

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.

PHILOSOPHY OF SLEEP.

Our health and happiness depend very much on the way in which we regulate our lives. Strange as it may appear, there is a discipline which should be observed in our sleeping as well as in our waking hours. But after all what is sleep? "It is so like death," said Sir Thomas Browne, "that I cannot trust myself to it without my prayers." Our medical philosophers puzzle themselves in vain to account for it; and move about in a circle of truisms, reminding us of the kitten described by Goethe, everlastingly playing with its own tail. There is no better description given of the approach of sleep than that which we find in one of Leigh Hunt's papers: "A gentle failure of the perceptions comes creeping over one; the spirit of consciousness disengages itself more and more with slow and hushing degrees, like a mother detaching her hand from that of her sleeping child; the mind seems to have a balmy lid closing over it, like the eye;—'tis closing—'tis more closing—'tis closed. The mysterious spirit has gone to take its airy rounds."

But what is the immediate cause of sleep?—Let us explain. There can be no doubt that a certain amount of nervous energy is necessary to support the activity of the body; and when this is exhausted by the exertions of the day, the organs of animal life become fatigued, and unable any longer to perform their functions. Hence their prostration, arising from the want of their usual nervous stimulus, superinduces a state of sleep. The perception of external objects becomes confused; the eyes grow dim; the lids drop, in spite of every effort to uphold them; then the muscles of the back and neck relax their tension, the head falls forward to one side or the other, and the body sinks, as far as circumstances will permit, into a horizontal position. But the sense of hearing remains for a period after that of sight; so that we may hear the conversation of persons around us long after we are able to perceive their gestures, and discriminate the object of their remarks. In this half-waking, half-sleeping condition, which the French call "*demi sommeil*," we may remain as in a pleasing reverie, for sometime, until sleep absorbs the last glimmering of consciousness. Now, if this state arise, as we believe it does, from a deficiency of exhaustion of nervous energy, the more perfectly developed we shall find the nervous system, the greater will be the amount of sleep required to recruit the animal strength. Let us take a glance through the different gradations of the Animal Kingdom.

If we begin with Insects we shall find that although many, like the common housefly, remain in a state of torpidity, yet they may continue wakeful and cheerful throughout the year—in fact, they scarcely sleep at all. We shall next observe that in fishes the nervous system is only imperfectly developed; therefore, they require little sleep, and when asleep, they may be observed motionless in the water, with the exception of the tail, in which state they may be easily netted, or even taken with the hand; but, if suddenly touched, they start in an instant, and swim away in evident alarm. The serpent tribes, which rank somewhat higher in the scale of organization, remain awake many days and nights, and then have long periods of repose. The Boa Constrictor, after gorging itself to repletion, will remain for many days or weeks motionless and insensible. But this should be regarded as a state of lethargy, consequent upon over-distention, rather than one of natural repose.

As we proceed higher in gradation, we shall find that birds sleep much more than fish or reptiles; but the slightest noise or movement will awaken them, as was evinced by the cackling of the scared geese which saved the capitol of Rome from the

soldiers of Brennus, when the watchdogs and sentries were sleeping on their posts. When we arrive at the different orders of quadrupeds, the brain and spinal marrow appear more fully developed; and the consequence is, that in obedience to their instincts, those which are active by day, sleep by night, and those which roam abroad in quest of prey during the night, sleep by day. It is a curious circumstance, however, that this order of their nature is reversed in those animals which are kept in captivity; thus it may be observed that the lions, tigers, hyenas, &c., in the Zoological Gardens, remain awake during the day, and sleep by night. They accommodate themselves so far to the uses of "civilization." The monkey tribes—particularly the smaller species, are very restless; but the great baboon or Chimpanzee, the organization of whose brain very closely resembles that of man, will take his six or eight hours' sleep, if undisturbed. We therefore come to the conclusion that the more full developed the nervous energy that is successively generated and exhausted, as it were, from its electrical battery—the greater will be the quantity of sleep required; hence it has been truly remarked, that "man sleeps longer than any of the larger animals."

Let us now draw near to the bedside, and consider more attentively this mysterious state;—let us examine the phenomena of sleep.

It will be observed that the breathing is slower than it is when we are awake; the inspirations are fuller and deeper, and there is a greater interval between them. Many persons, however, particularly young people who are delicate, breathe very gently; their respiration, during sleep, is sometimes scarcely audible.

We have known a lady in extreme grief lie in a kind of trance, breathing so feebly for nearly a fortnight, that her respiration was scarcely perceptible to the ear. It is the same in infancy; and under the exhaustion produced by many diseases, there would appear to be no manifest boundary between sleep and death. Like the respiration, the circulation also diminishes in rapidity; the vessels of the skin relax; and it has been proved that a person sleeping healthfully and without any artificial means to promote it, will, during an undisturbed sleep in a given space of time, perspire insensibly twice as much as a person awake. The temperature of the body, under such circumstances, falls somewhat below its waking standard; which, in the management or discipline of sleep, is a matter of considerable importance. On this account, during sleep, there is less resistance to the cooling power and morbid effects of cold than when we are awake. "Therefore," says Dr. Elliotson, "persons cover their heads before going to sleep; and when habit has not overcome the necessity for this, cold is continually caught from its neglect. A draught of air is far more dangerous in the sleeping state, and the back of the body appears less vigorous than the front, as a draught at the back is much more dangerous than in front." The cause of this is obvious; the cold strikes directly on the spinal column—the back-bone having, unlike the chest, very little muscular protection. It is important, therefore, that during sleep the back should be well covered." Dr. Elliotson adds that "agues are caught more readily if persons fall asleep;" which may be explained from this simple fact, that although the muscular system is relaxed and prostrate, and the organs of sense veiled, as it were, from communion with the external world, the processes of absorption, digestion, and nutrition, go on with increased activity. The function of absorption is particularly active, which explains the danger of sleeping in marshy places, or where there is a succession of paludal exhalations. Already we have observed, that during sleep—when the nervous system is in repose, the temperature of the body is reduced—there is less animal heat generated; hence arises the danger of yielding to sleep when exposed to cold. "The power of intense cold in producing sleep," as Dr. Macnish observed, "is very great in the human

subject; and nothing in the winter season is more common than to find people lying dead in the fields and the highways, from such a cause. When Dr. Solander was crossing the mountains which divide Sweden from Norway, in company with Sir Joseph Banks and several other gentlemen, he warned them, saying, "Whoever sits down will sleep; and whoever sleeps will wake no more." Shortly afterward Dr. Solander was the first who felt an irresistible inclination to lie down, and one of his fellow-travelers, Mr. Richmond, persisted in doing the same, declaring that he desired nothing better than to lie down and die. Both lay down. Finding it impossible to proceed with them, Sir Joseph Banks, with the rest, lit fires with brushwood around them; having done which, Sir Joseph endeavored to wake Dr. Solander, and happily succeeded; but though he had not slept five minutes, he had almost lost the use of his limbs, and the muscles were so shrunk that the shoes fell from his feet. He consented to go forward with such assistance as could be given him; but no attempts to relieve Mr. Richmond were successful—he died on the spot. In severe winter weather, when the poor suffer much from cold, blankets are almost as indispensable to them as food. There is also one very interesting and important fact connected with this subject; it is that sleep promotes the cure of all diseases. What the physicians of old called "*the crisis*," occurs in this state, and it is not, therefore, without reason that afflicted relatives watching round a sick bed await with painful anxiety the awaking of their patient. In a state of health, sleep not only contributes to the prolongation of life, but enhances the conscious pleasure even of our existence; indeed it frequently happens, after a refreshing night's rest, that the mind experiences a high degree of unwonted buoyancy, particularly after pleasant dreams, although the details of them may not be remembered—a circumstance which Shakespeare has admirably described, where Romeo says in a tone of exultation,

"If I may trust the flattering eye of sleep,
My dreams portend some joyful news at hand;
My bosom's lord sits lightly upon his throne,
And all this day an unaccustom'd spirit
Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts."

MIND.

The mind! aye the *mind*—who can define it? How beautiful and dazzling is its power! It creates scenes of Edenlike beauty, and peoples them with creatures suited to our tastes, endowing them with capabilities which we may not possess, and capacitating them for enjoyments which we may not reach; and yet all bearing the semblance of reality. Nor is this a power which affords only such amusements for an idle hour, but it is one which, when Hope speaks of future days, or pictures to our view the bright realization of all her ardent aspirations, and which, when Faith points to a fairer and better world, lifts the dark veil which intervenes, and portrays all the loved and lost of earth, in the dazzling presence of the throne, arrayed in garments of celestial whiteness, and crowned with glorious immortality!

Let the atheist, who can look abroad upon this beautiful earth, and contrast with each other the thousand different productions which spring from the same center, and notice how the spire of grass grows beside the lordly oak, yet never aspires to its height; how the delicate petals of flowers vie in beauty and color, with the sterner leaves of the parent stem, yet each an emanation from the same root,—he who can observe that each of the various productions knows its own "seed-time and harvest," without an essential variation during the whole number of years to which his memory bears him witness—he who can meditate upon the wonderful complexity and multitudinous machinery exhibited in his own frame—and more than all, who can gaze by night upon those thousands of orbs hung so far above him that they appear but as the flickerings of so many lamps amid the darkness; and reflect that for ages on ages they have pursued the same untiring rounds, without discord or irregularity—he, we say, who can in calmness, meditate upon all these, and ascribe the creating and regulating power to the fickle arm

of chance, or to a law of attraction and repulsion whose existence commenced without a creator, ere eternity began; let even such an one turn to his mind (if he should happen to have one), and tell us how this chanced to be thus—why it dwelt not in a stone, or why, if there exists an affinity between this and the human frame, that affinity does not continue forever, and man "live always." Rather than frame a reply, he would, if he spoke conviction, tell you that Mind, *Mind!* at least, is an emanation from Deity—a spark that cannot cease to exist while eternity rolls its rounds!

Yes, and as the mind is heaven-born, it must be immortal! We feel—nay, we almost *know* that it will be. Not so with our physical frames. We see in them marks of decay, and we know that when the spark of vitality which now animates them shall be extinguished, they will return to the dust as they were; but not

"————— With life's precarious fire
The immortal ties of Nature shall expire;
These shall resist the triumphs of decay
When time is o'er and worlds have passed away!
Cold in the dust the perished heart may lie,
But that which warmed it once shall never die!"

Modification of Sleep.

Sleep is much modified by habit. Thus an old artillery-man often enjoys tranquil repose while the cannon are thundering around him; an engineer has been known to fall asleep within a boiler, while his fellows were beating it on the outside with their ponderous hammers; and the repose of the miller is nowise incommoded by the noise of his mill. Sound ceases to be a stimulus to such men, and what would have proved an inexpressible annoyance to others, is by them altogether unheeded. It is common for carriers to sleep on horseback, and coachmen on their coaches. During the battle of the Nile, some boys were so exhausted that they fell asleep on the deck amid the deafening thunder of that dreadful engagement. Nay, silence itself may become a stimulus, while sound ceases to be so. Thus, a miller being very ill, his mill was stopped that he might not be disturbed by its noise; but this, so far from inducing sleep, prevented it altogether, and it did not take place till the mill was set a-going again. For the same reason, the manager of some vast iron works, who slept close to them amid the incessant din of hammers, forges, and blast furnaces, would awake if there was any cessation of the noise during the night. To carry the illustration still further, it has been noticed that a person who falls asleep near a church, the bell of which is ringing, may hear the sound during the whole of his slumber, and be nevertheless aroused by its sudden cessation. Here the sleep must have been imperfect, otherwise he would have been insensible to the sound; the noise of the bell was no stimulus; it was its cessation, which, by breaking the monotony, became so, and caused the sleeper to awake.—*Macnish's Philosophy of Sleep.*

Mind against Mind.

There is a strong disposition in men of opposite minds to despise each other. A grave man cannot conceive what is the use of wit in society; a man who takes a strong common sense view of the subject, is for pushing out, by the head and shoulders, an ingenious theorist, who catches at the slightest and faintest analogies; and another man, who scents the ridiculous from afar, will hold no commerce with him who tests the exquisitely finer feelings of the heart, and is alive to nothing else; whereas, talent is talent, and mind is mind in all its branches. Wit gives to life one of its best flavors; common sense leads to immediate action, gives society its daily motion, and large, comprehensive views of its annual rotation; ridicule chastises folly and impudence, and keeps men in their proper spheres; sublety seizes hold of the fine threads of truth; analogy darts away to the most sublime discoveries; feeling paints all the exquisite passions of man's soul, and rewards him by a thousand inward visitations for sorrows that come from without. God made it all! it is all

good. We must despise no sort of talent; they all have their separate duties and uses—all the happiness of man for their object; they all improve, exalt, and gladden life.—*Sidney Smith.*

Psychological Department.

Curious Fact.

A short time since a young man in the township of Warsaw, Genesee Co., New York, was engaged in cutting wood; and in felling a tree it became entangled in the branches of other trees. While endeavoring to disentangle the tree and bring it to the ground, it suddenly fell; and splitting at the butt, he was caught by the foot, and thus suspended with his head downward. In this condition he cried for help, until his voice was gone and his strength well nigh exhausted. His axe had fallen, and he could barely touch the end of the helve with his finger. He labored to reach it, but it was all in vain. Could he but get that, he could extricate himself. But alas! it was beyond his reach. What was he to do? He had cried for help until he could no longer speak. He was in the woods, three-quarters of a mile from any human being. The weather was extremely cold, and he was hanging with his head downward, suffering extreme pain, not only in the foot which was caught in the cleft of the tree, but also in the head caused by his unnatural position and great exertion he had put forth to make himself heard. Death now seemed inevitable, unless he could be immediately extricated. There was no alternative. Summoning all his courage, therefore, he came to the determination to make the attempt to cut off his leg; and should he succeed in doing this, there was but a faint hope that he would thereby save his life, for there was no surgeon at hand to take up the arteries, no kind friend near to bind up the mangled limb. It seemed more than probable, therefore, that he would bleed to death. But what will a man not do to save his life? He had in his pocket an old, dull knife. With this he cut off the legs of his boot and stocking, and then unjoined his own ankle.

This being done, he crawled to his dinner basket, and binding up the stump with a napkin which had conveyed his dinner, he started upon his hands and knees through the snow for home. When he arrived within a few rods of his house he was discovered by some friends who hastened to his relief. His strength was now exhausted. Help had come and he fainted. He was borne to the house and resuscitated. *Now come the curious facts;* and I will here say that the gentleman who related the facts to me was present, and went for the surgeon. "Go" said the wounded man, "go immediately to the woods and cut out my foot, for it is suffering most excruciating pain." They did so, and brought the foot to the house. He then said it was cold and wished it put into warm water. This request was also granted. It was not in the room in which the unfortunate man lay, yet as soon as the foot touched the water he cried out, saying, "it burns me; the water is too hot!" Upon putting the hand into the water it was found even so. The water was then made cooler, and he was satisfied. I will also add that a surgeon was obtained from Batavia, a distance of fifteen or eighteen miles, the limb again amputated—the man recovered and became a preacher of the gospel in the Baptist Church!—*Philadelphia Presbyterian.*

Somnambulism.

The following extraordinary example of somnambulism is mentioned by Dr. Abercrombie as an established fact:—A girl, aged seven years, an orphan of the lowest rank, residing in the house of a farmer, by whom she was employed in attending cattle, was accustomed to sleep in an apartment separated by a very thin partition from one which was frequently occupied by an itinerant fiddler. This person was a musician of very considerable skill, and often spent a part of the night in performing pieces of a refined description, but his performances were not taken notice of by the child, except as a disagreeable noise. After a residence

of six months in this family she fell into bad health, and was removed to the house of a benevolent lady, where, on her recovery, the most beautiful music was often heard in the house during the night, which excited no small interest and wonder in the family, and many a waking hour was spent in endeavors to discover the invisible minstrel. At length the sound was traced to the sleeping room of the girl, who was found fast asleep, but uttering from her lips a sound exactly resembling the sweetest sound of a small violin. On further observation, it was found that, after being about two hours in bed, she became restless, and began to mutter to herself. She then uttered sounds precisely similar to the tuning of a violin, and at length, after some prelude, dashed off into elaborate pieces of music, which she performed in a clear and accurate manner, and with a sound exactly resembling the most delicate modulations of that instrument. During the performance she sometimes stopped, made the sound of re-tuning her instrument, and then began exactly where she had stopped, in the most correct manner. These paroxysms occurred at regular intervals, varying from one to fourteen or even twenty nights, and they were generally followed by a degree of fever and pain over various parts of the body.

Instance of Presentiment.

A singular instance of presentiment is related of the battle of St. Pierre:—When the inlying picquets turned out in the morning, a soldier of my company, the grenadiers, named M'Kinley, came up to me handing a paper, and said, "Captain, here is my will—I am to be killed to day, and I will all my effects, and every thing I have, to my comrade, Hugh Swift." "What nonsense, M'Kinley," I replied to him—"go into action and do what you have always done, behave like a brave soldier." He answered, "I will do that, sir, but I am certain I am to be killed to-day, and I request you to take my will." To satisfy him, I took it, and the man fought with the picquets during the whole day, with the greatest coolness and gallantry. In the afternoon, a little before the action was over, he rejoined the regiment;—we had suffered much, but M'Kinley was standing unhurt close to me; upon which I observed to him, "So, M'Kinley, I suspect you are wrong this time." The right of the regiment being posted on the round end of a hill, cut into steps for the vines, a body of the enemy's sharp shooters came close under us, and opened a fire to cover their retiring columns. M'Kinley seeing one of them taking aim over the arm of a fig tree in our direction, exclaimed, "Look at that rascal going to shoot our captain!" and advancing one step down the hill, he presented at the Frenchman, who, however, was unfortunately too quick for him, for in an instant afterwards poor M'Kinley was shot through the neck, and killed on the spot. The same ball gave me a severe contusion on the breast, and I fell with the unfortunate man, and was literally covered with his blood. He was one of the best soldiers in the grenadier company, and was much regretted; indeed but for him it is probable I should not live to tell this tale. The will was duly recorded in the war office, whence an order was issued for his comrade Swift to receive all that was due to him.

Pleasing Death from Cold.

The long continued action of snow or cold on the animal frame is inevitable death, and that of the most pleasing kind. At first a degree of languor is felt; to this succeeds an irresistible drowsiness, which, if indulged in, is surely fatal; the sufferer passing, without motion or pain, from the slumber of life into the cold sleep of death, leaving the countenance as calm and placid as if the pulse of existence still vibrated through the frame, while voluntary muscular power was quiescent under the delightful enjoyment of profound repose. Those who feel the pleasurable moments which intervene between the state of consciousness and unconsciousness on approaching sleep, when indistinct visions and indescribable emotions are experienced by the senses, may readily conceive the exquisite mode in which the terrific influence of frost softens the iron grasp of the grimace.—*Martin's History of the British Colonies.*

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

R. P. AMBLER, EDITOR.

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THE LAW OF HARMONY.

To a mind that has been imbued with the true philosophy, society, in all its present aspects, seems in an inverted position. You may begin where you may, and the same truth will every where make itself manifest. Take the three great professions, the Lawyer, the Physician, the Preacher. When the subject is logically considered, there can be no doubt but that these professions represent a reality, and have their foundation in human nature;—that is, when their offices are properly defined, society has for each an appropriate place and a real use. But who will say that they have now their true place and true use? The Lawyer, instead of occupying his mind with benevolent plans, formed in accordance with natural and societary laws, and laboring in their promulgation and application, occupies his mind with, and gains his subsistence by, the details of litigation and the endless labyrinth of mere technical or artificial names and schemes that society has adopted. The Physician, also, acts wrongly, from the inverted position in which he finds himself. His business is to take care of the sick, while he uses no means to keep the people enlightened concerning the laws by which sickness is produced. He does not obtain his living by the promulgation of those laws which show the absolute dependence of the soul upon the body, and thus add, in this way, to the prevention of evil, and the accumulation of wisdom, and the sum of human happiness. So also with the Preacher;—he evidently has a place in the constitution of society, but his disposition and employment are often—taking in consideration the higher truth that has visited us from the heavenly Spheres—at variance with those laws by which man is yet to come into juster relations with God, Nature, and himself. An illustration of my meaning is also seen in the endless jars and contentions of the world;—in the principles of trade, whose natural fruits are discord, deception, wrongs, poverty and suffering.

From this dark and repulsive scene, we may not turn away without, by farther contemplation, obtaining profit for our pains. We must start, then, with the reflection that everything means something; and whenever any case presents itself to us for our contemplation, we must ask ourselves, what does it mean? Nor in arriving at our conclusions, must we look at our present society as being crystalized, but first ascertain its true relation to the Future.

In finding these relations, we must first admit the law of Harmony—the blending of those laws that flow from the Divine Wisdom and Love, after whose counsels all things are formed, and whose fruits carry with them the evidence of their heavenly origin. Now this law leads us to anticipate that every thing will arrive at its completion. Shall the little blade that springs up beneath our feet, bud and blossom, and not the worlds and all the events that have their foundation in the very laws of Nature?

Society, then, is destined to be perfectly organized, and by the more intricate complication of its laws compared with those that govern the flower, is that period postponed. But so sure as this is a law whose operation we see everywhere about us, so it is also a law that the higher the thing, the more perfect will be its development. Neither the beauty of the unfolded flower, then, nor the sweet aroma of its leaves, can bear any comparison to that Society organized after the Divine Order, either in the wisdom and beauty of its exterior development, or in the aromas and harmonies that are yet to arise from its cultivated fields and palace-residences. Looking at things in this light, by further study we may find a place for the Lawyer, the Physician, and Preacher.

If we turn our minds to spiritual things, we shall find the same great law. It is thus that good springs from evil, and that

God governs amid the armies of heaven. Let, then, the veil that conceals the glories of the Immortal Land from our outward eye, become transparent; and as we prepare our minds to contemplate its heavenly scenery and its celestial residences, how sweet may be our thoughts, how worthy of Divine Wisdom and Love the results of our contemplations! I allude to the completion of the first grand scale of music in the heavenly harmonies. I would use no cant; I would not have the hand of Wisdom unclasped from the hand of Love, as I view their footsteps in that beautiful Land. I would follow them hand in hand, as slowly through the ages to come, sin and suffering are dying out from their dismal abodes—as note by note their voices are lost in that grand procession of the yet unnumbered years of our being's duration. But to such a result must I be led at last; and for its slow and sure development, I watch even as I would view a stream whose waters have been corrupted, and still by whose connection with its parent fountain, must yet be purified.

I wish to make this lesson practical, and to bring it down to every day's application. Now, then, wherever you see discord, there will yet be harmony, and you may make your application everywhere. Let us see.

A child is born from inharmonious parents. It inherits their imperfections and errors, but yet that child, by the law of its birth, inherits a particular quality of character; there are in him germs of a real character which he shall always possess. Thus in a given number of births, by an established law, persons are born with such peculiarities as to form, in a given number, a well-organized society, by which every trade and profession will find their just relations one to the other. By this law, Fourier has laid the basis of his Divine Order of Society, and proclaimed many of its laws—or to say the least, has given hints what they are yet to be. By this he even pretends to state the exact number that will form a perfect society.

If what I say about the child born from inharmonious parents is true, it is true of every thing, and life is greatly more real than reformers generally have imagined. Nature tells us to throw away nothing, but to find what every thing means. There is no individual, no matter who he is, but can be benefited by this rule. Let society ascertain the cause of suffering and wrong, before it builds scaffolds and prisons. Let the conservative account for the new things at which he rails before he rejects them. Let the philosopher account for the meaning of the thing he would have put away, and let us always ask ourselves, by our every experience, the message it brings out of the warm and loving bosom of Nature. It is thus we shall be led to adopt a true philosophy, and to see the law that pervades all earthly and heavenly harmonies. It is thus that societary difficulties will find an end, that the flowering of truth proceeds, and that the celestial Spheres will be peopled by their heavenly families. S. H. L.

Guardian Spirits.

Through all past ages, the opinion has been entertained, that when those we love pass from this state of existence, and are lost to the external vision, their spirits still retain a personal identity, and, with undiminished affection, return from their homes of bliss, to watch over, protect, and guide, the loved ones they have left on earth. To many individuals in all time this truth has been demonstrated, and the conviction so firmly established, that it could not be overthrown by any argument of the skeptic, or effaced by the raillery of superficial minds. They have been favored with manifestations of too convincing a character to leave any doubt on their own minds, either as to the actual existence of the friends that have passed from this life, or of their continued affection and ever watchful regard. Yet in the minds of men in general there floated only a vague, indefinite impression concerning the future state, the whole subject being involved in mystery and perplexity, beyond the power of the searching intellect to solve or unravel; producing, also, in the mass of uncultivated minds, the most superstitious fear and dread.

But a brighter era has now dawned. We live in a favored age. The mists that have so long shrouded in impenetrable mystery the destiny of the human spirit, are fast rolling away.

Brilliant rays from the sun of Truth are gleaming in on this heretofore dark department of Nature, and waiting, anxious hearts are beating with surprise and joy as the light breaks on their gladdened vision.

"There is a fount about to stream,
There is a light about to beam,
* * * * *
There is a midnight blackness changing
Into gray."

The conception of guardian spirits is no longer to be regarded as merely a beautiful superstition; but its truthfulness has been demonstrated by manifestations of the most convincing character. Spiritual messages, also, rich in wisdom, tender and consoling in their sympathy, have enlightened the minds and strengthened the hearts of many. As yet, however, the day has but just dawned, and glorious beyond our present conception will be its midday brightness. M. F. C.

FRAGMENTS OF CLAIRVOYANT IMPRESSIONS.

The following communication has been received at Bridgeport, Conn., through the medium of a young man whose clairvoyant powers have been recently developed. We cheerfully comply with the request to publish it in the Messenger.—Ed.

Fear not; all is well. The angelic host shout the glad tidings of love, and proclaim to us the beauty of the Spirit-home. The influences of the heavenly land are their voices, which, though unheard by us, are tuned in the most exquisite harmony.

I see a beautiful form approaching. It is a mother;—she calls me "son," and speaks thus:—"The armor you have girded on was given you by the spirits. The weapons are sure; those weapons are love, inward sight, and intuition. But rejoice, O my son, that we have chosen you as an instrument to prepare the way for the triumphal car of Truth. Your mission is but just begun, and as time advances so will you progress. Fear not to speak that which you know proceeds from the spirits, for it is said, 'by their fruits ye shall know them'—so shall men know you. You shall be one to lead many to believe that there is affection beyond the grave." She informs me, also, that she will give me instruction from the Spirit-land which cannot fail to impress and be instructive, when my body is in a proper condition.

Many persons imagine that God, Christ, and the Holy Ghost are all in one; but I am impressed to say that there is but one source, which is God. He, however, employs many agents, and each performs his work in accordance with the universal law of affinity.

The world is only in its infancy in regard to religious truths. The so-called Church partakes only of the murky waters flowing from the pure fountain that lies beyond. The Jews would not receive Christ because he was a spiritual man; and the Church, in its present state, may be compared to the Jews. Still there are a few whose minds are not bound up in bigotry and superstition, who are willing to receive and view in its sublime aspect the high and holy purpose of their Maker. These friends do not erect any earthly cathedral, gilded with gold—they do not partake of the outward wine and bread, but drink the pure waters of love, and find strength in the joys of harmony.

That is error which has had too much leaning on the Bible. This is a book which contains many truthful sayings and pure precepts; but there is a far holier light than that emanating from the Bible, which many have seen and portrayed to those who will receive. I allude to the teachings of spirits which have been conveyed in writings, sounds and impressions.

God is love. The Spheres of heaven proclaim his goodness to us in the flesh, and angels rejoice that there are a few on earth who will receive the message. They whisper the glad tidings throughout the courts of heaven. Well may they be happy, for they are bathed in the pure crystal light of love and harmony.

There are things hidden in our philosophy, which the angelic band will reveal. To him who will truly search for the light of

heaven, it will soon dawn, and dispel the dark shadows of ignorance and bigotry. Then shall he rear the fair fabric of Truth, whose gateway is paved with virtue, and each murmuring breeze shall bear the requiem of the dying Church. This beautiful structure of which I speak is not made with hands, but eternal in the heavens. Wisdom is the presiding minister, Truth is the porter of the gate, and Harmony and Love are the celestial audience.

The day of spiritual communications has just dawned; the first ray has but just reached the earth; but for that which has been already received many thankful hearts are raised in holy thanksgiving to their Maker. It needs no angelic messenger to convey the news to the Spirit-land that thousands have already commenced the work which has been given them to do. Though dark views may arise to obscure the mind, yet those who continue to advance will gain the victory, passing over the turbulent waters of skepticism, and arriving safely on the heavenly shore.

There are voices speaking to us now, but the import of their language cannot now be understood. The time is not far distant when that which is now seen as an atom will become a mountain—when many shall run to and fro to proclaim the glad tidings which have been borne by the Seraph-train to enlighten the dark minds on the earth. The race of man only buds in this sphere—it blooms and blossoms in the next. The evils of our nature here may be compared to the passing breeze that gently floats over the green fields, and shakes from flowers the golden dew-drops of the morn.

Prayer is necessary, but not the long wordy form in which it is usually embodied. True prayer consists not in mere words, but it is the earnest desire of the heart poured forth in silent invocation. Such prayers are borne upward to the great Fountain of love, and an answer is returned through the medium of the loved ones that once dwelt on earth.

Reflections on Death.

There is no event in the course of human existence more interesting in its nature than that which we are accustomed to term death. When the spirit has become so refined and exalted as to be irresistibly drawn by the attractive influence of higher Spheres, or when the body has been subjected to the power of disease by which the ties of life are gradually sundered, there naturally takes place a separation between the body and spirit—the first returning to its native dust, and the other soaring to a diviner life. This change is in accordance with the law of progress which is universally manifested in Creation; it results from the action of the same great principle by which the plant springs from the cold earth, by which the blooming rose is unfolded from the bud, or by which the gay butterfly bursts from its chrysalis to roam in its sunny clime. Thus in the light of philosophical principles the process by which the spirit is released from the body, is surpassingly interesting and beautiful. The power of Decay can extend only to the external frame; it cannot reach to the structure of the inward being—it cannot quench the spirit-fires which are enkindled there to burn forever; but amid the crumbling of the earthly temple, the soul, calm and serene, can look forth in triumph on the change, and feel that death has no sting—the grave no victory. In the dissolution of the body we may recognize one of the means employed by Divine Wisdom to accomplish a benevolent and glorious result. Death comes to us not as a cruel tyrant,—not merely a stern desolator of human joys, but rather as the kind messenger of angels—as the deliverer whose power only bursts asunder the fetters of the spirit—as the conductor standing even in the portals of heaven, whose office it is to usher us through the dark and shadowy vale into the abodes of celestial light. It is a consoling reflection to the mourner that death is not a barrier to close the celestial gates—that heaven is not a prison in which its denizens are confined forever; that we are permitted to roam forth to behold the beauties of the spheres, and enjoy communion with the loved ones who dwell in those spheres. Yes—the departed visit us again.

the home which they have left lone and desolate ; and though we may see them not—though we may not hear the voice which once spoke to us in tones of love, nor behold the brightness of the eye enkindled with the spirit-flame within, yet we may feel their presence, and if we will listen, we may perchance hear the low whisperings of a voice which speaks in the still hours of night, and lulls the troubled soul into a sweet and tranquil rest.

With these views we may wait with joyous anticipation for the approach of death, and as we enter the cold and dreary vale, we may know that we shall feel only a momentary darkness which is the forerunner of a glorious, eternal day.

R. F. A.

Departure of Br. Munn.

It becomes our sad duty to announce to the readers of the Messenger, that this brother, who will be recognized as formerly an associate editor of this paper, and an able advocate of the Harmonial Philosophy, has taken his departure from this earthly sphere, after lingering for many weeks in much pain and suffering. The breath passed from his body on the night of Saturday last, about one o'clock. He was cheered and sustained to the last by a calm and triumphant faith, by aid of which he was enabled to look through the valley and shadow of death to the glorious realities of the Spirit-home. Not a struggle or a groan gave evidence of the passage of his spirit, and the gladness which thrilled through his soul as he beheld the beauties of the celestial land, was manifested in a beautiful smile which rested upon his countenance. For him death had no terrors ; he realized that this is but a *birth* into a brighter Sphere. With a tranquil spirit he awaited the coming change, and when at last it stole over his sinking frame, he experienced an earnest of that ecstatic joy with which he was welcomed to the heavenly land.

There are many signs of absence which tell that our brother has departed. His voice will be missed in the lonely home, where his presence shed light over the family circle ; and the world will be deprived of his earthly labors, which were tending to the improvement and elevation of humanity. Still, in the glory and freedom of a higher existence, and with the unfolded and intuitive wisdom of the soul, he may engage in a loftier mission than that which enlisted his efforts here—watching with a heavenly affection over the objects of his earthly care, and impressing the minds of men with those joyous truths which unfold the reality and blissfulness of the Spirit-life.

The earthly remains of Mr. Munn were interred on the afternoon of Tuesday last. On this occasion the ceremonies were of the most simple and impressive nature. There were no long and cheerless prayers—no gloomy picturings of the future—no inconsolable anguish of the mourners, but the reflection of Heaven's own peace seemed to rest upon the hearts of all. After a few introductory remarks by Mr. A. J. Davis, a beautifully written and appropriate article prepared for the occasion was read by Mrs. Davis in the most heartfelt and impressive manner. The corpse was then conveyed to the place of interment, where the usual services were performed peculiar to the Order of Odd Fellows, of which Mr. Munn was an active member, and from which he derived much assistance. Thus was the earth consigned to dust ; but those who have been called to mourn will find consolation in the truth that the spirit they loved on earth may still linger near, and impart the tranquilizing influence of its presence.

R. F. A.

Principle of Association.

Every particle of matter in the whole universe, sustains a certain relation to all other particles. Minute and invisible atoms are united in consolidated masses, which form the physical objects of Nature ; and these objects may be considered merely as the particles composing still larger bodies, while these latter, when viewed in relation to a body of still greater magnitude, may be regarded merely as parts of the immense whole. Thus the principle of association is manifested in all the works of creation. There is not a single body or even atom in the whole system of the universe that stands entirely alone, independent

of all other objects. A line of connection and dependence runs through the entire constitution of things. From a concretion of atoms arranged in suitable form, the earth is created ; this has a necessary dependence on the central orb which is termed the sun, together with the several planets by which it is accompanied in its revolutions ; these again are dependent on a more remote and still larger body, around which the whole solar system revolves—and thus creation, as it extends into the depths of space, presents one grand and harmonious system, which is united in every part by a mighty and indissoluble chain. It is this principle which gives to every thing in being, form and order ; it is by this that the particles of all substances are united, and by this, also, that worlds are made to occupy their respective positions, and to roll in their endless circles without jar, discord, or confusion.

R. F. A.

Spiritual Telegraphing.

In place of the slow and tedious mode of communication through electrical sounds, our spiritual friends have recently adopted a more expeditious and convenient method by making use of the person of the medium to write the thoughts which they desire to express. Many individuals are now being employed in this way as instruments of the spiritual power. We are informed by a friend residing at Glen's Falls, N. Y. that there are in that vicinity as many as twenty mediums through whom communications are daily received by writing. Many other places, also, are favored in the same manner. From a letter just received we learn that this mode of spiritual intercourse is enjoyed at Fitchburg, Mass. The writer expresses great confidence in the genuineness of the communications, and encloses one addressed to his wife by a sister in the Spirit-land, which we here insert :—

"My dear sister :—How oft we have roamed together—how oft we have enjoyed each other's love ; and, dear sister, it gives me joy to know that in death we are not parted, but will continue in each other's love throughout the endless years of the great and loving Father. Oh, what joy it is—too great for earthly mortals—to conceive this truth. God is love, and His goodness is inconceivable. Therefore live in hope ; enjoy all that is good, and believe that all things are for the best. The time is at hand when there shall be a great change, and man shall seek goodness and truth. Hope is the anchor of the soul. How pure is love, and how much greater is the spiritual love than that of the mortal. Sister, I love you with a spiritual love, and will be ever near you to cheer and sustain you in all your troubles, which are as nothing when compared with the bright purity of the Spirit-world. Take my instruction to your heart, for it is good. So, sister, good night,—I shall meet you often."

Hope of the Reformer.

There is an element of purity existing in the human heart which is manifested in almost every situation, and which can never be fully destroyed by all the unfavorable influences of society. Some traces of the divine image will linger beneath the mass of external corruption, and the bright, though fitful gleamings of the spirit within, will bear witness to its holy destiny. Man is not, and cannot be, totally depraved. The soul may be chilled and contracted by outward evils, or like some precious stone, may be hidden in the dust of earth, but there is an energy slumbering in its depths, and a beauty which is there waiting to be unfolded, which shows to us that man, as well as the inferior portions of creation, contains something of the reflected beauty of God. We may look through the ranks of humanity—among the most vile, depraved and degraded of the race, and we shall find none who are so inherently attached to evil as to be utterly destitute of every virtuous emotion. If, then, the race is not entirely corrupt, the reformer may have courage to put forth his noblest efforts for its redemption ; for the gladdening visions of joy and purity which rise to his view, may be realized in the glories of the Future.

R. F. A.

Poetry.

GREAT TRUTHS.

EXTRACT FROM AN UNPUBLISHED POEM,
BY O. S. WAIT.

Progression's law forbids the race should be
Perfect at once—it is not in God's plan.
Progression's law forbids but earth must see
The babe, the child, before the full-grown man.

"Our God is patient" saith St. Augustine,
"Because he is eternal!" If man knew
He was eternal likewise—if serene
Did trust in Heaven, he would be patient too.

How indivisible the soul! how this
Proves it immortal:—cut off a hand, and
Lo, what loss! give all thy thoughts—and thou'lt ne'er miss
One golden grain from soul's unwasting strand!

Time clasps the merest part of life, its whole
Is wide progressive good in endless scope!—
Oh let man bathe his harrassed dust-soiled soul,
In the cool waters of this living hope.

And trust in Heaven. Alas! how few do know
That God's love, power and wisdom are supreme:
That everything—the mean, the vile, the low,
As we do style them—all are in his scheme.

For powers adverse to God's there cannot be,—
No devil's prow to those in Truth's pure light.
Such shadows grim of old mythology,
Such heathen relics suit but heathen night.

As man advances, this great truth will still
All doubts! 'Tis ignorance only makes us fear!
And since nought can act contrary to God's will,
There's nothing fallen or degraded here!

The comet and the eclipsed moon, to eye
Of savage man seem omens dire and dread:
To untaught children stars of night's full sky
Do come and go in wild disordered tread.

The more we have of knowledge, more are sure
Laws fixed by God sway all. No act then could
Be done save Heaven will it. Thus, to the pure,
All things are pure—to God, all, all is good!
Rockwell, Ill.

THE PURE IN HEART.

How pure at heart and sound in head,
With what divine affections bold,
Should be the man whose thought would hold
An hour's communion with the dead.

In vain shalt thou, or any, call
The spirits from their golden day,
Except, like them, thou too canst say,
My spirit is at peace with all.

They haunt the silence of the breast,
Imagination calm and fair,
The memory like a cloudless air,
The conscience as a sea at rest.

But when the heart is full of din,
And doubt beside the portal waits,
They can but listen at the gates,
And hear the household jar within.

Tennyson.

Miscellaneous Department.

The Dying Child.

The sun had disappeared in the west, and those brilliant hues which attend an autumnal sunset (so lovely to behold) were fast fading, fading away. The hum of business was over; the mechanic had ceased to labor, and joy rested upon the countenance of the laborer, as he sat with his little family around the table, whereupon was spread their simple meal. But while others were happy—while many were rejoicing, and giving thanks to "the Giver of all good," there was another who appeared distressed, who sighed, as if her heart would burst; ah! she had cause to weep, and why? We shall see.

A beautiful girl lay upon her couch; we say she was beautiful, for though the roseate hue of health no longer glowed upon her cheek, yet there was a beauty in those pale features, which cannot be forgotten.

"Alice," said the tender mother, as she stood by the bedside and watched her dear child, "tell me, are you happy? do you fear death?"

The sweet child looked up, her eyes beaming with joy, as she said, "mother, mother, I am happy; I can die without fear, the grim messenger I am ready to meet—why should I be afraid? but, mother, you are weeping; why those tears?"

"Alice, my dear child, it is hard to be parted from you; who shall comfort me when you are gone? who will dress my hair, and sing to me? Who will attend to, and nurse me when I am sick, as you have done? ah! well may I weep;—my children, where are they? George is gone, William also was torn from me, and now, you, Alice, will soon be taken from me; oh! how can I bear it?" and the poor woman sobbed aloud.

"Weep not mother, God is wiser, far wiser than you; I know that you will feel lonely, you will not have little Alice to come and kiss you at night, but God will be with you, He will be your comforter; there do not weep, I shall soon be gone, for my breath grows shorter and shorter and shorter; I am ready to go; pray with me, once more, dear mother, it will be the last time I shall hear your soft voice in prayer; kneel down, and let your hand rest upon my head; there, now mother pray."

The mother (her eyes streaming with tears) prayed fervently that God would be with and strengthen her blessed one in the trying hour, and enable her to part cheerfully with her last tie on earth.

As she arose from her knees, Alice said, "Mother, that was a sweet prayer, Oh! I love to hear you pray; kiss me, dear mother, and place your soft hand again upon my head; often has it rested there, let me feel it once more. I am going, yes, I feel cold, and my breathing is hard; this feeble pulse will soon cease its beatings, and these eyes that you love to gaze into, will be glazed in death; I shall see George and dear little Willy, yes, I shall see father, too, in the Spirit-world; I cannot speak any more, mother, but let your hand still rest upon my head, and let me die with my eyes fixed upon you."

The mother gazed upon her dear child; she saw that death was about to rob her of the darling one that might have cheered her own declining years; and she raised her eyes toward heaven, saying in sweetly pious resignation, "Thy will, oh Lord, be done."

The lips of the dying girl moved slightly, and she uttered these last words:

"Mother—fare—well;" then all was over. Her eyes moved no more, the eyes were glazed, the pallid hue—Alice was dead; her mother, but the spirit had taken its flight to the Spirit-world.

What is happiness?
A flower in the garden of life,
Pursued by the multitude,
Prize, yet continually

The Storm.

A mother and daughter were walking in the fields. It was in the beginning of summer, and Caroline, as she went on, was gathering a bunch of flowers, to gladden with beauty and perfume the silent chamber of her sick brother. But the day was very sultry, the heat prevailed, and the delicate and beautiful flowers were drooping and covered with dust. They were endeavoring to hide their heads from the burning rays of a summer sun. Caroline was afraid that it would be impossible to make up a pleasing bouquet from flowers which "seemed as if they were bowing their heads in prayer to their Creator for the refreshing rain;" when suddenly the sky darkened, the whole blue vault of heaven, which before was serene and bright, was now covered with dark and heavy clouds; the thunder rolled; the forked lightning darted from cloud to cloud; the rain began to fall in large drops; and it soon descended in torrents. Caroline and her mother were obliged to take shelter in a neighboring cottage, where they remained till the rain was over, and the sun had once more dispersed the clouds, and in some measure dried the grass.

"My mother," said Caroline, "I am afraid that the heavy rain has broken down all the flowers, they seem so slight and tender—I have but a few to take to my poor brother."

Her mother answered, "We shall see."

But what was the astonishment of Caroline, on returning, to see that the flowers were still standing! that they had not been injured!

"Oh, mother!" she cried, "the flowers have not been beaten down, but they look more beautiful than ever. They are looking up to heaven with joy, smiling through their tears, and thanking God for the reviving shower."

She then threw away the flowers which she had before gathered, and, with the help of her mother, soon made up a bouquet which she was sure would be delightful and pleasing to the weary eye of the invalid. While they were thus employed, the mother talked with her daughter, and said: "My beloved daughter, you have seen the thunder-storm refresh and strengthen delicate flowers. So it is with the children of men. An all-wise, merciful and beneficent God sends sorrow and affliction to his children in this world—not that he might crush them for their manifold sins, but that he may purge them from all uncleanness—that he may wash from their hearts any sinful thought or design that may be lurking there, as the rain washed the dust from our favorite flowers. If He sends us suffering, He does it for our good, for, 'whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.' As the rain strengthened the tender herb, so do the afflictions of the righteous strengthen their faith in the Most High. Then when the trouble is past or the suffering over, they will arise with a clean heart, and a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man. They will look up to Heaven with confidence, and bless God that they were afflicted."—*Young People's Book.*

Kindness in the Family.

If a man has the soul of benevolence in him, where should he more show it than at home; to whom should he more develop it than to the wife of his bosom and the "olive plants around his table?"

We never could have any fellowship with that sort of piety which fails to make home sweet and happy. It never could gain our confidence. In a very practical and pertinent sense, real charity always "begins at home." There it does its first works, and some of its best.

There is a sort of piety, so called, which promises well in the distance and has the best name farthest from home. A worse testimony than this for its genuineness need not be sought.

God made the family; every element of beauty and fitness, of order and sweetness, blending in its constitution, combines to evince his handiwork. He made it to be the nursery of the soul—the school of morals—the home of happiness. Let no

Christian think that his home responsibilities are met, unless the family of which he forms a part, bears this image, and answers these divinely conceived ends.

Uses of Flowers.

How the universal heart of man blesses flowers! They are wreathed round the cradle, the marriage altar, and the tomb. The Persian in the far East delights in their perfume, and writes his love in nosegays; while the Indian child of the far West claps his hands with glee, as he gathers the abundant blossoms—the illuminated scriptures of the prairies. The Cupid of the ancient Hindoos tipped his arrows with flowers, and orange buds are the bridal crown with us, a nation of yesterday. Flowers garlanded the Grecian altar, and they hang in votive wreaths before the Christian shrine.

All these are appropriate uses. Flowers should deck the brow of the youthful bride, for they are in themselves a lovely type of marriage. They should twine round the tomb, for their perpetually renewed beauty is a symbol of the resurrection. They should festoon the altar, for their fragrance and their beauty ascend in perpetual worship before the Most High.—*Lydia M. Child.*

Triumph of Talent.

Talents, which are before the public, have nothing to dread, either from the jealous pride of power, or from the transient misrepresentations of party spleen, or envy. In spite of opposition from any cause, their buoyant spirits will lift them to their proper grade. The man who possesses the great and vigorous stamina which entitle him to a niche in the temple of glory, has no reason to dread the ultimate result; however slow his progress may be, he will, in the end, most indubitably receive that distinction. While the rest, "the swallows of science," the butterflies of genius, may flutter for their spring; but they will soon pass away, and be remembered no more. No enterprising man, therefore, and least of all the truly great man, has reason to droop or repine, at any efforts which he may suppose to be made with a view to depress him. Let, then, the tempest of envy or of malice howl around him. His genius will consecrate him; and any attempt to extinguish that, will be as unavailing as would a human effort "to quench the stars."—*Wirt.*

If life be a battle, how mad must he be who fails to arm himself for the contest. If life be a storm, how infatuated is he who sleeps while his bark is driven amid unknown waters. If life be a pilgrimage, how unwise is he who strays from the right road, nor seeks to return until the twilight shadows gather round his pathway.

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