

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

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

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The Principles of Nature.

THE RIGHTS AND MISSION OF WOMAN.

WRITTEN FOR THE SPIRIT MESSENGER,
BY A. J. DAVIS.

In relating my impressions upon this long-neglected and vitally-interesting subject, as also upon other subjects, the reader is requested to consider me as giving utterance to sentiments and convictions, which are wholly free from educational predilections or prejudices, either for or against any Age, Country, Position, Complexion, or Sex—for I constantly realize my general relationship to the great Body of humanity—a sojourner on the earth, confined by prejudice to no particular or favored spot—acknowledging a universal country, and a universal brotherhood.

Much has been well spoken and written upon the "Rights of Woman," and many valuable suggestions for her improvement and elevation, have occasionally been developed; but I feel deeply impressed with the conviction, that the relation of the sexes, and their reciprocal dependence and claims upon, and duties to, one another, are but little understood and acknowledged. This fact can be accounted for, only, by admitting the hypothesis that there is a great destitution of correct thinking and acting in the world, and a surprising misapprehension of the true springs of society and government. The stronger sex, that class of individuals too frequently misnamed *man*, would certainly proceed immediately to unfeigned repentance and humiliation, could they but once behold the vast amount of vice and unhappiness, they have caused to befall such a mass of the weaker portion of humanity. *Man* has depressed, deceived, degraded, betrayed, and enslaved *Woman* to an extent almost beyond expression. Because woman, in her unsuspecting and undeveloped state of mind, has manifested a fondness for display and attention, man has frequently taken advantage of this affection; and, instead of regarding it as an incipient manifestation and prophecy of latent female excellence and beauty, he has bestowed flattery, instead of a refining admiration; and a fawning gallantry, instead of that honest counsel and faithful protection which gladdens and elevates the dependent Soul.

I cannot but deplore the structure or education of that mind, which can, contemptuously and arrogantly, pronounce woman as only the fit companion of children; for such a mind always shrinks from the attempt to place the female element in a circle of usefulness, wider and higher than her present narrow enclosures, known as the kitchen, the bed-chamber, and the nursery. The perpetual perplexities, and unbroken monotony of these departments, are too depressing and fatiguing to be endured; and woman, especially among the higher or wealthy classes, are beginning to despise and shun these confining and enslaving duties, on the ground that they are unpleasant, degrading, and unfashionable. It cannot well be denied, nor disguised, that woman is sometimes moved to rebel against what are considered to be her respective duties, and that she runs into numerous vices, follies, and extravagances, simply because she is not properly placed in society; and because, also, those who govern States and Nations are profoundly ignorant of the interior attractions natural to the female character, and of the sublime influence her spiritual organization qualifies her to exert upon the race universally.

A misunderstanding or misappreciation of the rights and mission of woman, has been and is now, the cause why man usually regards the various impulses and attractions of females, as weak and childish. It is said that you cannot reason with a woman,

and consequently, that it is the province of man to think, decide, and legislate for her; but, I think, it will be seen that there are two causes why woman does not generally manifest an equal tendency and strength to exercise judgment: one is because she is deprived of her natural liberty and ability to do so; and the other is because, except in a few cases, man treats her, not as a reasonable being, but as a mere child; not as a companion worthy of honor, but as a slave.

In the rudimental development of mankind in the savage state of human progress, women are esteemed as slaves and domestic chattels. Cows, mules, horses, and women, are valuable and conspicuous items in the domestic and agricultural inventory. In the eastern countries—in upper Europe and Asia—women are not unfrequently compelled to perform the labor of *oxen or mules*; they are obliged to tread the rough fields, and gather in the harvests, while their husbands are luxuriating in idleness and smoking their pipes. Nor is it necessary to cross the Atlantic to "pluck the mote from our neighbor's eye;" because there are numerous instances among us, where husbands owe all the comforts, delicacies, and refinements which they possess, to the ceaseless industry, studied frugality, and to the constitutional modesty of their companions. And there are men—fathers—who, in the attempt to maintain their supposed entailed power and superiority over women, will frighten mothers into the paying of tribute, by threatening to deprive them of their children. Sometimes the husband is an inebriate, and will take the children into the midst of depraving influences. And there are husbands, also, who, in order to support and defend the position of being at the "head of the family," will proceed to angry contentions and useless discussions before their children—sometimes at the expense of damping or perverting the natural affection of those young hearts, and of extinguishing within their own soul what little love may yet linger around the memory of former attachment for the now disregarded companion. These are sad pictures to gaze upon! But in our own country—in the sunny South—there is even now a class of females compelled, or condemned, to live and labor, and to be sold like cattle; being regarded simply as machines, capable of locomotion, and of producing like machines. Thus, even in this civilized land, the cruelties of savagism are yet in existence.

In the patriarchal development of humanity, are also visible the assumptions of masculine superiority to the feminine. By patriarchal development, I mean that state of human progress which hereditarily and legally imparts to the male the right to hold property, and to guide the reins of government, to the exclusion of female ownership and influence. Primogeniture is a bequeathment of the patriarchal age, whereby women are deprived of the power to possess property, and are thus made dependent on their husbands, or others for subsistence and privileges. This law establishes a system of usurpation on the one hand, and a system of servitude on the other, between the sexes, which cannot but operate unfavorably upon the natural and moral inclinations of the female. Woman has desires and impulses which man, because of his dissimilar constitution and impulses, does not and cannot perfectly understand; and, sometimes, to gratify her desires, being impatient of restraint, she is moved to break away from her allotted sphere, and, not being properly guided, to rush into extremes of habit and passion, greatly to the disfiguration of her naturally beautiful and pure character. Amongst the civilized nations it is said, and generally believed, that woman is so constituted as to render her incapable of moving harmoniously in any other sphere than the one at present apportioned her by civilization—where, instead of being regarded as a mere chattel, or a domestic slave, she has been promoted to a position in which she subserves the purposes of a

drawing-room adornment, a parlor picture, or a walking ornament—and she is considered and treated as a passionate, a sentient, and a reasonable being. But, I think, it will be acknowledged that, even in *Christian Europe and America*, woman is generally esteemed not as a companion—not as a gentle and regenerating principle, acting an important part in the humanitarian drama, and exerting there an influence as great as, if not superior to, that which is therein exercised by man. Even in these, the most enlightened portions of the world, the expressed opinion is "*Woman was made for Man*"—thus implying a kind of servitude of female elements to masculine attributes. To acquire a "finished education"—to "get married"—to "have children"—to "remain at home"—or to "go when and where" her husband goes, (as he desires,) is a synopsis of "*Woman's Rights*" and mission, as they are generally apprehended, in the most enlightened and civilized parts of the world.

It is easy to understand why woman is frequently found to manifest weakness and impetuosity in her judgment, desires, and impulses, nor is it strange that female prostitution should, in various forms and modifications, exist in the sequestered and public portions of society. I affirm that should any being, possessing the qualities and spiritual desires of the female character, be situated in the midst of *flattery, deception, and slavery*; and, should that being become accustomed to just that kind of evanescent attention, which is characteristic of the deference which acknowledged superiors manifest toward idolized inferiors, or to choice ornaments, it is positively certain that *infidelity, vice, alienation, and wretchedness* would be the legitimate fruits developed.

As are a country's institutions so are the people, and, *vice versa*, as are the people so are the institutions; they reciprocally affect each other's character and development. Action and reaction are inevitable; and, therefore, just that influence which *man* (as a governing principle), exerts upon the position and character of woman, the latter will, and must, necessarily exert upon the world in return. There are, in the world, a few enlightened minds who know *how* dependent society is upon the morals and refinement of the female character; and such know that woman is, and must be, what man and society make her. The female character has a three-fold, and, at the same time, a fundamental and a vital influence upon the world, viz: It builds the foundation of society and of nations by moving in, and presiding over, the *sphere of childhood*, the *sphere of the family*, (or the home), and the *social sphere*. According to surrounding circumstances, and according to the quality of the materials which she is compelled to employ, will be the foundation-elements which woman furnishes, whereupon to erect the mighty superstructure of nations and the world.

A synopsis of her *influence* is this: Through the medium of *childhood* she moulds the individual—through the family medium, she influences and refines the husband—and, through the social medium, she influences and *spiritualizes* legislation and government.

Female elevation, and consequent liberty, are the inevitable results of social re-organization, and a true republican government. The female spirit is a beautiful combination of immortal springs and affections; but if the sphere of its movements is, in any respect, limited or circumscribed, so as to cramp its infinite expansion and improvement, then will dissatisfaction, and, perhaps, dissipation be developed. Philosophers and legislators have not bestowed sufficient thought upon the variety and importance of female influences; nor have they been sufficiently minute in their investigations into the secret springs of human action, misdirection, or improvement; and hence there are many discoveries yet to be made and disclosed, which will conspire greatly to the development of harmony among nations.

The extent of female influence is as little understood by the sex, themselves, as it is by the world of minds in general. For, upon investigation I learn, with as much pleasure as astonishment, that woman exerts *three-fifths* of that influence which moves the human world. The internal and spiritual circles are spheres in which she, particularly, performs her *mission*. 1. The first circle is the *childhood sphere*. 2. The second circle is the

family sphere. 3. The third circle is the *social sphere*. And on these fundamental spheres the female element should be completely incorporated, and allowed its legitimate action; it desires no wider or higher scope, nor could it feel harmonious in different spheres of action and movement. Woman will act in these three circles, and it is not possible to prevent her; but it is possible to surround her with deforming circumstances, and to put her in the possession of heterogeneous materials, and thus cause her works to be imperfect and unprofitable to the race. For instance, the female gives (*directly*) constitution and character to the individual through the mediums of childhood, domestic example, and social intercourse; but she is only an instrument and dispenser of those personal and several influences, those home conditions, and those social tendencies, with which her husband and the world's customs have surrounded her, and the individual which she is instrumental in developing. Woman will inevitably develop the world; but by way of compensation to her, and for its own interests, the world should supply her with good matrimonial relations, with pleasant home advantages, with ennobling social institutions, all so complete and harmonious within themselves, as to make it easy and natural for her to furnish society with noble minds.

All the heroes, poets, artists, philosophers and theologians, that ever moved upon the earth, were put in possession of their various maxims and attributes, mainly, by woman; she exerts a positive influence upon the constitution and character of the individual until the *national sphere* is reached, when, compared with the influence of the male, the female power is negative; and now the wisdom principle pervades the individual, for the purpose of modifying, harmonizing, and further developing the mind. Properly, and naturally, man has but *two* circles of action,—he moves harmoniously, first in the *national sphere*, and second in the *universal sphere*—because these are the circles of government and harmony. Woman cannot produce harmony of herself, but she can furnish the proper *elements* for its elaboration and establishment; and man cannot produce these elements, but he can discover, furnish, and enforce the principles of *discipline*, or the natural laws of government.

Thus, the *childhood sphere*, the *family sphere*, and the *social sphere*, are spheres or circles of love; and the *national* and *universal spheres* are circles of wisdom. The former are properly the arena of female action and influence, and the latter are properly the spheres of intellectual government. And therefore, as it has been explained, the female influence is positive and powerful upon individual constitution and character, until the point or verge is approached, where discipline and government are natural and necessary, when it becomes negative, and acts, thereafter, as a balance-wheel to the higher portions of humanity's governmental and constitutional arrangements.

I come, now, to consider woman in her first sphere of action—in the *childhood sphere*. According to the situation and education of the female, will be the constitution and inclinations of her offspring. The truthfulness of this proposition is beginning to be recognized by pathological and physiological inquirers, and especially among the self-subordinating and profound students of scientific medicine in Germany; but, notwithstanding the vast amount of ignorance and scepticism which exists upon this subject, I am perfectly aware that human reformation must begin at this point; and, consequently, with the elevation and education of the female character. The impressions and hereditary predispositions of the body and mind, are alike imparted by the parents to the child. Progenitory influence is inevitable and irresistible; hence, the attention of philanthropists and philosophers should be directed to this point, to investigate and remove the origin of human weaknesses and misdirection.

If parents are engaged in pursuits and occupations, calculated only to develop their social and animal nature, the child will be an exact representative of the peculiar characteristics and situations of its progenitors, and, also, of the various influential circumstances by which they are continually surrounded; therefore, the child will, most likely, grow into maturity with an inferior moral and intellectual development; and will experience many social temptations, and animal attractions, over which,

the moral and intellectual faculties can have no absolute control.

Again: If one or both of the parents have an inordinate desire to accumulate property, and acquire riches; and in the gratification of which pursuit, they employ their intellectual faculties, combined with the inferior faculties of self-esteem, firmness, combativeness, and destructiveness; the child will inevitably be born with a similar organization, and will, almost as inevitably, exercise throughout the whole of its life on earth, the same faculties in the attempt to gratify the same desire.

Again: If one or both of the parents have a selfish, arrogant, combative, and impetuous disposition, with a considerable weight of character, the child will be born, and grow up with a similar disposition, and ability to make itself, and many other individuals, very unhappy.

And, again: If there be a disposition on the part of the parents to mental derangement, the child will experience, and perhaps manifest an under-current of the same constitutional defect. These are a few cases illustrative of the many influences which are constantly at work, impeding the progressive beauty and elevation of the race.

The influence of the mother upon the child is almost incalculable. She associates with it continually; whereas, the father sees it only now and then. The mother is familiar with its powers, its passions, and its impulses; whilst the father sees them but partially, and even when he witnesses their exhibition, he does not understand their origin and true mode of treatment. The mother can sympathize with all its little movements, and spontaneous attractions; she can understand the secret use of its impetuosity and uneasiness; she can forgive, and subdue, and impress maxims of action; but the father is disqualified to understand those childish impulses, and still less is he capable of "hushing" the youthful tempest into sweet repose.

[CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.]

Psychological Department.

VISIONS AND TRANCES.

In our last two numbers, our readers were entertained with interesting extracts from the Great Harmonia, in which was faithfully described the beautiful process of dying, as it was witnessed by the clairvoyant, in the case of a lady sixty years of age, at the time of her metamorphosis. There are many facts constantly transpiring, some of which have attracted public notice, that can only be explained by admitting the great truth, that, in the last moments of existence in the material body, the spiritual perceptions are naturally increased; and that, when the spirit is entirely freed from its encasement of flesh, its powers and intelligence are wonderfully unfolded.

It is but a few years since, that a little child lay at the point of death, suffering from a typhus fever, at its father's house in New Jersey. Before its final dissolution, in a fit of delirium, as its parents supposed, it aroused, and exclaimed—"Mother, my brother is coming home from Liverpool—he is about twenty miles from New York, and will be here at two o'clock to-morrow afternoon. He has got five books for the children—all with red covers." To the astonishment of the family, that vision proved true, to the very letter. Several scientific and religious papers in New York published the facts, which were well authenticated, and pronounced the whole matter an unaccountable manifestation of the power of Divine Providence.

Another interesting incident is recorded in the Bangor (Me.) Whig, of September, 1819. We make the following extracts:

"An incident of the cholera occurred in this city a few days since, which for several reasons we think worth recording. Among the households which had been entered and stricken by the fatal disease, was that of Mr. Hangley, a worthy Irishman who has long been employed by the Commissioner of Streets. His wife, a warm-hearted, motherly woman, devotedly attached to children, and self-sacrificing to promote their welfare and happiness, was taken with the cholera and died, and was buried on Thursday, Sept. 20th. Next, a lovely little daughter, seven

years of age, was taken sick, and she too died (apparently), and her body was laid out and her limbs adjusted in the embrace of the King of Terrors. The father applied to Alderman Wingate for a coffin, but for some cause it could not be had immediately, and its delivery was postponed for an hour or two; during this time, Mr. Hangley returned home, when the supposed dead child stretched forth her arms, with the exclamation "Oh, Father, I have been to Heaven, and it is a beautiful place!"

After the surprise and the excitement of the girl had subsided, she gave a relation of what she had seen, as she expressed it, "in Heaven."

She saw her mother in Heaven, and she was taking care of little children, many of whom she called by name, and among them she said were four children of Uncle Hangley, and three children of Uncle Cassey's. "Aunt Lynch is not there now, but will be to-morrow."

"But," said an elder sister, "it cannot be so, dearest, for there are but two of Uncle Cassey's children dead!"

"Yes, I saw three of them in Heaven, and dear mother was taking care of them. All were dressed in white, and all were very happy, and the children playing. Oh! it was beautiful there."

Mr. Hangley immediately informed Mr. Wingate that his daughter was not dead, when he, in company with Dr. Morrison, visited the house, and the little girl related substantially the same story. It seems too, that shortly after this relation of the little girl of what she had seen and heard in Heaven, a message came from Mr. Cassey in Carmel, giving information of the death of another child, and inviting them to attend the funeral.

Of the four children of her Uncle Hangley, two died in this city, and two were drowned on their passage from Ireland.

We called on Saturday to see and talk with this little girl, but she was very feeble, and just then in a drowse, and we would not allow her to be disturbed. She is said to have a very thoughtful and serious countenance, and to be a very interesting child. She had no wish to live, but preferred returning to her mother. The father and sisters are seriously, but very happily impressed with the relations of this sweet child, and joyfully believe the story she tells. Their house is a pattern of neatness, and they all possess hearts overflowing with affection, and are sincerely happy on account of their heavenly messenger.

"I was sorry," said Mr. H. to Dr. Morrison, in the honest, truthful simplicity of his heart, "when my good wife died, but I'm not now, but only wish to be with her." The elder sisters, too, live in joyful hope of meeting at length, and they care not how soon, if it be God's time, their dear mother in heaven, where she has been seen by their angel sister, who has been permitted to return to the earth and make the fact known to them."

To the believers in a cold, material philosophy, and in the unnatural theological doctrine that the soul is destined to slumber in the grave, until some future trump shall sound and call it forth, re-clothed in the corrupt matter that composed its corporeal body, such phenomena will always appear unaccountable. But to the spiritual philosopher, who exercises the higher faculties of his soul; he who has an indwelling consciousness of the reality and immortality of the interior man, and who believes that the spirit has a form of refined and indestructible matter, and is possessed of an intelligence which is expanded by the change called death, there is nothing unnatural or miraculous in such manifestations of increased spiritual perception.

A. M.

☞ We have been recently informed, on reliable authority, that spiritual communications, through the medium of what are usually termed the "rappings," are now being regularly received at the residence of Mr. J. F. CLACKNER, Ohio.

We also learn from a friend residing in Bridgeport, Conn., that the so-called mysterious sounds have recently visited his own house, and that abundant demonstrations have been made of the presence and power of spiritual agencies. These facts present an interesting illustration of the gradual extension of spiritual manifestations, proving that the time is approaching when the means of an intimate communion with the celestial world will be universally enjoyed.

R. F. A.

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

APOLLOS MUNN AND R. P. AMBLER, EDITORS.

SPRINGFIELD, MASS., AUGUST 31, 1850.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TRUE FAITH.

Every person who will reflect on the subject, will acknowledge the importance and necessity of faith. Amid the multitude of human creeds and theories which have prevailed in the world, man finds it essential to believe *something*; and though he may reject every established system presented to his view, he is certain to entertain a faith of his own. It is faith by which we walk. This forms one of the great main-springs of human action. It gives direction to the thoughts, feelings, and impulses within, and, to a greater or less extent, determines the nature of the outward movements. Holding in view, therefore, the importance of that which men may believe, I propose in the present article to unfold some of the prominent characteristics of the true faith.

The Christian Church has long been rent with controversies and disputes, in relation to the particular faith which ought to be received and cherished. On this subject, varied and opposite opinions have been entertained, and it would be a vain attempt to set up any sectarian standard which should command a universal assent. If, however, we may not infallibly determine the precise doctrines which are proper to be received, we may at least discover some of the essential features of a genuine faith, which will be recognized by the interior sense.

Let it be remarked at the outset that the true faith is *beautiful and attractive* in its nature. Its messages are those of love, and peace, and good will to men. It speaks not in the thunders of Sinai, and its voice is not heard in the earthquake or the storm. There is nothing dark or repulsive in its revelations — nothing fearful or denunciatory in its language, but as light is adapted to the eye, and as music delights the soul, it is presented to the mind in a lovely and attractive form. Error, though glossed with sophistry and made plausible with argument, can never be intrinsically beautiful, and from beneath the outward guise in which it is concealed, will steal the traces of its deformity. But on the contrary, the true faith, as it comes from the great Spirit of Beauty, and accords with the outward expressions of that spirit in nature, must be inherently attractive. It comes as an angel of light, radiant with celestial purity. It is sent as the messenger that points to heaven; and as it opens the dark veil of the future, as it soars to the throne of inaccessible light, and unfolds the glories of a higher sphere, it brings to the listening soul of man "visions all beautiful." Turning then from the stern, gloomy and repulsive doctrines that men have established, we shall find the true faith in that which is bright and glorious, like the Source from whence it flows.

Another point to be considered is, that the true faith is a *rational* one. By this, I mean that it is based on the principles of reason, and results from the impartial exercise of the intellectual powers, not being obscured by the folds of mystery, or lost in the mist of groundless fancies. Many persons are content to exercise a faith which has no connection with reason; a faith which is dependent on mere theological speculations, and has no other foundation than the testimony of their spiritual lords, and the credulity of their own minds. Such a faith, however, can be only a blind and worthless guide to man; and if we carefully observe its effects which are everywhere visible in society, we shall see that it has already misled its recipients into the gloomy mazes of superstition and error. We are again reminded that the genuine faith is a rational one, that it roams only where reason has prepared the way, and receives that alone as its basis, which the unperverted vision of the soul has discovered to be true. Hence while others feed on airy fancies and gloomy superstitions, believing in incomprehensible mysteries and supernatural wonders, it becomes us to cherish a faith which will bear the

scrutiny of thought, and which can be reconciled with the unerring teachings of nature and the immutable laws of God.

In the next place, it is well to observe that the true faith is *impartial and free*. It is confined within no limits prescribed by the selfishness of man. It is restricted by no line which sect and party may establish. Beyond the narrow enclosure of human systems, it soars away through the unlimited sphere of truth, and above the darkness where superstition lowers, it reigns in liberty and light. The true faith has no congeniality with those gloomy creeds which represent God as a partial Being, and reveal no heaven but for a few. It finds its appropriate similitude in the rays of the sun and the falling showers which descend upon all. It embraces in its promised blessings the vast brotherhood of man, unfolds the Father in the majesty and greatness of his being, and then beyond the clouds which overshadow earth, it points to a home where love shall be infinite, and where joy shall be universal. As there is no limit to the perfections of God, no boundary to the works of his creation, and no end to the truth which He has endowed with infinity, so the true faith is unlimited in its nature, soaring in freedom through the vast field of intellectual inquiry. It is unshackled as the broad ocean, the free air, or expanding light; and it is this which renders it adapted to the spiritual wants of man, and suited to revive, nourish, and strengthen the soul.

Again, it should be noticed that the genuine faith is a *living and working* one. It is not a passive, dead, intellectual belief which is laid up in the mind to be remembered and rejoiced in at particular seasons. It consists not in a mere idea, thought, or opinion, which is to be treasured like a valued jewel. But it is a feeling, realizing and abiding sense of truth which is to operate continually within, and animate the whole spiritual man. The true faith has a mighty and important mission to perform, and hence it is not a mere skeleton of thought, but a living and breathing energy — not a mere passive conception, but an active and operating power. In this the heart, as well as the mind, the affections, as well as the thoughts are engaged. There is an impulse here which moves the whole inner being — a spirit which breathes its life through every fibre of the soul. There is nothing cold or inanimate in its nature; it is not passive, like the stagnant pool, but flows to the heart like living streams and the breath of God.

In this connection let it be remarked further that the true faith operates through *love*. This fact unfolds one of its most important and attractive features. Love is the moving spirit by which it acts. It has no voice to menace, no power to destroy, but it is gentle and peaceful in its character, working its way to the heart, and relying alone for success on its own winning and persuasive influence. In contrast with this, the systems of men are wont to employ a far different principle. Being repulsive and odious in themselves, they have made use of foreign and arbitrary means to advance their interests. Cruelty, oppression, and death have been the results of their sway. They have gone forth assuming a hostile bearing to all who may stand in opposition to their teachings. They have raised the arm of persecution, built the cross of the martyr, and lighted the fire of the faggot; and when, through the growing freedom and toleration of public sentiment, they were no longer permitted to manifest their spirit in this manner, they have endeavored to alarm the fears and terrify the hearts of men, by gloomy revelations of divine wrath and terrifying visions of future misery. Such is the agency employed by human systems. The true faith is possessed of a mightier and holier power. It works by *love*. It is aided by the spirit of God — that spirit which first moved over the face of the deep, and rolled away the darkness from its bosom; and by this it enters, with an all-subduing and resistless influence, into the sanctuary of the soul, and there it purifies the affections, refines the thoughts, and exalts the desires, ever revealing love as the nature of God, the duty of man, and the inheritance of all.

Thus may we recognize some of the prominent characteristics of the true faith. With these as our guide, may we seek and find that treasure in which the soul delights. Let us seek it, though it may lead as it has led, through clouds of reproach and storms of persecution, remembering that the true faith, amid all

the efforts which may be made to stay its progress, shall at last prove triumphant; that it shall gain a mighty and glorious victory over the world—a victory in which all humanity shall rejoice, and which even angels on high shall delight to witness.

B. P. A.

THE LAW OF HARMONY.

Superior to all other laws established in creation, and existing as the legitimate result of their action, is the great law of Harmony. This law applies not only to the outward universe, but also to Deity himself, as it constitutes one of the essential and inherent principles of His nature. It is in fact the end attained by the innumerable parts of creation—the effect, produced by the natural operation of the grand WHOLE.

The final purpose of God being resolved into a unity, all things tend harmoniously towards one end. Though occupying different spheres, and existing in different stages of development, the varied forms of nature have no conflicting aims, but combine to work out the great and beautiful result, intended by the Divine Mind. Each part in the mechanism of creation, bears a relation to all other parts; each is essential to form the whole, and each performs its appropriate office, while all unite, and act in unison and harmony, to accomplish the proposed design.

So the multifarious laws established in nature, are but subordinate tendencies, having constant reference to one eternal purpose, and, as wheels moving within wheels in a perfect machinery, are made subservient to the great law of harmony. These inferior laws are all essential to the superior law here mentioned, and on the separate and united operation of all these, the other is necessarily dependent. Hence, the law of harmony requires that all the subordinate principles of nature should always preserve their specific and appropriate action, and that these should never, for a single moment, be reversed or suspended. When we are told, therefore, that to answer some special purpose, the laws of nature have been suspended in certain cases, as exemplified in the changing of water into wine, and the resurrection of a dead body, in which the process of decomposition had already commenced, we know that this *cannot be true*, because, such is the mutual dependence of all things in nature, this suspension, or reversal, of established laws, would jar the whole machinery of creation, and the law of harmony which pervades the very being of God, and constitutes an essential principle of the universe, can never be infringed. Though we are accustomed to invest Deity with the attribute of omnipotence, yet it is evident to every philosophical mind, that it is utterly impossible for Him to act inconsistent with his own nature, or in any way disturb the beautiful harmony of His universe, which is an outward and natural expression of the interior principle.

The law of harmony is, therefore, supreme and eternal. It cannot be changed by any contingency which may arise in human affairs. To this, the whole material creation is made to conform; by this, the spheres of the celestial universe are governed, and towards this, society, in its approach to the grand end—*unity and happiness*, is rapidly and surely tending.

B. P. A.

Our poetical department this week contains an interesting article; and, thanks to our kind contributors, the future is also full of promise. The thoughts that flow from the pen of our fair correspondent SILONA, bear on their face the evidence of an origin in the "pure sanctuary," and are ever welcome to congenial spirits. We hope to hear from her often. We have, for future numbers, two beautiful poems from FANNY GREEN; two from T. H. CHIVERS, M. D., of Washington, Ga.; two from S. H. LLOYD, of Boston, and one from JAMES RICHARDSON, Jr., of Dedham. Our readers shall have them in due time. Each of these poetical gems is worth more to the reader than the subscription price of the paper.

A. M.

There is no death; what men call death, is but the mortal struggle for immortality!

S. B. B.

OUR BRETHREN OF THE PRESS.

We are indebted to many editorial brothers for words of kindness, given since we first announced the character and objects of the Messenger. In almost every direction, our little paper has been greeted with expressions of fraternal welcome, which will be treasured in our memory as bright lights in the path-way of life. A single exception to this general rule of brotherly kindness, is furnished by the *Universalist Trumpet*, published in Boston, and edited by Rev. THOMAS WHITTEMORE. This Christian minister, to whom many people are accustomed to look for an exemplification of those principles which lead to "PEACE ON EARTH," and bring "GOOD WILL TO MEN," we regret to say, has indulged the lower faculties of his nature, in the unprofitable effort to ridicule, personally, the writers for the Messenger. If we were governed purely by selfish motives, we should not regret such attacks from that, or any other quarter; for, while they are perfectly harmless to us, they will very likely recoil and injure their authors. But, when we reflect that Mr. Whittemore stands before the world as a minister of the gospel—an avowed expounder of the principles of the Prince of Peace—a living representative, and professed impersonation and teacher of a doctrine based upon the idea of LOVE TO GOD AND MAN,—we do think he would have manifested greater wisdom, had he taken a little more time for reflection, before entering the arena of personal detraction, as a voluntary gladiator, ready to cut down those who do not choose to be saved, by taking refuge under the narrow folds of a sectarian banner. We well know the force of prejudice, and have felt the withering power of sectarianism; but neither the one nor the other, shall deter us from an honest pursuance of that line of duty, which our allegiance to reason and truth requires. The spirit of the beautiful philosophy we love, expands the fraternal sentiment, and inculcates unity and peace. We can assure the editor of the Trumpet, that he has not only failed to wound our feelings, but has also failed to engender in our hearts, a single spark of unkindness. We shall rejoice with him, and for him, when his mind shall become freed from prejudice, and when the dark mantle of bigotry, which, like a funeral pall, envelopes the sect to which he belongs, as well as others, shall be so far lifted up as to reveal to the understanding of all, the beautiful and important truth, that God can, and WILL, draw all his children to himself, by an inherent power of His own, even if they should fail to believe in a special plan, or to seek salvation through the darkened and contracted channels of intolerant sectarianism. Then will the spirit of strife and personal detraction, which naturally arises from the antagonistic institutions of religious parties, give way in the march of progress, to the more genial, and fraternizing influences, which flow from an expanded conception of the religion of nature, and the spirit of the true God.

We repeat, that we have no desire to meet Mr. Whittemore with the weapons he has chosen; we prefer to repay his harshness with words of brotherly love. It is but just, however, that we should remind him of the high position he has assumed as a public instructor, and a contemner of illiberality in other sects, and suggest, that if he would secure the respect of the world to aid him in his mission, it would be well that his *outer* expressions which are indicative of the *interior* man, should, hereafter, exhibit that mild and liberal spirit—that fraternal regard for the human race, which "angels love to gaze upon," and which illustrates a heart that feels no enmity against God or man. A. M.

God's smile is in the sun-light; those who dwell above earth's clouds and shadows, enjoy the light of His smile forever.

S. B. B.

☞ The kind letter of T. S. S., of Randolph, Cattaraugus County, N. Y., with a substantial remittance, came safely to hand. Many thanks, brother.

Mr. Milo A. Townsend, of New Brighton, Beaver Co., Pa., is authorized to act as Agent for the Messenger, in Western Pennsylvania and Northern Ohio.

What is the Sabbath?

The Sabbath is a day of rest, originally suggested and established by the Israelites or Jews in the patriarchal age, which age may be considered as a mediatorial or transition era, just half way between Savagism and Republicanism; the form of government to which the progressions and developments of the present age are advancing the universal family of man. Sabbath is called Sunday, because it was, subsequently to its establishment, dedicated or consecrated to the Sun, by the most ancient Druids, and also by the early religious sects in Persia. In Persia there are Magi, or priests of the Sun, who discharge what they are taught to believe to be their sacerdotal duties chiefly on that day.

Sunday was dedicated to the Sun; Monday to the Moon; Tuesday to the god Tuesco; Wednesday to the god Wednos; Thursday to the god Thor, &c.; but, for a few centuries past, the Sabbath has been set apart by man, who made it originally, for purposes of rest, meditation and worship.

As a social institution, this day is worthy of commemoration and undying respect; but as a religious institution, it may be forgotten; because it has always caused that class of persons for whom it was designed—I mean the laborer and the irreligious—to do on other days through the week, what it is *never right* to do at any time,—supposing that, by not doing the same on the Sabbath, their souls would pass to heaven free from pollution and sin. It is right to live every day as correctly as on Sunday. To live and act every day as we would on Sunday, and on Sunday as we would every day—thus living a holy and righteous life at all times—is surely more like our Heavenly Father; whose tides ebb and flow in our seas; whose birds sing; whose flowers bloom; whose Sun shines; and whose innumerable Orbs roll on through the immeasurable firmament, all just as much on the Sabbath as any other day!

Fatigued with the toils of the week, man and beast require rest and refreshment. The beast refreshes his nature, the aspirations of which are never higher than the granary; but man, whose aspirations are toward Immortality and eternal Happiness, may put aside the ideas and movements connected with material things, and repair to the sanctuary for spiritual culture and elevation. This is the rational way to celebrate the Sabbath; only let not the sanctuary, in which you worship the ONE TRUE GOD, be always composed of wood, brick and clay. No! Seek God in his universal Temple. If you are moved to read the "Word of God," go forth to the highest mountain, to the humblest valley, to the living forest, to the simplest flower; and just as much as your Love is developed and your Wisdom is unfolded, will be the magnitude and practicability of the lessons you receive, from these beautiful chapters in the everlasting Volume.

A. J. D.

A Theological Argument.

We make the following extract from an article in the Springfield Republican, a respectable newspaper, whose editor is a member of a sectarian church:

"It is expected that all men in the 'superior condition,' who are not free moral agents, will take such liberties with the meaning of words and terms, in the English language, as they may see fit to be obliged to take. The public would like to be informed by Mr. Andrew Jackson Davis who Jehovah was agent for when engaged in the agency of creation?"

We do not admire the *taste* of our brother who conceived and penned the above sentiments. It would have seemed better if he had attempted to answer the arguments of Mr. Davis on the subject of man's free agency, instead of manifesting an apparent want of respect for the Creator of the universe, by comparing him to a mere *agent*, with limited powers like dependent man, whom He has created. It is a pleasing evidence of the mental progression of the human family, that very few can be found at the age of manhood, who cannot readily distinguish and understand *something* of the relations between the necessitous and trammelled finite, and the free and boundless Infinite—between the mere

creature and the great CREATOR. We are not inclined to blame, but to pity that brother, who is so far from the *superior condition* that his mental vision is obscured by the dark shroud of a false theology. We advise him to turn to the light gradually. The bright rays of the sun at meridian should never be allowed to strike too suddenly on the enfeebled optic nerve—made so by the darkness of popular superstition.

A. M.

CORRESPONDENCE.

In the midst of the powerful stream of opposition that flows down upon us, from the self-elevated, but dark and gloomy fountains of religious bigotry, it is refreshing and cheering to our spirits, to turn to the many tokens of kindness and encouragement, which spring up spontaneously in the hearts of those who readily perceive and appreciate the importance of our mission, and which reach us in the form of welcome letters by every mail. As a specimen of the tone of our correspondence, coming to us from many sections of our wide-spread country, we take the liberty of giving the following extracts from letters, the first, written by a lady of Southampton, who, although personally a stranger, is evidently no stranger to the spirit of the new and harmonious philosophy—the second, by a distinguished literary gentleman of Georgia:

SOUTHAMPTON, Ms., Aug. 18, 1850.

DEAR BROTHERS: I rejoice to know that there are those who, in the midst of the darkness of prejudice and pious bigotry, are breaking away from the narrow bounds by which minds have been so long held, and launch out, untrammelled, into the broad field of universal truth, and explore those mysteries which have been hid for ages, but which are now made manifest to the children of men.

We live in an age when new truths are breaking out, when light is pressing itself into dark corners, and flying with mighty speed; and men, with all their wisdom, can no longer cover up or smother its rays. All that remains for them to do, is to advance with its hastening footsteps, or be trampled beneath its mighty tread. Newspaper paragraphs and pulpit eloquence can no longer stop its progress. Its force is like the torrent, irresistible.

I am glad to learn that you have, like Jesus of Nazareth, been willing to make yourselves of "no reputation" for conscience sake, and stand forth as lights in this community. May your voice be loud, and may its tones of love fall on the ear of the sinner kept in darkness by the teachings of men, establishing the great truth that man was born, not merely to die, but to live forever; that a faithful Providence is continually drawing him onward to immortality and eternal life. I trust you have counted the cost in taking this stand. You probably know and have felt that no garland of roses will encircle your brows, and no burst of applause will greet your ears, but that, on the contrary, your badge of honor will be a crown of thorns. I find it costs all that a man hath, yes, and woman too, to identify one's self with any reform, or stand in defense of any new truths outside of the church; and I am aware that it is out of the church that new truths spring forth, flourish, and bear fruit unto eternal life.

The title, "Spirit Messenger," has a charm to me, from the fact that my little family have already entered the spirit-land, and I love to think of them as "Ministering Spirits"—messengers of mercy, to help me onward in the path which leads to God.

Yours, in the cause of truth,

T. R. R.

WASHINGTON, GA., August, 15th, 1850.

DEAR FRIENDS,—I have just received the first No. of "The Spirit Messenger," and am truly pleased with the manner in which it is arranged—reminding me as it does of the so-much-beloved "Univocalum," whose discontinuance has caused so much regret throughout the Union.

I am glad to see that A. J. Davis and Fanny Green are both contributors to it. Mrs. Green is a lady of elegant abilities. Her "Etheld," published in "The American People's Journal,"



is one of the finest Mythical Tales ever written. Besides, she writes beautiful poetry.

Your paper is beautifully printed, and I am anxious to hear of your entire success.

My soul delights to wander over the flower-enameled fields of your elysium, where the souls of the great departed have wandered, in days gone by — for it is in this field, and in *this alone*, that our enraptured souls can hold blissful converse with those beautiful angels who were once the idols of our hearts here on earth.

It is a ruby star which rises up in this morning of time to herald us to the Everlasting Day. May you never cease in your efforts until you make it a Lucifer of the most glorious Apocalypse to the souls of men.

Wishing you all happiness,

I remain yours, most truly,

Editors of "*The Spirit Messenger*."

T. H. C.

Supernaturalism.

The term *Nature* is properly used to express all the innumerable forms, both visible and invisible, existing in the whole universe, which are an effect and manifestation of the Creator's power. It comprehends not only those things which may be seen with the outward eye, but also those subtle and refined elements which, from their exalted position in the progressive scale of existence, are beyond the reach of the human vision. Nature therefore, embraces both the *physical* and the *spiritual*, for one is as properly a work of God, and as necessarily subject to established laws, as the other. In short, everything in the whole universe may be comprehended in two great departments — God, the Cause — Nature, the Effect. The supposition, then, that there is, or ever has been anything, less than the Divine Mind itself, which is supernatural or above nature, involves an impossibility and absurdity.

I am aware that the plan of the old Theology is based, to a great extent, on the occurrence of events which are regarded as supernatural. The basis, however, which is here recognized, is as frail and untenable as the system itself is corrupt and false. The events supposed to be supernatural have been so regarded, merely because the laws by which they were produced have not been understood.

Standing as it were in the vestibule of creation, we are able to penetrate but a small part of its sublime mysteries, and hence, not comprehending all the essential principles operating in Nature, we have been inclined to limit them to the boundary of our own vision, and imagine that those occurrences which cannot be readily explained, must be *above* or *beyond* nature, resulting from some special exercise of divine power. When, however, we take a more extended survey of the Creator's works; when we consider that everything below God which exists as an effect of His power is a part of nature, and that those creations which are spiritual and invisible to the outward sense, are governed by laws as fixed and immutable as those with which we are acquainted in this material sphere, we shall realize that there is and can be nothing supernatural, but that all events, however mysterious and wonderful in their character, are the result of established principles, which, though not at present comprehended, shall be known as we advance in knowledge, and the light of a superior wisdom breaks upon the soul.

R. P. A.

INTERESTING WORK.—Our readers will be pleased to learn, as we do, that Mr. WILLIAM FISHBOUGH, an accomplished and well known Psychological writer, and one of the editors of the late "*Universe*," is preparing for publication, a small volume comprising the history of spiritual intercourse in all ages, and especially in modern times, through clairvoyance, the rappings, &c. Such a work is much needed, and from our knowledge of the research and ability of Mr. Fishbough, we cannot doubt that it will come quite up to the demand of the age.

A. M.

✍ Letters for Mr. A. J. DAVIS should be addressed to him at Cambridge, Mass., where he will probably reside for one year, or more.

Poetry.

SPIRITUAL PRESENCE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

We are never alone, the angels are near.
We have nothing to weep for, nothing to fear;
Our tears are all dried, our hearts need not sigh,
Sweet spirits are near us — the angels are nigh.

Be still — for they whisper, the voice is within,
The low, gentle sound is not heard 'midst the din;
Not in the whirl of the gay world doth it tell
The words which, in stillness, it breathes, "*all is well*."

Listen to that music and hark to that tone
Which breathes to thee sweetly, "*thou art not alone*" —
Be strong, for thy guardian spirit is by;
Be bless'd, for pure angels are hovering nigh.

Enter thy closet, shut the door, and be still,
Subdued be thy heart, and resigned be thy will;
God's messengers come, list ye what they impart,
Aye, hear them, and write what they teach, on thy heart.

Fear not, they are here, and start not at that sound,
For the place where you stand is hallowed ground,
And the spirits have come, to proclaim to man
That *life is immortal*, and not a brief span.

Too long have we grieved, clad in mourning and gloom,
Too long have we bow'd 'neath the power of the tomb;
'T is time that the world more enlightened had grown,
For through the grave's portals the true light has shone.

No more shall its darkness turn day into night,
Obscuring the soul's life, and dimming its light —
But the Truth shall proclaim that "*death is no more*,"
Our griefs and our sorrows — their reign shall be o'er.

Then list to the sounds when ye hear them close by,
Start not, and fear not, for the living are nigh;
And not from the grave do they come to our side,
To be both on earth, and to Heaven our guide.

They come from fair worlds, from a glorious sphere,
From their bright homes on high to be with us here —
They leave us not alone, but are watching nigh,
With the power of that love which never can die.

They enter our chambers, they pass to and fro!
O listen to catch the low sounds as they go;
A spirit is near thee — fear not — 't is a brother,
A sister, perhaps, or thine own lov'd mother.

A father, it may be, who seeks his dear child,
To reclaim what, perhaps, the world has beguiled;
It may be the lov'd child thou long hast thought dead,
Clothed with new beauty, standing close by thy bed —

A son, or a daughter, who watches thy sleep,
Close, close by the pillow their vigils they keep;
Or thine infant has come, and breathes a low tone,
"*Mother, I love thee, and I still am thine own.*"

The passage from earth severs not the heart's ties,
Love is of the soul, and the soul never dies;
Heart draws to heart, and it is felt thro' each sphere,
And true love dies not which has once been born here.

And the hand which so gently touches thine now,
Or passes so soothingly over thy brow —
Is that which caressed thee in days that are gone;
'T will guide thee in love to Eternity's dawn.

Cambridge, Aug. 14, 1850.

SILONA.

Miscellaneous Department.

A PARABLE.

Early in the twilight of the morning, the sage Hillel walked out with his disciples in the vicinity of Mount Hermon. They talked together of faith, of the higher world, and of divine wisdom.

Then asked his disciples: Rabboni, to what dost thou compare the divine wisdom?

Hillel lifted his hand, and said: Behold! there shines its symbol, the morning dawn! Fog and mist still lie upon the hills and vallies, and earth rests in silence waiting, while the gates of heaven are now quietly and gradually unfolded.

We understand, said the pupils; it comes from above, and takes up its abode with quiet believing humility.

Again Hillel lifted his hand to the morning twilight, and said: See, it now bows itself down to the dark, slumbering earth. Already it pours forth, over hill and vale, a soft, lovely light; and inanimate creation shines in more than earthly splendor.

Nature grows in signification and import! said the disciples. Behold! said the teacher, how its gently undulating stream of light rests densely on earth, like a band that unites earth with Heaven.

Man with God, softly whispered the disciples.

It does not indeed, give out the brightness of day, nor does it shed around a solemn darkness; but it announces, with its mild light, the source of day, which retires behind its veil. We night-wanderers look up to it with confidence and joy, for we know it promises the day.

You perceive how fragrantly Hermon smells and renews his strength; the plants grow green, and the buds bloom in the light of the dawn. The dew, distilled out of its bosom, fell gently down on earth; and see how it now sits sparkling on every leaf and blade of grass, like the pearls of the Orient.

So faith begets love! whispered the disciples.

Light and strength, too! observed Hillel. Lift up your eyes, he proceeded, as he pointed towards Aurora; she now sends forth the youthful sun. Nourished on her maternal bosom, and his head crowned with her golden beams, he enters on his course full of strength and courage. Clouds and storms do not drive him back.

An image of the man whose heart is filled with divine wisdom, cried the disciples.

On his high, heavenly way, proceeded Hillel, he goes on in quietness and strength, and dispenses a thousand-fold blessings, a son of Aurora.

When he has finished his course, just before the approach of night, she comes again as the evening twilight, and receives him with motherly embrace.—*Krummacher's Parables.*

An Instructive Lesson.

A merchant in London had a dispute with a Quaker, respecting the settlement of an account. The merchant was determined to bring the question into Court, a proceeding which the Quaker earnestly deprecated; using every argument in his power to convince the merchant of his error, but the latter was inflexible. Desirous to make a last effort, the Quaker called at his house one morning, and inquired of the servant if his master was at home. The merchant hearing the inquiry, and knowing the voice, called aloud from the top of the stairs—"Tell that rascal I'm not at home." The Quaker looking toward him, calmly said, "Well, friend, God put thee in a better mind." The merchant, struck with the meekness of the reply, and having more deliberately investigated the matter, became convinced that the Quaker was right and he was wrong. He requested to see him, and after acknowledging his error, he said, "I have one question to ask you—how were you able, with such patience, on various occasions, to bear my abuse?" "Friend," replied the Quaker, "I was naturally as hot and violent as thou

art. I knew that to indulge this temper was sin, and I found that it was imprudent. I observed that men in a passion always speak loud, and I thought that if I could control my voice, I should suppress my passion. I have therefore made it a rule never to suffer my voice to rise above a certain key, and by a careful observance of this rule, I have with the blessing of God, entirely mastered my natural temper." The Quaker reasoned philosophically, and the merchant, as every one else may be, was benefited by the example.

A Tradition of Jesus.

Jesus and two or three of his disciples went down one Summer day, from Jerusalem to Jericho. Peter—the ardent and eager Peter—was, as usual, by the Teacher's side. On the road to Olivet lay a horse-shoe, which the Teacher desired Peter to pick up; but which Peter let lie, as he did not think it worth stooping for. The Teacher stooped for it, and exchanged it in the village for a measure of cherries. These cherries he carried (as eastern men now carry such things,) in the bosom-folds of his dress. When they had to ascend the ridge, and the road lay between heated rocks, and over rugged stones, and among glaring white dust, Peter became tormented with heat and thirst, and fell behind. Then the Teacher dropped a ripe cherry at every few steps; and Peter eagerly stooped for them. When they were all done, Jesus turned to him, and said with a smile, "He who is above stooping to a small thing, will have to bend his back to many lesser things."

Language of Colors.

Nothing in nature is more beautiful than her colors; every flower is compounded of different shades. Almost every mountain is clothed with herbs, different from the one opposite to it, and every field has its peculiar hue. Color is to scenery what entablature is to architecture, and harmony to language. Colors are indeed so fascinating that in the East there has long prevailed a method of signifying the passions which is called the love language of colors. This rhetoric was introduced into Spain by the Arabians.

Yellow, expressed doubt; black, sorrow; green, hope; purple, constancy; blue, jealousy; white, content; and red, the greatest possible satisfaction. In regard to mourning, it may not be irrelevant to remark, that though Europeans mourn in black, the ancient Spartans, Romans, and Chinese, mourned in white; the Egyptians, in brown; the Turks in violet; while Kings and Cardinals indicate their grief in purple.—*Harmonies of Nature.*

The Stars.

To go into solitude, a man needs to retire as much from his chamber, as from society. I am not weary whilst I read and write, though nobody is with me. But if a man would be alone let him look at the stars. The rays that come from those heavenly worlds, will separate care between him and vulgar things. One might think the atmosphere was made transparent with this design, to give man, in the heavenly bodies, the perpetual presence of the sublime. Seen in the streets of cities, how great they are. It the stars should appear one night in a thousand years, how would men believe and adore; and preserve for many generations the remembrance of the city of God which had been shown! But every night come out these preachers of beauty, and light the universe, with their admonishing smile.

EMERSON.

TERMS.—The SPIRIT MESSENGER will be issued every Saturday, by MUNN & AMBLER, from their office in Elm Street, a few rods west of the Post Office, 2d story in Byers' building, directly under the office of the Hampden Post. Price of subscription \$2 per annum, payable in all cases in advance. For a remittance of \$10, six copies will be forwarded.

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