

# 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 PHILOSOPHY OF CREATION.

BY R. P. AMBLER.

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The same important principle of progressive development which is manifested in the original formation of worlds, is exhibited also in the creation of other and higher forms of matter which appear upon their surfaces. To illustrate this part of the subject, it will be proper to refer particularly to the planet on which we live. As first derived from its parent source, it necessarily partook of its liquid and igneous nature, and was consequently in a condition entirely unsuited to the production of any of the objects which now adorn the expanse of Nature. In the lapse of time, however, which doubtless embraced many centuries, the outward surface being subjected to a cooling process, and the same principles of motion and progression originally established being still in operation, all the present superior developments of the primitive substance were caused to be unfolded, resulting in the existence of minerals, vegetables, animals, and man.

The reader should understand that these several developments were not all produced at the same time, but at different successive periods. Even the grossest mineral could not have been formed in a sea of liquid fire; plants could not have been born without an appropriate soil to nourish them; animals could not have existed without the previous growth of plants, and man never could have appeared on the earth's surface without the former creation of all these lower forms; so that the several kingdoms or departments of Nature as they are now viewed, represent so many successive gradations or series, which must have occupied at least several centuries. Here may be observed the introduction of that sublime order which now forms a marked and beautiful characteristic of the works of creation. Instead of a confused, irregular, or convulsive gathering of the elements essential to form the higher organizations of matter, we behold only a steady and gradual unfolding of the several kingdoms of Nature, in accordance with the same established principle by which the tree is developed from the plant, or the rose from its tiny bud. Every thing was created in its own appropriate time and place. It was necessary that the lowest, rudimental forms should undergo a preparatory process of refinement, before the higher order of animate creation could be developed; and this, also, in obedience to the same unvarying law, was made to pass through the ascending stages of advancement, until at last man, who is the king and priest of Nature, was brought forth to worship in this mighty temple.

I am aware that, in the presentation of these views, I necessarily oppose the mythological revelations of antiquity; especially the doctrine which teaches that this earth, and all the myriad of worlds that light the realms of space, including the varied animate and inanimate objects that exist upon the globe, were created in precisely six of our days, composed of twenty-four hours each, and that God, having labored for this space of time, became weary, and rested on the seventh day. Here let it be understood that the idea is not objected to that the world was created in the course of *six successive periods*, each of which, for the sake of distinction, may be termed a *day*; but to suppose that this result was accomplished in the precise time indicated in the popular teachings on this subject, is sanctioned by no principle of reason, and is wholly unwarranted by the revelations of geological science. The fact should not be overlooked that several of the most eminent and candid geologists in this country and in Europe,

have given it as the result of their investigations that the work of Creation must have occupied a much longer space of time than is usually allotted to this process. Among these may be mentioned Mr. Faber, a learned English writer, who expresses the opinion, that, from various circumstances, including the discoveries of modern physiologists, it is clearly proved, "that the six demiurgic days, instead of being nothing more than six natural days, were each a period of very considerable length," embracing at least six thousand years. Another author, whose opinion on this subject is entitled to consideration, is Professor Silliman, of this country, who "sees a necessity in the mechanism of the earth, for extending the days of Creation to periods of time of indefinite length." "It is granted," says this author, "that Moses might have understood the word (day) according to the popular signification, and that this sense would be the most obvious one to every mind *not informed as to the structure of the globe.*" At the same time he clearly expresses the opinion that, in the light of geological researches, the usual interpretation of this term as applied to the process of creation, is wholly inconsistent; as he remarks, "According to the popular understanding, the transition and secondary mountains, with their coal beds, plants, and animals, were formed in two or three natural days, by physical laws, which is *incredible because it is impossible.*" Being thus instructed by the revelations of Science, as well as by the teachings of Reason, we are led to conclude that the construction of the Universe from the chaotic materials previously existing, was not an instantaneous birth of form and order, but rather a gradual and progressive work, performed in strict accordance with the original design that existed in the mind of the Supreme Power.

That we may properly conceive of the magnitude of this work and the length of time required in its accomplishment, it is necessary that we should entertain an appropriate idea of the immensity of the Universe. It should not be supposed for a moment that the earth on which we dwell constitutes one of the principal or prominent objects of creation, and that the stars which glitter in the firmament are merely gems placed there to adorn the brow of Night and delight the human eye. Such an idea might apparently sanction the presumption that the whole was created and arranged in the limited period of six days. But it is not true. As we gaze upward to the radiant heavens and view the marshaled hosts of night, we should remember that every star we see is a mighty world, or glorious sun, which in its magnitude and grandeur may transcend our most expanded conceptions. Around each of these immense bodies as a central point, we are to imagine revolve numerous planets which are the offspring of the parent sun, buried from our view in the inconceivable distance. Then far away beyond the limits of the earthly vision, we may roam into the depths of space—and with every advancing step we shall meet with new worlds, new systems, and new glories, ever stretching out before us and filling the illimitable expanse of infinity, until the mind, beholding no limit—no end which it may ever hope to reach, returns again to earth and falls, mute and dazzled, as in the presence of Infinite Power. Expression is utterly powerless to convey a complete idea of the greatness, the grandeur and immensity which is thus presented, and the soul can only indulge in a delirious dream of a boundless infinitude, without having the power to embody one suitable thought of that dazzling glory with which all space is filled. Thus we, who perhaps imagine that this earth is the great world which is peculiarly favored with the divine presence, are residing as it were on the very outskirts of an illimitable universe—a universe which is too deep for the human mind to fathom—too high for its aspirations to ever reach—too broad for the most expanded thought to traverse. In view of this inconceivable magnitude of Creation, can it be imagined that this

ushered into being from the darkness of nonentity?—that all the glorious worlds of light were formed out of that which never existed? And can it be imagined that the innumerable forms of Nature were produced and made perfect in a few days merely at one brief command of Deity? On the contrary, if we will listen to the voice of Reason, the conclusion is irresistible that the Universe was not created out of *nothing*, but from an infinite mass of materials existing in an undeveloped state; that it was created, *not instantaneously* by the immediate interposition of Divine Power, but *gradually* by the tendency of the inherent laws and properties of matter eternally established—not in a period of time corresponding to six days, but rather in the lapse of countless ages.

In the light of these views, the philosophy of Creation is presented as disrobed of the mists and shadows of mythological theories, and standing forth in the beautiful sunlight of eternal Truth. The conclusion arrived at, if not congenial with the long-cherished prejudices of men, may be regarded as the legitimate result of a rational investigation into the principles of Nature. Reasoning from the existing effects that surround us in the universe, we are able to obtain an analogical view of the causes originally in operation. It is true that we may catch but glimpses of the eternal design and stupendous work of God; for this subject embraces a field of thought which is illimitable in extent, and can never be fully explored by the human mind. Yet moved by the inspiration that ever flows into the seeking soul, we may indulge in those sublime contemplations which relate to the origin, constitution, and laws of the mighty structure of Creation, and drink in those beautiful and exalted truths which are interwoven with the very elements of existing things. There is no more fruitful or attractive field of investigation than Nature. If we would draw to our souls the divine thoughts of God; if we would commune with the invisible reality, and feel the breathings of the pervading Spirit, we must worship in the courts of that great sanctuary which is hallowed with the presence of Infinite Love, and is replete with instructions which are divine and eternal.

### The Study of Science.

A material creation surrounds us. This earth, and all that it contains, and the immense hosts of stellar worlds, are absolute entities, surrounded with, and interpenetrated by, certain exhibitions of creative intelligence, which perform, according to fixed laws, the mighty labors upon which depend the infinite and eternal mutations of matter. The origin of a grain of dust is hidden from our finite comprehensions; but its existence should be a source of hope that those minds which are allowed the privilege of tracing out its marvelous properties—of examining the empyreal principles upon which its condition, as a grain of dust, depends,—and even of reducing these giant elements to do our human bidding,—may, after a period of probation, be admitted to the enjoyment of that infinite power, to which the great secrets of creation will be unveiled.

Every motion which the accurate search of the experimentalist has traced, every principle of power which the physicist has discovered, every combination which the chemist has detected, every form which the naturalist has recorded, involves reflections of an exalting character, which constitute the elements of the highest poetry. The Philosophy of Physical Science is a grand epic; the Record of Natural Science is a great didactic poem.

To study science for its useful applications merely, is to limit its advantages to purely sensual ends. To pursue science for the sake of the truths it may reveal, is an endeavor to advance the elements of human happiness through the intelligence of the race. To avail ourselves of facts, for the improvement of art and manufactures, is the duty of every nation moving in the advance of civilization. But to draw from the great truths of science intelligible inferences, and masterly deductions, and from these to advance to new and beautiful abstractions, is a mental exercise which tends to the refinement and elevation of every human feeling.

The mind thus exercised during the mid-day of life, will find,

in the twilight of age, a divine serenity; and charmed by the music of nature, which, like a vesper hymn poured forth from pious souls, proclaims in devotion's purest strain the departure of day, he will sink into the repose of that mysterious night which awaits us all, tranquil in the happy consciousness that the Sun of Truth will rise, with unclouded brilliancy, and place him in the enjoyment of that union with Divine Intelligence which has ever been among the holiest aspirations of the human race.

The task of wielding the wand of Science,—of standing a scientific evocator within the charmed circle of its powers, is one which leads the mind through nature up to Nature's God.

Experiment and observation instruct us in the discovery of a fact which connects itself with natural phenomena,—the ultimate cause of which we learn from God's Spirit and Divine Revelation, and receive in full belief,—but the proximate causes are reserved as trials of man's intelligence; and every natural truth discovered by induction, enables the contemplative mind to deduce those perfect laws which are exemplifications of the fresh-springing and all-enduring Poetry of Science.

### Law of Motion.

The apparent, without the invisible physical changes that are constantly taking place upon earth, are sufficient of themselves to confound man and excite his admiration, whilst they inform him that all around him is in continuous motion, and that even his corporeal existence can not literally be identified at any two instants. The body that lies upon the ground, apparently inert, is as truly in motion as the body falling through the air; both urge towards the terraqueous center, with a velocity inversely as the resistance to be overcome, and the square of the distance. The waters of the mighty deep are in a state of continual agitation; moving horizontally in currents alternately from the equator to the poles, and changing vertically, particle by particle, from the surface to the bottom, and *vice versa*, as physical causes may operate; whilst its surface is thrown into commotion by violent winds or its aqueous elements repulsed by caloric into the air, whence it is distributed in the form of rain, to different climes, and again returned in crystal flow to the grand reservoir.

The physical condition of the earth is undergoing incessant mutations; numberless vegetables, and animals deriving their sustenance from earth, air, and water, are continually springing into existence, and decaying, strewing its surface with their mouldering remains; hills and mountains, by virtue of frost, air, water, and chemical action, are perpetually hurling their cumulous masses into the contiguous valleys, whence they are gradually transported, by gurgling brooks and majestic rivers into the mighty main, whose displaced waters in return encroach upon the land, whilst volcanic fires that shake earth to the center, are daily ejecting internal materials, and forming islands and mountains. The body of man, though possessing the sameness of configuration, is unceasingly changing in its materials; receiving and throwing off, in constant succession, fleeting particles of matter. Water and other terrestrial materials, are continually undergoing decomposition, and yielding up their elementary principles to enter into a new arrangement and combination with other bodies. The majestic *king* of day, without intermission is sending forth his luminous emanations, exciting undulations on the earth's surface, and giving variety and continuity of motion to the air, whilst perchance its modified caloric flows inwardly from the equator, and passing out at the magnetic poles, returns again in the upper regions of the air, giving rise to that sublime phenomenon, *aurora borealis*. Changes are perpetually taking place in the molecular arrangement of bodies, which appear to the human eye in a state of perfect quiescence. The sensible motion which undoubtedly the magnet effects in the ultimate particles of iron, would be forever unsuspected by the most acute philosopher, were it not for the perceptible motion it communicates to the whole mass. It has recently been suggested by a philosopher, that all the transparent space that we behold, may be but a mighty pore, in an inconceivably extended solid, and that an atom of matter is to a world what a world

is to the grand whole ; all are in continual motion, revolving about each other according to certain immutably established laws.

## Psychological Department.

### MYSTERIOUS VISITATION.

BY FLORA SUMMERVILLE.

It was a lovely morning in the month of June upon which I sat out for the purpose of paying a visit to a friend at some distance from the city. The sun was just rising above the clouds of the east, drinking the dew off the flowers, as they raised their drooping heads to greet its appearance. The birds caroled sweetly as they flew from their nests in search of their morning meal, while the sun warmed the cool atmosphere with its cheering rays.

At some distance from the city, however, our route lay through an uncultivated tract of country. Nothing to call forth the feelings of the passengers occurred on the road, and my fellow-travelers seemed in no way disposed to break through the little formalities attendant upon such occasions. For a long time I endeavored to amuse myself with the prospect from the window of the coach ; but this finally lost all its charms, and I sank into a state of half unconsciousness, vainly endeavoring to keep in possession of my faculties.

The bright eyes of heaven were peeping from the face of the sky, when I arrived at the place of my destination. Immediately after supper, being drowsy with my ride, I requested to be shown to my bed, and was accordingly conducted by a little girl, daughter of my friend. The room in which I was to sleep was one of those long apartments so common to country residences. There were two beds in it, beside my own ; that which I was to occupy being at the end of the room farthest from the door.

About midnight I was awakened by feeling a hand passed across my chin, as if for the purpose of adjusting the blanket. The scene which presented itself was one of the most singular events of my life, and has made an impression upon my mind which no earthly occurrence has had power to erase ; nor do I believe will be forgotten to the latest day of my existence.

The moon had reached its meridian in the skies, and its bright beams came streaming in at the windows of my apartment, revealing each nook and corner with all the radiance of the noon-day sun. A broad belt of light poured itself directly across my face, compelling me to close my eyes and seek another position for my head. My first impression was that one of the female members of the household, impelled by a friendly motive, had entered my room for the purpose of seeing how I rested, and finding the covering disordered, had proceeded to arrange it. But my surmises were soon cut short, by the apparently real disturber of my dreams.

At the foot of my bed, reclining languidly on the frame, stood the tall figure of really the most beautiful man I ever saw. His eyes were fixed directly on me, and I therefore had an opportunity of narrowly scrutinizing his handsome features and strange costume. His hair, of midnight darkness, was combed back from the front of his head, revealing one of the loftiest foreheads I have ever seen, without wrinkle or line of any kind. The arching brows were of the same color as the hair, beneath which glistened eyes of dazzling brightness, turning aside my gaze for an instant, but alluring it again the next. The nose—almost invariably the most imperfect feature of the face—was of Roman order, and seemed to correspond with the beauty of the other lines of his countenance ; as did also his mouth, with his alabaster teeth, the finely dimpled chin, and rosy cheek ; rendering it the most angelic countenance it has ever been my province to look upon. The dress of the stranger appeared to be rather of the ancient order of costume. He wore a Roman toga, thrown around him after the most graceful manner of the citizens of the Republic which he seemed to represent. The robe was of a most costly character, to judge by the number of glittering diamonds which met my astonished gaze. The remainder of the dress, combined with a cap surmounted by a dark feather, which he

held in his hand, also served to lead my memory back to the palmy days of the mighty nation which had at one time subjugated all the surrounding countries, and I felt as though one of its proudest champions stood before me, and almost impressed me with the belief that I was then residing within the walls of ancient Rome.

My first impulse was to scream, and thus alarm the house ; but as the stranger made no advances towards me, remaining at the post, I was struck dumb with astonishment and surprise. His eyes were fixed on mine with all their power, and I remained fascinated as it were, by their glance ; while his position was so graceful, as to bring to my mind the most splendid of the Grecian statues. A feeling of indescribable awe crept over me, and I lay as one charmed by some potent spell.

Did I dream ? Could my senses deceive me ? Was it only my imagination that was conjuring up such heavenly apparitions before my vision ? These were questions that passed through my mind, as thus entranced, I gazed upon the well-known articles of furniture attached to the room. In order to satisfy myself that I did not dream, I raised myself to a sitting posture in the bed, and with outstretched hands endeavored to grasp the subject of my doubts ; but I was unable to encompass the space betwixt us, and I strove no further, feeling confident that the awe which had filled my soul was real, and not the offspring of my disordered brain.

The more fully to convince myself that I was awake, I reached my dress, and took from the pocket thereof my pencil, with which I wrote my name upon the back of the chair at the head of the bed ; rightly judging that if in the morning my name was where I had affixed it on the previous night, it would be an indisputable evidence of my having been free from any somnambulist visitations during the period the foregoing scene was progressing before my view. With this precaution, I again turned my attention to the nocturnal visitor, and sank into a deep slumber, those piercing eyes still fixed upon me, until I lost all consciousness.

Bright Phœbus had traveled a goodly portion of her day's journey, when I was again awakened by some one calling my name. This time, however, the disturber of my repose was the dear friend whom I had traveled so far to visit. I at once proceeded to relate the circumstance of the preceding night, hoping that from her I might receive some explanation of the mystery. She at once told me that it was a pleasant dream, which had lengthened my repose to such a late hour in the day. I immediately referred to the back of the chair, and there, in the same bold legible characters which I had traced on the night before, stood my own name ! This staggered us both, and it still remains a mystery to all whom this mystery has been narrated.

What renders this affair still more mysterious and unaccountable, is that I was acquainted with every person in that section of country for miles around, having made several visits previous to that on which this singular incident occurred ; and I am convinced that the expressive face and commanding figure was not the person of any farming gentleman to whom I have alluded.

### New Form of Magnetism.

It is said that certain clock makers at Bristol, Connecticut, in making some chronometers lately, found it impossible for the workmen to keep awake when they were setting the instruments going. It is necessary, in regulating them, to count the beats in a minute by a regulator, and change the hair spring until both go nearly in time ; then the screw in the balance is turned until the greatest maximum is obtained, when they are rated and registered. The workmen find no difficulty with this, but when the whole movement is going, any person who attempts to count the beats, or watches the motion of the balance, invariably becomes drowsy. Attempts have been made to make clocks, but they do not produce the same result. These are of polished work, and gilded by a peculiar method, which, if the facts be as here stated, may have to do with the effect. What is curious is, that the workman asleep continues to count the beatings of the balance or foot.

## THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

R. P. AMBLER, EDITOR.

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## CULTURE OF THE SPIRIT.

The imperfect and erroneous ideas which have been entertained with regard to the nature of spirit, have naturally precluded any attention to its appropriate cultivation and improvement. Regarding the soul as some immaterial essence which can only manifest its inherent powers on leaving the body, man has heretofore devoted but little attention to this department of his being. Care has been taken to nourish and sustain the body; the necessary means have been employed to strengthen and cultivate the mind; but as to the spiritual being, which is of the highest importance, men have acted as though it were impossible to cultivate or enlarge its powers. Hence like a withered and neglected plant, it has remained in an undeveloped state, surrounded by all the depressing and unfavorable influences of earth. It is scarcely a subject of wonder that some should lose faith in a spiritual existence, while the qualities of the soul are so feebly and imperfectly manifested. Man has been accustomed to live too much as a mere animal, feeding as it were on the lusts and passions of the flesh, while that which may be termed the real man—the image of the Great Divinity, has been concealed beneath the dark mantle of earthly corruption. From this cause, the philanthropist has sometimes looked upon the race in despair of its redemption, and earth has appeared only as a barren and dreary waste. But, looking down beneath the external covering—removing the gross corruptions which have buried the internal soul, we may behold a work to be accomplished and a hope for the race in that work, which never have been fully seen and appreciated. To those who can thus view the real state and wants of humanity, it will be apparent that the great labor of spiritual culture is to be made the chief element of true reform. By a careful observation it will be seen that the spirit, like all things subject to the law of progress, is susceptible of improvement and expansion. If it is now dwarfed and weakened in its degraded state, we should not forget that it may be gradually unfolded and developed; and if, from its corrupting situation, it is prevented from exerting its appropriate influence on human action, our great aim should be to restore it to its true position and its just supremacy. In acting on this principle individually, the race would rapidly assume a far different appearance;—dark corruptions with which it is now clothed would be removed, scenes of vice and misery would disappear, and the immortal flowers of the spirit, blooming in perennial beauty, would arise in the moral wastes of earth.

But an inquiry here arises in relation to the proper means to be employed in the culture of the spirit. The answer to this inquiry, as given in accordance with the analogy existing between the spiritual and physical man, may be resolved into several particulars which seem worthy of notice. We may naturally remark in the first place, that, like the outward body, the spirit, to be enlarged and strengthened, must live in a *pure atmosphere*. There is a beautiful truth here, which appeals directly to our intuitive perceptions. The sons of the mountain that dwell above the sultry air and unhealthy vapors of the valley, are rendered strong and hale, seeming to breathe in the very elements of life which are borne on every passing breeze. So also the spirit, in soaring upon the summits of faith and breathing the pure atmosphere of heaven, is enabled to feel something of that youthful vigor and elastic lightness which only the immortals know. It is almost in vain that we attempt to cultivate the soul, while it is buried, as it were, in the corruptions of earth—while it is confined within the enclosure of human creeds, and oppressed with the burden of selfish interests. As wisely indeed might we expect the rose to blossom while blighted with the pestilential vapors of the desert, as to anticipate that the soul will expand and be perfected beneath the chilling breath of perverted society. A differ-

ent and far more elevated condition is required to develop the beauty of the inward being. The spirit must be elevated above the plane of the material; it must be lifted up to the sphere of angelic communion; it must feel its fellowship with the bright celestials in higher worlds;—and thus, inhaling the pure atmosphere of truth and love, it shall unfold with the deepest joy, the slumbering energies of its godlike nature.

Again; it is essential in cultivating the powers of the soul, that it should be furnished with *nutritious diet*. We are aware that the growth of all living forms is dependent on appropriate nourishment. The plant grows in attracting the nutritive elements of the soil, and the body is strengthened by feeding on the animate forms of nature. This same prominent law may be applied also to the soul. To become enlarged and expanded, it must be fed, not with earthly substance, but with bread from heaven. Soaring above the idle vanities of earth, it attains its true culture by breathing in the light and love of the universe—partaking of the rich feasts of reason, feeding upon immortal truths, and receiving into its depths the streams of heavenly life. Like a plant made strong and beautiful by the sunshine and the rain, it must grow into the fullness of its celestial nature, by imbibing and digesting those divine realities which shall constitute its strength and joy when the body has fallen back to dust.

Another means to be employed in the culture of the spirit, is *wholesome discipline*. As the body becomes weak and languid when deprived of suitable exercise, so the interests of the soul require that it should be aroused to some disciplinary action. With reference to this object, the trials and adversities of life are not without their use. The smooth and even pathway may be more agreeable to the outward man, but this is not most favorable to the culture of the spirit. In the gloom and disappointment of adversity—in the storm and tempest of affliction, the soul may find a means of discipline which may conduce to its growth and strength. Let, then, the spirit boldly wrestle with the trials and sorrows of life, though it may cause a momentary pain; let it run with patience the race that is set before it, though the way may be rough and uneven. For the true development of the soul is to be obtained, not only on beds of down, in rosy paths, or on the smooth lake, but in the dreary desert, on the mountain top, and amid the billow's roar.

In the foregoing particulars are involved the general means which are to be employed in the cultivation of the spirit. The end to be attained, so exalted and glorious, should enlist the noblest efforts of man. In this is a source of joy which the world knows not. Deep and thrilling is the new life which wells up from the inner being, and, as we turn from the treasures of earthly wealth, we find a beauty in the expanded soul, which is of more value than all fading riches. This is the treasure which we chiefly need. If we strictly examine our hearts, we shall find that they are cold, selfish and contracted. Our feelings need to be expanded, our views enlarged, and our aspirations strengthened. We live, and yet we see not all, and feel not half that we ought. We look only within the shell of our own being, and behold not the immensity which stretches out beyond. The soul needs to be filled with the all-expanding principle of the universe, which is love. It needs to be warmed, gladdened, and enlivened by the celestial flame. The strong, deep yearning for a higher life must be called in action; charity, the crowning excellence of virtue, must be exercised; and the warm sympathies of the heart must flow forth in a broad and mighty stream, to purify and bless the world.

R. P. A.

## Ideas of God.

Speculations on the nature of the Deity, can be, from the necessity of the case, only of the most general character. It is true we may possess a certain conception of the qualities which adhere to the Divine Being, but when we consider the nature of those qualities—when we think of that vast infinity in which the mind can find no resting-place, and of that long eternity, compared with which time is but a drop in the boundless ocean, we find ourselves in the presence of that limitless immensity, before which the soul shrinks abashed with an inward consciousness of its weakness.

R. P. A.



## CONCEPTIONS OF HUMAN GREATNESS.

The ambitious passions of the human heart have flowed in many different channels to reach their ultimate gratification. In seeking the summit of earthly greatness, men have labored, not only in different spheres, but with varying conceptions of the object to which they aspire. Almost every era of the world has had its characteristic ideas of greatness, in correspondence with which the aims and objects of individuals have been governed. The prevailing views on this subject have seemed to keep pace with the several stages of human advancement. Each passing era has witnessed some modification in the nature and direction of the ambitious impulses. The goal of human aspiration has been raised continually higher and higher, as the race has advanced from the darkness of past ages into the increasing light of the present. In relation, however, to the constituent elements of true greatness, three prominent conceptions may be observed existing in different eras, being founded on the unfolding nature of man.

The first of these ideas relates to merely physical superiority. Previous to the development of the intellectual and moral faculties, man being supplied by nature with a strong and sinewy body, was naturally inclined to seek for eminence in cultivating the powers and energies of the material frame. In this lowest degree of human progress, the physically strong—the men of powerful frame and elastic sinews, were regarded as eminently great; while those possessing a weak and inferior organization were looked upon as bearing the stigma of disgrace and shame. Accordingly, the prominent aim of those aspiring to greatness in this era, was to excel in physical strength, fleetness of foot, and qualities of a kindred nature. The warrior then met his foe face to face upon the open field, and with his “arm of iron” gained a victory which crowned his brow with laurel. Possessing this physical qualification alone, the heroes of the past acquired a name which was enrolled on the page of history, while the pathway of the world was illumined through succeeding ages by the glory of their achievements. In the games of ancient Greece and Rome, is presented a marked manifestation of the prevailing idea. Here the united energies of mind and body are concentrated in one mighty struggle for a physical triumph. Competitors for fame enter the wide arena where multitudes may gaze upon their wondrous feats, and, as with glistening eyes and panting breath, they struggle for the victory, they look to the crown which shall grace the conqueror’s brow as the loftiest height of human glory. Thus in the dim light which lingers over the early ages of humanity, is revealed but little more than the merely physical achievements, which result from this first-born conception of human greatness.

At last, however, a higher view dawned on the advancing mind. It was discovered that man is endowed with something more than a mere outward body, and that no merit can be attached to the exercise of that physical strength, which is only the gratuitous gift of nature. Hence the pathway that leads to eminence was raised to a higher plane. To gratify the ambitious feeling that yet existed, attention was now turned to the improvement of the mind. Greatness was made to consist in intellectual superiority. Instead of the arena of physical strife—the gorgeous amphitheater and bloody battle-field, men entered the wide realms of mind, and, within the sacred precincts of the presiding Soul, sought for the glory which the strong arm now failed to gain. It was no longer the physical conqueror who was alone great, but the philosopher, the statesman, the orator, and the poet—all presented a claim to the appellation. Thus the poor student of weak and sickly frame, now earned in toiling at midnight what the mightiest hero had gained upon the fields of war; and the humble discoverer of new truths, though buffeted awhile the waves of popular scorn, was enabled to enstamp his name on human history so as never to be effaced. Truly in this struggle for mental greatness, a mysterious power—a something godlike is developed; and the rich gems of mind reflect a lustre upon the human character which dazzles, yet delights the beholder. Hence the man of intellect—he who explores the secrets of Nature, unravels the mysteries of life, and reveal truths

which gleam like stars in the darkened heavens, has been able to attain a higher place in the thoughts and affections of men than could ever have been reached by merely physical prowess. Still even in this idea of greatness, is there not something wanting to complete the charm which the truly godlike may possess? Is there not, even at the highest attainable point of intellectual elevation, a lack of some essential quality to be interwoven in the crown of human glory? The answer to these inquiries may be readily seen, as we glance at those numerous instances which show that the brightest intellect may be immersed in moral turpitude, and that those who attain the highest degree of intellectual eminence, may be guilty even of the darkest crimes. While, then, we allow to mental superiority the merit which it may justly claim, let us be reminded that there dwells in man the germ of nobler qualities which are essential to the attainment of true nobility.

The conceptions of mankind relating to physical and intellectual greatness are imprinted on the history of the past. It is for the future to develop and embody a still loftier conception. In the attainment of true greatness, man needs to be impressed with the reality that he possesses a moral as well as intellectual being;—he needs to realize that nobleness of purpose, as well as strength of mind—purity of feeling, as well as elevation of thought, is essential to perfect the human character. Thus shall he acquire a moral and spiritual greatness—a nobility and elevation of soul, beneath which the mere brilliancy of intellect becomes faint and dim, like some feeble flame in the glaring sunlight. If, then, man has been honored in warring with outward foes—if he has acquired fame in disclosing the beauties of the intellectual world, let his ambition now take a still higher aim: for he is truly great, who amid the storms and gloom of earth preserves a calm, unruffled soul—he who, while wrong and crime and corruption throng around him, has the courage to do right, to seek for truth, and commune with God!

R. P. A.

## Intellectual Strength.

The man of mighty, towering intellect, if not possessed of a sufficient preponderance of moral principle, is, of all others, the most dangerous to community. Such a man works in the dark. You may see the operation performed, but the performer is invisible. The effects of his actions may fall with destructive force upon society, but the actor is beyond the reach of human justice. Thus as the garrison of an almost impregnable fort has occasion to fear the subterranean miners, so may we dread the man who possesses no higher qualification than mere strength of intellect. Day and night he is engaged in forming his wily schemes, in which innumerable victims are enthralled. The fascinated bird rushes not more blindly to its ruin, than he who is drawn within the net-work of the ambitious plotter.

Herein lies the extreme danger of intellectual strength—its combination with irresistibly strong and selfish propensities: thus favoring that unconquerable desire which ever seeks the aggrandizement and gratification of self, either directly, or through the medium of some party movement. Were this strength of intellect combined with expansive benevolence, large conscientiousness, and active spirituality, we should behold a grand and glorious result;—a noble specimen of humanity would be presented in the form of a *genuine man*—not only in stature, but in soul. The predominance of intellect, however, as united with the promptings of self, has been the cause of the majority of evils which now prevail. Examine, if you please, the professional classes; look into our legislative halls—enter the doors of our literary institutions, and, if you have courage, glance at the various churches of the land; and what do you behold? This is the principal characteristic of the operations here—*it is not the manœuvring and scheming of mighty intellect, but the clashing of words and argumentative disputation from an action of the lower faculties?* I know much there of “liberty,” “patriotism,” and “a sincere desire for what is here signified” by these terms, but rather unity in both feeling and action, glorious in themselves, hackneyed

they have been, are now made to signify merely the self-interest of the person or party who employs them, and this they will continue to mean so long as mere strength of intellect is suffered to predominate over moral influence. The proper mode of correcting this evil, is to place men possessing moral qualifications in the responsible stations of society—that those who are endowed with power may be such as will employ it for the good of humanity, rather than for individual, party, or sectarian interests.

F. M. B.

### Objects of the Harmonial Philosophy.

Many individuals who are delighted with the beautiful conceptions involved in the spiritual philosophy, have no distinct comprehension of the ultimate *objects* contemplated in this grand system of truth. To such it should be remarked that these objects are not included in any mere passing gratification, but are eminently *practical* in their nature. If there are hopes and visions here presented to the soul more beautiful than all earthly dreams, we should not forget that beyond these there is a divine reality to be attained, which forms the end and substance of our glorious faith. The details of this subject we find briefly stated in the preface of Mr. Davis' recent work, an extract from which may be here appropriately introduced:—

The exceeding happiness which the revelations of the harmonial philosophy have imparted to hundreds of minds in the United States, is a source of lasting satisfaction to those who labor for its dissemination and application to the interests and pursuits of every-day life. For the edification of those who do not comprehend its *nature, scope, teachings and tendencies*, it is here deemed proper to remark that it hath *two objects* in view—*two ends* to accomplish, to which all its scientific, theological, and religious teachings are particularly subservient, namely:

1st. *The Harmonization of the Individual.* To accomplish this, it presents an analysis of the human affections and faculties; it exhibits both the *natural and inverted* modes of their manifestation; it discovers the various and diversified *causes* of evil and wrong in the world, and prescribes the infallible remedy; it harmonizes the elements of the human soul, to the end that men thus united *within themselves*, may conspire and form a united race. It supposes that man possesses in a finite degree, the attributes of the Infinite; that all Development—Architecture—Commerce—Language—Science—Philosophy—Theology—Government—Authority—Art—Music—Poetry—&c., have their seat, germ, or beginning principle, in the human soul, and that the development of each one is in actual proportion to the soul's growth. This is equally true with reference to the *RACE*, as it is in respect to the *INDIVIDUAL*.

2d. *The Harmonization of Society;* to bring all affections, professions, interests, and pursuits into unity, as the notes of a musical instrument. Unity, as the author is impressed to define it in the harmonial philosophy, comprehends every conception and idea of "Elysium"—"Utopia"—"City of the Sun"—"New Atlantis"—"Dream of Perpetual Peace"—"Celestial City"—"New Jerusalem"—"Millennium"—"Home"—"Harmony"—"Happiness"—and "Heaven;" for all the conceptions of which these various terms are expressive, have their origin in the immanent elements of the Soul, and are consequently homocentrical. The various sects and systems of faith existing, all evince the *conception and impression* of a period of Unity sometime in the future. Each sect, however, entertains but *partial* and in many respects *incorrect* conceptions of that period, as each does also of God, of Immortality, and of that future Happiness to which mankind individually aspire; yet the very existence of such a conception of heavenly happiness or millennial harmony among all sects and nations, and in all periods of human history, *proves* that the elements and causes of that conception are eternal in Man and in Nature, and, therefore, homogeneous with the constitution and design of the Divine Mind. Unity, in Man and in Society, includes the full growth and harmonious action of every Passion, Desire, or Love. This is the ultimate of God's design and of human desire; and when it is accomplished, Man

will be in Harmony with Himself, with his Neighbor, with the Universe, and with the UNIVERSAL FATHER.

Such are the humanitarian objects and lofty tendencies of the Harmonial Philosophy.

### Spiritual Progress.

One peculiar and attractive feature connected with the progress of the soul, is the illimitable extent of the field through which it is destined to traverse. There is here no boundary which can circumscribe its unfolding powers. The pathway on which it has entered leads up to God; and while the attractive beauties of heaven are ever leading it onward, it is joyous to think that there are no steps to be retraced. While to the finite vision which cannot comprehend infinity, there may seem to be a boundary like that which is seen where the ocean and the sky mingle, yet the soul moves ever on, roaming with delight in the inconceivable expanse that reaches every where beyond its view. From truth to truth, and from joy to joy, it advances in its course, learning constantly more of God, its own nature and the universe, penetrating deeper into the vast arcana of creation, and comprehending more fully the design and uses of existence. Thus is the destiny of the soul made ineffably glorious; and there is a voice which bids us enter on its enjoyment now. Behold! the field is open before us—let us advance. Though perchance weak in the beginning, yet at every step shall we acquire new strength; and with every new virtue which we attain shall we become better prepared to add others of a still brighter lustre, until we seem to have arrived at the highest point of earthly perfection. And even here we may not rest; the wide temple of celestial Spheres rises from the foundations of earth, and infinite love spreads out before us, in an illimitable sea, forming the course of eternal progress.

R. P. A.

### Mental Tranquility.

In a world like this, where scenes of darkness are mingled with the sweet joy of life, and where the vicissitudes of fortune bring sorrow and disappointment to the soul, a state of interior calmness and tranquility becomes a chief characteristic of the great mind. When all is calm and peaceful without—when no storm arises to ruffle the smooth waters on which our bark is drifting—when in short the blessings of wealth, honor and ease are enjoyed, it is not difficult, or at least should not be, to maintain a cheerful serenity. It is only when the light of joy has been withdrawn, and the dark shadows of earth have gathered upon the spirit, that the trial comes. Then, amid the confusion of outward elements, the strength of the great mind is beautifully manifested. Calmly it looks forth on the troubled stream of life; and in its deep tranquility, which no frown of fortune may disturb, are mirrored a confiding faith and a celestial joy.

R. P. A.

In investigating the spiritual phenomena which are now so generally taking place, it is well to be calm and patient. There may be mysteries here which it is now difficult to solve—seeming discrepancies and contradictions, which appear to illy accord with the truth and purity of spiritual beings, yet we may be assured that, in the process of time, all these things will be satisfactorily explained. Let not, then, the foundations of our faith be shaken by changing winds, but, relying on the eternal principles of Nature, let us wait patiently for the unfolding light.

To CORRESPONDENTS.—We trust that our generous correspondents will not discontinue their kind offices, nor forget the duties they owe to the readers of the Messenger. They are reminded that our "drawer" is now nearly empty—except perhaps the drawer of the editor's brain, which, it must be confessed, has been sadly drawn upon during the present week.

The letter from T. S. S. has been gratefully received. We shall look eagerly for his appearance.

## Poetry.

## A SONNET.

WRITTEN FOR THE SPIRIT MESSENGER,  
BY R. P. AMBLER.

The earth is bright  
As the clear light  
Shines on its blooming breast ;  
And flowers are fair  
That slumber there  
In sweet and dewy rest.

The sky is clear,  
Without a tear,  
In wide, majestic blue ;  
And clouds we see  
That wander free,  
Are tinged with sunlight hue.

Each twinkling star  
That gleams afar,  
Gives light to sleeping earth ;  
And 'neath the storm,  
The rainbow's form  
In beauty has its birth.

So Nature's voice  
Bids all rejoice  
In this fair home of love ;  
While faith serene,  
With heavenly mien,  
Points to the Spheres above.

## THE SPIRIT'S FAREWELL.

BY CARLETON SEYMOUR M'KEE.

Farewell, farewell, I go  
To a far distant land,  
Where fragrant waters flow  
O'er a bright pearly strand:  
I go, my struggle o'er,  
To joyful day,  
Beloved, adieu, no more  
With thee I stay.  
Oh! tearful hour, we part,  
Death chills my throbbing heart,  
Farewell, farewell.

Farewell, I would that thou  
Couldst soar away with me,  
Where care ne'er shades the brow,  
And loving souls are free :  
Oh! there we might forget  
The griefs of earth,  
Evil and sad regret  
Have there no birth,  
May we, our sorrows o'er,  
Rest there forevermore,  
Farewell, farewell.

Farewell, beyond the skies  
I haste me now to dwell,  
Where gladness never dies,  
Nor sounds the dismal knell.  
We part, but we shall meet,  
Far, far from here,  
'Mid peace and pleasure sweet,  
In that blest sphere.  
Adieu, why should I stay ?  
I rise to Heaven's fair day,  
Farewell, farewell.

## Miscellaneous Department.

## WHAT IS LIFE?

BY MRS. S. ELIZA GIBSON.

Near a garden walk grew a lovely rose-bush, whose beauty attracted the notice, and arrested the footsteps of each passer by. Careful hands had nurtured it, and the choicest of Heaven's dews descended upon and blessed it. One rose which had but just burst the fetters of the bud—white in its nature, yet its delicate leaves tinged by the faintest blush, looked modestly out from behind the green leaves of its parent bush, and asked the tribute of admiration. The zephyr stooped to kiss it, and passed on loaded with perfume. How beautiful! 'Twas life that made it thus! A day passed, and yet others in quick succession, and again the eye sought the rose; but, alas, how changed! Its petals, yellow and seer, were now scattered wildly around, or hung mournfully down the stalk which had once supported it. Why thus? Ah! with its odor, Life had fled!

A lofty oak reared its head to the sky, while its branches, broad and extended, waved proudly, and spoke its mightiness. Nature's choristers found a home in its recesses, and beneath its tempting shade lingered even the antlered rover and panting fawn. Here, too, the weary traveler sought rest and a shelter from the scorching rays of a noon-day sun, while wonder marked his gaze as his eye, upturned, sought the topmost branches. What! marveled he that the sapling became so lofty! 'Twas Life that brought even from the germ, the mighty oak! But look again! A fiery fluid, "the finger of God" has marked it, and the once proud trunk is shattered, and its branches, clad in blackened leaves, hang in mournful submission to the ground.

A worm—start not back in disgust, ye of refined sensibilities, for that worm was animated by the same principle which animates the proud and noble of earth!—a worm was in the path, and its motions were quick, active and joyous, as onward it moved, as if thought guided its steps, or intellect dictated its motives. The curious stooped to observe, and while doing thus, mused on the incomprehensible something which enlivened it: but a careless foot passed that way, and when the eye again turned to the worm, it found it crushed and mingled with the dust. Thus frail, and thus brittle is the thread of life!

A butterfly all glad and joyous sported in the smiles of a summer sun. Pride seemed exultant, for gorgeous colors met in its attire, and gaiety bedecked its silken wing. Now it stooped and sipped the sweets of the lowliest flowers—now drank nectar from the honeysuckle, and anon, rose on gilded wing to banquet on the delicacies of the richer rose. Here, too, was Life in all its sportiveness and gaiety! Could it indeed be transitory? A week has fled, and look now for the butterfly! The measure of its life is full—the number of its days is o'er, and the gay butterfly is not!

A young damsel stood at an open window, and her enthusiastic gaze rested on those brilliant gems, that bedecked the sombered canopy of heaven. Health has kissed her cheek, and left there its loveliest blush, and beauty resplendent shone from every feature, while the signet of intellect sat proudly on her lofty brow, and the fire of genius flashed in her every glance! Her ornaments were the bright gems from the deep mines of science, and her crown, a garland of truth interwoven with the flowers of literature! But what illumined the temple, and rendered visible to earth's creatures its beautiful decorations? Ah! this too, was Life. A period of time has winged its flight, and again, in the same room is that lovely maiden; but the light hath left her eye and the enthusiasm her countenance; and now, cold and motionless, she rests on a lowly bier!

Say, why is this change? Alas! the pale messenger called at her door, and, without waiting for her bidding, entered and left the temple of its glowing spark.

A monarch sat upon a throne with the garb of royalty about him, and the ensign of power upon his haughty brow. Menials trembled at his glance—proud lords cowered beneath his frown, and nations hastened to obey his mandate! Yes, he was great

and powerful, too, in his greatness, for kingdoms bowed in submission to his decree, and even the lives of thousands were at his disposal! But what was it that sent the purple blood circling through his royal veins?—what but life! and had the monarch power over this? The wind of the pestilence arose, the haughty one inhaled its poisonous breath, and the head which was once graced by a crown, now lies low, and on a level with the slave and the beggar!

Here, then, is Life! The rose and the oak, the worm and the butterfly, the maiden and the monarch, portray it in all its gaiety and sportiveness, its beauty and power; but how frail, how fickle and uncertain are its beamings! To-day it brightens, it glows, it illumines—to-morrow it is not! We see, we feel it, and yet we know it not! Look to it, ye of reflection, and then tell me if ye can—what is Life?—*Magazine and Advocate.*

### Silence of Death.

In the city, while men are brawling in the crowded streets, death is entering the secret chambers, and friends sit pallid by the couches of the breathless, or love in drinking in the sigh which bears the soul to Heaven. Death is silent. Those whose every look spoke to us in life, pass from our sight as the shadow from the dial, and the music of their words become sad echoes in the distance of our memory. Death is silent. Living hatred thunders in the strife of war, and when the contest is over, Death, grim and speechless, is monarch of the field. Death is silent. Tempests shriek madly upon the ocean, and many are they who sink with this requiem into their fathomless grave; but from the depths of that sublime sepulchre, no sound comes back to tell of those who perished. Death is silent; yet not so entirely; silent it is to the ear, but not always to the heart: our brethren are still bound to us, and though dead, they have not ceased to be. There is much to be felt and learned where they rest. Humility has instruction from the proud man's monument, and contentment a lesson from the vanity that overlies his clay. There is pathos in the solitude where the stranger sleeps; there is mute eloquence on his unlettered grave; there is a beauty in the poor man's epitaph, inscribed honestly by affection; there is sublimity in the rude sculpture of the peasant's tomb, when it is the effort to symbolize an immortal faith. And it is such faith which takes terror from the power of death, and despair from the silence of the grave. There is that in us, which is not all clay. That which belongs to earth, must go to the earth: but when earth claims and gets back its atoms, God gathers up and calls home his spirits.

### Felicity of the Soul.

If an untutored peasant, living out his days in privation and poverty, could deliberately observe a man of cultivated intellect and sensibility, while surrounded with external gifts and possessions, the sun shining on his path, the landscape glowing on every side, flowers springing beneath his feet, equipages awaiting his orders, servants ready to anticipate his wishes, pictures, jewels, and gold, all in lavish profusion, assembled within his grasp—how little would such a looker-on guess the small share which such acquisitions have in the real felicity of a refined and sensitive spirit; that the interest of life depends not on these decorations; that our real existence is not chronicled by its possessions, nor even by its events; and that the inward, invisible state of the heart, its meditations, its affections, its wishes, even its very dreams, constitute the unspeakable felicity or the unutterable wretchedness of a thinking spirit. The best and most intense enjoyments of man are all wrapped up within his own mind, and so are his most acute sufferings: therefore, in periods of deep emotion, if the touch of a magician could, like Cinderella's godmother, transform a luxurious equipage into a pumpkin, or a bed of down into a pallet of straw, the change would scarcely be noticed. To a soul capable of intense feeling, the mere paraphernalia of life is, in times of excitement, no more a source of interest than toys to a sickly child. The deep emotions that spring from within, are felt by such a soul to be the true felicity.

### Thoughts of Nature.

We look wishfully towards the gold colored sky of the west at the close of day. It seems like the warm blush of summer time, and we forget the bleak aspect of earth around us. It speaks the silent and beautiful language of Spring. The sky is always blue and the sunlight always bright, though clouds may sometimes intervene. So in the winter of life, the light of Spring bathes the evening sky of years with the earnest of Eternal Summer.

We like the cold, wintry sky, the roar of the blast and the thunder-music of the storm but yet the rain-bow of the calm heaven and the sheen of earth as she smiles through the tears that have gathered on her green tresses, is grateful. There is a holy, unspeakable ecstasy in the heart at the approach of Spring. Were it always spring, we should forget that the earth is so beautiful. But the warm breezes, the bright flowers and green fields that follow the retreating footsteps of Winter, are all the brighter and more welcome for their sojourn at the South. So we love to watch the sunlight as it fades out in the West, even in winter time. The heart reads its language, and leaps to the thoughts of field's once more clothed with the poetry of Earth, and chiming to the melody of glinting streams.—*Cayuga Chief.*

BEAUTIFUL APOLOGUE.—Near a dew-drop there fell a tear upon a tomb, whither a beautiful female repaired every morning to weep for her lover. As the sun's golden disk rose higher in heaven, his rays fell on the tear and dew drop, but shone with a redoubled brilliancy on the pearl shook from the tresses of Aurora. The liquid jewel proud for its lustre, addressed its neighbor—"How darest thou appear thus solitary and heartless?" The modest tear made no answer; but the zephyr that just then waned near them passed in its flight, brushed down with its wings the glittering dew-drop, and folding the humble tear of affection in its embrace, carried it up to heaven!

THE TWO HEAPS.—"I see in this world," said John Newton, "two heaps—one of human happiness and one of misery; now if I can take but the smallest bit from the second heap, and add to the first, I carry a point. If, as I go home, a child has dropped a half-penny, and if by giving it another, I can wipe away its tears, I feel that I have done something. I should be glad indeed to do great things, but I will not neglect such little ones as this."

☞ The attention of a little girl being called to a rose bush, on whose topmost stem the oldest rose was fading, but below and around which three beautiful crimson buds were just unfolding their charms, she artlessly exclaimed to her brother, "See, Willie, these little buds have just awaked to kiss their mother before she dies."

☞ The BOOKS and CHART of Mr. Davis; comprising all the works on the HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY that have been published, can be had at our office, and forwarded by express or otherwise, to any part of the Union. PRICE—REVELATIONS \$2; GREAT HARMONIA, Vol. 1, \$1.25; CHART, exhibiting an outline of the Progressive History and approaching destiny of the Race, \$1.50 PHILOSOPHY OF SPECIAL PROVIDENCES, \$0.15. THE PHILOSOPHY OF SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE; being an explanation of modern mysteries—50 cts.

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