

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.

HUMAN HAPPINESS AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.

WRITTEN FOR THE SPIRIT MESSENGER
BY O. S. WAIT.

From following out thoughts suggested by a tale entitled "The Don of Dantzic," in Frazer's Magazine, I arrived at a truth which has proved of exceeding value to me. It is this: *Happiness does not consist in accomplishing certain objects, or attaining certain desires, but in exercising the measure of our own faculties.* By our faculties, I mean those of which we are in conscious possession. For it will not be denied that the majority of mankind have latent powers and capacities of which they are totally ignorant.

There is no doubt, as sages have declared, that in the early undeveloped stages of our race, man was less unhappy than now. His conscious faculties were few and were proportionably easy of gratification. He was then more nearly allied to the lower animals, who, if the instincts of their nature are satisfied, are absolutely happy, and exhibit their delight in their different ways—singing, chattering, frolicking, or gamboling, as may be.

Look at the inferior races of men now, with their few and simple wants. Where they have no inner aspiration goading them to something unattained with the spur of discontent, they are what they appear—happy to the extent of their present capacities.

The slave, or the serf, who has not heard of freedom, or dreamed that aught higher than his lot belonged to him—how light-hearted how merry is he! That happy carelessness enjoyed by the bond-slave in his hours of recreation, has often been the envy of his lordly owner. And in Shakspeare's Henry V., miserable sleep-forsaken royalty soliloquizes eloquently on him,

"Who, with a body filled and vacant mind,
Gets him to rest crammed with distressful bread,
And all night sleeps in Elysium!"

One of Burke's ablest essays is that in which he shows forth the advantages, in point of happiness, which savage life has over civilized society.

This being so, says one, "Where ignorance is bliss, 't is folly to be wise." No, no, friend poet! for civilized man is far in advance of the savage in point of development. That he is unhappy is because his awakened faculties are not gratified. Many style the present yearning, unsatisfactory order of things "a transition state," and so it doubtless is.

Paul declares Christ to have been "made perfect through sufferings;" and that Humanity, of which he is the type, must not hope to be harmoniously developed other than at the expense of present happiness. For to excite degraded and undeveloped individuals to amend their condition, or their morals—to stimulate them to intellectual culture, it is first necessary to render them discontented with their present selves on these points. As regards the first of these, viz: the amendment of their condition, many of the present generation have progressed far enough to be fully conscious that they possess natural rights and faculties, of the existence of which they as a class were before totally ignorant, and in the enjoyment of which they are oppressively curtailed. They suffer; but they must suffer yet more before they will, uniting with their fellows, eventually and after numerous abortive endeavors, effect that social regenera-

tion their necessities require. Witness the English laborer,—he has become a miserable, restless grumbler. Yet even his step into misery is still a step forward. And the soul-chafed miner or factory worker is far in advance of the vacant-minded, happy slave, who knoweth not but it is right that he should be a slave.

If man's destiny be as that of the lower animals—if it be mere happiness in a certain fixed state, rather than development through progressive states, then it is better to let the contented one alone, no matter how degraded he may be:—it is better not to whisper the word "freedom" into the ear of the down-trodden—it is better not to excite a desire for knowledge in the breast of the unlettered—it is better then to conceal from the serf that he belongs to humanity and not to the soil—better to withhold from woman the knowledge that she has from her Creator the same inalienable rights as man; and better to leave the hardened sinner the pleasure of glorying in his foulest crimes, and of boasting over his fellow convicts his excess of villany.

But the spirit of the human being is not that of the beast. No, ever in its development it "goeth upward."

When man is unhappy though, he does not always, from his deficient education, comprehend the truth that his restless cravings and yearnings are the voices of his inner nature calling for better and purer food. And therefore, instead of seeking nobler aliment, which is, alas! too generally quite withheld from him by the unjust regulations of society—he, too, often strives to satisfy his spirit's hunger with the husks of low excitement and dissipation. If by nature and other circumstances, he is rendered utterly blind to his own high destiny, he continues to misunderstand his wants, and wades but deeper into the mire where lieth that swine-food. Perhaps, finally, in this starvation of soul, he grows desperate and commits crime;—crime, in the eyes of that ignorant tyrant, Society, which by neglecting to cultivate the germs of his human faculties, has as it were forced him to become that monstrous abortion—an animal with the form and speech of a man.

But though individuals are thus "lost in the wilderness," humanity as a whole does not therefore retrograde in its course of progressive development. "All as warnings or examples stand," and the bitter experiences—the crimes even of the individual, are some of the means by which the race is taught wisdom. And in his search for good, the enlightened traveler shuns carefully those paths which, as thus sadly proved, lead not unto the object of his desire.

The young, upward-yearning soul in its aspirations and inter-rogations, has hitherto met but negative responses. He is told that in this world all resources fail of their promised pleasures—that here friendship will wither—that love is a mockery, and virtue a martyrdom. The recorded past informs him that the well-trodden paths of wealth, fame, or power, are destitute of all soul-satisfying requisites. He bears much of Christianity; but the way Jesus trod he finds is unknown in society, though frequent the false guide-boards there that point to it.

Thus hath many a young soul beat his wing at every wire in his cage, and, struggling, bruised himself all vainly.

But lo, now there is for him a positive prospect of an opening of the only door of exit from physical, mental, and moral thralldom. That opening is a scientific knowledge of man in all his relations.

Twenty-three centuries ago, Socrates, a barefooted wanderer, beheld on the temple of Apollo this inscription: "Know thyself. This brief injunction—his really mind to action—he thought, questioned therefrom, till sublimated, he rose above all men." There in the temple

the "Father of Philosophy." In the words of Cicero, he "first brought philosophy from heaven to dwell upon earth—applied her divine doctrines to the common purposes of life, the advancement of human happiness, and the true discernment of good and evil." Socrates, then, first taught the necessity of self-knowledge to intellectual man. But though the ideas he introduced have been rolling on in an increasing stream thus long, still man has not as yet been able to grasp understandingly that greatest of sciences, a knowledge of himself.

Know thyself! That word hath echoed down the corridors of time, far above and yet unnoticed as if far beneath, that learned savor who stoopeth intently over fossils and sea-shells. It has floated alike over the astronomer, the philosopher, and the law-giver. Unheeded by all save the physiologist, and his observations were directed to the outer frame rather than the inner faculties.

Man has been thus uninstructed as regards that which most nearly concerned him, while, as suggested by another, the intellect of earth, all science and learning, absorbingly engrossed in comparatively puerile investigations, have lent no rays of reason to show why the creation of humanity, unlike that of the lower kingdoms of nature, appears an unsuccessful experiment.

Governments and rulers have directed the circumstances of man without knowing him. What wonder, then, that he has been but misruled! What wonder that he has so often proved ignorant and depraved, sickly and deformed,—a luxury-palled rich man, or a beggar starved to desperation. Without some knowledge of the extent of man's faculties, and the varied influences that modify them, one is no more qualified to teach and govern human beings than the ignorant, earth-immured miner, who never even breathed the air of a garden, is qualified to tend and cultivate its flowers.

But there has arisen the morning harbinger of that day, wherein will shine that sun indeed, the true knowledge of man,—wherein will begin to put forth the glad growth of a harmoniously developed humanity!

Buchanan, thou star of the dawning! Those who rise earliest from their sleep of ignorance, and go out to gaze upon the heaven of truth, see thee first;—they watch thy rising, and thank God.

Yet Buchanan came but in the natural order of heaven-guided progression. There were bright ones who preceded him—stars of our night before the herald of our day! Gall—whose first directed science to the investigation of the brain, in order to obtain a positive knowledge of man; Spurzheim, the worthy disciple of a worthy master; and Combe, the able, large-hearted physiologist. What advanced mind have we that hath not received some portion of the warmth that expanded it from Andrew Combe!

Honor be to them all! But now we naturally turn more eagerly to him of the brighter beaming, whose radiance will soon be blent with that of the wide-spread dawn.

For a detailed exposition of the Science of Man, which Buchanan is giving to the world, I refer the reader to himself. He needs no expounder. No pen could explain the results of his investigations more simply, or demonstrate their bearing on the advancement of mankind more conclusively than his own.

But in the continuation of this essay I will dwell somewhat on the fact that a knowledge of man holds forth to us the hope that the world henceforward will see her greatest intellects, not the one-sided, distorted beings they have too frequently proved, but *whole* men! And as whole men laboring with an irresistibly regenerating power for the lifting up of the masses to the true stature of humanity.

The great Buchanan has triumphantly demonstrated the existence in the human brain of what the meagerness of our language forces us to call opposites and antagonists, as if they were natural and eternal enemies, when really each is essential to the formation of character—when really it is in proportion to the harmony of their *united* action that man approaches human perfection.

But in the arrangement of the balance of power between these opposites, the selfish and animal nature on the one part, and

the moral and intellectual on the other, the former must ever be subordinate to the latter; because where the higher nature is in the ascendant, a greater variety of faculties are put in action, and the individual, consequently, is a more mighty agent than when his lower passions sway him. For behold as regards the moral nature, it cannot act at all in the human soul, unless in the capacity of a superior!

This is a fact worthy of deep consideration. Intellect may be rendered a subordinate, but the moral nature never. A man may prostitute his intellect to the gratification of his selfishness—he may make it pander to his vices; but he cannot make benevolence or conscientiousness, or any higher sentiment, stoop to aid, or bend to approve, the dominance of one evil propensity.

The moral faculties, when they act, are ever true to their mission, and surely as the moment of passion or crime is past, and the individual gives back the reins of his soul into the hands of these, his heaven-appointed guides, so surely the first act of their resumed government is to remonstrate with him on his errors. He then, and consequently, suffers what is called remorse.

The hardened sinner never knows remorse, because he is never swayed by his moral nature. In the vicious, remorse has ever been considered the indispensable antecedent of reform. As Festus says:

"I am glad I suffer for my faults;—

I would not, if I could, be bad and happy."

A sinful act, or content in sin, indicates in the individual, then, a dormant condition of a portion of his brain; consequently, he who is not controlled by his moral nature does not exercise all his faculties. For that the moral nature shall rule, by no means infers the destruction of the lower—only its subordination.

I know that this is contrary to the received notions of the past, which are that every inferior propensity must be eradicated from a being before he can be wisely happy. But this is not so. God has made no mistake in his creation. He has not made one propensity that is not indispensable. All that is necessary in regard to the faculties of man, is that they be reduced to order in their degrees of activity.

For, as in the arrangements of Nature the animal kingdom is placed below the human race, so must the animal instincts and lower propensities of the individual be rendered subordinate to his higher, his more distinguishingly human faculties.

It seems from what may thus far be inferred, that in proportion as a man is a foe to virtue, his influence and capabilities are reduced in power—he becomes, as it were, but a fraction of a man. And it is impossible, thus partially developed as he is, for him to do half so much to oppose Truth, as the *whole* man is capable of doing to assist her.

Had but ten good men been found, Sodom might have been saved—so powerful are those who by cultivating their moral natures leave room for the action of the entire man.

This is why our few morally controlled and intellectual men have, despite the opposing influences of the many selfish, been enabled to advance the world perceptibly along the pathway towards more light and higher excellence.

We cannot but rejoice for earth in its few "whole men," for now we know that from the fiery destruction of sin and ignorance the great city of Humanity will yet be saved!

The development of the individual is necessarily gradual. It is true, however, that a powerful outward stimulant will often excite the selfish or vindictive temporarily to noble acts. I was told lately of a case in point. It related to two unfortunately constituted individuals who bore towards each other an abiding hatred. A dear and mutual friend of both died suddenly. They met at his funeral. Then and there their higher natures were roused to such unwonted action that their hate towards each other entirely disappeared. And with the utmost sincerity, they proffered mutual regrets for the past and promises for the future, while they humbly implored each other's forgiveness. They parted friends. In a short time the excitement had passed;—old propensities resumed their sway, till they came to regard one another with as little of love as before.

The excitement of religious revivals among those habitually governed by their lower natures, produces like temporary results. With a knowledge of the Science of Man, however, the moral teacher could lead his convert, step by step, to that species of excellence which is abiding—not spasmodic nor periodical. Hardly had man's nature began to be studied as a science, than a purer and higher-toned theology began to be widely adopted. And I earnestly recommend to the converts of the New Philosophy an acquaintance with that science of which their spiritual religion is the outgrowth. For of course real religion must be the natural result of that which tends to make men comprehend, practically as well as theoretically, that the true sheep's clothing is part of himself—nourished from his inner being, and of every-day wear. Genuine religion is the capstone of morality, and cannot exist unless upheld by it.

It is essential, then, to the true development of a man, that he be pre-eminently moral and religious. It is also essential that he possess a knowledge of the physiological laws of his being and be conscientiously obedient thereunto. For it is impossible that a soul in a diseased body should be other than a partially developed being. The sick man cannot be greatly good or greatly wise. Bodily languor, it is true, often reduces the excitement in the animal region of the brain, and the patient consequently appears milder and less viciously disposed than when in health. But if, as is usual in such cases, this languor be general—if the moral region is likewise inactive, expect no permanently good result.

It has been stated that the selfish and animal instincts are essential to our well-being and our usefulness, when their activity is in just proportion to that of our higher developments. And this, because they contribute—when rightly restrained—vigor, and impetus, and order to every virtue, and every excellence.

That man is no virtuous man who refrains from evil through fear of popular opinion, or any other punishment, be it human or divine. Such negative goodness is mere selfishness enlightened by intellect, and may exist where the moral nature is, as it were, lifeless.

Yes, to be a whole man, the moral must be active, superior, controlling; and controlling not inert characterless faculties and propensities, but warm, living, healthy subjects.

To illustrate this, suppose combativeness be roused to prompt some decided demonstration; but the moral nature being active receives immediate cognizance thereof, and, being more highly positive, reacts so as to prevent the propensity from following its blind impulse, and wins its over rather, as it were, an ally to unite with itself. For at such a meeting of positive and negative, there is immediately imparted by the subordinate a certain degree of vigor and tone to our higher natures which produces moral strength.

The most vigorous moral nature is his who has often struggled, yet come off finally victorious. As preparation to his mission, Christ was tempted forty days in the wilderness. At the close of these forty days, his superior nature became so active that his interior sight was opened, and he became conscious of the ministration of angels. There is a pleasure the untired one never indeed knows;—it is that of a fierce temptation conquered.

An individual who has advanced in his own self culture till the moral generally predominates, is straightway incited by all his higher ruling sentiments to extend to others the blessings he enjoys, and to aid in developing universal humanity to true harmony. Even his selfish nature, enlightened as it now is, would prompt him to this; for to cease to be governed by his higher sentiments for one moment, subjects him to pain. And since he is surrounded by inferiorly organized beings, and moves within a falsely arranged society, he is continually liable—now by the sudden attack of some vindictive, truth-regardless, and arrogant opponent; and now, greater cause, by being the witness of some outrageous act of oppression done to another,—continually liable to have his lower nature, by such violent stimulants, temporarily excited above his higher. And since after every such excitement he suffers self-reproach, his selfish nature even would be sufficient to prompt him to desire the elevation of his race.

His superior nature, as before stated, most certainly does. All act upon his reflective faculties, to incite them to the devising of the best means to accomplish this desirable end.

The higher spiritual intelligences he invokes assist him, and thus greatly stimulated, his intellect becomes proportionably powerful, till there standeth forth this fact, however generally unknown, that the true, whole-souled philanthropist is the greatest man of his day! And other men, be they mighty as poets, historians, logicians, divines, physiologists or statesmen,—as science-exponents or novelists,* become but instruments in his hands for the prosecution of the interests of that great aim which is to him more vital than the pulse-throb of his heart!

Let it not be imagined, though his aim be thus beyond him—be unattainable, in any very great degree, in his earthly life-time or in many succeeding life-times, that the truly developed philanthropist is therefore, as are those in lower stages of progress, rendered unhappy because of delay in the fulfillment of his wishes; for he is exercising all his faculties, and that is happiness. And moreover, though he be baffled in the immediate consummation of his wishes, he knows progression is sure, though gradual. The husbandman is not wretched nor despairing because the seed he planted yesterday does not yield him the full-grown ear to day.

Where superior sentiments are pre-eminently developed, the soul is planted firmly upon the rock of an unshaken hope. The world's best men have ever been most hopeful as to their own destiny and that of their race. And this hope is to them present happiness; for, thanks be to Heaven! man's thirsty soul, in its journeyings from one desired oasis of life to another, has discovered that unswerving hope is real as possession!

Thus far-seeing, and thus hopeful, he who cultivates his whole being to harmonious development, may not only all the wiser help, but all the heartier cheer, those of his less fortunate fellows, lower down on the mountain-side; who, though upward gazing, see little because bounded by a narrower horizon;—cheer them with such right, stirring, heart-leaping tones as those of Greeley, when he cried—"Patience, impetuous souls! the day dawns, though the morning air is chilly!"

* The true sphere of the novelist—as yet scarcely comprehended by writer or reader—embraces those of all the foregoing. The novelist wields a wider influence than any other author, because more generally read. He is more generally read because he exercises himself and gratifies in his reader a greater range of human faculties than other literary men. Humanity has much to hope from the novelist of the future. With a high aim and wisely directed effort, and a harmoniously developed brain, he will be acknowledged, with his greater mental scope and powers of illustration, to be a more effective teacher than any other writer.

Rockwell, III.

Vagaries of Insanity.

In the form of insanity, combined with general paralysis, the patient will sometimes assume the highest rank in the navy, army, or state, altogether. In all asylums there are patients who consider themselves divine persons. A very elevated idea of their talents and powers is extremely common among those who have recently become insane. They detail the vast plans which they were about to execute, and deplore the loss of time and money to which they are subjected. Their demands for writing or drawing materials are extensive; and they make ambitious but fragmentary efforts to sketch designs for railways, palaces, or even asylums; or to write poems such as the world has never seen. One of our most intelligent patients has spent months in painting on the walls of three sides of his bed-room innumerable faces, and figures, and forms, representing the defective state of the social and political world; and has exercised in this work what may almost be called an eloquent ingenuity. As the three walls set forth "what is," the fourth is destined to indicate "what ought to be;" but at present these words alone are painted on it, and a mysterious blank remains to be supplied.—*Dr. Conolly.*

The human soul is the finite representative of the great I

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

R. P. AMBLER, EDITOR.

SPRINGFIELD, MASS., JULY 26, 1851.

THE CONVICTIONS OF A READER.

When individuals have required evidence to substantiate the truths contained in that stupendous volume entitled "Nature's Divine Revelations," we have been accustomed to refer them to the work itself, believing that its own strong appeals to the interior reason of man will convey to the enlightened mind the appropriate evidence of its truthfulness. To those who will freely investigate and honestly search for truth, this internal evidence is found to be irresistible; and accordingly the more carefully and extensively this work is studied, the wider and deeper is the spread of the philosophy of Nature. In illustration of this encouraging fact, we may here introduce the following interesting letter, published in the Greenville Journal, Illinois, as expressive of the interior convictions of an investigating mind:—

GREENVILLE, May 1, 1851.

DEAR FRIEND:—I have read DAVIS. Carefully and thoughtfully have I perused those eight hundred pages, and it is not egotism to say, they have made me both wiser and better. Not that I can adopt or receive all of his revelations as truth; but while I believe much, I have also been enlightened, and taught precepts which before had but a misty, vague, and indefinite existence in my mind. Many of those important truths respecting the geological formation of the earth, and also his conceptions relating to the causes of difference in creeds; the early notion of man respecting deities, good and evil spirits; the formation of theories and speculative philosophies therefrom, had long since passed before my mind's eye as probabilities, if not facts; and now I am convinced of the truth of much, which if not in accordance with the common interpretation of the Bible, is at least more in harmony with nature and its mysterious workings. Even while admitting the old writers of the Scriptures to have been inspired, I cannot but believe they wrote much when not subject to that spiritual influx termed inspiration. As historians of the Jews they were doubtless generally correct; but in receiving as truth the traditions of many tribes respecting the previous history of the human family—incorporating into their state records and worship the Shaz Avesta of the Persians with the gloomy Myth of the Egyptians,—they did but prove that they too were fallible and liable to deception. Also the rejection of so many manuscripts at the Councils of Nice and Laodicea, which had previously formed a part of their sacred writings, induces the belief that much was regarded as error, even by those whose prejudices favored the sanctity to which those writings had attained. It is quite creditable to the present age that there is a general seeking after truth, though the means employed to arrive at it are as various in their workings as the different organizations of mind will admit. With the increase of intelligence old creeds are becoming modified, and better adapted to the wants and requirements of man. Much that was once considered essential is now thrown aside as useless rubbish; and we may hope the day is not far distant when our clergymen and teachers will learn to distinguish between sectarian dogmas, the relics of a superstitious age, and that pure philanthropy whose greatest commandment, first taught by the Chinese philosopher Confucius, if rightly understood, comprises in it all that is holy, or just, or merciful, or needful from man to man, or from man to God: "As ye would that man should do unto you, do ye also unto them."

But I must at present confine my remarks to my original text, "the Revelations of Nature," as explained and elucidated by Davis, the Clairvoyant. That he should become, through mesmeric influence, so conversant with geological, chemical, and astronomical terms and technicalities, is truly surprising, when

we consider his previous ignorance respecting those sciences; and it is urged by disbelievers that his scribes were composed of geologists, chemists, astronomers, and physiologists, who, by a wonderful harmony of parts, concocted and introduced their corresponding ideas until they formed the work as we have it. But the testimony we have does not warrant any such belief; and no work of such pretensions could have been so written and compiled by different individuals without others being made cognizant of the fact. The clairvoyant's conceptions of the creation of worlds and systems, so sublimely beautiful, are . . . much more reasonable to my mind than the generally received opinions respecting it. Of the successive stages of development in the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms on our earth, we have sufficient proof; inasmuch as the progression of the imperfect to the more perfect is continually taking place before our eyes; and it were folly to say there is a loss of any true good, or that nature is retrograding. The chemical properties of plants or minerals may be changed in effect (a fact well known), or so modified by circumstances as to produce new forms and adaptations; but the germ is there to unfold itself into something more lovely or useful; and if lost to the eye or senses, we may be sure those elements are somewhere at work, fulfilling the immutable laws of Nature and her God.

I am not satisfied with the generally received idea that men had a common origin; for if so, it argues retrogression in the species, or a wonderfully imperfect beginning. The former proposition is not in harmony with the workings of nature, while the latter goes to prove the merging of the animal into the human,—and here we have Davis' theory—"Man is the ultimate or perfection of the animal," and further, "spirit is the ultimate or perfection of man"—"God is the ultimate of spirit." When we consider that there are traditions of events dating back forty thousand years—that the Chinese records extended to that period, we must believe this earth to have rolled for ages of ages on its path, and the beginning of man's identity—the period of time when he became individualized as man—unknown save to Him who has ruled and will rule as God over all, the Father of the Universe. It is certainly less important to us whether this or that opinion is true respecting the origin of man, than it is to live up to the requirements of our nature; doing our duty to each other, and endeavoring to raise ourselves to that degree of intelligence and happiness for which we were originally designed. While the mental perceptions of men are blinded by error, prejudice, and long established bigotry, it is not surprising that they walk "as men seeing not," or that they "love darkness rather than light." But these clouds are being dispelled. Men are beginning to think for themselves—to know themselves, their different wants and duties—their necessary obedience to the commands of nature, to avoid inevitable penalties. And we hope the new lights illuminating our moral and mental world, whether by knowledge in the perception of truth, or by revelations from another sphere, will yet redeem mankind from the misery and degradation to which they have fallen, and lift them up to that state of mutual reciprocity and affection which alone can create harmony, peace and happiness. When men will learn to appreciate the command of Jesus to love one another, righteousness will reign throughout the earth—when they cease to do violence to their natures, the diseases of both mind and body will be forever done away; and when discord and tyranny give place to unity and brotherly love, whose application must be universal, then will the hosannas of redeemed humanity arise as incense, pure, fragrant and acceptable to Him who is all love, merciful and forbearing,—then indeed will man be blessed with the knowledge of the truth, and beauty and holiness forever adorn his consecrated dwellings.

I have but little to say in the way of criticism. The author is no imitator, though his style bears a resemblance to Swedenborg. It is, however, easy and natural. . . . In conclusion, let me say, I regard these revelations as truthful so far as I can apply them to reason and nature; and if mesmerism, magnetism, and clairvoyance prove to be a deception, we may set them down as one of the sublimest humbugs of the age.

Adieu.

S. A. B.

QUERIES OF A CORRESPONDENT.

PORT WASHINGTON, July 5, 1851.

FRIEND AMBLER:—The Spirit Messenger is duly received, from which I derive much gratification; and I do hope that you will continue to publish it. Although I am overstocked with papers, frequently getting several at a time, yet I generally read yours before opening others.—If I attempt doing otherwise when one of your numbers is on hand, I derive but little pleasure or profit therefrom, for the impression continually haunts me, that there is something specially good in the Messenger, and thus am led to read it first, or find others insipid, and not worth the time in reading.

I have just read your number of June 28th, and the longing desires of soul, or spiritual cravings of your correspondent, J. L. H., previous to his interview with the spiritual sphere, were so entirely in accordance with my own, that his narration electrified me in no small degree, especially on learning that those so solicitous are sometimes favored with heavenly interviews. I have some months felt as he did, and have often virtually exclaimed with him, relative to the recent spiritual manifestations—“*Can it be possible;—if so, why will they not manifest to me?*” Oh that with him I could also be enabled to truthfully proclaim, “*I believe—thank God it is true!*” I fully believe the facts exist as narrated by many in different parts of our country, and presume they emanate from a spiritual source—but how to know it practically, experimentally,—how to realize the truth personally—how get into the work so as to have or witness a manifestation myself,—that is the difficulty with me, and I presume with thousands more.

When I came to the article headed “Directions for Circles,” I rejoiced, hoping that at last the requisite information would be explicitly given, whereby all who desired could test and know these most momentous things; but herein I was again disappointed, though more full than any other directions I have seen.

Will not you, or the “Harmonial Circle A, of Philadelphia,” or some of your experienced correspondents, soon give such “directions,” even to minutiae, as may be deemed requisite to enable one or more anxiously inquiring minds after truth, to arrive at the same, and know for themselves that these strange things are not cunningly devised fables? Persons intimately acquainted with a given subject or science, are prone to presume their readers sufficiently acquainted therewith to fully appreciate and properly understand what they offer, though frequently it is far otherwise, and to the uninitiated, jargon and nonsense. May not such be the case too much with those who treat of spiritual things as recently developed? Recollect this is a new subject to nearly the whole community. If directions can be given so as to enable all honest inquirers after truth to arrive at this new feature of psychomancy, it surely should be done—thus enabling every vicinity to give indisputable evidence of the truth of the Harmonial Philosophy. It is not in every place that “twelve or sixteen members” or persons can be found, of proper pre-requisites to form a “circle,” according to the directions given; but perhaps no neighborhood can be named in which there are not one or more persons of about the proper kind, who would gladly follow any practicable directions thought requisite by those best versed therein, to enable them to know and experience for themselves.

If this be a light recently broke forth from the Spirit-land, why not do all, and the best that can be done, to bring all men to the knowledge of the truth—and especially those who ardently and honestly desire it?

The Guardian Spirit of Harmonial Circle A, of Philadelphia, says, “None shall come to us (the spirits) in vain, for we will fully soothe, advise and guide all who will give us the power of doing so, by coming to us in a proper spirit.” But how are we to give them that power—how shall we come—how modify our spirits so as to be sure to be guided correctly? The *modus operandi* is the all-important consideration with many.

Can you tell me what is meant by that “*harmony*” so much insisted upon in the Philadelphia “directions?” Perhaps no

two persons living harmonize in every particular;—then how get up a circle? Again, said guardian says, “The undeveloped mediums should set at equal distances around the table,” &c. I have often wondered why a table was so essential an ingredient in this spiritual operation: and who can divine the reason why the spaces between those who set should be exactly equal—the same. What should the persons do when thus seated?—do they occupy all the sides of a square or oblong table?—suppose that but two or three are to sit, how should they be disposed of, and what is essentially requisite for them to do? What constitutes that “passive state of mind required; is it mental inertia, or what is it?”

J. S. B.

REMARKS.—The above suggestions of our correspondent express desires which are perfectly natural and must be fully appreciated by all who are truly interested in spiritual subjects. Many queries of a similar nature have doubtless arisen in the minds of many individuals whose aspirations for spiritual light and knowledge have been properly awakened. For the purpose of answering such queries, certain directions have been given for the formation of circles in the “Philosophy of Spiritual Intercourse,” and in this journal, which are deemed sufficiently definite to be adapted to general use, it being scarcely possible to present special directions to all circles, in which circumstances and conditions are so widely different. It seems especially important that we should understand as far as possible the general principles involved in this subject; and with this understanding, we shall usually be enabled to make an application of them to individual cases. However, it is proper that all the light which has been received should be freely disseminated, and accordingly, at a future time, our correspondent as well as our readers may be furnished with more full and explicit instructions than it is now convenient to present.—Ed.

A Heart Offering.

SPRINGFIELD, July 15, 1851.

DEAR BROTHER AMBLER:—Though I never saw you till now, I am not willing to admit that I have not known you, nor that we have not often communed together. You have sent your spirit to me through the columns of the Messenger, far over river, valley, lake, and mountain, to greet me in the west; and I have sent mine back to you laden with deep thanks for the gifts received, and ready to make return by saying: “I am with you; go on, and may God be the helper!” A poor return some may think, though you know it not so poor as they imagine; for what is there, the wide world over, like human love and sympathy? And what strength is there like that we experience when we feel some kindly spirit—whether of a brother from a far-off land on earth, or a brother from the both farther, and yet nearer, home of the angels—enter the secret chamber of our soul, and nestling close in its inmost recess, whisper to us holy words of encouragement, bidding us “Be of good cheer—all we are on thy side, and there be more with us than there be against us?” Yes,—who does not know that it is the *spirit* which strengtheneth?

And then, God hath so made us that we can send our hearts whithersoever we will. We need no telegraph of lightning-wire, for thought is quicker than lightning. We need no words of spoken sound, nor characters traced by pen, nor aught else addressed to outward sense,—for the mind sees, hears, and knows by intuition. God hath made us all one—he hath welded the hearts of the race together—we are fused into one great, omnipresent Humanity, so that the throbings of one soul pulsate through all others in the universe. And so I have oft talked with thee, my brother; and we both have talked with the dwellers at the end of the earth, as we have also with the dwellers in the sky, and even with the spirit of the great All-Father himself. And having thus talked with you *silently*, erewhile, may I hereafter sometimes talk with you and your readers through these columns? Receive, then my humble contribution.

And yet, not all the books we can write, nor all the pages we can scatter, can do aught for the great world of humanity, compared with this same silent preaching—compared with the voice.

less messengers of love and sympathy, sent forth on errands of mercy and blessing to the suffering brotherhood every where, and accompanied by earnest, laborious, and beneficent action. Yes, there must be action, practice, effort, self-denial—a *life of labor* with our love! The heart must go out in yearnings of tenderness, and the hand must go with it. Faith, even in the best of doctrines, without work is dead, being alone! *Spirituality* is reform, and reform is *doing* something—it is rowing up stream—it is fighting against sin—it is striving with might and main to turn back the popular current—it is trying to make all things new—in short, it is action, action, action. "This do, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." And reform is *one*, too, and universal—so then will we be Unitarians and Universalists; not in the sense of the sects, but as being laborers in the cause of our own common and universal humanity.

Yours most truly,

J. T.

POETRY FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD.

PHILADELPHIA, July 14, 1851.

BROTHER AMBLER:—I take the liberty of sending you a few verses of Poetry, and also to inform you of the mysterious manner in which they have been communicated to me.

I was in the company of a partially-developed medium, thinking of a cousin who had left this earthly sphere about two years ago;—he had a bright intellect, and often, while on earth, produced some beautiful poetical effusions—and I felt desirous now that he would give me some verses from the Spirit-land. The medium took the card and spelt out the following:

"My dear Brother, it gives me pleasure to communicate to you. You want some poetry from Charles. You shall have it in the course of time."

I could not at first understand from what spirit this communication came, until I recollected that my elder brother left this earth when one year old—about four years before I was born. The following dialogue then took place between us:

Q. Is this my brother John, who left this world before I was born? A. Yes. Q. Is he one of my guardian spirits? A. Yes. Q. Has he been with me since my birth? A. Yes. Q. Is this poetry to come through Mrs. C., the present medium? A. No. Q. Can I get it through Miss. H.? A. Yes.

Two days after, I had an opportunity of visiting the residence of Mr. H., and after mentioning the circumstance to him, and his sister and wife—both mediums—being present, the following scene took place:

Q. Is Charles present? A. (through the rapping) Yes. Q. Will he now communicate to me? A. Yes.

Miss H. then took the card and spelt out the following with such rapidity that I had great difficulty to take it down, although I profess to be an uncommon fast penman. I would here remark, that the medium or myself have not the least pretensions to rhyming, much less to poetry:—

My cousin dear, I love you yet,
Still deeper than before;
My love for you cannot be check'd,
I'll love you ever more.

Our love for friends, while on the earth,
Burns purer here than there;
For now we see their inner worth,
And all is clear and fair.

If they do wrong we know the cause,
And never blame them now;
But seek to try to change their course
Fow we can tell them how.

Love should adorn the human race,
And deck each being fair;
As well on earth as in this place
Where love fills all the air.

If it were so, man would not feel
As now he often does;

That happiness comes but in weal,
And never in his woes.

Let love sink deep into all hearts,
Let love direct all hands;
Then will you well perform your parts
And spread joy o'er all lands.

Yours fraternally,

Letter from Oldtown, Md.

BRO. AMBLER:—I sit down for the purpose of relating my experience in spiritual manifestations since I left Philadelphia. According to the promise of the spirits, my sister has become a medium of spiritual communications. The faculty seems very well developed already; but the manifestations have been very strange and unlooked for.

For a number of years past I have longed for inward harmony. I have wished to unite with a band of harmonious individuals, whose minds were congenial, and with whom I might reap social, moral, and intellectual pleasures. But I now begin to think I am not prepared for association;—I find that I am too sensual and selfish. I cannot feel willing that my neighbor should know my feelings, thoughts, and actions. We must first be harmonious individually before we can be so collectively.

For a long time, also, I have endeavored to converse with my spirit friends. Now I have the opportunity,—I may do so hourly,—but I cannot get such information as I ask for, desire, or anticipate. Let me be ever so anxious to obtain important truths, they will tell me little else than my own secret faults, thoughts, and actions, such as I would not have the world to know. I have been told repeatedly that those spirits were evil, because they were often known to use improper language and express debasing thoughts. There is, however, an instructive lesson to be learned. If it be the fact that spirits in the second sphere, read our inmost feelings, we may never think to keep any thing secret, for spirits *will know it*, and if spirits know it man will know it too, for man will yet be spirit. Hence, then, he that would blush to have his thoughts made public, should set about a reformation—he should purify his heart, the sooner the better. There is nothing hid that shall not be known, "for God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil."

But many persons doubt on the question of immortality; others think that no eye save One can behold their secret faults. They intend to repent after a season, and imagine that God will then be reconciled. Be this as it may, I know there is some intelligence that reveals to others my faults, such as I would have kept secret—hidden from the world. Then, if by contrition God should become reconciled to me, it would be too late for silence on His part to avail.

I have come to this conclusion, that if it is right for a man to sit in company and indulge in unclean thoughts, it is right that the company should know it, and if it is right that the company should know it, it is right that the spirits should tell it.

Many are ready to say—"How can these be good guardian spirits?"—"What parent, if his child ask for bread, will give him a stone?" Let such consider that a child often asks for that which it ought not to have, and further, that if the parent loves his child, he will not gratify his perverted tastes, but rather endeavor to correct them.

G. B. M.

Let the hearts of our brethren every where be encouraged. The light which has already dawned upon the world is ever becoming brighter and clearer, and amid all the secret efforts of those who love darkness, this stream of heavenly radiance is flowing on, giving joy to the spiritual freemen of humanity. It is as impossible to stay the progress of truth or blot out the great reality which is bursting upon us, as to arrest the waves of the mighty ocean or strike the sun from its native sky. Then, while our souls are hopeful, let our efforts be earnest and unceasing.

Miscellaneous Department.

THE BROKEN HEARTED.

BY JOHN G. WHITTIER.

I have seen the infant, sinking down like a stricken flower to the grave; the strong man fiercely breathing out his soul upon the field of battle; the miserable convict standing upon the scaffold, with a deep curse upon his lips. I have viewed death in all its forms of darkness and vengeance; with a fearless eye, but I never could look on woman—young and lovely woman, fading away from the earth in beautiful and uncomplaining melancholy, without feeling the very fountain of life turned to tears and dust. Death is always terrible, but when a form of angelic beauty is passing off to the silent land of the sleepers, the heart feels that something lovely is ceasing from existence, and broods with a sense of utter desolation over the lonely thoughts that come up like specters from the grave to haunt our midnight musings.

A few years since, I took up my residence for a short time in a country village in the eastern part of New England. Soon after my arrival, I became acquainted with a lovely girl apparently about seventeen years of age. She had lost the idol of her pure heart's purest love, and the shadows of deep and holy memories were resting like the wing of death upon her brow. I first saw her in the presence of the mirthful. She was indeed a creature to be worshipped; her brow was garlanded with the young year's sweetest flowers; her young locks were hanging beautifully and low upon her bosom, and she moved through the crowd with such a floating and unearthly grace, that the bewildered gazer almost looked to see her fade away into the air, like the creation of some pleasant dream. She seemed cheerful and even gay, yet I saw that her gayety was but the mockery of her feelings. She smiled—but there was something in her smile which told that its mournful beauty was but the bright reflection of a tear; and her eyelids at times closed heavily down, as if struggling to repress the tide of agony that was bursting up from her heart's secret urn. She looked as if she could have left the scene of festivity and gone out beneath the quiet stars, and laid her forehead down upon the fresh green earth, and poured out her stricken soul, gush after gush, till it mingled with the eternal fountain of life and purity.

WRITTEN FOR THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

Days and weeks passed on, and that sweet girl gave me her confidence, and I became to her a brother. She was wasting away by disease. The smile upon her lip was fainter, the purple veins upon her cheek grew visible, and the cadence of her voice became daily more weak and tremulous. On a quiet evening in the depth of June, I wandered out with her in the open air. It was then that she first told me the tale of passion, and the blight that had come down like a mildew upon her life. Love had been the portion of her existence. Its tendrils had been twined around her heart in its earliest years; and when they were rent away, they left a wound which flowed till all the springs of her soul were blood.

"I am passing away," she said, "and it should be so. The winds have gone over my life, and the bright buds of hope, and the sweet blossoms of passion are scattered down and lie withering in the dust, or rotting away upon the chill waters of memory. And yet I cannot go down among the tombs without a tear. It is hard to leave the friends who love me; it is very hard to bid farewell to these dear scenes, with which I have held communion from childhood; and which from day to day have caught the color of my life, and sympathized with its joys and sorrows. That little grove, where I have so often strayed with my buried love, and where at times, and even now, the sweet tones of his voice come stealing around me, till the whole air becomes one intense and mournful melody—that pensive star which we used to watch in its early rising, and on which my fancy still can picture him looking down upon us, and beckoning me to his own chamber—every flower, tree, and rivulet, on which he loved to dwell, and which his dearly loved ones

seal, have become dear to me—and I cannot, without a sigh, close my eyes upon them forever."

I have lately heard that the beautiful girl of whom I have spoken is dead. The close of her life was calm as the falling of a quiet stream—gentle as the sighing breeze, that lingers for a time around a bed of roses, and then dies, "as 't were from very sweetness."

Bright creature of my dreams—in that realm I shall see thee again. Even now thy lost image is sometimes with me. In the mysterious silence of midnight, when the streams are glowing in the light of the many stars, that image comes floating upon the beam that lingers around my pillow; and stands before me in its pale dim loveliness, till its own quiet spirit sinks like a spell from Heaven upon my thought, and the grief of years is turned to blessedness and peace.

A String of Pearls.

A year of Pleasure passes like a floating breeze—but a moment of misfortune seems an age of pain.

What is the universe but a blank flung into space, pointing always with extended finger unto God?

Pride is the dainty occupation of our kind.

Beauty eventually deserts its possessor, but virtue and talents accompany him even to the grave.

He who hates his neighbor is himself miserable.

How is it possible to expect that mankind will take advice, when they will not so much as take warning.

Speak with calmness and deliberation on all occasions, especially in circumstances which tend to irritate.

Refined taste often makes us appear insensible, and want of refined taste often makes us enthusiastic.

Does not the echo in the sea shell tell of the worm who once inhabited it? And shall not man's good deeds live after him and sing his praise?

Opinion may be considered as the shadow of knowledge. If our knowledge be accurate, our opinions will be just. It is very important that we do not adopt opinions too hastily.

Experience is a torch lighted in the shades of our illusions.

They who weep over errors were not formed for crimes.

Contentment brings a solace to all who enjoy it.

Some bigots would much rather hear a man condemn religion altogether, than speak harshly of their own particular sect.

We cannot practise deceit without that deliberation of purpose which constitutes the very essence of vice.

To pronounce a man happy merely because he is rich, is just as absurd as to call a man healthy because he has enough to eat.

The Roses of Earth.

A FABLE.

Eve, the mother of mortals, walked one day alone and sorrowful, on the desecrated soil of this sinful earth. Suddenly she espied a rose tree laden with expanded blossoms, which like the blush of dawn shed a rosy light upon the green leaves around them.

"Ah!" cried she, with rapture, "is it a deception, or do I indeed behold, even here, the lovely roses of heaven? Already do I breathe from afar their paradisaal sweetness!"

"Hail, thou gentle type of innocence and joy. Art thou not a silent pledge, that even among the thorns of earth Eden's happiness may bloom? Surely it is bliss even to inhale the pure fragrance of thy flowers!"

Even while she was speaking, with joyous gaze bent on a profusion of roses, there sprung up a light breeze which stirred

the boughs of the tree, and lo! the petals of the full-grown flowers silently detached themselves and sank upon the ground. Eve exclaimed with a sigh:

"Alas! ye also are children of death. I read your meaning, types of earthly joys."

And in mournful silence she looked upon the fallen leaves. Soon, however, did a gleam of joy lighten up her countenance, while she spoke, saying:

"Still shall your blossoms, no longer as they are unfolded in the bud, be unto me the types of holy innocence."

So saying, she stooped down to gaze upon the half-closed buds, when suddenly she became aware of the thorns that grew beneath them, and her soul was sorely troubled.

"Oh!" cried she, "do you, also, need some defense? Do you indeed bear within the consciousness of sin; and are these thorns the symptoms of your shame? Nevertheless, I bid you welcome, beauteous children of the spring, as an image of Heaven's bright and rosy dawn upon this thorny earth."

The Two Misers.

A miser living in Kufa had heard that in Bas-sora there also dwelt another miser—more miserly than himself, to whom he might go to school, and from whom he might learn much. He forthwith journeyed thither, and presented himself to the great master as a humbler commender in the art of avarice, anxious to learn, and under him to become a student. "Welcome," said the miser of Bassora; "we will straight go to the market and make some purchases." They went to the baker. "Hast thou good bread?" "Good indeed, my masters, and fresh and soft as butter." "Mark this, friend," said the man of Bassora to the one of Kufa,—"butter is compared to bread as the better of the two: as we can only consume a small quantity of that, it will also be cheaper,—and shall therefore act more wisely and more savingly too, in being satisfied with butter." They then went to the butter merchant, and asked if he had good butter. "Good indeed—and flavory and fresh as the finest olive oil," was the ready answer. "Mark this, also," said the host to his guest,—"oil is compared with the best butter, and therefore, by much, ought to be preferred to the latter." They next went to the oil vender. "Have you good oil?" "Yes, the very best quality—white and transparent as water," was the reply. "Mark that, also," said the miser of Bassora to the one of Kufa, "by this rule water is the very best. Now at home I have a pail full, and most hospitably therewith will I entertain you." And indeed, on their return, nothing but water did he place before his guest—because they had learnt that water was better than oil, oil better than butter, butter better than bread. "Thank God!" said the Kufa miser, "I have not journeyed this long distance in vain."

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