

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 MISSION OF BEAUTY.

BY FRANCIS H. GREEN.

We open our eyes on the external world, and find ourselves placed in the midst of a scene of order, beauty, and magnificence, which is singularly adapted, not only to supply the physical wants of universal nature, but also to a much higher purpose—to minister to our spiritual necessities, to allay the hungering and thirsting after truth, which every healthy mind recognizes as one of its strongest elementary principles. This light of the inner shrine may, indeed, become dimmed, and the sanctuary desecrated by the continual predominance of low ideas, by sensual indulgence, or by accustoming ourselves to a narrow range of thought, or a low standard of taste; but the eyes of the soul cannot be put out—even by Fashion, that most inveterate foe of Individuality—as well as of every thing vigorous and true in nature—nor yet by ignorance, which is, as it were, an accretion of dead matter, accumulating and incrusting itself on the living germ of mind, shutting out the healthful light and the necessary air, until its native functions, its vital energies become paralyzed, and almost inert.

But there is an active, a self-restoring power in the human mind, which repels, if I may so express it, circumstances tending to its injury, and is continually struggling to reach that state, for which, even in its lowest condition, it feels an instinctive sense of adaptation. The principles of taste, then, and the love of truth are inherent in the soul. This, I think, admits of hourly demonstration, in the numerous facts that are continually coming before the eye of the attentive observer. Objects of great beauty or sublimity, are also objects of universal interest and admiration; birds, flowers, shells, waterfalls, rocks, mountains, sunset skies, clouds, and the ocean, as well as fine specimens of art, address themselves to the universal heart of man; and next to the eye of the man of highly cultivated intellect and taste, that of the savage is, perhaps, the most delicate in its perception of beauty and sublimity—showing that the principle is an element of man's nature—and that a state of nature is more favorable to its development, than the false refinement of an artificial society.

The rudest plowman, in some particular mood of mind, will stop to admire the blossom which his heedless share has rent from the parent soil. Its structure, its coloring, however familiar they may be, will steal into his bosom with unwonted thoughts of delicacy and beauty; and though he be not a Burns, there will be always something of poetry in his emotions—something that gives evidence of the inherent dignity of human nature. And so the most thoughtless and roughest school-boy, may, occasionally, be affected by the tint of a shell, or flower, or even the structure of a leaf—by the graceful motions of waving corn, and the majesty of wind-swept woods; and the rustic milk-maid will pause in the midst of her blithest carol, to pick up a curious stone, to observe the various shades of green in grass and foliage, to watch the flight of birds, or to forget all the dark necessities of the present, in the bright colors of an insect's wing. Then will be awakened feelings and emotions of whose origin they may be perfectly unconscious, but which are, nevertheless excited by the finger of Nature, touching the one living spot in bosoms whose sensibility is well nigh lost amid the darkness and incrustations of ignorance.

Yet the lowest state of humanity is susceptible of culture; and there is no occupation—no calling—there are no absolutely necessary struggles of physical want, which must, of consequence, shut out the light of science and the common perception of beauty. Could human beings only be taught their own dignity, and their

own power—could they perceive that they were *not* created for the purpose of eating and drinking—of being covered from the cold, or of wearing fine apparel—nor yet even to *go to Heaven*, in the vague and unmeaning sense in which the phrase is generally held before the multitude; but that they are creatures invested with the responsibility of educating immortal souls, of untold, and yet unimagined powers, which are destined to live, and progress in wisdom and virtue, through the interminable periods of all subsequent time, which we call eternity, they might be redeemed. There is something in this thought capable of lifting up every human brow, and turning it into its natural position—heavenward: and Beauty acts as an interpreter of this thought—and of much else that is dark and infinite—and otherwise unintelligible.

A remarkable instance of the effect of beauty to disarm man of his coarser instincts, is told of a hunter of the great Northwest. He came suddenly and unperceived on a plantation of beavers. The little ones were frolicking about the doors in a variety of innocent and exhilarating gambols. He gazed a moment. He drew near. They looked on without fear; for they knew nothing of danger, and continued their sports. Their beauty, their innocence, their confidence, melted his hunter's heart. He thought of his own dear cabin, and his clustering babes, as happy, as innocent, as unsuspecting and weak as themselves. The instrument of death fell from his hand, as he turned aside and wept. In this instance the external beauty was a symbol of kindred affections; and this, perhaps, is the true use of beauty in the visible creation. It is a shadowing forth of the Unseen—the Infinite—the Eternal.

The most zealous devotee of pleasure will sometimes steal away from the din of the brilliant assembly, with a sense of hollowness in her aching bosom, where the fearful cry of squandered Time is echoing through the void places of a wasted intellect; and as she leans her burning forehead against the casement, turning her heavy eyes up to the studded heavens, which seem to be looking down on her—nay, into the very depths of her soul, with the calm, deep eyes of Eternity, the beautiful Silence will speak to her as language never spake. The Soul will then assert its own immortal essence—its heirship with the Divine—its alliance with the Infinite—and it *will* struggle upward, even against the iron bondage which years of pernicious habits have been fastening on its crushed, but still heaven-born wing. Were such admonitions heeded, how many waste places of the human heart and mind would be gladdened! How often might the wilderness and the ruin be made to blossom as the rose and smile as the morning! Of all the sad things which we meet with in this world, the perversion—the desecration of mind, on the altars of Pleasure and Fashion, is the saddest, the most deplorable! The ignorance of the poor is a subject of regret, of sincere sorrow; but the mental suicide of which the wealthy are often guilty, is to be thought of with deep shame—to be wept over in dust and ashes!

There are few persons entirely callous to the perception of external beauty; and perhaps there is no form of it so universally felt, and so deeply interwoven with the strongest and most enduring affections of the heart, as in the beauty of flowers; and herein must be their obvious design and use in the economy of nature. It is not known to be at all necessary to the perfection of the fruit, that the corol, or blossom should be of brilliant hues. The same great processes of vegetation and reproduction might probably be carried on, were all nature dressed in one unvarying garb of russet or gray. But our benevolent Father has tinged their delicate petals with every inimitable hue and shade of beauty, contrasting exquisitely with all the various combinations of green, in grass and foliage, that a perception of this beauty might steal into the harder and sterner elements of our nature,

awakening thoughts of affection and gratitude to Him, who has not merely administered to our necessities, but to the luxuries of taste and sentiment.

The beauty of flowers, then, subserves an important moral purpose in the economy of nature. It awakens and refines the social affections; it attracts to the study of Nature; it is a sweet relief to the weariness and cares of life; and, above all, it comes to us with the sweet teachings of piety and benevolence, and thus ministers to one of our strongest spiritual tendencies—that of seeking the unseen in the visible, the infinite in the familiar. It is not without design, then, that God has sprinkled the common way-side with gems of beauty—that he has clothed the hills and meadows with the richest verdure, enamelling them with unnumbered blossoms—that he has lifted up the majestic tree, and taught the graceful vine to ascend through the mazy portals of the wood; for each and all contains not only a luxury for the heart, but a lesson for the soul of man. The contemplation of external beauty creates a refined and holy joy, whenever the spirit is open to the teachings and the love of Nature. It is a symbol of the all-pervading Life. It is, as it were, the visible presence of the Omnipotent—the sensible expression of His benevolence. All that grows is teaching one great lesson, from the oak of a thousand years to the mushroom of an hour; and not more truly does the cedar of Lebanon shadow forth His majesty, than the little valley floret whispers of His love; while the simplest moss—the very blade of grass we crush beneath our feet, is in itself a complete manual of wisdom. Let us open our hearts to the gentle influence of Nature, and we shall continually grow in wisdom, and in goodness.

CONDITION OF THE DYING.

In dying, the whole of the faculties seem sometimes concentrated on the placid enjoyment. The day Arthur Murphy died, he kept repeating from Pope,

“Taught half by reason, half by mere decay,
To welcome death, and calmly pass away.”

Nor does the calm partake of the sensitiveness of sickness. There was a swell in the sea the day Collingwood breathed his last upon the element which had been the scene of his glory. Captain Thomas expressed a fear that he was disturbed by the tossing of the ship. “No, Thomas,” he replied, “I am in a state in which nothing in this world can disturb me more. I am dying, and I am sure it must be consolatory to you, and all who love me, to see how comfortably I am coming to my end.”

A second and common condition of the dying is to be lost to themselves and all around them in utter unconsciousness. Countenance and gestures might in many cases suggest that, however dead to the external world, an interior sensibility still remained; but we have the evidence of those whom disease has left at the eleventh hour, that while their supposed sufferings were pited by their friends, existence was a blank. Montaigne, when stunned by a fall from his horse, tore open his doublet; but he was entirely senseless, and only knew afterwards that he did it from the information of his attendants. The delirium of fever is distressing to witness; but the victim awakes from it as from a heavy sleep, totally ignorant that he has passed days and nights tossing wearily and talking wildly. Perceptions which had occupied the entire man, could hardly be obliterated in the instant of recovery; or, if any one were inclined to adopt the solution, there is yet proof that the callousness is real, in the unflinching manner in which bed-sores are rolled upon, that are too tender to bear touching when sense is restored. Wherever there is insensibility, there is virtual death itself, and to die is to awake in another world.

More usually, however, the mind is in a state intermediate between activity and oblivion. Observers, unaccustomed to sit by the bed of death, readily mistake increasing languor for total insensibility; but those who watch closely can readily distinguish that the ear, though dull, is not yet deaf—that the eye, though dim, is not yet sightless. When a bystander remarked of Dr. Wallaston that his mind was gone, the expiring philosopher

made a signal for paper and pencil, wrote down some figures, and cast them up. The superior energy of his character was the principal difference between himself and thousands who die and give no open sign. Their faculties survive, though averse to even the faintest effort, and they badly testify in languid and broken phrases, that the torpor of the body more than keeps pace with the inertness of the mind. The same report is given by those who have advanced to the very borders of the heavenly country. Montaigne, after his accident, passed for a corpse, and the first feeble indications of returning life resembled some of the commonest symptoms of death; but his own feelings were those of a man who is dropping into the sweets of a slumber, and his longing was towards blank rest, and not for recovery. “*Me-thought*,” he says, “my life only hung upon my lips; and I shut my eyes to help to thrust it out, and took a pleasure in languishing and letting myself go.” In many of these instances, as in the cases of stupefaction, there are appearances which we have learnt to associate with suffering, because constantly conjoined with it. A cold perspiration bedews the skin; the breathing is harsh and labored; and sometimes, especially in delicate frames, death is ushered in by convulsive movements, which look like the wrestling with an oppressive enemy; but they are signs of debility, and a failing system, which have no relation to pain. There is hardly an occasion when the patient fights more vehemently for life than in an attack of the asthma, which, in fact, is a sufficiently distressing disorder before the sensibility is blunted and the strength subdued. But the termination is judged by the beginning.

Dr. Campbell, the well known Scotch professor, had a seizure which all but carried him off, a few months before he succumbed to the disease. A cordial gave unexpected relief; and his first words were to express astonishment at the sad countenances of his friends; because his own mind, he told them, was in such a state at the crisis of the attack, from the expectation of immediate dissolution, that there was no other way to describe his feelings than by saying he was in rapture. Light, indeed, must have been the suffering as he gasped for breath, since physical agony, had it existed, would have quite subdued the mental ecstasy.

As little is the death-sweat forced out by anguish. Cold as ice, his pulse nearly gone, “a mortal perspiration ran down the body” of La Boetie, the friend of Montaigne; and it was at this moment that roused by the weepings of his relations, he exclaimed, “Who is it that torments me thus? O! of what rest do you deprive me?” Such fond lamentations disturb many a last moment; and the dying often remonstrate by looks when they cannot by words. Hard as it may be to control emotions with the very heart strings ready to break, pity demands an effort in which the strongest affection will be surest of success. The grief will not be more bitter in the end, than to keep it back had been the last service of love. Tears are a tribute of which those who bestow it should bear all the cost. A worse torment is the attempt to arrest, forcibly, the exit of life, by pouring cordials down throats which can no longer swallow, or more madly to goad the motionless body into a manifestation of existence by the application of pain. It is like the plunge of the spur into the side of the courser, which rouses him, as he is falling, to take another bound before he drops to rise no more.

Silent Influence.

We may err in judging of the usefulness of men by the position which they occupy. If prominent, and attended with much eclat, the multitude think that man excelling most others in influence and usefulness. It may be so, and it may be far otherwise. The prominence of his position gives emphasis to his acts; and if men see almost as many foibles as virtues, and as much that is indiscreet as that is wise and true, they may not, after all, be much the better for his influence. It may be that another person, whom the world knoweth not, and whose name will never be blazoned or chronicled, is exerting an influence, silent, deep, and permanent, that will endure and increase through many years, and in successive generations. He is noiselessly, but actively and vigorously, prosecuting plans of usefulness; and while he is constantly looking forward, he is as constantly looking upward

Psychological Department.

VAGARIES OF IMAGINATION.

A youth of sixteen, of a weakly constitution and delicate nerves, but in other respects quite healthy, quitted his room in the dusk of the evening, but suddenly returned, with a face as pale as death, and looks betraying the greatest terror, and in a tremulous voice told a fellow-student who lived in the same room with him, that he should die at nine o'clock in the morning of the day after the next. His companion naturally considered this sudden transformation of a cheerful youth into a candidate for the grave, as very extraordinary: he inquired the cause of this notion, and, as the other declined to satisfy his curiosity, he strove at least to laugh him out of it. His efforts, however, were unavailing. All the answer he could obtain from his comrade was, that his death was certain and inevitable. A number of well-meaning friends assembled about him, and endeavored to wean him from his idea by lively conversation, jokes, and even satirical remarks. He sat among them with a gloomy, thoughtful look, took no share in their discourse, sighed, and at length grew angry when they began to rally him. It was hoped that sleep would dispel this melancholy mood; but he never closed his eyes, and his thoughts were engaged all night with his approaching decease. Early next morning I was sent for. I found, in fact, the most singular sight in the world—a person in good health making all the arrangements for his funeral, taking an affecting leave of his friends, and writing a letter to his father to acquaint him with his approaching dissolution, and to bid him farewell. I examined the state of his body, and found nothing unusual but the paleness of his face, eyes dull and rather inflamed with weeping, coldness of the extremities, and a low, contracted pulse—indications of a general cramp of the nerves, which was sufficiently manifested in the state of his mind. I endeavored, therefore, to convince him, by the most powerful arguments, of the futility of his notion, and to prove that a person whose bodily health was so good, had no reason whatever to apprehend speedy death: in short, I exerted all my eloquence and my professional knowledge, but without making the slightest impression. He willingly admitted that I, as a physician, could not discover any cause of death in him, but this, he contended, was the peculiar circumstance of his case, that without any natural cause, merely from an unalterable decree of fate, his death must ensue; and though he could not expect us to share this conviction, still it was equally certain that it would be verified by the event of the following day. All that I could do, therefore, was to tell him that, under these circumstances, I must treat him as a person laboring under a disease, and prescribe medicines accordingly. "Very well," replied he, "but you will see not only that your medicines will not do me any good, but that they will not operate at all."

There was no time to be lost, for I had only twenty-four hours left to effect a cure. I therefore judged it best to employ powerful remedies in order to release him from this bondage of his imagination. With this view a very strong emetic and cathartic were administered, and blisters applied to both thighs. He submitted to everything, but with the assurance that his body was already half dead, and the remedies would be of no use. Accordingly, to my utter astonishment, I learned, when I called in the evening, that the emetic had taken little or no effect, and that the blisters had not even turned the skin red. He now triumphed over our incredulity, and deduced from this inefficacy of the remedies the strongest conviction that he was already little better than a corpse. To me the case began to assume a very serious aspect. I saw how powerfully the state of the mind had affected the body, and what a degree of insensibility it had produced; and I had just reason to apprehend that an imagination which had reduced the body to such an extremity, was capable of carrying matters to still greater lengths.

All our inquiries as to the cause of his belief had hitherto proved abortive. He now disclosed to one of his friends, but in the strictest confidence, that the preceding evening, on quitting the room, he had seen a figure in white, which beckoned to him, and at the same moment a voice pronounced the words—"The

day after to-morrow, at nine in the morning, thou shalt die!" and the fate thus predicted nothing could enable him to escape. He now proceeded to set his house in order, made his will, and gave particular directions for his funeral, specifying who were to carry, and who to follow him to the grave. He had insisted on receiving the sacrament—a wish, however, which those about him evaded complying with. Night came on, and he began to count the hours he had yet to live, till the fatal nine the next morning, and every time the clock struck, his anxiety evidently increased. I began to be apprehensive of the result, for I recollected instances in which the mere imagination of death had really produced a fatal result. I recollected, also, the feigned execution, when the criminal, after a solemn trial, was sentenced to be beheaded, and when, in expectation of the fatal blow, his neck was touched with a switch, on which he fell lifeless to the ground, as though his head had been really cut off; and this circumstance gave me reason to fear that a similar result might attend this case, and that the striking of the hour of nine might prove as fatal to my patient as the blow of the switch on the above mentioned occasion. At any rate, the shock communicated by the striking of the clock, accompanied by the extraordinary excitement of the imagination, and the general cramp which had determined all the blood to the head and the internal parts, might produce a most dangerous revolution, spasms, fainting fits, or hæmorrhages; or even totally overthrow reason, which had already sustained so severe an attack.

What was then to be done? In my judgment, everything depended on carrying him, without his being aware of it, beyond the fatal moment; and it was to be hoped that, as his whole delusion hinged upon this point, he would then feel ashamed of himself, and be cured of it. I therefore placed my reliance on opium, which, moreover, was quite appropriate to the state of his nerves, and prescribed twenty drops of laudanum, with two grains of hen-bane, to be taken about midnight. I directed that if, as I hoped, he overslept the fatal hour, his friends should assemble round his bed, and on his awaking, laugh heartily at his silly notion; that instead of being allowed to dwell upon the gloomy idea, he might be rendered thoroughly sensible of its absurdity. My instructions were punctually obeyed: soon after he had taken the opiate, he fell into a profound sleep, from which he did not awake till about eleven o'clock the next day. "What hour is it?" was the first question on opening his eyes; and when he heard how long he had overslept his death, and was at the same time greeted with loud laughter for his folly, he crept ashamed under the bed-clothes, and at length joined in the laugh, declaring that the whole affair appeared to him like a dream, and that he could not conceive how he could be such a simpleton. Since that time he has enjoyed the best health, and has never had any similar attack.—*London Mirror.*

Extraordinary Cure.

The following curious anecdote respecting a new homœopathic remedy, is given as authentic in the *Journal de Médecine* of Bordeaux, where homœopathy is entirely the order of the day:—A lady who had been tormented for several months, with difficult digestion, loss of appetite, and other symptoms of gastrodynia, had in vain employed the ordinary remedies, when good fortune threw in her way a follower of Hahnemann. After an attentive examination of the symptoms, the worthy doctor promised a quick cure, provided she would scrupulously swallow the globules which he would send on the following morning; the patient promised obedience, and the next day finding on the chimney-piece a small box containing a quantity of globular bodies, she commenced swallowing them one after the other. The first few went down with great difficulty, but hope and perseverance conquered. The digestion immediately became improved, the appetite better, and the lady was shortly in full convalescence. When her husband, who had been absent in the country, returned, he immediately demanded by what means the almost miraculous cure had been worked; the empty box was shown him in reply. The unfortunate husband devoured in secret his anxiety for some days, but finding his wife's health continue unimpaired, he confided the mystery to a few discreet friends—"his wife had swallowed a whole box of fulminating capsules."

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

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RECOGNITION OF FRIENDS IN THE FUTURE STATE.

There are few subjects of greater intrinsic interest than that which relates to the recognition of friends when we have passed the darksome vale of death. Next to the question of immortality and the existence of a spiritual world, the soul instinctively inquires, shall we know each other in that state?—shall we have a recollection of the changeful scenes through which we passed in this life, and shall we feel still the same deep and holy attachments which bound us to our kindred here? These questions receive a truthful answer, not only in the sublime teachings of Nature and Reason, but in the exalted intuitions of the human soul; for in its pure and earnest aspirations for a higher life, it naturally embraces, also, with equal fervency, the great truth of spiritual recognition.

The following article from the pen of Rev. J. M. Austin, though published sometime since, contains much sound philosophy and many valuable suggestions on the above subject, which entitle it to a careful perusal.—Ed.

The supposition that in the future existence we shall possess no knowledge or recollection of the things of this life, seems to amount virtually to the doctrine of annihilation. The real identity of intellectual beings, consists not in the form or features of the body, but in the *mind* or *soul*. The mind constitutes the *image* of God in which the human race have been created—it is all that raises us above the brute creation—it is the link by which we are related and united to higher grades of being—to angels and to God—indeed, it is the *mind* that is the *man*! The body may be greatly changed by sickness—the countenance disfigured by accident—the complexion embrowned by the burning rays of a torrid sun, so as to be unknown to intimate relatives, and yet if the mind is sound, the identity is preserved. It only needs the exclamation—"It is I—your brother—your son!" to enable all to recognize the hitherto unknown personage.

Now it must be acknowledged that *memory*—the power of recollecting past events—is the chief and all important power of the mind. It may be called the soul of the mind, giving as it does life and activity to all the mental, moral, and religious capacities which constitute the mind. It is only by the power of memory that we retain the knowledge heretofore obtained—and it is only by the power of this faculty that we are enabled to call up knowledge thus retained, to convert it to present purposes, or to assist us in forming plans for future action. Strike memory from the mind—let the acquirements and the proceedings of each succeeding hour as it passes away fade from the mind, and the whole intellectual structure will be broken up and destroyed. We should be like a ship at sea, without a rudder or compass,—all foresight, all calculation would be lost, and we should be reduced wholly to the control and guidance of the *animal instincts* alone!

If the conclusions at which we have arrived thus far are correct, we are now prepared to take another step. The *mind* alone constituting our identity, being solely the *man*, the *intelligent being*—and the *memory* being the chief faculty, the main-spring of the mind—if, on entering the future world, we shall not be able to recollect the things of this life, it must be because our present minds or souls *will not be in existence there*. No other possible reason can be assigned for this want of recollection. And would not this actually be an annihilation of being? The same mind which constitutes the person on the earth, not being in the future—and the *body* certainly can not be there—what is there which now pertains to us, that would be in that existence?—*Nothing*! The being who dwelt in this world will have become entirely extinct—annihilated—and another race, distinct and differ-

ent in every possible respect, will have been created in their place.

But if to avoid a conclusion so abhorrent as annihilation, it is acknowledged that we shall retain the same souls or minds in the future life that we have here, then the whole ground is conceded: for if we shall possess the same minds, we must necessarily retain the first and most important faculty of the mind—*memory*! And what can be the office and action of memory, but to call up to view at least the more prominent and interesting facts obtained, and impressions made upon it here? And as there is nothing which makes a deeper impression upon the memory—as there is nothing which the memory holds with greater tenacity than the recollection of dearly beloved relatives and friends—what conclusion can be more obvious and reasonable, than that those who have "lived and loved together" on earth, will, when united in heaven, readily recognize each other there?

The natural desire of the soul to live again after the dissolution of the body, is an old and favorite argument in behalf of the doctrine of immortality—it being contended that the Creator would never have implanted within us a craving so deep and lasting, without designing its gratification. This argument is both plausible and reasonable. But does it not support with still greater power the doctrine of recognition in the world to come? We have been created social beings—we have a natural desire for the society of fellow creatures. Being thus drawn together, our hearts become united by reciprocal affection, and our happiness in no small degree depends upon a continuance of the intercourse thus established. And besides this, the ties of consanguinity are numerous and lasting. The mutual love which God has established between parents and children, brothers and sisters, and relatives of more distant degrees, is as imperishable as our very nature. While the soul lives in a conscious existence, this love will continue in imperishable vigor and freshness. It is this union of heart with heart that forms the highest and purest sources of earthly enjoyments. And it is the dis severing of these ties that give the severest pangs of sorrow.

When the time of separation comes—when a parent is about to bid adieu to the world—what feelings dwell stronger in the heart than a desire to meet in heaven, and again enjoy the company of those children whom they are about to leave behind, and in whose society they have enjoyed so many happy hours? This wish may be considered the all-absorbing impulse of a parent's heart in the solemn hour of death. Take away the hope of this re-union, and the pinions of the departing spirit would droop and fail ere it commenced its flight to the unseen world! Did God implant these deep and ardent yearnings in the soul, only to blight and blast them forever? Is this mightiest and purest impulse of the heart, the one which alone is to be disappointed? Has the Creator provided an answering gratification of every appetite of the body, and every other desire of the soul, yet in this single instance so far depart from this great and equitable rule, as to impart a thrilling, uncontrollable desire, for which he has furnished no satisfying return? Reason forbids a supposition of this description. The actual existence of a wish so natural and so commendable, is a most convincing proof that God will allow its gratification.

There is a natural repulsiveness in the thought that hereafter we are to mingle with those whose society gave us so much happiness on earth, without the ability to recognize them, or to renew the associations which we now prize so highly. This supposition robs the celestial world of half its charms. I confess that, to me, a heaven of *strangers* has comparatively but few attractions. My soul is linked by a thousand ties to those whose society here gives me the highest enjoyment. And in my anticipations of the happiness of the Spirit-land, I find that the desire to meet and recognize the same loved ones there, mingles with all other desires as a life-giving element. The brightest vision of heavenly felicity which has ever dawned upon my mind—the highest pinnacle of anticipated happiness to which hope has soared in my soul—is the expectation of *meeting* and *knowing* my venerable and dearly beloved parents, my companion, my children, my brothers and sisters—the expectation of mingling our grateful thanksgivings, of recounting the scenes through which we have passed on the earth, of feeling that we are all

saved from sin, and toil, and pain, and misfortune, and death—that we are to part no more forever, but, in each other's society, can participate in the endless felicities which our Creator has graciously prepared for us! All the treasures of earth are too poor to make me part with the hope of this meeting and this recognition. Were it to fade from my faith, a shade of sadness would be cast over all my anticipations of future joy.

The Mysterious Manifestations.

In investigating the subject of spiritual manifestations, which has proved so great a mystery to many, it has been a question with some, why these tokens of supra-mortal power have not been given to the world before? If such individuals would read the chronicles of the past, they would there find the record of similar manifestations which have occurred in almost all ages. While until recently no satisfactory intercourse has been established with the spiritual world, audible sounds, the moving of furniture, and other demonstrations of the most remarkable character, have been given as the sensible tokens of spiritual presence, foreshadowing the glorious era which is now dawning upon the earth. In illustration of this fact, we extract the ensuing paragraph from the "New York Transcript," published in the year 1835:

"At the dwelling-house of a poor widow woman named Newbery, residing at New Romney, the inmates have been alarmed by an invisible knocking at different parts of a room in which lies an unfortunate daughter in a very dangerous state of health. Many neighbors have been called in to witness this strange and unaccountable noise. It began on Thursday night, and is to be heard every evening about seven o'clock. Three or four distinct knocks are heard, commencing loud, and gradually becoming less till not perceivable. A tremendous noise was heard one night about twelve o'clock, which alarmed the poor woman and her children much. Every evening different persons have been in to witness it, without being able to ascertain the cause."

Soon after the above, in the same year, the following account of another mysterious occurrence was published in the "Cincinnati Whig":

"A gentleman on Fourth street having had some bells hung (among which was the street bell), was exceedingly annoyed by having his servants and others called to the door some twenty times a day, or oftener, but on opening the door, lo! and behold, there was not a single person to be seen;—the gentleman and his family watched, but still the bell rung *by no visible means*. Under these circumstances, the bell-hanger was sent for, and requested to furnish a correct bell, or remove the old one. The bell hanger, after examination, declared it was improperly hung, and that he would right it at once; but after various experiments, what was his surprise to find that no silence was obtained—the bell continued to ring louder than ever! Perplexed and puzzled, he at length quitted the premises, and called on a friend to advise with, who also took his friend and went to examine the premises.

They at first supposed that rats might have some agency in the business, but on boring some fifteen or twenty holes in the joist, it was decided *nem. con.* that they were not the aggressors, and on cutting the wire within a few inches of the bell (at intervals), the ringing was as violent as usual;—they then united the wire, and while holding on in two different places, the bell rung worse than ever. Under these complicated difficulties, what was to be done? The gentleman recommended that a request be forwarded to a number of scientific persons in the city, if possible to ascertain the cause of this singular phenomenon. Whereupon several gentlemen were called upon to examine the premises, and if possible lay the evil spirit (if any existed). One gave it as his decided opinion, that the noise was occasioned by electricity or galvanism, operating on the clapper of the bell; another *by* meteoric phenomena; while another stoutly maintained that it was the devil or his agent (which he could not tell), but sure he was that one of them had a hand in the matter. It soon got noised over town that the house was haunted; and the

proprietor of the house was at length compelled to take the bell down."

Many remarkable manifestations of a character similar to the foregoing, have been recorded in the history of the past; but the popular ideas on this subject have been so warped by superstition, that these were never attributed to their appropriate cause. Being educated to believe in the existence and power of a Devil, men were naturally inclined to ascribe all occurrences of a mysterious nature to his special agency; and it is not improbable that, had the spiritual manifestations been extensively introduced in past time, they would have been generally recognized as coming from the realms of darkness, rather than as representing the efforts of departed friends to communicate with their earthly kindred. It will be seen, therefore, that the recent discovery by which a direct intercourse has been opened with the spirits that have passed from this earth, was made at an appropriate time, when the people in their advanced and enlightened state, could in some measure comprehend and appreciate the glory which is thus revealed.

R. P. A.

Truth Consistent with Itself.

"I and my Father are one."—*Jesus.*

Of those who believe in the reality of spiritual manifestations, there is at present a large class who seem to incline to the opinion that many of the communications made by spirits are not only false, but that they are given with malicious design. The doctrine of innate depravity has held a place in the affections of this class of minds for so long a time, that they find it difficult to abandon it. One of the highest and most consistent of all revelators, has lately revealed the causes of the misapprehensions and sympathetic delusions which have been so unaccountable to most minds, and shown that the facts admit of a perfectly rational explanation. The elucidation given by Mr. Davis is perfectly consistent—both with his previous writings, and with the accounts of the discordant manifestations, as they have been from time to time recorded.

When the reality of spiritual intercourse came to be no longer doubted by those who were led to investigate the subject, a difficulty arose at once inexplicable and painful. It was found that to the same question propounded at different circles, replies were elicited which were altogether inconsistent with one another. These discordant answers, so irreconcilable with the beautiful harmony of truth, spread a general gloom over those minds which were excited with the futile hope of finding in the instructions of these new-formed circles, an infallible guide. But as the accounts were multiplied, it was seen that the replies to questions were characterized by a certain order, indicative of some law by which they appeared to be governed. At Auburn, N. Y., a company of Second-Adventists received a full corroboration of their preconceived opinions from no less an authority than the "Circle of Apostles and Prophets," with whom they enjoyed the most familiar intercourse. In New York city, a preacher regularly received his text and the outlines of his discourse from (as he stated) the same source. In Boston, various persons of dissimilar views obtained responses confirming them in their long-cherished doctrines—and, indeed, in almost all places where the manifestations were experienced, the replies were mainly corroborative of the established convictions of the questioners.

Upon testimony so contradictory, all reasonable men inferred that no reliance could be placed. And although a few rather hastily concluded that they had found the solution of the mystery in the writings of Swedenborg, yet the general feeling seemed to be one of doubt and painful incertitude. No satisfactory explanation could be obtained. How is it (was the general inquiry) that disembodied spirits, who may be presumed to have attained to a degree of intelligence and power far in advance of that possessed by mortals, should manifest so much willingness to communicate with us, and yet be so contradictory in their teachings? This was a difficulty not easily solved.

Now the explanation of this matter, to be believed, should not only come from a source entitled to respect on account of the

uniform truthfulness of its previous revelations, but the explanation itself must be rational, and account for all the phenomena in a clearly consistent manner. And every unprejudiced mind that has perused the last publication of Mr. Davis, and is acquainted with his previous writings, will admit that his elucidation bears this character in every respect. All that could be required to render all the phenomena consistent with the Harmonial Philosophy and with truth, is there given. Let those who enjoy the intercourse of friends from the Spirit-land, follow the course which he indicates, and there will doubtless be less to regret, and more to rejoice at, in future manifestations. O. F. H.

New York, April, 1851.

Social Reform.

OLDTOWN, Md., April 9, 1851.

BR. AMBLER:—In a late number of the Spirit Messenger, I observed an article on the "Basis of Reform," in which the writer places true marriage as the foundation-stone of social regeneration. I think this position is very nearly right; but it may be that he has missed the point a little. Speaking of the organization, he says, "make this right, and external causes of a mountain's weight and a torrent's force could not move a person to do wrong." I think with him, that a completely harmonious organization cannot be developed without true marriage. But I think man is very much influenced by the circumstances in which he is situated. Suppose persons of good physical organization, high moral and intellectual developments, and exalted spirituality, united in marriage, but placed in antagonistic and unfortunate circumstances, similar to the slave of the south, the exiles of tyrants and despots, or the captured fugitive in the hands of an Austrian butcher,—would they still preserve a calm, peaceful, harmonious and happy frame of mind?

External circumstances may produce discordant feelings in the minds of the most pure. They serve to stimulate the faculties—to call them into exercise, and then, by the laws of reproduction, we transmit those faculties to our offspring; which faculties are developed in them, in proportion to the degree of excitement or exercise in the parents. We often observe that parents whose chests and muscles are well developed, have children who are puny and weakly. We have noticed that parents with moderate benevolence, spirituality and veneration, have children with these faculties well developed, and *vice versa*. In some families of children we find very different organizations. We find the strong, weakly, healthy, sickly, intelligent, imbecile, virtuous, and vicious among the offspring of the same parents. These are facts which declare man to be the creature of circumstances. Those mental prodigies, who have astonished the world, may be accounted for on this principle. They inherit their talents from their parents, one or both of whom had their attention drawn in the direction which their children's minds have taken. Hence, then, the importance of circumstances on the part of parents favorable to proper physical and mental exercise, in view of the character of their future offspring.

Now the best situation in which man could be placed in order to bring all his faculties into healthful and harmonious action, I conceive to be a co-operative brotherhood—an association of congenial spirits, whose interests are united, and whose objects, ends, and aims are one—namely, the good of all, and the elevation of the race. And is there not to be found, among all the believers in the Harmonial Philosophy, a sufficient number of individuals whose minds are sufficiently illuminated and harmonious, and who have the great principles of Nature sufficiently at heart, to take hold of this matter. If so, why do they not? Is the harvest not fully ripe? How many are there like that friend you noticed on page 270, who being sensible of the ills and vicissitudes of isolated life, sigh for brighter hopes and more enduring joys? The constant struggle required to obtain subsistence blights their otherwise peaceful and harmonious minds, causes them to pant for a more congenial atmosphere, and long for those living streams which flow from the fountain of truth and love. "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Then what

wait we for? Shall we not be up and doing, that the car of reform may move gloriously on?

Thine most truly,

G. B. Mc L.

Correspondence.

POUGHKEEPSIE, April 15, 1851.

DEAR FRIEND AMBLER:—It gives me unspeakable gratification to see you hold so calmly and so firmly on your course of spiritual progression. I blame no one for losing their way and "stumbling on the blocks" of Swedenborgianism, for it is the life-principle of our faith to have charity for all, even towards those who willfully close their eyes to the light, and prefer darkness. I am thankful that never for a moment have I faltered in yielding a most implicit reliance in the entire system of the Harmonial Philosophy. Mr. Davis, in his last work, has given the world, not only his best production, but a *treasure* of truth and philosophical revelation, which renders it impossible for me to conceive upon what consistent ground any one can escape his deductions and conclusions. Surely, as yet, he is the "chief among ten thousand," and in the beautiful, meek, and forbearing manner in which he has met the spirit of his opposers, "the one altogether lovely." While I am far from believing a thing simply on account of the reputation of the medium through which it is proclaimed, neither will I circumscribe my assent to only a *portion* of what that medium may reveal, if *all* that he affirms bears equally the stamp of truth, simply for fear that I may fail of being considered *wise too*, and capable of astounding the world with the profundity of my philosophical disclosures. Dear Brother, I like much the circumspection with which you seem to receive that which seems at a superficial view to favor truth, as well as the firm, unflinching manner in which you oppose mythological error and superstition. Be assured that what I can do for the success of the Messenger, will be done without cessation of effort. It would be well to invite as general a correspondence for the paper as would be useful in showing the progress of truth abroad throughout the land; and I would decidedly favor the appearance in the Messenger of all apparently truthful clairvoyant discourses on spiritual philosophy which can be rendered available. Also the announcement of all reliable accounts of new mediums for the electrical sounds in different places, tends to strengthen the cause of progress.

Hoping the best success for your valuable paper—for your own endeavors in the cause of truth—and wishing you that internal peace which accrues from a constant harmony of spirit, I remain

Yours truly,

V. C. T.

Spiritual Thoughts.

The light which Truth giveth cannot be extinguished—it is the life of the universe. Let us roam in the fields of holy and god-like wisdom, and we may drink from that spiritual fountain which is inexhaustible; we may converse through the medium of spiritual influx, receiving truth from angels in the higher Spheres, where strife and discord are unknown, and where love, unity, and harmony reign.

In following spiritual direction, we shall progress and be happy. Angels will protect us from all harm. Let a holy influence steal over our minds as we contemplate the beauties of Divine Love and Wisdom. Sincere and earnest seekers after spiritual truths, shall be spiritually enlightened. T.

Beautiful is the light reflected on the bosom of Nature, in which is seen the all-pervading smile of God.

As the sun is most beautiful when, with a softened brightness, it is descending behind the western hills, so the human soul is most attractive and most filled with the glory of heaven, when it is sinking into the rest of death. R. F. A.

☞ The communications of G. E. H. are welcome, and will be inserted next week.

Poetry.

WILLIE TO HIS BIRD.

WRITTEN FOR THE SPIRIT MESSENGER,
BY S. H. LLOYD.

"Come back! I miss thee from thy nest,
My sweet, my bonnie bird;—
Come back and nestle on my breast,"
These were the words I heard,

As stood my Willie, with his eye,
Bent towards a stalwart tree,
Where, filling all the fragrant sky,
It poured its melody.

"Come back, my little bonnie bird,
Why now from Willie stray?"
Was still the pleading voice I heard;—
"Have I not, every day,

Brought little crumbs, and water too,
And filled thy little well?
And plucked thee berries when they grew
In meadow, wood, and dell?

Have I not hung thee 'neath the trees
That shade my window-sill,
Where thou couldst reach, with little ease,
The berries with thy bill?

And sat long hours and chirped with thee
In answer to thy song?
Why then so high upon that tree
Wilt thou now stay so long?"

All vainly there did Willie seek
His little bonnie bird,
'Till manly tears stole down his cheek,
And quenched the words I heard.

But Willie since has not so erred,
And keeps no cages now,
And loves, far more than prisoned bird,
The bird upon the bough.

And when the Spring's glad voice we hear
And fills our joyous breasts,
And birds with songs the gardens cheer—
Begin to build their nests;—

With cheerful looks he sits him down
To breathe the fragrant morn,
While here they pick the straw and down
Upon the daisied lawn;—

And sees them build their little nest
Upon some bush or tree,
And loves their blithesome songs the best,
Because their wings are free!

A Pretty Thought.

The night is mother of the day,
The winter of the spring,
And ever upon old Decay
The greenest mosses cling.
Behind the cloud the starlight lurks,
Through showers the sunbeams fall;
For God, who loveth all his works,
Has left his hopes with all!

Miscellaneous Department.

MIRZA.

BY CARLETON SEYMOUR M'KEE.

I slept amid the palm trees, resting from the fatigues of the day. Mine was a lot of toil, and care, and anxiety. My father had been an unfortunate man, and I, his son, seemed born to have a like share of the painful in this strange existence. I was wont to labor long and wearisome hours in the rich gardens of another, while my mind was accustomed to weary itself with contemplating the abundance which he enjoyed, deploring at the same time the unhappy lot that had befallen me, a poor being depending upon every day's toil for my daily sustenance.

The day was very warm, and I had been laboring hard from the dawn. The sun now had long passed the meridian. Oppressed with my long, continued toil, yet more oppressed with thoughts which disquieted me, I lay down, and soon was sleeping.

As I reposed thus calmly, a gentle voice whispered, "Mirza, listen!" and I thought I awoke and strove to behold the angel whom I doubted not hovered over me. I saw not the spirit, yet the voice murmured, "Listen! Seek not to behold me until thou hast obeyed the voice which thou hearest." Methought there was an unutterable sweetness in that sound—a sound as of a lute-string in the gardens of heaven.

"Wouldst thou be happy, mortal?" said the angel.

"What is man without happiness," I replied, in a subdued voice, for I felt that I was not in communion of the earthly.

"Yet thou art not happy," responded the spirit.

"Alas! I am not!" I answered, with a tone of earnest feeling. "Often, too often, am I but a wretched being, driven into the shades of gloom, and envy, and despair. Good angel, are there not far more noble and joyful destinies than mine?"

"What dost thou desire, oh! discontented man?" asked the unseen.

"I would have wealth, power, pleasure, good spirit. Am I not worthy to enjoy some of the choice gifts of existence? Would I not be generous with my wishes, just in my dominion, temperate in my enjoyments?"

"Thou shalt be tested?" responded the angel.

Then my heart beat with a rapid pulse, and my breast seemed penetrated with a refulgent light, where gloom had dwelt before. I knew not what a destiny I had provoked.

"I knew thou wert good!" I exclaimed, in a rapturous voice, but the angel answered not, and I knew the spirit had flown to the celestial dwellings.

I awoke. I had been long sleeping, and the night dews were falling around me. With a hasty pace I left the gardens, and traversed the way to my humble habitation, overjoyed by the glad vision of my slumbers, for something seemed to whisper, "The vision is true."

With a light heart I rose on the morrow, and merrily I sang as I went to my daily toil. No longer the day seemed to pass wearily along. My heart was possessed by hope. Nevertheless, I was anxiously looking for the amelioration of my destiny, and ever and anon I was startled by the breezes among the fig trees, which I half fancied were voices, bidding me arise from my humble station.

The day at last dawned which was to witness my first step in the ascent of greatness. A stranger of venerable appearance and noble mien, walked in the groves, and beheld me busily gaged in the culture and embellishment of the fruitful whose shade interposed between the earth and the brilliant sun. The old man was a philosopher, a man of great among the gifted, whose counsels were esteemed most ex by the sovereign of our nation. Born with neither diadem scepter, he had chosen virtue for his crown of majesty and as the power by which to rule.

Observant of all that was good, or noble, or excellent, the humble as well as the mighty, he strove to spread hope around him by encouraging the highest impulses of human

ture. His presence was thus esteemed as that of a benefactor and teacher, whether he entered the cottage, or abode in the regal mansion.

Discovering me as he walked along, he conversed with me in a tone of elegant familiarity—never descending from his own real dignity, he strove to exalt others, or to unfold the noble sentiments of their hearts. His conversation and deportment would lead one to regard him with affection and reverence—to love him as a friend, and to respect him as an instructor.

I was myself a lover of knowledge. Many an hour had I passed over volumes of the philosophers, learning the mysteries of morals, and history, and science. Few with whom I associated thought the poor, struggling husbandman the possessor of so much mental wealth. Yet it was so. I was ambitious—and how daring, how self-sacrificing, how powerful is ambition.

"Thou hast shown much skill in thy husbandry," said the philosopher, addressing me; "'t were well most men did labor as much for their own advantage as thou dost for the advantage of another." I bowed and responded, "He who hath not vineyards of own, must needs labor in the vineyards of another. Yet it is good to employ life to some purpose, be that purpose but just and right."

"'T is very well to think thus; but wouldst thou live and die in this obscurity didst thou know a way in which to rise far above it?"

"The eagle has wings; why should he not soar? And when a man has knowledge, why should he not exalt himself?" I responded.

"True," answered the philosopher; "but hast thou knowledge?"

"I would not be a boaster, oh! man of wisdom; yet methinks there are many in high estate, who would envy, did they but know, the virtues of Mirza."

"Work then, Mirza, to-day," he replied; "to-morrow, mayhap, shall have other things in store for thee." Thus saying, the philosopher left me amazed, yet joyful.

The morrow came, and I repaired again to the grove where I met the philosopher, when a message came to me, bidding me hasten to join his retinue, as he was about to journey to the capital. With gladness, mingled somewhat with regret, I took leave of the familiar scenes around me, and set out with my aged patron to the center of my country's grandeur and magnificence.

Under the guidance of the venerable sage, I made rapid progress in knowledge and in the esteem of the wise. I rose speedily into favor, and received many promotions. The Sultan regarded me as a man of peculiarly apt abilities for government, and at length gave me rank over those who had long been distinguished in the empire. A mighty province had become discontented with misrule, and I was appointed the monarch's viceroy, for the purpose of appeasing the rebellious people.

I set out to assume my functions in a style of great splendor. A multitude of soldiers and attendants went with me to give power and pomp to my progress, and to add to my majesty when I entered upon my viceroyal government.

On arriving, I found that my task would be one of no slight difficulty. I was expected to remove grievous evils, and substitute therefor wise and just regulations.

I put myself earnestly to work to ameliorate the condition of the injured and neglected populace. I carried into effect the maxims of the philosophers with whom I had associated; and being favored with the counsels of the man who had withdrawn me from my obscure station, I was very successful. Peace soon established itself in my province—comfort spread among the people, and they looked with gratitude upon me as upon a deliverer.

For some time this prosperity and virtuous energy continued, but by degrees the flattery of courtiers, the applause of the multitude, and the security of my position, made me neglect the persevering pursuits of my duty. To aid in prostrating my resolutions of virtuous rule, the old benefactor of my humbler days expired, peacefully dying in his path of excellence, and leaving me without one warning friend.

Exposed now to insidious foes, who sought to undermine my

just principles, and thus to expose me to the resentment of the people, as well as the indignation of the monarch, I gradually relaxed the strictness and impartiality of my administration. Pleasure became my grand pursuit. My attention was withdrawn from the execution of justice; men of poor abilities were promoted to high places by the influence of sycophants, who crowded about my footsteps, traitorously affecting to be anxious for my exaltation, at the moment when they hoped to sacrifice me. Yet, I fancied that all was secure—that I was amidst friends and good counsellors. So blind are we mortals when we forget to be virtuous.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Influence of Truth.

He who lends his ear to the voice of eternal truth, feels not the footsteps of perpetual change that is creeping over him and ripening him for the harvest of death. His weary moments are beguiled, his dreary thoughts are banished, while he listens to the sweet accents of truth, and realizes that the spirit of God, his love and mercy—those angelic ministers of grace, throng unseen the regions of mortality. As Time scatters its snows upon his head, their freezing influences reach not the greenness of his heart. That is unchanged. It feels the breath, as it were, of an everlasting Spring, and the dews of celestial grace shed their renovating power around. Misfortunes may gather upon him, sickness may blight his frame, and adversity's rude wind may shake his withered locks, yet the heart remains an oasis amidst this general desolation. Then can we not feel to say,

"O! let us listen to the words of life!"

The Truth of Beauty.

There is nothing beautiful that is not true. There is nothing true that is not beautiful. It was in searching for beauty that I discovered truth. Its temple stands in the center of an artificial labyrinth composed of the most complicated windings, in which many lose themselves; whilst millions are deluded by the specious falsehoods, met with on the way, and over-written—"This is the truth, and he who doubts is doomed." But he who would reach the temple round which this 'wondering maze of thorns and briars is planted, must overleap these artificial fences, or hew away right onward, instinct led, having an unwavering confidence in God, and his own soul. God is truth, and every natural instinct of the soul guides us to God. There are as many revelations as there are souls to need them; each is a revelation in itself, for itself; which is a greater marvel than any of the spurious marvels out of which a periodical, soulless worship has proceeded.

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