

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. 62.

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SALVATION FROM HABIT.

I have had great satisfaction to day in denying the almighty power of habit.— We have talked on that subject a good many times, but I see that we are not likely to say too much on it. Look into yourselves, and you find the devil works on you through habit—he uses various occasions, and his influence comes on you with as many different velocities and variations as the wind—but that which he operates on in you is *habit*, i.e. the strong predisposition of your life to act in affinity with him in consequence of having *practiced* wrong. You have been long accustomed perhaps to think in a certain way that is narrow, foolish, and contrary to the expansion of faith, and the mind of Christ. It is easy for you to think in that way; it becomes a habit of mind, and this state of things in you the devil's influence takes effect on. To save us from the power of the devil considered as an external force simply, or even as aided by outward circumstances and events, is a small affair comparatively. What we want is something to save us from the power of the wicked one as acting on this very proclivity of our nature to hab-

it—continuing in evil from past practice. Habit is the sceptre of the devil, as truth, rationality, is the sceptre of God's kingdom. And the very question whether God or the devil shall reign, resolves itself into the question whether habit or truth shall reign—and the question whether we are to get rid of bad habits, is in effect the same as whether we are to be saved. By giving attention to the difficulties that you labor under, and the things that you need to be saved from, you will see that it is from bad habits that have established themselves in the mind and the various passions.

It is precisely here that I find Christ an almighty Savior. I deny that habit is almighty, and can deny it with a perfect warrant in experience and fact. I know there is power and faculty in Christ to redeem men from the vain conversation received by tradition from their fathers, and the malpractices induced by habit—that he is able to make them new creatures. This is not vain-glorious testimony or talk; but it is the eternal truth, that he is able to wash us in his blood—wash us from sin—i.e. from our bad habits—and so make an end of that which the wicked one works upon, and save us from the evil circumstances which surround us. I exceedingly desire that every one should give at-

tention to this point, in order that faith may grow. I believe all need more liberal conceptions of the power of Christ to raise them from the dead—bring them out of their graves, and unwind the shroud that the wicked one, by the working of habit, has wound round them. Because, it is only as you really see that Christ is able to do this, and recognize in earnest that he is your Savior, that you will have a foothold to stand, and the courage to attack your bad habits. As you find yourself liable to be carried away by the current of old thoughts, find yourself falling into the same accustomed things, and learn the tremendous suction of habit, you will be discouraged from attempting any change. You will be discouraged until you more fully conceive of Christ's ability, and heartily give him credit as a perfect Savior on this point. You must so yield to the truth as to get an enlarged view of his resources, and thoroughly believe that he is able to do the very thing that you want done; then you are in condition to go to work in good hope. You will feel that you are not at work at your own charges—that your failure or success is not your own, but Christ's; and you will be sure that he will accomplish what he undertakes.

Our own works, and the devil's work in us under his administration, and our deliverance from it all, may be compared to the operation of a silk worm. The silk worm goes to work, and winds itself up until it is enclosed in a firm ball of tenacious substance. But the end of the matter is, when it comes to the time of its new birth or second state, it eats through its own enclosure, and comes out of it. So in the carnal state, you have wound yourself up in an envelop of bad habits—bad thoughts and tendencies of every kind; you come to the second

birth, and find yourself enclosed, with no possibility of assuming any shape of liberty, or getting the breath of freedom, unless you can divest yourself of this envelop. The question is, how you are to do it? I say, the power that raised Christ from the dead can eat through the covering, and enable you to release yourself from the envelop of bad habits,—the power that raised Christ from the dead can raise us up, and break every snare. If it cannot there is no hope. With what I know of the power of habit, I should lie down with no hope of escaping damnation, if I did not see that Christ is able to conquer this evil.—It is only as I see that Christ is mighty to save, and that all his resources are offered to us, including the power that raised him from the dead, to prevail as it did in him over principalities and the power of Satan, that I have any hope. But there I have hope—glorious hope—and plenty of encouragement; it sets me to work in a courageous, plodding spirit, that will never tire, and that is sure of success.

I advise every one who is conscious of any bad habit whatsoever, to make friends with the truth, and get at the right way of dealing with it. The way to deal with it, as instructed by the devil, would be to ignore it—refuse to think of it—keep it out of mind as much as possible; and when it comes up in a way that you cannot avoid, make a rush at it, in a desperate, impatient way, and give it a push that amounts to nothing, and then pass it by, and go along with the constant feeling that if you look it in the face, it will bring you into condemnation. I advise any who are treating bad habits in this way to turn right about, and begin by acknowledging them to themselves, and to any body else that they are in confidence with: I would make up my

mind to regard the thing as a *fact* that there is truth, interesting truth, to be known about. You need not be impatient, or worry, or fret, because you are under the influence of some habit; neither ignore it: but consider it a matter for experiment. Christ professes to be mighty to save, and here is a chance to prove him. It is his very function and profession to deliver from these evils. He has proposed his blood as the remedy, and here is an opportunity to put him to the test. I will give him the same chance that the patient does his physician, and let him see what he can do. I will not ignore or turn my back on the habit to get rid of it: that is like the ostrich, burying its head in the sand; but I will expect help by laying myself open to the truth, fairly and squarely, and consulting with Christ about it.

See how we are prevented, in a very foolish way, from going to Christ, and getting him to do what wants to be done. I have a bad habit, and I am ashamed of it, and must not go to Christ till I get rid of it: this is precisely an opposite view to the truth. Instead of getting rid of bad habits before going to Christ, you must go to him to get rid of them; and the more you are ashamed of them, the more need of going to him to be cured; and give him credit, that in doing so, he will not upbraid you. Understand his generosity, that he came into the world not to condemn it, but to save it.

I would account all bad habits of mind and will as no part of myself—not as things that I am to justify or sympathise with, or to regard as essential to my comfort or peace. I would not attempt to forget them, but deal truthfully with them; not expect to get rid of them by darkness, but by light—by opening myself to light that the devil cannot bear. The

devil hates light, and you press toward the light, press toward the acknowledging of the truth, concerning Christ on the one hand, and yourself on the other, and in that proportion you are straining on the line that binds you to the devil, and the line will part. You may be sure that you cannot gain any thing by forgetting your faults and covering them in darkness;—that is the element in which the devil works;—the love of truth and daylight will get you out.

Bad habits are of all varieties of strength, and they need to be dealt with in a variety of ways; but you find in the gospel that Christ has resources to deal with them all. To lay out of account those forms of bad habit that can be pretty readily dismissed—that are reached by an easy flow of the Spirit of truth upon them—and to come to cases of bad habits that are too deep seated to yield to the elementary influences of the gospel, I will put two cases. The first is brought to light by Paul's discourse on the subject of marriage and the relations of the sexes. He points out what he calls the better way, but insists that a person may take what is not the best way and still not be condemned. 'He that giveth in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth not in marriage doeth better. He that standeth steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, &c, doeth well; but if thou marry thou hast not sinned,' &c.

It is well to know and understand Christ's method of treating cases where there is apparently the most alarming strength of bad habits; for it was a bad habit that was in question on this occasion. If after being advised, the man has power over his own will to take the course pointed out, it is the better way; but if he has not power, then Christ does not con-

demn him, but will wait till he can bring to bear upon him the secondary and complex influences that are necessary to change him. Here is a case that it is to be supposed was a bad habit of amativeness, that in effect for the time being, foils the power of Christ. The man has not power of his own will, and for a time Christ has not. His amativeness is in a rebellious state; in consequence of long bondage to evil, the man is in a chronic bad habit in this department. Now how does Christ treat such a case with a view to cure it, and bring the man out into freedom? Well, he introduces *free discussion*. The apostle invites him to a frank consideration of the matter, and not to ignore the fact that he has not power of his own will; he leads him to a full discussion of the case in the presence of Christ. In this attitude there is no condemnation in the fact; Christ takes charge of the man, admitting the fact, and denies the devil's right to condemn him. He justifies him, admitting his connexion with the bad habit; and so gives him a foothold to go to work and conquer it. Without such a foothold of justification and access to Christ, he never could begin to rise out of its control. It is no way to ignore it in general, and occasionally wake up to a desperate and fruitless struggle with it, neither to sink into condemnation about it; but as I have said, Christ's resources are such as to give you a foothold to meet it boldly and truthfully, and put it down. He is not in a hurry. All that he wants is that you should put yourself in a position where he can give you power to overcome it. And his quarrel with you, if he has any, will not be that you have bad habits, but that you are too small-hearted to believe in his power—the skill and resource he has in his hand to give you help.

There is one case. I say there is no difficulty in getting rid of habits, be they what they may, if a man has the confidence and great-heartedness to put the case into Christ's hands in this way—he is sure to conquer: eternity is before us, and there is no end to the resources that Christ has to bring, adapted to every exigency. He has the resource of twelve legions of angels, and command of all circumstances that can be brought to affect the case. If we can prevail on ourselves to take this attitude toward Christ in regard to bad habits, we shall certainly conquer; and we shall certainly be conquered by them eternally if we cannot get a foothold of justification and quietness in Christ from which to work.

There is another way that Christ has of dealing with habit, and we have an example of it in respect to this very passion of amativeness: Paul, writing to the Corinthians, alludes to the case of a man who was so far under the control of bad habit as to be guilty of fornication and incest—outbreking iniquity. He not only had not power to abstain from marriage, but his passions were under diabolical power, that led him to break forth from all decency. Christ and Paul did not despair of that case; they did not treat it as they did the other, as a case that admitted of justification at present, but they did treat it as one that admitted of hope, and as being within reach of Christ's resources.—They proceeded to apply those resources; they delivered him to Satan for the destruction of the flesh. In the first case the object was to strengthen and save by justification and the introduction of Christ; in this instance the object was to destroy the devil, and let the inner man take care of itself during the operation. The judgment of the church was

put upon him in the utmost severity that it was possible to bear, and yet leave a door of escape. Well, he finds that his nature is put under a pressure that brings him out—brings him to repentance, and works an entire revolution in his motives and character.

These examples show that Christ's resources extend to the worst cases that can be put. He is not like physicians who expect to cure a certain class of diseases, and keep those well who are already well,—whose remedies are confined to a few of the forms and modes of disorder. On the contrary, he shows abundant power over chronic, desperate cases of rebellion and abominable perverseness of will.—He is provided with resources for every disorder; he does not take the light cases and shirk the hard ones, but takes the hard ones, and treats them with equal certainty and success. He did so in the Primitive church, and can do so again.

I think that of all the physical and animal passions people are troubled with, probably alimentioniveness is the one that is most infested with bad habits. Here they need to invite Christ, and to let in an intelligent spirit. I recommend to all to examine into their bad habits, and take the toughest by the horns. Find out the very worst habit you can, and make it your business to test Christ on that.

Paul speaks of some as fornicators, covetous, &c., and says of the church,—‘Such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God.’—1 Cor. 6: 11. There is plenty of evidence that Christ did cure people of most wretched bad habits in the Primitive church. I think there is a great deal of matter-of-fact encouragement to be found among us, if we would hunt it up. I think that

Mr. B——'s case is a splendid example of Christ's power to save from habit, in curing that spirit of willfulness, that was almost omnipotent in him. There is just enough left to show the almighty grace that has been at work upon him.

The point to be gained, as I said the other evening, is not only to prevent the sparks from being projected into us by Satan, but to *get rid of the tinder*; and that is precisely the point I am on now—to get rid of habits. Habit is tinder, and some occasion is the spark which the devil uses. It is a superficial salvation merely to get rid of the occasions of evil. We must get so as to live where the sparks are flying all the time, and not catch fire. One way, very likely, to get rid of tinder, would be to let the devil set fire to it and burn it up. In fact, it is necessary, if there is tinder in a man, that fire should get into him to reveal it.

There is a secret feeling that bad habits are almighty, which is an admission that Satan and evil are almighty. We shall bring into the field one *good* habit by and by, that will face every way, and will put fire into and destroy every bad habit. That good habit is the habit of *changing for the better*. We shall get into the habit of changing for the better continually; i. e. the habit of having no habit. The habit of progression will face every way, and will touch every bad habit; because the way of going on in a cider-mill round cannot exist with it in respect to any thing. We are to change from glory to glory. To merely enjoy a glory in cider-mill fashion, if that could be supposed possible, would be a bad habit; but we are to go on from glory to glory—change all the time. This is what we mean by the spirit of improvement—the spirit of improvement, so far as it is an appurtenance of ourselves, is the habit of

progression—of improving change. It is a spirit that nullifies all habit in the evil sense, but makes us unchangably changing—fixed in improving progress. We may get into that habit and stay there eternally. We shall not be shaken out of it; but if we get into any other habit God will shake us up.

### Overcoming the Wicked One.

Salvation is spoken of several times as a process of 'overcoming.' 'I write unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.' I advise all to give attention to that, and to pray that they may have grace to overcome the wicked one. They should consider what it is to overcome in this sense. The Lord's prayer contains all the great, generic, sweeping desires of the soul, and this among the rest: 'Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever, amen.' The word translated 'evil' in this passage is the same with that translated 'wicked one' in John's epistle, and should be so rendered here. 'Deliver us from the wicked one.' All individual troubles will pass away if we can once let in the expanding majesty of that spirit that has overcome the wicked one. Let it breathe upon us—give it room to deploy in us—and all individual trouble will be at an end.

The *spirit of the cross* is the spirit that has overcome. Christ said, 'Lo, I come to do thy will, O God;' and he did it.—His spirit, as a human spirit, became almighty against the wicked one. And that spirit that was perfected in him, was transferred to the apostles, and carried victory through the apostolic age, over the spirit that makes men dark and unbelieving. It was triumphant in all the saints

of the Primitive church, till the end of that dispensation, and then the influx closed. Well, in the transactions of 1834 it was reöpened. When I yielded to the truth, that spirit which overcame 1800 years ago, got foothold again. It gained a touching-point in an individual case. I feel now that there is coming a crisis in which there will be a great expansion of it.

We must rejoice in that old victory; that is the victory that is to have expansion and overcome in us—the victory of the cross. As we learn the awful suffering that belongs to the perverse spirit, and learn the awful power of the wicked one—learn the evil that we suffer under him, and the good that is ours by deliverance from him—as we learn this, we can begin to read the meaning of that great transaction. People in the shallowness of the churches don't know who the wicked one is, or what it is to be saved. They have no conception of the interests involved, or of the work of Christ in overcoming the power that holds them in ruin. If all our suffering lets us into an idea of the character and strength of the wicked one, we shall then be prepared to know who Christ is, and what he has done, and can do. As we discover what the wicked one is, by tasting the bitterness of his power, and trying our strength upon him, we shall learn to appreciate and understand Christ. 'Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?' He met the wicked one and drew his fire—stood up, and summoned the devil to shoot. He did shoot, and Jesus came out of it unscathed. If you know what that means, what a load he had to lift in that conflict, and the strength of righteousness that was concerned, if you know and believe the real truth about it, you have joined a spirit of righteousness that is stronger than the strong man armed. You will have to understand that, if it takes years and ages of suffering to make you know what it is to be saved, and what God did when he raised Christ from the dead. Understand that, and then you

will also appreciate the victory that God wrought in me in 1834.—*Home-Talk*, April 1851. . .

### Transition Manners.

In a late *Tribune* there is an editorial notice of a book, published by a French traveler in this country—a gentleman of quality, whose aristocratic tastes make him an ill-natured critic on American institutions and manners. The remarks of the *Tribune* struck us as a very fair defence of our republic; and we have marked a few passages for our paper, assuming that we shall not be taken as commending bad manners, of which we entirely acquit the author of the remarks that follow:

“We have no doubt that our good Xavier saw many ugly sights among us, and encountered various afflictive experiences, but it is none the less clear that Xavier’s judgment on these things is wholly unworthy of any reasonable man’s attention. According to his own showing, he saw nothing worse among us than very gross derelictions of conventionalism. He does not attempt to prove that there is less humanity in our population than elsewhere, or less charity when any real call for it is made. He simply proves the existence of a very frequent indifference to the precepts of European etiquette among our male population especially, and lavishes the sincerest pity on our women that they are obliged to marry such barbarians.—But the traveler should have recollected that he came in contact on our steamboats with the masses of the people—those masses who, at home, never travel, but live and die in the same dingy and dirty hovel which gave them and their progenitors birth.

“We do not deny any amount of conventional uncouthness among the masses of our population. But we do deny any *substantial* baseness among them: On the contrary, we are persuaded that those very rudenesses which we hear so much about, in many cases grow out of that sentiment of human fellowship or unity, which will, ere long, be the recognized basis of all virtue. The two worst experiences we have had at home were as follows. Once on a North River steamboat we observed a well-known citizen, Mr. H. H., emerging from the cabin after breakfast with a cigar which he had just lighted. He had no sooner reached the forward deck than a light was requested by a plain countryman, to whom accordingly he handed over his cigar. The cigar was unhappily not very well lighted, and the countryman consequently, in order to bring it to a better glow, incontinently put it in his own mouth,

whence, after giving it a couple of vigorous puffs, and than applying it to his own expectant Havana, he gratefully returned it to Mr. H. H. The latter looked stupified, as you may suppose, but observing a perfectly good conscience on the part of the other, he courteously received the cigar, and waiting till the countryman’s back was turned, threw it overboard.

“The other case occurred at the Astor House. We were seated at the dinner table next a person from Connecticut, who called for a plate of corned-beef, and greatly disliking, as he said, the fat with which it was garnished, very coolly applied for permission to transfer the noxious incumbrance to our plate. We begged him of course to make his trouble known to the waiter, who was there expressly for his accommodation, but we acquitted him at the same time of the slightest consciousness of disrespect toward us. In both these cases in fact it was entirely evident that the parties sinned only from the excess of fellow-feeling, and that they did nothing more than they would willingly have done unto them.”

It is an interesting view that the conventionalisms of the proud are, to a great extent, pure expressions of individuality, and will be wholly unappreciable in the coming time, when the law, ‘Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,’ gives fashion to society. Is it not true that ignorance of etiquette, and the nice distinctions of the fastidious, is good proof many times that one is simple concerning that which is evil?—and has never had his ‘eyes opened’ by apostasy from innocence?

And yet there is a counterpart, in our spiritual experience, of this aristocratic sensitiveness, these repulsions, scruples of taste, &c. We do not love to share the same dish with coarse, earthly spirits. Unwashed hands, or uncouth manners, do not defile things for us half so bad as worldliness and insincerity. These are the vulgarities that give us qualms, and we should like to have etiquette, and every thing which will repel familiarity, come between us and them; we should like to have them feel their meanness and abject destiny, and be always abashed by the dignity of truth and goodness. But they are as offensively present in the immaculates of fashion and good-breeding as any where. Indeed, all our study of character goes to prove that the excessively nice—those to whom scarcely any thing is pure—are by no means the purest, sweetest class of characters.

In respect to blood and ancestry, we are

constrained to honor those who have had God-fearing ancestors, and inherited from them veneration, conscientiousness, and an organized moral nature. But we know the only true noble blood is the life of Christ; and those only are high born, in the best sense of the word, who have been made partakers of the divine nature, through the faith of the Gospel. All other blood, whatever the distinctions in society, is common and low born.

## The Free Church Circular.

HARRIET H. SKINNER, EDITRESS.

ONEIDA RESERVE, MAY 13. 1851.

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

—There has been allusion in several letters received lately, to a Home-Talk on *overcoming Habit*, which appeared in the Circular some time since. We see it is a subject of lively interest, and are pleased that we can give another Talk upon it in the present number, hoping that our readers will find in it the sincere milk of the word, as we have. Experience confirming the truth of these articles, will always be edifying—an acceptable offering to the Circular, and we believe to him whose power and goodness is commended to our faith.

—The New York *Sunday Times* of May 4th contains a somewhat extended notice of the Community, with several extracts from our last Annual Report. The writer gives as correct an account of us as a person not personally acquainted with the Community could be expected to, and treats our ideas with at least gentlemanly good nature. The few comments that are interspersed in the narrative, we thought were about equally flavored with satire and sympathy.—We were pleased with the following notice of facts in regard to education among us, and expect to prove the statement more and more true:—

“Education, with all ages, seems to us the leading interest of the association. Individual improvement, the report assures us, is considered of much higher importance than the accumulation of material wealth. The children enter into their studies and labors with equal enthusiasm, and even the aged men-

bers—men and women of sixty or seventy—join classes, study the sciences, and find that they can learn as well as in their youthful days. Being too old to learn, they say, is a humbug. All study, and all improve. A class of seventeen persons was formed last winter to study phonography, whose ages averaged fifty years, and four were over sixty.”

After copying a section from the Report, headed ‘Signs of the Times,’ the article concludes as follows:—

“It strikes us rather forcibly that here are matters which both conservatives and progressives would do well to look at steadily. The one should know what they oppose, the other should understand the point toward which they are driving. In the remaining pages of this report all the common arguments against slavery are made to apply to marriage, and the parallel is curiously complete. Each is opposed, and each defended upon precisely the same grounds.

“It makes a prudent man hold his breath, and wonder where all the world is driving to.”

We should say, if there is fast driving there is more reason for a prudent man to hold on, and take care not to get thrown out. Truth is no doubt moving rapidly on to universal reform; that is a fact that cannot be helped. If we assent to it, and keep wide awake in our place, we shall move safely on with the progress of things: but wo to the man who gets sleepy and dreams of the past, or frightened, and undertakes to block the train.

G.

## A Glance at Palestine.

We have received a little work entitled “Meshullam: or tidings from Jerusalem: the journal of a believer recently returned from the Holy Land”—and read it with the peculiar relish which the subject is calculated to excite. No name appears, but we infer that the author is a lady, of Philadelphia, who in the summer of 1849 made a journey to Jerusalem—in obedience to a spiritual instinct and what she believed was the will of God. She seemed to go without any definite object, but with apparent simplicity and faith, and was encouraged by many marks of God’s care. We conclude that she belongs to some division of the Second Advent believers, and is looking for the restoration of the Jews in connection with her faith. As the result of her mission, she became acquainted with John Meshullam, a Christian Jew, and entered in-



to coöperation with him in a plan of establishing something like a 'manual labor school of Agriculture for the Jews,' on the land of their Fathers. Meshullam has been very successful in experiments on the soil—being the first Hebrew Christian, the lady says, who has ever succeeded in this line, since the Jews dispersion—and he is prepared for extension as he shall have helpers and means. She appeals for offerings to this 'altar of service, which she believes the Lord is rearing again amid the ashes of Zion.'

Her journal is chiefly an account of visits to the memorable scenes of Scripture history, Bethlehem, Gethsemane, the Jordan, &c.,—which she seemed to enjoy with genuine emotion: and for ourselves, we should not soon tire of hearing about Palestine. We love to read about its mounts and valleys, its wells and pools,—olive trees and vineyards—shepherds with their sheep and goats—women with water pots on their heads, &c. The new views which we are permitted to have of the characters that have adorned its history, who are now in heaven, shining as the brightness of the firmament, reacts upon our feelings toward these scenes of their earthly memories.

The real impression that we get from this narrative is best expressed in the words of Christ: 'Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled,'—and again, 'Your house is left unto you desolate.' Desolation and waste is stamped on the whole picture: we can think of nothing but the neglected domain of a long absent owner, infested with thieves and marauders. Arab robbers are a terror in the country, and poverty reigns in the city. The most simple improvements in machinery yet remain to be introduced there. Did you imagine, dear reader, that the poor Jewish women were grinding at the mill to this day? Hear our journalist at Jerusalem:—

"The darkness and silence of the streets increases the awe that broods over these sombre walls at night, in this city without wheels. This stillness continues till midnight, when I am often awakened by a sullen jar that sounds like distant thunder, and grieve to think of the weakness, suffering, and toil which occasions it. It is the sound of countless rude mill-stones, which are here mostly turned by women, who nightly commence to grind about this time, and continue till morn-

ing; the labor is so heavy, that it is too great for their weak frames to endure in the heat of the day. I have made one effort, and could scarcely move one of their smallest stones. The process is so slow, that it generally takes a woman an hour for each member of her family."

And yet Palestine is the 'good land,'—and 'beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth,' is Jerusalem. The natural advantages of this country heighten the effect of its desolation, and preclude the idea of chance, or any cause less than the persistent purpose of God:—

"——In her wastes a voice I hear,  
As from some prophets' urn;  
It bids the nations build not there,  
For Jacob shall return."

We would say to the author of 'Meshullam,' that it is the cherished ambition of the Free Church to be the servants of God's faithfulness to the seed of Adrahah, although we are not led into any direct efforts at present.

### Nebuchadnezzar's Dream.

Our confidence in the validity of Daniel's prophecies, and the inspiration of his book, does not depend on guess work or tradition; we have Christ's sanction of it, and stand on firm ground. We know that Christ is the faithful and true witness; and in the 24th chapter of Matthew, he appeals to the prophecy of Daniel, telling us distinctly to remember the foretelling of the destruction of Jerusalem by Daniel the prophet; and Christ's prophecies in that chapter were commentaries on Daniel's, and a clearer presentation of the very things predicted by him; so that Daniel's authority is as good to us, as Christ's.

The predictions in the 24th of Matthew, related more particularly to the great events then immediately impending, in which the Jewish nation were most interested. Christ introduced the subject, by saying of the temple, 'There shall not one stone here be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down;'

and the disciples questioned him about the time of its destruction, which was to be, as they understood, the sign of his coming, and the end of the world. After telling them the signs of the destruction of the temple, (the events which they first inquired about,) he says that immediately after the tribulation of those days, 'shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory:' 'verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.' There is the full account of the second coming of Christ, and the end of the *aion*; coincident with the destruction of the temple, the city of Jerusalem, and the hierarchy of Judaism. This was not to be the end of the Gentile kingdoms, for Christ said distinctly that the Jewish nation should be trodden under foot till the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled; showing that he did not contemplate the end of the times of the Jews as the end of the world in the usual sense of that word. He did not contemplate the setting up of the kingdom of God in outward manifestation, for he had in his mind, *beyond* the destruction of Jerusalem, and the second coming, and the end of the *aion* to the Jews—the *continuance* of the Gentile kingdoms, and the treading of the Jews under foot for a long period. He did not specify definitely the end of the times of the Gentiles—he simply said Jerusalem should be trodden under foot until the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled. We must go elsewhere to find the time of the last end, for there are two ends—the first, when Jerusalem was destroyed, and the second when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

So that the history of the world, considered as lying in the records of prophecy, clearly divides itself into two parts, having two ends—the ends of the times of the Jews, and also of the Gentiles; and there is a train of events leading to both, and history and prophecy connected with both.

This dream of Nebuchadnezzar, though a heathen's dream, was inspired, and declared to be true by Daniel, and the God of Daniel; and also declared to be true by Jesus Christ, who recognized Daniel as a true prophet. This dream manifestly relates to the kingdoms of the Gentiles—it was a Gentile image, and Nebuchadnezzar was the head of it, as he was the head of all Gentile kings.—Observe that God manifested his purpose in organizing the human race, in his promises to Abraham. He gave the Jewish nation the *precedence*. They are the royal nation of the world; and he raised them up and gave them great power and glory: for a brief season, under David and Solomon, that nation was the mistress of the world. The world at that time was a Theocracy; for the nation that was at the head of it, owned God's authority as the supreme power in all things. But that nation was not allowed to retain the crown of the world; and after God had manifested his power and glory in it sufficiently, then he betook himself to establishing an *interior* kingdom, of which that kingdom was only a type or shadow. His main efforts were directed to the evolving of the soul of his empire—a spiritual kingdom which should know him in spirit and in truth. That was the most important matter with him, and with the angels; and with that in view, he let this outward kingdom decay, and let the Gentiles get the supremacy in the world; and the Gentile

empire commenced with Nebuchadnezzar's reign. God gave him dominion and power over all things visible, and the royal nation that had God's authority in it, was put under him. The *power* remained in the Jewish nation, but the external trappings of it were all dropped. We can see that Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, exercised authority though they were in captivity. The reality of power continued with their nation, while the show passed into other hands; and it was so by God's appointment; and Paul meant that, when he said, 'the powers that be, are ordained of God.' It was not merely providential, but there was an explicit commission given to Nebuchadnezzar, to reign over the earth; and not only he, but all the powers that followed him, were commissioned by God, who had a definite plan for the elevation of the Gentiles for a certain period. He wanted Israel for something better; and making an economical division of labor, he said that the Gentiles should take charge of outward governments, and the Jews should go to school; meaning to get a spiritual kingdom out of them. So that the powers of the Gentiles are all ordained of God, and all loyal persons are bound to submit to them as to Jesus Christ, in all lawful requirements, so long as their charter lasts. We have in the history of Daniel and his companions, a clear line of demarkation worked out in their example, as to what is right and wrong in obeying these requirements; but we are bound to be loyal to them as a whole, so long as their commission lasts.

The complete image is, as we may say, a connected view of the Gentile empire extending from Nebuchadnezzar's reign to the end. It is strictly a view of the external history of the world, and be-

longs to what may be called the *body* part of history. The predictions of Christ concerning his second coming, relate entirely to another series of events—to what we may call the *soul* of history, i. e., to the affairs of the nation that was the interior kingdom; and these two lines of history must be kept distinct in our minds. We must learn to separate those which belong to the body from those which belong to the soul—those which relate to the Jews, from those to the Gentiles, and give each their place and time. If the Millerites would consent to make this distinction, and let the 24th of Matthew speak for itself, and not undertake to corrupt and mystify it, we would not quarrel with them. They should let alone that part of the prophecy which relates to the Jewish story and kingdom, including the second coming, and confine their enthusiasm about things future and impending, to the Gentile story, as the sphere to which they belong. If they will only keep the two skeins of history apart, and reel each one off separately by itself, they will have no difficulty with us, or we with them. The substantial idea of the Millerites, that a great era has come which involves the end of the world and the coming of the reign of God over man, I fully agree with; but that idea did not come out of the prophecies in the 24th of Matthew. The New Testament has very little to say about that at all. It was not that event which roused the enthusiasm of the apostles. But this vision of Nebuchadnezzar properly belongs to the train of prophecy that *we* are interested in, and we have a right to exercise our hearts and minds on this point with an enthusiasm analagous to that which the apostles had on the second coming. The end of the times of the Gentiles is as interes-

ting to us, as that event was to them; and if it is understood that we clearly distinguish between the two events, then there is no objection to our using the same language that was used in talking about the second coming, though people are liable to make mistakes in using the same language.

It will not do for people to limit God, and think, because he has done a thing once, he is going to do the same over again: he is original in his manner of doing things. For instance there is no evidence, that Christ 'will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God,' because he did it once. Do you ask if I believe that he did come in that way? Certainly, I do believe that he came with a shout and the voice of an archangel, just as he said he would; but I do not expect he will come in that manner again. There is plenty of evidence that he proposes to wind up the times of the Gentiles, in a very different way, and in a manner consistent with the improvement of the human race; he can do many things now that he could not then.

The vision of Nebuchadnezzar covered the whole time of the Gentiles, until the destruction of their kingdom. We know then that it covers the present time; for the kingdoms of this world cannot be said to be destroyed yet. We see in the account of the image, there was a transition period in which it began to crumble away, which seems to correspond with the present state of the world; for the fact that the kingdoms of the world remain standing to some extent, is not an argument that the 'stone' has not commenced its operation. To determine where we are in the history of that image, look at the great divisions of it. Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was succeed-

ed by the Persian kingdom, which corresponded to the character of the second division of the image. That was succeeded by the Grecian, which corresponds in like manner to the third. The fourth in regular succession was the Roman, which corresponds to the description of the kingdom of iron, of terrible strength, which brake in pieces and ground to powder all the nations of the earth, and was the strongest the world ever saw: its capital remains now, which cannot be said of any other universal empire. Then follows the division of the kingdom into feet and toes of iron and clay, indicating weakness and strength both, and also indicating a preparation for crumbling to pieces. The Roman Empire was broken to pieces in the middle ages, and since then the world has had no central empire. The Gentile power has been in the hands of many different kings, and there has been a sort of anarchy with reference to the general government of the world. And now we see that these kingdoms which have succeeded the Roman Empire, have partly its strength, and partly the weakness of clay, and they are now crumbling to pieces, and becoming as "the chaff of the summer threshing floors."

Throughout all Europe the kingdoms are in a state of ruin which has been rapidly progressing within the last three years, and it is manifest that the process of decay and crumbling goes on, and there is no building up; nothing rises out of the chaos, that is hopeful. The same is true of this country; for although destined to be the home of the kingdom of God, it is still in its minority, under the governments of the old world, and the boldest say that there is terrible destruction ahead—that the cohesiveness of the people is all gone, and they can but just hold together.—I say then there are plenty of signs that

the last days of the image have come ; that the breaking in pieces is going on ; and this brings us to the interesting question in regard to the process, which is this:—The vision declares that these kingdoms shall not break themselves in pieces, but that the ‘stone’ which is to swell into the kingdom of God, shall break them in pieces ; and the question arises, how can that be? Is the kingdom of God at work doing that, and if so, where is it? I suppose the true view of the matter is this, that the essential principle of the kingdom of God, in a latent form, has been in the heart of this nation ever since God began here ; and in this view of the matter we can go back to Cromwell’s time. He broke England in pieces, and his men came over and settled this country on Theocratic principles, which have been at work ever since ; i. e. the essence of that spirit has been at work in the country from its birth, which is now breathing out of Seward’s mouth. And every thing free and liberal in our institutions, our republican government, and our revolution in fact, is dashing in pieces the kingdoms of Europe. Our revolution set in motion the French Revolution, and that has been the breeder of all the other revolutions. So that it is the Theocratic sentiment, working from Cromwell down, that is concerned in the present breaking up of the kingdoms ; and that sentiment has been gradually ripening in the church, till now it has a body and form. Three years ago we were impelled by the spirit of God within us to declare that the kingdom of God had come ; and the echo of that little declaration, out of sight and hearing of the world, was the coming down with a crash, of the power and authority of the old world. Things came along in their right order : the kingdom of God came

out first, and the destruction of the nations followed. I do not pretend to say that we, a handful of Perfectionists, are breaking them in pieces ; but the Theocratic sentiment of which we are the embodiment, is breaking them down. I fully believe that the influences which have been uttering themselves through us these last sixteen years, have smitten this government, church and state, with destruction.

It will be well for us to take a comprehensive view of those prophecies, and the present state of the world as compared with them ; for we must prepare ourselves to answer people who say we are ahead of the times. What we are doing, is simply endeavoring to let the kingdom of God, which has been in the heavens, down into the earth ; and we want those who say we are premature, to look over the prophecies, and see if we have not struck at the right time ; and if the end of the times of the Gentiles has not come. I believe it has, and that the element of destruction went forth at the commencement of our Revolution : but if there is not behind this an *element of edification*, then the world is in a bad case. Their only hope is, that with this element of destruction there is an element of building up ; and certainly we are none too soon, if we look at the prospects of destruction which exist, to commence active operations for the going forth of that kingdom which is to be the substitute of these others.—*Home-Talk*, Nov. 26, 1850.

### Successful Volition.

All Christ’s dealings with us encourage us to set up the *power of the will*. As we imbibe his spirit we shall find that he gives us new power of will, or in other words, successful volition. We shall be

able to command ourselves, be self-possessed; and perfect self-possession is salvation. So that instead of its being true that Christ's government goes to train men to servility, it is true that a hearty surrender of ourselves to him produces exactly the contrary effect, and makes us free. All the charges made against me of being a tyrant, and against others of being servile to me, are charges made on superficial grounds, and really aiming at Christ; for whatever the appearance may be, the general tendency of the school that we are in is not to suppress will, but to strengthen it. It does not take men out of themselves, and make tools of them, but gives them a self-possession and power of will that they never had before in the world. It gives them self-management in every direction—in a word, successful volition. This is the kingdom of liberty: it is no matter what form of external arrangement you live under, whether monarchy, democracy, or republicanism—a training which tends to give men self-government, and extend their range of successful volition, so far goes to make them free.

Compare the two kingdoms—Christ's and the world's—on this point, and see which is right. Men talk of freedom and independence while they are full of insubordination and rebellion against God, and with all their zeal for liberty, crouch down under the idea that Death is a power that can come in any time and snatch them up as a cat does a mouse, and they cannot help themselves. They cower down under the idea that they cannot live without sin—that they must submit to a degrading bondage to their passions. Their souls and bodies are at the mercy of all sorts of powers that they call laws of nature—subject to many corrupt and poisonous influences against which they

are wholly unarmed. That is the way in which men are trained to servility in the devil's kingdom; and his subjects have come to consider their bondage so much a matter of course, so inevitable, that if any one suggests the possibility of deliverance from it, they are indignant. They are like slaves so besotted with slavery that you cannot convince them that there is any better state; and they are ready to lynch an abolitionist who should come among them to preach freedom.—We should expect to see slave-holders lynch an abolitionist, but it would be a strange sight to see slaves themselves do it; yet this is the condition of men in the world who make a great hue and cry about liberty, and advocate independence. They are in the most abject submission possible to all sorts of bondage, of both body and soul. Right over against this, the kingdom of Christ extends liberty of will in all directions. As soon as men become acquainted with Christ they begin to find out that they need not submit to death—that they need not let passion run riot over them—that they have a power of will against evil. This is the immediate effect of coming into the atmosphere of Christ's kingdom—and if the *form* of government were as autocratic as the Russian, it is still a kingdom of liberty; and we may fully turn back the charge of despotism on the world. That is a despotic power, and it is we who have come into a kingdom of liberty, and are raising ourselves up to the dignity of men.—*Home-Talk.*

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## CORRESPONDENCE.

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Brooklyn, May 7, 1851.

DEAR FRIEND: I often shut my eyes and thus look in upon you and your associates, busy as you are in giving form and expression to truth which if it is not new

to us here is always fresh in edification.

We do not meet face to face these days, but do we not heart to heart? Words and external expressions are rare, but do not our spirits sometimes mingle in fellowship? God is certainly weaning me from all dependence on fellowships that are merely personal. Not that I esteem persons less—but permanent '*condensation of life*' more. My experience in Newark and on board the sloop has conduced to this. There is now before me and Mr. S. particularly a problem of unity to be worked out; and our hope of success is grounded exclusively on the faith and operation of God: for in every emergency human nature turns out to be weak and worthless. Its pride is all gone, and in this I rejoice and give thanks.

Yesterday Mr. S. and I attended the anniversary of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, at the Tabernacle. The opportunity of looking in upon the progressives and their movements I enjoyed very much. Clergymen by scores were present, the house full, and for chief speaker, the distinguished Henry Ward Beecher. Among others who took part were the Rev. Messrs. Finney and Lansing, both fathers in the old revival school. Mr. Finney made the concluding speech. I was glad to see and hear him, (for the first time,) who formerly I regarded with so much respect, not to say adoration. He has just arrived in this country with fresh thoughts from the old world; but every thing about the man impressed me with the feeling that he had lost the vitality and inspiration that gave him so much power in 1831-2. I should judge that he was under fifty years of age, yet his countenance was furrowed with lines peculiar to the decline of life. He lacked that youthful elasticity and vitality that must mark the man for the times.

The deportment of Mr. Beecher was in some respects different: young in years, dark complexion, a pleasant eye. His speech was radical, but popularly adapted to the times and the audience; and in spite of the hissing and grumbling in the galleries he carried every thing

before him. On one hand he exposed and rebuked the church and clergy for their impotence and unfaithfulness in respect to the slaves, and, on the other, he whittled the 'lower law' class, the 'Union Safety Committee,' Daniel Webster, &c. His sarcasm and wit was sufficiently tempered with logic and theoretical argument to give his address a consistent rounding off, and the whole was sufficiently conservative to sustain and give breadth to his reputation.—With all his professions of boldness and the martyr spirit for the truth and free discussion, my conviction was that his *sincerity* was subservient to his fame.

Taking an observation from our meridian, I could not but criticize the proceedings as mechanical and superficial. There was enthusiasm and eloquence, and occasionally a flashing out of ideas and facts that indicated the progressive march of the times—a visible tendency to free discussion and liberality of thought—especially in the address—which we could properly appreciate; but the motive power—the object to be accomplished—was too sectional, limited, and heartless to feed what Carlyle would call an *earnest man*.

My recent experience as sailor on the North river, has been interesting and profitable. It is a fine place for variations; and the scenes and incidents, to a green hand are often exciting, and sometimes sublime. A gentle breeze in the outset, ends in a gale, high waves, plenty of spray, and at least a temptation to seasickness—but I will not describe what many of our number are familiar with. It is a good school for heart work and faith, which is our primary business.

Yours truly, H. W. BURNHAM.

Brooklyn, May 7, 1861.

DEAR C.—Your little note was thankfully received. You say you 'hear but little from me, but conclude that I am learning the best of all lessons.' I have felt very little like writing since I have been here, and have followed my feelings

or instincts in this respect; although I could have found enough to have written about.

I can say in truth that I have been and am learning the best of all lessons, and feel that I am in the best of schools. I cannot be too thankful for, or appreciate too highly, my advantages, and God's goodness to me. I have had some experience of late which has been very satisfactory—an increase of faith, and newness of life, which has united me more closely to the family here. I am learning to appreciate the power of Christ more; and have had clearer views of his resurrection power that makes us *new creatures*, saves us from bad habits, and enables us to walk in the spirit in every thing we do. I feel very much at home here, and much interested in the victory we are gaining in the sphere of labor. There has been a work done in me respecting labor, which I have great reason to be thankful for; a more thorough work, and with it a feeling of security that I never had before. The desire for improvement in the knowledge and wisdom of God, is growing with me more and more. Is it not becoming true with us all as a body, that we can sum up all our desires in this one desire, to '*know Christ and him crucified?*' In yielding ourselves to the cross of Christ, we come into fellowship with his spirit and life, which is triumphant over all evil. I have been quite interested for sometime past, in studying the cross of Christ, particularly Paul's character in that connection, and I have been exceedingly comforted. Paul's theme was, '*Christ crucified*'—'*the cross of Christ*'—'*I determined*' says he, '*to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified.*'—Again he says, '*For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us who are saved, it is the power of God.*' I can truly say that my heart feels more and more in sympathy with such language, and to *know Christ* is my ambition.

Your sister in the truth,

FANNY M. LEONARD.

Putney, May 4, 1851.

TO MR. & MRS. M.—

*Dear Friends:*—I often call to mind the many pleasant and profitable seasons spent at your house, and could wish I had made greater attainments in spiritual life: I am satisfied I have too much surface and not enough depth. I feel the necessity of judging myself in the light of truth: the Home-Talks find me wanting. But I know that in Christ is a remedy for all things, and if I seek truthfully and prayerfully I shall be blessed of God, and not without. I often ask myself, How came I by this knowledge of the character of God? How came I to realize the great truths of the gospel, this faith which has kept me from making shipwreck? Faith is the gift of God—and through the teachings of J. H. N. I comprehended the promise to those that believe. I feel to thank him for that portion of his time and labor that has so benefited me—made me happier and better. When difficulties come up, I have learned to look at them as I think God does; then comes a spirit of trust and quietness, by which I know God is not far off. But I lack—O! how many things, before I get such a character as God loves and his church can fellowship. I will have less to do with the world, and give greater attention to things eternal and unseen. The truth shall make me free from the fear of the world—free to confess Christ on all occasions, and in all places. My love to all Putney friends, and believe me to be sincerely yours.

HARRIET M. CAMPBELL.

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