

The Spirit Messenger.

AUGUST 15, 1852.—NEW SERIES.

COMMUNION OF THE SPIRIT.

A MESSAGE FROM THE INTERIOR.

Humanity has been blessed in the present age with clear and satisfactory demonstrations of the truth, that man may hold intercourse with spirits. Facts and phenomena, appealing to the external senses, have arrested the attention of the world, and pointed to the brightness of angelic spheres. Yet many minds, in observing the external effects which are the result of an invisible power, have failed to obtain a proper understanding with regard to the philosophy of the miracles that are beheld with interest and wonder. The time has now arrived when the precious truths relating to spiritual communion, should be unfolded in the human soul. It is exceedingly important, and even essential to an enlightened faith, that the principles which occasion and govern spiritual phenomena should be rightly apprehended, that thus the superstructure of wonderful facts may rest on the firm foundations of reason. When this subject is properly conceived, it will not be regarded as unworthy of profound examination; it will not be viewed in the light of sorcery and witchcraft; it will not be placed under the ban of religious bigotry, or subjected to the sneers of the sensualist and worldling, but it will be welcomed as embracing sacred though philosophical truths, which commend themselves to the reason and judgment of every mind. Indeed no subject in the whole range of physical and moral science, can possess the interest and importance which are attached to that, in whose investigation the noblest aspirations of the soul are caused to rise towards the unfolded angels of Heaven. The geologist may search into the bowels of the earth; the philosopher may analyze and classify the beautiful principles that regulate the growth and movements of external bodies; and the astronomer—moved by the divine principle of worship in the soul—may extend his gaze to the radiant sky and study the laws that govern the shining orbs of night, yet all these may have no conception of the higher glory that dwells beyond the reach of sight and thought, in the boundless regions of celestial life. But the

searching soul will at last penetrate the veil which has been thrown around it during long ages past; it will reach forth towards the realities of the unseen world; it will aspire to realize the existence and influence of spiritual beings; it will long to feel the gentle breathings of thought upon the inward sense,—and then will the great want of the world be supplied by the inspiration of angels and the vision of the developed spirit.

The reader may now profitably consider the relation which man sustains to the spiritual world. In the human being are concentrated all the elements of surrounding Nature, and these elements are composed not only of the gross materials which form the visible creation, but also of the refined essences which belong to the spiritual realm. Therefore does he present that combination of substances by which he is related to both the spheres of material and angelic life; as while his feet are placed upon the earth his brow is bathed with the light of heaven, and in him

“—is matter's last gradation lost,
And the next step is Spirit—.”

It will thus be easily understood that man is an intermediate link in the scale of being which reaches from the brute to the angel. The truth is clearly apparent that he possesses those powers of body and soul—those principles of material and spiritual existence, by which he becomes naturally allied, not only to the animal creation, but also to the spheres of celestial being. When this truth is properly appreciated, it will be easily seen that, while man through the physical system has the power of associating with inferior animals, he also has the capacity of communing with those higher intelligences to whom his spirit is related. On the principle that man occupies an intermediate position between the animal kingdom and the spiritual realm—that he is possessed of a two-fold nature which connects with both these departments in the great mansion of Nature, it will be sufficiently evident that the human spirit has powers which admit its communion with the beings of the invisible world, as well as that the human body is adapted to associate with the inferior brutes. It should be borne in mind that, while man is above the brute, he is but little lower than the angels—that while he can descend, in the penetration of the senses, to those objects which are beneath and around him in the fields of Nature, but can also ascend, by virtue of the sublimated faculties of the soul, to the radiant heights of immortal being. To suppose that man stands upon the lofty pyramid of spiritual existence without companionship—that he has powers, exalted and godlike in their nature, which have no corresponding objects towards which to rise—that, in short, he has a spirit, ever soaring towards Heaven, which has no capacity to commune with kindred spirits, would be to suppose a most mysterious anomaly which is unsustained by all the analogies of creation. If the

mind desires to reason on this subject, it must reason on natural and philosophical principles; and when these principles are recognized as the proper basis of reasoning, the mind will readily admit the truth, that, in the vast and interminable chain of being, man can as naturally associate with those links which rise above him to the mansions of God, as with those which descend below him to the dark regions of matter; and, therefore, that a communion of spirit with the angel-world is simply one of the exalted privileges which is permitted to the human being.

As another principle of kindred nature, it should be observed that there exists an intimate relation between the material and spiritual sphere. It is a beautiful and consoling truth that the world of matter and the world of spirit, so far from being separated by an impassable barrier, are united by ties of the most essential nature. In contemplating the perfect system of the Universe, it will appear that all things are but parts of one complete whole, maintaining a natural and necessary connection with each other—that the very grossest forms of earthly substance are united with the most etherial essences, and that, while not a link is wanting in the unbroken chain of being, there is presented one beautiful series of gradations, extending from the dark sphere of matter to the radiant world of spirit, along which the aspirations of the soul may rise to be received into the bosom of angelic kindred. Therefore is it righteous to believe that the spiritual sphere is an outbirth and emanation from the material sphere; and at that point of refinement in the gradations of matter where the visible is lost in the invisible, where the tangible is swallowed up in the etherial, and where the external is merged into the spiritual, there exists no absolute boundary of separation—no definite line of distinction between the one and the other, but, like the mists of distant mountains that seem to mingle with the sky, the expanded temple of the outward creation is blended with the refined atmosphere of Heaven. With this conception in view, it will be irrational to suppose that there is established any localized and defined circle within which the immortals are confined, or that there is erected any impassable barrier of an external nature which can restrict the roamings of the freed soul; and from this conclusion it will immediately follow as a corresponding reality, that there is and can be no possible hindrance to the passage of the spirit in any direction which may be indicated by the internal affinities, and that thus the inhabitants of the Second Sphere are permitted to so far approach their kindred on the earth as to bear the glad tidings of love and wisdom.

In accordance with this truth, the conviction has been inwardly felt by the most elevated and advanced minds on the earth, that it is possible in certain conditions to hold intercourse with invisible beings, and that the destiny of mortals has been shaped and controlled by some superior bu

unknown intelligence. The serious investigations of several ancient philosophers, have served to sustain this elevating and truthful sentiment. Indeed the most eminent among these philosophers, including Pythagoras, Plato, Socrates, Jesus, Swedenborg and others, gave evidence that they were moved by a spiritual inspiration, and acted, however unconsciously, as mediums for the transmission of important truths to the generations in which they lived. To the perceptions of the soul, it appears that, in all past ages, spirits have been the friends of the mortals who have wandered in darkness; that they have sent down to the soul in its bondage the rays of a divine light, and that they have quickened and strengthened its energies in its progress towards the unseen reality. The bards and prophets whose utterances have flowed down with the tide of ages, derived their visions from the paintings of invisible artists; the great orators whose breathing thoughts moved and hushed the passive multitude, received the influx of truth from immortal minds; and the reformers of all ages who have sought the bright realities of Nature—who have labored, and sacrificed, and suffered in the cause of human redemption, have obtained the divine impulse so gloriously manifested in the inspiration of the angel-realm. And even those who have walked unknown and unhonored in the more humble paths of life—who have toiled amid the discouragements of poverty and beneath the burden of sorrow, have likewise received from on high, in their seeming solitude, the breathings of celestial hope. Thus has the world been moved, guided and governed, not so much by the powers which have been most revered by the mass, as by the beings who have lingered unseen and unknown around the paths of men.

A voice, breathing on the soul, bears the exalted truth, that God speaks to the world through the medium of angels. While man, from the grossness and imperfection of his nature, may not commune immediately with the Divine Mind, he may yet remember that there is a chain of being which reaches even from the lowest forms of matter up to the great vortex of the supreme Intelligence; and this chain is so perfect and unbroken—the links of which it is composed are so firmly and intimately united, that even the most rudimental forms are caused to feel the influence of the Eternal Sun, and man, standing upon the summit of the visible creation, can look upward into the immensity of ever-unfolding Life, and hold communion through intermediate agencies with the Infinite Spirit. The source of all truth is in God; but the influx that originates in the Divine Soul, is caused to descend through unnumbered channels of angelic being. Let it, then, be suitably impressed, that man is connected with the Deity through a series of consecutive links—that he receives truth ultimately from the Divine Mind, but proximately from ministering angels, and that thus the communion of the spirit is the true and living worship of the Father.

THE SLEEPER.

BY A MINISTERING SPIRIT.

Calm Night had thrown her sombre veil
Around the dewy breast of Earth,
And Silence hushed—o'er hill and dale—
Each wail of woe and sound of mirth.

On high the gleaming watch-fires shone
To melt the soft and shadowy gloom,—
As Hope and Faith afar have flown
To gild the darkness of the tomb.

O time of sweet and holy rest,
So hallowed are thy silent hours,
That from the home which Heaven has blessed,
E'en angels come to grace thy bowers.

A sleeper round whose wearied form
The chains of slumber softly wove,
Reposed, and thought of care nor storm,
'Mid dreams of sweet and peaceful love.

But lo! a form all gentle bends
Unseen to catch the flowing thought,
And whispering echo softly lends
Its charm to dreams that Night had wrought.

Mid rosy bowers whose beauties rare,
Are smiling in their fragrant bloom,
Soft music loads the balmy air,
And light celestial conquers gloom.

So dreams the soul,—on high it soars,
To list the harmonies that swell
From brighter Spheres, whose Life adores
The Spirit that on high doth dwell.

Thus angels come when shades of night
Have gathered round the couch of sleep,
To bring the sweet and holy light
Of love that calms the inner deep.

So brightly flows the spirit's dream
Which pure immortals stoop to breathe,
That life appears a golden stream,
Whose banks with flowers the angels wreath.

THEOLOGICAL DOCTRINES.

BY R. P. AMBLER. 75

The doctrines of the Church which have been guarded and cherished with jealous care through the lapse of centuries, are commended rather to the ignorance and bigotry of mind, than to its powers of reason and intuition. When these doctrines were primarily established, the people with whom they originated were situated in the valley of spiritual darkness, having no visible sign from heaven whereby to become instructed in the truth. Therefore, since by a law of adaptation, they were prepared to receive only the most sensual and imperfect theories, they were blinded to the beauty and expansiveness of truth by the covering of gloom which was cast over all nations. Through the dense clouds that enshrouded the sky, they had no power to discern the light which flows far above, and amid the mists of superstition with which they were darkly surrounded, they beheld not the glory of the Divine presence. Thus, at this period in the history of humanity, the world was not prepared to appreciate any exalted or complete system of truth, and consequently could only receive the imperfect and unworthy doctrines which had been conceived in the lowest faculties of mind.

By a natural principle which is seen in every manifestation of human influence, the people became deeply impressed with the doctrines which had at first only existed as shadowy fancies; and accordingly, as successive generations came into being, these doctrines began to be embodied in a growing system of theology, which at last became the cherished idol of popular devotion. It is the desire of the writer to elucidate the real nature and tendency of existing theological doctrines; and in this work he is not moved by any hostile sentiments towards those individuals by whom these doctrines are entertained, but labors simply to promote the welfare of mind as respects the expansion and elevation of its powers. To this end he would say, that the doctrines of theology as these are now beheld on earth, have their birth in ignorance and their growth in superstition. It is clearly perceived that these doctrines found a congenial soil in the darkness of those early ages when only the first buds of the soul were seen to expand. There is no assimilation between these doctrines and the wisdom of Heaven; for they seek not the light which flows down from the Upper Sphere, but crouch in the gloom where they were first conceived. To demonstrate that theological doctrines can be sustained only by ignorance and superstition, we may refer to the fact that these doc-

trines are composed of the constituent elements of heathen mythology. The worshipers of material deities—deities constructed by their own hands—were endowed with qualities which corresponded precisely with their own dark passions and animal propensities. It is seen that the gods of the heathen were the exact reflection, in a moral sense, of the individuals by whom they were worshiped,—manifesting to the imagination of the devotee the fearful impulses of wrath, the direst exhibitions of revenge, and the ever-changeful disposition which tyrants are accustomed to display. But how much better than this is that Being which the modern Church has worshiped as God! In Him, according to the doctrines of theology, are embraced the same repulsive passions which were supposed to move the heathen deities. So dark and revengeful is He imagined to be, that for the wrong-doings of a few years, caused by unfavorable circumstances and conditions, He is willing to subject his own children to the most terrible suffering throughout eternity; and so changeful and fickle are his designs supposed, that when he becomes angry and has decreed the punishment of his children, he may be readily appeased by the offering of loud prayers and unholy penances,—on a principle similar to that by which the heathen worshiper was led to sacrifice his own life to appease the fancied wrath of his idol. When the doctrines of theology unfold and cherish sentiments like these—so repugnant to the heaven-born aspirations of man—they are seen to openly manifest their intrinsic nature as false and corrupt, and to point unmistakably to the dark and polluted source from which they were derived.

The truth may be now stated, that the doctrines of theology are the doctrines of the sensual and undeveloped mind—that they are doctrines which have relation rather to the selfish enjoyments of sense than to the exalted pleasures of the spirit. This statement at the first view may appear to be somewhat harsh and severe, but it is proper to reveal in fearless language that which is interiorly perceived. To substantiate the statement here referred to, we have only to examine the most prominent feature of theological doctrines as comprehended in the plan of salvation. As the fundamental principle of this doctrine, it is supposed that all men are in danger of eternal torment, which torment has special reference to the flames of a bottomless pit!—and in this connection the idea has been made prominent, that the torture which would be endured in this God-forsaken place, is analogous to that which would be suffered by the body when placed amidst the fires of a burning oven! With this material and degrading thought in view, it has been the object of theological preaching to induce men to selfishly flee from the punishments of hell, that they may gain an entrance into that *golden city*, where all the streets are glittering with the glory of the idol which they have worshiped on earth, and where they

may slumber upon a downy couch with no thoughts of labor to disturb their rest! And then as a corresponding sentiment, it is stated that, to secure the salvation of men, Christ made an external offering of himself for the sins of the world, and that his *blood*—the blood which he shed upon the cross—is to be employed as the only instrumentality, whereby man can escape from the punishment which God has decreed, and gain entrance into the New Jerusalem. These doctrines have been stated in this manner, for the reason that their very embodiment in language is sufficient to show the grossness and materiality of their nature; for it must be clear to every exalted soul, that the whole system on which these doctrines are based, is adapted only to those minds which are still groping on the plane of sense, and are moved only by the selfish considerations of external ease. The plan of salvation which the Church has adopted, is one which must have sole reference to the external and material man. A punishment is first placed in view which only sense could suffer; a reward is then presented for attainment which only sense could enjoy; and then as to the agency by which men are to be redeemed, it is supposed to be no principle which has relation to spiritual growth, but rather the flowing blood and crucified body of Christ. The object in thus disrobing a mournful truth, is not to disturb the sensitive feelings of those who have been wrongly educated, but rather to remove and destroy the materiality of the world, by exposing the deformity of the doctrines by which this is nourished and sustained.

In concluding the present article, the writer desires to speak briefly of the influence which theological doctrines have exerted on the world. It is well understood that these doctrines have established an immovable standard of thought and action—that they have constituted the judgment-seat to which all theories must be brought and tested, and that they have restricted the movements of the soul to a certain platform of faith and sentiment, beyond which it has not been permitted to roam. But more than this, the doctrines of theology have employed the engine of fear to enforce their authority. Dark and terrible pictures of woe are presented to the soul as the symbols of its destiny, while images of wrath, whose blazing billows roll through the bosom of God, are impressed upon the receptive mind. Let calm and exalted Reason pass judgment on such an influence. Listen to her decision:—*All doctrines which tend to confine the soul—which have an influence to darken its perceptions and depress its energies, are unnatural, irrational, and wrong.* But if such is the judgment of reason, it is also the experience of the world. For the space of many centuries have the doctrines of theology been presented to the minds of the people. Amid the darkness and imperfection of the rudimental world, they have grown and flourished. The opportunity which they have had to reform the race, has been wasted by the depressing and degenerating influence which

they are designed to exert ; and now—at the dawn of a new era, when the hallowed light of Heaven is breaking upon the earth—they stand, all cold, and dark, and pulseless, as crumbling relics of departed time.

INTERVIEW WITH A SPIRIT-FRIEND.

BY HON. J. W. EDMONDS.

After I had been engaged several weeks in investigating the phenomena of Spiritual Intercourse, and had had some ten or a dozen opportunities of conversing through the rappings, (Catherine Fox being the medium), I was reposing one afternoon on my sofa reading, when suddenly the thought introduced itself upon my mind that I ought to go to E— F—, a clairvoyant, and magnetize him, when I should receive a communication from my son, who died at the age of two years some twenty-five years ago, and who was in a higher condition than any spirit with whom I had conversed. I had, at that time, no acquaintance with E— F—, never having seen him but once ; I had never seen a clairvoyant but once in my life ; I had never magnetized any one and knew nothing how to begin even to do so, and I therefore dismissed the thought from my mind as one of my own vain imaginings. But it returned upon me again and again in spite of myself, until I mentally asked the question, "Is it possible that this is an impression from the Spirit-world ?" I had no sooner asked the question than I felt three or four gentle touches upon my shoulder. Still I doubted, until a few days after, when I was in the presence of the rapping medium, I was told that it was indeed a communication from the Spirit-world, which it would be well for me to heed. I did so, and sought and obtained an interview through E— F— at his lodgings. There were five persons present, and almost as soon as we were seated, he passed into the clairvoyant state and commenced the promised teachings to me, which extended through a number of meetings.

I give now a portion of the lesson, as I took it down with great care at the time. The residue I will give at a future time.

"Man, interiorly, is composed of one element, in three distinct grades of perfection, which grades serve to form a link between the spiritual and physical worlds. This element is an electricity, but more perfected than that with which you are familiar, or that which you term electricity.

The first or lowest quality of electricity which pervades the human system, is what may be termed the *vegetable motive element*. This is a better term to use than electricity, because you would otherwise associate it with electricity as you see it in its commonest form, and that would give

you an erroneous idea. This element of which I speak is one grade above the common electricity. Its sphere or function is to give involuntary growth or action. It, therefore, is a most essential element of all the plant creation. That element is to the vegetable creation what the soul is to the human creation. Nearly all nature has a greater or less degree of this element or quality.

The next grade of this substance may be termed the *animal motive element*. This is still another grade or perfected form of electricity, and is that substance which some term magnetism. It is that which pervades the nervous system and gives voluntary motion. It is that which imparts life to the nerves and which gives us sensation. This element is but one grade below the soul, and is that through which you receive instinct. Animals, through this element, show instincts which seemingly almost amount to impressions. Still they are not impressions in reality, though nearly allied. The mind does not grasp the idea, but receives the instinct and acts accordingly, but not from reason. As I have said, the vegetable element is the soul of plants; so this is the soul of animals. You will understand that I do not intend to convey the idea that plants or animals have organized, individualized souls that will ever exist. Their element is necessarily confined to organized bodies, and when the body becomes disunited, this must of course be disorganized with it.

Next in order is the *soul motive element*, which is the grand microcosm of all below the Divinity. This is an element which baffles your efforts to analyze—as self cannot investigate self. It is that element which forms Man and constitutes him an ever-existing, individualized being. It is superior to the animal element, and therefore exists independently of the physical body. It is the function of this element to individualize man and give to each person those peculiarities which may distinguish him from all others.

The soul of the plant is positive to the plant and negative to animals:

The soul of animals is positive to animals and negative to man:

The soul of man is positive to man, but negative to God.

These three elements of the Universe combine to form Man. This is man interiorly. He is superior to the lower organizations of nature, because their superior element is his inferior—the animal's positive being man's negative.

Here you arrive as far as you are able to investigate. As you cannot analyze the soul of one individual, which is but a small particle of what makes up the Divinity, much less can you analyze the Divinity. You may notice the different appearances of different souls, but their appearances and phenomena will be as various as the inhabitants of the Universe.

These three qualities are with, or a part of, the soul after leaving the

body. As we spiritually are formed much as you are physically, and as the vegetable element is necessary to growth, and the animal to the motive power, so they must exist in the spiritual world though much more refined and elevated."

Here ended, for that interview, the spirit's teaching, the residue of the evening having been consumed in personal questions, that would not be interesting to the general reader. At the next meeting, circumstances prevented our receiving much. What little there was of interest, is given as follows:

"It is a mistake that is doing much mischief for the time, that there is a positive evil principle. There is much negative evil existing, but no positive. You can arrive at a clear conclusion on this subject by interrogating Reason and Nature."

Ques. "What subject do you speak of?"

Ans. "Of all subjects in fact. It needs not much talent to ascertain truth, but needs much to put error into broken patchwork.

If any of your ideas do not harmonize with Nature, be assured you do not understand Nature, or your ideas are defective.

Nature is simple, and if you throw aside all fears and all heathen mythology and superstition, you will come to correct conclusions."

THE SPIRIT AND ITS HEAVEN.

BY R. P. AMBLER.

In every age there have been too numerous theological conceptions of Heaven—too many partial, narrow and restrictive views of the angel-home, and far too vague and unnatural fancies of human destiny. These influences have prevented the mind from exercising its native aspirations; they have confined and narrowed the sublime thoughts of the soul, and they have thrown dark shadows on that glorious picture which the angels delight to paint in dreams. In accordance with the teachings of the received theology, the immortal being is supposed to inhabit a world which corresponds, in its external proportions, to the most extensive and magnificent city—whose streets are paved with gold and whose mansions are palaces—where luxurious ease and abundant feasting are presented as the reward of righteous labors upon the earth. It is seen that all conceptions of this nature are mere reflections from the sensual and depraved desires of the undeveloped mind—that they are the dark and repulsive shadows of human imperfection, which the light of the Heavenly Sphere can only remove. It has been a severe and almost fruitless task to turn back the

current of long-established opinion which originated in the gloom of early centuries, and to introduce the elements of truth and freedom where only error and bondage have existed. Yet may this task be performed with earnest joy, when we remember that the end to be attained is to increase the native dignity of man—to expand the budding thoughts of the spirit, and prepare the inner being for the exalted destiny which awaits it; and with this view I am impressed to relate the thoughts which are addressed to the inner sense, in hope that these may be submitted to the test of interior reason, and be made the agents of spiritual elevation and refinement.

Beautiful and glorious, in a sense in which no earthly objects are, are the scenes of the Spirit-land. There are beauties in this land of the soul which the earthly eye hath never seen, and which the earthly mind hath not conceived. So sublimely and expressibly grand are these beauties, that they could not be received into the most expanded imagination; for there is no object on the earth and no radiance in the sky, which could be referred to as an appropriate representation of celestial glories. But the freed spirit can behold and enjoy the beauties by which it is surrounded, because its vision is more clear and its thoughts more expanded than those of the earthly mind. On being separated from the tenement of the body, the spirit experiences a sense of lightness and buoyancy which it is impossible to describe; and when the ties which bound it to earth are measurably weakened, it is borne by kindred and congenial companions to the Second Sphere, where it is permitted to gaze on the resplendent beauties of its home. As it extends its vision through the wide expanse which is opened before it, it exclaims in the ecstasy of bliss, "What a beautiful place! How pleasant everything is!" If, in its residence on earth, the spirit had been enclosed in a diseased and suffering body, the surprise relates to the perfect health and vigor to which it is restored, and it is prone to exclaim, "How well I am!"—or if the soul had been long bowed down with sorrow and trial, groping amid the gloom of earthly anguish, it will breathe forth its sense of freedom in subdued but joyful tones as it views the glorious beauty of its Heaven.

I am moved to speak, in this article, of the peculiar relations which the spirit sustains to the Sphere into which it is born through the process of death. Man, as a material being, sustains certain relations to the external forms of matter by which he is surrounded, and these relations are always defined by the nature of the substance and the position which it occupies. Thus he stands in a certain relation to the brute—in another relation to the flower, and in still another to the grosser forms of Nature. But in these relations which man sustains to the outward world, it will be seen that he occupies a position which is apart from, and measurably independent of,

the various objects which are here contained, and that he also assumes certain positions as to locality with respect to other forms and beings, so that he appears as but one of the myriad objects which cover the earth, sustaining the same relation to them with regard to position and refinement, which they sustain to corresponding objects. To employ other terms, it may be said that man exists upon the earth as a separate and individual form, surrounded by almost an infinite diversity of other forms, all existing as separate individualities; and it appears farther that man is related to the world in which he dwells, as a structure developed from the gross and rudimental forms which constitute the scenery of earth. But the relations which the spirit sustains to the Sphere into which it is born through the process of death, are entirely diverse from those which the physical body bears to the material world. Instead of existing as an independent form which is constantly assuming certain positions with reference to other forms, it harmoniously blends and mingles with the refined beauties by which it is ever surrounded, breathing in the spiritual essence as a shining atmosphere, and bathing in the luminous substance which flows far and wide as a vast sea of light. When the spirit enters into its appointed home, it discovers that visible beauty does not consist in the presence of fixed and definite forms as on the earth, but that it dwells in the ever-moving and ever-glorious ocean of myriad hues which rolls around, above, beneath—everywhere, in the most captivating and attractive brightness. Therefore do the dwellers of Heaven sustain a relation to their home which is similar to that which the inhabitants of the sea sustain to the world of waters,—being surrounded by a flowing and congenial substance whose elements are ever changing their position, and whose depths are pervaded with a soft and dreamlike radiance. Let the earthly mind conceive, if possible, a perfect, luminous, yet ever-changing rainbow—an expanse of liquid colors whose height and breadth no eye can measure, and let it imagine that, floating in the very elements of this ethereal, but gorgeous rainbow, there are radiant celestial beings whose bodies seem to be composed of the purest light, and whose countenances are glowing with a sweet and tranquil joy. With the aid of this conception, the mind may arrive at some shadow of the truth with respect to the nature of the Spirit-world, and the relations which the angels sustain to their beautiful abode; but this conception, however vast and sublime it may be made, will fall almost infinitely short of the bright and glorious reality.

There is a thought in connection with the present subject which may be appropriately mentioned. This thought is, that the spirits of the departed do not, as a general truth, linger very near, as to locality, the sphere from which they ascend,—this being the case only in those instances in which

the spirit has been left exceedingly undeveloped while in the body, and is therefore attracted to the earth from a natural affinity. The spirit, as a general fact, passes to the Second sphere in a comparatively short time after it has been released from the body, and enters almost immediately into the intimate and beautiful relations which it afterwards sustains to the heavenly home. And farther, it should be known that these relations, when once formed, are not usually broken or disturbed by an absolute departure of the spiritual body from the sphere in which it dwells. It is true that the departed sometimes approach near to the earth, and occasionally enter into the house where their earthly friends are situated, but instances of this nature are comparatively rare, and this is done only by special permission from more advanced spirits. As a general truth, the spirits, on their departure from the earth, do not frequently return to its surface, but it may be truly said that they are ever near to their friends in *spirit*—in the thoughts and affections which are ever fresh and glowing in their hearts; and from the exalted position which they occupy—even from the loftiest height of their expanded home—they are enabled to send down, through the medium of the most refined essences, the precious truths which they have learned in the course of unceasing progress. Let it be realized, then, that the *spirit* of the angel is near to its earthly friends, while its body continues to sustain appropriate relations to the world in which it dwells,—being repelled from the gross and unrefined materials which are only fitted to compose the habitations of mortals.

TO THE PATRONS OF THE MESSENGER.

BRETHREN:

It will doubtless be to you a matter of surprise to receive another number of the Journal which was supposed, as well by me as by others, to be discontinued forever. But the present issue will serve to fulfill the prophecy contained in the last message of the spirits, saying: "*The Messenger is not dead;*" and it appears, also, that this embodiment of spiritual truth, poor and humble though it be, contains "*the essence of immortal life.*" At the risk of subjecting myself to the charge of egotism, I desire to speak briefly of the circumstances and conditions which, while they led to the temporary discontinuance of the Messenger, have ultimately resulted in its speedy, and as I trust permanent re-establishment.

It is known that the columns of this Journal have been, for several months, professedly under the control of an unseen intelligence, which represented the spirits of the Sixth Circle of the Second Sphere. This control I had personally no power to resist, inasmuch as my whole being became gradually and almost insensibly subjected to the influence of an

invisible power, whose operations were mighty as they were mysterious. Accordingly I was content to be entirely passive, and indeed was made so by an inward and silent breathing which seemed to lull the very spirit to repose; and when I had attained to this desired state of passiveness, my whole nature appeared to be subjected to a process of change—the natural operations of the mind were apparently interrupted, and while the brain remained almost a perfect blank on which no definable thought was impressed, the hand and arm were moved with the greatest rapidity to give expression to the truths which emanated from an unseen source. From this point I was subjected, for many weeks, to a severe and trying ordeal of which my friends have been measurably informed, but the details of which I do not distinctly remember and certainly should be unable to relate. While undergoing this ordeal I could perceive no wisdom or goodness in the operations of the spirits, and was disposed to censure them for a severity which was undeserved; and yet, beneath it all, I experienced an internal consciousness that they were designing to accomplish some higher end which I was not then prepared to appreciate. The result has proved that this inward voice was a reliable oracle. On the fourth day of July last—the anniversary of a nation's independence—I was suddenly introduced into a new sphere of spiritual liberty and light. From the seeming degradation of a slave, I was at once elevated to the dignity of a freeman;—the restraint which had been previously imposed on all my actions was apparently removed—the burden that had long rested on the soul was kindly uplifted, and while I remained *externally passive* so that the physical system was still under the control of spirits, I became *internally positive* to a degree which I had never before attained, as though the elements of the spirit had been concentrated in their eternalized form. To this result, as I now perceive, all previous trials had a natural tendency; and in the harmony which now pervades my being—in the developed senses of the soul which grasp the realities of spiritual life, and in the interior light and peace which fill the avenues of the immortal nature, I not only see but feel the wisdom and goodness which have created the sufferings of the past.

In this connection I desire to say a few words relating to the course which has been pursued with the Messenger. This course I am now well assured, however strange and mysterious it may appear, was dictated by a higher wisdom than I was at first able to conceive. I had supposed that spirits to be wise and good, must in all cases consult my earthly interests, and at the same time pursue such a course with the world at large as would induce a reverence for their revealments. But I have found that the designs of the Sixth Circle have reached far deeper than this. As I now clearly perceive, the great object for which they are laboring is the

development of the soul—the unfolding of the spiritual nature; and as a means for accomplishing this object—an object which essentially involves the reformation of the world—it was designed that all external props and dependences should be removed, and that the soul should be thus forced to an interior exercise of its own inherent powers. The refusal to furnish matter at the appropriate time—the disappointment occasioned by irregularity and delay—the making of promises which were seemingly broken, and the ultimate discontinuance of the paper,—all served to furnish a practical exemplification of the truth—a truth which could be effectually taught in no other way—that the world can have no external authority on which to lean, and that reason, intuition, and the inward consciousness of the spirit, are the only reliable standards of thought and action; and now that this lesson has been taught in a practical manner, the designs which have been previously announced by the spirits will be carried into effect—the promises which they have made with regard to the Messenger will be progressively fulfilled, and from the dark clouds of mystery a light shall gleam to hallow the inner Sanctuary of the soul.

According to a previous announcement, the columns of the Messenger will not hereafter be made the medium through which the Sixth Circle will communicate directly with the world, inasmuch as the thoughts conveyed from this source are to be embodied in the form of books; but I desire it to be understood that this Journal will be continued by my own special agency at least one year from the present date, without regard to the number of its subscribers. The elevated character which the Messenger has heretofore preserved, will be sustained by communications from the most advanced minds, among which may be mentioned that of Hon. J. W. Edmonds, who has kindly offered to make this a medium of his spiritual messages. As to my own articles, I may be allowed to say without undue pretension, that they will be written in the spiritual state—a condition in which the soul is withdrawn from external things and enters into the sphere of interior communion, while the hand is moved by an invisible power to write the truths which are thus perceived. In conclusion I have only to add my conviction, that wisdom and goodness reign over this earthly world—that the disrobed intelligences of Heaven will guide the bending lines of human life to a glorious end, and that the opening flower of divine love will shed its grateful fragrance through all the senses of the human spirit.

Yours in Liberty, Fraternity and Unity,

R. P. AMBLER.

☞ Our former patrons will be furnished as usual with the numbers of the Messenger, and the publisher will be responsible for their prompt issue.