

SPIRIT MESSENGER

AND

HARMONIAL ADVOCATE.

Behold! Angels are the brothers of humanity, whose mission is to bring peace on earth.

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Revelations of Nature.

MARRYING OF THE NEW AND OLD DISPENSATIONS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SPIRIT MESSENGER,

BY V. C. TAYLOR.

"*First know thyself.*" I have sometimes thought, in view of the ignorance which man is in of his own powers, and his inability to analyze the nature and trace the cause of his opinions—his liability to mistake prejudice for reason—habit of thought for intuition, that this aphorism were the highest embodiment of finite wisdom. For, if an individual is honest, but deficient in perception, he will persist in the maintenance of an error against the plainest dictates of reason and the most indubitable evidence, simply because his confidence of opinion has never suffered distrust, by the supposition of the possible existence of truth *above* the plain of his present apprehension. Such persons know that the world has constantly been making advancement and discovery up to *their* time, but they take no hint by this precedent that there is anything to be known beyond the sphere of their own knowledge.

The reasons of this state of things we imagine are these: pride of opinion, and inability to scan the realm of the ideal. The first is averse to investigation, because its results reveal the poverty of the individual's acquirements; for, by some inexplicable species of philosophy, such have adopted the conclusion that it is ignominious and weak to *search* for truth, because of the possibility of taking steps in its discovery which subsequent disclosures may require to be retraced; but on the other hand, they impliedly maintain that it is commendable to stand still until others have made discoveries, and then dignifiedly loose from their moorings and advance to its reception when even a school-boy knows its certainty. The second reason is the result of mental impotency, rather than a crime chargeable to voluntary sufference, and hence can not be deemed as censurable. Yet it is unquestionable that the powers of apprehension are mostly habitated and circumscribed by the restraints imposed upon them by the fear of venturing upon premises which may from additional evidence require subsequent relinquishment. With persons in whom the religious sentiment is active, adherence to certain tenets of theology of a doubtful nature, is rather owing to the contracted views they cherish of the extent and amplitude of truth, than a disposition not to yield a point for fear of showing that they have been in error. And the only way to remedy this condition, is, first to set reason at work to as-

certain the fallibility to which the opinion of the majority is subject—as credence, in all mere outward authorities is one of the most prolific sources of error—and secondly, to analyze thoroughly one's own belief by the standard of nature, as the only safe criterion for arriving at the truth. But in attempting to survey the field of nature, the greatest danger is, that the individual will bring nature to conform to his own standard, instead of relinquishing all prepossessions and yielding passively to what nature itself reveals. There is no condition of the human mind so destructive to all rational inquiry as that which is known by the vague and shadowy term, *faith*; a thing which never *did* nor *can* have an existence except in *name*. Or perhaps it might be better expressed by saying, a thing which has reference only to an *uncertainty*. For the moment that a thing becomes evident, faith ceases; and what I mean by saying that it can exist only in name, is, that it can not exist at all, except as the result of evidence. It would therefore be well for people to know, that what they denominate faith, is in fact a belief which rests on *partial* evidence; and that in the absence of such evidence, if they exercise a "faith," it is wholly evanescent and rests on the airy basis of nothing.

The intent of these observations thus far, is to show why an individual rests in error, and how he can find means to advance out of it. And certain it is that a person is never so likely to relinquish a position—if he is honest—as when he comes to suspect its infallibility by a perception of something more rational and consistent above it.

In pursuing my remarks, I shall not undertake so much to determine what truth is, as I shall endeavor to disencumber the mind of those obstacles which prevent it from going in search of it.

Having now shown the causes by which an individual is detained in error, we must next introduce another feature of our subject, and prove that the new philosophy has, and must necessarily have, advocates, who, from the causes before related, will blindly though honestly incorporate with it the opinions and errors of the old theology. We will proceed to specify some of the more prominent of these errors, and will endeavor also to "show cause" *why* they are errors and not truths. But let it be understood, that while we controvert errors, our issue is with the errors themselves, and not with those who honestly hold them.

In choosing our subject, it will be seen in the facts which will sustain it, that there are some of the ostensible defenders of Spiritualism, who, like the "angel which will stand with one foot on sea and the other on land," occupy a medium position between the new and the old dispensations, and by the aid of the former, seem to enjoy a wonderful facility in detecting many *supposed* truths in the latter, which, like the

satellites of Jupiter until seen through the telescope of Galileo, were not discovered until discried through the lens of the spiritual philosophy. Many features in the old theology which were too faulty once to be tolerated, seem to become strangely harmonious and consistent when tested by this new scheme, which, *per se*, is regarded in many respects by them as of doubtful verity. With such, the "Fall" assumes the air of a probability, because, perhaps, its negation can not be rendered clearly and positively demonstrable; or because it can not be affirmed that such a thing was absolutely impossible. And upon this data the "Atonement" becomes an essential sequence, because the "Fall" set matters back too far to be remediable without the intervention of some recuperative means which should place man in a condition where it were possible for him to attain the same state, where—there is no reason he should not have been kept, in the first place.

I would not distinctly imply that any of the semi-converts to the spiritual faith go so far as actually to join hands with these fundamentals of a Puritan platform; but they are in a state of infelicitous suspense, as to whether it would be safe to cut loose from them or not. Most certainly have they a right to think as they may, but what we complain of, is, that "poor" spiritualism has to father all their incongruities. It is dressing it in a garb more variegated than was Joseph's coat, and which renders it more indistinguishable than the attendants of a masquerade. The conservativeness of such persons is like the cautious aeronaut who made his aerial flights with a rope attached to his balloon, so that he could be prevented from getting too far from his starting point.

It may consistently be said, we grant, that a degree of circumspection is a virtue in pursuing any investigation, but it must also be remembered, that error which is negatively induced, is not less hurtful than when the result of misapprehended truth. And if we respect truth more than opinions which stand as its representative, we should be impartial in endeavoring to remove that which may interpose any obstacle against its reception. That an eclectic course with regard to the new and old systems may be reasonably pursued, is indeed rational enough; for the new philosophy does not claim to be in possession of *all* truth; neither does it suppose the old theology altogether destitute of it.

But our issue is with those absurd and extravagant dogmas of the old faith, which some who style themselves Spiritualists seem inclined to transplant from the soil of theology to that of the new philosophy.

Take the doctrine of the Atonement, as one of the pillars in the theological structure, and one which, in some incomprehensible sense, some of the believers of spiritualism think was a rational and essential scheme. If (as is alleged) man was originally holy, why let him "fall" from a state, which for him to regain, the Creator himself must be sacrificed? Was it to show man that his free agency was rather a curse than a blessing, in its being subjected to temptations which his moral nature could not withstand? Again, if man was perfect at first, could his restoration from the effects of the fall render him afterward any more so? If not, what was gained by it? If it did render him more perfect than he was before he fell, it would become a question of no little moment—if one fall from a state of perfect holiness would render man more than perfect when restored to it again, why not a second and a third keep on improving him in the same ratio? It is supposed by believers in this extraordinary assumption, that,

had man "kept his first estate," the whole race would have been like him, perfectly holy. But is it claimed that the atonement saves the universal family from the effects of the fall? None but the Universalists profess to believe it! Then it must follow that God suffered a thing, which even the sacrifice of himself could only in part restore! But, is it said—man was free to act as he chooses, and thus doing, God could not have prevented the fall. Certainly he must have foreknown it; else where was his foreknowledge? And if he foreknew it and yet could not have prevented it, where then was his omnipotence? And if he foreknew it and had the power to prevent it, and still lacked the disposition to do it, where was his infinite love? Is it said that it was necessary, to show man his dependence on his Creator! If such were the case, then man's original state was *not* perfect; for he lacked a knowledge of his own moral weakness. Now what should we think of a Railroad company which should construct a road absolutely perfect, so that travel upon it could not be attended with any accident, but to show to the world their "power and mercy," should then suffer it to be totally destroyed, and then should incur the loss of their entire personal and joint effects in getting it rebuilt, and when done, it was so rickety as to occasion the loss of two-thirds of the lives of all the passengers who might ever travel upon it! To say however that two-thirds of the human race are included in the "elect," is altogether too liberal a per centage for the "true blue" orthodox statistics, for we believe that only about one-tenth are considered "sheep," while the remainder are "goats." What splendid facilities there must be, though, at that place on the "left," for Odd-Fellows and Freemasons to initiate new members to their fraternities, especially if all the other equipments are as abundant as the "goats" will be!

I trust that this utilization view of the subject will not disturb the feelings of any one, for if there is any such thing as impiety belonging to it, it can only be in making God the author of such monstrosities and absurdities as "elective" and other kindred doctrines imply. For, if man attributes to his Creator the authorship of systems so base and abhorrent that he himself (man) would fear and be ashamed to enact those as bad, it is proof that God *could not* be the institutor of any, bearing the remotest resemblance to them.

But some of the joint friends of Spiritualism and Theology assert, in substance, that God is constantly and specially employing means exterior to the progressive tendencies immanent in the human soul, to withhold it from its "natural love of evil," and to advance it in purity. But in answer to this let us inquire—if special intervention is necessary for the progression of the human spirit, then, as it will be conceded that this is superior to all subordinate entities, what means are employed to refine and advance physical NATURE? For there can be no greater solecism than to say, that matter is inferior to spirit, and yet that matter is innately progressive and that spirit is not! But again, if it is claimed that God does institute means directly to restrain man from sin and incline him to holiness, why are they not potent enough fully to accomplish the desired end? Does he lack the power or disposition to act thus effectually, or does he, according to the calumnious expression, "wink" at sin because its existence is not especially offensive to him? Here then is a dilemma that there is no escape from. Sin and evil do exist in the world; now if God does administer providential dispositions to

counteract and destroy their effects, the fact that such end is not accomplished, proves that these means are ineffectual; but as we know that God is not *impotent* in his resources for the accomplishment of whatever he undertakes, unimpeachable evidence is furnished us that he does not, in any sense, act providentially and directly in restraining sin or in causing men to progress in moral refinement. Again, if God is special in directing or controlling his moral government, then his laws, which we know to exist and operate, are superfluous; because it can not be said of nature's laws, as of those of human enactment, that they require constables and sheriffs to stand back of them; they are self-operative, and hence need no auxiliary agency to enforce their action. Neither let it be said, in vindication of such supposed providence, that their failing to remove all sin at once from the earth does not argue the negation of their reality; for such a sophism is answered directly by the axiom—that, if it is desirable that evil should ever be eradicated, it is important that it be done at once; for the *present* is as worthy of such immunity from the effects of inharmony and sin as any other portion of eternity, past or to come.

The conclusion is irresistible, that if God incorporated in his creation any element, tendency or principle so intrinsically pernicious as to require a subsequent inspection over it to prevent its deleterious consequences, that his works are *not perfect*. And it is equally evident, that if any untoward principles now exist which the Creator is constantly endeavoring to restrain or annul, on the principle of the old maxim that "prevention is better than cure," it would have been the course of Infinite Wisdom, *not to have created such principles in the first place*.

But I may be asked, do you not believe evil exists? and if so, how, except it was, like its correlative, good, *created*, as a principle? Certainly, I admit its existence; but I will answer the question by asking another. Are we to suppose that darkness was a primordial part of creation, as a *created substance*? or are we to believe that it was a nihility—an unoccupied condition of space; awaiting the introduction of a positive entity—light! Or, I will reply to the question by asking, whether we are to suppose that a piano or organ builder, intended the discord which the untuned state of his instruments at first produces, as a component and essential *part* of the use which those instruments are designed to fulfill! It is a great error to suppose that "all things are possible with God." Nothing is possible with him which conflicts with the established order of his government, or which causes the simultaneous existence within given limits of two opposite principles. God can not make a thing exist, and at the same time not exist: but until a thing is created, the *absence* of it is a necessary consequence; or after it is created, the removal of it equally implies its absence from the place which it previously occupied. And thus it is with sin and evil; they are the absence of conformity to natural law. But, although God is not the author of evil, yet, through the established order of his laws, he provides means to remedy its effects. The same as with man: he is not the cause of the chilling winter blast, nor the sweltering heat of a meridian summer's sun; yet he provides raiment and shelter to counteract their too rigid effects.

One of the great duties of Spiritualism will be, to disabuse the mind of the belittling and pernicious effects of believing God to be the capricious intermeddler, of governing and di-

recting common events and human affairs by special interposition, brought about by entreaty, invocation and prayer by human offering. Such a supposition implies the impotency of the laws of nature, as well as the lack of power or disposition to govern the world efficiently by providential dispensation. Any amalgamation therefore of the dogmatic assumptions of the old Theology not founded in nature, with the tenets of the New Philosophy, will prove the bane of its success, as well also as of its continued and distinctive existence.

CORTLAND, N. Y., February 12, 1853.

CHEMISTRY OF VEGETABLE GROWTH.

As we look around us, we see two different classes of objects; one retaining their form and structure unchanged from year to year, the other continually assuming new forms, undergoing processes of accretion, decay and dissolution. Those having the characteristics of stability and permanence pertain mostly to the mineral kingdom, the unorganized dead matter composing the rocks, stones and soils. Those upon which changes are continually passing are organic bodies, the living and dying tenants of the animal and vegetable worlds. So, if we examine the constituents of a mineral, granite for instance, they are ever the same. If we burn it, it is not consumed. A drop of water, taken from any body of that liquid, is essentially a specimen of all the water on the globe. And of air the constituents are unchangeable. But the combinations of vegetables are ever altering. They are subject to change and are undergoing it constantly from the action of air, fire and water. The elements of these unchanging objects are united in pairs, in binary atoms, and held firmly together by a strong affinity; but the organic objects are more complex compounds, combining three or more elements, and hence, seem less firmly bound together.

Now it is the grand office of vegetation, the chief operation in the vegetable world, to take these dead substances of inorganic matter and put them into forms of life. How is this done? The first process is that of germination. All seeds are composed of two parts. One, the smaller part, is the embryo, the infant plant; but the other, the larger portion, is what is called the albumen, a nutritious substance, designed to sustain the germ in the very first stages of growth. This embryo plant, when examined with a microscope, is perceived to be in a good measure perfect as to form, one part developed as a root, and the opposite divided by a line to denote the parting leaves. The conditions of germination are: 1st, proper temperature; 2d, moisture. Water is employed to carry the aliment contained in the seed to the germinating part. For here as elsewhere life is not sustained without nutrition. But now there is a difficulty, in that water will not dissolve the pulp of the seed, so that it may transfer it to accomplish its appropriate end. Hence, 3d, another condition is air, the oxygen of which so acts on the gluten of the seed as to produce fermentation, and change this nutritious part into sugar, which water can dissolve and thus administer food to the plantlet. In this curious manner is the germ sustained in its first stages, on organized matter previously prepared for it. But this provision is soon exhausted, and the plant must depend on a different process for support. This is by means of cells. These are little sacks or bladders so minute as to be invisible to the naked eye, whose sides, as the lecturer expressed it, are all doors. These cells receive the

fluids of the vegetable or animal body and the gases from the atmosphere, and so elevate and change them as to throw out embryos of other cells, and thus produce extension and growth. All extension and enlargement in vegetable and animal bodies come by means of this cellular action. And in vegetation this action begins as soon as the young plant opens its leaves to the air and light.

Suppose we burn a piece of wood. A part falls as ash to the ground, but most of it passes off in the form of gases into the air. Now, if we would constitute a new plant from that consumed we must go down to the earth and into the air, for these contain the material of which to make it. This is what the plant or tree does, in effecting its growth. Together with the water or sap, it draws up mineral substances from the earth. It was formerly thought that whatever matter of this kind was found incorporated with the vegetable, was owing to accident. It was because it happened to be in the soil, and had no business to be in the plant. But the truth is far otherwise. And here is a foundation fact in agricultural chemistry. The wheat stalk, for instance, is composed in part of silica, common sand, and the pea contains lime; and these are indispensable for the formation of these vegetables, which will not grow in soil where they are not. The necessity for these earthy substances for vegetable growth is illustrated in a season of drought. It is then sometimes observed that the upper part of a plant looks green and flourishing when the leaves near the ground wilt and die. By examination it has been found in such cases, that as there was a lack of moisture in the earth to carry thence the necessary mineral substances, these have been taken from the lower portions of the plant in order to perfect the growth upward. The truth here involved should be fully understood by farmers, as without it there can be no intelligent preparation of soils for various crops.

But the atmosphere is the chief store-house of materials for building in the vegetable world. We might infer this from the form of the tree, fitted as it is with the trunk and branches and leaves shooting up, presenting its extended surface to the waving breezes. The leaves, however, are the principal media through which the growth is effected. The water, holding in solution the proper earthly substances, forced up in the pores of the tree, is spread out over the entire surface of the leaves, which there undergoes various important chemical changes, preparing its matter to be incorporated as a part of the tree itself. As carried up it contains its earthly matters, but when it descends, after having been elaborated in the leaves, it is essentially changed, containing sugar and other totally different substances. The extension of the vegetable is effected by this descending fluid. This is proved by tying a ligature round a branch, when it will swell more above than below the ligature. To effect these changes, the leaves are furnished with innumerable little pores or mouths, which not only give out the fluids which rise in the trunk of the tree, but take in materials from the air. Twenty-four thousand of these, it is estimated, are contained in every square inch of the leafy surface. That the plant derives materials from the air is most fully demonstrated. Plant a seed in perfectly pure silex, and water it with distilled water, in which there shall not be a particle of carbon, it will yet grow and contain in its structure a portion of carbon. This could be derived from no other source than the air. We hence see that the leaf is furnished with a wonderful chemical apparatus, and endowed

with a peculiar analytical and synthetical power. It can do what no chemical laboratory has yet done—decompose carbonic acid gas at a common temperature. It manufactures all the materials of which the vegetable world is composed; and more, all which are used to sustain animal life. Yea, the leaf elaborates and condenses from the air all the substances which build up the towering tree and support our own bodies, as we are nourished by what is derived from vegetable growth.

Now what is the motive power by which all these processes in the vegetable world are carried on? It is found in the influences of the solar rays. All know that plants will not grow well without light. But in the solar rays there are different forces. One is illuminating; another is to produce heat; another, still, produces chemical effects, such as are witnessed in daguerreotype processes, decomposing to some extent the iodized silver plate. It has not yet been demonstrated which of these forces is the essential one that effects the changes we have spoken of in vegetation; or whether there may not be another more imponderable emanation from this grand central orb, which is the peculiar agent. However this may be, it is from the sun that the influences are derived which set in motion the operations of the vegetable kingdom. Oxygen is the great destroyer, burning all with which it comes in contact. In the sunbeam is the effective antagonistic force of that powerful agent. This reorganizes and reconstructs what that has decomposed and dissolved.—*[Am. Artisan.]*

NATURE AND SPIRIT.

There is a high sense in which Nature and Spirit are one: there is another sense in which they are not one but two. When we consider that the Universe springs from the infinite fullness of Deity; when we look at even the world of things, as we call them, as being, on the whole phenomenal, rather than essentially substantive—in so far as what is seen is concerned—we find that what we call Nature, is but the active expression of Spirit, in its endlessly varied life in earth and air, in sense and soul. In other words, the Universe is an outbirth of the infinite and eternal Spirit—an unfolding of the exhaustless resources of Deity. And in this point of view, there is an intimate blending of the substantive with the phenomenal Universe. God and Nature here are one—not in any gross and merely material sense—but in the high sense of serial gradation of substance, from highest to lowest, through which the phenomena of the Infinite thought and affection flow in similar degree of development and expression, from first to last.

The great error of Pantheists has been in the conception of Deity as no higher than what is called matter, together with their denial of his personality. Now the all-pervading God, as the immanent, living and ever-present Spirit, may include what is generally esteemed matter, and still not be matter in any exclusive, or common acceptance of that term. The whole question turns on this—Whether matter is from eternity? or, on the other hand, whether it is an outflow from Deity? If the former, then it is self-existent, and, in some sense, independent of God, and may therefore be his eternal antagonist; which, of course, makes it of a sort, equal with God, while, at the same time, it is of a grosser make. And if the latter, then it is one with God, on the same principle

that the outward body of flesh and bones and blood, is one with the essential man, while at the same time the said body is not the essential man.

From this point of view, all Matter, so called, is Spirit—Spirit made dense—Spirit exhibited most outwardly—Spirit brought down to the lowest plane—the descent of the Infinite to the absolutely finite, for the purpose, perhaps, of forming the circle of infinite movement, and, in the ascent, change the circle into the spiral—that the return shall be upward as well as onward, gathering the fruits of an infinite increase, in variety of manifestation, and in the joys of the beautifully unfolding life.

But when we look at Nature and Spirit from an opposite point of view, we see them as two. We then stand on Nature's plane alone. We now use our senses mostly, and reason from the merely natural man. We comparatively overlook Spirit—especially in its higher phases of development, and look mostly at rocks and trees and earth. From this point of view, Nature is one thing and Spirit another. This is according to the law of appearance, but not of essential and permanent reality. But in this sense, however, Nature is distinct from Spirit—is seen and believed to be so. It is here, as it is with the rising and the setting Sun—everything looks as though it were really so, and in the sense of *seeming*, is really so. But at the same time, as the Sun does not rise nor set in reality, so, in the same sense, matter or Nature is not exactly what it seems. It is what a keener than a *sensual* philosophy determines it to be.

It is thus that Nature and Spirit really blend into oneness and unity, while what *seems* Nature, and what we commonly term such, is only the outermost verge of Spirit—Spirit descending to its lowest point, that the great work of formation in endless variety, and ever-ascending life, may be best and most fully accomplished in the thoughts and works of the Infinite.—[*New Era*.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH.

What magnificent discoveries have been made by scientific investigators! The wonders of the natural world now lie open like a vast book, inviting mankind to come and read. Science investigates all the wonders of the universe. It has opened the bowels of the earth, and counted back the millions of years that it has been in existence; but has never discovered when matter was first created. Science has proved that mind and matter have existed, from ages, doubtless, many millions and billions of years, prior to the Mosaical account of creation.

It has revealed the fact that if mind and matter were once created, they can never again be destroyed only by the mighty volition of the great Creator.

It teaches us that there can never be a single atom of matter otherwise blotted out of existence; but may only be made to take different forms.

Man stands on the broad fields of the world, and surveys the grand wonders of nature, and goes away and comes again, and gazes till his powers are exhausted; then returns to the laboratory, and there investigates and extorts from nature Eternal Truths. Nature can not lie. She speaks a language when rightly interpreted, that man can not mistake. Natural science exists in everything. It has its abode in the tender grass blade that quivers beneath the forest shade; in the little

pebble that is trodden under foot; in the giant oak that towers on our hills; in the overwhelming avalanche that rushes down from dizzy mountain heights; in the colossal rock cliffs that issue their towering heads into the blue sky; in the vast fountains that descend far down in the dismal caverns of the earth; in the whirling and eddying of the majestic river rolling on towards the being deep; in the rushing and dashing of the fearful cataract; in the wild scream of frightened birds, flapping their wings above the tumultuous waters; in the howling winds that shake "Old Ocean's mane," and in hoarse roarings of his mountain waves, rolling into their huge caverns, and dashing against the sides of the "rock ribbed earth."

Science is everywhere, in everything. It has brought to light the greatest wonders of Nature, and proved that all things were not made at one time; but that world's and systems have been constantly forming for millions upon millions of ages.

Science has carried her investigations away from earth, and taking up her abode in the heaven of heavens. By long continued researches man has become acquainted with scientific wonders that were for ages unknown. It is the golden key which has unlocked the great store-house of nature. It has dugged into the bowels of the earth, and discovered the foot prints of by-gone ages.

On rocks that are quarried from the fields of the earth, the scientific man reads the history of the world. He picks up here and there a pebble from which he learns valuable lessons. He sees in the crevices of some huge rock the letters that the fingers of time has indelibly imprinted upon its riven surface, telling him that some internal convulsions have reft the earth and tossed up lofty mountains and laid open immense valleys. It enlightens the human mind, and spreads wide the fields of knowledge. It brings man into immediate connections with some of the most magnificent works of God. It exhibits to him the majestic powers of the Almighty and teaches him his own insignificance.—[*Light from the S. world*.

Does the Race Degenerate?

An opinion, to the effect that the human race has for centuries been degenerating, prevails to a considerable extent. There are, unquestionably, some to favor such an opinion. If the manufacturing population of England, or especially the workers in the cotton mills of Manchester, who were sent there at an early age and wrought, perhaps, twelve hours a day before their bodies had attained their full growth, be compared with the choicest specimens among the agricultural class, or the aboriginal rangers of our forests, there may be obtained something of the appearance of evidence that the race degenerates under the influences of civilization. But such facts admit of a more just and a more satisfactory explanation. They show that there are, verily, certain causes in operation among the manufacturing population which tend to produce degeneracy, and which, if kept in operation in the same families for several generations, would produce quite an amount of degeneracy. But there are no facts which indicate any thing like a universal or even a very general degeneracy. On the contrary, there are facts sufficient to make manifest that since the creation of man, or, at least, since the earliest reliable records, the stature and physical powers of the human race have been, in similar circumstances, essentially the same. All human tradition, all authentic history, go to confirm these views:

LETTER FROM JUDGE EDMONDS.

ADDRESSED TO THE CIRCLE OF HOPE.

CITY OF MANAGUA, Nicaragua, }
January 18, 1853. }

MY DEAR FRIENDS OF THE CIRCLE—If you could only realize the sad difference between the loneliness and desolation of my present condition and your happy opportunities of meeting together often and enjoying that heavenly intercourse which is at once so elevating and so grateful, you would indeed appreciate the great privileges which you enjoy.

I am far away among strangers, in a town said to contain 14,000 inhabitants, and among them all there is only one man—my interpreter—with whom I can converse. And I am cut off entirely from that “holy communion” which made life pass so pleasantly while with you.

At first, I had several very palpable spiritual visitations, but of late they have ceased with me, and I have been a good deal sick. I have been confined four times to my bed; once with congestion of the liver, once with a severe wound in the head from a fall which cut open my forehead, and twice from my old complaints: all this among strangers with whom I could not converse, and amid habits which conflicted terribly with my own. Judge then how often I have thought of you, and how dearly I shall prize the opportunity of meeting with you once again, and again uniting with you in raising my thoughts on high.

But think not that I mean to complain; for full well do I know that it is good for me to be here. I am persuaded that my principle object in coming will be answered. My general health is improving; the pain in my side is gradually leaving me, and now only occasionally occurs. And no wonder; for the air here is the most balmy and grateful that can be imagined. Day after day the sun rises through a most transparent dawn, and sets in the most soft and pink-colored twilight. At night the moon shines with a brightness and a clearness, that you see at the North only in one of your sharpest cold nights. The thermometer stands quite uniformly at about 74°. I can wear thick or thin clothes without inconvenience and in bed. I have only occasionally to draw a blanket over me. The scenery all around is sublime and beautiful; the earth is covered with the most dense and luxuriant foliage, interspersed with a multitude of flowers of every hue and fragrance; and in the morning when I ride out, I meet ever and anon with the most delicious perfume, coming in volumes upon me. Amid all this, an invalid can scarcely do otherwise than improve. And if I only had the privileges and luxuries which are your daily bread at home, how pleasantly would the time pass along, and how sincerely could I be thankful to the

(Giver of every good and perfect gift, for his manifold blessings!

Do not however suppose that I am unthankful for such blessings as I do enjoy, even now; and among them I value as high as any, the privilege of *thinking*. At home, amid the constant bustle of my official life, and the oft-repeated excitement of our spiritual intercourse, I could not find time sufficient to digest the new and most important revelations that were made to us. I felt in the condition which our friend Major Noah described to us,—new knowledge came upon me with such an overwhelming flood, that I wanted to sit down by the way-side and think till I could comprehend and embrace it. At home, I had no suitable opportunity to do so, and I am indeed grateful that it is now afforded to me.

And now, day after day, as I wander alone, on the banks of this beautiful Lake in the midst of Central America, and look abroad upon God's word as he speaks it to me through the sublime and the beautiful around me, I become more and more convinced of the truth of the words which he has spoken to us through those revelations which have been so marvelously vouchsafed to us at home. All nature speaks to me of that truth, and I rise from my contemplations more than ever convinced that a voice has arisen from the grave that we may believe. The daily excitement of the intercourse has subsided; the intercourse itself has ceased; and bringing to bear on the subject my calmest judgment—my most deliberate reason—the severest scrutiny of my understanding—I imbibe the strong, the unwavering conviction, *that it is true*. I might doubt my own convictions when swayed, or liable even to be affected by the passing emotion; but I can not doubt them, when thus calmly and deliberately sustained by my judgment. I hear ten thousand evidences around me in the voices of external Nature; and chief of all is the fact that the doubts and contradictions and inconsistencies which once disturbed my judgment, are vanishing before the light which is shed down upon us, and becoming converted into evidences as simple as they are satisfactory.

Do you ask, why I write to you in such a strain? Simply, dear friends, because before I left the United States, my mind, almost unconsciously to myself, and certainly without acknowledgment to others, was approaching a painful state of doubt and distrust, arising wholly from the fact that I had not the chance of reflecting and reasoning as fully and deliberately as I felt was necessary, on the many marvelous things which were revealed to us; and I felt the necessity of stopping to think, and I hailed my absence from all our delightful intercourse, as a blessing, as it would afford me the opportunity. And now that I have availed myself of it, and the result of more than six weeks undisturbed reflection has been an increased and more

settled conviction of the reality and divine origin of spiritual intercourse, you, I know will not be uninterested in learning it.

I would that I could give you the details of this sifting process in my own mind. But it would be far too long for any ordinary letter. Even my journal, of which I have now nearly completed four volumes, would give you only a faint idea: so you must be content with the result, for the present at least.

I have as yet heard only once from the United States, and that was through letters from my children, written on the 14th of December. Doubtless the steamer which left New-York on the 5th of January, brought me more letters, but I am in the interior of the country, several hundred miles from the steamer's landing, and may not get my letters, unless I send a courier expressly for them, in six months. They have what they call a mail in this country, which is a small wallet carried around the waist of a muleteer, which passes only once a week, even between this, the capital of the State, and Grenada, the commercial emporium; and how often it gets as far down as the southern extremity of the State, Heaven knows—I can not find out.

I am now at the seat of government, and more among the pure native blood than heretofore. Then I saw a great deal of the Spanish blood and Spanish manners; but here I see little of either, but the native Carribean Indian, with some mingling of the Negro. The people interest me very much, and would you. They are of a gentle, simple, affectionate temper—all kindness to me and to each other. I have only once heard a cross word spoken since I have been in the country, and have never seen a drunken person—no quarrelling, but light-hearted cheerfulness all around me. They have very few wants, and these are easily supplied, so that they have to work very little. The soil is very productive, the climate so mild and uniform that they have no winter, and very little clothes to provide for; so that they can and do lead very idle lives. Every where I see hammocks, and always find them occupied. They pass their time swinging in them, or in religious festivities, which come very often, and are attended with dances, processions, shows and fireworks. On Sundays I hear, all day long, church-bells, sky-rockets, fire-crackers, and "bombas"—a species of explosive fireworks that beat us all to pieces for noise.

It is more than two hundred years that they have been under the Spanish domination, and it is surprising how only half-civilized they are. They eat with their fingers; sleep on ox-hides drawn tight as a drum-head over a frame; have no windows nor chimneys; the children go entirely naked, and the women more than half so; they carry every thing on their heads, and have no such thing as a wheeled carriage except the clumsiest of all imaginable ox-carts, drawn by the oxen's horns. The boatmen in rowing their canoes,

(*bongos*, as they call them,) go entirely naked; and in the same condition, the women wash their clothes and bathe in the lakes, it making no sort of difference whether men are present or not.

Yet with all these *outré* customs, so gentle, kind and affectionate is their nature, that of all other people they are the ones for the New Philosophy. Hard as it may seem, it would be an easy thing to teach them to love their neighbors better than themselves. Then what a garden of Eden! This would be Paradise regained—the gifts of God appreciated by his children—the blessings of Heaven realized in advance by its future inhabitants! Then indeed would there be a new earth, because the old earth, with its perversions and misdirections, would pass away; and a new heaven, because men fitted to inhabit it would enter there. It is a glorious prospect and yet to be realized, though not during our residence in the form.

In the mean time our attention must be turned to a country, where, if external blessings are more sparsely scattered, internal ones the more abound; and so I will descend from my altitude, and as my sheet is nearly ended, conclude my letter, by repeating the assurance how much I am, as ever,

Most affectionately yours,

J. W. EDMONDS.

REMARKS.—We publish the preceding letter with feelings of peculiar satisfaction, not merely on account of the intrinsic interest of the letter itself, but more particularly because it shows the conclusions of an individual whose name is widely known, and whose judgment has been highly esteemed, on a subject which is now occupying a considerable share of public attention. It will be seen from the letter that the writer in his absence from home, has enjoyed a very favorable opportunity for profound and deliberate reflection on the evidences of spiritual intercourse which he had previously received, and that the result of the reflection has been a confirmation and deepening of his convictions that there exists here an important reality. We believe that this result is almost certain to be insured to the rational mind from a course of calm and serious investigation. Indeed the real beauty, profundity and importance of such a subject can never be fully understood and appreciated, until it is subjected to the critical analysis of the reasoning and reflective powers. It is well therefore in the examination of spiritual realities, to retire from the excitement and tumult of the outer world, that, within the chambers of the interior mind, the facts and principles which are here involved, may be fully scrutinized and satisfactorily tested.—Ed.

The letter of V. C. T., has been duly received. An answer will be returned by mail to the place where the letter was dated.

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

R. P. AMBLER, EDITOR.

NEW-YORK, MARCH 5, 1853.

PHILOSOPHY OF PRODUCING AND CONTROLLING
THE FALL OF RAIN.

NUMBER TWO.

Dear Sir—In accordance with the promise made at the conclusion of the preceding communication, I again per force of the will-power compose myself, even to the induction of the interior condition whence proceed my impressions of Nature; and these I now send to you without reservation.

There is a general repugnance to the contemplation of scientific themes,—especially to a close study of *dry* physical facts and the causes of common phenomena,—because doubtless they are so elaborately presented by certain scholars, with an overwhelming array of hard words exhumed from Hebrew, Greek, and Latin germs; nevertheless, it seems to me that I shall neither be tedious nor “dry,” because it will be remembered that my subject is *Rain*, and my impressions seldom permit me to *conceal thought* beneath the imposing livery which ordinarily adorns the mind of a Cambridge student.

Whether distributed throughout the air, or flowing over the earth, Water is essential to the existence and welfare of the animal creation. It gives diversity to the magnificent scenery of the globe. That order and harmony which is everywhere so conspicuously manifested to the investigating mind, are inseparably connected with the diversified operations of water. The gushing fountain, the mountain torrent, the quiet lake, the babbling stream, the immersion of all currents into the ocean, the ascension of its dissolving elements into the invisible air, from whence by certain electrical conditions it descends again in varied forms to moisten, enrich and fertilize the soil—all constitute the most interesting mundane subject for investigation of the true lover of wisdom. Water in nature never appears free from impurities. It invariably contains gaseous sand, clay, or saline matters, partially derived from the atmosphere through which it falls to earth, and partially from the subterranean springs whence it originates and flows upward and over the surface of the lowest land. The constitution of water is well enough understood. But quite certain am I that future chemistry will discover a more *intimate relation* between the dual constituents of water and what is now termed “Electricity.” This agent, although its *character* has been much impaired and traduced of late—being denounced as the cause of every new “manifestation” regarded as inexplicable—will yet be found to form the basis of both water and atmosphere.

Chemists are already aware that electricity is the only agent by which both elements, composing water, can be simultaneously evolved and held in free conditions. It is ascertained that one part of water, hydrogen, may be *by itself* elicited in various ways—as, for instance, by the action of sulphuric acid upon zinc, causing it to decompose and combine with the oxygen in the water, thus forming a sulphate of oxide of zinc, which of necessity sets the hydrogen at liberty. But here let it be borne in mind that “Electricity” is only capable of eliciting the constituents of water in a pure and simultaneous condition. This fact has an important bearing upon the theory of producing and controlling rain.

Next as to the atmosphere. Essentially considered, the invisible envelopment of our globe has been long represented as consisting of a large quantity of Nitrogen, less of Oxygen, a minute trace of Carbonic acid, azote, and an irregular quantity of aqueous or watery vapor. It is a curious fact, that in the air, water is found to be omnipresent or coëxtensive with it, and always in a state of invisible vapor; and both elements, although not “simple” as the ancients taught, but compound and different in constitution, are yet *identical* in the exhibition of their phenomena when heated or reduced in temperature. Water and air, when elevated in temperature (or heated) are alike changed as to their density; and become lighter by expansion. Cold air and cold water have a superior density, and therefore occupy lower strata in the scale of elements. Boiling water will float upon the surface beneath; and so, heated air, in consequence of being lighter, can no more descend to the cold below, but ascends and becomes an attractive medium or “magnet” to the particles composing the stratum beneath. This idea of attenuated air or water forming a *magnet* in relation to colder and lower bodies of the same elements, is an idea, Mr. Editor, which I would have lodged firmly in the mind. It has something to do, it seems to me, in bringing about the phenomena, evaporation or condensation, and rain—which we desire to comprehend.

The experimental evidence that water is always diffused throughout the air, as an invisible vapor, is obtained in many ways. It is of common occurrence, that a decanter or pitcher filled with cold water, and placed upon a table in a warm room, will, in the lapse of ten minutes, become literally covered with dew, or rain, and large drops will bedim its surface. Has the water filtrated through the vessel? No. Whence then does the dew proceed? Ah! here we have it; the cause of rain, at least in this case, is simple! The temperature of the water in the vessel is colder than the temperature of the water invisibly subsisting in the air; consequently the invisible vapor, surrounding the decanter, is rapidly cooled and condensed, (reduced in temperature and in density,) and therefore it *rains up*

on the surface of the vessel. Now reduce the temperature still more, and you have *frost*: still more, and *snow* appears; and the final reduction of temperature brings the *ice*, which is water in its lowest state of condensation or solidity.

These are familiar occurrences, and scarcely excite a single thought; but they are none the less essential, *as data*, from which to develop the practicability of our leading proposition.

Furthermore, it is worthy of attention in this connection, that water is a *negative* element when compared to the atmosphere. The air is *positive* to water, and is capable of decomposing and dissolving its constituents under certain conditions. By the action of atmospheric magnetism (sometimes termed caloric,) water is decomposed. Its particles become separated or vaporized. And although water is more than eight hundred and fifty times denser or heavier than air, still air endows it partially with wings—empowering them to fly with “the celerity of thought” throughout the empire of nature, in some other form to bestow a good upon the organic kingdom of the soil. This fact is evidenced not only by the universal evaporation of water, but more commonly, by the drying of a piece of cloth which has been saturated with water, and hung out in the heat of the sun. The water soon leaves, and the cloth is dry. This fact illustrates the intimate relations subsisting between the water on the earth and the air which envelops it. And all this points to the turnpike or highway whereon constantly travel a class of terrestrial phenomena, which, as yet, the science of chemistry has only hinted at, but has not discovered.

Having introduced a few familiar facts to your readers, Mr. Editor, with which doubtless the most of them are well acquainted, I now proceed more particularly to describe the philosophy of rain.

The view commonly received is, that through the calorific action of the Sun, the atmosphere and the surface of the water become heated. The process of vaporization thereby occurs, and the watery vapor is thus made constantly to ascend from the oceans and rivers of the globe. When the atmosphere becomes over-charged with this vapor, then sudden changes in its temperature cause the water to return to the earth in three different states of condensation; viz., as rain, as snow, or as hail.

It would seem from this, that *cold* in the clouds is necessary in order to condense the watery vapor of the air, and produce the deposition of dew or rain upon the earth. But this theory is unsettled by the fact, that the heaviest rains are generally preceded by exceedingly sultry weather. Hence some philosophers have set out to account for it upon a different principle.

The next theory propounded—if my impressions be correct—is: that two masses or volumes of air, thoroughly saturated with moisture or aqueous vapor, and

of different temperatures, will, when they approach and mix together, become over-charged with the moisture, and a part of it would of necessity be precipitated in the form of rain to the earth. This is measurably true. The commencement of rain is frequently attended with such a phenomenon; i. e., two unequally heated volumes of atmosphere being fused into one mass. But there are difficulties which this theory does not remove. First it implies that in case of the admixture of two unequally heated portions of air, only the *superabundant* moisture in them would be liberated and dejected to the earth, while the *unsuperfluous* vapor would still remain in the clouds, all ready to pour out more rain on the least reduction of their temperatures. This is disproved by the fact, that dry and cool weather generally succeed the cessation of rain. It is also much impaired, as a theory, by the fact, that large bodies of water or of any liquid require much time in running together. The waters of the Amazon or of the Gulf Stream consume a long period in flowing into union with the constituents of the Atlantic; and the same remark is applicable to all large bodies of fluid on the globe. The same principle obtains in the atmosphere, among the clouds, when two of immense size come into actual juxtaposition with each other, and are tending to intermixture.

The distinguished Mr. Hutton has confined his attention too exclusively to the immediate meteorologic phenomena associated with the falling of rain; he has overlooked the deeper and more subtle *causes* of showers and storms; but notwithstanding this, his philosophy is generally received among many of the scientific as established by experiments and experience. Nevertheless I am impressed to consider it as unsound; not only for reasons already stated, but because *heat* is frequently the precursor and the concomitant, while comparative *cold* is almost invariably the successor of a shower or storm of rain or snow.

Having brought the subject to this point, indicating the difficulties which the commonly received theories of the cause of rain do not explain, I have nothing before me now but to detail my philosophy of this matter, and to see whether or not it is supported by reason and experience.

It is my impression—indeed I may say I “see” it to be unqualifiedly the case—that all atmospheric and meteoric phenomena are wholly referable to the alternate action of electricity. The mineral storehouses of the interior of the globe are the sources whence this subtle terrestrial agent is derived. There are enormous laboratories—*natural galvanic and electrical batteries*—in the earth, which generate all the elements composing water and air. The force exhibited by volcanoes is derived mainly from these inherent laboratories. In the Island of Panavia may be seen volcanic fires and elements, bursting up out of unseen sources, forcing

their way through the water at a distance of nearly 500 feet. Every such eruption of internal fires is accompanied by the elimination of vast quantities of terrestrial electricity.

Where think you, Mr. Editor, do these volumes of electricity go? My impression is, that they go to support, vivify, and to refine the various substances, animate, and inanimate, and to compose and replenish water and air, and all else, which diversify and adorn the empire of existence. Essentially, I find that electricity, galvanism, magnetism, and voltaism, are of one parentage, being at base identical; although, by undergoing the processes of disintegration, &c., the primary element (which is common electricity,) becomes divided up into sympathy with surrounding substances, and so it becomes differently refined and differently disposed throughout nature. It was this fact which led some philosophers to suppose that there are two kinds of electricity—the resinous and vitreous. But Dr. Franklin was right when he affirmed the existence of but *one kind* of electricity, existing in two different conditions—the positive and negative.

You will remember that I have noticed the fact that it is electricity only which can decompose water so as to simultaneously liberate both oxygen and hydrogen in a state of complete purity. Also the other fact, that water, though eight hundred times heavier than air, is capable of uniting with it, as brother with brother, as they are—indeed, that water is coextensive with air; all of which goes to establish that both water and atmosphere have one and the same *paternity*—namely, the inherent electricity of the globe, which, like the Sun, is one immense galvanic battery.

Allow me to lodge in your mind another proposition; that positive electricity is magnetism, and magnetism is comparatively warm; that negative electricity is undeveloped magnetism, and is comparatively cold; that these male and female forces are always everywhere present; and that they produce all the action and reaction, motion and development, in the heavens above, in the earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth.

The male and female—or positive and negative—principles range, side by side, hand in hand, throughout the whole domain of being. These reciprocal forces underlie all the phenomena of existence. They circulate through the air; between orb and orb; through the life of trees; between atom and atom; control all animal functions; and are in short, the fundamental laws of all existence. When you have comprehended these Male and Female Laws, in the fullness of their operation, you have then found the “Philosopher’s Stone”—the sure KEY which will, in the master’s hand, unlock every conceivable mystery in the world of science and philosophy. They are the inherent principles of the Universe. A productive unity; the Alpha and

Omega of all refinement, production, and generation! In the different kingdoms of animated nature, these laws beget the external manifestation of the sexes, and are familiarly termed *Male* and *Female*. In chemistry, they are known as *Positive* and *Negative*. In mechanism, they are *Centripetal* and *Centrifugal*. In the world of inorganic matter, so called, they are *Attraction* and *Expansion*. In the Sun, they are *Light* and *Heat*. In the Divine Being they are Love and Wisdom. In the human mind they are Passion and Reason. But enough has been said to impress the idea of an omniprevalence of unity and immutability in the Principles of Existence; to which we must always look for an adequate explanation of any physical or spiritual phenomena.

“O, this is all a mere speculation!” Nay, far from it, Mr. Editor. These are truths. By careful reflection, you will see that these principles open a new door to the cultivation of the several sciences. Truth is of universal application. Parts of creation are but links in a grand series of corresponding links; which, taken altogether comprehensively, constitute the chain of cause and effect that binds in harmony the Infinite Universe. Go forth; and leave all narrow thought! Broad, free, magnificent generalizations will do you good! Our scientific men are full of “points,” and plethoric with fragmentary “demonstrations;” (not spiritual) they are vastly too much engaged in isolated inspections and microscopic analyzations; and so they see not the great general principles which sustain the broad realms of existence, physical and spiritual.

We are told by the Primitive History, (the Bible) that all things as they came forth from the hand of the Creator, were pronounced “good.” Still we see low poisonous plants; destructive and venomous creatures; large territories of country unfit for the habitation of man; unfortunate conflicts between the sun, the seasons, and the soil; whole fields of vegetation and scores of ships destroyed by sudden hurricanes, or by protracted storms at the wrong time, &c.; and mankind, too, all disunited and diseased! How is this to be explained? Are these things “good” and right? Has man abused the freedom of the will, and perverted the animal kingdom, and the earth, the water, and the atmosphere? We are told by certain rather popular authorities, that when Humanity fell,

“Earth, through all of her parts, gave signs of wo.”

Are we, then, to await the interposition of supernatural power before the defective conditions can be removed? This is no theologic discussion, Mr. Editor, but an appeal to your Intelligence in behalf of a more rational way to explain certain *discords*, and how they may be harmonized with the interests of humanity. And it is, as before said, reasonable to suppose that every thing is “good” when all things are considered by a law of adaptation. For instance: that every

imperfect or unfinished piece of creation, is no result of a perverted free will, but is left in the order of Providence for Man to complete by his own skill and experience. *And one unfinished piece is the atmosphere.* So you can see, with me, the fields adapted for the manifestation of human discovery and control.

"But where is your philosophy of rain?" Be patient with me, Mr. Editor; it will surely come, as I proceed with my writing. This letter contains enough suggestive matter for present reflection. And you may rest assured, that when more comes to me, the world shall receive it. Hoping that we shall at last be able to control rain, to some extent, and the temperature of the air, I remain,

Yours for Humanity,

A. J. DAVIS.

WORDS OF REASON.

To the Priesthood in particular, and Church-members generally, throughout the United States.

LETTER NUMBER TWO.

ESTEEMED FRIENDS, BRETHREN AND SISTERS: I would approach you with kind and gentle words; I have no desire to vex or irritate. Yet when I remember that man has but one term of earth-life, and observe how quickly this life speeds away, (my own being doubtless already more than half gone,) and seeing, as I think I clearly do, that the highest and noblest qualities of the mind, are with the multitude of men and women generally, more or less crippled and cramped by the vast weight of traditions and superstitions—these being fastened on the mind in childhood, in youth, and in manhood—my highest and deepest convictions of obedience to God, and of duty toward my fellow men, demand of me to lend a helping hand in the work of brushing aside the smoky mists of superstition, and of establishing Reason upon its true and legitimate throne.

In temples made with hands, called "Houses of God," are places termed "sacred desks;" in these places stand human beings, called "divines;" before them, or in their hands, is a book called "the Holy Bible," "the Inspired Writings," "the Sacred Oracles," "the Word of God." In these churches the people assemble, having been previously taught that each individual mind should always, at such times and in such places, divest itself entirely from the influence of natural reason. They are taught also, that to doubt the truth of what the minister reads from that "Book of books," or to question any of his assertions or explanations of the same, would really peril their souls to the suffering of torments indescribable, which are to last longer than time itself.

The assemblies thus gathered together and prepared to hear and believe unreasonable teachings, are in the first place informed that all of the vast and glorious bodies of light, which shine above and around us, and

all things pertaining to the earth on which we live, are the result of only six days' work, and that God rested on the seventh day, as though in the creation He had exhausted a great portion of his vital energy, and required a respite from his labors. It would be well for us to consider in this connection the nature of those days in which God worked, previous to the formation of the two luminaries which were made to rule the day and night; for it will be discovered by a careful reading of the account that these were not created until the third day, thus leaving the two previous days to be undefined by the presence of either sun or moon.

The teachings of the same primitive history likewise inform us that Man was created from the dust of the ground; and in one sense this idea is sanctioned by reason, inasmuch as in him is manifested an ultimate production of Nature, which has been formed through a gradual uprising and development of the substances of the earth. But the account proceeds to relate the primitive origin of Woman, saying that Adam was put into a deep sleep; that in this condition a rib was taken from his side, and that the woman was made from this rib. Here, Reason says, there must be some mistake; for it is apparent that such an assumption can rest on no philosophical basis—that there is and can be no relation between the effect produced and the means employed, while it is at least fair to presume that the female form could have been created more easily from the same original substances—denominated the "dust of the ground"—from which man was developed.

To complete the mass of theological inconsistency which is forced upon the minds of the people, it is said that, while the first pair were enjoying the beauties of Paradise, the woman was induced by the persuasions of a serpent to eat of the fruit of a certain tree of the garden—that by this act they were expelled from the garden and burdened with the Divine curse—that thus the parents of the human race received a "fall" which endangered the immortal interests of all their descendants, and that by a course of planning and scheming, the wrath or "justice" of Deity became at last appeased and satisfied by the sufferings and murder of the innocent Jesus; for it is said that "he died the just for the unjust," and that "by his stripes we are healed."

Again, much argument and mental labor are expended on the children of church-members and others, to lead them into the belief that they are all naturally corrupt and are wholly incapable of living other than sinful and unprofitable lives. And they are warned repeatedly not to place any confidence in their own good works in this life as being of any use in the way of conferring happiness hereafter, the death and blood of Jesus being the main chance.

Now, brethren and sisters, let me entreat you to look calmly, deliberately and in the light of reason at the

effect which must follow in the train of such a mistaken theology. Take an illustration. It is well known, that if persons are induced by any means whatever to believe fully and confidently that they are going to be sick, this effect is almost certain to follow; the very anticipation of being sick will make them so. On the same principle induce mankind to believe that they are totally depraved and can lead no other lives than those of sin and wickedness, and the work of corruption is already accomplished. The world is groaning and suffering beneath the burden imposed by this doctrine. But it must not and *can not* so remain. Truth is abroad in the earth; and there is a philosophy, now fast becoming established in the minds of the people, which will cause all the old errors, superstitions and traditions to vanish, as do the misty fogs of morning before the rising sun. More anon.

Harveysburgh, Ohio.

V. N.

ANOTHER VISIT AT HARTFORD.

By the force of an interior admonition, I was induced to visit the friends of the Harmonial Philosophy in Hartford, on Saturday of last week. On my arrival in the evening, I found quite a large company of individuals that were all "of one accord in one place," waiting for the manifestations of spiritual presence. Among this company I was happy to observe Mr. A. J. DAVIS, Mr. JOHN M. SPEAR, Mrs. J. R. METTLER, Mrs. A. D. SHEPARD, and others, who seemed to have been drawn by some mysterious affinity or superintending influence from almost all directions to this one locality. The consciousness of this fact gave to the occasion a more than ordinary interest; and the spirit of harmony which seemed to breathe in the very atmosphere, lent to all hearts a sense of tranquil joy, with an appreciation of the blessing which angels are ever waiting to bestow on the seeking soul. It would be impossible to represent in language the impressive scene of consecration which was enacted on this occasion. Every sound and movement appeared to mingle and flow with the harmonious life of other Spheres, and all realized that it was good to draw thus near to the Gate of Heaven. It may be stated as an item of interest that Mr. Davis was consecrated to the work of human redemption under the name of a Guide and Leader,—by the light of whose revealments those who now sit in the valley and shadow of death may be brought forth to the blissfulness of a new day.

The occurrences which took place during my brief visit at Hartford were all of an exceedingly interesting nature, and I was pleased to observe that the progress of truth in this place has been more than ordinarily rapid. May the earnest souls who are seeking so perseveringly the establishment of the new heavens and new earth, be abundantly blessed and strengthened in their praiseworthy efforts.

R. P. A.

Facts and Phenomena.

CURE BY SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE.

The following is a true statement of facts, as given by persons who have a knowledge of and were eye-witnesses to them:

Mr. Mooney, a young man, between twenty and twenty-five years of age, residing in the northern part of St. Louis, has been for a long time affected with a scrofulous disease; for some weeks past, he has been under medical treatment, and it is the opinion of his relatives that the medicine which has been given him lately brought on many other affections—among which were derangement of the liver, spleen, and kidneys; his chest seemed filled with phlegm, rising at times, and producing symptoms of suffocation. His feet presented a dropsical appearance, and upon being pressed with the finger, an indentation was left, with a spot, assuming a white appearance. His neck and throat seemed to have been scarified, and was very sore. He was, indeed, a mass of disease, from head to foot, and seemed fast hastening to the tomb. In this condition, he was, on Friday morning, Dec.—, at 2 o'clock, taken with spasms. The family were aroused, and he was brought from his own into his father's room. During the convulsions, the phlegm came up in his throat, and it was with much difficulty he could breathe.

At this juncture, physicians were sent for; two or three were soon in attendance, but only to pronounce the case a hopeless one! During the convulsions the young man called loudly for Mrs. ———, a medium, in the vicinity, and exclaimed, "She can help me!" [It was written out through a medium that the patient is an impressible medium, and that the spirits impressed him to call for the medium above alluded to.] He lingered thus until morning, when the lady medium, who had been sent for, arrived. At this time the process of death had undoubtedly commenced. The extremities were quite cold; the eyes sunken; the breathing restless and difficult; the phlegm was oozing from his mouth—and he seemed unconscious of all around him. The medium seated herself by the fire, and asked the physicians if "there could be nothing done for him?" to which they replied, they "thought not."

The medium felt the influence of spiritual power, and was impressed what to do. She approached the bed of the sick man—called for ley-water, into which his feet were placed—and then struck him several times on the chest, which produced vomiting. She then ordered him to be rubbed, which was done; and, after applying sundry hard blows upon his person, he was enveloped in wet bandages. All this was done in less than twenty minutes! The patient experienced relief at once; perspiration appeared on different parts of

his body, in great quantities, and he seemed like a new being! The next day he was up and dressed—to the astonishment of himself and all who were cognisant of his previous situation. On Sunday he wanted to go to Church. On last Sunday he was at the Conference at Odd Fellows' Hall, and stood up, a living monument of spiritual power, and testified to the above facts.

In conclusion, we would state that the medium had not the slightest knowledge of what was to be done, one minute before she commenced. This is but one of the numerous instances of remarkable cures that are being performed by our angel-friends in our midst. We think all this is the work of spirits. Let those who think differently give a better solution.—[*Light from the Spirit-world.*]

SPIRITUAL HEALING.

Mr. Lucien Gardener and family occupying one of my dwellings, has a little son two years of age, who has from his birth been struggling with disease, which has caused a general debility throughout the system. He has never been able to walk a step. His head is uncommonly large, and the sight of his eyes extremely so. The little sufferer, though weak and puny, was almost constantly moaning and crying, and at times seemed to be suffering from acute pain, which called into exercise feelings of pity for the little sufferer.

The continual crying was somewhat annoying, not only to the parents, but to myself, being obliged to spend a considerable portion of my time, in my Furniture ware room, directly above.

While pondering upon the suffering condition of the child, I become controlled by spirit influence; upon which, I inquired if anything could be done for the little sufferer. Immediately the answer was, "Yes. You must lay your hand upon him, and he will be healed." Instantly I perceived altogether a different influence passing over me, which caused me to inquire if this was the healing power. The answer was "Yes. And you must apply your hand as you have been instructed." This, thought I, was rather a delicate business, and I hesitated some time, asking many questions, and receiving as many answers, before I could be persuaded to make the trial. The influence being quite strong upon me, I went down into their room; and on approaching the child my hand and arm became powerfully effected, and was made to pass over the child, (as if to examine it) and soon rested upon the small of the back, remaining in that position for five to ten minutes, the sweat streaming in the most profuse manner from the child; especially, about the back and hips. My hand was then made to pass over the child, in a variety of ways, for at least five minutes. At this juncture; the influence left, and I was again at liberty. The consequence was that the child rested quietly the remainder of the day, and through the night. The

next morning it run alone, for the first; and has continued to improve in health and strength ever since! The parents feel greatly rejoiced at the change; yet astonished at the mysterious means of producing it. I have since, been influenced to lay my hands upon my daughter, in a similar manner, she being severely afflicted with the Bronchitis—which has completely checked the ravages of the disease, and she is now fast recovering.

I am sorry to say, that I am blessed with this influence but a small portion of the time. ELMER WOODRUFF.
—[*Spiritual Era.*]

Poetry.

ORDINATION HYMN.

BY FANNY GREEN.

Send abroad the great Evangel
Over land, and over sea—
Truth, the spirit's fairest angel,
Now proclaims new liberty.
Heed no chidings, sound the tidings
That shall make the bondman free!

Not for Mammon's hoarded treasure
Sell the Truth that Jesus taught—
Not for vain and sensuous pleasure
Shame the Gospel that he brought!
Be devotion—true devotion—
With thy life and mission wrought.

Haste! unfold the true paternal
Character of God above,
With its counterpart fraternal
Binding all in bonds of Love!
God our Father—Man our Brother—
And the soul a nestling dove.

See! the light afar is streaming!—
Surplice black and cassock gray
Nevermore shall hide its beaming—
Nevermore obscure the day—
God hath spoken, chains are broken;
And the old Night rolls away!

Wait; and watch the radiant dawning
O'er the darkness of the mind;
Truth, the herald of the morning,
Leaves the shadows far behind;
Light is waking! Light is breaking!
Living light for all mankind!

Dare to teach the waking Spirit;
It may safely use its power—
Claim its heirship—and inherit
Its own priceless human dower—
Ne'er be Reason chained for Treason,
From this Fate-unfolding hour.

Lo! the bonds of iron Ages
From the rousing Giant fall;
Vainly Superstition rages,
Her old victim to appal;
We are stronger—and no longer
May she hold our hearts in thrall!

Send abroad the tidings glorious
With a pledge of victory;
Truth and Right shall be victorious,
And the long-enthralled be free!
Hark! the Nations sound salvation's
Coming day of Jubilee!

Miscellaneous Department.

THE DREAMS OF LIFE.

I dream, thou dreamest, we dream. The world is full of dreamers. Consciously, or unconsciously; wisely, or unwisely; more or less, all men are dreamers. Who is not conscious, as he traces upward the history of his life from the cradle until now, of many a hope indulged, of many a day-dream past, as unreal and unrealized as any vision of the night? The restless spirit of man, big with the fact of existence, conceives a thousand lives in the attempt to grasp the conditions of its being; each new conception becoming changed, or obsolete, as experience steps in with its gradual stores of knowledge. There is no pause in the circle. This birth, renovation, and decay, must still go on. Let all the gleanings of experience, and the stores of wisdom be gathered in; let the three score years and ten be added to them; and the "life we live in the flesh is still a dream." The first touch of reality will dissolve it like the broad blaze of the morning.

"We know in part." It is the attempt—instinctive, inevitable—out of this partial knowledge to construct a whole, which fills life and the world with delusions. We know a little, and we fit the universe to our little knowledge. With the infant and the sage, the wise man and the fool, alike, this is the inevitable tendency. Analyze the scepticism of the sceptic, and the system of the philosopher, and still the result is the same: *not* the measure of the universe, but the measure of the man. The finite has clasped its little armful of the infinite, and of this fragment shaped the illimitable.

This tendency is a primary law of our being. Ordained to high and beneficent ends, whilst man kept his first estate; but from the moment that he transgressed, desiring "to be a God," enduring as a trial and a snare. Yet may we still recognize in it a provision of mercy. Just as the natural horizon forms a clear and defined limit of which the observer is the center, widening with his statue and expanding indefinitely as he proceeds; so is each man's mental world peculiarly his own; just so much of the real world as comes within the range of his knowledge or experience, and nothing more. Error commences here; when we refuse to believe that which lies beyond our own horizon, or treat our small segment of infinity as it were in very truth the universe.

As matter is made up of atoms and particles, so is the great world of man and nature made up of a myriad of lesser worlds; and it requires creative intelligence to comprehend the grand result. Nevertheless, as atoms group together into shape and form, and are pervaded and worked upon by the laws of attraction; as the material orbs depend and circle round the central glory, whose world of worlds is lost in the mighty void of space, and may well seem limitless, so there are intelligences far below the Omniscient which do yet seem to grasp all knowledge; to comprehend the various circling existences rather as fixed stars, than as tributary and companion satellites. To such it is hard to remember that they "know in part," and thus it is that "not many wise, not many noble," come up into that higher light in which "a babe in the kingdom of heaven" is greater than they.

We have said that all men are dreamers. It may be profitable to define our meaning. Dreams! what are they? Waking dreams? The dreams of life and action? Here

analogy comes in to our assistance. Of the panoramic scenes that stretch themselves out before us in visions of the night, most are cognizant. They come to us with more or less distinctness, with more or less brilliancy of coloring; the deception may be long and perfect, or through the whole may lurk the suspicion or confidence that the thing is a fiction; yet all agree in this, that at the first beam of the morning or start of returning consciousness they vanish away. We wonder for a moment, perhaps, at the strange scenes in which fancy has made us her actors, showing us the kingdoms of her world and the glory of them, while wrapped in oblivion of all besides; and the illusion vanishes; the tablet of memory is cleared for more durable impressions. Thus it is with the dreams, and schemes, and illusions of life. They may differ in every other conceivable respect; may have all the air and aspect of sober reality, or, to the very dreamers themselves, be manifest as a delusion too pleasant to dispel; yet, at the first touch of reality, the first glimmer of that morning which breaks from behind the tombs, and from the dark dust of the charnel brings "life and immortality to light," they have but one name and value—all are equally delusion.

This view of life is humbling—humiliating, in the first instance, to the pride of man; but such humility is its own reward. We see now "through a glass, darkly;" but what then? Now, we "know in part." Then that which is partial shall be done away. Mistake us not, we pray thee, O reader! Did we say that "all men are dreamers?" That life is a dream? That, as a vision of the morning, it shall vanish away, and leave no result? Verily, we meant not this. Bethink thee, there is the awakening! What shall that be? No: there is truth in the universe, there is truth in the life of man: at all events, there is terrible reality. How comes it, then, that we *dream*, if life is real? How can the same existence be at once true and false? Just this; to every man under heaven is given this one fact, which folly can not part with, or falsehood falsify—that he is, and shall never cease to be. This germ of truth lies at the foundation of every life of man; but it may be hidden. On this truth as a foundation may be reared a whole superstructure of falsehood. This glimmer of heaven-sent light may play through a labyrinth of darkness, to which it gives but a hideous reality of gloom. Do we ask why? There comes no answer more grateful to our ears than this, "God made man perfect, but he has sought out many inventions."

Here we pause, merely pointing out the great highway of thought which stretches hence far onward, and is lost in the "great unseen." For himself, let the reader follow it, remembering that eternity rests upon the result.

There are delusions not necessarily guilty; false, or rather unreal views, and hopes of life inevitably arising from our partial knowledge; or experience, which is just knowledge that we have ourselves attested—set our seal to; it was on these, especially, that we wished to muse for a moment. To profit, if it only shake our faith in the infallibility of our own conclusions, and soften the tone of dogmatism with which we assail those of others.

How intensely interesting would it be, if by any effort of memory, excluding all the additions of after knowledge, we could *realize* the past again, in all its many stages of development—could live the child, the youth, the man, and then, with all the impartiality of a judge and spectator, compare the results. This may be done imperfectly, and the sighs with

which we accompany the retrospect are so many eloquent tributes to the vanished dreams of the past. Perhaps the momentous phrase in the vocabulary of man is, "I remember." O, how touchingly may it be spoken!

"I remember, I remember
The fir-trees dark and high.
I used to think their spiry tops
Were close against the sky.
It was a childish ignorance;
But, now, 'tis little joy
To think, I'm further off from heaven
Than when I was a boy."

Happiness here is the creature of hope; and in saying that youth is the happiest time of life, we say simply, that it is the hopefulest. In the heyday of life, rainbow-clad, the syren keeps before us, whispering ever, "Onward," pointing to Elysian fields that lie sunny in the distance, harping rich melodies that enchant us before—always before. But the hour comes—earlier or later it may be, but inevitable—when she steps backward behind us, and the Elysian fields, the strange rich melodies, are behind us to. We call them now the blessed days of our youth, and with us, too, is the wail that happiness is gone forever!

Now is the time, when the "dreams of life" are fading, that that which was true in them shall endure, as the glitter of diamonds in the ashes of a robe of gauze. For the true man there is now light in darkness, the struggling beams of another dawn.

Shall we ever, amid the little glitter of our short-lived day, shut out the remembrance of the night that cometh? Shall we ever, as that night approaches, wail for the hopes that have vanished? For the many dreams that have vanished? For the long "dream of life" that is vanishing? And forget the great future before us, making no preparation for that verity which must come whether we will or not? Thus has it been with all generations; and "this their way was their folly, yet their posterity approve their saying." Beautiful, glorious is this earth of ours; let us be glad in its beauty. Hopes spring fresh as the flowers of the morning—numberless as the stars of night; let us cherish them. As the flowers, they shall die, and spring anew. As the stars, they shall vanish, but return again; not one of them is lost. But changed they must be; die they must. "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." Let us cherish a lively faith in that sure word of promise, foreshadowed in the glory of each laden harvest, "That which thou sowest in corruption shall be raised in power."

Sow on then, but see that the seed be good, lest, haply, the "power" be power of darkness. Remember, also, that this is but the seed-time. Expect to see the harvest here, and thou wilt assuredly be disappointed. It were well if by faith thou couldst now realize something of that full fruition; if, by communings with that which is most spiritual in thy nature, by treasuring those hints which are given for our assistance from above, thou couldst gird up thy spirit for the expansion and widowhood that must intervene. But our poor nature is weak, "of the earth earthy;" and we know not what we shall be, and we faint beneath the burden of the invisible. Well:

"They also serve, who only stand and wait."

If a neighbor judges you wrongfully, do not quarrel with him; but with the consciousness of rectitude, "make the best of it."

PRESENTIMENTS.

"Whence the strange inborn sense of coming ill,
That of times whispers to the haunted breast,
In a low tone that naught can drown or still,
'Midst feast and melodies a secret guest?
Whence doth that murmur wake, that shadow fall?
Why shakes the spirit thus? 'tis mystery all!"

Among all the branches of the supernatural, there is no one which has been so little discussed by philosophical writers at that generally known by the term *presentiments*. And yet there is no one among them all better entitled to our consideration from the many and well authenticated instances which may be cited to prove their existence; nor is there any one of them, at the same time, so difficult of explanation, on natural principles, when that existence is established. It is this difficulty, probably, which has deterred many learned men from attempting a solution of the mystery, while it is the secret reason, we apprehend, why many others pass the subject with a slur, placing the presage to the account of despondency of mind or nervous timidity, and professing to look upon its fulfillment as nothing more than one of those remarkable coincidences which are often occurring in the ordinary events of life. This is doubtless an easy way of getting along with what we will not believe, and can not explain; but it so happens that by far the greatest proportion of the recorded cases of presentiments (by which term we mean forebodings which are realized—not false presentiments) have occurred among a class of men the most noted for firmness and courage, and the least subject, by nature and discipline, to be affected by superstitious fears or nervous weakness. Scarcely an important battle has been reported, by the details of which it has not appeared that some of the slain, though the bravest of the brave, and never before troubled with such impressions, have confidently foretold the death that awaited them.

The brave and chivalrous General De Kalb, who fell at the battle of Camden, at the eve of that memorable engagement, told his brother officers that he felt, for the first time, that his hour had come, and, making his last requests, rode into battle, and soon received in his heart the fatal bullet that brought his towering form to the earth.

The gallant General Pike, the night before the storming of the British fortress at Little York, in the war of 1812, made his preparations for death, and wrote a letter, giving directions for the future education, &c., of his beloved daughter, under the avowed impression that he was not to survive the expected battle, though, as commanding officer, he was not necessarily to be exposed to danger. The battle came—the fortress was blown up by the retreating foe, and a small stone, thrown to the distance of a quarter of a mile, struck Pike, who was sitting on a stump, apparently out of the way of all harm, and caused his immediate death.

Our lamented Ransom, as we are informed by an officer of his regiment who fought by his side; the night previous to the terrible battle of the Chepultee, talked of home and family, and the melancholy thought of falling so far away from them in a strange land, in a manner which convinced all that he had been seized with an overpowering presentiment of his approaching fall.

* * * * *

The foregoing instances of presentiments, selected from the

hundreds of others which might be cited, not only because they were remarkable and striking in themselves, but because they occurred to men whose characters for firmness and intelligence clearly exempted them from all suspicion of having been the victims of any of those mental infirmities which lead to so many false presentiments or groundless forebodings among those of an opposite character—the foregoing instances, must drive all candid and reflecting minds, we think, to one of two conclusions; either, first, that the presentiment is an intimation of coming events which Providence, directly or through the agency of His special spiritual messengers, gives to mortals to warn them of the threatened evil, that they may avoid it, or that they may have an opportunity to prepare to meet the fate which they are not permitted to escape;—or second, that these presentiments are caused by the operation of those mysterious spiritual sympathies by which one mind, it is said, sometimes becomes apprised of, or least, affected by, what is silently passing in another mind; so that one man may thus be darkly informed of the plottings which are going on against him in the mind of another, and even to the extent that a mortal may, in the same manner, receive impressions of approaching evil from attendant spiritual beings, who may be hovering around, and looking upon us in commiseration, in view of the doom which they see is about to overtake us.

These are the two conclusions, from which we, at least, find ourselves compelled to choose. Which is the most correct one? While most of those who are guided by the simple faith of the Christian, in its literal teachings, will probably adopt the first named, there are many, we apprehend, inclined to believe in the correctness of the latter, conceiving it to be in accordance, probably, of some fixed law of Providence, which, though but imperfectly revealed to us, may be equally well calculated to carry out His designs. And who can say that it is not so!

"For knowledge strives in vain to feel her way
Amidst these marvels of the mind."

D. P. THOMPSON.

—[Home Magazine.

If the cares of life press heavily upon you, look around, and see how many there be who are equal or greater sufferers than yourself. Though not insensible to your condition, for that would argue callousness, yet comfort will come to you, almost unawares, if you "make the best of it."

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