

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

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

VOL. I.

SPRINGFIELD, SATURDAY, MAY 17, 1851.

NO. 41.

The Principles of Nature.

THE EMPIRE OF MIND.

There is no field over which the mind has ranged, more fruitful—none affording higher and nobler objects of contemplation and study—than that embracing the nature of man. In it are involved the most glorious works of creation, and mysteries which the deep research of six thousand years has not been able to unfold. And were we to ask from whence arise the difficulties that have ever opposed the successful exposition of man's true nature, the answer must be found in the fact that we are the workmanship of Him whose hand hath formed all things, and clothed them in mysteries not yet to be revealed to mortals. Man has been so constituted, that a knowledge of himself—an acquaintance with his powers, both physical and intellectual, is essential to his best interest and highest well-being; and in this pursuit have been engaged the good and virtuous of every age. But not unfrequently have their researches ended in baseless theories, that are calculated to shroud the mind and bewilder the understanding of the inquiring. So comprehensive is the nature of that being formed in the image of the Deity, that ages more fruitful in research than all by-gone time, can only approximate towards a solution of his powers, and eternity alone can embrace the extent of their duration.

Were we to consider man only as he moves along in the current of active life, we should find him existing in a small compass—confined in his sphere of action to narrow bounds. His appearance to the careless observer, and to the barren in thought, furnishes no other consideration but that of weakness and imbecility—a being limited by the bounds described by his narrow vision. True, he springs into existence and spends a life in a world which our eyes can encompass, and here we are not wholly a stranger to that part of his nature, of which sensation gives us a knowledge. But he who reads in man no higher nature—no more ennobling truths—has looked upon the human countenance with a soul shrouded in gloom, impenetrable by the brightest rays of science, and unmoved by the most resplendent beauties of nature. This is that which feels the withering influence of Time, and perishes beneath the hand of Decay. But the empire of mind is free from the ravages of the victorious power, which has prostrated the mightiest works of human hands, and made desolate the regions once clad in the garments of plenty. The glory of oriental climes has faded, and Wretchedness, with her wan and pale countenance, stalks abroad in those lands, once the garden of the world. Egypt, the mother of learning, the land of science—once prosperous with her "thousand cities," is now the home of ignorance, the abode of the wretched and degraded sons of a once glorious ancestry. Greece, the cradle in which was nursed the first-born of Liberty, the land of genius and of art, is now obscured by moral and mental darkness. Her Solon, Lycurgus—her philosophers, orators, and statesmen, are lost amid the wrecks of her former grandeur, and her poets are known only in the song that transmits their sad fate to posterity. And Rome, once the light of surrounding nations and the soul of the world, has felt the destroyer's hand with a vengeance that prostrated her might, and sunk her in the oblivion of irrevocable ruin. The voice of her Cicero no longer reverberates along the wide extended forum, stirring the souls of men by the omnipotence of his eloquence, the power and force of his reasoning. But Desolation's withering breath has faded the brightest scenes that have opened upon the enraptured vision of man, and Time mocks his vain efforts to oppose her ravages.

But why do we linger in oriental climes, to mark the ruin that follows in the footsteps of man? Why mourn over the fallen greatness of those nations whose fate has been recorded by the hand of the faithful historian? Rather, with an eye bedewed with the tear of sympathy, let us contemplate the forgetfulness that broods over that people whose history must forever remain locked in the charnel house of forgetfulness. Yes! this fair land, in which the goddess of Liberty has erected her temple, has once been the scene of desolation. The fruitful fields and numberless cities that pour forth their treasures, are built upon the graves of an exterminated race. No monuments of the sculptor, or poet's song, tells of their origin, their *wrongs*, and their *glory*; but the stillness of death's slumbers will soon gather round them, and no sound shall disturb their repose as the genius of desolation enrols their history upon the tablets of forgetfulness. Such is the condition of those nations which were once exalted to the zenith of glory, but to sink into the nadir of barbarism. Their splendor was like the transit of a comet, which shines with transcendent brightness for a moment, but leaves in its path a deeper darkness, that casts a gloom on all surrounding objects. Here among the things that pass away, is the mortal part of man confined by the decree, "thus far shalt thou go, and no farther." But in the mind there are elements that know no confinement—no limitation! The boundaries of mortality cannot encompass the realms of Thought! The subjects upon which thought can be engaged, involve all causes, operations and effects that infinity embraces; and this power of scanning a universe, renders man superior to all other works of creation—it is this that constitutes him a *Man*.

Were we to attempt to explore the regions through which Thought roams, the task would be accomplished only when mind's progressive power shall cease, and when

"Time shall be slain, nature be destroyed,
Nor left an atom in the mighty void,
When universal ruin spreads abroad,
And prostrates every work of God."

Thought is not confined to the same unvaried subject—it lingers not on the same tiresome round of pleasures, which afford no gratifications commensurate with the lofty aspirations and unbounded desires of the soul; but it returns into the unexplored abyss of time without beginning, and looks forward into the depths of an eternity to come.

The smallest particles of matter, and the laws that unite them to their kindred—the fiery regions of the earth whose convulsions heave forth the molten torrents that desolate fertile fields and flourishing cities—the Tornado's destroying breath, that sweeps the earth with the besom of destruction—all form fruitful themes for thought's discursive power.

Those abstruse sciences whose embodiment is the plan of infinite wisdom, and whose truths are the elements of the Divine existence—the regions which the mind of a Galileo and Newton measured ere the problem of the universe was solved—the mighty demonstrations of a La Place—the deep researches of a Cuvier—the profound reasonings of a Locke and Bacon—the keen analogies of a Gall, and the bright illuminations of a Spurzheim and Combe, are the glorious rewards of a *laborious thought*. It is in such elements as these that thought has an eternal existence. Yes! the truths that have been developed by the mighty powers of mind, and which constitute the richest treasure of man, would have remained in the secret stillness of those regions from which Thought has dragged them forth, and displayed them to the gaze of an admiring world.

But not to earth's narrow confines is this power of mind confined. It roams throughout the illimitable regions of space—dwells upon the most distant star—mounts upon the rapid car

imagination, and transcends the bounds of earth, and expatiates in the immensity of undiscovered worlds. Neither the burning rays of the dissolving sun, nor the frozen regions in which Uranus wanders, can impede the rapid flight of thought. The beauties and realities of the terrestrial world, and the glittering splendor of that numberless host that throngs the celestial bounds, fill the soul with those lofty aspirations that lay hold of immortality. Thought even penetrates the dim and doubtful future, and, lighted on its way by the cheering rays of *hope*, it ascends into the realm of unfading beauty, and lingers among the pure and angelic. It stands upon the mount of promise, and gazes upon the spiritual empire of God, and beholds at once the redeemed and purified race of men, clad in the bright robes of immortality, and basking in the sunbeams of eternal felicity.

Such is the nature of that etherial principle which constitutes the great attribute of the human character; and when freed from its connection with mortality, its destiny can be none other than to search through the new creations and expanding beauties, until it shall have absorbed all the other faculties of the mind, and then converging to the throne of God, shall mingle in that fountain of intelligence whose emanations are power omnipotent, *wisdom infinite*, and *LOVE ETERNAL*.

Superintendence of Providence.

It cannot be denied that, in the great plan of creation, the divine agency is every where visible. We see incontestible proofs of it in all the grand outlines of the picture which Nature has designedly drawn, and which cannot be affected by the revolutions of chance. The unfolding of flowers—the growth of trees—the nature and situation of air, light, and water—the attraction of the earth—the disposition of the planets—and the general arrangement of the universe, which is so perfect that no imagination can conceive any improvement, can never be supposed the effect of accident, except by minds unaccustomed to reason, or bewildered in the labyrinths of sophistry. As for me, when I discover so much benevolence pervading all things, and detect, in every branch of creation, so many schemes for our happiness—when I see the sun, after having warmed, lighted, and beautified our hemisphere, going down in the blushing west, and yielding his blazing and busy empire to silence and repose—or when, in the quiet evening, I behold the moon emerge from the horizon, and shape her circling course along the broad and glittering heavens, I cannot refrain from worshiping Providence, thus in his own temple, with deep and inspiring devotion, and clinging with energy to my conviction of his goodness and power.

Yet, without doubting that our Creator has instituted many general laws, as regards the affairs of men, which cannot be broken without introducing confusion and misery somewhere, I do not believe He has ordained the occurrence of every change which takes place in Nature, or every thought and action of his reasonable beings. If we choose, for an example, the process by which the vegetable world is supplied with water, we perceive one of the most beautifully contrived plans that could be suggested. The water which is evaporated from the earth into the sky, is borne by the wind over a vast extent of country, in the shape of clouds, and poured forth in refreshing showers upon the thirsty fields. Mountains also attract around their summits the vapors of the air, and, after becoming saturated, give birth to gushing springs and widely spreading rivers. Thus every part of the vegetable world enjoys the blessings of the bounteous skies. There is nothing like chance in this arrangement, so well adapted, in all its various branches, to the object which it ultimately accomplishes. But when we descend into the minuter details, and lose sight of the original outline, we cannot justly imagine that the Divine Intelligence follows each spring through all its circulations; that it directs it to flow around yonder good man's meadow, and to refresh the fields of his wicked neighbor, or that He orders the rain to descend upon a certain portion of the earth, at precisely a certain time. Without wishing to jest, the subject becomes ludicrous when viewed in this light, and although men have asserted that God was familiar with the

most secret and trifling occurrence, and that his influence was exerted in regulating the most ordinary affair, they could not have intended to be understood literally, but only that the general order of things is adapted to the happiness of man, and that the means of improvement and enjoyment have been placed in his hands. Fire, air, and water are all inestimable blessings, which could have originated in nothing less than divine benevolence; yet when the house of the sick man is burnt and his innocent children perish in the flames—when the air rises to a whirlwind, scattering the leaves and blossoms from the trees, prostrating the harvest of the industrious farmer, destroying in a moment the gifts of nature, and checking all the growth of spring—or when the sea swells, and the lashing waves wreck the proud vessel against the rocks, and swallow in their bosom a crowd of beings unprepared to die, by which the hopes and happiness of a hundred families are blighted, perhaps forever—here we lose the character of benevolence which runs through the skillful works of Providence, and perceive in them but the remote consequences of his plans, but not his plans themselves.

From a consideration of the principles which govern all events, both in the physical and moral world, we are enabled to arrive at the following conclusions:

I. That the Master of the universe is a Being, possessing the attributes of power, wisdom, and goodness to an extent to which we can set no limits.

II. That this great Being appears to have always governed matter and mind according to certain fixed and uniform principles, called from their universality, *laws of nature*.

III. That those great principles have never been disturbed in a single instance, as far as it appears, or in any case suspended.

IV. It is extremely improbable that such disturbance or suspension will ever take place, since the whole scheme is so arranged by Almighty foresight and wisdom, that virtue is effectually rewarded and vice unfailingly punished, and the intended measure of happiness and enjoyment diffused through all animated beings.

V. That this view of boundless wisdom and power constantly pervading all His works, and superintending every operation in nature and in Providence, by fixed, determined laws, is more in accordance with our views of the dignity and grandeur of the Supreme Being than the opposite view, which represents the Governor of the universe as under the necessity of resorting to shifts and expedients, which seem to imply an imperfection in the original arrangement and plan, which ever stand in need of varying, mending, improving and patching, and thus to introduce uncertainty, confusion, and disorder in his works. And so far from excluding the Creator from the government of the world (as has been asserted), it represents him as constantly superintending the whole, by laws emanating from himself, and by which he may truly be said to be ever present through his vast, extended empire.

Opinions and their Advocates.

The scum, some philosopher has discovered, rises to the top, while the dregs sink to the bottom. No enterprise is to be judged of by those who seem to take the lead in it, for their position is often accidental, and mortifying to others, but unavoidable. Among the pioneers of every new country are to be found ruffians and outlaws, who could not stay in the old. We are not to judge of any cause by the character of the individuals prominently attached to it. There are restless spirits, ready to spring on every hobby, mount on every reform, and do anything to attract attention to themselves.

In respect to opinions, and doctrines, and even in matters of science, let it be remembered that there is very little weight in authority, or antiquity, or numbers. In the progress of science and of thought, every fact and every doctrine must at some time be new. It must have a beginning; and there must be a time when only one man knows it, and all the rest of the world is ignorant of it, or when one man is its advocate, and all the rest of the world is opposed to it. There was a time when Mahomet stood alone, single-handed against the world—now, half the

world receives his creed. There was a time when Galileo stood alone in the assertion that the earth moves round the sun, and all the learning, and wisdom, and religion, and authority, and experience of the world—all men of science, and colleges, and universities, and even the infallible Church, were arrayed against him. There was a time when Columbus stood alone in the advocacy of a western passage round the world. And so of all discoveries, all improvements, all reforms. And when a man talks to you about the lessons of experience, the weight of sage authority, the reverence due to antiquity, and the accumulated wisdom of centuries, give them all due weight; but, at the same time, do not forget that they have ever opposed, and ever will oppose, every effort in the path of progress. Reverence antiquity, and authority, and accumulated wisdom, if it does you good to do so, but beware how you let this reverence blind you to the truth as it reveals itself from day to day, or to the prospects and possibilities of the future.

Psychological Department.

SINGULAR EVENT.

FROM MADAME DU NOYER'S LETTERS.

The following story will appear to you incredible and fabulous, and perhaps I need not assure you that I had great difficulty in believing it: but as I had it from the lips of the individual who formed the subject of it, and as he was a visionary, I attributed it to the effects of a disturbed imagination. The event (at least as far as this person's mind was concerned) occurred in our day, and is attested by many in the city of Nismes. The tale is thus told:

Mr. Graverol was alone in his study one day, about two o'clock in the afternoon, when a stranger was ushered in. As soon as he was seated, a conversation started up between the two. The stranger addressed Mr. G. in elegant Latin, saying that he had heard his learning spoken highly of, and he had come from a distant country to converse with him on things which had embarrassed the ancient philosophers. After Mr. G. had replied suitably to the compliment offered to his talents, some very abstruse subject was introduced, and handled in a very scientific manner. The stranger did not confine himself to the Latin language, but he spoke Greek and some Eastern tongues, which Mr. G. also understood perfectly. The latter was astonished and delighted with his guest's profound information; and from fear some person should call on him and interrupt it, he proposed a walk, which was readily acceded to by the stranger. The day was delightful, and you know there are some beautiful walks in the neighborhood of Nismes. They left the house with the design of going through the gate called the Crown-gate, which leads to some gardens and a very fine avenue of noble trees; but as Mr. Graverol's house was a considerable distance from the place above-mentioned, they were obliged to cross several streets before they reached it. During the walk, Mr. G. was observed by many of his acquaintances, he being well known in the city, to use much gesture, and he was also noticed to be speaking at intervals: what added to the surprise was, that no person was seen accompanying him. Some of his friends sent to his wife, expressing their fear that he was deranged, describing the manner in which he was noticed to pass through the streets. She being greatly alarmed at intelligence so extraordinary, despatched several persons in search of him; but they could not find him, as he had gained the shady walks outside the city with his new acquaintance. After expatiating on the subjects of ancient and modern philosophy, and reasoning on the secrets of nature, they entered on the wide fields of magic and enchantment. The stranger argued with great ingenuity and power, but exceeded the bounds of probability; and Mr. G. cried out, "Stop, stop! Christianity forbids us proceeding to such lengths—we should not pass the prescribed boundaries." He had no sooner said this (at least according to the narration spread abroad) than the stranger vanished. Mr. Graverol being at that moment at the extreme end of one of the avenues, which was terminated by some palisades, was compelled to return the same

way he went. On turning round, and not perceiving his companion, he became greatly alarmed, and uttered a dreadful shriek, which brought some men who were employed in pruning the trees, to him. When these people perceived how pale and frightened he was, they gave him some wine which they had in a flagon, and used all the means they could devise to restore him to himself. As soon as he recovered his recollection, he inquired if they had noticed where the gentleman had gone with whom he had been walking. He was very much agitated when these good people informed him that there was no one with him when he passed under the trees where they were at work; neither had a single individual been in his company since he came in their sight, and they had observed him some distance before he reached them. They added, moreover, that when he passed, it struck them as being somewhat singular that he should be so deeply engaged in apparent conversation, although he was alone. Mr. G., on learning this, went immediately home, where he found his house in disorder and alarm concerning the reports which had reached his wife. He then related his adventure. When the story was noised abroad, it was publicly asserted all over the city that the devil had visited Mr. Graverol. He was a very gentleman-like man and an advocate, and related the circumstances to me as I have detailed them. When he concluded, he said, "This is accurately what happened: you now are acquainted with the facts as well as myself, and you may exercise your judgment respecting them as shall best seem fit. And all that I can add is, the stranger was a very learned and eloquent man, and reasoned like a philosopher."

Mental Hallucination.

A young man had a strong imagination that he was dead, and earnestly begged his friends to bury him. They consented by the advice of the physician. He was laid upon a bier, and carried upon the shoulders of men to church; when some pleasant fellows meeting the procession, and inquiring who it was, they answered. "And a very good job it is," said one of them, "for the world is well rid of a very bad and vicious character, which must have had the gallows in due course." The young man, now lying dead, hearing this, popped up his head, and said they ought to be ashamed of themselves in thus traducing his fair fame, and, if he were alive, he would thrash them for their insolence. But they proceeding to utter the most disgraceful and reproachful language, dead flesh and blood could no longer bear it; up he jumps; they ran, he after them, until he fell down quite exhausted. He was put to bed; the violent exertion he had gone through promoted perspiration, and he got well.

Then there is the case of the insane watchmaker, mentioned by Pinel, who insisted that he had been guillotined, and that another head had afterwards, by mistake, been put on his shoulders instead of his own. "Look at these teeth," he would say, "mine were extremely handsome; these are rotten and decayed: my mouth was sound and healthy; this is foul. How different is this hair from that of my own head!"

Mr. Haslam, in his work on insanity, mentions a case of one who insisted that he had no mouth, and when compelled by force to swallow, declared that a wound had been made in his throat, through which the food had been introduced.

Benvenuto Cellini, the celebrated Florentine artist, in his Life, says, that "the governor of the castle in which the former was confined, had a periodical disorder of this sort; every year he had some different whim. One time he concealed himself metamorphosed into a pitcher of oil; another time he thought himself a frog, and began to leap as such; another time, again, he imagined he was dead, and it was found necessary to humor his conceit by a show of burying him. At length he thought himself a bat, and when he went to take a walk, he sometimes made just such a noise as bats do; he likewise used gestures with his hands and body, as if he were going to fly." But it is a matter of some jest that Cellini, the writer of another's hypochondriacs, should state that a resplendent light shone over his (own) head from morning till two o'clock in the afternoon, and then again at sunset; and that it was conspicuous to others, to whom he thought proper to show it.—*Cabinet of Curiosities.*

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

R. P. AMBLER, EDITOR.

SPRINGFIELD, MASS., MAY 17, 1851.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNICATIONS.—No. 2

FANATICISM AND SECTARIANISM.

Perhaps nothing has tended more to cast reproach upon spiritual communications, and to disgust the rational investigator, who is disposed to believe, than the fanatical way in which circles have been managed by some who have thought themselves prepared to be directors in all matters pertaining to these communications. For any one, however familiar, to assume the direction of the way persons shall proceed in asking questions, or obtaining manifestations, is rather an assumption. There may, with propriety, be certain arrangements for order and for proceeding quietly and without confusion. Beyond this it is not safe to go; first, because none know exactly the best mode to be pursued under all circumstances, and, secondly, because any dictatorial rigidity in the matter, very naturally and very justly excites suspicion in the minds of persons who are not believers. So a fanatical faith in every sound that is heard, and exclamations of implicit confidence that every thing is correct, and can be from none but the higher spheres, and entirely true, are equally wrong. The writer has been thrown in the way of observing these phenomena under almost every variety of circumstances which have yet attended them, and has uniformly found that the most fanatical believers are the surest means of retarding the truth. He once visited a place where a medium was giving "sittings," accompanied by a gentleman who had been a recent convert, and who had unfortunately formed the idea—and so stated—that *he*, with *his* medium, never had received any but correct answers. The signal of a departed sister was called for, and a slight sound was heard in no way resembling the signal given in a Western city, and which had been familiar as household words to the questioner for two years. "There's the dear angel!" exclaimed the master of ceremonies, "I know the signal—I have often heard it." "No—it is not her signal," said the questioner. The question was repeated, with a like result, only the man of great faith was *sure* that it was the correct signal this time. When it was disputed, he says, "You must be mistaken," and being assured that it was well remembered, he said, "Perhaps she has forgotten the signal." The answer to this was, that spirits out of the body would not be likely to give signals and forget them sooner than the frail mortals in the flesh. "Ask some questions," said he, "perhaps she does not choose to give you her signal yet." "She was very accommodating when in the body, and she will not be likely to be less so now that she is released from the flesh," was the reply. At this our confiding friend was slightly out of humor and left the room, with the remark that the spirit of our sister was grieved at our persevering determination to get the signal. If the questioner had not previously had evidence that was most incontestible, it would have been well calculated to make him feel that spiritual communications were rather too intimately connected with spirits in the body to be of much consequence to mortals. In this case the one who assumed superior knowledge in the matter was disagreeably dictatorial. It is this that has worked to the disadvantage of progress in spiritual developments.

Several circles have drawn around them persons of peculiar views, and some of them have established a creed which the spirits must answer in order to be admitted orthodox and truthful. Others have done similar things, with little variation, but with equal bigotry, condemning all who do not accord with their revelations.

One feature of these sectarian circles which, to many, was strange and unaccountable, is the fact that communications (as before hinted at) are always from St. James, St. Paul, some battle-hero, or some distinguished person. From these great and

authoritative names these petty sects have sprung up, and present a motley picture of spiritual communication. The writer was at one time present when Paul and other apostles were said to be the communicators, and was requested to write. He did so, and by the alphabet the following was spelled out:

"You can find a record of time in *Exidas* and Revelations."

This was not *very* lucid, and the question was asked, "Who gave that message?" The answer was, "Truth." It was insisted that the simple word, truth, conveyed nothing in itself, and that there was no kind of meaning to the sentence; and the bungling spelling gave abundant proof that doubts should be entertained whether the spirit was capable of distinguishing truth from error. This, as in the other case, excited some unpleasant demonstrations from spirits in the flesh, and the skeptical believers, who insisted on trying the spirits, withdrew and left the apostolic circle to themselves. Here, instead of instituting diligent inquiry to find out who and what the spirits were, every thing was taken for granted, and the advent affinities had called a response, bungling though it was (and on that account should have been considered unreliable), from some spirit that knew they, of all things, desired to know something about time and records. Under such circumstances, any sect may get its endorsement, any fanaticism its confirmation, and error be promulgated in the minds of all such as believe through faith, without any adequate foundation from knowledge and proof.

So far as the writer's experience goes, it has been abundantly demonstrated that the safest way is, to form no circles of preconceived opinion or prejudices. Ask for no high-sounding names, and be sure to cross-examine all who come with such names and titles. If they are true witnesses, they will bear cross-examination; if false, we need to use it to find them out. But little danger of such intrusions need be apprehended where there is not a morbid veneration for old things and customs, and great names. Honesty and candor, with the exercise of the reasoning faculties, will be sure, as a general rule, to insure reasonable, and not sectarian or frivolous communications. c.

The Nature of Man.

Different views have existed in the religious world in regard to the true nature of man. By one class of individuals it has been supposed that man is by nature totally depraved and unable of himself to perform a righteous action, while another class has proceeded so far in the opposite extreme as to claim the power of attaining almost absolute perfection. We can perceive no necessity for admitting the correctness of either of these views; and it is right to presume that the truth on this subject may be found in less extravagant and more rational conceptions. If we believe that all things, including man, proceed primarily from the action of the Divine Will, we must acknowledge that every thing in itself is good—that every external form has some benevolent use, and that every faculty of the human soul is given for some definite purpose which is consistent with divine wisdom and purity. We are aware that evil and wrong are prevalent in the world; we know that corruption and misery exist to an alarming extent among nearly all classes of society. Still, in searching out the causes of evil as it is outwardly manifested, we find no reason for supposing that the nature of man is inherently depraved; but, on the contrary, we see in all the wrongs and evils of society only the abuse of faculties which are intrinsically good—the perversion and misdirection of powers, which, when rightly employed, may serve to procure the highest blessings. As an illustration of this idea, let us consider the evil of intemperance. This, we all know, does not consist in any native power which has been given to man; it does not result from the legitimate use of any faculty implanted in his nature, but rather is created by the misuse and violation of some power, or in other words, is the perversion of that useful propensity by which the body is supplied with its appropriate nourishment. So it is, as we conceive, with all the different forms of evil; they do not exist in any original, unperverted power of our nature, but rather in the abuse and perversion of those very faculties whose just

employment would produce the most tranquil happiness. We conclude, then, that man contains within him powers which are inherently good, and that were these rightly exercised and harmoniously developed, he would become characteristically the child of God, bearing in his whole being the likeness of the Divinity.

R. P. A.

SOURCES OF HAPPINESS IN NATURE.

That the Creator intended that the study of his works should be a source of happiness, there is no doubt. There are evident proofs given of it in the relation we sustain to them, and in the necessity of a knowledge of their constitution, and of the laws by which they are governed. Take, for an example, the earth. It is no longer a matter of no importance to know of what it is composed—by what system of laws it is governed, and its adaptation to the condition of those placed upon it. Advances in the knowledge of it have already led to more enlightened views of mankind, and as knowledge improves, those still more ennobling, of the nature and destiny of the intelligent creation, will be entertained.

The science of geology amply displays the wisdom and the power of the Creator. The successive changes through which the earth has passed in being prepared for the reception of man, beautifully illustrates his omniscient goodness. Throughout its broad expanse there is sufficient to raise our conceptions of Him—to elevate the soul in ecstasies, and to convey to the mind the best idea of Omnipotence. The scientific geologist, then, always finds a rich feast for the soul. Whether he surveys the world as it appears on its surface, or descends into the abyss below, new pleasures delight the senses, and new wonders proclaim the greatness of that Being, who formed, governs, and supports the whole system. This is a source of happiness worthy to be appreciated by every enlightened mind. Here new delights are afforded for the mind, and while it knows that its habitation is on earth—itsself, enlightened and invigorated, soars above and beyond it.

Let us turn our attention for a moment to the heavens, and we shall find them no less a source of happiness. Whether we gaze upon the king of day, or admire the queen of night—whether the blazing meteor or the twinkling star form the subject of our contemplations, thought is lost in sublimity. The azure blue and the blushing crimson—the spotless white and the dying violet, thrill the mind with a secret delight, and as it loses itself in the thought of these fading beauties, it, for the moment, forgets earth with all its sorrows and scenes of woe, and mingles with superior beings. The whole phenomena of the regions of space—the frowning cloud and the commingling storm—the burning flash and the rolling thunder, strike the mind no less impressively. Though they appear less calm and serene than the diamonds of the sky, or pale Cynthia in her silent course, or dazzling Phebus, their majesty calls forth admiration, and a thousand pleasures cluster around them. There is no source of happiness more pure than this. Fashioned and set in order by the hand of Omnipotence, the impressions we receive from these works, can be none other than those honorable to him, and beautifying to us. Speculation may perplex, and the mind under its influence may, in some degree, lose its relish for them, yet, when these speculations are lost sight of, how much there is to admire!—how powerful are they to draw out every feeling of the soul, and bear it away on seraphic wings,

“Where light's celestial radiant beams,
Its drooping senses cheer!”

These are far from being the only sources of happiness. Every thing that beautifies the face of the earth, from the smallest plant to the lofty oak—the mighty river and the gentle rill, is equally a source of pleasing emotions. Not a flower blooms but to please—not a bough waves in the summer breeze but to call forth admiration. The song of the warbler in the grove “tunes the passions into peace,” and the morning gale breathes purity and delight.

But in addition to this, we should study to know ourselves. This knowledge is a never failing spring of happiness, and he

who knows himself best, and best understands the relation he sustains to every thing around him, is the better prepared to make all conducive to his highest good. In all that we do, this should be one great end and aim. It will make us wiser and better. It will show us where the thorns in the path of life are concealed, and will teach us the only means by which we may avoid them. It will also display the flowers that bestrew it in lovelier tints, and if it can not make them bloom alway, it can make their remembrance light up a smile in the winter of age, when they begin to fold and fade.

S. J.

Principles and Action.

It will appear to the careful observer that the principles of the Harmonial Philosophy are silently and gradually working their way into the minds and hearts of the people. In the intrinsic beauty and apparent truthfulness of these principles, is contained a power which appeals directly, not only to the reason, but to the noblest sensibilities of the human soul. Like a still, deep river the influences of truth have moved onward, cheering the moral wastes of earth, and imparting life and joy to mourning hearts. The stern religionist, whose soul was chained and cramped with gloomy creeds, has rejoiced in a glorious deliverance, and the cold skeptic who gazed in cheerless gloom into the abyss of annihilation, has been moved with deep and thrilling joy in viewing the glories of a brighter home. Thus we have seen that the influence and effect of these principles are good—that in their operation on the human mind they serve to impart freedom, purity, and inward life.

But the question may here naturally arise, is there not some thing more required than the mere reception and appreciation of principles? If these are good and useful in themselves, is it not important that they should be carried forth and manifested in a practical application. In short, is not *action* to be regarded as the proper ultimate of principles, and shall not the beautiful theory which has so highly delighted the soul, be reduced to consistent practice? In these inquiries, I have reference to a general and practical movement on the part of the friends of our Philosophy—a movement which shall concentrate the efforts and energies of individual minds to the accomplishment of a great humanitarian work—which shall unite and harmonize the chaotic elements of mind, resulting in some external organization in which the animating soul may find an appropriate expression. It appears to us that the time has now arrived when there exists a necessity for some outward embodiment of our divine truth. There needs to be a greater concentration of individual efforts—some general system or arrangement by which all who are interested in this cause may labor in union and harmony. We would not be understood as referring to any organization which will tend in the least degree to cramp or confine the soul. No; this must remain forever free; having once tasted the sweet joys of spiritual liberty, it should never again be entangled in the yoke of bondage. We designed to refer only to such an organization as that through which the soul can best manifest its noblest energies, and by which merely form and direction may be given to the efforts and aspirations of individual minds. The necessity for some general movement of this nature is now beginning to be extensively felt, and we have reason to hope that the idea which has thus been born, will be illustrated in united and consistent action. With these remarks we leave the subject for the present, in the anticipation that some definite instructions on this point will be obtained by Mr. Davis, which will probably be communicated through the columns of the *Messenger*.

R. P. A.

He who yields to the pure influences of all things beautiful the presence of a holier inspiration, and worship, than he who trembles in the groves at the altar that is reared by the greater mistake made by the mind from the true spirit of devotion. Innumerable forms of Nature only in heartless forms are

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CHARITY.

Among the numerous virtues which are calculated to adorn and elevate the human character, charity occupies a conspicuous place. This is a quality or state of mind which results from an expanded view of the relationship existing between man and man. Thus if we regard mankind as brethren, possessed of the same nature, characterized by the same divine image, and moving onwards towards the same heavenly home, we shall naturally be induced to look on all around us with charity, realizing that the failings we observe in our brother may correspond to others existing in ourselves, and that if he has not unfolded the best and holiest faculties of his being, it is because he has been surrounded by influences unfavorable to spiritual growth. Should individuals possessing these views of man and human relations, find it impossible to exercise charity for others, there is reason to suppose that the faith is not in them as a living and indwelling principle; for if it were, they would have a distinct perception of the causes that lead to unrighteous actions, and would realize the obligation they are under to assist and strengthen their fellows who may be more unfortunately situated in society. It is true there are circumstances under which it seems difficult to manifest this heaven-born virtue. When with apparently malicious design we are injured by another—when our motives are impugned and our good name sullied by the tongue of Slander, or when in some sudden outburst of wrath, we are made to feel the force of misguided passion, we may be almost irresistibly impelled to give expression to the deep sense of wrong that is felt within us. And this, to a certain extent, may be justly allowed; yet even under the circumstances supposed, there is still room for charity, and this may be derived from an appreciation of the elevating principles embraced in the harmonial faith. If we regard the immoral man as totally depraved, and possessed of an evil spirit, which in the higher life shall exist and be manifested as evil, then indeed may we be consistently excused should we fail to exhibit the grace of charity; for what God has already created evil, can properly require no sympathy from our hearts. But if, on the other hand, we recognize the great truth that all men are alike children of God, and that all possess a germ of internal purity, which, though now suppressed by outward circumstances, will be gloriously unfolded in a higher Sphere, then are we led to observe an equality in the whole body of humanity, which forms the proper ground work of charity. Let this virtue, therefore, be exercised, not as a mere passing emotion of the soul or a sentiment to be assumed at pleasure, but as the result of an inward principle founded on a great practical reality.

R. P. A.

Passage to the Second Sphere.

As I walked upon the brink of a fresh, gushing rivulet, the banks of which were lined with bright spring moss, my mind wandered to the higher Sphere, and I thought within me, that surpassing even this loveliness are the beauties of that fair land to which we go. With what unalloyed delight may we anticipate the change that passes upon all human beings—a change by which we shall be welcomed to our homes in the Spirit-land, and wander by the rivers of paradise, culling the beautiful flowers that bloom in rich luxuriance upon their banks, or listening to the music of the rushing waterfall mingling with the melody of angel-voices! What pure pleasure will it be to roam through the vallies of that celestial country, and feel the balmy zephyrs

"That ever for the weary soul
Do breathe some tone of rest,"

passing softly and soothingly over the brow; or repose in the shade of fragrant groves; or, yet again, to bathe in the sparkling fountains of eternal purity!

And a still purer happiness will be ours—to feel the tranquilizing and elevating influence of more advanced spirits, that shall irresistibly attract us onward and upward, in the paths of endless progression. Then how joyous is the thought that we shall also be permitted to re-visit these earthly scenes, to soothe the

sorrowful—to instill hope into the bosom of gloom—to enlighten the seeking mind, and diffuse through the darkened earth a knowledge of the principles of Harmony and Wisdom.

M. F. C.

Friendly Correspondence.

LOWELL, May 6, 1851.

DEAR BROTHER:—Among the many agents for spiritual culture afforded in this nineteenth century, we recognize the Spirit Messenger as one, both in design and effect, which has imparted much internal pleasure, and, as we trust, conduced to our progress. We are pleased to learn from its pages the gradual development and diffusion of the Harmonial Philosophy, as this gives promise of that "good time coming," when glory shall be given to the Father, and peace shall dwell among men.

Progress, which has placed at our doors so many blessings, and cheered our homes with so many spiritual joys, has likewise sent some angel-spirits to whisper glad tidings in our ears. A few friends here have formed a circle, and meet together twice a week. We have received many communications from those in the Second Sphere, whose memory we delight to cherish. The happy hours we have passed together have brought the conviction which for years has been desired, and thus we have received the reward of those who diligently seek the truth. During the last four months, we have assembled every week, and have been generally successful in securing the attention of our spiritual friends. I will not comment on the happiness of these meetings, and the indwelling joy which arose in our hearts;—you have realized all this. We now form our circles on the plan recommended by A. J. Davis, which bids fair to afford us additional pleasure—when we can have the full number of positive and negative persons. Thus far our little Harmonial Society has lived, and now enjoys the hope, not only of life, but of growth; as we have moved to a neat hall, and expect to have lectures on the Sabbath. It is our constant and earnest desire that all men may come to a knowledge of the truth; and we can see no reason why those who love the truth should not dwell together in union and harmony.

Yours in love,

B. M. F.

Our Reply.

It may be expected that we shall offer some reply to the invidious remarks contained in the last number of the "Spirit-World," in relation to Mr. Davis and the editor of this paper. It is not, however, our mission to pour out vials of wrath on our fellow men, and the spirit of our philosophy forbids that we should return railing for railing. We can only say that the unpleasant feeling so plainly manifested in the remarks referred to, awakens no such response in our own bosom; and we are disposed in this instance to cover up the obvious attempt at detraction with the mantle of that Charity which "thinketh no evil." Whatever may be the efforts of designing persons, we have no fear that our readers will misconceive the prominent objects of this paper, or misconstrue our motives in its publication.

R. P. A.

In answer to the inquiries of many friends, we would simply state that we have no thought, at present, of discontinuing the Messenger. Having proceeded thus far, through many difficulties and sacrifices, we are now looking upward to a clearer sky, and shall continue to administer to the spiritual wants of the people so long as the friends of the Philosophy we advocate, are disposed to encourage our efforts.

The articles on "Spiritual Communications," contained in the last and present number, though perhaps somewhat caustic in their nature, may be said to express "more truth than poetry." While we duly appreciate the privilege of holding communication with the departed, it becomes us to carefully guard against the tendency to fanaticism, and above all to degrade not this means of spiritual instruction by forcing it into the service of a sect.

Poetry.

TO A DEPARTED SPIRIT.

BY MRS. HEMANS.

From the bright stars or from the viewless air,
Or from some world unreach'd by human thought,
Spirit, sweet spirit! if thy home be there,
And if thy vision with the past be fraught,
Answer me, answer me!

Have we not communed here, of life and death!
Have we not said that love, such love as ours,
Was not to perish, as a rose's breath,
To melt away like song from festal bowers?
Answer, oh! answer me!

Thine eye's last light was mine—the soul that shone
Intensely, mournfully, through gathering haze;
Didst thou bear with thee, to the shore unknown,
Nought of what lived in that long earnest gaze?
Hear, hear, and answer me!

Thy voice—its low, soft, fervent, farewell tone
Thrilled through the tempest of the parting strife,
Like a faint breeze:—oh! from that music flown
Send back *one* sound, if love's be quenchless life!
But once, oh! answer me!

In the still noontide, in the sunset's bush,
In the dead hour of night, when thought grows deep;
When the heart's phantoms from the darkness rush,
Fearfully beautiful, to strive with sleep;
Spirit! then answer me!

By the remembrance of our blended prayer;
By all our tears, whose mingling made them sweet;
By our last hope, the victor o'er despair;
Speak!—if our souls in deathless yearnings meet,
Answer me, answer me!

The grave is silent—and the far-off sky,
And the deep midnight:—silent all, and lone!
Oh! if thy buried love make no reply,
What voice has earth? Hear, pity, speak! mine own!
Answer me, answer me!

LINES

ADDRESSED TO ANN E. S***B,

A MEDIUM FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNICATIONS.

I need not tell thee, sister of my soul,
How much I love thee, or how much I owe,
For thou hast opened glorious spheres that roll
To my rapt gaze, and bid them come and go,—
Spirits that love me in that realm of light
Where joy and peace abounds, and wisdom bright.

Oh, joy fore'er to thee, through whom I feel
The thrilling presence of a father dear,
And whose communication, bright with zeal,
Contents my heart and tells it not to fear,
For it shall live again, with them and you,
In that bright Spirit-land beyond the blue.

Receive this book, and learn in it the way
To live in sweet communion with the lov'd,
That when you reach the portals of *that day*,
Your spirit, freed, may dwell in spheres above.
Until that day, may you in love progress,
And live with God, who ever more will bless.

April, 1851.

Miscellaneous Department.

AN INTERESTING INCIDENT.

"There is a little story connected with that plant," said a friend, pointing to a pretty, fragrant geranium.

Instantly we were all attention. How quick the commonest thing, which before seemed merely pleasing, becomes an all-absorbing object of interest, when the spring of some sad or tender emotion is touched, and its presence calls forth the low sad tone that dwells on some tender recollection of the departed.

A darkened room and a dying bed,—these are the usual preludes to those heart-sketches, that, flowing fresh from memory, stamp kindred hearts with their beauty, or their gloom.

In this little instance related, a young girl in her fresh womanhood, was serenely gliding into the brighter world. The angels had deputed their pale-browed brother, with his white robes and his cold, deep eyes, that mortals tremble to meet, to summon the gentle spirit, and pass with it over the swift tide in the dark, rapid river of death. Beyond that river, it is sweet to fancy, stand forms of loveliness; and pure hands, with no earth stain to mar their fairness, array the disembodied soul in beautiful garments.

There was no longer any encouragement that health would return, though love still nursed the flickering flame of hope, and the weeping eyes gazed yearningly as though they would stay life with their earnest glances upon the paling cheek, and send the red tide once more to the white quivering lip.

The hand of this young girl grasped a blooming branch of geranium. Perchance its sweet fragrance was grateful to her failing senses, or some cherished memory gave to the frail, delicate leaves a beauty, brighter to the dim eyes of the dying than others could find; but even till the parting breath, the pretty plant rested within her icy hand.

Hours passed, and the dead was shrouded; yet a little longer, and the heavy sods pressed upon her young bosom, and the mourners went back from the silent home in the church-yard, to one almost as silent, and to them even more desolate.

We may imagine that the mother often lingered in that still chamber, often smoothed down the snowy covering of that deserted bed, and gazed mournfully upon the lone pillow that had been pressed by the dear brow of her child. A day or two after the funeral, a little wilted sprig of green was found in the room, and the mother recognized it as the same her child had clung to with so tenacious a grasp in the dark hour. It was a dear relic, though all its beauty had departed; the twining fingers, which so often in infancy had been clasped together around her neck, which in childhood's years had clung to her own, and which had, in maturer age, often cooled her heated brow, and ministered to her wants—the touch of those dear fingers had, as it were, sanctified the withering plant; and as she looked mournfully upon it, she wept as only mothers can weep.

She moistened it with water, and after a few days placed it within a pot of earth. She hardly knew why she did this, there was no promise of life—it was, apparently, dead as the poor hand that was mouldering in the grave. Day after day the bereaved one watched the delicate sprig, and to her surprise, it gradually enlivened, the dead-looking stem put forth tiny leaves; they brightened, deepened, and enlarged; new branches shot forth, the roots spread, and now that little, wilted, drooping branch is a large, luxuriant bush, in fact, a tree in miniature.

This renovation embodies beautifully the idea of the resurrection of the spirit, and leads the parent to think of her child as now, glorious in beauty, shining among the seraphs, with mind and intellect enlarged, quickened and strengthened, made meet for the companionship of angels.

KIND WORDS DO NOT COST MUCH—they never blister the tongue and lips, and we have never heard of any mental trouble arising from this quarter. Though they do not cost much, they accomplish much. First, they help one's own good nature and good will. Soft words soften our own soul. Angry words are

M.

fuel to the flame of wrath, and make it blaze more fiercely. Secondly, kind words make other people good natured. Cold words freeze people, but hot words scorch them, and sarcastic words irritate them, and bitter words make them bitter, and wrathful words make them wrathful.

Constancy.—A Fable.

In the ancient times, when flowers, and trees, and fairies were on speaking terms, and all friendly together, one fine summer's day the sun shone out on a beautiful garden, where there were all sorts of flowers that ye could mention, and a lovely but giddy fairy, went sporting from one to the other (although no one could see her, because of the sun-light) as gay as the morning lark: then said the fairy to the rose, "Rose, if the sun was clouded, and a storm came on, would ye shelter and love me still?" "Do ye doubt me?" says the rose and reddened up with anger. "Lily," says the fairy to another love, "if the sun was clouded and a storm came on, would ye shelter and love me still?" "Oh! do ye think I could change?" says the lily, and she grew still paler with sorrow. "Tulip," says the fairy, "if the sun was clouded and a storm came on, would ye shelter and love me still?" "Upon my word," says the tulip, making a very gentlemanlike bow, "you are the very first lady that ever doubted my constancy." So the fairy sported on, joyful to think of her kind and blooming friends. She reveled away for a time, and then she thought on the pale, blue violet that was almost covered with its broad green leaves; and although it was an old comrade, she might have forgotten it had it not been for the sweet scent that came up from the modest flower. "Oh, Violet," said the fairy, "if the sun was clouded and a storm came up, would ye shelter and love me still?" And the violet made answer, "Ye have known me long, sweet fairy; and in the first spring time, when there were few other flowers, ye used to shield from the cold blast under my leaves; now ye've almost forgotten me—but let it pass—try my truth, if ever ye should meet misfortune—but I say nothing." Well the fairy skitted at that, and clapped her silvery wings and whisked, singing off, on a sun-beam; but she was hardly gone when a black cloud grew up out of the north, all in a minute, and the light was shrouded, and the rain fell in slashings like hail, and away flies the fairy to her friend the rose. "Now rose," says she, "the rain is come, so shelter and love me still." "I can hardly shelter my own buds," said the rose, "but the lily has a deep cup." Well, the poor little fairy's wings were almost wet, but she got to the lily. "Lily," says she, "the storm is come, so shelter and love me still." "I am sorry," says the lily, "but if I were to open my cup, the rain would beat in like fun, and my seed would be spoilt,—the tulip has long leaves." Well, the fairy was down-hearted enough, but she went to the tulip, who she always thought a most sweet-spoken gentleman. He certainly did not look so bright as he had done in the sun, but she waved her little wand, and, "Tulip," says she, "the rain and storm are come, and I am very weary, but you will shelter and love me still." "Begone," says the tulip; "be off," says he, "a pretty pickle I should be in if I let every wandering scamperer come about me." Well, by this time she was very tired, and her wings hung dripping at her back, wet indeed—but there was no help for it, and leaning on her pretty silver wand, she limped off to the violet; and the darling little flower, with its blue eye that's as clear as a kitten's, saw her coming, and never a word she spoke, but opened her broad green leaves, and took the wild wandering creature to her bosom, and dried her wings, and breathed the sweetest perfumes over her, and sheltered her until the storm was gone. Then the humble violet spoke and said, "Fairy queen, it is bad to flirt with many, for the love of one true heart is enough for earthly woman or fairy spirit; the old love is better than the gay compliments of a world of flowers, for it will last when the others pass." And the fairy knew that it was true for the blue violet; and she contented herself ever after, and built her downy bower under the wide-spreading violet leaves, that sheltered her from the rude winter's wind and the hot summer's sun, and to this very day the fairies love the violet beds.

The True Course.

Let the winds blow, and the waves of society beat and frown about you, if they will; but keep your soul in rectitude, and it will be firm as a rock. Plant yourself upon principle, and bid defiance to misfortune. If gossip, with her poisoned tongue, meddle with your good name—if her disciples, who infest every town and hamlet, make your disgrace the burden of their song, heed them not. It is their bread and their meat to slander. Treat their idle words as you would treat the hissing of a serpent, or the buzzing of many insects. Carry yourself erect; and by the serenity of your countenance, and the purity of your life, give the lie to all who would berate and belittle you. Why be afraid of any man? Why cower and tremble in the presence of the rich? Why

"Crook the pliant hinges of the knee
That thrift may follow fawning?"

Why care for the frowns of an artificial society? No! no! friend, fear them not! Build up your character with holy principles; and if your path be not strewn with flowers, let it be beautiful with the light of a divine life; and you will leave behind you a noble example, which will be to the world a perennial flower, whose leaves will be a healing to the nations, and its fragrance the panacea of the soul.—*Pioneer*.

Dignity of Labor.

A people's treasure is in useful labor; there is no wealth, and can be none, but what it creates. Every good, great or small, is purchased by it. Savages, with boundless territories and fertile lands, are indigent and often destitute, because they work not. A single day's labor of a peasant or a mechanic, tends to relieve human wants and increase human comforts. It produces that which is not to be had without it, and to which tons of glittering ore can contribute nothing. In fine, there is no wealth but labor—no enjoyments but what are derived from it.

Words are apt to become fetters. Thinking gets adulterated if we do not pour out free words. Whatever lays an embargo on the free thought is wrong. We come to truth by intuition. When measured by tape and yard-stick she becomes mercantile. Never fear to utter a noble sentiment when God gives one.—*H. W. Beecher*.

It is with us, as with other things in nature, which by motion are preserved in their native purity and perfection; if the water runneth, it holdeth clear, sweet, and fresh; but stagnation turneth it into a noisome puddle.

Whatever you do, or wherever you are, always preserve a sweetness of soul as well as a fixedness of purpose.

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Printed for the Publisher, by G. W. WILSON, Book and Job Printer, corner Main and State Streets, Springfield, Mass.