

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. 52.

[REPORTED FOR THE CIRCULAR.]

JUSTIFICATION—TRUE AND FALSE.

The original doctrine of Perfectionism was *Justification by Faith in Christ*. That was the amount of the meaning implied in the terms, 'salvation from sin,' 'holiness,' &c. The meaning of those terms was, that we could be substantially set right—could be free from condemnation, and at peace with God, and need not live in a perpetual quarrel with ourselves and with him. The church insisted that it is necessary in the present life to live in the condemnation of the 7th of Romans, sinning against conscience, and abusing God. Our controversy with them was on that point. We insisted that it is *not* necessary to live so; but that we can have our hearts purified from an evil conscience, and by the grace of God be set free from sin,—free both in respect to the practice and the accusation and condemnation of it.

Now, that doctrine will stand. It is true, and has been true in my experience. I have been thoroughly at-

tached to it, and am still, as much so as I was sixteen years ago. But I see very clearly that the devil, through Charles H. Weld and other influences, took advantage of the foolishness of believers in that early time, and perverted the doctrine most outrageously. They turned the truth of God into a lie, and made justification by Christ the basis of a most horrible system of self-righteousness—self-justification in sin and selfishness. All the mischiefs and miseries that followed in the train of Weld's, and Boyle's connection with Perfectionism, came mainly by a willful perversion of this doctrine of justification—by substituting *self-justification* for the justification of Christ. In immediate connection and acquaintance with the truth, and with the Bible to work from, a most damnable counterfeit was got up and imposed upon many. It is therefore quite important for us to dig about the subject, and detect and expose the subtlety by which Satan brought about the perversion.

I think the line may be run between true and false justification, or

self-justification and justification by Christ, in this way. True justification exists by virtue of a *social, community state of mind and heart with Christ*. On the other hand, self-justification is a solitary, isolated act. In true justification, a partnership between us and Christ is realized and recognized; and, on the basis of that partnership, we feel ourselves justified, and profess justification. In true justification the heart does not say 'I am justified;' but 'We are justified—Christ and I are justified.' That is the language of the heart—Christ and I; it is a social affair. With that basis, we see that justification may start from a previously sinful experience—sinful, so far as *we* are concerned, up to the point of our commencing the testimony. 'While we were yet without strength, Christ died for the ungodly.' We get rid of the consciousness of sin by dying—merging ourselves in him—and confessing the righteousness of Christ. It is as if a man had been doing business, and up to this time has failed—proved utterly bankrupt—but he now enters into connection with a rich partner. From this time he can say, not, 'I am out of debt;' but 'We are—the firm is rich.' So faith, and the justification which comes by faith, is a social act; it belongs to a social state of mind, and is impossible to selfishness, or an isolated state of mind. A person standing apart by himself or herself, and talking the language of *I*, cannot be justified; they cannot come into that partnership by which alone true justification is possible.

But it is the state in which self-justification will be sure to work; for as we said, self-justification is an isolated act. It is an attempt of egotism to make *itself* out good and righteous. But if you consider it, this is a contradiction in terms; an absurdity of the most absolute kind. Egotism good! In self-justification the language is *I*:—*I* did right in that and the other thing; *I* am right, and you are wrong; *I* am righteous, without any reference to partnership with Christ. But any one who attempts to make himself out right without reference to Christ, is certainly attempting to make out an absurdity. He will fail, whether he can make out certain specific acts to be right or not. The very existence of *I*, separate from Christ, is the damning sin of all. Egotism may curl itself up into the smallest space, and demean itself as innocently as possible, and make out so good a case that you cannot lay hold of any evil thing it has done, and still if it asks me to justify it, I say, 'Get out of my way!' it is a hideous, hateful, dirty spirit, whether I can lay my finger on wrong-doing in it or not. Its very presence is mischief. I hate it, for instance, as I hate a spider. A spider is probably as good a symbol of egotism as you can find—sitting solitary in its web, eating its own young ones, and refusing all society. So the *spider-life*—the spirit of egotism—separates itself from the center and sociality of the universe, and makes a centre by itself. That life is perfectly hateful, let its

acts be what they may; it is damnable, and can have no justification. For see, if you can, *how* it is to be justified. If that life chooses, as a last subterfuge, to say, 'I did not make myself, and cannot help being what I am—I am therefore not to blame;' it directly puts these words into the mouth of its antagonist—the life that is perfectly opposite to it. The community life says, 'I, too, did not make myself; I hate you, and cannot help it; *and if my hatred is stronger than yours, I shall condemn you.*' For what is condemnation but the prevailing power of hatred? If two lives hate each other, one must *condemn* the other, by an inevitable law. We come then to the simple question—Which is the *strongest*, community life or spider-life? For the strongest of these two will be justified, and will condemn the other.

Christ puts forth this idea in the plainest language. 'He that believeth not is condemned [damned] already; because he believeth not on the only begotten Son of God.' I place the emphasis here on the phrase '*only begotten*'—'*the only begotten Son of God.*' God has but one Son: i. e., there is only one social influence, one bond of relationship in the universe. God is the center, and there is but one being in the universe in connection with him. It is the play of life between the Father and the Son, at the center, that is the reservoir of all social action; and the only possible way for us to have community

life, is to attach ourselves to the Son. There is no way for us to enter into connection with God *by ourselves*, as separate individuals; we must enter through the only begotten Son. There is and ever will be but one Son of God; and by attaching ourselves to him we attach ourselves to social life. But he that believeth not is condemned already; because he rejects the social element, and that, by the law of its existence, will reject him. It will prevail over, and cast out into outer darkness, the isolated, opposite nature.

Well, the devil managed, as has been remarked, to substitute self-justification for true justification by Christ. Those who could be cheated by him, took the counterfeit and went to justifying themselves on the isolated basis. The result was, they followed the course of spiders, and became separate and distinct from every body else, and finally grew into the most monstrous perversions of human nature that were ever seen. It was a case in which the spider life got its armor from God and the Bible, and set up as judge over all. It nursed itself in most outrageous egotism, and commenced war on every thing in the strength of assumed spirituality and the Bible. For they were under a stimulus that was supposed to be a Bible spirit. But you will find, that whereas true justification, as I said, inevitably makes a person social and brings about community of life with Christ and each other, and leads to organization, and all the combinations of social beauty; on the

other hand those who took the counter-foit have become the most solitary egotists the world ever saw. They have run themselves clear out of all the harmonies of the universe, and come to the spot where Boyle now is—out of sympathy with everybody—with no associates, and no heart or power to gain them. They are worse than the armed barons of the dark ages, who sat, each one in his stone castle, looking out at eye-holes for enemies.

There is one feature of this false kind of justification, that it will be well to trace a little further. Self-justification implies pride, presumption—the assumption of a place that does not belong to us. *God* is the Judge of all the earth; and any attempt to justify ourselves, is an attempt to take his office. No matter how good the case may be; to sit in judgment on it is an arrogant usurpation of God's office. Judgment, even among men, is an affair of government, administered, not in private but in regular authorized courts. If a man has ever so good a cause, he has no right to go out and take his neighbor's horse.—His appeal must be to the court; as a private individual he has no right to judge the case. But this is as true between man and God as it is between men and the state. Taking our cause into our own hands, is an act of pride, self-importance, gross self-conceit.—True justification is a *gift*. We find ourselves justified—at peace with ourselves and God, by virtue of a partnership which opens the goodness of God to us, and causes it to flow into

our consciousness. In that attitude of submission to God and partnership with him, there is meekness—modesty. It is an attitude in which we are receiving a *gift*; allowing the justification of Christ to flow into us, without claiming any thing. But you set up and claim a right on God or man, and there is the spider life, acting presumptuously—assuming that as a right which it has no right to whatever, and can receive only as a gift.

Well, this same spirit which presumptuously assumes God's office in claiming *justification*, in another action turns itself round into an attitude of *despair*—condemnation—rejection of all hope. At first view this would seem to be modest, or at least free from the open assumption of the former attitude. But you will find it is at bottom precisely the same. It is *self* still, assuming to be judge. A judge does not always give his verdict in your favor: but whether for or against, he still sits as judge. So, that egotistical life still assumes to be judge, whether in the act of claiming or despairing. And it just as much takes judgment out of God's hands when it accuses and condemns itself, as when it justifies itself. You have no more right to despair than to presume. You have no right to claim heaven on the one hand, or to assume that you are going to hell on the other. What right have you, because God has not given you a flow of justification in the heart, to say that you are therefore a damned sinner? It is all presumption. There is no more modesty in despair than in arrogance.

That self-justifying spirit has established itself in the hearts of many of the old Perfectionists, in great strength and perversity. But the judgment is coming on, and they will be found bankrupt—'weighed in the balance and found wanting:' their castles will be stormed, and they dragged out into day-light. Then too it will be found that the same spirit that has carried them so high in self-justification, will carry them just as low in self-condemnation and despair. It will not give up, and sink and die in Christ. There is the point—its tenacious zeal for maintaining its own individuality. It *will judge itself*; and if it cannot judge itself *favorably*, it will pass over as a last resort into the equally proud position of judging itself *against* itself. We must be prepared to meet that kind of experience, and understand it, and assert God's right to judge the world against presumption, both ways. The Spirit of Truth will certainly pursue and rout the devil in all the twists and turns of perversion with which he surrounds the doctrine of justification. Egotism may attempt to ascend the heights of heaven and get above God, but it will fail; the judgment will destroy it; its end is coming.

There are a great many different ways in which that presumptuous, self-justifying spirit has worked. We shall have to break up all its refuges; and then deny its right to pass over into condemnation. We must destroy its foundations, and uncover all its falsehoods, and deny its right to justi-

fication; and yet deny its right to *despair*. This is a hard pinch for egotism. The right to despair is the last refuge of pride. When this is swept away, there will be no further place for it. 'The heavens and the earth fled away,' says John, 'and there was found no place for them.'

I have referred to one of the refuges of lies to which this spirit betakes itself—the plea, 'I am what I am, and cannot help myself'—and have shown the foolishness of that position, inasmuch as it puts the same plea into the mouth of the other side; and the other side is already the strongest. It is plainly a suicidal resource, putting weapons into the hand of its enemy. Well, all its other excuses will turn out in the same way. For instance, an excuse for doing wrong that is quite common among us, is, that we are carried away by devilish *spirits*. It is quite a fashion to lay evil to such agencies. This kind of talk is good, in a purely philosophical point of view. Directed to finding out the cause of evil and curing it, the implication of spirits may be good and necessary; but as an *excuse* for evil, and for continuing in it, no such second-hand reference to spirits will stand the judgment. God will take no such excuse. Every man will be rewarded according to his works: no matter where your work came from, or what spirit was upon you. If a man 'soweth to the flesh he shall of the flesh reap corruption.' And God is just. We shall be very foolish if we use this kind of philosophy as an *excuse* for

evil. Your productions are going to market, to be tested according to their actual value there; and there will be no going back to the reasons *why* they are so;—to the good or bad influences of *spirits* upon you. The question will not be, What made you bad? but, What *are* you? Are you a devilish, mischievous being? If so, you will be rewarded according to your works.

Then the same retort is put into the mouth of God and the angels as in the other instance. You say you are made what you are by the driving force of spirits, and cannot help yourself. But I say the same. The driving force of spirits, has made *me* what I am; I am *driven* as well as you, and cannot help myself. And you may be sure that if your spirits drive you to mischief, my spirits will drive me to resist and expel you. Thus the question of justification ends just where it did before, in the clash of the two spirits, and in finding out which is the strongest. One force is directly antagonistic to the other, and one or the other must fall under condemnation. The strongest of course will have its own way, and will condemn its opposite. That is the result of all that kind of argument.

Another refuge of that spirit is this: 'I am tempted and provoked by those around me, and I have a right to do wrong under such circumstances: they are to blame for it, and not I, because they have irritated and provoked me.' Now here again, if that is the truth, the argument is good on the other side. Your child provokes you to wrong, and

your wrong provokes me. I am tempted to resist it; and I have as good a right to be tempted as you. If you blame your child for tempting you, you must also blame yourself for provoking me. The truth is, a rational spirit does not claim justification on any such grounds. No matter what spirit tempted me, I am still bound by all my obligations to God and to society around me, to have that charity which "suffereth long, and is kind, which envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, and never faileth." *There* is my duty, let my original character, temperament, and circumstances, be what they may. Be my temptations what they may—though all hell were let loose upon me—there is my duty; and if I do not do it I shall be paid accordingly by God and his hosts, and *justly* too.

This business of excusing one's self for evil doing, is the same thing acted over again that was seen at the beginning in the garden of Eden.—God came to the man and found him sneaking, and asked him what he had done. His reply was, '*The woman* whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.' He went to the woman and enquired into it, and she said, '*The serpent* beguiled me, and I did eat.' God did not take their excuses. It is true he went to

the beginning of the matter, and cursed the serpent first and most; but he put a heavy curse upon the woman and the man.

Well, the truth is, there is *no need* of all these excuses. They only keep egotism alive; and the point to be gained is to *kill* it. The truth is, the strongest spirit in the universe is Christ;—and he comes as near us as he can, and tries in every possible way to get us into partnership with him—to make us drop the *I* and say *We*. In the *we* spirit we receive a force *stronger* than all these temptations—a force able to subdue all things to itself—a life which cares nothing for constitution, education, temperament, circumstances, temptations, or the spirits by which we are surrounded. It is 'able to make *all* grace abound to us, so that we *always*, having *all* sufficiency in *all* things may abound to *every* good work.' What is the use, then, of studying out these distinctions, and making all these excuses, which the day of judgment will scatter like smoke? True justification comes, in that very break-down of self-justification, when 'judgment is laid to the line, and righteousness to the plummet,' and the hiding places and refuges of lies are swept away. When self-justification gives up in despair, true justification begins; there we flow into Christ, and get strength from Christ to be righteous.

—We are often placed between two influences—one matter-of-fact, the other of a dreamy kind—which are counter-checking each other, and we cannot get a clear impression of either. In such a case, we are bound between the two probabilities, to choose the *best*; and not expect undisturbed certainty. If we are truthful enough to choose the best probability—that which addresses itself to the best part of our nature—that probability will reveal itself more and more as actual cold reality, and will cast down all doubtful imaginations. *We are bound to obey the highest probability, just as promptly and freely as though it was absolute certainty.*

FOR THE CIRCULAR.

The Oneida Indians.

Some time ago Messrs. Burt and Kinsley of our Association, having business to transact with the Indians, invited me to accompany them to the Indian settlement, about two miles from Oneida Reserve. I gladly accepted their invitation, for I had had a desire for some time to become more acquainted with the original owners of this beautiful valley, and to learn more of their history, manners and customs.

We called at the house of Skenandoah who is a great grandson of the celebrated Indian chief of that name, who formerly lived at Oneida Castle. Perhaps some will recollect a speech of his, delivered after he was an hundred years old, in which he says, 'I am an aged hemlock, dead at the top. The winds of a hundred winters have whistled through my branches,' &c.

After we had transacted our business, we entered into free conversation with him, and spent two hours very pleasantly indeed. He is apparently about forty years of age—has a wife and four or five children. He is quite intelligent, free and social in his manners, and speaks the English language fluently, making conversation with him easy and pleasant.

We asked him the present number of the Oneida tribe. He replied, 'We have here only about 180. At Green Bay there are 892, and nearly 500 in Canada. When we lived together here, the land was all owned in common; but when we sold out to the State in 1840, those who did not choose to accept of their share of the public funds and go west with the tribe, had separate farms set off to them, which they now occupy, and these 180 are that number.' We told him

that we owned the land in common, as it had always been owned by his fathers—that we had no separate interests; which seemed to please him much.

He then proceeded to give us an account of the history of his tribe, and told us many very interesting anecdotes, illustrative of the Indian character. He said, "About ten miles south-west of here, is a large rock called 'Council Rock.' There the tribe first held their war councils, and built around it their first wigwams. When there was any public business to be transacted, the custom was for some one to go to 'Council Rock', and call the tribe together."

What we were particularly interested in, was his decided testimony in favor of community life. He said, "We prospered a great deal better when we owned our land all in common, than we ever have since with our separate farms.—Then we could plant our corn, sow our wheat, and pasture our cattle, in the best places. If we wanted a stick of timber, we could cut a tree in the most convenient place. We were not obliged to build fences as we are now, to protect us from our neighbors. Then we were free to go where we pleased, but now we cannot step over our line, without trespassing on somebody's rights. There was a great deal more peace and harmony then than there is now. Having separate land makes a great deal of trouble—makes folks quarrel." 'You like the way you used to live best then,' said we. 'Oh yes,' he replied, 'I like it much the best to have our chiefs, and own our lands in common; we get along better and are so much more friendly.'

I was much interested in the above statements, because it was the testimony of one who had had long experience, both in community and isolated life.

Skenandoah himself is a man in good circumstances, owns a good farm, a framed house, and I understand has money at interest. He gave us to understand that he should go west and join the tribe as soon as he could get his price for his farm. The fact that they lived together much more harmoniously when they owned their property in common, is worthy of particular notice. J. R. M.

The Free Church Circular.

HARRIET H. SKINNER, EDITRESS.

ONEIDA RESERVE, FEBRUARY 20, 1851.

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

Ad' We expect to publish the present volume of the Circular in *weekly* numbers, but prefer, with our predecessors, not to promise exact regularity. We grow more and more in love with the extempore principle of publishing adopted in this office—not altogether for the personal freedom it gives us, but for its good effect upon the character of our paper. We never have to fill it up with indifferent matter, or 'lead it out,' (in printers' phrase,) in order to meet the engagement of periodical issue. It suits us to leave the time to Providence, and be in a position where we can double our expedition, or our interval of delay, as the Spirit and God's occasions may invite.

It pleases us to be able to say that we have received only one notice of discontinuance.

A Word from the Heart.

If a little editorial personality is expected, or permitted, on the occasion of commencing a new volume, and I may speak out of the abundance of my heart, I will take the opportunity to *confess Christ*—to testify openly my acceptance of the free gift of partnership with him; by which I am now justified, and in the way to apprehend all his perfections and glory. I sincerely believe that the Spirit which was poured out on all flesh at the promised time, perfected the union of the divine and human nature, commenced by Christ's per-

sonal mission; and that it is no presumption, but true modesty, to recognize the fact of our reconciliation to God, through the offering of Christ, and the sprinkling of his blood. I wish to thank Christ that his gospel has not been hid from me, but that he has opened the eyes of my understanding, and given me wakefulness enough to lay hold of the truth.

It is interesting to me to contemplate Christ's faithfulness to the truth, in respect to himself. He never denied his heavenly origin, and unity with the Father. He was under temptations, from within and without, to think of himself as a man—as the son of Joseph and Mary—a man of like passions with his brethren. There was every thing to tempt him to voluntary humility, but he confessed the truth, that he was the Son of God, against his great adversary and accuser, the devil—in face of the contempt and mockery of the Jewish and Roman chiefs—before the unbelief of his brethren and countrymen—and in all his private communion with his disciples. He endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, and was truthful to the central fact, that he was one with the Father. We are called to the same steadfastness, to the truth that he is our life, and we are one with him;—and, by his own experience, he is able to succor them that are tempted on this point. I believe that Christ is saving me from this temptation, and is establishing my heart.

H. H. S.

A Confession of Faith.

We heard a conversation, not long since, between a brother in our society, and another gentleman representing, we should think, a large class in these days, who believe in a Christ of abstractions,—in some law, or theory of life, which they *call* Christ, and substitute in their own minds for the personality to whom that name belongs. The difference of our views was brought out in something like the following terms:—

We believe in the present personal existence and identity of the man Christ Jesus—the very same person who, many centuries ago, lived, and walked, and talked, in Judea. We believe that he and his apostles, James and John and Peter and Paul, are actual living characters and potentates in the spiritual world. With the primitive church, they compose a city, a center of government, a princi-

pality;—which is as real a fact to us, as that there is a city called Washington, where the President and his cabinet now live. This principality we believe is above all others, as it is said of Christ, that 'he was raised *far above* all principality, and power, and might, and dominion.' We profess to be put in positive communication with Christ and his church. His life is saving us from sin, and his spirit is leading us into all truthful forms and relations. The confession of Christ, not as a formality, but from step to step, as we grow in the knowledge of him, is the principal business of our lives. If you ask what is the first qualification for membership in our Association, it is the *confession of Christ*.—We are bigots, if you please to call us so, in reference to Christ and the Bible. 'There is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we can be saved,' but Jesus Christ. Phrenology, Physiology, social theories, nothing of that kind, can be any substitute for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Instead of the motto sometimes paraded by political moralists, 'Principles, not men,' our motto is 'Men, not principles.' That is, we have first ascertained by sufficient evidence that Jesus Christ is the embodiment of all true principles—he is the fountain of all truth—'in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;' and now we go for him as a whole, with complete abandonment of ourselves, though we know we very imperfectly comprehend his principles. And men take things on trust, in that way, a thousand times, in practical life. For instance, on board a steamboat, we feel safe without understanding particulars in the management of the boat; because we have confidence in the *men* concerned. Experience has shown that this trust is rational. We confide in men; not principles. How much more reason have we to take Jesus Christ on trust!

Fashions at Oneida.

We introduce the following correspondence, thinking that the allusion in the Circular, referred to by Mr. R., may have excited curiosity in other quarters, which our answer will gratify:—

Olio, Wisconsin, Jan. 18, 1851.

EDITRESS OF THE CIRCULAR—

Madam:—We have been so much pleased with the Circular, its principles, the organi-

zation of your society, and your spiritual tendency, that we have concluded, as we have a brother who has never *thus* known Christ, we wish to call him to see, that he too may be led to rejoice in knowing that there is a building of God in Oneida county. Here is the dollar. Please address the Circular to Nelson Rounsevell, Caroline, Tompkins Co., New York.

My wife says, 'Ask them how far they practice a reform in the female dress,' as it was intimated in a letter in the Circular, that they wore short dresses, while about home at least; and she feels a deep interest on that subject, as she has assumed courage enough to make and wear the short dress and pantaloons for her own comfort, and bear the taunts of some of our fashion-loving neighbors; and now she wishes to know the fashion or style of your dresses, not only to assist her in the reform, but to know that sympathizing spirits are awake even in a distant region. If it is not asking too much, please address us a letter on the subject, if you do not think it advisable to publish in the Circular.

More light is what we are seeking; and as we receive, we wish to communicate to our brethren, that we may advance by that 'true light' into the kingdom of God, which I have for some time been expecting to see established more fully or *practically* about this time, as a fulfilment of that chain of prophecies by which Miller came to the conclusion that about this time was to be the end of the world: his mistake being in the manner and spirit of the end. When I see brethren coming together in the spirit of brotherhood, seeking and practising the ways of light and life instead of darkness and death, I am induced to exclaim, 'truly the end of the world is at hand, and the believer is about to be raised from death to life eternal.' Go on dear friends.

I would like to see your views more fully on the subject of the judgment and the second coming of Christ, as they are new to me and I do not clearly understand them.

ALBERT ROUNSEVELL.

In looking over what my husband has just dictated, I cannot help just remarking to you that he is so completely taken up with your manner of living, views and principles, so far as he is acquainted, that he is spiritually one amongst you; and, did he possess the means of doing so, I feel assured that he would be so bodily, but certain obstacles are now in the way of such a movement, otherwise you might expect him soon. We have been connected for many years with the Close-Communion Baptists, as they are termed, but of late have had no communion with them, residing as we do at a distance from a branch of that church, and feeling but little union for brethren

who have no fellowship for any Christian who is not of their faith and order—as we have become more liberal in our views and feelings.

Yours in the bonds of sympathy,

LUCY C. ROUNSEVELL.

REPLY TO THE FOREGOING.

Brooklyn, Feb. 10, 1851.

TO MR. & MRS. ROUNSEVELL—

Dear Friends:—Your letter addressed to the Editress of the Circular was forwarded to me from Oneida, a day or two since. In return, we have taken the liberty to send you several of our publications; which will make you fully acquainted with our history and principles, as a religious sect and as an Association. Mr. Noyes' views of the Second Coming and Judgment you will find explained in the Berean. You will see, also, a brief notice of our women's dress, in the First Annual Report. The Oneida fashion is described there as the common dress of children—short frocks and pantaloons: they are usually of one material. '*Simplicity and convenience*,' is our motto;—and we feel free to make any improvements in that direction that we please. We have gradually simplified our dress in all respects, and have lost all taste for a *superfluity* of this article. It is very fashionable with us to wear one dress till it is worn out, with change, of course, necessary to keep it clean. By this practice, we avoid many temptations to vanity and distraction, and our friends are saved the difficulty of recognizing us in new colors, and their attention is not continually attracted to our external appearance. The truth is, we are so engaged in getting an *education*, that we value highly the time and thought we save from outward adorning. We like our *short hair*, as well as our short dresses. The effect of both is to make us feel youthful and free. We can put on our bonnets and run like children, without any combs falling or frocks entangling. You can conceive how much more at home we are *out doors* without these embarrassments; and that is a favorite object with us, as we think much of the companionship of the sexes in their industry and recreations, and believe that in a true state of things, as in the primitive state, the disparity of their tastes and spheres of action will be much less than now. We are not Woman's Rights people, as that name is applied abroad;—but we have no fel-

loyship with the effeminacy and superficiality that women are trained to by the fashions and prejudices of the world. We are ambitious, at least, to understand and appreciate the inventions and workmanship of the superior sex, and desire by every means to increase our sympathies with them. The standard of feminine character to which we aspire is the acquisition of healthy, vigorous bodies, active, fruitful minds, large hearts, and perfect sincerity of manners.

We can appreciate the courage which Mrs. R. must assume, in her situation, to make this sacrifice of fashionable propriety. When the short dresses were first adopted at Oneida, though we knew they were modest and becoming, as well as convenient, there was something about the change, repulsive to worldly feeling; it cut across a strong prejudice of false delicacy, that was deaf to good sense. But we have outlived these feelings completely, and now the stare of strangers is often the first thing that reminds us of our oddity in their presence.

I might remark that the fashion is not arbitrary with us at all: it is a matter of choice and individual taste. For instance, it is generally conceived that short dresses are rather incongruous with caps; so that our elderly women do not often wear them. We are always free to consult good taste in individual cases. Neither do we profess to have attained perfection in our fashions. We mean to perfect our inward adorning of meekness first, and expect that God's Spirit will cultivate in us good sense, and good taste, and a true sense of the beautiful, in outward ornament. Thus far, we have not obtruded our peculiarities in dress outside of the Community; but we see signs of a revolution in the popular taste, which promises, ere long, to restore us to the caste of fashion, if there is any thing desirable in that.

We shall be pleased to hear from you, if you have any thing to communicate, after extending your acquaintance with our principles.

Yours for improvement, H. H. S.

—*Man* is called the 'baser clay'; but a friend of ours maintains, if his *clay* is coarser, his *spirit* is finer than woman's? That is, if Eve's clay was a refinement on Adam's, by not being taken from the earth, her spirit was the reverse, by not coming pure from God.

Genius and Obedience.

In the world, genius is valued most, and obedience is despised; but in heaven, obedience is valued, and genius without obedience, is despised. In heaven they understand distinctly that the essence and root of all genius is obedience; that in the long run, faithfulness and obedience will shine brighter, and manifest more genius than mere natural brilliancy.

Genius, considered as an expression, is *faithfulness to inward conceptions*. We have good conceptions from time to time, but the supply of them depends on our obedience to God. It is only the spirit that is obedient and responsive to some interior life that has good conceptions. So inspiration depends upon obedience. Success in music depends on obedience to the inner conceptions; and success in writing depends on the obedience of language to thought. In all the arts, the man who has trained himself to obedience to his inner conceptions, so that he sees clearly what he wants to do, and steadily pursues the expression of it; that man will be a genius.

Some men are born with their faculties organized, and subordinate one to another to begin with. That we call genius. But how did they get it? By chance of nature? Suppose you have a genius for something; I infer that you, or your forefathers somewhere back, have been obedient; and if the latter, that obedience has been transmitted from generation to generation and is now showing itself in you. If a man is in possession of a large estate you conclude at once, either that he has been industrious and economical or that his forefathers were before him; and you may as safely conclude in the case of genius, that a man who possesses it for any thing, has been

a faithful plodder himself, or has inherited the fruit of some one else's plodding. A spendthrift may run out his inheritance, but while it lasts he has the benefit of it. So it is with inherited mental advantages. Southey, Coleridge and Dean Swift, were during the fore part of their lives the most brilliant men in the world, and at last died idiots. Such men as Poe, Byron, and Burns, took their inheritance from their forefathers, and squandered it. If they had built obedience and faithfulness on the foundation they had received, they would have been splendid characters. I think the *greatest* geniuses are those who receive an inheritance from their forefathers, and then are trained to obedience in their own characters. Shakspeare is an example of a man of genius who was at the same time subordinate to the nature of things,—a serene and equable, and undoubtedly, a pain-taking, plodding man. The result was similar to what it would be in the case of a man who has a large fortune left him, and who takes all necessary pains to increase that fortune by industry and economy. Shakspeare immensely increased his fortune. Obedience brings us into fellowship with God; and he is a genius. A blockhead who is in communication with God, has a better chance of distinguishing himself eventually, than the brightest genius who is without that communication.

These ideas are very important in two ways. First, in reference to bringing down the pride of geniuses, and secondly, in reference to encouraging the ambition of the humble. There is no limit to the reasonable ambition of a person who seeks brilliancy through obedience. In the case of these natural geniuses, they make more display than the others, but in process of time they will have to give

credit to the obedient for perfecting their genius. The two sets will work together and complete each other. But the more I look into it the more I am satisfied that obedience stands first.

The first school of believers, those of 1834, were mostly bright cases, possessed of a good deal of genius, and consequently of a good deal of pride. They were unmanageable; and God's plan seems to have been, to let them go on their way, and use themselves up in their folly; and in the meantime to raise up another school who should be distinguished, not for brightness and genius, but for faithfulness and obedience; and having surrounded himself with a sufficient force of that kind, then to call in the more brilliant cases, and make them submit to the second school, on Christ's principle, that 'the first shall be last and the last first.' The brightest came out first; but the last are more humble and faithful; and God prefers faithfulness, humility and obedience, to genius and brightness without them; and he will profess that preference by making the first school submit to the second.

S— is an example of the first school; he was bright and independent. But he has had to sit down at the feet of Oneida. So it will be with that whole set. The second school is their superior in the sight of God, because he prefers faithfulness, obedience, and humility, to brightness.

Our people, for instance, as a whole, have learned, out and out, some valuable lessons which these characters have not a glimmering of yet. The whole subject, of *criticism* is familiar to every one of us, and the principle of submission is established among us, by long experience. The reconciliation of justification with criticism, is a problem that has been wor-

ked out in our hearts. But in that old set, as in E. H. there is scarcely any understanding of it. She is just beginning to see these things. Then, as to the great general doctrines, such as Salvation from Sin, the Second Coming, the Origin of Evil, our relations to the Primitive Church, they are all a blank to her, and to all of that old set. Again, the practical ideas that we have about property, and trusting God for a living, they know nothing about. We have taken the ground for sixteen years, 'Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.' But they are worldlings in this matter yet. So of all the traits of character that go to make up community life. They are green; they will yet find out how much God prefers obedience to brilliancy. 'He that humbleth himself shall be exalted;' not arbitrarily, but because his obedience will develop the real matter of greatness in him.—*Home-Talk.*

How to use the World.

Every thing that we do, we shall find, is of the nature of an *ordinance*; and all our physical acts are connected with a spiritual operation. In the case of the Lord's supper, it was to be eaten in a special manner, 'discerning the Lord's body', or it would produce a bad effect. 'For this cause, many are weak and sickly among you'; because they ate and drank unworthily, and the ordinance became an ordinance of Satan unto them, communicating mischief instead of life. What is set forth in this special matter, is substantially true of all outward things. There is a way to use this world as not abusing it—to use it as God's ordinance. There is a way to use work, and eating and drinking, and sexual intercourse,

and every form of external enjoyment, as ordinances of God; and they may be made methods of worship and interchange between us and the divine. On the other hand, there is a way to use them as a medium of interchange between us and the diabolical, which will make us weak and sickly. So while we insist upon keeping our freedom *to use all things* as a constitutional right never to be given up, at the same time we can pray, 'Lead us not into temptation,' and be vigilant in finding out where temptation comes in; and when the use of things good in themselves is becoming an ordinance of the devil, and check it. The wisdom of Christ will manifest itself in our experience, by learning us to proportion our use of this world according to our strength. 'One believeth that he may eat all things; another who is weak eateth herbs.— Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.'

The right use of the things of this world, depends on our *digestive* power. You do not give an infant vegetables and meat that you can digest with perfect safety yourself. Its food must be proportioned to its digestive power. There is a digestive power that will spiritualize and sanctify every thing that we receive.— 'Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.' *There is digestive power.* Well, the whole of our wisdom consists in the discernment of what we can bear. When we pray, 'Lead us not into temptation,' we pray to know how to proportion our use of this world to our digestive power—we pray to be kept from using any more of this world than we can digest. We can-

not regulate ourselves by reference to others; one can digest more than another. Neither can we make any general rule for specific conduct, but must have instinctive wisdom and discernment for ourselves, and for those we have any responsibility for. We must see that our children do not use this world in a way to make things good in themselves, devil's ordinances to them. We must help them with our wisdom.

With regard to using the things of this world, it is having only *half* of our liberty to be free to do as we have a mind to. The whole of it is to be free to do as we have *not* a mind to. Pray for discretion in all things.—*Home-Talk.*

The Repulsion of Egotism.

I remarked of —, when he left us, 'If he did not become sick of the devil, perhaps the devil would become sick of him;' and some other circumstances have led me to consider the idea contained in that remark, and to see sober truth in it. I can demonstrate that if the devil is left alone altogether, he will at last repel and vomit forth any being that he sucks into him. For observe, we say his essence is egotism, i. e., devotion to self. All the power of attraction he has, is an emanation from this central egotism, corresponding to it in its nature; and where there is egotism in another person, of course there is sympathy. His influence, or magnetism, falls in with the magnetism of the other individual, and the electric process takes place,—the greater draws in the less, and equilibrium is the result. This period of suction and approach is one of complete captivity—iron bondage of the weaker to the stronger spirit. But, observe, it is two separate centres of egotism, approaching under the draw of a magnetic sympathy

or unity, which subsists only in their emanations, and not in themselves; and as these centres approach each other, they come at last to a spot where the next thing in order is to coalesce, and become one; which is the only legitimate and satisfactory end of magnetic intercourse. But, in order to do this, one spirit must give up its egotism; and, as the devil has infused the whole strength of his spirit into his victim, and suckled and brought him up on egotism, it is not to be expected that he will yield it up at this point. No;—they must repel each other; and the attraction must end in explosion. Egotism hates the devil, and the devil hates it. When the parties come near enough to touch, they must recoil with perfect hatred. Attraction and unity, and, in fact, bondage one to the other, is only possible while in the distant relation of sympathy. When the point arrives where sympathy must pass into unity, then begins exterminating war on both sides. So in the case of those who are essentially like the devil, incurable egotists—they will at last repudiate their own father; and, on the other hand, he will clear out and vomit forth his own children: he would kick them out of hell with his cloven foot, if he could. He gets utterly sick of them, and they of him;—and this *must* be the case with the devil and all his victims, by the inevitable law of spiritual existence.

How will this principle work in reference to those who are not vitally egotists, but only so by the force of their carnal nature, circumstances, education, &c. We can see how it works in the line of damnation; let us now see if there is not some working of the same principle in the line of salvation. Paul speaks of some that he had 'delivered

unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh.' Here is destruction of the flesh by a carnal spirit. It evidently means a withdrawal of the direct means of salvation, by instruction and the kindly influences of the church, and a committing of the work to Satan himself. Now, how precisely are we to understand that Satan destroys his own works? I answer, this same process of revulsion of one egotism against another, must of course take place in the case of those who have *good* at the centre, as well as in the case of those who have evil. The devil gets sick of his victims, as the whoremonger does of his; and when he has used up the pleasure of their sympathy, and approaches so near as to demand identity, then they revolt against each other, and his attraction and power end together. This revolt must take place at its greatest strength at last, between him and one who is capable of salvation, and has something pure and good at the center. The repugnance of Satan to such a being, after he has used up what pleasure he can get by distant sympathy, must be greater than in any other case; because, in addition to the force and final necessity of the repugnance of two egotisms, which is true as between the devil and the flesh of man, there is further and still greater repugnance of egotism to a truthful spirit, as between the devil and the interior of man. So that there is a two-fold power of repugnance; and the devil's intercourse with that man must result in his heaving him out with perfect disgust.

If we take these things fairly into consideration, we shall get our satisfaction at last; for we are sure by the laws of spiritual life, 'that death and hell will deliver up their dead,' and that, even without the attraction of Christ.

With the attraction of Christ, salvation certainly looks easy. Egotism is sure to vomit the devil at last, and much more anti-egotism will vomit him.

This view of the case discovers to us the secret of the devil's weakness.—*Home-Talk.*

CORRESPONDENCE.

Newark, N. J., Feb. 1, 1851.

DEAR BRO. BURT:—We were quite refreshed with letters from you and Bro. Ackley, a few days since. I know assuredly that your expressions of love and sympathy are not mere words, but that they have soul in them; and I feel grateful for them. I have suffered severely, within a few weeks, from a spirit that I have at last discovered is C. H. Weld's; and I thank God that he has enabled me to make this discovery, and given me a disposition to join heartily in his condemnation. When I first read, about eight or nine years ago, Mr. J. H. Noyes' letter of judgment against Weld, I was exceedingly chafed in my spirit by it towards Mr. N., feeling that he was needlessly harsh and cruel in his denunciation of Weld; and these feelings were excited every time I thought of the subject, until I had an opportunity of witnessing, about three years ago, a similar operation in the case of an individual that I was fully acquainted with. And the good results in this latter case led me to heartily thank God that he had placed in the church an instrumentality so well adapted to judging and cutting off hurtful members. After this I felt fully reconciled to Mr. N. in this matter, tho' I was not intimately acquainted with Weld's case, and did not feel prepared to judge of it for myself.

I have been acquainted with C. H. Weld about eight years, and have met him from time to time in Perfectionist meetings in Newark, and at the house of his brother, (T. D. Weld,) and have frequently heard him speak on subjects that interested him religiously;—but could

never get the least evidence of any true spiritual life in him, though he appeared to assume a sort of spiritual oversight of those he met with.

After having been separated from the Welds for about two years, I was induced to visit the house of Theodore, about a month since, for the purpose of friendly religious conference, and spent part of a day in his family very pleasantly.—When I was about leaving for home, a gentleman in the company proposed to Theodore to go to the house of Charles Weld, and I was invited to call there with them; and, as it was on my way, I concluded to do so. We found Charles in a rather doleful condition—his mother being quite sick, and he, having the principal care of her, had been deprived of rest, and appeared jaded, and his spirit seemed gloomy and melancholy. I was left alone with him a little while, and he began to talk on the redemption of the body through faith; which I believe is a favorite subject with him; but it seemed like dismal talk to me, as there evidently was no clear apprehension of Christ as his life, in the man.

Previous to my calling at C. H. W.'s my mind was clear, and my spirit was buoyant, truthful, and happy in God;—but, on coming out of his house, I found a gloomy mist and pressure on my mind, and a fearful and timid shrinking in my spirit, that was awfully distressing to me—and I have suffered very much from it at times ever since. I have found great weakness and imbecility in myself since then, in all the duties of life, and have been assailed with temptations to excess in my animal appetites that is very strange to me; and, from examining the history of C. H. Weld, I am fully convinced that it is his spirit that has been possessing me. I can now see why Mr. N. should regard his influence as so pernicious to the church, and can heartily endorse his judgment of it.

I find great cause of gratitude to God for the society and help of Bro. Burnham and Mr. and Mrs. Campbell. I like the manifestation of the Oneida spirit which

I find in them, in their devotion to the truth, and their boldness and vigilance in confessing Christ, and maintaining his standard, at all times and under all circumstances;—and I am glad of the opportunity to learn of them in these things, for I perceive that we have had a loose way of sliding along in these matters in Newark. I know that God is with us here, and will lead us forward as a church to a thorough victory over the world in its spirit and fashions. We have dismissed all foreign help from our shop now, and are going along in good harmony and peace in spirit, though it seems to me that we blunder somewhat yet in our outward movements;—but having the inside right, we know we shall have the outside also.

Your brother, WM. R. INSLEE.

Community Items.

The printing office is shining with new type; having made an addition this week of two hundred dollars worth to its previous stock. The type was purchased with a note presented by Miss. A. Kellogg, a valued member of the Association. We dismiss with some interesting memories our old Putney fount, well worn out in the service to which its employers are devoted. The best wish we can wish it in the changes of the future, is, that it may never come to any use unworthy of the past.

G. W. NOYES and E. H. HAMILTON are preparing the third Annual Report of the Association—to be published soon.

The new building erected by our Community last fall, designed for a saw-mill, grist-mill, mechanics' shops, printing-office, &c., is advancing successfully towards its completion. At this date, the saw-mill is just put in operation.

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