of the transfer, would be a miserable calculation. But let us settle it that the Spirit of Truth is our new master, and that in discarding the old

rule of law and routine for him, we have only accomplished the introductory, negative part of our education. Then that which is before us to learn is, what things are expedient—what edify us,—what things bring us into bondage, and what do not. This is a great lesson to learn; and it is the intent of all discipline and precept—of the ‘line upon line, here a little and there a little,’ that is going on among us, to teach us that part of the lesson. It is teaching us to distinguish between good and evil—between things that edify and those that do not. Well, there is much that is severe and trying in learning this lesson under the direction of the Spirit of Truth—much of suffering and labor in the school of the Spirit; and if there are those who pass out from under the law merely because they hate the labor and distress of the law school—those who are not seeking improvement, but selfish ease, they will find the school of the Spirit not very luxurious—not so much easier than the law-school as they imagined.

It is a nice point to look all through and see what things edify and what do not; and our master will not let us off until we have learned it. The Spirit of Truth is willful, persevering, stubborn, never gives up. If you have put yourselves in its hands, it will hold on and torment you until you learn what is expedient and what is not. It will hold on to us till we have worked out all the problems that come up, and find out what is right and expedient for all our tastes and passions. It will hold on to us till we are brought into a position where we shall freely *choose* what is edifying to us, and refuse what is not. So the school of the Spirit is not a call to feather-bed ease at present, but rather

a call to severe and chastening exercise of the passions and affections.

But I want to do my best to reconcile the school to the Spirit of Truth as a most desirable instructor. I am unwilling that any one should get an idea that the Spirit of Truth is a hard master, austere, unreasonable, uncharitable, cruel. I think it is essential to the interests of the school that we should have a right appreciation of the character of the spirit of Truth, and yield ourselves to it, with joy and hope, and not with fear. I propose to show, in two or three ways, that the Spirit of Truth is a good master.

In the first place, I believe myself, and shall use my influence to make others believe, that it is *not an enemy of pleasure*; but on the contrary that it is the best and truest, and only friend of real pleasure. I suppose all will admit that it is the friend of our *interior* nature and to all the pleasures of the inner man. No one will deny that: but probably most of you have retained an idea from the churches that it is an enemy to the body, to the pleasures of the senses. Now the body is a great part of us. The senses are busy agents, constantly at work in us, and must affect the whole character. And if the Spirit of Truth is considered an enemy to the pleasures of the senses, then it will certainly be unpopular with us. The inner man will have to gird himself for continual war; for the body, if a minority, is still a mighty part of us. The senses have keen appetites, and a good deal of influence in the spiritual corporation—power enough probably to break down any proposition the inner man exclusively, may get up. So then if we carry the understanding that the Spirit of Truth is an enemy to our bodies and external senses, the school will be

constantly liable to be disturbed by mobs. The rowdies and outsiders will be constantly annoying the master.

I hate such a supposed state of things; for the Spirit of Truth is not an enemy to our bodies. On the contrary, the *selfish* spirit that the world is full of, is a deadly enemy to our bodies and the pleasures of the senses. It is not necessary to follow out the details of all that Christ proposes, in order to show that he is the friend of our bodies. It is sufficient that he offers to *save the body from DEATH*; which no other system of religion or irreligion in the world ever offered or thought of. On the contrary they consign it to death; for they continually run it into excesses, which naturally end in disease and death. On the other hand, Christ throws off the power of despair, and offers us the redemption of our various passions; thus putting us in the way of obtaining the resurrection.

Examine closely its operation. It proposes to deepen and perfect all enjoyment. An incident will perhaps illustrate the idea. When Mr. H. first came to the Association, he evinced an excellent taste for music—a capability of fine playing on the violin. He could play a few tunes, by instinct, as it were, and amuse himself and others pretty well, and there was the whole of it. I said to him, If I were you, I would stop playing for the mere sport of the matter. You evidently have powers and talents undeveloped. I want you to study the science of music; and from a common violin player, to become a true artist, able to fathom its heights and depths, and play any thing. In a measure he followed that advice; with what results, all know. Now I would ask if by this advice, I am not a true friend to his taste

for music—to his sense of pleasure in that thing? Which spirit is doing the best for him; the one that would be satisfied with his playing a little for amusement, or the one which would urge him to a thorough acquaintance with the principles of the art, and to make a deep and serious thing of it? The answer is not doubtful; and I say *that* is precisely the change that the Spirit of Truth comes to make in every pleasure that we have. He does not propose to take the violin away, but instead of allowing us to amuse and *abuse* ourselves with it, is teaching us to go into the depths of it. He asks us to be temperate in the use and enjoyment of our present little external knowledge, but wants us to cultivate and develop our *powers*. I ask again, which spirit is the truest friend to the pleasures of the senses?

There is one other idea that I wish to impress on your minds, in order to reconcile you to the Spirit of Truth as your master; and that is, that it is the intent and sure result of his labors, to keep us from being brought into bondage—to make us perfectly free, and make it easy for us to do right. We are all conscious to ourselves of wishing to be free. We want to be free from the necessity of going through a long calculation about our actions. We want to be free as birds. It is a distress to us when a thing is to be done or not done, to have to stop and study, to run about and hunt up our reason, and make it sit down and judge for us. The world may preach and argue forever, about reason; but we want to act at once—free, quick, and certain. Women especially, hate to be put to the trouble of laborious reasoning upon action. Men hate it bad enough, women worse, and children worst of all.

Yet we must become little children. The Spirit of Truth is going to make us perfectly *rational*, and yet make us act like little children. This is a broad paradox, but the statement is perfectly true, and this is the explanation:—That which is working in our natures, is not merely *abstract truth*, but the *SPIRIT of truth*—a living thing. Let that spirit get possession of you, and it will produce a true instinct in you. It will produce a true instinct in your aliveness, amateness, and every passion of your nature. Just as fast as that gains possession of you, it gains a power to express itself, and your life becomes spontaneous. Just as fast as you become subject to it, your actions will be free and impulsive as a child's, and yet you will be perfectly rational, and perfectly in harmony with this thing that has possession of you.

So we will not imagine that the Spirit of Truth is leading us into a dull process of reasoning, and compelling us to look at the *pros* and *cons* of subjects on every side. The churches lead us there. The Spirit of Truth leads in another direction. It leads us where we shall find God, and be free as the birds. Experience shows that this has already been done in us to some extent, and I am sure it can be perfected in us. The Spirit of Truth will not make us *wooden* characters—it will not make us so rational that there will be no *snag* to us. It is a spirit then, that ought to be popular with us since it can be demonstrated to be a sure and true friend to our bodies, as well as our souls, and one that will lead us into perfect freedom.

I will go a step further. This school of the spirit is a good school in respect to the *social* influences which are brought to bear upon us. There are

some things which rather tend to raise the impression among us that our influence one on another is not exactly good;—that conversation is a means of drawing us away from spirituality. The truth is, our tongues are slippery things, they will go, and you cannot stop them; in such an association as ours. Here, again, the woman is distinguished, in the passion for free speech. In association our social nature is roused, and conversation is as natural as life; and a good deal of experience has tended to the impression that this is a positive disadvantage; that it is more difficult to preserve fellowship with God in the midst of our large circle, than under circumstances of more seclusion.

But this is not true; the reverse is the case; for the Spirit of Truth is not only a living, but a *contagious* thing. Love, joy, peace—these are the fruits of the Spirit, and every one of these fruits is catching. Just as sure as the Spirit of Truth gets into a man, that man becomes a centre of contagion, and is throwing it out all around him. The contagion of evil is great, but the Spirit of Truth is more contagious than the spirit of the devil. Joy and peace are more easily communicated than jealousy and evil thinking. The devil is not almighty, but God is; and facts will bear me out in asserting that heaven-fire has steadily prevailed thus far in the Association. So, the social spirit, if it is a source of temptation on the one hand, shall be a channel for good on the other. They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it. They that fear the Lord will speak often one to another, till heaven's fire blazes up to the firmament.

We may then settle it in our hearts that the Spirit of Truth is a friend to

pleasure—that it tends to make us the possessors of true freedom, and that it is continually availing itself of all the passions and tastes of our nature to prevail against evil. I say, we may take it home to our hearts that the course before us is easy and pleasant—a down-hill course, and one that is perfectly satisfactory to us as intelligent lovers of pleasure. Accordingly, we ought to let hope expand, give free play to the buoyancy of childhood, believe the best is before us, that it is not a hard but a plain way that is cast up for us, and it will grow easier and easier, and we shall go home with everlasting joy.

Advantages of a Long Boat.

AN ILLUSTRATION OF EXPERIENCE.

Small boats, such as skiffs and sail-boats are liable to a great deal of tossing about, and are at the mercy of the waves; but large vessels which reach from one wave to another have a much more equable motion. This is a good illustration of different stages of spirituality. One who is dependent on present feelings for comfort, is like the small boat that is constantly changing its position, by the action immediately under it. But one who has educated his heart to reach back into the past, and forward into the future, is like a ship that reaches from wave to wave, and sails steadily along.

The same education of heart which reaches back into the past, and makes all experience of God's dealings with us available in the present, also extends into the future. With the length that may be gained in this way the vessel is safe; let the winds blow from what quarter they may, the swell will not disturb it; for its stern reaches into the past, and its bow into heaven. In one sense it is the advantage of all education that it enables us to extend ourselves forward and back; and whatever does that

goes to steady us. Spiritual education in particular gives one a stiff frame work of character, which enables them to reach so far in both directions, that the present moment is as nothing.

Here comes in the beauty of John's description of God Almighty. 'I am the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the *beginning* and the *end* which *was*, and *is*, and *is to be*, Again—'They rest not day nor night, saying, Worthy is the Lamb which *was*, and *is*, and *is to come*.' He is like a great steamer, whose stern is in the *was*, and bow in the *to come*, and engine midway between, in the *is*. His action is in the *now*, but his intellect is in the *was* and *to come*. That is the way to stand steady. Small boats are at the mercy of the waves, but great ones glide over them.

If you find it difficult to extend your vessel into the past, and so lengthen her stern, see if you cannot find out a way to lengthen her bow. That was Paul's way of making the ship steady. In the 15th of Corinthians he points to the resurrection, and dwells earnestly on the future—'If in this life, only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.' He reached forth and rested firmly on the resurrection—the *to come*; and thus carried his bow forward into eternity. 'Therefore' he continues, 'be ye *steadfast*, *immovable*, always abounding in the work of the Lord.' The legitimate effect of having a long bow, is, that the ship is *steadfast* and *immovable*, not tossed about by the winds. I say as the song says 'A life on the ocean wave; but give me a long vessel. Every fact that you can hunt up in your past history that goes to establish your confidence in God, lengthens your stern and goes to strengthen and steady your vessel. One advantage of historical criticism is, that it sets us free to look into the past, and the effect of discovering the faithfulness of God in the past, is to throw hope into the future, so that as fast as you lengthen your stern, you also lengthen your bow. By getting a clear view of things all the way back, we

can turn all that was apparently evil, into good, and work every thing in to strengthen the ship. In proportion as we extend ourselves forward and back, we become like God and get above time. If you were on board a ship, and could see only the plank on which you was standing, you would seem to be in a miserable condition; but on looking around upon the whole deck, you would feel perfectly safe. So if you look at your *present* experience merely, you seem to be on a single plank; but survey your whole experience and see it all fastened together in one great whole, and you will find that you have a ship that will bear knocking. That will give you boldness; this is what you need. We must get so we can walk the quarter-deck from stem to stern, and defy the devil from every side. Christ nobly walked the quarter-deck. Says he, 'Before Abraham was, I am.' His faith reached clear back to the beginning of events, and had command of the whole past. In the same style he walked forward to the second coming, and stood there, while yet before the cross. It was a fearful stormy time; but his bow shot ahead in majesty. 'Hereafter ye shall see,' said he, 'the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.'

CRITICISM.

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

SECONDARY DISEASES.

We find that although persons correct themselves of faults, and are cured of the things toward which criticism was directed, they sometimes contract another disease, caused by the chill of the process, and labor under it a long time. There is a result produced similar to that which takes place under the medical system. A man has a disease—his physician gives him mercury, which cures him, but leaves behind another disease, the effect of the medicine, that has to be cured also. That is the way

that criticism works in many cases. It frees the subject from evil entanglements and specific faults, but leaves him chilled and depressed. This is a serious difficulty, and we must learn how to overcome it, so that criticism shall cure diseases, and leave no bad effects—but the subjects of it shall rise into sincerity, and not feel sore, chagrined and small.

In a former discourse, we plainly saw that unless we make the necessary distinction between ourselves as sheep, and our carnal nature as swine, we shall get false ideas of God. If you confound these two natures in you, criticism will chill your hope and justification, and cast a cloud over all your prospects, and you will feel perhaps that your whole salvation is at stake. Probably to some extent, persons feel when they are criticised that they are on trial for life. This is not so. Settle that question once for all, that you are the called, and chosen, and elect of God; then criticism does not come in to unsettle that question; but to wash the surface of character. It is a bad position to be in, to suffer criticism every time it comes, to unsettle the foundations. It should never affect our hope and relation to God unfavorably. Instead of making criticism a distressing affair, we may make it a means of positive enjoyment; and we are not really sincere until that is the case. We may invite criticism in *word*, but if, when it comes, we are distressed and cry about it, the spirit does not invite it, and there is more or less cant in our talk about desiring it. So long as egotism is at work, it will make criticism a distressing affair, and the medicine will cure specific diseases, but it will leave the poison of self-condemnation and evil thinking of God.

Let us consider that the Spirit of Truth is a spirit of criticism. This spirit must be received into our life—it is our friend and lover, and as long as we have any faults, it cannot help striking at them. Now if we try to love that spirit as a lover and guide, and not as a critic, we shall find it impossible. We

must love it as a whole, and then criticism will be a healthful, genial operation. The only cure for this secondary disease, is to get taste enough for truth to enjoy criticism. There is no other way but to pursue criticism until we enjoy it. Received in a right spirit, it will enlarge us and increase our self-respect, instead of making us feel small. Where there is freedom from egotism, and a spirit that loves and accepts truth, we shall rise out of criticism brighter and happier than ever. The Spirit of Truth is not like mercury. It is a spirit that is nutritious and enlivening in its nature, and if it comes in the form of criticism, it is just as nutritious and exhilarating as when it comes in any other form. In a word, we are going to be cured of our diseases by meat and drink; for the Spirit of Truth is meat and drink, and we must not convert it into mercury. We are not going to be cured by medicine, but by eating and drinking, which we shall enjoy forever; if eating and drinking is our life and joy now while we need criticism, we shall be sure to love it when we do not need criticism. It is true that the Spirit of God is poison to the devil; but we can enjoy it as meat and drink, let it poison whom it will.

This is the summing up. You will be in continual distress and have secondary diseases as fast as you are cured of primary, until you are refined enough to be conscious of the difference in you between the sheep and swine, so that the operations of the Spirit of God on the swine will not distress and fret you, but on the contrary, be meat and drink to you. And criticism will have to go on until you take it in that way; and you will have to feel that you are driven away again and again with the swine, until you make the discovery that the Spirit of Truth is not your enemy, but your friend.

The spiritual philosophy brought out in the Address to Perfectionists, (Witness, Vol. 1st, p. 45,) must have its application in our war with evil in ourselves. I am in the habit of considering

constantly, what attitude of spirit is going to be *perpetual* with me—what will be the general tone of my spirit and behavior when all evil has passed away. That is the spirit I must cultivate if I would enter into rest. You cultivate in yourself a spirit of *endurance* of evil or suffering, and you cultivate something which is not to have any place in heaven. Endurance of suffering is a necessary thing, but it is transitional. Evil is passing away—good is to remain. My whole business is to learn, not how to endure evil, but how to enjoy good. Here in the midst of the sharpest criticism is the time to enjoy the same happiness we shall enjoy in the bosom of God; for the same glory and joy that we shall dwell in there, is coming into us when we are receiving criticism.—Christ says, 'Resist not evil;' I say further, *Endure not evil.* Away with the idea that you must learn to endure evil—learn how to enjoy good. All this monkish solemnity and patient endurance is to be got rid of, just as much as the spirit of sensuality. If we get used to suffering, we cannot enter heaven in that state—we enter there as little children, in a joyous spirit that fears no evil. When Nehemiah read the law to the people, they mourned and wept. They were under criticism; but he said to them, 'Go your ways, eat the fat and drink the sweet—neither be ye sorry, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.' Here is the way he wanted them to behave under it. When people get solemn and make a virtue of enduring criticism, we must turn right about and call on them to rejoice. This is uniformly the devil's tactics—when the spirit of criticism takes hold of character, he gives up his hold in the primary disease, and goes to work to produce a second. His method is to slip over and get precedence of God, by making us feel sore, and stirring us up to thinking evil of ourselves and of God, and to make a merit of enduring torment. We must defeat him there, and say to him, Criticism shall be let loose upon our disease,

and the process shall not produce any chill, but we will rise buoyant and happy as heaven right out of it.

THE FREE CHURCH CIRCULAR.

GEORGE W. NOYES, EDITOR.

ONEIDA RESERVE, APRIL 13, 1850.

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

☞ The Community are receiving frequent applications from friends abroad, for the admission of children into their family. They are obliged to refuse them, as it is thought wholly inexpedient if not impossible to increase their responsibility in this department of the school. More on this subject may appear hereafter.

☞ Our readers have probably read accounts of the great Webster Trial at Boston, and experienced the unnamable sensations which the result was calculated to produce. The character and station of all the parties, gives peculiar significance to the affair. It is an explosion at the very centre of New England's best society, which rends the outward covering of refinement, and discloses the heart. We take it to be an evident item of the judgment day. The case is *officially* entitled, "The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, *versus* Professor John W. Webster for Murder;" but we think the real indictment stands thus: "The Spirit of Truth, *versus* Cambridge University, and the smooth, polished, Unitarian aristocracy of New England, for *Unbelief*."

Seward and Calhoun.

The position taken by Gov. Seward, in his late speech in the Senate, that the Law of God and Truth is paramount to all statutes and conventional agreements, has excited a good deal of remark. We believe that Mr. Seward will be sustained by the best part of the country. The following circumstance is mentioned by the Washington correspondent of the Tribune:

Calhoun was resolved that the South

should continue to rule the Union, and dispense its vast patronage; and on the 13th ult., he declared that he did not want to be on good terms with Mr. Seward. "The Senator," said he, "who holds that he must consult a higher power than the Constitution in regard to our rights, is not the man to associate with me."

In this spirit did he leave the Senate Chamber on that day, and never returned."

It is a true instinct in the writer of the above, which leads him to connect Calhoun's fall, with his public disrespect and denial of God.

A New Book.

MORALISM AND CHRISTIANITY: OR MAN'S EXPERIENCE AND DESTINY.—*In three Lectures. By Henry James. New York.*—

We have been somewhat acquainted with Mr. James as a reform writer, and metaphysician. His articles in the *Harbinger* attracted our attention, both from the novelty of their matter, and their brilliancy of style. The system of which they presented some partial ideas, is now before us in a tolerably complete form.

While we see many things to admire in this book we also find some fatal deficiencies. If we admit that it is in many respects a *true statement*, it still fails of being, as it ambitiously attempts to be, a *statement of the truth*. And as we may expect in these days, nearer and nearer approaches to the interior perception of things, and consequently theories of reform which are *almost* balanced on the central pivot of universal truth, there is more occasion than ever for the discrimination that alone dwells with the Spirit of God.

In discussing the problem of human evil, the solution which Mr. James offers is in the briefest form this: That man, by virtue of original creation is a Son of God, and therefore possesses inwardly the infinite life of God. That by some necessity, he finds himself hitherto in unrighteous subjection to outward nature, and to Society. These tend continually to repress his true genius, and to reduce his consciousness of the divine life. Subjection to nature, he says, is the ground of our limited physical resources, our poverty, pain and disease; and subjection to Society is the ground of all social crimes and burdens. Hence vice, or

self-abuse, he insists, is but the imperfect protest of the soul against the unjust dominion of nature; and *crime* is but the perverted assertion of man's rightful, inherent superiority to Society.

Admitting these positions to be strictly true, and that the divinity of man is crushed and smothered under the impositions of nature and Society, still the mystery of evil is not sounded to the bottom. For what are nature and Society? If they are things evil in themselves, then we must go back of human life for the original fountain of mischief. And if they are not evil, but the evil consists in our false relation to them, then how did we come into that false relation for these six thousand years? And what prospect is there that the 'divine man' will be in the future any more than he has been in the past, delivered from this curse of subjection? These questions cannot be answered in any hopeful or satisfactory way, but by recognizing an uncreated Spirit of evil, and the vital meaning of the mission of Jesus Christ. These great foundation facts are left out of the account by Mr. James; he considers and attempts to prove 'the devil an unprofitable hypothesis'; and speaks of 'the Christ' in that equivocal way, which is more unsatisfactory than the entire omission of him would be.

By the falsely limited premises to which as we have shown Mr. James confines himself, his system as a system, is made of no value. But within the circle of his reach, he often reasons strongly; and many of his statements, taken as the complement of greater truth, which he fails to recognize, become practically valid. Thus in the following passage, he deduces the truth of Community or Universality of property, from the idea of a true relation to God:—

I complain that I, who am as to my inward parts infinite or perfect, should find no answering perfection in my circumstances. I who am inwardly one with God—ONE I say, not *identical*, for identity destroys unity—should be one also with nature and my fellow-man. My natural and social proprium should be precisely commensurate with my inward or divine one. Whatsoever the whole of nature has to bestow,

whatever blessing the unlimited fellowship of mankind encloses, should be mine by virtue of my inward worth. Nature and society should have no power to identify me with a particular potato-patch, and a particular family of mankind all my days. The fact of my divine genesis makes God's whole earth my home, makes all His children my intimates and brethren. Why should nature have power to limit this home, society have power to limit this brotherhood? Their true function is only to universalize me, and give me outward development commensurate with my inward power. They but cheat me when they give me houses and lands, and a score of friends, and call these things my property. They are not my property. My true property in nature includes all her strengths and sweetnesses, includes all her resources to make pliant and strong and beautiful my body, and give my spirits the play of the morning breeze. And my true property in mankind is not my mere natural father and mother and brother and sister, and the great tiresome dispensation of uncles and aunts and cousins and nieces thereunto appended, but the whole vast sweep of God's harmonies in the realms of human passion, intellect, and action. Nature is my debtor and foe until she have deposited all her pith within me, and given me a body superior to her thunders. Society is likewise my debtor and foe until she have given me the frankest fellowship of every man, until she have lavished upon me the really inexhaustible wealth of human affection, and sunned me with the really infinite splendors of human thought.

In one word let nature give *herself* to man, and society give *herself*, as is but fitting where God does not hesitate to give Himself. Shall these have the assurance to offer but a part, where he gives all? God gives His infinite self to me. And this property is inalienable in all ways. Not only it cannot be stolen; it cannot even be lent. * * *

There is an absurdity here somewhere. If men's union with God were real, there could be no ground for these complaints against nature and society. And if their union with God is not real, then it should not be assumed; and the complaint should be directed against himself and others for non-acceptance of God. Nature and society do not refuse to give themselves where God is accepted. The admission of these complaints side by side with his assumption of unity with God, shows a terrible lack of substance and meaning in his idea of the latter; and this vacancy is sufficiently accounted for by his recognizing only the unity which is based on the fact of creation.

This universality of possession—this sublime superiority to nature and circumstances which shall exact their homage and blessing, is true, for every one, conditioned upon that faith which identifies us with Christ; thus and not otherwise. If the hypothesis of such a state of being were new, (and to the world it will seem both new and visionary.) we would perhaps accept Mr. James' philosophy of its attainment, which allows him to dispense with Christ; but it happens that all that is here proved or imagined of blessedness in human destiny, was distinctly announced, and triumphantly enjoyed 1800 years ago. And here we may as well apply the same remark to all the new lights of the age, from Fourier, down through the whole class of prophets and reformers. We hold ourselves ready to prove that all their best ideas, and most original positions are still but partial reflexes of truth that was massively stated by Paul. Instead of having added any thing to the testimony of the New Testament, their feeblest demonstrations only disclose its greater range. The truth is that Science though waking, is yet not half awake, not competent of itself to grasp the profound glories that are contained in those simple words. So long then as reason and discovery even in the hands of infidels are only yielding a constant confirmation to the product of the New Testament, what better proof can there be that its rule and formula are also correct?

Let us give a passage from the Testament presenting the same truth which forms the subject of Mr. James' demonstration, and notice the conditions which are attached:—

'He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him, freely give us all things. . . . Let no man glory in men: for all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours and ye are Christ's . . . He that overcometh shall inherit all things. . . . Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. . . . There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, houses and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come, eternal life.'

Here all that Mr. James demands, is plainly promised, but it is also plainly predicated on union with Christ, who is the only lover, the heir of all things, the Lord of the universe. In saying that the author of these Lectures fails to recognise this condition, and expects the desired consummation from other causes, as the abolition of Law, and the institution of Socialism, we say enough to show hopeless infirmity in his book and system. Having now expressed our judgment of the whole, we shall be free to present our readers with some detached passages which they will like. The following contains a fine idea beautifully expressed:—

But you know this truth experimentally also. You know that you never find perfect peace or contentment in your outward and finite *proprium*.—You know by experience that you cannot set your life's happiness upon any outward possession, be it wife or child, or riches, without an incessant and shuddering dread of betrayal. The infinite faculty within you steadfastly refuses these limited satisfactions. But when you rejoice first of all in that infinite faculty, when you seek above all things to give it development by the medium of appropriate action, by the medium of Art, then the house of your peace is built upon a rock, against which the windows of heaven are opened in vain. Let a man then renounce all enforced property in persons and things, accepting only such things and

persons as actually gravitate to him ; let him renounce all tale-bearing and recourse to the police, and come into universal candor, into complete whiteness of soul towards all men and things, how instantly would every heart expand to him as to God's melting sunshine, and the earth swarm with fragrant kisses for his feet !

Community Common-places.

Fear never saves us from evil ; Trust will. Fear is the devil offering to take care of us. Trust will always exactly realize itself. 'According to your faith be it unto you.' 'If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.' True, we cannot believe anything we please—God gives us our measure of faith ; but just so far as we have grace to believe—to trust—the thing is as well as done. The recklessness of trust is safety ; the precaution of fear is danger.

The greatest man will be the one who has the greatest capacity for humility ; who ever has the talent to descend the lowest, he will be able to ascend the highest.

Confession, or self-criticism is a superior form of judgment to the criticism of our character by others. If we can admit the Spirit of Truth, and let it light up our interior, trace and illumine our life-labyrinth, we can judge ourselves better than a second person can do it for us. 'All things are naked and open' to the Word of God which is in our heart, and we can communicate with it about ourselves ; it is a spirit of memory too, and can read to us the effaced passages of our experience, and help us to the minutest details of evidence in the trial of our character. Perfect honesty, and a love for the truth stronger than love of self-complacency, will admit this spirit. By faithful exposure, we renounce the fellowship of evil, we are no more identified with it—it reverts to its author, the devil, to whom God imputes all evil. Confession is not an atonement—we cannot make any atonement—but we can cut the partnership of secrecy with the devil, and join our-

selves to the truth. Whoever has done this, knows that the effect is indescribable relief and blessing—something far sweeter than self-justification.

Mr. Boyle's Last.

As the light which burst out in 1834, resulting in the experience and testimony of perfect holiness was plainly an inspiration—a direct work and gift of the Spirit of Truth, so, the attending circumstances were all pregnant with spiritual force and meaning. The persons who were connected in any way with that birth, whether as sincere friends, or secret traitors, or open foes, have since stood out of the category of common men. They became the vessels and agents of warring principalities ; and consequently their subsequent history must present something of a dramatic, and preternatural interest. We have persons in our mind of all these classes, whose course perhaps presents nothing very marked to the outward view, but whose orbit is still, and forever will be, determined by the attractions which they yielded to in the presence of the truth of 1834.

It is well known to our readers that Mr. Boyle's course since 1834, has been but a series of shifting descents from the summit of truth which, in form at least, he then occupied. We need not repeat the successive steps by which the declivity has been accomplished : it is enough to say, that every turn of things which has brought him into view, has showed him inclined to lower alliances and lower business than ever before. But we confess we were hardly prepared for the exhibition which he makes of himself, in an article published in the N. Y. Tribune of March 12.

The circumstances of the case, and the immediate occasion of Mr. Boyle's communication are substantially these ; Boyle was student and sort of partner of Dr. Beach (the Ishmaelite man) at a time when Dr. B. was forming an Anatomical Museum ; and we understand took much interest and an active part in the preparation of it. The Museum is now on exhibition in New York, and was for some time advertised in the Tribune. At length one of the Editors of that paper visited it, and upon discovering its character,

at once threw the advertisement out of his paper, pronouncing the Museum 'an abomination,' and describing it in a paragraph, as 'an exhibition of the most disgusting trash that adventurous charlatanism could gather from the Hospitals of Paris—a collection of horrid exaggerations of more horrid diseases,' &c. &c.

This calls out Mr. Boyle in its defence and in wrathful denunciation of the critic. We cannot give his article, both because it is quite lengthy, and because its presence in the paper would remain a perpetual offence, even if we introduced it for the purpose of dissection. Neither shall we attempt much of an analysis or description of it. Yet those Perfectionists who have still a lingering weakness towards Mr. Boyle, (as we confess to have had ourselves,) should procure and read it. Let them apply their spiritual senses to the interior of the article, and then judge of the spiritual condition of its author. For our part, we have rarely had such recoiling impressions of distinct and utter evil, as were forced upon us by reading the article alluded to.

Mr. Boyle formerly charged Paul with resorting to 'trickery, to pious frauds, carnal management, double-dealing, Jesuitical and back-handed ways,' in his operations as an apostle. Now we seriously think, we never saw an article embodying so much of this very kind of work, as the column before us, written by James Boyle. Ill-disguised 'trickery and management' with reference to Mr. B.'s private interests, is the real warp of the piece from beginning to end. Witness the incidental purpose of puffing himself as a physician; the trick by which he forges the endorsement of several respectable men to his character, by familiarly calling their names, and claiming intimacy with them; the pretence that he is in no way personally interested in the Museum, &c. &c.

In the course of his extraordinary tirade against the Tribune critic, and his "disinterested" zeal in defence of the Museum, Boyle also projects a double charge of flattery at Mr. Greeley, with the design grossly evident of compelling him to disavow the remarks of his subordinate editor. Mr. G. however takes no notice of it, but rubs in

the original castigation in the following pithy remark, with which he dismisses the communication:—

"We trust Mr. Boyle and his friends feel relieved by the above ejection. Having given place to it, we only add that our opinions of the tendencies of the exhibition so commended are unchanged. Our readers now know quite enough of the whole matter, and will act as their tastes may impel them.
Ed. Tribune.

One or two general remarks may be made concerning this affair:—

1. Whether the Anatomical Museum spoken of is indecent, and immoral as the Tribune alleges, and as we are inclined to believe, or not, it is at any rate, by Boyle's own boast, a collection of loathsome examples of horrible disease—a select cabinet of the devil's most characteristic work; and Boyle in this affair shows too plainly, that he is in love with these hideous curiosities—that he explores the science of corruption with the inward delight of an amateur. It makes no difference how much he may try to dignify his pursuit with scientific terms and philanthropic pretences, we are forced to conclude that he follows his esthetic tendency, and shows his radical attractions, in becoming a waiter on the foul diseases that breed in vice. The bare fact of a man's voluntary connection with such a Museum as this is described to be, (to say nothing of the extravagant interest and zeal which is manifest in Boyle's article,) is certainly the most unpromising thing that we could know of him. When a man has got so far in the direction of *depth*, we dislike to speculate on his further attainments.

2. Boyle and Beach, are the very two men who once attempted to hold up J. H. N. to infamy in New York City, as the author of the 'Battle Axe Letter.' This was in the 'Israhmaelite' published by Beach in 1837. Now these same men are pointed out to the gaze of the Community, by the most respectable paper in the Country, as infamous charlatans and corruptionists. Boyle in the present communication, attempts to throw a slur on our Community, but curiously overshoots the mark; and while he and Beach are calculating our disgrace, they are themselves cast out into the gutter of contempt as paanders to licentiousness, on a level with

the vilest city characters. And this too by the very paper which he vainly attempts to flatter, pronouncing it the most liberal and judicious in the land. Well, truly,

“As yet the world goes round and round,
And the genial seasons run;
And ever the truth comes uppermost,
And ever is justice done.”

We have extended these remarks much longer than we intended, and yet have scarcely touched on the many curious points that are offered in this affair, or brought out its dramatic interest. We should perhaps not have alluded to it at all, but for the reason, that Mr. Boyle's influence with Perfectionists, though growing 'small by degrees and beautifully less' is yet not quite exterminated. We have reason to know by a recent example that this influence, wherever exerted, is most injurious, inducing darkness, suffering and infidelity. With this fact in view, we have thought best to mention as we have done the late exposure of his position, and the evident progress he is making in the disgust of all cleanly persons.

Progressive Conversion.

One of the greatest obstacles we have to contend with in our progress, is the *aversion to change* so universal in human nature. This aversion relates to our outward circumstances, to our moral habits and feelings, to our intellectual opinions, and to our vital, spiritual state.

This disposition to remain fixed in the old condition, may be called the *vis inertia* of human nature. People do not like the trouble of making changes. Some however acquire a facility in changing their outward circumstances, and even learn to find pleasure in doing so, who are yet very tenacious of old habits and opinions. Others again may be brought to change their former habits and opinions, manners and morality, while they stubbornly resist the power that would change their vital and spiritual state. But this internal change is in fact the most important of all; it is what is implied in our receiving a 'new heart and a new spirit.'

The work of complete regeneration,

includes *all* the changes that are necessary to raise us from the fallen state of the old man, to the perfection of our whole character, and the attainment of the glorified state; while *conversion* may be considered as only a partial change from one state to another, as from bad to good, good to better, or even from bad to worse, as there may be conversions in a descending direction. Here is the error of the churches: when a man experiences *conversion* they call it *regeneration*, and there they stop, and consider the work as done, instead of expecting the work to go on in a series of conversions, in the ascending direction. They refuse to receive a new conversion, lest they should have to throw away their old one, which they are persuaded was good. But we need not fear to have new conversions, involving not only change of opinion, but change in our spiritual state—only let us be sure that they are in the *ascending direction*, leading us on towards God. Our experience may be illustrated thus: In ascending a flight of stairs, we have to go through the same process again and again; but every time we ascend a stair, we are higher than we were before, and nearer the top. So in our experience; every time we are called to a new conversion, we should not be discouraged, and think our past experience must have been all a sham, but remember we are ascending the stairs, and must have conversion after conversion, until we have reached the top—and attained the perfection of God.

It is important that we should get a thorough understanding of this subject; that we should study into the cause of this aversion to change, both in ourselves and others; and that we should seek to gain a facility, and willingness to make any and all the changes necessary to the attainment of perfection of character, and the complete establishment of the kingdom of God. There is a sphere in which this aversion to change, this love of permanence and stability, may have place. There are some things in which

we should be fixed, and unchangable, except in the way of increase; for instance, in our *trust in God*--in our *love of God*, and of the truth. Let us find the true place for the exercise of this tendency of our natures, and apply it where it belongs.

Let us pray for a revolutionary spirit. Any thing that breaks up effeminacy and gives us faith and toughness of spirit, is good for us. We must acquire the heroism of a sailor; an inexperienced person on the waters in time of trial and danger would rather be in sight of shore; but the sailor who is used to the rolling billows of the ocean, prefers great distance from shores, and deep waters.—Any experience that schools us in faith, and keeps our hearts in an active growing state, we should rejoice in.

Letter to a little Boy.

Brooklyn, March 20. 1850.

DEAR GEORGE: * * * * Did you ever see a trumpet? It is a tube, small at one end and large at the other. We may think of our spirits as having this shape. When they are just right, the small end is towards the devil, and the large end towards God. Then we are rich in love, and peace, and sincerity, and modesty, and all those things that make us happy. When the spirit gets turned round the wrong way, with the small end towards God, and the large end towards the devil, then we are poor, and that makes us restless and unhappy, and every thing goes wrong. All the desires that you have to go somewhere, or do something that you may be happy, show that you want more life. Life makes us happy. Life is God, and what you want is more of the life of God in your heart. If you will turn over your Testament to the last chapter of Revelations, 17th verse, you will read—*'And the Spirit and the Bride say come, and let him that heareth say, Come,*

and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.' Then in the 16th verse of the 21st chapter, Christ says, *'I will give to him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life freely.'* Then in his discourse with the woman of Samaria, while he was sitting on the well, he said to her, *'Whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst.'* This restless spirit that seeks to find happiness in pleasing itself, in playing, or reading stories, or in any other way than by asking God for his life in our hearts, can never be satisfied. It is always thirsty. The world is full of men and women that are seeking happiness in such ways. A man came here one morning who was going to California to get gold. I was sorry for him, and I told him that if he would seek to please God, he owned all the gold and would give him all that he wanted, because he says in the 6th chapter of Matthew, *'Seek first the kingdom of God and all things shall be added.'* That is, seek to please God, and he will seek to please you. Do you ask, *'How shall I keep my spirit open toward God, and closed up towards the devil—how shall I become a faithful, modest, sincere boy?'* I will tell you. Pray to God every day to keep your spirit turned right; read some in your Testament every day, and ask God to teach you how to please him. Then you will be happy, will enjoy your play, and your school and your work. If any thing grieves you, that sorrow will close up your spirit towards evil, and open it toward God, if you ask God to comfort you. * * * * * I send you my love and blessing, and expect to see you before a great while. Your Mother.

☞ Tell the truth, and you will be saved.

Communication.

Oneida Reserve, March 5, 1850.

Having formerly publicly opposed the Perfectionists and their principles, I should like to confess as publicly my love for them. I believe them to be the children of God, and their doctrines to be the only true doctrines of the Bible. I should like to renew my confession of Christ in me a whole Savior from sin. I feel that my heart is in full fellowship with this Association and its principles

LORENDA BURT.

CORRESPONDENCE.

North Cambridge, Vt Mar. 26, 1850.

EDITOR OF THE CIRCULAR :

DEAR SIR :—I desire very much to convey a few thoughts to you, and the circle of believers associated with you, expressive of my former and present position; not because others are doing so, but because I feel it my duty and privilege, and because I covenanted with the Lord, when I was in trouble, that if he would 'deliver me out of my distresses,' and show me the way my feet should go, I would do it.

Many of you are aware that my name stands enrolled among those who 'saw the heavens opened,' and for whom the world has been forever spoiled. 'This was true indeed with me, and little did I dream, when I was so 'overshadowed by the power of the Highest,' that the day would ever come when the 'heavens would be as brass over my head;' yet such indeed has been the case, as you all very well know. My very first teaching was, that having entered the 'heavenly city,' the New Jerusalem that 'came down from God out of heaven,' I was to go no more out forever; that Christ was forever after responsible or all my thoughts, words and actions; that my trials were over, and rest, *sweet rest* was mine. Thus I passed smoothly on, singing 'all is well,' until the issuing of the 1st No. of the Witness.

Here I was brought to a stand, and for the first time began to review my course, to see if all was right. I could not refrain from reading the bold testimony of J. H. N. against all iniquity, although it often struck a deadly blow at my very heart. Yet I thought, surely there will be a way of escape, for God will take care of all our works; having so been taught from the beginning.— But from this time my spiritual strength began evidently to fail. And thus we passed on a number of years, mostly in silence; my husband being with me in testimony. It had once been said to me that what we had received was but a "vision" of the glory soon to be revealed, and we should all have to come up out of great tribulation to enter it; but I could not receive it then.

When the little cluster of believers began to gather at Putney, and subsequently at Oneida, in such great harmony, while I myself, and others with me, were left out, having no part nor lot in the matter, I was distressed. What does this mean? Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then it would ring like thunder in my ears, Depart from me, ye that work iniquity—while a blaze of light would flash across my mind, emanating from the band of love at Oneida, and showing me but the more vividly my darkness and want of rest. But Oh, to confess my weakness; when I have so long boasted of strength. What shall I do? and I cried to the Lord. Again and again did I retrace my steps to see if indeed I had sinned against the Holy Ghost and thereby forever shut myself out of the kingdom of God. I told the Lord my troubles, for in him alone I had confidence. To go back I could not; to go forward, I dared not, for fear of one day finding myself in deeper trouble than I was even now in. Thus was I tossed and thrown from one extreme to the other, until I was well nigh being bereft of my reason; indeed, I often im-

aged myself being carried to Brattleboro, an insane person:—and Oh! the load at my heart! which lay beyond the reach of human aid. 'My sin is ever before me,' and 'He that covereth his sins shall not prosper.' I longed to throw myself into your meetings of criticism, where I might in confidence ease my troubled heart. I tried to open my case to my husband; but found no relief; for we had long been like lost children caught among thorns, where we could not move without wounding each other.

I said to myself, 'My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death.' As this thought passed my mind, I remembered they were the words of Jesus Christ. The thought comforted me. I called upon his name; told him he was the rightful owner of my heart; I had long since received him as a Savior, and confessed his name before men; and I invited him to take the field and fight the battle for me, for I was sinking in death. The sweet answer as of a voice so distant scarcely to be audible, 'It is I, be not afraid,' came to my relief; and then I covenanted with God as before stated.

I now began to see and believe that God cared for me, *even for me*; and O, with what willingness I committed myself to his guidance. I soon saw that all his providences were moving in my favor, and I thanked God and took courage. My brother, J. Kinsley brought me the first 4 Nos. of the 'Free Church Circular;' and out of the kindness of his heart, read many select pieces to me, which were like healing balm to my wounded and sin-sick soul. Since then, I have seen more and more clearly that an entrance is being ministered unto me, abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

RHODA MUGGET.

☞ Forrest the Actor, has applied for a divorce. The affidavits in the case, afford a curious glimpse behind the curtain of fashionable aristocratic life.

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