

# THE NEW ERA.

DEVOTED TO THE NEW DISPENSATION, OR THE INAUGURATION OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN UPON EARTH THROUGH THE AID OF SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE.

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WHOLE NO. 118.

## Thoughts of the Age.

The following paper is doubtless well intended, as are all the productions of our friend Potter, which appear in the *Era*. But his method of expressing his views, seems to us somewhat calculated to give a wrong idea, oftentimes, of what he would say. However, every one has his own manner of saying and doing things, and that, perhaps, is the best for him. We cannot help thinking, however, that we should ever aim to be clearly and truly understood—it saves time at least in getting at the absolute truth. As to our friend's notions about Jesus, of which he has often given intimations in our columns, some of our more sensitive friends, who know our own views on that subject, think we ought to express ourselves more fully than we have heretofore done. Well, perhaps we may, by and by, when Bro. Potter gets through. But why not earlier? Simply because our own wisdom does not so say, and we are not so egotistic as to suppose that our readers cannot think for themselves in this matter. When we give our views on any subject, we do it in the way of suggestion merely, and thus in the hope of aiding thought in what seems to us the right direction.

### No Man should be a Christian.

BY A. M. POTTER.

No man should be a Christian.—It is said, that the gates of Basyrane had certain inscriptions on them. The first, "Be bold;" the second, "Be bold, be bold, and evermore be bold;" the third,—"Be not too bold." Thus am I encouraged, and warned.

At first sight this expression, No man should be a Christian, may, to many of the readers of *The New Era*, appear strange; a little reflection, however, must satisfy such, that it assumes strangeness, more by its latitude and longitude, than by any principle involved in it. Had this paper as wide a circulation among the Hindoos and Moslems, as among such as have their very character shaped by ancestral influences, who have ever been hearing the saying, *Every man should be a Christian*, certain it is that the last remark would appear equally strange to the one portion, as does *my heading* to the other.

Again, if a majority in numbers has any virtue in it, toward deciding the right or wrong of my position, then am I *right*, for it will be borne in mind, that the Christian religion is very unpopular with by far the greatest portion of the inhabitants of the world.

Nor am I wrong in saying, no man should be a Christian, because of the general belief in this country, that God has given in the Bible a full, (or so full as is necessary), expression of his will concerning man, as a race, or as an individual. While we as a nation, with great confidence give ourselves to this belief, will any one say that God has any less interest or care, that the Hindoo or Mussulman should know His will, than ourselves? And have those to whom was given that which is esteemed among us as the revelation of God to man had any *faculties* by which God could reveal himself to them alone, and not also to those of other nations, whose welfare must have been equally his concern? And while Christians look with pity, and with a foreboding of evil upon such as have not their Scriptures; yet have not the Hindoos, Chinese, Persians, and others, what is to them as much a revelation of God's will as is ours to us? Nor can I see why God, their Father, may not have so revealed himself to them, if to any; inasmuch as the faculties of body and mind are the same in them as in ourselves. And if the same *time, talent, earnest good will, and desire*, had been bestowed to make their Scriptures harmonious, and to prove them given by "plenary inspiration," the sum of the evidences would be fully as weighty for their Scriptures, as now, in relation to the Hebrew and Christian writings. Nor can I see why we should be more concerned for them, than they for us.

It seems to me that from the *Jew* my subject would meet a full response. Reverse it as regards his religion, and he would meet me as coldly as do some as it is. Therefore when I hear it said, that the Hindoo has within himself *less evidence* that God has favored him, or that the Moslem feels himself a rejected child of God; that God could give and did give to the Hebrews and early Christians, all that earth has ever, and can ever have, of this will; and that the various confessions, of various peoples, in the same thing, viz: that God has in some way spoken to them, are but gross deceptions; I come to one or two conclusions: First, That all alike may be deceived; or Second, and on which I establish my own belief, that God is no respecter of persons, and that one who is to us a poor benighted heathen, has no less of God's favor than the man who in the pomp and dignity of civilization, worships in a Cathedral; or than one, who in quietness seeks Him in nature,

and adores Him there. The same God who reveals himself to one man or nation, has the same interest in and ability to reveal himself to any other man or nation. To every man His will may be known, and to every nation, also, through the same faculties; equally the property one as of another. Hence my confidence in their various revelations, (so esteemed,) is based on the same general principles. Truth is as beautiful to me in the Vedas, as in the Hebrew writings; in the Koran, as in the New Testament. Nor can I see how I should use my reason, any less or more, in seeking after wisdom in the Bible, than in the Shaster. I am quite confident that the hand of God has been full as busy, and been guided by equal skill in India as in Palestine; that the eternal design in the Persian, is fully as interesting as in the Jew; that God's Laws have ever been shaping the practical History of the Mussulman, as well as that of the Christian; so that whatever be the fate of either, the same God, is the Author and Finisher.

No should man be a Christian. This word Christian is derived from one Jesus of Nazareth, whose followers esteemed him to be their Christ, or Anointed, or Redeemer from political evils, and probably from moral evil as well. In their hope of his being the political Christ, or Redeemer of the Jewish nation, they were disappointed. Some six or eight of his immediate friends have given somewhat of him, in biography, and otherwise. So far as these writings have been known and read by honest minds, free from religious bias, the universal sentiment has been that of deep regard for this lovely, self-sacrificing victim of bigotry, intolerance and enmity. Doubtless a political vindictiveness was also blended in the designs upon his life. The life and virtues of this Nazarene, his practical love of his fellow beings, his pure devotion to his mission, and the no less imposing devotion of his life in the completion of his life purpose, and for which he seemed by inheritance and adaptation so well suited, must ever bless man by the force of a practical exposition of love to God and man. His object seems to have been, in degree at least, misconceived; his end was tragical; his public life, a series of good works; his death, a testimony of his deep sincerity and desire to redeem his people and the world from sin.

From his teachings and course of action, arose in process of time, a stupendous system of religion. It seems to me he must have had this in view, as well as the purpose of redeeming Israel. Assuming, then, the point, that Jesus of Nazareth did intend to establish such religion, I repeat, no man should be a Christian, in the same sense in which I would say, no man should be a Hindoo, a Moslem, a Mormon or a religionist, at all; and by religion, I would be understood, as meaning a "system of faith and worship." Hence I say no man should be a Christian.

1. Because every religion has a vitiating effect upon any man or nation. Had I said this of any other than the Christian religion, I am confident that I had been met cordially in my position. In fact I somehow fancy that every people that are not Protestant are thought to be injured by their religion. And I as strongly suspect that the Romanist regards the Protestant as being in a bad way. What nation is so conspicuous as an example of what a religion will do, as the Jewish? Not since History began its etchings, has there lived a more vicious, barbarous, bloody people; one more deeply stained in crimes of every shade, murder, slavery, idolatry, theft, lying, polygamy, wars, rapine, cruelty, and an unparalleled savagism in killing, oftentimes, men, women and children, in their thirst of blood; and yet, from first to last, they were sustained, as they verily thought, by a warrant like this,—"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,"—or a "Thus saith the Lord." Even in their last days as a nationality, did they not with "wicked hands crucify and slay" Jesus, of whom we have just been speaking? And was it a fact, that the sons of Jacob, or Isaac, or Abraham, were such men as the Israelites in Egypt after Moses had come among them?

And since the Christian era, can any candid mind look at the almost completed two thousand years, without strong doubts, that man has been more blasted than blessed in it? Some would have God move by "steps or dispensations in man's destiny. By such, man was better by the religion of Moses than before. If it be true, that God moves by "steps," I would say that the Israelites were what they were because of their religion, and I think it will be conceded by

Christendom, at least, (doubtful if the *Jews* coincide; hence when Doctors disagree, who shall decide?) that they had been better, had they known and followed that of the Nazarene.

Again, if God moves by "steps," let us divide man's history, as by the Bible, into three "steps," of about two thousand years each. From Adam to Moses or thereabouts, I cannot see any very plain footprints;—one step. From Moses to Jesus,—one step. And from Jesus to "about these days," one step.—Will God step again, or are three "steps" enough?

Now, if all men before Moses should have been Israelites as by Moses' system, because his was a better one than theirs; and if those before Moses, and those after him too, should have been Christians, because the Christian system is better than either; and if the world is not manifestly better on account of these "steps," the conclusion from analogy is, I think, a fair one, that God will "step" again. Indeed, another step is held as a promise of a "good time coming" in the Christian system, as was the Mosaic to that before it; and as the Christian is claimed to be in the Mosaic. So then, is not the inference fairly deducible, that as the Mosaic system to that before it, and the Christian to the Mosaic, were each a "higher law" to the preceding, so will be that which is near at hand, a "higher law" to the Christian, Mosaic, and those prior?

If it be true that one system rises above the other, as just illustrated, is it not equally true that each was better than the preceding? If better, then was not the one just back imperfect, wanting in something,—in that which makes the next following better? And from this train of reflection, have we not reached a point in which the Christian system is shown to be imperfect, wanting in something, that the next "step" or revelation (for I trust it shall not be a "system of faith and worship") shall possess? By this too, we can scarce conclude the Nazarene as occupying a position in relation to God much different from that of a medium, by which this system was transmitted to the world; or as was Moses and Zoroaster, Confucius, Noah and others in their revelations. From the effect of Christianity upon the world; independent of extraneous aids and influences, such as the arts and sciences, which are clearly no part of its revelations; I am "fully persuaded" that another "step" shall be realized; also, that it is not a little dubious which of the two systems, the Mosaic or Christian, has been most fruitful of evil and bloodshed. Notwithstanding the simplicity of the teachings of Jesus, and the evident gain to man in them, no sooner had he died, than his followers were divided among themselves, and the so-called Christians very soon reduced his teachings and principles to a system; and therefore I speak of the Christian religion as a system of faith and worship, rising, as I think, indirectly at least, from the teachings and life of Jesus of Nazareth, while his disciples soon came to the adoption of what I find not in their Master.

Some may think I mistake Sectarianism for Christianity, as a system; but it seems to me that if Jesus of Nazareth had desired that no system should or could have grown out of his ministry, and the lesson of his life as a whole, it had been an easy matter for him to have so taught in a clear, unmistakable manner. Whereas now, all schools, creeds, sects and systems go, as they say, to him as their Master and model. And for this reason, I say, no man should be a Christian, since the religion of Zoroaster, Confucius, Mahomet or others have, in them much that is to our comprehension worthy, and if made the property of all men, would be found full of redeeming excellence; yes though this be true, I am confident few in this land would say, be a Hindoo, a Chinese, or Moslem in religion; and I but add another to the list and say, Nor be a Christian. Like the honey-bee, gather good from all, and practise it; but become a worshipper in the Temple of neither, "for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

This system rapidly accumulated to itself more and more of system, making to itself friends in various directions, sinking lower and lower meanwhile, till gross darkness covered the people. The dark ages were the result of religious systems; and probably none was more an element in the causes than the Christian. Had it been possible, which I doubt, for this religion to have preserved its original simplicity, the world had well nigh been Christian, at least in this

present time. I have not time,—(I wish I had) to say more at this point, but at the risk of appearing a little paradoxical, I proceed. The enormities and cruelties practised by this religion are scarcely exceeded by any other during the dark ages as well as before and since.

In the Reformation, however, things began to mend—or so one would conclude, when hearing the story of Protestants. And the Romanist would say, grew worse; so we go. It is doubtless true that the world is in a better state now, than three centuries ago; but what has caused the improvement? The Reformation? Nay; the sunlight of reformation was not in Luther. It was in *Science and the Arts*, with *Commerce*. The Art of Printing was the dawn. That gave to thought a galvanic shock, which I hope will ultimate in man's redemption. Had it been undiscovered, I see not but man were still in his darkest days. These and other kindred things have forced the Christian religion along up to its present position. I say forced, for it has not the elements of growth, but rather decay in itself. This may seem strong language, but not too strong. For where have been the churches, the accredited systems of Christianity, in all reforms? In the background always, till compelled to rise. Witness the cause of Temperance, Slavery, the scoffings and sneers at Spiritualism,—whence are they? From the churches. All reforms spring up, are for a time opposed by Christians, so called; till opposition becomes too gross—and then they are awakened to their necessity. This is become palpable indeed; it must be very palpable, very; or else such a paper as the *New York Evangelist* would not have admitted what follows as editorial, a year or two back. The quotation I give at the risk of overstepping my usual space, as it is too good to be lost; fit only to be kept before the people. I can scarce believe that paper was sane (by its own standard) when it gave room to the following:

"To the shame of the Church, it must be confessed that the foremost men in all our philanthropic movements, in the interpretation of the spirit of the age; in the practical application of genuine Christianity; in the reforming of abuses in high and in low places; in the vindication of the rights of man, and in practically redressing his wrongs; in the moral and intellectual regeneration of the race, are the so-called infidels in our land. The Church has pusillanimously left not only the working oar, but the very reins of salutary reform in the hands of men she denounces as inimical to Christianity, and who are practically doing with all their might, for Humanity's sake, that which the Church ought to be doing for Christ's sake; and if they succeed, as succeed they will, in abolishing rum, restraining licentiousness, reforming abuses and elevating the mass, then the recoil upon Christianity will be disastrous in the extreme. Woe, woe to Christianity, when infidels, by force of nature, or the tendency of the age, get ahead of the Church in morals, and in the practical work of Christianity. In some instances they are already far, far in advance; in the vindication of truth, righteousness, and liberty, they are the pioneers, beckoning to a sluggish Church to follow."

I wanted to underscore, but must have underscored the whole, if any. I think the writer of that must have written as do many mediums, because he could not help it—and thereby wrote truly.

2. No man should be a Christian for the following reasons. But a word or two first, lest I be misunderstood altogether. Let me say I have no controversy with Jesus of Nazareth. No man has lived in whom has shone, in the only way that is worth a groat, in his every day life, such virtues as in his. I love him for what he so clearly was. He has gone before me, and in very much, is an example. His precepts, too, are precious. Yet was he not a man? If a man, is it strange that in nothing he should err? Rather is it not strange that he erred so little? Hence some, many indeed, from the sum of his perfections, grant to him yet more, and make him an Ideal of Perfection. Even his imperfections are strenuously counted as virtues. But to go on.

1st. All "systems of faith and worship," or religions, are limited—limited to something. God has no limits that I know about; therefore I discard all limitations, and seek after God wheresoever he may be found.

2d. All religions have this as a cardinal principle on which they stand:—*I am right, you are wrong*. So says the Protestant of every other, and so says every other of him. These cannot all be right, altogether. I do

not like this, for I find too good evidence every day that what I thought was right, is quite too often disclosed as wrong; or so I deem it.

3d. That man is the best who is in the right. Nobody doubts that. Now, every religion says to its adherent, You are right. Of course, then, he is a better man than any other out of his system. But so says every religion to its followers, and hence bitter wars, feuds, inquisitions, heart-burnings, scandal, and such like fruits.

4th. A religion is a "thus far and no further shalt thou go" principle. When once you are right, of course you can go no farther in that direction; but I much fear no religion is yet a standard of going. This, of course, cuts off all progress, and makes a complete stand-still affair. The proof is all around us every day.

5th. All religions narrow the mind. It must be so. A system of faith and worship is one system, not all systems. Fences, like systems, narrow the field fenced in. There is ten times more danger in being too narrow, than too liberal, wide, diffusive as God. See a Romanist, Puritan; indeed, one can almost tell the members of the different sects by their tone and manner of speech; so pinched and dwarfed is a mere religionist. Well, this is the natural effect of every religion.

6th. Every religion creates castes. It must be so. It is too plain to be gainsaid, all over the world. It is at once sheep and goats, wheat and tares, righteous and wicked, good and bad, I and you, "stand by thyself; I am holier than thou."

7th. Every religion destroys all desire for further research, and makes of man a mere muttering worshipper. There is no need of research if a system is once adopted as one's own, and that forever. Hence, all systems claim infallibility. They cannot do less. They claim to have already done all your thinking,—you have only to sink into this or that sarcophagus and become as dead.

8th. I heard a young clergyman of a fine spirit, in a popular branch of popular Orthodoxy (could any reader guess what branch I mean by popular Orthodoxy?) say not long since, in his pulpit, that "when Luther made a Lutheran he killed the man, and when Calvin made a Calvinist he killed the man. Too true, alas! But what struck my mind most forcibly was that one whose perceptions are so active, should not have seen that "when" Christ, or Jesus, "made a" Christian, "he killed the man," and to kill a man is granted as no small crime. Yet this young clergyman holds up the Christ as an ideal of perfection, and would have Jesus of Nazareth to fill the measure of his ideal; hence would say, perhaps, No matter if Christ does "kill the man," for he shall "be made alive." If a religion-maker "kills the man," in each case of making a proselyte, then does not a religion the same?

Many more points might be adduced, but enough are given, as I trust, to show my readers that I would have every "system of faith and worship" forever blotted out. And now one word to Spiritualists. In the light of the lessons of other systems and their effects upon individuals, society, and the world, let it be your firm purpose to let Spiritualism be just where it is, unfettered, unceasing, without a fence, every man's fountain of life. Thank God, Spiritualism cannot be fenced. When once it is fairly caught, it is gone.

As to what a man should be, it is too late to say more than a word. Every man should be a man; a lover of God; a growing man; seeking after truth everywhere, yet never thinking for a moment he has attained, but should press on to the mark of attainment. He should live so as to make his life approximate most rapidly to that being whom every one should adore as the God and Father of us all. I would not tear down only, but no man can build up unless he first tear down. More anon.

ELMIRA, N. Y., Jan. 16, 1855.

### The Sabbath.

More than two thousand years passed away after the reference to a Sabbath in the first chapters of Genesis, before another allusion is made to it by the writer or writers of the Pentateuch. Generation after generation passed into the spirit land, leaving no evidence on record that they observed any day as sacred. Moses is said to be the writer of the first five books of the Old Testament, and he records that God spake unto him those sayings now called the ten commandments. One of the commands is as follows: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Being once spoken, they were then written upon two tables of stone by the

finger of God. This is generally believed by the church of to-day, to be a history of a literal transaction, though they believe God is a spirit, having neither body nor parts. They affirm that a spirit is an immaterial substance—that God is such a Spirit, and yet wrote with his finger on as gross substance as stone! That an immaterial substance could make a mark with its finger on a substance as material as stone, seems to me a little incredible. If God is a material spirit, and filleth the heavens and the earth, or the universe of worlds, then one of his fingers would be of such proportions as to be unfitted for writing on tables of stone small enough to be carried by one man down a mountain. I do not say that a spirit might not do it with his finger; but it is difficult to conceive of God's doing it by direct contact of his finger with stone. If God were the only spirit in the universe, then we should be obliged to admit every spiritual impression or direction as coming from Him. It is possible for Moses to have labored under an impression common to many at this day,—that every spiritual suggestion must either come from God or the devil. Whether the Sabbath had its origin with Moses, Spirits, or God, it was given only to the Jews, and hence can have no binding force elsewhere, unless it is a law of absolute right; and even then it fails to be obligatory if not perceived or appreciated. Where there is no law, there is no transgression—there can be no guilt incurred. The Jews may observe it, and those who have conscientious scruples concerning it, but on those only does it have any force. We have admitted that such a law existed among the Jews, and have criticised its origin a little. They believed it came from God, and they had a right to believe thus. But this is not the end of it. The professed followers of the Nazarene assure us that we are under obligations as believers in the teachings of Christ, to observe one day in seven as sacred time. Those who follow Christ in the outward sense, and, as a standard of authority, the history of his sayings and doings as recorded in the New Testament. But, had the Old Testament been kept in the hands of the Jews, and had the popular sects of this age had no other standard save the New Testament, it would have been as difficult a thing to establish a sacred day, as to have established the idea that tall steeples were evidence of high spiritual development. Christ paid no regard to days; and for this he was often rebuked by the Pharisees of his time. Aiming at the right, he pursued his usual course on the Jewish Sabbath. If he attended the Synagogue occasionally, it was because the people whom he wished to instruct, and save from a dead and formal religion, were there assembled. His silence on the subject, except when reproved by the time-serving religionists, and then his replies to those reproaches, as well as his evident disregard of it in his acts, demonstrate that the Sabbath was no more sacred to him than any other day in the week. His whole practice and teachings were in conformity with the sentiment, that it is *always* proper to do right, and *never* proper to do wrong—that days give no character to acts—that days have no character of themselves,—and that an action which is intrinsically right, can never become wrong by being performed on a particular day. I know he said, "it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath day," and I feel equally certain, that it is as lawful to do well on any other day.

A young man once asked Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life, and he referred him to certain commandments which should be kept. The command to observe the Sabbath was omitted. The young man said he had kept those referred to from his youth up. Christ said unto him, "One thing thou lackest." "Now," says the listening Pharisee, "he will mention the Sabbath as the one thing." Strange as it may seem, Christ saw something worse than a disregard of days to be criticised. The young man's covetousness stood in the way of his progress toward life eternal. But the greatest covetousness exists in perfect harmony with that spirit which regards days, times and seasons as holy.

Not only is it true that a man can follow Christ, and pay no regard to days as sacred, but it is equally true that none who follow him in the true sense do entertain any respect of this character. The apostles who have written, and whose writings have been kept unto this day, saw the subject in the same light. Paul says, in a letter written to his brethren at Rome, "One man esteemeth one day above an-



other; another esteemeth every day alike. This is as true of to-day, as of that time. But Paul's conclusion differs from those who talk most about him. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." We may form some idea of "his own mind" on the subject by what he says in some other letters. In one, written to his brethren at Galatia, he says, "Ye observe days and months and times and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain."

To the Colossians he writes, "Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath."

I have thus briefly noticed the Bible idea concerning the Sabbath. It may be late in the day to discuss such a question. "The agitation of thought," however, may be the beginning of wiser purposes and more liberal views on this, as well as other matters.

E. B. PRATT.

## The New Era.

"BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW."

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### Spiritualism and Reform.

There is no possible reform of human ill—no idea of reform now agitating the world, to which we do not give our heart and our hand, and bid it God-speed. Our sympathies are daily growing stronger and stronger for the abolition of chattel slavery and the institution of freedom for the African race; for the destruction of intemperance, and for the establishment of organic, social, and spiritual manhood in its place; for the cessation of war and the reign of peace; for the abolition of the gallows and prisons, to be superseded by moral hospitals where the criminal shall be treated in a more common-sense and Christian way than heretofore; for the annihilation of licentiousness, whose substitute is the Divine Marriage of two souls in complete spiritual blending; for the triumph of health over disease in its multi-form varieties; for the extinction of poverty and its host of attendant evils, by a healthy affluence founded on rational and co-operative industry and a system of exchange or commerce, that shall no longer make parasites of the millions who labor; for the elevation of woman from a doll to a personal being, from a dependent to an independent, mentally, morally, and physically vigorous counterpart of man, his equal in all privileges, opportunities of culture, and rewards for services of whatever character or kind; for the interment of a dead church, and the establishment of one that is truly living, one that shall make the whole of life sacred, business, work, pleasure—all things; a church that shall no longer be content with serving the devil six days and the Lord one, which, after all, is so bunglingly observed that Satan gets the pith of even the seventh day as well as the other six; for the extermination of all penal law by becoming "a law unto ourselves," thus abolishing the very elements on which one class of civilized vampires live, and transforming the state into a paternal providence, whose care of its children, shall be impartial and universal; for banishing to the shades our whole system of gigantic Commercial Fraud, by which the very commonest necessities of life, as well as luxuries, are not only often held at very exorbitant prices, by the princely speculations of the few, while the masses starve, but which are much oftener most woefully adulterated, so that health is made greatly to suffer, and the earth almost to groan out in agony as she observes the misuse her children make of her free and bounteous productions and her inexhaustible wealth; and finally, for the complete reorganization of Society on a Divine basis,—a foundation embracing such principles of equity and universal good as will inevitably reduce to its own proper limits the human proprium—the self-hood of man, which has so long been "master," not only among all Gentile sinners, but "in Israel" also.

For all these Reforms, and for all other imaginable ones, to the fullest possible extent, are we fully ready; do we give all our heart's energies, and all the faculties of our mind. We are consecrated, body, soul and spirit, to them all, and shall not cease to labor for those who suffer, in these various directions, while God gives us breath, to the extent of our ability, and according to our own best judgment. We most fully believe the Kingdom of Heaven is now having its advent in a most marked and prominent manner, as compared with any former age, and that the time is not very far off, when the light we now enjoy, will appear only as the very first rays of the morning dawn, in view of the brilliancy of the more mature, yet ever maturing day. There is no extent of imagination, in the line of good and truth, that can possibly exceed the positive design of Providence in relation to man,

even on this earth. "Eye hath not seen; ear hath not heard; neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive," the blessings which are yet in store for him. Nature is inexhaustible in her riches; God is unfathomable in his goodness; and man is infinitely capacitated for progressive reception and appropriation of the good, the true and the useful. And realization, at most, is only a question of time. And even this, in times like these, when the very elements are all astir, when old institutions are crumbling into ruins, and their devotees are quaking with such unwonted fear; when creeds and creed-worshippers—when souls of mere shell, and ice-berg heads, are shedding but a faint and sickly light on great questions of living and of present moment—questions whose very intimation tells but too truly the deep heart-story and world-story too, of crushed and bleeding affections and most hellish discordances; even the question of time is not the very hardest problem to solve that one could imagine. When the chemist observes the materials he has put together for a specific compound, in a state of agitation, he is able to see beyond that ferment, to more harmonious results yet to be. It is so, also, with the spiritually-social chemist—with him whose spiritual eye is clarified, and whose sight is therefore clear, far-reaching and comprehensive. And what though full realization may not come to-morrow, or the day after—this year or the next?—what matters it? It will nevertheless come! It will come in due season—come in obedience to natural law too, which can neither be forced nor set aside.

Too many people seem to think, talk and act, as though there were no laws in the universe; as though Nature could be forced and hurried forward to all desirable results, or else transcended and over-rode—set aside and thwarted by human power and intelligence. But such will, doubtless, sooner or later, learn their mistake, and conclude to adopt a system of co-operation with Nature and with law, which will insure a more wise and permanent result, so far as they are individually concerned. In the mean time, Nature, doubtless, will not delay her movements on their behalf, but go on elaborating her own proper forms, evolving her own proper forces, and ultimately her own appropriate results. And, as sure as

"Order is Heaven's first law," even so truly will it be her last law also. And, therefore, out of all the chaos of the past and the present—out of all the slaveries, the wars, the degradations, the crimes, the debaucheries, the tyrannies and the agonies, which have been so sorely felt by the great throbbing heart of Humanity, and which still give the race its dismal forebodings and its keen heart-pangs—shall yet spring the joys of the Blest and the peace of the Heavens. The mighty commotions of the battling nations, and the almost seemingly endless antagonisms and woes of deeply false human relations and conditions, in the present, are but the majestic birth-throes of the great Human Race of this planet, from whose agonies shall, by and by, be born, in organic symmetry, beauty and joy, the great SOCIAL HUMANITY, whose elements have been long maturing, and whose embryotic life is well-nigh complete.

To us, and to many more, to whom Spiritualism has made its advent, this is its most significant lesson—a lesson without which this Third Dispensation, so called, is no dispensation at all—has in it no life, no beauty, no good—becomes a tool without use, without significance—rather detrimental than otherwise; yea, verily, a curse! For, to open the Heavens, and let a flood of light into dark human souls, without removing the causes of that darkness and its consequent woes, is but to increase the darkness and aggravate the woes. But Spiritualism tells a more genial and significant story. Bright and beautiful as its own heavenly source, it comes to us all, with the serenity of an angel and the peace of the Infinite. Its full, glad story, ever has been, and still is, the elevation and joy of the whole Human Race. To this end, ever, are all its wonders exhibited—all its manifestations made; and it will not cease its remarkable exhibitions and influence, till, in the benevolence of Heaven on earth, THE TOLLING AND GROANING MILLIONS ARE FREE.

### To Writers for the Era.

We are always glad to receive the productions of those who write for the Era—those, especially, which express worthy and comprehensive thought, or communicate facts of remarkable, interesting and profitable character, bearing more or less directly on the subject of Spiritualism. But some of those who write for our columns, leave us (thoughtlessly of course), a large amount of labor to perform, in preparing their articles for the press, which a very trifling attention on their part, would save us. For instance, an article comes to us written in such fine hand, that we have to strain our coarse eyes immensely to make it out, dreading all the time, not a little scowling of compositors, when they come to put it in type. Then again, although the writer is evidently an educated man, he fails to point his writing

with accuracy, so as to be readily intelligible, as it stands in manuscript; and so we have to dig out the meaning, oftentimes, as best we can—reading and re-reading, till we either have a very fair prospect of getting the reputation of Job, for patience, or else such a one as we neither covet nor feel to be profitable. And lastly, (so far as the instance under review is concerned,) many letters are so indistinctly formed, that we find ourselves in a trinity of troubles—1. Penmanship too fine, tries the eyes too much. 2. Not well pointed, hard to get the meaning. 3. Letters badly formed, can't tell what they are, and hence have to work an hour or two over a brief article, to get it into readable shape, when we ought to be about something else.

Well, this is but the "beginning of sorrows." Some correspondents mix up business matters with what they intend for the public eye, and so we have another trying job before us, to either copy what is to be printed, or to take out their orders on other sheets for immediate use, and for preservation for reference, if needful, in future.

But not to be tedious in matters of this nature, (although exceedingly interesting, from one point of view,) we will leave this mode of particularizing, and suggest the following simple rules for those writers only who need them, assuring them, that if they take the hint, they will very greatly aid us in our manifold labors.

1. Write a bold, clear hand, so that the eye will catch every word at a glance.
2. Punctuate carefully, so as to give the meaning readily, and save future labor.
3. Always leave a good margin at the beginning for heading and introductory remarks, if the latter should be deemed needful.
4. Never mix orders for publications, with what you desire to be printed. The former should be put on a separate slip of paper.
5. Everything of a private nature, should be headed "Private."

By complying with these directions, we shall be saved much perplexity and perhaps some mistakes.

### Of Ancient Ruins.

#### LANGUAGE.

It belongs to this subject to speak somewhat fully of the languages. Speech belongs more strictly to man. While all things have their language, yet it can only be truly said that man has the ability to distinctly utter intelligible speech. But in this paper of Ancient Ruins, this vast subject can only be quite briefly unfolded. Volumes vast, sometimes quite unintelligible, have been written of the languages of man.

The Ancient Records have preserved a somewhat amusing account of the confusion of tongues. They narrate that a number of persons had assembled together for the construction of an edifice, for a quite lofty purpose. Basely employed in their various branches of labor, suddenly, and quite unexpectedly to themselves, they were able only to speak in diverse languages—no two able to transmit intelligence. This was indeed not only a very remarkable phenomenon, but also a most extraordinary catastrophe. A number of persons associated for a common purpose, yet no two able to understand each other. Fable though this is, yet in an unfolding age, it serves to call the attention of man, to the whole subject of language, of different languages, of dead language, of living language, and of the general structure of language as a whole.

The schools deem it a *sine qua non*, that the accomplished scholar should study what is denominated the dead languages, that is, languages which are not now spoken by a tribe, clan, or nation, but which lie dead in the lifeless books. It is thought that a study of these dead languages, aids one in acquiring a more distinct knowledge of the roots of living languages. There is considerable wisdom in this view, as it bears relation to philology, and may be exceedingly useful for the class denominated "critics."

But it is an interesting inquiry, Where are the people who once commanded and fluently used the dead languages? The instant this inquiry is started, the thought will flash on the mind that there must be what are called distinct races. If there were such races, how came they to be extinct? There are two ways by which a race may become extinct; and first, by ceasing the sexual intercourse, procreation cannot be. But then a curious inquiry arises, why should man and woman resolve upon this particular separation? If there was a condition in the surrounding elements, bringing the immortals to this condition, then the same would apply to animality, and animals would cease to copulate; and the same law would apply to the positives and negatives of the vegetable and mineral conditions, and the grand clock-work of procreation would cease to beat. Broad though this thought is, yet it belongs to the grandest thought unfolded in the opening era—that all things are either male or female.

Secondly: There is another way by which a race may become extinct, that is, by submergences, earthquakes, volcanoes, and that class of natural upheavings, sinkings, or mountainous projections. This paper proceeds on the last mentioned basis. Now, while a race may be submerged, some of their records or language may, in several ways, be preserved. Without particularizing these

ways, it is sufficient to say that the intelligent mind will, at a glance, see that by such and such ways, a language would be left, while the race to whom it especially belonged, might become extinct; hence there are what are called dead languages.

This general thought being clearly perceived, firmly fastened upon the mind, there may be passage back to a prior question—How did man construct language? How did he primarily learn, not only how to speak, but to speak to his neighbor intelligibly? Can it be believed that two or more persons assembled together, and said to one another, "Let us now make a speech, or construct a language"? Such a meeting could not have been held prior to ability to speak intelligibly. Speech must be to a certain extent, prior to holding a meeting to construct a language. It is plain that, at least, for a season, each person, family, clan, or tribe, must have opened a school on its own individual hook; and hence the diversity of languages, of speech, or of human language. For example's sake, one sees water. He desires to tell what he has seen, and he makes a certain sound, corresponding to the sound of water, as it rolls onward. Being capable of hearing, the listener hears a vocal sound from a person, and thus what is called thought of water, is communicated to the mind of the hearer by the vocal utterance. So man went onward, constructing language, the sound, or the signs, or the motions corresponding to the things seen, heard or known.

Here, again, the Ancient Record has its fable. The beasts of the forest quietly, as the gentle lamb, approach the primeval pair, and quite deliberately, they name each class of animals, as they approach. All the animals come, not a single class excepted, and the names then given remain unto the present time. It was manifestly seen by the constructors of the Ancient Records, that some thing of this sort must at some time be done, and so they place the whole load on the shoulders of a newly created, and quite illiterate man. Still fables have their uses. As man has approached to a class of animals, as of other things, he has given names corresponding to their general character; and thus the names of animals have been transmitted from generation to generation, in the circle of particular races. But there are extinct animals, as well as extinct races. And when the naturalist becomes sufficiently simple to examine this paper, certain mysteries bearing relation to fossils, will be mysteries no more.

Returning, then, from this point, directly to the subject of ancient languages, it may be observed, that each race conceals its own language, agrees on certain words as signs of ideas; and hence the great diversity of tongues.

The Ancient Records contain also another curious historical point, bearing relation to language. Certain highly spiritualized persons are made, unexpectedly to themselves, to speak with tongues. That epoch was, to a considerable extent, a spiritual epoch. Man had arrived at a condition somewhat beyond the bounds of intellectuality, reaching somewhat into the higher stratum of spirituality, and could be easily influenced to speak and act under a considerable degree of spiritual power; and as it were, reaching up to the more spirit life, the two could intermarry, interlink, or, so to speak, inter-speak, and so that extraordinary phenomenon was exhibited.

A curious inquiry is then started—Are the languages of the ancients so fastened upon their minds, that they have retained them? and if so, can they transmit them? All that is essential of language, is preserved, and there will be comparatively little difficulty in teaching pupils the ancient, and even the dead languages, especially in instructing that class whose organs of language, and of vocal utterances, are found to be in favorable conditions.

(For the New Era.)

### Of the Arts. I. Of Speaking.

JOHN M. SPEAR, MEDIUM.

Language, in some of its varied forms, may be said to be universal. The minerals, vegetables, animals, in their various conditions, each and all, have their language. Things said to be inanimate have a language. "Day unto day uttereth speech." But, more strictly speaking, speech belongs to man. True, the lower animals enunciate sounds, forming a sort of speech among themselves; it is, however, quite unintelligible to others. Man is not only capable of speaking intelligently to his fellows, but, to some extent, can make himself understood to lower animals.

In discoursing of the Art of Speaking, it is proposed to speak more especially of man,—of his vocal powers,—of methods of speech,—of its influence on persons addressed,—thus opening to the mind an important, useful and interesting branch of knowledge.

Among the ancients, the Art of Speaking, especially as it related to addressing large assemblies, was more generally cultivated than it is in more modern times. The art of printing being unknown,—the press not having been constructed,—in moving the masses, great reliance was placed upon the accomplished, able and efficient public speaker. He who could best move the public mind by his oratorical powers, was highly valued, and was regarded as among the benefactors of mankind when a beneficent

enterprise was to be urged onward. Young men devoted themselves most assiduously to a thorough study of this highly important art. Some of the more eminent orators among the ancients secluded themselves from the world, lived in caves, dwelt in groves, wandered by the side of flowing streams, or roamed on lofty eminences, exercising their voices in various locations, preparing themselves to appear before large assemblies as public speakers. The name of Demosthenes has been preserved and carefully handed down to posterity, as one who devoted himself most thoroughly to the study and practice of the Art of Speaking. Everywhere he is named as the distinguished orator among the ancients, and as a model for the moderns.

In discoursing of this Art, a series of instructions will be presented; and, in so far as they are observed, will the student become an easy, fluent, interesting and efficient public speaker. And though some of the things said may be deemed comparatively unimportant, yet great things come of apparently insignificant matters. Little things must not be disregarded because they are small—connected with large things they constitute a whole.

In unfolding to man a new social order, much public speaking will be requisite to call attention to the general and special objects had in contemplation. As it were, a school must be opened; and among the branches taught the Art of Speaking should hold a prominent position. To proceed, then, to rules to constitute one an able public speaker; and,

First. Before one appears in presence of a public assembly, with a view of public address, there must be careful preparation; and in preparing, the following things are requisite. 1. A thorough acquaintance with the subject of which speech is to be made, embracing in that acquaintance, careful and methodical arrangement, so that the general train of thought will be firmly fixed in the mind, and incorporated, as it were, in the whole being. 2. Prior to appearance before a public assembly, and subsequent to ordinary preparation, there should be at least one hour of profound mental quiet. 3. If foods are taken, they should be masticated at least two hours prior to public speaking. 4. The garments worn should be exceedingly loose, the abdominal and the breasts may be fully inflated, and the neck should be but slightly covered, if at all. These several particulars are essential as preparative.

Second. In entering the assembly, all conversations with persons should be studiously avoided. Care should also be had, that the place of public speech, if in an edifice, is freely ventilated; and, if practicable, the North should be faced.

Third. The hour having arrived for the address, the shoulders should be thrown back, the abdominals forward, the head somewhat elevated, the voice, like a curving rocket, should be thrown over to the distant part of the assembly. The mouth should be quite widely opened, and pressure should be mainly on the positive foot, the negative being thrown somewhat out, keeping perfectly cool, wait, as it were, for silence, and for an upflow or an outflow of the subject, which has become a part of the being. It will struggle for utterance, like a child prepared for outer birth.

These several things being with care observed, if filled with the subject, if the heart is interested in it, speech will be clear, forcible, impressive, efficient, accomplishing, in some degree, the objects had in contemplation. Other adjuncts, however, are essential to render one what may be called a graceful speaker. Several of these adjuncts may now be named.

First, Gesture. Many persons who are otherwise effective speakers, greatly fail in this accomplishment. The stage far excels the pulpit, the forum or the bar, in respect to gesture. It teaches gesture with great nicety. It exercises its students long, and drills them patiently. Well would it be if the pulpit, the forum and the bar, could learn of the stage. It would be exceedingly desirable, in becoming an accomplished speaker, to associate with distinguished persons of this class,—be with them at rehearsals, and listen to their instructions.

In a brief discourse of the Art of Speaking, details of gesture cannot be entered into. That branch must be left to be acquired mostly by careful observation of the attitudes of accomplished public speakers.

Some public speakers are accustomed to drink freely whilst engaged in public speaking, a practice which should be discontinued, not only on account of its awkwardness, but because it breaks the links of discourse, and somewhat cools the ardor of the speaker, which should invariably increase as he progresses in his subject.

Second. Another adjunct, which is exceedingly useful to render one an accomplished speaker, is a careful knowledge of terms. One cannot become too thoroughly acquainted with lexicography. Every new word he hears uttered he should record, and at the earliest moment should consult an able lexicographer in respect to its meaning, its enunciation, and, if possible, its derivation. A practice of this sort will be of great service in clothing one's thoughts when preparing or enunciating his address.

Third. Another adjunct is quite useful. An oddity of dress should be avoided. If persons are dressed fantastically or uncouthly, the minds of the persons listening are directed more to the dress than to the address, and so the speaker fails to be efficient.

Fourth. And yet another adjunct—an acquaintance with authors whose diction is pure, whose language is liquid, whose sentences are full, and whose style is somewhat poetic. Almost without thought the words flow to the mind, which are most frequently and attentively studied. These several considerations, if carefully observed, will constitute the student an able, instructive, interesting and efficient public speaker.

### Spirit Readings.

MENTAL DELINEATION AND CONSECRATION OF MRS. J. H. FOSTER, MEDIUM OF LOWELL, MASS., THROUGH JOHN M. SPEAR.

This woman is a person of exceedingly fine mental texture. In this respect, her equal is very rarely found. Hers is a very compact mind. She has a very large amount of mentality, in a very compact form. Her mental faculties are unfolded in a quite extraordinary manner, in the following respects:—1. Her vision is very transparent: she beholds persons and grasps subjects without ordinary mental effort; that is, she directly sees persons—sees what they are—sees what they intend to do—sees what they are capable of becoming. 2. Her mental affections are extended in an unusual degree, so much so that she cannot conceal them. She feels that she must declare her affections. Should she conceal them, her happiness would be greatly alloyed. 3. She is a prophetess. She rather feels than sees things which are to be; and she freely declares that prophetic feeling; but her prophecies relate more to persons than to subjects; and that which she prophecies of persons, whether good or evil, substantially comes to pass. She is also unfolded as a developer: that is, she can and does bring that to the surface which is within, whether good or evil; so that persons will act out their real internal condition. She knows not of weariness in plans of beneficence. Mentally she schemes—looks at persons who may aid her schemes,—sets them to work—while she, apparently, sits quietly in a corner. Mentally, therefore, she labors beneficially, and is a very adroit manager. Very few persons know her ability in this respect. Her plans are very broad, comprehending present action, and far distant future results. In this she very greatly excels: in this particular she is a casuist,—seeing how, when one thing is done, of necessity another must be done. But she secretes—she does not declare all she sees. Philosophically, she says, "If I declare the whole, they will not do anything. If I can interest them to do one thing, they must do the next." Very few persons plan thus.

This woman is exceedingly conscientious. She cannot be terrified or cajoled; so that she walks by her own inner light: husband, children, father, mother, brother, sister, neighbor, friend, cannot control her, except so far as her interior leads her. She loves society, but she loves individuality more. These several particulars render this woman a very marked personage. She would be a very able, useful, beneficent person as a counsellor. Her counsel would be of great service in an emergency, because she is a casuist. She could lead an opposing person into a labyrinth. She could lead a friendly person into a straight, direct path, to reach an end. She has also ample secretiveness; so that schemes will not be prematurely divulged, which is an important requisite in that sort of labor.

Thou who art the Grand Guiding Mind of all minds, aid in this reverential service. From this time this woman will hold the position of DIRECTRESS,—directing persons, or things to be said, to be sought for, to be accomplished. And now thou shalt receive thy true and thy appropriate name. Henceforth thou shalt be called the GUIDRESS. Walking, thyself, in the way, thou shalt be a living embodiment of wisdom, of counsel, of true guidance.

Go thou, gentle Guidress, keep thy lamp trimmed and burning; walk in truth; say to others, this is the true and living way, walk ye therein.

From this hour there is formed a bond of union between these persons,—each acting and reacting, aiding and guiding in the labors which are in contemplation.

Lowell, February 4th, 1855.

It is with much pleasure, and of our own free will, without the least hint from "The People's Doctor," to that effect, that we publish the following document—a paper which manifests the true spirit, and an intelligence well worthy of either womanhood or manhood. DR. RANDALL is a woman—not simply in the sense of sex—but in a far higher sense, at least, as the common estimate goes; for, by her steady perseverance and earnest desire to be a blessing to her race, she has fully qualified herself, not simply to practice medicine, but to teach all who need the simple principles of health—the laws of nature and of life; and especially those principles of integrity and simple-hearted honesty of purpose, so much neglected by "the Faculty" in general, as well as by other classes. Mrs. R. is a thorough spiritualist, and a medium.

For further remarks, we refer the reader to the article entitled, "Mrs. Randall in Boston," in our last week's issue.

### The People's Doctor.

MAREND A. RANDALL, M. D.

Would respectfully solicit a share of Public Patronage, as a general Practitioner of Medicine. Her claims to such favor are, briefly, as follows:

She commenced the study and Practice of Obstetrics, in connection with Botanic Medicine, fifteen years ago, within her own family and a circle of immediate friends; since which, she has been much of the time in the investigation of various Systems of Medicine, among which are Hydropathy, Homoeopathy, Allopathy, and Chrono-Thermalism, as also, various systems of Diet, Regimen, and Hygiene. Within the last six years she has had free access to the text books of one of the best Allopathic Colleges in New England—the Vermont Medical College—her husband being a graduate from that college. Still seeking instruction, she came to this city and entered, as a student, the Penn Medical University, where she received a test examination in presence of all the faculty, in every branch of obligatory Medical Science taught in any of the Schools of this city, receiving, with the unanimous vote of the faculty, the Degree of Doctor of Medicine.

She has also received much assistance from Magnetic or Spiritual influences—having, in many cases, greatly relieved, and in others, entirely cured Neuralgia, Convulsions, Chills Fever, and even Cholera, after it had reached the "Collapsed Stage," with no visible agency, save simple contact between the fingers of Doctor and Patient.



of dis- to 6 P. M.  
Also Clairvoyant, Psychometric, and Medica-  
tions made during any of the above hours.  
J. S. LOVER  
GEORGE AT  
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# THE NEW ERA.

DEVOTED TO THE NEW DISPENSATION, OR THE INAUGURATION OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN UPON EARTH THROUGH THE AID OF SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE.

VOL. III.—NO. 20.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1855.

WHOLE NO. 118.

## Thoughts of the Age.

The following paper is doubtless well intended, as are all the productions of our friend Potter, which appear in the *Era*. But his method of expressing his views, seems to us somewhat calculated to give a wrong idea, oftentimes, of what he would say. However, every one has his own manner of saying and doing things, and that, perhaps, is the best for him. We cannot help thinking, however, that we should ever aim to be clearly and truly understood—it saves time at least in getting at the absolute truth. As to our friend's notions about Jesus, of which he has often given intimations in our columns, some of our more sensitive friends, who know our own views on that subject, think we ought to express ourselves more fully than we have heretofore done. Well, perhaps we may, by and by, when Bro. Potter gets through. But why not earlier? Simply because our own wisdom does not so say, and we are not so egotistic as to suppose that our readers cannot think for themselves in this matter. When we give our views on any subject, we do it in the way of suggestion merely, and thus in the hope of aiding thought in what seems to us the right direction:

For the New Era.

### No Man should be a Christian.

BY A. M. POTTER.

No man should be a Christian.—It is said, that the gates of Buxyrane had certain inscriptions on them. The first, "Be bold;" the second, "Be bold, be bold, and evermore be bold;" the third,—"Be not too bold." Thus am I encouraged, and warned.

At first sight this expression, No man should be a Christian, may, to many of the readers of *The New Era*, appear strange; a little reflection, however, must satisfy such, that it assumes strangeness, more by its latitude and longitude, than by any principle involved in it. Had this paper as wide a circulation among the Hindoos and Moslems, as among such as have their very character shaped by ancestral influences, who have ever been hearing the saying, *Every man should be a Christian*, certain it is that the last remark would appear equally strange to the one portion, as does *my heading* to the other.

Again, if a majority in numbers has any virtue in it, toward deciding the right or wrong of my position, then am I right, for it will be borne in mind, that the Christian religion is very unpopular with by far the greatest portion of the inhabitants of the world.

Nor am I wrong in saying, no man should be a Christian, because of the general belief in this country, that God has given in the Bible a full, (or so full as is necessary), expression of his will concerning man, as a race, or as an individual. While we as a nation, with great confidence give ourselves to this belief, will any one say that God has any less interest or care, that the Hindoo or Mussulman should know His will, than ourselves? And have those to whom was given that which is esteemed among us as the revelation of God to man had any *faculties* by which God could reveal himself to them alone, and not also to those of other nations, whose welfare must have been equally his concern? And while Christians look with pity, and with a foreboding of evil upon such as have not their Scriptures; yet have not the Hindoos, Chinese, Persians, and others, what is to them as much a revelation of God's will as is ours to us? Nor can I see why God, *their Father*, may not have so revealed himself to them, if to any; inasmuch as the faculties of body and mind are the same in them as in ourselves. And if the same *time, talent, earnest good will, and desire*, had been bestowed to make *their Scriptures* harmonious, and to prove them given by "plenary inspiration;" the sum of the evidences would be fully as weighty for their Scriptures, as now, in relation to the Hebrew and Christian writings. Nor can I see why we should be more concerned for them, than they for us.

It seems to me that from the *Jew* my subject would meet a full response. Reverse it as regards *his* religion, and he would meet me as coldly as do some as it is. Therefore when I hear it said, that the Hindoo has within himself *less evidence* that God has favored him, or that the Moslem feels himself a rejected child of God; that *God could give and did give to the Hebrews and early Christians, all that earth has ever, and can ever have, of this will*; and that the various confidences, of various peoples, in the same thing, viz: that God has in some way spoken to them, are but gross deceptions; I come to one or two conclusions: First. That all alike may be deceived: or Second, and on which I establish my own belief, that *God is no respecter of persons*, and that one who is to us a poor benighted heathen, has no less of God's favor than the man who in the pomp and dignity of civilization, worships in a Cathedral; or than one, who in quietness seeks Him in nature,

and adores Him there. The same God who reveals himself to one man or nation, has the same interest in and ability to reveal himself to any other man or nation. To every man His will may be known, and to every nation, also, through the same faculties; equally the property one as of another. Hence my confidence in their various revelations, (so esteemed,) is based on the same general principles. Truth is as beautiful to me in the Vedas, as in the Hebrew writings; in the Koran, as in the New Testament. Nor can I see how I should use my *reason*, any less or more, in seeking after wisdom in the Bible, than in the Shaster. I am quite confident that the hand of God has been full as busy, and been guided by equal skill in India as in Palestine; that the eternal design in the Persian, is fully as interesting as in the Jew; that God's Laws have ever been shaping the practical History of the Mussulman, as well as that of the Christian; so that whatever be the fate of either, the same God, is the *Author and Finisher*.

No should man be a Christian. This word Christian is derived from one Jesus of Nazareth, whose followers esteemed him to be their Christ, or Anointed, or Redeemer from political evils, and probably from moral evil as well. In their hope of his being the political Christ, or Redeemer of the Jewish nation, they were disappointed. Some six or eight of his immediate friends have given somewhat of him, in biography, and otherwise. So far as these writings have been known and read by honest minds, free from religious bias, the universal sentiment has been that of deep regard for this lovely, self-sacrificing victim of bigotry, intolerance and enmity. Doubtless a political vindictiveness was also blended in the designs upon his life. The life and virtues of this Nazarene, his practical love of his fellow beings, his pure devotion to his mission, and the no less imposing devotion of his life in the completion of his *life purpose*, and for which he seemed by inheritance and adaptation so well suited, must ever bless man by the force of a practical exposition of love to God and man. His object seems to have been, in degree at least, misconceived; his end was tragical; his public life, a series of good works; his death, a testimony of his deep sincerity and desire to redeem his people and the world from sin.

From his teachings and course of action, arose in process of time, a stupendous *system of religion*. It seems to me he must have had this in view, as well as the purpose of redeeming Israel. Assuming, then, the point, that Jesus of Nazareth did intend to establish such religion, I repeat, no man should be a Christian, in the same sense in which I would say, no man should be a Hindoo, a Moslem, a Mormon or a *religionist*, at all; and by religion, I would be understood, as meaning a "system of faith and worship." Hence I say no man should be a Christian.

1. Because every religion has a vitiating effect upon any man or nation. Had I said this of any other than the Christian religion, I am confident that I had been met cordially in my position. In fact I somehow fancy that every people that are not Protestant are thought to be *injured by their religion*. And I as strongly suspect that the Romanist regards the Protestant as being in a bad way. What nation is so conspicuous as an example of what a religion will do, as the Jewish? Not since History began its etchings, has there lived a more vicious, barbarous, bloody people; one more deeply stained in crimes of every shade, murder, slavery, idolatry, theft, lying, polygamy, wars, rapine, cruelty, and an unparalleled savagism in killing, oftentimes, men, women and children, in their thirst of blood; and yet, from first to last, they were sustained, as they verily thought, by a warrant like this,—"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,"—or a "Thus saith the Lord." Even in their last days as a nationality, did they not with "wicked hands crucify and slay" Jesus, of whom we have just been speaking? And was it a fact, that the sons of Jacob, or Isaac, or Abraham, were such men as the Israelites in Egypt after Moses had come among them?

And since the Christian era, can any candid mind look at the almost completed two thousand years, without strong doubts, that man has been more blasted than blessed in it? Some would have God move by "steps or dispensations in man's destiny. By such, man was better by the religion of Moses than before. If it be true, that God moves by "steps," I would say that the Israelites were what they were because of their religion, and I think it will be conceded by

Christendom, at least, (doubtful if the *Jews* coincide; hence when Doctors disagree, who shall decide?) that they had been better, had they known and followed that of the Nazarene.

Again, if God moves by "steps," let us divide man's history, as by the Bible, into three "steps," of about two thousand years each. From Adam to Moses or thereabouts, I cannot see any very plain footprints;—one step. From Moses to Jesus,—one step. And from Jesus to "about these days," one step.—Will God step again, or are three "steps" enough?

Now, if all men before Moses should have been Israelites as by Moses' system, because his was a better one than theirs; and if those before Moses, and those after him too, should have been Christians, because the Christian system is better than either; and if the world is not manifestly better on account of these "steps," the conclusion from analogy is, I think, a fair one, that *God will "step" again*. Indeed, another step is held as a promise of a "good time coming" in the Christian system, as was the Mosaic to that before it; and as the Christian is claimed to be in the Mosaic. So then, is not the inference fairly deducible, that as the Mosaic system to that before it, and the Christian to the Mosaic, were each a "higher law" to the preceding, so will be that which is near at hand, a "higher law" to the Christian, Mosaic, and those prior?

If it be true that one system rises above the other, as just illustrated, is it not equally true that each was *better* than the preceding? If *better*, then was not the one just back *imperfect*, wanting in something,—in that which makes the next following *better*? And from this train of reflection, have we not reached a point in which the *Christian* system is shown to be *imperfect, wanting in something*, that the next "step" or re-velment (for I trust it shall not be a "system of faith and worship") shall possess? By this too, we can scarce conclude the Nazarene as occupying a position in relation to God much different from that of a medium, by which this system was transmitted to the world; or as was Moses and Zoroaster, Confucius, Noah and others in their revelations. From the effect of Christianity upon the world; independent of extraneous aids and influences, such as the arts and sciences, which are clearly no part of its revelations; I am "fully persuaded" that another "step" shall be realized; also, that it is not a little dubious which of the two systems, the Mosaic or Christian, has been most fruitful of evil and bloodshed. Notwithstanding the simplicity of the teachings of Jesus, and the evident gain to man in them, no sooner had he died, than his followers were divided among themselves, and the so-called Christians very soon reduced his teachings and principles to a system; and therefore I speak of the *Christian religion* as a system of faith and worship, rising, as I think, indirectly at least, from the teachings and life of Jesus of Nazareth, while his disciples soon came to the adoption of what I find not in their Master.

Some may think I mistake Sectarianism for Christianity, as a system; but it seems to me that if Jesus of Nazareth had desired that no system should or could have grown out of his ministry, and the lesson of his life as a whole, it had been an easy matter for him to have so taught in a clear, unmistakable manner. Whereas now, all schools, creeds, sects and systems go, as they say, to him as their Master and model. And for this reason, I say, no man should be a Christian, since the religion of Zoroaster, Confucius, Mahomet or others have in them much that is to our comprehension worthy, and if made the property of all men, would be found full of redeeming excellence; yes though this be true, I am confident few in this land would say, be a Hindoo, a Chinese, or Moslem in religion; and I but add another to the list and say, Nor be a Christian. *Like the honey-bee, gather good from all, and practise it*; but become a worshipper in the Temple of neither, "for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

This system rapidly accumulated to itself, more and more of system, making to itself friends in various directions, sinking lower and lower meanwhile, till gross darkness covered the people. The dark ages were the result of religious systems; and probably none was more an element in the causes than the Christian. Had it been possible, which I doubt, for this religion to have preserved its *original simplicity*, the world had well nigh been *Christian*, at least in this

present time. I have not time,—(I wish I had) to say more at this point, but at the risk of appearing a little paradoxical, I proceed. The enormities and cruelties practised by this religion are scarcely exceeded by any other during the dark ages as well as before and since.

In the Reformation, however, things began to mend—or so one would conclude, when hearing the story of Protestants. And the Romanist would say, grew worse; so we go. It is doubtless true that the world is in a better state now, than three centuries ago; but what has caused the improvement? The Reformation? Nay; the sunlight of reformation was not in Luther. It was in *Science* and the *Arts*, with *Commerce*. The Art of Printing was the *dawning*. That gave to *thought* a galvanic shock, which I hope will ultimate in man's redemption. Had it been undiscovered, I see not but man were still in his darkest days. These and other kindred things have forced the Christian religion along up to its present position. I say *forced*, for it has not the elements of growth, but rather decay in itself. This may seem strong language, but not too strong. For where have been the churches, the accredited systems of Christianity, in all reforms? In the background always, till compelled to rise. Witness the cause of Temperance, Slavery, the scuffings and sneers at Spiritualism,—whence are they? From the churches. All reforms spring up, are for a time opposed by Christians, so called; till opposition becomes too gross—and then they are awakened to their necessity. This is become palpable indeed; it must be very palpable, *very*; or else such a paper as the NEW YORK EVANGELIST would not have admitted what follows as editorial, a year or two back. The quotation I give at the risk of overstepping my usual space, as it is too good to be lost; fit only to be kept before the people. I can scarce believe that paper was sane (by its own standard) when it gave room to the following:

"To the shame of the Church, it must be confessed that the foremost men in all our philanthropic movements, in the interpretation of the spirit of the age; in the practical application of genuine Christianity; in the reforming of abuses in high and in low places; in the vindication of the rights of man, and in practically redressing his wrongs; in the moral and intellectual regeneration of the race, are the *so-called infidels* in our land. The Church has pusillanimously left not only the working oar, but the very reins of salutary reform in the hands of men she denounces as inimical to Christianity, and who are practically doing with all their might, for Humanity's sake, that which the Church ought to be doing for Christ's sake; and if they succeed, as succeed they will, in abolishing war, restraining licentiousness, reforming abuses and elevating the mass, then the recoil upon Christianity will be disastrous in the extreme. Woe, woe, woe to Christianity, when infidels, by force of nature, or the tendency of the age, get ahead of the Church in morals, and in the practical work of Christianity. In some instances they are already far, far in advance; in the vindication of truth, righteousness, and liberty, they are the *pioneers*, beckoning to a sluggish Church to follow."

I wanted to *underscore*, but must have underscored the whole, if any. I think the writer of that must have written as do many mediums, because he could not help it—and thereby wrote truly.

2. No man should be a Christian for the following reasons. But a word or two first, lest I be misunderstood altogether. Let me say I have no controversy with Jesus of Nazareth. No man has lived in whom has shone, in the only way that is worth a groat, in his every day life, such virtues as in his. I love him for what he so clearly was. He has gone before me, and in very much is an example. His precepts, too, are precious. Yet was he not a man? If a man, is it strange that in nothing he should err? Rather is it not strange that he erred so little? Hence some, many indeed, from the sum of his perfections, grant to him yet more, and make him an Ideal of Perfection. Even his imperfections are strenuously counted as virtues. But to go on.

1st. All "systems of faith and worship," or religions, are limited—limited to something. God has no limits that I know about; therefore I discard all limitations, and seek after God wheresoever he may be found.

2d. All religions have this as a cardinal principle on which they stand:—*I am right, you are wrong*. So says the Protestant of every other, and so says every other of him. These cannot all be right, altogether. I do

not like this, for I find too good evidence every day that what I thought was right, is quite too often disclosed as wrong; or so I deem it.

3d. That man is the best who is in the right. Nobody doubts that. Now, every religion says to its adherent, *You are right*. Of course, then, he is a better man than any other out of his system. But so says every religion to its followers, and hence bitter wars, feuds, inquisitions, heart-burnings, scandal, and such like fruits.

4th. A religion is a "thus far and no farther shalt thou go" principle. When once you are right, of course you can go no farther in that direction; but I much fear no religion is yet a standard of going. This, of course, cuts off all progress, and makes a complete stand-still affair. The proof is all around us every day.

5th. All religions narrow the mind. It must be so. A system of faith and worship is one system, not all systems. Fences, like systems, narrow the field fenced in. There is ten times more danger in being too narrow, than too liberal, wide, diffusive as God. See a Romanist, Puritan: indeed, one can almost tell the members of the different sects by their tone and manner of speech; so pinched and dwarfed is a mere religionist. Well, this is the natural effect of every religion.

6th. Every religion creates castes. It must be so. It is too plain to be gainsaid, all over the world. It is at once sheep and goats, wheat and tares, righteous and wicked, good and bad, I and you, "stand by thyself; I am holier than thou."

7th. Every religion destroys all desire for farther research, and makes of man a mere muttering worshipper. There is no need of research if a system is once adopted as one's own, and that forever. Hence, all systems claim infallibility. They cannot do less. They claim to have already done all your thinking,—you have only to sink into this or that sarcophagus and become as dead.

8th. I heard a young clergyman of a fine spirit, in a popular branch of popular Orthodoxy (could any reader guess what branch I mean by popular Orthodoxy?) say not long since, in his pulpit, that "when Luther made a *Lutheran* he killed the man, and when Calvin made a *Calvinist* he killed the man. Too true, alas! But what struck my mind most forcibly was that one whose perceptions are so active, should not have seen that "when" Christ, or Jesus, "made a" Christian, "he killed the man," and to kill a man is granted as no small crime. Yet this young clergyman holds up the Christ as an ideal of perfection, and would have Jesus of Nazareth to fill the measure of his ideal; hence would say, perhaps, No matter if Christ does "kill the man," for he shall "be made alive." If a religion-maker "kills the man," in each case of making a proselyte, then does not a religion the same?

Many more points might be adduced, but enough are given, as I trust, to show my readers that I would have every "system of faith and worship" forever blotted out. And now one word to Spiritualists. In the light of the lessons of other systems and their effects upon individuals, society, and the world, let it be your firm purpose to let Spiritualism be just where it is, unfettered, uncaged, without a fence, every man's fountain of life. Thank God, Spiritualism cannot be fenced. When once it is fairly caught, it is gone.

As to what a man should be, it is too late to say more than a word. Every man should be a man; a lover of God; a growing man; seeking after truth every where, yet never thinking for a moment he has attained, but should press on to the mark of *attainment*. He should live so as to make his life approximate most rapidly to that Being whom every one should adore as the God and Father of us all. I would not tear down only, but no man can build up unless he first tear down. More anon.

ELMIRA, N. Y., Jan. 16, 1855.

For the New Era.

### The Sabbath.

More than two thousand years passed away after the reference to a Sabbath in the first chapters of Genesis, before another allusion is made to it by the writer or writers of the Pentateuch. Generation after generation passed into the spirit land, leaving no evidence on record that they observed any day as sacred. Moses is said to be the writer of the first five books of the Old Testament, and he records that God spake unto him those sayings now called the ten commandments. One of the commands is as follows: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Being once spoken, they were then written upon two tables of stone by the

finger of God. This is generally believed by the church of to-day, to be a history of a literal transaction, though they believe God is a spirit, having neither body nor parts. They affirm that a spirit is an *immaterial substance*—that God is *such a Spirit*, and yet wrote with *his finger* on as gross substance as stone! That an immaterial substance could make a mark with *its finger* on a substance as material as stone, seems to me a little incredible. If God is a material spirit, and *filleth* the heavens and the earth, or the universe of worlds, then one of his fingers would be of such proportions as to be unfitted for writing on tables of stone small enough to be carried by one man down a mountain. I do not say that a spirit might not write on stone, and that a spirit might not do it with his finger; but it is difficult to conceive of God's doing it by direct contact of his finger with stone. If God were the *only* spirit in the universe, then we should be obliged to admit every spiritual impression or direction as coming from Him. It is possible for Moses to have labored under an impression common to many at this day,—that every spiritual suggestion must either come from God or the devil. Whether the Sabbath had its origin with Moses, Spirits, or God, it was given *only* to the Jews, and hence can have no binding force elsewhere, unless it is a law of absolute right; and even then it fails to be obligatory if not perceived or appreciated. Where there is no law, there is no transgression—there can be no guilt incurred. The Jews may observe it, and those who have conscientious scruples concerning it, but on those only does it have any force. We have admitted that such a law existed among the Jews, and have criticised its origin a little. They believed it came from God, and they had a right to believe thus. But this is not the end of it. The *professed* followers of the Nazarene assure us that *we* are under obligations as believers in the teachings of Christ, to observe one day in seven as sacred time. Those who follow Christ in the outward sense, are, as a standard of authority, the history of his sayings and doings as recorded in the New Testament. But, had the Old Testament been kept in the hands of the Jews, and had the popular sects of this age had no other standard save the New Testament, it would have been as difficult a thing to establish a sacred day, as to have established the idea that tall steeples were evidence of high spiritual development. Christ paid no regard to days; and for this he was often rebuked by the Pharisees of his time. Aiming at the right, he pursued his usual course on the Jewish Sabbath. If he attended the Synagogue occasionally, it was because the people whom he wished to instruct, and save from a dead and formal religion, were there assembled. His silence on the subject, except when reproved by the time-serving religionists, and then his replies to those reproaches, as well as his evident disregard of it in his acts, demonstrate that the Sabbath was no more sacred to him than any other day in the week. His whole practice and teachings were in conformity with the sentiment, that it is *always* proper to do right, and *never* proper to do wrong—that days give no character to acts—that days have no character of themselves,—and that an action which is intrinsically right, can never become wrong by being performed on a particular day. I know he said, "it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath day," and I feel equally certain, that it is as *lawful* to do well on any other day.

A young man once asked Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life, and he referred him to certain commandments which should be kept. The command to observe the Sabbath was omitted. The young man said he had kept those referred to from his youth up. Christ said unto him, "One thing thou lackest." "Now," says the listening Pharisee, "he will mention the Sabbath as the *one thing*." Strange as it may seem, Christ saw something worse than a disregard of days to be criticised. The young man's covetousness stood in the way of his progress toward life eternal. But the greatest covetousness exists in perfect harmony with that spirit which regards days, times and seasons as holy.

Not only is it true that a man can follow Christ, and pay no regard to days as sacred, but it is equally true that none who follow him in the true sense do entertain any respect of this character.

The apostles have written, and whose writings have been kept unto this day, saw the subject in the same light. Paul says, in a letter written to his brethren at Rome, "One man esteemeth one day above an-

other; another esteemeth every day alike; but God regards none of them." "One man esteemeth one day above an-

other; another esteemeth every day alike; but God regards none of them." "One man esteemeth one day above an-



other; another esteemeth every day alike. This is as true of to-day, as of that time. But Paul's conclusion differs from those who talk most about him. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." We may form some idea of "his own mind" on the subject by what he says in other letters. In one, written to his brethren at Galatia, he says, "Ye observe days and months and times and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain."

To the Colossians he writes, "Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath."

I have thus briefly noticed the Bible idea concerning the Sabbath. It may be late in the day to discuss such a question. "The agitation of thought," however, may be the beginning of wiser purposes and more liberal views on this, as well as other matters.

E. B. PRATT.

## The New Era.

"BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW."

S. C. HEWITT, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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### Spiritualism and Reform.

There is no possible reform of human ill—no idea of reform now agitating the world,

to which we do not give our heart and our hand, and bid it God-speed. Our sympathies are daily growing stronger and stronger for the abolition of chattel slavery and the institution of freedom for the African race; for the destruction of intemperance, and for the establishment of organic, social, and spiritual manhood in its place; for the cessation of war and the reign of peace; for the abolition of the gallows and prisons, to be superseded by moral hospitals where the criminal shall be treated in a more common-sense and Christian way than heretofore; for the annihilation of licentiousness, whose substitute is the Divine Marriage of two souls in complete spiritual blending; for the triumph of health over disease in its multi-form varieties; for the extinction of poverty and its host of attendant evils, by a healthy affluence founded on rational and co-operative industry and a system of exchange or commerce, that shall no longer make parasites of the millions who labor; for the elevation of woman from a doll to a personal being, from a dependent to an independent, mentally, morally, and physically vigorous counterpart of man, his equal in all privileges, opportunities of culture, and rewards for services of whatsoever character or kind; for the interment of a dead church, and the establishment of one that is truly living, one that shall make the whole of life sacred, business, work, pleasure—all things; a church that shall no longer be content with serving the devil six days and the Lord one, which, after all, is so bunglingly observed that Satan gets the pith of even the seventh day as well as the other six; for the extermination of all penal law by becoming "a law unto ourselves," thus abolishing the very elements on which one class of civilized vampires live, and transforming the state into a paternal providence, whose care of its children shall be impartial and universal; for banishing to the shades our whole system of gigantic Commercial Fraud, by which the very commonest necessities of life, as well as luxuries, are not only often held at very exorbitant prices, by the princely speculations of the few, while the masses starve, but which are much oftener most woefully adulterated, so that health is made greedily to suffer, and the earth almost to groan out in agony as she observes the misuse her children make of her free and bounteous productions and her inexhaustible wealth; and finally, for the complete reorganization of Society on a Divine basis,—a foundation embracing such principles of equity and universal good as will inevitably reduce to its own proper limits the human proprium—the self-hood of man, which has so long been "master," not only among all Gentile sinners, but "in Israel" also.

For all these REFORMS, and for all other imaginable ones, to the fullest possible extent, we are fully ready, do we give all our heart's energies, and all the faculties of our mind. We are consecrated, body, soul and spirit, to them all, and shall not cease to labor for those who suffer, in these various directions, while God gives us breath, to the extent of our ability, and according to our own best judgment. We most fully believe the Kingdom of Heaven is now having its advent in a most marked and prominent manner, as compared with any former age, and that the time is not very far off, when the light we now enjoy, will appear only as the very first rays of the morning dawn, in view of the brilliancy of the more mature, yet ever maturing day. There is no extent of imagination, in the line of good and truth, that can possibly exceed the positive design of Providence in relation to man,

even on this earth. "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard; neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive," the blessings which are yet in store for him. Nature is inexhaustible in her riches; God is unfathomable in his goodness; and man is infinitely capacitated for progressive reception and appropriation of the good, the true and the useful. And realization, at most, is only a question of time. And even this, in times like these, when the very elements are all astir, when old institutions are crumbling into ruins, and their devotees are quaking with such unwonted fear; when creeds and creed-worshippers—when souls of mere shell, and ice-berg heads, are shedding but a faint and sickly light on great questions of living and of present moment—questions whose very intimation tells but too truly the deep heart-story and world-story too, of crushed and bleeding affections and most hellish discords; even the question of time is not the very hardest problem to solve that one could imagine. When the chemist observes the materials he has put together for a specific compound, in a state of agitation, he is able to see beyond that ferment, to more harmonious results yet to be. It is so, also, with the spiritually-social chemist—with him whose spiritual eye is clarified, and whose sight is therefore clear, far-reaching and comprehensive. And what though full realization may not come to-morrow, or the day after—this year or the next?—what matters it? It will nevertheless come! It will come in due season—come in obedience to natural law too, which can neither be forced nor set aside.

Too many people seem to think, talk and act, as though there were no laws in the universe; as though Nature could be forced and hurried forward to all desirable results, or else transcended and over-rode—set aside and thwarted by human power and intelligence. But such will, doubtless, sooner or later, learn their mistake, and conclude to adopt a system of co-operation with Nature and with law, which will insure a more wise and permanent result, so far as they are individually concerned. In the mean time, Nature, doubtless, will not delay her movements on their behalf, but go on elaborating her own proper forms, evolving her own proper forces, and ultimating her own appropriate results. And, as sure as

"Order is Heaven's first law," even so truly will it be her last law also. And, therefore, out of all the chaos of the past and the present—out of all the slaveries, the wars, the degradations, the crimes, the debaucheries, the tyrannies and the agonies, which have been so sorely felt by the great throbbing heart of Humanity, and which still give the race its dismal forebodings and its keen heart-pangs—shall yet spring the joys of the Blest and the peace of the Heavens. The mighty commotions of the battling nations, and the almost seemingly endless antagonisms and woes of deeply false human relations and conditions, in the present, are but the majestic birth-throes of the great Human Race of this planet, from whose agonies shall, by and by, be born, in organic symmetry, beauty and joy, the great SOCIAL HUMANITY, whose elements have been long maturing, and whose embryonic life is well-nigh complete.

To us, and to many more, to whom Spiritualism has made its advent, this is its most significant lesson—a lesson without which this Third Dispensation, so called, is no dispensation at all—has in it no life, no beauty, no good—becomes a tool without use, without significance—rather detrimental than otherwise; yea, verily, a curse! For, to open the Heavens, and let a flood of light into dark human souls, without removing the causes of that darkness and its consequent woes, is but to increase the darkness and aggravate the woes. But Spiritualism tells a more genial and significant story. Bright and beautiful as its own heavenly source, it comes to us all, with the serenity of an angel and the peace of the Infinite. Its full, glad story, ever has been, and still is, the elevation and joy of the whole Human Race. To this end, ever, are all its wonders exhibited—all its manifestations made; and it will not cease its remarkable exhibitions and influence, till, in the beneficence of Heaven on earth, THE TOLLING AND GROANING MILLIONS ARE FREE.

### To Writers for the Era.

We are always glad to receive the productions of those who write for the Era—those, especially, which express worthy and comprehensive thought, or communicate facts of remarkable, interesting and profitable character, bearing more or less directly on the subject of Spiritualism. But some of those who write for our columns, leave us (thoughtlessly of course), a large amount of labor to perform, in preparing their articles for the press, which a very trifling attention on their part, would save us. For instance, an article comes to us written in such fine hand, that we have to strain our coarse eyes immensely to make it out, dreading all the time, not a little scowling of compositors, when they come to put it in type. Then again, although the writer is evidently an educated man, he fails to point his writing

with accuracy, so as to be readily intelligible, as it stands in manuscript; and so we have to dig out the meaning, oftentimes, as best we can—reading and re-reading, till we either have a very fair prospect of getting the reputation of Job, for patience, or else such a one as we neither covet nor feel to be profitable. And lastly, (so far as the instance under review is concerned,) many letters are so indistinctly formed, that we find ourselves in a trinity of troubles—1. Penmanship too fine, tries the eyes too much. 2. Not well pointed, hard to get the meaning. 3. Letters badly formed, can't tell what they are, and hence have to work an hour or two over a brief article, to get it into readable shape, when we ought to be about something else.

Well, this is but the "beginning of sorrows." Some correspondents mix up business matters with what they intend for the public eye, and so we have another trying job before us, to either copy what is to be printed, or to take out their orders on other sheets for immediate use, and for preservation for reference, if needful, in future.

But not to be tedious in matters of this nature, (although exceedingly interesting, from one point of view,) we will leave this mode of particularizing, and suggest the following simple rules for those writers only who need them, assuring them, that if they take the hint, they will very greatly aid us in our manifold labors.

1. Write a bold, clear hand, so that the eye will catch every word at a glance.
2. Punctuate carefully, so as to give the meaning readily, and save future labor.
3. Always leave a good margin at the beginning for heading and introductory remarks, if the latter should be deemed needful.
4. Never mix orders for publications, with what you desire to be printed. The former should be put on a separate slip of paper.
5. Everything of a private nature, should be headed "Private."

By complying with these directions, we shall be saved much perplexity and perhaps some mistakes.

### Of Ancient Ruins.

#### LANGUAGE.

It belongs to this subject to speak somewhat fully of the languages. Speech belongs more strictly to man. While all things have their language, yet it can only be truly said that man has the ability to distinctly utter intelligible speech. But in this paper of Ancient Ruins, this vast subject can only be quite briefly unfolded. Volumes vast, sometimes quite unintelligible, have been written of the languages of man.

The Ancient Records have preserved a somewhat amusing account of the confusion of tongues. They narrate that a number of persons had assembled together for the construction of an edifice, for a quite lofty purpose. Busily employed in their various branches of labor, suddenly, and quite unexpectedly to themselves, they were able only to speak in diverse languages—no two able to transmit intelligence. This was indeed not only a very remarkable phenomenon, but also a most extraordinary catastrophe.—A number of persons associated for a common purpose, yet no two able to understand each other. Fable though this is, yet in an unfolding age, it serves to call the attention of man, to the whole subject of language, of different languages, of dead language, of living language, and of the general structure of language as a whole.

The schools deem it a *sine qua non*, that the accomplished scholar should study what is denominated the dead languages, that is, languages which are not now spoken by a tribe, clan, or nation, but which lie dead in the lifeless books. It is thought that a study of these dead languages, aids one in acquiring a more distinct knowledge of the roots of living languages. There is considerable wisdom in this view, as it bears relation to philology, and may be exceedingly useful for the class denominated "critics."

But it is an interesting inquiry, Where are the people who once commanded and fluently used the dead languages? The instant this inquiry is started, the thought will flash on the mind that there must be what are called distinct races. If there were such races, how came they to be extinct? There are two ways by which a race may become extinct; and first, by ceasing the sexual intercourse, procreation cannot be. But then a curious inquiry arises, why should man and woman resolve upon this particular separation? If there was a condition in the surrounding elements, bringing the immortals to this condition, then the same would apply to animality, and animals would cease to copulate; and the same law would apply to the positives and negatives of the vegetable and mineral conditions, and the grand clock-work of procreation would cease to beat. Broad though this thought is, yet it belongs to the grandest thought unfolded in the opening era—that all things are either male or female.

Secondly: There is another way by which a race may become extinct, that is, by submergings, earthquakes, volcanoes, and that class of natural upheavings, sinkings, or mountainous projections. This paper proceeds on the last mentioned basis. Now, while a race may be submerged, some of their records or language may, in several ways, be preserved. Without particularizing these

ways, it is sufficient to say that the intelligent mind will, at a glance, see that by such and such ways, a language would be left, while the race to whom it especially belonged, might become extinct; hence there are what are called dead languages.

This general thought being clearly perceived, firmly fastened upon the mind, there may be passage back to a prior question—How did man construct language? How did he primarily learn, not only how to speak, but to speak to his neighbor intelligibly?—Can it be believed that two or more persons assembled together, and said to one another, "Let us now make a speech, or construct a language"? Such a meeting could not have been held prior to ability to speak intelligibly. Speech must be to a certain extent, prior to holding a meeting to construct a language. It is plain that, at least, for a season, each person, family, clan, or tribe, must have opened a school on its own individual hook; and hence the diversity of languages, of speech, or of human language.—For example's sake, one sees water. He desires to tell what he has seen, and he makes a certain sound, corresponding to the sound of water, as it rolls onward. Being capable of hearing, the listener hears a vocal sound from a person, and thus what is called thought of water, is communicated to the mind of the hearer by the vocal utterance. So man went onward, constructing language, the sound, or the signs, or the motions corresponding to the things seen, heard or known.

Here, again, the Ancient Record has its fable. The beasts of the forest quietly, as the gentle lamb, approach the primeval pair, and quite deliberately, they name each class of animals, as they approach. All the animals come, not a single class excepted, and the names then given remain unto the present time. It was manifestly seen by the constructors of the Ancient Records, that some thing of this sort must at some time be done, and so they place the whole load on the shoulders of a newly created, and quite illiterate man. Still fables have their uses. As man has approached to a class of animals, as of other things, he has given names corresponding to their general character; and thus the names of animals have been transmitted from generation to generation, in the circle of particular races. But there are extinct animals, as well as extinct races. And when the naturalist becomes sufficiently simple to examine this paper, certain mysteries bearing relation to fossils, will be mysteries no more.

Returning, then, from this point, directly to the subject of ancient languages, it may be observed, that each race conceits its own language, agrees on certain words as signs of ideas; and hence the great diversity of tongues.

The Ancient Records contain also another curious historical point, bearing relation to language. Certain highly spiritualized persons are made, unexpectedly to themselves, to speak with tongues. That epoch was, to a considerable extent, a spiritual epoch. Man had arrived at a condition somewhat beyond the bounds of intellectuality, reaching somewhat into the higher stratum of spirituality, and could be easily influenced to speak and act under a considerable degree of spiritual power; and as it were, reaching up to the more spirit life, the two could intermarry, interlink, or, so to speak, inter-speak, and so that extraordinary phenomenon was exhibited.

A curious inquiry is then started—Are the languages of the ancients so fastened upon their minds, that they have retained them? and if so, can they transmit them? All that is essential of language, is preserved, and there will be comparatively little difficulty in teaching pupils the ancient, and even the dead languages, especially in instructing that class whose organs of language, and of vocal utterances, are found to be in favorable conditions.

[For the New Era.]

### Of the Arts. I. Of Speaking.

JOHN M. SPEAR, MEDIUM.

Language, in some of its varied forms, may be said to be universal. The minerals, vegetables, animals, in their various conditions, each and all, have their language. Things said to be inanimate have a language. "Day unto day uttereth speech." But, more strictly speaking, speech belongs to man. True, the lower animals enunciate sounds, forming a sort of speech among themselves; it is, however, quite unintelligible to others. Man is not only capable of speaking intelligently to his fellows, but, to some extent, can make himself understood to lower animals.

In discoursing of the Art of Speaking, it is proposed to speak more especially of man,—of his vocal powers,—of methods of speech,—of its influence on persons addressed,—thus opening to the mind an important, useful and interesting branch of knowledge.

Among the ancients, the Art of Speaking, especially as it related to addressing large assemblies, was more generally cultivated than it is in more modern times. The art of printing being unknown,—the press not having been constructed,—in moving the masses, great reliance was placed upon the accomplished, able and efficient public speaker. He who could best move the public mind by his oratorical powers, was highly valued, and was regarded as among the benefactors of mankind when a beneficent

enterprise was to be urged onward. Young men devoted themselves most assiduously to a thorough study of this highly important art. Some of the more eminent orators among the ancients secluded themselves from the world, lived in caves, dwelt in groves, wandered by the side of flowing streams, or roamed on lofty eminences, exercising their voices in various locations, preparing themselves to appear before large assemblies as public speakers. The name of Demosthenes has been preserved and carefully handed down to posterity, as one who devoted himself most thoroughly to the study and practice of the Art of Speaking. Everywhere he is named as the distinguished orator among the ancients, and as a model for the moderns.

In discoursing of this Art, a series of instructions will be presented; and, in so far as they are observed, will the student become an easy, fluent, interesting and efficient public speaker. And though some of the things said may be deemed comparatively unimportant, yet great things come of apparently insignificant matters. Little things must not be disregarded because they are small—connected with large things they constitute a whole.

In unfolding to man a new social order, much public speaking will be requisite to call attention to the general and special objects had in contemplation. As it were, a school must be opened; and among the branches taught the Art of Speaking should hold a prominent position. To proceed, then, to rules to constitute one an able public speaker; and,

First. Before one appears in presence of a public assembly, with a view of public address, there must be careful preparation; and in preparing, the following things are requisite. 1. A thorough acquaintance with the subject of which speech is to be made, embracing in that acquaintance, careful and methodical arrangement, so that the general train of thought will be firmly fixed in the mind, and incorporated, as it were, in the whole being. 2. Prior to appearance before a public assembly, and subsequent to ordinary preparation, there should be at least one hour of profound mental quiet. 3. If foods are taken, they should be masticated at least two hours prior to public speaking. 4. The garments worn should be exceedingly loose, that the abdominals and the breasts may be fully inflated, and the neck should be but slightly covered, if at all. These several particulars are essential as preparative.

Second. In entering the assembly, all conversations with persons should be studiously avoided. Care should also be had, that the place of public speech, if in an edifice, is freely ventilated; and, if practicable, the North should be faced.

Third. The hour having arrived for the address, the shoulders should be thrown back, the abdominals forward, the head somewhat elevated, the voice, like a curving rocket, should be thrown over to the distant part of the assembly. The mouth should be quite widely opened, and pressure should be mainly on the positive foot, the negative being thrown somewhat out, keeping perfectly cool, wait, as it were, for silence, and for an upflow or an outflow of the subject, which has become a part of the being. It will struggle for utterance, like a child prepared for outer birth.

These several things being with care observed, if filled with the subject, if the heart is interested in it, speech will be clear, forcible, impressive, efficient, accomplishing, in some degree, the objects had in contemplation. Other adjuncts, however, are essential to render one what may be called a graceful speaker. Several of these adjuncts may now be named.

First, Gesture. Many persons who are otherwise effective speakers, greatly fail in this accomplishment. The stage far exceeds the pulpit, the forum or the bar, in respect to gesture. It teaches gesture with great nicety. It exercises its students long, and drills them patiently. Well would it be if the pulpit, the forum and the bar, could learn of the stage. It would be exceedingly desirable, in becoming an accomplished speaker, to associate with distinguished persons of this class,—be with them at rehearsals, and listen to their instructions.

In a brief discourse of the Art of Speaking, details of gesture cannot be entered into. That branch must be left to be acquired mostly by careful observation of the attitudes of accomplished public speakers.

Some public speakers are accustomed to drink freely whilst engaged in public speaking, a practice which should be discountenanced, not only on account of its awkwardness, but because it breaks the links of discourse, and somewhat cools the ardor of the speaker, which should invariably increase as he progresses in his subject.

Second. Another adjunct, which is exceedingly useful to render one an accomplished speaker, is a careful knowledge of terms. One cannot become too thoroughly acquainted with lexicography. Every new word he hears uttered he should record, and at the earliest moment should consult an able lexicographer in respect to its meaning, its enunciation, and, if possible, its derivation. A practice of this sort will be of great service in clothing one's thoughts when preparing or enunciating his address.

Third. Another adjunct is quite useful. An oddity of dress should be avoided. If persons are dressed fantastically or uncouthly, the minds of the persons listening are directed more to the dress than to the address, and so the speaker fails to be efficient.

Fourth. And yet another adjunct—an acquaintance with authors whose diction is pure, whose language is liquid, whose sentences are full, and whose style is somewhat poetic. Almost without thought the words flow to the mind, which are most frequently and attentively studied. These several considerations, if carefully observed, will constitute the student an able, instructive, interesting and efficient public speaker.

[For the New Era.]

### Spirit Readings.

MENTAL DELINEATION AND CONSECRATION OF MRS. J. H. FOSTER, MEDIUM OF LOWELL, MASS., THROUGH JOHN M. SPEAR.

This woman is a person of exceedingly fine mental texture. In this respect, her equal is very rarely found. Hers is a very compact mind. She has a very large amount of mentality, in a very compact form. Her mental faculties are unfolded in a quite extraordinary manner, in the following respects:—1. Her vision is very transparent: she beholds persons and grasps subjects without ordinary mental effort: that is, she directly sees persons—sees what they are—sees what they intend to do—sees what they are capable of becoming. 2. Her mental affections are extended in an unusual degree, so much so that she cannot conceal them. She feels that she must declare her affections. Should she conceal them, her happiness would be greatly alloyed. 3. She is a prophetess. She rather feels than sees things which are to be; and she freely declares that prophetic feeling; but her prophecies relate more to persons than to subjects; and that which she prophecies of persons, whether good or evil, substantially comes to pass. She is also unfolded as a developer: that is, she can and does bring that to the surface which is within, whether good or evil; so that persons will act out their real internal condition. She knows not of weariness in plans of beneficence. Mentally she schemes—looks at persons who may aid her schemes,—sets them to work—while she, apparently, sits quietly in a corner. Mentally, therefore, she labors beneficially, and is a very adroit manager. Very few persons know her ability in this respect. Her plans are very broad, comprehending present action, and far distant future results. In this she very greatly excels: in this particular she is a casuist,—seeing how, when one thing is done, of necessity another must be done. But she secretes—she does not declare all she sees. Philosophically, she says, "If I declare the whole, they will not do anything. If I can interest them to do one thing, they must do the next." Very few persons plan thus.

This woman is exceedingly conscientious. She cannot be terrified or cajoled; so that she walks by her own interior light: husband, children, father, mother, brother, sister, neighbor, friend, cannot control her, except so far as her interior leads her. She loves society, but she loves Individuality more. These several particulars render this woman a very marked personage. She would be a very able, useful, beneficent person as a counsellor. Her counsel would be of great service in an emergency, because she is a casuist. She could lead an opposing person into a labyrinth. She could lead a friendly person into a straight, direct path, to reach an end. She has also ample secretiveness; so that schemes will not be prematurely divulged, which is an important requisite in that sort of labor.

Thou who art the Grand Guiding Mind of all minds, aid in this reverential service. From this time this woman will hold the position of DIRECTRESS,—directing persons, or things to be said, to be sought for, to be accomplished. And now thou shalt receive thy true and thy appropriate name. Henceforth thou shalt be called the GUIDRESS. Walking, thyself, in the way, thou shalt be a living embodiment of wisdom, of counsel, of true guidance.

Go thou, gentle Guidress, keep thy lamp trimmed and burning; walk in truth; say to others, this is the true and living way, walk ye therein.

From this hour there is formed a bond of union between these persons,—each acting and reacting, aiding and guiding in the labors which are in contemplation.

Lowell, February 4th, 1855.

It is with much pleasure, and of our own free-will, without the least hint from "The People's Doctor" to that effect, that we publish the following document—a paper which manifests the true spirit, and an intelligence well worthy of either womanhood or manhood. DR. RANDALL is a woman—not simply in the sense of sex—but in a far higher sense, at least, as the common estimate goes; for, by her steady perseverance and earnest desire to be a blessing to her race, she has fully qualified herself, not simply to practice medicine, but to teach all who need the simple principles of health—the laws of nature and of life; and especially those principles of integrity and simple-hearted honesty of purpose, so much neglected by "the Faculty" in general, as well as by other classes. Mrs. R. is a thorough spiritualist, and a medium.

For further remarks, we refer the reader to the article entitled, "Mrs. Randall in Boston," in our last week's issue.

### The People's Doctor.

MAREND A. B. RANDALL, M. D.

Would respectfully solicit a share of Public Patronage, as a general Practitioner of Medicine. Her claims to such favor are, briefly, as follows:

She commenced the study and Practice of Obstetrics, in connection with Botanic Medicine, fifteen years ago, within her own family and a circle of immediate friends; since which, she has been much of the time in the investigation of various Systems of Medicine, among which are Hydropathy, Homoeopathy, Allopathy, and Chrono-Thermalism, as also, various systems of Diet, Regimen, and Hygiene. Within the last six years she has had free access to the text books of one of the best Allopathic Colleges in New England—the Vermont Medical College—her husband being a graduate from that college. Still seeking instruction, she came to this city and entered, as a student, the Penn Medical University, where she received a test examination in presence of all the faculty, in every branch of obligatory Medical Science taught in any of the Schools of this city, receiving, with the unanimous vote of the faculty, the Degree of Doctor of Medicine.

She has also received much assistance from Magnetic or Spiritual influences—having, in many cases, greatly relieved, and in others, entirely cured Neuralgia, Convulsions, Chill Fever, and even Cholera, after it had reached the "Collapsed Stage," with no visible agency, save simple contact between the fingers of Doctor and Patient.







## Poetry.

## Spirit Love.

Tell me, ye who long have treaded  
All the mazes of the heart,  
Are not life and death still wedded,  
Each of each a part?

Once a gentle form before me  
Shed a light around my soul;  
Holy eyes were bending o'er me,  
Music through my spirit stole.  
Once my inmost life was plighted  
Fondly with a saint on earth,  
Like two music notes united,  
Notes that never in their birth.

Yet not severed we, though parted,  
Still in truth our souls are one;  
Though on earth the gentle-hearted  
Hath her blessed mission done.  
Still for me in sweet communion  
Lives the form that smelteth dead;  
Love was once our chain of union,  
Still with love our souls are wed.

In the spirit's tranquil vesper,  
When the prayer of love ascends,  
Come a soft, responsive whisper,  
Thine as earth's dim shadows blend;  
Flit, and from mine eyes depart,  
Dwell with me a presence saintly,  
Dove-like folded near my heart.

Tell me, then, ye spirit-seers,  
Is it truth the angel saith—  
Is not love the chain of being—  
Love the lord of death?

A. J. H. DUGANNE.

## The Golden Age.

When the glad slave shall lay down  
His broken chain—the tyrant lord his crown—  
The priest his book—the conqueror his sword—  
When from the lips of truth, one mighty breath  
Shall, like a wind, scatter in its breeze  
The whole dark pile of human mockery;  
Then shall the reign of mind commence on earth:  
And, starting fresh, as from a second birth,  
Man, in the sunshine of the world's new spring,  
Shall walk transparent like some holy thing.

MOORE.

## The Young Philosopher.

Mr. Solomon Winthrop was a plain old farmer—an austere, precise man, who did every thing by established rules, and could see no reason why people should grasp at things beyond what had been reached by their great grandfathers. He had three children—two boys and a girl. There was Jeremiah, seventeen years old, Samuel, fifteen, and Fanny, thirteen.

It was a cold winter's day, Samuel was in the kitchen, reading a book, and so interested was he that he did not notice the entrance of his father. Jeremiah was in an opposite corner, engaged in ciphering out a sum which he had found in his arithmetic.

"Sam," said the farmer to his youngest boy, "have you worked out that sum yet?"

"No sir," returned the boy, in a hesitating manner.

"Didn't I tell you to stick to your arithmetic till you had done it?" uttered Mr. Winthrop, in a severe tone.

Samuel hung down his head and looked troubled.

"Why haven't you done it?" continued the father.

"I can't do it, sir," tremblingly returned the boy.

"Can't do it? And why not? Look at Jerry there, with his slate and arithmetic. He has ciphered further than you have long before he was as old as you are."

"Jerry was always fond of mathematical problems, sir, but I cannot fasten my mind on them. They have no interest to me."

"That's because you don't try to feel an interest in your studies. What book is that you are reading?"

"It's a work on philosophy, sir."

"A work on philosophy? Go, put it away this instant, and then get your slate, and don't let me see you away from your arithmetic again until you can work out those roots. Do you understand me?"

Samuel made no answer, but silently he put away his philosophy, and then he got his slate and set down in the chimney corner. His nether lip trembled, and his eyes were moistened, for he was unhappy. His father had been harsh towards him, and he felt that it was without a cause.

"Sam," said Jerry, as soon as the old man had gone, "I will do that sum for you."

"No, Jerry," returned the younger brother, but with a grateful look, "that would be deceiving father. I will try to do the sum, though I fear I shall not succeed."

Samuel worked very hard, but all to no purpose. His mind was not on the subject before him. The roots and squares, the bases, hypotheses and perpendiculars, though comparatively simple in themselves, were to him a mingled mass of incomprehensible things, and the more he tried, the more did he become perplexed and bothered.

The truth was, his father did not understand him.

Samuel was a bright boy, and uncommonly intelligent for one of his age. Mr. Winthrop was a thorough mathematician—he never yet made across a problem he could not solve, and he desired that his boys should be like him, for he conceived that the acme of educational perfection lay in the power of conquering Euclid, and he often expressed his opinion that, were Euclid living then, he could "give the old geometer a hard tussle." He seemed not to comprehend that different minds were made with different capacities, and that what one mind grasped with ease, another of equal power would fail to comprehend. Hence, because Jeremiah progressed rapidly in his mathematical studies, and could already survey a piece of land of many fangles, he imagined that as Samuel made no progress in the same branch, he was idle and careless, and treated him accordingly. He never caudally conversed with his younger son, with a view to ascertain the true bent of his mind, but he had his own standard of the power of all minds, and he pertinaciously adhered to it.

There was another thing that Mr. Winthrop could not see, and that was, that Samuel was continually pondering upon such profitable matters as interested him, and that he was scarcely ever idle; nor did his father see, either, that if he ever wished his boy to become a mathematician, he was pursuing the very course that was making it obnoxious.

The dinner hour came, and Samuel had not worked out the sum. His father was angry, and obliged the boy to go without his dinner, at the same time telling him that he was an idle, lazy child.

Poor Samuel left the kitchen and went up to his chamber, and there he sat and cried. At length his mind seemed to pass from the wrong he had suffered at the hand of his parent, and took another turn, and the grief marks left his face. There was a large fire in the room before him, and he went to a small closet, and from beneath a lot of old clothes he dragged forth some long strips of wood, and commenced whittling. It was not for mere pastime that he whittled, for he was fashioning some curious affair from those pieces of wood. He had bits of wire, little scraps of tin plate, pieces of twine, and dozens of small wheels that he

made himself, and he seemed to be working to get them together after some peculiar fashion of his own.

Half the afternoon had thus passed away, when his sister entered his chamber. She had her apron gathered up in her hand, and after closing the door behind her, she approached the spot where her brother sat.

"Here, Sammy—see, I have brought you something to eat. I know you must be very hungry."

As she spoke, she opened her apron and took out four cakes and a piece of pie and cheese. The boy was hungry, and hesitated not to avail himself of his sister's offer. He kissed her as he took the cake, and thanked her.

"Oh what a pretty thing that is you are making," uttered Fanny, as she gazed upon the result of her brother's labors. "Won't you give it to me after it is done?"

"Not this one, sister," replied the boy, with a smile; "but as soon as I get time I will make you one equally as pretty."

Fanny thanked her brother, and shortly afterwards left the room, and the boy resumed his work.

At the end of the week, the various materials that had been subject to Samuel's jack-knife and pincers had assumed form and comeliness, and they were jointed and grooved together in a curious combination.

The embryo philosopher set the machine—for it looked much like a machine—upon the floor and then stood off and gazed upon it. His eyes gleamed with a peculiar glow of satisfaction, and he looked proud and happy. While he yet stood and gazed upon the child of his labors, the door of his chamber opened and his father entered.

"What are you not studying?" exclaimed Mr. Winthrop, as he noticed the boy standing in the middle of the floor.

Samuel trembled when he heard his father's voice, and he turned pale with fear.

"Ha, what is this?" said Mr. Winthrop, as he caught sight of the curious construction on the floor. "This is the secret of your idleness—Now I see how it is that you cannot master your studies. You spend your time in making playthings and fly-pens. I'll see whether you'll learn to attend to your lessons or not—There!"

As the father uttered that common injunction, he placed his foot upon the object of his displeasure. The boy uttered a quick cry, and sprang forward, but too late. The curious construction was crushed to atoms—the labor of long weeks was utterly gone. The lad gazed for a moment upon the mass of ruins, and then covering his face with his hands, he burst into tears.

"Ain't you ashamed?" said Mr. Winthrop, "a great boy like you to spend your time on such clap-traps, and then cry about it, because I choose that you should attend to your studies. Now go out to the barn and help Jerry with corn."

The boy was too full of grief to make any explanation, and without a word he left his chamber; but for long days afterwards he was sad and down-hearted.

"Samuel," said Mr. Winthrop, one day after the spring had opened, "I have seen Mr. Young, and he is willing to take you as an apprentice. Jerry and I can get along on the farm, and I think the best thing you can do is to learn the blacksmith's trade. I have given up all hopes of ever making surveyor of you, and if you had a farm you would not know how to measure it or to lay it out. Jerry will now soon be able to take my place as a surveyor, and I have already made arrangements for having him sworn and obtaining his commission. But your trade is a good one, and I have no doubt you will be able to make a living at it."

Mr. Young was a blacksmith in a neighboring town, and he carried on quite an extensive business, and moreover, he had the reputation of being a fine man. Samuel was delighted with his father's proposals, and when he learned that Mr. Young also carried on quite a large trunk machine shop, he was in ecstasies.

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a pattern of the very loom I have set up in the factories, though of course, I have made much alteration and improvement, and there is room for improvement yet."

"And that was what you were studying when you used to stand and see me weave, and when you used to fumble about my loom so much?" said Mrs. Winthrop.

"You are right, mother. Even then I had conceived the idea that I have since carried out."

"And that is why you could not understand my mathematical problems," uttered Mr. Winthrop, as he started from his chair and took the youth by the hand.

"Samuel, my son, forgive me for the harshness I have used towards you. I have been blind, and now I see how I misunderstood you. While I have thought you idle and careless, you were solving a philosophical problem that I could never have comprehended. Forgive me, Samuel, I meant well enough, but lacked judgment and discrimination."

Of course the old man had long before forgiven for his harshness, and his mind was opened to a new lesson in human nature. It was simply this:

Different minds have different capacities, and no mind can ever be driven to love that for which it has no taste. First, seek to understand the natural abilities and dispositions of children, and then in your management of their education for after life, govern yourself accordingly. George Combe, the greatest moral philosopher of his day, could hardly reckon in simple addition, and Colburn, the mathematician, could not write out a common-place address.

## THE LAST INCARNATION.

## Fourth Legend.

## THE APPRENTICE CARPENTER.

At that time, Jesus said: "In order to render the condition of the children better, it is first necessary to teach their fathers and their mothers."

"When men shall be associated in their labor, the heaviest burdens will not weigh upon the weakest, and when all shall work, there will be rest for all. Then the rich will no longer torture their own children in order to fit them for unjust domination, and the poor will not be compelled to bend their youthful sons to the sorrows of servitude. For selfish passions will no longer stifle nature, and men will understand that labor is a duty and not a punishment. For there is no one to whom Providence has not given more fitness for one function than for another; and labor ought to be distributed according to the inclinations, and divided according to the strength of each."

"As to education, it ought to be common to all, like the light of the sun, for all desire it, and feel the need of it. And when it shall no longer be falsified in its direction and barbarous in its methods, it will be a reward and a happiness for all children."

Jesus said: "As he passed near a harbor where the carpenters were at work building a vessel. Some were squaring a large tree which was to be placed at the keel, and others were smoothing and adjusting planks of equal size, to form the sides of the hull. And all worked according to a plan and upon precise measures, in order that the work of one should conform to that of another, and that the whole should be harmoniously composed of all the parts."

Jesus, under the figure of a youth, approached the foreman who had the superintendence of the work, and asked him if he could not give him occupation among his workmen.

The foreman looked at him disdainfully, and said to him: "What use could you be to us? You are not strong enough?"

Jesus then noticed ten stout men who could not succeed in lifting an enormous piece of timber, because they distributed their forces badly and did not act together. All the strongest were on one side, and on the other all the weakest; so that the piece of timber, when raised on one side, threatened to fall on the other, and to crush a part of the workmen.

Jesus approached and said to them: "Brothers, let me help you."

And they began to laugh, leaving their hard labor in order to wipe the sweat from their brows.

But Jesus spoke to them with so much gentleness that they allowed themselves to be advised by him; he distributed the greatest strength where the weight was most heavy, assigned to each his post, indicating to him the motion he was to make; he himself then placed his white and delicate hand under the enormous mass and gave the signal. And the mass of timber was raised without effort and as if by a miracle.

Then turning towards the foreman, he said to him: "You see that in association no one is weak; for he who can do the least with his hands can sometimes do the most by his advice. It is the cooperation of small efforts that determines the greatest movements; and in order that a small force may become a power, it is only necessary to put it in its true place, so that it may act in harmony with all the other forces."

Then the workmen said to him: "You are very young; and we see that you are already passed master in our trade."

Jesus said to them: "I am an apprentice carpenter; but I speak to you in the name of supreme wisdom, which is master in all the arts and in all the sciences. When Noah caused to be built the ark, which was to preserve the seeds of a new world, he consulted that supreme wisdom, and by it directed the cooperation of his workmen in the construction of that wonderful vessel."

"But the workmen who had labored in the building of the ark did not enter it, and perished in the deluge, because they obeyed the man, and did not penetrate the divine thought. Let it not be so with you, for I tell you in truth, that you are all called to the building of a new ark. Be, therefore, intelligent workmen; and be careful to provide a place for yourselves and for your children in the great social vessel, in order that you may not perish when the great storm shall come."

The workmen said to him: "Of what storm do you speak?"

Jesus answered them: "When the wind blows, it must raise, or it must carry away, or it must overturn everything that opposes its passage. If it is thrown back upon the waters, it will uproot the mass of the waters; and if it descends in a whirlwind upon the earth, it will uproot the trees."

"The spirit of God, the spirit of intelligence and of love, is like an impetuous wind, which blows from the east even to the west. It drives before it the clouds of error, shakes the rocks of pride which resist it, and uproots the old beliefs. And those who have thought they could usurp the kingdom of heaven, try to repel it, and drive it back upon the suffering multitudes, as upon the surface of the waters. This is why you must hasten to erect the edifice of salvation, in order that the rising of the waters may not carry you away."

Then the workmen understood his words; and some became pensive, while others looked at him with astonishment, while others murmured within themselves, saying: "This young boy

is sent here to make us talk;" and they mistrusted him.

But Jesus, taking an axe, began to work with them; and everything that he did was of an admirable precision.

Then he said to them: "If any one requests you to labor for the salvation of your brothers, and does not at the same time put his hand to the work, distrust that man. True love for the people is proved less by words than by deeds. And how will they believe that a man feels for their sufferings, unless he suffers with them? Listen to the advice of those who give you examples, and do not allow yourselves to be enervated and discouraged in the present by thoughts of the future; the future will be the son of the present, and to-morrow will gather what you sow to-day."

"But take care that envy, or foolish pride, or other bad passions, do not make you despise the advice of those who love you. Recollect what happened to the people who allowed Jesus to be crucified. Know that the spirit of Jesus is always upon the earth, and that often, when you least expect him, he approaches you. Do not say, what right has such a one to teach us? It is as if you said, what right has he to love us?"

"Receive truth from love for the truth itself, and be not jealous of him who devotes himself to tell it to you. Listen not to those who seek to depreciate his words by accusing his person, for the weakness of man belongs to man, but the word of truth belongs to God. And you must know that it is so much the more divine, because it uses the voice of a more imperfect being, in order that you may not attach yourself to the man who speaks, but only to the truth which he tells you."

The men of the people, on hearing these words, were seized with respect, and looking upon him who spoke to them, it seemed to them that they had already seen him before. Each of them found in him some resemblance to those whom he had loved, and whose affection had rendered his life less bitter. To some, it was the remembrance of a mother; to others, it was the image of a son, or of a brother, who was no longer in this world; and all felt their hearts moved, and courage and hope were re-awakened in their souls.

Jesus worked with them until their dinner-hour, and, as they rested themselves to eat, he remarked that some had more, the others less; and he said to them: "Do you know how the Christ formerly multiplied the loaves to satisfy the people in the desert?" They answered him: "No; and we do not believe in that miracle, because it appears to us impossible."

Jesus said to them: "Put together in common all that you have brought for your dinner, in order that each may have the advantage of what belongs to all; and you will see that your provisions will be multiplied, for the bread of fraternal communion will be the bond of association, and the seed of future prosperity. And each of you will feel that he ought not to be a burden to the others, and you will be like the earth which receives the grain that is given to it, to render it back a hundred fold." Then, having blessed the bread, he broke it, and distributed it amongst them; and he did the same with the other provisions. And he said to them: "Learn what humanity can do by the labor of its hands."

Then each offered from his share to his brethren, and no one wished to receive more than he could give in return; seeing which, Jesus said to them: "The kingdom of God is not far from you." And he left them.

"Will you come back?" cried the workmen. "Yes," replied he; "if you do as I have told you, you will soon see me again in the midst of you."

And he left them in their astonishment, not daring to communicate their thoughts to each other; and several said: "If he were not so young, we should think the Christ had again come among us." Because they did not recollect that the spirit of the Christ is immortal, and cannot grow old.

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# THE NEW ERA.

DEVOTED TO THE NEW DISPENSATION, OR THE INAUGURATION OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN UPON EARTH THROUGH THE AID OF SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE.

VOL. III.—NO. 20.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1855.

WHOLE NO. 118.

## Thoughts of the Age.

The following paper is doubtless well intended, as are all the productions of our friend Potter, which appear in the *Era*. But his method of expressing his views, seems to us somewhat calculated to give a wrong idea, oftentimes, of what he would say. However, every one has his own manner of saying and doing things, and that, perhaps, is the best for him. We cannot help thinking, however, that we should ever aim to be clearly and truly understood—it saves time at least in getting at the absolute truth. As to our friend's notions about Jesus, of which he has often given intimations in our columns, some of our more sensitive friends, who know our own views on that subject, think we ought to express ourselves more fully than we have heretofore done. Well, perhaps we may, by and by, when Bro. Potter gets through. But why not earlier? Simply because our own wisdom does not so say, and we are not so egotistic as to suppose that our readers cannot think for themselves in this matter. When we give our views on any subject, we do it in the way of suggestion merely, and thus in the hope of aiding thought in what seems to us the right direction.

For the New Era.

### No Man should be a Christian.

BY A. M. POTTER.

No man should be a Christian.—It is said, that the gates of Basyrane had certain inscriptions on them. The first, "Be bold;" the second, "Be bold, be bold, and evermore be bold;" the third,—"Be not too bold." Thus Am I encouraged, and warned.

At first sight this expression, No man should be a Christian, may, to many of the readers of The New Era, appear strange; a little reflection, however, must satisfy such, that it assumes strangeness, more by its latitude and longitude, than by any principle involved in it. Had this paper as wide a circulation among the Hindoos and Moslems, as among such as have their very character shaped by ancestral influences, who have ever been hearing the saying, *Every man should be a Christian*, certain it is that the last remark would appear equally strange to the one portion, as does *my heading* to the other.

Again, if a majority in numbers has any virtue in it, toward deciding the right or wrong of my position, then am I right, for it will be borne in mind, that the Christian religion is very unpopular with by far the greatest portion of the inhabitants of the world.

Nor am I wrong in saying, no man should be a Christian, because of the general belief in this country, that God has given in the Bible a full, (or so full as is necessary), expression of his will concerning man, as a race, or as an individual. While we as a nation, with great confidence give ourselves to this belief, will any one say that God has any less interest or care, that the Hindoo or Mussulman should know His will, than ourselves? And have those to whom was given that which is esteemed among us as the revelation of God to man had any *faculties* by which God could reveal himself to them alone, and not also to those of other nations, whose welfare must have been equally his concern? And while Christians look with pity, and with a foreboding of evil upon such as have not their Scriptures; yet have not the Hindoos, Chinese, Persians, and others, what is to them as much a revelation of God's will as is ours to us? Nor can I see why *God, their Father*, may not have so revealed himself to them, if to any; inasmuch as the faculties of body and mind are the same in them as in ourselves. And if the same *time, talent, earnest good will, and desire*, had been bestowed to make their Scriptures harmonious, and to prove them given by "plenary inspiration;" the sum of the evidences would be fully as weighty for their Scriptures, as now, in relation to the Hebrew and Christian writings. Nor can I see why we should be more concerned for them, than they for us.

It seems to me that from the *Jew* my subject would meet a full response. Reverse it as regards his religion, and he would meet me as coldly as do some as it is. Therefore when I hear it said, that the Hindoo has within himself *less evidence* that God has favored him, or that the Moslem feels himself a rejected child of God; that *God could give and did give to the Hebrews and early Christians*, all that earth has ever, and can ever have, of *this will*; and that the various confidences, of various peoples, in the same thing, viz: that God has in some way spoken to them, are but gross deceptions; I come to one or two conclusions: First, That all alike may be deceived; or Second, and on which I establish my own belief, that *God is no respecter of persons*, and that one who is to us a poor benighted heathen, has no less of God's favor than the man who in the pomp and dignity of civilization, worships in a Cathedral; or than one, who in quietness seeks Him in nature,

and adores Him there. The same God who reveals himself to one man or nation, has the same interest in and ability to reveal himself to any other man or nation. To every man His will may be known, and to every nation, also, through the same faculties; *equally the property one as of another*. Hence my confidence in their various revelations, (so esteemed,) is based on the same general principles. Truth is as beautiful to me in the Vedas, as in the Hebrew writings; in the Koran, as in the New Testament. Nor can I see how I should use my *reason*, any less or more, in seeking after wisdom in the Bible, than in the Shaster. I am quite confident that the hand of God has been full as busy, and been guided by equal skill in India as in Palestine; that the eternal design in the Persian, is fully as interesting as in the Jew; that God's Laws have ever been shaping the practical History of the Mussulman, as well as that of the Christian; so that whatever be the fate of either, the same God, is the *Author and Finisher*.

No should man be a Christian. This word Christian is derived from one Jesus of Nazareth, whose followers esteemed him to be their Christ, or Anointed, or Redeemer from political evils, and probably from moral evil as well. In their hope of his being the political Christ, or Redeemer of the Jewish nation, they were disappointed. Some six or eight of his immediate friends have given somewhat of him, in biography, and otherwise. So far as these writings have been known and read by honest minds, free from religious bias, the universal sentiment has been that of deep regard for this lovely, self-sacrificing victim of bigotry, intolerance and enmity. Doubtless a political vindictiveness was also blended in the designs upon his life. The life and virtues of this Nazarene, his practical love of his fellow beings, his pure devotion to his mission, and the no less imposing devotion of his life in the completion of his *life purpose*, and for which he seemed by inheritance and adaptation so well suited, must ever bless man by the force of a practical exposition of love to God and man. His object seems to have been, in degree at least, misconceived; his end was tragical; his public life, a series of good works; his death, a testimony of his deep sincerity and desire to redeem his people and the world from sin.

From his teachings and course of action, arose in process of time, a stupendous *system of religion*. It seems to me he must have had this in view, as well as the purpose of redeeming Israel. Assuming, then, the point, that Jesus of Nazareth did intend to establish such religion, I repeat, no man should be a Christian, in the same sense in which I would say, no man should be a Hindoo, a Moslem, a Mormon or a *religionist*, at all; and by religion, I would be understood, as meaning a "system of faith and worship." Hence I say no man should be a Christian.

1. Because every religion has a vitiating effect upon any man or nation. Had I said this of any other than the Christian religion, I am confident that I had been met cordially in my position. In fact I somehow fancy that every people that are not Protestant are thought to be *injured by their religion*. And I as strongly suspect that the Romanist regards the Protestant as being in a bad way. What nation is so conspicuous as an example of what a religion will do, as the Jewish? Not since History began its etchings, has there lived a more vicious, barbarous, bloody people; one more deeply stained in crimes of every shade, murder, slavery, idolatry, theft, lying, polygamy, wars, rapine, cruelty, and an unparalleled savagism in killing, oftentimes, men, women and children, in their thirst of blood; and yet, from first to last, they were sustained, as they verily thought, by a warrant like this,—"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,"—or a "Thus saith the Lord." Even in their last days as a nationality, did they not with "wicked hands crucify and slay" Jesus, of whom we have just been speaking? And was it a fact, that the sons of Jacob, or Isaac, or Abraham, were such men as the Israelites in Egypt after Moses had come among them?

And since the Christian era, can any candid mind look at the almost completed two thousand years, without strong doubts, that man has been more blasted than blessed in it? Some would have God move by "steps or dispensations in man's destiny. By such, man was better by the religion of Moses than before. If it be true, that God moves by "steps," I would say that the Israelites were what they were because of their religion, and I think it will be conceded by

Christendom, at least, (doubtful if the *Jews* coincide; hence when Doctors disagree, who shall decide?) that they had been better, had they known and followed that of the Nazarene.

Again, if God moves by "steps," let us divide man's history, as by the Bible, into three "steps," of about two thousand years each. From Adam to Moses or thereabouts, I cannot see any very plain footprints;—one step. From Moses to Jesus, —one step. And from Jesus to "about these days," one step. —Will God step again, or are three "steps" enough?

Now, if all men before Moses should have been Israelites as by Moses' system, because his was a better one than theirs; and if those before Moses, and those after him too, should have been Christians, because the Christian system is better than either; and if the world is not manifestly better on account of these "steps," the conclusion from analogy is, I think, a fair one, that God will "step" again. Indeed, another step is held as a promise of a "good time coming" in the Christian system, as was the Mosaic to that before it; and as the Christian is claimed to be in the Mosaic. So then, is not the inference fairly deducible, that as the Mosaic system to that before it, and the Christian to the Mosaic, were each a "higher law" to the preceding, so will be that which is near at hand, a "higher law" to the Christian, Mosaic, and those prior?

If it be true that one system rises above the other, as just illustrated, is it not equally true that each was *better* than the preceding? If better, then was not the one just back *imperfect*, wanting in something,—in that which makes the next following better? And from this train of reflection, have we not reached a point in which the *Christian* system is shown to be *imperfect*, wanting in something, that the next "step" or revelation (for I trust it shall not be a "system of faith and worship") shall possess? By this too, we can scarce conclude the Nazarene as occupying a position in relation to God much different from that of a medium, by which this system was transmitted to the world; or as was Moses and Zoroaster, Confucius, Noah and others in their revelations. From the effect of Christianity upon the world; independent of extraneous aids and influences, such as the arts and sciences, which are clearly no part of its revelations; I am "fully persuaded" that another "step" shall be realized; also, that it is not a little dubious which of the two systems, the Mosaic or Christian, has been most fruitful of evil and bloodshed. Notwithstanding the simplicity of the teachings of Jesus, and the evident gain to man in them, no sooner had he died, than his followers were divided among themselves, and the so-called Christians very soon reduced his teachings and principles to a system; and therefore I speak of the *Christian religion* as a system of faith and worship, rising, as I think, indirectly at least, from the teachings and life of Jesus of Nazareth, while his disciples soon came to the adoption of what I find not in their Master.

Some may think I mistake Sectarianism for Christianity, as a system; but it seems to me that if Jesus of Nazareth had desired that no system should or could have grown out of his ministry, and the lesson of his life as a whole, it had been an easy matter for him to have so taught in a clear, unmistakable manner. Whereas now, all schools, creeds, sects and systems go, as they say, to him as their Master and model. And for this reason, I say, no man should be a Christian, since the religion of Zoroaster, Confucius, Mahomet or others have in them much that is to our comprehension worthy, and if made the property of all men, would be found full of redeeming excellence; yes though this be true, I am confident few in this land would say, be a Hindoo, a Chinese, or Moslem in religion; and I but add another to the list and say, Nor be a Christian. Like the honey-bee, gather good from all, and practise it; but become a worshiper in the Temple of neither, "for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

This system rapidly accumulated to itself, more and more of system, making to itself friends in various directions, sinking lower and lower meanwhile, till gross darkness covered the people. The dark ages were the result of religious systems; and probably none was more an element in the causes than the Christian. Had it been possible, which I doubt, for this religion to have preserved its original simplicity, the world had well nigh been *Christian*, at least in this

present time. I have not time,—(I wish I had) to say more at this point, but at the risk of appearing a little paradoxical, I proceed. The enormities and cruelties practised by this religion are scarcely exceeded by any other during the dark ages as well as before and since.

In the Reformation, however, things began to mend—or so one would conclude, when hearing the story of Protestants. And the Romanist would say, grew worse; so we go. It is doubtless true that the world is in a better state now, than three centuries ago; but what has caused the improvement? The Reformation? Nay; the sunlight of reformation was not in Luther. It was in *Science* and the *Arts*, with *Commerce*. The Art of Printing was the *dawning*. That gave to thought a galvanic shock, which I hope will ultimate in man's redemption. Had it been undiscovered, I see not but man were still in his darkest days. These and other kindred things have forced the Christian religion along up to its present position. I say forced, for it has not the elements of growth, but rather decay in itself. This may seem strong language, but not too strong. For where have been the churches, the accredited systems of Christianity, in all reforms? In the background always, till compelled to rise. Witness the cause of Temperance, Slavery, the suffragings and sneers at Spiritualism,—whence are they? From the churches. All reforms spring up, are for a time opposed by Christians, so called; till opposition becomes too gross—and then they are awakened to their necessity. This is become palpable indeed; it must be very palpable, *very*; or else such a paper as the NEW YORK EVANGELIST would not have admitted what follows as editorial, a year or two back. The quotation I give at the risk of overstepping my usual space, as it is too good to be lost; fit only to be kept before the people. I can scarce believe that paper was sane (by its own standard) when it gave room to the following:

"To the shame of the Church, it must be confessed that the foremost men in all our philanthropic movements, in the interpretation of the spirit of the age; in the practical application of genuine Christianity; in the reforming of abuses in high and in low places; in the vindication of the rights of man, and in practically redressing his wrongs; in the moral and intellectual regeneration of the race, are the so-called *infidels* in our land. The Church has pusillanimously left not only the working oar, but the very reins of salutary reform in the hands of men she denounces as inimical to Christianity, and who are practically doing with all their might, for Humanity's sake, that which the Church ought to be doing for Christ's sake; and if they succeed, as succeed they will, in abolishing rum, restraining licentiousness, reforming abuses and elevating the mass, then the recoil upon Christianity will be disastrous in the extreme. Woe, woe, woe to Christianity, when infidels, by force of nature, or the tendency of the age, get ahead of the Church in morals, and in the practical work of Christianity. In some instances they are already far, far in advance; in the vindication of truth, righteousness, and liberty, they are the *pioneers*, beckoning to a sluggish Church to follow."

I wanted to underscore, but must have underscored the whole, if any. I think the writer of that must have written as do many mediums, because he could not help it—and thereby wrote truly.

2. No man should be a Christian for the following reasons. But a word or two first, lest I be misunderstood altogether. Let me say I have no controversy with Jesus of Nazareth. No man has lived in whom has shone, in the only way that is worth a groat, in his every day life, such virtues as in his. I love him for what he so clearly was. He has gone before me, and in very much is an example. His precepts, too, are precious. Yet was he not a man? If a man, is it strange that in nothing he should err? Rather is it not strange that he erred so little? Hence some, many indeed, from the sum of his perfections, grant to him yet more, and make him an Ideal of Perfection. Even his imperfections are strenuously counted as virtues. But to go on.

1st. All "systems of faith and worship," or religions, are limited—limited to something. God has no limits that I know about; therefore I discard all limitations, and seek after God wheresoever he may be found.

2d. All religions have this as a cardinal principle on which they stand,—*I am right, you are wrong*. So says the Protestant of every other, and so says every other of him. These cannot all be right, altogether. I do

not like this, for I find too good evidence every day that what I thought was right, is quite too often disclosed as wrong; or so I deem it.

3d. That man is the best who is in the right. Nobody doubts that. Now, every religion says to its adherent, You are right. Of course, then, he is a better man than any other out of his system. But so says every religion to its followers, and hence bitter wars, feuds, inquisitions, heart-burnings, scandal, and such like fruits.

4th. A religion is a "thus far and no farther shalt thou go" principle. When once you are right, of course you can go no farther in that direction; but I much fear no religion is yet a standard of going. This, of course, cuts off all progress, and makes a complete stand-still affair. The proof is all around us every day.

5th. All religions narrow the mind. It must be so. A system of faith and worship is one system, not all systems. Fences, like systems, narrow the field fenced in. There is ten times more danger in being too narrow, than too liberal, wide, diffusive as God. See a Romanist, Puritan; indeed, one can almost tell the members of the different sects by their tone and manner of speech; so pinched and dwarfed is a mere religionist. Well, this is the natural effect of every religion.

6th. Every religion creates castes. It must be so. It is too plain to be gainsaid, all over the world. It is at once sheep and goats, wheat and tares, righteous and wicked, good and bad, I and you, "stand by thyself; I am holier than thou."

7th. Every religion destroys all desire for further research, and makes of man a mere muttering worshipper. There is no need of research if a system is once adopted as one's own, and that forever. Hence, all systems claim infallibility. They cannot do less. They claim to have already done all your thinking,—you have only to sink into this or that sarcophagus and become a dead.

8th. I heard a young clergyman of a fine spirit, in a popular branch of popular Orthodoxy (could any reader guess what branch I mean by popular Orthodoxy?) say not long since, in his pulpit, that "when Luther made a *Lutheran* he killed the man, and when Calvin made a *Calvinist* he killed the man. Too true, alas! But what struck my mind most forcibly was that one whose perceptions are so active, should not have seen that "when" Christ, or Jesus, "made a" Christian, "he killed the man," and to kill a man is granted as no small crime. Yet this young clergyman holds up the Christ as an ideal of perfection, and would have Jesus of Nazareth to fill the measure of his ideal; hence would say, perhaps, No matter if Christ does "kill the man," for he shall "be made alive." If a religion-maker "kills the man," in each case of making a proselyte, then does not a religion the same?

Many more points might be adduced, but enough are given, as I trust, to show my readers that I would have every "system of faith and worship" forever blotted out. And now one word to Spiritualists. In the light of the lessons of other systems and their effects upon individuals, society, and the world, let it be your firm purpose to let Spiritualism be just where it is, unfettered, uncaged, without a fence, every man's fountain of life. Thank God, Spiritualism cannot be fenced. When once it is fairly caught, it is gone.

As to what a man should be, it is too late to say more than a word. Every man should be a man; a lover of God; a growing man; seeking after truth every where, yet never thinking for a moment he has attained, but should press on to the mark of *attaining*. He should live so as to make his life approximate most rapidly to that Being whom every one should adore as the God and Father of us all. I would not tear down only, but no man can build up unless he first tear down. More anon.

ELMIRA, N. Y., Jan. 16, 1855.

For the New Era.

### The Sabbath.

More than two thousand years passed away after the reference to a Sabbath in the first chapters of Genesis, before another allusion is made to it by the writer or writers of the Pentateuch. Generation after generation passed into the spirit land, leaving no evidence on record that they observed any day as sacred. Moses is said to be the writer of the first five books of the Old Testament, and he records that God spake unto him those sayings now called the ten commandments. One of the commands is as follows: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Being once spoken, they were then written upon two tables of stone by the

finger of God. This is generally believed by the church of to-day, to be a history of a literal transaction, though they believe God is a spirit, having neither body nor parts. They affirm that a spirit is an *immaterial substance*—that God is such a Spirit, and yet wrote with his finger on as gross substance as stone! That an immaterial substance could make a mark with its finger on a substance as material as stone, seems to me a little incredible. If God is a material spirit, and filleth the heavens and the earth, or the universe of worlds, then one of his fingers would be of such proportions as to be unfitted for writing on tables of stone small enough to be carried by one man down a mountain. I do not say that a spirit might not write on stone, and that a spirit might not do it with his finger; but it is difficult to conceive of God's doing it by direct contact of his finger with stone. If God were the only spirit in the universe, then we should be obliged to admit every spiritual impression or direction as coming from Him. It is possible for Moses to have labored under an impression common to many at this day,—that every spiritual suggestion must either come from God or the devil. Whether the Sabbath had its origin with Moses, Spirits, or God, it was given *only* to the Jews, and hence can have no binding force elsewhere, unless it is a law of absolute right; and even then it fails to be obligatory if not perceived or appreciated. Where there is no law, there is no transgression—there can be no guilt incurred. The Jews may observe it, and those who have conscientious scruples concerning it, but on those only does it have any force. We have admitted that such a law existed among the Jews, and have criticised its origin a little. They believed it came from God, and they had a right to believe thus. But this is not the end of it. The *professed* followers of the Nazarene assure us that we are under obligations as believers in the teachings of Christ, to observe one day in seven as sacred time. Those who follow Christ in the outward sense, "ave, as a standard of authority, the history of his sayings and doings as recorded in the New Testament. But, had the Old Testament been kept in the hands of the Jews, and had the popular sects of this age had no other standard save the New Testament, it would have been as difficult a thing to establish a sacred day, as to have established the idea that tall steeples were evidence of high spiritual development. Christ paid no regard to days; and for this he was often rebuked by the Pharisees of his time. Aiming at the right, he pursued his usual course on the Jewish Sabbath. If he attended the Synagogue occasionally, it was because the people whom he wished to instruct, and save from a dead and formal religion, were there assembled. His silence on the subject, except when reproved by the time-serving religionists, and then his replies to those reproaches, as well as his evident disregard of it in his acts, demonstrate that the Sabbath was no more sacred to him than any other day in the week. His whole practice and teachings were in conformity with the sentiment, that it is *always* proper to do right, and *never* proper to do wrong—that days give no character to acts—that days have no character of themselves,—and that an action which is intrinsically right, can never become wrong by being performed on a particular day. I know he said, "it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath day," and I feel equally certain, that it is as lawful to do well on any other day.

A young man once asked Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life, and he referred him to certain commandments which should be kept. The command to observe the Sabbath was omitted. The young man said he had kept those referred to from his youth up. Christ said unto him, "One thing thou lackest." "Now," says the listening Pharisee, "he will mention the Sabbath as the one thing." Strange as it may seem, Christ saw something worse than a disregard of days to be criticised. The young man's covetousness stood in the way of his progress toward life eternal. But the greatest covetousness exists in perfect harmony with that spirit which regards days, times and seasons as holy.

Not only is it true that a man can follow Christ, and pay no regard to days as sacred, but it is equally true that none who follow him in the true sense do entertain any respect of this character.

The apostles who have written, and whose writings have been kept unto this day, saw the subject in the same light. Paul says, in a letter written to his brethren at Rome, "One man esteemeth one day above an-



other; another esteemeth every day alike." This is as true of to-day, as of that time. But Paul's conclusion differs from those who talk most about him—"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." We may form some idea of "his own mind" on the subject by what he says in some other letters. In one, written to his brethren at Galatia, he says, "Ye observe days and months and times and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain."

To the Colossians he writes, "Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath."

I have thus briefly noticed the Bible idea concerning the Sabbath. It may be late in the day to discuss such a question. "The agitation of thought," however, may be the beginning of wiser purposes and more liberal views on this, as well as other matters.

E. B. PRATT.

## The New Era.

"BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW."

S. C. HEWITT, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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### Spiritualism and Reform.

There is no possible reform of human ill—no idea of reform now agitating the world, to which we do not give our heart and our hand, and bid it God-speed. Our sympathies are daily growing stronger and stronger for the abolition of chattel slavery and the institution of freedom for the African race; for the destruction of intemperance, and for the establishment of organic, social, and spiritual manhood in its place; for the cessation of war and the reign of peace; for the abolition of the gallows and prisons, to be superseded by moral hospitals where the criminal shall be treated in a more common-sense and Christian way than heretofore; for the annihilation of licentiousness, whose substitute is the Divine Marriage of two souls in complete spiritual blending; for the triumph of health over disease in its multi-form varieties; for the extinction of poverty and its host of attendant evils, by a healthy alliance founded on rational and co-operative industry and a system of exchange or commerce, that shall no longer make parasites of the millions who labor; for the elevation of woman from a doll to a personal being, from a dependent to an independent, mentally, morally, and physically vigorous counterpart of man, his equal in all privileges, opportunities of culture, and rewards for services of whatsoever character or kind; for the interment of a dead church, and the establishment of one that is truly living, one that shall make the whole of life sacred, business, work, pleasure—all things; a church that shall no longer be content with serving the devil six days and the Lord one, which, after all, is so bunglingly observed that Satan gets the pith of even the seventh day as well as the other six; for the extermination of all penal law by becoming "a law unto ourselves," thus abolishing the very elements on which one class of civilized vampires live, and transforming the state into a paternal providence, whose care of its children shall be impartial and universal; for banishing to the shades our whole system of gigantic Commercial Fraud, by which the very commonest necessities of life, as well as luxuries, are not only often held at very exorbitant prices, by the princely speculations of the few, while the masses starve, but which are much oftener most wofully adulterated, so that health is made greatly to suffer, and the earth almost to groan out in agony as she observes the misuse her children make of her free and bounteous productions and her inexhaustible wealth; and finally, for the complete reorganization of Society on a Divine basis, a foundation embracing such principles of equity and universal good as will inevitably reduce to its own proper limits the human proprium—the self-hood of man, which has so long been "master," not only among all Gentile sinners, but "in Israel" also.

For all these reforms, and for all other imaginable ones, to the fullest possible extent, are we fully ready, do we give all our heart's energies, and all the faculties of our mind. We are consecrated, body, soul and spirit, to them all, and shall not cease to labor for those who suffer, in these various directions, while God gives us breath, to the extent of our ability, and according to our own best judgment. We most fully believe the Kingdom of Heaven is now having its advent in a most marked and prominent manner, as compared with any former age, and that the time is not very far off, when the light we now enjoy, will appear only as the very first rays of the morning dawn, in view of the brilliancy of the more mature, yet ever maturing day. There is no extent of imagination, in the line of good and truth, that can possibly exceed the positive design of Providence in relation to man,

even on this earth. "Eye hath not seen; ear hath not heard; neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive," the blessings which are yet in store for him. Nature is inexhaustible in her riches; God is unfathomable in his goodness; and man is infinitely capacitated for progressive reception and appropriation of the good, the true and the useful. And realization, at most, is only a question of time. And even this, in times like these, when the very elements are all astir, when old institutions are crumbling into ruins, and their devotees are quaking with such unwonted fear; when creeds and creed-worshippers—when souls of mere shell, and ice-berg heads, are shedding but a faint and sickly light on great questions of living and of present moment—questions whose very intimation tells but too truly the deep heart-story and world-story too, of crushed and bleeding affections and most hellish discordances; even the question of time is not the very hardest problem to solve that one could imagine. When the chemist observes the materials he has put together for a specific compound, in a state of agitation, he is able to see beyond that ferment, to more harmonious results yet to be. It is so, also, with the spiritually-social chemist—with him whose spiritual eye is clarified, and whose sight is therefore clear, far-reaching and comprehensive. And what though full realization may not come to-morrow, or the day after—this year or the next?—what matters it? It will nevertheless come! It will come in due season—come in obedience to natural law too, which can neither be forced nor set aside.

Too many people seem to think, talk and act, as though there were no laws in the universe; as though Nature could be forced and hurried forward to all desirable results, or else transcended and over-ridden—set aside and thwarted by human power and intelligence. But such will, doubtless, sooner or later, learn their mistake, and conclude to adopt a system of cooperation with Nature and with law, which will insure a more wise and permanent result, so far as they are individually concerned. In the mean time, Nature, doubtless, will not delay her movements on their behalf, but go on elaborating her own proper forms, evolving her own proper forces, and ultimating her own appropriate results. And, as sure as

"Order is Heaven's first law,"

even so truly will it be her last law also. And, therefore, out of all the chaos of the past and the present—out of all the slave-ries, the wars, the degradations, the crimes, the debaucheries, the tyrannies and the agonies, which have been so sorely felt by the great throbbing heart of Humanity, and which still give the race its dismal forebodings and its keen heart-pangs—shall yet spring the joys of the Blest and the peace of the Heavens. The mighty commotions of the battling nations, and the almost seemingly endless antagonisms and woes of deeply false human relations and conditions, in the present, are but the majestic birth-throes of the great Human Race of this planet, from whose agonies shall, by and by, be born, in organic symmetry, beauty and joy, the great SOCIAL HUMANITY, whose elements have been long maturing, and whose embryotic life is well-nigh complete.

To us, and to many more, to whom Spiritualism has made its advent, this is its most significant lesson—a lesson without which this Third Dispensation, so called, is no dispensation at all—has in it no life, no beauty, no good—becomes a tool without use, without significance—rather detrimental than otherwise; yea, verily, a curse! For, to open the Heavens, and let a flood of light into dark human souls, without removing the causes of that darkness and its consequent woes, is but to increase the darkness and aggravate the woes. But Spiritualism tells a more genial and significant story. Bright and beautiful as its own heavenly source, it comes to us all, with the serenity of an angel and the peace of the Infinite. Its full, glad story, ever has been, and still is, the elevation and joy of the whole Human Race. To this end, ever, are all its wonders exhibited—all its manifestations made; and it will not cease its remarkable exhibitions and influence, till, in the beneficence of Heaven on earth, THE TOILING AND GROANING MILLIONS ARE FREE.

### To Writers for the Era.

We are always glad to receive the productions of those who write for the Era—those, especially, which express worthy and comprehensive thought, or communicate facts of remarkable, interesting and profitable character, bearing more or less directly on the subject of Spiritualism. But some of those who write for our columns, leave us (thoughtlessly of course), a large amount of labor to perform, in preparing their articles for the press, which a very trifling attention on their part, would save us. For instance, an article comes to us written in such fine hand, that we have to strain our coarse eyes immensely to make it out, dreading all the time, not a little scowling of compositors, when they come to put it in type. Then again, although the writer is evidently an educated man, he fails to point his writing

with accuracy, so as to be readily intelligible, as it stands in manuscript; and so we have to dig out the meaning, oftentimes, as best we can—reading and re-reading, till we either have a very fair prospect of getting the reputation of Job, for patience, or else such a one as we neither covet nor feel to be profitable. And lastly, (so far as the instance under review is concerned,) many letters are so indistinctly formed, that we find ourselves in a trinity of troubles—1. Penmanship too fine, tries the eyes too much. 2. Not well pointed, hard to get the meaning. 3. Letters badly formed, can't tell what they are, and hence have to work an hour or two over a brief article, to get it into readable shape, when we ought to be about something else.

Well, this is but the "beginning of sorrows." Some correspondents mix up business matters with what they intend for the public eye, and so we have another trying job before us, to either copy what is to be printed, or to take out their orders on other sheets for immediate use, and for preservation for reference, if needful, in future.

But not to be tedious in matters of this nature, (although exceedingly interesting, from one point of view,) we will leave this mode of particularizing, and suggest the following simple rules for those writers only who need them, assuring them, that if they take the hint, they will very greatly aid us in our manifold labors.

1. Write a bold, clear hand, so that the eye will catch every word at a glance.
2. Punctuate carefully, so as to give the meaning readily, and save future labor.
3. Always leave a good margin at the beginning for heading and introductory remarks, if the latter should be deemed needful.
4. Never mix orders for publications, with what you desire to be printed. The former should be put on a separate slip of paper.
5. Everything of a private nature, should be headed "Private."

By complying with these directions, we shall be saved much perplexity and perhaps some mistakes.

### Of Ancient Ruins.

#### LANGUAGE.

It belongs to this subject to speak somewhat fully of the languages. Speech belongs more strictly to man. While all things have their language, yet it can only be truly said that man has the ability to distinctly utter intelligible speech. But in this paper of Ancient Ruins, this vast subject can only be quite briefly unfolded. Volumes vast, sometimes quite unintelligible, have been written of the languages of man.

The Ancient Records have preserved a somewhat amusing account of the confusion of tongues. They narrate that a number of persons had assembled together for the construction of an edifice, for a quite lofty purpose. Busily employed in their various branches of labor, suddenly, and quite unexpectedly to themselves, they were able only to speak in diverse languages—no two able to transmit intelligence. This was indeed not only a very remarkable phenomenon, but also a most extraordinary catastrophe.—A number of persons associated for a common purpose, yet no two able to understand each other. Fable though this is, yet in an unfolding age, it serves to call the attention of man, to the whole subject of language, of different languages, of dead language, of living language, and of the general structure of language as a whole.

The schools deem it a *sine qua non*, that the accomplished scholar should study what is denominated the dead languages, that is, languages which are not now spoken by a tribe, clan, or nation, but which lie dead in the lifeless books. It is thought that a study of these dead languages, aids one in acquiring a more distinct knowledge of the roots of living languages. There is considerable wisdom in this view, as it bears relation to philology, and may be exceedingly useful for the class denominated "critics."

But it is an interesting inquiry, Where are the people who once commanded and fluently used the dead languages? The instant this inquiry is started, the thought will flash on the mind that there must be what are called distinct races. If there were such races, how came they to be extinct? There are two ways by which a race may become extinct; and first, by ceasing the sexual intercourse, procreation cannot be. But then a curious inquiry arises, why should man and woman resolve upon this particular separation? If there was a condition in the surrounding elements, bringing the immortals to this condition, then the same would apply to animality, and animals would cease to copulate; and the same law would apply to the positives and negatives of the vegetable and mineral conditions, and the grand clock-work of procreation would cease to beat. Broad though this thought is, yet it belongs to the grandest thought unfolded in the opening era—that all things are either male or female.

Secondly: There is another way by which a race may become extinct, that is, by submergences, earthquakes, volcanoes, and that class of natural upheavings, sinkings, or mountainous projections. This paper proceeds on the last mentioned basis. Now, while a race may be submerged, some of their records or language may, in several ways, be preserved. Without particularizing these

ways, it is sufficient to say that the intelligent mind will, at a glance, see that by such and such ways, a language would be left, while the race to whom it especially belonged, might become extinct; hence there are what are called dead languages.

This general thought being clearly perceived, firmly fastened upon the mind, there may be passage back to a prior question—How did man construct language? How did he primarily learn, not only how to speak, but to speak to his neighbor intelligibly?—Can it be believed that two or more persons assembled together, and said to one another, "Let us now make a speech, or construct a language?" Such a meeting could not have been held prior to ability to speak intelligibly. Speech must be to a certain extent, prior to holding a meeting to construct a language. It is plain that, at least, for a season, each person, family, clan, or tribe, must have opened a school on its own individual hook; and hence the diversity of languages, of speech, or of human language.—For example's sake, one sees water. He desires to tell what he has seen, and he makes a certain sound, corresponding to the sound of water, as it rolls onward. Being capable of hearing, the listener hears a vocal sound from a person, and thus what is called thought of water, is communicated to the mind of the hearer by the vocal utterance. So man went onward, constructing language, the sound, or the signs, or the motions corresponding to the things seen, heard or known.

Here, again, the Ancient Record has its fable. The beasts of the forest quietly, as the gentle lamb, approach the primeval pair, and quite deliberately, they name each class of animals, as they approach. All the animals come, not a single class excepted, and the names then given remain unto the present time. It was manifestly seen by the constructors of the Ancient Records, that some thing of this sort must at some time be done, and so they place the whole load on the shoulders of a newly created, and quite illiterate man. Still fables have their uses. As man has approached to a class of animals, as of other things, he has given names corresponding to their general character; and thus the names of animals have been transmitted from generation to generation, in the circle of particular races. But there are extinct animals, as well as extinct races. And when the naturalist becomes sufficiently simple to examine this paper, certain mysteries bearing relation to fossils, will be mysteries no more.

Returning, then, from this point, directly to the subject of ancient languages, it may be observed, that each race conceals its own language, agrees on certain words as signs of ideas; and hence the great diversity of tongues.

The Ancient Records contain also another curious historical point, bearing relation to language. Certain highly spiritualized persons are made, unexpectedly to themselves, to speak with tongues. That epoch was, to a considerable extent, a spiritual epoch. Man had arrived at a condition somewhat beyond the bounds of intellectuality, reaching somewhat into the higher stratum of spirituality, and could be easily influenced to speak and act under a considerable degree of spiritual power; and as it were, reaching up to the more spirit life, the two could intermarry, interlink, or, so to speak, inter-speak, and so that extraordinary phenomenon was exhibited.

A curious inquiry is then started—Are the languages of the ancients so fastened upon their minds, that they have retained them? and if so, can they transmit them? All that is essential of language, is preserved, and there will be comparatively little difficulty in teaching pupils the ancient, and even the dead languages, especially in instructing that class whose organs of language, and of vocal utterances, are found to be in favorable conditions.

(For the New Era.)

### Of the Arts. I. Of Speaking.

JOHN M. SPEAR, MEDIUM.

Language, in some of its varied forms, may be said to be universal. The minerals, vegetables, animals, in their various conditions, each and all, have their language. Things said to be inanimate have a language. "Day unto day uttereth speech." But, more strictly speaking, speech belongs to man. True, the lower animals enunciate sounds, forming a sort of speech among themselves; it is, however, quite unintelligible to others. Man is not only capable of speaking intelligently to his fellows, but, to some extent, can make himself understood to lower animals.

In discoursing of the Art of Speaking, it is proposed to speak more especially of man,—of his vocal powers,—of methods of speech,—of its influence on persons addressed,—thus opening to the mind an important, useful and interesting branch of knowledge.

Among the ancients, the Art of Speaking, especially as it related to addressing large assemblies, was more generally cultivated than it is in more modern times. The art of printing being unknown,—the press not having been constructed,—in moving the masses, great reliance was placed upon the accomplished, able and efficient public speaker. He who could best move the public mind by his oratorical powers, was highly valued, and was regarded as among the benefactors of mankind when a beneficent

enterprise was to be urged onward. Young men devoted themselves most assiduously to a thorough study of this highly important art. Some of the more eminent orators among the ancients secluded themselves from the world, lived in caves, dwelt in groves, wandered by the side of flowing streams, or roamed on lofty eminences, exercising their voices in various locations, preparing themselves to appear before large assemblies as public speakers. The name of Demosthenes has been preserved and carefully handed down to posterity, as one who devoted himself most thoroughly to the study and practice of the Art of Speaking. Everywhere he is named as the distinguished orator among the ancients, and as a model for the moderns.

In discoursing of this Art, a series of instructions will be presented; and, in so far as they are observed, will the student become an easy, fluent, interesting and efficient public speaker. And though some of the things said may be deemed comparatively unimportant, yet great things come of apparently insignificant matters. Little things must not be disregarded because they are small—connected with large things they constitute a whole.

In unfolding to man a new social order, much public speaking will be requisite to call attention to the general and special objects had in contemplation. As it were, a school must be opened; and among the branches taught the Art of Speaking should hold a prominent position. To proceed, then, to rules to constitute one an able public speaker; and,

First. Before one appears in presence of a public assembly, with a view of public address, there must be careful preparation; and in preparing, the following things are requisite. 1. A thorough acquaintance with the subject of which speech is to be made, embracing in that acquaintance, careful and methodical arrangement, so that the general train of thought will be firmly fixed in the mind, and incorporated, as it were, in the whole being. 2. Prior to appearance before a public assembly, and subsequent to ordinary preparation, there should be at least one hour of profound mental quiet. 3. If foods are taken, they should be masticated at least two hours prior to public speaking. 4. The garments worn should be exceedingly loose, that the abdominals and the breasts may be fully inflated, and the neck should be but slightly covered, if at all. These several particulars are essential as preparative.

Second. In entering the assembly, all conversations with persons should be studiously avoided. Care should also be had, that the place of public speech, if in an edifice, is freely ventilated; and, if practicable, the North should be faced.

Third. The hour having arrived for the address, the shoulders should be thrown back, the abdominals forward, the head somewhat elevated, the voice, like a carving rocket, should be thrown over to the distant part of the assembly. The mouth should be quite widely opened, and pressure should be mainly on the positive foot, the negative being thrown somewhat out, keeping perfectly cool, wait, as it were, for silence, and for an upflow or an outflow of the subject, which has become a part of the being. It will struggle for utterance, like a child prepared for outer birth.

These several things being with care observed, if filled with the subject, if the heart is interested in it, speech will be clear, forcible, impressive, efficient, accomplishing, in some degree, the objects had in contemplation. Other adjuncts, however, are essential to render one what may be called a graceful speaker. Several of these adjuncts may now be named.

First, Gesture. Many persons who are otherwise effective speakers, greatly fail in this accomplishment. The stage far exceeds the pulpit, the forum or the bar, in respect to gesture. It teaches gesture with great nicety. It exercises its students long, and drills them patiently. Well would it be if the pulpit, the forum and the bar, could learn of the stage. It would be exceedingly desirable, in becoming an accomplished speaker, to associate with distinguished persons of this class,—be with them at rehearsals, and listen to their instructions.

In a brief discourse of the Art of Speaking, details of gesture cannot be entered into. That branch must be left to be acquired mostly by careful observation of the attitudes of accomplished public speakers.

Some public speakers are accustomed to drink freely whilst engaged in public speaking, a practice which should be discontinued, not only on account of its awkwardness, but because it breaks the links of discourse, and somewhat cools the ardor of the speaker, which should invariably increase as he progresses in his subject.

Second. Another adjunct, which is exceedingly useful to render one an accomplished speaker, is a careful knowledge of terms. One cannot become too thoroughly acquainted with lexicography. Every new word he hears uttered he should record, and at the earliest moment should consult an able lexicographer in respect to its meaning, its enunciation, and, if possible, its derivation. A practice of this sort will be of great service in clothing one's thoughts when preparing or enunciating his address.

Third. Another adjunct is quite useful. An oddity of dress should be avoided. If persons are dressed fantastically or uncouthly, the minds of the persons listening are directed more to the dress than to the address, and so the speaker fails to be efficient.

Fourth. And yet another adjunct—an acquaintance with authors whose diction is pure, whose language is liquid, whose sentences are full, and whose style is somewhat poetic. Almost without thought the words flow to the mind, which are most frequently and attentively studied. These several considerations, if carefully observed, will constitute the student an able, instructive, interesting and efficient public speaker.

### Spirit Readings.

MENTAL DELINEATION AND CONSECRATION OF MRS. J. H. FOSTER, MEDIUM, OF LOWELL, MASS., THROUGH JOHN M. SPEAR.

This woman is a person of exceedingly fine mental texture. In this respect, her equal is very rarely found. Hers is a very compact mind. She has a very large amount of mentality, in a very compact form. Her mental faculties are unfolded in a quite extraordinary manner, in the following respects:—1. Her vision is very transparent: she beholds persons and grasps subjects without ordinary mental effort; that is, she directly sees persons—sees what they are—sees what they intend to do—sees what they are capable of becoming. 2. Her mental affections are extended in an unusual degree, so much so that she cannot conceal them. She feels that she must declare her affections. Should she conceal them, her happiness would be greatly alloyed. 3. She is a prophetess. She rather feels than sees things which are to be; and she freely declares that prophetic feeling; but her prophecies relate more to persons than to subjects; and that which she prophecies of persons, whether good or evil, substantially comes to pass. She is also unfolded as a developer: that is, she can and does bring that to the surface which is within, whether good or evil; so that persons will act out their real internal condition. She knows not of weariness in plans of beneficence. Mentally she schemes—looks at persons who may aid her schemes,—sets them to work—while she, apparently, sits quietly in a corner. Mentally, therefore, she labors beneficially, and is a very adroit manager. Very few persons know her ability in this respect. Her plans are very broad, comprehending present action, and far distant future results. In this she very greatly excels: in this particular she is a casuist,—seeing how, when one thing is done, of necessity another must be done. But she secretes—she does not declare all she sees. Philosophically, she says, "If I declare the whole, they will not do anything. If I can interest them to do one thing, they must do the next." Very few persons plan thus.

This woman is exceedingly conscientious. She cannot be terrified or cajoled; so that she walks by her own interior light: husband, children, father, mother, brother, sister, neighbor, friend, cannot control her, except so far as her interior leads her. She loves society, but she loves Individuality more. These several particulars render this woman a very marked personage. She would be a very able, useful, beneficent person as a counsellor. Her counsel would be of great service in an emergency, because she is a casuist. She could lead an opposing person into a labyrinth. She could lead a friendly person into a straight, direct path, to reach an end. She has also ample secretiveness; so that schemes will not be prematurely divulged, which is an important requisite in that sort of labor.

Thou who art the Grand Guiding Mind of all minds, aid in this reverential service. From this time this woman will hold the position of DIRECTRESS,—directing persons, or things to be said, to be sought for, to be accomplished. And now thou shalt receive thy true and thy appropriate name. Henceforth thou shalt be called the GUIDRESS. Walking, thyself, in the way, thou shalt be a living embodiment of wisdom, of counsel, of true guidance.

Go thou, gentle Guidress, keep thy lamp trimmed and burning; walk in truth; say to others, this is the true and living way, walk ye therein.

From this hour there is formed a bond of union between these persons,—each acting and reacting, aiding and guiding in the labors which are in contemplation.

Lowell, February 4th, 1855.

It is with much pleasure, and of our own free will, without the least hint from "The People's Doctor" to that effect, that we publish the following document—a paper which manifests the true spirit, and an intelligence well worthy of either womanhood or manhood. DR. RANDALL is a woman—not simply in the sense of sex—but in a far higher sense, at least, as the common estimate goes; for, by her steady perseverance and earnest desire to be a blessing to her race, she has fully qualified herself, not simply to practice medicine, but to teach all who need the simple principles of health—the laws of nature and of life; and especially those principles of integrity and simple-hearted honesty of purpose, so much neglected by "the Faculty" in general, as well as by other classes. Mrs. R. is a thorough spiritualist, and a medium.

For further remarks, we refer the reader to the article entitled, "Mrs. Randall in Boston," in our last week's issue.

### The People's Doctor.

MARENDIA B. RANDALL, M. D.

Would respectfully solicit a share of Public Patronage, as a general Practitioner of Medicine. Her claims to such favor are, briefly, as follows:

She commenced the study and Practice of Obstetrics, in connection with Botanic Medicine, fifteen years ago, within her own family and a circle of immediate friends; since which, she has been much of the time in the investigation of various Systems of Medicine, among which are Hydropathy, Homeopathy, Allopathy, and Chrono-Therapeutics, as also, various systems of Diet, Regimen, and Hygiene. Within the last six years she has had free access to the text books of one of the best Allopathic Colleges in New England—the Vermont Medical College—her husband being a graduate from that college. Still seeking instruction, she came to this city and entered, as a student, the Penn Medical University, where she received a test examination in presence of all the faculty, in every branch of obligatory Medical Science taught in any of the Schools of this city, receiving, with the unanimous vote of the faculty, the Degree of Doctor of Medicine.

She has also received much assistance from Magnetic or Spiritual influences—having, in many cases, greatly relieved, and in others, entirely cured Neuralgia, Convulsions, Chills Fever, and even Cholera, after it had reached the "Collapsed Stage," with no visible agency, save simple contact between the fingers of Doctor and Patient.











