

Drake



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DEVOTED TO SPIRITUAL SCIENCE, THE ELUCIDATION OF
TRUTH, AND THE PROGRESS OF MIND.

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EDITED BY R. P. AMBLER,

"The truth shall make you free."

Jesus.

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EMPLOYMENT OF SPIRITS.

BY R. P. AMBLER.

Wrong conceptions of the immortal nature of man, have induced the opinion among theologians, that the spirit on passing into the Second Sphere of human existence enters at once into a state of complete passivity. It has been imagined that the soul which outrides the storms of time, lies secure in the haven of eternal rest—that happiness is to be resolved into the undisturbed repose that is sought and desired by the physical being. This opinion, as I have intimated, is founded on a wrong conception of the immortal nature. To the mind that has been expanded by the light of spiritual wisdom, it will appear that the spirit is composed of those internal elements and forces which preclude the possibility of rest, in the sense in which this term has been commonly used in connection with this subject. If the soul, being immortal, can never die, so being the essence of life and motion, it can never become stagnant or motionless. Indeed the spirit must lose one of the prominent characteristics of its nature, before it can cease to act in obedience to the divine impulse that ever moves within it. Let it therefore be fully known and understood, that the spirit can never enter into any state of complete passivity; for though, on its entrance into the celestial home, the pure influence of harmonious thought and feeling is breathed through all its depths, yet in the stillness of the pervading atmosphere—in the deep tranquility of heavenly joy, there are still inward promptings, desires, and affections which well up continually from the springs of the inner being—powers which cause a constant and harmonious exercise of the spiritual faculties,—even as the still waters of the lake reposing beneath the calm serenity of heaven, are still moved through all its elements by an internal force. It is only the body which requires rest, and this is the case only because the exhaustion of the material elements has served to weaken the ties by which the spirit is united to its form. The soul needs no rest, since it is dependent on the interior germ of intelligence, and intelligence is the perfection of motion. Hence motion, philosophically speaking, constitutes an internal element of the spirit; and accordingly it is not

permitted, by the necessity of its own nature, to repose or slumber as the body reclines upon its couch. While the spiritual being is freed from all the disturbing influences by which it was surrounded while in its residence on earth; while it enjoys the sweet and tranquil happiness that pervades every department of the divine mansion, it feels the movings of that exalted power which descends to the very lowest sphere of being, stirring the deep thoughts and aspirations of the soul, exciting the emotions of purity that dwell within its breast, and impelling it onward to those higher stages of development and progress, which form the end of the inward prayer that ever rises as sweet incense from the spirit-shrine. Holy and righteous is the thought that the spirit is not only deathless in its nature, but that it is also destined to be ever active, progressing in the light, truth and wisdom of the Infinite, and rising through the spheres of endless life towards the glory of the perfected essence of which it is itself a divine reflection.

From the principles which have been here explained, it may be seen that the spiritual world is a sphere of the most perfect activity. The inhabitants all labor according to their several capacities and inherent attractions. No spirit could be happy without a suitable exercise of the inward powers, and consequently no spirit can be relieved of labor in a degree proportionate to the development of those powers. All action must increase in correspondence with the growth of the form or being in which this takes place; as for illustration there is found to be a greater amount of motion in the developed plant than in the budding germ. So the labor of spirits is constantly increasing instead of diminishing, as the internal faculties become expanded, strengthened, and matured; and there will be no time in the series of endless years, when the action of the spiritual world shall have become absorbed in a useless rest. Therefore it may be rationally presumed that spirits have employment as well as the beings on the earth; that they have something more to do than to praise God in empty sounds or kneel on the soft footstool of prayer, and that labor, which on earth has been misconceived and degraded, is by them exalted to its celestial dignity.

But I will hasten towards the center of the subject which I have been moved to undertake, by referring to the special employments in which the inhabitants of the Spirit-world engage, as these are presented to my receptive understanding. The truth will be readily appreciated, that the identity of the individual is not disturbed by his passage from the earth to the Second Sphere. All the faculties that were attached to the inner being—that gave quality and personality to the soul, continue to exist and to manifest themselves in the immortal nature. In other terms, the same combination of powers—the same embodiment of moral and spiritual being—the same prevailing tastes, tendencies and modes of thought, will be found to exist to a certain extent, under the modification of higher condi-

tions and influences, as well in the enfranchised spirit as in that still bound to the earthly body. Accordingly that inward tendency of mind which was demonstrated on earth to be the native attraction of the soul, will hold a prominent sway and become preeminently manifested in the spiritual world. Labor, therefore, among spirits is made the natural and delightful expression of certain interior powers, which have been nourished and developed in such a manner as to become distinctive qualities of the conscious being. Every spirit after attaining to his proper sphere has an appropriate employment, inasmuch as he possesses certain faculties which need exercise and unfolding ; and this employment will always correspond with the predominant qualities and attractions of the interior. It would not be true to say that the employment of the spirit on earth must in all cases be the same in heaven, since the soul in its residence in the body is frequently prevented by unfavorable conditions from pursuing the course of action to which it is inherently inclined. But it is right to affirm that the employment of the spirit will be of such a nature as is indicated by the internal affinities which form the characteristics of its being, and through which it is led to seek suitable and congenial associations with all surrounding things. If in its rudimental state the soul has been cramped and perverted by circumstances so as not to be able to follow the end towards which it is really attracted, the change of situation that occurs on its transition from the body, will soon give freedom to the faculties which have long struggled for their proper exercise, and will thus introduce the individual into his true sphere of action and labor. Hence the spirit labors as it *wills* and not as it *must* ; or, in other words, it seeks that employment which is most congenial with its nature, and is not governed by any merely outward necessity as caused by an arbitrary influence.

The employments of spirits, as well in their intrinsic nature as in the ends to which they are directed, are entirely superior to the employments of men. On earth it is made a custom to labor with the hands in order to provide the necessary means of sustenance for the body. The sound of the hammer goes out upon the air as the groan of a heart that is toiling to keep itself in motion. Man labors not because it is a delight to do so—not because it is a means of developing and expanding the powers of his being, nor yet because he may thus assist in benefiting others, but simply for the reason that it is necessary in order to maintain a physical existence. In the bosom of the spirit there is born a higher purpose. When released from the circumstances and influences of earth, it is moved by a nobler impulse and rises to a more exalted sphere of action, than that which it ever knew while restrained by the necessities of the body. Indeed the employment of spirits is simply the exercise of their most sublimated powers,—an exercise directed towards such ends as will cause an interior delight, and pro-

mote the happiness of kindred natures. In all cases the spirit leaves the material portion of the employment in which it was engaged on earth, while it may still continue to exercise the same faculties which that employment called into action. For instance the immortalized being will no longer build material structures for the accommodation of the body, but he may still rear temples of truth and wisdom, arranging the materials that are scattered around him in the Universe into a beautiful and sublime order; and so, likewise, he will not construct the intricate and massive wheels which he here employed to achieve physical wonders, but he may still investigate the principles involved in the operations of Nature, and study the machinery of moving worlds. In this way the employments of men are sublimated into the most exalted spiritual action; and so perfectly adapted is each department of labor to every corresponding circle and society of spirits, that there is created a complete and harmonious whole, whose parts are as the notes of an eternal anthem that rises to the Supreme Mind.

The mission of all spirits is two-fold in its nature, consisting in the development of their own powers, and in the elevation of those beneath them in the scale of progression. In this mission there is both an individual responsibility and a social obligation—the first serving to lead the spirit upward towards the Deity, and the second assisting others to advance in the same direction. If, then, it is asked in what manner the inhabitants of the spiritual world are employed, the proper answer would be, *in blessing and being blessed*; and if to the same inquiry a more definite reply is required, it may be said that spirits are engaged in exercising their inherent powers—that they are searching into the deep recesses of Nature—that they are learning and teaching the realities of Heaven—that they are aspiring to the higher stages of progress that ever rise on high—that they are seeking the revealments of wisdom from expanded angels, and are imparting from the treasures which they receive to those who dwell in the shadows of a lower sphere. It should not be presumed that because the spirit has no longer to labor for the body, it is therefore destitute of employment. The soul has powers that relate to higher ends than those pursued on earth; it has faculties which are ever unfolding and strengthening amid the flow of ages,—and then there is a universe, infinite and glorious, waiting to be explored—a world of life, and light, and beauty, opening through all the vast fields of Nature, in which are breathed the living thoughts of the Divine Soul. Surely, there is employment for all spirits in the performance of their legitimate work, which must fill the measure of their endless years; and in this employment shall be felt the delight and happiness unspeakable, which the Great Spirit has caused to flow from the exercise of those divine powers with which He has endowed his children as the reflected glory of his own being.

SONG OF TRIUMPH.

BY A SPIRIT OF THE SIXTH CIRCLE.

There is a pure and golden light,
There is an inward mental sight,
There is a spark all shining bright,
 Within the godlike soul.
And angels bend this light to see,
And come to earth this sight to free,
And bear the spark on high to be
 The gem of Nature's whole.

Long, long have gazed the watchful eyes,
Still beaming in their native skies,
That turned to earth at human cries
 To tearful sorrow given;
While lo! beneath their love-lit ray
The shadowing clouds have passed away,
And sweetly dawns the golden day
 That breathes of life and heaven.

Low voices breathing o'er the deep,
Where silent gloom and chaos sleep
And slimy forms of error creep,
 Bring morning back to earth;
And through the shadows now defied,
The echo, thrilling far and wide,
Brings to each soul that wept and sighed,
 A bright immortal birth.

Immortal hearts are beating strong;
Immortal arms shall crush the wrong;
Immortal tongues shall chant the song
 Of triumph in the sky;
Proud tyrants from their thrones shall fall—
Earth's slaves shall rise at Freedom's call,
And Error in her funeral pall
 Shall crown the victory:

Above there dwells a blessing power;
Above there blooms a heavenly flower;
Above there spreads a rosy bower
 Where angels love to rest.
That power to earth a glory lends—
That flower a holy fragrance sends,
And to that bower each soul ascends
 To be forever blest.

PHILOSOPHY OF INSPIRATION.

BY A MEDIUM.

The human soul is always inspired. This may seem a strange and startling assertion to those who have been accustomed to regard the gift of inspiration as conferred only on the special favorites of God, belonging exclusively to individuals whose names are recorded in the Primitive History. But it will not be rejected by those minds which are disposed to look beneath the veil of theological mystery, and study the operations of the Divine Mind. Every human soul is essentially related to God. Even the most undeveloped germ of spirit contains a spark of the divine light. There is no power that can destroy the likeness of God enstamped on the immortal being, and to entirely separate this being from Him in whose image it was created, would be to dissolve the most sacred and important relation of which the mind can conceive. Accordingly, the original Source from which all things proceed and from which also the human spirit was ultimately born, must maintain forever a necessary connection with the offspring that issue from its exhaustless depths. Therefore, since a relation exists between the finite and the Infinite by virtue of an inward likeness, there is naturally formed a medium of communication between the one and the other, in the innumerable avenues of life and thought that extend through the domain of being. By means of this communication—established as naturally as that maintained between the earth and the sun—every individualized soul must be influenced, to a greater or less extent according to the degree of unfolding, by the movements of the Parent-Mind.

What is here stated may be recognized as a philosophical truth. The Universe being one connected system of things under the government of the Supreme Being, and man constituting the crowning and perfected work of this system, it follows that every whisper of the Divinity from the expanse of his immeasurable abode, must have an echo in the bosom of his spirit-children. We cannot realize how far and wide the inspirations of God may flow. The revolving worlds are radiant with the life that issues from the Divine Heart, and every trembling leaf is thrilled with an inspiring breath. Shall not, more than these, the delicate fibers of the soul be stirred?—shall not man in his superior relations to the Deity be actuated, even insensibly, by the influence of heaven-born thought? The spirit in its darkened and degraded state may know nothing of God; it may not be sufficiently expanded to view the tokens of his presence or read the lessons of his love; and yet, while thus groping in the shadow of materialism and shrinking from the light of

heaven, it is moved, strengthened and unfolded by the divine breathings that descend silently to its heart,—as the drooping flower is revived and freshened by the movings of the dewy air. Thus is it true that every soul is inspired, however remote it may be, in the degree of its expansion, from the sphere of creative Light.

Inspiration may be regarded as a prominent means of the soul's development. It is the influx of love, truth and wisdom from the celestial fountain that awakens the latent energies of man, excites to action the higher faculties of his nature, and exalts him into the light and life of the heavenly sphere. There is, it is true, a principle of expansion in the soul itself—there is an inward attraction that leads it constantly towards the Magnet of the Universe, unfolding it into the beauty of angelic being, and causing it to aspire to the perfection which it inwardly adores. But this principle would not be sufficient in itself to secure the proper measure of the soul's progress. Accordingly this is assisted in its action by the inspiration of the spiritual world. And this is the living answer of prayer. The aspirations of the spirit go up to the beings that throng the realm of the Invisible, and then in return flow down the inspirations of angels as a stream of immortal life. Thus there is a constant outflow and influx of thought,—a sweet and holy incense rising from the altar of the soul, and a silent stream of truth and wisdom descending from the skies. On this principle it appears that inspiration is but the natural antipode of aspiration; that the former is dependent on a law as fixed and definite as that by which the latter is produced,—even as the vapors rise from the surface of the water to descend again in refreshing showers. It is, therefore, unjust that the operation of a natural principle so intimately connected with the development of man, should be regarded as a supernatural gift with which but comparatively few of the human race have been ever favored. Inspiration is like the dew that falls insensibly from heaven as a return for the fragrance sent forth from earth. The spirit that is moved by some great thought—that is stirred with emotions of earnest hope and faith, and labors for the development and application of important truths, may not feel or know that angels are breathing in its bosom and that the inspiration which it feels is but the answer of its silent prayer; for still and peaceful is the power that moves the inner deep, while it flows from a source that is far away in the heights of heaven.

Yet it should be understood that all souls are not inspired alike. The measure of inspiration will be proportioned to the degree of interior unfolding. If the spirit is yet in its infancy, having only just entered on the course of progress and reflecting but feebly the brightness of the heavenly world, it will be capable of receiving but a comparatively small measure of spiritual influx. But as the light of the celestial realm expands the in-

ward powers—as the beauty and energy of the soul are developed and made manifest, and the whole being, as a flower, is opened to receive the atmosphere of heaven, the stream of inspiration grows deeper and stronger in its flow, and a nearer and more sensible communion is enjoyed with angels. This principle will explain the reason that certain individuals in different ages have appeared to be endowed with special and peculiar gifts, which have invested their teachings with a supernatural authority. Being interiorly unfolded in a greater degree than others in the same age, they have had a natural capacity for being preeminently inspired; while this inspiration, being regarded as a divine endowment, has caused them to be consulted as infallible oracles. It has been thus with the authors of the *Primitive History*. These individuals manifested an eminent degree of inspiration, simply because their interior powers were comparatively developed; but superstitious minds, instead of examining the principles on which the ancient prophets received their influx, were satisfied to yield a credulous assent to their external claims,—and thus was reared the gloomy structure of theological error. When the true philosophy of inspiration becomes generally understood, the world will be relieved of important barriers to its progress. The mind should not shrink from an investigation of this subject through the fear of treading upon sacred ground. No truths can be of greater primary importance than those which relate to the nature of man and his relations to a higher sphere. That which has been long shrouded in mystery may be revealed to the vision of the soul, and beneath the veil which Superstition has wrought may be discovered the most beautiful realities. It will be found that every soul may be inspired, and indeed that all souls are so in exact proportion to their growth and expansion; and, realizing this truth, man will lean no more on the authority of the past—he will worship no more with blinded eyes the oracles of a sect, but he will seek to strengthen and develop the energies of the immortal spirit, by which he may receive the life-giving breathings of Nature, Angels, and God.

The wisdom that would now speak to the world is that which relinquishes all superficial authority to repose confidence in the divine and unerring teachings of Nature. The expanded spirit will seek to leave the forms that fade and die. It will ascend far above the things that bloom and pass away, and will be attracted to the beautiful and ever-living principles which have their dwelling-place in the heart of the Universe. Infinite and glorious beyond conception are the realities which exist in Nature; and these are not contained in the musty parchments of the past—they are not embraced within the lids of any earthly history—they are not even confined within the limits of those pages which men have long gazed upon with blinded reverence, but they gleam forth in those higher unwritten revelations that

issue from the heart of Deity. Therefore look up from the dissolving parchments of former eras, and learn the brighter truths of Nature and God; for thus shall the soul be attracted towards the Center of all power and love, which was, and is, and shall be the supreme reality.

FACTS AND PRINCIPLES.

BY THE EDITOR.

Different opinions, in accordance with the several stages of spiritual progress, have been entertained with respect to the comparative importance of facts and principles. Those individuals whose appreciation of spiritual life and truth is dependent entirely on external phenomena, feel and advocate the necessity of facts as the basis of a rational faith; while to others who have attained to a higher stage of progress—who have so far unfolded and quickened the inner consciousness as to feel the witness in themselves, the divine principles which constitute the light of the soul are invested with a superior authority. The truth seems to be that both facts and principles are necessary to complete the system of spiritual truth; that both perform their appropriate office, and are adapted to minds in different stages of interior development.

The writer would not undervalue in this article the importance of facts. While the veil of materialism rested on the minds of men and sense was made the standard by which Reason uttered her decisions, it was highly essential that the world should have evidence of an external nature to prove the realities of spiritual existence. Facts connected with this subject were precisely what men demanded and required. Indeed nothing less than something that could be seen, felt or heard, would have been sufficient to satisfy the skeptical mind. But while the importance of external evidence is thus freely conceded, this should not, in the view of the writer, be regarded as the ultimate for which the soul should seek. Facts are simply the stepping-stones that lead to more interior truth. They are not in themselves the real reality; they are not the essence of the thing which they illustrate, but they are useful only as they teach some important lesson and give expression to an internal principle. All phenomena are the outbirth and illustration of certain established laws, which laws are the internal force by which the former are produced. There is no fact within the sphere of the senses, which does not owe its existence to the unseen energy that lives and moves beneath the veil of matter. Those effects which are apparent to the sensuous perceptions, are simply the ulterior results that proceed from the action of interior causes. Hence if we would approach the divine reality of Nature—if we would worship at the inward shrine of the tem-

ple, instead of lingering in its outer courts, it is necessary that the mind should enter *within* the sphere of external facts, and commune with the living soul from which these have derived their birth.

Well do I understand the insufficiency of mere theories, if by theories are meant the fanciful speculations which have burdened and darkened the world for ages. But it should be known that there is something more than what is here comprehended, in the arrangement and classification of eternal principles; for these principles are not mere passing dreams of the mind—they are not the frail and perishing fabrics of imagination, but they are the immutable and ever-living expressions of the Divine Mind. Higher than all theories—deeper than all human fancy, and more vast than all external forms, are the silent thoughts of God that live in all his works. These are the deathless soul of matter—the primary agents that give significance and power to all outward effects. We may gaze forever on the beauty of creation—we may bask in the sparkling glories of the Universe, and yet we can never commune with the divine and immutable reality, until we learn the laws by which that beauty is produced, and approach the fountain from which those glories flow. The stars have shone since the morning of Creation's birth, and for ages they were viewed externally as ornaments on the brow of Night, or as lamps designed to cheer the darkness; but it was not until the true nature of these orbs was investigated and until the principles by which they are governed became comprehended, that they were seen in all their vast reality, as mighty worlds rolling through the fathomless depths of space. So it is with all things else. The pervading law which operates within them—the elements which make their quality and use, and the interior truths which they reveal to the reason, constitute a far higher standard of authority than all the visible effects which they may outwardly manifest.

To say that the soul has no capacity to investigate or comprehend the principles of Nature, simply because they are not appreciable to the senses, is to deny the existence of those most godlike powers which render man, in a peculiar sense, the child of God. It is only necessary to develop the faculties that are in man—to cultivate the senses of the soul as well as those of the body, to enable him to search into interior causes with the same ease and accuracy with which he now examines external effects. I will write, then, what I feel to be an important truth, that the great realities of Nature, which have been long concealed from superficial and materialistic minds, are capable of being known and understood; for why should not man, possessing as he does a two-fold nature, enjoy also the two-fold world of physical and spiritual being? The fact to be lamented is, that man has not been made conscious of the powers that exist within him, or the existence of an inward world; and from this very fact the hard crust of mate-

rialism has been formed to shut out the light that seeks a passage to the soul. In my view, the great mission of the spiritual philosophy is to quicken the perceptions of the mind—to open to its view an unexplored field of truth, and elevate it from the change and falsity of external things to the bloom and brightness of eternal realities. And when this mission shall be fully accomplished, men will make use of external phenomena as the child in its weakness clings to outward objects—not as a final resting-place, but as a means of attaining to that inward growth and strength which are the sources of enduring happiness; and then shall the living truths which God in all his works is whispering to man, be tested by the reason, grasped by the inner consciousness, and received into the chambers of the understanding. Therefore will it yet be felt and known, when the world is blessed with a more expanded perception, that, while outward phenomena are but the changeful representatives of higher truth, *principles are the only fixed facts in nature.*

THE TEMPLE OF TRUTH.

The foundation of a majestic temple is being laid in the earth. A mighty voice has spoken, and in obedience to the divine behest the appointed labor is begun. Sublime and expansive truths disclosed to the freed spirit, are revealed as the basis of an illimitable structure. The unseen toilers are at work. They are preparing the way for the accomplishment of a great design. They are gathering and arranging the elements of which the temple of truth is to be constructed, and on the deep foundation of eternal principles, the beautiful structure is rising to the sky. Men have sought to rear this temple by employing earthly implements, by building on false foundations, and making use of perishable materials. They have sought to operate on the mind through the agency of fear; they have erected towering theories on the basis of fallible writings, and they have piled up huge masses of uncongenial doctrines on the narrow platform of sectarian theology. Therefore have men labored unwisely in the greatest of all works; and the succession of unsuccessful efforts which they have made to build up the truth, may serve as an indication of the fact that the means employed are inadequate to the end proposed. In the work of establishing the divine reality, it is wise for men to act as followers instead of leaders—as workmen instead of directors,—listening to the still voice of wisdom that issues from a higher sphere. Lo! the toilers of heaven invite the workmen of earth to labor with them. Let the invitation be welcomed and obeyed—let the instructions furnished in wisdom be received, and then will the brightest hopes of the philanthropist, the divinest dreams of the prophet, and the highest inspirations of the bard, be all concentrated and

interwoven in one great reality—introduced into the sublime temple of immortal truth, where both mortals and angels shall worship forever.

POWER OF MIND.

We have received the following extract from a friend, taken as he states from a magazine entitled "The Magnet," into which it was introduced from another work. It presents an interesting illustration of the power of mind over the magnetic fluids of the body, and the efficacy of a positive and well-directed will in the removal of disease. From facts of this nature we learn that the spiritual principle in man is superior to, and exercises a natural supremacy over, the material elements of the system, and that by a proper use of this controlling power, the equilibrium on which a state of health is dependent, may be often obtained without the aid of medicinal agents.—Ed.

A mandarin of high rank had a dearly beloved wife, whom he saw wasting away from day to day, and rapidly hastening towards a dissolution, without complaining whatever of any pain or sickness. He wished to submit her to an examination of a physician, but she opposed him, saying that, in entering his house, she had taken a firm resolve, never to allow herself to be seen by any other man, and that she did not want any,—she would sooner die. The mandarin begged, pressed, and solicited very much—all was useless. He consulted the physicians, who told him that they could give him no advice, unless they had, at least, some indications of the disease which affected the person for whom they were consulted.

An old man of letters presented himself, and assured him that he would cure her without seeing her—without even entering into the apartment where she was; provided, however, that she would be willing to hold in one hand one of the ends of a long tube of bamboo, while he held the other end. The mandarin regarded this as a curious expedient; and without any faith in the promised cure, he proposed it, nevertheless, to his wife rather as something which would amuse than as a remedy.

The patient entered into it with a good feeling—the old man came with his tube, of which he held one end while the lady held the other, and applied it to that part of her body where she suspected her disease to lie, removing it from one place to another until she experienced painful sensations. She obeyed the directions, and when she had carried the end of the tube towards the region of the liver, the pains manifested themselves and made her cry out loudly. "Do not remove it," said the old man, "you will infallibly be cured." After she had continued in this state of pain for the space of more than fifteen minutes, he withdrew and promised to return the next

day at the same hour ; and so he continued each day until a perfect cure was effected, which was produced on the sixth day.

The mandarin, full of acknowledgements, recompensed him liberally, but exacted from him a promise that he would frankly state if his method were not a *sie-fa*, that is to say, a superstitious art, or, as we term it, witchcraft. "My art," answered the old man, "is in the most common laws of Nature, and it is for this very reason that it is always efficacious. It consists only in the knowledge that I have of *yu*, and of *yang*, which are in my body ; likewise in my skill in directing the one or the other, as may be proper, toward any one in whom the *yu* and the *yang* are not in equilibrium in order to re-establish them" etc.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

DEAR EDITOR :—I have, for the past year, been watching the signs of the times with the most intense interest. It has fallen in my way, without any special aim on my own part, to witness some most pure and satisfactory specimens of the phenomena of the present age. I have not sought this privilege ; it has come to me in the discharge of regular duty. I will not say that I am convinced beyond a possible doubt, that these phenomena are, as they purport, produced through the agency of disembodied spirits, but I will say that they have made an impression on my mind in this direction which is deep and abiding, which I cannot do away with at my bidding, and which the withholding of my bread by a tyrannous public sentiment, cannot deter me from avowing openly and plainly.

Thank God ! I have never shrunk from the duty of investigating these phenomena, whenever they have come in my path ; and I have done so with that christian sacrifice which leaves even wife and children, and brings the scorpion sting of private complaint and public ridicule. And I feel myself honored in thus suffering for my willingness to discharge what seems to me the plain duty of one in my profession, in a matter so obviously falling under the jurisdiction of the ministers of that kingdom which "not of this world." It has been my lot, I said, to witness satisfactory specimens of the phenomena of the day, by which I mean that I have scientifically tested their reality. I have heard the rappings of invisible agents, loud—intelligible—astounding. I have seen articles of furniture rise, move and pass across the room without the aid of mortal hands. I have myself read mentally from a card, seen by no mortal eye but mine, and thus silently called off the alphabet, when, letter by letter, a communication has been given of the length of a common letter of friendship,—letters forming words, words sentences, and sentences rhetorical and logical composition, without a single mistake in the whole experiment. And who

should purport to do this but the spirit of a loved father? And if it was false—if he did not do it, then was there committed a falsehood stupendous—unnecessary—inexcusable; then is there somewhere in the domain of Nature a subtle and intelligent principle or spirit of the blackest and most gratuitous falsehood; then is my faith shaken in every thing that I see, feel, hear, touch or taste—in every sense—in every phenomena—in every experiment.

Still I have held my peace on the subject beyond the circle of my own friends, and recently I have refrained from relating my experiments even to them, as being more than they are able to bear, and subjecting me to a suspicion of insanity. And now I have waited a year since these experiments commenced, having withheld my testimony from the public, though I would have gladly uttered my convictions, to see how I should feel after the "*excitement*" had passed off, and I had returned to my "*right mind*." But my convictions remain undiminished, nay, they grow deeper and stronger as I reflect, compare, and reason—as I try them by the analogies of Nature, by the real necessities of the race, and by my own interior consciousness—the only sure source of evidence and the only authority from which there is no appeal—the *still, small voice of God in the consciousness*. And now I feel impressed to utter my experience, convictions, and reflections on the signs of the times, among which your own periodical professing to be under the guidance of spirits, is certainly not the least. In looking around me for a public organ through which to communicate what I think and know, and how I feel and reason on the subject of spiritual intercourse, I have been moved to ask the privilege of your columns; and I have done this because your periodical seems to be devoted to the subject, and because I suppose you intend to make it an organ of what is true and reliable in the new order.

I hold myself alone responsible for the interpretations which I make of, and the use which I put to, the intuitions, impressions and discipline imparted to me by God, the Great Spirit, through many lesser spirits, embodied and disembodied, and through his own vast organism the Universe—in the midst of which I live, and by which He speaks to the soul through the medium of the senses. If I am to others the medium of only relative and imperfect truth, it is because I am an imperfect and fallible creature, and because relative and imperfect truth is the best adapted to them in their present circumstances. I am content to be a medium of thought. Whence come the supplies, or in what manner they are communicated, I know not farther than I can conceive of the inspirations of God and Nature. All that can be said is, I see, hear, read, meditate, and find my mind teeming with emotion and thought; I sit down and make marks on paper; the compositor, with difficulty perhaps, renders these marks into type, and that type

makes other marks by which these thoughts are communicated to your mind. And can you say that I, and you, and the printer are the *only* agencies in this wonderful process? Truly, there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in earthly philosophy. A little searching and patient thought would show even the commonest things in a more spiritual point of view, while it would suggest the idea that the new developments, so far from being unnatural or out of keeping with other things, are such as the careful observer would expect as the most natural subject of human experience and consciousness.

Yours truly,

SERVUS.

SPIRITUAL EDUCATION.

All past history has demonstrated the fact, that the human race has been instructed wrongly with respect to those subjects which especially need to be understood. Man has been recognized chiefly as a physical being. The expansive powers of his spiritual nature have not been properly comprehended. Hence the education which he has received has been exceedingly defective, consisting mostly in the accumulation of external facts and the arrangement of crude ideas on the basis of a superficial authority. Systems of instruction have been established, relating to scientific disclosures and theological doctrines, but these systems are marked with the ignorance and error that existed in the undeveloped minds from which they proceeded. There has been but little power in the systems of popular education to expand and develop the spiritual being; but in these has been generated a repulsive and depressing force, which has tended to rivet the chains imposed by ancient superstition.

But the world is now rapidly advancing to a stage of progress, where it can comprehend and appreciate the truths that pertain to the interior life. Man is beginning to understand that he has a spiritual as well as a material nature—that he is endowed with internal as well as external senses, and that the great realm of being is not confined to the visible forms whose beauty and vastness he admires. Therefore a more complete and rational system of educational training is being rapidly introduced. Imperceptibly to the minds of the mass, a change, silent but powerful, is passing over the sentiments and feelings of the world. The intellectual rubbish which has served as a barrier to human progress, is being removed by the efforts of the struggling soul to enter into the sphere of immortal truth. A time draws near when man will feel the need of something higher than mere external and superficial forms of thought—when the accumulation of passing facts and phenomena will be regarded of less importance than the comprehension of divine principles: when, in short, the discipline of the spirit—the

education of the soul—will be recognized as the basis of all true reform and the means by which the great ends of human life are to be attained. O there is a beauty in the unfolding soul which has no appeal to the physical sense; there is a grandeur in the aspiration that goes up from the human breast, which even angels rejoice to witness; there is a wonder in the developments of inward thought—a miracle in the achievements of spiritual power, which, as the ages roll away, are bursting on the advancing world.

R. P. A.

WISDOM OF SPIRITS.

It is doubtless difficult at times to comprehend or appreciate the wisdom by which the celestial guardians of the world are moved. Situated as they are on a higher plane of being—having a more clear perception of the principles which govern the Universe, and knowing far better than we do the elements of human happiness, they may pursue a course of action which to the superficial view appears obviously unwise, while at the same time it may be dictated by a higher intelligence than the earthly mind could possibly conceive. It should be deeply realized that there is a diviner wisdom than that which moves along with the current of the earthly desires. Man, while under the control of his lower faculties, does not know what constitutes his own good; and it is both a wise and benevolent power which will prevent the gratification of those desires whose fulfillment would only lead to spiritual weakness and degradation. In this respect there is an important difference between the wisdom of heaven and the wisdom of earth. The first would secure the real and enduring happiness of the individual at the expense of temporary crosses and trials; the latter would labor only for the enjoyment of those fleeting pleasures which end in dissatisfaction and sorrow. It is evident that the highest wisdom will secure the development of the highest powers of man; and if in attaining this end it is necessary to oppose the lower and more material tendencies of the mind, this wisdom is not therefore made folly. In accomplishing the work of human redemption, the wisdom of spirits has a sublimer end in view than that towards which the earthly desires are directed. We should not suppose, therefore, that these invisible powers will, in all cases, come down to our own standard of thought and action; for in what way could man be ever elevated and saved, were there not some influence to counteract the tendencies of his lower affections? Hence, instead of blindly rejecting that which we do not understand, it is well to be as little children in learning, with meekness of spirit, the wisdom that labors for the good of man.

R. P. A.

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

THIS Journal which, from its commencement, has lived beneath the protecting care of angelic ministers, continues to be sustained in its beneficent work, and will still go forth upon its mission to breathe peace on earth and good will to men. It will be devoted, as heretofore, to an investigation of the laws of Nature, the relations of Spirit and Matter, the principles of Social Reform, and the beautiful realities connected with Spiritual Intercourse and the Destiny of Man.

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