

# 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. 9.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1854.

WHOLE NO., 107.

## Thoughts of the Age.

For the New Era.

### Miracles.

Miracles have been denied on the ground that they would be a departure from what are called *general laws*, or the laws of nature. It is said that such a departure would be derogatory to the wisdom of God, as implying that he had ordained laws for the government of the Universe which were so defective that under certain circumstances he was obliged to violate them in order to effect his purposes. I do not see, however, any soundness in this objection. For even admitting that there is such a thing as *general laws*, which I absolutely deny in the sense in which this term is used, they are but the expression of the will of God himself, as carried out in the production of certain effects in the Physical Universe. And this will may be changed if circumstances in his judgment should require it, and a different mode adopted by him to produce the same effects. There can be no law which shall operate upon and bind God himself, for he is the maker of the law, and can repeal or alter it at his pleasure. He is the Sovereign of the Universe, and can make and execute what laws he chooses.

But I deny that there is any such thing as *general laws*, in the sense in which the term *law* is properly used. By general laws, as applied to matter, is usually understood a uniform and invariable mode by which certain phenomena or effects are produced in the material world, and which effects are produced by some inherent energy imparted to matter acting in and of itself, and capable of so doing, without the immediate agency of any intelligent cause foreign to itself, whatsoever—and of course without the agency of God for this purpose. Now, in this sense, I contend that there are no *general laws*; and that matter in all its forms is of itself incapable of the effects that are produced, but that these effects depend altogether and always upon the direct agency of God himself, or of some intelligent being whom he has commissioned for this purpose. In other words, that these effects are always produced by *Spiritual agency* in some way or other. A law cannot execute itself, neither can matter be made capable of comprehending a law and governing itself by it. A Being, therefore, foreign to matter itself, must execute the law, who is capable of comprehending it, and of making it the rule of his operations—and this Being is God himself. In other words, what are called *general laws* are but *mere modes of operation*, according to which God chooses to conform himself, and which are usually uniform and immutable, but which may be changed if he should see fit to do it. His agency is the immediate and efficient cause of all the effects that take place in the Physical Universe, acting according to certain rules he has prescribed to himself, and not to matter, and which rules are for convenience termed, though improperly, *laws*.

It follows from the preceding views that if circumstances should arise requiring that the same effects should be produced in a different form from what they are usually produced, this can be done by varying the mode of operations. And this is done in the case of *miracles*, which is only another way of producing the same effect, when the end to be accomplished renders it necessary that it should be done. And the miracles which are related in the Bible as having occurred at different periods of the world, illustrate this position, and prove its truth.

To suppose matter to be made capable in itself of the effects produced, and that by an inherent energy imparted to it, all its operations are carried on without the constant and continued action of any external Power upon it, is to suppose matter to be endowed with *intelligence*. In other words, it is to make matter God himself—and is asserting the doctrine of *Pantheism*. For to what does this amount? In all the operations of nature we discern contrivance, design and skill, means adapted to an end; and this end beneficent in itself, as contributing to the happiness of animate beings, whether brute or rational. Can inanimate matter be made to possess the power of continually carrying on itself these operations, by which these purposes are effected, and no wisdom nor power external to it at the time guiding it, and acting through it, to produce these results? To illustrate this matter, let us take a plant. It springs from a seed, and then by the process of growth is made to produce a flower, and afterwards fruit, which ministers to the gratification of man, and perhaps beast, who are endowed with senses to receive this gratification. Now can you suppose this process of growth to proceed from any inherent energy in the plant, imparted to it or not, which shall take that course exactly to answer the end which it does answer? This supposition would be as irrational as it would be, if the parts of a building were to take their places exactly where they should do to construct this house, to suppose that by some inherent energy imparted to these parts, they could be made to act in such a way as to produce a house. Can you suppose the bricks and the wood which compose a house could be endowed with a blind and undiscerning energy

which would enable them of themselves to shape themselves and take the place precisely that they should do to form a house, without the intervention of man for the purpose;—without the aid of his intelligence and contrivance? Yet, when you suppose a plant can come to maturity of itself, unaided by any intelligent power constantly operating upon it, you suppose something as remarkable and as unaccountable as in the case of a house. And as no one could suppose the house capable of forming itself, so no one ought to suppose the plant capable of itself alone of attaining to maturity, and reproducing its species in the way we see that they are reproduced. The same train of remarks may be applied to animals. And the conclusion is irresistible, in both classes of cases, that some Being having the requisite intelligence and power is employed, by his immediate and constant agency, in producing and rearing both the plant and the animal. And if in regard to them, so in regard to all the operations which are going on in the animate and the inanimate world. They are but the materials, and God is the Maker.

Again: in proof that *miracles*, properly so called, have taken place, without going to Scripture for the proof, we have only to look to the formation of our globe, and the productions it contained in its early stages. Miracles may be defined, I conceive, to be a departure from the usual way in which certain effects are produced in the material world,—to be a way different from the latter. Now the present mode of operations by which animals and plants are produced, could not always have been the mode in which they were produced. For there must have been a time when they could not have been so produced. There must have been a period when they were produced for the first time, and therefore could not have been produced by a course of successive propagation, in the way they are at the present time. The first animal could not have been produced by the preceding one, nor the first vegetable; and, therefore, some other than the present mode must have been used for producing them. There was a time when the animal was not produced by the ovary, nor the vegetable from the seed; for they did not exist. Therefore there must have been a time when *miracles*, as they are called, were performed—when there must have been a departure from what is now the usual mode of operations, or from what are improperly called *general laws*. And if it was done once, why may it not have been done again, to produce the same effect, when the occasion should arise which should require it?

And this view of the subject is confirmed by Geology itself. Geology teaches that the different tribes of animals which have existed at different periods since the beginning of organized matter, could not have been produced by what has been considered a sort of progressive and spontaneous creation, carried on by matter itself, continually changing its forms, and producing a higher type of the animal tribes. For the remains of different tribes of animals are found in different strata of rocks, and so arranged that the subsequent ones could not have been produced in any possible way from the preceding ones, but must have been a new creation by God himself. And geology also teaches that the earth has been undergoing, from the creation itself, such changes as would fit it to be the abode of different tribes of animals at the time they should appear upon the earth, and not at any time preceding. In this way it proves that the changes in the material world were contrived and carried on by God himself, with a view to the production of these subsequent tribes of animals. And then coincidence in point of time clearly proves the wisdom and power of a *discerning Providence*, in adopting means to ends, and causes to effects.

And Geology also proves that man was produced at a period long subsequent to the other tribes of animals, and could not have been produced by them. And it would also be utterly absurd to suppose that man could have been produced by them, when man is possessed of a *rational and moral nature*, of which they are wholly devoid, and which of course could not have been imparted to him by them.

The conclusion from all which considerations, and an inevitable one, is, that God, at successive periods of the world, created by a direct act of his power, without any connection whatever with preceding tribes, or by their propagation, new tribes of animals, and at last man himself. And if he did so, he performed what are called *miracles* at each of these periods; for he produced them, not by successive propagation, or by what are termed *general laws*, but by a special act of his power in a manner altogether different from the usual mode. He produced them by a *new creation*, requiring a process altogether different from the former one.

Again: all effects in the mineral, vegetable and animal worlds, are produced by certain chemical or physiological processes, by which certain properties or elements are brought into combination. The mineral, the vegetable, and the animal are but the production of certain elements existing in nature, combined in certain ways. These combinations usually take place by the slow process of accretion or growth, because this is the way in which God usually sees fit to

produce them, to answer certain ends he has in view in their production. But the Being who knows exactly what these properties or elements are, and in what proportion they must be combined in order to produce a certain substance or animal, could, if he saw fit, produce them instantaneously, as well as gradually. He could produce an animal or a vegetable by an act of his power, full grown and at once, as well as by the slow process of growth; for it is only a combination of the elements in a certain way, which he knows how to bring about. He could produce "the loaves and the fishes" instantaneously, as well as by the slow process of growth, or by the physiological and chemical process by which they are now produced—and by what is called nature. For all he has to do is to bring into combination instantaneously those elements which compose them.

And one of our chemists could produce bread instantaneously, if he had the command of the elements or ingredients of which it is composed, and knew how to bring them into proper combination for the purpose. He knows no other way but by the slow process of raising corn and grinding it into meal, and then baking it. But God may know of a different way. And in the New Testament, he is said on one occasion to have adopted this way, when he multiplied "the loaves and the fishes." For in both cases it is only a combination of the same elements to produce the same substance—in the former case slowly and gradually, and in the other rapidly and instantaneously.

The objection has been made against the *modern Spiritual manifestations*, on the one hand, that they would be a departure from *general laws*, and for that reason they would be incredible, since it is asserted that God always acts by uniform and immutable laws. And on the other hand, it is asserted that these manifestations are in strict conformity to *general laws*, and for this reason are entitled to belief, if supported by a sufficient amount of evidence. But if the view I have taken upon the subject of *general laws* be a correct one, these manifestations are not produced by any conformity with *general laws*, for no such laws exist. But they are produced by the direct agency of Spirits themselves, who are endowed by God with the power of producing them, in the same way that he himself conducts all his own operations; that is, by a direct and immediate agency upon matter. It is true, material forces may be employed by Spirits in producing the phenomena, but they are employed as instruments put into operation and controlled by the Spirits themselves, at the time the phenomena take place. And not as acting by virtue of any inherent energy imparted to matter made capable of acting itself, without the intervention of any Spiritual action upon it for this purpose. They act in the same way when Spirits use them, as they do when God uses them, as materials and modes, and not as efficient of themselves alone.

It seems to be supposed by those who find the solution of all physical phenomena in the action of *general laws*, that God is restricted in the production of all effects in the material world, by what has hitherto been his accustomed mode of operations. They do not seem to consider that it would be possible for him to devise and carry into operation new modes of producing these effects—to invent new forces, and make them to act in a new way, when the occasion should seem to him to require it. Why may he not invent some other force, which is neither magnetism nor electricity, nor any known power, to produce motion, and make it act in a way different from what these old forces are known to act? Because we ourselves know of no such way, it does not follow that he does not. This would be to raise our intelligence to a level with that of God himself, and to restrict him by the bounds of our short-sighted and feeble power of discernment and capability. It would be setting limits to his omniscience and omnipotence, and making him such an one as ourselves.

As a conclusion to this article, I would say, that those persons who contend that a *miracle* would be in derogation from the power and wisdom of God, and so altogether incredible under any supposable circumstances, only show their own fallibility, and reason from their own limited power and knowledge. They should be impressed with the conviction that these do not extend to God, with whom is all power and all knowledge, and who finds no more difficulty in performing what they call *miracles*, than they do their accustomed operations. Let such persons read that wonderful and sublime production, the Book of Job, and learn a lesson of humility in the estimation of their own understanding, and in the limits of power and wisdom they choose to assign to the Almighty. "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?"

WILLIAM S. ANDREWS.

A man in the common walks of life, who has faith in perfection in the unfolding of the human spirit, as the great purpose of God, possesses more the secret of the universe, perceives more the harmonies or musical adaptation of the world without and the world within him, is a wiser interpreter of Providence, and reads nobler lessons of duty in the events which pass before him, than the profoundest philosopher who wants this grand central truth.—CHANNING.

### The Shaker Faith.

NEW LEBANON, NOV. 1st, 1851.

RESPECTED FRIEND HEWITT:—In the "New Era" of Sept. 13th, 1854, we notice an article under the head of "Inspiration," professing to be a dialogue between one of your correspondents and a Shaker. As the sentiments which the latter is made to utter, do not correctly represent those of our society, we feel it our duty, with your permission, through your valuable paper, to disabuse the public mind on this subject; and in the following article, propose to quote some of the questions and their answers, from the above-said article, or dialogue, making such remarks as best suit our present purpose.

To the question of the Spiritualist in the dialogue, "What do you mean by inspiration?" the sentiment put into the mouth of the Shaker in reply, is, "God, speaking through us directly, using our voice," &c. Now the Shakers cannot father, or accept this definition of inspiration. But, to our understanding, inspiration is, 1st, in its highest sense, the supernatural influence of the Spirit of God on the human mind or spirit, through appropriate media, by which prophets, apostles, and sacred writers, or speakers, are qualified to set forth divine things, in a manner which evidences their divine origin. 2d, in an inferior sense, inspiration is the infusion, or communication of ideas to the mind, or influences to the soul, by a foreign being, or power, or supposed presiding influence, either superior or inferior to the soul of man, and either good or evil. Hence, we have Divine inspiration, angelic inspiration, human inspiration, and satanic inspiration; and there are all grades of quality or degree, attachable to each of these varieties of inspiration, from plenary to a slight impression. But, in our estimation, it is not possible for a soul truly to follow Christ, in the regeneration, without a constant influx of a measure of wisdom, light, power, and goodness from God through media superior to unregenerate, fallen man.

"Spiritualist. Do you really believe that the eternal Godhead, who fills the Universe, concentrates Himself in a mere man, so as to speak to us?" "Shaker. Yea, and we may know it is God speaking to us."

Now the true Shaker faith on this subject is, God speaks to man through appropriate media, intelligences superior to, and between God and man.

"Spiritualist. Do you pretend to say we may know when a man is inspired? If so, please give me your evidence." "Shaker. Consciousness of it."

To this answer the Shakers do not object, neither can any sane mind. But no soul can be conscious of the existence of such a thing without a demonstration to the soul made manifest, which in itself and of itself is declaratory of that thing, and manifest to the understanding in a way that it can recognize it.

"Spiritualist. Now suppose you, or the prophet, are conscious, how can I, or others be conscious of the fact, before we hear the communication?" "Shaker. When I tell you that God is speaking, you must believe it."

Of this, we would remark: No Shaker, having an understanding of the Christian faith, ever claimed such an idea as this. No principle of Christianity was ever more thoroughly taught among the Shakers, than the principle of evidencing the qualities of all souls and of all sentiments and influences, by the fruits, agreeably to the teachings of Christ and his apostles; and, that to the true Christian is committed the seal of judgment, as Christ said, "As I hear I judge, and my judgment is just," John 5: 30. And to the Corinthians, Paul saith, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" Cor. 6: 3. And again, our Savior saith, "Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" Luke 12: 57. Again, John 7: 51, "Dost our law judge any man before it hear him?" But, in relation to this sentiment, we understand that a creature sees and judges according to the influence he is under; if this be pure, holy, heavenly, just, and righteous, of God, the judgment will be just, and no man can in all cases judge justly, who does not obey every particle of godliness manifest to him; or, in other words, who does not please God; that is, become spiritual. "He that is spiritual judgeth all things," 1st Cor. 2: 15. "But they that are in the flesh cannot please God," (Rom. 8: 5) either in judgment, or anything else. And none can judge with righteous judgment, only inasmuch as they crucify the old sinful self, as said Jesus, "I judge no man," John 8: 15. And the Shakers recognize the propriety and Christianity manifest in the instructions of the Apostle John, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world," 1st John 4: 1.

The Apostle James has given Christians a very good test, by which to determine the character of wisdom, whether it be worldly or heavenly, and the Shakers accept this as a standard—viz: "The wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy, and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy," James 3: 17. "But if ye have bitter envyings and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but

is earthly, sensual, devilish," James 3: 14, 15.

We recognize the fact that God has given to each soul of man, however debased, a particle of godliness, and this, however small, if listened to, will recognize that which is godly. Kindred elements flow together. It would be just as impossible for a soul, possessing anything of God, not to appreciate in some little degree, that which is godly, when presented to it, as for two drops of water to come in contact and not unite. The evidences, then, of the divinity, humanity, or satanicity of a communication, are in the communication itself; and it is only by hearing the communication, and feeling its import, that we can judge of its character. This is Shakerism. We can very well subscribe to the words of "Nathan Rice," "Truth is its own authority," because it appeals to the measure of truth each soul possesses for its sanction, and confirms its claim by a harmony with all those laws of righteousness revealed to man, through whatever media or messengers God may have been pleased to send it.

Further, in regard to the dialogue before me, from which we quote, the words put into the mouth of the Shaker, concerning reasoning, and the authority of the Bible, are as follows: "You must take the Bible for your guide, throw away your reasoning, or you will be ruined; it is God that speaks." With regard to Bible authority, the Shakers have a word to say. We understand that the work of God with man has been, and still is, a work of progression, and there have been progressive dispensations of it, and each dispensation had its authoritative revelations to man, by superior or equivalent and appropriate media. The revelations of the laws and will of God thus presented to man in each progressive dispensation were adapted to the sense and understanding of man, already in some degree developed, which would enable him, on hearing the revelation, and observing its effects, to determine its character, and to recognize its divinity; while the revelations thus made, if received and obeyed, have a progressive influence in developing man for the reception of still higher influences and revelations from God; and thus create in man, not only an ability to comprehend higher revelations, when made, adapted to a forward and elevating progress, but an earnest aspiration after such increasing revelations; and it is thus that the means, in man, for receiving and comprehending progressive revelations, are provided, against the time of need, when those revelations shall be made. The Bible, being a continuous record of the progressive revelations and dispensations made to man, consequently presents, to the undeveloped understanding, characteristics of God, his laws and way, adapted and presented to other men, in a less developed state, presenting a phase of revelations in dispensations past, with which man is not now satisfied. Jesus Christ, being the instrument for the institution of a "New Creation" which is the product of a phase of revelations from God, entirely superior to and in advance of those phases which have preceded it, though in harmony with them in the order of progress, enabled him, and enables his followers to comprehend and judge of the merits and demerits of the Bible, (to speak of it as a whole,) as adapted to man in the present dispensation of God's will to man, and to determine its whole character.

The wisdom of God revealed to man in the Christian dispensation, then, furnished a test for the general character of the Scriptures, and of all revelation, from whatever source. It was the revelations of this dispensation which enabled Jesus Christ authoritatively to declare a character of God and his laws, different from those revealed to Adam, Noah, or Abraham, or Moses. It is this pure, peaceable, merciful, and faithful wisdom which enabled Jesus and his followers to judge the Bible, and to learn that a portion of it is sacred history, and a portion less sacred; some of it a record of the word of good men, other portions a record of the word of bad men; some part a record of the word of the angels of God, and others still, a record of the word of God, which, as St. Paul expresses it, "is quick and powerful, and is sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart," Heb. 4: 12. Now no portion of the Bible is this word, but simply a record of it. And it is the Shaker faith that the word of God, and the power of God, always have been, and always will be, dispensed to man by the choicer of; and we understand that although "God is no respecter of persons," He is yet "not without order; and the whole creation evidences that there are superior and inferior beings, and to some God hath given capacity to lead, as the head for the body; to others simply to be led, and has adapted certain individuals to certain ends and purposes, for which others are not adapted. If the whole body of nations or societies were the head, where were the trunk, hands, and feet? Thus, different characters of constitution are adapted to different purposes in the work of God, and to receive peculiar gifts of God, adapted to the accomplishment of those purposes, as recognized by the apostle Paul—"For the body is not one member, but many," 1st Cor. 12: 14 to end.

Our friend, Nathan Rice, has suggested that "the old notion of selecting different persons for mediums will soon be done away and forgotten, and the privilege recognized by all upon certain conditions." But, he adds, "We may be ready to receive light, and, in our spheres, shed light on those below us." In other words, be God's instrumental mediums for the revelation of light to other souls. Thus it appears that "Nathan" recognizes that some individuals, through some means, have more light than others, even of their own times; but what have they that is not a gift or revelation of God to them, which they have been the instruments to receive?

This is the Shaker faith, and we also believe this light is a revelation of God through media to the most wise and superior, and those who are the humble instruments to transmit it to those below them, are God's media to the lowly. It is thus that there is a regular gradation of capacities and intelligences, between God and man, and the superior are the media of revelation to the inferior, which superiority is a gift of God to man, revealed to him in God's way.

The Shakers do not harmonize in belief with those Spiritualists who claim that the present development of Spiritualism is a dispensation of the power and will of God to man in advance of, and superior to, Christianity; but that it is simply an operative element of the Christ-dispensation, which is a perfect work, and illimitable in its progressive development of wisdom, power, and goodness, for the elevation, redemption, and perfection of man.

GILES B. AVERY.

For the New Era.

### Thoughts on the Universe.

The Universe is a great circle, the centre of which is God, the Infinite Spirit, and the circumference of which is matter in its grossest form. As the circumference is turned to the centre, so all forms of creation turn to God and receive the radiations of his spirit. We cannot bound the Universe in any other way. The mineral kingdom is the outermost edge of creation. Its coldness, want of life and sensation, show its distance from the centre of light, warmth and animation, and as we rise in the scale of creation through the vegetable, animal, and intellectual conditions, we find more of the interior, and less of the grossness of the exterior organization. There are no *stars* or *stars* which form the outskirts of God's material creation, or stand as picket guards to the heavenly host. The dominions of the omniscient power are not thus folded in the arms of "chaos and old night." There is no limit to the material expression of God's eternal thoughts. We cannot understand the infinite and eternal existence of mind, else we would be great as God: so it is not possible to comprehend the eternity of matter, the immensity, yea, the unbounded extent of the material universe. Yet it is no less true, that it can no more be confined by special limit, than eternal duration can be counted by years.

All space (which is eternal) is filled with stellar globules of life. God as the centre of this vast universe resides not in a fixed place. He is a movable centre—a centre to every sun, moon, and star—to every form of mineral, vegetable, animal, or spiritual existence—ever out-radiating his life-giving influences: ever modulating and refining, by light, heat and magnetism, all forms of matter; and ever evolving from the limitless depths of his mind, great thoughts which permeate through all grades of spiritual life, assimilating to their conditions, and affording to each, food, occupation, happiness; and progress.

There is not only a material, but there is a spiritual universe; and the material is contained in, and proceeds from the spiritual; yet is ever, by the law of compensation, approaching again the spiritual by endless circles of refining and purifying existence. This is illustrated by the harmony in the order of creation as appears on earth. First comes *inorganic* matter, represented by the mineral kingdoms; then *life without sensation*, as in the vegetable; then *organic life*, embracing both mineral and vegetable existence, but superadded sensation and volition; then the *ultimate man*, combining the mineral, vegetable and animal existences, so refined and purified as to be the recipient of *intellections*, and the temple of the spirit.

These two Universes are distinct, yet not separate, but are joined as body to soul in man, a union of life and action, the one ever vivifying, energizing and elevating the other. The Spiritual universe is positive, the material negative—the one active, the other receptive—the one is universal, the other local, defined, limited—the one representing the creative thought, the other its outward expression, its material garment—the one a world of causes, the other of effects—the one a fountain of wisdom, the other the adaptation of it to conditions, and both forming a material union, the great type of sexual relations in the spiritual and material kingdoms.

We have therefore but to look at our own globe, with its twofold existences of mind and matter, to obtain an elementary knowledge of the wondrous philosophy of the universe. The relations of man in his internal growth towards the Divine Essence, and his external development in connection with his



race, truthfully express the countless modifications of the great univocal, of which he forms a part, and an almost perfect representation.

It would be highly instructive to observe the relations and correspondences that exist between the mental and material universes, the harmony of development that makes the contrasts exhibited in the different degrees of mental growth in the unfolded child and mature man, in the wonderful varieties of mental organization, but beautiful types of the material as presented in satellite, planet, sun—the dependence of the immature intellect on the nature, for spiritual light; each as planet and sun, being only reflections of rays from higher media of reflection, until the chain is completed in the central sun of the universe—and to regard the magnetic cords by which, in harmonious circles, all forms of spirit and matter, move in their orbits around the Infinite Centre.

It would be worthy the genius of a spiritual Newton, to probe the relations which exist between the body and the soul of the universe; to reduce to our comprehension the laws which govern this intimate and eternal connection; and to demonstrate the formula by which every star whose light in its travels has reached our globe, exerts on minerals, vegetables, animals, man, and each organ of his brain, its own peculiar virtue, and aids in unfolding their ultimate destiny as they are attracted along the pathway of progression.

But it is our province in this only to secure the key by which the intuitive mind may unlock the storehouse of Nature, and exhibit the rare gems of thought which shall yet sparkle in the adorning gaze of the human understanding. We may be impressed to pursue this subject, if we do not succeed in attracting to its investigation other minds more adapted by structure and development to expound its wonders.

H. H. GOODMAN.

## THE NEW ERA.

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BOSTON: SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1854.

### Antiquity of Spiritualism.

It is well known as the belief of all intelligent Spiritualists, that manifestations and communications from the Spirit-life have been known in all past ages and in all countries of the world, whose history or literature has to any extent come down to us. They find in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures a storehouse of evidences on this point, extending back to very remote periods; and the writings of almost all other nations are replete with testimony to the same great fact. And Spiritualist books and publications have teemed with these evidences, collected with great research and erudition, by such as were qualified for the labor—and they have been brought to bear with great cogency against the materialism of the present day, which denies all manifestations from such a source in modern times. They have argued that what has been, may be; and that the evidence of our own senses is more conclusive to us than any testimony which has come down from the past. And they have furthermore insisted, that where the testimony of the past, and the experience of the present, so fully agree and corroborate each other, they form for Spiritualism a Gibraltar of Truth, against which the materialistic philosophy of the times may make its puny assaults in vain.

Such being the state of the case, we were not a little amused at finding, in a late number of the *Lynn Reporter*, a long and learned article, endeavoring to make against the "new doctrines of Spiritism and the rest," (including clairvoyance, mediumship, Spirit-communication, etc.) by showing that they existed in the world "centuries before Christ." The assailant who thus blunderingly turns his weapons in favor of the movement he seeks to oppose, rejoices in the somewhat egotistic title of the "Lynn Bard," and is well known in the City of Shoemakers as an aspirant for the fame of a literary geyser and antiquarian. With great display of erudition, he quotes from Synesius, Macrobius, Solomon, Plato, Firmicus, Isidorus, Nymphodorus, Pliny, Apuleius, Cicero, Philostratus, Herodotus, Tacitus, Plutarch, Minutius, Paul, and many others, showing conclusively that phenomena identical with and very similar to many of those of our day, occurred in various nations of antiquity, and were then with one voice attributed to Spirit-agency. We thank him for his valuable service to the cause of Spiritualism, in thus bringing forward a number of witnesses to its truth, whose testimony had not come to our knowledge before. We shall treasure up this document beside those of Rev. Charles Beecher and others, who have opposed, or rather advocated, Spiritualism in the same way.

Near the close of his effort, our author very complacently assures us—"I am satisfied that these things are not consonant with Christianity, and that he who has the most of the spirit of Christ will regard them the least." The "Bard" is surely entitled to all the satisfaction which this conclusion affords him; but he ought not to think it strange if other people, when they find the testimony of the past fully corroborated by their own personal experience and observations, are com-

pelled to regard "these things" as facts; and to conclude that if they are "not consonant with Christianity," (as interpreted by the sectarians of our day,) it is only because such Christianity is not consonant with truth. We find that those generally, we might say universally, who are best acquainted with the Spiritual developments of our day, find them to be not only consonant with the facts of Christianity as recorded in the New Testament, but with all other unfoldings of truth, in all times and nations.

The "Bard" further charges that these "pretended new doctrines," (i. e., Spirit-agency and intercourse,) are "merely a revival of the old heathen belief, centuries before Christ; and that those who adopt them are not going forward but backward." So might the Atheist of to-day charge that the belief in a God, who governs the affairs of this world, is a heathen superstition as old as the human race, and that they who adopt it are not going forward but backward! The fact is, that a conviction of superior agency—of Spiritual existence, and of communication and aid granted to mortals from that source—runs through all human history, and is the basis of all systems of religion, heathen or Christian. Take away this, and Christianity itself is gone. Now if this conviction be well founded, as modern developments prove, and if some ancient heathen nations or writers had a fuller belief in its truth, and comprehension of its philosophy, than have our modern Christian sects,—it only shows that the latter have not yet so far advanced, in this respect at least, as the "heathens" had centuries ago; and a coming to the knowledge of the truth on this interesting subject will be really a going forward on the part of our materialistic Christians!

We find no evidence that either Christ when on earth, or "the Spirit of Christ," since he left the earth-form, was or is opposed to the investigation of any truth, in any department of God's Universe,—as are those who claim to be his disciples now. On the contrary, after teaching his immediate followers all they could "bear," at that time, he promised to send them "the Spirit of truth," to lead them into "ALL TRUTH," without limit or restriction. (See John 16: 12-15.) Consequently "they who have most of the spirit of Christ" are evidently those who pay most "regard" to all manifestations, and engage most earnestly in all investigations, calculated to give them more expansive views of God's Universe, His creatures, and His kingdom of universal harmony.

We trust the "Lynn Bard" may yet rank among these, and thus be found "on the Lord's side."

### Alleged Plagiarism.

We published recently a brief paragraph, forwarded to us by Mr. A. P. Price, of Philadelphia, purporting to have been written without human hands, at Mr. Koons's Spirit Room, to which was appended the words, "Written by the Spirit of Christ." The important fact in this case, to us, was the manner in which the writing was performed, and as we had other testimony on that point besides the statement of our correspondent, we did not hesitate to give it publicity. With regard to the authorship of the writing, which was quite another matter, there was to our mind no evidence that it was executed by the personage whose name was appended; and we intimated as much in our remarks, leaving each reader to form his own conclusions.

An anonymous correspondent has sent us a slip from a newspaper, containing the same paragraph, credited to the authorship of *De Witt Clinton*. He accompanies it by some facetious doggerel, in which he intimates that either Mr. Koons has imposed upon the community, or that Spirits "fulminate stolen thunder," and that we have shown too great credulity in the case.

With regard to Mr. K., we can only say that we have, from different sources, what appears to be satisfactory evidence that he has acted truthfully in the matter. There surely have been real wonders enough enacted at his place, to render it unnecessary, as well as extremely unwise, for him to attempt to fabricate any false stories.

As to disembodied Spirits using "stolen thunder," and assuming fictitious names, there is nothing about that which is either incredible or improbable to our apprehension—since it is so common a thing for many to do the same before they leave the body. Why should they not continue to amuse themselves with similar tricks, until they have advanced to higher wisdom?

If our correspondent will look again at our introductory remarks to the communication referred to, he will see that we manifested no credulity whatever in the matter. We simply gave the statement on the authority with which it came to us, and left it to the reader to form his own opinions.

### Who are the Infidels?

An intelligent gentleman of this city, whose wife is now under discipline by the authorities of one of our popular churches, for entertaining a belief in Modern Spiritualism, said to us, a few days since, in remarking upon the circumstance, "This is a singular state of things. I have been what is called an infidel from my youth—unable to believe in the Bible on account of the miraculous and seemingly impossible nature of many occurrences narrated in its pages, which I could not accept on such doubtful testimony. The church members have labored long and unsuccessfully to convince me of their truth; but within a year or two I have witnessed with my own senses so many similar things, in what purport to be modern Spiritual Manifestations, that I have begun to believe in the truth of those recorded in the Bible. And now these church members turn around and tell me that all I have myself witnessed is a delusion or from the devil! I confess, I cannot understand them."

Is it not evident that our friend is now the believer, and the church members the infidels?

### Mr. Davis's Lectures.

From our notes of Mr. Davis's Lectures in the Melodeon, on Sunday, Nov. 18th, we make the following brief synopsis:

#### AFTERNOON.

Mr. D. announced as his topic, "The tendencies of Spiritualism—are they moral or immoral?" and said that he should take the liberty to select a text from the gospel according to St. Nature, in these words: "The second manifestation of the principle of Wisdom is Justice."

He would first inquire, what is Spiritualism? As now exhibited it is the outgrowth of the religious phase of the social element. The love of society draws people together in social intercourse. The social element is the basis of the family, of the church, of the school, of all our institutions. Without it our churches would at once go to pieces. But the social element has a religious department. It looks upward to superior beings, and years after those who have entered a higher life. On this upward yearning of the social nature, Spiritualism is based. Thus far the intercourse between this and the spiritual spheres has been mainly of a social character—communion between friend and friend, growing naturally out of our social and religious instincts. The religious community have misunderstood its nature—have conceived it to be impure and foul—and have persisted in slandering it, until some, no doubt, have come honestly to believe their slanders.

But Spiritualism, being based upon the aspirations and wants of man's nature, is as old as man himself. It is not the child of the nineteenth century; its foundation is lower down than the first verse of Genesis, and it reaches higher up than the last verse of Revelation. Every church in Christendom is based on Spiritualism. It is the doctrine of the Divine Influx—the universal conviction of the religious world, that men and women, associating together for high and holy purposes, and looking upward for superior influences, will receive the gift of the Divine Spirit—the communication of the Holy Ghost. Why should this be denied to us, when all religionists claim it for themselves? All Spiritualism, in the Church and out, is based upon the idea that man can and should intercommune with the Divine through his higher aspirations, his religious nature. Can the tendency of this be otherwise than purifying, elevating, ennobling?

The Church, to be sure, has a habit of opposing all movements and all ideas which do not originate with itself. But what is the use of such opposition here? It is a losing warfare to the Church, for she is obliged to ignore and deny her own foundation. Spiritualists find themselves compelled to turn around and convince the church of the truth of what she always been preaching!

But Spiritualism has its difficulties and its individual trials. The speaker finds the Spiritualists of to-day working out each his peculiar experience—each building for himself or herself a ladder of communication with the unseen world. Many severe trials are endured, and some are on the point of giving up in despair. There are difficulties which must be met and explained on principles which will commend themselves to the instincts of human nature in all coming time, or they will not stand; but Spiritualists who are also philosophers will not shrink from meeting with such difficulties, and seeking with steady perseverance for their solution.

There are contradictions and apparent falsehoods in spiritual intercourse—what shall be said of them? These will be explained when we have more wisdom. Be patient. What if some fall and are crushed beneath the weight of these new experiences?

Because, in constructing a new railroad, a laborer sometimes gets buried beneath the falling earth, do we give up the undertaking and repudiate building railroads? These contradictions and difficulties all have their use, and when understood this will be seen.

The speaker here narrated cases which had come under his own observation, where what was at first sight evil and false, resulted in great good. He defined morality to be—doing some good, no harm. Spirits often act on this principle—perhaps unwisely in some instances. In order to accomplish what they think to be good, they sometimes state what turns out to be untrue, and they often allow those whom they watch over to act under misapprehension and mistake, until such time as they can be undeceived without doing a greater harm. By such considerations as these, much that is apparently evil may be explained, and many of the difficulties of spiritual intercourse be solved, and its tendencies on the whole be shown to be good.

The time having expired, Mr. D. proposed to consider the same topic further in the evening.

#### EVENING.

Mr. Davis, in pursuing the general subject of his afternoon lecture, proceeded to speak of the tendency of Spiritualism to the institution of a New Order of Society.

Spiritualism, as already shown, is the outgrowth of the religious phase of the social element in human nature. The highest manifestation of religion is universal justice. It has been predicted in all ages that an era is to come on earth in which the best things shall preponderate—an age when universal justice shall prevail among men. The common notion has been that the first age of the world was such an age, but this was an error. Here the speaker dwelt upon the crudity and absurdity of the popular notions respecting Adam and Eve, and the primitive inhabitants of the world. The truth was that man started from a very low condition, and has ever been progressing towards the era of universal right and justice, ever climbing upward toward that which is still in the future.

But a great variety of opinions prevail as to what the kingdom of heaven is to be, and

now it is to be introduced. The Adventists, the Orthodox, the Swedenborgians, the Christian Fathers, the Hebrew Prophets, the Fourier and the Phalansterians, the so-called Practical Christians, the Shakers, and the believers in Individual Sovereignty,—all have their different conceptions, and show their various paths; and we have ours also.

Spiritualism unquestionably furnishes a most potential agency to bring about a new social order—the reign of universal justice. Its grand central principle is that the soul of man is of divine origin, and therefore intrinsically pure, and constitutionally immortal. The dominant religious theories hold man to be depraved, and therefore not to be trusted, hence universal distrust prevails throughout society. This is unjust. This stigma is false, and must be uprooted before confidence and justice can prevail. There are sins in the world, it may be, but there are more evils than sins. Evils are but comparative stages of progression; they are not lesser goods. This fact is a great discovery, and it opens a new philosophy of reform. Evils are to be removed by unfolding greater good—error destroyed by making known truth.

Religious people pray in the beautiful words of the Lord's Prayer, yet have little idea that they have anything to do to bring it answer. The lawyer devoutly repeats in church, "Thy kingdom come;" but if the kingdom of universal love and peace were to reveal for one day in Boston, would not that be a dismal day for the lawyers? The physician prays, "Thy will be done;" but if all men were to do God's will, as revealed in their physical constitutions, and thus begin universal health, what would the doctor do?

So of other professions and occupations. Spiritualism, teaching that the soul of man is intrinsically pure and constitutionally immortal, and recognizing constant aid from above through intercourse with higher forms of life, tends necessarily to the promotion of social harmony and universal justice. But this harmony must commence within the individual. Be just to yourself, physically, mentally, spiritually, and then you will do most to promote justice in others.

The true social order must be a thing of slow growth—it may require a century for its unfolding. We must therefore work in patience, in the midst of society as it is; leading just and pure lives, until the principles of justice shall permeate all hearts, and bring Humanity into an universal brotherhood.

The remainder of the discourse was a spontaneous out-pouring of inspiration, laden with deep, stirring, manly and practical thought, to the expression of which the reporter's pencil could do no justice.

### Spiritualism in Nashville, Tenn.

From the *Nashville Evening News*, of Nov. 11, we copy the following:

"The meetings of the 'Spiritual Conference' are held on Friday evenings of each week. Rev. J. B. Ferguson presiding. On last evening Old Fellow's Hall was crowded almost to its utmost capacity, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, by an audience comprising scores of ladies and hundreds of gentlemen, embracing lawyers and doctors, ministers and people of every grade of talents and every position in society.

Whether the seeming interest of the large audience, as manifested in the marked and patient attention to the proceedings of the evening's session, was induced by a desire to investigate the matter and test the truth or falsity of the doctrines of the believers in Spiritual intercourse, or whether from a curiosity ever attendant upon the novel in the philosophic moral or material universe, much less the Spiritual, we cannot say. But a system of philosophy, or morals, or religion, as the case may be, claiming the authority, the respectability and origin of the doctrines of Spiritualism demands, and will receive, more or less attention in any community where its claims are presented, and we are not surprised to see that in this city a considerable degree of interest is manifested in it.

The editor then proceeds to remark that he knows nothing of the phenomena of Spiritualism, but will give "an opinion—perhaps too hastily formed and incorrect—of its doctrines and theory;"—the substance of which is that he understands the Spiritual doctrine to teach "the final salvation of all men, irrespective of moral and religious qualifications," while the Bible, which he accepts as "the word of God," teaches a different doctrine.

The editor was quite right in his admission that his opinion might be too hastily formed and incorrect. We have never yet found the intelligent Spiritualist who imagined it possible for any body to be saved, "irrespective of moral and religious qualifications." To a Spiritualist—to any mind that has any clear conception of what salvation is—such a statement is a contradiction of terms. To be saved, is to attain to certain "moral and religious qualifications"—without which there is no salvation, either present or final. So long as any mind is under the power of ignorance, error, or wrong of any kind, it is not saved from the evils of such a condition, nor can it be. But just so far as it is delivered from ignorance, error and wrong, in any degree, so far is it saved from such error or wrong, and of course from the consequences of wrong-doing; and when any mind shall, in its endless progression, become completely enlightened and purified by wisdom and love, then will it be completely saved, and not till then.

Such is, we think, the uniform "Spiritual doctrine" of salvation, and to us it seems eminently rational as well as spiritual. We trust that, in the light of this fact, the editor of the *News* will revise his opinion, and with an unprejudiced mind acquaint himself with both the facts and teachings of Spiritualism, that he may enjoy the "great salvation" which we experimentally know it will bring to him.

Bro. A. M. Potter's article was received too late for this number. It may be looked for in our next.

### Communications.

#### Letter from Mrs. Randall.

Philadelphia, Nov. 20, 1854.

MR. NEWTON.—In my remarks upon Marriage, which appeared in the last *Era*, my great aim was to express in as few words as possible the essence, so to speak, of my present view of the Civil Institution of Marriage, preferring to be brief rather than smooth; but as you have found it expedient to make that expression a text for lengthy remarks, it is but justice to myself and those who hold these views with me, to extend still further that expression.

Those who read the Spiritual papers two years ago, will not need to be told here that I am a devout worshipper at the shrine of Love as manifested in a pure conjugal unchanging union of spirit; neither shall I be accused by those who have read much upon general Reform for the last ten years, of possessing an uncharitable spirit towards the great brotherhood—Man. But one thing I do plead guilty to—if guilty it be. This is an abrupt, outspoken devotion to truth, as it reveals itself to my perception.

I am not *palpable*, as the masses view policy, and fear I never shall be. I never yet could find it in my soul to express a hard truth over a fictitious signature; neither can I consent to bury an unwelcome truth under a haze of soft words. This may be the better way for others, but not for me. When I speak of my brothers and sisters, I speak of them gently, lovingly, for I love them all; but when I speak of those civil institutions which rivet chains upon them, which not only tear and lacerate their shrinking, quivering flesh, but also torture and dwarf their loving, aspiring spirits,—then it is that soft words are impotent in the expression of my spirit's earnest thought. Then it is that harshest epithets become tame. The expression may be *unwomanly* in the eye of those who love softness in woman; but when women learn to have independent thoughts, and express them, too, softness will not then be considered an essential female attribute. Let us apply all the hard words to hard subjects, and save all the gentle ones for each other, and we shall all grow more womanly and more manly, too.

My brother, you suggest, while bestowing a compliment for "intelligence" upon me, that I should not forget "that 'the true meaning of Doctor is Teacher,'" and that I qualify myself to teach upon this momentous subject. Now how can I do this? Shall I teach in harmony with my own convictions, and in my own language, or borrow, beg, or steal from others?

I was not so brief because I had nothing more to say; but because a small dose of unpleasant medicine is an important consideration when treating a sensitive patient; and will sometimes be received when a more dilute preparation would be rejected simply because of its quantity. While I could not carry this so far as to administer a bitter draught under the name of honey, and thus forfeit my reputation for honesty, still, my benevolence would prompt me to be as indulgent as the nature of the case would permit.

But should my gentle brother ever have occasion to call upon me to administer for a deep, foul ulcer, (which I hope he never will, as I do not fancy surgery,) methinks he would think it *unprofessional* at least to cover it over, and try to persuade him that there was no ulcer there, because a sharp knife looks savage and hurts too, when applied vigorously to an irritable nerve.

Ah! I am too squeamish about our pets. Do not let us be afraid of truth; it will not hurt us.

I would undertake to write a whole column to prove the truth of each sentence in my last article, were it necessary, citing facts and authority enough to fill your entire sheet; but which is the more noble, to make such an indiction upon you and your readers, or submit uncomplainingly to the imputation of insanity and impurity!

Whose motives are not impugned, that dares to step out from the prescribed path of Church or State! and who ever dared to advance an unpopular thought, that was not insane in the eyes of the popular thinker? I have always been unpopular, and presume I always shall be; for I mean to be true to my highest convictions of truth; and truth is never accepted as *truth* until it is at least a century old in its external growth.

I have, within a few weeks, received some "Communications" upon true Earth-Marriage, which to my mind are new, beautiful, and in harmony with science, both natural and spiritual, so far as science is within my comprehension; and should you find it wise in your own judgment to allow me to "doctor" according to my own professional ability, I may be able to present them to you in an acceptable manner. If not, I can well afford to wait, and let me assure you that I shall wait in kindness.

MAREDA B. RANDALL.

REMARKS.—Those who read our observations on the previous communication of Mrs. Randall, which called forth the above, will perceive that she entirely fails to meet the point of our objections. We did not question the correctness of her views, nor ask that the truth should be withheld, or even buried "under a haze of soft words," because unwelcome or unpopular. Nothing of the sort. We only asked that truth should be stated so clearly, accurately and dispassionately, that it shall not appear to the mass of readers to be falsehood—that it shall not be made to look like a lie, because vehemently and imperfectly enunciated. Had all our readers been as well acquainted with the real views of Mrs. R. as we are, there would have been no danger of misapprehension; but such is probably far from being the case. It is as unworthy a fair reformer to give needless occasion for misunderstanding, and to court unpopularity for the purpose of doing it, as it is to shrink from the declaration of truth at the proper time, through cowardice.

Our sister may be assured that we have no "pets" to be "squeamish" about—and not the slightest fear of truth on any subject. Nevertheless, it becomes every teacher who would be useful, to study the *adaptation of truth*, and never to indulge in denunciation, where instruction is more needed.

Should Mrs. Randall, when called to treat an ulcer as she supposes, approach the patient with a dissecting-knife, and proceed as if about to amputate a limb, or cut off the head, we should conceive that she was acting "unprofessionally," and that she would be likely to do more harm than good, by so terrifying the patient that the ulcer could not be touched.

If Mrs. R. has anything calculated to throw light upon the important subject of Earth-Marriage, and thus instruct humanity in the true nature and uses of that relation, we shall be most happy to give it a place in our columns.

For the New Era.

### The Heart is Human.

HOWEVER DIVINE ITS HOPES MAY BE.

How much of truth is embodied in this sentiment! Yes, the heart is human, however strong our faith in immortality—however bright and beautiful our visions of the heavenly land—however lovely and pure may seem this haven of rest beyond the grave; and we may associate with this dear home, the loved ones of bygone days, and follow them in bright fancy to the land of beauty and repose—and we may in vision see them clothed with beautiful forms—forms which angels wear. And we may also hear their voices breaking upon our ears in dulcet tones, whispering words of touching melody. And we have bowed in resignation and said, "All is well." And yet there are times when we cannot forget the shroud and the coffin. We cannot forget that clay-cold form, which we had learned to love so well. We cannot forget that dear form was once radiant with life and beauty. We have seen the eye closed in death, and know it will beam on us no more as it has done. We have clasped the cold and lifeless hand, but felt no answering clasp to ours. We have kissed again and again, those clay-cold lips, but they heeded us not. And there we found the heart was indeed human still. Yes, we must feel this, when we reflect that they have gone from our mortal sight,—that we shall miss them by the fireside,—that we see the "vacant chair," the cast-off garment. Then in the loneliness of the chamber, where, associated with many things, are the memories of our loved ones, meditation calls up the face and form so dear to us; and we weep again, because they are not made manifest to our mortal sight.

There are those who argue that we ought not to mourn for the departed. Tell me, oh! tell me, ye that have stood by a loved and cherished friend, and have seen the beaming eye grow dim and sightless,—who have bent low to catch the last fond whisper ere the lips were forever closed in death,—who have in agony of soul knelt upon the grassy mound and wept because life's day seemed all desolate and bare,—can we who have seen and felt all this help mourning for the departed? There may be those who have never mourned—yes, and there may be those who never loved much. It is those that love most intensely, that mourn most deeply. There may be those who never suffer. If so, they are those who come and go from this earthly life, without their hearts feeling one holy throbbing of sympathy or thrilling with one note of sorrow—who can look upon the sensitive soul with coldness and indifference. But I am no subscriber to this doctrine of indifference. Oh! I would rather suffer still more, than love less. Let those boast of their stoical philosophy who have no hearts to feel. Let those who sneer and scoff at the loving, sensitive, affectionate soul still sneer on. They know not the holy calm that comes from the sorrowed heart, when angels have ministered to it. Those who have never been in Gethsemane, know not a Savior's joy.

There are many who think we ought not to mourn for the departed, because it is selfish so to do. It may be so. But can we reason thus, and dry up all our tears? We know that we weep for ourselves. And we must weep, because our way seems so lonely, desolate and dark. And we know, also, that deeper and darker would be the gloom which would hang over all our earthly way, but for the thought that our loved ones still live—oh! and still watch around our earthly way. Oh! sweet and rapturous thought, we are not left alone! There is ever an unseen throng around us.

My faith is strong in the doctrine of Spirit-communication. It has ever seemed to me that Spirits from the spheres above were all about me. When a child, I fancied I heard angel voices. On every breeze there came a message of love. In every flower I could see an angel's smile. In every murmuring brook I thought I saw angel forms. I early learned to associate everything that was pure and beautiful with the angel-world. This was childhood's sunny days; and when dark hours came—hours so densely dark that I could not see one angel form, yet even then, in the distance, I could hear their sweet voices chanting in softest cadence some message of love; and my bowed soul would again look heavenward, dash aside the spray, and calmly breast the storm. My soul, adore the great and good Father for all his tender mercies, and know that though thy heart seems human, yet at times it lives in the unseen future, and lives also in God. Then its hopes are divine.

LIDA.

HOPEDALE.

### The Right Spirit.

A correspondent in New York closes a business letter as follows:

"While I am writing, I want to say a word on the general subject. On reading a few of the articles in some of the recent numbers of the *Era*, something there, I regret to say, looked a little like crimination and re-



crimination, and I seemed to be led to inquire, does all this originate or flow from minds at all times sufficiently guided by Divine influences? I seemed likewise to be lost in a soliloquy on this wise: What if A. Ballou and others do make accusations or throw out insinuations that would seem injurious to Spiritualism? Let us, as true Spiritualists, live them down; always endeavoring to feel as Jesus felt, when he said, in reference to his persecutors, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." If we do this, those who have expressed themselves, perhaps unguardedly, will soon outgrow the wrong, if any, that they have done to the cause. Again, when our opponents endeavor, by their arguments, to show that the Harmonical Philosophy tends to *degrade* rather than to *elevate*, let us calmly endeavor to show, by paramount reasoning, that they have not yet reached a plane so elevated as to discover all the beauty—the transcendent loveliness of Spiritualism, that has been revealed to those who have sought more opportunities to investigate and who have spent more time in reading the hand-writings, and tracing the results of immutability. These are engraved in indelible characters where those who look may read.

Fraternally yours, S. E.

#### A Clergyman struck dumb.

A correspondent sending us a Spiritual communication, prefaces it with the following singular statement:

Inclosed I send you a communication from Doct. S. Stanley, who left this sphere in August last. Doct. S. was educated for the ministry, and graduated at Auburn with high honors and great promise of usefulness, about twelve years since. Soon after entering upon his profession, his mouth was closed by a power unknown to himself. Although his wife and friends wept over him for months, yet whenever he attempted to preach "orthodox" doctrine a power stopped his utterance, and he was forced to seek other pursuits. He was a man of great dignity of character, a powerful mind, and was a fluent speaker on all subjects except partialism. This was as strange to him as to his friends. Upon the re-opening of intercourse with the Spirit-world, he sought an opportunity to investigate the subject, and the whole matter was fully explained. He became a full believer in Spirit-intercourse, and rejoiced that he was not permitted to teach a doctrine to his fellow-men so fraught with error. At the time of his death he was perfectly resigned, said he knew well the road he was about to travel, and the house he was to occupy. Yours truly,

S. CHAMBERLIN.

A communication from Doct. Stephen Stanley, at the house of S. Chamberlin, through H. Bigelow, medium, Nov. 1st, 1854.

The covering which has kept the Spiritual from the earthly is now silently but surely melting away, and the future shall witness its total annihilation. The partition walls that have long separated the inhabitants of the two spheres are soon all to be removed, and a free and easy communication established.

In the past, the world has learned something of an after existence. The present has witnessed its almost entire obliteration—and you would certainly conceive it proper that angels in their heavenly home should come forth at the call of universal man, to teach him something of death and its consequences. They have toiled incessantly for you, and yet their labor has not been performed unwillingly. They have succeeded in becoming known and listened to, and their objects are fast being accomplished.

The falling rain is certain to ascend again to the clouds; and thus man, lying aside only his outward vestments, soars upwards, attracted by the same principles that govern all nature. For feeling is in all things, as it is by feeling that all things are impelled to move onwards as they do.

Have you not thought that the ascending water has feeling to ascend, obeying in this impulse the breathings of Him whose life is in all things? Think you that the tree in the forest would grow until it towered towards heaven, if there were no pleasant response to attraction therein? or that the springing grass would shoot upwards if not impelled by a desire existing throughout all nature? You mistake in calculating your own greatness, and not ascribing to all things their appropriate places. The wandering comet has a desire to go forward, and feeling exists in its action as surely as in yours. The stars twinkle because of their joy; for thought floweth through them, as the Infinite breathes into them the feeling. They obey His impulses, and look gladness upon all things and frowning upon none.

Ah! what selfish mortals ye are! and truths are yet to be revealed that will stagger the human understanding. Little have you known of what is around you, and little have you thought of the effects you have witnessed. Study the springing vegetation—the descending rain—the howling blast—the rushing torrent—and see in them all the human mind aspiring upwards, to a state of being not yet attained.

These exhibitions you behold all around you, and yet you seldom think how you are related to them. But a combination of nature hath produced you; and learn not to despise that combination; for see you not that you are despising yourselves when you do it? Life hath a charm for you. So it hath for the toiling bee, which you suppose only fits for a day, guided by no intelligence and destined to go out in oblivion.

Mistaken are ye to suppose that God worketh not in all these, and well may you ask, What are we without Him? Rocked by the tempests of life, learn to regard these storms as under your own control, and a wise direction of them at your hands will cause you to subdue them, or turn them to account.

Rest assured you cannot find a home on earth to contain you long; for moved as you

are, you must ascend upwards, where a more beautiful abode, and one better suited to your situation, will be opened to you. Signed,

STEPHEN STANLEY.

For the New Era.

#### Problems

FOR SOLUTION BY BELIEVERS IN MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

1st. What constitutes a consistent Spiritualist in the modern acceptance of this word? What is the standard of Spiritualism? Have Spiritualists any book or creed by which to determine this question?

By some it is denied that Adin Ballou, J. H. Robinson, Laroey Sunderland, and even A. J. Davis, are true Spiritualists. Others, professing themselves to be Spiritualists, are also proscribed, censured, disfellowshipped. "It will not do to have them speak in our meetings," etc.

"This iron bedstead they do fetch To try our hopes upon; If we're too short we must be stretched,— Cut off, if we're too long."

What is the standard by which these things are done? What is the origin and character of that disposition which divides and scatters?—What is sectarianism but exclusiveness, bigotry, and censoriousness? and if persons professing the new faith exhibit this spirit, what is the remedy?

2d. What is our duty as respects discriminating between the high and the low; between psychology and that which is truly Spiritual? If discrimination is attempted by some, and they give offence, what shall be done?

We have good authority for believing that persons of a certain temperament may be entranced by their own idea of an influence, real or imaginary. A. J. Davis has asserted this fact, and so has the author of the Book of Psychology. (p. 87.) Now when we see people constantly falling into a state of trance, and, with their eyes closed, speaking and writing as if they were somebody else, how are we to distinguish between real cases and what we have all witnessed in experiments in Psychology, Mesmerism, etc. If it is contended that spirits do these things, what is the evidence of it?

If I am told that spirits out of the body may entrance a medium as well as a mortal, I reply that the problem here is not what spirits may or may not do, but what the spirits *have done*; or how we are to distinguish between that which is self-induced, or induced by external surrounding circumstances, and that which is professedly by spirits out of the body? If a spirit out of the body can "rap" on the table, why cannot a spirit in the body do the same?

In matters so purely speculative, ought we not to be careful how we dogmatize and censure.

If we believe in the sovereignty of the individual, and in the eternal progression of the race, is not the normal and regular way for searching for truth in respect to mortals and spirits, for each one to rely upon his own judgment? Is there any better way than this?

We may learn something of the Spiritual world from the exercise of our externals; but more in the development of the internal.

What is the difference between the external and the internal? Is not man's higher nature discreted from his lower or external? the external for the external world, the spiritual for the world of causes, and the celestial for the divine or highest? Can there be any higher standard of authority for what we believe than the dictates of an enlightened judgment?

What grade of mind is that which cannot discern the difference between the natural, external, and the purely spiritual? Can you unite the square and the circle? What state of mind is that which stigmatizes the doctrines of discreet and continuous degrees as "only a relic of Swedenborgianism?"

Discreet degrees measure altitude or height, the separation of the spiritual from the external. Can discreet degrees be united otherwise than by correspondence and influx?

What is the regular, natural way for developing an apple or a walnut? Is it not by the life-element that flows in through the roots of the tree, and up through the limbs, into the inmost of the fruit? And yet in each fruit are there not three discreet degrees, comprising the inmost spirit or seed, the pulp, and the rind or skin? Are not these degrees discreted from each other, so that you cannot mix them up without destroying each other? And yet the life principle flows into the inmost, and from that up to the second, and thence to the third or external. But continuous degrees relate to extension without separation,—as light extends into shade and heat extends into cold. Hence may not some of our good brethren labor under mistaken notions, who judge of the purely spiritual by continuous degrees, as if the spiritual were a continuity of the external? Indeed, if one thing more than another may constitute a stumbling block of Spiritualism, may it not be the ignorance of the difference between continuous and discreet degrees? Viewing the spiritual as a continuation of the external, is putting the cart before the horse, "so to speak." And with a knowledge of these principles, and a willingness to apply them, Spiritualists especially may always be able to account satisfactorily to themselves, for phantasies, discords, and contradictions.

JOHN HARDY.

REMARKS.—Bro. Hardy suggests some inquiries which it may be well for all Spiritualists to ponder; though we do not apprehend that much real difference of opinion exists among intelligent minds on these subjects. As to who are Spiritualists in the modern sense of the term, we have repeatedly indicated that we recognize as such all who believe that spirits exist, and that they communicate with mortals. Spiritualists, of course, hold a variety of opinions on all other subjects, moral, philosophical, and theological; and they are the last persons who

should indulge in anything like intolerance towards each other on account of these differences. Nevertheless, this intolerance is not to be wondered at, when we remember what sort of materials Spiritualists are necessarily made of—namely, just such men and women as the ignorance, bigotry, and sectarianism of the past have inevitably produced. We therefore have learned to look with toleration even upon this intolerance, in full confidence that as light increases, and minds expand, it will be outgrown like the fables of childhood.

#### Weekly Record of Phenomena.

##### More Modern Miracles.

Being in Lowell on Saturday evening, Nov. 18, for the purpose of speaking there on the following day, and being also present at a large public circle in one of the rooms of Classic Hall building, we heard Wm. Hulme, of Springfield, relate some of his more recent experiences in those curious and often very astonishing exhibitions of Spirit-power, of which he seems to be no ordinary medium.

On one occasion, when away from home, and walking by himself, he felt something strike his forehead, like a large insect, to appearance, that had been flying swiftly through the air. He immediately put his hand to his forehead and felt there a *ten cent piece*. He tried hard to take it off, but found he could not remove it. So he went to a place farther on, where he knew a medium resided—went in and found that she also had a ten cent piece on her forehead in like manner. They looked at each other in mutual surprise, and attempted to speak, but to their further astonishment, found themselves mutually speechless! Thus they remained some little time, when the pieces of money fell from their places simultaneously, and then they could both speak freely.

On another occasion, he was walking by himself, when a three cent piece came suddenly into his hand, slid gently along from the centre of the palm to the third and larger section of the thumb, where it remained for some time.

One day he was riding with a gentleman, when, all at once, he was literally taken from his seat in the wagon, lifted out over the hind wheels by some invisible power, set down in the road on his feet, and then made to run some distance smartly toward a large sand-bank. When he reached the bank, he was made to dig into it with both hands. After doing this a short time he was made to take a handful of sand, and return to the wagon, which was in waiting for him. He mounted the vehicle, and the man with whom he was riding took the end of his whip-handle and stirred the mass of earth in Mr. H.'s hand, when they both espied an old fashioned Mexican quarter! It was dated 1700 and some odd years, and was afterwards marked by Mr. Hulme, so that he would know it again if necessary. Not long after this, he was made to find another Mexican quarter, under similar circumstances.

A brief time after this, he was at a private circle where quite a company were gathered for the manifestations,—he having previously spent the money he had thus mysteriously obtained, in riding on the railroad to a place where it was necessary for him to go, and which the amount just about paid for,—when one of the company felt something fall into his hand. On looking, he found there a Mexican quarter, and having heard Mr. Hulme tell these money stories, he immediately asked him if he could identify the piece of money he formerly found in the sand-bank. Mr. H. said he could, and taking the quarter, he pointed out to him the identical private mark he had put upon it, and found it to be of the same date also. The window of the room where the company were assembled, was open when this event occurred, and the Spirit doubtless brought the piece of money through that opening, and put it into the hand of the man alluded to. When questioned, as to how they obtained the money, the Spirits replied, that they came by it honestly. And when asked how that could be in the case of the marked Mexican quarter, which had but lately been paid away as railroad fare, the reply was, that the man who had possessed it, previously to their finding it, had a hole in his pocket, through which he lost the piece of money.

#### The Spirit Lights.

Being at Barnard's Spirit-Room a short time since, we saw some very fine exhibitions of what are called Spirit lights. These occurred, we should judge, in as many as twenty instances, at intervals, and were, to us, a very marked demonstration of Spirit-presence, intelligence and power. The light appeared to be of a somewhat blue color—would come and go, more like the lightning than anything else, and yet it lacked both the vividness and the illuminating power of lightning. It would appear all about the apparatus, in connection with which the Spirits here make their exhibitions, and in one instance there seemed to us an evident attempt to exhibit the form of the Spirit. It was, altogether, the most interesting scene to us, that we have ever witnessed among the merely outward exhibitions of Spiritual power.

#### Beautiful Extract.

The following is from the proof sheets of "THE LILY WREATH," a work now in press and to be issued in a few days, by A. B. Child, M. D., written through the mediumship of Mrs. J. S. Adams. The work is filled with sparkling gems of beauty like the following:

"Life, life! how it beams with beauty! On the golden-winged hour of time, insert diamonds of beauty. Place there the true heart and hand of duty. Live for humanity, live not alone. Waft to the barren hills, the darkened valleys, the shady groves, waft the undying truth, the light of Spirit-progression. Penetrate the thick hedges of error. O, let thy soul be a beacon light; let many, many walk by thee. Life will be beautiful; death, O, how glorious!"

"Wipe the tear from sorrow's eye, hush the sigh of misery. Would'st thou then add

to the convoy of angels that shall welcome thee to those heavenly shores, when the spirit passes there, fill well the little sphere allotted thee, with deeds of love and duty.

"Thou need'st not turn aside for some mighty act; enough daily blossoms spring in thy pathway, for thee to culture. Thou wilt have strength equal to the deeds.—Freely give, and thou shalt receive the soul's equivalent. I now leave thee, but in spirit I am still, still hovering over thee."

An Exposition of Views respecting the principal Facts, Causes, and Peculiarities involved in Spirit Manifestations: together with interesting Phenomenal Statements and Communications. By Adin Ballou. Second Edition, with a Portrait. Price in cloth, 75 c., postage 12 c.; paper, 50 c.; postage 9 c.

The Religion of Manhood, or The Age of Thought. By J. H. Robinson; with Introduction by A. E. Newton. Price in cloth 75 c., in paper 50 c.; postage 12 c.

Familiar Spirits and Spiritual Manifestations; being a series of Articles by Dr. Enoch Pond, Professor in the Bangor Theological Seminary; with a Reply by A. Bingham, Esq., of Boston. Price 15 c.; postage 3 c.

The Philosophy of Creation, unfolding the laws of the Progressive Development of Nature, and embracing the Philosophy of Man, Spirit, and the Spirit World. By Thomas Paine, through the hand of Horace G. Wood, Medium. Price 35 c.; postage 6 c.

We find the above books on our table awaiting, as we suppose, a special introduction to the new public which is every day being made through the progress of Spiritualism; or, it may be, to the old public, perchance, who are troubled with "treacherous memories," (not judgments) and to whom a second introduction would, perhaps, prove nothing amiss.

The book by Adin Ballou is truly a standard work on Spiritualism, in its earlier stages, and will give the reader much discriminating thought on the subject, as well as numerous interesting and important facts, bearing upon and illustrating the main idea. It is especially adapted to inquirers.

The Religion of Manhood is another work of much interest, though totally different in its method, as well as much of its thought. The author is a writer of very vivid imagination and of warm and earnest sympathies; and these attributes give coloring, of course, to the ideas of which he was the medium by "impression." The coloring, however, is such as suits the fancy of a large class of readers who have already fed upon the thought and drank in the spirit of this book. When one has read the work by Adin Ballou, he will be in a mood to take in hand the Religion of Manhood.

The little work on "Familiar Spirits" was one of the earlier pamphlet publications, presenting the pro and con in that particular department of Spiritualism which is indicated by its title. The part presented by Dr. Pond gives the reader the pith of the Orthodox view of Spiritualism, which is aptly replied to by Albert Bingham, Esq., of this city.

The Philosophy of Creation is purely a Spiritual communication, written by the hand of a mechanical medium, and is among the very best things of the kind it has been our good fortune to come in contact with. The reader may not always agree with the spirit-author but he will almost always come in connection with strong thought, well expressed and quite suggestive.

THE TRI-WEEKLY CIRCLE IN LOWELL.—At No. 112 Merrimack Street, Lowell, a circle of Spiritualists convenes three times every week for specific and highly practical purposes. On Monday evenings, the Developing Circle meets, when all persons desirous of being developed as mediums, convene and sit for that purpose. On Wednesday evenings, they have what the Spirits call The School, at which time, instructions of various kinds are communicated from above. And on Saturday evenings, they have a Healing Circle, for curing the sick. Mr. L. D. Pike, a very pleasant and quiet young man of some twenty-three or four years of age, we should judge, is the medium through whom these circles are regulated, and one through whom many cures, we understand, have been performed. Mr. Pike may be consulted at the place above designated.

EVENINGS WITH THE SPIRITS.—Dr. Hayden's lecture, at the Melodeon on Sunday evening, detailing his observations at the Spirit-Room of Mr. Koots, in Ohio, was attended by a large and intelligent audience, who were deeply interested in the narration. The diagrams and paintings illustrative of the lecture, attracted much attention. We understand the Dr. will repeat this narrative in other places, if called upon to do so. Address Dr. Wm. R. Hayden, Boston.

#### Special Notices.

LIFE ILLUSTRATED; a new first-class Family Newspaper, devoted to News, Literature, Science, and the Arts; to Entertainment, Improvement, and Progress. Published weekly at two dollars a year, in advance, by Fowlers and Wells, New York.

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This interesting volume has now been before the public for some months, and is highly regarded by many who have read it. It comes professedly from the spirit of Dr. Olin, through R. P. Wilson as medium, and cannot fail to interest all those devoted to Spiritual investigations. Price in cloth, 57 cents, in paper 45 cents. Address A. E. Newton, 5 Washington Street, Boston, Mass.

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#### THE NEW ERA.

The Third Volume of this Journal has now commenced. It will still be the advocate of SPIRITUALISM in its broadest, most comprehensive, and most tolerant sense, according to the best understanding and conviction of its Editor and Proprietor, who, while he recognizes his own proper individual responsibility to the Public for what he may utter through its columns, and for the general character and tone of the paper, at the same time wishes it to be distinctly understood that he is not responsible for many individual convictions and statements he may feel free to publish from others, in accordance with the obviously just demands of a truly FREE PRESS.

He also wishes it to be distinctly understood, that no subscriber, writer, or reader of this Journal will be considered as committed to its principles, views, and measures, any farther than he voluntarily and willingly commits himself, independently of his subscription or his reading. He wishes it to be constantly borne in mind that this is the AGE OF FREE THOUGHT, and of Individual Responsibility; and that in connection with what for the time being is, perhaps, somewhat peculiarly denominated *Spiritualism*, the Era will be, as it ever has been, the uncompromising advocate of free thought,—and the free expression of thought,—for in that way only, as one essential element of advancement, can any true progress be made.

The Era will still be the vehicle of the prominent Facts of the Spiritual Movement, of the various phases of its PHILOSOPHY, and of such suggestions of a PRACTICAL nature as may with justice and propriety come within its own province to present and discuss. In short, while it will ever earnestly strive to be true to its own convictions, it will as truly try to do its whole duty to the Public.

The New Volume begins with entire New Type and a New HEAD, and will contain from week to week about one third more reading matter than it ever has before. And yet for this, among other additions to its expenses, there will be no addition to the price of the paper. Thankful for the past efforts of its many friends in its behalf, it may be said the Era still stands, dauntless, and confidently expects the



## Poetry.

## NOT TO MYSELF ALONE.

"Not to myself alone,"  
The little opening flower transported cries,  
"Not to myself alone I bud and set;  
With fragrant breath the breeze I perfume,  
And gladden all things with my rainbow dyes.  
The bee comes sipping, every evensong,  
His dainty fill;  
The butterfly with my cup doth hide  
From throb'ning ill."

"Not to myself alone,"  
The circling star with honest pride doth boast,  
"Not to myself alone I bud and set;  
I write upon night's curtain of jet  
His power and skill who formed our myriad host;  
A friendly beacon at heaven's open gate,  
I gem the sky,  
That man might never forget, in every fate,  
His home on high."

"Not to myself alone,"  
The heavy-laden bee doth murmuring hum,  
"Not to myself alone from flower to flower,  
I roam the wood, the garden and the bower,  
And to the hive at evening weary come;  
For man, for man, the luscious food I pile  
With busy care,  
Content if he repay my cheerful toil  
With scanty share."

"Not to myself alone,"  
The searing bird with lusty pinion sings,  
"Not to myself alone I raise my song;  
I cheer the drooping with my warbling tongue,  
And bear the mourner on my viewless wings;  
I bid the mourner cheer, my anthem learn,  
And God adore;  
I call the worldling from his dross to turn,  
And sing and soar."

"Not to myself alone,"  
The streamlet whispers on its pebbly way,  
"Not to myself alone I sparkling glide;  
I scatter health and life on every side,  
And strew the fields with herb and floweret gay;  
I sing unto the common bleak and bare,  
My gladness tune;  
I sweeten and refresh the languid air  
In droughty June."

"Not to myself alone,"  
O man, forget not thou—earth's honored priest,  
His tongue, its soul, its life, its pulse, its heart—  
In earth's great chorus to sustain thy part!  
Chiefest of guests at love's ungrudging feast,  
Play not the nigard, spare thy native eld,  
And thy discourse  
Live to thy neighbor, live unto thy God;  
Not to thyself alone!

## THE PHANTOM.

Again I sit within the mansion,  
In the old familiar seat;  
And shade and sunshine chase each other  
O'er the carpet at my feet.

But the sweet-brier's arms have wrestled upwards  
In the summer's dews and rain,  
And the willow trails its branches lower  
Than when I saw them last.

They strive to shut the sunshine wholly  
From out the haunted room;  
To fill the house, that once was joyful,  
With silence and with gloom.

And many kind, remembered faces  
Within the doorway come,  
Voices, that wake the sweeter music  
Of one that now is dumb.

They sing, in tones as glad as ever,  
The songs she loved to hear;  
They braid the rose in summer garlands,  
Whose flowers to her were dear.

And still, her footsteps in the passage,  
Her blushes at the door,  
Her timid words of maiden welcome,  
Come back to me once more.

And, all forgetful of my sorrow,  
Unmindful of my pain,  
I think she has but newly left me,  
And soon will come again.

She stays without, perchance, a moment,  
To dress her dark brown hair;  
I hear the rustle of her garments—  
Her light step on the stair!

O, fluttering heart! control thy tumult,  
Lest eyes profane should see  
My cheeks betray the mark of rapture  
Her coming brings to me!

She tarrys long; but lo! a whisper  
Beyond the open door,  
And, gliding through the quiet sunshine,  
A shadow on the floor!

Ah! 'tis the whispering pine that calls me,  
The vine, whose shadow strays;  
And my patient heart must still await her,  
Nor chide her long delays.

But my heart grows sick with weary waiting,  
As many a time before;  
Her foot is ever at the threshold,  
Yet never passes o'er.

BYARD TAYLOR.

## TO A BELOVED ONE.

Heaven hath its crown of stars, the earth  
Her glory-hubs of flowers;  
The sea its gems—the grand old woods  
Their songs and greenish showers;  
The birds have homes, where leaves and blooms  
In beauty breathe above;  
High yearning hearts, their rainbow-dream—  
"And we, sweet," we have love.

We walk not with the jewelled great,  
Where love's dear name is sold;  
Yet have we wealth we would not give  
For all their world of gold.  
We revel not in corn and wine,  
Yet have we from above  
Manna divine, and we'll not pine:  
Do we not live and love!

I know, dear heart! that in our lot  
May mingle tears and sorrow;  
But love's rich rainbow's built from tears  
To-day, with smiles to-morrow.  
The sunshine from our sky may die,  
The greenness from life's tree,  
But ever, 'mid the warbling storm,  
Thy nest shall feathered be.

I see thee! Ararat of my life,  
Smiling the waves above!  
Thou hast met me victor in the strife,  
And beaumont me with love,  
The world may never know, dear heart!  
What I have found in thee;  
But, though sought to the world, dear heart!  
Thou'rt all the world to me.

GERALD MASSEY.

## THINK OF ME.

Go where the water glideth gently ever,  
Gildeth through meadows that the greenest be;  
Go, listen to the low, beloved river,  
And think of me!

Wander in forests, where the small flower layeth  
Its fairy gem beneath the giant tree;  
List to the dim brook pining as it playeth,  
And think of me!

And when the sky is silver-pale at even,  
And the wind grieves in the lonely tree,  
Go out beneath the solitary heaven,  
And think of me!

And when the moon riseth, as she were dreaming,  
And treadeth with white feet the lulled sea,  
Go, silent as a star, beneath her beaming,  
And think of me!

W. G. CLARK.

## Miscellany.

## The First Engine in India.

The following account of the first introduction of the steam engine into India furnishes so admirable a parallel to the manner in which the modern developments of Spirit-agency are received in more civilized countries, that we cannot forbear its quotation:

A gentleman who had long labored indefatigably in India to introduce European thrift, notices the first introduction of the steam engine as follows:

In the district in which I lived there had been vague, mystical stories about respecting a strange machine said to be possessed by the Sahib people. It was said to be capable of running ten "cass" (twenty miles) an hour, with a hundred wagons at its heels; and ships were said to be propelled by it on the "Kella pance" (blackwater or sea) against both wind and tide. But these stories were considered by many as far away wonders with which the Sahibs delighted to magnify their own wisdom at the expense of the men of Hindoostan.

Great, therefore was the astonishment of these wise men when it was made known that one of these mysterious machines was about to make its appearance among them. Crowds of solemn-looking Brahmins, and grand-bearded Mussulmen might be seen examining and criticising the limbs of the huge creature as they lay scattered about on the wharf, where they had been just landed; During the time these "disjecta membra" were being put together, there was much speculation and curiosity as to what means of energy these uncouth looking pieces of iron could possess; and as I had occasion to consult the plans before giving instructions to the workmen—apply a pair of dividers, scale, and sometimes making calculations with a piece of charcoal on the nearest wall. I observed that the men ceased working, and looked on with open mouths, as if I had been going through a conjuring process.

After much labor and anxiety, I at length succeeded in getting the "monster" put together; and one day, just as the heat of the day was beginning to decline, I ordered the boiler to be filled with water, and soon had a roaring fire beneath it. The natives seemed to have an impression that something unusual was about to happen, and crowds from all directions began to assemble to witness the new "avatar." By dusk the steam was well up; and by the light of two flaring torches I could see curious looking faces peering in at the door and windows of the engine-house. The workmen who had assisted in its erection, laid by their tools, and were whispering to each other in wondering groups, when the safety-valve suddenly opened, and the new born Titan began to let his voice be heard. I shall never forget the terror and amazement depicted on the faces of those who were standing by me when this occurred. A great man ran away in sheer fright; but those who had been employed in putting the engine together, and, from daily familiarity, grown bolder, readily assisted in turning round the ponderous fly-wheel preparatory to starting. It was as much as a dozen of them could do to move it, and that very slowly; but when the steam began to act, and the massive iron rim to steal away from their aiding hands, they fairly screamed with delight. Faster and faster went the wheel; the pumps clanked, the steam whirled through the escape pipe; and the heavy masses of iron that had experienced so much difficulty in lifting into their places, now seemed endowed with life and motion.

Some months after the engine had been at work when I had become better acquainted with the language, I was at much pains in endeavoring to explain the principles of its action to the most intelligent of the workmen; but I found they had long ago provided themselves with what, to their thinking, was a complete theory of the whole matter. The doctrine was, that the boiler contained an English "bhoot" (spirit), that we made a fire beneath the boiler, and roasted the said "bhoot" until he called out "duhagi" (mercy), through the safety-valve; and then only, and not before, would he go to work; and the water was merely given to quench his thirst!

The repeated injunctions given the man who attended to the boiler about the necessity of keeping it well supplied with water, and the consequences of the boiler bursting, which I attempted to explain as likely to follow any neglect of this precaution, led the poor fellow to imagine that if the bhoot was not "made pleasant" with plenty of water, he would certainly break loose and kill every body within his reach. They soon began, however, to have tolerably correct notions of its true character; and although no longer believing in its supernatural attributes, they allowed it was a "great contrivance."

Steamboats now ply between all the different stations on the Ganges; and it presents a curious contrast to witness the straight forward course and inflexible will of the English steamers, breasting wind and tide, as if impelled by fate, and the crazy, undecided motions of the native budgeraws, creeping along the lee shores, tacking and tumbling about with the most bewildering uncertainty. Railways, too, are now in course of construction on some of the principal lines of traffic; and the time is not far distant when, by their means, the rich produce of Central India will be poured into Europe with a profusion and regularity never yet dreamed of. Aye, the steam-engine is destined to do more for India than all her other teachers have yet effected. The iron apostle of civilization does not declaim; it does not dispute nor vituperate, but it works and always succeeds.

A NEGRO CALCULATING BOY.—At the United States Hotel, a short time since, was stopping a colored boy, named William Marcey, whose extraordinary mathematical powers have greatly astonished all who have witnessed his demonstrations. He will add up columns of figures any length, divide any given sum, multiply millions by thousands, within five minutes of the time the figures are given to him, and with such exactness as to render it truly wonderful. Yesterday, noon, in presence of a party of gentlemen, he added a column of figures eight in line, and 108 lines, making the sum total of several millions, in about six minutes. The feat was so astounding, and apparently incredible, that several of the party took off their coats, and dividing the sum, went to work, and in two hours after they commenced, produced identically the same answer. The boy is not quite seventeen years of age; he cannot read nor write, and in every other branch of an English education is entirely deficient. His parents reside in Kentucky, near Louisville. (Cincinnati Gazette.)

People who are jealous or particularly careful of their own rights and dignity, always find enough of those who do not care for either to keep them continually uncomfortable.

## Socrates.

The following is the estimate put upon this wonderful man (who lived 470 years B. C.) by M. de Lamartine, the French historian and poet:

Not content with improving himself, Socrates was inspired with the more disinterested and divine passion of improving others. He employed every moment he could abstract from his domestic avocations in the instruction and correction of his fellow-citizens of every class. Often, indeed, (and his wife justly complained of this), he forgot the necessities of his household, and would sit for whole days in dreamy abstraction, his head buried in his hands, or holding philosophical converse with the first stranger who demanded from him lessons in wisdom. By degrees, the profound truth of his remarks, the novelty of his ideas, the penetrating, unexpected simplicity of his arguments, the familiarity of the images and parables which he borrowed from the commonest employments of life, to elevate the minds of those with whom he was conversing to the most sublime conceptions of genius, as the jeweller uses the vilest dust to polish the diamond—these combined attractions drew around Socrates an extensive circle of disciples. Athens was a free republic—rich, idle, and luxurious; given to doctrines, controversies, sects, truths, sophistries, and even falsehood; the government, which was carried on in public, was little more than a perpetual conversation between the citizens, on politics, laws, religion, nature, and the Deities. In that lovely climate—where men passed their lives in the sun—the porticoes of the temples, the studios of the artists, the open shops of the tradespeople, the streets, the squares, the market-places, were so many academies or schools, where all discoursed together, and the most eloquent, the most seductive, or the most able carried away the greatest number of auditors from his rivals. Perpetual converse was, in fact, the leading institution of Athens. It supplied the place of what the periodical press has become with us since the discovery of printing, with this distinction, that the press speaks separately to single readers, and allows neither dialogue nor reply; while the public conversations of Athens became to many animated discussions, and gathered together the idlers and the followers of the most popular speaker in a sect or college. Thus it was that Socrates, though always speaking, and on every subject, wrote nothing; his lessons were all dialogues with his listeners, and after his death Plato and Xenophon, his disciples, transcribed from memory, and under this constrained form, the doctrines which they had heard and noted during the life of their master.

For ourselves, while with Xenophon we admire the wisdom of the Grecian philosopher, we do not hesitate to prefer by a thousand degrees, the more divine inspirations of Plato, of China, and, above all, of the Christian revelation. The wisdom of Socrates was intelligence only, not sufficiently imbued with love. It reflects justly, but fails in self-devotion. Personal sacrifice, the highest consummation of virtue and prize of truth, can scarcely be awarded to him, despite his punishment, which was entirely political and not religious. He is a sage, but not a martyr. He accommodates himself to the manners, the faith, and even the failings of his age and country. He delivers able and animated lectures on virtue to those who require them, but he also discourses on vice with youths and courtisans. He believes in one only God, the Creator and Regulator of the universe, but publicly worships the multiplied and carnal divinities, formed after the conceptions of man. He dies heroically, but for himself as much as for truth. His very death is a fortunate incident in his destiny, which he turns to advantage with consummate intelligence. "I am old," says he to Xenophon, "and nothing remains for me but to decay in faculties and genius. This is the proper moment for me to die." Socrates exhibits little sympathy with human nature; he has no strong tenderness even for his wife and children; he is always a man of logic, rather than a being devoted to his fellow-creatures. His conversations, although occasionally sublime, attest this want of heavenly love in his nature and his wisdom. He banters sometimes, he ridicules often, he laughs always. Irony, which renders truth offensive, is the inseparable feature of his dialogues. He argues by teasing interrogatories, as if to force his antagonist to contradict himself; he draws him on from point to point, hiding with dexterity the end to which he proposes to lead him. Finally, he confounds him in his own admissions, as if truth itself might be entangled in a snare. He is always critical, scarcely ever imaginative. Plato, his divine disciple, has given him wings, without which he would often creep.

From this summary we conclude that Socrates was neither wiser, more virtuous, nor more religious than all the other philosophers of antiquity, but that he was the most witty and the most amiable of Athenian citizens; that he knew how to think well, to speak well, to die well; but that he also knew how to live well, and according to his ideas, had too much prudence in his wisdom, and too much cleverness in his virtue. Clarity (in its Christian sense) had not yet appeared in the world.

## A Little German Story.

A countryman one day returning from the city, took home with him five of the finest peaches one could possibly desire to see, and as his children had never beheld the fruit before, they rejoiced over them exceedingly, calling them the fine apples with rosy cheeks, and soft plum-like skins. The father divided them amongst his four children, and retained one for their mother. In the evening, ere the children had retired to their chamber, the father questioned them by asking—

"How did you like the soft, rosy apples?"  
"Very much indeed, dear father," said the eldest boy; "it is a beautiful fruit—so acid, and yet so nice and soft to the taste; I have carefully preserved the stone, that I may cultivate a tree."

"Right, and bravely done," said the father; "that speaks well for regarding the future with care, and is becoming a young husbandman."  
"I have eaten mine, and thrown the stone away," said the youngest; "besides which, mother gave me half of hers. Oh! it tasted so sweet, and so melting in my mouth."  
"Indeed," answered the father, "thou hast not been prudent. However, it was very natural and endurable, and displays wisdom enough for your years."

"I have picked up the stone," said the second son, "which my little brother threw away, and cracked it, and eaten the kernel. It was as sweet as a nut to the taste; but my peach I have sold for so much money, that when I go to the city I can buy twice of them."

The parent shook his head reprovingly, saying—

"Beware, my boy, of avarice. Prudence is all very well, but such conduct as yours is unchildlike and unnatural. Heaven guard thee, my child, from the fate of a miser. And you, Edmund!" asked the father, turning to his third son, who frankly and openly replied—

"I have given my peach to the son of our neighbor—the sick George, who has had a fever. He would not take it, so I left it on his bed, and I have just come away."  
"Now," said the father, "who has done the best with his peach?"  
"Brother Edmund!" the three exclaimed aloud, "brother Edmund!"  
Edmund was still and silent, and the mother kissed him with tears of joy in her eyes.

BEAUTIFUL EXTRACT.—The editor of the *Knickerbocker* attributes the following to Ito Marvel, and it is certainly worthy of him:

"Last evening we were walking leisurely along, the music in the choir in three churches came floating out into the darkness around us, and they were all new and strange tunes but one; and that one—it was not sung as we have heard it, but awakened a train of long buried memories, that rose to us even as they were before the cemetery of the soul had a tomb in it."

It was the sweet old "Corinth" they were singing—strains we have seldom heard since the rose color of life was blanching; and we were in a moment back again to the old village church, and it was a summer afternoon, and the yellow sunbeams were streaming through the west windows, and the silver hair of the old deacon, who sat in the pulpit, was turned to gold in its light; and the minister, who we used to think could never die, so good was he, had concluded "application" and "exhortation," and the village choir was singing the last hymn, and the tune was "Corinth."

It is years—we dare not think how many—since then, and "the prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended," and the choir are scattered and gone. The girl with blue eyes that sang alto, and the girl with black eyes that sang air—the eyes of the one were like a clear June heaven at noon.

They both became wives, and both mothers, and they both died. Who shall say they are not singing "Corinth" still, where Sabbath never wane and congregations never break up!

There they sat Sabbath after Sabbath, by the square column on the right of the "leader," and to our young ears their tones were the "very soul of music." That column bears still their pencilled names, as they wrote them in those days in life's June, 183—, before dreams or change had overcome their spirit like a summer's cloud.

Alas! that with the old singers most of the sweeter tones have died upon the air; but they linger in memory, and they shall yet be sung in the sweet reunion of song that shall take place by and by in a hall whose columns are beams of morning light, whose ceiling is pearl, whose floors are all gold, and where hair never turns silvery, and hearts never grow old. Then she that sang alto, and she that sang air, will be in their places once more.

RAILROAD STATION HOUSES.—There is nothing connected with railroads generally, where-in the comfort and convenience of the passengers is less consulted and cared for than in the supply of station houses along our lines of road. The following account of a German one is commended to the attentive perusal of railroad directors.

"Arrived at the station, we found that we must wait till half past five in the afternoon for the train. This would have been an intolerable doom in the desolate precincts of an English or an American station, but not in a German one. As usual, this had a charming glow, laid out with exquisite taste, and all glowing and fragrant with plates of verberna and fuschias, heliotropes, mignonettes, pansies, while rows of hot-house flowers, set under the shelter of neatly trimmed hedges, gave brightness to the scene. Among all these pretty grounds were seats and walks. If the Anglo-Saxons would imitate the liberality of the continent in the matter of railroad stations, the traveller would find something more agreeable than the grim, bare, forbidding places which now obtain in England and America."

## TO GET CASTINGS OF MALLEABLE IRON.

Mr R. A. Brooman, of London, has taken the patent for this invention, which consists of an improved method of preparing wrought iron so that it may be capable of being poured or cast into molds for the production of malleable castings, or articles which shall have all the strength and qualities due to wrought-iron. The invention is designed chiefly for the manufacture of railway wheels, but it is equally applicable to the production of other articles. Scrap or wrought iron may be employed, or bars or plates cut into small pieces, and it must be melted in crucibles such as are used for melting blister steel. To a charge suitable in amount to the crucible, one half of one per cent. of charcoal by weight, one per cent. of manganese and one of sal ammonia is added. The whole is covered from the atmosphere and melted in a temperature of about 1,500 degrees Fahrenheit, which temperature is maintained for three hours. The metal is then poured into molds. Other carbonaceous matter may be substituted for charcoal.

The iron thus cast will, it is stated, be malleable, so as to be capable of being treated under the hammer in the forge and formed into other shapes, and thus also part of the iron may be shaped in molds and part completed by forging, so as to produce intricate shapes and ornamental work.—*Spiritual Telegraph*.

AERIAL NAVIGATION.—For some time past a new system of aerial navigation has been exhibited by a model in this city, the invention of E. D. Tibbets, Esq., of Washington City, an old and respectable teacher and inventor. His plan is to have a condensing reservoir in the car of his balloon, connected with the inlet pipe and the balloon itself by two pipes. When the balloon is inflated, and has ascended, and it is desired to descend to another stratum of air for a favorable or less swift current, it is designed to employ an air pump to draw the gas out of the balloon and condense it in the reservoir, thereby, as he conceives, making the balloon descend by the gas being confined in a smaller space than in the balloon: when he wants to ascend again, he opens the faucet and allows the condensed gas in the reservoir to pass by the inlet tube into the balloon, and thus—by condensing and expanding the gas—arise and descend at pleasure. He also employs two propellers set towards one another, forming an angle of about 90 deg. for propelling the balloon. The successful navigation of the atmosphere is something much to be desired, and Mr Tibbets' plan is the best we have yet seen for effecting this object. [*Scientific American*].

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VOL. III.—NO. 9.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1854.

WHOLE NO., 107.

## Thoughts of the Age.

For the New Era.

### Miracles.

Miracles have been denied on the ground that they would be a departure from what are called *general laws*, or the laws of nature. It is said that such a departure would be derogatory to the wisdom of God, as implying that he had ordained laws for the government of the Universe which were so defective that under certain circumstances he was obliged to violate them in order to effect his purposes. I do not see, however, any soundness in this objection. For even admitting that there is such a thing as *general laws*, which I absolutely deny in the sense in which this term is used, they are but the expression of the will of God himself, as carried out in the production of certain effects in the Physical Universe. And this will may be changed if circumstances in his judgment should require it, and a different mode adopted by him to produce the same effects. There can be no law which shall operate upon and bind God himself, for he is the maker of the law, and can repeal or alter it at his pleasure. He is the Sovereign of the Universe, and can make and execute what laws he chooses.

But I deny that there is any such thing as *general laws*, in the sense in which the term *law* is properly used. By general laws, as applied to matter, is usually understood a uniform and invariable mode by which certain phenomena or effects are produced in the material world, and which effects are produced by some inherent energy imparted to matter acting in and of itself, and capable of so doing, without the immediate agency of any intelligent cause foreign to itself, whatsoever—and of course without the agency of God for this purpose. Now, in this sense, I contend that there are no *general laws*; and that matter in all its forms is of itself incapable of the effects that are produced, but that these effects depend altogether and always upon the direct agency of God himself, or of some intelligent being whom he has commissioned for this purpose. In other words, that these effects are always produced by *spiritual agency* in some way or other. A law cannot execute itself, neither can matter be made capable of comprehending a law and governing itself by it. A Being, therefore, foreign to matter itself, must execute the law, who is capable of comprehending it, and of making it the rule of his operations—and this Being is God himself. In other words, what are called *general laws* are but mere modes of operation, according to which God chooses to conform himself, and which are usually uniform and immutable, but which may be changed if he should see fit to do it. His agency is the immediate and efficient cause of all the effects that take place in the Physical Universe, acting according to certain rules he has prescribed to himself, and not to matter, and which rules are for convenience termed, though improperly, *laws*.

It follows from the preceding views that if circumstances should arise requiring that the same effects should be produced in a different form from what they are usually produced, this can be done by varying the mode of operations. And this is done in the case of *miracles*, which is only another way of producing the same effect, when the end to be accomplished renders it necessary that it should be done. And the miracles which are related in the Bible as having occurred at different periods of the world, illustrate this position, and prove its truth.

To suppose matter to be made capable in itself of the effects produced, and that by an inherent energy imparted to it, all its operations are carried on without the constant and continued action of any external Power upon it, is to suppose matter to be endowed with intelligence. In other words, it is to make matter God himself, and is asserting the doctrine of *Pantheism*. For to what does this amount? In all the operations of nature we discern contrivance, design and skill, means adapted to an end; and this end beneficent in itself, as contributing to the happiness of animate beings, whether brute or rational. Can inanimate matter be made to possess the power of continually carrying on itself these operations, by which these purposes are effected, and no wisdom nor power external to it at the time guiding it, and acting through it, to produce these results? To illustrate this matter, let us take a plant. It springs from a seed, and then by the process of growth is made to produce a flower, and afterwards fruit, which ministers to the gratification of man, and perhaps beast, who are endowed with senses to receive this gratification. Now can you suppose this process of growth to proceed from any inherent energy in the plant, imparted to it or not, which shall take that course exactly to answer the end which it does answer? This supposition would be as irrational as it would be, if the parts of a building were to take their places exactly where they should do to construct this house, to suppose that by some inherent energy imparted to these parts, they could be made to act in such a way as to produce a house. Can you suppose the bricks and the wood which compose a house could be endowed with a blind and unfeeling energy

which would enable them of themselves to shape themselves and take the place precisely that they should do to form a house, without the intervention of man for the purpose;—without the aid of his intelligence and contrivance? Yet, when you suppose a plant can come to maturity of itself, unaided by any intelligent power constantly operating upon it, you suppose something as remarkable and as unaccountable as in the case of a house. And as no one could suppose the house capable of forming itself, so no one ought to suppose the plant capable of itself alone of attaining to maturity, and reproducing its species in the way we see that they are reproduced. The same train of remarks may be applied to animals. And the conclusion is irresistible, in both classes of cases, that some Being having the requisite intelligence and power is employed, by his immediate and constant agency, in producing and rearing both the plant and the animal. And if in regard to them, so in regard to all the operations which are going on in the animate and the inanimate world. They are but the materials, and God is the Maker.

Again: in proof that *miracles*, properly so called, have taken place, without going to Scripture for the proof, we have only to look to the formation of our globe, and the productions it contained in its early stages. Miracles may be defined, I conceive, to be a departure from the usual way in which certain effects are produced in the material world,—to be a way different from the latter. Now the present mode of operations by which animals and plants are produced, could not always have been the mode in which they were produced. For there must have been a time when they could not have been so produced. There must have been a period when they were produced for the first time, and therefore could not have been produced by a course of successive propagation, in the way they are at the present time. The first animal could not have been produced by the preceding one, nor the first vegetable; and, therefore, some other than the present mode must have been used for producing them. There was a time when the animal was not produced by the ovary, nor the vegetable from the seed; for they did not exist. Therefore there must have been a time when *miracles*, as they are called, were performed—when there must have been a departure from what is now the usual mode of operations, or from what are improperly called *general laws*. And if it was done once, why may it not have been done again, to produce the same effect, when the occasion should arise which should require it?

And this view of the subject is confirmed by Geology itself. Geology teaches that the different tribes of animals which have existed at different periods since the beginning of organized matter, could not have been produced by what has been considered a sort of progressive and spontaneous creation, carried on by matter itself, continually changing its forms, and producing a higher type of the animal tribes. For the remains of different tribes of animals are found in different strata of rocks, and so arranged that the subsequent ones could not have been produced in any possible way from the preceding ones, but must have been a new creation by God himself. And geology also teaches that the earth has been undergoing, from the creation itself, such changes as would fit it to be the abode of different tribes of animals at the time they should appear upon the earth, and not at any time preceding. In this way it proves that the changes in the material world were contrived and carried on by God himself, with a view to the production of these subsequent tribes of animals. And then coincidence in point of time clearly proves the wisdom and power of a discerning Providence, in adopting means to ends, and causes to effects.

And Geology also proves that man was produced at a period long subsequent to the other tribes of animals, and could not have been produced by them. And it would also be utterly absurd to suppose that man could have been produced by them, when man is possessed of a rational and moral nature, of which they are wholly devoid, and which of course could not have been imparted to him by them.

The conclusion from all which considerations, and an inevitable one, is, that God, at successive periods of the world, created by a direct act of his power, without any connection whatever with preceding tribes, or by their propagation, new tribes of animals, and at last man himself. And if he did so, he performed what are called *miracles* at each of these periods; for he produced them, not by successive propagation, or by what are termed *general laws*, but by a special act of his power in a manner altogether different from the usual mode. He produced them by a new creation, requiring a process altogether different from the former one.

Again: all effects in the mineral, vegetable and animal worlds, are produced by certain chemical or physiological processes, by which certain properties or elements are brought into combination. The mineral, the vegetable, and the animal are but the production of certain elements existing in nature, combined in certain ways. These combinations usually take place by the slow process of accretion or growth, because this is the way in which God usually sees fit to

produce them, to answer certain ends he has in view in their production. But the Being who knows exactly what these properties or elements are, and in what proportion they must be combined in order to produce a certain substance or animal, could, if he saw fit, produce them instantaneously, as well as gradually. He could produce an animal or a vegetable by an act of his power, full grown and at once, as well as by the slow process of growth; for it is only a combination of the elements in a certain way, which he knows how to bring about. He could produce "the loaves and the fishes" instantaneously, as well as by the slow process of growth, or by the physiological and chemical process by which they are now produced—and by what is called nature. For all he has to do is to bring into combination instantaneously those elements which compose them.

And one of our chemists could produce bread instantaneously, if he had the command of the elements or ingredients of which it is composed, and knew how to bring them into proper combination for the purpose. He knows no other way but by the slow process of raising corn and grinding it into meal, and then baking it. But God may know of a different way. And in the New Testament, he is said on one occasion to have adopted this way, when he multiplied "the loaves and the fishes." For in both cases it is only a combination of the same elements to produce the same substance—in the former case slowly and gradually, and in the other rapidly and instantaneously.

The objection has been made against the *modern Spiritual manifestations*, on the one hand, that they would be a departure from *general laws*, and for that reason they would be incredible, since it is asserted that God always acts by uniform and immutable laws. And on the other hand, it is asserted that these manifestations are in strict conformity to *general laws*, and for this reason are entitled to belief, if supported by a sufficient amount of evidence. But if the view I have taken upon the subject of *general laws* be a correct one, these manifestations are not produced by any conformity with *general laws*, for no such laws exist. But they are produced by the direct agency of Spirits themselves, who are endowed by God with the power of producing them, in the same way that he himself conducts all his own operations; that is, by a direct and immediate agency upon matter. It is true, material forces may be employed by Spirits in producing the phenomena, but they are employed as instruments put into operation and controlled by the Spirits themselves, at the time the phenomena take place. And not as acting by virtue of any inherent energy imparted to matter made capable of acting itself, without the intervention of any Spiritual action upon it for this purpose. They act in the same way when Spirits use them, as they do when God uses them, as materials and modes, and not as efficient of themselves alone.

It seems to be supposed by those who find the solution of all physical phenomena in the action of *general laws*, that God is restricted in the production of all effects in the material world, by what has hitherto been his accustomed mode of operations. They do not seem to consider that it would be possible for him to devise and carry into operation new modes of producing these effects—to invent new forces, and make them to act in a new way, when the occasion should seem to him to require it. Why may he not invent some other force, which is neither magnetism or electricity, nor any known power, to produce motion, and make it act in a way different from what these old forces are known to act? Because we ourselves know of no such way, it does not follow that he does not. This would be to raise our intelligence to a level with that of God himself, and to restrict him by the bounds of our short-sighted and feeble power of discernment and capability. It would be setting limits to his omniscience and omnipotence, and making him such an one as ourselves.

As a conclusion to this article, I would say, that those persons who contend that a *miracle* would be in derogation from the power and wisdom of God, and so altogether incredible under any supposable circumstances, only show their own fallibility, and reason from their own limited power and knowledge. They should be impressed with the conviction that these do not extend to God, with whom is all power and all knowledge, and who finds no more difficulty in performing what they call *miracles*, than they do their accustomed operations. Let such persons read that wonderful and sublime production, the Book of Job, and learn a lesson of humility in the estimation of their own understanding, and in the limits of power and wisdom they choose to assign to the Almighty. "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?"

WILLIAM S. ANDREWS.

A man in the common walks of life, who has faith in perfection in the unfolding of the human spirit, as the great purpose of God, possesses more the secret of the universe, perceives more the harmonies or mutual adaptation of the world without and the world within him, is a wiser interpreter of Providence, and reads nobler lessons of duty in the events which pass before him, than the profoundest philosopher who wants this grand central truth.—CHANNING.

### The Shaker Faith.

NEW LEBANON, NOV. 1st, 1851.

RESPECTED FRIEND LEWITT.—In the "New Era" of Sept. 13th, 1854, we notice an article under the head of "Inspiration," professing to be a dialogue between one of your correspondents and a Shaker. As the sentiments which the latter is made to utter, do not correctly represent those of our society, we feel it our duty, with your permission, through your valuable paper, to disabuse the public mind on this subject; and in the following article, propose to quote some of the questions and their answers, from the aforesaid article, or dialogue, making such remarks as best suit our present purpose.

To the question of the Spiritualist in the dialogue, "What do you mean by inspiration?" the sentiment put into the mouth of the Shaker in reply, is, "God, speaking through us directly, using our voice," &c. Now the Shakers cannot father, or accept this definition of inspiration. But, to our understanding, inspiration is, 1st, in its highest sense, the supernatural influence of the Spirit of God on the human mind or spirit, through appropriate media, by which prophets, apostles, and sacred writers, or speakers, are qualified to set forth divine things, in a manner which evidences their divine origin. 2d, in an inferior sense, inspiration is the infusion, or communication of ideas to the mind, or influences to the soul, by a foreign being, or power, or supposed presiding influence, either superior or inferior to the soul of man, and either good or evil. Hence, we have Divine inspiration, angelic inspiration, human inspiration, and satanic inspiration; and there are all grades of quality or degree, attachable to each of these varieties of inspiration, from plenary to a slight impression. But, in our estimation, it is not possible for a soul truly to follow Christ, in the regeneration, without a constant influx of a measure of wisdom, light, power, and goodness from God through media superior to unregenerate, fallen man.

"Spiritualist. Do you really believe that the eternal Godhead, who fills the Universe, concentrates Himself in a mere man, so as to speak to us?" "Shaker. Yea, and we may know it is God speaking to us."

Now the true Shaker faith on this subject is, God speaks to man through appropriate media, intelligences superior to, and between God and man.

"Spiritualist. Do you pretend to say we may know when a man is inspired? If so, please give me your evidence." "Shaker. Consciousness of it."

To this answer the Shakers do not object, neither can any sane mind. But no soul can be conscious of the existence of such a thing without a demonstration to the soul made manifest, which in itself and of itself is declaratory of that thing, and manifest to the understanding in a way that it can recognize it.

"Spiritualist. Now suppose you, or the prophet, are conscious, how can I, or others be conscious of the fact, before we hear the communication?" "Shaker. When I tell you that God is speaking, you must believe it."

Of this, we would remark: No Shaker, having an understanding of the Christian faith, ever claimed such an idea as this. No principle of Christianity was ever more thoroughly taught among the Shakers, than the principle of evidencing the qualities of all souls and of all sentiments and influences, by the fruits, agreeably to the teachings of Christ and his apostles; and that to the true Christian is committed the seal of judgment, as Christ said, "As I hear I judge, and my judgment is just," John 8: 30. And to the Corinthians, Paul saith, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" Cor. 6: 3. And again, our Savior saith, "Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" Luke 12: 57. Again, John 7: 51, "Doth our law judge any man before it hear him?" But, in relation to this sentiment, we understand that a creature sees and judges according to the influence he is under; if this be pure, holy, heavenly, just, and righteous, of God, the judgment will be just, and no man can in all cases judge justly, who does not obey every particle of godliness manifest to him; or, in other words, who does not please God; that is, become spiritual. "He that is spiritual judgeth all things," 1st Cor. 2: 15. "But they that are in the flesh cannot please God," (Rom. 8: 8.) either in judgment, or anything else. And none can judge with righteous judgment, only inasmuch as they crucify the old sinful self, as said Jesus, "I judge no man," John 8: 15. And the Shakers recognize the propriety and Christianity manifest in the instructions of the Apostle John, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world," 1st John 4: 1.

The Apostle James has given Christians a very good test, by which to determine the character of wisdom, whether it be worldly or heavenly, and the Shakers accept this as a standard—viz: "The wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy, and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy," James 3: 17. "But if ye have bitter envyings and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but

is earthly, sensual, devilish," James 3: 14, 15.

We recognize the fact that God has given to each soul of man, however debased, a particle of godliness, and this, however small, if listened to, will recognize that which is godly. Kindred elements flow together. It would be just as impossible for a soul, possessing anything of God, not to appreciate in some little degree, that which is godly, when presented to it, as for two drops of water to come in contact and not unite. The evidences, then, of the divinity, humanity, or satanicy of a communication, are in the communication itself; and it is only by hearing the communication, and feeling its import, that we can judge of its character. This is Shakerism. We can very well subscribe to the words of "Nathan Rice," "Truth is its own authority," because it appeals to the measure of truth each soul possesses for its sanction, and confirms its claim by a harmony with all those laws of righteousness revealed to man, through whatever media or messengers God may have been pleased to send it.

Further, in regard to the dialogue before me, from which we quote, the words put into the mouth of the Shaker, concerning reasoning, and the authority of the Bible, are as follows: "You must take the Bible for your guide, throw away your reasoning, or you will be ruined; it is God that speaks." With regard to Bible authority, the Shakers have a word to say. We understand that the work of God with man has been, and still is, a work of progression, and there have been progressive dispensations of it, and each dispensation had its authoritative revelations to man, by superior or equivalent and appropriate media. The revelations of the laws and will of God thus presented to man in each progressive dispensation were adapted to the sense and understanding of man, already in some degree developed, which would enable him, on hearing the revelation, and observing its effects, to determine its character, and to recognize its divinity; while the revelations thus made, if received and obeyed, have a progressive influence in developing man for the reception of still higher influences and revelations from God; and thus create in man, not only an ability to comprehend higher revelations, when made, adapted to a forward and elevating progress, but an earnest aspiration after such increasing revelations; and it is thus that the means, in man, for receiving and comprehending progressive revelations, are provided, against the time of need, when those revelations shall be made. The Bible, being a continuous record of the progressive revelations and dispensations made to man, consequently presents, to the undeveloped understanding, characteristics of God, his laws and way, adapted and presented to other men, in a less developed state, presenting a phase of revelations in dispensations past, with which man is not now satisfied. Jesus Christ, being the instrument for the institution of a "New Creation" which is the product of a phase of revelations from God, entirely superior to and in advance of those phases which have preceded it, though in harmony with them in the order of progress, enabled him, and enables his followers to comprehend and judge of the merits and demerits of the Bible, (to speak of it as a whole,) as adapted to man in the present dispensation of God's will to man, and to determine its whole character.

The wisdom of God revealed to man in the Christian dispensation, then, furnished a test for the general character of the Scriptures, and of all revelation, from whatever source. It was the revelations of this dispensation which enabled Jesus Christ authoritatively to declare a character of God and his laws, different from those revealed to Adam, Noah, or Abraham, or Moses. It is this pure, peaceable, merciful, and faithful wisdom which enabled Jesus and his followers to judge the Bible, and to learn that a portion of it is sacred history, and a portion less sacred; some of it a record of the word of good men, other portions a record of the word of bad men; some part a record of the word of the angels of God, and others still, a record of the word of God, which, as St. Paul expresses it, "is quick and powerful, and is sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernment of the thoughts and intents of the heart," Heb. 4: 12. Now no portion of the Bible is this word, but simply a record of it. And it is the Shaker faith that the word of God, and the power of God, always have been, and always will be, dispensed to man through appropriate media, whom God is the choicer of; and we understand that although "God is no respecter of persons," He is yet not without order; and the whole creation evidences that there are superior and inferior beings, and to some God hath given capacity to lead, as the head for the body; to others simply to be led, and has adapted certain individuals to certain ends and purposes, for which others are not adapted. If the whole body of nations or societies were the head, where were the trunk, hands, and feet? Thus, different characters of constitution are adapted to different purposes in the work of God, and to receive peculiar gifts of God, adapted to the accomplishment of those purposes, as recognized by the apostle Paul—"For the body is not one member, but many," 1st Cor. 12: 14 to end.

Our friend, Nathan Rice, has suggested that "the old notion of selecting different persons for mediums will soon be done away and forgotten, and the privilege recognized by all upon certain conditions." But, he adds, "We may be ready to receive light, and, in our spheres, shed light on those below us." In other words, be God's instrumental mediums for the revelation of light to other souls. Thus it appears that "Nathan" recognizes that some individuals, through some means, have more light than others, even of their own times; but what have they that is not a gift or revelation of God to them, which they have been the instruments to receive?

This is the Shaker faith, and we also believe this light is a revelation of God through media to the most wise and superior, and those who are the humble instruments to transmit it to those below them, are God's media to the lowly. It is thus that there is a regular gradation of capacities and intelligences, between God and man, and the superior are the media of revelation to the inferior, which superiority is a gift of God to man, revealed to him in God's way.

The Shakers do not harmonize in belief with those Spiritualists who claim that the present development of Spiritualism is a dispensation of the power and will of God to man in advance of, and superior to, Christianity; but that it is simply an operative element of the Christ-dispensation, which is a perfect work, and limitless in its progressive development of wisdom, power, and godliness, for the elevation, redemption, and perfection of man. GILES B. AVERY.

For the New Era.

### Thoughts on the Universe.

The Universe is a great circle, the centre of which is God, the Infinite Spirit, and the circumference of which is matter in its grossest form. As the circumference is turned to the centre, so all forms of creation turn to God and receive the radiations of his spirit. We cannot bound the Universe in any other way. The mineral kingdom is the outermost edge of creation. Its coldness, want of life and sensation, show its distance from the centre of light, warmth and animation, and as we rise in the scale of creation through the vegetable, animal, and intellectual conditions, we find more of the interior, and less of the grossness of the exterior organization. There are no suns or stars which form the outskirts of God's material creation, or stand as picket guards to the heavenly host. The dominions of the omnipotent power are not thus folded in the arms of "chaos and old night." There is no limit to the material expression of God's eternal thoughts. We cannot understand the infinite and eternal existence of mind, else we would be great as God: so it is not possible to comprehend the eternity of matter, the immensity, yea, the unbounded extent of the material universe. Yet it is no less true, that it can no more be confined by special limit, than eternal duration can be counted by years.

All space (which is eternal) is filled with stellar globules of life. God as the centre of this vast universe resides not in a fixed place. He is a movable centre—a centre to every sun, moon, and star—to every form of mineral, vegetable, animal, or spiritual existence—ever out-radiating his life-giving influences: ever magnetizing and refining, by light, heat and magnetism, all forms of matter; and ever evolving from the limitless depths of his mind, great thoughts which permeate through all grades of spiritual life, assimilating to their conditions, and affording to each, food, occupation, happiness, and progress.

There is not only a material, but there is a spiritual universe; and the material is contained in, and proceeds from the spiritual; yet is ever, by the law of compensation, approaching again the spiritual by endless circles of refining and purifying existence. This is illustrated by the harmony in the order of creation as appears on earth. First comes inorganic matter, represented by the mineral kingdoms; then life without sensation, as in the vegetable; then organic life, embracing both mineral and vegetable existence, but superadded sensation and volition; then the ultimate man, combining the mineral, vegetable and animal existences, so refined and purified as to be the recipient of intellects, and the temple of the spirit.

These two Universes are distinct, yet not separate, but are joined as body to soul in man, a union of life and action, the one ever vivifying, energizing and elevating the other. The Spiritual universe is positive, the material negative—the one active, the other receptive—the one is universal, the other local, defined, limited—the one representing the creative thought, the other its outward expression, its material garment—the one a world of causes, the other of effects—the one a fountain of wisdom, the other the adaptation of it to conditions, and both forming a material union, the great type of sexual relations in the spiritual and material kingdoms.

We have therefore but to look at our own globe, with its twofold existences of mind and matter, to obtain an elementary knowledge of the wondrous philosophy of the universe. The relations of man in his internal growth towards the Divine Essence, and his external development in connection with his



Face, truthfully express the countless modifications of the great universalism, of which he forms a part, and an almost perfect representation.

It would be highly instructive to observe the relations and correspondences that exist between the mental and material universes, the harmony of development that makes the contrasts exhibited in the different degrees of mental growth in the unfolded child and mature man, in the wonderful varieties of mental organization, but beautiful types of the material as presented in satellite, planet, sun—the dependence of the immature intellect on the mature, for spiritual light; each as planet and sun, being only reflections of rays from higher media of reflection, until the chain is completed in the central sun of the universe—and to regard the magnetic cords by which, in harmonious circles, all forms of spirit and matter, move in their orbits around the Infinite Centre.

It would be worthy the genius of a spiritual Newton, to probe the relations which exist between the body and the soul of the universe; to reduce to our comprehension the laws which govern this intimate and eternal connection; and to demonstrate the formula by which every star whose light in its travels has reached our globe, exerts on minerals, vegetables, animals, man, and each organ of his brain, its own peculiar virtue, and aids in unfolding their ultimate destiny as they are attracted along the pathway of progression.

But it is our province in this only to secure the key by which the intuitive mind may unlock the storehouse of Nature, and exhibit the rare gems of thought which shall yet sparkle in the adoring gaze of the human understanding. We may be impressed to pursue this subject, if we do not succeed in attracting to its investigation other minds more adapted by structure and development to expound its wonders.

H. H. GOODMAN.

## THE NEW ERA.

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BOSTON: SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1854.

### Antiquity of Spiritualism.

It is well known as the belief of all intelligent Spiritualists, that manifestations and communications from the Spirit-life have been known in all past ages and in all countries of the world, whose history or literature has to any extent come down to us. They find in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures a storehouse of evidences on this point, extending back to very remote periods; and the writings of almost all other nations are replete with testimony to the same great fact. And Spiritualist books and publications have teemed with these evidences, collected with great research and erudition, by such as were qualified for the labor—and they have been brought to bear with great cogency against the materialism of the present day, which denies all manifestations from such a source in modern times. They have argued that what has been, may be; and that the evidence of our own senses is more conclusive to us than any testimony which has come down from the past. And they have furthermore insisted, that where the testimony of the past, and the experience of the present, so fully agree and corroborate each other, they form for Spiritualism a Gibraltar of Truth, against which the materialistic philosophy of the times may make its puny assaults in vain.

Such being the state of the case, we were not a little amused at finding, in a late number of the *Lynn Reporter*, a long and learned article, endeavoring to make against the "new doctrines of Spiritism and the rest," (including clairvoyance, mediumship, Spirit-communication, etc.) by showing that they existed in the world "centuries before Christ." The assailant who thus blunderingly turns his weapons in favor of the movement he seeks to oppose, rejoices in the somewhat egotistic title of the "Lynn Bard," and is well known in the City of Shoemakers as an aspirant for the fame of a literary savior and antiquarian. With great display of erudition, he quotes from Synesius, Macrobius, Solomon, Plato, Firmicus, Isidorus, Nymphodorus, Pliny, Apuleius, Cicero, Philostratus, Herodotus, Tacitus, Plutarch, Minutius, Paul, and many others, showing conclusively that phenomena identical with and very similar to many of those of our day, occurred in various nations of antiquity, and were then with one voice attributed to Spirit-agency. We thank him for his valuable service to the cause of Spiritualism, in thus bringing forward a number of witnesses to its truth, whose testimony had not come to our knowledge before. We shall treasure up this document beside those of Rev. Charles Beecher and others, who have opposed, or rather advocated, Spiritualism in the same way.

Near the close of his effort, our author very complacently assures us—"I am satisfied that these things are not consonant with Christianity, and that he who has the most of the spirit of Christ will regard them the least." The "Bard" is surely entitled to all the satisfaction which this conclusion affords him; but he ought not to think it strange if other people, when they find the testimony of the past fully corroborated by their own personal experience and observations, are com-

pelled to regard "these things" as facts; and to conclude that if they are "not consonant with Christianity," (as interpreted by the sectarians of our day,) it is only because such Christianity is not consonant with truth. We find that those generally, we might say universally, who are best acquainted with the Spiritual developments of our day, find them to be not only consonant with the facts of Christianity as recorded in the New Testament, but with all other unfoldings of truth, in all times and nations.

The "Bard" further charges that these "pretended new doctrines," (i. e., Spirit-agency and intercourse,) are "merely a revival of the old heathen belief, centuries before Christ; and that those who adopt them are not going forward but backward." So might the Atheist of to-day charge that the belief in a God, who governs the affairs of this world, is a heathen superstition as old as the human race, and that they who adopt it are not going forward but backward! The fact is, that a conviction of superior agency—of Spiritual existence, and of communication and aid granted to mortals from that source—runs through all human history, and is the basis of all systems of religion, heathen or Christian. Take away this, and Christianity itself is gone. Now if this conviction be well founded, as modern developments prove,—and if some ancient heathen nations or writers had a fuller belief in its truth, and comprehension of its philosophy, than have our modern Christian sects,—it only shows that the latter have not yet so far advanced, in this respect at least, as the "heathens" had centuries ago; and a coming to the knowledge of the truth on this interesting subject will be really a going forward on the part of our materialistic Christians!

We find no evidence that either Christ when on earth, or "the Spirit of Christ," since he left the earth-form, was or is opposed to the investigation of any truth, in any department of God's Universe,—as are those who claim to be his disciples now. On the contrary, after teaching his immediate followers all they could "bear," at that time, he promised to send them "the Spirit of truth," to lead them into "ALL TRUTH," without limit or restriction. (See John 16: 12-15.) Consequently "they who have most of the spirit of Christ" are evidently those who pay most "regard" to all manifestations, and engage most earnestly in all investigations, calculated to give them more expansive views of God's Universe, His creatures, and His kingdom of universal harmony.

We trust the "Lynn Bard" may yet rank among these, and thus be found "on the Lord's side."

### Alleged Plagiarism.

We published recently a brief paragraph, forwarded to us by Mr. A. P. Price, of Philadelphia, purporting to have been written without human hands, at Mr. Koons's Spirit Room, to which was appended the words, "Written by the Spirit of Christ." The important fact in this case, to us, was the manner in which the writing was performed, and as we had other testimony on that point besides the statement of our correspondent, we did not hesitate to give it publicity. With regard to the authorship of the writing, which was quite another matter, there was to our mind no evidence that it was executed by the personage whose name was appended; and we intimated as much in our remarks, leaving each reader to form his own conclusions.

An anonymous correspondent has sent us a slip from a newspaper, containing the same paragraph, credited to the authorship of *De Witt Clinton*. He accompanies it by some facetious doggerel, in which he intimates that either Mr. Koons has imposed upon the community, or that Spirits "fulminate stolen thunder," and that we have shown too great credulity in the case.

With regard to Mr. K., we can only say that we have, from different sources, what appears to be satisfactory evidence that he has acted truthfully in the matter. There surely have been real wonders enough enacted at his place, to render it unnecessary, as well as extremely unwise, for him to attempt to fabricate any false stories.

As to disembodied Spirits using "stolen thunder," and assuming fictitious names, there is nothing about that which is either incredible or improbable to our apprehension—since it is so common a thing for many to do the same before they leave the body. Why should they not continue to amuse themselves with similar tricks, until they have advanced to higher wisdom?

If our correspondent will look again at our introductory remarks to the communication referred to, he will see that we manifested no credulity whatever in the matter. We simply gave the statement on the authority with which it came to us, and left it to the reader to form his own opinions.

### Who are the Infidels?

An intelligent gentleman of this city, whose wife is now under discipline by the authorities of one of our popular churches, for entertaining a belief in Modern Spiritualism, said to us, a few days since, in remarking upon the circumstance, "This is a singular state of things. I have been what is called an infidel from my youth—unable to believe in the Bible on account of the miraculous and seemingly impossible nature of many occurrences narrated in its pages, which I could not accept on such doubtful testimony. The church members have labored long and unsuccessfully to convince me of their truth; but within a year or two I have witnessed with my own senses so many similar things, in what purport to be modern Spiritual Manifestations, that I have begun to believe in the truth of those recorded in the Bible. And now these church members turn around and tell me that all I have myself witnessed is a delusion or from the devil! I confess, I cannot understand them."

Is it not evident that our friend is now the believer, and the church members the infidels!

### Mr. Davis's Lectures.

From our notes of Mr. Davis's Lectures in the Melodeon, on Sunday, Nov. 18th, we make the following brief synopsis:

AFTERNOON.

Mr. D. announced as his topic, "The tendencies of Spiritualism—are they moral or immoral?" and said that he should take the liberty to select a text from the gospel according to St. Nature, in these words: "The second manifestation of the principle of Wisdom is Justice."

He would first inquire, what is Spiritualism? As now exhibited it is the outgrowth of the religious phase of the social element. The love of society draws people together in social intercourse. The social element is the basis of the family, of the church, of the school, of all our institutions. Without it our churches would at once go to pieces. But the social element has a religious department. It looks upward to superior beings, and yearns after those who have entered a higher life. On this upward yearning of the social nature, Spiritualism is based. Thus far the intercourse between this and the spiritual spheres has been mainly of a social character—common to between friend and friend, growing naturally out of our social and religious instincts. The religious community have misunderstood its nature—have conceived it to be impure and foul—and have persisted in slandering it, until some, no doubt, have come honestly to believe their slanders.

But Spiritualism, being based upon the aspirations and wants of man's nature, is as old as man himself. It is not the child of the nineteenth century; its foundation is lower down than the first verse of Genesis, and it reaches higher up than the last verse of Revelation. Every church in Christendom is based on Spiritualism. It is the doctrine of the Divine Influx—the universal conviction of the religious world, that men and women, associating together for high and holy purposes, and looking upward for superior influences, will receive the gift of the Divine Spirit—the communication of the Holy Ghost. Why should this be denied to us, when all religions claim it for themselves? All Spiritualism, in the Church and out, is based upon the idea that man can and does intercommune with the Divine through his higher aspirations, his religious nature. Can the tendency of this be otherwise than purifying, elevating, ennobling?

The Church, to be sure, has a habit of opposing all movements and all ideas which do not originate with itself. But what is the use of such opposition here? It is a losing warfare to the Church, for she is obliged to ignore and deny her own foundation. Spiritualists find themselves compelled to turn around and convince the church of the truth of what she always been preaching!

But Spiritualism has its difficulties and its individual trials. The speaker finds the Spiritualists of to-day working out each his peculiar experience—each building for himself or herself a ladder of communication with the unseen world. Many severe trials are endured, and some are on the point of giving up in despair. There are difficulties which must be met and explained on principles which will commend themselves to the instincts of human nature in all coming time, or they will not stand; but Spiritualists who are also philosophers will not shrink from meeting with such difficulties, and seeking with steady perseverance for their solution.

There are contradictions and apparent falsehoods in spiritual intercourse—what shall be said of them? These will be explained when we have more wisdom. Be patient. What if some fall and are crushed beneath the weight of these new experiences?

Because, in constructing a new railroad, a laborer sometimes gets buried beneath the falling earth, do we give up the undertaking and repudiate building railroads! These contradictions and difficulties all have their use, and when understood this will be seen. The speaker here narrated cases which had come under his own observation, where what was at first sight evil and false, resulted in great good. He defined morality to be—doing some good, no harm. Spirits often act on this principle—perhaps unwisely in some instances. In order to accomplish what they think to be good, they sometimes state what turns out to be untrue, and they often allow those whom they watch over to act under misapprehension and mistake, until such time as they can be undeceived without doing a greater harm. By such considerations as these, much that is apparently evil may be explained, and many of the difficulties of spiritual intercourse be solved, and its tendencies on the whole be shown to be good.

The time having expired, Mr. D. proposed to consider the same topic further in the evening.

EVENING.

Mr. Davis, in pursuing the general subject of his afternoon lecture, proceeded to speak of the tendency of Spiritualism to the institution of a New Order of Society.

Spiritualism, as already shown, is the outgrowth of the religious phase of the social element in human nature. The highest manifestation of religion is universal justice. It has been predicted in all ages that an era is to come on earth in which the best things shall preponderate—an age when universal justice shall prevail among men. The common notion has been that the first age of the world was such an age, but this was an error. Here the speaker dwelt upon the crudity and absurdity of the popular notions respecting Adam and Eve, and the primitive inhabitants of the world. The truth was that man started from a very low condition, and has ever been progressing towards the era of universal right and justice, ever climbing upward toward that which is still in the future.

But a great variety of opinions prevail as to what the kingdom of heaven is to be, and

how it is to be introduced. The Adventists, the Orthodox, the Swedenborgians, the Christian Fathers, the Hebrew Prophets, the Fourier and the Phalansterians, the so-called Practical Christians, the Shakers, and the believers in Individual Sovereignty,—all are their different conceptions, and show their various paths; and we have ours also.

Spiritualism unquestionably furnishes a most potential agency to bring about a new social order—the reign of universal justice. Its grand central principle is that the soul of man is of divine origin, and therefore intrinsically pure, and constitutionally immortal. The dominant religious theories hold man to be depraved, and therefore not to be trusted, hence universal distrust prevails throughout society. This is unjust. This stigma is false, and must be uprooted before confidence and justice can prevail. There are sins in the world, it may be, but there are more evils than sins. Evils are but comparative stages of progression; they are at lesser goods. This fact is a great discovery, and it opens a new philosophy of reform. Evils are to be removed by unfolding greater good—error destroyed by making nobler truth.

Religious people pray in the beautiful words of the Lord's Prayer, yet have little idea that they have anything to do to bring an answer. The lawyer devoutly repeats in church, "Thy kingdom come;" but if the realm of universal love and peace were to reveal for one day in Boston, would not that be a dismal day for the lawyers! The physician prays, "Thy will be done;" but if all men were to do God's will, as revealed in their physical constitutions, and thus be in universal health, what would the doctor do of other professions and occupations?

Spiritualism, teaching that the soul of man is intrinsically pure and constitutionally immortal, and recognizing constant aid from above through intercourse with higher forms of life, tends necessarily to the promotion of social harmony and universal justice. But this harmony must commence within the individual. Be just to yourself, physically, mentally, spiritually, and then you will do most to promote justice in others.

The true social order must be a thing of slow growth—it may require a century for its unfolding. We must therefore work in patience, in the midst of society as it is; leading just and pure lives, until the principles of justice shall permeate all hearts, and bring Humanity into an universal brotherhood.

The remainder of the discourse was a spontaneous out-gushing of inspiration, laden with deep, stirring, manly and practical thought, to the expression of which the reporter's pencil could do no justice.

### Spiritualism in Nashville, Tenn.

From the Nashville Evening News, of Nov. 11, we copy the following:

"The meetings of the 'Spiritual Conference' are held on Friday evenings of each week. Rev. J. B. Ferguson presiding. On last evening Odd Fellow's Hall was crowded almost to its utmost capacity, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, by an audience comprising scores of ladies and hundreds of gentlemen, embracing lawyers and doctors, ministers and people of every grade of talents and every position in society.

Whether the seeming interest of the large audience, as manifested in the marked and patient attention to the proceedings of the evening's session, was induced by a desire to investigate the matter and test the truth or falsity of the doctrines of the believers in Spiritual intercourse, or whether from a curiosity ever attendant upon the novel in the philosophic moral or material universe, much less the Spiritual, we cannot say. But a system of philosophy, or morals, or religion, as the case may be, claiming the authority, the respectability and origin of the doctrines of Spiritualism demands, and will receive, more or less attention in any community where its claims are presented, and we are not surprised to see that in this city a considerable degree of interest is manifested in it."

The editor then proceeds to remark that he knows nothing of the phenomena of Spiritualism, but will give "an opinion—perhaps too hastily formed and incorrect—of its doctrines and theory;"—the substance of which is that he understands the Spiritual doctrine to teach "the final salvation of all men, irrespective of moral and religious qualifications," while the Bible, which he accepts as "the word of God," teaches a different doctrine.

The editor was quite right in his admission that his opinion might be too hastily formed and incorrect. We have never yet found the intelligent Spiritualist who imagined it possible for any body to be saved, "irrespective of moral and religious qualifications." To a Spiritualist—to any mind that has any clear conception of what salvation is—such a statement is a contradiction of terms. To be saved, is to attain to certain "moral and religious qualifications"—without which there is no salvation, either present or final. So long as any mind is under the power of ignorance, error, or wrong of any kind, it is not saved from the evils of such a condition, nor can it be. But just so far as it is delivered from ignorance, error and wrong, in any degree, so far is it saved from such error or wrong, and of course from the consequences of wrong-doing; and when any mind shall, in its endless progression, become completely enlightened and purified by wisdom and love, then will it be completely saved, and not till then.

Such is, we think, the uniform "Spiritual doctrine" of salvation, and to us it seems eminently rational as well as spiritual. We trust that, in the light of this fact, the editor of the *News* will revise his opinion, and with an unprejudiced mind acquaint himself with both the facts and teachings of Spiritualism, that he may enjoy the "great salvation" which we experimentally know it will bring to him.

Bro. A. M. Potter's article was received too late for this number. It may be looked for in our next.

### Communications.

#### Letter from Mrs. Randall.

Philadelphia, Nov. 20, 1854.

Mrs. Newton:—In my remarks upon Marriage, which appeared in the last *Era*, my great aim was to express in as few words as possible the essence, so to speak, of my present view of the Civil Institution of Marriage, preferring to be brief rather than smooth; but as you have found it expedient to make that expression a text for lengthy remarks, it is but justice to myself and those who hold these views with me, to extend still farther that expression.

Those who read the Spiritual papers two years ago, will not need to be told here that I am a devout worshipper at the shrine of Love as manifested in a pure conjugal union of spirit; neither shall I be accused by those who have read much upon general Reform for the last ten years, of possessing an uncharitable spirit towards the great brotherhood—Man. But one thing I do plead guilty to—if guilty it be. This is an abrupt, outspoken devotion to truth, as it reveals itself to my perception. I am not *polite*, as the masses view policy, and fear I never shall be. I never yet could find it in my soul to express a hard truth over a fictitious signature; neither can I consent to bury an unwelcome truth under a haze of soft words. This may be the better way for others, but not for me. When I speak of my brothers and sisters, I speak of them gently, lovingly, for I love them all; but when I speak of those civil institutions which rivet chains upon them, which not only tear and lacerate their shrinking, quivering flesh, but also torture and dwarf their loving, aspiring spirits,—then it is that soft words are impotent in the expression of my spirit's earnest thought. Then it is that harshest epithets become tame. The expression may be *unwomanly* in the eye of those who love softness in woman; but when women learn to have independent thoughts, and express them, too, softness will not then be considered an essential female attribute. Let us apply all the hard words to hard subjects, and save all the gentle ones for each other, and we shall all grow more womanly and more manly, too.

My brother, you suggest, while bestowing a compliment for "intelligence" upon me, that I should not forget that "the true meaning of Doctor is Teacher," and that I qualify myself to teach upon this momentous subject. Now how can I do this? Shall I teach in harmony with my own convictions, and in my own language, or borrow, beg, or steal from others?

I was not so brief because I had nothing more to say; but because a small dose of unpleasant medicine is an important consideration when treating a sensitive patient; and will sometimes be received when a more dilute preparation would be rejected simply because of its quantity. While I could not carry this so far as to administer a bitter draught under the name of honey, and thus forfeit my reputation for honesty, still, my benevolence would prompt me to be as indulgent as the nature of the case would permit.

But should my gentle brother ever have occasion to call upon me to administer for a deep, foul ulcer, (which I hope he never will, as I do not fancy surgery,) methinks he would think it *unprofessional* at least to cover it over, and try to persuade him that there was no ulcer there, because a sharp knife looks savage and hurts too, when applied vigorously to an irritable nerve.

Ah! we are too squeamish about our pets. Do not let us be afraid of truth; it will not hurt us.

I would undertake to write a whole column to prove the truth of each sentence in my last article, were it necessary, citing facts and authority enough to fill your entire sheet; but which is the more noble, to make such an indiction upon you and your readers, or submit uncomplainingly to the imputation of insanity and impurity!

Whose motives are not impugned, that dares to step out from the prescribed path of Church or State? and who ever dared to advance an unpopular thought, that was not insane in the eyes of the popular thinker? I have always been unpopular, and presume I always shall be; for I mean to be true to my highest convictions of truth; and truth is never accepted as truth until it is at least a century old in its external growth.

I have, within a few weeks, received some "Communications" upon true Earth-Marriage, which to my mind are new, beautiful, and in harmony with science, both natural and spiritual, so far as science is within my comprehension; and should you find it wise in your own judgment to allow me to "doctor" according to my own professional ability, I may be able to present them to you in an acceptable manner. If not, I can well afford to wait, and let me assure you that I shall wait in kindness.

MARENDIA B. RANDALL.

REMARKS.—Those who read our observations on the previous communication of Mrs. Randall, which called forth the above, will perceive that she entirely fails to meet the point of our objections. We did not question the correctness of her views, nor ask that the truth should be withheld, or even buried "under a haze of soft words," because unwelcome or unpopular. Nothing of the sort. We only asked that truth should be stated so clearly, accurately and dispassionately, that it shall not appear to the mass of readers to be falsehood—that it shall not be made to look like a lie, because vehemently and imperfectly enunciated. Had all our readers been as well acquainted with the real views of Mrs. R. as we are, there would have been no danger of misapprehension; but such is probably far from being the case. It is an unworthy a true reformer to give needless occasion for misunderstanding, and to court unpopularity for the purpose of delaying it, as it is to shrink from the declaration of truth at the proper time, through cowardice.

Our sister may be assured that we have no "pets" to be "squeamish" about—and not the slightest fear of truth on any subject. Nevertheless, it becomes every teacher who would be useful, to study the adaptation of truth, and never to indulge in denunciation, where instruction is more needed.

Should Mrs. Randall, when called to treat an ulcer as she supposes, approach the patient with a dissecting-knife, and proceed as if about to amputate a limb, or cut off the head, we should conceive that she was acting "unprofessionally," and that she would be likely to do more harm than good, by so terrifying the patient that the ulcer could not be touched.

If Mrs. R. has anything calculated to throw light upon the important subject of Earth-Marriage, and thus instruct humanity in the true nature and uses of that relation, we shall be most happy to give it a place in our columns.

For the New Era.

### The Heart is Human.

HOWEVER DIVINE ITS HOPES MAY BE.

How much of truth is embodied in this sentiment! Yes, the heart is human, however strong our faith in immortality—however bright and beautiful our visions of the heavenly land—however lovely and pure may seem this haven of rest beyond the grave; and we may associate with this dear home, the loved ones of bygone days, and follow them in bright fancy to the land of beauty and repose—and we may in vision see them clothed with beautiful forms—forms which angels wear. And we may also hear their voices breaking upon our ears in dulcet tones, whispering words of touching melody. And we have bowed in resignation and said, "All is well." And yet there are times when we cannot forget the shroud and the coffin. We cannot forget that clay-cold form, which we had learned to love so well. We cannot forget that dear form was once radiant with life and beauty. We have seen the eye closed in death, and know it will beam on us no more as it has done. We have clasped the cold and lifeless hand, but felt no answering clasp to ours. We have kissed again and again, those clay-cold lips, but they heeded us not. And there we found the heart was indeed human still. Yes, we must feel this, when we reflect that they have gone from our mortal sight,—that we shall miss them by the fireside—that we see the "vacant chair," the cast-off garment. Then in the loneliness of the chamber, where, associated with many things, are the memories of our loved ones, meditation calls up the face and form so dear to us; and we weep again, because they are not made manifest to our mortal sight.

There are those who argue that we ought not to mourn for the departed. Tell me, oh! tell me, ye that have stood by a loved and cherished friend, and have seen the beaming eye grow dim and sightless,—who have bent low to catch the last faint whisper ere the lips were forever closed in death,—who have in agony of soul knelt upon the grassy mound and wept because life's day seemed all desolate and bare,—can we who have seen and felt all this help mourning for the departed? There may be those who have never mourned—yes, and there may be those who never loved much. It is those that love most intensely, that mourn most deeply. There may be those who never suffer. If so, they are those who come and go from this earthly life, without their hearts feeling one holy throbbing of sympathy or thrilling with one note of sorrow—who can look upon the sensitive soul with coldness and indifference. But I am no subscriber to this doctrine of indifference. Oh! I would rather suffer still more, than love less. Let those boast of their stoical philosophy who have no hearts to feel. Let those who sneer and scoff at the loving, sensitive, affectionate soul still sneer on. They know not the holy calm that comes from the sorrowed heart, when angels have ministered to it. Those who have never been in Gethsemane, know not a Savior's joy.

There are many who think we ought not to mourn for the departed, because it is selfish so to do. It may be so. But can we reason thus, and dry up all our tears? We know that we weep for ourselves. And we must weep, because our way seems so lonely, desolate and dark. And we know, also, that deeper and darker would be the gloom which would hang over all our earthly way, but for the thought that our loved ones still live—oh! and still watch around our earthly way. Oh! sweet and rapturous thought, we are not left alone! There is ever an unseen throng around us.

My faith is strong in the doctrine of Spirit-communication. It has ever seemed to me that Spirits from the spheres above were all about me. When a child, I fancied I heard angel voices. On every breeze there came a message of love. In every flower I could see an angel's smile. In every murmuring brook I thought I saw angel forms. I early learned to associate everything that was pure and beautiful with the angel-world. This was childhood's sunny days; and when dark hours came—hours so densely dark that I could not see one angel form, yet even then, in the distance, I could hear their sweet voices chanting in softest cadence some message of love; and my bowed soul would again look heavenward, dash aside the spray, and calmly breast the storm. My soul, adore the great and good Father for all his tender mercies, and know that though thy heart seems human, yet at times it lives in the unseen future, and lives also in God. Then its hopes are divine.

LIDA.

### The Right Spirit.

A correspondent in New York closes a business letter as follows:

"While I am writing, I want to say a word on the general subject. On reading a few of the articles in some of the recent numbers of the *Era*, something there, I regret to say, looked a little like crimination and re-







## Poetry.

## NOT TO MYSELF ALONE.

"Not to myself alone,"  
The little opening flower transported cries,  
"Not to myself alone I bud and bloom;  
With fragrant breath the breeze I perfume,  
And gladden all things with my rainbow dye.  
The bees sip nectar, every eve and morn,  
The butterfly with its cap doth hide  
From the sun's bright rays."  
"Not to myself alone,"  
The evening star with honest pride doth boast,  
"Not to myself alone I rise and set;  
I write upon night's coronal of jet  
His power and skill who formed our myriad host;  
A friendly beam on heaven's open gate,  
I give the sky.  
That man might ne'er forget, in every fate,  
His home on high."  
"Not to myself alone,"  
The heavy-laden rose doth murmuring hum,  
"Not to myself alone from flower to flower,  
I roam the wood, the garden and the bower,  
And to the hive at evening weary come;  
For man, for man, the luscious food I pile  
With busy care,  
Content if he repay my cheerless toil  
With scanty share."  
"Not to myself alone,"  
The soaring bird with lusty pinion sings,  
"Not to myself alone I raise my song;  
I cheer the drooping with my warbling tongue,  
And bear the mourner on my viewless wings;  
I bid the hyacinth curl my anemone learn,  
And God adore;  
I call the worldling from his dream to turn,  
And sing and soar."  
"Not to myself alone,"  
The streamlet whistles on its pebbly way,  
"Not to myself alone I sparkling glide;  
I scatter health and life on every side,  
And strew the fields with herb and flower gay;  
I sing unto the common bleak and bare,  
My gladsome tune,  
I sweeten and refresh the languid air  
In droopful June."  
"Not to myself alone,"  
O man, forget not thou—earth's honored priest,  
Its tongue, its soul, its life, its pulse, its heart,  
In earth's great chorus to sustain thy part!  
Chiefest of guests at love's ungrudging feast,  
Play not the niggard, spare thy native eld,  
And self disown;  
Live to thy neighbor, live unto thy God;  
Not to thyself alone!

## THE PHANTOM.

Again I sit within the mansion,  
In the old familiar seat;  
And shade and sunshine chase each other  
O'er the carpet at my feet.  
But the sweet-brier's arms have wrestled upwards  
In the summer that is past,  
And the willow trails its branches lower  
Than when I saw them last.  
They strive to shut the sunshine wholly  
From out the haunted room;  
To fill the house, that once was joyful,  
With silence and with gloom.  
And many kind, remembered faces  
Within the doorway come—  
Voices, that wake the sweetest music  
Of one that now is dumb.  
They sing, in tones as glad as ever,  
The songs she loved to hear;  
They braid the rose in summer garlands,  
Whose flowers to her were dear.  
And still, her footsteps in the passage,  
Her blushes at the door,  
Her timid words of welcome,  
Come back to me once more.  
And, all forgetful of my sorrow,  
Unmindful of my pain,  
I think she has but newly left me,  
And soon will come again.  
She stays without, perchance, a moment,  
To dress her dark hair;  
I hear the rustle of her garments—  
Her light step on the stair!  
O, fluttering heart! control thy tumult,  
Lest eyes profane should see  
My cheeks betray the rush of rapture  
Her coming brings to me.  
She tarries long; but lo! a whisper  
Beyond the open door,  
And, gliding through the quiet sunshine,  
A shadow on the floor!  
Ah! 'tis the whispering wind that calls me,  
The vine, whose shadow strays;  
And my patient heart must still await her,  
Nor chide her long delays.  
But my heart grows sick with weary waiting,  
As many a time before;  
Her foot is ever at the threshold,  
Yet never passes o'er.

BAYARD TAYLOR.

## TO A BELOVED ONE.

Heaven hath its crown of stars, the earth  
Her glory robe of flowers—  
The sea its gems—the grand old woods  
Their songs and greening bowers:  
The birds have homes, where leaves and blooms  
In beauty wreath above;  
High yearning hearts, their rainbow-dream—  
And we, sweet! we have love.  
We walk not with the jeweled great,  
Where love's dear name is sold;  
Yet have we wealth we would not give  
For all their world of gold.  
We revel not in corn and wine,  
Yet have we from above  
Manna divine, and we'll not pine:  
Do we not live and love?  
I know, dear heart! that in our lot  
May mingle tears and sorrow;  
But love's rich rainbow's built from tears  
To-day, with smiles to-morrow.  
The sunshine from our sky may die,  
The greenness from life's tree,  
But ever, 'mid the warbling storm,  
Thy nest shall feathered be.

GERALD MASSEY.

## THINK OF ME.

Go where the water glideth gently ever,  
Glideth through meadows that the greenest be;  
Go, listen to your own beloved river,  
And think of me!  
Wander in forests, where the small flower layeth  
Its fairy gown beneath the giant tree!  
List to the dim brook pining as it playeth,  
And think of me!  
And when the sky is silver-pale at even,  
And the wind whisteth in the lonely tree,  
Go out beneath the solitary heaven,  
And think of me!  
And when the moon riseth, as she were dreaming,  
And treadeth with white feet the lulled sea,  
Go, silent as a star, beneath her beaming,  
And think of me!

W. G. CLARK.

## Miscellany.

## The First Engine in India.

The following account of the first introduction of the steam engine into India furnishes so admirable a parallel to the manner in which the modern developments of Spirit-agency are received in more civilized countries, that we cannot forbear its quotation:

A gentleman who had long labored indefatigably in India to introduce European thrift, notices the first introduction of the steam engine as follows:

In the district in which I lived there had been vague, mystical stories afloat respecting a strange machine said to be possessed by the Sahib people. It was said to be capable of running ten "cass" (twenty miles) an hour, with a hundred wagons at its heels; and ships were said to be propelled by it on the "Kella pance" (blackwater or sea) against both wind and tide. But these stories were considered by many as far away wonders with which the Sahibs delighted to magnify their own wisdom at the expense of the men of Hindoostan.

Great, therefore was the astonishment of these wise men when it was made known that one of these mysterious machines was about to make its appearance among them. Crowds of solemn-looking Brahmins, and grand-bearded Mussulmans might be seen examining and criticising the limbs of the huge creature as they lay scattered about on the wharf, where they had been just landed. During the time these "disjecta membra" were being put together, there was much speculation and curiosity as to what means of energy these uncouth looking pieces of iron could possess; and as I had occasion to consult the plans before giving instructions to the workmen—applying a pair of dividers, scale, and sometimes making calculations with a piece of charcoal on the nearest wall, I observed that the men ceased working, and looked on with open mouths, as if I had been going through a conjuring process.

After much labor and anxiety, I at length succeeded in getting the "monster" put together; and one day, just as the heat of the day was beginning to decline, I ordered the boiler to be filled with water, and soon had a roaring fire beneath it. The natives seemed to have an impression that something unusual was about to happen, and crowds from all directions began to assemble to witness the new "avatar." By dusk the steam was well up; and by the light of two flaring torches I could see curious looking faces peering in at the door and windows of the engine-house. The workmen who had assisted in its erection, laid by their tools, and were whispering to each other in wondering groups, when the safety-valve suddenly opened, and the new born Titan began to let his voice be heard. I shall never forget the terror and amazement depicted on the faces of those who were standing by me when this occurred. A great man ran away in sheer fright; but those who had been employed in putting the engine together, and, from daily familiarity, grown bolder, readily assisted in turning round the ponderous fly-wheel preparatory to starting. It was as much as a dozen of them could do to move it, and that very slowly; but when the steam began to act, and the massive iron rim to steal away from their aiding hands, they fairly screamed with delight. Faster and faster went the wheel; the pumps clanked, the steam snorted through the escape pipe; and the heavy masses of iron they had experienced so much difficulty in lifting into their places, now seemed endowed with life and motion.

Some months after the engine had been at work and when I had become better acquainted with the language, I was at much pains in endeavoring to explain the principles of its action to the most intelligent of the workmen; but I found they had long ago provided themselves with what, to their thinking, was a complete theory of the whole matter. The doctrine was, that the boiler contained an English "bhoot" (spirit), that we made a fire beneath the boiler, and roasted the said "bhoot" until he called out "du-hagei" (mercy) through the safety-valve; and then only, and not before, would he go to work; and the water was merely given to quench his thirst!

The repeated injunctions given the man who attended to the boiler about the necessity of keeping it well supplied with water, and the consequences of the boiler bursting, which I attempted to explain as likely to follow any neglect of this precaution, led the poor fellow to imagine that if the bhoot was not "made pleasant" with plenty of water, he would certainly break loose and kill every body within his reach. They soon began, however, to have tolerably correct notions of its character; and although no longer believing in its supernatural attributes, they allowed it was a "good contrivance."

Steamboats now ply between all the different stations on the Ganges; and it presents a curious contrast to witness the straight forward course and indelible will of the English steamers, breasting wind and tide, as if impelled by fate, and the crazy, undecided motions of the native baidgerows, creeping along the lee shores, tacking and tumbling about with the most bewildering uncertainty. Railways, too, are now in course of construction on some of the principal lines of traffic; and the time is not far distant when, by their means, the rich produce of Central India will be poured into Europe with a profusion and regularity never yet dreamed of. Aye, the steam-engine is destined to do more for India than all her other teachers have yet effected. The iron apostle of civilization does not declaim; it does not dispute nor vituperate, but it works and always succeeds.

A NEGRO CALCULATING BOY.—At the United States Hotel, a short time since, was stopping a colored boy, named William Marcey, whose extraordinary mathematical powers have greatly astonished all who have witnessed his demonstrations. He will add up columns of figures any length, divide any given sum, multiply millions by thousands, within five minutes of the time the figures are given to him, and with such exactness as to render it truly wonderful. Yesterday noon, in presence of a party of gentlemen, he added a column of figures eight in line, and 108 lines, making the sum total of several millions, in about six minutes. The feat was so astounding, and apparently incredible, that several of the party took off their coats, and, dividing the sum, went to work, and in two hours after they commenced, produced identically the same answer. The boy is not quite seventeen years of age; he cannot read nor write, and in every other branch of an English education is entirely deficient. His parents reside in Kentucky, near Louisville.—[Cincinnati Gazette.]

People who are jealous and particularly careful of their own rights and dignity, always find enough of those who do not care for either to keep them continually uncomfortable.

## Socrates.

The following is the estimate put upon this wonderful man (who lived 470 years B. C.) by M. de Lamartine, the French historian and poet:

Not content with improving himself, Socrates was inspired with the more disinterested and divine passion of improving others. He employed every moment he could abstract from his domestic avocations in the instruction and correction of his fellow-citizens of every class. Often, indeed, (and his wife justly complained of this), he forgot the necessities of his household, and would sit for whole days in dreamy abstraction, his head buried in his hands, or holding philosophical converse with the first stranger who demanded from him lessons in wisdom. By degrees, the profound truth of his remarks, the novelty of his ideas, the penetrating, unexpected simplicity of his arguments, the familiarity of the images and parables which he borrowed from the commonest employments of life, to elevate the minds of those with whom he was conversing, as the jeweller uses the vilest dust to polish the diamond—these combined attractions drew around Socrates an extensive circle of disciples. Athens was a free republic—rich, idle, and luxurious; given to doctrines, controversies, sects, truths, sophistries, and even falsehood; the government, which was carried on in public, was little more than a perpetual conversation between the citizens, on politics, laws, religion, nature, and the Deities. In that lovely climate—where men passed their lives in the sun—the porticoes of the temples, the studios of the artists, the open shops of the tradespeople, the streets, the squares, the market-places, were so many academies or schools, where all discoursed together, and the most eloquent, the most seductive, or the most able carried away the greatest number of auditors from his rivals. Perpetual converse was, in fact, the leading institution of Athens. It supplied the place of what the periodical press has become with us since the discovery of printing, with this distinction, that the press speaks separately to single readers, and allows neither dialogue nor reply; while the public conversations of Athens became to many animated discussions, and gathered together the idlers and the followers of the most popular speaker in a sect or college. Thus it was that Socrates, though always speaking, and on every subject, wrote nothing; his lessons were all dialogues with his listeners, and after his death Plato and Xenophon, his disciples, transcribed from memory, and under this constrained form, the doctrines which they had heard and noted during the life of their master.

For ourselves, while with Xenophon we admire the wisdom of the Grecian philosopher, we do not hesitate to prefer by a thousand degrees, the more divine inspirations of India, of China, and, above all, of the Christian revelation. The wisdom of Socrates was intelligence only, not sufficiently imbued with love. It reflects justly, but fails in self-devotion. Personal sacrifice, the highest consummation of virtue and prize of truth, can scarcely be awarded to him, despite his punishment, which was entirely political and not religious. He is a sage, but not a martyr. He accommodates himself to the manners, the faith, and even the failings of his age and country. He delivers able and animated lectures on virtue to those who require them, but he also discourses on vice with youths and courtisans. He believes in one only God, the Creator and Regulator of the universe, but publicly worships the multiplied and carnal divinities, formed after the conceptions of man. He dies heroically, but for himself as much as for truth. His very death is a fortunate incident in his destiny, which he turns to advantage with consummate intelligence. "I am old," says he to Xenophon, "and nothing remains for me but to decay in faculties and genius. This is the proper moment for me to die." Socrates exhibits little sympathy with human nature; he has no strong tenderness even for his wife and children; he is always a man of genius, rather than a being devoted to his fellow-creatures. His conversations, although occasionally sublime, attest this want of heavenly love in his nature and his wisdom. He banters sometimes, he ridicules often, he laughs always. Irony, which renders truth offensive, is the inseparable feature of his dialogues. He argues by teasing interrogatories, as if to force his antagonist to contradict himself; he draws him on from point to point, hiding with dexterity the end to which he proposes to lead him. Finally, he confounds him in his own admissions, as if truth itself might be entangled in a snare. He is always critical, scarcely ever imaginative. Plato, his divine disciple, has given him wings, without which he would often creep.

From this summary we conclude that Socrates was neither wiser, more virtuous, nor more religious than all the other philosophers of antiquity, but that he was the most witty and the most amiable of Athenian citizens; that he knew how to think well, to speak well, to die well; but that he also knew how to live well, and, according to our ideas, had too much prudence in his wisdom, and too much cleverness in his virtue. Charity (in its Christian sense) had not yet appeared in the world.

## A Little German Story.

A countryman one day returning from the city, took home with him five of the finest peaches one could possibly desire to see, and as his children had never beheld the fruit before, they rejoiced over them exceedingly, calling them the fine apples with rosy cheeks, and soft plum-like skins. The father divided them amongst his four children, and retained one for their mother. In the evening, ere the children had retired to their chamber, the father questioned them by asking—

"How did you like the soft, rosy apples?"  
"Very much indeed, dear father," said the eldest boy; "it is a beautiful fruit—so acid, and yet so nice and soft to the taste; I have carefully preserved the stone, that I may cultivate a tree."

"Right, and bravely done," said the father; "that speaks well for regarding the future with care, and is becoming a young husbandman."

"I have eaten mine, and thrown the stone away," said the youngest; "besides which, mother gave me half of hers. Oh! it tasted so sweet, and so melting in my mouth."

"Indeed," answered the father, "thou hast not been prudent. However, it was very natural and endurable, and displays wisdom enough for your years."

"I have picked up the stone," said the second son, "which my little brother threw away, and cracked it, and eaten the kernel, it was as sweet as a nut to the taste; but my peach I have sold for so much money, that when I go to the city I can buy twelve of them."

The parent shook his head reprovingly, saying—

"Beware, my boy, of avarice. Prudence is all very well, but such conduct as yours is unchildlike and unnatural. Heaven guard thee, my child, from the fate of a miser. And thou, Edmund!" asked the father, turning to his third son, who frankly and openly replied—  
"I have given my peach to the son of our neighbor—the sick George, who has had a fever. He would not take it, so I left it on his bed, and I have just come away."  
"Now," said the father, "who has done the best with his peach?"  
"Brother Edmund!" the three exclaimed aloud, "brother Edmund!"  
Edmund was still and silent, and the mother kissed him with tears of joy in her eyes.

BEAUTIFUL EXTRACT.—The editor of the *Knickerbocker* attributes the following to like Marvel, and it is certainly worthy of him:

"Last evening we were walking leisurely along, the music in the choir in three churches came floating out into the darkness around us, and they were all new and strange tunes but one; and that one—it was not sung as we have heard it, but awakened a train of long buried memories, that rose to us even as they were before the cemetery of the soul had a tomb in it."

It was the sweet old "Corinth" they were singing—strains we have seldom heard since the rose color of life was blanching; and we were in a moment back again to the old village church, and it was a summer afternoon, and the yellow sunbeams were streaming through the west windows, and the silver hair of the old deacon, who sat in the pulpit, was turned to gold in its light; and the minister, who we used to think could never die, so good was he, had concluded "application" and "exhortation," and the village choir was singing the last hymn, and the tune was "Corinth."

It is years—we dare not think how many—since then, and "the prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended," and the choir are scattered and gone. The girl with blue eyes that sang alto, and the girl with black eyes that sang air—the eyes of the one were like a clear June heaven at noon.

They both became wives, and both mothers, and they both died. Who shall say they are not singing "Corinth" still, where Sabbath never wane and congregations never break up?

There they sat Sabbath after Sabbath, by the square column on the right of the "leader," and to our young ears their tones were the "very soul of music." That column bears still their pencilled names, as they wrote them in those days in life's June, 183—, before dreams or change had overcome their spirit like a summer's cloud.

Alas! that with the old singers most of the sweeter tones have died upon the air; but they linger in memory, and they shall yet be sung in the sweet reunion of song that shall take place by and by in a hall whose columns are beams of morning light, whose ceiling is pearl, whose floors are all gold, and where hair never turns silvery, and hearts never grow old. Then she that sang alto, and she that sang air, will be in their places once more.

RAILROAD STATION HOUSES.—There is nothing connected with railroads generally, where in the comfort and convenience of the passengers is less consulted and cared for than in the supply of station houses along our lines of road. The following account of a German one is commended to the attentive perusal of railroad directors.

"Arrived at the station, we found that we must wait till half past five in the afternoon for the train. This would have been an intolerable doom in the desolate precincts of an English or an American station, but not in a German one. As usual, this had a charming garden, laid out with exquisite taste, and all glowing and fragrant with plants of verberna and fuschias, heliotropes, nigette, pansies, white rows of hot-house flowers, set under the shelter of neatly trimmed hedges, gave brightness to the scene. Among all these pretty grounds were seats and walks. If the Anglo-Saxons would imitate the liberality of the continent in the matter of railroad stations, the traveller would find something more agreeable than the grim, bare, forbidding places which now obtain in England and America."

TO GET CASTINGS OF MALLEABLE IRON.—Mr R. A. Brooman, of London, has taken the patent for this invention, which consists of an improved method of preparing wrought iron so that it may be capable of being poured or cast into molds for the production of malleable castings, or articles which shall have all the strength and qualities due to wrought-iron. The invention is designed chiefly for the manufacture of railway wheels, but it is equally applicable to the production of other articles. Scrap or wrought iron may be employed, or bars or plates cut into small pieces, and it must be melted in crucibles such as are used for melting blister steel. To a charge suitable in amount to the crucible, one half of one per cent. of charcoal by weight, one per cent. of manganese and one of sal ammonia is added. The whole is covered from the atmosphere and melted in a temperature of about 1,500 degrees Fahrenheit, which temperature is maintained for three hours. The metal is then poured into molds. Other carbonaceous matter may be substituted for charcoal. The iron thus cast will, it is stated, be malleable, so as to be capable of being treated under the hammer in the forge and formed into other shapes, and thus also part of the iron may be shaped in molds and part completed by forging, so as to produce intricate shapes and ornamental work.—*Spiritual Telegraph*.

AERIAL NAVIGATION.—For some time past a new system of aerial navigation has been exhibited by a model in this city, the invention of E. D. Tibbets, Esq., of Washington City, an old and respectable teacher and inventor. His plan is to have a condensing reservoir in the car of his balloon, connected with the inlet pipe and the balloon itself by two pipes. When the balloon is inflated, and has ascended, and it is desired to descend to another stratum of air for a favorable or less swift current, it is designed to employ an air pump to draw the gas out of the balloon and condense it in the reservoir, thereby, as he conceives, making the balloon descend by the gas being confined in a smaller space than in the balloon: when he wants to ascend again, he opens the faucet and allows the condensed gas in the reservoir to pass by the inlet tube into the balloon, and thus—by condensing and expanding the gas—arise and descend at pleasure. He also employs two propellers set towards one another, forming an angle of about 90 deg. for propelling the balloon. The successful navigation of the atmosphere is something much to be desired, and Mr. Tibbets' plan is the best we have yet seen for effecting this object. [*Scientific American*].

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