

DIXON AND HIS COPYISTS.

A

CRITICISM

OF THE ACCOUNTS OF THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY
IN "NEW AMERICA," "SPIRITUAL WIVES"
AND KINDRED PUBLICATIONS.

BY

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DIXON AND HIS COPYISTS.

IN the latter part of August, 1866, Wm. Hepworth Dixon came to the Oneida Community with a letter of introduction from Horace Greeley, and remained with us two days. He had previously read some of our publications at the British Museum, and he got such additional scraps of information from us as we could give him in so short a time. Thus qualified, he wrote a book about us, in the swiftest and freest style. That book — *New America* — had a great run in England and in this country. Indeed it was translated into several foreign languages, and went round the world.

At the first appearance of this book, I notified the public that its representations of us were not altogether reliable, in the following good-natured remarks published in the CIRCULAR, Feb. 18, 1867:

I must caution our friends against expecting too much. This book is not history. It is a sketch as swiftly made as the journey which it reports; and that was a journey from London to Utah and back in four months! It is not to be criticised as a book of mathematics, or even as a well digested history, whose great object is truth. It is a work of art, like an opera or a play, thrown off at a heat. Its object is entertainment. It is founded on fact. It reports many things that the author actually saw and heard, and many others that he thought he saw and heard; but accuracy must not be expected. On the contrary, according to the rules of art, all its details must be subordinated to the object of producing certain general effects. Some of our people were tempted to be indignant at the mistakes of fact which certainly abound in Dixon's representations of the Community. I laughed at the

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mistakes, and at those who were offended by them. What if he did call Erastus H. Hamilton James Hamilton, and speak of Mr. Newhouse as a Canadian Trapper, and place Dartmouth College in Connecticut? Where is the harm? Do you say that such blunders in things that we know about, show carelessness which forbids us to trust Dixon in things which we do not know about? Be thankful then that your general estimate of his accuracy is in a way to be corrected. I presume he does not wish to be judged in any of his works as a precisian or a historian, but as an entertaining off-hand book-wright, who tells the truth as near as he can remember it in the hurry and heat of artistic composition.

After this general caution, I published a running commentary on Dixon's account of the Community, correcting many of his blunders and criticising the *animus* of the whole as unfairly caricaturistic. Of course, these cautions and corrections never reached a thousandth part of the readers of *New America*. Yet one would suppose, that even without them fair-minded men would have held the representations of a writer so rapid and sensational as Dixon, in doubt long enough to test them in some way before incorporating them into sober history. But it turns out that his stories about the Community have been taken at par, and have passed into general circulation on both sides of the Atlantic. Writer after writer has repeated them as grave verities, till there is really no other accepted account of our society afloat in respectable literature. The English reviewers, in their notices of our History of American Socialisms, all quoted Dixon as undoubted authority for any slur they chose to cast upon us. Chambers' Encyclopedia, under the head *Perfectionists*, has a long and elaborate account of us, which appears like sober history, but proves on examination to be nothing but an epitome of *New America*. And finally, writers on this side of the water, who, one would think, might find something original to say, or at least might eliminate some of Dixon's blunders, have taken to copying him by wholesale, with no attempt at improvement, except in the way of exaggerating his misrepresentations. I have seen an American book lately in which I counted 113 pages taken bodily from Dixon's account of the Oneida Community, with only slight verbal alterations, just enough to make the writing seem original, and to intensify

the sensationalism by throwing in occasionally an extra lie.

In this state of things it seems best to go back and overhaul Dixon. I know very well that Falsehood, as usual, has got a long way the start, while Truth has been "putting on his boots;" but I have faith that in this case "the race is not to the swift," but to the persevering and the honest.

I will begin with a matter in which I have a special personal interest, viz.,

THE STORY OF MY EARLY LICENTIOUSNESS.

The growth of this story is very curious, and may be divided into three stages. There was, first, the innocent germ, taken from my own writings; secondly, Dixon's careless and suggestive expansion of that germ; and, thirdly, the enormous and malignant slander ripened off by Dixon's copyist. Let us look at these stages in their order.

THE GERM.

In an account of my Religious Experience, printed in our paper twenty-five years ago, I described certain singular exercises and adventures which I went through in New York city soon after I became a Perfectionist. Among the rest occurs the following passage:

In my night excursions I was sometimes led into the vilest parts of the city. I went alone at midnight into streets which I had been told were dangerous even in the day-time. I descended into cellars where abandoned men and women were gathered, and talked familiarly with them about their ways of life, beseeching them to believe on Christ, that they might be saved from their sins. They listened to me without abuse. One woman seemed much affected. I gave her a Bible. To another I gave a Testament. Sometimes when I had money, I gave that to the wretches whom I found in those dark places. These were the only dealings I had with them.—*Rel. Ex. p. 42.*

This seems innocent enough. It is positively all there is in that autobiographical sketch or anywhere else, that can possibly be perverted into a confession of visiting bad houses for licentious purposes. Now let us see what Dixon made of it.

THE EXPANSION.

In *New America*, vol. II. page 226 (English edition), there is a paragraph, the object of which is to represent me as

in a riotous state of disregard to the laws of God and man. The whole passage is founded on my story of Religious Experience above referred to, as may be demonstrated from many of its expressions. Among other things Dixon says :

He had been chaste in his habits, regular in his hours of sleep ; he now began to stay out all night, to wander about the quays, to lie in door-ways, to visit infamous houses, *to consort with courtesans and thieves.*

This free and easy version of the foregoing confession is certainly a remarkable specimen of sensational license. Dixon does not say in so many words that I went about the city in the night on licentious errands, but my missionary excursions into the Five Points are converted into "consorting with courtesans and thieves." In this indefinite shape the story has gone round the world, and has been repeated by reviewers and cyclopædists. Now we come to the final enlargement by an American sensationalist.

THE RIPE SLANDER.

The book which I have referred to as copying substantially 113 pages from Dixon, paraphrases his passage about my "consorting with courtesans and thieves" thus :

He had led a life of chastity and regularity ; now he gave himself up to licentiousness and riotous living. He became a vagabond. He was a companion of courtesans and thieves, *and was a regular visitor to houses of ill fame !*

This is really but a little advance on Dixon's representation, and would hardly be blameworthy if the writer had not recklessly copied and exceeded an author known to be unreliable. Compare this final form of the story with the germ, and see how far sensationalism, carried to the second power, can pervert and reverse the truth.

That same confession of Religious Experience, from which Dixon got all his information about my adventures in New York city in 1834, had the following protest expressly relating to those adventures :

As I was for the most part alone, or among indifferent strangers, during the period under consideration, the material facts of the case have come to be known only by my own report. I am the only primary witness, and all second-hand

reports depend on me for their verification. Those which exceed, or differ from my statements, have no vouchers. What I have reported in relation to my preaching at the Five Points, has been magnified by inferences, till it has been made the foundation of a wide-spread belief that I was guilty of licentiousness. As I am commenting on the general character of the whole transaction in question, I will take this occasion to clear it of evil surmises in regard to this matter. I must tell my own story. If there is no witness to confirm it, there is none to contradict it. It must stand upon the credit of my affirmation, or, if it is demanded, of my oath. *I affirm then, that all reports that I committed any acts of licentiousness during my sojourn in New York in 1834, are false.*

On the first appearance of *New America*, I gave the following notice in the CIRCULAR that Dixon's intimation of my licentiousness was a "bad bill:"

All that Dixon says about my "wantoning with the flesh" and "consorting with courtesans" in my early experience, must be taken with doubts and drawbacks. The truth that will come out in the judgment is, that I never knew woman sexually till I was married, and that I never knew any woman but my wife until we entered into complex marriage in 1846 — which was eight years after my first marriage, twelve years after my conversion to holiness at New Haven, and fifteen years after my first conversion at Putney. And as I can truly say that in this second marriage I have not been unfaithful, either to the expressed terms of the first, or to the wishes of my partner, I can honestly boast of a clear matrimonial record.

To the credit of Dixon be it said, that in his subsequent book, *Spiritual Wives* (p. 351, American Edition), he allowed me to make a statement, substantially the same as the above. But his American copyist takes no notice of any of these protests, thus fully assuming the bad bill.

Another misrepresentation that has gone round the world with *New America*, is Dixon's elaborate account of my

MARRYING FOR MONEY.

He made a great point of this matter, devoting to it many pages, as his copyists have done after him. I contradicted the charge as emphatically as possible in my first notice of *New America* in the CIRCULAR (Feb. 18, 1867). This drew from Dixon a rejoinder in the London *Athenæum*, to which I made answer in the CIRCULAR, April 15, 1867. Here the contro-

versy rested ; but the falsehood went on its way, unretracted and unchanged ; and has been reproduced certainly in *Chambers' Encyclopedia*, and in the American book to which I have alluded ; and in how many other publications no man can tell. My present task is to bring before the reader that controversy in a connected form, and leave him to judge between me and the great sensationalist.

THE CHARGE.

From *New America*, Vol. II. p. 233.

Noyes was poor. His life had been that of a wanderer to and fro ; resting-place he had none ; and the shepherd, like his sheep, was without shelter from the storm. Among his disciples in Vermont, there was one young lady of good family, with present means and some expectations ; such a young lady would be a blessing to him in every way, if he could only obtain her as a wife ; but then his principles stood in the way. Marriage being utterly against his doctrine of the true gospel life, how was he to get her person and her money into his power ? Of course, he could not offer his hand and his heart in the usual way, since she had heard him declaim against wedlock as the sign of a degenerate state. In fact, if he proposed to her at all—and his need for her dollars was very sore—he would be compelled to say that he should not expect her to be true to him only, and that he would certainly not engage to be true to her. But Harriet's position was out of the common way. She had no father, no mother, no brother, no sister. Her only kinsman was an aged and foolish grandfather. She had been in love with a young man who wished to marry her, but the old man had interfered to prevent him ; on which the girl had fallen sick, and in a fit of remorse her grandfather had sworn an oath that in future she should do as she pleased, and he would willingly abide her wishes. Thus, a way had been opened, as it were, for Noyes to come in with his proposal, which conveyed to her an offer of his hand in the following words (a copy of which has been given to me by himself) :

[Here follows the whole of a letter which may be found on the 195th page of the third volume of the CIRCULAR. I reprint the essential part of it.]

Extract from my Letter of Proposal.

TO MISS HARRIET A. HOLTON : June 11, 1838.

* * * At first I designed to set before you *many* weighty reasons for this proposal ; but upon second thought, I prefer the attitude of a witness to that of an advocate, and shall

therefore only suggest briefly, a few matter-of-fact considerations, leaving the advocacy of the case to God, the customary persuasions and romance to your own imagination, and more particular explanations to a personal interview.

1. In the plain speech of a witness, not of a flatterer, I respect and love you for many desirable qualities, spiritual, intellectual, moral and personal ; and especially for your faith, kindness, simplicity and modesty.

2. I am confident that the partnership I propose will greatly promote our mutual happiness and improvement.

3. It will also set us free, at least myself, from much reproach, and many evil surmisings, which are occasioned by celibacy in present circumstances.

4. It will enlarge our sphere, and increase our means of usefulness to the people of God.

5. I am willing at this particular time, to testify by example, that I am a follower of Paul, in holding that "marriage is honorable in all."

6. I am also willing to testify practically against that "bondage of liberty" which utterly sets at naught the ordinances of men, and refuses to submit to them even for the Lord's sake. I know that the immortal union of hearts, the everlasting honeymoon, which alone is worthy to be called marriage, can never be *made* by a ceremony; and I know equally well that such a marriage can never be *marred* by a ceremony. William Penn first bought Pennsylvania of the British King, and then he paid the Indians for it. "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."

7. I have the permission and good-will, not only of God, but of all who are specially concerned in my movements, in making this proposal. * * *

J. H. N.

Dixon continues :

Harriet, left to herself, answered as the preacher wished ; in a few days they were united ; and Noyes expended her seven thousand dollars in building a house and a printing-office, in buying presses and types, and in starting a newspaper. So long as the old man lived he supplied them with money to live on ; when he died, Brother Noyes came in for nine thousand dollars in one lump. He makes no secret of the fact that he married Harriet for her money ; to use his own words, she was given to him as his reward for preaching the Truth.

THE REPLY.

From the CIRCULAR, Feb. 18, 1867.

* * * Whoever got up this account made several bad mistakes (to speak mildly) which I will here extinguish.

1. I was in no such strait for money or home. My father was wealthy—the banker of his village; and he, with the most of his family, were my unfaltering friends.

2. I had never denounced marriage, and had no theory against it, except the theory of its abolishment in the Kingdom of Heaven, which I then avowedly regarded as future. All this is evident from the letter of proposal; as it is from the Battle-Axe letter, written and published years before.

3. Harriet's "foolish grandfather," Hon. Mark Richards, had been wise enough and respectable enough to serve as a member of Congress, and as Lieut. Governor of his State.

4. Besides this "old man," Harriet had an uncle, Hon. W. C. Bradley, not so old, who also had been member of Congress, and was then the best lawyer in Vermont. He advised her to accept my proposal.

5. I never said or intimated or admitted, that I "married her for her money;" for I had no consciousness of any such thing. My reasons for proposing were honestly given in the letter which Dixon publishes [see extract on the preceding page]; and I never had or gave any other.

Dixon did not see Harriet. If he had seen her, I do not think he would have printed this poor stuff. Does he suppose that if I were foolish or impious enough to marry a woman for her money, I should also have had the wonderful luck to get the best wife in the world, and the good taste to find it out afterward and make a love-match of it? If he had read *all* the letters of that courtship, and followed on the track of our married life till now, he would have known that Harriet has been the helper of my fortune in all ways, and from the beginning to the end; and that her money was the least item of the value for which I married her and for which I love her still. * * *

J. H. N.

DIXON'S REJOINDER.

From the London *Athenæum*, March, 1867.

I have this morning received from Father Noyes, the founder of Bible Communism, a criticism—addressed in the first place to his own people—of my account of the Bible family at Oneida; and as he and his people conceive that in what they call my "heat and haste" I have done them some injustice, I venture to place the matters of complaint before that public which is supposed to have been misled by me, with such annotations as they may seem to need from my pen. * * * Mr. Noyes objects to my account of his marriage as conveying the idea that he was poor, and sought his wife mainly for the sake of her money. My account certainly conveys this idea; and if I am wrong in believing that the fact is so represented by

Mr Noyes himself, I shall very promptly and willingly apologize to him for having fallen into it. * * * Now, I will set aside, as liable to challenge, all my remembrance of what Mr. Noyes himself told me about his early days, and about his courtship and marriage, while I was his guest at Oneida Creek, and take my stand on his own published words, in his own official organ, a copy of which he gave me. In the *Circular* of January 8, 1866, there is an article by Mr. Noyes, under the title of "Financial Romance," in which he gives an account of his position at the time of his marriage, of the motives which led him to propose to Miss Holton, and of the pecuniary advantages which came to him from her acceptance of his offer. In this article he says [of his condition while in Ithaca, N. Y., in October, 1867]:

"I was in debt for my board and in debt to the printer, some eighty dollars in all. I had not the remotest idea how I should be delivered from that state. But one day in opening my letters I found one which contained just eighty dollars. That letter came from Harriet A. Holton, who is now Harriet A. Noyes. She sent it by inspiration, obtaining it from her grandfather in a way that she regarded as miraculous. With this money I paid my debts."

This passage as to the preacher's needs was scored by me, and used in my account. Later on Mr. Noyes says:

"In the spring I went to Putney. There I saw Harriet A. Holton, the woman who had sent me eighty dollars when in Ithaca. I found she believed in me and trusted me. There was no particular love of the sentimental kind between us, but she had read my writings published in the *New Haven Perfectionist*, and received the truth into her heart, and she respected me and believed in me as a man of God. I soon sent her a letter in which I offered marriage, on such conditions as were compatible with the social principles of this Community."

This passage I had also scored and used. Again Mr. Noyes writes:

"By this marriage, besides herself and a good social position, which she held as belonging to the first families in Vermont, I obtained money enough to build me a house and a printing-office, and to buy a press and type, with which to go to work. We bought the press and type within three weeks after our marriage, and began the work of publication. Her grandfather furnished us with money upon which to live for about six years, until his death, when she received, as his heir, nine thousand dollars. In all, we received from him not less than sixteen thousand dollars."

These words are my vouchers for the statement that Mr. Noyes made no secret of having married Miss Holton for her money. In the same article he says once again: "It was the truth that drew Harriet Holton to me; *it was the paper that she married.*"

In substance, this is just what I have said: "He makes no secret that he married Harriet for her money; to use his own words, she was given to him as his reward for preaching the truth." * * * * *

W. HEPWORTH DIXON.

[Observe the juggle in these last sentences. There is just nothing at all in what Dixon quotes and italicizes, to show my motive or my profession of motive, but only a statement of Harriet's motive, viz., that she was drawn to me by the love of the truth which she found in the paper which I published. Yet with cool assurance he says, "In substance this is just what I have said; 'He makes no secret that he married Harriet for her money,'" &c. In substance it is no such thing, as any body can see who will look carefully at the two sentences which he makes equivalent to each other. This poor trick shows well the flimsiness of all his proofs. J. H. N.]

MY ANSWER TO DIXON'S REJOINER.

From the CIRCULAR, April 15, 1867.

Mr. Dixon puts his strong point last. I will attend to it first, and let the rest go. The motives of my marriage with H. A. N. are in question, and the question is before the world. I plead "not guilty" to the charge of marrying for money, or of saying any thing that fairly implies a confession of that crime.

Mr. Dixon clips select extracts from a report 'of my "talk" to the family at Oneida, delivered about a year ago, in which, assuming that my hearers knew all about my motives in marrying, from the original correspondence, I spoke freely and perhaps unguardedly of the money that came to the Community through H. A. N. My sole object in that talk was to show the original sources of the Community capital, and that our little paper, thriftless as it seems, had made our fortune, by securing the hearts, and of course the money, of the founders of the Community. I confess I took some pleasure in exhibiting the fact that, so far as money was concerned, H. A. N. brought in more than any body else; and that so far as I was concerned, I won her

and her money by the publication of the truth. Mr. Dixon puts the matter as though I were telling, not facts and discoveries that came after the marriage, but feelings and motives that went before it. I certainly did get a good deal of money by her, and I spoke freely of it in that talk. But that is a very different thing from saying that I married her for that money. His vouchers, just as they stand, do not authorize his assertion that "I make no secret that I married Harriet for her money." They do not say any such thing. That assertion is an *inference*, and, all things considered, rather a careless inference from the premises. For while I said that there was not much sentimental love between us, I also took care to show that it was not the love of money but the love of the truth that drew us together, as is manifest in the vouchers; and in recounting what I got, I said, "By this marriage, *besides herself* and a good social position which she held as belonging to the first families in Vermont, I obtained money enough," &c. Dixon chooses to ignore that little expression—"besides herself"—but I choose to italicize it; and when the question is as to the proportion between HERSELF and the money, I choose to put it in the largest capitals. My business in that talk was simply to tell how much money the Community got by H. A. N.; but my business now is to call attention to the fact that even in the freedom and careless manner of that talk I did not forget that which was more than money. If I should say of a friend's gift of a horse, that "by his generosity, besides the horse I got a fine saddle and bridle," that would not be a just ground of inference that I thought more of the bridle than I did of the horse.

But fortunately I have the means of showing beyond cavil, my innocence in this matter; and that, not by loose retrospective talk, but by deliberate words written before the marriage, and under circumstances that gave them the full force of deeds. In Harriet's reply to my letter of proposal (published by Dixon) she wrote that her grandfather had said that "he had made a comfortable provision for her, and he hoped she would not put it out of her power to enjoy it." In my rejoinder (not published by Dixon, but to be found in the third volume of the CIRCULAR, p. 203) I said:

"I am not sure that I understand your grandfather in what he says about your putting it out of your power to enjoy the provision he has made for you. But I will say at a venture, that *I have no objection to his so securing that provision that it shall be out of my power to dispose of it. I seek not yours but you.*"

Here I rest the case.

A word only needs to be said about the subordinate ques-

tion of fact — as to my *poverty*. Dixon arranges his extracts so as to make it seem that the poverty I was in at Ithaca was in close juxtaposition with my proposal of marriage. Indeed, he distinctly signifies that the poverty described in his first voucher was my “position at the time of my marriage,” and the “motive” of the proposal in his second voucher. The truth is that there were eight months and a total change of circumstances between the first voucher and the second. The course of matters was this: Although my father was wealthy, and with his family, was in sympathy with me, I chose for several years after my conversion at New Haven, to keep my independence of him, and led a wandering life. He gave me money often without my asking for it, and sometimes paid my debts when I forbade him to do so. This was the state of things when I was at Ithaca in October, 1837, attempting to start a paper independently, at which time I got that introduction to H. A. H. by the gift of eighty dollars. But my proposal to her was not made till June following; and in the eight months intervening, I had abandoned my wandering life, closed up my affairs at Ithaca, and returned to Vermont. When I wrote to her I was living at home in Putney; my father’s infirmities had disabled him; I was taking care of him; and, being the oldest son, was in some sense the head of the family. Moreover, I was in negotiations with the other members for an arrangement by which I should take charge of his business; so that I had a home and a prospect of the means of living. All this also is stated in that second letter. I knew but very little, and cared less, about the state or amount of Harriet’s property, and was as much surprised as pleased to find that her grandfather, instead of acting on my suggestion to tie up her patrimony, made her and me free to use it as we wished. Instead of being beholden to her for a home, I brought her to my own home, where she lived with my sisters more than a year.

J. H. NOYES.

After all this controversy in periodicals on both sides of the ocean, dating back to 1867, the recent American book before referred to copies with slight changes of language and with some rather malignant improvements, the whole of Dixon’s representation of my marriage, and adds, “*Noyes has never denied that he married her for the money she brought him.*”

SHARP PRACTICE.

The reader will observe that Dixon introduces the three “vouchers” in his rejoinder with a very crafty statement. He

says: "In the CIRCULAR of Jan. 8, 1866, there is an article by Mr. Noyes, under the title of "Financial Romance," in which *he gives an account of his position at the time of his marriage, of the motives which led him to propose to Miss Holton, and of the pecuniary advantages which came to him from her acceptance of his offer.*" Thus he labels beforehand his three vouchers. The first is to be taken as my account of my position at the time of my marriage ; the second as a statement of my motives ; the third, as a showing of the money I got by the operation. This antecedent interpretation of the vouchers seems fair enough, but really it assumes the very thing which they are adduced to prove, and is the principal poison that enters into them. Without this interpretation they would amount to nothing. On close examination this interpretation proves to be false. The first voucher does *not* give an account of my position *at the time of my marriage, but of my position eight months before.* The second voucher says not one word about my motives in proposing, but only speaks of Harriet's sympathy and respect for me. The third voucher does indeed speak of the money that came to me through Harriet, but also and first in order, of herself and her social position. What is there in all this that bears out Dixon's introductory interpretation, or that in any way proves what he undertook to prove? The most that can be said is, that the vouchers might come in as plausible circumstantial evidence, *if it were first assumed, as he did assume, that my motive in marrying was money.*

SUMMING UP.

Where then shall we look for direct evidence as to my motives? There is none except my own statement of them in the letter of proposal, and the fact that I virtually invited Harriet's grandfather to place her property beyond my reach. It is foolish to say, as Dixon says, that I "make no secret" that I married for money, or as his American copyist says, that I have "never denied" that I married for money, meaning as they evidently do to make me a direct witness against myself. They can not find my admission of their charge. I have confessed that Harriet sent me eighty dollars when I was in great embarrassment at Ithaca ; that I afterwards re-

ceived with her, sixteen thousand dollars, which helped me to keep my independence of my relatives and to start printing ; and I have no objection to confessing now, if I have not done it before, that Harriet's money was undoubtedly *a part* of the complex value which I appreciated in my choice of her. No man need be ashamed of the prudence which regards money as *one* good item in a woman's dowry. But this is a very different thing from what these sensationalists charge. And if I were to imitate their freedom of assumption, I might make bold to say that, knowing as they do that I am not a fool or a money-coward, they themselves do not believe their own charge, but are inwardly sure that I had my eye on the moral and spiritual values enumerated in my proposal, more than on money or social position or any other worldly advantage.

DIXON'S CLAP-TRAP.

Another cunning insinuation, tending to supply the lack of direct evidence, Dixon thrusts into the preceding case when he says in his rejoinder, * * * "*Now I will set aside as liable to challenge all my remembrance of what Mr. Noyes himself told me about his early days and about his courtship and marriage, while I was his guest at Oneida;*" * * * which means that he *could*, if he pleased, support his charge by reporting what he got from my own lips. Does anybody believe that I was foolish enough to tell him that I married for money? I knew that he was going to spread all he got from me before the world. Is it likely that I would confess to such a man at that time what I have so strenuously denied since? This shrewd auxiliary to his argument is a specimen of a general habit he has in his books of stealing credence by pretending to have got his information directly from the persons of whom he writes. Thus he preludes his whole account of the O. C. with the following racy notification :

I have been spending a few days at Oneida Creek, the chief seat of the three societies founded by Noyes — Oneida, Wallingford, and Brooklyn — as the guest of Brother Noyes. I have lived in his family ; had a good deal of talk with him ; had access to his books and papers, even those of a private nature ; had many conversations with the brothers and sisters whom he has gathered into order, both in his presence and

apart from him ; had leave from him to copy such of the Family papers as I pleased. The account which follows of this extraordinary body of men has been written fresh from their own mouths, and from my own observation, on the spot which it describes.—*New America*, Vol. II. p. 209.

So all the way through, Dixon throws in as often as he finds a chance, such confidentialities as these—"Brother Noyes said to me this morning," "as Noyes tells me," "says Noyes," "Brother Hamilton assures me," etc. etc.; which phrases are generally connected with matter which "Brother Noyes" and "Brother Hamilton" wholly repudiate. The best way to expose the real character of this habit of Dixon, will be to show, as I easily can, that the general prelude just quoted is mainly a cunning piece of clap-trap.

The reader will observe that he says nothing in that prelude of any other sources of information than those he found fresh at Oneida ; nor does he refer to any other elsewhere in his books. But the truth is that he had other sources from which he drew a great deal more than he drew from our lips.

DIXON'S CRAMMING.

He had studied his subject, or as the students say, had "*crammed*," before he came to the Community. This he told me himself. The way he first became acquainted with the O. C. was this :

Some time after the establishment of the Community at Oneida (probably between the years 1852 and 1855), a traveling agent of the British Museum, whose business was to collect books and other articles, called at the branch family of O. C. then remaining at Putney, Vt. and obtained a set of our publications. These were deposited in the British Museum, where Dixon found and read them.

When he visited us in August, 1866, I was surprised to find that he was familiar in a loose way with many of our doctrines and much of our history. In fact he could tell me of some things that I had forgotten, of some that I could not recall even with his help, and of some that I knew were not true.

The very prelude I have criticised has a small but sure earmark which testifies of this previous cramming. Dixon speaks

of "the *three* societies founded by Noyes; Oneida, Wallingford and Brooklyn." Now there are but few of our habitual readers who need to be told that we have no society in Brooklyn, and had none when Dixon was here. We had a family there sixteen years ago, and published papers and books there. Dixon looked into these papers and books at the British Museum, and imagined that we still had a society where they were dated. This significant blunder is repeated afterwards (p. 218), showing that the impression which he got from the Brooklyn publications stuck to him in spite of his fresh communications with us, in which nothing was said about Brooklyn.

Of course, a mere topical blunder of this kind is of small account by itself; but the careless cramming of which it is the sign, led to a multitude of serious misrepresentations, which I shall by and by expose. For the present I will exhibit only one of them, but a gross one, and remarkable from the fact that Dixon not only did not get it "fresh from our lips," as he pretends in his prelude, but actually persisted in it in spite of contradictions which he got "fresh from our lips."

THE DEVIL'S DOINGS AT PUTNEY.

In the course of our conversation at Oneida, Dixon inquired about a certain scandalous defection, which, as he alleged, took place in our Community family during its infant experience at Putney. I stared and scratched my head in vain attempts to make out what he was driving at. He insisted, and undertook to awaken my memory by quoting something that I had said and printed of this sort — "*Shall I turn back, because offenses must come?*" I had not the faintest remembrance of any such passage, and I *knew* and assured him that no such defection as he imagined had ever taken place. So we had to drop the matter.

A few months after, *New America* came out, and in it, to our increased surprise and mystification, we found the following detailed account of what never took place:

Noyes admits that the Devil found a way into the second Eden as into the first; and that, in Putney as in Paradise, the Evil One worked his evil will through woman. When the moral disorder in his little Paradise could be no longer hidden, he became very angry and very sad. How was he to

bear this cross? A sudden change from legal restraints to gospel liberties, must needs be a trial to the lusts of man. But how could he make distinctions in the work of God? God had given to man his passions, appetites and powers. These powers and appetites are free. Desire has its use and faculty in the heavenly system; and when the soul is free, all use implies the peril of abuse. Must, then, the Saints come under bonds? He could not see it. Aware that many of his people had disgraced the profession of Holiness, he still said to himself, in the words of St. Paul, "Must I go back because offences come?" [The compositor can not find this in St. Paul's writings.] To go back was for him to tear up his Bible and lay down his work. Such a return was beyond his desire, and beyond his power: so he labored on with his people, curbing the unruly, guiding the careless, and expelling the impenitent. As he put the case to himself:—If a man were moving from one town to another, he could not hope to do it without moil and dirt; how then could he expect to change his place of toil from earth to heaven without suffering damage by the way? Waste is incident to change. His people were unprepared for so sharp a trial; and the quarrels which had come upon them, scandalizing Windham County, and scattering many of the Saints, were laid by him to the account of those as yet unused to the art of living under grace. [*New America*, Vol. II. p. 241, Eng. Ed.]

We printed this passage in the CIRCULAR, March 11, 1867, and I appended the following foot-note:

What Dixon refers to in this whole paragraph I have not the least idea: and so I told him when he spoke in this way.—J. H. N.

This same story of internal corruption and defection at Putney is echoed in Chambers' Encyclopedia, and in the late American rehash of Dixon.

HOW THE STORY ORIGINATED.

After such a fiction has traveled so long and gone so far, one would hardly expect to find out where it started from; but I had the luck sometime ago, in looking over the old files of our papers, to light upon the very article which, undoubtedly, was the cause of Dixon's mistake. In the *Perfectionist*, published at Putney Feb. 1, 1844, there is a discourse in which occurs the very question remembered by Dixon—"Must [we] turn back, because offenses must come?"—and the very illustration of moving from one place to another, which he puts into

my mouth in the passage quoted from *New America*; so that it is quite certain that his representation of the dreadful time we had with the Devil in our Putney Eden was founded on this article, to which he had access in the British Museum.

In order to comprehend the nature of his mistake and of my puzzle over it, the reader only needs to be informed that the article in question does not refer at all to our Community family at Putney, but was a homily on the state of the whole body of Perfectionists scattered about the country; and the disorders which it comments upon were those of which Dixon gives accounts in his stories about Brimfield, Rondout, and the New York Perfectionists, — with which we had no connection except as reprovers. The Putney church, at the time that article was published (1844), had not become a Community. The members lived in separate families; and walked in all the ordinances of common society blameless. Our present mode of social life was not entered upon nor in any way attempted or anticipated till May, 1846; and no such lapse into disorder and quarreling as Dixon represents, ever took place in the Community family.

The simple truth is that Dixon, in his cramming at the British Museum, unluckily swallowed a gross misunderstanding, referring an article to the Community family which was written two years before there was any such family; and when he was at Oneida he undertook to make me sanction that misunderstanding; but I steadily refused, and utterly denied all knowledge of the facts he mentioned; and yet in spite of that denial "fresh from my own lips," he published his misunderstanding; which I have at this late day, by great good luck, traced to its source and annihilated.

The letter of introduction which Mr. Dixon brought, is worth citing here in confirmation of what I have said about his previous cramming. It shows that he told others as well as myself that he knew all about us before he left England. Here is the letter:

New York, Aug. 10, 1866.

To J. H. Noyes,

Dear Sir: — The bearer, Mr. Hepworth Dixon, Editor of *The Athenæum*, has come from London expressly to study

our people. He wishes especially to know *your* people, *having long been familiar with your writings*. I commend him to your confidence and hospitality.

Yours,
HORACE GREELEY.

HOW LONG DIXON WAS AT ONEIDA.

It is probable that Dixon had the *programme* of his account of us fully made out before he came to this country; and that his visit to the Community was mainly useful to him in the way of putting a varnish of freshness on the material which he got by "scoring" our writings in the British Museum. Certainly his visit here did not amount to much. He says in his prelude, with politic indefiniteness, "I have been spending a *few days* at Oneida Creek as a guest of Brother Noyes. I have lived in his family," &c. &c.; which might naturally be taken as meaning a visit of a week or more. By referring to our journals and consulting the best memories we have among us, I find that he was here and here-about, forty-three hours, or somewhat less than two days—hardly long enough to warrant the use of the plural *few*. He came on Wednesday, Aug. 16, 1866, at about 4 o'clock P. M. and left on Friday at 11 A. M. In the course of the intervening time he took an excursion to the Indian settlement, a mile east of us, which must have occupied several hours; and attended a musical concert of an hour or more. He had a bad headache a part of the time (owing to the lack of stimulants in our diet), which must have caused a further loss of some hours. One of the evenings he spent in lecturing to the family on the "Holy Land." Deducting seven hours for these diversions and sixteen hours for two nights' sleep, we have a remainder of twenty hours, which may be supposed to have been devoted to conversation and the pursuit of knowledge among us; though much even of this time must have been spent in writing out notes and talking on indifferent subjects. Let the reader compare this "beggarly account" of time with the large pretensions of intimacy with us in the prelude, and judge whether I am too severe in calling that passage a piece of clap-trap.

SMALL BLUNDERS.

Now let us see what sort of use Dixon made of his time, short as it was. We have seen that he blundered badly in

his cramming at the British Museum ; and we shall find that he misunderstood us just as badly in the conversations at Oneida. Take for examples the following list of blunders in names, places, dates and other small matters of fact :

1. In his description of my personal appearance and career, Dixon says—"He has been in turn a graduate of Dartmouth College *in Connecticut*, a law clerk *in Putney, Vermont*," etc., which short sentence to be correct should be changed to this: "He has been in turn a graduate of Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, a law clerk in Chesterfield, New Hampshire," etc. Dixon could not have got this jumble from our publications, for they state such things correctly. He must have taken false notes of what he heard from us. And such blunders, trivial as they are, show his carelessness, and go far to destroy the credit of all the notes he made at Oneida.

2. Speaking of our Mansion House, Dixon says: "The builder of this pile is James Hamilton, once a New England farmer, carpenter, what not, as a New Englander is apt to be." The facts here aimed at, but missed, are these: the name of our architect is Erastus H. Hamilton (no James Hamilton ever having been heard of in the Community); he was never a farmer, or a "what not," and never in New England after ten years of age, till he joined the Community; he was brought up in Syracuse, N. Y. his only profession being that of a carpenter and architect.

3. Dixon describes his guide at O. C. as "Brother Bolls, a gentlemen who, for twenty years, has been a Baptist preacher in Massachusetts." This gentleman's name was *Bolles*; he had been a *Methodist* preacher ten years in Connecticut, five or six in Massachusetts, and four in Iowa, whence he came to the Community.

4. Dixon says that "the Bible newspaper, called the CIRCULAR, is edited and published by a son of Noyes in New York city." The CIRCULAR was never published in New York city, and was never edited by my son. When Dixon was here it was published at Wallingford and was edited by Alfred Barron. T. R. Noyes was then in New York city, not editing the paper, but superintending our commercial affairs. Hence probably the jumble.

5. Dixon makes a very prominent figure of our great trap-maker, Mr. Sewell Newhouse, introducing him as a "*Canadian trapper*," who, fortunately for us, joined the Community in its early days, and by his skill in trap-making "proved in the end to be the actual founder of its fortunes." As Mr. Newhouse was born in Vermont and has always lived in New England and New York, we have never been able to guess why Dixon insisted on calling him a "*Canadian trapper*." Possibly national vanity in some way led to the mistake, as it would be a feather in John Bull's cap to be able to say that one of his subjects was the founder of the Community fortune. We incline, however, to the opinion that Dixon misunderstood some talk he heard in the Community about trapping in Canada. He says (p. 253)—"A party of the Saints went up into Canada last fall *under Newhouse*, to trap beaver; they had five weeks of very hard life, and came back from the forests strong and well." It is true that such an excursion took place, *but Newhouse was not in the party*; and if he had been, it is difficult to see how Dixon should have jumped from that fact to calling him a "*Canadian trapper*." But these "double-and-twisted" blunders confound all conjecture.

I will now exhibit one or two specimens of more serious misrepresentations, evidently attributable to something worse than mere haste or carelessness in reporting things seen and heard at Oneida.

"BROTHER HAMILTON'S" OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. Hamilton, our architect, is not only fitted out in Dixon's book with a new name, residence and profession, but is made responsible for several ridiculous remarks which he never made. Thus Dixon says:

Being master of the house, so to speak, he is also builder of the house; though he claims that every thing in it, from the position of a fire-place to the furnishing of a library, is the result of a special sign from heaven.

And again:

At first thought, there seems to be something comic in the fact of a kingdom of heaven being dependent for its daily bread on the sale of traps. As I walked through the forges with Brother Hamilton, I could not help saying that such work seemed rather strange for a colony of Saints. He answered,

with a very grave face, that the Earth is lying under a curse, that vermin are a consequence of that curse, that the Saints have to make war upon them and destroy them—whence the perfect legitimacy of their trade in traps!

In our first notice of *New America* I said in a foot-note referring to the first of these passages:

We venture to say, without inquiring of Mr. Hamilton, that this imputation of low credulity is without any fair foundation. It is not like him. Those most familiar with him never heard him say any such thing.

Mr. Hamilton soon after sent me the following note:

You were right in denying that there was any fair foundation for the legend that "the builder of the house claimed that everything in it, from the position of a fire-place to the furnishing of a library, is the result of a special sign from heaven." I am at a loss to imagine upon what he could base so ridiculous a story. I *could not* have made the literal statement he reports, for the house contains not a single "fire-place," and "the builder" did not furnish the library. So also of that other story—"the earth lying under a curse"—"vermin a consequence"—"the saints making war upon them with steel traps," &c. He puts that into my mouth, but I have no memory of it. Dixon was very free, companionable, and given to jokes; and a *joke* like the above may have been attempted in the course of his free conversations with us; or he may have fallen in with the "Canadian Trapper," who is something of a *quiz*, and got him and "James Hamilton" mixed. I surmise that Dixon is somewhat possessed by the caste feeling of the English upper class, which renders him not over-ready to do justice to mechanics, farmers and "what-not." But he is a charming writer, and I mean to improve by his criticisms.

SLANG TITLES.

Dixon's picture of life at Oneida is garnished throughout with a set of special titles. I am called "*The Prophet*;" the members collectively are called "*The Saints*;" individuals are always introduced with the fraternal epithets common in certain low sects; as, "Brother Noyes," "Brother Hamilton," "Sister Alice," &c. These vulgarities, of course, were supposed by Dixon's readers to have come, with the rest of his representations, "fresh from our lips." He doubtless intended that they should be thus taken. Here are the remarks made on this matter in my first notice of *New America*:

If Mr. Dixon were before the Community for criticism, and I were called upon to say my say about him in our sincere way, I should have to find some fault with the *animus* of his story about us. In the first place there is an unpleasant and unnecessary amount of caricature in his picture. He need not have called our people *saints* and me their *Prophet* so often or at all. He did not hear those words among us or among our neighbors. We do not go by any such names. The word *saint* was used among the early Perfectionists, but our taste long ago discarded it. I told him distinctly I was known in the Community as Mr. Noyes, and occasionally as Father Noyes; but had no official name. He reported the Mormons and Shakers by their accepted titles—"president," "apostles," "elders," "saints," &c. Why not leave us to our chosen simplicity? We do not even call each other "brother" and "sister," as he makes free to do. His readers will inevitably suppose that we use the slang titles as he uses them. There was no need of such an imputation on our good taste, unless the "rules of art" and due reference to the prejudices of his audience, required him to make us seem a little more foolish and fanatical than we really are. The words "Saints" and "Prophet" are really no more descriptive of our relations to the world and to each other, than they would be in the case of Henry Ward Beecher and his congregation.

Dixon in his rejoinder thus disposed of my criticism of these fictitious titles:

Mr. Noyes remarks that I speak of him as the "prophet," and his people as "saints,"—the first a word which they do not use, the second a word which they formerly used, and have now discarded. "I told him distinctly that I was known in the Community as Mr. Noyes, and occasionally as Father Noyes; but had no official name." The matter is not important; and Mr. Noyes does not pretend that it is so. If I have hurt his feelings by the use of an obnoxious word, I am very sorry. I have only to say in answer, that I caught these names from my New England friends, and used them for distinction's sake, and not with any view to "caricaturing" this peculiar people. In the later editions of *New America*, the word "prophet" had been already substituted in the text by the word "preacher."—*London Athenæum*, March, 1867.

To which I again answered as follows:

Mr. Dixon's weak point is his answer to my complaint about his use of the slang appellatives, "prophet" and "saints." He tries to protect it by calling it "not important," and asks me to consent to this view, by saying that I "do not

pretend that it is so." But he should remember that I put this complaint as an index of a general criticism. I am glad that he acknowledges his wrong in this matter, and that he has made changes in his later editions (though I see they were not made in our copy of the *third* edition). But, as I consider this particular fault an indication of the *animus* with which he treated us, and have characterized that *animus* as a *tendency to caricature*, I can not regard it as unimportant, though I can tolerate it with good nature.

The reader must not fail to notice here another instance of Dixon's persistence in a foregone purpose of misrepresentation after getting an explicit correction "fresh from our mouths." He confesses that he did not hear any thing about "the prophet" and "the saints" among us, but "*caught these names from his New England friends.*" Nevertheless he cross-questioned me with the vehemence and perseverance of a lawyer, as to what title I was addressed by in the Community, evidently hoping to get from me something that would sanction the slang that he "caught from his New England friends." I told him again and again that I was generally called Mr. Noyes ; occasionally Father Noyes ; but had no official or ecclesiastical title. Yet he went on with his book, as he had at that time doubtless begun it, calling me "the prophet" as often as he could, till he became ashamed of the trick himself, and dropped it in his later editions. But he never dropped his sneering talk about "the saints" and "Brother Hamilton" and "sister Alice," though these titles were as fictitious as that which he gave me, and were caught, with that, from his "New England friends," and not from us.*

THE REPEATER'S WORK.

Let us now see what Dixon's copyists have done to extend the circulation of this mass of blunders and fiction.

Chambers' Encyclopedia follows Dixon in his geographical novelties, representing me as a "law clerk in Putney, Vermont," and placing Dartmouth College "in Connecticut." Here also we find the "Canadian Trapper" in all his glory. The American copyist, often referred to, tells the same story as Dixon about "James Hamilton," how he was "formerly a

* The name "*Oneida Creek*," which Dixon foists upon our location, is also a fictitious title, not much to our fancy, and never used by us or our neighbors.

farmer" and "a New England man," and how "he claims that his plans are the result of inspiration," and "that every detail of the building, from the placing of a rafter to the arrangement of the principal hall, is the result of a direct communication from heaven." This writer also magnifies the achievements of the "Canadian Trapper" in the style and very nearly in the words of Dixon. And all this, be it remembered, is served up in chapters which profess to give an account of *what the author himself saw and heard at Oneida*, thus doubling on Dixon's false pretensions. The only original item of information added in relation to the "Canadian Trapper" and his business, is, that the trap which he invented, and to which we are said to have owed our rescue from financial failure, is "*a patented article*" — which also is a falsehood. This American book also is garnished throughout with the slang titles invented by Dixon, gossiping about "Brother Newhouse" and "Brother Pitt," and taking pains to lug into every paragraph something about "the Saints;" thus aping Dixon at this late day in sneers which he had the grace to be ashamed of and apologize for years ago in the *London Athenæum*.

SENSATIONALISM.

One of our people who waits on visitors reports that a certain small editor, who has taken Brick Pomeroy for his *beau idéal*, was at the Community last summer, and among other things sententiously observed: "The way to make a taking paper is to get plenty of exciting items. I am going to make my paper take; and if exciting things don't happen, *I'll make them happen!*" That was an outburst of genuine sensationalism.

It would be a great mistake to imagine that Dixon and his copyists bear any malice toward us, or that their object is to break us down for any reason, public or private. About half of the time they give us an excellent character, and sometimes they go out of their way to say good things about us which they need not have said if their object were really to abuse us. And, although they pelt us with rotten things the other half of the time, the balance of this self-contradicting treatment is, on the whole, in our favor, and our reputation

steadily prospers under it. Their objective point is solely to make taking books, and by that means to make money; and with this in view they are as ready to bless as to curse. Any thing that is exciting, good or bad, for us or against us, they shovel in with equal enthusiasm. And if exciting things do not happen in sufficient quantities, they "make them happen." That is the art and mystery of sensationalism.

PURE FICTION.

I have given examples of carelessness and worse than carelessness in Dixon's renderings of our writings on the one hand, and of our conversations on the other. I will now give an example of misrepresentation which has for its basis neither our writings nor our conversations, but is wholly fictitious. The thing wanted for effect "did not happen," nor any thing like it; so Dixon "made it happen."

In his book on *Spiritual Wives* he has a chapter about us under the heading, "The Pauline Church." He took a fancy to give us this title, not because he ever heard us or any body else use it, but because he had on hand a sensational dissertation on Paul's sexual ideas and practices, which he wished to tack on to his account of us. The following extracts from this chapter will give the reader an idea of the Pauline theory which he invented for our benefit.

From Dixon's *Spiritual Wives*, Vol. II. p. 57.

All the members of the Pauline Church, and nearly all the advocates of Spiritual wifehood, pretend to find some sanction for their doctrine in the teaching and the practice of St. Paul. They say St. Paul had felt that mystic companionship of male and female in the Lord which Lucena Umphreville made known to the Saints of New York, which Father Noyes has carried out in his Bible Families at Wallingford and Oneida Creek, and which Warren Chase describes as the only bond uniting a spiritual husband to a spiritual wife.

Paul, it is commonly said, was not a married man; not married, that is, in the carnal sense before the law; yet he would seem, from his own epistle to the saints at Corinth, to have been accompanied on his journey by a woman who was a daily helper in his work. In terms which no one has yet been able to explain away, and which, since all our churches are drawing more upon the Pauline writings, they hold that men should try to understand, St. Paul affirmed his right to the

fellowship of this female partner against those cynics and scorers in the infant church who made his personal conduct matter of reproach. What was this woman's relation to St. Paul? Was she his wife? Was she one who stood to him in the place of a wife? Was she as a sister only? The Greek word (1. Cor. IX. 5) by which the apostle names her — *gyniaka* — means either wife or woman, like the French word *femme*, and the German word *frau*. From the earliest times in which critics wrote, men have been divided in opinion as to the sense in which the term *adelphē gyniaka* was used by Paul. Clement, of Alexandria, seems to have assumed that Paul would not have taken a female companion with him on his travels, unless she had been his wife. Tertullian, on the other hand, asserts that the woman who went about with him was not his wife, but a holy sister, who traveled with him from place to place, doing just that kind of work in the early Church which only a woman can effect. Which is the truth?

* * * The Pauline churches of Massachusetts and New York have found an easy way through what has proved so hard a path to scholars in Europe and Asia. They pretend that St. Paul lived with the woman who traveled with him, in grace, and not in law; in a word, that he was to her a spiritual husband, that she was to him a spiritual wife.

* * * The Saints of New York find the same sort of Spiritual love between men and women in the Agapæ, those Feasts of Love which are so frequently mentioned both by friends and enemies of the early Church.

Hardly any subject connected with the planting of Christianity is obscured by darker clouds than the origin and history of the Agapæ; yet enough, they urge, is known to prove that the Feasts of Love were the results of a new sympathy having been introduced by the Church into the relations of sex and sex.

* * * An Essenic spirit displayed itself in every act of the infant Church; the Apostles taking that counsel of our Lord to a rich man tempted by his wealth, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven," as a rule for all. In their eyes, private wealth was not only a snare to the soul — such as love, rank, beauty, power, health, in fact any earthly good, might become in its abuse — but a thing stolen from God, and consequently accursed in itself, and incompatible with a holy life. Therefore, say the brethren of Mount Lebanon, and the Bible families of Oneida Creek, the Apostles put it down. Did they also meddle with the relations of man and wife? The American saints say boldly, yes; they intro-

duced, in their Agapæ, that spiritual wedlock which is now being revived in the Christian Church.

At the first appearance of *Spiritual Wives*, I printed the chapter from which these extracts are taken, and appended the following

DISCLAIMER.

From *The Circular*, Feb. 24, 1868.

Truth compels me to say that in the above discourse, Dixon is simply ventilating a theory of his own. No such interpretations and reasonings, either on Paul's "woman," or on the "Agapæ," can be found in our writings; and I venture to say they were never heard of before among Perfectionists or the Oneida Communists.

And here I take occasion to avow, that we do *not* believe that Paul or any of the apostles, either gave or took any liberties contrary to the laws of marriage, in their practical life before the Second Coming. They had the theory of Christ that in the resurrection there is to be no marriage; and Paul evidently discussed that theory among the wise, and on account of it refrained from marriage, and advised others to do so. But it was a *doctrine for the future*, and Paul resisted in every way, by word and deed, all attempts to realize it by transgressing the laws of marriage, during the visible pilgrimage of the Church.

We have never sought justification for our own course, from Paul's "leading about a woman," for we never believed that he did lead about any woman. He asked a question about this matter—"Have we not power to lead about a wife or a sister?"—but he said afterward in the same chapter, "I have used none of these things;" and in another part of the same epistle, he distinctly professed to lead a life of entire continence. (See 1 Cor. 7: 1-9). We believe he was an honest man, and have no idea that he falsified his professions, or did things which needed to be covered up in obscure hints.

Neither have we ever imagined that the *Agapæ* were meetings for sexual liberties, or ever appealed to them for justification. It is and always has been plain to us, that the strict orders of Christ and his lieutenants, for the time between his first coming and his second, were, to avoid by all means fornication; and that fornication in those orders meant illegal sexual intercourse. We believe the church, as a whole, understood and obeyed these orders; and that all attempts to transgress them were vigorously arrested and suppressed. We renounce all advantage from suspicions and insinuations that the primitive disciples practiced sexual communism in their secret meetings.

Our social system stands on very different ground from that brought to view in Dixon's chapter, as our readers are well aware. If it did not, we should not deserve the good name of the "Pauline Church."

COMMUNISM OPPOSED TO SPIRITUAL WIFERY.

So much I said years ago, chiefly with a view to vindicating Paul and the Primitive Church from the abominable insinuations which Dixon himself made against them, while pretending to report our views. I will now add, in justice to the Oneida Community, that this attempt of Dixon to identify us with the *Spiritual Wife* theory, which is the subject of his book, is utterly incongruous not only with our whole history, but even with his own account of us. — ~~He represents our system elsewhere correctly as Social Communism.~~ What place is there in Social Communism for spiritual wives, any more than for legal wives? We do not believe in ownership of persons at all, either by spiritual claim or legal claim. We give no quarter to the "marriage spirit," or to "special love," or to any other fashion of idolatry and appropriation that takes folks out of the family circle of heaven and dedicates them to one another. How much should we gain for Social Communism by merely shifting from legal marriage to spiritual marriage? Such a change would only make matters worse, in proportion as spiritual ties are stronger than legal. Swedenborgians believe in eternal monogamy; Spiritualists believe in mating by affinity; and fanatics generally, as Dixon's examples show, adopt one form or another of spiritual dualism, involving more sentimentalism and in the end worse slavery than common marriage. But the Oneida Community instead of training in any of these companies, has always fought them, and maintained that the only true foundation is that which Jesus Christ laid when he said, that in the good time coming there will be no marriage at all.

MANUSCRIPT SENT TO DIXON.

We have seen that the account of us which Dixon professes to have written "fresh from our own mouths," came, partly, from his cramming at the British Museum, partly, from his gossip with his "New England friends," and partly from his

own invention. To complete our view of his method of making his books, I will now advert to a fourth resource, which he obtained after his visit to us; and will give an example of the use he made of it.

After Dixon's return to England, but before the publication of *New America*, he wrote me a letter, inviting me to give him what information I could about the origin of the theory of "Spiritual Marriage" in this country. In the ensuing spring I sent him a manuscript of some eighty pages of closely written letter-paper, with the following introduction:

Wallingford, March, 1867.

TO WILLIAM HEPWORTH DIXON,

Dear Sir: On the receipt of your letter of inquiry as to the origin of Spiritual Wifehood in this country, I bethought me of some of the old Perfectionists at the Community who might have stories to tell that would throw light on that subject, and I went immediately to Oneida and commenced an examination of "persons and papers." The brethren told their experience freely, and I soon had a large package of narratives. The inquest proved to be so interesting to me and to the Community, that it lured and led me on, till it was too late to send any thing to you for your book "New America." So I settled down to the investigation more leisurely, enlarged my plan, and made a winter's job of it. And here you have the result.

I hardly know why I send you this big budget. It is too late, and there is too much of it, for the object you had in view in writing to me. It may be of no use to you for any future publication. Yet I think much of it will be interesting to you. I send it, perhaps, partly to fulfil my promise, and partly in hope that some of it may find its way into literature and history. "I cast my bread upon the waters."

* * * * *

J. H. N.

I violate no confidence in disclosing the fact that I sent Dixon the manuscript above referred to: nor should I violate any, if I should publish it entire: for I notified him in the letter which accompanied it, that I had reserved a copy, and might sometime publish it, if he did not make use of it, or if his use of it did not suit me.

That manuscript furnished a large part of the material out of which the second volume of Dixon's book on *Spiritual Wives* was compiled. There are 292 pages in that volume

(in the English edition); of these there are 15 pages on the Pauline Church and the "Agapæ" and 66 pages of concluding speculations, which are probably original. Then there are 86 pages of George Cragin's "Story of a Life," taken from the CIRCULAR without much alteration. The remaining 125 pages consist of historical materials obtained from my manuscript, worked over and badly distorted, to make them sensational.

I do not intend to publish that manuscript at present; but I must correct one misrepresentation that was made from it; and for that reason I have given this account of it.

FALSE HISTORY OF THE ORIGIN OF MALE CONTINENCE.

The example of Dixon's misuse of my manuscript to which I call attention, is his report of the way I was led to the theory of Male Continence. This is a point of some importance, at least to me; and as I find that Dixon's copyists, misled by him, are making false history about it as fast as they can, I will take this occasion to give my account of the matter.

First we will look at Dixon's story, which is as follows:

* * * "Dale Owen wrote a book called *Moral Physiology*, in which he proposed a new theory for limiting the number of mouths to be fed. It was a daring book, and many pious people denounced it as the spawn of hell; but the abuse of men who were known for their old fashioned virtues only helped it into wider notice. More than by any other class, it is said to have been read and pondered by the clergy. I have reason to think it suggested the vagaries of the Rev. Theophilus Gates; and I happen to know that it gave the first hint of his system to Father Noyes."—*Spiritual Wives*, II. 214.

The American book that stole 113 pages of its thunder from Dixon, copies the above paragraph with characteristic variations, and recasts the last clause more sharply thus:

"Owen has the discredit of having suggested to Father Noyes his dirty practice of Male Continence."

Now let us see the original passage in my manuscript, from which these oracles got their information. Here it is:

"Owen published a book entitled *Moral Physiology*, the object of which was to propose a method of limiting propagation; viz., by the practice of withdrawing immediately before the emission of the semen. This book had a great circulation. I read it in 1837, and *have reason to believe that it had*

some agency in turning my attention to the studies which led to our doctrine of Male Continence."

What is the fair meaning of these last words in italics? Did they authorize Dixon to say that Owen's book gave me the first hint of our "system?" or his copyists to say that Owen suggested to me the practice of Male Continence? Fortunately I have the means of showing what my words mean, by showing exactly what impression Owen's book made on me when I first read it, as above stated, in 1837. I reviewed "Moral Physiology" in the *Witness*, Sept. 23, 1837, and gave my opinion of it as follows:

"The *last* part of the book I can not commend, because it shamelessly advocates the most atrocious robbery of which man can be guilty; a robbery for which God slew Onan, and for which I doubt not he will in due time destroy all who practice and commend it. Yet the pure in heart, those who are clad with the armor of *light*, need not fear to read the book, for it contains its own antidote, inasmuch as it most beautifully portrays and inculcates that fearless simplicity which is the very essence of genuine modesty, and a most perfect preventive of the crime which the book was designed to propagate. I may say this is one of the best and the worst books I ever read. It is a dish of poison, garnished with the most wholesome viands. I advise the reader to take the garnishing as lawful spoil, and leave the poison for those who distilled it. Let no man say that in these remarks I commend infidelity. On the contrary, I counsel believers to carry the war against infidelity into the very center of its camp, by fearlessly facing its falsehoods and making spoil of its truths."

Our "system," as every body knows, is, in its essential feature, the exact opposite of Owen's. Ours is Male Continence; his is Male Incontinence *plus* Evasion. If I got my "first hint" from his book, the "system" that resulted, as well as the above review of the book, shows that the hinting must have been "by contraries," just as atheism suggests faith. What I meant, and all that I meant, in what I wrote to Dixon, was that Owen's book probably helped to *turn my attention to the study of the sexual question*; and this is all there is in the language I used. I was reading Shaker books also in 1837, and they had quite as much influence on my studies afterwards as "Moral Physiology." In fact, the "system" of Male Conti-

nence has more real affinity with Shakerism than with Owenism. It is based on self-control, as Shakerism is based on self-denial; while Owenism is the usual self-indulgence evading its natural consequences.

THE TRUE STORY.

And now, to prevent mistakes and misrepresentations hereafter, it is time that ~~I should tell how I did get my first~~ hint of Male Continence. This is a story which I have never before told in print. Whatever may be thought of it, I hope it may be interesting enough to supplant the falsehoods of Dixon and his copyists.

(I was married in 1838, and lived in the usual routine of matrimony till 1846. It was during this period of eight years that I studied the subject of sexual intercourse in connection with my experience, and discovered the principle of Male Continence. And the discovery issued from very sorrowful experience. In the course of six years, my wife went through the agonies of five births. Four of them were premature. Only one child lived. This experience under God was what directed my studies and kept me studying. After our last disappointment I told my wife that I would never again expose her to such fruitless suffering. I made up my mind to live apart from her, rather than break this vow. This was the situation in the summer of 1844. At that time I conceived the idea that the sexual organs have a social function which is distinct from the propagative function; and that these functions may be separated practically. I experimented on this idea, and found that the self-control which it required was not difficult; also that my enjoyment was increased; also that my wife's experience was very satisfactory, as it had never been before; also that we had escaped the horrors and the fear of involuntary propagation. This was a great deliverance. It made a happy household. I communicated my discovery to Mr. Cragin. His experience and that of his household was the same. In the course of the next two years I studied all the essential details and bearings of the discovery. In 1846 we commenced Community life. In 1848 I published the theory of Male Continence.) This is the only true account of the origin of that theory.

GOOD POINTS.

Though I may seem to have dealt harshly with Mr. Dixon in the preceding criticisms, I assure the reader that I have always cherished kindly feelings toward him, and have none other now. At the first appearance of *New America* I said in my review of it—“The *spirit* of the book is good—comparatively. Its treatment of us is better than we should have got from popular writers in this country. Dixon is a good-natured, jolly Englishman. I do not think he would wish to see us persecuted or lacking fair play. His chapter on toleration at the end of his account of the Mormons, is noble.” I still acknowledge all this and more. He has spread far and wide some real knowledge of us ; mixed, it is true, with many falsehoods ; but still valuable knowledge ; so that since his report went forth we can at least say, as Paul said of the Primitive Church, that our “faith is spoken of [in some vague way] throughout the whole world.” Dixon’s personal treatment of us, both during his visit and in correspondence and intercourse afterward, was entirely courteous and honorable. My brother and his companion were indebted to him for many valuable attentions during their sojourn in London in 1867. In fact, I had long ago condoned and forgotten all the faults of his books.

~~Why then do I now rake open the buried past? For the reason which I gave at the beginning of this criticism—~~*Dixon’s blunders and fictions will not stay buried.* They have reappeared in Chambers’ Encyclopedia, a grave book of permanent reference which is likely to furnish materials for history in all time to come ; they have reappeared in an American book which is quite destitute of Dixon’s good nature and occasional fairness ; they are likely to reappear, like Canada thistles, everywhere, and crop after crop, *ad infinitum*. Therefore I must do my best, with scythe and fire, to destroy them, at least in the space immediately around our premises ; and I must not be hindered by my good feelings towards the man who set them growing and flying.

And after all, so far as blame is concerned, I think better of Dixon than of his copyists. He only pretended to sketch hasty travel-pictures, the natural function of which is to make a

momentary sensation and then disappear. But the transfer of such pictures to a work claiming to be a permanent repository of historical verities, like Chambers' Encyclopedia, and that without any attempt to verify them or ascertain whether the subjects of them had anything to say, is an act of very different morality. And still worse is the deed of the man on this side of the water, who copied those pictures unchanged into what he calls "a brave and pure book, written in the interests of morality," though he might have found our corrections and disclaimers of them in almost any public library, and though he had the opportunity of his own personal visit to the O. C. to make sure that he was not copying slanders. But let the blame be distributed as it may, I must cut up the thistles.

THE AMERICAN COPYIST.

Before closing it is due to the reader that I should give a few particulars about the book which has put Dixon to so poor a use in this country. It may be identified by the fact that on its title page it professes to be the work of "Dr. John B. Ellis, Author of Sights and Secrets of the National Capital, etc. etc." Its posters loftily remark that this author "is too well known to the American people to require any encomium at our hand beyond the announcement of his name," etc. etc. But we found, on inquiry in New York, that no such man as Dr. John B. Ellis is known in literary circles, and that the actual author of this "brave" book is a literary gentleman living in the upper part of the city, who does not wish to have his name mentioned in connection with it. He was employed to get it up by a publishing house that got the idea of it some years ago from a sensational story about the O. C. in a Philadelphia paper, and that confessedly had no object in view but to make money by it.

The matter of the book may be analyzed as follows: The Preface and Table of Contents occupy 30 pages; then follow 320 pages devoted to the Oneida Community; then 28 pages on Berlin Heights; 20 pages on Modern Times; 21 pages on Spiritualism; 67 pages on Free Love and Free Divorce in general society; and an appendix of 4 pages on

the Woman Suffrage party ; making in all (with the help of blank leaves), 502 pages to the volume, and giving about two thirds of whole to the O. C.

All the latter part of the book is of course only a supplement to the main discourse about us ; and a very incoherent supplement too, for it is well known that the socialism of the O. C. has nothing in common with the Free Love of the Spiritualists at Berlin Heights, Modern Times, or in general society. All I need to say about this supplementary part is, that the author got his historical theory and his main facts in relation to Free Love among Spiritualists, from our *History of American Socialisms*, and from material which we contributed to Hepworth Dixon's work on *Spiritual Wives*.

The 320 pages devoted to the O. C. were worked up in the following manner :

The first 50 pages were taken bodily (with slight verbal alterations) from Dixon's *New America* and *Spiritual Wives*. Being without quotation marks, they appear as original writing. There is an occasional reference to Dixon in the foot-notes. Further on we have the whole of the story of Mr. and Mrs. Cragin's experience at Rondout, which was originally written by our Mr. Cragin. This story occupies 63 pages, and is credited to Dixon, though he borrowed it with slight alterations from the CIRCULAR. Then I find, scattered about, not less than 56 pages of matter taken verbatim and directly from our own publications. The remainder of the 320 pages dedicated to the Community, consists chiefly of stories told to the author by the hack-driver who brought him to our place, of what he professes to have seen and heard there, and of his comments and inferences.

The general logic of the book is that which characterizes all kindred productions, viz., — "If I believed as they do, I should be dreadfully licentious ; therefore they are." The perfunctory cursing is also done up in the usual style. The words *filth, lust, foul, terrible, horrid, &c.*, are sprinkled in as liberally as they were in *Frank Leslie's* exhibition of the O. C. On the whole I discover nothing either in the facts or in the moralizing of the book which has not been served

up over and over by Reed, Pomeroy, the virtuous editors of *Day's Doings*, and various other writers for the sensational press. As to the style and spirit of its re-cookery of Dixon, the reader will be able to judge from the many specimens we have given in previous pages.

CONCLUSION.

In this pamphlet I have been dealing with falsehoods in matters of fact, which admitted of short and definite refutations, generally by confronting them with the original statements from which they were derived. But Dixon's books abound in misrepresentations which cannot be disposed of in this summary way. He caricatures our *doctrines* as well as our history, making grotesque pictures of our belief in regard to Salvation from Sin, Christian Faith, the Abolition of Law, the Confession of Christ, the Second Coming, etc., etc. These are themes of complicated thought, on which I have labored carefully many years, and to which the Community has committed itself conscientiously and practically. Dixon exhibits them in his flippant, picturesque way, as though they were the random vagaries of reckless and "roaring" fanatics; and his copyists make his caricatures worse. The only way to refute these misrepresentations in detail, would be to show what we do believe on these subjects. But this would require a volume, instead of a pamphlet. I must content myself with what I have done, asking the reader to judge the theological part of Dixon's work by the specimens I have given from its more superficial portions. I will however warn him in a general way, that Dixon's account of the controversy between us and the Oberlin brethren about Liberty and Holiness is a ludicrous historical jumble, which, so far as it has any foundation in fact, reverses the actual position of the parties; and that his elaborate account of the way in which the principle of "Sympathy" arose in the Community and was substituted for the laws of God and man, is entirely imaginative.

Also I beg all men, for their own sake, not to believe a word of the following statement of our faith and practice in relation to the confession of Christ:

* * * But how, it may be asked, does a man arrive at this stage of grace [salvation from sin?] Nothing (if I understand it) is more easy. You have only to wish it, and the thing is done. Good works are not necessary, prayers are not desirable; nothing serves a man but faith. You stand up in public, by the side of some brother in the Lord, and take upon yourself a profession of Christ. You say, you are freed from the power of sin, and the stain is suddenly washed from your soul. In this American creed, facts would appear to lie in wait for words, and all that is said is apparently also done. "He stood up and confessed Holiness,"—such is the form of announcing that a lamb has been brought into the fold of Noyes.—*New America*, II. p. 227.

Such is *not* the form of introduction to our fold. The whole picture is as strange and ludicrous to the Community as it is to the general reader. In fact, we have no form for the great spiritual act of yielding the heart to eternal life; and nobody among us ever heard of the above mummery, till Dixon invented it.

But time and space would fail me in attempting to note, however briefly, all the misrepresentations of this kind which I should like to correct; and it is best here to bring the present sally against Canada Thistles to a close.