

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

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

VOL. 1.

SPRINGFIELD, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1850.

NO. 6.

The Principles of Nature.

THE ORIGIN OF THE DEVIL.

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

Among the numerous and diverse questions, which have been, at different times, put me, and to which the interrogator, in almost all cases, seemed desirous of an answer, was the following : " Mr. Davis, it seems to me that all mankind believe in a devil, or in some malignant spirit, who plans the ruin of hundreds and thousands. Now, sir, I have heard you do not believe the existence of any such spirit ; if this report be true, I shall esteem it a kindness to be informed by you how such a *belief* in evil beings originated — or, who is the devil, and how did he originate ? "

To the above interrogatory, the following is intended as a brief and somewhat superficial reply; but which I am most willing to enlarge and render demonstrative, if any reader should, upon perusing the present answer, express his desire for more light upon this exceedingly dark, and, I must confess, very mythical and uncongenial subject.

Probably throughout the illimitable expanse of human inquiry, there are no questions considered so dreadful, so solemn, and unapproachable, as those which pertain to what is conceived to be the Supreme Good, and His eternal antagonist, the Devil. And it is both impossible and unprofitable to disguise the conspicuous fact, that, on our earth, belief in, and fear of the Devil is almost universal — but let it here be impressed that all conceptions of the Devil, or unseen spirit of Evil, are as different among different nations as are their diverse complexions, customs, and government. But the most perfect conception of the embodiment of an Evil principle — the most splendid concentration and personification of hatred, of envy, of a voluntary love of evil, of the most unalloyed vice, of every intrinsically wicked and fiendish principle — is the *entailed property of the Christian Church*. If the reader's interior perceptions were opened, and his spirit would interrogate the labyrinths of mythology, and the mazes of heathen speculations upon Cosmogony, Theology, and Demonology, he would perceive that the most extravagant stories of Devils and Demons, indigenous to the Pagan world, do not equal the real Devil which is supposed to preside over the Theology of Christendom. Indeed, this superior Demon is not only presiding over, but is considered an indispensable ingredient in, the Theology which is promulgated by what is styled the Evangelical Order of teachers and clergymen.

The universality of a belief in a Principle of Evil is susceptible of the clearest and most rational explanation. Among the earliest inhabitants of the earth, there were minds who speculated upon the causes of evil and discord; and the love of approbation being a powerful passion in the constitution of the human mind, it became both agreeable, and convenient, to refer the causes of personal deficiencies, and unrighteousness, to invisible beings or spirits. At first it was suggested that the Winds were the indications of the presence of Evil-Spirits; it was not long before this suggestion, or opinion, became considered as an established fact; and in the course of a few generations, this supposed fact was not only believed and taught because of its romantic and mysterious character, but, also, for its antiquity or ancient origin. And then it was, when Paramah, Vishnu, and Siva, had their respective positions assigned them in the Eastern and most ancient cosmogony; and Siva was settled upon as the cause of human wickedness and misdirection. The general relief, afforded by this discovery of the arch-enemy of mankind, can be easily imagined and appreciated.

In consequence of this discovery, the early inhabitants experienced a kind of self-justification in whatever they attempted to perform. It was not long after Siva was made to rule over the Infernal Regions of evil atmosphere, that his name was changed, and he was promoted, from a mere principle, or breath, (*spiritus*,) to be a strong and influential chieftain of evil persons, hosts, and empires. This was done by Zoroaster — who, in his systematic speculations upon Cosmogony, and Demonology, styled him *Ahriman*.

From the Hindoo and Chaldean-Persian mythology, the Spirit of Evil was introduced into the Egyptian, the Hebrew or Jewish speculations, under the more mild and indefinite name of Belial and Diabolus — the former signifying, simply, a *libertine*; and the latter, an *accuser*, or *calumniator*. Here it is well to observe, that the Hebrew or Jewish scriptures contain but very few intimations of a belief in a personal Devil. The Jews believed in no Devil more wicked, or more potent than *Belial* and his sons. And it will be conceded that an individual cannot have a more troublesome, and, perhaps, direful enemy, than a *libertine* or a *calumniator*; and from what I can learn of the Jewish, and old testament writings, no other Devils, than *Belial* and *Satan* (which signify *Libertine* and *Accuser*) were ever incorporated in the Theology of the Egyptians, the Romans, and Jews. Notwithstanding the old testament is silent on the existence of a personal Devil, it is evident that the Jews believed in a spirit, or principle of Evil, not unlike the opinion entertained by the early inhabitants. The new testament is more explicit upon this subject — indeed, there are several allusions in it, which give the impression that the historians and followers of Christ were thorough believers in personal Devils. They describe many experiments upon Devils; such as casting Satan (or Devils) out of persons into swine, causing the latter to run madly over precipices into the sea; and several other demoniacal demonstrations are recorded, each bearing sufficient evidence that the writers of them were believers in Satanic influences and evil personalities.

The disciples of Mahomet are believers in a personal Devil bearing the name of Eblis, who corresponds to the Christian's Lucifer. The Mahomedans also name their Devil Azazel, who is made mention of in the old testament, in the book of Enoch,* and which signifies *refractory persons, and wicked spirits, and also perdition*. It is evident that *refractory* individuals, (those who are badly organized in mind and body,) give the more advanced nations of the earth an idea of what a devil would be in his own localities and habitations.

Thus the Devil of the whole world is a personification of the evil deeds of wickedly disposed individuals, — and the reason why he is promoted to personality and influence every where, is, that the human mind cannot easily think of principles without a body, and locality; and because, also, it is found convenient to have a person with whom to contend, and gratify the superficial and unamiable propensity of combativeness and destructiveness. This is called, overcoming the Devil, and putting his temptations under your feet.

Thus, at first, the Winds were considered Devils, and were termed "Breaths"; then the Devils were systematized, and made to correspond to the biological personages of the more ancient cosmogony, and who was named the Zoroastrian system of a Devil Spirit who had taken the form of a man, and he was called Ahriman, and his modifications were the Persian, Arabian, Indian, Grecian, Roman, and German legends of legendary and

♦ One of

Hide was made.

theological speculations; and the consequence is, that, now, the Christians have the whole contribution of evil principles and personages manufactured into a single "*Devil*," which is the very quintessence of past imaginings; and this amalgamation renders the Christian's *Satan* the most omnipotent, the most dreadful, the most insinuating, the most wicked Demon, and, at the same time, the most magnificent and powerful Prince that exists in any theology, as an antagonist to Good and the Deity. His names are various in sound and significance. He has been progressively named *Siva*, *Ahriman*, *Genius*, *Belial*, *Eblis*, *Azazel*, *Lucifer*, *Dragon*, *Serpent*, *Satan*, *Devil*, *Demon*, *Mephistophiles*, and other names of a more or less fiendish sound and significance.

Christians, having the superior advantages of wealth and education, have succeeded better in defining the appearance, habitation, and disposition of the fabulous Devil, than any other nation on the earth. And I cannot but think, that were it not for the mythological suggestions of a serpent Demon in the beginning of the old testament, the confirmations of, and serious allusions to him, in the new; and the independent speculations upon a Devil derived from other theological books; I say, were it not for all this assistance to the fancy, Christian poets would have failed in their attempts to render Satan what they have, in their various classical productions.

Assisted by mythological and theological systems and suggestions, Milton imagines a splendid Pandemonium, illuminated with

—— "a row
Of starry lamps, and blazing cressets, fed
With naphtha and asphaltus" —

where resides the majestic Prince, or

"Chief of many throned powers
That led the embattled seraphim to war."

This conception is nothing more than a civilization and promotion of the powerful Zoroasterian Devil, together with his subordinate angels the genii. The most splendid and accomplished Satanic Prince, ever described to the world, is the Miltonian Devil, the materials for the manufacturing of whose physical organization, and innumerable supernumeraries were supplied by the Persian mythology. The Persians generally believe that there lives somewhere a powerful Evil Being, whose rich possessions are too vast to be imagined, and whose servant-spirits are stationed at the various lakes, mines, mountains, caves, forests, and stars, which belong to the earth, or which can be seen by its inhabitants. In evidence of the truthfulness of this statement, I refer the reader to that world-wide celebrated collection of Persian tales, known as the "*Arabian Nights' Entertainments*." The genii represented in this remarkable work, are the infernal hosts which Milton describes as peopling his Pandemonium; and *Lucifer* (the splendid "Prince of darkness") is Ahriman, the Prince of the genii, who is made to govern in opposition to Ormuzd (or God) in an empire of fire, wealth and magnificence.

In order to satisfy the mind that Christian poets have infinitely sublimated and perfected all Hindoo, Arabian and Jewish conceptions of a Devil, the reader may consult Pollock's lucid description of his character — he describes Satan as having

" — his bosom filled with hate, his face
Made black with envy, and in his soul begot
Thoughts guilty of rebellion 'gainst the throne
Of the Eternal Father, and Son."

And still further proofs that Christians have the most perfect conception of the mythological Devil, may be gathered from that profoundly imaginary and classical work, the "*Pilgrim's Progress*," written by the imprisoned John Bunyan. This book, probably, next to the Bible, is the most influential representative of oriental superstition, and systematic mythology, ever published in Christendom. It is influential, because it possesses many of those attractions which have insured the sale of the Arabian tales, and because it faithfully impresses upon the youthful mind the whole philosophy and mystery of the Christian theology. Here I would like the reader to understand that I do not confound religion with theology.

I think it will appear that the Devil of the Christian world is manufactured out of those kindred and homogeneous materials, which, in parts and fragments, are to be found among all nations.

The reason why a Devil, or evil Spirit was first conceived of, is explained in the mythological tale of the "*Garden of Eden*." It is related that Eve was disobedient, and, having done wrong, desired to excuse herself by introducing a foreign and extenuating cause; therefore, to answer the purposes of self-justification, she accused the serpent. Adam also sinned and *knew* it, and he sought to excuse himself by weakly attributing the cause of his evil deed to the woman; so likewise, did the most early inhabitants excuse themselves by referring their personal, social, and other disturbances to unseen causes, and infernal beings. This system of referring the origin of human misdirection to foreign influences has for its foundation two causes — *Dishonesty* and *Ignorance*. Some minds are not sufficiently honest to acknowledge their own voluntary faults, and constitutional weaknesses; and other minds are not sufficiently philosophical to trace effects to their legitimate causes; and thus, between the two causes (dishonesty and ignorance) we have the profoundest disclosures and the sublimest descriptions of a magnificent Devil, and of his incalculably numerous victimized subjects. Surely, no system can equal that of Swedenborg on the philosophy of infernal influences; but even the materials of this system are to be found among the Persians, especially with the fire-worshippers, who believe that every individual is constantly attended by Evil Spirits or Genii.

This habit of individuals, this fact in history, this system of nations, of referring human, social, and constitutional evils to unreal and imaginary causes, instead of *searching out*, and *removing* their *real* ones, blinds the understanding, whilst it relieves personal responsibility to attribute all errors to the dangerous enemy of mankind, intent upon destruction, whose work upon the earth is admirably illustrated by Pollock. He describes the Devil as disobeying the will of God, and not consigned to utter punishment, but as being

"Left to fill the measure of his sin,
In tempting and seducing man — too soon,
Too easily seduced! And from the day
He first set foot on earth, — of rancor full,
And pride, and hate, and malice, and revenge, —
He set himself, with most felonious aim
And hellish perseverance, to root out
All good, and in its place to plant all ill."

Milton and Pollock illustrate in the most explicit and beautiful language, the fact that the human mind has put forth unsuccessful efforts to become acquainted with the source of its many and diversified afflictions. Every human description of a Devil, and his pernicious influence among men, adds only another evidence in favor of the proposition, that Ignorance and Dishonesty (or a want of candor) have implanted in the Theology of our earth, erroneous and unphilosophical explanations of evils and existing misdirections.

Robert Burns, in his "*Address to the Devil*," manifests the most unqualified contempt for what is generally styled the spirit of Evil: he clearly proves that his perceptions extended farther into the nature of things than that simple and obscured vision which sees truth only in the popular theology. Burns, with all the consciousness of honesty, informed the mythological Devil, whom the young and aged Christians fear so much, that though he might be thinking to entrap a "*certain Bardie*," that Bard would

"Turn a corner, jinkin,
An' cheat him yet."

Surely, nothing can be more unreal or imaginary than the Devil who is so feared and deprived of his just dues by Christians — I say deprived, because the whole system of theological mechanism, of which the presumptive and ceremonious Church is a representative, is founded upon the supposed existence of this fabulous and formidable personage; and upon the idea of wresting from him his legitimate sons and daughters, and preventing the peopling of his Fiery Lakes, his Council Chambers, or splendid Pandemonium.

In conclusion, I feel impressed to remark that to the spiritually enlightened mind, to the clear and true sighted intellect, this subject presents a powerful contrast between the Errors of Theology, and the Truths of Nature. On the right is seen Nature with all

her beauty, and loveliness; and on the left is Theology with its deified objects and principles. Theology makes all night. Nature illumines every thing with the light of day. On one side are visible the ghostly pyramids of Error; on the other the stupendous mountains of Everlasting Truth. O, could the reader stand upon these immeasurable mountains of intellectual elevation and divine truth, with his spiritual perceptions so opened as to scan the worlds of mind beneath, he would, behold on one hand an awful night of mental misdirection; — colossal errors, residing in costly temples, bound together in sacred books, and having for their advocates and devotees the most talented minds. He would see forests of heathenism turned into the most seductive gardens of *Christian Errors* — *revered errors of the past*, dressed up with the garments of education and wealth, and potentialized by the spirit of antiquity. He would perceive that the hypothetical ideas and realities of the East, have been, (and are,) sublimated, systematized, Deified, and magnificently supported in the West; that the inhabitants of the Eastern Hemisphere supplied the germ of modern Theology in *their* mythology, and that the inhabitants of the Western Hemisphere religiously nourish the germ and perfect the flower. Upon the other hand, he would see Nature's golden Truths of Heaven gliding from mount to mount, from spirit to spirit, from flower to flower, and gilding with immortal loveliness the weakest and the strongest works of God; — he would behold that everything declares the character and Divinity of its mission by doing its legitimate work, by obeying the principles of Nature, and consequently the Will of its Creator; and that Freedom, Truth, and Harmony, are visible in every direction.

Instead of mythological Devils, are visible the sublimest realities; and instead of false adoration and idolatry, are exhibitions of the profoundest deference and admiration. Instead of ghastly phantoms, the valley of awful shadows, and lakes of liquid fire, pregnant with frenzied children of the Most High, are visible most beautiful and unchangeable truths — the fragrant mountains of eternal progression; and the diamond ocean of Infinite Love, whose universal tide of Spiritual Life flows up, from out of everlasting fountains, which, unlike the tides of earth, **ebb not again!**

Psychological Department.

CASES OF TRANCE.

From Mrs. Crowe's "Night Side of Nature," a work of 450 pages, recently issued from the press, we make the following extracts. The facts therein stated, all tend to illustrate and confirm the essential verity of the description of the Spiritual Spheres, given in the Revelations of the American Clairvoyant, Davis. The different appearances presented to different persons in the Trance, can be explained by the fact that their vision was distinct or indistinct, in degrees proportioned to the actual freedom of their spirits from their bodies:—

"The late Mr. John Holloway, of the bank of England, brother to the engraver of that name, related of himself that being one night in bed with his wife and unable to sleep, he had fixed his eyes and thoughts with uncommon intensity on a beautiful star that was shining in at the window, when he suddenly found his spirit released from his body and soaring into that bright sphere. But, instantly seized with anxiety for the anguish of his wife, if she discovered his body apparently dead beside her, he returned, and re-entered it with difficulty (hence, perhaps, the violent convulsions with which some somnambules of the highest order are awakened). He described that returning, was returning to darkness; and that while the spirit was free, he alternately in the light or the dark, accordingly as he was with his wife or with the star.

Plutarch relates, that a certain man, called T. fallen from a great height, was taken up apparently dead. On the third day after the accident, however, he awoke. About to bury him, he unexpectedly revived; and was observed, to the surprise of all who knew

being a vicious reprobate, he became one of the most virtuous of men. On being interrogated with respect to the cause of the change, he related that, during the period of his bodily insensibility, it appeared to him that he was dead, and that he had been first plunged into the depths of an ocean, out of which, however, he soon emerged, and then, at one view, the whole of space was disclosed to him. Everything appeared in a different aspect, and the dimensions of the planetary bodies, and the intervals between them, were tremendous, while his spirit seemed to float in a sea of light, like a ship in calm waters. He said that the souls of the dead, on quitting the body, appeared like a bubble of light, out of which a human form was quickly evolved. That of these, some shot away at once in a direct line, with great rapidity, while others, on the contrary, seemed unable to find their due course, and continued to hover about, going hither and thither, till at length they also darted away in one direction or another. * * * * *

Thespesius was then informed by one of them, that he was not dead, but that he had been permitted to come there by a Divine decree, and that his soul, which was yet attached to his body, as by an anchor, would return to it again. Thespesius then observed that he was different to the dead by whom he was surrounded, and this observation seemed to restore him to his recollection. They were transparent, and envined by a radiance, but he seemed to trail after him a dark ray, or line of shadow. These spirits also presented very different aspects; some were entirely pervaded by a mild, clear radiance, like that of the full moon; through others there appeared faint streaks, that diminished this splendor; while others, on the contrary, were distinguished by spots, or stripes of black, or of a dark color.

Dr. Passavant mentions a peasant-boy who, after a short but painful illness, apparently died, his body being perfectly stiff. He, however, revived, complaining bitterly of being called back to life. He said he had been in a delightful place, and seen his deceased relations. There was a great exaltation of the faculties after this; and having been before rather stupid, he now, while his body lay stiff and immovable and his eyes closed, prayed and discoursed with eloquence. He continued in this state for seven weeks, but finally recovered.

The case related by Lady Fanshawe, of her mother, is very remarkable, from the confirmation furnished by the event of her death. "My mother, being sick of a fever," says Lady Fanshawe, in her memoirs, "her friends and servants thought her deceased, and she lay in that state for two days and a night; but Mr. Winslow, coming to comfort my father, went into my mother's room, and, looking earnestly in her face, said, 'She was so handsome, and looked so lovely, that he could not think her dead;' and, suddenly taking a lancet out of his pocket, he cut the sole of her foot, which bled. Upon this, he immediately caused her to be removed to the bed again, and to be rubbed, and such means used that she came to life, and, opening her eyes, saw two of her kinswomen standing by her (Lady Knollys and Lady Russell), both with great wide sleeves, as the fashion then was; and she said, 'Did you not promise me fifteen years, and are you come again already?'— which they, not understanding, bade her keep her spirits quiet in that great weakness wherein she was; but, some hours after, she desired my father and Dr. Howlesworth might be left alone with her, to whom she said: 'I will acquaint you, that, during my trance, I was in a most beautiful place, but in a place I could neither distinguish nor describe. I was in a state of leaving my girl, who is dearer to me than anything, and I remained a trouble upon my spirits. Suddenly I was clothed in long white garments, and my face in the dust, and they asked me to go to great happiness. I replied, 'Oh, give to Hezekiah, that I may live longer a woman!'— to which they then at that instant I awoke out of the trance. Dr. Howlesworth did affirm that the day was from that time."

We give our readers further extracts illustrative of various Psychological

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THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

APOLLOS MUNN AND R. P. AMBLER, EDITORS.

SPRINGFIELD, MASS., SEPTEMBER 14, 1850.

SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA AT BRIDGEPORT.

In accordance with intentions previously expressed, our readers shall now have the result of our inquiries, into the nature and character of the manifestations we witnessed at the house of Mr. J. R. Mettler, in Bridgeport, Conn.

The sounds and demonstrations generally, together with the mode of communication adopted, are intrinsically the same as those which attend the ladies of the Fox family, at Rochester. In this case, the medium of communication is a young man, of light complexion and nervous temperament, who has been somewhat distinguished as a clairvoyant. His name is HENRY GORDON. From him we learn, that in the incipient stages of the phenomena manifested in his presence, his attention was often attracted by sounds, resembling those produced by the dropping of water from some point of elevation, to the floor of the room he occupied. These sounds, which he could trace to no visible agency, gradually increased in frequency, variety and loudness, and were occasionally attended by startling phenomena, such as the sudden and unaccountable moving of chairs, tables, and other articles of furniture. Being wholly unable to comprehend the rationale of the singular disturbances which were thus thickening around him, the young man began to suffer from fears and gloomy anticipations of future troubles. At the time to which we refer, he was, we believe, living in Middletown, Conn. Subsequently, about three weeks ago, he returned to Bridgeport, his usual residence, and by invitation, became an inmate of the house of Mr. Mettler, who, with a circle of friends and neighbors whose minds have been enlightened with some of the lovely truths of the New Philosophy, at once perceived the spiritual nature and origin of the sounds and other demonstrations, and, by means of the Alphabet, the doors of spiritual communication were soon thrown open, and, from their friends who have escaped the body and are now dwellers in the world of Spirits, they began to receive messages and directions, breathing that pure and refined sentiment which the human mind in its highest moments of refined thought, attaches to the character of its cherished idols in Heaven. "WE ARE ALL HAPPY HERE."—"LOVE GOD—LOVE EACH OTHER—DO GOOD AND BE HAPPY." These are a few of the sentences that have been communicated by invisible beings, whose bodily presence once cheered their friends in the walks of daily life. They repeat what has often been said through other similar mediums, that the era of spiritual communications has dawned; and that the doubt and anxiety that have pervaded the world concerning the destiny and happiness of the Spirit, will be relieved by actual demonstrations of existing facts which have hitherto been shrouded in mystery. They say that the young man (Gordon) need have no fears—he shall not be harmed; that, by a combination of causes, the effects of which are developed naturally, his system furnishes the right electrical medium, through which spirit can act on grosser matter, and thus communicate intelligibly with the inhabitants of earth in the rudimentary state. They tell us that there are no evil spirits—for all things that God has created are intrinsically good—although the different degrees of development and refinement among spirits as well as men in the body, may sometimes appear to us by comparison, as representing both good and evil. Yet it is not so. Ignorance is the parent of all seeming evil; Intelligence develops and illustrates the good. Death changes the mode of man's existence; it is a refining and subduing process which enlarges his intelligence and thus develops the interior goodness of his soul. It gives him a greater knowledge of the CAUSES which have operated against his proper development in the first sphere of his existence, and gives his spirit an impetus in the direction of its God, which continues to be felt through the countless cycles of never ending time.

We have thus briefly given the general character of the message received through the spiritual medium. To us, as individuals, several interesting messages from our friends were spelled out—and to gratify our desire to witness some evidence of their power over gross matter, several convincing demonstrations were made. A table was moved without hands, and by the same invisible power, books were opened at particular pages of interest. At one time, when we were all seated around a table in the sitting room, getting communications, a spirit purporting to be Dr. CHANNING, called for the Alphabet and spelled out—"TELL BROTHER AMBLER TO PREACH THE GOSPEL." This led to a little discussion at the table, and after a few moments delay, the question was asked, "will the spirit explain what it means by the Gospel?" The reply was spelled out—"YES—LOOK IN THE PARLOR." We all repaired to the Parlor as directed, and an interesting scene was presented. On the floor in the center of the room, was a work on Physiology, published by Mr. Fowler, of New York, on which was placed a silver-plated candle-stick with an unlighted candle; and on one side of this was a chair, containing the hat belonging to the clairvoyant Gordon, on the crown of which was placed a copy of the "Great Harmonia," opened at pages 138 and 139, presenting the diagram illustrative of the Philosophy of Disease. Directly opposite, was another chair containing the Revelations of Mr. Davis, opened at pages 110 and 111, from which we make the following extract, which contains the substance of the matter embraced in the two pages:—

"The law of gravitation; of repulsion; of progression;—also the evaporation and refinement of particles existing upon the face of Nature; the immense and inconceivable good which is thus constantly being produced; finally, the beauty and harmony of ALL THINGS; the Cause, Effect, and End; the Design; the uses; the unchangeable and eternal simplicity of movements externally manifested, still which are too immense and powerful to be comprehended,—speak only the voice of eternal Power and Wisdom! And the mind thus contemplating Nature and all her various forces and motions, receives distinct and impressive truths from the universals of existence, that kindle within it an intellectual flame of reverence and adoration! And by steady and profound meditation, this will burn and brighten, and purify the internal principle of organic life. And the field of such meditations is unbounded, inasmuch as thoughts themselves are inadequate to conceive of the high and deep Wisdom emanating from the Great Cause of causation."

Thus, was this sublime answer given in symbols and unmistakable language. The GLAD TIDINGS which are to be preached, are not all embraced in primitive histories or ancient traditions. We are admonished by the beautiful figure of the spirits, that Physiology,—the science of the properties and functions of plants, animals and man—the laws of Health and Philosophy of Disease, and the relations of Cause, Effect and End, as manifested in the boundless volume of nature, constitute the TRUE GOSPEL—the GLAD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY, which are even now ringing through the land, and shaking to their dusty foundations those colossal structures of ignorance and bigotry, which have been built up through a false conception of the true relation of man to his fellow-man and surrounding nature, and to God, the great Author, Controller, and Preserver of all.

It may be said by the sceptic or the bigot, that the figure which we have described in the parlor, was pre-arranged by designing individuals of the family, for the purpose of imposing upon our credulity. They may indulge this belief so long as it may seem agreeable to them. We feel an inward consciousness, from our knowledge of the character of the family, as well as from the circumstances which attended the phenomena, that there was no deception or fraud in the matter. It was perfectly natural, and required no exercise of power that we do not know that the invisible agents have used, at other times and in other places.

Just before the hour of our departure arrived, and as we were preparing to leave our kind friends in Bridgeport, the Alphabet signal was given by the spirits, and the following words of encouragement spelled out:—"EVERY MIND WHO WILL RECEIVE IS TO HAVE A COMMUNICATION SOON. HAVE FAITH WELL GROUNDED."

We then took our leave, with an inward satisfaction that may

be imagined but not easily expressed, and inspired with still greater confidence in the promises of the future, and a firmer reliance on the omnipotent power of TRUTH. May the time soon come, when thousands, whose eyes are now blinded by prejudice or darkened by a false theology, will become awakened to a realization of those joys which the developments of the future will surely unfold.

A. M.

NECESSITY FOR HIGHER REVELATIONS.

The unfoldings of truth being adapted to the intellectual development of the people, every successive stage in the advancement of mankind creates a demand for new and more extended revelations. The soul is not satisfied to feed forever on musty theories and time-worn creeds; but, as its vision becomes expanded and its powers enlarged, it sighs to pass the limits by which it has been confined, that it may breathe a purer atmosphere and bask in a clearer light. Thus in accordance with the necessity created by an increased intelligence, the former systems of faith and worship must pass away, and higher revelations—more beautiful conceptions of truth and duty, must be unfolded to the searching mind.

This principle has a special application to the present era. Man, from his exalted intellectual position, has need now of higher revelations, adapted to the measure of his internal growth. The teachings of old records, suited to the darkness of by-gone ages, are no longer able to supply his rapidly unfolding wants. While he pores with lingering reverence over the treasured wisdom of the past, and peruses the written thoughts of ancient seers and prophets, he feels within his longing soul the necessity of attaining brighter truths, and seeking the breathings of a purer inspiration.

A higher revelation of truth is now needed to exert an immediate influence on the heart and life of man. The theological teachings of the past have performed their mission. Creeds and doctrines which have been long established and sanctimoniously adhered to, have exerted their power upon humanity and have failed to raise it from its degradation. Amid all their efforts the world is still in darkness, and the pall of depravity and corruption yet overshadows the universal mind. It is now apparent that the teachings of the old theology are utterly inadequate to the work of reformation; and the faith for the want of which it has been supposed that man might be even lost forever, is found to be destitute of any practical effect. Delineations, neither of the golden streets of heaven, nor the flashing flames of hell, can stir the stagnant souls of men. Such pictures have lost their fancied charm. Men slumber now even beneath the thunderings of the pulpit, and dream of lust and sin though seated within the gates of the sanctuary. The difficulty has been that theological instructions have had too much reference to the outward, leaving the internal unaffected; they have regarded safety and deliverance from external evils as the primary object to be attained, while the heart, unpurged and unimproved, has been left to wallow in its own corruptions. Man now needs the influence of teachings more elevating and powerful. He needs a voice which shall speak from higher authority than the oracles of the Church—a revelation which shall charm, subdue and harmonize the soul, which shall bring the spirit in communion with heaven and its joys, and thus give an impulse to the internal powers, which shall lead to their full expansion and development.

But this is not all. A higher revelation of truth, also, is needed to convince man of immortality. All that has been thought and written on this subject in the past, including the speculations of philosophy, the teachings of human creeds, and the testimony of men laying claim to inspiration, has failed to be entirely satisfactory to the reasoning mind. It is true that man has yielded an outward assent to the doctrine of a future life, and has cherished an internal desire that its truthfulness may be clearly unfolded. Yet while hope has pointed to a higher sphere, and faith has whispered of immortality, the human mind has been mournfully destitute of any deep, realizing and immovable confidence, and with all the superficial reasonings and enthusiastic exclamations

of religionists, death has appeared still as a grim and direful monster, and the faint heart has bowed trembling at its approach. The tendency of these facts is to show that man needs a higher and more complete revelation; that he needs a revelation which shall cause him to *know* he is immortal; which, by the presentation of truths founded on the unchanging laws of nature and confirmed by actual demonstration, shall enable him to *feel* and *realize* that death is but a door to an endless life; that the flowers of affection, faded and withered here, shall bloom in immortal freshness, and that the spirit-fires which are enkindled within the earthly frame, shall burn through the ages of eternity.

R. F. A.

THE FUTURE—THE REAL LIFE

It is well that mankind should feel that we do not live for the present alone, but that we are placed in this rudimentary state for the purpose of gradually unfolding our minds, preparatory to the reception of those greater blessings and lovelier joys, which will expand our hearts with gratitude, as we enter upon the brighter life beyond the dark confines of the grave.

When we cast our eyes over the varied scenes of wealth and poverty which society here presents; when we perceive that discord and injustice have enslaved millions, and arrayed brother against brother, in deadly strife; when we behold the weak and defenseless, falling victims to the avarice or ambition of the mighty; when our hearts dwell upon these perversions of God's harmonious laws, we become impatient for the dawning of that better day, when the more intimate acquaintance with the condition of society in the spiritual spheres, shall exert a powerful reformatory influence, which shall result in the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven in the hearts of men on earth. To this end, let the principles of nature be consulted, and knowledge will flow into the mind in pure streams from its exhaustless Fountain. To the future, rich and consoling in its promises, let the suffering child of misfortune direct its mind, and the contemplation will be satisfactory to its bereaved Spirit. There, the distinctions and oppression which now mark and mar humanity, are all obliterated, and earthly heroes and monied lords, at once discover that the gildings of the external which made them great on earth, are all eclipsed by the more chastened, refined and beautiful spirits, which, once clothed in the habiliments of the beggar or the laborer, are there arrayed in the shining robes which are the true expression of their interior purity.

And even here, the world's heroes and pets are not really great. ALEXANDER, whose temples were bound with chaplets dipped in the blood of millions, and whose name is recorded high on the roll of the earthly great—finally entered the world of spirits from a scene of disgraceful debauch. HANNIBAL, having passed the Alps and put to flight the armies of the "mistress of the world," and made her very foundations quake, fled from his country, and finally freed his spirit from his body with the aid of poison administered by his own hands. CÆSAR, after having dyed his garment in the blood of a million slain, and conquered eight hundred cities, reached the highest point of earthly ambition—and then, left the earth through the instrumentality of an assassin's knife!

The history of those whom the world has accounted great, may often be compared to a rocket, which, after startling the beholder with its sudden rise and brilliant light, soon reaches its zenith and falls to the ground, an unilluminated, and blackened stick. It is plain, then, that the present is not the only scene in the Great Drama of Life. The boundless future, whose illimitable fields stretch far away beyond the most expanded thoughts of the human mind, will furnish the Great Theatre, for the display of the unspeakable joys of the soul. From this we should take courage, and never weary in well doing. From chaotic matter, the Divine Mind, has created a harmonious universe; and from the gross and savage state in which man was first formed, he is now gradually approximating that state of UNITY and HARMONY, which constitutes the ultimate Design of Omnipotence. Let us then exercise patience. The works of

progression may seem slow; but all nature proclaims it **SURE**. Be kind, be just, and have **FAITH** well grounded in the revelations of nature, and in the boundless love of the **FATHER OF ALL SPIRITS**.

A. M.

"Nature's Divine Revelations."

I wish to call attention to this book once again. Nearly three years ago, I expressed my opinion of it in the introductory article to the first number of the "Universe," and it was the occasion of considerable ridicule by many of my former friends and sectarian connections. But the opinion then and there expressed, remains unchanged. It is still the *Book of books*. To all who are in darkness in respect to God, Nature, Matter, Spirit, Immortality, Inspiration, the Causes and the Cure of Human Misery, we recommend this book. It is the only complete salvation. By this I do not mean to depreciate other books which contain much in detail which this does not, but I mean to say simply, that this book, in *principle*, and in *unity, harmony, and universality of thought*, takes the pre-eminence of all others. But let none tamper with it. It is no book for fractional, one-sided men; it is none for littleness, haste, mere fact and superficialities; it is a comprehensive, profound, all-grasping, glorious embodiment of the principles, operations, and results of material and spiritual nature. It must be read consecutively, entirely, and thoroughly. Thousands has it already lifted to a higher sphere of thought and affection, from which they can never descend into the dark and bewildering regions of theological learning. The book is not perfect, but it is the *most* perfect of any book ever presented to man. It is the fullest transcript of the Divine Mind. There is no doubt left, in the mind of those who appreciate it, of the author's communication with the spiritual and immortal spheres. God speed this best of books. It should be bound in gold, and read in all the churches.

W. M. F.

The Spirit of Joy.

It has been truly remarked that "happiness is our being's end and aim." Existence was bestowed upon man that he might derive enjoyment from the gift. Every thing by which he is surrounded is made to minister to his pleasure. The spirit of joy is breathed to his soul from all the outward manifestations of life and harmony. From the verdant earth, with its blooming flowers and limpid streams, comes up the enchanting voice of gladness; and the ethereal heavens, in their starry radiance, reflect upon the heart their rejoicing smile. Cheerless and unnatural is that theology which brings to man the dark visions of woe, and clothes his soul in sadness and despair. Such is not the expression of the infinite Father. His smile which is seen in the gladdening sunlight, and His voice of love which is heard in the harmonies of nature, bring only joy to the heart. True religion, therefore, never was designed to make less the real pleasures of earth, or to cast one fitting shadow upon the spirit. On the contrary it is calculated to render us joyful and happy. It comes with a message of glad tidings to the soul, unfolds the beauteous visions presented to the eye of faith, and reveals to our longing view the gleamings of a higher life and the beauties of celestial spheres, thus imparting a joy which is ineffable and full of glory.

E. P. A.

The Father and his Children.

God is a kind father, and all mankind are his children. He recognizes none of the ordinary distinctions of wealth and title, which are the offsprings of unenlightened society, but his parental love encircles every member of the human family, embracing the people of every nation, creed and tongue. He is the Great Positive Mind, who has created all finite minds; the centre of whose limitless Power is everywhere, and whose circumference is inconceivable! It would seem but just, in return for the unnumbered blessings which our common Father has bestowed upon the race collectively, that we should extend our fraternal love to each other, and practically manifest our gratitude, by thus recognizing the divinity which stirs in every bosom, and stamps

EVERY MAN as a child of an immortal God, bearing the image of His Father, and occupying a sphere BUT LITTLE LOWER THAN ANGELS.

A. I.

THE EIGHTH AND NINTH PLANETS.—A scientific and true friend of the Harmonial Philosophy, writing from Belmont J., kindly reminds us that we inadvertently fell into an error our first number, in stating that the ninth planet, spoken of by Mr. Davis in his Revelations, has since been discovered by Astronomers. We thank him for calling our attention to fact, and now make the correction. The Eighth planet, to which Mr. Davis made allusion, has been actually brought within the range of the telescope. Our correspondent thus describes the manner in which the discovery was made:—"Astronomers for many years suspected the existence of an unknown body which might produce certain perturbations in the orbits of some of the Superior Planets. La Verrier sought to solve this problem by consummating one of the most stupendous mathematical calculations ever made; and not only demonstrated the existence but actually determined the position, of said body in the heavens. He addressed a note to M. Arrago, at Paris, communicating the results, who hastened to direct a telescope (probably of the National Academy of Sciences) to that point in the heavens where to his great delight he beheld the Eighth Planet, a monument to the science of mathematics, to La Verrier's genius and skill, and, we may add, to the development of man; it bears a beautiful illustration of the foundation principle of the new philosophy—the progressive development of the race and of the universe."

A. I.

BENEVOLENCE is the lesson written on all created things. Each being and object are formed to exert a mutual influence on one another. The sun shines not for its own glory; but thereby may shed its light on the surrounding planets. So the wind blows, the rivers run, the ocean moves, and all nature exercises its functions for relative purposes and ends. In the practical application of the lesson here given, we shall experience the most refined and substantial pleasure. How calm and comforting are the thoughts which rise up in the benevolent soul, as it reflects on a life devoted to the welfare of humanity! Wealth and power and crowns and thrones and sceptres—all the gifts and possessions of the world, convey nothing of that sweet and thrilling joy which the reflection of a benevolent act is designed to impart.

E. P. A.

A warm hearted friend of the new Philosophy (A. B.) writing from Madeira, N. Y., and remitting the amount of his subscription to our paper, thus speaks of our publication and our mission:—

"I have seen three numbers of the Spirit Messenger, and read them with intense interest and delight. They afforded me a spiritual rest, for which I had long hungered. You are engaged in a noble cause. Persevere in your labors of love, elevating the condition of suffering humanity, and freeing mind from the influence of conflicting creeds and errors, which have chilled every noble aspiration of man's better nature, and impeded his intellectual progress and development."

We are pleased to receive such expressions of interest, and would remark that every column of our paper might be filled with similar extracts, from letters of encouragement received since our first number was issued.—EDS.

The articles of "G.," Southampton, are received, but we regret to say that they are not precisely adapted to our columns, for which reason we must beg leave to decline their publication. Our correspondent is reminded that there exists a marked distinction between the spirit of free inquiry and a *controversial spirit*, and that dreams, though sometimes unfolding impressive truths, are not always sufficiently lucid to solve an important point in theological argumentation.—EDS.

We have heretofore omitted to mention the fact, that Mr. BELLA MARSH, 25 Cornhill, Boston, is a local agent for the Messenger.

Poetry.

INSCRIPTION FOR THE MONUMENT OF A FRIEND.

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

The Body is the House
In which we live,
Which to the Earth, in Death
We freely give.

And Death is but the Gate
Of Destiny,
A Triumph-Arch, through which
Our Heaven we see.

Most precious Dust, O Earth,
Is this we yield,
That 'neath thy grass and flowers
Thy love may shield.

And while in Temples fair
Our hopes find rest,
We'll write our Faith in flowers
Upon her breast.

As while the rain-drops fall
The bow appears,
The Pearly-Gates are seen
Through falling tears.

ANGEL VISITANTS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SPIRIT MESSENGER,
By CHARLES A. BOOTH.

Come forward all, you need not fear,
The sounds are heard,—spirits are near,
Hark, now hark, the signal is given
By angels from the courts of Heaven.

They come to unfold the beauties of truth,
With glorious robes—a seraph band,
And bid us believe in no other creed
Than the one from the bright spirit-land.

"LOVE GOD, AND BE HAPPY,"* is a message they bring
From the land of our Father, our God and our King.

List ye all, there's nothing to dread,
The living are here, not the dead;
They speak to us, with kindly voice,
The truths that make our hearts rejoice.

The friends that were loved and cherished while here,
In the form of pure spirits now rove;
To the shades of earth again they have come,
From the light of their Heaven above. [bring
"LOVE ALL, AND DO GOOD,"* is the pure message they
From the land of our Father, our God and our King.

Wide is open'd the heav'nly door,
All may come, the rich and the poor;
Sweet voices from a holy sphere,
Bring words of love to each one here.

They have come to remove the galling chains
That around the sighing heart are wove,
And to break in twain the fetters of fear,
Teaching that God and Nature are love.

"BE CALM, I AM HAPPY,"* is the message they bring
From the land of our Father, our God and our King.

*Communicated by the spirits.

Bridgeport, Sept. 1850.

Miscellaneous Department.

A DREAM OF SOCRATES.

THE DAY on which Socrates was to drink the poisonous cup had arrived. Already, early in the morning, his beloved disciples were gathered around him. In sorrowful seriousness they stood about the couch of the philosopher; some wept.

Then the sage sufferer raised his head and said: Why this sober silence, ye loved ones? I will relate to you something agreeable, a dream, which I had last night.

Canst thou sleep, and even dream pleasant dreams? asked the good Apollodorus: I have not closed an eye.

Socrates smiled and said: Thou good Apollodorus, of what value would my past life have been if it did not sweeten my last sleep? Do you not think, Apollodorus, that I had devoted it to heavenly love?

Many voices, with pathetic gratitude, replied in the affirmative. Apollodorus could not answer in silence, with two glistening tears.

Behold, said Socrates thereupon, whoever devotes his life to her service, on him will she send down his Graces. These privately and invisibly adorn all his hours, whether they be hours of joy or of suffering, with heavenly glory, and surround them with a balmy fragrance.

But above all are the gentle sisters busy about him in the last hour of his life. For that is a more solemn hour than all the rest, and most needs heavenly illumination. Just as the last hour of day is the most beautiful. The evening red flows around it, like a stream of light from Elysium.

But then follows the dark night; interrupted the quiet Xenophon.

For our hemisphere, replied Socrates. Is not our evening red, the morning red of another hemisphere?

Socrates proceeded: Now hear, ye loved ones! For as the realm of Hades, as the living call it, will very soon become to me a realm of light, as the spirits of the dead will call it, and I am nearer to it than you all, so my discourse may perhaps disclose much that is new. So hearken then!

The Graces themselves leave their favorite in his last hour. For they soar away before him, and prepare for him the heavenly life, after they have adorned his earthly. But they leave him not alone. They send to the departing three other spirits, attired with celestial beauty.

These three are sleep, the twin-brother, and at the same time the friendly image of death: dream, the image of past life, but also the harbinger of another world, and soars between the other two, and death, more glorious and beautiful than the others, and clothed in the celestial glow of morning. Behold, Apollodorus, the first two have not deserted me the last night, and the third appeared to me in the distance. How could I fear his approach? I expect him with longing desire.

The eyes of his disciples filled with tears, and there reigned in the prison a sorrowful silence.

After a while Socrates proceeded: I had almost forgotten my dream! Sleep had strewed his poppy-seeds thickly over me, and indeed, I needed strength for the task, which I shall this day fulfil with serene spirit. But not only was the strengthening of the body granted me in the balmy hours of sleep; the kind dream-god brightened my spiritual vision.

Then I saw a beautiful woman in to me. On his countenance were that stillness and sobriety, which belong to the form divine. There was a burning torch, and a reddish glow, and a darkness of my prison.

The prison seemed to I the brightness

a torch; but I What are you torch!

light in the

He however smiled, and said : It is the torch of the earthly life. Thou hast no further need of it. For as soon as it is extinguished, thine earthly eye closes forever, and thou soarest aloft on my hand to a higher world, where a pure and heavenly light beams around thee. Of what use to thee any longer is the self-consuming earthly torch?

O, then, put out the torch! I cried, and awoke. I found myself in the gloom of my prison. Alas, I was troubled that it was but a dream. Yet lo! there comes the cup indeed that will fulfil it!

The keeper of the prison entered with the boy that carried the cup of poison. Then there was lamentation and sobbing among the disciples of Socrates. Even the jailor wept.

A Lesson of Nature.

Among the disciples of Hillel, the wise teacher of the sons of Israel, there was one named Sabot, who hated all kinds of labor, and gave himself up to idleness and sloth. But Hillel was concerned about the young man, and determined to cure him. So at length he took him out into the valley of Hinnom, near Jerusalem. There was stagnant water full of reptiles and insects, and covered with noxious weeds.

When they had reached the valley, Hillel laid down his staff, and Sabot said: What! master, in this hateful marsh! Do you not perceive what a poisonous vapor rises from it?

You are right, my son, replied the teacher; this stagnant pool is like the soul of the idler. Who would wish to tarry any where near him?

Thereupon Hillel took the youth to a waste field, on which grew only thorns and thistles, that choked the grain and wholesome plants. And Hillel leaned upon his staff, and said: This field has a good bottom for bearing every useful and luxurious product; but it has been passed by and neglected, so that now it produces abundance of thistles, and thorns, and poisonous seeds, among which serpents and salamanders nestle. Before, you saw the soul—now, see the life of the idler.

Then was Sabot affected with shame and penitence, and said: Master, why did you bring me into so solitary and gloomy a region? It is the admonitory image of my soul and life. Hillel replied: As you would not credit my words, I have sought to see whether the voice of nature would penetrate thy heart. Sabot pressed his teacher's hand, and said: You have not been unsuccessful. A new life—you shall see it—has sprung up in me.

So it was: Sabot became an active young man. Then Hillel took him into a fruitful vale, on the bank of a clear stream, which, in beautiful meanderings, flowed through flowery meads, amid fruit-trees, and overshadowing shrubbery. See here, said the old man to the delighted youth, the image of thy new, industrious life. Nature, which has admonished thee, may now also reward thee.

Her charms and beauty can only delight him, who, in her life, beholds his own.

ENVY.—When a statue had been erected to Theogenes, a celebrated victor in one of the public games of Greece, by his fellow citizens of Thasos, we are told that it excited so strongly the envious hatred of one of his rivals, that he went to it every night, and endeavored to throw it down by repeated blows, till at last, unfortunately successful, he was able to move it from its pedestal, and was crushed to death beneath it on its fall. This, if we consider the self-consuming misery of envy, is truly what happens to every envious man. He may perhaps throw down his rival's glory, but he is crushed in his whole soul beneath the glory which he overturns.

BEAUTIFUL SUPERSTITION.—Among the superstitions of the Seneca Indians, is one, which, for its singular beauty, should be well known. When a maiden dies, they imprison a young bird until it first begins to try its power of song, and then loading it with kisses and caresses, they loose its bonds over her grave, in the belief that it will not fold its wings, neither close its eyes, until it has flown to the spirit-land, and delivered its precious burden of affection to the loved and lost.

Fraternal Love.

SHERIFF! that man is your brother whom you are dragging away to a cold and loathsome den, for crimes against Society which Society compelled him to commit. Forbear! No sin, degradation into which his soul has been plunged can wash smother the inborn humanity of him. He was a child once—that poor, shriveled, rough, and sin-scorched man—a child of a young mother's own; but joy by joy, of innocent life, was crowded out of him; and when his features hardened into manhood they were tinged with hopelessness, and dark with successive sin. He was poor, and that monstrous crime crushed him into the pit of shame. Forbear! for deep down under the roughening of iniquity is a heart beating, better than ye wot of. He is not all devil, but a horrified and virtuous people have made a hell for him, and he has been forced to put on the devil's mask to endure it. Now away, you thing of hands but no heart—the child of the people's power without its love, and let Humanity take back its wronged and sinful child to her bosom. He has angel wings now, all shriveled and crisp, and close hidden under that devil's garb, and when we can pour heaven's warmth around him, it will pierce that evil and bring the bright wings of his virtue out, slowly unfolding, broad and re-strengthened, to lift him into good again. Let us throw around him the temptations of love and joy, and see how long his poor heart can resist them. Sin and sorrow are not charmers. Give us leave to match them with some virtuous delight—and we shall have a brother feeding our hearts with his benediction, instead of a felon piling the curses of a blighted being on us, from his frosty prison. All good will be our help—all that reverent souls will dare to wrestle shall be with us; and not till all this fails will we yield a brother to the omnipotence of Evil. Memory, guarding the fires of old joy—the boyhood and the opening youth, will join with us, for she is faithful. Hopes, that fell sick under the stinging curse of poverty and scorn, will rouse again when a ray of kindness recalls the tones of childhood's loved ones by kindred sounds. Buffeted, outlawed, scared and sinful brother! Is there no help for him but hate? no home but the dungeons—*Prisoner's Friend.*

THE OUTER MAN may perish, the desire of the eyes and the pride of life may fail; but the signature of God's spirit on the inner man, time cannot efface, or the waves of death wash away. And if on the theatre of life the soul may clothe herself in garments of righteousness that shall never wax old, then is life precious and holy, and full of dignity; and if, from the wear of all things earthly, the soul may gather the trophies of pure faith and a more fervent love, then may we bid a welcome to solemn and fearful though it be,—to the storms and billows of adversity, believing that they can work only for our progress and our highest good.

A BEAUTIFUL IMAGE.—A deaf and dumb person being asked to give his idea of forgiveness, took a pencil and wrote—"It is the sweetness which flowers yield when trampled upon."

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