

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

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

VOL. 1.

SPRINGFIELD, SATURDAY, AUGUST 17, 1850.

NO. 2.

The Principles of Nature.

IS MAN A FREE AGENT?

WRITTEN FOR THE SPIRIT MESSENGER,
BY A. J. DAVIS.

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2.]

It has been shown that man, as a physical being, has no absolute and unconditional freedom in his will or movements; and I am fully persuaded that the philosophical understanding will readily and cheerfully concede the proposition, that *that which is physically and scientifically true, cannot be spiritually and theologically false*; for the universe is one inseparable whole, without antagonisms, without contradiction, and without the least possible shade of actual inconsistency.

Concerning the terms, "Free Agent," a few remarks are deemed necessary. On reflection, I think it will appear evident to the reader's mind, that the terms involve a positive contradiction. According to the highest and most popular authorities in theological research, and whose definition of words is usually received as correct, the term "Agency," cannot be employed consistently, in connection with the word "Free," as these terms are used by theologians. Sir William Blackstone understands the term, "Agency," as appropriate to the position of any individual who acts, or performs business for another; hence, it is proper to apply this term to the occupation of a factor, a deputy, a minister, or to the business of an attorney; but it is a positive absurdity to employ the term, "Free," in the same connection. If an individual is an *agent*—if he holds an *agency*—he is necessarily transacting business for another; and it certainly will appear evident, that, should a man be thus engaged, he is not a free, but a *bound* agent; such a man is acting for another and not for himself. Inasmuch, therefore, as these terms are inconsistent with an understanding and solution of the question under present examination, it is proper to investigate and analyze the proposition in a new and more philosophical form, viz: *Is it true that man has absolute freedom of the will?*

By *freedom of the will*, theologians, and all who are devoted to the mythological theology of modern days, understand that an individual has, from the moment he arrives at the age of discretion and responsibility, concentrated in himself a power whereby he can become the supreme ruler of his own instincts, propensities, impulses, and movements; that he can *love or hate, act or rest, preserve and destroy*, just as he internally wills to do; and that he can develop good or evil, truth or falsehood, heaven or hell, as, when, and where he desires. I trust no earnest disciple of mythological theology, (such as is proclaimed from popular pulpits throughout Europe and America), will venture to accuse me of misrepresenting their definition of free agency; because it cannot be denied that clergymen suppose the human soul invested with the power of selecting, at any time, whom it will follow—God, or the Devil!

I have already said that the supposed truthfulness of the theological assertion, that man has an absolute "free will," is the *thread* by which the whole system of unphilosophical theology is suspended in the sacerdotal atmosphere. It is the only foundation whereon rests the entire theological superstructure, whose towering, but trembling turrets are visible in our land, sending their discordant and lifeless proportions high up in the air—shutting out, so to speak, the broad light of heaven from the soul's aspiring gaze. Almost every sect in Christendom admits that the *Atonement* was instituted as a means, whereby mankind might escape the otherwise everlasting effects, consequent upon the commission of the "Original Sin;" and yet, at the same

time, this identical *Atonement* was intended by the Divine Being, who, clergymen say, instituted it, to operate as a means of satisfying the infinite demands of eternal justice, which have been infringed by the disobedience of the first human pair.

The intelligent reader—he who does not consult superficial and popular authorities, but the sublime and everlasting teachings of Nature, Reason, and Intuition—such a reader need not be informed that all these cardinal principles in theology, are wholly and unqualifiedly erroneous. Even the doctrine of there having been at any period in the earth's dark and mysterious history, a "first human pair," sounds to the ear of a geologist like the tale of an Egyptian priest. But how transcendently absurd are the suppositions of clergymen, respecting the higher consequences of man's having in his possession a free, untrammelled will! It was the supposed freedom of the *Will* which caused the fabled angel to make war in heaven; and, according to the celebrated Pollock, it is the power, which, by being impiously exercised, peoples the innumerable caverns of Hell. This impressive and orthodox poet affirms that—

"Each has his conscience, each his reason, will,
And understanding, for himself to search,
To choose, reject, believe, consider, act."

This affirmation I am impressed to consider a complete generalization of the belief of nearly all the sects in Christendom.

The opinion entertained by the most advanced believers in oriental mythology, (or popular theology,) and literature, is, that Man is born on a middle ground, being especially inclined to neither goodness nor righteousness; but that he occupies an intermediate position between holiness and wickedness—having the bequeathed ability to select his associations, to refuse the evil and choose the good, or, *vice versa*, to reject the good and choose the evil. And by the most advanced believers in oriental mythology, I do not mean the *forty* sects that have arisen from the five hundred different and conflicting versions of the Bible, since the publication of the sacred canon, but I mean the three grand divisions of protestantism, viz: Calvinism, Methodism, and Swedenborgianism. These sects imbibe and advocate the opinion, that man is situated intermediately between *good* and *evil*, and that he has the power to reject the one or the other; and, that man thus determines his own eternal character, destiny, and situation in the world beyond the grave.

Justified by the impression that there is but a very little pure reasoning among men, I will, without bestowing any more attention upon the speculations of clergymen and sectarians, with regard to this subject, proceed to consider the popular doctrines of "free agency;" and I desire the reader to open his understanding, and be exceedingly watchful as to the legitimacy of the conclusions which I shall develop by the following process of ratiocination. I will commence with the most recent improvements in the doctrine of free agency, and which are adopted by the most advanced believers in mythological theology; hence I begin with this proposition—

1. *Man is inclined neither to goodness nor wickedness.*

The absolute falsity of this theological proposition is so self-evident and conspicuous, that, but for the general fear or inability to reason on these points, which many minds feel, I could pass it by unanalyzed and unexplained. Yet, when I behold the multitude of pernicious errors, and closely combined evils, which have no other origin or foundation than the asserted and received truthfulness of this proposition, I feel strongly moved to attempt its examination.

To begin then:—It has been incontrovertibly demonstrated, that *Man* is the noblest and most perfect work of God; that, to develop his *physical*, and to eternally individualize his *spiritual* organization, all the vast, stupendous and innumerable processes of Nature were instituted; that, in order to unfold the divine

image in the human form, the Divine Mind breathed the essential elements of His inmost nature, through nature's innumerable organizations, into the organization of *Man*; and, therefore, demonstrated that man is the ultimate development of universal matter and universal spirit — that he (man) is the most perfect embodiment of matter and mind in the immeasurable universe, except the Divine Mind itself! In consequence of this sublime derivation and organization of the human soul, the assertion that man is inclined neither to good nor evil is rendered totally erroneous. For if it be conceded, and science compels this concession, that man is the highest organization in the stupendous system of nature — that he is a microcosm; that he *lives*, and *moves*, and has a *being* in God's universal spirit — then, I ask, can he be a *passive* creature when first introduced upon the earth? Can he be born without a spring of action — without an impulse — without an attraction? Is man, when first created, an *empty* vessel — a mere shell — into which flows the spirit of wickedness or holiness, as his uneducated and inexperienced "will" determines?

All nature and pure reason contradict this theological proposition; because every intelligent individual knows, by the mysterious workings of the elements of his own interior soul, that wants — desires — attractions — and impulses, are born with him; and he knows that *internally*, he is a living Whole. In truth, man inherits *inclinations* from his birth. Those which proceed from his immediate progenitors are temporal, but those which he receives from his Heavenly Father are eternal! Man is not, therefore, situated between *good* and *evil*, or heaven and hell; because, I repeat, he is the *superior* production of God and Nature; because he stands on the summit of creation — a little lower than the angels — requiring simply a constitutional harmony, and a spiritual development, to understand and enjoy their continued association. Nor is man merely a recipient. He is filled with *motion*, *life*, *sensation*, and *intelligence*; he is God manifested in the flesh; he is a son of the Most Glorious and High!

But there is another proposition which may not be wholly unworthy of notice. I allude to the following — "Man, although inclined neither to good nor evil when introduced into this probationary existence, possesses the power of choosing between them."

The enlightened intellect will readily perceive, that both of these theological propositions were expressly instituted for the purpose of rendering apparently philosophical, the assertions of the Primitive History (or Bible,) on this subject, — that is, to render man's moral attitude reasonably consistent with the biblical statements which imply the "free agency" of the soul. But let us examine the last proposition.

Is it philosophical or true to affirm that an individual can discriminate between good and evil, without possessing either an inclination toward them, or an understanding of what is meant by good and evil? It is said that man has no natural inclination toward evil or good, and that he is neither one nor the other, until after he acts or chooses; and that his action and choice are solely the offsprings of his moral freedom. But is this statement consistent with truth and pure philosophy? Surely, without *inclination* the soul cannot experience any attraction; and without *experience* the human mind can exercise neither freedom nor reason. Hence, it is unreasonable to suppose that the spirit will seek good or evil without first having an internal desire for one or the other; and it certainly is still *more* unreasonable to suppose that an individual can exercise a preference for anything, without first having an understanding of that thing's nature and influence. I therefore, feel impressed to affirm, and I know the subject justifies any strength of assertion, that man does not and can not *select* his associations without a personal knowledge of their character and influence; and, that, in order to obtain this knowledge, he is dependent upon surrounding suggestions and interior promptings, both material and spiritual; and, consequently, all these premises being incontrovertibly true, I am led to affirm that man has no absolute freedom of the Will.

According to the oriental fable, which is in some particulars very beautiful, the *first* female was informed upon the highest

authority, that the fruits of one tree were good, and that the fruits of the other tree were exceedingly evil. But she did not *know* the truthfulness of this statement, and the consequence of this ignorance on her part, was, that this information inflamed her uneducated mind and desires to such an extent, that she could no longer resist the temptation to acquire a knowledge of this truth, by an actual experiment, — just as a child will try the fire in order to ascertain whether that element is really hot or cold. Here, then — at the alleged beginning of the human race — is manifested the universal truth, that causes will produce corresponding effects; because here it is seen that the temptation or information imparted to Eve, overpowered her inexperienced spirit, and she was moved to act in a corresponding manner upon the spirit of her companion. Now it must certainly be admitted that *reasonable* action or selection depends invariably upon prior experience and understanding — consequently, the human mind, in order to reasonably choose between good and evil, must first ascertain by actual experience, or by interior perception, what good and evil are. How is it possible, therefore, for an individual to be a free moral agent, without having an infinite ability to discriminate between the seeming and the actual, between the false and true?

[CONCLUSION NEXT WEEK.]

Psychological Department.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DEATH.

AN EXTRACT FROM THE "GREAT HARMONIA."

DEATH is but a Door which opens into new and more perfect existence. It is a Triumphal Arch through which man's immortal spirit passes at the moment of leaving the outer world to depart for a higher, a sublimer, and a more magnificent country. And there is really nothing more painful or repulsive in the *natural* process of dying, (that which is not induced by disease or accident,) than there is in passing into a quiet, pleasant, and dreamless slumber. The truthfulness of this proposition is remarkably illustrated and confirmed by the following observations and investigation into the physiological and psychological phenomena of death; which my spirit was qualified to make upon the person of a diseased individual at the moment of physical dissolution.

The patient was a female of about sixty years of age. Nearly eight months previous to her death, she visited me for the purpose of receiving a medical examination of her physical system. Although there were no sensations experienced by her, excepting a mere weakness or feebleness located in the duodenum, and a falling of the palate, yet I discovered, and distinctly perceived, that she would die with a cancerous disease of the stomach. This examination was made about eight months previous to her death. Having ascertained the certainty of her speedy removal from our earth, without perceiving the precise period of her departure (for I cannot spiritually measure time or space), I internally resolved to be present and watch the progressive development of that interesting but much-dreaded phenomenon. Moved by this resolution, I, at a later period, engaged board in her house, and officiated as her physician.

When the hour of her death arrived, I was fortunately in a proper state of body and mind to induce the Superior Condition; but, previous to throwing my spirit into that condition, I sought the most convenient and favorable position, that I might be allowed to make the observations entirely unnoticed and undisturbed. Thus situated and conditioned, I proceeded to observe and investigate the mysterious processes of dying, and to learn what it is for an individual human spirit to undergo the changes consequent upon physical death or external dissolution. They were these:—

I saw that the physical organization could no longer subserve the diversified purposes or requirements of the Spiritual Principle. But the various internal organs of the body appeared to resist the withdrawal of the animating soul. The muscular system struggled to retain the element of Motion; the vascular

system strove to retain the element of Life; the nervous system put forth all its powers to retain the element of Sensation; and the cerebral system labored to retain the principle of Intelligence. The body and the soul, like two friends, strongly resisted the various circumstances which rendered their eternal separation imperative and absolute. These internal conflicts gave rise to manifestations of what seemed to be, to the material senses, the most thrilling and painful sensations; but I was unspeakably thankful and delighted when I perceived and realized the fact, that those physical manifestations were indications, *not of pain or unhappiness*, but simply that the Spirit was eternally dissolving its copartnership with the material organism.

Now the head of the body became suddenly enveloped in a fine—soft—mellow—luminous atmosphere; and, as instantly, I saw the cerebrum and the cerebellum expand their most interior portions; I saw them discontinue their appropriate galvanic functions; and then I saw that they became highly charged with the vital electricity and vital magnetism which permeate subordinate systems and structures. That is to say, the Brain, as a whole, suddenly declared itself to be tenfold more positive, over the lesser portions of the body, than it ever was during the period of health. This phenomenon invariably precedes physical dissolution.

Now the process of dying, or of the spirit's departure from the body, was fully commenced. The brain began to attract the elements of electricity, of magnetism, of motion, of life, and of sensation, into its various and numerous departments. The head became intensely brilliant; and I particularly remarked that just in the same proportion as the extremities of the organism grew dark and cold, the brain appeared light and glowing.

Now I saw, in the mellow, spiritual atmosphere, which emanated from, and encircled, her head, the indistinct outlines of the formation of another head! The reader should remember that *these super-sensuous processes are not visible to any one except the spiritual perceptions be unfolded; for material eyes can only behold material things, and spiritual eyes can only behold spiritual things.*—This is a law of Nature. This new head unfolded more and more distinctly; and so indescribably compact and intensely brilliant did it become, that I could neither see through it, nor gaze upon it as steadily as I desired. While this spiritual head was being eliminated and organized from out of, and above, the material head, I saw that the surrounding aro-mal atmosphere which had emanated from the material head was in great commotion; but, as the new head became more distinct and perfect, this brilliant atmosphere gradually disappeared. This taught me that those aro-mal elements, which were, in the beginning of the metamorphosis, attracted from the system into the brain, and thence eliminated in the form of an atmosphere, were indissolubly united in accordance with the divine principle of affinity in the universe, which pervades and destines every particle of matter, and developed the spiritual head which I beheld.

With inexpressible wonder, and with a heavenly and unutterable reverence, I gazed upon the holy and harmonious processes that were going on before me. In the identical manner in which the spiritual head was eliminated and unchangably organized, I saw, unfolding in their natural, progressive order, the harmonious development of the neck, the shoulders, the breast, and the entire spiritual organization. It appeared from this, even to an unequivocal demonstration, that the innumerable particles of what might be termed unparticled matter, which constitute the man's Spiritual principle, are constitutionally endowed with certain elective affinities, analogous to an immortal friendship. The innate tendencies, which the elements and essences of her soul manifested by uniting and organizing themselves, were the efficient and imminent causes which unfolded and perfected her spiritual organization. The defects and deformities of her physical body, were, in the spiritual body which I saw thus developed, almost completely removed. In other words, it seemed that those hereditary obstructions and influences were now removed, which originally arrested the full and proper development of her physical constitution; and therefore, that her spiritual constitution, being elevated above those obstructions, was enabled to unfold and perfect itself, in accordance with the universal tendencies of all created things.

While this spiritual formation was going on, which was perfectly visible to my spiritual perceptions, the material body manifested, to the outer vision of observing individuals in the room, many symptoms of uneasiness and pain; but these indications were totally deceptive; they were wholly caused by the departure of the vital or spiritual forces from the extremities and viscera into the brain, and thence into the ascending organism.

The spirit arose at right angles over the head or brain of the deserted body. But immediately previous to the final dissolution of the relationship which had for so many years subsisted between the two spiritual and material bodies, I saw—playing energetically between the feet of the elevated spiritual body and the head of the prostrate physical body—a bright stream or current of vital electricity. This taught me, that what is customarily termed *Death*, is but a *Birth* of the spirit from a lower into a higher state; that an inferior body and mode of existence are exchanged for a superior body and corresponding endowments and capabilities of happiness. I learned that the correspondence between the birth of a child into this world, and the birth of the spirit from the material body into a higher world, is absolute and complete—even to the *umbilical cord*, which was represented by the thread of vital electricity, which, for a few minutes, subsisted between, and connected the two organisms together. And here I perceived, what I had never before obtained a knowledge of, that a small portion of this vital electrical element returned to the deserted body, immediately subsequent to the separation of the umbilical thread; and that that portion of this element which passed back into the earthly organism, instantly diffused itself through the entire structure, and thus prevented immediate decomposition.

[CONCLUSION NEXT WEEK]

BEAUTIFUL INCIDENT.

F. W. Krummacher, D. D., a German author, relates the following impressive incident:

"A short time ago, in our neighborhood, a poor man was sitting, early in the morning, at his house door; his eyes were red with weeping, and his heart cried to heaven—for he was expecting an officer to come, and seize him for a small debt. And whilst sitting thus with his heavy heart, a little bird flew through the street, fluttering up and down, as if in distress, until at length, quick as an arrow, it flew over the good man's head into his cottage, and perched itself on an empty cupboard. The good man, who little imagined who had sent him the bird, closed the door, caught the bird, and placed it in a cage, where it immediately began to sing very sweetly, and it seemed to the man as if it were the tune of a favorite hymn—"Fear thou not when darkness reigns;" and as he listened to it, he found it to soothe and comfort his mind. Suddenly some one knocked at his door. "Ah, it is the officer," thought the man, and was sore afraid. But no, it was the servant of a respectable lady, who said that the neighbors had seen a bird fly into his house, and she wished to know if he had caught it. "Oh yes," answered the man, "and here it is;" and the bird was carried away. A few minutes after, the servant came again. "You have done my mistress a great service," said she; "she sets a high value upon the bird, which had escaped from her. She is much obliged to you, and requests you to accept this trifle, with her thanks." The poor man received it thankfully, and it proved to be neither more nor less than the sum he owed! And when the officer came, he said: "Here is the amount of the debt; now leave me in peace, for God has sent it to me."

Is it not possible, in this case, that the guardian spirit of that poor man, anxious to alleviate his distress, psychologically impressed the bird to act in such a manner as to bring him the necessary relief?

There is certainly nothing intrinsically absurd in such an idea, and when it is considered that birds, from their negative relation, as well as from their native freedom and innocence, are adapted to act as agents of spirits, and also that they are peculiarly susceptible to the influence of charms, as indicated in the fascinations of the serpent, this explanation of the phenomenon appears consistent and rational.

R. F. A.

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

APOLLOS MUNN AND R. P. AMBLER, EDITORS.

SPRINGFIELD, MASS., AUGUST 17, 1850.

WHAT IS TRUTH?

The question here propounded is one of the most comprehensive and important which can arise in the human mind. It embraces that which the soul has thirsted for in every age; that which man has ever felt to be the great want of his nature, and which he has labored and struggled to obtain, amid the deep gloom of his own ignorance and error. This inquiry, therefore, arises from a natural instinct of the soul, which has been manifested through the perversion and darkness of the misguided intellect. It has been made by the sage as he has threaded the mazes of human theories and speculations; it has dwelt in the mind of the student as he has pored over the treasured volumes of ancient lore, and it has lingered in the thoughts of the philosopher as he has gone out beneath the expanded heavens, and contemplated the sublime mysteries of creation.

It is well for man to obey this instinctive impulse which moves within him. The inquiry after truth should be made the governing spirit of all mental investigations. It should linger in the mind with an unyielding tenacity, and be applied as a touchstone or test to all subjects of a moral, intellectual, or religious nature. Truth is the appropriate object of human desire. It is this alone which is adapted to the requirements, and can satisfy the thirst, of the inward being. It is, in fact, the just and living principle of the soul—the element of spiritual light and happiness—the priceless and unfading gem of the immortal mind. Hence the first great inquiry to be made in all investigation, is, What is truth?

This question, it is to be lamented, has too often been superseded by selfish interests, and has been allowed too feeble a hold on the attention of man. The influence of religious bigotry, preconceived ideas, and antiquated institutions, has served to limit the range of human thought, and keep truth far off in the distance, to be seen only through an obscure and distorted medium. Under this influence man has forgotten the high object to which his noblest powers should be devoted, and has roamed through the fields of knowledge, searched the records of the Primitive History, and explored the great arcana of nature, not to obtain and understand the *truth*, but to seek support and countenance for some favorite dogma. In this way, sects and parties have been organized, creeds and ceremonies have been established, and, as an ultimate result of the same principle, ignorance has covered the mind with its cloudy veil, error has perverted the thoughts and affections of men, and superstition has reared its altars and established its dominion in the soul.

The infidelity to truth which has led to these lamentable results, should be deprecated as one of the greatest evils. It is the duty of man to follow faithfully that which is *true*, irrespective of any influence which may tend to mislead his steps. To this object all inferior interests should be made subordinate. It should occupy a constant pre-eminence in every mind, and should be made the chief stimulus to mental exertion. As the mass of human creeds and theories is spread before us, and new discoveries and enlarged conceptions rise from the unfoldings of human thought, instead of yielding to the force of preconceived opinions, or fearing an encroachment on the established faith, we are to inquire simply, What is truth? This is the question which is to analyze every sentiment, and test the value of every doctrine.

This question, it should be observed, has an important bearing on the moral and spiritual interests of the race. It has power to move over the mental deep like a spirit of light. It can serve to remove many of the evils which oppress humanity, and diffuse the blessings of spiritual life and liberty in the earth. Before its searching power, the clouds which have obscured the soul would be dispersed, and the shackles which have bound its powers and crushed its aspirations, would be broken. Had this

inquiry been generally and truly made, the spirit of bigotry and intolerance would never have had its birth, the cruel hand of persecution would never have been raised, and the blood which has been shed by martyred saints would have never flowed. Had this been made by the unbelieving Jews, Christianity would not have been so blindly rejected, its recipients would not have been so bitterly persecuted, and its founder would not have been nailed upon the cross. Had this been made by the church in later times, the noble reformers would never have been reproached and anathematized with such wrathful bitterness,—the prison doors would have never closed on the suffering martyr, nor the slow fire of the fagot consumed his body. These reflections teach us that the question, what is truth? is possessed of the highest conceivable importance—the question which is to expand and ennoble the human soul, which will break away the mists and darkness that surround the paths of earth, and aid in the accomplishment of those great results which shall crown humanity with glory.

I now come to the consideration of another point, and ask, *what is the true interpreter* of the inquiry before us, or in other words, from what source may the correct answer be obtained? Various are the sources to which men have resorted for a solution of the problem. Some have repaired to the Church, which is claimed to be infallible and true, and in its gloomy doctrines and formal rites, have received their answer to the question. Others have gone to the chiefs and leaders of more enlightened sects, and derived an explanation from arbitrary creeds; while others still have resorted to the old records of treasured wisdom, and obtained a reply in the dreams of prophecy, the precepts of the moralist, or the profound lore of the philosopher. None of these, however, may be regarded as true interpreters of this great question. They are all but fallible and imperfect oracles, subject to perverting influences and erroneous impressions, and hence cannot be considered as genuine and reliable sources from which we may learn what is truth. The true interpreter of this question, I may venture to affirm, is *free and enlightened reason*. This is the noblest and most exalted faculty of the human mind, and is designed to preside over and control the action of all other faculties. It has been given as the true guide of man—the bright illuminator of his path, and is made, as it were, the lord and master of the soul, and the *presiding umpire*, whose office is to decide between right and wrong, between truth and error. Hence, while other authorities, from their extreme liability to false impressions, become unworthy of confidence, reason is the true and appropriate source from which we are to ascertain what truth is. It is from this alone that we may derive a satisfactory solution of the problem. We may be surrounded by a thousand other oracles, all of which may pretend to furnish a correct answer to the inquiry before us, yet if reason be clouded or obscured—if it be shackled and perverted by earthly and debasing influences, or if it lie in a dormant, inactive state, unexercised and unimproved, we shall receive no true and satisfactory response, but shall be left to wander on in a cheerless gloom, with no certain light to direct our steps.

It may indeed be affirmed by some, that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament contain a sufficient and reliable answer to the present inquiry—that here are the treasured records of divine wisdom, prepared and sent by the direct agency of God, to teach us what truth is. But, before admitting the truth of this assertion, let us seriously inquire, is it not the office of reason to preside over the teachings of the Scriptures? Is not this to determine the nature of every sentiment, and to test the truthfulness of every doctrine? Is not this, amid the obvious mistakes, interpolations, and inconsistencies contained in the Bible, to decide what should be received as truth, and what should be rejected as error? In short, what are the Scriptures, without reason? The answer may be read in the darkness, the ignorance and superstition which now prevails in the very bosom of the Church. Reason, then, after all, becomes the final umpire in this matter—it is this alone which can prepare and illuminate the path that leads upward to the celestial temple, where truth reigns in its purity and loveliness. If, then, we would know what truth is, we must consult reason. We are not to rely on the mere assertions of others; we are not to consult fallible and imperfect



teachers, who are lost in the mazes of their own errors, but we are to look within the soul—we are to consult the presiding power which reigns in the interior man, and receive the light which shines, clear and pure, from the depths of the spiritual being.

In completing my remarks on this subject, I now propose to furnish a brief answer to the important inquiry before us. The answers which have been usually given to this inquiry, are as various as the existing opinions and systems of faith. Each individual has his own peculiar views which he terms the truth. The Calvinist points to the cherished doctrines of his favorite leader, and calls them the truth. The Armenian refers to the creed which he has made the basis of his faith, and tells you that the truth is there. And thus, with all the different classes of religionists. Each finds an answer to the question under consideration, in the peculiar system of faith to which he is attached.

All this is in perfect accordance with the natural inclinations of man. He spontaneously cherishes a feeling of partiality for the distinctive peculiarities of his own character, though they may be absolute faults; and, in the same way, it is equally natural that he should manifest an attachment to his own sentiments and opinions, though they may be absolute errors. It is manifest, however, that none of the varied systems of men contain a complete embodiment of truth. Some limited measure of truth undoubtedly belongs to all these systems, but neither one, nor all of them together, can fully monopolize this principle. Were it otherwise, the systems referred to would be subject to no change, but would remain forever perfect, without the necessity of alteration or amendment; while on the contrary, we observe that they are constantly undergoing the process of improvement, and are carried onward with the advancing tide of knowledge, which shows that they are now imperfect in their nature, and need the light of still further revelations. It is indeed a vain and presumptuous thought, that truth can be confined within the narrow enclosure of a creed. Think you that an angel so bright and pure, could live in such a dark and corrupted form?—that a principle which had its birth in the bosom of the Infinite, could be restricted to a fallible confession of faith? Nay, it could not be. Hence, the inquiry before us receives no appropriate answer from the varied creeds of the church.

What, then, must be our reply to this inquiry? Let it be given according to the dictates of reason. Truth, then, is an exalted, refined, and spiritual principle, which has its source in the Supreme Mind.—It is the thought of the Great Divinity, expressed in the harmony and perfection of every thing visible and invisible, and is unfolded from all the untarnished beauties of the material and spiritual creation!—It comprehends all ideas, thoughts, and opinions which are in accordance with the nature, laws, and purpose of God, and consistent with the order and constitution of things which He has established in the universe. Truth is infinite and limitless in its nature. It stretches out far beyond the present limited conceptions of the human mind. It dwells not alone in any creed or system of man; it is confined not within the lids of a printed book, but like its great Author, it exists every where. It speaks to us from all the works of God—from the smiling earth and the radiant heavens; it is whispered in the gentle messages of love that angels send, and then again from the depths within, it comes in a voice sweet and solemn as though it flowed from heavenly regions, and breathes in the soul pure and holy thoughts that burst forth in the poet's lay and the prophet's utterance. Such, then, is Truth. It is manifested in every thing which God has made, and dwells with His all-pervading spirit. No sect or party can claim it all their own, for it is free and unbounded as Heaven's love; no human mind can reach its fullness, or find an end to its revelations, for it is deep and measureless as the ever-expanding Infinity.

In view, then, of the teachings of this subject, let truth be the object of our search, without regard to any human system. Let us seek for it as the "pearl of great price," and the dearest treasure of the soul; and though we may not hope to instantaneously, or even ever attain its full measure, yet may we re-

ceive, as we press onward, its more perfect and still unfolding revelations, having the hopeful assurance, that, as our minds become more expanded, spiritualized and refined, its divine glories shall illumine the soul, as the golden beams of morning light fall on the night-clad earth.

R. P. A.

CONCEPTIONS OF THE INFINITE.

It must be generally conceded that the most exalted conception of the love, wisdom, and power of the Creator, that can illumine the human mind, will, from the very nature of the relations which subsist between the Finite and Infinite, fall immeasurably short of the actual reality. Although standing at the head of subordinate kingdoms, as the crown and culmination of universal nature, Man is but a single atom in his relations to Deity. In him is first developed the great principle of immortal Intelligence, whose germ was implanted in nature, by that God, of whom it is a constituent, and a beautiful finite representative.

Endowed with a portion of the great Spiritual Essence, and stamped by the heavenly Progenitor with an individuality of refined and indestructible materials, this finite intelligence commences its career of endless life and progression, at that interesting period of its infancy, when the lungs of its corporeal body receive their first inspiration of the free air, which, among the numberless blessings supplied, God has bountifully provided for the nourishment of all His animated creation. From this period, up through the stages of infancy, youth, and manhood, the individualized Intelligence exhibits in its own history, a plain and striking illustration of the truth of the great law of progression, which, from the beginning of time, has characterized every department of nature, and furnishes a beautiful type, or prophecy, of the soul's *NEW BIRTH*, and progressive expansion, in the spheres of the angels.

In the rudimental state, where the soul is nidulated in a corporeal encasement, and subjected to the action of influences pertaining to the grosser kingdoms, the mind is limited in its capacity, and cannot comprehend the nature and solution of many enigmas which are presented before it, and fails to drink in all those sublime truths, which, in the fullness of time, are destined to fill the soul with rapture, and with admiration of the great spiritual Fountain whence they flow. In his efforts to comprehend himself, man becomes lost in the sublime discoveries which are constantly unfolded before his mental vision; and, if he would scan the heavens,—as his thoughts soar away, in the contemplation of the unutterable grandeur of the innumerable family of worlds which bespangle the firmament, moving noiselessly and harmoniously in their allotted orbits, through infinite space, obeying in all their motions, the silently expressed, but imperative and eternal law, which applies with equal force, to planets, man, and atoms—the soul, conscious of its comparative weakness, shrinks back upon itself, and again expands towards its Maker, like the infant mind towards its natural parent, inspired with renewed confidence in its own immortality, and with the most exalted and inexpressible ideas of the love, and wisdom, and power of that Heavenly Father, of whose nature it partakes, and of whom it is a natural and legitimate offspring.

The soul feels that it cannot die; because it is sustained and upheld as a legitimate child of an IMMORTAL God. It discovers in the course of its investigations, that our most delightful and brilliant thoughts of the universal love and power of that Almighty Parent, are but ideal shadows, falling infinitely short of the Divine Reality; that we have but just commenced a life of progressive expansion, which is to continue through the cycles of never-ending time; that as fast as we grow in our capacity to receive and understand them, NEW and HIGHER TRUTHS, revealing more, and still more, of the character of God, will constantly flow into and enrich our minds.

The finite mind is thus enabled to perceive, that, while it sustains a positive electrical relation to the lower departments in nature, it is still negative to the great world of spiritual Intelligence, which in turn, is also negative to the great Celestial

Magnet, who, by inherent and unfailing laws, executes His beneficent will, by attracting all minds in the direction of His throne.

With such facts before us, will it not at once become a profitable and pleasing duty, to review our old, and perhaps cherished opinions of the Creator, and test them by the light of reason and a strict comparison with the truthful revelations of God in nature? It is for our interest and safety to know the truth, and reject the error.

If, in the Primitive History, we find sentiments according with reason, which are calculated to enhance our ideas of the goodness and greatness of God, let us adopt and cherish them. We can readily believe that the sweet singer of Israel spoke truly when he said, "The Lord is gracious, full of compassion and of great mercy." We can subscribe unhesitatingly to the admirable sentiment of Christ—"Love your enemies, bless them that curse you." We can applaud the declaration of Moses, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." These beautiful ideas are in harmony with the teachings of universal nature, and consistent with the high character of God. We should adopt these sentiments because of their apparent truthfulness, and not because they come to us through the medium of a book printed by human agency, and which is of course liable to many imperfections. The reasonableness of the introduction of this test, in regard to the formation of our belief, will be apparent if we examine a little further into the character of God, as given by the same Primitive History. If it be true that the sentiments of David, and Jesus, and Moses, to which we have subscribed, are indicative of the *real* character of God, *it cannot be true*, as described in the 31st chapter of Numbers, that for sins which a few of the Israelites themselves had committed (ch. 25), the Lord commanded Moses to send 12,000 armed men against the Midianites, who took all their cattle, flocks, and goods, burnt their dwellings, and killed fathers and brothers, capturing the women and children. *It cannot be true*, as further intimated in the context, that the Lord sanctioned the brutality of Moses, who afterwards ordered the savage butchery of the surviving mothers and infant boys of the despoiled and defenseless Midianites, and the keeping of the young girls for the licentious use of the chosen people of God (Numbers, 31st ch 17th and 18th verses). *It cannot be true*, as described in 1st Samuel, 6: 19, that the Lord slew 50,070 people, for no other offense than that of looking into the ark. *It cannot be true*, as described (Hosea 13: 16), that in His anger against the people of Samaria, the Lord ordered their infants to be dashed in pieces, and their women disemboweled. It is unjust to charge our Heavenly Father with examples and offenses so gross. The pure in heart shrink from a contemplation of such a character, as from contact with an object that corrupts and defiles. It will not do, then, to take the Bible as a perfect and unitary transcript of the Divine Mind, notwithstanding the sacred character with which the Councils of the Church, of many ages, have invested it. Its *raura*, when discovered, is always to be admired; but its *errors* should be discarded, as the fruits of ignorance and barbarism. No book can give God two *opposite* characters and maintain its consistency and truth. The God we love is not a savage, and cannot glory in the murder of little children, of whom Christ says, "such is the Kingdom of Heaven;" nor is he a libertine, like the real, or visionary being, who ordered his people to ravish the tender maidens of the Midianites. Let us, then, break away from the superstitious trammels which early prejudices and organized and powerful theological institutions have cast around us, and seek constantly for HIGHER REVELATIONS, and a more exalted STANDARD OF TRUTH; remembering for our encouragement at all times, that the highest and purest standard we can erect, will be but a faint prophecy of the living reality which is yet to burst upon us.

A. M.

☞ The purest and richest thoughts that adorn the human mind, are those which flow spontaneously from the depths of the soul, as the faithful embodiment of spiritual impressions, which are untainted by the influence of selfish bigotry, and unconfined by the boundaries of sectarian creeds.

R. P. A.

THE NATURE OF INSPIRATION.

If we correctly understand the derivation and meaning of the term inspiration, we are in a suitable condition to examine and judge rightly of, the extent, character, nature, and use of the inspiration of the writers of primitive history, and all other works. We are too apt to associate in our minds, in connection with the subject of inspiration, the idea of something entirely special and supernatural. This is wrong, as we will endeavor to prove, by a brief analysis of the word, and the presentation of a few facts and thoughts in connection therewith.

The English word inspiration, is proximately derived from two Latin words, *in* and *spiro*, signifying, literally, a *breathing in*. It is primarily used to designate the act of inflating the lungs with atmospheric air; metonymically and figuratively, it is employed to signify an influx into the mind of a foreign influence of the most elevating character. It is in this sense that we wish to view it.

It is difficult to trace the origin of the almost universal belief in inspiration. It seems to have been common to all nations and tribes, and in all ages of the world. The Egyptian, the Hebrew, the Chaldean, the Greek, the Mahometan, the Hindoo, and the untutored savage, all claim to have felt its influence, and through its agency, to have communed with God. An impression so universal and spontaneous, had its origin in truth; and its very universality and spontaneity, forbid the conclusion that there is anything special or supernatural in such inspiration. It has existed, not as a special gift to a few writers, but as a natural and universal law. It is a boon of the Heavenly Father, which he has placed within the reach of all his children who are desirous of attaining it. We have only to render ourselves, mentally and physically, harmonious with the universal teachings of nature, in order to become the mediums for the receipt and transmission to others, of the highest spiritual intuitions. Each mind, like the opening flower which instinctively unfolds its petals to the sun, should turn to the light of truth, no matter from what direction its rays may emanate. If we would breathe into our souls the divine afflatus, and commune spiritually with God, our minds must be emancipated from the thralldom of antiquated opinions, and free to soar away into the more exalted regions of purity and truth. It will not do to fetter the soul to narrow church creeds and ancient dogmas. Let the spirit expand itself freely in the direction of its Maker, and the very desire it has for truth, will draw to itself by the attraction of affinity, a natural influx from the Divine Mind, the great Vortex of all truth.

From the foregoing facts and inferences, it is apparent that no one sect, church, or *printed book*, can contain the records of *all* the inspiration or revelation that has been unfolded by the Creator to man. There is nothing in all nature, that furnishes a justification of the idea of such a condensation and monopoly of spiritual influx, and hence, if we would arrive at truth, we must at once break away from the narrow creeds of the organized church. That portion of the church which arrogates to itself the term Catholic, claims that inspiration is a special gift to a few only, and those its members. Its Pope, who may butcher the citizens of Rome for daring to ask for a republican form of government, can do no wrong, for he is the inspired head, through whom God speaks to man! Qualified priests of the church are always sinless like the Pope, and consequently, absolutely inspired by God, to tyrannize over, and trample upon, the uneducated millions, who are taxed at the point of the bayonet, to support the splendor and profligacy of the church and craft! Hence, the church, claiming to be the expounder of the Bible and the keeper of the keys of hell, pursues a system of robbery and extortion, and the people are piously told that all this fraud and wrong is authorized and sanctioned by God, through communion with His *inspired* servants.

The Protestant church differs from the Catholic, its natural mother, in this; that she does not recognize the peculiar claims of the Catholic, but asserts that the Bible contains *all* the inspiration and revelation, that God ever did, or ever will, make to the children of men. All that He designed, or designs to communi-

cate to the human race, He revealed through Moses, Isaiah, Jesus, Paul, and other ancient prophets! This is the contracted and unnatural idea inculcated by the whole Protestant church—an idea that only requires a bold examination, and comparison with the revelations of God in nature, by the light of reason, to be rejected at once, as one of the weakest absurdities that has been handed down to us from a dark and dismal age. It narrows and attenuates our conceptions of God, and contradicts His power and glory, goodness and truth, as manifested throughout all nature, and displayed in characters so bright that even the untutored savage can exclaim in the fullness of his heart-worship—"The Great Spirit speaks to me in the thunders of the cataract, and in the gentle murmurings of the stream."

There is nothing miraculous in inspiration. It is as natural as the breath we inhale. The savage, who, towering up in view of the wrongs entailed upon his race by his Christian oppressors, pours forth a torrent of indignation in his vernacular tongue; the Reformer who stands out before the world and proclaims the wrongs that should be righted, and the Free Inquirer, who, in defiance of public opinion, dares to think and act with independence, are all inspired. They all breathe into their souls, in different degrees, so much of Divine Truth, that it finds utterance in the strongest language they can command. They are all children of a common parent, God. Think you, then, reader, that God will fail to inspire their hearts with love for Him and His teachings, and with a due sense of wickedness and crime? We repeat, then, there is nothing supernatural or miraculous in inspiration. It is free to all who seek its gentle influences in purity of heart. No man, or set of men, that lives or ever has lived, has been able to monopolize this precious gift—and no one book or collection of books, contains within its paste-board covers, all the revelations of the Father to His children. Let us then, seek, for we shall surely find, new facts, giving us higher conceptions of our Maker, by a closer study of nature and the assimilation of our own spirits to the harmony and purity it teaches—bearing ever in mind, that simplicity of heart, freedom from prejudice, and a sincere desire to know what is truth, are essential requisites to the enjoyment of the highest degree of SPIRITUAL INSPIRATION.

A. M.

The Harmonial Philosophy.

In our Psychological Department, we this week give an extract from an interesting work of Mr. Davis, in which the author compares death to a TRIUMPHAL ARCH, through which the spirit passes in its transition from the outer to the inner life—from the natural to the spiritual spheres. Every apparent death is indeed a new birth; a manifestation of a natural effort to develop a higher and more perfect form. All the departments of nature are replete with appropriate illustrations of this beautiful fact. The egg, which contains the undeveloped form of the eagle, must be addled and broken before the eagle can have birth. The gross worm which feeds upon vegetable leaves, must die before it can exist in the more pleasing form of the butterfly, and draw nourishment from the interior sweets and aroma of flowers. From a little egg deposited in the bosom of the water, is developed a small marine animal, which, when matured will die, and from its outer covering, will spring up the higher form and further development of its essence, the *gnat*, which is provided with wings by which it can fly away and draw its support from another and higher kingdom. These facts, whose kindred can be multiplied to an indefinite extent, furnish striking analogies of the death of the physical, and birth of the spiritual MAN. Every change we witness is but the natural effect of the eternal principle of MOTION, which is performing its mission in the great work of DEVELOPMENT, with unerring certainty. The segregation and recombination of forms in all the lower departments of the universe, are but so many links in the chain of cause and effect, proceeding from the Great First Cause, whose end and aim are UNITY and PERFECTION. In this sublime mission, the principles of nature never tire, and never stray from the ultimate design of the Divine Architect. They go on, developing from the grossest matter, through suc-

cessive changes and stages of refinement, higher and still higher forms, up to the creation of angelic spirits.

Brothers, the study of nature is indeed a delightful task. Its lessons are of love, and wisdom, and purity. We are all parts of one stupendous WHOLE. With every atom, the system is perfect and harmonious—and all conspire to swell the praises and exemplify the majesty of our Infinite Creator. There will be no loss of parts by the transition called death. We shall live on, passing through a delightful sleep, from which the refreshed spirit will awake with enlarged powers, to perceive and appreciate the resplendent scenes and inexpressible joys, of its eternal home. These truths, constituting a high and beautiful revelation of God, are written by His Almighty hand, in characters of living light, upon every page of the great Bible of the Universe. Search, then, these *natural* scriptures, "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good."

A. M.

THE MISSION OF WOMAN.—On this highly interesting theme, Mr. DAVIS has authorized us to say to our readers, that they may expect an article from his pen, soon, written while in the SUPERIOR CONDITION—as, indeed, are all the articles he sends us for publication. Our fair readers will be especially delighted with the topic, and with the elevated and beautiful thoughts that will flow from its consideration.

☞ The length of Mr. DAVIS' powerful argument on the subject of Man's Free Agency, renders it necessary for us to divide it again, in order to preserve the symmetry of the various departments of the paper. The remainder will be given in our next.

☞ Messrs. Capron & Barron, of Auburn, N. Y., have issued a second edition of an interesting pamphlet entitled, "Explanation and history of the mysterious communion with spirits, comprehending the rise and progress of the mysterious noises in Western New York." This pamphlet of ninety pages, contains many well authenticated facts, concerning spiritual manifestations, and should be in the hands of all who wish to be thorough in their investigations. They can be had at our office.

Poetry.

WHAT'S TRUE WORSHIP?

WRITTEN FOR THE SPIRIT MESSENGER,
BY HENRY D. BARRON.

What's true worship? Organs pealing?

Priestly forms in silence kneeling?

Vespers thro' the twilight stealing?

Glittering spires?

Solemn Temples and altar fires?

Sculptured columns and classic arts?

Sweet incense burned as day departs,

With fervid prayers and freezing hearts?

Proud souls unbent?

Forms prostrate low and garments rent?

Rich gems and gifts to altars brought,

Or solemn rites in temples wrought

By those whose prayers and praise are bought

Censers waving?

Superstition man-enslaving?

What's true worship? Will God alone

Such soulless rites of worship own?

Can these for sin and crime atone?

Nay, 't is not so!

My heart and Heaven answer, *no*.

A loving, humble heart to show,

To wipe away the tears of woe,

That all along life's pathway flow;

Say, will not *these*

Far more the God of spirits please?

AUBURN, N. Y., 1850.

Miscellaneous Department.

THE DEAD CHILD AND THE ANGEL.

BY HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSON.

As soon as a good child dies, one of God's angels descends upon the earth, takes the dead child in his arms, spreads out his large white wings, and flies over all the places that were dear to the child, and plucks a handful of flowers, which he then carries to Heaven, in order that they may bloom still more beautifully there than they did here on earth. The living God presseth all these flowers to his bosom; and then it receives a voice, and can sing and join in the universal bliss.

An angel of God related this as he bore a dead child to Heaven; and they flew over all the spots around the house where the little one had played, and they passed through gardens with the loveliest flowers. "Which one shall we take with you and plant in Heaven?" asked the angel.

And a beautiful slender rose-tree was standing there; but a wanton hand had broken the stem, so that all the branches full of large half-open rose buds hung down quite withered.

"The poor tree," said the child: "take it, so that it may bloom again on high with the living God."

And the angel took it, and kissed the child: and then the little one half opened his eyes. They gathered some of the despised odious and wild pansy too.

"Now we have flowers," said the child, and the angel nodded, but they did not yet fly up to Heaven.

It was night; it was quite still. They strayed in the great city, they floated to and fro in one of the narrowest streets, where great heaps of straw, of ashes and rubbish lay about, there had been a removal. There lay broken potsherds and plates, plaster figures, rags, the crowns of old hats; nothing but things that were displeasing to the sight.

And amid the devastation, the angel pointed to the fragments of a flower pot and to a clod of earth that had fallen out of it, and which was only held together by the roots of a great withered flower; but it was good for nothing now, and was therefore thrown out into the streets.

"We will take that with us," said the angel, "and I will tell you about it while we are flying."

And now they flew on; and the angel related:

"Down yonder, in the narrow street, in the low cellar, lived once a poor sickly boy. He had been bedridden from his very infancy. When he was very well indeed, he could just go a few times up and down the little room on his crutches; that was all.

"One day in the spring, his neighbor's son brought him some wild flowers, and among them was by chance one with a root; it was therefore planted in a flower-pot and placed in the window close by his bedside. It thrived, put forth new shoots, and every year had flowers. To the sick boy it was the most beautiful garden, his little treasure upon earth; he watered and tended it, and took care that it got every sunbeam to the very last that glided by on the lower pane. And the flower grew up in his very dreams with its very colors and fragrance; to it he turned in dying, when the loving God called him to himself. He has now been a year with God; a year has the flower stood in the window withered and forgotten, and now, at the removal, it has been thrown among the rubbish into the street. And that is the flower, the same poor faded flower, which we have taken into our nosegay; for this flower has caused more joy than the rarest flower in the garden of the queen."

"But how do you know all this?" asked the child which the angel was carrying up to Heaven.

And the child opened his eyes and looked in the beautiful calm face of the angel; and at the same moment they were in Heaven, where was only joy and blessedness.

Every thing throughout the expanse of creation is in constant motion, manufacturing the elements of higher forms, and composing the ever ascending steps in the scale of infinite progression.

B. P. A.

Social Relations—The Daisy.

BY ELIHU BURRITT.

"You cannot go into the meadow and pluck up a single Daisy by the roots, without breaking up a society of nice relations, and detecting a principle more extensive and refined than mere gravitation. The handful of earth that follows the roots of the little flower is replete with social elements.

"A little social circle had been formed around that germinating daisy. The sunbeam and the dew-drop met there, and the soft summer breeze came whispering through the tall grass to join the silent concert; and the earth took them to their bosom, and introduced them to the daisy germ; and they all went to work to show that flower to the sun. Each mingled in the honey of its influence, and they nursed "*the wee, canny thing*," with an aliment that made it grow.

"And when it lifted its eyes towards the sky, they wove a soft carpet of grass for its feet. And the sun saw it through the green leaves, and smiled as he passed on. The daisy lifted up its head, and one morning, while the sun was looking upon the dew, it put on its silver rimmed diadem, and showed its yellow petals.

"And it nodded to the little birds that were swimming in the sky. And all of them that had silver lined wings came; and birds in black and gray, and quaker brown came; and the querulous blue bird, and the courtesying yellow bird came, and each sung a native air at the coronation of that daisy.

"Every thing that sung or shone on that modest flower was a member of that social circle, and conspired to its harmony, and added to its music. Heaven, earth, sky, and sea, were its companions; the sun and stars walked hand in hand with it, as kindly as if they never saw another daisy, or had another companion."

Fact in Nature.

Animals living in vallies are endowed with much smaller lungs than those of the mountains, owing to the greater density of the air and the mephitic vapors which are in it. In the city of Mexico, which is located in the bosom of mountains, several thousand feet above the level of the sea, the air being lighter and purer, lungs capable of inhaling a much greater volume at each inspiration, are required, and *always* developed by nature. Hence the diseases known as consumption and pulmonary affections are rarely manifested in Mexico, and never, unless carried there from the region of a less wholesome atmosphere.

A. M.

Spiritual Organization.

We are apt to become skeptical as to the existence of spiritual beings in perfect form and substance, which we cannot see. It is only necessary to reflect that the common atmosphere around us is matter of some kind; and were a being to be made even of a substance so dense, it would be invisible to us. But again, there are substances of a much lighter nature. Hydrogen gas is twelve times lighter than the atmosphere. Let us suppose a being constituted of this. It would be utterly invisible to our senses. Why then will we doubt because we cannot see? The eye of the spiritual body is much finer than the eye of such a body would be. The electrical organization is as substantial as a solid rock. — *Univercalum*.

A truth once implanted in the mind can never be destroyed. It will linger there, buried perchance in temporary forgetfulness, to be brought forth with a still brighter lustre, as the diamond from its dusty bed.

R. P. A.

TERMS.—The SPIRIT MESSENGER will be issued every Saturday, by MUNN & AMBLER, from their office in Elm Street, a few rods west of the Post Office, 2d story in Byers' building, directly under the office of the Hampden Post. Price of subscription \$2 per annum, payable in all cases in advance. For a remittance of \$10, six copies will be forwarded.

G. W. WILSON, Printer, corner Main and State Streets, Springfield, Mass.

