

# NEW-ENGLAND SPIRITUALIST.

A JOURNAL OF THE METHODS AND PHILOSOPHY OF SPIRIT-MANIFESTATION, AND ITS USES TO MANKIND.

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"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT STILL!"—GOETHE.

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## Phenomenal & Philosophical.

### REQUISITES OF SOCIAL PROGRESS.

[Much desire having been expressed to see the following paper in the columns of the *Spiritualist*, we lay it before our readers,—premitting that it was submitted by the writer at the opening of the late Conference of Friends of Progress in this city. Though some of the subjects discussed therein are extraneous to Modern Spiritualism, yet the paper may be of interest to many as affording an indication of the tendency of some minds in the field of general Reform.]

#### EXPLANATORY STATEMENT.

Doubtless many persons who have read the call for this Conference, have failed,—perhaps from having bestowed little thought upon the great Social Problem which agitates the present era,—to perceive either any mutual relations between the several topics proposed for consideration, or any practical bearing, in some of them, upon the end proposed, namely, the promotion of Human Progress.

I have therefore thought proper, as a member of the Committee of Arrangements, to submit at the outset, a brief statement explanatory of my understanding of these topics. This statement also, I am permitted to say, expresses the views, so far as it goes, of the other members of the Committee.

Though the programme of subjects did not originate with this Committee, but, as they believe, from minds in the Higher Life; and though it opens a broad field of investigation, either department of which might profitably occupy our time for several days; yet it is believed that this programme is calculated to direct the student of Social Science in the right path, and to remind him of some, at least, of the essential requisites of true Progress. A few general hints upon each topic, it is thought, will be sufficient to make this appear.

1st. *The Relation which Man bears to the Mineral, Vegetable and Animal Kingdoms.*

That man derives his external sustenance from the kingdoms below him,—that his physical body is made up in all its parts, from substances derived, partly through the lower animal and vegetable orders, but all primarily from the mineral,—that thus the earth sustains to him the very intimate relation of *Mother*, without whose fostering supplies his mundane existence could neither commence nor be sustained,—all this will be readily admitted. Many will also concede that the *spiritual form*, which man is to retain after the grosser material has been cast off, is in some measure derived from these same earthly materials, refined and sublimated through the chemical processes ceaselessly going forward in that living laboratory, the human organism.

More than this, it is clear that man stands supreme over those lower kingdoms,—that he is their apex and culmination,—that they exist for him and in him,—he being the highest and only complete type of the animal kingdom yet developed on this planet.

Now, from these admitted premises, it inevitably follows that man cannot reach a full and harmonious development, without a full supply of all his material needs,—without full liberty to draw from the breasts of mother Earth those nutriments which she amply provides for all her children. This implies an *inalienable right to a proper share in the soil and its productions*, as the birth-inheritance of every human being. It follows, also, that a *mineral or agricultural basis* is an essential requisite for the foundation of a true Social State; and that the existing order of things, so far as it ignores this *right*, and lacks this *basis*, is essentially imperfect.

Much more may be involved in this topic, but this is sufficient for present purposes.

2d. *The grand principles of the Masculine and Feminine, as exhibited in each and all of these kingdoms.*

That the distinctions of sex obtain in the animal (which includes the human) kingdom, is a familiar fact; they have been traced also to some extent even by the commonest observers, in the vegetable world; and, in some mineral and elementary substances, (as electricity,) they are known to science under the distinctions of *positive and negative*. But the community at large has as yet failed to perceive that these are *grand universal Principles*, inhering in and co-existent with Deity and the universe, characterizing all things relatively, from the minutest atom to the Infinite Father and Mother of all.

If these distinctions of Masculine and Feminine be indeed universal Principles, then they are *equally* important to the constitution of the universe and of society; and it follows that any atom, and any being, has a perfect *right* to be of either sex, just as it, or he, or she, may have been constituted. From an ignorance of these universal Principles have arisen questions about the equality of the sexes; one has thought the other a sort of appendix, an after-thought, or special arrangement got up for convenience and pleasure; hence one has enslaved and degraded the other, and both have sunk together in the mire of pollution and debasement. On the contrary, from a recognition of the sexes as universal principles in Nature,—regarding the male and female as the counterparts or necessary complements of each other,—will be likely to follow mutual respect, equality of rights, and purer, freer, nobler lives. Without such equality and mutual respect, there can be no true society, and little real advancement from the present state. This, then, points clearly to a second essential step in the road to Progress.

3d. *The whole subject of Re-production, as it relates to the mineral, vegetable, and animal worlds.*

Surely little need be said to show the intimate relations and transcendent importance of this topic to human advancement. Men have learned that if they would

enhance the value of their crops of apples, peaches or potatoes,—if they would improve their stock of horses, sheep, or swine,—they must understand and give careful heed to the laws of re-production. Now how much better are *sheep or swine than men and women*, that the improvement of the former should be so carefully looked after, and promoted by bounties from the State and the Industrial Associations, while the advancement of the latter, *through the application of the same laws*, is considered a matter unfit to be hinted at? The truth is, the law of re-production has become associated in the human mind with acts of sin and shame; and until it shall be redeemed from such vile association, by a true philosophy and by purity of life, men and women will continue to beget offspring "in their own likeness,"—sensual, selfish, grovelling, and unfit for a higher social state.

Its recognition, however, as a universal law, operative in all kingdoms, as pure and holy in its *legitimate* use as any other law of Nature, lies at the very threshold of progress. When better human beings shall be *born*, (and to no great extent till then,) will society possess the *materials* out of which to construct a better social order.

The operations of this law in the vegetable and mineral kingdoms present topics of high interest to the scientific inquirer, and of great importance to an improved system of agriculture and mineralogy. To these, however, allusion only can be made in this paper.

4th. *The whole subject of Marriage, as a Natural, a Moral, a Religious, and a Spiritual Relation.*

The consideration of this topic grows naturally out of the last; and their importance is identical. But the form in which it is presented suggests certain distinctions, of the highest moment, but which have generally been overlooked by the moralists and legislators of Christendom. That human nature has several distinct departments, which may be designated by the terms *natural*, or *physical*, *moral*, *religious*, and *spiritual*, (to which others still might be added, but these suffice for popular presentation), is recognized by the consciousness of most persons. That two individuals of opposite sexes, may be adapted to harmonize in some one or more of these departments, while they disagree and hence continually chafe each other in other departments, is also quite obvious. That entire harmony or blending in all points is requisite to a *true and full marriage*, is also plain; and that a true marriage is essential to the production of harmonious offspring, is equally evident. As things are, men and women are drawn together often mainly by merely *physical* attractions,—sometimes by *intellectual*, or *moral*, or *aesthetic*, or *religious* sympathies,—to the entire neglect of adaptation in any other but the *one* department most in activity at the time. Hence, when the education of actual life brings out other portions of their natures, discords and miseries, which render life a living death, result from this very institution which should be only a well-spring of purest joys.

That a better social state can be introduced to any great extent on earth, until the very *fountains* of society, in the marriage relation, are purified, and made to send forth sweet waters and not bitter, it is useless to hope. This can be done only by men and women learning to understand themselves and the *chemistry of soul*, or, in other words, the *Divine Law or Science of Marriage*. When this is done, they will no longer attempt to unite by *external* law what God hath never joined by *interior* relationship,—the natural results of which are *inborn* discord, wrangling, selfishness, crime, and all the evils which afflict the present social state; rendering it necessary, beyond question, that persons thus badly born should in some sense be "*born again*" before they can be fit for a better condition.

5th. *The subject of Education, in all its various ramifications.*

The preceding topics have reference mainly to the pre-requisites of man's introduction to life on this planet; they look to giving him a good birth,—a proper *start* in the world. Next in order comes the unfolding, the bringing out, or *education*, (from *e* and *ducere*, to *lead forth*) of what is in him. To do this understandingly and properly, it is necessary first to know that there is *something in man to be brought out*. The idea of an *empty vessel*, to be merely filled with something *put in* by others; and the other idea of a mere *mathematical point*, destitute in itself of any sort of dimensions, but only to be *built upon*, or *added to*, from without;—both these are equally absurd with that theological dogma which constructs a universe out of *nothing*.

The seed of the apple contains within itself the *enfolded germ*, from which *unfolds*, or is drawn out, not only the tree, but future orchards of trees. The first care of the pomologist is to have good seed; next, to unfold or educate that seed under good conditions. Surely an equal care should be had in unfolding human germs. Man, in all the past, has been, under favorable conditions, ever putting forth new powers and higher capacities. Who shall say that all which is in him has yet been brought out? Who shall limit his capabilities of expansion or achievement?

But there is not only an unfolding of what is within, but that unfolding or education has its *natural order*. First, the infant shoot, then the trunk, the branches, the leaves, the blossoms, the fruit. When the human being unfolds *naturally*, he exhibits the same order. First, the physical, second, the intellectual faculties, then the moral, the social, the religious, the spiritual, the celestial. Vast mischief is done by attempting to *force* education out of its natural order. If the pomologist endeavors to produce blossoms or fruit upon his trees before the trunk and branches are properly matured, he dooms it to precocity, weakness and premature decay.

But under our present systems of education, children are hastened into school, and forced into intellectual development, before their bodies are half grown; they are sent to Sunday schools, and taught, parrot-like, to repeat the symbols of the profoundest spiritual truths, before their spiritual understandings have in the least unfolded; they are sent to church and crammed with the "strong meat" of theological dogmas, before their spiritual stomachs have even come into an organized state, or begun to secrete the gastric juice of good sense for the solution of such food. Hence society is filled with physical dwarfs and invalids, with intellectual pigmies, with weak and enslaved devotees of authority, with shrivelled members of creeds, and with zealous dyspeptic sectarians, whose whole religious life is one prolonged attack of theological night-mare, caused by the lodgment in their weak stomachs of such indigestible concretions as "election," "reprobation," "original sin," "the trinity," "salvation by grace," and the like. (I doubt not,—indeed I know from experience,—that all these doctrines can afford healthful nutriment, when properly *masticated* and thoroughly *digested*, so as to bring out their essential substance; but unless thus masticated and interiorly appropriated, they are sure to *lie hard*, in more senses than one.)

I do not by any means intend to say, that intellectual or spiritual culture should be entirely postponed until physical maturity is reached, but simply that this *natural* order of unfolding should be judiciously regarded, and the *forcing* process entirely dispensed with.

It is evident, then, that there can be no true society, and little suitable material out of which to construct a true society, until these educational principles are recognized and applied, equally to both sexes; and hence the indispensability of this round in the ladder of Human Progress.

6th. *The whole subject of Individual and of Collective Rights.*

Men and women, finding themselves in existence, without their own choice, and possessed of certain powers and capacities not of their own making, naturally next inquire what *rights* pertain to this existence. An assembly of the most advanced minds on this planet, some eighty-two years ago, made this declaration: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, and are endowed by their Creator with certain *inalienable rights*,—*Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness*." This statement is surely very well, as far as it goes, and has been widely accepted, professedly forming the basis of the governmental and social institutions of this country. But unfortunately it has received a very imperfect interpretation and a restricted embodiment in these institutions. A new reading, or at least a new interpretation, of this declaration is obviously demanded, in order to make it correspond to nature and to truth; and that should be something as follows: *We hold this truth to be self-evident, that all men and women, without distinction of color, or nationality, are alike and equally endowed with certain inalienable rights, among which are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.*

If these rights be inalienable, then it follows that I, as an individual, have no right to interfere with and control the life, the liberty, or the pursuit of happiness, of any other person, male or female; and that no other person has the right to interfere with mine. And though I may have the right to protect myself from such interference, it follows, moreover, that I have no right to *retaliate*, or vindictively *punish* another for any transgression. All necessary punishment is sure to follow, in the workings of natural or Divine law, which makes evil always its own avenger.

Now, if no individual has these rights, the inevitable result is that no *number* or *body* of individuals can by any possibility possess them; since a thousand nothings added together produce nothing. In so far, then, as present governmental and social institutions assume such rights, they assume what is clearly not theirs; they stand upon a false basis, antagonistic to Nature and to God, and must sooner or later come to an end.

The highest human Progress can be effected only by the fullest mutual concession of all rights. The oppressor, the usurper of what belongs to another, whether upon the Southern plantation, or in the Northern workshop; whether in the Presidential chair or on the Imperial Throne; whether bearing the title of Bishop, Doctor of Divinity, or Reverend; whether at the marriage altar or by the domestic fireside; inflicts an injury upon *himself*, greater than upon his victim,—binds his own soul with fetters which to that extent forbid moral growth and spiritual progress, and which can be struck off only by letting the oppressed, of whatever class, go free.

These several consecutive steps seem thus to be, each and all, *essential* to reach the end desired. Which one of them can be omitted, and leave a *complete* basis for a New Social System?

These steps, moreover, bring us naturally to the last topic submitted for consideration, namely:

7th. *The wisdom of taking incipient steps toward forming a New Confederation, wherein distinctions of clime, of color, and of sex, will be no bar to equality.*

Perhaps a proposition of this nature, even in its incipency, may have a *treasonable* aspect to many minds. But such should remember that all efforts in the past towards the institution of higher and better forms of political and social life, have seemed treasonable to the

devotees of old systems. Greater traitors never lived than John Hancock, Samuel Adams, George Washington, and Thomas Jefferson. And had the *principles of equality*, asserted by those now honored men, been *carried out* in the governmental system which followed their original declaration of rights, there would have been less need of another movement in the same direction at so early a period. In an elaborate decision of the Supreme Court of this nation, just promulgated at its Capital, as well as in the general policy of the government for several years, these principles, as every one knows, are ignored and *flatly* contradicted. And hence it has come to be the case, that *fidelity to the fathers of the Republic is of necessity moral TREASON to the present authorities*.

But again: it was another fundamental principle of these revolutionary worthies, that "all rightful government is derived" from the *consent of the governed*." Do we consent to the adoption of any principle, or the enactment of any law, not in accordance with Natural Right or Divine Law? Who presumes to take this position? Those who do, are, so far as I am concerned, quite at liberty to remain in allegiance to the present confederation; but those who recognize the "higher law," and do not consent to the policy laid down by the supreme authorities of the present national government, are, by the very principles of its founders, absolved from all allegiance thereto. It has no longer any rightful authority over them. They are simply *outsiders*, and at liberty, by natural and moral right, to set up for themselves, whenever they see fit so to do.

But there is nothing in this proposition which need to give any alarm. A "confederation" of individuals is simply an association, a community, or a colony, numbers of which (as "Phalansterians," "Practical Christians," "Shakers," "Communists," etc., etc.) have been formed, on various bases, and now exist in different parts of the country, giving no offence and exciting no fears. It is simply proposed "to consider the wisdom of taking initiatory steps towards forming" another such colony, group, or community, on perhaps a somewhat different basis from any of these, out from which, if successful, a confederation of colonies, or groups, may grow in time.

Should any of us become satisfied, in the calm exercise of our judgments, that the existing governmental institutions, as with the exceptions or the guts of social institutions of the country are hopelessly defective, in that they fail to recognize certain essential and *universal natural principles and inalienable rights*, and do not secure to all the means and conditions of a full and harmonious development; and should we decline longer to give our *consent* to the declared policy of this government; then surely it behoves us, as thinking, responsible men and women, to see if *better* institutions are possible and practicable. If clearly convinced that such is the case, then,—in the name of all that is right and true,—in the name of our revolutionary sires who set the noble example, and whose inspiring though invisible presence and aid we now invoke and recognize,—in the name of Humanity and of Humanity's God,—LET US TO THE WORK!

It is not proposed to *destroy* the existing Confederation. From present appearances, such a labor would be as needless as it is unphilosophical, since shrewd politicians begin seriously to doubt if the States can hold together long enough to elect another President! No, our work is not to *destroy*, but to look about and especially *within* ourselves, and see if we are prepared to *build more wisely* than did our fathers.

Though full justice cannot be done to themes of such magnitude, in the few sessions which this Conference will hold, yet it is hoped that at least suggestions may be elicited from various sources, which, like seed sown in good ground, may spring up and bear a plentiful harvest against a coming time of need.

In conclusion, I feel it incumbent on me to say that Modern Spiritualism, and Spiritualists as such, cannot be justly held responsible for any of the sentiments expressed in the foregoing paper, or which may be put forth in this convocation, any further than they individually endorse the same. I say these things not specially as a Spiritualist, but as a *MAN*, and in virtue of my right as a resident of this planet. True, I, in common with the others who have participated in calling this Conference, heartily believe and rejoice in the fact of realized communion with the exalted spirits of our race; and we gladly avail ourselves of any aids or useful suggestions which may come from that or any other quarter. But we accept only that which commends itself to our individual judgments, and wish none others to be bound or in the least compromised by any acts or opinions of ours.

And, finally, as this Conference has been convened not so much for the purpose of consulting the popular voice, or asking popular consent to any opinions, or aid in any movements, as for the purpose of investigating and declaring *unpopular* principles, it is my recommendation that the usual formalities of organization and voting be dispensed with, leaving the meetings entirely under the direction and control of the committee who have called them, and leaving each attendant to pass his or her own votes, and to adopt his or her own resolves, according to individual perceptions of right and duty.

A. E. NEWTON.

A wise man will stay for a convenient season, and will bend a little, rather than be torn up by the roots.

The man who does most, has the least time to talk about what he does.

If we can still love those who have made us suffer, we love them all the more.

### SPIRIT-INTERCOURSE—ITS EFFECTS.

"For me, if I forget the darling theme,  
Be my tongue mute, may fancy paint no more,  
And, dead to joy, my heart forget to beat."

To spirit-intercourse, chiefly through my own mediumship, I am indebted for a happier life. My first teaching to me was "cease to do evil, learn to do well," and from a brother twelve years deceased, who in the body was not a professor of religion, I was counselled, that "the devoted Spiritualist must be the devoted Christian." Thus have I been brought, by a *rigid self-discipline*, from *infidelity*, and from the very sink of moral pollution and whirlpool of iniquity. If this be the work of the devil, God bless him!

When a suicide occurs by one who has been investigating Spiritualism, out comes the *frothy portion* of the press, with the "deleterious effects of Spiritualism." Sir, the true, intelligent Spiritualist *cannot* be a suicide! He knows too well the horrible consequences of entering the spirit-world *uncalled for*; he knows in a faint degree the awful penalty of this and every other violent breach of Nature's laws;—yes, awful penalty, where the worm of memory dieth not, and the fire of remorse is not quenched. This philosophy teaches me, that I cannot otherwise "find religion," except by a scrutinizing purification, not of outward appearances only, but of the very "thoughts and intents of the soul." It teaches me no instantaneous "finding of religion," but patient perseverance in well-doing; that to have a pure mind, there must be a clean body inwardly and outwardly; no gross feeding, but strict temperance and sobriety, to insure truthful spirit-communication. "To be carnally minded is death, to be spiritually minded is life and peace." To insure this, Daniel and his friends fed on pulse, and to secure a high spiritual manifestation, he ate "no pleasant bread for three whole weeks," "for this cometh not but by prayer and fasting." He ate no roast beef or plum pudding, neither fat pork, that scrofulous seed of sensuous lust. Truthful mediums have to know and practise these things, and thus subdue the animal passions. Every one is constantly under the guardianship of a pure and holy spirit, who is acquainted with the most *secret* thought. With this conviction, can the drunkard continue his soul-debasing vice? Could the uplifted hand of the assassin strike Allan, Anan, nor turn the *ashes* of a man into the *deceitful snow*? Would the *fox* steal any more? With such a conviction, he who overreached his neighbor will learn to "do to others as he would they should do to him," for he knows his most secret, covetous thought is watched by the "recording angel" to Heaven's high court, and though that angel may "drop a tear and blot out the record forever," he must *indulge* that thought no more. The law of love overrules angel life, but intrudes not on the law of Justice.

"Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,  
And men below, and saints above,  
For Love is Heaven, and Heaven is Love."

Spirit intercourse, with sure, steady, silent footsteps, from the pulsations of the great Heart of Hearts, through his agents, is moving every soul! for are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister? Irrespective of editors, popes and potentates, the spiritual schoolmaster is abroad, and his march is onward, upward! His commission is under the triumphant banner of Him who was never foiled in battle—the LAMB who made war with the BEAST—of him who sat on the white horse—his vesture dipped in blood—whose name is called the WORD OF GOD.

Like Festus of old, you call us *mad*; like Paul of old, "we speak forth the words of truth and soberness, and would that not only thou, but all who read this, were not only almost, but altogether such as I am, except in my defects."

Do you think the phenomena limited to Dodworth's Hall? It may be fairly estimated that three millions of sound-minded men and women are believers in spirit-intercourse in the United States; very many influential persons, who will not publicly and honestly avow their real conviction. *Ten thousand mediums* tell a tale. Through the length and breadth of this fair land, it is steadily progressing. Go to the New England factories in the East—to the farming districts in the West—to the Canadas of the North—and the plantations of the South, and you will perceive the *mighty moralizing influence* of that GREAT MIND, "that, ever busy, wheels the silent spheres, works in the secret deep; sends the fair profusion that o'erspreads the spring; feeds every creature, hurls the tempest forth." Nay, more. Spirit intercourse is throughout the human family, confined to no country—to no avocation! The Stage, once designed to be the school of public morals; alas! how prostituted! But spirit-influence is at work there, too; and reformation will be effected. Shakespeare and many brilliant minds of the past are developing mediums for the moral elevation of the stage. Its *living machinery*, the most whole-souled, generous-hearted men and women, held as outcasts of society, where they would shine as intellectual stars! And why? The managers have to stoop from their otherwise dignified moral position, to gratify morbid sensibility and pampered, vitiated public taste.

Spiritualism has a mighty mission for humanity to accomplish, each one for himself. The list and the ism will be solved in the crucible of Truth; but high up on the mount of progression methinks I see her fair and stately form—her feet on the rock of insurmountable Truth.—*Cor. N. Y. Dispatch.*

Ice broken and ice melted represent the two kinds of repentance.





