

# 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.

### DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

WRITTEN BY ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS.

Innumerable centuries have rolled away, and colossal empires have appeared upon the distant hills—have existed for a little season, and have fallen into ruin and decay. Monarchies and religions have come up in different portions of the earth—have exhibited great power and despotism—have glided away, like a dream of the night, making a dim and dark impression on the page of history. Countless beings have appeared upon the earth—have performed some part in the vast and mysterious drama of life, and have passed away into a higher sphere.

But the Past has vanished, and the stupendous Present is before us. Here we stand, upon the towering summit of the ages past, contemplating the world of matter and the world of mind. We stand upon a mighty eminence, with all the vast accumulation of ages, with all the experience and wisdom of the past, beneath, around, and within us.

By the powerful momentum which the revolution of ages and the development of ideas and principles have imparted to us, we have steadily and progressively advanced to a moral and intellectual position, from which we perceive it to be our personal right and mutual duty to present to the world the reasons why we occupy this position, and why, also, we are resolved to maintain it, as the *only* certain foundation of individual culture and humanitarian progression.

We hold it to be a self-evident truth, that the principle of Reason is the greatest and highest endowment of the human mind; that it is the indwelling *light* and the *power* of understanding by which man is enabled to read the innumerable sentences and chapters contained in the everlasting volume of Nature! We hold Reason to be the divinely inherited treasure of the human soul, because it sees the indications, studies the principles, and progressively comprehends the countless and infinitely diversified manifestations, of the Universal God.

And we, likewise, hold it to be self-evident, that Nature is the *only* perfect and unalterable "Revelation" which the Deity has ever given, or ever will give, to mankind. By Nature, we apprehend the Material Universe, with its innumerable constellations of Suns, Planets, and Satellites; and the Spiritual Universe, with its innumerable spheres of loveliness, and with their multitudinous angelic and seraphic inhabitants. It embraces the stupendous Univercelum! which comprehends the kingdoms beneath, the powers within, and the boundless firmaments above us. We believe Nature to be the universal exponent of God; and Reason to be the eternal exponent of Nature; therefore, that Nature and Reason, *combined*, constitute the *only* true and reliable standard of judgment upon *all* subjects—whether social, political, philosophical or religious—which may come within the scope and investigations of the human mind.

Furthermore, we hold it to be the nature, and tendency, and divine prerogative of the human soul to explore, to investigate, to classify, and reduce to a practical application, *every* thought, and principle, and science, and philosophy, and religion, which rests upon the everlasting foundations of the Universe; and likewise, that it is man's nature and prerogative to candidly, freely, and fearlessly—with an eye single to truth—examine *all* sciences, and discoveries, and mythologies, and theologies, and religions which have been, or may be, developed among men; and that if they do not accord with the immutable principles of Nature and Reason, it is his divine right and authority to openly expose, repudiate, and discard them.

We believe that there is nowhere, in the mighty empire of this material and spiritual universe, any *absolute* sin or evil! We believe that all evil is but the negation of good—all sin, the negation of righteousness—all error, the negation of truth—all discord but the negation of harmony;—that is to say, what are conventionally or customarily termed sin and evil, among men, is but the misdirection or perversion of the attributes of the human soul, which are substantially good and intrinsically pure!

We believe that, in consequence of a law of sympathy and universal dependence by which all created things are inseparably united and connected together, the individual affects society, and that society moulds and shapes the individual. And we believe that all men have two important responsibilities resting upon them: 1st. The protection, welfare, and harmonization of the Individual. 2d. The protection, welfare, and harmonization of Society.

We believe it to be our highest interest and legitimate duty to discover, and decay, and remove every conceivable barrier and obstruction, which, in any manner whatsoever, may serve to derange, impede, or arrest the progressive development of peace on earth and good will to all men. We, therefore, hereby resolve to declare ourselves free and independent of *all* personal, social, educational, and theological habits, customs, and restrictions which militate against, or prevent us from accomplishing, these grand and glorious ends of our creation and destiny.

Among some of the reasons why we are conscientiously impelled to make this open avowal of our sacred sentiments—this Declaration of Independence—are those which follow:

First: The present organization or structure of Society, although vastly better now than in any previous age of the world, nevertheless engenders personal and national animosities. It develops many and various antagonisms. It imposes restrictions upon the natural rights and enjoyments of life, and leaves us unprotected against the ills of disease and accident, by encouraging and supporting monopolies, which are monarchies, and by aiding and perpetuating Poverty, and consequent Crime, and consequent Misery.

Second: It does not *reform* the criminal, and the morally deformed, by fraternal and hospitable treatment. It does not *attract* the gambler from his haunts of vice, by kindness and principles of brotherly love and good will; nor the voluptuary from his pandemonium, by the positive sphere of Love and Wisdom; but it incarcerates and *brutally disposes* of the transgressor and the criminal, and *repels* the gambler and the licentious man with prejudicial words and unrighteous deportment.

Third: It contaminates our youth. It converts a joyful and confiding child into a sad and suspecting man; it transforms a fair and happy mind into a disproportioned and miserable one; and consequently causes and perpetuates unhappiness, misdirection, and error among men.

Fourth: It develops the evils known as prostitution, cupidity, envy, malice, duplicity, and hypocrisy; and makes subsistence and prosperity, and even life or existence itself, dependent upon, and inseparably connected with, individual intrigue, deception, and knavery.

Fifth: It is based upon antagonistic and conflicting interests and professions; and thus deranges and perverts the legitimate development of the enterprising and the human mind; and causes these to feed themselves in strifes, contentions, and sordid selfishness.

Sixth: It keeps up a perpetual conflict. It sanctions a conflict of arms, and a man to lacerate and defile the human body—ward monitor—in order

emoluments. This is true of all the trades and professions. On the other hand, the present structure of society compels a man to sacrifice his worldly interests—yea, his reputation, his profession, his friendships, his subsistence, and life even—in order to honestly obey the serene voice of Duty, which intuition constantly whispers in his inmost ear. The saying has become almost proverbial, that “an honest man cannot succeed in business.”

Seventh: It makes the lawyer's interest consist in individual and social disturbances—in contentions, litigations, and lengthened or continuous disputes. His inward Deity—his innate love of truth, and justice, and harmony—may frequently prompt the lawyer to seriously pray for the utter banishment of all discords and disputes; yet, nevertheless, his interest impels him to procrastinate and complicate individual disturbances in every possible and conceivable manner. This conflict between interest and duty we hold to be vitiating and demoralizing to mankind. We hold that that man is immorally situated whose duty tells him one thing and his interest another. And this is the work of present society.

Eighth: The present structure of society we likewise hold to be demoralizing and depraving, because it makes the physician's interest to consist in the existence, prevalence, and multiplicity of human disease and physical suffering. His duty—his love of general health and happiness—may prompt him to earnestly desire the total extermination of all bodily infirmities and distress; but it cannot be denied that his pecuniary interest consists in the abundance of organic violations, and disease. And his interest, also, prompts him to strenuously oppose all medical reform, or the introduction of any principle which tends to banish disease and destroy his occupation.

Ninth: The present social arrangements make the clergyman's interests to conflict also with his duty. It causes his interest to consist in the prevalence of ignorance, and in the existence of moral transgressions. It causes him to usurp the right to reason and decide upon religious subjects. It causes him to deny the privilege of free discussion to others. It prompts him to impose unrighteous restrictions upon our speech and actions. It vitiates his mind by assigning to him a false and unnatural position; and, then, he exerts upon us, and upon our children, a correspondingly false and unnatural influence.

Among the numerous reasons why we are moved to declare ourselves free and independent of the existing forms and institutions of Theology, are the following:

First: It assumes to be, or to possess within its organization and cardinal doctrines, the medium or totality of inspiration; and it arrogantly proclaims itself to be the supreme and sovereign authority. It arbitrarily determines upon what book, or what peculiar combination of books, we shall revere as the “Word of God;” and then denies to us the right of exercising the same amount of intellectual, moral, and religious liberty. It describes the circle in which we shall move, and think, and reason; and then authoritatively and dogmatically denies to us the moral or religious freedom to advance beyond it. It thus imposes what we conceive to be improper and demoralizing restrictions upon our thoughts and investigations—trammels the progressive development of our minds, and peremptorily denies to us the divine privilege of free discussion and a free expression of our inward sentiments.

Second: It unites with society in its unphilosophical and unbrotherly treatment of the criminal, and of the unfortunate victim of crime; and it (that is, popular Theology) sanctions the old barbarian or mosaic law of Capital Punishment.

Third: It emphatically justifies society in the perpetuation of personal and national animosities and antagonisms. It permits war, confiscation of property, and carnage; and it assists to promote successful military chieftains, without regard to other merit or demerit, to the responsible position of emperors and governors.

Fourth: It sanctions the monarchical despotism of *monopolies*. It smiles, with silent approbation, upon the conflict between Labor and Capital. It permits the present unjust remuneration of the toiling millions. It permits them to live from day to day without the least guarantee of a *home* in case of pe-

culinary adversity or ill health; and, more than all, it openly and emphatically sanctions the dark and fearful sin of *human slavery*!

Fifth: It deforms and enslaves, but it does not reform and emancipate the human mind, from the confinements and mournful influences of Sectarianism. Its influence is not positive and reformatory, but it is merely negatively restraining. It opposes almost every measure or movement which originates with the people. It engenders melancholy and erroneous conceptions of the nature and destiny of man. It keeps up a perpetual warfare between the *head* and the *heart*. It encourages a gladiatorial struggle against liberty of speech and freedom of action. It even opposes temperance reformation, unless it originates in the Church; and uniformly exerts its multiform influences, to restrain the progress of social and prison reforms upon identical grounds.

Sixth: It conveys discord into our families. It arrays husbands against wives, and wives against husbands. It produces many private alienations of affection and friendship. It causes the heads of many families to separate and go to different and antagonistic sectarian sanctuaries on the Sabbath; and it develops sad and unwholesome dissensions among friends—between members of society, and disturbs the equilibrium of nations!

Seventh: It generates cupidity and hypocrisy, by teaching our children to regard certain doctrines as truths, which (because those doctrines are not true) cannot be felt; but which, nevertheless, are frequently manifested with all the show of confidence in their validity. This leads directly to practical dissimulation and deceit. Many persons are in the constant practice of *exhibiting* piety, who, at the same time, do not (because they cannot) *feel* such piety to be sacred truth; and this apparently willful hypocrisy on the part of some individuals, leads directly to the theological assumption—an assumption which has retarded human progress for ages—that the heart of man is desperately wicked and depraved by nature.

Eighth: It instills dark and unwholesome thoughts into the minds of our children. It teaches them to believe in the most soul-revolting doctrines. They are educated to consider themselves as “totally depraved”—and as being under the “curse” of the living God. It teaches them to regard themselves as evil, and “sinners” by nature; and as incapable of being good and heaven-worthy, independent of the Bible and the Church. They are taught to believe in a “God of Love,” who, at the same time, encourages hate; and in a “God of Heaven,” who, at the same time, permits the everlasting duration of Hell! Thus our youth become contaminated by the *existing* methods of religious education; and, when they advance in years, and become men and women, they become either bigots and sectarians, or skeptics and misanthropes. A sadness and gloom are consequently thrown over our minds; and we deprive ourselves and our children of a large proportion of that enjoyment and progressive happiness which are the inalienable rights of man!

Ninth: It seeks to array its conservative and authoritative influence against scientific inventions and improvements. It asserts this whole world of human beings to be under an *Adamic* curse or condemnation. It has most dogmatically pronounced, and still continues to assert it, that all the sorrows, and perplexities, and vicissitudes, and trials, and discords, and diseases, and all the afflictions of this mundane state, are expressly sent by the living God to punish man for his alledged manifold transgressions! And it has openly opposed every medical reform, every social improvement, every benevolent design, upon the fabulous ground that such mortal attempts were wicked, and would prove unavailing, because they were in opposition to the “will” and punishment of God. And it trammels the progress and advancement of mankind, by teaching our children and our communities to believe the erroneous and baneful doctrine, that no improvement or reformation can be permanently accomplished, except through the so-called “divine” instrumentalities and multifarious restrictions and principles of the established Church.

Tenth: It perpetuates social, political, and professional conflicts, by itself manifesting that internal sectarianism and aristocratic intolerance which are the invariable symptoms and inevitable concomitants of ignorance and pernicious error! It

presents to the world numerous examples of jealousy and clerical ambition which subserve the purpose of sanctioning and confirming, and rendering fashionable, the war of the trades and professions which surrounds us in society, and by which we are more or less injuriously affected.

Eleventh: It unqualifiedly professes to not bring "peace, but a sword"!

Twelfth: It discourages and emphatically condemns natural or physical enjoyments. It strives to awaken in our minds what we consider to be imaginary compunctions of conscience. It imposes what we conceive to be unnecessary and deforming "trials" upon us; and causes us to "crucify" ourselves and "bear crosses," that are wholly unnatural and wrong. We therefore feel that it has defrauded us, and the generations that are gone, of two-thirds of the real happiness and mental consolations which we solemnly believe to be ours, according to the laws of the human constitution and the universal Providence of God! Yea, it deprives us, and seeks to deprive our children, of proper amusements—it disapproves of singing those joy-giving songs, and of dancing those easy and graceful waltzes, which are manifestly natural and useful for man.

Thirteenth: It dogmatically asserts Nature, and Reason, and Conscience even, to be subordinate to ecclesiastical authority. It inculcates the baneful doctrine that our very heart-impulses are naturally sinful and opposed to the "will of God." Here again it creates a false issue between the heart and the head; and thus it has been the sole cause of impelling many minds into sad and hopeless insanity. It sheds a melancholy, dismal gloom over our families, our homes, and the nations of the civilized world. It renders this life a dark, and toilsome, and uncertain gift of God; and, with its clouds of ignorance and superstition, it darkens our thoughts and anticipations of the other life. When our friends resign their material forms to the grave, then this Theology fills our hearts with sadness, and our minds with distressing doubts, concerning their future welfare and eternal happiness. And thus it spreads gloom, and disconsolation, and suicidal melancholy, and insane despair and mental misery, where joy, and cheerfulness, and righteousness, and gratitude, and peace, and happiness should and might exist in abundance.

Fourteenth: And we are moved to declare ourselves free and independent of the existing Theology in all parts and portions of the earth, more particularly and especially, because it endeavors to retard and prevent the march of social improvement and humanitarian progression;—because it seeks to vilify and anathematize us—to denounce us—to wound our reputations—to prejudice the multitude against us—to encourage mobs and riots (by inspiring their children with the spirit of sectarianism and intolerance)—to injure us in our commercial or business relations—to array our families against us by misrepresenting our characters and sentiments to our associates and offspring—to calumniate us in our daily walk and conversation;—and, more than all the rest, it strives to prevent the free investigation, the general adoption, and the universal expansion of our Harmonial Philosophy, which we do most sacredly believe to be the sublimest incarnation of the essential principles of christianity, and the spacious vestibule to a temple of Eternal Truth.

We believe that the destiny of all men is Immortality, endless Happiness, and eternal Progression!

We believe—in accordance with the interior and material constitution of the human species—that there is a general mission for each individual to accomplish.

1st. To properly beget and perpetuate his kind.

2d. To justly respect and honor, and wisely direct and cultivate the heavenly germ—the spiritual principle—which is deposited in the soul.

3d. To live here with special reference to individual and social happiness, and with an ultimate reference to another and a higher life!

We believe (with the glorified Solon) that it is only the good who die happily; for the troublesome or troubled spirit is sometimes not quieted until after it has been, for a considerable length of time, removed from the earth; and until it has experienced the subduing, the chastening, and disciplining influences, which

universally pervade the spiritual habitations of all spirits, angels and seraphs.

We, therefore, declare it to be "our highest duty" to become enlightened concerning ourselves; and concerning the powers and spheres of the human mind; to the end that we may grow in personal harmony—give to human society a healthy constitution—and thus gratify our homocentrical desire—"our continual prayer" for social Peace and universal Unity!

And it is our happiness to believe (with James Victor Wilson,) that the chief employment of our departed friends, the dwellers of the Spirit-land, is the transmission of thoughts, truths, and pure affections, from circle to circle, and from sphere to sphere; and that true happiness and true progression consist, both here and hereafter, in receiving and imparting; in unfolding the elements of our being and assisting others to unfold; in seeking the Great Divinity and imparting to the world the results of our investigations.

And we, moreover, freely declare it to be our sacred conviction, which we base upon the past historical experience of humanity and upon our highest intuitions and reason, that all true religion and all true inspiration are natural to the human soul. We believe that heaven is harmony, and that no man can secure this condition merely by doing penance at the virgin's shrine; nor by being prayed for or praying; nor by building Churches and hiring the Gospel preached; nor by believing, or trying to believe any system of religion. On the contrary, we do declare it to be our deepest conviction that Heaven is attainable only through self-development and self-harmonization. And we believe, that popular Theology, and popular Education, and popular Society, are insufficient to supply the human spirit with its proper nourishments and encouragements to an easy, natural progression toward truth and perfection! We believe that Theology is inadequate to the reconstruction of Society; and that modern systems of Education (which are saturated with this Theology) are inadequate to a proper education and cultivation of the spirit.

We declare ourselves free and independent of these systems, we repeat, because they restrain us in our investigations, and set up many and various barriers to our development; and we declare ourselves free of them, also, because they do not cover our wants, nor respond to the imperative necessities of our outer and inner being! We feel that we have mentally and morally out-grown them—out-grown their virtue, their principles, and their means and methods of individual and social reformation.

And we furthermore declare ourselves independent of these systems of superstition and error, because they circumscribe the sphere of our researches; and because they create a false issue, and perpetuate a conflict, between physical philosophies, and sciences, and what they term religion; while we believe all truth, whether scientific or religious, to be equally divine, harmonious, and eternal!

We believe that Social or Political sciences comprehend:—

1. Marriage; 2. Language; 3. Amusements; 4. Temperance; 5. Education; 6. Government.

We believe that Material or Physical sciences comprehend:—

1. Agriculture; 2. Commerce; 3. Chemistry; 4. Anatomy; 5. Physiology; 6. Mechanism.

We believe that Psychological or Spiritual sciences comprehend:—

1. Poetry; 2. Music; 3. Painting; 4. Astronomy; 5. Philosophy; 6. Religion.

We believe all these sciences to be in strict harmony, one with another, and that our happiness consists in their proper and universal application to individual wants, and social improvement.

We are not merely opposed to the prevailing systems of ignorance, superstition and wrong; we are not merely disciples to the science of Human Magnetism, and to its sublime and spiritual phenomena; we are not merely anti-slavery, anti-casting punishment, and prison reformers; we are not merely social philosophical, and religious reformers; but we openly avow ourselves henceforth to be the germinal constituents of a HARMONIAL BROTHERHOOD.

We are ready, and willing, and expect to hear it said of us and to us, that we are "Infidels," and "Mystics," and "Fanatics," and "Conspirators," and "Blasphemers," and "Impostors," and "Workers of Iniquity" even,—so long as these odious terms and epithets will subserve the purpose to remind us of our free and independent principles; and to arouse us to the sacred and holy consciousness, that we are determined foes of Ignorance, Error, Injustice and tyrannical Institutions.

And we hereby declare that we will oppose and remove what we conceive to be social, political, or religious injustice and error, when and where and just so far as (according to our highest reason and intuitions,) we apprehend such opposition and removal beneficial to the individual and universal conditions and rights of mankind.

We hold it to be self-evident, that all books, creeds and institutions contain more or less truth and useful instruction; nevertheless we solemnly declare it to be our intuitional conviction, that all books, creeds and institutions are inferior and subordinate to the divine power within the human mind—the Reason-Principle—without which all thoughts and truths were the merest fancies, and the sublime Universe an empty shade!

And furthermore—until we feel and comprehend greater truths—we hereby declare that—

Our Book is Nature;  
Our Master is Reason;  
Our Law is Love to Man;  
Our Religion is Justice;  
Our Light is Truth;  
Our Structure is Association;  
Our Path is Progression;  
Our Works are Development;  
Our Heaven is Harmony;  
Our God is the Universal Father!

And we feel moved to fraternally suggest to those minds, everywhere, who are morally, intellectually, and constitutionally endowed with powers and blessings superior to the great mass of mankind about them—the propriety of immediately organizing themselves into a *true Harmonial Brotherhood*—declaring yourselves free and independent of all those habits, forms, creeds, restrictions, and ceremonies in modern Society, Theology, and Education—without regard to sect or nation—which tend, in any manner whatsoever, to arrest, prevent, or derange the progressive happiness of mankind, or to retard their progress toward Universal Unity and Perfection. For we believe that such an organization is necessary in order to learn what is useful, what is Justice, and what is Power; and Beauty, Aspiration, and Harmony, will then be familiarly learned from the fields of universal nature and humanity. To understand what harmony is, we must ourselves become harmonious. A harmonious-individual is a Revelation of the Divine Mind; for every human spirit is a finite embodiment of the elements of the Infinite God.

We conclude our Declaration of Independence, by affirming—that we do most religiously believe—that all men to be heaven-worthy must aspire to heaven; to be perfect, they must aspire to perfection. But this no man can perfectly do of himself; because man necessarily depends upon the favorableness of progenitary bias; upon the propitiousness of outer conditions; and upon the harmoniousness of social circumstances, for his opportunity and ability to practice such aspiration! And yet, harmony must begin with the Individual; it will thence spread over our families and communities; thence it will flow and ramify through the innumerable veins and arteries of the distant sects and nations; then the Whole will represent the Individual! the Individual the Whole; and *God will be all in all!!!*

In presenting to the wide world, and endorsing this, our Declaration of Independence—our principles of free discussion and universal progression—we do not pledge ourselves to adhere to an infallible and proscriptive creed; but we simply make a personal acknowledgement and a mutual confession of sentiments and principles, which, (be it every where known) we are resolved henceforth to revere, love, and maintain—until we discover and comprehend truths still higher and better, and more worthy of our sacred esteem and confidence.

## BEAUTIFUL SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENT.

THE ROTATION OF THE EARTH MADE VISIBLE.

According to the London Athenæum, the experiment now being exhibited in Paris, by which the diurnal rotation of the earth is rendered palpable to the senses, is one of the most remarkable of the modern verifications of theory. At the center of the dome of the Pantheon a fine wire is attached, from which a sphere of metal, four or five inches in diameter, is suspended so as to hang near the floor of the building. This apparatus is put in vibration after the manner of a pendulum. Under and concentric with it is placed a circular table, some twenty feet in diameter, the circumference of which is divided into degrees, minutes, &c., and the divisions numbered. The mode, in which the fact of the earth's rotation is established, is thus beautifully arrived at:

Now, it can be shown by the most elementary principles of mechanics that, supposing the earth to have the diurnal motion upon its axis which is imputed to it, and which explains the phenomena of day and night, &c., the plane in which this pendulum vibrates will not be affected by this diurnal motion, but will maintain strictly the same directions during twenty-four hours. In this interval, however, the table over which the pendulum is suspended, will continually change its position in virtue of the diurnal motion so as to make a complete revolution round its centre. Since, then, the table thus revolves and the pendulum which vibrates over it does not revolve, the consequence is, that a line traced upon the table by a point projecting from the bottom of the ball will change its direction relatively to the table from minute to minute, and from hour to hour, so that if such point were a pencil and paper were spread upon the table, the course formed by this pencil during twenty four hours, would form a system of lines radiating from the centre of the table. And the two lines formed after the interval of one hour would always form an angle with each other of 15 deg., being the 24th part of the circumference.

All this, we are assured by the London Athenæum, is rendered actually visible to the crowds which daily flock to the Pantheon to witness this remarkable experiment. The practiced eye of a correct observer, especially if aided by a proper optical instrument, may actually see the motion which the table has in common with the earth under the pendulum, between two successive vibrations. It is, in fact, apparent that the ball, or rather the point attached to the bottom of the ball, does not return precisely to the same point of the circumference of the table after two successive vibrations. Thus is rendered visible the motion which the table has in common with the earth.

It is true, that, correctly speaking, the table does not turn round by its centre, but turns round the axis of the earth; nevertheless the effect of the motion relatively to the pendulum suspended over the centre of the table, is precisely the same as it would be if the table moved once in twenty-four hours round its own centre, for although the table be turned in common with the surface of the earth round the earth's axis, the point of suspension of the pendulum is turned also in the same time round the same axis, being continually maintained vertical above the centre of the table. The plane, in which the pendulum vibrates does not, however, partake of this motion, and consequently has the appearance of revolving once in twenty-four hours over the table, while, in reality, it is the table which revolves once in twenty-four hours under it.

No more beautiful scientific experiment has been exhibited; and it is naturally exciting quite a sensation in Paris. — *Star Spangled Banner.*

## Tyranny.

A tyrant attacks the soul first, then the body; I mean he first tries to make his slaves stupid, before he renders them miserable, because he knows people with sensible minds will direct their hands with their head, and raise them against the tyrant. The executioner imitates him, in drawing the bandage round the criminal's eyes, before he torments him.



## Psychological Department.

CLARA MAY;  
OR, THE RECOLLECTIONS OF A PHYSICIAN.

BY WILLIAM STANLEY.

[CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 331.]

I looked down the hall to observe if he had found the object of his search, when he came to me, and said :

"The lady and gentleman have left the hall; I have been unable to find either."

"Never mind," said I; "we had better secure partners for the next dance, or we shall lose our amusement for the evening."

"Well, come this way," said he, and taking me by the arm, he led me to a lady—introduced me, and then secured a partner for himself.

The sets now being complete, the music commenced. All was again motion, and in the excitement I soon forgot the little incident above related. At the close of the cotillon, I accompanied my partner to the supper room. Seating myself beside her, I entered into an animated conversation. Something, I could not tell what, attracted my attention, and upon looking up, I was surprised to see a lady enter the room unaccompanied. She came down the other side of the table, and stopped near the table opposite me, where she seated herself. My eyes were immediately riveted upon her. In vain I attempted to turn them from her for any length of time. She was attired in spotless white, and was surpassingly beautiful. Her eyes seemed to possess more than human brilliancy. Her form was faultless, and there was a purity of expression about her face which I had never seen in woman, and yet it seemed to be a familiar countenance—one that I had seen before, but when or where I could not remember. She raised her eyes to mine. Such a sensation came over me that it is impossible for my pen to describe it. Those dark blue orbs seemed to look into my very soul, and read its inmost thoughts. I looked up and down the table to see if every eye was not turned on the beautiful creature before me. What was my surprise on beholding no one who seemed to observe her. I thought it must be the angel which my friend had spoken of in such rapturous terms on my entrance; but on looking at him, I observed that he did not appear to notice her in the least. This to me was most inexplicable, as he sat very near. She soon arose and left the room. I excused myself to my partner, and followed her into the hall. Upon entering, I found that she was the only person there. She immediately came up and extended her hand. I grasped it with ardor; it was cold as marble, and as I held it in mine, she pointed to the ring on my finger; it was a brilliant circle of fire. I felt faint; a sickly sensation came over me; I sunk down upon a seat at the side of the hall, and as I did so, I heard these words:

"Be in your library to-night at one o'clock."

In a few moments I revived, and found my friend standing beside me rubbing my temples.

"Has the close air affected you?" said he.

I replied that I felt better, and asked him if he had seen the young lady who sat opposite to me.

"At your side you mean?"

"No," said I, "the one in white."

"Stanley, you must be out of your senses, for no lady sat opposite you to-night."

I made no answer. Looking at my watch, I found it was half past twelve o'clock, and I immediately ordered a carriage and was driven home. Upon entering my library, I locked my door, and left the key in the lock. Throwing myself into any easy chair, I endeavored to account for the mystery of the evening. I cast my eyes up to the clock; it wanted *two minutes of one*. I had scarcely turned my eyes from the dial, when the door opened, and the unknown and beautiful being again stood before me. I arose and immediately offered her a chair. She seated herself, and I resumed mine at the other side of the fire. For a single

moment I contemplated the strange creature. Her lips parted, and from them fell such celestial words of music as were never heard before by human ears. I was charmed with the heavenly sounds which fell upon my enraptured senses. All fear vanished in an instant. Listen to the words she uttered:

"Stanley, have you forgotten Clara May, and the promise which she made when you sat beside her sick-bed, when she was suffering in the body, ere she departed for the Spirit-world?"

"Clara May is not dead," said I, "she lives."

"Ah, true," she replied, "she does live, not on earth, but in heaven; beneath the ever glorious smiles of our Father, where all is bright and happy. She lives in the garden of eternal bliss, where angels walk together and chant joyous songs of praise."

"When," said I, scarcely daring to interrupt the celestial visitant, "When did Clara leave this world?"

"But one short month ago; but longer I cannot tarry; sister spirits are calling me away. *Adieu!*"

"Stay, Clara, but a moment?" I exclaimed.

"To-morrow night, at eleven," she answered. And the bright vision had vanished. I arose from my seat, and tried to open the door, but it was locked as I had left it on entering.

I soon retired, and fell into a profound sleep, and dreamed of the bright and beautiful beings of the Spirit-land.

In the morning I arose refreshed in body and in mind; but the events of the night before haunted me through the day. I longed for the evening to come, that I might again converse with Clara. Oh, how slowly the hours passed! At last the clock struck the long wished for hour, and as I stooped forward to pick up a book which had fallen from my hand, and on again raising my head, my eyes fell on the face of the vision of the previous night, sitting in the chair opposite me.

"Good evening, Stanley," she said, "have I not kept my promise? I have now come to relate what befell me after leaving Boston. I went with my father to Detroit. We lived there three years, when I was suddenly stricken with a malignant fever. After ten days of suffering, the angel of death removed me from this world. Oh how hard it seemed for me to die, thus far away from friends! I would have given worlds, had I possessed them, to have seen you for a single moment. But the summons for my departure came. I sank into a gentle, unconscious sleep. When I awoke, angels were hovering around, ready to welcome me to my new home. I recognized the familiar faces of friends who had gone before me. They conducted me to a beautiful garden, and sung the song of welcome. I wished not to return to the earth; I was permitted to forget all I could not remember with pleasure. My promise to you was not forgotten; I have come to fulfill it. I shall often be with you, and sometimes be visible to the natural eye. I must now leave you. At this hour to-morrow you will receive news of my death."

Thus saying, the vision of Clara faded away. The next day I received a letter, postmarked Detroit. It read as follows:

DETROIT, Nov. 8th, 1833.

DEAR SIR:—It is with a heavy heart that I take upon myself the painful duty of informing you that my daughter Clara is no more. She departed this life on the seventh of October, after a short but distressing illness of ten days. Her last words were, "Remember me in love to William Stanley, and tell him that I will not forget my promise."

If, sir, there is aught in that promise that can afford consolation to your afflicted friend, you would confer a lasting favor by communicating it to,

Yours truly,

DAVID MAY.

I immediately sat down and wrote to him all that I have related. And in all his correspondence with me since that time he has been perfectly reconciled to the loss of his child. In hours of sickness and pain which I have suffered, she has hovered around like a guardian angel, and I was happy. And now only wait the liberal hour which lays beggars beside kings to join her spirit in Heaven.—*Boston Star Spangled Banner.*

## THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

R. P. AMBLER, EDITOR.

SPRINGFIELD, MASS., MAY 31, 1851.

## SPIRITUAL COMMUNICATIONS.—No. 4.

## GOOD AND EVIL SPIRITS.

Probably nothing has contributed more to the general skepticism on the spiritual origin of what is generally denominated the "Rapping," and been the cause of more unjust censure of the mediums, than the fact of there being many answers wholly at variance with truth and facts. Most persons who have first been led to notice the subject of spiritual communications by hearing of the new and singular phenomena that were first brought to notice by the rapping, have so little general knowledge of spiritual intercourse, that they have expected that if spirits could be brought into communication with mortals, every thing that was received must necessarily be true and perfect. A false theology has taught that there is a vast separation between all spirits in, and those out of, the body—that the gulf that separates them is a "dark valley" which can not be repassed by those who have once groped their way through; and the Styx has been supposed to be an altogether impassable stream. Nevertheless it has been argued that if they do or can return, they must necessarily be perfect in character, knowledge and truth.

With such opinions of spiritualism, have communications been sought and obtained. When everything was harmonious and truthful, belief was confirmed and converts were easily made; but we have seen many zealous believers disappointed by getting unsatisfactory or false answers, and, as we have before stated, some who were the most zealous believers at first, when all was harmonious, turned suddenly away when they found that all was not perfection as they had at first supposed. Some of these very unjustly accused the mediums of deception, while there was no other proof of it than the falsity of the answers. Others have taken altogether a theological turn, and declared that it was all the work of the devil, and the true answers were made only the more effectually to deceive. Those who were not to be driven from the investigation by such arguments as these, have kept steadily on their course, ready to go wherever truth and facts should lead them; and it is doubtful if any of this class can now say they are able to absolutely and fully account for all the angular, eccentric and false manifestations that have been made in various places, during the progress of the new development.

Without assuming to know more than others, even of less experience, it may be well as one of the number who feel that they have not investigated entirely in vain, to make some suggestions which have been brought to mind by past and present experience. We have used the term "Good and Evil Spirits" at the head of this article, not because it conveys an exact idea, nor a distinction that is deemed true in an absolute sense, but because it would serve to call attention to the subject in fewer words than the distinction which is thought proper and just, in regard to the contradictory communications. The question of the existence of absolutely evil spirits, is one which is likely to call out as much discussion and bitter sectarian feelings among spiritualists, as the long mooted question among old theologians in regard to the eternity of punishment after the spirit has passed from this life. There is to be a revival, (and from some indications lately, quite as malignant feeling on the part of the lovers of, and contenders for, a devil) among the believers in spiritual communication, of all the main theological dogmas of orthodoxy (so called,) and while some will stand firm on the ground of christian rationalism, others will contend for the absolute God-man theory in regard to Jesus, and attempt to still further prolong the era of christian irrationalism.

Here the question will arise, "why do not the spirits settle these questions themselves, and end the differences and religious animosities among men?" The answer seems plain, that it is

simply because they cannot settle the question. They are not all advanced to a degree sufficient to see alike on these and other subjects; and there being different states of development, it would very naturally follow that we should get different and contradictory answers on theological subjects as well as on many others. We deem it an evidence of bigotry and intolerance for any human being to charge his fellow with being a devil, a liar, and inherently wicked, because he has been led to an entirely different conclusion on theological subjects, from that which we have arrived at; and should we be less charitable and kind to spirits after they have left the body? Are we to be the judges and pronounce all spirits devils who do not come up to our standard? It looks like the rankest sectarianism and dogmatism thus to do; yet this is the course now pursued by a class of believers in spiritual communications. If they can feel satisfied in branding all spirits out of, beyond, or behind their affinities, with being devils, we cannot envy them their dispositions or affinities.

We have not found, in our own experience, any evidence of the existence of evil spirits; and from this experience as well as the very nature of all things which emanate from good and good only, we have made up our mind that if positive evil does exist with spirits, there must have been two antagonistical powers at work in the formation of all worlds, the evil one having the largest share. On no other hypothesis can the theory of the existence of evil spirits be maintained. Thus we stand on the theory of "Good and Evil Spirits," and nothing that has transpired thus far, has given us reason to distrust its soundness, but much to confirm it.

If asked to account for all the false answers on the ground taken by A. J. Davis in his recent work on the "Philosophy of Spiritual Interchange," our experience contradicts the theory. That work places it all on the ground of affinities by which spirits are attracted; that the true and good attract their kind, and the false theirs. Had not some few facts contradicted this, A. J. Davis's would have been the solution that seemed most natural; but if there is in existence any facts, however few, that contradict it, his theory must be deemed so far deficient. It seems that the general rule of affinities attracting affinities is right, and is almost universal, but not entirely so. We know of two instances (and have good evidence of several more) where there was no kind of persons or affinities to draw false spirits; in one of which there were but three persons present, who were not trying to obtain, nor expecting to receive, any communications, but were engaged in innocent and elevating conversation, when they were interrupted by loud raps, and, on calling the alphabet, nothing satisfactory or intelligent was received. Everything was bungling and coarse. One of the company requested the intruding spirit to retire, as they wanted no conversation with such spirits. The answer by the spirit was, "Mind your business." On again requesting the intruding visitor, they were answered by a sentence of extreme vulgarity, such as might have come from a low, vulgar boy in the streets; and the spirit then retired. Other instances of the same kind have come to the knowledge of the writer, where the affinities could not have been such as to have induced such communications. In the first case, an intelligent spirit was consulted, who, instead of branding the intruder with being a willful, malicious devil, told the company to speak kindly to the intruder, and kindness would cause it to comply with their request to leave. Is this the case with the fast increasing class of "devils," and "evil spirits," that are coming to light by the aid of the fossil remains of antiquated theology? Surely, if devils are moved by kindness, they are not so bad as they have been represented. But the above cases are not accounted for on the affinity theory of A. J. Davis. His mistake seems to be this,—that he did not sufficiently recognize the fact that "ignorance was the evil and knowledge the remedy," and that with spirits as with men, ignorant, vulgar, and profane persons will sometimes intrude themselves among persons of higher and better feelings, sometimes for the purpose of communicating (like some in the body) whether they know what to say or not. The tendency to devilize every thing opposed to certain dogmas, and deify every thing that endorses old theories, is no new

thing among men; but the custom has not increased its attractions by age. That there are ignorant spirits who are not at all reliable—who may tell right or wrong—who communicate for the sake of being noticed—who were degraded, crushed, and made mere animals while in the body, and have not yet progressed to a knowledge equal to that of intelligent men in the body—is quite evident; but shall the same relentless bigotry follow them and denounce them as devils, that made them such here? Truly Sectarianism, with its slanderous tongue, follows beyond the grave, and seeks to make the errors and mistakes of this life result in creating men devils throughout eternity. o.

### Extravagant Churches.

Among the numerous evidences of an excited and misguided zeal on the part of religious sects, one of the most prominent is the enormous expense incurred in the erection of temples for worship. Violating the christian principle of humility and rejecting the lesson furnished in the simplicity of Nature, religionists have been usually inclined to worship in the most costly and gorgeous sanctuaries, and have thus caused even the services of devotion to minister to a perverted pride. But while we contemplate this large and unnecessary expenditure of individual and national wealth, we are forcibly reminded of the great injustice which is thus done to the lower classes of society, who by such expenditures are deprived of the very means of subsistence to which all are entitled; and we deeply realize that those splendid temples in which the rich man takes his ease on the Sabbath are reared by the toil and sweat of the starving poor.

The following pertinent reflections, which we find in the Providence Mirror, places this subject in a strong and truthful light:—

The authorities of Trinity Church, New York, have decided to erect another church in that city, at a cost of one million dollars.

Eighteen and a half centuries ago, a wanderer was seen in the East, who required no particular form for worship—no particular edifices built of the sweat and blood of the poor—to be “dedicated” to him or by him. He was odd—very odd—he did not follow the fashions of the times—did not cringe at the foot of power, but made himself obnoxious to kings and princes, because he preached unpopular doctrines. He was poor and lowly, and was not deemed worthy to enter the temples of the rich and fashionable. The poor and lowly are now denied the privilege of entering Trinity Church; and were he to appear in his humble garb, unknown and without an admission card, he would be ejected from the present and prospective haunts of the merchant princes of Gotham. Men, women, and children have starved to death within reach of the shadows of Trinity steeple. Thousands are now toiling and dying by inches, in part for these same temple builders, who pretend to be worshipers of him who said of himself, “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the son of man hath not where to lay his head.”

The princes and judges of old bowed to the voice of the multitude, and gave up this troublesome person to be killed, according to the custom of his times. They thought his seditious doctrines would die. One of his greatest heresies was that of preaching glad tidings to the poor—a heresy, by the way, which there is no danger of the preachers of Trinity Church or their congregation being hung for, unless they very materially change their course. The doctrines of the peasant of Nazareth, the carpenter’s son, have, at this distant day, made some progress in the world, but we rather think that were he to look in upon a congregation worshipping in a church whose cost is a million of dollars, and on the preacher whose salary is six thousand a year, he would point to the poor, ignorant, starving creatures around the church, and say, “In the persons of these poor and needy children, ‘I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink, I was sick and in prison and ye visited me not, and inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not unto me.’”

From whence comes the vast sum which created the present towering edifice—from whence the million that is to build the

new? From laborers, half-starved, down-trodden laborers, whose blood and sweat are hardened into these temple walls. It is seldom that a laboring man earns three hundred dollars a year, and yet such an edifice would take the labor of one man, at that rate, three thousand three hundred and thirty-three and one-half years! or three thousand three hundred and thirty-three men would have to give all their work for a year to pay for such an edifice!

When we contemplate that all these extravagant and enormous sums are first wrought out by the productive industry of the world, and that it has been hoarded up by a few to lavish upon fashionable and costly religion, it will not seem strange that the mass are poor and degraded, and those who worship in their costly temples “bind heavy burthens upon them grievous to be borne,” but will not lift a finger for their relief.

### An Important Mistake.

When a deep and unwarrantable prejudice has been excited in the mind against the intellectual productions of any author, it is frequently the case that an entire misapprehension is created in regard to the real principles and doctrines which are advocated by the individual against whom such prejudice exists. This seems to be the case with many critics who, by a few dashes of the pen, have sought to overthrow the writings of Mr. Davis. An instance of this nature came under our observation in a late number of the “Spirit World.” One of its contributors, in endeavoring to expose the fancied inconsistencies of Mr. Davis, makes use of the following language:—

“In his revelations, page 504, he says, ‘It is supposed that Christ was designed as a *medium*, by and through whom man might escape eternal condemnation;’ ‘this is believed, and flourishes to the greatest extent where folly, superstition, and ignorance exist in abundance.’ ‘It is no less notorious, that as the human mind discards preconceived opinions, and becomes intelligent, this *horrible and unrighteous dogma* recedes.’ ‘It originated in darkness, was conceived in darkness, and is itself so exceedingly dark, that it cannot approach the serene and brilliant light that surrounds the throne of an enlightened reason.’ And yet, in the ‘Great Harmonia,’ he says, ‘that all the hope of the redemption of the world’ is in this very dogma; that this ‘Christ is co-essential and co-eternal with the Father,’ and through him alone it is possible for men to escape from the prevailing evils of the world. Never did invaders make more serious breaches in the walls of a fenced city, or Moscow more completely destroy itself at the approach of Bonaparte, than Mr. D. has his theology.”

It appears to us that the writer has here made quite an important mistake. If we do not entirely misapprehend the meaning of Mr. Davis, he does not intend to convey any such idea as that which is said to be expressed in the first Vol. of the Great Harmonia. In order that the reader may determine whether we are correct in this assertion, we will here quote the passage which seems to be referred to in the above language:—

“The true Savior—he who is co-essential and co-eternal with the Creator of all things, and who is incarnated and represented more or less in every correct movement that has been made since the world began—is Wisdom, the embodiment and image of universal Harmony, and the ever-blooming flower of the Divine Mind.” Page 453. From this language it appears that the Savior referred to by Mr. Davis, who is co-essential and co-eternal with the Father, is not Christ, but Wisdom, which, as will be seen from the context, is exhibited “in the harmony of society of universal worlds,” and “is, in a finite degree, identical, and the bright and protecting angel, of the world.” With this mistake corrected, the inconsistency of the brother speaks, is resolved into a misapprehension of mind, which seems to have resulted from a wish to display his powers as a critic. We regret the parent mistake for the sake of the truth, and to prevent any feelings of unkindness towards the purpose of removing any error arisen from this cause.

## Sympathy.

Of all the virtuous feelings implanted within the human breast, there is none so ennobling, none so worthy of admiration, as sympathy. Like a messenger of celestial origin, it bears "healing on its wings," and imparts to the hearts of the desponding the balm of divine consolation. Like the star that increases in splendor as night unfolds her curtains and enshrouds a world in gloom; so sympathy thrice gladdens the heart, when adversity clouds our mental horizon and veils the soul in its benighted folds. It is an attribute of perfection calculated to check the violent ebullitions of man's perverted propensities, and prepare his heart for the indwelling of those divine precepts, which are destined to produce "peace on earth and good will to men." It induces us to participate in the sorrows of our fellow mortals, wherever they may exist; it opens our hearts to the suffering children of humanity, and prompts us to "rejoice with them that do rejoice and weep with them that weep." It has existed in all ages of the world; amid the wild convulsions and dilapidated ruins of falling empires, as well as amid the calmer retreats of solitude and repose. It is equally the companion of him who lives in his rude and humble cottage, and of him who reclines amid the rich magnificence of the gilded mansion. It is not like the diamond, the production of a particular region; but like the wild flower of nature, it flourishes in every clime—not like the early blossom of spring, that is blasted by the first chilling gale, but like the evergreen bough, it increases in grandeur amid the wintry storms. The garb of poverty detracts nothing from its beauty; the royal trappings of power increase not the luster of its hue. Its tones are not like the deafening thunders of the whirlwind which only terrify and alarm; but its "still, small voice" of love strikes upon the ear in accents sweeter than a seraph's song, in strains in unison with the pæans of paradise. To the mourner, who is weeping for the loss of a companion, or grieving for the premature departure of some cherished one, for whom was conceived an affection "strong as death," its mellifluous tones sound more sweetly than the enchanting strains of the *Æolian lyre*. To the disconsolate, bowing in sorrow over the grave of some long-loved friend, moistening with tears the turf which covers all that is held most dear; sympathy, unsullied and untarnished by the sordid things of sense, is ever nigh, "to bind up the broken heart and dry the briny tear." Oh how sweet the consolation, when suffering the sting of disappointment, to know that some heart, full of the most ardent and pure affections, beats in unison with our own, and heaves with the throbbings of heavenly pity.

It is this that adds delight and happiness to the social scene, that raises man above the inanimate world, and ranks him with the pure angels of light. Its eloquence declares the presence of Divinity in man. When the corroding mildew of time blights the blooming flower and withers the delicate blossom in its pristine beauty—when the chilling gale of disappointment destroys our fairest hope, and the mementoes of our love are torn from our embrace and consigned to the narrow mansions of the dead—when the dark clouds of adversity veil in their benighted folds the pathway to happiness, and obscure the polar star of hope; then Sympathy, seraph-like, the ministering angel of peace, is ever nigh; she administers a healing balm to the wounded heart—removes the sting of guilt from the breast of the penitent—speaks in the soothing accents of consolation to the sorrowful—cheers the desponding soul with words that breathe their living accents, and lights with its celestial radiance the dejected traveler to the haven of felicity, that "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," man's everlasting home.

D. D. B.

☞ We present to our readers this week four extra pages of the Messenger as a gratuitous offering, which consideration may serve to compensate for the delay attending its publication. If our patrons are pleased with this idea of progressive growth and are disposed to continue their generous encouragement, they may see in the present number a prophecy of what we shall endeavor to accomplish at the commencement of another volume.

## In what manner do Spirits move gross matter?

This question has been the greatest stumbling-block in the way of believing in the reality of the demonstrations at Rochester and Auburn. How can a *spirit* "rap?" How can a *body* rap? A *body* cannot rap, because it possesses, of itself, no power whatever. It is the spirit, animating and controlling the body, which is alone capable of motion. It is useless to inquire whether the spirit is material or immaterial. But, suppose it to be the latter. Is not God, then, immaterial? Yet God is a living, active Being. The human spirit, for the same reason, may likewise be so considered, though in a finite instead of an infinite capacity. What is to be understood by the word *immaterial*? It can be nothing tangible, visible, or substantial—in fact, *nothing*. But spirit, having an existence, and manifesting intelligence, besides possessing, or at least controlling, motion, must be more than nothing. If more, then something; if something, of course matter. The doctrine of the immateriality of the spirit (all the philosophers and doctors to the contrary, notwithstanding), involves a downright absurdity. That the physical organization, of itself, possesses neither motion nor intelligence, is proved by the process of death, by which it becomes inert matter, and subject to decomposition. It was the spirit which animated all. The body was only the medium through which it exerted its force. In moving matter, then, the spirit, while connected with the body, is first required to move that body. *All power resides in the spirit*. Does the disembodiment of the spirit deprive it of this power? Does the removal of the clogs which weigh it down to earth lessen its capacity? Most assuredly not, unless it can be shown that the body is the only medium through which its force is exerted. Can this be shown? A knowledge of the connection between the spiritual and corporeal existence (as yet little understood), would solve the mystery. How can a man raise his hand? By an exertion of the *will*, it is answered; but what is the will—where does it reside, and by what laws is it governed? Is it any part of the physical organization? When these questions are answered, and not before, will it be permissible to assume that the disembodied spirit is incapable of motion or physical power? Until which, it would not seem to be irrational to conclude that the spirit (if there be such a principle) is the seat of all motion and intelligence, and that for the reasons given above, it may act independently of the body after death.

C.

## Controversy.

The present aspect of the theological world—the speculations, theories, and differences of opinion, which now prevail on spiritual subjects, seem to favor the exercise of a combative feeling and keep in constant action the spirit of controversy. Were we disposed to enter the field of conflict which is thus opened, and take up arms against the multitude of avenging critics, we should doubtless have sufficient work on hand to occupy the greater portion of our time. The question arises, however, whether such a course would serve to promote the principles of love, harmony, and wisdom, and whether the native energies of the soul may not be devoted to a higher and nobler purpose. In our opinion a mere war of words, verbal criticisms, and angry disputations, can result in little or no profit; and hence, leaving those who are fond of this mode of warfare in possession of the entire field, we prefer to go on our way with a calm and serene spirit, laying our foundation on broad and general principles, rather than external, isolated facts, and eliciting truth, not from any individual as an *oracle*, but from all the innumerable well-springs of inspiration in Nature—receiving the impressive influences of higher spheres, and listening to the harmonious voices that rise from the smiling earth, or steal from the bending skies.

R. F. A.

## The "Declaration."

By reference to our first department, the reader will observe an article, entitled, "The Declaration of Independence," to which allusion was made in our last number. The statements therein expressed are strong, bold, and radical in their character,



and for spiritual children may prove to be strong meat. If some individuals are disposed to term this article a *creed*, let them endeavor to conceive of a larger liberty than is here granted; or if this is still felt by some to be an *enclosure*, it is at least one which is boundless as universal Nature, *whose gates are never closed*. We have only to say farther,—let the Declaration receive the candid attention of those who feel an aspiration for spiritual freedom, and let the lofty and inspiring sentiments which are here unfolded, be examined in the light of an expanded reason.

## Poetry.

### THE PRESENT AGE.

BY MRS. MARY A. LIVERMORE.

Ours is peculiarly an age of far-reaching, intense effort. Never so has the great cause of humanity been pleaded—never so have men looked below the formal, the time-serving, the vestments of things, to central and primary ideas. . . . But our eyes look into that gleaming vista that opens through the horizon before us, and we hear the voices of Prophecy saying—'Forward! forward! much is yet to be revealed.'—K. H. CHAPIN.

Back has rolled the murky darkness which the buried past enshrouds,  
And light from heaven is piercing through its densely folded clouds;  
Brighter than the brightest sunrise, fairer than the fairest dawn,  
Is the advent of the Era, which to present man is born.

Loud its trumpet voice is pealing, startling all the earth and sky,  
Floating through the azure arches that o'erhang us from on high,  
Echoing in increasing fulness to the heaven's farthest span—  
"God, the Father, hath created brethren all the race of man."

Glance across the outstretched present, quickened with intensest life,  
Which, a field of bloodless battle, echoes with tumultuous strife;  
Where the sons of Truth enlisted, bold and fearless warfare wage,  
With the tall, gigantic evils, which oppress the struggling Age.

Flashing as the summer lightnings are their bold and earnest words,  
Which enfold, like burnished scabbards, truths as keen as two-edged swords;  
And they move in dauntless phalanx, knowing not to turn or yield,  
Trusting in the certain victory of the weapons which they wield.

Where the heel of hard Oppression standeth on the quivering heart,  
Where Humanity is bartered at the auction or the mart,—  
Wheresoe'er a chain is rusting into any human right,  
There they loudest swell the conflict, hottest there they wax the fight.

Where the arguments of Error are upcast against the Right,  
Ossa mounted upon Pelion, toppling in their dizzy height,  
There do arms and hearts Herculean wrestle with the pile uncouth,  
And the fabric overthrowing, found a monument to Truth.

Not alone are heard the tumult, and the warring conflict's din,  
For when fainter swells the clamor, sweeter sounds are chiming in;  
Gentlest sounds, and full of music, than the soft South wind more mild;  
Lulling many an anguished spirit, as a mother soothes the child.

Goodness, with the voice of Jesus, winning back the child of sin,  
Mercy, pleading for the guilty, though by prison walls shut in,—

Kindness, exorcising evil, by her spell of potent power,  
Love and Truth, mankind enriching, with the bliss which is their dower.

Up! it is a glorious Era! never yet has dawned its peer!  
Up and work! and then a nobler in the future shall appear;  
"Onward!" is the Present's motto, to a larger, higher life,  
"Onward!" though the march be weary, though unceasing be the strife.

Pitch not here thy tent, for higher doth the bright Ideal shine,  
And the journey is not ended, till thou reach that height divine;  
Upward! and above Earth's vapors, glimpses shall to thee be given,  
And the fresh and odorous breezes of the very hills of Heaven.  
FALL RIVER, MASS.

### LAST HOURS OF SOLOH.

(Suggested by reading his communication to A. J. Davis; Great Harmonia, Vol. I.)

WRITTEN FOR THE SPIRIT MESSENGER,  
BY J. B. WEBB.

The midnight moon has climbed its wildest height,  
And glimmers sadly down on heather drear;  
The wet leaves rustling with the wind of night,  
Make lonely music to my feverish ear.  
O Death, this hour is thine, and thine this gloom,  
This boding stillness weighing on my soul;  
And O! how dark the shadow of the tomb,—  
How Lethe's waves in blackness round it roll.

Some low, sad strain is breathing on mine ear,—  
The dash of ocean's waves against her shore;  
Their mystic tones I've held my breath to hear,  
And wept and prayed until the night was o'er;  
O! tell me now, thou lone mysterious sea,  
Hast thou not seen some fair and lovely isle,  
Where clothed in robes of immortality,  
Departed souls live free from sin and guile?

Have not thy waves in silvery cadence beat  
And danced to music by its azure shore?  
And come they now my list'ning ear to greet  
With tales of beauty in their lonely roar?  
O say, thou boundless, mystic deep! wilt thou  
In safety all my scattered ashes bear  
Across thy wavy breast, all dreary now,  
'Till New Atlantis smiles serenely there?

Ye Gods! whose high commands my trusting soul  
Has ever strove sincerely to revere;  
Will ye not keep my wand'ring ashes whole,  
Until that Isle of Beauty shall appear?  
Let not this thinking, grasping being cease,  
And be no more 'mid ocean's stormy gleam;  
O! guide me to that land where love and peace,  
Joined hand in hand, in endless beauty bloom.

My Country,—O! if burning tears suffice  
To move the mighty arm of Powers Divine;  
To guide thee from the tempting paths of vice,  
And lead where Honor, Truth, and Virtue shine,  
That lot is yours. Long years my humble heart  
Has loved thy people and thy learning well;  
Here flourish Science, and here triumph Art,  
Here Wisdom teach, and prophet-bards foretell.

Ay, moan on, thou hollow-whispering deep,  
For I must watch, and hope, and weep alone;  
While all the world is locked in balmy sleep,  
And stars are burning on their azure throne:  
Moan on, I listen to thy music wild,  
And dread and doubt fill all my aching breast;  
O guide me, Ocean, to that beauteous Isle,  
Where safe at last my wearied ashes rest.

## Miscellaneous Department.

## VISION OF THE PURE.

BY S. B. BRITTAN.

Every man has some idea of a Supreme Being. That idea will be low and groveling, or elevated and comprehensive, in proportion to the spiritual light and moral purity of the creature. It is impossible for an impure man to have correct views of the Divine Nature, because his spiritual and moral vision is imperfect. He cannot see distinctly on account of the veil which ignorance and sensuality interpose. He looks up to the Deity through the medium of his own powers of perception; and since God is a being of immaculate holiness, man must be pure in heart to see him as he is.

The word *see*, when used as a transitive verb, signifies to perceive, to notice, to discover, to learn, to know, to comprehend. It is not restricted in its application to the sense of vision through which the mind receives impressions of external objects; but it is applied to *intellectual perception*—to the power by which we discover certain things which are invisible and intangible to the outward sense—objects that pertain to the spiritual world—the faculty by means of which we are enabled to distinguish the good and true, from the false and pernicious.

This being the true meaning of the word, what are we to understand by *seeing God*? The answer is plain. To see him, is to know him—to become acquainted with his nature, and the laws of his government. To see God, we must receive knowledge of him, not through the instrumentality of the senses, but we must behold him through the medium of that *inward perception* with which his rational offspring are endowed.

We become acquainted with external objects only as they are presented to us and become the subjects of sensuous observation. We may adopt opinions and arrive at conclusions from the representations of others, but we can possess no certain knowledge of things we have not seen. The man who has never opened his eyes on this lower world, can form no adequate conception of its extent, diversity and magnificence. You may talk of its hills and valleys, of its flowers and living greens; you may tell him of the sparkling beauty of its crystal waters—or direct his thoughts to the heavens—to the infinitude of revolving spheres and all the glittering garniture of that upper world, where the glory of the Infinite Mind is unveiled! But what are these to him? He sees them not. The sun may shine brightly; the silver moon and the far distant stars may shed down their radiance on the slumbering earth, but for him they shine in vain. The medium through which the mind receives impressions of external objects is forever *clouded*; and it is of no avail to him that the earth, the waters and the heavens are bright and beautiful.

But the spiritual world may surpass in grandeur and excellence all that our eyes behold. Its embellishments may be more beautiful than the things of earth. Compared with these, the sweet flowers and the sparkling gems, the flowing waters and the green isles of the sea, may grow dim and fade away. The nature of God may be infinitely glorious and supremely attractive; the light of his love may outshine the Sun; yet if the moral vision be obscured by the mists of ignorance and depravity; if we are wanting in the ability to perceive these things—the things that are spiritual; the soul will remain in a state of darkness and insensibility, unmoved by all that is excellent in the Divine nature, and lovely in the veiled glories of the interior world.

It is worthy of remark, that all things appear dark and even the Divine nature is invested with unreal terrors, by the ignorant and depraved mind. The very moment that an individual becomes sensible of his guilt, he loses his confidence in himself, his neighbor and his Creator, and begins to expect evil or sudden destruction to overtake him. Indeed, we can have no distinct perception of the Divine presence and of spiritual things, while we are impure or destitute of personal holiness. This is the real and painful experience of the unfortunate transgressor.

Cast your eye over the wide world, and wherever you find the moral nature prostrate—man depraved and sinful—the powers of the soul shackled and bending low beneath the weight of his guilt—there you will find him poor and blind, without a rational idea of God, or any just conception of invisible and spiritual things. Go to the pagan world enshrouded in the deep darkness of ignorance and moral night. There behold the miserable victim of superstitious fear. You will find him torturing his body to save his soul. Trembling with awful apprehension, he bows low at the altar of the implacable gods! It is true, he worships; but it is not God he worships. The being *he sees* is not glorious in holiness and plenteous in mercy. Nay; but the object of his adoration is the hideous offspring of the benighted soul. The attributes of his God, are the passions of his own breast.

The individual who is acquainted with the science of light and the phenomena of vision, knows very well that a clouded glass, or a semi-transparent lens, will cast a shade even over the radiance of the sun. It is equally true that to men whose spiritual vision is obscured by the mists of ignorance and moral darkness, the Divine character appears dark and terrible.

We will endeavor to elucidate this point. If you look through a glass that is imperfect, things presented to the view will put on appearances very different from the reality. If the medium through which we direct the vision is in itself defective, the objects seen will assume unreal forms and fantastic shapes. On the contrary, if the medium through which we look upon surrounding objects be true, everything will appear in its proper form, and occupy its relative position. The outline of every object will be clearly seen, and the mind will receive correct impressions. So, if a man look through the medium of a diseased imagination, or of his own evil passions and corrupt desires, he will see nothing aright. Things beautiful in themselves will be shorn of their grace and comeliness, and will appear to the vision distorted and unsymmetrical. The mind will receive false impressions, and he will readily ascribe to the subject of his observations the very defects which really exist in himself, or in the medium through which the object is seen.

Thus do men fail to see God as he is. They look through the polluted medium of sinful affections, and the brightness of the Father's glory shines not into the benighted soul. To discern the Divine nature, *we must partake of that nature*. Our minds and affections must be molded into his spirit and image. The more we resemble the standard of all perfection, the more clearly we shall *see him*—the more we shall know of his nature and character—the higher will be our spiritual attainments, and the more perfect our unity and happiness.

## INFLUENCE OF KINDNESS.

Kindness is the sister of happiness, and one of the most beautiful attributes of our nature. There is a power, as well as love, in kindness, for it will still the "tempest and whirlwind of passion," and make it as calm as the bosom of the unruffled sea. It will find its way to the heart when every other means have failed. It will make a friend of your worst enemy. It exalts the mind, and draws us nearer to God.

A kind word will often reclaim the erring from the path of evil, and draw him back to the paths of virtue again. It lightens the load of care, and makes us smile as we travel on the rough and rugged journey of life. It strews flowers instead of thorns in our way.

How often have we seen a tear start from the eye of those who have been spoken to kindly. Here is a little story, which we have never seen before in print, and which we *know* has never been. It is a good illustration of kindness.

In a village where we once resided, lived a young couple, who were married when the sun of prosperity was shining brightly over them. But alas! the clouds and storms of adversity broke upon them, and they lost nearly all of their property, except a little cottage and garden. A gloom came over the young man, and so deeply did his loss prey upon his mind, that he took to drinking and gaming. He became irritable and morose. In vain his friends expostulated with him. He grew worse and



Let every succeeding day witness the faithful performance of duty, and realize the benefit to be derived from endeavoring to attain an habitual preparation for death. So shall pure pleasure sparkle around thee in the morning, emit its luster on thy path at noon, and not forsake thee in the evening of life; when, as it shall draw toward a close, the prospect of immortality shall brighten, and thy solace and support shall be, the genuine hope which rests on the rock of ages.

### Music.

It was the power of music, according to fabulous history, which enabled Orpheus to recover his wife, Eurydice, from the infernal regions, to subdue and tame the ferocity of wild beasts, to chain the courses of rivers and stay the waters of the torrent, and to level the mountain with the valley and loose the tongues of those who spake not.

Though there is not enough of credulity in the present age to believe in these poetical fictions, yet who will deny that the powers of music are great and wonderful? The captive, who has been bound in slavery for long years, hears the notes which charmed him in the days of freedom, and for the moment forgets his captivity—the criminal listens to the song which was sung to him in the days of his innocence, and is carried back in memory to those days when crime had not polluted his heart, and the misery attendant thereon had not destroyed his peace, and again is forgetful of unhappiness—the soldier, struggling for liberty, attends to the notes which have once lured him to victory, and encouraged by the sounds, rushes on to battle and to conquest. The religionist hears the chimes of Sabbath bells which summon to worship, and the hymns of praise to God, and his heart swells in ecstatic thanksgiving. In short, the burden of the oppressed is made comparatively light, the disconsolate is cheered, the mourner forgets his sorrows, and the billows of passion receive and obey the authoritative mandate of "peace, be still!"

Such is the power of music, but such is the power yielded only to the musician's skill. And is there, then, no music but in the productions of Art? Yes, there is; and though it may be unwritten, and all may not hear it, yet to the heart attuned to melody, there is music in the murmur of the rippling rivulet and in the loud roar of the thundering cataract, in the sigh of the passing breeze, and in the shrill whistle of wintry winds; in the gentle rustle of leaves when stirred by summer's zephyr, and in the bass notes of distant thunder; and oh! is there not music in the singing of birds as they join in their chorus to the song of Nature? Yea, it is heard at early morn, at sultry noon, and balmy eve, above us, around us, and in the very atmosphere we breathe; nor was it born, as some have sung, in "early Greece," but its birth was on the morn of creation, when "the stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Nor shall it perish with time, for "with songs of everlasting joy," shall the angels strike their harps, and join in the anthem of the redeemed, till the broad court resounds with praise to heaven's High King.—*Mrs. S. Eliza Gibson.*

### Charity.

Night kissed the young rose, and it bent softly to sleep. Stars shone, and pure dew drops hung on its blushing bosom, watching its sweet slumbers. Morning came with her dancing breeze, and they whispered to the young rose, and it awoke joyous and smiling. Lightly it danced to and fro in all the loveliness of health and youthful innocence. Then came the ardent sun-god, sweeping from the east, and he smote the young rose with its scorching rays, and it fainted. Deserted and almost heart-broken, it drooped to the dust in its loneliness and despair. Now, the gentle breeze, which had been rambling over the sea, pushing on the home-bound bark, sweeping over the hill and dale—by the neat cottage and the still brook—turning the old mill, fanning the fevered brow of disease, and frisking curls of innocent childhood—came tripping along on her errands of mercy and love; and when she saw the young rose she hastened to kiss it, and fondly bathed its forehead in cool, refreshing show-

ers, and the young rose revived and looked up and smiled in gratitude to the breeze; but she hurried quickly away; her generous task was performed, yet not without reward, for she soon perceived that a delicious fragrance had been poured upon her wings by the grateful rose; and the kind breeze was glad in heart, and went away singing through the trees. Thus true Charity, like the breeze, gathers fragrance from the drooping flower it refreshes, and unconsciously reaps a reward in the performance of its offices of kindness, which steals upon the heart like rich perfume, to bless and to cheer.

THE LOVE OF THE BEAUTIFUL AND THE TRUE, like the dew-drop in the heart of the crystal, remains forever clear and liquid in the inmost shrine of man's being, though all the rest be turned to stone by sorrow and degradation. The angel who has once come down into the soul, will not be driven thence by any sin or baseness even, much less by any unobserved oppression and wrong. At the soul's gate sits she silently, with folded hands and downcast eyes; but at the least touch of nobleness, those patient orbs are serenely uplifted, and the whole spirit is lightened by their prayerful lustre.—*J. R. Lowell.*

CHANGE is an order of Creation. The outward universe proclaims this truth. The stars look down from their eternal circles, and speak its solemn teachings. The sun flings back his golden locks while "trembling at the gates of the west," and preaches the sublime sermon. It is written on the brow of evening. It melts, in eloquent whisperings, from the rosy lips of morning. It burdens the enchanting warblings of noon-day. The trees of the forest have learned its lesson, and they put off in the embrace of autumn, all their beautiful garments. The earth has listened to its lectures, she hath learned its sentiment, and her covering momentarily changes.

God and love are everywhere; in light, in colors, in flowers, in the beauty of man, in the happiness of animals, in the human mind, in the endless spheres, as the sun shines on all, alike, yet differently, and is majestic on the ocean, sparkling in a dew-drop, ruddy on the ripe fruit, silver on the stream, many colored in the rainbow, and pale and tremulous in the moon.

BEAUTY.—The flower which blossoms to-day, and is withered to-morrow,—is it at all more actual than the colors of the rainbow? Or rather are these less actual? Beauty is the most fleeting thing upon earth, yet immortal as the spirit from which it blooms.—*De Wette.*

Liberty and the sun never sink on this earth, but rise eternally. Should you hear that the sun, or liberty had grown pale and died, and fallen asleep in the ocean: look! behold America, there the sun shines like the dew of the young morning-rose, and liberty stands by her side.

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