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 mystical and uncongenial subject.

Probably throughout the innumerable 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 speculation and cosmogony, 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 Devil is not only presiding over, but is considered an indispensable ingredient of, 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 approval 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 manifestations 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 Parmah, Vishnu, and Siva, had their respective positions assigned them in the Eastern and most ancient cosmogony, and Siva was set up as the cause of human wickedness and misdirection, 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 promulgated, from a mere principle, or breath, (spirits,) 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 Abriman.

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 Diabolos—the former signifying simply Abominable; and the latter, an accruer, or cosmopolitan. 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 cosmopolitan; 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 demonical 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 by the name of Allah, 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 habits.

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 everywhere, 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 insatiable propensity of combative ness 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 "Breathe"; then the Winds of Devils were systematized, and made to correspond with theological personages, who figures largely in the old testament writings; and more ancient cosmogony, and who was inseparable from the Devil Spirit who had the most ancient cosmopolitan, Grecian, Roman, German, and modifications of legendary and Biblical names. *One of the most ancient names of the Devil.
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 exculminating cause; therefore, to absolve 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 world, so that the Lord, did the less 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 dissembling 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 rainor full,
And pride, and hate, and malice, and revenge,
He sets himself, with most floridious 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 unsuccess-ful efforts to become acquainted with the source of its many and diversified affictions. Every human description of a Devil, and has 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 obscure 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',
Aa' 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 ceremonial 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 defined objects and principles. Theology makes all night. Nature illumines every thing with the light of day. On the one side are visible the ghastly pyramids of Error; on the other the stupendous mountains of Everlasting Truth. He would 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 Error — remnants 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, in the profoundest deference and admiration. They were given in the Revelations of the Divine decree, and that his soul, which was yet attached to his body, as by an anchor, would return to it again. Thespiesus than 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 environed 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. Passavent 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, spake 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 kinwomen 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 weak-ness wherein she was; but, some hours after, she desired my father and Dr. Bowlesworth might be left alone with her, to whom she said: I will acquaint you, that, during my trance, I was in a place in which I could neither distinguish nor recollect anything; but after leaving my girl, who is dearer to me than all the world, I was troubled a trouble upon my spirits. Sud- denly, I saw a great man, who said to me, 'You have not been a faithful servant to me, and I give you up to my just deserts.'—whichBowlesworth did affirm that the day before that time."
THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

APOLLO 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. B. 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 this mystery, his attention was thus directed 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 Gospel, are gradually realizing 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 exercised the office of communicator, we have thus briefly received the messages and directions, breathing that pure and refined spirit of love, which tend to carry the soul upward, and unite its aspirations with the public weal.

Directly opposite, was another table, containing the book of the “Great Harmonies,” and on one side of this was a chair, containing the hat belonging to the clairvoyant Gordon, on the cover of which was placed a copy of the “Great Harmonies,” opened at page 139, and 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 incomprehensible spiritual, 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 universe of existence, that kindle within the intellectual flame of reverence and adoration! And by steady and profound meditation, this will be burned and purified, 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 untranslatable 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 and infinite volume of nature, constitute the true religion of the future; and are even now ringing through the mind, 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 are condemned by the intellect; 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 arrival, and as we were preparing to leave our kind friends in Bridgeport, the Alphabetical 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 raya. May the time soon come when thousands, whose eyes are now blinded by prejudice and darkness of false belief, will be awakened to a realization of those joys which the developments of the future will surely unfold.

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 musky 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 demands 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 nature. 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 longingsoul the necessity of attaining brighter truths and seeking the breakings 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 overwhelms 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. Delusions, 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. Man slumber now even beneath the thunderings of the pulpit, and dream of lust and sin through sealed gates of the sanctuary. Theiy dullness may be due, in part, to the fact that theological instructions have been too much removed from the outuard, leaving the internal unaltered; they have regarded safety and deliverance from external distress as the primary object to be attained, while the heart, unprayed 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 ten thousands 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 religiousists, death has appeared still as a grim and direful moment, and the faint heart has bowed trembling at its approach.

The necessity 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 embalmed within the earthly frame, shall burn through the ages of eternity.

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 rudimental 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 presents; when we perceive that discord and injustice have enslaved millions, and arrayed brother against brother, in deadly strife, when we behold the wretched, defenseless, falling victims to the avarice or ambition of the mighty; when our hearts dwell upon these perversions of God's merciful 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 inexhaustible 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 heros and monarchs, at once discover that the gildings of the external which made them great on earth, are all eclipsed by the more chaste, refined and beautiful spirits, which, once clothed in the habiliments of the beggar or the laborer, are therearrayed in the shining robes which are the true expression of their interior purity.

And even here, the world's heros 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 death. POMPEY, 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. CASSAR, 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 starting 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 unspikeable 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 rare well grounded in the revelations of nature, and in the boundless love of the Father of all Spirits.

"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 "Univerconium," 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 superficies; 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 immaterial spheres. God speed this best of books. It should be bound in gold, and read in all the churches. W. M. P.

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 the eternal 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 the eternal heavens, in their starry radiance, reflect upon the heart their rejoicing smile. On the contrary it is calculated to render us joyful and happy. It comes with a message of glad tidings to the soul, unloads the burdensome visions presented to the eye of faith, and reveals to our longing view the glenings of a higher life and the beauties of celestial spheres, thus imparting a joy which is indefinable and full of glory. R. 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 an enlightened society, but his paternal love circles 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

EVEAfter MAN is a child of an immortal God, bearing the image of His Father, and occupying a sphere but little lower than angels.

The Eighth and Ninth Planets. — A scientific and true friend of Harmonial Philosophy, writing from Belmont J., kindly reminds us that we have not only fallen into an error as its first number, in stating that the ninth planet, spoken of by Mr. Davis in his Revelations, has since been discovered. 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 have much years suspected the existence of an unknown body which would produce certain perturbations in the orbit 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 results, who hastened to direct a telescope (probably of the National Academy of Sciences) to that point in the heavens to which his great discovery had been made; but he sought a moment to the science of mathematics, to La Verrier's genius a skill, and, we may add, to the development of man; it be a beautiful illustration of the foundation principle of the philosophy—the progressive development of the race and of the universe. A. A.

Benevolence is the lesson written on all created things. Each being and object are formed to exert a mutual influence upon another. The sun shines not for its own glory; but that it may shed its light on the surrounding planets. So the wave, the rivers run, the ocean moves, and all nature exerts its functions for relative purposes and ends. In the practice 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 fame, crowns and thrones and scepters—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.

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

• "I have seen three numbers of the Spirit Messenger, and read them with intense interest and delight. They afforded me intellectual refreshment, 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 mankind from the influence of confounding 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. —

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 contrivance of spirits, and that dreams, though sometimes unfolding impressive truths, are not always sufficiently lucid to solve an important point in theological argumentation. —

We have heretofore omitted to mention the fact, that Mrs. Bell-Maree, 25 Cornhill, Boston, is a local agent for the Messenger.
Indexial 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 manthy 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.

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

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 suffered 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, Apollo, 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 they reigned in the prison a sorrowful silence.

After a while Socrates proceeded: I had almost forgotten my dream. Sleep had strewn his poppy-seeds thickly over me, and indeed, I needed strength for the task, which I shall this day fulfill 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 image before me. On his countenance there was still a look of sobriety, which belong to the form divine. There were a burning torch, and a reddish glow diffused over the darkness of my prison. Then the prison seemed to light up, but I could not find the brightness of the light. I could not find the light.
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 then soars 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 fulfill 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 the youth down upon his staff, and said: This valley is like the snow of the idler. Who would wish to tarry anywhere 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 kind of grain and vegetables; and it is covered with noxious weeds. But it has been passed over 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 adulatory 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 meadlens, flowed through flowery meadows, amid fruit-trees, and overshadowing shrubbery. See how 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 her own.

Envy.—When a statue had been erected to Theogeneas, 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 lose its bonds over its 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.