

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER

AND HARMONIAL GUIDE.

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

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The Principles of Nature.

FIRST PRINCIPLES OF PHYSIOLOGY.

WRITTEN FOR THE SPIRIT MESSENGER
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CHAPTER I.

The least attentive observer may perceive certain remarkable differences, which distinguish the various forms in the several kingdoms of nature. He will observe first, a variety of solid masses irregularly dispersed about him, in which the process of change operates so slowly as not to be perceptible to the senses. In these will be found none of the phenomena which are the signs of life. They have no distinct parts, or *organs*, adapted to particular functions of being; but each fragment of any body is a representative of the whole. Consequently each part produced by subdivision, is independent of all the other parts, and contains all that is necessary to its individual being. These are **MINERALS**, composing crystals, earths and stones.

In leaving the mineral kingdom we advance to higher forms, in which life is at once manifest. Here we find organs necessary to the fulfillment of certain conditions of being; and if any one of these organs is removed or injured, the whole being, in a greater or less degree, becomes affected. These bodies are mostly fixed in the earth by means of roots; and they exhibit the phenomena of birth, life, growth, decay and death. These are **VEGETABLES**. Here, then, we find the first grand division of nature into the organic and inorganic forms.

By another movement we arrive at still higher conditions of life. We find a great variety of organized beings, in which, to the mere vegetative functions are superadded those of voluntary motion, sensation and intelligence. These are **ANIMALS**. Thus clearly are marked out the three great classes of material forms, which naturalists have defined as the Mineral, Vegetable, and Animal kingdoms.

Physiology is **THE SCIENCE OF LIFE**—its functions—the organs by which they operate—and all the forces, both external and internal, which act upon them. The first process in the study of life, should be to distinguish it, philosophically, from all that is *not* life. We will then observe some of the essential differences between organic and inorganic forms. The first and most obvious of these, will be found in the difference of structure and function observable in the two classes.

Minerals consist of purely corporeal masses, of homogeneous structure and the same chemical properties, without the least appearance of individuality in their several parts. Every living body is a system of organs, each of which is necessary to the health and preservation of the whole; but a mineral manifests none of these reciprocal relations. If you break a stone, you will see that it is composed of particles which are all of the same kind. You will perceive also, that no one of its parts has any particular office to perform, or any necessary connection with its other parts; but the smallest fragment will be as truly and perfectly a stone, as the largest mass, or the whole.

On the contrary, if you examine an animal, you will find nutritive and assimilating organs—organs of locomotion and of the senses—each of which has its own peculiar office, and the loss of which could not be supplied by any one or number of the others. Or if you divide a tree, by cutting it across, you will find, first, a bark of several layers, then several layers of wood,

then perhaps a pith; and if you have a microscope, you may discover the little cavities, where the proper fluids of the plant are deposited, and ascertain its fibrous and cellular structure. You know, too, that this tree, at certain seasons, exhibits remarkable changes; that it puts forth buds, expands leaves and flowers, and ripens fruit; in short, that it has functions of its own, which are performed through its own inherent vitality.

Another very conspicuous quality of organism consists in *form*. Every living being has a shape peculiar to its species and developed along with its life. Minerals, with the exception of crystals, have no fixed and invariable forms; and in so far as the latter have a determination to specific outlines, they are subject to a law, which may very properly be termed vital, since it acts from an inherent necessity in itself, which, under the same conditions, will invariably produce the same results. But the vitality extends no farther than the tendency to produce form, without introducing any of that reciprocal action, which is a character of organism. Thus if a limb, or any organ whatever, in a plant or animal, is lopped off, or otherwise injured, a general disturbance of the whole system, more or less painful and dangerous will be the inevitable consequence. But a complete preservation of its outline, is not an intrinsic necessity in the crystal, since any number of its planes, or angles, may be broken, or otherwise rendered imperfect, and yet its health, or its condition of being, and continuance as a crystal, is not affected by the malformation, in the slightest degree.

On the other hand, plants and animals have forms which always bear a certain and essential relationship to their habits and character; and the shape of each particular organ is modified by its office. Twining plants have slender stalks, and they are furnished with tendrils for climbing. Trees have strong bodies to support the superincumbent weight of branches, and large powerful roots to fix them in the earth. Birds of flight have forms best calculated for cutting the air, and fish for gliding through the water. Aquatic animals have webbed feet for swimming; and the carnivori strong talons, and beaks or teeth, to seize, hold, and devour their prey.

Organic bodies have also a determined *volume*, or there is an average measure of size, for every species; while inorganic matter is not subject to this law.

A mineral substance may exist in a solid, liquid, or gaseous form; but it will be either purely gaseous, liquid, or solid, and never presents a combination of these. In living bodies the liquids and solids are inseparably combined; for they always consist of a cellular, or porous substance, with fluids contained in its vessels, or interstices; and by this structure alone could the organization be either developed or maintained.

If any organized substance be submitted to the action of the microscope, it will be seen that the fluids as well as the solids, are composed of minute particles of a spherical or oval shape; and in these globules are probably contained the primeval elements of form, which, in living bodies, is always to be described by curved lines with few sharp angles, and hence is either spherical, elliptical or cylindrical. But as the primitive particles of minerals are angular, so are their forms described by plane surfaces, sharp angles, and straight lines.

A mineral may be composed of a single element, or it may be compounded of several elements, united and held together by chemical and cohesive attraction. An organized body never has less than three, or more than four of the simple substances or elements, namely, carbon, oxygen, hydrogen and azote, or nitrogen.

A mineral has a fixed chemical composition, and is hardly subject to any change; but the whole history of an organized being would present one unbroken series of change. The first manifestation of life consists in motion; this motion continually acts in the decomposition and recombination of matter, and is preserved so long as life exists. Every development, every sensation, every emotion, and every thought, is the result of some particular combination of the chemical and vital forces, and is accompanied by some change in the secreted fluids or the substance of the brain, so that at no two moments of its life may an organized body be precisely the same.

Minerals are only governed by the mechanical and chemical forces. These exist in all bodies, and through them are wrought all the changes that occur in the physical world. But in plants and animals we find a third power, which is termed the organic, or vital element. Between the organic and chemical forces there is maintained a constant and inveterate warfare. In the latter may be found the very type of the conservative principle. They seem to regard the former as aliens and deserters; and are ever struggling to bring them back into subjection to the first kingdom, from which, like rebellious and unloyal subjects, they have wandered. This conflict consists in the strong affinity which the primary elements of physical nature have for those of living matter.

On the other hand, the vital power resists, by its own innate forces, the action of the chemical. Living bodies are capable of maintaining a certain medium of temperature, which is, to a considerable degree, independent of that of the surrounding air. They also have the power of elaborating, from homogeneous and other substances used as food, tissues and organs, wholly different in structure, composition, and properties, all of which are compounded in direct opposition to the established laws of matter.

Living bodies have the power to resist disease, or physical injury; and to understand this process is one of the most important principles in the sanative art, or the power of healing. All true remedies must be congenial with, and assist the vital power.

Organized beings are affected by external circumstances, or are capable of being excited by them to certain actions, as are manifest in nutrition, growth, and the voluntary motions of animals. They are also capable of reproducing themselves; and thus, through their offspring, of securing the continuance of the species. The growth of living bodies takes place internally, by assimilating foreign substances, and incorporating them with their own; while minerals grow by accretion, or the superposition of foreign particles.

Organized forms have a limited period of being, which is nearly the same in all the individuals of a species. After the attainment of maturity, there is a gradual preparation for the great and final change; until, at length, the vital power, worn out and overcome by the long struggle, yields to its ever watchful antagonist—motion is suspended—life becomes extinct—decomposition takes place;—and the body is surrendered to its original elements.

Forms of Clouds.

The highest cloud region is that of the *CIRRUS*, which resembles in shape a cluster of plumage, or a lock of streaming hair. The lowest of these clouds seldom touch even the highest mountains, and are never less than three miles high. They are remarkable for purity of color, and for delicacy and beauty of form, and are generally attended by a fresh breeze. The next in height is the *CUMULUS*, a round, fleecy, white cloud, indicative of settled weather. The *STRATUS* is a low, continuous, level cloud, generally accompanying fine weather. The *cirro-cumulus* appears in dense rounded masses of different heights, and also typifies serene weather. The *cirro stratus* is long and narrow, and of variable altitude, sometimes being high, at others descending to the earth in a dense mist. When stationary it indicates rain or snow. The *cumulus-stratus* is the thunder cloud,

and when it has discharged its electricity, it passes into the *Nimbus*, which is the shower seen in profile.

PREJUDICE.

BY CLAUDE ADRIAN HELVETIUS.

All men imagine, that on this globe there is no part of it, in this part of the earth no nation, in the nation no province, in the province no city, in the city no society, comparable to their own. We, step by step, surprise ourselves into a secret persuasion that we are superior to all our acquaintance. If an oyster, confined within its shell, is acquainted with no more of the Universe than the rock on which it is fixed, and therefore cannot judge of its extent; how can a man, in the midst of a small society, always surrounded by the same objects, and acquainted with only one train of thoughts, be able to form a proper estimate of merit without his own circle. Truth is never engendered or perceived but in the fermentation of contrary opinions. The Universe is only known to us in proportion as we become acquainted with it. Whoever confines himself to conversing with one set of companions, cannot avoid adopting their prejudices, especially if they flatter his pride. Who can separate himself from an error, when vanity, the companion of ignorance, has tied him to it, and rendered it dear to him?

It is the philosopher alone who contemplates the manners, laws, customs, religions, and the different passions that actuate mankind, that can become almost insensible both to the praise and satire of his cotemporaries; can break all the chains of prejudice, examine with modesty and indifference the various opinions which divide the human species; pass, without astonishment, from a seraglio to a cloister, reflect with pleasure on the extent of human folly, and see, with the same eye, Alcibiades cut off the tail of his dog, and Mahomet shut himself up in his cavern; the one to ridicule the folly of the Athenians, and the other to enjoy the adoration of the world. He knows, that our ideas necessarily proceed from the company we keep, the books we read, and the objects presented to our sight; and that a superior intelligence might divine our thoughts from the objects presented before us, and from our thoughts divine the number and nature of the objects offered to the mind. The Arab persuaded of the infallibility of his Khalif, laughs at the credulity of the Tartar, who believes the Great Lama immortal. In Africa, the negro who pays his adorations to a root, the claw of a lobster, or the horn of an animal, sees nothing on the earth but an immense mass of deities, and laughs at the scarcity of gods among us; while the ill-informed Musselman accuses us of acknowledging three. If a sage should descend from heaven, and in his conduct consult only the light of reason, he would universally pass for a fool. All are so scrupulously attached to the interest of their own vanity, that the title of wise is only given to the fools of the common folly. The more foolish an opinion is, the more dangerous it is to prove its folly. Fontenelle was accustomed to say, that if he held every truth in his hand, he would take great care not to open it to show them to men.

In destroying prejudices, we ought to treat them with respect: like the doves from the ark, we ought to send some truths on the discovery, to see if the deluge of prejudices does not yet cover the face of the earth; if error begin to subside; and if there can be perceived here and there some isles, where virtue and truth may find rest for their feet, and communicate themselves to mankind.

All those virtues originate from prejudice, the exact observance of which does not in the least contribute to the public happiness; such as the austerities of those senseless Fakirs with which the Indies are peopled: virtues that, being often indifferent, and even prejudicial to the state, are the punishment of those who make vows for the performance of them. These false virtues in most nations (for many of them are to be found in every nation under heaven,) are more honored than the true virtues; and those that practise them held in greater veneration than good citizens. Happy the people among whom the virtues which originate from prejudice and folly are only ridiculous;

they are frequently extremely barbarous. In the capital of Cochinchina they bring up crocodiles; and whoever exposes himself to the fury of one of these animals, and is devoured, is reckoned among the elect. What is more barbarous than the institution of convents among the Papists? In Martemban, it is an act of virtue, on the day when the idol is brought out, for the people to throw themselves under the wheels of his chariot; and whoever offers himself to this death, is reputed a saint. As there are virtues of prejudice, there are also vices of prejudice. It is one for a Bramin to marry a virgin. If, during the three months in which the people of Formosa are ordered to go naked, a man fastens upon him the smallest piece of linen, he wears, say they, a clothing unworthy of a man. The neglect, in Catholic countries, of fasts, confessions, penances, and pater noster, is a crime of the first magnitude. And there is, perhaps, no country where the people have not a greater abhorrence of some of these crimes of prejudice, than for villanies the most atrocious, and the most injurious to society.—*Bible of Nature.*

SKETCHES OF INTERIOR VISION.

BY FANNY GREEN.

DISAPPOINTMENT.

A wide landscape, soft and alluring as ever enticed the beauty-loving eye, was stretched before me. Long vistas, and deep openings, with the tenderest light and shade, terminating only with the verge of the horizon, won me forward; while a Spirit of inconceivable grace and beauty was hovering in the air, on whose undulations floated her light robes, beaming with many-colored light, like woven rainbows; and over her lovely forehead bent a crescent gemmed with stars. As she leaned forward from her aerial canopy, waving her hand enticingly, my soul recognized her as its own tutelary angel, Hope; and I sped on with a light heart; and an exhilarating energy pervaded my whole being. And although, as I have since found, this light which is radiated from the distant pleasure may be lost in the near approach, yet it has moments wherein the bliss of years may be concentrated—moments of exquisite, unshadowed joy—when glimpses of its true destiny break in upon the soul, foreshowing the intensity of rapture when the excitement of hope shall be lost in the serene depths of a perfect fruition.

Gradually the way became narrower, but I was so filled with the inspiring presence that attracted me as to be hardly sensible of the change. Soon, however, the beautiful landscape that won me forward, became enveloped in a dense vapor, and at times was entirely shut out from my view. But again the central light would break forth, and I could see that fair Spirit—even fairer than ever—winningly enticing me on. I struggled forward, more and more perplexed, until darkness as a thick cloud arose. For a moment its folds were touched and tinted with the declining light; and then its impenetrable shroud suddenly closed over all.

Yet still I labored to advance; but when at length I had reached the desired spot, its light and beauty were changed to darkness and desolation. A mighty fire had passed over it. It was a ruin; and all its glory was laid in ashes. Weary, and sad, I sat down on a blackened fragment—remains of the fairest tree—and through a momentary opening of the clouds, I again beheld that fair Spirit. She was bending with the saddest look, waving her hand with a deprecating gesture; as if, moved by a power she would resist, but could not, she must bid me farewell forever. Then she was lost in the black cloud-rift; and I saw her no more.

The loneliness occasioned by her departing presence fell on my heart with the paralyzing effect of conscious death.

I was aroused by approaching footsteps. A female form drew near. Her wan features had a somber expression, as if her countenance had been formed of the shadow that was projected from some fairer being. She turned her large, heavy, dark eyes from one object to another, with a look of something like pleasure, as if she enjoyed the ruin, and could, in fact, enjoy nothing else.

"I am Disappointment," she said, pausing, and regarding me with a pensive air, which I fancied also had malice in its languor; for there was a sinister look in the angular lines of the thin lip, and the momentary twinkling of the heavy eye, whose light was so abrupt and sharp, it really seemed to cut through the darkness that enveloped it. "You have entered my domains uninvited;" she continued, "and thus have laid yourself under the necessity of accepting such entertainment as I can give—" She paused a moment, and then added, with a very perceptible sneer—"however little it may be to your taste."

There was something in the very tones of her voice which curdled the blood to hear. I stood as one bound by some evil charm—conscious of the thrall, but unable to extricate myself. It became quite dark as she was speaking; and the light of the soul itself seemed going out, as if the single star toward which it had turned in all former darkness, were suddenly extinguished forever—as if the hand of God, himself, were turned against me; and anguish keener than the bitterness of death came upon my heart.

"Rouse thyself," said my visitor, "or thy heart will be completely in the power of Despair. She is my sister, and we work lovingly together; but I always try to keep the balance between us adjusted evenly. It was I who continually whispered in the ear of the young Genoese Painter, until by renewing the memory of former misadventures, I persuaded him that he could not gain the prize for which he labored; until at length Despair filled for him the brimming bowl of poison: and when they came to tell him of his unexpected success, he was gasping in the horrible death agonies. He could not speak; but he went out of the world with a curse of his own folly rankling with a more cruel barb in his last consciousness. Ha! that was our bravest work!—our masterpiece!" A low, hissing laugh sharpened for a moment the sneer that was indelibly cut into the corners of her thin blue lips; and then the countenance was bronze-like and rigid as before.

A storm arose. The rage of the elements was terrible; but I had no fear. Death, annihilation itself, would have been welcomed as a blessed relief from the tortures of that moment. I was again roused by that harsh and grating voice.

"Relinquish thy present pursuit," said the Spirit, approaching and laying a hand on my arm; "and I will instantly conduct thee to a place of safety; and by the way I will tell thee of young Chatterton, and how we poured out for him the cup of darkness."

A cold sweat like that of death was heavy on my brow; but suddenly there was a reaction of the spiritual faculties, and I came to reflect upon my situation. By a sudden reillumination of the inner testimony, I beheld, as it were, pictured in my soul, that divine being, who, I imagined, had quite deserted me. Then I perceived the necessity, and the virtue, and the absolute good of the discipline to which I was subjected. Rays of light kindled, and projected by this central faith, shot through the darkness, reaching even to the spirit of Him who is at once the source and end of its repose, and its confidence.

I arose from the earth where I had fallen prostrate in my agony, and turning to the Spirit, said: "My trust in my FATHER is still unshaken. Among all the ministers that work His will thou, too, unprepossessing as thou art, must have thy portion and thy place. I will not ask the especial purpose of thy mission; for that is hidden among his all-wise and inscrutable decrees. It is enough for me to know that all his dispensations are wrought in love. It is enough for me to feel that I am better and stronger for having met thee. Even now thy form is fading away in the light that beams forth from His unveiling countenance. Thou camest as an enemy; but I bless thee as a friend."

Even while I spoke her lineaments lost their positive and rigid outline; and as she vanished from my sight, a smile lit her dark features with a glory that made their haggard expression beautiful.

Just at that moment the moon broke forth; and on the heavy eastern clouds appeared the lovely Spirit, Hope, with her irised

mantle floating in the soft air, and a coronet of gems, which had drunk their brightness from the living Fountain of light, bending above her gentle forehead.

Psychological Department.

A SUPPER WITH SPECTRES.

The following narrative, by Miss Augusta Browne, a young lady who is a teacher and composer of Music, in New York, was abridged by a correspondent of the Spirit World, for that paper. It first appeared in the Home Journal, and is said to be well authenticated.

The ensuing occurrences, making due allowance for variation of phraseology, and the possible omission of some minutæ of detail, whatever credence they may obtain, and however difficult, as doubtless they are, to account for, are, nevertheless, strictly true.

The Rev. Mr. E——, travelling on a ministerial tour through the south of Ireland, one autumn day, found it impossible to reach his place of destination, yet distant many miles, before the coming on of night, which already announced its rapid approach by its sombre herald, twilight. During the day, his ride had been suggestive of solitary meditation, as the portion of the country through which he journeyed, was, owing to the grandeur and diversification of its scenery, one of the most picturesque in the kingdom.

In the earlier part of his journey, a few comfortable farm-houses had been visible to Mr. E——; but as the day wore on, the way grew increasingly gloomy. At last it became expedient to think of obtaining a lodging for the night, and he paused to reflect and reconnoitre. Not far from him towered the turrets of a venerable castle, around which clustered trees of an immense growth, whose thick trunks, gnarled and overhanging branches, and sombre foliage, seemed as if anxious to keep out the gaze of prying stragglers, and prevented the main body of the building from being seen. Altogether, the aspect of the place was so repelling, and spoke so strongly of desertion, that he involuntarily turned away. Meanwhile, the darkness increased apace, and no other habitation was in sight but one—that of a person whom he well knew, by report, to be an implacable hater of religion and its ministers. Alternative, therefore, there was none, between seeking admission as an unwelcome guest, from which his innate delicacy shrunk, and remaining exposed to the fury of a storm. He hesitated for some time, but determined at length to try whether the voice of hospitality might not plead his cause, and gain for him, at least, the shelter of a roof,—any refuge appeared preferable to exposure to the peltings of the storm. Mr. E——accordingly rode up to the door of the house and knocked; a tall, dark-visaged man appeared. Mr. E——introduced himself, apologized for the intrusion, and solicited accommodation for the night. The gentleman replied that he would with pleasure furnish him supper, and find room in the stable for his horse, but regretted that there was not in the house a vacant chamber.

"But are you a coward?" he demanded, abruptly.

"I hope not."

"Because, if you are not, yonder is the castle, across the park, of which I am agent; no one is in it, as the owner is travelling on the continent. I will not disguise from you, however, that strange tales are told of its being haunted, which was, in fact, the principal reason for the desertion of the Earl of L——'s family. If, as you say, you are not afraid, you are welcome to a bed there."

Not seeming to notice the sneer which accompanied the last words, Mr. E——accepted the offer with thankfulness, remarking, that however he might prefer society, yet as a minister of the gospel, he had no cause for fearing *even* the powers of darkness, should they league against him.

"Very well, then," said the host, whom we may designate as Mr. D——, "I will order supper, and send servants over to the castle to prepare a room and light a fire; and I will attend you

there myself, and assist in searching your room and the adjoining ones."

After supper, Mr. E——expressed himself in readiness to attend his host to his destined lodgings, as he was much fatigued and longed for repose. The rain had not yet commenced, but the flashes of lightning, and the howling of the wind through the stately oaks and elms, presaged its coming violence, and suggested to the imagination of Mr. E——the fitness of just such a night and place for a deed of crime; and he shuddered, as they traversed the gloomy park, as many a tale of murdered travellers, that he had heard in boyhood, came to his mind. Then, again, he would think on the unexpected hospitality of Mr. E——, and smile at the horrors which busy fancy had conjured up.

As they drew near the castle, its desolate appearance was not much calculated to re-assure him. Mr. D——carried a lantern, the faint glimmering of which only served to make darkness visible. The noise of their steps and voices disturbed a crazy congregation of owls, bats, and rooks, the time-honored inhabitants of the turrets, which, startled and affrighted, flew about, uttering dismal cries at the unwonted invasion of their premises. A chill ran through Mr. E——; but dreading to awaken the sarcasm of his grim host, he said nothing. They reached the grand entrance. On opening, the door grated harshly on its rusty hinges, and a rush of night-winds moaned bodily as they entered. While ascending the staircase, dim shadows seemed to gather and troop around them, with fantastic gestures beckoning them onward; a thousand spirit eyes peered inquisitively out of the arches and frets in the ceiling; snatches of faint song echoed through the corridors; glimpses he had of half-formed faces flitting about in corners, and whispers and sighs floated on the air. Mr. E——again smiled at his own imaginings, and, making a strong mental effort, fairly shook off further apprehensions. They thoroughly examined the room destined for him, and the adjacent ones, and afterwards looked through those below, one of which was a hall of magnificent dimensions, superbly carved and gilded in the old style. His companion reiterated his assurances that no living being save himself would be in the castle, and, with an invitation to breakfast at his house in the morning, bade him good night. Mr. E——attended him to the door, double-locked and chained it after him, and then ascended to his own apartment, which he also carefully locked and secured. He certainly was not situated very pleasantly. The rain now came down in torrents, but the tremendous thunder and the vivid lightning which occasionally pierced through the heavy damask curtains, only the more enhanced the value of his comfortable retreat, and made his feelings those of unmingled satisfaction. A bright fire blazed on the old-fashioned hearth, and two wax candles stood lighted on an elegant inlaid table beside it.

The room was richly furnished in an antique style, and the luxurious couch, to one tired as he, was extremely inviting to repose. But the inclination had quite left him, and a strange wakefulness had superseded all his weariness. Several noble paintings by the great masters, Guido and De Vinci, adorned the walls, one of which was a beautiful picture of the Virgin and Child, representing Him while yet the radiant brow was unpierced by thorns, and ere the delicate fair cheek had been subjected to the blow of the smiter, or the Prayer of prayers had been gasped by those cherub lips. Upon these he mused for an hour or so, and then, according to his usual custom, opened his pocket Bible, and read and meditated until his excitement passed away, and a sacred calm gradually settled upon him.

Suddenly his attention was aroused by a singular commotion in the room below. Heavy tables were dragged about, dishes and glasses rattled, chairs violently pushed hither and thither, doors slammed, and, in short, he heard every noise attendant upon the laying out of an extensive table. This unaccountable uproar continued unabated for about half an hour, when, all at once, the place became hushed as the grave. Soon after, a slow, heavy step began to ascend the stairs. Could his host have deceived him? For a time he doubted his truth. The ominous

step continued to ascend; nearer it drew, and still nearer, until it stopped at his door.

Three sullen knocks.

Mr. E—— paused a moment, and then asked—

"Who's there?"

A hollow voice replied—

"*The master wants you down to supper!*"

"Excuse me, if you please; I cannot go down."

The dull, heavy step descended the stairs, and entered the hall below. Mr. E—— began to conjecture that a band of forgers or smugglers had made the place their abode, and, being aware of his proximity, wished to inveigle him into their power, in order to insure his silence. His sensations were becoming very unenviable; but the pause was brief, for again he heard the step ascending, if possible, heavier and slower than before; and again the three sullen knocks were given.

"What do you want?"

"*The master wants you down to supper!*"

"Tell him I have already supped, and do not wish for more," replied Mr. E—— alarmed at his pertinacity.

The step departed as before, and he distinguished angry voices in loud debate below. Were their designs hostile, how could he hope to escape? Egress, unperceived was utterly impossible. He was a prisoner, and clearly in the clutches of his enemies, for such they must be. His heart sank like lead, as his thoughts reverted to his quiet, happy home.

The third time he heard the dreaded foot approaching, so heavy every footfall now, that they smote on his ear like cannon balls. The three sullen knocks again.

"What do you want, that you thus persist in disturbing me?" demanded Mr. E——, loudly.

"*The master wants you down to supper!*"

"I come," said Mr. E——, and mentally imploring the protection of heaven, he grasped a candle, and placing his Bible under his arm, opened the door. A grim, gigantic figure, habited in black from head to foot, stood without, who, motioning him to follow, led the way to the same splendid apartment in which he had been in the earlier part of the evening. The door was thrown widely back by his sable guide, and he was ushered in. The master of the revels received him with a silent bow, and escorted him to the table, which was covered with a sumptuous banquet, and entirely surrounded by guests, with the exception of one seat which had been reserved for him.

As he seated himself, a burst of hideous laughter pealed out, and died away in the distance. He glanced at the company; they were all robed in unrelieved black, and from countenances of livid ghastliness, the hollow eyes shot forth gloomy flashes of fire as they glared upon him.

All was silence—dead silence! It was appalling. He felt the blood curdle in his veins. The host helped him first and then the other guests. Demoniac grins wreathed their thin lips, as they watched to see him eat. But he no longer doubted as to the nature of the company, and touched not the unhallowed food. A dead weight hung upon the atmosphere, almost crushing him to the earth; dense sulphurous vapor floated around, and the lowering brows of the company knit into deeper scowls as they burst out into another fit of Mephistopheles-like mirth.

A moment of fearful trial, it is said, occurs in the life-time of every mortal. Mr. E—— shuddered as he felt that his had arrived; and what a tremendous ordeal it was—no less than a personal conflict with the powers of darkness. The host signed peremptorily to him to begin. With a great effort—for he well knew that each fiendish eye was riveted upon him—he exclaimed: "I have never been in the habit of eating, without having first asked a blessing."

So saying, he bowed his head on his Bible, and cried with a loud voice:

"Oh Lord, thou hast often fed me with the bread of heaven; suffer me not now to feast with devils."

A fearful shriek—a peal of thunder that shook the castle to its deep foundations—and, raising his head, Mr. E—— discovered that he was alone in the supper-room, sitting in the same place, with only his own candle, out of the score of lights burn-

ing on the table beside him. For a while he was stunned, his senses were overpowered; but soon recovering his self-command, he retraced his way back to his room, where, as may well be imagined, he slept not. That night was one prolonged vigil.—It did on him the work of years of agony. At a reasonable hour in the morning he left the castle, and went to the house of the agent, who welcomed him very cordially, inquiring, with much solicitude, how he had rested, and whether he had been molested or disturbed. Mr. E—— answered him in a composed manner, which, while it satisfied him, did not let fall the slightest intimation of the occurrences of the past night. Not wishing to excite suspicion by a precipitate departure, he awaited breakfast, and thanking Mr. D—— for his politeness, asked for his horse, which had received benevolent care, and rode away.

The instant he reached his home he became violently ill, and died in a few weeks. He never raised his head more, or overcame the terrors of that night.

His widow herself communicated the events here related to a friend of the writer. Mr. E—— was a clergyman of superior talents and extensive acquirements, and perfectly free from any superstitious feelings. There could be no reason to doubt his veracity; his adventure was not the result of imagination, for he was far from his own room at the conclusion of the frightful scene. His melancholy death, in the sequel, proves that he must have been assaulted by foes more than merely human.—The whole occurrence is enveloped in a mystery, of which we are unable to find a solution.

Psychological Impressions.

A gentleman of the highest respectability, resident in New Orleans, had, about ten years ago, a son who was engaged in some mercantile transactions which detained him for several months in the Island of Jamaica. His stay, by the force of unavoidable circumstances, had been protracted far beyond the prescribed period; and both himself and his friends were looking forward to his return with a great deal of impatience and anxiety.

During this state of things, the father, one night, after having retired to bed, extinguished his lamp, and lay awake a considerable time, in a state of unusually calm and placid rest. Directly he was much surprised to see the curtains of his bed drawn gently apart, and a human figure standing there. As it approached still closer, and bent over him, he distinctly recognised the features of his absent son. They wore a troubled and anxious expression; and as the form inclined itself, he heard a low, deep, hollow voice uttering these words: "Father! I am dying!" and then the figure seemed to pass into the shadows; and he saw it no more.

Mr. P. rose directly, and searched the room. The door was still locked, and nothing was out of place. He then recorded the hour and minute when he became thus affected by the unaccountable impression; and, strange to say, by the first possible intelligence from Kingston, he heard of the death of his son, which happened simultaneously with the vision; and his last words were: "Father! I am dying!"

An incident somewhat similar and yet in one sense the exact reverse of the above happened during the late Mexican war. A widow lady, the mother of a promising young officer who belonged to the American troops then engaged in active service, was walking out with a friend one clear, bright summer afternoon. Just as they came beneath the shadow of an apple tree, (for they were going through an orchard) the widow, Mrs. L——, suddenly sprang forward, uttered a piercing shriek and was caught nearly fainting in the arms of her friend, who, with all the effort she could command, just saved her from dashing on the ground. As soon as Mrs. L—— was able to explain the cause of her agitation, she said she had heard the report of a gun discharged apparently within a few inches of her person. And she added, "That shot killed my poor Henry!" This idea became so fixed in her mind it was impossible to divert her from it. She was in a state of frightful anxiety and distress until the news came that he was indeed shot at the very moment, as nearly as could be calculated, when the report was heard by his mother.

MESSENGER AND GUIDE.

R. P. AMBLER AND FRANCES H. GREEN, EDITORS.

SPRINGFIELD, MASS., NOVEMBER 15, 1851.

Thoughts on the Spiritual Aspect of the Age.

We are prone to look too much on the outward, and overlook the spiritual and inner world. Of a large portion of mankind it may be affirmed, with far too much truth, that the immediate end of their life is to *get money*. The remote and final end sought, is *PHYSICAL ENJOYMENT*. To eat, to drink, and to be merry, is the *Summum Bonum*. The young man, if his parents are poor, is early bound down to physical labor; and the only lesson of philosophy taught him, is, how to turn every thing into gold,—or at least into silver. The incipient merchant at an early age is instructed in the mysteries—not of science, or of the mind,—but of sharp-trading! The Ledger is his text-book; the Price of Stocks his manual. Nor is the case entirely different with regard to the other sex. Now this is all, to a great extent, wrong. It is wrong to devote the immortal energies of the mind so entirely and exclusively to the acquisition of that which is designed merely to procure us the means of physical existence.

We ought never to forget that the soul needs food, as well as the body; and that those who pamper with luxury the material, and starve the spiritual part of their nature, are doing all in their power to reduce themselves to the level of the brute. The spiritual being can derive no nourishment from account books, or mechanical tools. It is as possible to check the growth of the soul, and dwarf its noble powers, as it is to injure the bodily strength and vigor. Thousands, nay, millions in this country, are at this moment injuring their own highest nature by a denial of its proper sustenance. It demands, in addition to this, proper and vigorous exercise. It would soar above the height of sensual vision. It would grasp the mysteries of nature, and grapple with error in its most powerful form. But if—to continue the metaphor,—you deny it proper food and exercise—if you seek to fill it with the transitory interests of your occupation alone,—if you chain down these thoughts which can “wander through eternity,” and embrace all that is powerful and noble in the natural and spiritual world, and even reach the throne of Deity itself, and there gaze with enraptured awe,—if you stifle these aspirations, and fasten the mind firmly on the petty cares and concerns of every-day life, and forbid it wider scope than the workshop, the counting room, or the professional office, you will gradually weaken its vigor, rob it of its high hopes, and stint, if not destroy its growth.

And are not a majority of mankind doing this? Have they not already shut out from the daily circle of their thoughts, truths and hopes the most sublime, purifying and soul-invigorating? How seldom do they turn from the din and bustle of the world, and fix their thoughts inward, or hold communion with the Beautiful and Good. How seldom do they pause and consider the object and end of their creation, and the nature of that Essence, which is to live as long as the Great Eternal himself. How many have such an active, realizing confidence in this great truth as fully to appreciate the sentiment so finely expressed by the Poet:

“Ages pass away,
Thrones fall, and nations disappear, and worlds
Grow old and go to wreck; the soul alone
Endures, and what she chooseth for herself,
The arbiter of her own destiny,
That only shall be permanent.”

We do not mean to assert that the majority are deficient in mere assenting belief to the sublime truths of Revelation, and the teachings of Reason; but we say that belief is *not heart-felt*—that it does not incorporate itself into the mind's very existence, and become a part of our universal consciousness. S. T. Cole-

ridge has a remark like the following:—“It is not uncommon for truths at once the most sublime and important to lie bedridden in the dormitory of the soul, by the side of the most exploded dogmas of fancy.” And how much truth there is in the characteristic and concise expression! It is one great fault of our age that first principles and fundamental truths are overlooked in the rage for excitement and novelty. This is indeed a natural consequence of the great multiplication of books, and ephemeral literature. We read much, but think little. Instead of crowding our minds with crude vagaries and novelties, we need a perpetual recurrence to those ideas which

“Uphold us—cherish us, and help to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the Eternal silence; truths that wake
To perish never.”

How few regard our present existence but as a preparation merely for one of boundless duration! How few consider the vast capabilities of the human mind—that it proceeded from the breath of the great Power of the Universe, and that his image was stamped upon it! Could they completely take in, and digest this great idea, they would recognize in the most degraded human being of all those around them, a soul, to the expansion of which the Deity has placed no finite limits, believing that there may be a period in its existence when it will surpass in knowledge all that now is known by the angels of heaven!

Yes, proud Aristocrat! the poor, trembling outcast you are now loading with indignities, and on whose neck your armed heel is set, with such a sense of comfort to yourself, but with little or no consciousness of discomfort to him—even he is an heir of this glorious inheritance—the future companion of angels! Forget this truth if you please;—stifle it in your soul under the rubbish of earthly thoughts, but it will re-appear again in terror to thy soul! Remember that the Great Judge and Ruler of the Universe is no respecter of persons. N. B.

TOMBS.

By that mysterious principle of sympathy, which during the presence existence unites the soul with body, we are led to take a solemn but pleasing interest in all the associations of the tomb. And there is nothing, perhaps, that marks more strongly the religion, character, and real genius of a people, than their modes and places of burial. Are not those huge piles of gross matter, the Pyramids and the Necropolis, types of the darkness, heaviness, and grossness of the ancient Egyptian Theology?—There have been many people who have pampered and deified the perishable body, building palaces and temples for its last reception; but their character has invariably been deformed by grossness and superstition.

One might trace the progress of spiritual emancipation very clearly, and very truly, by only studying tombs, in their changes from generation to generation, and from clime to clime. Look at the Death's heads and cross-bones, which were the favorite symbols in the papist and puritan ages. How different is the aspect of those quiet rural places of the body's last repose, which the taste and spiritual affinities of this age alike demand. These are not now chosen for their dreariness or loneliness.—Cottages wreathed with roses, stand beside their gates of entrance; and when you visit them young and happy children open the way for you—showing fairest pictures of Life and Love, on the very borders of Death.

There is nothing that marks the ameliorating influence now acting upon the old Theology more clearly and more legibly, than the improvements in places of public burial. It was the policy of the old Religion to shroud the idea of death with all possible horrors; and ever through the mists of our beclouding faith, we beheld forms of darkness sitting upon the cold and cheerless grave. The horrible silence was seldom broken, except by the tread of the funeral train, or the heavy drop of the cold earth-clod upon the new coffin. There were no flowers to attract the cheerful hum of insects—no trees to win the loving song of birds. There was nothing to whisper of the Life in

Death. All surrounding forms spoke only of decay, of corruption, and the mingling of dust with dust. Every thing—the whole sentiment of the scene—was cold—sullen—solemn—awful; for the Grave, in the eye of the old Faith, was emphatically, the Gate of Hell, and was, as far as possible, invested with all the horrors of that fabled region of the Damned.

But an angel of Love descended into the heart of Man and whispered the sweet revelation, for which it had unconsciously hungered and thirsted, through the long Night of Ages—that “God is Love”—that the whole universe is but a development of this love—and the human being its highest form of expression. And straightway, in the light of this new faith, Death was disrobed of his unnatural terrors; and beneath his skeleton form were seen developing the rudiments of a higher, holier, happier being; while through his ghostly visage beamed the indwelling presence of a purer, truer life. Then the grave became the gate of paradise; and its once gloomy paths the luminous highway of angels. All its borders were planted with flowers—and there insects and waters sang. Trees folded their green arms like guardian spirits, over the turfy mound; and birds made the air musical with their songs of life and love. The close observer can see a change corresponding with, and parallel to this, written in the deepest recesses of the human heart. Let him who takes his bread at the hands of the old Theology, read it, and tremble; for the time is coming when it will have no bread to bestow.

F. H. G.

MONUMENTS.

Every age and nation has its MONUMENTS. The evidences of this are seen in the beautiful ruins which cover the earth.—Thrilling memories are revived, and the classic traveler is inspired with the life of genius, as he wanders alone among its sepulchers. There, amid the emblems of fallen glory, he sits down to listen to the dim mysterious utterances and to learn the history of departed nations, from the monuments they have left behind.

I have said that the ages and the nations have their Monuments. These always embody the cardinal ideas and the leading characteristics of the people. Rome has left the ruins of temples and palaces, of broken arches and crumbling mausoleums, to attest her former greatness. The barren soil of Attica—the land of Miltiades and Pericles—has its monuments, and the great names in Grecian story will long live the admiration of the world. Egypt is renowned for magnificent ruins. Thebes could boast of her splendid temples, and Memphis of her lofty pyramids. Chaldea was famous for the walls of Babylon and the tower of Shinar. But works like these neither evince the wisdom nor the benevolence of their founders. They are but the offspring of earthly pride and power—the proofs of a perverted taste, and an unworthy ambition.

The monuments of the past were erected at a fearful cost of human nerves strained to their utmost tension, and hearts crushed and quivering beneath the power of the oppressor.—We are amazed at the magnitude and dazzled with the material splendor of these works, but those only who are captivated by the extent and grandeur of human schemes and projects, will point to them as the evidences of national greatness and glory. A nation truly great—a people divinely good—an age distinguished for true intellectual culture and moral refinement—the PRESENT, has a nobler work than to copy the example and imitate the splendid creations of the storied Past. True, genius was there enthroned in the highest heaven of invention, molding with her plastic hand the most exquisite forms of outward beauty. But she was fostered at the expense of morality, and her proudest monuments, planted amid the wreck of man's earthly hopes, were baptized with his sweat, and tears, and blood.

After all, that was comparatively a dark period in the history of the race. Men lost sight of their reciprocal relations and mutual dependence. The offices of kindness were neglected.—Few paused to listen to the cry of the poor, the plea of innocence

was stifled, the sick man was left alone in his chamber to commune with the ministers of death, and the young mother and the little child wept together at the grave of their buried joys, while the ambitious tyrant and the thoughtless multitude were alike unmoved at the scene.

But that age has departed. Only here and there are seen the marble fragments of its history. It has been reserved for the living age to witness the beginning of a new era, and the advent of a spirit that has gone forth to renovate, to bless, and to save. The present time is distinguished for nobler impulses, loftier aspirations and more benevolent efforts. The crown and scepter of royalty and the galling chain, and dungeon bars of slavery, are fused together. Old dynasties are shaken to their fall; the right arm of Despotism is palsied, and all tyrants tremble, as the heart of Humanity pulsates with the energy of its own great purpose. Ministers of mercy go out to visit the sick, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and to seek after the wanderer. A fire is kindled on many a desolate hearth, men pray for their enemies, and the most beautiful affections bud and blossom in the garden of the soul. The orphan smiles through its tears, the widow's heart leaps with the inspiration of a new and greater joy, angel visitors unlock the doors of the prison-house, and stand by the captive in his cell, while immortal Hope bends her bow in the ebony sky that frowns above him.

The spirit of a great thought has taken possession of the human mind. Ours is a period in the world's history distinguished for the noblest works—for monuments of *wisdom* and *benevolence*. Strong hands, enlightened minds and true hearts, are engaged in enterprises which God will own and bless. Asylums for the sick and unfortunate of every class are being founded among all civilized nations, and Humanity is coming up from the wilderness of its desolation to sit in pleasant places.

Thousands live and move in this busy world and yet hear no sound; they may not listen to the first note in creation's anthem of praise. Others have no utterance for their deepest impulses and highest intuitions. Though instinct with life and thought, they are voiceless and silent as the senseless marble. Some live in perpetual night, on whose sightless eyes the first ray of light has never shone. But these are not forgotten. The means of intellectual and moral culture are adapted to the peculiarities of each, and the world becomes beautiful to all, as they are taught to recognize the existence and the presence of that Being, who, in his own time, will cause the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and the blind to receive their sight.

Such are the Monuments of the Present. On these the thoughts of great souls are written—in them the deeds of the immortal are enshrined. They constitute the imbodiment of the world's best idea, and stand forever the beautiful witnesses of its wisdom and its love. The monuments of this age will outlive the pyramids; and their founders shall receive the benedictions of the ages unborn. And when at last the black night of oblivion overshadows the pride and grandeur of antiquity—when time has left no memorial to tell of the greatness and glory of the Past, these shall endure, deathless as the “CHARITY which can never fail.”

S. B. B.

Twilight.

This is the hour for deep reflection, and for tender meditation. It is the hour to call up and to cherish, the sacred forms of the remembered past, and a time when we may create and commune with those of the future. Then the heart of the wanderer turns truly to the cynosure of home, and beholds from afar the peaceful spot of its remembered happiness. Always at such seasons, in the mind of youth, Memory and Hope meet and kiss each other; for the fair symbol of Life which has been drawn from the past, becomes still fairer when seen through the beautifying distance, in the bright ideal of the future. It is the hour of imagination, when we can mould the clouds into all lovely images, and gentlest beings fill the air with their loving whispers, as they hover in the deepening shadows. It is the hour of spiritual communion, when the soul feels at once the strength and privilege

of its birthright, and seems to expand itself into the measure of the Infinite. It is the hour of worship, when the whole being bows itself naturally, in adoration before the Adorable.

F. H. G.

NOTICES OF THE PRESS.

SACRED STREAMS; OR THE ANCIENT AND MODERN HISTORY OF THE RIVERS OF THE BIBLE; by PHILIP HENRY GOSSE; edited by GEORGE B. CHEEVER, D. D. New York: Stringer and Townsend, 222 Broadway.

This is a very charming book, furnishing both landscape-painting and natural history, in connection with those hallowed associations that still linger around all the scenes in the magnificent Drama of Human Life, as recorded in the Scriptures.

Some idea of the euphonic beauty of the style may be gathered from the following passage:

"Beneath the willows that droop their long pendant branches into the murmuring river, as if weeping in sympathy with those that seek their sombre shades, sit a group of mourners. They are strangers in a strange land, the captive daughters of Judah, who have sought a brief respite from the insulting scorn of their cruel oppressors, demanding mirth from their broken hearts. How can they sing the Lord's song in a strange land? or how shall they tune their harps to the praise of that Name which the haughty heathen only demand to hear that they may treat it with derision? They have hanged their harps upon the willows, where the mournful breeze sighing through the branches, sweeps over the strings, and awakens low and plaintive chords, in unison with their sorrowful thoughts."

And again, in the narrative of Jonah's mission to the Ninevites, witness the author's descriptive power. The prophet, unwilling to accept any hospitality from the guilty race to whom he is sent, is constrained to make the heavens his canopy, and the earth his pillow. "Yet, truly, to sleep beneath such a sky, reclined upon such a carpet, is no great self-denial."

"The sun has just gone down behind the long wall of the city, which just hides the horizon from view, but does not conceal the flush of ruddy light that bathes the western sky, nor the fantastic piles and little peaks of cloud, where the orb has disappeared, the points and sides of which display an edging of light that glows like molten gold. Streaks of crimson light radiate from the point of sun-setting, and stretching over the whole zenith in widening bands, rest upon the snowy peaks of Ararat, far in the north-east, flushing them with the hue of the rose. The parching heat has gone down with the sun, and a pleasant breeze, most delightfully cool, bears the fragrance of a thousand flowers. These, of every hue, enameling the grass in gorgeous abundance, are now, indeed, beginning to fade from the view in the advancing shadow, but give out their perfume in more copious gushes, under the stimulus of the falling dew. The peasants have unyoked their cattle, and are trudging to their cottages through the fields; and lowing kine and bleating flocks are slowly returning from the pastures, with distended udders. Women are seen around the huts, crouching beneath the kine to milk them as they arrive; others, in laughing groups, are going to the wells, or to the river, bearing pitchers on their erect heads. Youths bring home baskets of fruit from the orchards, or huge bundles of grass and rushes which they have cut by the river's side, their feet and legs wet with the heavy dew, and loaded with the yellow pollen of the blossoming grass.—Parties of the citizens, not yet aware of the proclamation, are enjoying the cool of the day; and many a traveller hurries along towards the city, anxious lest the gates should be shut before they arrive. The youths and maidens are dancing together in many a happy group, to the music of their own happy voices, or of a lyre strung by coarse, but not unskillful hands. Now and then the tinkling of the camel's bell betokens a party of wandering Arabs, whose long spears, tipped with tufts of ostrich-plumes, wave and flutter against the sky, over their heads. The long howl of the jackal comes from the desert, and is answered by the dogs prowling beneath the city walls for the car-

riage which daily accumulates there. At length, all the sights are lost in the purple night, save the stars that glitter and burn above; and all sounds have died away, except the rich notes of the bulbul, that are poured forth in gushes of melody from the orchards around."

I am strongly tempted to give the whole of the beautiful picture, of which the above extract is only a small part; but the want of space forbids; and I can only say that the painter's, and the poet's power, are equally present in the scene. Yes! this is, certainly, not only a very useful, but a highly entertaining book, notwithstanding its theology is rather time-worn.

THE ILLUSTRATED AMERICAN NEWS: T. W. STRONG, 98, Nassau st., New York.

We have received four Monthly numbers of this elegant Pictorial, which, whether we regard the beauty of its delineations, or the spirit of its contents, may fairly dispute the crown of pre-eminence with its London brother. The editorials are remarkably fresh and racy, and, what is better, they have the onward and upward tendency of the transition times in which we live. Whatever has this, possesses that inherent vitality which will not dissolve in the crucible of these gold-trying days. It is moreover, the cheapest work of its kind issued, the single weekly numbers being only five cents, and the monthly parts, beautifully gotten up, in an elaborately embellished cover, only twenty cents.

F. H. G.

Letter from Worcester.

MR. EDITOR:—Thinking it may not be uninteresting to you, as well as to the readers of the Messenger, I will now attempt to give you a little sketch of the progress of spiritual light in this region. The information is derived from different parts of the city, and I believe it is correct.

Six months ago the friends of the Harmonial Philosophy were "few, and far between." Indeed, one could seldom find a listener to the simplest facts relating to it; and only two known mediums were in the place. But a great change has occurred since then. Your excellent paper, and other spiritual guides were circulated round quite freely. Spiritual manifestations began to multiply among us. As they fell in the way of the phenomena, many of our opposers were so much interested as to seek communications for themselves; and they are now made happy by receiving manifestations in their own families. An anxious spirit of enquiry in regard to this intensely interesting subject seems now to be generally diffused among our people. There are as many as thirty mediums, more or less perfectly developed, now recognized among us; and the list includes one minister, lately ordained to preach the gospel of Universal Salvation.

There is much perceptible good already come out of this new bond of unity, which is drawing together hitherto divided interests. What else could have produced so salutary an effect in so short a time? Surely not any of the old means of religious excitement, so called, whatever form they might have taken; for the converts who may be won at such seasons are often estranged from their friends, while the churches themselves are at variance with each other; and harmony is a stranger among them. But now the celestial dove has nestled in the very bosom of families, with a continual presence of sweet fellowship, and peace, and love. This truly harmonizing spirit is constantly expanding into wider, and still wider circles, where its disciples are gathered together under the same vaine—not as strangers, but as brethren: and harmony dwells in our midst. The old frost work of creeds and forms—nay, the old iron of bigotry itself, is yielding, and softening, before the irresistible light of Truth. This is truly a season of rejoicing! Then let us take courage, and press forward with unabating zeal, to obtain those higher endowments, which shall free us entirely from the groveling influence of the senses, and prepare us to be the companions of angels.

Yours fraternally,

M. V. T.

Worcester, November, 10th, 1851.

Poetry.

A MORNING HYMN.

BY FANNY GREEN.

Lift thy great heart, O, Nature—Shout and sing!
 Waken with love thy thousand string-ed lyre,
 And chant thy morning hymn of praise to God!
 O praise Him, all ye hills, that lift your heads
 To catch the purpling radiance!—for his hand
 Hath planted every flower, and shrub, and tree,
 That make your heights a glory.

Quiet Vales,

Bright in the robe of summer, bending low
 Your fragrant garments, verdant with the promise
 Of golden Autumn, murmur forth his praise,
 Who filled your arms with plenty. And ye Cliffs,
 In awful loneliness that stretch afar,
 Lifting the clouds of Heaven—a resting place
 Where angel messengers their pinions fold,
 Lingering where mortal breath has left no taint
 Upon the breath of Heaven—nor mortal foot
 Hath marred the texture, or hath ever stained
 Your gathering mantles of eternal snow—
 Let your majestic silence utter praise!

And ye great Winds—whether ye wake your strength
 To stir the heaving ocean, or breathe low
 The music and the passion of the South,
 O'er some fair grotto's nurslings—sweeping drear
 Where wild Arcturus reigns—or murmuring soft
 'Mid fragrant bowers of lime and orange trees;
 Praise Him with every voice—or low—or loud—
 Shout with thanksgiving! shout, and carry far
 Your anthem to the boundaries of the world!

O, Flowers! the fairest ministers of Love
 That bless the temple of the Beautiful,
 Whether ye welcome morning from the fields,
 Verdant and sunny; or the leafy woods;
 Or garden walk; or desert lone and far,
 Where only glittering insects bright as ye,
 May praise your beauty, and inhale your sweets—
 Fair Lily, Hyacinth, and blushing Rose,
 And every simplest Blossom, waking now,
 Lift up your dewy eyes, and bless the light,
 Sped on swift wings to pencil every hue—
 To tinge you with our Father's radiant smile,
 And make you iridescent with his love—
 Pour out in praise your soft ambrosial breath—
 Worship him with the beauty he has given!

Trees, of the ancient time, bend low your heads!
 Ye Cedars, bow! and all ye haughty oaks,
 Do reverence to the Majesty on High!
 And every humbler Tree, and Shrub and Vine,
 In the old forest waving your green arms,
 Forget not him who wove your verdant robes—
 Send the sweet incense of your praise abroad!
 Sing, all ye Birds!—Attune your warbling throats,
 Ye who are springing from your mossy nests,
 Or soaring high, half piercing the dark veil
 Which curtains immortality—praise God!
 Thou mighty Sun, the soul of many worlds,
 Best image of thy Maker—rising now
 In living majesty to walk abroad,
 And personate the Universal Life!
 Speed forth thanksgivings on the wings of Light!
 Let all thy beams rejoice, and utter praise!

And oh, thou mighty Ocean!—wake thy waves—
 Attune thy surges' everlasting roar,
 And chant thy morning anthem! Loud and deep
 Lift up thy mighty voice in thankfulness—

Praise Him who made thee strongest of his sons,
 And clothed thy forehead with His Majesty!
 And all ye creatures dwelling in the depths—
 Leap up and praise Him with mute eloquence,
 Who measured out your strong abiding place,
 And gave it for an everlasting home—
 And all ye Coral-weavers—labor on,
 And rear your architraves;—for WORK IS PRAISE!

Ye lowing Herds, and every animal
 That nestleth in the rocks, or boundeth free
 Along the sand-robed desert, praise the HAND
 That gave you life, and food, and liberty!
 And ye majestic Rivers, carrying far
 Beauty and power to widely-distant lands,
 Let every wreath of mist that upward curls,
 Be the pure incense of your general joy!
 And all ye babbling Brooks, and whispering Rills,
 And Fountains clear, and thundering Cataracts,
 Lend your glad voices to the morning hymn
 Of universal Nature!

Thou, O, Man!—

For whom the hill, and vale, and mountain height,
 And river broad, and ocean majesty—
 With all their wealth of gems, and gold, and corn—
 And every living creature that exists,
 Were fashioned by thy Maker—first be thou
 To wake the anthem of Intelligence
 Amid inferior nature! let thy soul
 Bow down and bless the all-pervading Soul—
 Jehovah—God—the Universal Lord!

THE ANGEL-BIRTH.

WRITTEN FOR THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

BY MRS. SARAH GORSUCH.

On this beautiful Sabbath morn the angels have come and taken away
 a little one of our household.

Through the long silence of the night,
 A mother watched till day,
 Her little darling, cherished child,
 As its life fast ebbed away.

But not alone she watcheth there,
 Through the long and dreary night;
 For guardian angels hover near,
 All radiant with light.

From their own blissful spheres they come,
 Afar in the azure sky;
 And closely fold unto their breast,
 The babe they bear on high.

The morning breaks! and golden rays
 Pour in upon the dawn—
 While music soft floats on the air,
 For in heaven—an angel's born!

Around that newborn soul is wrought
 A chain of deathless love,
 Drawing our own with links of light
 To fairer worlds above.

Upspringing from this transient life—
 Love's holiest ties untriven—
 Affections that were blighted here
 Are blossoming in Heaven.

“Count that day lost whose low descending sun
 Views from thy hand no worthy action done.”

Miscellaneous Department.

MYTHIC STORIES.

BY FANNY GREEN.

ASLOG.

"In the beginning," as we read in the Preface of that mythic volume, the *Heldenbuch*, "God created the dwarfs, because the land and the mountains were waste, and there was much store of gold, silver, and precious stones, and pearls. And God gave them great skill in working metals, and great wisdom in the virtue of all stones. But when they were near being destroyed by the old Dragon, God created the Giants to protect them against the Dragon."

In the early days there were two Giants, who held possession of all the earth. They were rival powers. Their names were Aslog and Olog, which, being interpreted, signify Gold Gatherer, and Gold Scatterer. Aslog was much the larger and stronger of the two; but Olog so far surpassed him in cunning and sagacity, those subtle weapons of the weak, as not unfrequently to be more than a match for him. Indeed, he had become such a great annoyance, that Aslog really began to tremble for his sovereignty, which, till then, had been undisputed, and which he claimed not only by right of primogeniture, but by virtue of his superior strength.

But I must now turn aside from the main current of the narrative, in order to relate a little story, which I am quite sure is now, for the first time, about being presented to the public eye; though in doing so, I must call into question a character that has always, unless it be *at home*, received more honor than was really due. In short, Aslog was greatly enamored of Astaroth, a goddess better known in modern language as Cynthia, the fair Queen of Night;—or to make use of a popular phrase, which is quite to the point, he was completely moon-struck—while the lady herself, if I may speak so diminutively, had an equal regard for our giant hero.

No sooner had her husband, Baal, the bright sovereign of Day, gone to his couch over the western hills, than Astaroth glided from heaven with such a noiseless step, she never woke even the sleeping flowers, and kept tryste with her lover, in the beautiful pavillion he had built for her reception.

Aslog had established himself on the western coast of Africa. He had a great passion for Architecture, though it must be confessed he did not cultivate it as a *fine art*; and he had a greater passion for Astaroth, who was delighted with the wonderful structures he reared for her reception, and entertainment; indeed, she took such interest in them, that there was no end to her whimsical suggestions. To-day she made him pull down what yesterday she had pronounced the very type of perfection; for the Moon then, as now, was quite remarkable for its changes.

But Aslog never complained. It was wonderful to see how patient and devoted, even to her wildest caprices, he showed himself; though they completely nullified all the unities, and forever disturbed the leading idea, which was shadowed forth in the mind of the artist. Still he wrought on. Tower rose above tower, and terrace stretched beyond terrace. Temples, pavillions, palaces, and arcades, were grouped together, sometimes with the most picturesque, and again with the grandest effect. Now a colonnade tipped with jagged spires, stretched up into the clouds; then a long, projecting gallery hung over a yawning chasm, that seemed opening into mid earth. Thus obedient to the fancy of his lady queen, he threw up cliff beyond cliff, until he had reared those immense piles, which, stretching far across the continent, are known for better reason than has hitherto appeared, as the MOUNTAINS OF THE MOON.

However wrong these stolen interviews might have been, and certainly were, they became the occasion of great and lasting good to mankind—as you shall hear. One night, as the lovers were sitting together on the terrace of Mandara, which Aslog had made his chief residence, because it was a favorite with Astaroth, they chanced to look away to the north-west, over the

country of the Yariba, where appeared a vast lake that covered all the table land with its waters, stretching far inland.

"I have often thought strange," said Astaroth, "while gazing on your very respectable planet, that it never occurred to you what an enormous waste is occasioned by yonder flood. Dost thou not know that the earth is destined to bring forth fruit out of her bosom, for the support of men, who will some day cover the face of the ground?"

"I see!" exclaimed Aslog, with a true lover's ardor, anticipating her idea. "A passage must be opened. I have built my walls rather too close. I will correct the mistake."

Thereupon he strode off to the pinnacle of Yariba; and standing astride two projecting portions of the mountain, he began throwing out the rocks with such right good will, that before midnight a deep gorge was opened. The pent-up waters rushed through the narrow passage, with such force that Aslog came very near being carried away by the torrent, which, having found a passage for itself, completely drained the country. The waters soon subsided to the deepest part of their channel; and thus the beautiful Niger was formed. This stream was at first named by Astaroth the Joliba, which signifies "The labor of Love;" and to this day it retains its primal name among the natives, though it has long since lost its early significance.

Astaroth was not only delighted with her cavalier's readiness to please, but also with the result of his exertions, and she became anxious to show that her power, though of a finer and wholly different type, was quite equal to his own. As soon as she saw what he had done, she ran off toward the East with such speed that Aslog found it quite difficult to overtake her, though he had on his seven league boots; for she glanced along with her soft, wave-like step, which was more like swimming than walking; and though he took such enormous strides, it was not without the greatest effort that he came beside her.

"Men, as I have told thee before, will inhabit these regions, some day," she said, with an arch smile, that appeared quite captivating in the eyes of her lover, who had just come up, puffing like a modern fire engine; "and thou wilt be remembered as their benefactor."

"Who are men?" he asked.

"No such people as yet exist on this earth," she replied, "but they are a race of thinking animals, intermediate in size between thee, and thy dwarf Ebberich."

"They are smaller than I am;" returned Aslog, stretching himself up to his proudest height, which peered with the tallest cliff in the group where he was standing. "They are smaller than I am. Then I do not fear them"—he continued, musingly; for he had no higher idea of power than that of the massive bone and the brawny muscle.

"Yes," replied Astaroth; "They will remember thee; and I, too, would make this night memorable. Follow me; and behold the boon I have to bestow."

As she thus spoke, they passed before a rock, which stood nearly mid way in the range. Breathing on a slight cavity which appeared in the northern face of the immense wall, Astaroth then held her ear to the spot. No sooner had her breath touched the granite than it was emollient as clay. The fissure became a chasm; and a living fountain, which had been pent up for ages, leaped out from its imprisonment. Exulting in the freshness and strength of its new liberty, it dashed away toward the north—now diverting itself with various meanders, now guided by a fickle fancy, seeming to turn back; but in its general course stretching ever towards the Great Sea, in whose maternal bosom the weary stranger finally found repose.

"Behold," said Astaroth, "the Nile of future ages. On the banks of yonder stream, whose birth thou hast even now beheld, shall arise one of the proudest kingdoms of the Earth. All the Arts and ornaments of life shall there be cradled; and the fountains of wisdom shall first be opened there. There, too, shall their benefactress, the giver of their beauteous and fruitful Nile, be worshiped through long ages, in the name and under the form of Isis—and thus would I be remembered—thus worshipped—through the benefits I have the happiness to confer."

Upon this Aslog yawned; for it may easily be conceived

he had but a remote idea of the pleasures that spring from such sources.

The course of these loves, whether true or false, ran not smoothly as the scene I have just described: indeed the current was soon disturbed by quite unexpected obstacles.

The children of Astaroth were not so guileless and confiding as the good old Baal, who was indeed, a proverb of truth; for "honest as the Day," has grown into a familiar phrase. The good soul was tired enough, after his long journey, to go to sleep, and sleep soundly, too, as soon as it came night.—But the little imps of Stars, having done nothing, meanwhile, but take siestas, were wide awake at night. Their twinkling, mischievous eyes were eternally open. Astaroth was highly incensed at this conduct, and, withal, provoked at herself, for having given birth to such a host of spies. Sometimes she succeeded in covering them up with a thick cloud, or scattered mist in their eyes; then she infused powerful opiates into the vapors they inhaled. But, do her best, she could never put them to sleep—except when they chose to sleep; and that, you may be sure was not at night. There was ever some loop-hole in their curtains; and the narcotics operated only as stimulants. The most unmanageable, because the most far-sighted, and most like his mother, was Sirius; and to say truly, he was a malicious urchin—and a sad gossip, besides. He had several times witnessed the departure of Astaroth, for the purpose of obtaining interviews with Aslog; nor was he dilatory in reporting the same to his father.

Baal was astonished; and forthwith declared that he could accept no other than the testimony of his own eyes. But as this seemed to demand an interruption of his ordinary business, he resorted to the following expedient, which shows that when honest people do set themselves about any artifice, they can under-plot the best of professional plotters.

He went down to the subterranean habitation of his friend Erebus, and demanded of him the deepest disguise he could fashion—a demand for which he was much too good a husband to render a reason; though Erebus, the sly fellow, had strong suspicions about him. However, he lost no time in weaving a mantle of such thick darkness, as completely to cover and conceal the radiance of his celestial brother—with which Baal hastened away, well pleased.

Scarce had he arrived at his mid point station, which we call the zenith, on the following day, when he wrapped himself in his borrowed garments; and suddenly the darkness of night fell on the light of noonday. The two lovers were completely deceived. They had been thinking of nothing but the approach of evening, when they should again meet in the granite halls of Mandara; and if the impression arose that the time was coming more quickly than ordinary, they only considered it a piece of extra good fortune, with which no fear of impending evil could be associated. Indeed, it had grown dark so suddenly, that Astaroth could not see where Baal had gone to; nor did she much trouble herself to know.

Borne on her car of light she glided down to Earth; while close behind her followed a dark form, like the Death-shadow that ever treads in the footsteps of Life. Many little stars peeped slyly out from behind their curtains; and the wicked eyes of Sirius twinkled through the blue with a metallic luster. Aslog was sitting in a huge chasm of Mandara, which to this day bears the name of the Giant's chair. The white arms of the fair, but perfidious Astaroth were twined about his rugged neck; while he was whispering in praise of her beauty, things that were rather galling for a husband to hear, especially from the lips of another. So engrossed were they that they did not perceive the outlines of a majestic form, that strode before them, casting a shadow that made the darkness darker—until suddenly the intruder threw back his disguise, and stood in their presence, face to face.

Aslog was overwhelmed with confusion. He fell prostrate, and cried for mercy, while Astaroth, though really disconcerted, with that ready and cool tact which often marks the perfidious character, threw her arms round the neck of her injured lord, at-

tempting to say something of the loyal subject she was winning to his interest.

He repulsed her with grave dignity, and thus replied: "Faithless and wanton! over thy life I have no power; but I will perpetuate thy shame, lest at some future time I should forget this hour, and be betrayed by thy wiles into renewed trust. Behold, here is a robe of deepest blackness. Whenever the image of thy gross Earth-Love shall come between thee and me, thou shalt wear it, through all generations, for a testimony of thy falsehood, and thy guilt.

"I, too, will preserve the record; and when I wear my mantle of darkness, thou shalt know that I am keeping fast, and doing penance for the memory of thy wickedness. Go to thy place; and let me see thy face no more."

She knew that there was no other course left; and she obeyed.

As she withdrew, Baal turned to the quaking Aslog. "And thou, vile lump of clay!" he said, "I will not slay thee; for life shall be thy punishment. The love which thou hast dared to cherish, shall be changed into one as foul—an ungodly and insatiable love of gold. Covetousness shall sting thee as a living scorpion; and thy miser heart shall corrode in its own bitterness; yet thou shalt not die. Thou shalt gather riches; but they shall not be thine. Thou shalt yearn after death; but the grave shall be shut against thee. Thou shalt go forth with a strong hand, and an outstretched arm, against all that are weaker than thyself; but every act of tyranny—every act of wrong—shall recoil with ten fold vengeance, until the full time appears. Then will I send forth a power that shall subdue thee, by subduing himself; for whosoever overcometh himself, shall overcome thee. Thus, when thou hast paid the full penalty for this, thy great sin, thou shalt have release, at once from thy punishment and thy life. Such is thy fate.

Thus saying, Baal again wrapped himself in his dark mantle, and regained his chariot, which stood waiting for him by the western gates of the Zenith.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

POETRY OF WOMAN.

BY MRS. ELLIS.

For the poetry of her character, woman is chiefly indebted to her capability of feeling, extended beyond the possibility of calculation, by her naturally vivid imagination; yet she unquestionably possesses other mental faculties, by no means inconsiderable in the scale of moral and intelligent beings. Those who, depriving women of her rightful title to intellectual capacity, would consign her wholly to the sphere of passion and affection; and those who, on the opposite side, are perpetually raving about her equality with man, and lamenting over the inferior station in society which she is doomed to fill, are equally prejudiced in their view of the subject, superficial in their reasoning upon it, and absurd in their conclusions. In her intellectual capacity, I am inclined to believe that woman is equal to man, but in her intellectual power she is greatly his inferior; because, from the succession of unavoidable circumstances which occur to interrupt the train of her thoughts, it is seldom that she is able to concentrate the forces of her mind, and to continue their operations upon one given point, so as to work out any of those splendid results which ensue from the more fixed and determinate designs of man. To woman belong all the minor duties of life, she is therefore incapable of commanding her own time, or even her own thoughts; in her sphere of action, the trifling events of the moment, involving the principles of good and evil, which instantly strike upon her lively and acute perceptions, become of the utmost importance; and each of these duties, with its train of relative considerations, bearing directly upon the delicate fabric of her mind, so organized as to render it liable to the extremes of pain or pleasure, arising out of every occurrence, she is consequently unable so to regulate her feelings, as to leave the course of her intellectual pursuits uninterrupted.

Suppose, for instance, a woman is studying Euclid when she hears the cry of her child; in an instant she plunges into the centre of her domestic cares, and Euclid is forgotten. Suppose another (for such things have been), deeply engaged in the dry routine of classic lore, when suddenly the fair student sees something in the eye of her tutor, or hears something in his voice, which puts to flight the Roman legions, and dismisses the Carthaginian queen to weep away her wrongs unpitied and alone. Suppose a woman admitted within the laboratory of a chymist, and listening with the mute attention of a devotee to his learned dissertations upon his favorite science, when, behold, her watchful eye is fixed upon the care-worn brow and haggard cheek of the philosopher, and she longs to lead him away from his deleterious drugs and essences, into the green fields, or home to the quiet comforts of her own fireside, where she would rather cherish his old age with warm clothing and generous diet, than ponder upon the scientific truths he has been laboring to instil into her mind. Suppose another studying the course of the stars, when by one of those involuntary impulses by which thoughts are let into the mind we know not how, the form of her departed friend rushes back upon her memory, and suddenly, beneath that heavenly host, whose sublimity her rapt soul has been almost adoring, she stands alone, a weak and trembling woman; and asks no more of the glistening stars, than some faint revelation of her earthly destiny—some glimmering of hope that she may yet be permitted to shelter herself beneath the canopy of domestic and social love. Suppose a woman mentally absorbed in the eventful history of past times, pondering upon the rise and fall of nations, the principles of government, and the march of civilization over the peopled globe; when suddenly there is placed in her hand a letter—one of those mute messengers which sometimes change in a moment, the whole coloring of a woman's life, not only clothing in shade or sunshine the immediate aspect of nature and surrounding things, but the illimitable expanse of her imaginary future. A letter to a woman is not a mere casual thing, to be read like a newspaper. Its arrival is an event of expectancy, of hope, and fear; and often seems to arrest in a moment the natural current of her blood, sending it, by a sudden revulsion, to circle in a backward course through all her palpitating veins. In the instance we have supposed, the letter may confess the sad intelligence of the sickness of a friend or relative, who requires the immediate attention of a faithful and devoted nurse. The book is closed. The quiet hours of reading, and study, are exchanged for the wearisome day, the watchful night, the soothing of fretfulness, and the ministration of comfort and kind offices; while the heroes of ancient Greece are forgotten, and the Cæsars and the Ptolemies are indiscriminately consigned to an ignominious tomb.

It is owing to circumstances such as these, daily and even hourly occurring, that women are disqualified from great literary attainments; and every impartial judge will freely acknowledge that it is not her want of capacity to understand the fundamental truths of science and philosophy; but her utter inability from circumstance and situation, diligently to pursue the investigation of such truths, and when clearly ascertained, to store up and apply them to the highest intellectual purposes, which constitutes the difference between the mental faculties of woman and those of the sterner sex.—*Guide to Social Happiness.*

Microscopic Appearance of Wool.

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The FELTING property is the most important, as well as the distinguishing feature of wool; and on this the value of the fleece, at least for the purposes of clothing, depends. This qual-

ity varies essentially in different breeds. In this respect, the Saxon wool is superior to the Merino, and hence, for some purposes, it is more highly valued.

Prussic Acid.

Prussic Acid, called also hydrocyanic acid, is considered as an animal product, though it is also contained in some species of plants. It is chiefly obtained from Prussian blue; but a plant called *Lauro-cerasus*, and several kinds of nuts, or kernels, also yield it by distillation; among these are the kernels of bitter almonds, and those of the peach, wild cherry, and several others. It is also found in the bark of wild cherry trees, which is a pleasant and good remedy for many diseases of the skin.

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