

SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH

DEVOTED TO THE ILLUSTRATION OF SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE.

"THE AGITATION OF THOUGHT IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM."

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WHOLE NO. 178.

The Principles of Nature.

THE INSTINCT OF PROGRESS.

BY JAMES RICHARDSON, JR.

WHEN the poor worm feels his old coat growing too narrow for his free growth and expansion, and finds that he must have more room in which to develop himself, he neglects his food, forgets all other instincts, and is uneasy and restless till the desired change be accomplished. So, forever, the earth-worm, man, if true to his divinely instinct, is never content with the forms, and methods, and customs of the past, that confine him in their straitened limits, and restrain his free motion and development, but seeks new forms in which to expand himself. The old no longer satisfies him; he desires the new. The known ceases to suffice him, the unknown tempts him forward, and, as he goes continually onward and upward, the restless spirit cries out upon the past, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." And yet, as we listen to this restless cry, how apt are we to regard the wise preacher of the Hebrews as a discontented and unsatisfied soul, "desiring rest and finding none," and to condemn, in no measured terms, that spirit of unrest, of never-ending and never-successful seeking, which he manifests.

It has been the custom to regard any discontent a man may manifest respecting his position and circumstances, and his physical or mental condition, as worthy of censure and rebuke; to look upon all, who are in any way restless and unsatisfied, as either foolish or impious, and to consider the man who is contented and mentally inactive, and at a stand-still, satisfied with what he has and with what he is, as alone wise and good. That not only a man must not desire a better position, a more comfortable house, finer grounds, and more elevated and influential sphere; but more especially, that he must not seek a truer theology, a more perfect Religion, a purer Church, a more reasonable and consistent Philosophy, or a loftier Morality. That to cry out with a dissatisfied spirit, as he passes through the various forms, and ceremonies, and modes of faith about him, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity," is the weakness of an unstable nature. That any endeavor, any wish even, to modify his theology is but a foolish weakness—that it is heresy to overstep the bounds of his creed, or to go beyond the narrow pale of his sect; impiety to throw aside, or doubt even, the old book; irreverence to question the old priest; infidelity to forsake the old church; and very blasphemy to receive any new or farther revelation. That if a man is born a Catholic among Catholics, a Catholic he must always continue to be, no matter how much new and brighter light may dawn upon his soul to lift him above his present darkness. That if he is born a Calvinist among Calvinists, or a Unitarian among Unitarians, he must remain so through eternity, no matter how much farther, deeper, and higher he may see, or how earnest may be his aspirations after something truer, better and happier. If he has begun life a Baptist, he must die a Baptist; if he was born a Mohammedan, a Mohammedan he must die; if he was at first a bigot and an ignoramus, he must live on a bigot and an ignoramus still; if he is born a brute and a slave, a brute and a slave he must remain forevermore.

A man who has belonged always to the same party—he is respectable. A man who has been always firmly and unchangeably bound to one sect, is quite venerable. He who has never gone beyond what he was first taught, or advanced beyond his earliest notions of truth; who has stood still at the very point where he first started; who has never grown a single inch beyond his boyish stature; who has progressed in nothing; who has never gone forward and reached upward, but has remained forever the same, fixed, stationary, rigid, immovable and lifeless; he alone is the man to be admired and respected—the one most honorable, most venerable, most worshipful. To think what always has been thought—that is praiseworthy; but to reach forward to new ideas, and thus to enlarge the sphere of human thought and knowledge, is altogether unpardonable; and to outrun his party, or out think his sect is damnable. He must rest content with things as they are; take the world, its customs, its institutions, and its beliefs, as it is, without any exertions, any expectation, any thought even, of improving it. "Choke up the little stream, lest it flow on and grow into a mighty river. Dwarf the tree into a poor, stunted bush. Drug the child, lest he shoot upward into a man. Check the ever active, progressive, thinking mind, lest it outgrow our creed, our sect, our party, or our church. Stint and crush, if need be, the aspiring spirit and the expanding soul. Perish all fresh, living thoughts, all new ideas, lest our old musty notions, our rotten institutions, our ancient and moldy doctrines, be overshadowed and destroyed." This is the view, far too commonly felt, expressed, and carried out in the conduct and lives of men. "Let the full grown man keep on the boy's jacket, no matter how much it may fetter the free action of his limbs, no matter how tight and chafing it may be to his expanded muscles, or how awkwardly his long arms may protrude the scanty sleeves. Keep the coat—the coat is old and time-honored—then keep the coat, though the man be fretted and worried—aye! though the man be destroyed. Keep the form, the institution, the creed, though the man's soul can be expressed in it or not. Aye! keep the form and the creed, though the soul perish. Give the grown-up man the childish toy, the infant's rattle, still, and let him content himself with these; they sufficed him once, and why not now?" "That house is small and inconvenient; a man six feet high can not stand up in it without stooping; the windows are but sorry loopholes in the wall, and let in too little light for him to see." "What

matter? His fathers lived there, let him rest content; is he better I pray you than his fathers?" "It is old and rotten, it has been mended and patched till it can be repaired no longer, and the elements of nature must soon sweep it away. The house is no longer tenable." "What godless irreverence for ancient authorities, for the wise and good of past generations! Impious man! was not that house built by your pious grandfather?" "But the sills are decayed, the posts are failing, the building is falling into ruins." "Then perish in its ruins; better perish with the old than live in the new."

Such is the tone of the popular thought; such is the popular doctrine, and the popular life. With such a philosophy as this in the world of action and of business, where would have been our Manufactories, our gigantic Steamers, our Railways and our Telegraphs, with the stimulus to life and activity they have given to man—with the comforts, the luxuries, the blessings they have brought in their train? Where all our discoveries, inventions, and improvements in the physical sciences and useful arts of life? Where would have been the outward culture—the intelligence? Where would have been this glorious and ever-increasing civilization, that spreading over earth like a garment of light, is continually beautifying, elevating, and ennobling, more and more, this world of ours? And can we consent to be men in Science, gods in the wonderful creations of Art, and mere children, infants, ignoramuses, in morals, religion and theology—in the knowledge of our minds and souls, and in lofty and spiritual wisdom, as the popular rule would make us?

I thank God that this is an impossibility! I thank God that you can not build a Railway for the physical man to advance more swiftly on, without adding greater speed to thought, and quickening, by the diffusion of ideas, and the extension and reciprocal interchange of knowledge, the progress of the spiritual man: that every invention in Art gives us a new proof, of the divine power and wisdom in man, and thus humanizes and enlarges our Religion: that the discovery of every new law of the Universe increases our knowledge of the great Law-giver, and thus widens and deepens our piety. That every advancement made in Science, which is the understanding and interpretation of Nature and her revelations, advances our acquaintance with the Omniscient Author of Nature; and that thus art and true piety, science and religion must, despite all opposition of ignorance, bigotry, and fanaticism, move forever hand in hand. That even the narrow-minded conservative and the very bigot himself, sees and feels the truth of this, their frequent bitter hostility to the progress of science and art, and to the advancement of philosophy, sufficiently proves. And he who thus stands forth in opposition to the advancement of science and philosophy, and to all progress in morals, theology, and religion—who chooses to remain where he is, without moving onward and enlarging his sphere of vision, widening his field of thought and attaining to higher and nobler views, and fuller and more extensive knowledge, seems to me a full grown man in the little coat and breeches of the boy, that are everywhere bursting out, revealing his poverty and his nakedness; or like a swathed and swaddled infant, sprawling on the ground, that can neither stand nor go save in leading strings, tickled still with the noise of his shaking rattle, and delighting still to be fed with pap from the spoon of the nursery priestess. And surrounded by such, we feel ourselves among imbeciles or savages. And whatever may be their circumstances and condition, and the outward and apparent civilization of their lot, they but resemble those barbarous chiefs, that the traveler sometimes meets in the wilds of benighted Africa, their heads adorned with the plumed hat of some plundered English officer, and their unclad shoulders glistening with shining epaulettes, but they themselves, despite their foreign adornments, naked, brutish, ignorant and savage still. Such are the men who have nothing of their own—no inward convictions of right, no living principles of truth to depend on—but only the authority and traditions of the past and dead.

But however much the world—and that most worldly portion of it, the popular church—may ensure this restless and unsatisfied spirit, this desire of progress, this moulting instinct of the soul, that is ever aspiring after greater freedom, activity, and excellence; and however much it may exalt that instinct of thought, that fixedness and rigidity, and that reverence for the past and its authority, that stands in the way of all advancement, we shall endeavor to show that this dissatisfaction with the past—this discontent with our former views and opinions—with the ancient theology, the old sect, the worn out and unsatisfying philosophy—is not only natural, noble and praiseworthy, but that it is necessary to all real improvement and progress.

And first: we say this dissatisfaction is natural. As the infant grows into the child, as the child blooms into the youth, as the youth ripens into the man, he looks back with a smile of derision, with a sneer of contempt, or it may be with a tear of regret or pity upon the ideas, the pursuits, and the ambitions of his former state.

He says, with Paul of Ephesus, "when I was a child I thought as a child, I spake as a child, but when I became a man I put away childish things." With him, too, "he counts himself not to have apprehended" or learnt all things. The chrysalis in its silken tomb has no desire to be again the poor crawling worm of the past, but is longing and preparing earnestly to spread its mystic and beautiful wings and soar aloft. The child never looks backward with the wish to be an infant again. And the youth scorns the childishness of those early days, and looks forward and presses onward to be a man. The man derides the ignor-

ance, the crudities and follies of his youth. And if the old man longs for youth again, it is no earthly rejuvenescence that he craves, but the pure, serene and immortal youth in the Spirit-land, to which he is ever advancing. Man's eyes are not placed behind, that he should look backward, nor is his head like the brutes bent down to the earth, whence he sprang; but his eyes gaze forth from his forehead, and his face looks ever onward, and turns upward to his destined Heavens. And thus it is natural for man to be dissatisfied with the past and old, and reach forward to the future and the new. The infant drops the old accustomed toy when the new plaything is within his grasp. The child soon tires of the old play and the well-thumbed book. The smart little boy of the nineteenth century, true to the age in which he lives, plays horse no longer, nor mimics the rattling stage in his sports, but now he plays Railroads and sets up Telegraphs. And so the man, the real live man of active mind and soul, is never content with his present, but aspires ever to a higher, nobler future. The pictures that pleased his eye so much but yesterday, to-day seem coarse and soulless daubs. The music that so lately charmed his soul, as he comes to hear some deeper, grander harmony, some more thrilling melody, seems now but a poor discord. The writings that delighted him but one short year ago, and the preacher that stirred the very depths of his spirit then, seem now, perhaps, stale, flat and unprofitable, for he has gone beyond them now. "Milk for babes," he says; "strong meat for grown men!" What nourished his soul once, feeds it no longer. And so his appetite rejects with loathing that which it craved of yore. The old book is thrown aside: "dust to dust, ashes to ashes." The old coat of theology or philosophy has become too straight and narrow for him; he has all outgrown it now. Thus the child discards, or breaks in pieces the old toy; the youth is ashamed of the child's play;—the man of the youth's folly. The living scholar tires of the stereotyped and musty fables of the past; the thinker wearies of the old philosophy that fails to satisfy his queries; and the earnest seeking Divine is sick at heart of the foolish old theology of Jewish Savages, and of the Dark Ages. So natural is it for man to look forward and upward—to be discontented with the old and past, and to seek for something newer, fairer and better in the future! And still and forever, "the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing," neither will the nature of man consent to be limited or restrained by any bounds. Put the active child to play in the narrow ground, and he sighs for the field; give him the field, and he is soon through the fence, into the streets, and over the whole town. He can not be contained in any limits. Tell the youth of quick and generous mind, that he must not open this book and hear that preacher, and though he knew of neither book nor preacher, and cared for neither yesterday, yet before to-morrow he will have heard and read them both.

The desires and aspirations of man are as illimitable as the Universe. The old boughs are still strong, perhaps, and bear fruit, but the ancient moss covers them, and decay already threatens them; then let the young limbs grow with greener foliage and larger, fairer fruits. Because I have a cottage now, is it any reason why I should not have a palace by and by? The more anxious the youth is to have a silver watch to-day, the more likely he will be to want one of gold to-morrow. Because I have learned so much of truth this year, I am not content. What I have known makes me eager to know more. Still the unknown provokes my mental appetite—excites my knowing faculties as their natural food and stimulus; and I am better prepared and more strongly incited by what I have learned and thought this year, to learn and think the more, next. It is not enough for me to see France and England, I must visit China and Japan also. After I have examined the moon through the telescope, I want to see Jupiter and Saturn all the more. I am restless in the limits of the old knowledge. The old science refuses to satisfy my questionings. In my new strawberry-beds, I am not content to set out the old unproductive roots, with meager berries, that the old gardener cultivated, but I must plant new kinds with more prolific and mammoth fruitage. Calvinism was my book of A B C's. Among the Baptists I perhaps was taught to spell. Unitarianism was my School Reader, where I learned to help myself to knowledge; but I found a world of books beyond all these. A sect that seemed wise and liberal enough yesterday, to-day is found to be one-sided, and foolish, and narrow.

The soul outgrows all sects, all creeds, all philosophies; makes and unmakes them at its pleasure. They are but the cast-off skins of the caterpillar, and the soul grows at every moulting. Thus it is not only natural, but noble and praiseworthy, to feel the vanity of our past opinions and past experiences; to be discontented with what we have been, and with what we are, and to reach forward to something higher and fairer in the future. And however the stationary, unprogressive and bigoted may condemn and anathematize, the world, in its inmost heart, cherishes those who enlarge the sphere of human knowledge—its great thinkers and reformers, its distinguished inventors, and its world-renowned discoverers—as the noblest of the race. Admiring posterity reverences their memory, and History, in its immortal records, deifies them as the Heroes of the World. Copernicus, Galileo and Newton, with their new System of the Universe, and their new revelations of its laws, are held up to our admiration; while the memory of their opponents or persecutors has fallen into quick decay. The fame of our American Channing grows with the growing years, and his glowing words of new and higher truth are extending throughout the civilized world; while the old drivellers of ancient and moldy creeds, who were so bitterly hostile to his teachings, are

dying out of our memory with their decaying faith. And Columbus, who left an old world to seek a new, is held in deathless remembrance; while the nameless navigators, who remained behind, are buried in oblivion. The history of Socrates is immortal; yet will you tell me who were his poisoners, and what their occupations? And can you repeat to me the names of those old Pharisees who crucified Jesus? Praise me not then for my adherence to a time-worn faith, or an ancient and fashionable theology—for the fixedness of my views and the unchangeableness of my opinions. Blame me rather for my want of mental activity and spiritual advancement. Commend in me no false consistency—the consistency of remaining always the same in my opinions, theories, and belief. The only true and worthy consistency is that of constant improvement, perpetual, never-ending progress. If I am to be respected and applauded for anything, I would be for that. In all things but theology, man dares always to desire the new. The pious old lady loves the new cap-crowned bonnet, but, strange to say, she hates and curses the new and higher and purer Religion. Away with your old theories, your antiquated notions that the world is rapidly outgrowing; that the true soul has already outgrown. Away with your moldy philosophy, your tattered creed, your musty system of ethics and philosophy. I will be fettered no longer by your parties, your sects, your leaders and chief-priests, or by your tyrannic "POPULAR OPINION." I will be no longer tied down by your formulas and dogmas, by your antiquated customs and conventional usages.

"Old opinions, rage and tatters, Get you gone—get you gone!" I will be henceforth free to think, to speak, to act. Free to follow the truth, untrammelled by human fashion, unfettered by ancient notions and systems, "where'er she leads the way." Do not let us indulge in any dread of "freedom of thought," nor fear that the enfranchised mind shall lead us astray—shall carry us to a fabulous perdition. For the mind is created, inspired and directed by the great God; and if the mind could lead me to perdition, I am not afraid that I should reach through hell to heaven. But fear not, there is no danger in the advance of thought. Ideas, opinions, can not damn the soul, even should they prove false. Slavery, confinement, the repression of thought, the destruction of mental activity—of mental and spiritual life—that is damnable; its free growth and progress—that is saving. "This is the damnation," says Jesus, "that light hath come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." The tree that grows in the open sunlight and free air of heaven, is vigorous, beautiful and fruitful. Confine it, dwarf it, crush it down, and its vigor, beauty and glory are gone. And so with the fettered and enslaved mind; it becomes poor, and mean, and meager; narrow, distorted and deformed, degraded and darkened, and almost extinguished in intellectual night. Look around you and see if this be not the case. The intelligence of man is a breath of the Almighty, and man himself, like nature, is a fact of God; a creation, a revelation of the divine mind; then fear not its freest, fullest development. In such free and full development does it alone manifest itself most truly and most nobly. Neither dread the destruction of old systems, institutions and forms of faith, for the good can never die— "Tis but the ruin of the bad, The wasting of the wrong and ill, What'er of good the old time had Is living still."

Aye! must live forever! The old, dead leaves must fall before the fresh, new foliage can start into luxuriant life, and the tree can grow and bloom and fruit afresh. Every time the old, dead leaves fall, and the young foliage puts forth, the tree renews its youth and strength, its beauty, and its glory. The old house, now tottering, must come down, before the new and nobler edifice can be erected. The more thoroughly the land is cleared, and the deeper it is plowed, the more flourishing and abundant will the new crop be. Then away with these groundless fears of the destruction of the old and the coming of the new. Put not your new cloth into an old garment, your new wine into old bottles; but "put the new wine," says Jesus, "into new bottles, that both may be preserved." I have always feared, that when I trembled for the results of mental freedom, and feared that new views and new theories would bring destruction in their train, that my still beclouded mind was troubled by some scarecrow of old superstition, or frightened by some bugbear phantom of ancient error, or time-honored absurdity. Then let old opinions be exploded, let ancient systems perish, but let the new spring up more vigorously from their decaying beds, till man be enfranchised forever from slavery of Error and of Wrong.

Onward move the earth and planets and great sun himself, through the infinite regions of space. Onward move the streams to their destined sea; upward grow the trees; and so the human world moves ever onward, and grows ever upward. Mankind is just beginning to perceive that the great, eternal, all-powerful law of the Universe and of the Soul is "progress," and this must forever put an end to all sectarianism and bigotry. Put the seed into the ground, then, quietly and without fear, for it will spring forth and grow upward to the heavens. Without anxiety, aye, joyfully, scatter your great ideas and earnest thoughts—those living seeds of eternal truth—into the seed field of the world, and no indifference, opposition, or hostility—no power in the Universe, can prevent them from springing forth, and shooting upward, and spreading throughout the nations.

"From out the little fountain, There swells a mighty tide, Upon whose broad and crested waves The broods of commerce ride."

And on the winged tempest
A little seed there flies,
Whose roots strike down, whose giant arms
Reach upward to the skies.
And so the little alighted truth,
At length more mighty grown,
Shall fill the nations with its power
And make the world its own."

Superstition, ignorant bigotry, and intolerance, trouble me not, for I know that, sooner or later, the truth I see shall be seen by all; that the great ideas I may chance to hold, the noble principles I am blessed to cherish, shall, ere long, be received in the hearts of men everywhere; and that, as civilization and intelligence increase in the world, large, liberal, and noble views of God, of man and of religion, shall flourish with them, by the eternal and glorious necessity of Progress.

"They may veil their eyes but they can not hide
The sun's meridian glow;
The heel of a priest may tread thee down
And a tyrant work thee woe;
But never a truth has been destroyed:
They may curse it and call it crime,
Pervert and betray, and slander and slay
Its teachers for a time;
But the sunshine aye shall light the sky,
As round and round we run;
And the truth shall ever come uppermost,
And Justice shall be done."

MYSTICAL NUMBERS.

SCENE.—The Electric Ocean of the Solar System in close proximity to the Planet Mars.

"THERE are seven degrees in the holy Sphere
That girdles the outer skies;
There are seven hues in the atmosphere
Of the Spirit Paradise,
And the seven lamps burn bright and clear
In the mind, the heart, and the eyes
Of the angel-spirits from every world
That ever and ever arise."

"There are seven ages the angels know,
In the courts of the Spirit Heaven;
And seven joys through the spirit flow
From the morn of the heart till even;
Seven curtains of light wave to and fro
Where the seven great trumpets the angels blow,
And the Throne of God hath a seven-fold glow,
And the angel-hosts are seven."

And a spiral winds from the worlds to the suns,
And every star that shines
In the path of degrees for ever runs,
And the spiral octave climbs;
And a seven-fold heaven round every one
In the spiral order twines."

A company of Spirits, whose white arms
Are twined like lilies, float above the deep.
Their music lulls my spirit into sleep."

Lo! one most beautiful unrolls her form—
My thoughts are drawn to her as dew-drops to the morn.
"Oh, rose-lipped Seraph, whose celestial charms
O'ercome my being with a calm divine—
Whose heart of love in love inflows through mine—
Whose eyes are twin born spheres that blend together
As the sweet ocean and the enamored sky,
Feeling thy presence dear, I care not whether
My being to its primal life returns. To die,
To be diffused in love, and made a part
Of the divinest Beauty which thou art,
Were better, better far,
Where is thy home? in what beguiling star?"

I hear her sweet reply:
"Brother I am a Daughter of the Sky,
And I am sent to thee—
A Sister Spirit. I will pilot thee—
Where Beauty sits in groves of asphodel,
And weaves for hearts of love joy's hysanthine spell,
Charming her human folk. Seest thou yon zone
Of roseate light? It is a world unknown
By wisest-thoughted seers of the earth.
Within its fragrant bowers,
Death withers not the flowers,
And there Despair slings not the breast of Worth.
There life is calm and holy;
There rose and myrtle twine
Round loving brows. The frosts of death and time
Fall not upon the angel-maidens there;
But Bride and Bridegroom grow divinely fair
Within those bowers of amaranth and moly,
Counting their years a span,
Though centuries have pass'd since their sweet life began."

"Thou happy soul, thou blessed soul,"
The maiden sings to me.
"Come, drink from out the golden bowl
Of joy, I pledge to thee;
I drink to thee from out the cup
Of love and love's delight.
Rise! these dear arms shall bear thee up;
Let slumber end thy night.
In sleep alone canst thou be borne
To that transcendent Land,
Where Love hath never learned to mourn
Or veil her bosom bland.
In sleep alone canst thou ascend
And pass the seven-fold gates;
In sleep alone, oh, Spirit-friend,
Celestial morning waits."

As sink the drowsy billows of the sea,
When Night is in the skies,
So the long swirls of thought subside in me;
Sleep closes my mine eyes."

* The word "sleep" is used in this poem to signify a state of transition during which the spiritual senses gradually come to take cognizance of the unseen which previously had been invisibly mirrored upon the mind. Through this process the spiritual senses are being subjectively elevated, or transformed into rapport with the unseen locality, its scenery, its inhabitants, its forms of knowledge, states of affection, and general spheres of truth, goodness and use.

SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH.

S. B. BRITTON, EDITOR.

"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, SEPT. 29, 1855.

MAHAN'S MODERN MYSTERIES.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE reputed social, scientific, and religious position of Rev. A. Mahan, First President of Cleveland University, had prepared us to anticipate from his pen a work of decided interest and power. With the name we had long associated our ideal of the man, which ascribed to him superior natural endowments, liberal culture, and a degree of ingenuousness and logical acumen which are certainly no where discoverable in the volume before us. Entertaining our first impressions respecting the author, and learning that his book was in press, we ventured to indulge the agreeable expectation that the claims of the spiritual facts and philosophy were soon to be tried by one whom nature, education, and "the means of grace" had thoroughly qualified for the task. The prospect, though dim and uncertain, was full of novelty and encouragement; for since the time when there was a "Richmond in the field," no independent and magnanimous champion of popular materialism had appeared undisputed before the people. True, the Spiritualists had, from time to time, been introduced to a number of curious automatic machines in human shape, all of which were ascertained to possess the mysterious instinct of knowing which way the wind blows, and a self-adjusting power to spread themselves, more or less as occasion requires, whenever the popular breeze is in the right direction. Inspired and moved by this same invisible agency, many learned and unlearned pretenders to a knowledge of occult forces, abruptly appeared in the polemical arena, and challenged the whole spiritual world to meet them! But the innumerable angels and spirits of the Universe did not appear to think that the occasion demanded their immediate presence with the whole "artillery of heaven," and so they kept about their business, leaving those inflated souls to amuse themselves, to feed on their own empty speculations, and to shame even monkeydom by their fantastic tricks.

But at length those who once relished this kind of fare began to be dissatisfied, and the most erratic and reckless opposer seemed to feel the need of something more substantial than the air he had himself corrupted. Even skepticism could not long subsist on that, and hold its own. The opposition had a chill and was unable to be out much. Knowing that it was daily becoming more feeble and might ignominiously perish for want of suitable nourishment, we were not inclined to complain if, in one way or another, its most pressing necessities were to be supplied at our expense. Indeed it was a satisfaction to reflect that the opposition had at least one man of more liberal and substantial resources, who was really able and willing to offer the public a respectable entertainment, even though we might be dissected to serve the guests at his table.

The late work by Prof. Mahan has disappointed one reasonable expectation, and it will require but a cursory examination to satisfy the critical reader that the author is out of his appropriate sphere. In reasoning against the spiritual theory of the manifestations, he generally assumes his premises without proof and against probability, and at the same time his method of reaching a conclusion suggests the idea of substituting locomotion for logic. The author puts forth the most chimerical notions with as much confidence as philosophers assert axiomatic principles. Indeed, the book abounds in arrogant assumptions, and the most transparent sophistry. Almost every page reveals the author's want of careful observation in the department of Spiritual Science, while his knowledge of the psychological laws, which underlie the most significant phenomena, is manifestly superficial. We should be pleased to pause here, but a more serious objection remains to be stated. Professor Mahan is equally unscrupulous in his methods, whether the opinion of an individual, or his reputation, is to be disposed of. His limited information rarely prevents or restrains the expression of his judgment. Whether treating of principles or men, his dogmatic philosophy admits no doubtful issues. All his conclusions are irresistible. Even when his knowledge of the subject under consideration is extremely limited, he often preserves the same confident manner and imperious tone. The well-known attributes of an individual are disregarded, the incidents of personal history overlooked, and the testimony of responsible witnesses is set aside as wholly unnecessary in forming a righteous judgment of his real character and peculiar claims. The first part of the author's work, wherein he essays to canvass the personal claims of A. J. Davis and the principles of his "Nature's Divine Revelations," will be found to justify these remarks. Even the beggar in the parable, who depended on the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, was not more in need of respectable clothing and wholesome viands, than this writer is of genuine facts and reliable information—in this part of his work—and what is still more surprising, he seems unconscious of his poverty. Prof. Mahan may be a gentleman of liberal scientific attainments, for aught we know to the contrary. However, he has not been able to render his learning available in this case; and if Nature ever designed him for an expositor of her subtle mysteries, her purpose has been signally defeated. As a pretended explanation of spiritual phenomena, the claims of his book are simply preposterous. The author himself may, for the present, be held in higher estimation than those who preceded him in the hazardous experiment of writing on a subject which they did not understand; but it is only because he is a fresh sacrifice at the shrine of popular ignorance and prejudice. Being the last to break his devoted head beneath the unyielding walls of the Spiritual Zion, he may hope to be remembered until the advent of his successor.

CHAPTER II.

MR. DAVIS AND HIS REVELATIONS.

We design to limit the present review to a brief discussion of the general ideas and positions which Prof. Mahan assumes in the first and second parts of his book, wherein he considers the Revelations of A. J. Davis, and attempts to explain and expose the phenomena of Modern Spiritualism. The remaining portions, in which he examines the claims of the Bible to a divine inspiration, and analyzes the clairvoyant revelations of Emanuel Swedenborg, we shall probably have to leave unnoticed.

We do not propose an exposition or defense of the principles comprehended in "Nature's Divine Revelations." There are ideas which appear to the present writer to be fundamental in the philosophy of that book, which we have never believed, and can not now accept. But it is not necessary to defend its en-

nal principles and doctrines; we need not so much as accept a single idea it contains, in order to perceive its significance and value as evidence in behalf of Spiritualism. Our author takes a very narrow view of the whole subject. He views the wonderful experience of Mr. Davis and his remarkable Revelations, not in the calm light of a rational philosophy, but as a violent paroxysm or an intolerant dogmatist might be expected to regard them. He even denounces, by implication, the passive instrument through which the Revelations were communicated, as guilty of "impotence before the world," in the simple act of unconsciously giving them utterance. He assumes this illiberal and untenable position in the first paragraph following the preface to the book. A brief extract will suffice to show the author's position, and also to expose the arrogance, ignorance and injustice which disfigure no inconsiderable portion of the volume. We copy from page 1:

When any new and very gross absurdity is commended to public regard, men of real science, theologians especially, pass it by, under the impression that should they expose the imposition, they would appear to the public in the repulsive light of "answering a fool according to his folly." It is this fear, we think, rather than a prudent regard to the public welfare, which has shielded modern "Spirit revelations" from that degree of scientific scrutiny requisite to unmask the imposture before the world. Whatever may be thought of the subject in general, the writings of the individual whose name stands at the head of this article seem to demand a critical examination.

Here all modern media for "Spirit-revelations" are virtually charged with imposture; but as the chapter under review is especially devoted to Mr. Davis and his first book, we shall give our own observations a similar direction and bearing. The writer of this review was personally well acquainted with Mr. Davis long before the latter commenced dictating the Revelations. Being on familiar terms with him and his principal associates during the very time he was thus employed, and having been present as a witness on several occasions during the progressive unfolding of the work, we are doubtless better qualified to speak with confidence than Prof. Mahan, whose very positive assertions are contradicted by our own positive knowledge. During the delivery of "Nature's Divine Revelations," Mr. Davis was profoundly entranced, and so far removed from the sphere of outward consciousness as to be temporarily absolved from the obligations of the earth-life. At that time his states were preeminently distinct. It is true that the impressions derived from the realities of the inner life, have since progressively descended to the external memory, and have thus, in a good degree, become incorporated with the ordinary powers and possessions of his mind. But in Mr. Davis' early experience there was no such blending of the two states. In the ordinary condition he was untainted, destitute of extraordinary gifts, and totally unable to converse on any literary, scientific or other important subject. But the trance measurably released the spirit from its mortal restraints, and gave him the key to vast treasures of knowledge. So clear and comprehensive was his vision, that neither distance nor the most solid substances appeared to offer any barrier to his observations. The essential principles and uses, and the technical nomenclature of many arts and sciences, were at his command. Of all these things his mind, in its outward relations, was uninformed. Of course, in his state of waking consciousness he was no more accountable for what had been uttered during the trance, than the reader is responsible for his dreams or for unconsciously talking in his sleep.

The Revelations which Prof. Mahan undertakes to review in the book before us, are far more remarkable than any of the recent works of Mr. Davis; and yet, as has been observed, they were spoken before time had developed his manhood, or his faculties had been roused to action by intercourse with the world. At that time his habits were extremely simple; we often saw him under the most trying circumstances, and yet he manifested extraordinary gentleness and forbearance. All his acts were apparently unstudied, and on every occasion he exhibited the artlessness and spontaneity of a child. He was alike indifferent to fame and the advantages of a commanding social position. The little circle of his thoughts was comprehended within the narrow limits of his youthful experience and observation, save when some hand, visible or invisible, was laid upon him, and he was borne away in Spirit to the wider spheres of his interior life. Of these early revelations we may affirm that they were prompted by no mercenary motive on the part of the medium. A single fact is worth a thousand conjectures, and one will suffice to settle this point forever, in the mind of the candid reader. As soon as the work in question was completed, and while it remained in manuscript, Mr. Davis made a donation to a personal friend of his entire interest in the same. He has never had any worldly concern in the sale of the work. The book has passed through twelve editions in this country, and has been republished in England, and yet we believe, that up to this very hour, all the pecuniary advantage which Mr. Davis has derived from its publication has not amounted to a single shilling.

In the light of the facts just presented, Prof. Mahan will find it extremely difficult to justify the imputation of imposture, at least so far as the implied charge rests on the origin of these or any similar revelations. To constitute a man an impostor, three things are especially necessary. 1. He must assume a character not his own. 2. He must be conscious of what he is doing at the time. 3. It must be his object to practice deception. Admitting the general correctness of this definition, it is easy to perceive that the Revelations of A. J. Davis contain about as much evidence of imposture as the growth of his hair or the beating of his pulse. We may further add, in this connection, that the trance mediums for Spirit-intercourse are equally irresponsible. Many of them are totally unable to resist the powers which come to them from the invisible and unknown realms. They are, therefore, no more guilty of imposture than those who unexpectedly take cold or "catch the measles." Whoever asserts that they are, not only perverts the English language, but he libels humanity without a cause.

Respecting the intrinsic character of "Nature's Divine Revelations," we have a word to offer. They certainly contain much important truth that must serve to enlarge the reader's conceptions of Nature, to quicken the mental faculties, and to inspire the heart with deeper human sympathies. We also find many things which do not admit of demonstration by any one of our recognized methods of testing the truth of a proposition, while some things are positively erroneous in statement, and of questionable tendency. Similar elements enter into the composition of all books, so far as our knowledge extends. It is not our purpose to attempt a further illustration of the truth embodied in the Revelations; nor shall we seek a solution of their doubtful problems; and, least of all, are we disposed to sanction the errors they contain, by so much as an implied indorsement. Mr. Davis himself, we venture to presume, will never defend them. What, then, can Prof. Mahan reasonably hope to accomplish by proving what no one pretends to deny, viz, that the Revelations contain some important errors? (What Revelations do not?) Yet our author seems to imagine, that if he can only find a few false facts (?) or scientific, theological, and historical errors, they will serve at once to neutralize the truth in the book, and to dissipate its legitimate claims forever. To such absurd conclusions does theological dogmatism lead its willing victims! It must have a revelation to which reason and nature are subservient or it will have none at all. The conscious manhood, and

the divine attributes in man, are all of less account in its estimation, than the mere records and relics of an ancient inspired life. The orthodox classification of sacred books admits of no reasonable discrimination. It makes one broad distinction and recognizes no intermediate degrees. It virtually assumes that any book which claims to be a revelation is either all God's word, or it is literally a device of Satan. Thus do men pervert their natural instincts and the God-given attribute of reason. And while they invest the dead letter of the Jewish and Christian revelations with a divine, unerring authority, they seem anxious to choke the spirit of a living inspiration.

Prof. Mahan assumes that the Revelations of Mr. Davis claim a similar authority over the human mind. We are told that because the Seer is "impressed," others are required to believe. It is not so. On the contrary, this is a gross misrepresentation of the whole spirit and purpose of the book. We quote from the first and last paragraphs of the "OPENING ADDRESS TO THE WORLD":

BEWARE: Fear not, for Error is mortal and can not live, and Truth is immortal and can not die! Duty demands serious analysis and investigation of all conspicuous subjects. Truth may be found in the following Revelation: If so, Nature must be the standard by which all men may judge whether the truths therein contained are pure, practical and elevating. Inasmuch as all terrestrial creations are the spontaneous productions of the Divine mind, no truth is lessened by disbelief—no error is made true because the learned received it as such. Nothing can be changed that is unchangeable, by man or his actions. Then press onward! Exercise your choicest gift, which is Reason—and fear no corruption from truth, though new; and expect no good from error, though long believed.

Your duty is to search; and after searching, ask Nature and your own superior judgments how much practical truth there is herein revealed. In doing this, you will display the dignity of your natures, perform your highest duty, receive the most unbounded interior approbation, and obtain MENTAL HAPPINESS.

The despot whose word is law is not accustomed to explain the principles of his government, much less is he disposed to recognize, in the subject, the right to approve or to disapprove of his administration. The man who vainly supposes that he is competent to teach absolute truth, utters his *ipse dixit* and retires. But no such spirit pervades the Revelations. Throughout the volume the reasoning faculties are everywhere addressed; facts are stated, principles are discussed, reasons are assigned and objections anticipated; and the reader is exhorted to subject every theory, hypothesis, philosophy, sect, creed and institution, and all books to the ordeal of a calm and searching investigation.

Spiritualism is chiefly concerned with the extraordinary physical facts developed in the life of Mr. Davis, rather than in the contents of his books. Whether truth or error predominates in the latter is a consideration of secondary importance, as it regards the question of our immortality and the nature of the soul's life. But his experience is a lucid revelation of the most significant and sublime truths. It demonstrates that there is an inner and more perfect life, wherein the lusts of the flesh are sublimated or forgotten, the senses quickened and spiritualized, and the mind immeasurably expanded and exalted.

During the last six years we have been less familiar with Mr. Davis than formerly. How far the powers of this world, which lead most men astray, may have modified his disposition and character, we can not so positively affirm. Suffice it to say, that no act of his recent or his future life can blot out his experience or render his revelations an imposture. A critical examination of his life might possibly disclose some of the imperfections which are so conspicuous in his reviews. But if we are to discredit the truth because men make mistakes, who will hereafter honor the claims of Moses, David, or Solomon? The question which regards the physical experience of Mr. Davis, and its importance to Spiritualism, must be decided at last by an appeal to facts which no one will presume to deny. In the attempt to decide such a question, by assailing the man, our author justly forfeits his claims to the character of a scientific investigator. No moral issue, founded on specific acts of his subsequent life, or deriving their existence from improbable rumors in Ohio or elsewhere, can influence the final decision. Mortals may err, but no man has ever uttered a great thought or performed one God-like deed in vain. What if great men have fallen from high places, and the pure in heart have been corrupted; the laws of Nature are immutable and God is true. The very bones of the ancient philosophers, poets, seers and prophets were long since reduced to impalpable dust; no friend weeps over their ruined and forgotten sepulchers, but the truth that was spoken can never die.

We refer to the statement in Prof. Mahan's book that Mr. Davis, in the course of a lecture at Cleveland, suddenly paused, and pretended to go into an interior state, read, as he affirmed, from a manuscript in the possession of Horace Mann. Our author claims that this was a false pretense, and that Mr. Davis copied said paragraph from a report of Mr. Mann's lecture, which had previously appeared in the New York Tribune. We know not whether the real facts accord with this statement, since the Professor neglects to call the witnesses.

THE "TIMES" ON "FREE-LOVE."

TO HENRY J. RAYMOND, ESQ., EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

In your article, entitled "the Free-Love System," published in your daily of Sept. 8th, and your weekly of the 15th, you do Spiritualism great injustice in the following remark: "It (the Free-Love system) pervades the works of Spiritualist and Socialist writers." Whether you really mean to say that Free Love is an essential element in the writings of Spiritualists and the writings of Socialists, or whether you would be understood to mean that it pervades the writings of some persons who entertain both the Spiritualist and Socialist theories, is not very clear; but it is sufficiently obvious that your readers generally get the idea from the language I have quoted, in the connection in which it occurs, that Fourierism, Socialism, Free Loveism and Spiritualism go hand in hand, and are but parts of one system; also, that Free Loveism is omnipresent in the minds and writings of all persons devoted to the systems or reforms to which reference is made.

Whether, in the article referred to, you have fairly shown the tendency of Fourierism and Socialism to be toward Free Loveism, or have committed Robert Owen, Greeley, Brisbane, Godwin, and others to the Free-Love system, theoretically or practically, through their advocacy of social reforms, I will not pretend to say. That some writers on the reforms of the age have seen phenomena, within the last six years, which demonstrated to their minds the immortality of the human soul, and intercourse between the natural and spiritual worlds, is undoubtedly true; but have these phenomena taught these men the theories now held, or has it taught Free Loveism to anybody? Did not modern Spiritualism find persons advocating the theories it is now reproached for teaching? Did not the persons to whom you refer, including, as you say, a "large society of Free-Love Spiritualists about emigrating to south-western Minnesota," entertain the same views they now hold, before they ever heard of modern Spiritualism? If they did, I submit whether modern or ancient Spiritualism—if either—is responsible for it? You, or anybody else, may with equal propriety say that "Evangelical religion" (so called) is a result of modern Spiritualism, because it has appeared in like manner to Rev. Drs. Tyng, Burchard, all the Beechers, and many other exponents of that faith who continue to preach in their old beaten track—in the line of their predilections—and for the same reason that men continue the advocacy

of what they before regarded as principles of social reform.

Very possibly Spiritualism has not as yet reformed the passions, appetites and errors in the lives of all to whom it has come. Indeed, we admit the impotency of modern Spiritualism to inspire all men to whom it comes, with true manliness and uncompromising integrity; for we see that men now—as was the case in the introduction of ancient Spiritualism—"for fear of the people," or from the apprehension of sacrificing their own popularity, crucify their senses, and deny that they are one of us, or have investigated Spiritualism, and some turn and rend it with ridicule; but this no more militates against the truth and purity of modern Spiritualism than the consenting to the crucifixion of Christ involved the potency, efficacy and purity of his systems. But I insist that in the very nature of the case, so far as Spiritualism exerts any influence on the life and principles of men, that influence is elevating and ennobling, and tends to make them happier and more practical and devoted Christians.

Modern Spiritualism has demonstrated the immortality of the human soul to thousands of infidels, so called, who could not be convinced of this fact by the records of ancient spiritual manifestations; neither through the intelligence, skill and eloquence spent in elaborating and enforcing their significance. But this fact no more warrants the conclusion that its tendency is toward infidelity, than the fact that Christ preached to demons, or as some say, "devils in hell" warrants the conclusion that he was a devil. Instead of Spiritualism sanctioning the errors of mortals to whom it appears, its influence is morally reformatory, developing true human charities and Christian graces.

You do Spiritualism injustice in using the words "Spiritualist and Socialist writers" in the above connection, because it covertly deceives the casual reader with the idea that periodicals devoted to Spiritualism and spiritual books generally, have a vein of Free-Loveism running through them, which is far from the fact and entirely untrue. If a person who holds the Spiritual, Social and Free-Love doctrines should undertake to write a book on Spiritualism, we might, perhaps, expect to find those ideas foreshadowed in its pages; but who that holds these views has written a book on Spiritualism? Not one. I find Partridge and Britton's catalogue of Spiritual books, published in the SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH, contains one hundred and two different volumes upon Spiritualism, from nearly as many authors, and not one of them can be fairly cited in defense of the Free-Love doctrine. Moreover, I affirm that spiritual literature is as free from the Free-Love sentiment as is the literature of any society or religious denomination in existence; and furthermore, without claiming perfection for myself or my friends, I affirm that in morals and Christian charities the great body of Spiritualists will compare favorably with any other society in Christendom.

Modern Spiritualism is comparatively new, and it claims the privilege of proclaiming its own Gospel, and its right to stand or fall by its own merits. But it seems as if the devotees of the old dispensation are determined, either to subvert its mission and appropriate its influence to sectarian dogmatism, to Herod-like, hunt it down and kill it out-right, or to force it to stand god-father to some illegitimate or unpopular theory, in order the more effectually to laugh it to scorn before the people. In spite of this, however, it steadily moves on in a silent under-current, making conquests of the most intelligent, respectable and Christian people in this country and the world.

Modern Spiritualism, in its phenomenal aspects, appeals directly to the natural, external senses of men; but in convincing the judgment through the senses, it does not follow, necessarily, that its full significance is, in all cases, apprehended, nor that its legitimate influence descends into the heart and becomes at once incorporated in the life, in such a manner as to reform the passions, appetites, and errors of the individual. But I must insist that the realization of the great truth, that not only God but our guardian angels and the spirits of our fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, husbands, wives, children and friends, in the spiritual world, are cognizant of our most secret thoughts and actions, and may for good ends disclose them to mortals, is, of all others, the most potent influence hitherto employed to reform, elevate, and redeem mankind.

NEW YORK CONFERENCE.

SESSION OF SEPTEMBER 12.

Last week the record of our Conference proceedings was incomplete. The concluding portions were inadvertently left out, and the omission was not discovered until the edition was worked off. The remarks of the speakers were however interesting, and we therefore give place to the absent portions of the discommenced report. Following Mr. Brown, a synopsis of whose remarks was published in our last issue, Dr. Gray addressed the Conference.—Ed.

Dr. GRAY stated a recent communication, himself and a medium alone being present, under circumstances of great certainty that none of its elements were in either of their minds. In conversation the medium subsequently remarked, it was to him one of the surest tests of spiritual existence, with which he accorded; for though we stretch our credulity to the point of admitting that the combined influence of a circle might unconsciously impart motion to a table, it is impossible to conceive of the production of a consecutive sentence in this way. That involves the existence of a third mind. It conveyed intelligence which they had not; and intelligence inheres to the immortal soul; it does not belong to the category of impermanences.

Dr. WARNER remarked that in his early observation of magnetic phenomena, he doubted whether there was any such thing as objective clairvoyance. Subsequent observation has fully demonstrated it to his mind. Yet the sympathetic or subjective is equally true, and he has seen both phases manifested in the same individual. May it not, said Dr. W., be fairly inferred that the facts referred to by Mr. Partridge should be ascribed to one or both of two methods clearly belonging to clairvoyance?—that is to say, may not the psychometrist, in the use of his own spiritual faculties, pronounce the truth in regard to a given case, while another, or the same person under different conditions, may, through the sympathetic aid of Spirits, exhibit the same accuracy of knowledge?

Mr. A. W. McDONALD expressed his surprise that Mr. Partridge should invoke the aid of Spirits to solve a problem of so common occurrence as psychometry. Before we do that, let us first prove there are Spirits in communication with men. He had investigated for five years, and doubted that fact yet. Belief is nothing. How many in this Conference can say "We know?" He had read everything upon the subject that could fairly be deemed worth reading, and yet he was not able to say to himself, *It is true*. But as to psychometry, that was true, whatever the cause. He placed in the hand of Mr. Finny an envelope containing a letter from a distinguished man several years dead. The letter was written by General Jackson in a state of great mental excitement, just subsequent to a cowardly attempt on his life. Mr. F. not only described the mental state of the writer at the time, but his general character as well. Now if the psychometrist was not competent to do this, then we are to suppose a Spirit cognizant of the General's character and of Mr. F.'s inability to delineate it, took wing on short notice, and landed in their midst in the nick of time, to help him out of the difficulty. But if this be so, as the spiritual theory would have us infer, why did not Mr. Finny see him? He professes to see Spirits, and often speaks of their presence and of what they say to him; but in this case he spoke of the character as seeing it himself, not as being told to him by another.

Dr. GRAY wished to impress the fact that a Spirit in the body is a Spirit as well as out of it, and has spiritual faculties. He cited cases to show that such is the fact, and also that the methods alluded to by Dr. Warner were probably true. A clairvoyant in Boston once described to himself and wife the personal appearance and character of a relative in the Spirit-world. He supposed that relative was there,

and impressed the facts on the spiritual faculties of the clairvoyant. Subsequently, in the same interview, she described his home two hundred miles away, in New York, the persons there, what they were doing, what they said, etc., all of which was correct; but he does not find it necessary to suppose that a Spirit made the journey and brought back the intelligence; but he thinks rather the spiritual faculties, rendered objectively potent by the trance state, were fully competent to that branch of the case. A person in the deep trance state is, in a very full sense, in the spiritual world, and to a wonderful degree in possession of his spiritual faculties.

Mrs. FRENCH said, on Sunday last, at her own house in Pittsburgh, Pa., while seated with her family, the door bell rang, and a neighbor entered, which impressed her that he wished to know of the welfare of his wife and sons who were then in the far West. She was not in the trance state at the time, that she was aware of, but immediately a picture was presented of a log cabin on the banks of a stream, in which were the wife and sons of the gentleman whose presence induced the inquiry. She described one less than he supposed to be there. She then saw what she supposed to be a Spirit, who told her why he was not there. A letter received by her while in this city has confirmed the correctness of the statement. She wished all who heard her to form their own conclusions from that and other facts she was about to state: About two years since, at a large circle at which she was present in Pittsburgh, it was asked through the raps if there was a circle then in session in Philadelphia? To which it was answered by the Spirits who claimed to be two of her own children: We will go and see. They did go and see; or, in other words, a message was conveyed from us to a circle in Philadelphia, the time and contents noted, and another returned in the same wonderful manner. The time and fact which we noted, were subsequently fully proved by correspondence through the mail; our letters of mutual explanation passing each other in transit between the two places. She makes examinations of disease on this wise: Spirits tell her the nature of the disease. Though she sees the disease, she is not competent to the scientific description of it usually employed. Spirits do that; the language—that is, the ideas and terms—is not hers. But if I can by psychometry get the enclosed contents of an envelope, why may not Spirits see as well? In 1839 she was entranced for five days, during which she saw the death of an individual two hours after its occurrence, with all the attending circumstances, and many minute and interesting particulars (which she detailed), though miles intervened between her external person and the scenes and facts she was observing. Now, said Mrs. French, who narrated these facts with unusual dignity and composure, what is the meaning of all this? It could not have been the influence of mind upon mind in the common acceptance; yet it was a mental phenomenon, and therefore must have been the influence of mind in the Spirit acceptance. She closed with an eloquent appeal to common sense and experience for the truth of Spiritualism, and with an invocation that its blessings might speedily find their way to the individual hearts of the race.

R. T. HALLOCK.

VEGETARIANISM VINDICATED.

In our issue of the 8th inst. we published, with remarks, an extract from an Exchange, setting forth opinions adverse to an exclusive vegetable diet. A correspondent, deeming that article injurious in its tendency, has sent us the result of his experience and cogitations relative to the subject broached, and the essential portions of which we give below. After quoting the extract at large, which we here omit for the sake of brevity, our correspondent says:

Now what claim has this to the confidence of one who, like myself, has enjoyed uninterrupted health for twelve years, and his strength, on a diet from which *train oil, candles, flesh, fish, fowl, cheese, butter and eggs*, have been carefully excluded? And this after having been sick eight years on a mixed diet! But instead of living on the *over costs* of grains exclusively, I have eaten their entire substance, together with fruits, etc. And instead of macerating my body in rivers of water, I have taken my daily bath. This is the way "to make weak men strong." That's my opinion, and I have tried it.

The exchange quoted says: "It is well known that persons in good health, of sound digestive organs, who take plenty of exercise, and are free from anxiety, may eat almost anything, and in quantities which would kill those in other circumstances." Indeed, so they may, for a time, and perhaps feel no bad effects, but the vestry tyro in physiological knowledge, knows that Nature is keeping a "running account" all this time, and that all violators of her laws must sooner or later "foot the bill." Such gourmandizers will find themselves within the category of those in "other circumstances," and very likely be "killed."

It would be quite as absurd to base our philosophy of health and disease on the immediate apparent effects of our habits, as to attribute to (special dispensations of Providence; were it otherwise, *foods* could be proved to be *wholesome as an article of diet*. I am acquainted with several persons who ate heartily of a dinner "shortened," by mistake, with a quantity of oatmeal made by stewing six live toads in lard! The mistake was discovered immediately after dinner; but one of the party, however, was able to rid his stomach of its contents by vomiting.

Now the exchange in question ought by all means to know this. Here was a case in which the health of the parties was not particularly good, or the digestive organs strong, with the addition, as we may suppose, of mental anxiety, yet no apparent harm resulted. Therefore *foods are harmless food, even for those not very strong*. The human constitution possesses the power of adaptation to a great extent. Were it not so—were every violation of the laws of health to be immediately followed by pain and sickness—the whole race would be in continual pain, as none of us yet possess the requisite degree of wisdom (even though circumstances were entirely favorable) fully to obey the divine laws.

But though multitudes were to deprave themselves to such an extent as to be able to use with apparent impunity, tobacco, opium, alcohol, arsenic, pork, train oil, rotten eggs, toads, etc., in such quantities as to kill those in other circumstances, can any one at this age of the world believe them to be harmless to the consumers?

POPULAR RIDGE, N. Y., September 14, 1855.

S. YOUNG.

A QUADRUPLE TEST.—We have the authority of M. W. Jones, who writes us from Conesus, Livingston Co., N. Y., for the following: Our informant, who is a tipping medium, was one day seated at a table, in company with a lady who is also a medium, when the names of two persons, a lady and gentleman, were spelled out, with the announcement that they had recently passed into the Spirit-world, mentioning the time of their decease, etc. The persons whose names were given were both strangers to our correspondent, but the lady present knew them, though she had not previously received any intimation of their death. The lady whose name was spelled had resided in Pennsylvania, but the gentleman had been a resident of California. The friends of both were written to, and answers from each were received in due course of mail, stating that the parties, respectively, were actually dead, and had died at precisely the time mentioned in the Spirit-communication. Here, in fact, were four truths stated: 1, that the gentleman was dead; 2, that he died at such a time; 3, that the lady was dead; 4th, that she died at such a time; and concerning neither one of these facts had the parties receiving the communication any data on which they might have founded a probable conjecture.

The Tribune's Challenge.

I AM in receipt of several communications relating to my reply to the Tribune's challenge, which I have deferred answering until the article is published in that paper, which the editors promised to do. I presume they will redeem that promise as soon as they can make it convenient. It must be obvious that the article will do the readers of the Tribune more good in time than in eternity, where they will realize the truth of the several propositions therein contained.

CHARLES PARTRIDGE.

"Scenes in the Spirit-world," etc.

WE are now prepared to say that the book which we have in press, entitled "SCENES IN THE SPIRIT-WORLD, OR LIFE IN THE SPIRITS," by HENSON TUTTLE, Medium, which we noticed in our last week's issue, will be published on the first day of October. Price 50 cts. The trade are requested to send in their orders as early as possible.

EXEMPT TO P. B. RANDOLPH.—P. B. Randolph, the well known speaker, has returned to his native shores, with health sadly impaired, and entirely out of means. In this emergency Madame Leoni, the celebrated clairvoyant, and her husband, both of whom are staunch Roman Catholics, have in the noblest manner come forward and tendered Mr. R. a public benefit in Brooklyn, to take place at the earliest date possible. Doubtless the entertainment will be rich and varied, for Mr. R. expects to speak on "Rum," and the great prima donna will sing ten or twelve of her very best selections.

* MODERN MYSTERIES EXPLAINED AND EXPOSED. In four parts. I. Clairvoyant Revelations of A. J. Davis; II. Phenomena of Spiritualism Explained and Exposed; III. Evidence that the Bible is given by Inspiration of the Spirit of God, as Compared with the Evidence that these Manifestations are from the Spirits of Men; IV. Clairvoyant Revelations of Emanuel Swedenborg. By Rev. A. Mahan, First President of Cleveland University. Boston: published by John P. Jewett and Company.

Original Communications.

LIGHT IN DARKNESS.

BY E. A. KINGSBURY.

Lion in darkness, gently beaming
From that lone and quiet star,
Now obscured by clouds, now gleaming
Kindly on us from afar;
High above the storm it walketh,
In a clear and azure sky,
And it ever to us talketh
Of a sunnier life and by.

Light in darkness! When with anguish
Mourns the sorrow-stricken heart,
As it sees a dear friend languish,
And like morning flowers depart;
When the world seems cold and dreary,
Then come whispers, full of love,
Speaking to the spirit weary
Of a peaceful home above.

Light in darkness! Lo! descending
From the glorious sun of Truth,
Brilliant beams broadcast are wending
To the hearts of Age and Youth—
Scattering clouds of doubt and error,
Driving guilt and fear away,
Banishing the reign of terror,
Ushering in the perfect day.

PHILADELPHIA.

MARRIED.

At the Brandreth House in this city, on Wednesday, Sept. 19th, by S. D. Britton, editor of the SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH, BENJAMIN F. SMITH, Esq., of Albany, and Mrs. MARY E. MEECH, of New York.

A SHAKER ON FREE LOVE.

FRIEND BRITTON—Many thanks for your letter to the *Herald*, in answer to Nichols, purging Spiritualism from *Free Loveism*. It will take many such articles, published at proper intervals, to keep the public mind right upon that subject, as the morning note sounded by Adin Ballou evidently demonstrates.

I think it will be generally conceded that not only "all advanced Spiritualists," but also all true reformers, are rapidly verging to the conclusion that, while every other department and phase of human society is obnoxious to censure and rebuke, the "holy ordinance and sacrament of Marriage," with its sequences, is not so immaculate as to be entirely proof against all criticism.

And while the transition is easy from the perception and condemnation of the inherent and irrevocable evils of matrimony, to the abnegation of the institution itself, so also does the "repudiation" and rejection of the marriage system inevitably lead to and land the searching mind either in the more purely abstract and higher forms of *Christianity*, as understood and practiced by its originators and founders, the noted Twelve, and more particularly by their leader, the spiritual-minded and simple-hearted Jesus, who taught his followers that such as practiced marriage were the "children of this world," out of which he and his had been elevated or "raised," into what he designated the "resurrection"—state—that is, a *religious celibacy*, like the *Shakers* of our own time; or else in what, in the early days of Christianity, was so bitterly denounced by the greatest revelator and most pure-souled Spiritualist of that age, as the practice and "doctrines of the Nicolaitans," "which doctrine I hate!" (the vehement and emphatic language of the Spirit who spoke through him as a medium) and which doctrine is now advocated and lived, not only by the advocates of Nichols in the Ceresco community, but also by the six or seven communities of *Perfectionists*.

With your permission, I propose to show that both these extremes (the *Shakers* and *Community Free Lovites*) are no new thing under the sun; but that in and during the first four centuries of the Christian era, we have the record of similar antipodes in faith and practice.

Previous to the advent of Jesus, the earth was divided into two worlds, with their respective inhabitants, the Jewish and the Gentile; and although the former, in point of numbers, was the inferior, it nevertheless looms up in the pages of sacred history as by far the most conspicuous and important.

The *different views* entertained by these respective parties, on the *Marriage* question, lay at the foundation of all the differences and distinctions between the Jew and Gentile. The Jew was circumcised, the Gentile was uncircumcised; and circumcision evidently had reference to the principle of *propagation*, of which marriage is but an adjunct.

Abraham was a heathen—a Gentile, who, in his dreams in the night, had a Spirit appear to him, who made to him such and such promises, to be fulfilled upon such and such conditions; the first and ever the most important of which was, that he should practice upon himself and upon all his male posterity a mutilation called the rite of *circumcision*, nothing being said by his spiritual friend respecting the *females*.

But the man Moses subsequently supplied this deficiency, he also having been directed by some spiritual intelligence to enjoin that every woman who became a "mother in Israel" should pass through certain forms of purification, and be excluded from the camp which was called "holy," forty days for the crime of giving birth to a boy, and eighty days for the crime of giving birth to a girl; and then, before her re-admission into the "holy" camp, she was required to bring a *sin offering* to the priest as an acknowledgment that, however right it might be for the Gentiles to "multiply and replenish the earth," it was sinful and wrong for the Jews, who were called to be a "holy people," and that they could not do it without "transgressing also the law" (which was "holy and good"); for which transgression they must pay the prescribed penalty to appease its offended majesty. (See also Leviticus 15: 18.)

All of which goes to establish the fact that the spiritual being who dictated the Mosaic institutes thought that there were some concomitants of marriage in the present fallen condition of the human race, that were sinful—perversions of the original process of simple generation, as still exhibited in all orders of animals except man—he who, as the lord and the most noble and intelligent head of creation, ought to set an example of law and order, of the due observance of times and seasons, of keeping ever in sight the use and the end and object of every action, to all the inferior races of sentient creatures—he, *man*, is himself and herself the most lawless, irrational, and sensually-debased of all God's creation; and more especially in all that pertains to marriage, or the union of the sexes, which is subject to abuses and errors that ought to be abated, either by the re-institution of the spiritually originated physical circumcision, with its checks and restraints, as enacted by Moses; or by the still more highly spiritually-derived *spiritual circumcision* (of which the former was the significant type), with its perfect celibate virgin life, inaugurated by Jesus, of whom an ancient Spiritualist or prophet said, "his life was cut off from the earth; and who shall declare his generation?" No one. For he was the end of generation to all who fully entered into the spiritual order of which he was the founder and the most perfect exponent.

In contradistinction to the above exposition of the great characteristics of the Jewish world on the subject of marriage, the

Gentile world recognized nothing wrong, either before or after the deluge, in the indiscriminate and most unrestrained use (or rather abuse) of the reproductive faculties. Most of the famous gods and goddesses were worshiped by acts of licentiousness; and their religious assemblies were mere scenes of debauchery. It was this that constituted the great attraction and incentive of the Jews to idolatry; the allurements and temptation consisted in the manner of worship, and not in the object worshiped. Thus, when Israel worshiped the golden calf, and "corrupted themselves," it is said "they sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to commit fornication."

That this great distinction between Jew and Gentile on the Marriage question was continued even in the Christian Church, may not be generally known, except to the *theological student*. Yet that such was the fact can be readily shown. Nor do I consider it possible for any person, without this understanding, to derive clear and connected views and ideas from the New Testament writers. For all the converts to the new faith, called Christianity, made by its founder up to and at the spiritual day of Pentecost, were *Jews*; not a Gentile as yet was admitted into the Church. *It was a Jewish Christian Church.*

All property was held jointly, "in common;" and marriage was *entirely prohibited*.

After entering that Church, some who professed to give up the whole price of their houses and lands, which they had "sold," and "kept back part of the price," dropped down dead by the same spiritual agency which had revealed to the church officer their deception.

And some females who entered the Church, but who, by and by, "waxed wanton against Christ and married," are said to have incurred "damnation, because they had cast off their first faith" of living a *virgin life*.

But, when one of the twelve preachers began to expound Christianity to the Gentiles, which event was brought about by a simultaneous vision or visitation of Spirits to him and a noted Gentile, all the new converts were allowed to marry. "Every man might have his own wife, and every woman her own husband;" as also they might retain their private or individual property. *This was the Gentile Christian Church.*

This Church has existed for eighteen centuries, and is that which at this day fills Christendom, under as many names as a chameleon has colors; but is recognized as one by the Spiritualist John, to whom it was represented in a vision, under the figure of a *mighty woman*, of most notoriously bad character, gaudily dressed, sitting upon a beast; denoting that she subsists by ministering to and gratifying the animal (or bestial) sensual nature of mankind, instead of crucifying it, as true Spiritualism or Christianity would surely do.

The existence of Jewish and Gentile Christian churches; the falling away of the former, and its suppression and enslavement by the supremacy and continued ascendancy of the latter or Gentile Church, together with its hidden abnormal life, under the character of "two witnesses," running parallel with the history of the Gentile Church, until its entire destruction; and the final and triumphant re-establishment of the Jewish Christian Church in all its transcendent and far more than its pristine glory, in consequence of certain principles, called "the accuser of the brethren," which caused its overthrow, being now "cast out," are all graphically and beautifully represented, under certain tropes and characters, by the medium before spoken of as the great Spiritualist of that age, John: "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod; and the angel stood, saying, Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not, for it is given unto the Gentiles; and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months."

"And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand, two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth."—Rev. 11: 1-3.

The temple was the Jewish Christian Church. The court, or Gentile Christian Church, would rule forty-two months, or twelve hundred and sixty years, after it had destroyed and trodden under foot the order of the Jewish Christian Church.

The two orders of *Monks* and *Nuns* of the Roman Catholic Church have always witnessed to the two principles of *community of goods* and a *celibate life* being the true apostolic order of the primitive Jewish Christian Church.

In that Church seven deacons were appointed to distribute the necessities of life to its communicants every day. One of these, named Nicholas, introduced into the Church, in place of the old marriage system of the world, and instead of the celibacy of Jesus and his apostles, a *community of wives*, as well as a community of goods. This was the "falling away" of the Holy Ghost Church—the using of the religion of Jesus as "a cloak for licentiousness," "turning the truth of God into a lie," being the "abomination of desolation" itself.

Now, I do not know that there is anything particular in the similarity of the names of Nicholas and Nicholas; but I think there can be no doubt at all but that their *faith and practice* are homogeneous. The "doctrines of the Nicolaitans" and of Nicholas are evidently one and the same.

It is a question to be pondered, how far "all advanced Spiritualists" will finally "repudiate marriage," and hold a community of goods; not, however, by ceasing to marry, in order "to do worse"—plunging into the very slough of sensual degradation, unknown to brutes—practicing the community of goods, and at the same time holding "the doctrines of the Nicolaitans"; but in order to live a more spiritual—a purer and higher—a *Christian life*; in breathing, from the very heavens a Spirit of love, purity, and universal brotherhood; that they may again establish upon earth the *lost order* of the primitive Jewish Christian Church, with its *virgin life* and "all things common," accompanied with all the signs that were to "follow those who believe"—speaking in tongues, healing the sick, casting out demons, seeing of Spirits and angels, and, in fine, a practically useful, and perpetual intercourse, in a divine order, with the invisible, spiritual world—this being, as we suppose, the true *Resurrection*.

FREDERICK W. EVANS.

SHAKER VILLAGE, NEW LEBANON, COL. CO., N. Y.

MRS. LORIN L. PLATT.

Mr. L. ROBINSON, of Bristol, Conn., in a recent letter speaks in terms of high commendation of Mrs. L. L. Platt. We have known Mrs. P. for several years; her sympathies are easily and deeply excited by the sufferings of mankind, and no person has a more sincere and earnest desire to relieve the afflicted.

We extract a paragraph from Mr. Robinson's letter.—Ed.

I know that many of the sick and suffering will bless the memory of Mrs. Platt, and the poor can not but remember her sympathy and kindness.

Mr. and Mrs. Platt were my guests several weeks, and during the time her examinations and prescriptions were quite numerous and satisfactory. One examination was made publicly, and another under the close and critical scrutiny of one of our ablest physicians. The Doctor saw it done, but the *modus operandi*—that bothers him. There is but one way to get round the dilemma, and that is, to open up every time Science shouts "humbug." Facts speak back an echo, that the deaf hear, the blind see, and the sick are made well.

TEACHINGS OF "KING."

MILFELD, ATHENS CO., OHIO, August 26, 1855.

MR. JOSEPH P. HAZARD:

Dear Sir—I received your letter of the 5th inst., and avail myself of this opportunity to reply to your inquiries.

You wish to know whether "King," who claims to be much more ancient than Adam, remembers anything of the early history of man and the events related in the Old Testament. The account which we have received is this: Adam was a medium, and held some high office at the court of a great Emperor, whose dominions are represented in the Old Testament under the symbolical representation of a garden. The Spirits compare the position of Adam at this Emperor's court, to that of Daniel at the Court of Belshazzar. Adam, like Daniel, had enemies who were jealous of his preferment, and who, in the end, succeeded in having him banished from the Emperor's dominions. Adam became the founder of a sect; his descendants, who were mediums, and who continued to have spiritual manifestations, may be traced down to Noah and through him to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

At that early period of the world, the records of great events were transmitted to succeeding generations by means of hieroglyphics, or symbolical representations. It was in this manner that the history of Adam and his descendants was preserved, until the time when the children of Israel, having emigrated into Egypt, became the slaves of the Egyptians, and the records of their history fell into the hands of their conquerors. Moses, who was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, associated this early hieroglyphical history with the Egyptian theory of the creation of the world, and not being conversant with those ancient hieroglyphics, produced the absurd history which we find related in the first few chapters of Genesis.

The history of Noah's flood is also founded on fact. Noah had communications from Spirits who foretold and predicted that there would be a great inundation in that part of Asia where he lived, and he, in his turn, warned his countrymen of what would happen; but they were as unwilling to believe what he told him as modern skeptics are to believe our spiritual manifestations.

Moses was a medium, and the Spirit that appeared to him in the burning bush, was the Spirit of his ancestor Noah, who announced himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, meaning that he was the same Spirit who had appeared to them. Noah had willed his possessions to descend to his posterity through the eldest son of each successive generation, and considered that the children of Israel had still a right to possess those lands, which had been held by their ancestors.

It was by using Moses and Aaron as positive and negative mediums, that the Spirits performed their wonders before Pharaoh; and we are told that the Egyptians had also their magicians, who performed similar wonders. Thus we find that the Egyptians had their spiritual manifestations as well as the Hebrews, and that the Spirits of each people were at war with the other; but it appears that the Spirits of the Hebrews were more highly developed, and consequently prevailed over those of the Egyptians. The Spirits tell us that the pyramids of Egypt are of very remote origin. They were erected at a time when that vast portion of Africa, which is now occupied by the Great Desert, was a fertile and inhabited country, peopled by a race far anterior to the ancient Egyptians.

The history of the life of Jesus Christ has often been the subject of our conversation with the Spirits. The limits of this letter will not permit me to write all that has been given on this subject. King was a witness of his so-called miracles and sufferings, and was among the number of angels who, at last, transported him from this earth to the celestial regions. At his crucifixion the Spirits threw him into a trance, or what we call a mesmeric sleep, giving him the appearance of death. The manner in which his ascension was effected is thus explained. A great multitude of Spirits united in a circle over him, and, by the power of their will acting on the atmosphere which surrounded him, produced a circular motion, which formed a vacuum rising from the earth in the form of a funnel. Then admitting the pressure of the atmosphere below him, they caused a suction, by which the attraction of gravity was overcome, and he was raised from the earth with inconceivable rapidity. When raised to the electric region, which we term open space, beyond the reach of the law of cohesion, the atoms which composed his organized body sought their affinities in the surrounding elements, while his Spirit ascended to its destined sphere.

With regard to the size of Spirits, I have another observation to make. When I see Spirits in a diminutive form, they appear to be surrounded by a luminous effulgence; but when I am enabled to view them as they existed on earth, there is no such brightness round them. I give you this fact, and leave others to deduce their theories from it. To corroborate this statement I will add the testimony of Mr. J. Duncan, one of my neighbors, who, though he does not profess to believe in the present spiritual manifestations, yet relates the following story:

"When I was a boy, I was hired out to labor, and it fell to my lot to sleep in a garret, where I was regularly visited by human forms of various sizes and appearances. Sometimes the forms were small, bright, and luminous. They appeared to enter by a gable window, and placed themselves in a row in the chamber. At other times there were forms of a darker appearance, and of a large size. The sight of the latter excited in me such feelings of terror that I have frequently screamed out and alarmed the family, who, on such occasions, never failed to come to my assistance." These visitations he affirms to have been made when he was in a perfectly conscious and normal state, and offers to affirm them by oath, if requested to do so.

As to your question concerning trees, flowers, etc., this is how we understand it: From the fifth sphere ascending, Spirits have the power to produce plants, trees, and flowers; which exist as long as the Spirits hold them under their influence; upon a principle similar to that by which they form a tangible hand in our circles. From the sixth sphere ascending to what the Spirits denominated the God-sphere of intelligence, the Spirits can grow durable plants, trees, and flowers upon what they term the magnetic principle. These productions are grown from magnetic germs or seeds, which are formed by the celestial inhabitants of the God-sphere; which is the first sphere in which the power of forming such germs can be exercised. The Spirits of the sixth and seventh spheres receive those germs from which they cultivate those celestial productions to their own fancy and taste, and such productions are held sacred by them in honor to the giver. Please publish this letter in the SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH, for the benefit of its readers. I shall be happy to answer any other inquiries which may be of public interest.

I am, dear sir, yours, as ever,

JOSEPH P. HAZARD.

CONTRADICTORY SPIRIT TEACHING.

UNDER the head, "What Spiritualism Teaches," I find a communication from one signed "Calein." He says "My eyes lately fell upon a paragraph in an article in a paper headed, 'Spiritualism.' The design was to show what Spiritualism teaches. Its doctrines were expressed in ten propositions," etc., etc.

To satisfy himself of the truth of these propositions, or to ascertain the opinion of his guardian spirit, he took occasion to ask, and it appears from his answers that every one is contradicted, and more, for the Spirit so speaking contradicts himself. In reply to the third proposition, he said, "False! It is true that all who are renewed by the spirit of God, will progress and finally reach heaven; but those who do not yield their hearts to him will not progress. They will finally sink to hell." And in reply to the fourth proposition, he says "It is true that Spirits, after the dissolution of the body, are permitted to remain with their friends for a while, but it is only for a while—they must all soon go to their own place."

In answer to the seventh, he caps the climax of absurdity; he hears him: "And does not the Bible teach this? But the Bible does not teach that man should ever look to Spirits for authority or advice. It expressly forbids it. The whole system of consulting Spirits is one of sin, and ere long God will close this channel of deception, and teach that he alone is the director of all human affairs, and that to him alone should man go for guidance."

Compare this with the statement on the second proposition, where he says, "The system of consulting Spirits was not given to teach the immortality of the soul." There is another object which God has in view in opening this communication with the Spirit-world, which will soon be made plain."

Here, then, we find a contradiction so palpable as not to escape the attention of the most ordinary mind. To say that God has opened a communication between the natural and spiritual worlds, and the "whole system of communication is one of sin," is charging that very sin upon God himself.

It God has indeed opened a channel of deception, which will finally whirl millions of his creatures to an endless hell, then man has no alternative. And he might as well remain ignorant of his condition; yes, far better; and I doubt that the guardian spirit, if it be so, of "CALVIN" has a right to disclose the design of God, and thus interfere with his plans.

It is well for Spiritualists to try the Spirits, and see if the teachings

are in accordance with common sense. If not, they should at once be rejected, as coming from minds not qualified, to teach, and receive no more attention than such fanciful and superstitious minds would in the body. I am constrained to remark, that, had I a guardian Spirit whose doctrines were so old fashioned and absurd, I would pray God for an exchange or a dismissal altogether.

PORT CLINTON, August 20, 1855.

J. R. S.

PSYCHOMETRY.

FRIEND BRITTON—I take the liberty of sending you a short extract from a letter lately received, together with my reply, trusting that the same may throw some light upon this interesting subject.

I remain yours for truth and true religion,

R. H. BROWN.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER.

One evening in a crowded room a stranger handed me a letter, wishing an examination. In a few moments I commenced describing the gentleman who gave me the letter, not knowing it was he, but supposing I received the impressions from the letter. I pointed out every trait and peculiarity of his character so vividly that those who were present and knew him, said at once it was he. The letter was not written by the person whom I had thus described.

A while after, a lady, also a total stranger, handed me a blank piece of paper, which I supposed to be a note, and after saying that there seemed to be a peculiar impression of smoothness, I went on and gave an accurate description of the character of the lady. These things puzzle me. I begin to think that it is all phantasy and nothing else but a science. Can you explain these phenomena satisfactorily? C. M. W.

REPLY.

The fact that you described the gentleman who handed you the letter, in place of the person who wrote the letter, does not in the least tend to discredit the claim of psychometry as a fixed science. On the contrary, the experiment affords further evidence in support of that claim. The person who handed the letter to you was a stranger, yet you pointed out "every trait and peculiarity of his character so vividly that those who were present and knew him said at once it was he." If he was a stranger to you, by what means were you able to give so truthful a delineation of his character? The only answer to this question is this, you psychometrized the gentleman who gave you the letter in place of the person who wrote the letter. How did you come to make this mistake? Answer—You made the mistake because your mind was in rapport with the gentleman who gave you the letter, in place of being in rapport with the writer of the letter. How did this happen? Answer—The person who wrote the letter was less positive than the person who gave you the letter. The person who wrote the letter was less in affinity with you than the gentleman who handed you the letter. The person who gave you the letter was standing near you—his thoughts and attention were fixed upon you—his hand had touched yours. Your mind was therefore drawn in rapport with his, in place of flowing in rapport with the letter.

If in addition to these reasons there was anything in his appearance which struck you positively at the time he handed you the letter, or if you were thinking of him instead of the letter while engaged in the experiment, it is not at all to be wondered at that your mind should run in rapport with his sphere, in place of that of the person who wrote the letter. It clearly appears from what you relate, that you got strong and vivid impressions, and that all those impressions were correct. The only error made was one of your own judgment. You thought you were getting your impressions from the letter as usual, which was not true. Had you been in rapport with the letter, your description would have been just as correct of the writer of the letter. You correctly psychometrized, by your impressions alone, the sphere and the person with which your mind was in rapport. This is all that is claimed for psychometry at any time, or under any circumstance. It is impossible for you to psychometrize any person with whom you are not in rapport. This is the first law of psychometrical science.

The only purpose which the letter serves, is to put the mind of the psychometer in rapport with the person who wrote it. If the letter fails to do this, the experiment will fail. In this case the letter failed to put you in rapport with the person who wrote it, because your mind had involuntarily and previously got into rapport with the gentleman who handed it to you. Mistakes of this sort often take place when psychometrical experiments are conducted in a "crowded room." The psychometer should never practice his art in a crowded room. If he does so, those present should be perfectly passive, and withdraw, as far as possible, their attention from him; and above all, no person should be in physical contact with the psychometer. When there is a crowd about the psychometer, his mind is far more likely to flow in rapport with some positive and kindred mind present, than with that of the distant and unknown writer of the letter. If you wish to get good and truthful results, take the letter to be psychometrized and retire to the silence and solitude of your own private room.

The other instance of the experiment with a blank paper, supposed by you at the time to be a note, is also easily explained. You do not seem to be aware that the power to impart psychometrical impressions is not confined to letters and autographs. Psychometrical impressions may be obtained from a lock of hair, from a glove, a veil, a shawl, or anything which a person has worn or carried about them for a time. In brief, psychometrical impressions can be obtained from anything which in any way has become impregnated with the magnetic emanations of any person. If you take a person by the hand, you can psychometrize that person, for a rapport is thus at once established. If you are sufficiently impressible, you can even psychometrize without physical contact of any sort. The only condition needed for the impressible person to psychometrize, is that a rapport be established between the psychometer and the individual whose soul is to be measured. A strong wish, will or desire to know a person's character, will sometimes alone be sufficient to throw you in rapport with that person, and you will then be able to psychometrize him.

If I hold a blank paper in my hand a few moments, and then give it to you, without allowing it to be touched by another, you will be able to psychometrize it as well as though I had covered it with my writing. This will explain why you succeeded so well with the lady who handed you the blank paper. It does not weigh a feather against psychometry, that the psychometer does not know who he is describing, provided he truthfully describes, by the aid of impressions alone, whatever person he is really in rapport with. To affirm that the psychometer could describe any person with whom he is not in rapport, would be to unship the whole basis on which psychometry rests. The very fact, that the psychometer, without regard to his own belief or any other conditions, describes only the person with whom he is in rapport, is one of the strong points upon which we rest our claims.

The fact that, notwithstanding your belief, notwithstanding you held the letter to your forehead, you failed to describe the person who wrote it, not being in rapport with him, but, on the contrary, did describe truthfully another person with whom you were in rapport, affords the highest evidence that independent of all other conditions, the impressions follow the rapport in all cases, and that, therefore, psychometry is a fixed science, governed by fixed laws. For further information on this subject, your attention is called to Buchanan's Anthropology, a book which throws a flood of new light upon man's interior nature. It is written by Dr. James R. Buchanan, to whom belongs not only the distinguished honor of having first discovered the facts and phenomena of psychometry, but also of being the author of the beautiful and appropriate term by which that science is designated. The name "psychometry" was compounded by Buchanan from two Greek words, which, turned into simple English, means "soul measuring." Entertaining the hope that this letter will satisfactorily explain the phenomena which puzzled you, and that your faith in psychometry may be revived, I remain yours truly,

C. M. W.—D.

R. H. BROWN.

"GOD" AND THE "INFINITE."

"God," the "Infinite" two distinct terms, but alas! how misunderstood—how interconfused in their signification, alike by the theologian and the philosopher!

When we look back into the history of the term "God," we soon discover that giving unto God the attribute of infinity in any respect whatever, is of recent origin compared to the origin of the usage of the term "God" or "gods."

The idea attaching itself to the word "God" was first of all "guardian spirit," and as different nations were very properly supposed to have different guardian spirits, so did the Jews speak of "Jehovah," their "guardian spirit," as being their God, and spoke of the gods of other nations as being "strange gods." But though acknowledging "strange gods" (consequently a plurality of gods), they denied the attribute of infinity to all except their own God, "Jehovah." That the Jews believed in a plurality of gods is evident from the fact that the Hebrew Scriptures commence with, "In the beginning" (the words (ELOHIM) created the heavens and the earth." And again, "The gods said, Let us create man," etc.

The ancient Greeks and Romans believed in a plurality of gods, who were, in their opinion, spiritual beings who ruled over the affairs of this earth, and who were of different degrees of power and development. Some had power to produce or develop new forms of being on this earth; others could only influence (or psychologize) the minds of men;

some had power over the different forces of nature, and others (genii) were merely attached to different private families.

But in all these, in my opinion very sensible and consistent conceptions of the gods, they never attached the idea of infinity to any of them, except to one being, for whom they had no name, whom they called "Deus summus," "Deus optimus et maximus," etc., the ruler and controller of all things, from whom all things existed, and about whom, by virtue of his infinite nature, nothing could ever be known.

Far more sensible, it appears to me, is the above idea of the nature of "ELOHIM, the gods," than that of modern orthodoxy, which arrogantly asserts the absurd doctrine of special providences from an infinite God.

If special providences do occur, they come from some special guardian spirit or god, but not an infinite one; for the infinite can only act by universal laws.

If prayer is to be offered to God, it is absurd to suppose that the Infinite can be moved by our petitions; it is only a finite god or guardian spirit that can be so influenced.

The existence of all things in the universe proves the existence of an Infinite Deity, and that one of infinite power and intelligence, from whom "all things flow;" but who must necessarily be incapable of doing finite acts. The very existence of a finite act shows that it was conceived and done by a finite being. The creation or development of man, and the different races of plants and animals, as they are on this globe, is a finite act, and therefore the work of finite gods. The progression of the different races and families of men on this earth, are doubtless influenced by different gods, and some of them of very different dispositions from each other, but all of them under the control of still higher gods, such, for example, as the great Spirit or guardian God of this earth, or rather, perhaps, a circle of guardian gods for this earth.

Again; as we progress, may we not be attracted still higher gods to this earth? and may not this present spiritual movement be caused by this higher influence pouring down upon us from still higher spheres?

It has of late been fashionable with some, who have perceived the absurdity of praying to an infinite God, to deride the use of prayer altogether. But this is going to the opposite extreme. I believe in praying most fervently, both by action (without which prayer is a mockery) and by raising up our hearts and minds to the gods, as I believe that the gods are but finite beings and capable of being influenced by mental emotion. Pray, pray, I say, intensely to the highest guardian spirit or god that can benefit you. While working actively in all the duties of life, pray for higher spiritual wisdom, and you will have it. Are you in misfortune? The kind and loving sympathy of a guardian God is to be had for the asking.

Hoping that the above suggestion will influence some of your readers to discontinue the terms "God" and "the Infinite," and thus have some realizing sense of the sources of special providences,

I remain your sincere friend for progression,

HOMER, N. Y., Sept. 15, 1855.

EDWARD J. MATTHEWS.

I have just written the above by impression or inspiration, whichever you like to call it, and so send it to you just as it turned out. E. J. M.

AN EARNEST WITNESS.

Mrs. CHARLOTTE SPENCER, of Bloomfield, (what State?) who believes that her life in the form has been preserved by the use of Mrs. Mettler's medicines, renders her emphatic testimony in the following brief epistle:

Gentlemen—Permit me to express my gratitude through you to Mrs. Mettler for the inestimable benefit which I have received from the use of her invaluable Cholera Elixir and Dysentery Cordial. On the morning of the 20th July last, I was most violently attacked with internal pains, purging and vomiting, followed by excessive cramps and spasms, with a freezing chill pervading the entire system, inasmuch that the most intense heat was not felt; nothing could produce the slightest effect or relief. All hope was abandoned, and it was thought that my hours were numbered. A message was then despatched to my husband in Hartford, with a request that he would call and see Mrs. Mettler; he did so, and on entering her room found her in the clairvoyant state, examining patients. After a few minutes' delay, her attention was called to my case, which she seemed to understand perfectly, remarking that it was the worst case of Cholera Morbus she had ever seen, and if anything was to be done, it must be done immediately, as everything looked dark, and she could see nothing that would do any good, except the Cholera Elixir and Dysentery Cordial, which she prescribed.

My husband soon returned, and the medicines were administered freely and promptly, according to directions. The first dose I threw up, but its power was felt through the whole system. The next dose remained, and the two following ones, diffusing a glow of warmth through my whole system. Following up the directions, I was soon convalescent, and now enjoy better health than I have for many years past. I would not be without these valuable remedies for any consideration. I am satisfied they will do even more than is claimed for them, and my advice to every family is to keep them in store, for we can not tell what a day may bring forth, as the day previous to my illness I was at meeting, and also in the evening, feeling quite well. Yours, affectionately,

CHARLOTTE SPENCER.

NEITHER DEAD NOR SLEEPING.

A CONCERT BY THE INVISIBLES.

A. J. BRADY, PRINTER,
No. 348 BROADWAY, (Spiritual Telegraph Building.)
Haver & Wood's Rooms, Room Success 10 & 11