

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

"Brethren, fear not: for Error is mortal and cannot live, and Truth is immortal and cannot die."

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The Principles of Nature.

THE MASTER PRINCIPLE.

CONTRIBUTED FOR THE SPIRIT MESSENGER,
BY FRANCIS H. GREEN.

It has been said, and it has been repeated, until the saying has grown trite, that "THERE IS NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN;" and, physically speaking, there is nothing new; because the elements of all things were created at the beginning; but relatively considered, there is much that is not only novel, but interesting and valuable. That almost every day witnesses new combinations—new applications of material and forces, I think none will deny, and if such denial *should* be made, there is sufficient force in the power of Steam alone, whose mechanical properties have been discovered within the last century, to explode the negation, by a single breath. Yet almost all the theories—all the inventions—all the philosophies of the three past centuries, have been connected with physical science; while there has been comparatively little advancement in the science of mind. The master spirits of past ages have been thus engaged, in considering the properties of matter, and the laws which govern material forms. They were, consequently, bound to the material. This was certainly a necessary period in the progress of mental development; for as the material precedes the spiritual, so must the growth, knowledge, and study of it, be also anterior.

The natural tendency of thought is toward space—or, in other words, expansion; and if the subject which chiefly engages our attention is a lofty one, there will be a corresponding exaltation of the mind. By continually dwelling on carnal things—by which I mean the body, its necessities, conveniences, pleasures, and adornments—we are wedded to the carnal, while by contemplating spiritual things we become spiritualized. We naturally grow into the likeness and measure of our Thought, be it whatever it may. The real Man, that is the MIND, is an aggregate of all perception, motion, and thought, as the body is an aggregate of food and drink, and the vitality furnished by the atmosphere. In other words, the Man is the result of all he has known, thought and felt. By a necessary consequence, if the thoughts and feelings are essentially gross, the character, also, will be gross and sensual.

The misfortune of society seems to have been, that the very refinement which developed and perfected all the arts of life, brought luxury in its train. Luxury demands wealth, and has thus created new necessities—an unnatural stimulus—and a false estimate of things. The *reputed* value of the human being, in the popular estimation, at least, has passed from the interior to the exterior—from the man himself, to the houses, the lands, the dress—nay, to the very coffers of dead metal, which may be locked, or unlocked, by a simple action of the will. A fierce contest for the monopoly of these unreal dignities has taken possession of the world. In all human transactions the selfish spirit governs; and thus we are continually fettered by our mere animal instincts; and the progress of the race is greatly retarded.

Nevertheless, taking into consideration the whole aspect and character of things—the absolute degree of knowledge and light—we shall see that this age stands almost immeasurably before even the glorious eras of Egyptian, Judean, Grecian, and Roman Art. The single faculty of the Imagination was paramount in the early times; and for the very reason that this was completely unchecked, while, at the same time, all the motive forces were concentrated in the hands of *the few*. The results were

stupendous and magnificent, beyond all comparison. But when Reason, the centripetal force of the soul, came into action, though the immediate effect of the balancing power was to check the wild roaring of her more brilliant sister, yet a clearer, more uniform, and circular orbit was the consequence. While there is greater diffusion, there is less concentration of light and power. There are fewer splendid Individuals, but the Masses are coming into the light; and the Race is advancing.

Mr. Cole's two beautiful pictures of "The Past," and "Present," illustrate this idea very happily. "The Past" represents a splendid scene of a Tournament. Castellated structures, with Knights and Ladies, in the most magnificent array, occupy the fore ground; and over them is poured an intense glow of light; while the crowd of peasantry, and serfs, are cast into the obscure shadows of the back ground. "The Present" exhibits a wide champaign, over which there is a nearly equal diffusion of mild and pleasant light, which is thrown through the apertures of an old Ruin in the distance—the Light of the Present breaking through the Ruins of the Past. Farmers and Artisans, engaged in their respective occupations, turn their intelligent faces towards the observer and the light; while comfortable dwellings occupy the conspicuous heights; and cottages peep out from pleasant little nooks among the hills and valleys.

But as a Race we have not yet quite realized this idea. Let us look abroad—and we need not look far, to perceive that the great majority of men—nay, that almost all men are under a necessity of engaging in the strife for money. Selfishness is the supreme law of society, and one must be on the alert if he would not be completely trodden down and crushed by the eager and desperate throngs. When a man finds that his neighbors are at once plotting, underplotting, and over-reaching the too honest and the simple; in sheer self defence, he must, also, plot, and underplot, and make the greatest possible capital out of his own shrewdness—if he would even *live*. It is evident to all candid and careful observers of the times, that there must be a purer thought, a more generous spirit, and a higher motive, before we can begin to approach that happy state, of which the ancient Bards sang, and which has come even yet nearer, to the rapt vision of modern philanthropists. This fearful and unnatural antagonism between man and man, must be checked; and, as a necessary result of this, there will be nobler impulses, and a higher standard of action.

Look now at the mass of human character, as it presents itself, and see what are its objects—its motives—its rewards—the ends for which it labors. I leave out of the question the unfortunate Poor, whose mental powers are all absorbed by their instincts, and the imperative necessities growing out of these—while they continually grow faint, and fainter, in the struggle for life. These can, for the present, do no otherwise than as they do, and be no otherwise than as they are. The body must be fed, before the mind can be successfully cultivated. But take a peep at our comfortable farmers—our shop-keepers—our well-fed and thriving mechanics—our merchants; nay, we will not neglect our professional men, and scholars—whose minds *should* have a more generous expansion and a wider scope. What do we find them interested in, and for the most part of the time, *talking* about? The great duties of Life—moral responsibilities—mental phenomena, or any of the forms of Science, or Art? Nothing like it. We hear a monotonous chime of the rise and fall of stocks—the state of the markets—the prices of cotton, sugar, and coffee—the rise or fall of home produce—land speculation—tariffs—*banking systems*. In short, whatever has the closest relationship to money, as an ultimate end, would be found the engrossing topic.

In the domestic circle—in the bar-rooms and dining-halls of our public houses—at the corners of the streets—in the lobby of

the theatre, and the portico of the church—you will catch the same, or similar discussions. The desire of wealth is an epidemic that knows no intermission of its rage—a fever which finds no mitigation of its thirst. This is what most men are toiling for, from the rising of the sun, until the going down thereof—day in and day out—year after year. This is what, by anticipation, drives the share of Time in deep furrows over the brow of the young man, and sprinkles his locks with a premature grey.

And what is most commonly the end of this fierce encounter, which converts every man into every other man's enemy? First, disappointment in the desired end. They who sacrifice to this modern Moloch, find that as they have "sown the wind," so do they "reap the whirlwind." Too often do they feel, after reviewing their inglorious life-struggle, that they have wasted their energies for what is, in the highest sense, unsubstantial and unreal—that they have sacrificed their life for that which is "not bread." Nothing is truer than the proverb, that "Riches take to themselves wings and fly away;" and should they, by some accident, abide long with their votaries, they seldom fill the mind or satisfy the heart, even of the grossest; because every man has a mind, and however inert and deformed it may have become in the unmanly pursuits of life, still it craves something which cannot be found in any amount or measure of external riches. The false and unnatural stimulus of the quest and struggle, occasions a disproportionate development, and a morbid sensibility of the lower propensities, while the higher powers, both mental and moral, are left dwarfish and powerless. Thus the character becomes deformed with frightful contortions, and the mind that with higher aims might have attained to gigantic energies, becomes cramped and stultified.

The fable of Midas has less of fiction in it than of fearful and bitter truth. Are there any gifted with a power that turns every thing they touch to gold?—straightway their meats and drinks become metallized also, and choke them in the swallowing. Midas, notwithstanding his great wealth, had very little taste. He declared that the music of Pan was superior to that of Apollo, when the enraged god bestowed on him a pair of asses' ears, to show his ignorance and stupidity. He took every precaution to conceal the defect from his attendants; but a slave, having spied the malformation, could scarce forbear crying aloud, in the triumph which inferior castes always feel in discovering any defect in the ranks above them. But fearing the king's anger, he dug a hole in the ground, and whispered there, that MIDAS HAD ASSES' EARS. The poets say that a cluster of reeds sprang up over the spot; and when the wind stirred them, they uttered the words which had been whispered beneath, thus proclaiming to the world the shame of Midas. So it is with his descendants; for he has many, even in these days. In proportion as the sands of the rivers are converted by their presence into grains of gold, do they develop the assinine character, and appendages; nor will all their wealth hide their deformity. There will be ever some slave to whisper their deficiencies in secret; and insensible things will spring up around them, and become vocal with their disgrace.

And there is a philosophical necessity for this. The difficulty does not exist in the abstract possession of money, or any of the goods, chattels, and appurtenances, which are made to constitute wealth, so long as these are held subordinate to higher thoughts, and nobler aims. The human character is three fold, being composed of physical, intellectual, and moral powers. If any one set of these faculties is inordinately developed, it must be at the expense of the others; and hence the equilibrium is disturbed, and the harmony destroyed. But most especially is this true, when only the inferior powers—the propensities—are alone educated and strengthened. Where these are permitted to gain the ascendancy, as must always be the case in the exclusive pursuit of what can only feed and nurture them, the most successful in the chase will find, if ever he obtains leisure to look into himself, that instead of giving to the world the likeness of a true man, he has only put in his stead a mere cautious and cunning animal.

Yet such a state is, to a considerable extent, inseparable from the present condition of society. If one would live, now, he

must toil, and fight, and plot, and counterplot; for since combativeness, secretiveness, and acquisitiveness, are invested with the reigns of social government,—since only their issues are current coin, and all abuses, under certain forms, are legalized, he must stand against them clad in their own armor, and defended by their own weapons.

[TO BE CONCLUDED.]

The Laws of Nature.

The ills of life are multiplied a thousand fold in consequence of our ignorance of the laws of Nature, or of that disobedience which arises from neglect and want of consideration. It must not be forgotten that the laws of the mental constitution and its relations are as imperative as those of the physical; and that when we have violated a law of the mind, the punishment is frequently found in the penalty which follows the infringement of some physical law to which the former violation has conducted. A principal law of the mental constitution is, that the intellectual and moral powers shall be kept in the ascendancy, and exerted in controlling and regulating the exercise of the propensities and passions. Most unquestionably a very large amount of all the physical ills of our being, happen when these last have obtained the mastery. If ambition seize the man, if he yield to the love of glory, or the love of power, or the love of pomp and splendor, or the love of gain—that basest of all human affections—or if the grosser passions possess him; what is to be looked for, but that he should be hurried into every conceivable position of exposure and danger, to meet the just and necessary reward of his doings? Moved by a fretful and feverish excitement, caution is suspended, prudence is lost, and reason is quite dethroned. He looks to his purpose, and nothing but his purpose. He employs fearful agencies which he can not always control, and in his impatience he tasks them for power and for speed, until nature herself revolts at his presumption, and visits him with awful retributions. He tempts the furious ocean. He dares the angry sky. He is found panting beneath the line. He is found shivering at the poles. He plunges into the forests. He dives into the depths of the earth. Nothing stays him till he has tried every hazard within the reach and compass of his unnatural energies.

Nor are the evils which follow from a failure to preserve the supremacy of the intellect and of the moral sentiments, such only as are thus alluded to. He encounters dangers of a different order, but not less fatal to his peace. Jealousies disturb him. He is racked with envy. He perpetrates mischief, perhaps secret murder, and is stung with remorse. He wrangles with himself and with his household. He substitutes superstition for religion; absurd belief and causeless terror for a gentle faith and a confiding piety. He becomes the prey of every bold pretender—the subject and the vassal of every subtle, petty tyrant. If he be restless and nervous, he may stimulate himself to madness, and die of frenzy. If he be indolent, he may bear about a bloated, living corpse above the ground, long after it were better it should be rotting beneath it.

And besides the evils of life which flow directly from violations of the laws of the mental constitution, and indirectly from the infringement of physical laws to which a governing passion or propensity may lead, there are others—neither few nor small. It is a great error to suppose that when a man is acting under a rule of right, or a rule of duty, or a rule of benevolence, he will therefore be pardoned all his transgressions against the natural laws. Such is not the government of God. He will not pardon one of them. If a missionary were to set out to cross the ocean in a vessel utterly incapable of performing the voyage, he would be as certainly wrecked, as if he were a murderer fleeing from justice. It is a great gain, doubtless, and indispensable to happiness, that the moral sentiments should predominate over the mere animal habits and affections; but this obedience to one set of laws will never save a man from the penalties due to the violation of another set of laws. So surely as the sun rises on the evil and on the good, and the rain descends on the just and on the unjust, so surely will every infringement of natural

law be followed by its appropriate and appointed consequence, whether it be to the evil or to the good, to the just or to the unjust.—*D. D. Barnard.*

Psychological Department.

CLAIRVOYANCE.

The existence of an internal sight, which, under certain favorable conditions of the body, may be developed and manifested, can be shown to essentially depend on the spiritual constitution of man. If the internal organization is perfect, it must possess endowments corresponding with the physical senses—if the interior being is the real man, it must have an inherent power of perception, which, when fully unfolded in the torpid and death-like state of the body, is superior to the outward vision. The following facts, illustrative of this power, were elicited in the recent discussion held at Bridgeport, Conn. A statement relating to events occurring in his own experience, was given by Dr. S. S. Lyon, now a resident of Newark, N. J., as follows :

“In the year 1846, while I was residing in the city of New York, the following incident occurred. My little girl was, at the time referred to, boarding in Newark, N. J. On a Monday morning I left her apparently in perfect health, and returned to New York. About the middle of the same week, as, on one occasion, I was about to awaken Mr. Davis from the magnetic sleep, he suddenly arrested my efforts and bade me stop, saying, ‘Your little girl is very sick at Newark, of which fact you will soon be informed through another source, if you do not hasten immediately to her.’ He then gave me a diagnosis of her case, with a prescription which he said would afford the necessary relief, and desired me to make all possible haste. On my arrival at Newark, I found her in precisely the same condition as he had described, and applied the remedies suggested, the effects of which were exactly the same as had been promised. It should be remarked, also, that a messenger had been previously despatched to inform me of my daughter’s illness, which I must have passed on the way. Thus was the statement of Mr. Davis verified in every particular; and I would observe here that neither I myself nor Mr. Davis knew anything of the circumstance which he so accurately described, previous to the time of receiving his impression in the clairvoyant state. This is only one of numerous cases in my experience, of an equally striking and remarkable nature.”

In addition to the above, the annexed statement of facts, drawn up and signed by Dr. S. S. Lyon and B. Mallory, was presented in illustration of the clairvoyant power :

“In the autumn of 1845, the following announcements were made by A. J. Davis while entranced at the residence of S. B. Brittan. After mentioning several events, then future, which have since transpired, Mr. Davis proceeded to say that circumstances would arise to induce Mr. Brittan to leave Bridgeport on the ensuing spring and remove to Albany, where it was emphatically declared he would be settled. On being asked who would succeed Mr. Brittan as Pastor of his society at Bridgeport, he replied that different persons would temporarily supply his place, but that ultimately Rev. Moses Ballou would assume the pastoral relation. Existing circumstances did not then indicate any such change as was here mentioned, and so far from Mr. Brittan being influenced by this prediction, he closed an engagement to remain with his society the ensuing year; and he has assured us that he did not believe that the prophecy of Mr. Davis in this particular would prove true. Early in the spring of 1846, the circumstances denoted by Mr. Davis did transpire, and were the means of dissolving his (Mr. Brittan’s) connection with the society in Bridgeport. A few days after this, Mr. Brittan received a letter from Albany containing an invitation to take the pastoral charge of the society there, which invitation was accepted. Since that time, Mr. Quimby, Mr. Fletcher, and others, have temporarily supplied the desk, until the settlement of Mr. Ballou. The foregoing statement we severally certify is in all respects true.”

Spiritual Organization.

When it is considered that in all matter there exists an inherent tendency to assume organic forms and relations, and that this tendency is constantly increased as matter ascends the scale of refinement, we shall easily arrive at the conclusion that the spirit, being the most sublimated of all substances, dwells within as an organized body. The physical organism may be regarded as the mould or pattern by which the inward being is fashioned, the spirit extending itself through every limb, and assuming the precise form of its earthly habitation. That man possesses this two fold body, and that the spiritual is not destroyed by any injury or loss of the material, may be shown from the facts presented in the following physiological problem, recorded in the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal :—

“It has been observed that persons who have lost a limb, or a part of one, are at times very much troubled with an intolerable itching, or sometimes pain, in the fingers or toes of the extremity which is lost. A case of this kind lately presented itself to us for advice, which, being a little out of the common course, we have thought proper to give to our readers. A young man had his hand amputated just above the wrist, on account of having it shattered by the bursting of a gun. This happened some two years since and the deficiency is supplied by a wooden hand. At times, he tells us that he has the most intolerable itching between these wooden fingers, in fact, insupportable, and, to use his own words, he would give a hundred dollars for the chance to give them a scratching. At other times, he has much pain where the fingers should be, and he can only obtain relief by altering their position. When free from the pain or itching, he can discover no difference between that hand and the sound one. He can will the fingers of the lost hand to act, and they seem to obey. At times, the ends of the fingers are quite numb and cold; being partly flexed, he feels that he has not the power to extend them. There are other phenomena connected with this case, which, with those we have given, would be very difficult to account for on physiological principles.”

Perception of Jesus.

Some instances of a miraculous knowledge in the life of Jesus may remind us of the “*clear-and-long-sightedness*” of persons in a magnetic state, or of those in a similar condition. As Jesus saw Nathaniel under the fig-tree, so magnetic persons see their physician, their relatives, and sometimes even indifferent individuals, in distant houses and remote parts of the country; as he spoke to the woman of Samaria of her six husbands, so magnetic somnambulists have frequently read the most secret concerns in the hearts of those with whom they were conversing; and as he knew in what part of the lake a quantity of fish had crowded together, unnoticed by his disciples, though they were experienced fishermen, so there are persons who are able to tell where metals or bones are buried, where water is concealed under thick layers of earth, and some even, to whom the body of others is transparent as it were, so that they can see its innermost parts, and describe their condition or ailment, as the case may be.—*Strauss.*

Dreams.

Dreaming, as the precursor and accompaniment of diseases, deserves continued investigation, not because it is to be considered as a spiritual divination, but because the unconscious language often very clearly shows to those who can comprehend its meaning, the state of the patient. According to Albert, lively dreams are in general a sign of the excitement of the nervous action. Soft dreams are a sign of slight irritation of the brain; often a nervous fever announcing the approach of a favorable crisis. Frightful dreams are a sign of determination of blood to the head. Dreams about blood and red objects are signs of inflammatory conditions. Dreams about rain and water are often signs of diseased mucous membranes and dropsy. Dreams in which the patient sees any part of the body, especially suffering, indicate disease of that part.—*Dr. Winslow’s Journal of Psychological Medicine.*

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

R. P. AMBLER, EDITOR.

SPRINGFIELD, MASS., FEBRUARY 8, 1851.

NOTES BY THE WAY-SIDE

NUMBER ONE.

By the side of every famishing child of Humanity, who pleads to us in the form of stricken-hearted woman—the criminal in his cell—the slave in his chains, stands an Angel. If you turn them away, you also cause their angels to depart weeping. If you receive them, you cause their angels to linger around you, and secure their ministrations and blessings.

The kind of love we receive is proportionable to the quality of our actions. The love we bestow upon a drunkard or criminal is different from that we bestow upon the artist, the prophet, the man, or the friend. The love we bestow upon a star, is different from that we bestow upon the moth. In proportion to the harmony that exists between ourselves and the Divine Mind, will be the chasteness and beauty of the love we shall attract.

The production of the cloud and bow is not the result of the operation of different laws. The same law that distills the rain-drops, hangs the bow in the heavens and brings the unclouded sky.

Every chain we put around our brother's neck, leaves the other end resting and rusting in our own souls. And thus, by throwing the yoke from off our own shoulders, we throw it from off our brother's also.

Repentance is a sort of conscious abasement, that is in a degree unhealthy as a means of religious culture so long as the sense of shame remains.

The stars overflowing with their light, flowers with the dew-drops resting on their leaves, represent the true life of Joy and the true idea of Development. When the wrong act is done and put away by different laws of impulse and action operating within us, let the memory of it die. The flower has no use for the leaves after they have withered and dropped away. They mar the harmony and beauty of the plant.

Purity, whose dewy eyes see the sacredness and beauty of all things, is greater than piety with bashfulness, or modesty that has a sense of shame.

There is a current rushing from the soul that directs our best thoughts towards heaven, as a stream bends the stems of the flowers that hang upon its bosom.

If it is true that God is infinite and the Fount of all life, what are we but rills fed by Him? Then shall we not in time be freed from all our sins and sorrows? Do not fountains always purify their streams?

If what we call Matter and Spirit are married together, must not the Spirit-land and this join,—as God and the Universe—the Body and its Soul?

As there is a law of birth that produces an equilibrium of the sexes, so there is a law that predisposes man to each and every pursuit in life requisite for the existence of the society in which the individual may be born. Thus every thing in nature rhymes—man and his conditions, cause and effect, relations and possessions, and every man is born to sustain a particular character, which he will always retain, even after his soul becomes harmonized.

To comprehend the beginning and the ending of things, is an

infinite thought, and therefore it requires an Infinite Mind to grasp it. Why, then, should a finite being darken his soul by doubt because he cannot compass Infinity.

We may have a short-handed way with skeptics. The principle of life is an unseen principle. The fact that man is a derivative being and that the lesser cannot produce the greater, proves that the Power by which man has been produced is greater than man. This endows this Power with Intelligence. The Effect always supposes the Cause. The cause from its very nature must be self-existent. The Effect derivative. Whatever is self-existent, must be Infinite. The unity of Nature gives personality to this Intelligence. To understand farther concerning the character of the Great Supreme Mind, we have only to attempt to expand our faculties to Infinity, and we shall then be in the way to understand the object of our search.

The Immortality of the Soul may be demonstrated by a very simple process. Every thing in Nature arrives at maturity before it ceases to exist,—the flower, the star, the tree. Does man arrive at maturity at what we call death? So far as perfection or completeness of being is concerned, does not the humblest flower that blooms around our feet, put us to shame, if there exists no life beyond that of our present bodies? When the flower has put forth its leaves, and subserved the purposes for which it was designed—the exhaling of its perfume, the bearing of its fruit or seed—it must die. Nature has no farther use for it. Can it never be said so of man? Does not every day bring new wants, new desires, and thus necessitate the next, and so on forever? Immortality is no uncommon thought. It is but the miracle of every day constantly repeated. The philosophy of it is seen by the relations we sustain to God, that of perpetual receptivity.

We add to ourselves something of every thing to which we are attracted in others, and in Nature. Thus the soul gets something like perfume from the flower, sunshine from the sun, star-light from the stars, pensiveness from the woods, and a universality of thought and affection, by an attraction to the study of the entire Universe. And thus everybody is better for coming in contact with a good person. When we come in the presence of flowers, we carry a part of their fragrance away with us.

If by an act of your own volition, or otherwise, you find yourself in an uncongenial position, so far as your taste and higher faculties are concerned, and a change of circumstances would compromise the rights and feelings of others, or otherwise be productive of injury,—still be true to whatever duties may grow out of those existing relations, and by doing so, you will reap your reward. From these relations will spring new joys and whole constellations of new and beautiful thoughts, and your progress will be still continued. The angel-road to Heaven opens wherever the soul pursues the path of duty. What we lose in one thing we gain in another.

God is an Infinite Sun. Heat and light in our own material sun, correspond with Wisdom and Love in the Spiritual. The earth comes in contact with the beams of the former, and it fructifies and bears verdure and fruit. Our souls come in contact with the beams of the latter, by which the soul is surrounded, and thus thought and feeling, in all their infinite variety, spring up like a garden. This is inspiration. The measure of it we may possess, is dependent upon the harmony of our wills with the Great Supreme Mind, and the capacity of our souls to receive.

Properly speaking we cannot prove one thing to another, as we cannot think for another. We can merely lay before another mind the process by which we have reached the place we occupy, and thus give our latitude and longitude. If that mind is organized like ours, or fitted to receive the truths that may have impressed us, he may be willing to receive our company, and henceforth we walk together. There must be this preparation for every particular department of human thought and inquiry, as the earth has its seasons and times for the production of differ-

ent varieties of plants, and every clime its own varieties. There is a genius for every field of thought and investigation in which Truth may be found. The mathematician, such is his power of analysis, understands as if by intuition the loftiest problems of mathematical calculations. So with the Moralist and the Spiritualist. Now where there is this predisposition for any particular sphere of inquiry, the thought fills a want, and the truth of it is comprehended in the same way, as we know that light was intended for the eye, and air for the lungs, and as we see in the beautiful law of demand and supply every where.

S. H. LLOYD.

DISCUSSION AT BRIDGEPORT.

According to an announcement previously made in our columns, the discussion between Professor Brittan and C. C. Burr was held last week at Bridgeport, Conn., continuing on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings. It was our good fortune to be present at two interviews, in which these distinguished advocates of opposite theories, labored to set forth and fortify their respective positions. The discussion commenced with the question relating to the mental-electric theory of Psychology. On the part of Mr. Brittan it was contended that the remarkable phenomena presented in mesmeric and psychological experiments, result from the operation of mind in connection with the vital electricity of the system—that when two individuals sustaining opposite relations are brought into suitable communication, the operator, if positive, may gain control over the electric forces of the subject in such a manner as to place him entirely beneath the power of his own will. On the other hand, it was denied by Mr. Burr that either mind or electricity has anything to do in the production of these results, and was contended that they depend entirely on other and different laws of our nature. Not being present during the entire discussion of this subject, we are not prepared to speak decidedly as to the merits of the argument. It was observed, however, that in defense of the mental-electric theory, the more recently developed facts and experiments in electrical science were adduced; while the opposite hypothesis was sustained mainly by a reference to the mere opinion of certain authors, who, though distinguished and popular, belong to the conservative school of the past.

On Friday evening another subject was introduced for discussion, the question being stated as follows: "Is there a species of inward sight, or clairvoyance, which may be accepted in any case as reliable?" Of this question Prof. Brittan took the affirmative. Commencing in a calm, deliberate manner, he proceeded to unfold the essential principles on which the faculty of interior vision depends. He referred to the twofold nature of man, illustrating the fact that we are not all material, but that within the outward casing of mortality is the living spirit. This internal being he declared to be the *real man*, the outward body constituting the tabernacle in which it resides for a brief season, or the temple through whose windows it may look forth on external things. Such being the case, he inferred that the spirit must possess a refined and perfect organization, endowed with faculties and functions corresponding with those of the physical body—that beneath the outward and grosser senses exists an internal or spiritual medium of sensation, through which the spirit may have clear perceptions independently of the material organs. The speaker remarked that it was not necessary to argue the question of immortality, but that if we are to live hereafter as conscious beings, we may expect to see, feel, and hear. He then desired it to be borne in mind that we are all spirits *now*, and are already in possession of the same faculties which we may presume will be exercised hereafter. Thence it was concluded that man possesses the faculty of inward sight—a sight which, when fully developed, is as more clear and refined than the external vision, as the human spirit is more refined, sublimated, and powerful than the corruptible body. In illustration of these principles, the speaker introduced many interesting and well authenticated facts to prove the existence of the inward sight as unfolded in many individuals. Several instances of clairvoyance we represented from the writings of Zschokke, Jung, Stilling,

Swedenborg, and others, in which was clearly shown a power of internal perception which may be accepted as reliable.

On the negative side of the question, Mr. Burr admitted that there might be in some individuals a species of inward sight, but contended that this can never be relied on. It was assumed that if even one half of the prophecies of clairvoyance are correct, which he considered a larger proportion than can be justly allowed, it would still be unworthy of reliance;—if indeed there were a single instance in its entire history in which the internal vision had failed, a shade of distrust was thrown upon the whole power; for if it had failed once, it might again, and hence could not be accepted as reliable in any case. The speaker then mentioned several instances where the predictions of clairvoyance had proved to be false, and referred to some individuals who had deceived and imposed on the credulity of others, which circumstances, it was claimed, were sufficient to entirely destroy the reliability of the inward sight. He placed clairvoyance on the same ground with ordinary dreaming, which is sometimes marvellously fulfilled, but is far more likely to fail; and was careful to warn his hearers against placing any reliance on this power, as by that means they might lose their property, health, and even life.

In reply to the argument of Mr. Burr, Mr. Brittan stated that much of what his opponent had said did not touch the point in debate. He inquired the meaning of the term clairvoyance;—it signifies *clear vision*. The instances, therefore, in which this faculty has been counterfeited or has been shown not to exist, had, he claimed, no bearing upon the subject. We are now, said he, talking of clairvoyance or clear vision, not of the failures which have occurred from the absence of this power—and this, he continued, must be reliable in all cases where it really exists, as an individual who *sees clearly*, cannot be mistaken in the object to which his perceptions are directed. Mr. B. then proceeded to adduce several remarkable cases of clairvoyance which were known in that community, and were substantiated by the testimony of individuals whose statement had been attested before a Justice of the Peace. Some of these will be found in our Psychological Department.

To this reasoning Mr. Burr had the privilege of making the closing reply. He labored to show that clairvoyance is not reliable in and of itself, but that its predictions are known to be truthful only by their fulfillment. He called loudly on his opponent to show the precise law on which the internal vision depends, and assumed that unless he could do this, the latter must be considered unreliable. The remainder of his speech was little more than a repetition of his previous remarks.

On the whole, the discussion of this subject was conducted in an able and interesting manner, and we trust will be profitable in its results. With the deep consciousness that truth is immortal and must prevail, we can have no fear in subjecting any theory to the searching investigations of Reason.

R. P. A.

Interesting Incident.

While visiting at Rochester some time since, the writer was gratified with many pleasing testimonials of the reality of spiritual intercourse, received in the presence of the Fox family. On one occasion, as I was seated at a table in company with several strangers, the following incident occurred, which, though entirely unexpected, furnished the most satisfactory evidence of the nearness and intelligence of spirits. When one of the gentlemen present was conversing with one of his deceased friends, an infant spirit—as indicated by the lightness of the raps—made a signal for the Alphabet. On repeating the letters, the sentence was spelled out, "*Pa, you ask questions.*" None of us for some time understood to whom this language was addressed. The person whose communication had been interrupted, declared that he never lost a child, and the same statement was made by the rest of the company, until at last Mrs. Fish, turning to me, inquired, "Have you not lost one?"—to which I replied in the negative. Immediately there was another signal for the Alphabet, and the words spelled out were, "*If I were living, would you not call me daughter? You would be my step-father.*" It then

occurred to me that my wife, about ten years since, while living with a former husband, had lost an infant child; and on mentioning the fact, it was immediately indicated by the raps, that this was the same who had desired me to ask questions, and had described so accurately the relationship existing between us. It should be observed that I was at this time a stranger in Rochester, and that no person present could possibly have known that my wife had ever lost a child as above represented, it being a circumstance which had almost entirely faded from my own mind.

R. P. A.

SWEDENBORG AND DAVIS.

The following communication we present to our readers as the expression of a mind which claims to be free from sectarianism, and moved by a desire to obtain the truth. As to the propriety of the position taken by the writer with reference to the comparative merits of Swedenborg and Davis, the reader is at liberty to exercise his own judgment.—Ed.

MR. EDITOR:—I have read with great interest the numbers of the Spirit Messenger, sent to my order. In consequence of the numerous facts made known to us by clairvoyance, rappings, &c., respecting the spirit-world, we must soon cease to regard it as an "unknown country from whose bourne no traveler returns." To myself the events now transpiring in connection with these manifestations are particularly interesting, inasmuch as I see in them full confirmation of views long entertained and sincerely believed and cherished. These views I derive from the writings of the much calumniated Emanuel Swedenborg.

There probably never was an instance of an author, who possesses such strong and varied claims to our attention, being so long and completely unappreciated by the vast majority of mankind. He has long since passed to a higher and more congenial sphere, and yet, in the language of Douglas Jerrold, "his fame is yet to come." But come it will,—a day is now dawning that will do him justice. The night of ignorance and error—of oppression and injustice.—of utter selfishness and sensualism, is departing, and with it will die superstition, bigotry and intolerance—the barriers to all free thought and inquiry. Mankind will be no longer bound and shackled by the creeds and opinions of a by-gone age; they will reason and judge from the light that is now every where springing up around us, and the dead faith in immortality existing at the present day, to which may be traced the sensualism and worldly-mindedness of the age, must disappear; and man, becoming better acquainted with his true destiny, will strive more in the future for intellectual and moral progress, than for the transient and fading treasures of this temporary existence. To effect such a change in the human character is the mission of the new developments now being made from the inhabitants of the spiritual world. But what has been already done is only "the beginning of the end."

I am delighted with many things that are thus revealed, and more particularly with many things made known to us in the extraordinary productions of A. J. Davis; but I am again as well assured that many things revealed through him and others are not *the truth*; and that they are permitted to be revealed because they are more acceptable to the mind of the age than the truth would be, and that they are calculated and designed to help man over a transition state;—from one gross and sensual, by one rational and moral, to one spiritual and celestial. I look upon Swedenborg as the apostle of the latter.

A. J. Davis may be said to describe a beautiful country on seeing it from an eminence; or, he may be compared to a traveler in a balloon, who passes over a fertile region, every part of which is in the highest state of cultivation, and where the beauties of nature are improved and heightened by human industry,—where are cities, towns, and villages, abounding with handsome buildings, public edifices, and every evidence of a high degree of civilization. From the altitude of his position, and the rapidity of his flight, he can only take a cursory glance, and his description is necessarily of the most general character. Swedenborg is a traveler who has explored every part of that country, has made himself acquainted with the people, their laws, re-

ligion, manners, customs, employments, amusements, and every thing connected with their history, origin, and condition, by personal and constant intercourse with them for twenty-seven years. If, therefore, we desire to become acquainted with that country its institutions and inhabitants, the latter would seem to be our best guide; for, while the account of the former may be very pleasing, his description of the country cannot be so reliable as that of one who possessed immeasurably greater advantages of observing it, and who, from ocular demonstration, can vouch for all he states.

I would by no means underrate or do injustice to the writings of Davis in order to exalt Swedenborg, but from an examination and knowledge of both, it is my opinion that if the former does not lead to the study of the latter, they only half accomplish their true mission. The individual who reads and regards Davis as the ultimatum of truth and progress, is like one traveling to a distant place who halts at the first resting place and pursues his journey no further.

T. S.

Detroit, January 21, 1851.

THE COOK'S MANUAL AND AMERICAN HOUSEKEEPER; containing Receipts for making Bread, Cake, Puddings, Pastry, Custards, Jellies, Ice-creams, Sweet meats, Pickles, and for Cooking a great variety of Meat Dishes and Vegetables, all carefully prepared, and systematically arranged, by MRS. RUTH M. BAKER.

Cookery Books are not quite as thick as autumn leaves, yet it would have been difficult to persuade us, before the advent of this, that another could be well needed. Now we confess to a change of opinion. These formulas are not only excellent in themselves, but they are written in a clear, concise, and even agreeable style, with here and there a twinkling rhyme, that comes tripping in—makes its courtesy—and exit—often with as much grace as if its mission were to the drawing room, rather than to the kitchen. But in sober earnest, this is a book, beyond all other books, for the AMERICAN HOUSEKEEPER, as every one must see by cooking over only a few pages. While it has a sufficient portion of rich cookery to please the dainty palates of the Great, it is also equally well adapted to the families of the Farmer, Mechanic, and Laborer.

There is a little mystery about this name of "Baker." It looks very much as if it were tinged with a certain very agreeable color, which our readers wot of.—In short, it seems quite like the name of one who is favorably known to them, in the higher, but not more useful walks of Literature. But this is all *sub rosa*—and will be accepted in entire confidence. Twenty-five cents will buy the book. Purchase it, then, and read the riddle for yourselves; and while you are doing this, you will find out many things wholly new, and really useful; or we are much mistaken. For sale at this office.

A friend writing from Rapids, Ohio, remarks as follows: "The aspiration of the human mind reaches to immortality, and any evidence which will settle the question and place the matter beyond doubt, is of more value than the richest cargo of gold. It is supposed by many to be a hazardous undertaking to seek for evidence of future existence beyond the limits prescribed by the popular theology; but whatever evidence may be derived from this source, it is certain that skepticism is prevalent, and there is nothing but tangible facts and actual demonstration which can produce a firm conviction of the truth that man is destined to live forever."

The discussion on the subject of the rappings, was held at Bridgeport on Saturday evening last. Not finding it convenient to be present, we were obliged to forego the pleasure which might have been thus derived, and are consequently unable to present any report. Judging, however, from the debate on previous evenings, we may safely say that the occasion was one of peculiar interest, and we are much mistaken if the *theological* theory did not receive some *raps* which were sensibly felt.

"Notes by the Way-side" contain many beautiful gems of thought which it is well to treasure in the soul.

Poetry.

GLIMPSSES OF THE SPIRIT LAND.—No. 5.

WRITTEN FOR THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

BY S. H. LLOYD.

CLAIRVOYANCE.

In this vast temple of the soul,
 What fairy glimpses here have we,
 When closed are all the outer doors
 From which the outward world we see;—
 And as our spirits then may roam
 From land to land, and star to star,
 And bring the Spirit-Land so near,
 We once had thought so dimly far.

What truth and beauty then impress
 The spirit's likeness on the face,
 When as the starlight meets the star
 The Spirit-Land and we embrace;—
 And thus are mirrored on the cheek
 The shadows of that world of love,
 As through the soul the figures pass—
 The imaged forms of those above.

The eyes are closed, as night lets down
 Her curtains from the dewy skies,
 But as the night reveals the stars
 The day had hidden from our eyes;—
 So when all outer gates are closed
 And sculptured sleep our lips may seal,
 Then round our forms the Land is seen,
 That now these outer doors conceal.

And as the notes in music rise,
 And in successive scales must chime,
 So next this world that round us lies
 The Spirit-Land takes up the rhyme;—
 And all things here that now we have,
 Are types of those that there we'll see.
 As note to note, and scale to scale,
 Here typify the Harmony.

THE RAINS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SPIRIT MESSENGER,

BY MARIA F. CHANDLER.

The gentle rains, the gentle rains,
 Descending from above,—
 They bear in every lucid drop
 Sweet messages of love.
 At Heaven's baptismal fount I stand,
 And from pure Nature's beauteous hand,
 Delicious drops are falling now,
 That bathe in pearls my brow.

And thus baptised am I, into
 The name of Nature's Three—
 The Sunlight and the Waters,
 And the Winds that wander free.
 Now evermore my heart shall be,
 Subdued by their divinity;
 Until upon my spirit's sight
 Shall break celestial Light.

Until upon another shore
 Entrancing sounds I hear—
 The dashing of the waters
 Of the Spirit-Land so dear—
 Where zephyrs of immortal birth,
 More pure, more soft than those of earth,
 Shall fan the flame of Love's own fires,
 And sweep angelic lyres.

Miscellaneous Department.

THE MOTHER'S DREAM OF HEAVEN.

Three beautiful children made glad the home of a happy mother. Her love for them was intense, and her care never failing. They were in her thoughts all the day long, and in her dreams at night. The youngest of these children was a boy. He had large, deep blue eyes, and his long lashes, when he slept, lay upon his cheeks like the lashes of a woman. Something in his face ever awakened in the minds of those who gazed upon him, thoughts of heaven; and many said of him that he was but a stranger here, and would soon return to his own country. And such thoughts came, sometimes, to the happy mother, and then her heart trembled and grew faint.

At last, what had been feared befel the child. The Angel of Death came and removed him from this earthly abode to his heavenly dwelling place; and the stricken mother bowed her head, and would not listen to the voice of consolation.

"God is good," were the words of one who sought to comfort her, "and he afflicts us in loving kindness."

"I will not believe it," replied the weeping mother. "It was not good to take from me my precious boy."

"He is with the angels—think of that. The great problem of life is solved, and it is well with him. There is neither doubt, nor fear, nor anxiety on his account, for he is safe in the everlasting habitations of our Father in heaven."

The mother listened, and the consoler went on.

"No more grief, no more sorrow, no more pain! Think of that. Let not your thoughts droop with feeble wings about the dark and gloomy grave. He is not there. But let them rise on swift and sunny pinions to the beautiful dwelling-place of the angels. His decaying body alone fills the grave; but his pure spirit, that gave life and beauty to its earthly tenement, has gone to its better home. Would you have him back again? Had you power, with a word, to call him to earth, would you speak that word, now that he has escaped the long trial and suffering that comes to all who have to make the journey of life? No, I am sure you would not."

The tears of the mother ceased to flow, and she bent near to him who spoke, and listened more intently. He went on.

"All children who die are raised up to heaven and received by angels, who love them with the utmost tenderness. Your dear boy, though he has been taken from an earthly mother, has already found a heavenly one. And you have not really lost him, for he is present in your thoughts, and you love him with even an intenser affection than before. To part with him is hard, for our natural feelings cling to those we love, and their removal brings exquisite pain. But our natural feelings have in them the taint of selfishness, and it is needful that they should be purified; or rather that they should die, in order that spiritual affections may be born. And what are spiritual affections? The love of things good and true for their own sake. And such affections are not born unless natural affections are laid in the grave. The death of these affections is always accompanied with pain; but the birth of corresponding spiritual affections will be joy. The deep sorrow you now feel is a natural sorrow. Your heart is aching for its loss; and even while reason and religion tell you that this removal from earth to heaven is one of infinite blessedness to your boy, you mourn his loss, and will not be comforted. But it is for you to look up, and feel an exquisite joy in the thought that you have added one to the company of God's angels. It may not be now; it cannot be now; for the smiting of your natural affections is too recent, and the waters of affliction must flow for a time. And it is good that they should flow forth, in order that spiritual consolation may flow into your heart from heaven. But this influx of healing waters will depend on yourself. You must be willing to look up and seek comfort from the only source whence it springs. You must be spiritually glad that your child has gone to heaven—that is, glad for his sake, and for those who are made happier in heaven by his presence. There is such a gladness—but it thrills in a region of the mind far above the place where natural affec-

tions move—and it is full of that interior delight which fills the hearts of angels.”

Thus spoke the comforter, and his words found their way into the mother's heart. She did not make a response, but her thoughts were filled with new images; and even in the bitterness of her sorrow, she tried to look away from her own loss, and think of all that her absent one had gained.

In the night following, as she lay slumbering on her pillow, which was wet with tears, a sweet dream, that was not all a dream, came to her. She saw before her a company of angels surrounded by infants and little children, the latter dressed in white garments, with flowers blushing amid their clustering curls. They were in a garden, and the children were sporting with one another, and ever as they drew near or touched the flowers that sprang up around them, each blossom glowed with a new and living beauty. Eagerly the mother looked for her precious boy, for she knew that he was in this company; and as she looked intently, one of the angels, who held a child by the hand, separated herself from the rest, and approached her. She knew her sweet one in an instant; and oh! inexpressible delight! she knew the angel also. It was her own mother! Her mother, who had been taken to heaven when she was only a child, but whose gentle, loving face had ever remained pictured on her memory.

Oh! the exquisite joy of that moment. Her own mother was now the angel-mother of her beautiful boy. How sweet the smile that beamed upon her from eyes seen only in dreams for years! And as her lost darling sprang into her arms and laid his head upon her bosom, a voice of exquisite melody, whose tones had come to her as from afar off, many and many a time, since childhood, said,—

“Daughter, be comforted! He was too pure, too gentle, too frail for earth. Life would have been a scene of pain and suffering; he would have been sorely tried and tempted of evil, and perchance might have fallen by the way. Therefore, in mercy, he was removed to his heavenly land, where there is no evil to tempt him, no pain to afflict, no grief to bow the stricken heart. Sorrow was not for him, for all is well. He has been committed to my care, and I will love him with a tenderness made deeper for the love that is felt for you. A little while longer, and you will be called home. I will keep your darling safe for you until that time.”

An angel's kiss then warmed the mother's cheek, and she awoke. Heavenly light and heavenly music were in her chamber. Slowly the light faded, and the music grew fainter and more distant; and as she listened after it, bending her spirit towards heaven, she still heard the sounds; and even yet she can hear them, when earthly grief is hushed, and her mind is elevated into heavenly tranquility.

From that time joy mingled with the mother's sorrow. She believed the dream. To her it was not fantastic, but a vision of things that were. She had a treasure above, and her heart was there also. Love's golden chain had extended its links, and the last one was fastened in heaven. Daily, hourly, momentarily, she missed the one who was away, and she longed to hear again the sound of his happy voice, and to look upon his beautiful face; but she knew where he was, and that it was well with him; and she dried her eyes and patiently bore her affliction.—*Golden Grains from Life's Harvest Field, by T. S. Arthur.*

Love of Flowers.

Flowers, in all ages, have been made the representatives of innocence and purity. We decorate the bride and strew her path with flowers; we present the undefiled blossoms as a similitude of her beauty and untainted mind, trusting that her destiny through life will be like theirs, grateful and pleasing to all. We scatter them over the shell, the bier and the earth, where we consign our mortal blossom to the dust, as emblems of transient joy, fading pleasures, withered hopes; yet rest in sure and certain trust that each in due season will be renewed again. The love of flowers seems a naturally-implanted passion, without any alloy or debasing object as a motive. The cottage has its pink, its rose, its polyanthus; the villa its geranium, its dahlia, its clem-

atis; we cherish them in youth—we admire them in declining years; though perhaps it is the early flowers of spring that bring us the greatest degree of pleasure, and our affections seem immediately to expand at the sight of the first opening blossom under the sunny walls or sheltered bank, however humble the race may be.

HOME.

What a beautiful word is home! How it thrills our whole being! How it turns, and changes, and transforms the heart. In this world—a world of hopes—hours and years of joy, golden visions, fair as heaven, are hidden; and in manhood, when the cares of the world have hardened the heart, and benumbed the heart-strings of the affections, even then the vision of the early home will tune them to music. Round home, images of beauty, and forms we love forever, cluster. These are the links which unite the living with the dead, give us glimpses of scenes which are imperishable, and fill our ears with echoes of melody, though the living voice may be singing anthems in heaven.

Home is the place where our hopes and happiness, our tears and sighs, our prayers and aspirations, have ever blended, and from whence they have been wafted as grateful incense to the skies. Here we have nourished bright thoughts and holy affections, lavished love upon the dear ones of the family group, and perhaps watched with eager eye the gradual unfolding of some sun-eyed flower, and, while we watched, beheld the angels come and carry it above.

Mankind, oppressed with toil, and care, and penury—benighted with error, ignorance, and sin—have their existence lightened by one beacon, are favored with one bliss, which no wealth can buy, which no change can utterly extinguish. The world-sick wanderer, as he wendeth his weary way with baffled footsteps: the wretched outcast, as he sendeth a longing look to the scenes where once he strayed; the toil-worn rustic, as he returns from his daily labor at night-fall; the soul, as it is emancipated from the body, pluming its wings for a heavenward flight—all, all utter the thrilling cry,—

“Home! home! sweet home!”

This, like the burning lens, collects into one point the scattered rays of affection, and in the wildest storm and gloomiest time, kindles a bright and sacred fire.

Home is the watchword which fires with emotion the true heart; it is the pole-star which guides the mariner over the storm-swept ocean, and through the black and angry night. Home is the boon which infinite mercy has given to erring mortals, designing by this to knit us in the bonds of love—to grant us one holy consecrated place, where the brighter home may be shadowed to our souls. God be thanked for the gift of home. May it ever be cherished as the most sacred spot on earth, and be pervaded by those holy influences which make it the lower Paradise of man and woman; and over it may the twin angels of Purity and Love hover, to guard and defend it from unholy intrusion. Palsied be the hand that shall ever be lifted to disturb the stone of the sacred edifice.—*Christian Repository.*

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