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[EDITED BY J. H. NOYES.]

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Progress of Discussion.

THE HIGHER LAW; TRIED BY REASON AND AUTHORITY. New York: S. W. Benedict, Publisher.

The 'Higher Law' is working its way grandly into the conscience of the people, and, as might have been foreseen, is proving a barbed arrow to the Russian element in our laws and institutions; the more it is stirred, the deeper it searches and the firmer it holds. We venture to say, that at the present time there is no other subject exercising so vital and profound an agitation in the country. It does not show itself in a noisy way, because superficial, noisy men will avoid it as long as they can. It is a handwriting on the wall, which they forebode, but cannot interpret, and therefore try to exclude and forget. But the best class of men in the country, the thoughtful, disinterested and sincere, are every where silently cogitating this subject, and preparing to meet it. It is no ripple on the surface, that draws out such men as Seward, Sumner, David Paul Brown, Greeley, Bacon and Beecher, in affirmation of the new doctrine of a 'higher law.' The thing is manifestly growing, deep in the heart of the people, and it is none the worse sign, that its progress is still and slow; it will come to its development in due time. As a specimen of the discussion that is going, and the tone of the Higher Law writers, we present the following extracts from the pamphlet before us:

"However men may theorize, it will be found in practice, that some sentiment of justice is natural to man; and public opinion will much sooner violate its own law, than push to the extremity the unreasonable or supererogatory enactments which are found on the statute book. I know it is often said that 'the law is the perfection of reason;' but most lawyers, and some who are not, know that a more absurd falsehood was never uttered. If the converse of the maxim were true, and the perfection of reason were always law, there might be some rational hope of always getting justice done. The law books are not wanting in cases of this kind, where laws have proved in practice wholly inoperative, because not founded in reason or necessity. And this fact alone is a sufficient confutation of the notion of the sacred supremacy of the law. Law, no more than government, has any Divine right, or any inherent authority. It is always amenable to the reason and public opinion that made it. A senseless statute is no very sacred thing, and to say that all laws are sacred and supreme, because they are laws, is a kind of logic which is charitable criticism to call absurd. Law is at the best, a temporary expedient,—reason is a perpetual force; law is artificial,—common sense is natural. That our fathers stultified themselves, is no reason why we should,—and the Egyptian law, requiring men to eat garlic in worship of cats, though both 'sacred' and 'supreme,' was not very rigidly observed by their posterity.

Thus we might go on, citing instance after instance to prove, that there are some laws which are ridiculous, and fall to the ground by the Higher Law of common sense;—some laws which are obsolete, and are defeated by the Higher Law of human progress;—some laws which are inconvenient, and are overruled by the Higher Law of necessity;—some laws which are unnatural, and are null by the Higher Law of instinct and of nature; and some laws which are unjust, and are void by the Higher Law of conscience and of God.

Experience proves that passive obedience never yet repealed an unjust law. To talk of the sacredness of unrighteous laws, and the binding obligation of them till we can get them repealed, is to deny all experience and to fly in the teeth of facts. The natural method, that which history points out, and reason approves, and justice sanctions, is just precisely the opposite of this. First, the unjust law has been tried,—then its wrongfulness has become

apparent to some among the people,—these men thought and reflected, and tried the law by reason and conscience,—next they settled their minds against it and resolved not to obey it,—next they disobeyed it,—next this excited and roused public opinion,—all that could be brought to uphold the unjust law was brought—authority, proscription—sacred obligation;—it was discussed and agitated, and weighed and found wanting,—the friends of justice soon began to outnumber its foes,—the revolution (something which never goes backward) could not be stopped,—the law was disobeyed again, and again, and still again,—every new man in whom justice found a home, added to the number who would not keep the law,—soon it came to pass that the law could not be executed;—the law which cannot be executed, must one day be repealed;—and finally, and after all this preliminary contest, the law was formally and definitely repealed. This is the actual method in which the world gets rid of unrighteous laws; first they are disobeyed and then repealed; first the people have thrown them aside, and then the legislature have abrogated them because they were thrown aside; first the law has perished because of justice, and then been buried by statute because it was dead.

All history can scarcely show an instance of the repeal of a law before it was first disobeyed. The opposite doctrine, of passive obedience first and repeal afterward, would have kept alive every wrong, and perpetuated every tyranny since the world began. It would have sanctioned the oppressions of James and the tyranny of bloody Mary. It would have deprived Hampden of all claim to honor, and torn the crown of glory from the brow of Sydney. It would have put a stopper on the English revolution, and kept our forefathers and us their children to this day loyal subjects of the British crown.

We come now to the grand Corymbus of objections to the Higher Law, viz.: That it tends directly to subvert all laws, and overturn all government, and must sooner or later end in anarchy. If this were true, we should be among the last to advocate a principle which leads to such deplorable results.—But it is not true.

If we have proved anything at all in the course of our argument, it is that the only sanction which a law can have, is its justice. Now, if the case stands thus with the law, that its only claim to be obeyed is that it is just, then disobedience to unjust laws, so far from subverting law, tends directly to establish it, by honoring in the highest degree the only true source of its claims,—viz., justice. In fact, the only real upholder of the law, is he who strenuously opposes an unjust law,—since, as all men hold, justice lies at the foundation, and if it be not there, the superstructure must sooner or later totter and fall. He who blindly and passively obeys all laws, right or wrong,—just or unjust—is not the friend of law, but of arbitrary rule and tyranny. It is a sheer absurdity to say that because one unjust law is set at naught, all the just ones are overthrown. So far from this, it can be proved that every act of obedience to unjust laws tends to weaken the foundations of all law, by perpetuating those which cast a stain upon the statute book, and inducing men to think lightly of a power which ordains wrong. For it is not possible to serve justice and injustice together; it is not in nature to respect the wrong, and yet reverence the right.

If it is said that should I disobey an unjust law, another man will disobey a just one, I reply, so much the worse for him. If he cannot see the difference between right and wrong, it is no reason why I should refuse to see it, or to act upon it when seen. Men talk much and foolishly of the evil effects of example, as if a good example were accountable for every bad thing done in its name. Shall I be afraid to do right to-day, lest my neighbor do wrong to-morrow? Must I stand forever balancing between right and wrong, fearful of doing right lest a greater wrong should follow? Must I be the slave of circumstance and expediency, and only do just so much justice, as, on a cool calculation of chances will, in my opinion, lead to no ill consequences? Away with such temporizing and paltering! Where truth and justice and duty stand on one side, and example and precedent and expediency on the other, we have simply nothing to do with consequences. If I am too timid to walk uprightly lest my weaker neighbor stumble and fall, I had better at once renounce the responsibility of living, and quit a world in which it is so dangerous to do right.

This plea of the abuse by bad men of the liberty of good ones, is fit only to be used by Jesuits and knaves. He who will not do good lest evil come, is the very man to do evil that good may come.

Again, let the theory of the ill results of disobedience be what it may, all experience proves that in practice it is no very dangerous thing, after all.—The man who will most strenuously disobey every unjust law, because he has too much conscience to do wrong,—is the very man of all others who will most religiously obey every just one,—and for the very same reason. Who so scrupulous in his observance of Custom House and civil laws, as the Quaker, who will not, for penalties or prisons, give up his conscience to obey the military laws? And everywhere it will be found that the opponents of injustice are invariably the best and most valuable citizens the

State can show. It would be strange if it were not so; strange indeed, if men who are so anxious to do right at every hazard, should wrong or injure the State at last. Time brings all things out correct,—and no good law ever suffered yet because a just man refused to keep a bad one.

One would think that the same conclusion could be reached without the help of experience to prove it. For what is the whole theory and object of government from foundation to cap-stone, but an endeavor to realize justice? Our trial by jury is only twelve men in pursuit of justice. Justice between man and man is the very thing aimed at, and if the law contradicts justice—as it is acknowledged it often does, why what harm can follow from justice stepping in and taking the place of the law? It will do this spontaneously, if only men think rightly,—and, as we have already shown, in questions of humanity, in those extreme necessities where only there is call for conscience to interpose,—they generally do think rightly.

At all events, the principle holds good, that nothing but justice at last satisfies every body; and if justice be done now without the law, the law will by and by come in to sanction it. Do we then make void the law through justice? Nay, we establish the law.

It is strange that any ministers of Christianity should lend themselves to the work of advocating the lower law at the expense of the Higher.—One blushes to hear from the pulpit, deprecations of disobedience, and doubts as to the "expediency" of obeying conscience. If our Christianity is only good to make time-servers and moral politicians, we had better go to Socrates and Cicero for our religion, who at least bade men be conscientious, let what might follow.—Shall it be said that that grand old saying, "Fiat justitia, ruat cælum," let the right be done though the skies come down," although the utterance of a heathen Roman, is a mark above the morality of the church? To what avail then its "noble army of martyrs," its fearless prophets and brave apostles? What boots it that Saint Peter obeyed God rather than men, if his successors teach us to obey men rather than God? Is the church then sunk so low as to pander for crime in the name of law, and preach down conscience in the name of God? Better give us heathenism with conscience, than Christianity without it. Better leave men to the law of nature than teach them in the name of Christ to do to others what they would not for the world that others should do to them. If this is all that Christianity can come to, then surely Christ is dead in vain, and he, who, for obedience to the Higher Law, was put to death by the lower, has shed his sacred blood for naught. But no! 'twere blasphemy to think so meanly of God's goodness as to believe that he will suffer his truth to perish. Let there be a few wolves among the flock; there are yet enough free lips, and Christian, human souls, to keep alive the Christianity of Christ, that beautiful and sacred brotherhood whose limits are mankind!

Finally, it can hardly be expected of our people,—at least of any general portion of them,—to surrender the rights of conscience, the best established principles of former times, and the strong instincts of human nature, in obedience to such laws as that lately hurried through the forms of legislation. The law which is built on justice, requires but little aid of men to make it binding; but to such laws as these, justice is a sworn and eternal foe. The law of conscience cannot be set aside by courts, the eternal instincts of humanity cannot be legislated out of men.

The Law of Nature still reigns supreme, whether men set up their puny laws, or pull them down. Not king, nor Congress, nor legislature can nullify that; not all the votes of all the parties can bear down justice at the last. Sooner or later, the right will have its way. If justice be not done by your laws, 'twill be done in spite of them, for it must and will be done. An unjust law is sure to be set at naught, for conscience cannot be cheated of her rights forever. Talk not to us of Treason. Injustice is the only treason; no law can legalize it, no constitution can sanction it; it is null by the older Constitution of Nature, void by the Higher Law of God!

'Tis strange that so plain a truth should need be told; strange that Justice should need the help of History, and call on logic for its defense. But so it is, that in the minds of men, reason is dethroned by prejudice, and interest will blind their eyes to justice. To hear the daily talk of men, one would think that no law was ever disobeyed till now; no act of legislation ever so much questioned before. Politicians gravely tell us that the Higher Law is treason,—and Divines preach solemn sermons to prove the Statute Book infallibly inspired! Yet every day witnesses the breach of laws far more reasonable, and a hundred times as righteous. Men can swear unlawful oaths at the Custom-House,—take unlawful interest,—drive trades unlawfully on Sunday,—make unlawful bets,—rent unlawful brothels,—sell unlawful liquors without license,—yes, vent unlawful oaths against the "Higher Law," and who is there that cares a pin? Men may break all these laws, and more, for the sake of interest, and there is not a dog to wag his tongue; but let a man disobey an unjust law, for the sake of principle, and the whole land rings with the cry of treason! The very man who will break every law, human or divine, for the Almighty Dollar, sneers at the "fanaticism" of him who keeps the law of Almighty God! In the hands of a subtle lawyer, working for a fee, the Constitution and the laws are as elastic as India rubber; but when the voice of humanity cries out for justice, suddenly they are found to be stereotyped in steel!

But let no man despair. Justice asks no aid of mortal men, and God's laws will one day or other execute themselves. The Higher Law is in no danger of being permanently disregarded, nor are its subjects to be frightened from their allegiance by being called bad names. The law which came not from men, depends not on them for its sanction,—it reach-

es down its feet to the foundations of the universe, and its hand takes hold on the throne of God.

"In the open Book of Nature, Heaven above and Earth below, We have learned a Higher Statute than the babbling schoolmen know."

God's voice in conscience taught us, as his angels only can. That the one sacred thing beneath the cope of Heaven is Man.

That he who treads profanely on the scrolls of law and creed, In the depths of God's great goodness may find mercy in his need; But woe to him who crushes the Soul with chain and rod, And herds with lower natures, the awful form of God!"

Newness of Life.

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."

This language points to the great Christian change—the most important and interesting possibility in all human experience. Whatever the cause and character of this change, it is at least represented as a decisive one; extending to a complete revolution of the course and conditions of life. It is a spirit-crisis, separating between such opposite states and destinies, that a man becomes another man in passing it. Let us study the characteristics of the two conditions—before and after the change.

They are variously contrasted by the scripture writers, but frequently in connection with the terms 'new' and 'old.' Thus the 'new man' is contrasted with the 'old man'—'newness of life' with death—'newness of spirit,' with the 'oldness of the letter.'—In the same line we have the opposition of the two Covenants—'New' and 'Old'; and finally the coming of the 'New Jerusalem' and 'new heavens and new earth,' in place of the old Jerusalem and the former earth.

As the terms used in describing the two conditions are those of perfect contrast, we may reason on the change introduced by the new birth, from observation of the state of things previous to that event: i. e. we may get an idea of Christian experience, by just reversing ordinary experience.

What then are the conditions and progress of life as it grows up from the first birth? The story is open to observation, and in its main outlines is easily told. The child commences with a certain stock of fresh healthy life, but from the moment of full development it begins to grow old. Sin, i. e. unruly passion, comes in at the earliest period, and as a consequence of that, the law. Law, while it suppresses outward transgression, aggravates the inward malady, and poisons the conscience. The war thus commenced between conscience and the flesh continues, and widens, until it blights the whole life. The man grows old, and decays in all the constituents of his being; life flickers, and fails, and at length uniform death closes the scene, and hastens him back to the dust from whence he was taken.

We see how appropriate the term 'old' and 'oldness' is, applied to this primary condition of life. Oldness is the supreme law that begins to work even from birth, and though it is counteracted by growing life for a few years, it is still there, silently extending itself and preparing to overcome. We say it is the supreme and universal law of the mere natural life, unsupported by God; and disease and death are its resulting consummation.

Now what is meant by the 'new birth,' 'newness of life,' 'all things made new?' Is it possible that the course of things we have described, and that is generally considered natural, may be reversed? We believe it may; we can make nothing else out of the gospel. A person who attains the new birth, instead of tending towards oldness and death, begins to move in the opposite direction towards increasing life, and everlasting newness. All the conditions of the previous life, relating to sin and law, are reversed, as will appear by collating scripture passages

on the subject. And first in regard to sin, Paul describes the change we are considering, as a death which sets a man free from sin, and so introduces him to 'newness of life.' "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in NEWNESS OF LIFE.—For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Roman: 6: 3—11. Death in one way or another, is the inevitable termination of a sinful career; and the apostle shows in the above passage, that this termination is actually accomplished in us by a right apprehension of the death of Christ. Elsewhere, he puts the case still more positively, judging, 'that if one died for all, then all died.' (Gr.) Thus to the believer the ruling law of oldness and decay has already worked out its consummation, and death is behind him. Thenceforth if he lives, it must be by a new life; by the resurrection power of Christ, which has in it neither sin nor decay; but is forever swallowing up death in victory.

It necessarily follows that if sin is supplanted by 'newness of life,' the law also becomes dead, and loses its hold of the new creature.—The legal principle belongs with sin, and cannot exist out of that combination. But Paul argues deliverance from the law by the new birth, explicitly, as follows:—"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members, to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in NEWNESS OF SPIRIT, and not in the oldness of the letter." Rom. 7: 4—6.

Thus in Paul's gospel 'newness of life' is put in triumphant opposition to the oldness of sin and legality, which leads the children of the first birth the downward way to 'dusty death.' The whole idea is gathered up into one condensed statement when Paul says, 'The law of the SPIRIT OF LIFE in Christ Jesus, hath made me FREE FROM THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH.'

The common course of movement toward evil is then completely reversed by the new birth, under the new covenant. 'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.' *Newness* is the reigning law of this experience; and how much of meaning is contained in that idea. It is the very soul of heaven, as oldness is the element of hell. Let persons' objective state of happiness be what it may, let them attain any given degree in the whole range of extrinsic experience, and if the principle at the center is vital *oldness*, they are as good as damned. Their life is finite, and of course destructible; there is already nothing to it; by the very laws of inertia and gravitation, it must come to the ground. Perpetual newness is the thing wanted at the center; and this is the infinite life of God. It carries us above the tyranny of circumstance, of time, space, and the 'natural laws;' burns its way upward through all obstructions, scours difficulties, continually digests evil into good, and good into better.

That such a change as we have spoken of, is

possible by belief in Christ—and that it has been amply verified in experience—no one who believes the Bible can doubt. Due consideration of the fact will lead a person to count with Paul, 'all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.' G.

THE CIRCULAR.

BROOKLYN, MARCH 7, 1852.

Proposing to delay the Annual Report for the present, in view of a possibly larger work than usual—the paper will go on regularly as heretofore.

The following manifesto is authorized by the Oneida Association. Editors who love fair dealing, are invited to consider it:

The Past, Present, and Future.

The Centric Convention on the 20th ult., seems to have been well attended, and to have produced everywhere, a feeling of increased intimacy with the universal body of Christ. The 20th of February is the anniversary of our movement—the commencement of the spiritual year; when we are accustomed to make up our Annual Report—get a new observation, and take a fresh departure. The present year especially, many things seemed to point to that period as forming an important crisis—and hence the idea of a 'Concentric Convention,' which should bring together in spiritual counsel all who are interested in the kingdom of heaven in the three worlds. The Community took occasion to submit their interests and affairs to the interior church for criticism and advice. The result is a somewhat interesting change of position, to which we would now call the attention of our friends, and whomsoever else it may concern.

THE PAST.

Our position as a Community in regard to marriage and the relations of the sexes, has always been more or less an offense to the world, and has been much aggravated recently, by the gross misrepresentations of sectarian opponents. But it should be observed on the other side that we have been from the beginning perfectly frank in the avowal of our principles, and as we believe not illegal in our practices—at least according to the laws of this State.—At the outset of our movement at Oneida, we placed a copy of the First Annual Report, containing a full disclosure of our Social Theory, in the hands of the Governor of the State, and various high functionaries, including the distinguished Representative of our district in the national Congress. No objection was made in any quarter to our movement, and the latter gentleman, we understood, expressed the opinion that we had a right to proceed on our new social basis, without interference. By openly publishing our platform in three successive Annual Reports, and by special advertisement of the highest general and local authorities, we satisfied in equity, if not in form, our obligations to the State. This was clearly evinced by the fact that for four years we lived undisturbed. It strikes us as rather ridiculous for the New York Observer, at this late day, to sound the alarm of discovery, and call on the Legislature to put down Perfectionism as a new found heresy!

As our course has not been seditious, neither has it been unchaste; and those who are fond of imputing indecency to us, simply by inference from our free principles, only show that they have no confidence in their own virtue, except as it is secured by law. 'Mormonism,' 'Mahometanism,' 'heathenism,' are epithets easily applied by surmises of corruption; but they are all false as applied to us. A legal scrutiny of the household habits of the Oneida Community during any period of its history, would show, not a licentious spirit, but the opposite of licentiousness. It would disclose less careless familiarity of the sexes—less approach to any thing like 'bacchanalian' revelry—vastly less unregulated speech and conduct than is found in an equal circle of what is called good society in the world. That we disclaimed the cast-iron rules and modes, by which selfishness regulates the relations of the sexes, is true; but with these conditions we affirm, that there was never in that Association, one tenth part the special commerce that exists between an equal number of married persons in ordinary life. This statement can be substantiated by the oath of the Community, as our general modest behavior may be verified by the testimony of disinterested persons who have often visited their friends there.

And if this is not enough, let the proof of our morality be found in the broad fact of the general health of the Association. No death of an adult member has ever occurred at Oneida, and not a doctor has been employed; many who joined us sick have become well; and the special woes of women in connection with children, have been nearly extinguished. The increase of population by birth, in our forty families, for the last four years, has been considerably less than the progeny of Queen Victoria

alone. So much for the outcry of 'licentiousness and brutality.'

THE PRESENT.

Still, with all this ground of vindication in reason and conscience, our liberty on this subject is looked upon with jealousy and offense by surrounding society. And in view of the fact, we have decided to forego it, and withdraw from the position that we have held. It may be understood henceforth that the Oneida Association, and all Associations connected with it, have receded from the practical assertion of their views, and formally resumed the marriage morality of the world, submitting themselves to all the ordinances and restrictions of society and law on this subject. This definite concession to public opinion, made in good faith, we trust will be satisfactory, and give peace. It may be observed that the late disturbance of the public mind, has not been occasioned by action of the authorities, but is merely the work of a newspaper mob. The State, and all its agents, have treated us with the most considerate generosity through the whole course of our residence at Oneida; and we think we have gained hearty toleration from those best acquainted with us—the most intelligent and respectable of our neighbors. We should regret to have this cordiality disturbed, or to have the magistrates seem compelled by a newspaper gust (which sometimes blows away common charity for the time being) to interfere unpleasantly with our affairs. We prefer to reciprocate the courtesy we have received, by withdrawing the occasion of difficulty. As our neighbors have tolerated us in our way of living, we will now adopt theirs, on the only point that could create offense, and wait for the change of public feeling, which is gradually extending the 'area of freedom' and the reign of truth.

Those friends who inquire the spiritual meaning of this movement, will find it in the twofold obligation of Paul's morality; which requires, in the first place, entire emancipation from human judgment in respect to meats and drinks and holy ordinances, and, in the second place, requires considerable abstinence from offense. By our four years' experience—wrestling, not with flesh and blood, but with the powers of law and selfishness, within and without, we have gained the first point; and now we can turn to the fulfilment of the second. Our experiment has been carried through successfully, both subjectively, as relates to our own education, and objectively, as developing the principles of heavenly society. The main thing is gained; and we have graduated in a sufficient state of spiritual freedom, so that we can now afford to accommodate ourselves to others and seek the salvation of all. Having learned, at all hazards to please God, we will now endeavor to preserve a good conscience toward men. With Paul, 'we are persuaded that nothing is unclean in itself; but, on the other hand, we agree with him, that if meat make our brother to offend, we will eat no meat.' Both these principles are necessary to make a spiritual freeman; and having learned the first, we will freely practice the last. We are NOT ATTACHED TO FORMS; and in no way could we express this victory so well as by our present movement. To substitute for the fashions of the world, cast-iron fashions of our own, would be no gain.—To be able to conform to any circumstances, and any form of institutions, and still preserve spiritual freedom, is Paul's standard, and what we now claim.

THE FUTURE.

We land from our long voyage of exploration, improved and refreshed, with large stores of various experience, which we shall be glad to distribute for the general benefit, as they are called for. That voyage, with its gales and icebergs and elemental perils is done—passed into history; and we emerge now under new circumstances, ready for new enterprises. Our present transition is like that of the insect passing from its chrysalis state revived by experience, and shedding its envelopment. The forms that we leave behind are mere cast-off *exuviae* which the New York Observer may tear to pieces at its leisure. We shall be found elsewhere.

The Community organization will remain, bound together more firmly than ever by the ties of a common faith and imperishable regard. The Community, as a corporate institution is perfectly legal, and in fact popular, where it is best known. We expect now to have our hands loosened for vigorous movements in business and improvement of all kinds, looking toward the central object of a Free Press. And among the objects that now fill the future of our attention, is a movement towards the ABOLITION OF DEATH. This will evidently demand a separate and special campaign; 'it is the last enemy that shall be destroyed.' We conceive that what is past has been a necessary preliminary to this engagement; spiritual emancipation from human laws and institutions must be won before any successful attack can be made on the King of Terrors. Our past experience has gained us this spiritual freedom; and now, while we accept any form that is most convenient, for the Lord's sake, we will address ourselves to the final conquest of Satanic power.

These topics will be more fully presented in our forthcoming Annual Report, together with the general results of our four years' experience. G.

FAITH is not a capricious thing, that comes and goes at pleasure—a 'will o' the wisp'—something that we must watch for, and seize when it comes. It is one of the cultivable secrets—a study. If we give attention to it as persons do to mathematics, for instance, it will grow in us. Faith is always open to our hearts and minds. These are standing invitations: 'Seek, and ye shall find;' 'knock, and it shall be opened unto you.' Faith is the end of our existence—the work that is set before us: 'This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.'

The Newspaper Pressure.

There's a maxim that all should be willing to mind—
'Tis an old one—a kind one—and true as 'tis kind;
'Tis worthy of notice wherever you roam.
And no worse for the heart, if remembered at home:
If scandal or censure be raised 'gainst a friend,
Be the last to believe it—the first to defend!
Say to-morrow will come—and then time will unfold
That 'one story's good till another is told.'

[Charles Swain.]

The notoriety that we are getting in the world, in connection with such misrepresentations as the New York Observer circulates about us, naturally brings down a good deal of criticism from the conservators of public opinion. It is a pretty serious thing to lie under the general and outspoken censure of mankind, but we have lived through several such pressures on a smaller scale, and are conscious that our strength has increased in full proportion to the increased extent of the present emergency. And to those who are sustained by the conscious justification of Christ, there are some consolations in such circumstances, that others who go along in the smooth current of popular favor, can hardly know. It has always been the lot of the best to be misunderstood and abused in this world—to have 'all manner of evil said against them falsely;' and whether we belong to that class or not, we have some chance of knowing how it feels, and therein rejoice as we are commanded.

In another view, we are only suffering the spirit of accusation which dooms every year thousands of unfortunates to ruin of body and soul—a class of whom Christ said that they should go into the kingdom of heaven before their accusers. The sexual subject is undoubtedly the rock on which more of earth's best children split and come to shipwreck, than any other. A misstep here is sufficient to let in the poisonous accusations with which counterfeit virtue has surrounded this subject, and flood the soul with despair. And this merciless spirit of condemnation is as cowardly as it is cruel; bearing chiefly on women who is least able to encounter it, and letting men for the most part go free. There is no forgiveness for an erring woman, no escape from the selfrighteous thrust of society which shuts her out of hope in this world, and consigns her to the howling demons which are ready to persuade her there is none in the future. Is it a wonder that there is a class of abandoned women, and that their ranks are continually filled by those who begun life hopefully and fair, but who met their doom because there was no one to say to them as Jesus did, 'Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more?'

If we are appointed to bear a part in their condemnation, most gladly do we accept it, if we may successfully breast the unrighteous, hypocritical judgment of men, and afford a shelter from the current which so wrongfully and rapidly bears its victims to perdition. We are conscious that we have that power. We have sailed through this hell-gate, and all round it, without bilging; and no amount of scurrility and defamation such as the Observer indulges in, can affect our moral security and self-respect. The waves of accusation and misrepresentation will beat around the bulwarks of conscious innocence in vain; and whatever may be our outward treatment, we shall have the satisfaction of knowing that God has raised in our inward experience a substantial breakwater of justification and salvation, in place of the awful vortex which has heretofore reigned in the sexual department. We see in our experience hope for the world—hope for those outcasts from human charity that punctilious sanctity can never reach, unless it be to push them still further into the depths of woe.

Finally, as a short method of settlement with the buzzing swarm of calumnies and accusations that are flying about us, we ask ourselves, What was the object of Christ's heart toward the world? We find it expressed in his two memorable prayers, thus: 'That the will of God might be done on earth as it is in heaven,' and as the complement of that, 'That they [his disciples] all might be one.' Finding our hearts set on the same object, and believing most surely that it will be accomplished, we have peace; and can wait as long as is necessary, for the superficial misunderstandings that grow out of the reports of our scandalizers, to be cleared up. G.

The Inspired Student.

"One characteristic of the spiritual man, is an UNQUENCHABLE DESIRE FOR PROGRESS."—Berean.

When we turn our thoughts toward Mrs. Cragin, they always glow with a sentiment of admiration for her spirit of improvement—her passion for progress. It was an unquenchable flame—the bright radiance of her life, which impressed you at first sight, and is as inseparable from her memory as the lineaments of her person. Our heart thanks God that earthen

vessels—those, too, that have been through much wear and tear of time—can be filled with such pure, fresh, glowing life, which finds its only rest in activity, and for which knowledge never loses the fascination of an enigma. It was evidently a superhuman manifestation in her, the effect of her fellowship with Christ and the primitive church. Aside from her spiritual tendency, she was naturally superficial, and had more taste for the relaxations of leisure and luxury, than for the severities of progress. Love of learning was a growth of the new birth in her, and magnified God's grace. In admiring it, we admired Christ in her: it was unsullied with selfish ambition and vain glory, and very diffusive and stimulating to minds around her.

We have classed her with those whose natures are receptive to inspiration—who are wise by intuition, and see, rather than reason; but at the same time she was a real *plodder* in the pursuit of knowledge; she had no genius that took the place of diligent, pains-taking, persevering application. All her loveliness, which had so much the grace of nature, her faith, humility, earnestness, were stores as diligently gathered as the honey of the bees. It was by studious attention to Christ, that she transferred his image to herself. She left the evidence of her industry in a book she kept of Bible studies. It is a good concordance of scripture testimony on all the subjects most interesting to a believer. She gathered there the strength and light of scripture, in plain written texts, for every emergency of Christian experience. The following are specimens of the headings:—'Christ in us, and we in him'; 'Christ's Power'; 'The Christian armor'; 'Christ sought not his own'; 'Paul's desires for his converts, showing what we may set before us as the standard of holiness'; 'God's great love to us,' &c. &c. In opening this book, we say in our thoughts, here is where Mrs. Cragin laid the foundation of her beautiful character—here are the roots that bore such good fruit. In these Bible meditations, we see the secret of her growth and attainments.

We recur too, in our thoughts, to the time when this record of her studies was kept. She was living in Putney, in circumstances which left her but little leisure from domestic care.—Brought up in the city with comparative daintiness, it was a new life for her on a Vermont farm, with a family of little children, and task enough for all her powers, physical and spiritual. She might have excused herself if ever a woman could, for neglect of self-culture. But in this respect she was an example to her sex, perhaps more than in any other. She pursued education, kept study going in the midst of every embarrassment. She could not be placed in circumstances which would foil her ambition to learn. Her Testament was in her pocket; her books in the cradle; her pen always ready; and her minutes were saved. Perhaps the log cabin at Oneida—the little nursery of the Association—presented as curious a contrast as we shall soon find, between the rudeness of the circumstances, and the civilized taste which found a home there. A trunk served for a writing desk, and the deep windows were filled with books; the children's school was provided for, out of room and time that most housewives would have thought indispensable for other things. Mrs. Cragin was not afraid to be called 'slack' in such a situation, by those who sacrificed better things to order. It was a choice of two evils; and she would let housework go slipshod rather than neglect family government, or her own spiritual and mental improvement. In different circumstances, where order was not too expensive, she would compare with any of her critics for attention to particulars.

We find an observation from a friend, that we are pleased to introduce in this connection: "Mrs. Cragin's ambition for improvement and knowledge was remarkable; but I have thought the reason why she did not make uncommon attainments in any particular branch, was because her benevolence so balanced her ambition that she spent the best half of her energy in

setting those about her to studying. Thus she led the way in the Association, in singing, Phonography, Geometry, French, &c. It was only in Arithmetic that she seemed to have any private ambition; she studied that for herself, and because it was the study of all others that she had the least taste for, and found the most difficulty in conquering."

Here are two characteristics of her ambition for improvement, worthy of note. First, it was full of the *we* spirit, was communized, and made a servant to the general good. Secondly, it was not dainty—did not demand that a study should be at first attractive, if it promised benefit. Her natural aversion to mathematics, only strengthened her purpose to study them.—We will close with two or three jottings from her Note book:

"I pray that I may have a will and purpose to *know all things*, and take for my motto, What man hath done, man can do."

"When tempted to grasp a good deal of intellectual or spiritual knowledge, remember it is not the *amount we know* that is worth so much, as the *desire to learn*."

"The highest inspiration is courage to be a plodder."

Useful Doubts.

In the believer's 'good fight of faith' his antagonist has evidently chosen *doubt* as his favorite weapon. He is always on hand to blur over faith, hope, and the perception of God, with his 'don't be too confident,' 'be careful,' look out,' &c. 'Doubting Castle' holds many captives. If Satan can begot persons with doubt and unbelief, he feels sure of his victims.—Now 'it is a poor rule that will not work both ways,' and why may not this weapon of doubt be used by the party of faith? They certainly have the best of all grounds for doubt, in regard to the power of sin, disease, and death, and evil of all kinds. Christ was proof against all these things, and he said 'the works that I do shall ye do also.' We may fairly meet false doubts with true doubts; and answer all accusations and threatenings with 'That's doubtful.' Suppose a person is sick, the devil right away says to him, 'Perhaps you will die.' He may reply, 'Perhaps I shall get well; it is extremely doubtful about my dying.' Fill the imaginations with such doubts, and 'Giant Despair' will soon surrender. A plausible doubt distinctly pronounced in the imagination, is in one sense as good as a certainty. It is good policy to keep on hand a quantity of these doubts; but we must convert them as fast as we can into probabilities, and our probabilities into certainties.

In connection with the popular doctrine that the 'age of miracles is past,' we have handed down to us through successive generations the doctrine that 'death is certain.' This is proclaimed and acknowledged by nearly all. It passes as an axiom. The child sucks it in with its mother's milk; and the ministers of the present day continually reiterate it to their hearers as a divine decree.

At first sight, this bill appears perfectly genuine; but still in the face of God's facts we feel doubtful about its authenticity, and can accept it only at a discount.—1. It was never true in any age of the world that 'death is certain'; there never was a time when man might not reasonably hope to escape death. The cases of Enoch, Elijah, Christ, and many in the Primitive church, prove that this is not a universal law, and was not even in the Jewish dispensation. Death has always been the certain concomitant of sin, unbelief, and doctorism—not of faith.—2. Christ declares, with direct reference to the body, 'He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die.'—3. We are fast approaching the time when the law of life will be universal and inevitable—when 'death will be swallowed up in victory.' Isa. 25: 8, 1 Cor. 15: 24—26.

In view of these considerations, we are quite skeptical as to the almighty power of death: but we have firm faith in the power that raised Christ from the dead, and placed him far above all principality and power, death included. There are plainly two sides to this question; and no one who is respectful to God and his facts will ignore those facts, and say 'All men die.' If death is the rule, and life the exception, the exceptions are vastly more important to a man of faith than all contradictory facts. Here is pure gold; all else is but copper.

'But,' says the skeptic, 'don't you expect to die?' Well, it is an uncertain matter; we cannot decide; it must be decided by superior powers. We dare not limit the Holy One of Israel. Of one thing we are 'certain': 'the God whom we serve is able to deliver us' even from death.

W. A. H.

[The series of "HOME-TALKS" (continued in this paper from the Oneida Circular) will be understood to be off-hand conversational lectures, spoken at our evening fireside, and phonographically reported by Wm. A. Hinds.]

Home-Talk by J. H. N.—No. 84.

[REPORTED FOR THE CIRCULAR, FEB. 14, 1852.]

SPIRITUAL CHEMISTRY.

It is evident that all the various modes of exorcism of evil spirits, the healing of diseases, casting out devils, remitting of sins, and every process by which evil is separated from human life, are governed by the same law. Christ evidently considered the work of delivering men from the bondage of sin and disease as identical: in either case, it was simply separating them from Satanic power. He said to the Jews, 'Whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise and walk?'—signifying that it was the same thing to forgive sins as to command a cripple to rise and walk. And it is certain that the thing done is in all cases the same; and there is but one way in which it can be done—but one law which governs the whole matter. That law is, that a superior power must first attach itself by suitable affinities to the life that is to be saved, and then sever it from the life to be expelled, by a process something like that which takes place in *chemical decomposition*—i. e., two substances being combined, a third substance is introduced into the combination, which has a stronger affinity for one of the substances than they have for each other. In this case a new combination takes place, and the elements of the old compound are separated.

Now it is to me inconceivable, in the nature of things, that the disjoining of our life from evil should be accomplished in any other way than this. In the first place there has been a conjunction formed between our life and evil—it is all the same whether it is sin or disease—there is a moral combination between our life and the devil's. And it is required, in order to break up that combination, that a superior element should come in, having a stronger affinity to our life than there is between our life and the diabolical substance. It is necessary that that superior element should be introduced into the combination while it is still in action, and on the one hand attach itself by its affinities to our life, and on the other hand, sever the connection between our life and the devil's, and so precipitate the latter. If we adopt this as a general principle, and plant ourselves firmly on the assurance that this is the process in all cases, we are free to go into an examination of the details of the matter.

In the first place, we may with all truth and reason assume that Christ's spirit is the *superior* element of the universe—the strongest attractive and strongest solvent—an analytical-synthetic power. As I have said, in all cases of exorcism or precipitation, the first process is the introduction of this element into the combination of human life with Satanic, while that combination exists. Christ, by the affinities he has developed in himself by his incarnation, is able to attach himself to human life, without requiring the other element to retire. This part of the process is of course *pleasant*: it is union, and union is happiness. And this process not only takes effect in individual cases where there is an attraction between the subject and Christ before the evil spirit is cast out, but is destined to take effect on the whole human race. 'If I be lifted up,' says Christ, 'I will draw all men unto me.' He does not previously ask for a separation of life from Satan, or a separation of the righteous from the wicked; his spirit is poured out upon the whole mass, and draws the whole mass to him. 'The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; All that are in their graves shall come forth: some to the resurrection of life, and some to the resurrection of damnation'—without any reference to the quality of the combinations.—Christ has provided himself with such sympathies, analytic power, and power of digestion, that he is prepared to come upon all flesh, irrespective of character, not only in this world, but in Hades, and draw them all to himself, and take them all into himself, as it were, and

set the process of digestion in action upon the whole.

Then comes the *analytic* process: and in order that the first process may be of any advantage to us, we must pass through the second, and this involves suffering and pain. For Christ to throw upon us his attractive power, and draw the whole mass of good and evil toward him, is pleasant. But when digestion commences, when the solvent power begins to act, and 'the word of God, which is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart,' is brought to bear upon us, then we come to *pain*.

Suppose a person has reached this second stage of the process, in which the diabolical spirit is being precipitated, and an existing affinity is being severed; he must nerve himself with faith to endure the pain. It is a painful operation to both sides, to the life that is saved, and to the life that is precipitated. The pain is reciprocal; and it is only as the new organization is formed, and some degree of separation from the primary combination, has taken place, that the person feels any relief, and the pain flows back upon the power to which it belongs.

This view is in accordance with Paul's words in 2d Cor.: 'Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be manifest in our body.' The dying that the apostle here speaks of, is the solvent power of Christ. In order that our life may be disengaged from the Satanic combination, and so become a receptacle of Christ's life, it is necessary that the solvent power should take effect, i. e., dying must be constantly going on. The new combination cannot be formed any faster than the old combination is broken up. Christ cannot get possession of our life as material for new life, in which he is the combining element, only as our life is disengaged from Satan. We may, therefore, consider the pain and dying process an indication of the action of the solvent power; it is furnishing more and more material to the new combination: as Paul says, 'We which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.'

The individual in the case is the *subject* not the operator. His will may have something to do with the process, but, after all, the main conflict is between the two great opposing forces. The most that the individual can do is to behave well under the operation.

Although 'no affliction for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.' And always, under such circumstances, we may comfort ourselves with some great general principles. In every instance we may be certain that when the dying process is going on in us, the new life is organizing itself, and nothing that is worth saving will be lost—it is really the devil that dies, and that is certainly a matter of rejoicing. And, again, we may comfort ourselves with the perfect certainty that our life is not dying, but rising from the dead, in this very process. To be sure, life is separated from its primary combination, and that is, in one sense, death; but the life is separated from the old combination on purpose to form a new one, and separated by its attraction to the new element; it dies into life—a dying resurrection. We need not imagine that our life, in losing its hold on Satan, will slide off into the inane; for it is under the strongest attraction to the strongest element in the universe. It is the attraction of Christ that effects the dissolution. The solvent power works by attraction. You lose your life, but lose it in Christ; and your consciousness will ultimately find itself in him.

Whether we realize these two facts or not, they are true; viz., first, that all the pain and trouble in the matter is the devil dying—the death-agonies of the diabolical spirit; and so-

condly, that our life is affiliating itself to a stronger power—a power of righteousness, peace, and salvation. To illustrate: Christ presents himself to a demoniac, and a chemical combination takes place. Then comes on the analytical operation—a separation and precipitation—the devil tears, foams at the mouth; and for the time being it looks as though it was simply a matter of destruction. (See Mark 9: 20.) That is the true and necessary phenomenon in the case, indicating the agony and unwillingness of the evil spirit to surrender. For the time being the subject would think Christ was an enemy. But if we look sharp into the matter, we shall see that there is that in our own spirit that favors the affinity with Christ. While, on the one hand, we say that Christ's spirit is the very highest analytical-synthetic power, and has the utmost subtlety of affinity, able to insinuate itself every where, and between all possible combinations—all things being naked and open to it, and every joint discoverable by it; on the other hand, our own life, by an inevitable law of self-preservation, struggles to get loose from Satan, and get to Christ. All life hates pain and distress, and these are the fruits of the evil one. He has formed a cursed combination with human nature, that has thrown upon it all his diabolic influences, pain among the rest. And the combination between human and Satanic life cannot be a harmonious one. There is something in every one's life that favors its junction with Christ, and helps forward the solving process, and extends an invitation to Christ. 'There is treason in the camp.' Christ has friends there. Part of the combination is oppressed, discontented, and in a state of insurrection. Christ takes advantage of this state of things, and infuses his own spirit into the combination. Suppose your life is down in the depths of obscurantism, where you cannot see or feel Christ. There are certain laws that govern your life there, just as there are laws governing the movement of every atom in the vortex of Niagara, and one of these laws is, the proclivity of your life from pain to peace, which is the same as the proclivity of your life from Satan to Christ; for the devil is pain and Christ is peace.

The only real combinations in the universe are those that God has formed. His spirit is the only power that can make a permanent union. All other unions are but apparent—mere juxtapositions: there is always a joint between them. The mischiefs and miseries that we suffer, come in a great measure from false imaginations, which mistake juxtapositions for actual combinations. Let the appearance of union be never so perfect, the Spirit of truth, which is the most subtle of all elements, will detect the counterfeit, and discover that the elements are as really separate as if they were the distance of the universe apart. Faith follows the Spirit of truth, endorsing it. Faith brings its imaginations into accordance with the truth, and sends its imaginations with the Spirit of truth into all the joints, and finally the appearance of union vanishes. The Spirit of truth first perceives the fact of the false combination, and introduces a wedge, and faith drives the wedge, widening the breach until the appearance is destroyed.

We are apt to imagine that evil is very subtle, and so it is; but Christ is far more subtle. If Satan compared with us is like water compared with gross substances, Christ as compared with him is like electricity. If Satan is able to outwit us, Christ is able to outwit him.

Table-Talk, by J. G. N.—No. 5.

February 14, 1852.

The presence of God, the Creator, in creation is the natural state of things; the first and highest law of nature is that the Spirit of truth and love shall pervade all the other laws of nature. In the beginning, Adam and Eve were placed in the very bosom of nature, and God was their companion—he walked and talked with them. He was their Father, as truly as nature was their mother. It is a very unnatural state of things where there is a mother without a Father.

Our theory of faith demands that the laws of nature shall feed and support the law of faith, with the miraculous power of the living God for their medium of action.

Crude nature—i. e., nature without the interference of intelligence—is not considered, even by persons in unbelief, as the proper and unavoidable lot of man. The ingenuity of man is exercised in modifying the laws of nature. He cooks, and in various ways prepares his food; yet no one calls this an anomaly, or an intrusion on the simplicity of nature. Whatever may be the fact in regard to specific instances, it is the supreme law of man's nature to be inventive; this faculty is given him by God, and with it the high privilege of completing those arrangements for his happiness, which nature offers in an unadjusted state. The same power of transcending crude nature, is seen to some extent in the lower animals. The birds, for instance, make their nests; and nests are artificial things. Mere bald nature does not weave together grass, and form nests. This is a beautiful incident, revealing the higher law of nature, which provides for the interference of living skill. All the real improvements that we can make in our condition are natural. It is as natural that we should cook our food as it is for the birds to make their nests.

Every one recognizes, then, the rightful presence of human providence, the living intelligence of man, in modifying the things which crude nature presents to us—and in directing her processes. And it is just as rightful and natural that the living God should improve all things, and be accepted as the rightful sovereign and superintendent, not only of the processes of nature, but of the ingenuity and skill of man; and that we should eat and drink in his presence, and in his name; and that all the processes of nature and human providence, should be pervaded by, and bathed in, the spirit of love and truth, which can alone lubricate the whole machinery, and make harmony between nature and man. Human providence is not sufficient to reconcile man and nature, and make them work musically together. It requires the supreme influence of the love of God to reconcile them. Man and nature are really at war with each other as long as God is excluded from the combination: God is the great peace-maker of the universe, and must reconcile all things. All that is called civilization is only a recognition and elevation of human providence over nature,—human interference with gross matter; and we may be perfectly certain that if civilization continues to progress, it will end in readmitting the Divine Providence over nature.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Brooklyn, Feb. 27, 1852.

DEAR BRO. BURNHAM:—Your grateful response, received to-night, combined with an inclination to throw myself in the way of an edifying spirit, and to circulate what I receive, even though it be small, prompts me to send you some of the thoughts and conclusions that have wrought in my experience to-day. Notwithstanding alternations of malignant darkness and suffering to which I find myself somewhat exposed, the result to-day has been an uncommonly clear perception of our vital relation to Christ. It is true that he has taken away the sins of the world, and reconciled us to God; it is true that we who believe on the Son of God, have everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but are passed from death unto life. And when we sound down to the center of our hearts, we find there is access to, and actual union with, his eternal life. I then ask myself, how is it that I am from time to time affected by evil, and what is the awful power that sweeps over my spirit, and swallows up for the moment in distress, all conscious communication with God? My mind reverts to Paul's statement, as the natural solution:—'We wrestle not,' he says, 'against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places.' Eph. 6: 12. For one thing, the whole world denies the gospel of union with Christ—his actual presence and salvation—and has raised up in his place a set of 'rulers,' viz., doc-

tors, lawyers and priests, to rule over body, soul and estate; thus excluding, both by denial, and by positive enactment, the doctrine of his presence among men. Now in advancing to the assertion of 'Christ in us the hope of glory,' which we know by the eternal word of God is true, we necessarily have to encounter point-blank this tremendous principality of denial, which has been distilling world-wide volumes of unbelief for thousands of years, and which is ready to take advantage of any relaxation of attention, to deluge us with distress. This same spiritual wickedness extends even to the heavenly places—i. e., to the highest circles of Hades—and it is not improbable that as we advance in spirituality, we shall find increased virulence and subtlety in the contact of this spirit.

Here then is our task—to overcome the principality of unbelief, and so break through into undisturbed rest in the bosom of God.—What are our resources, and what our hope of success? In the first place, Christ has overcome and destroyed in his own case this principality. His refined spirit thoroughly riddled it 1800 years ago, and is now really penetrating it in every direction. The fact that we recognize his voice in our hearts and yield to him in the beginning, is evidence of this, and accordingly, after he has established his hold in our hearts, the grosser spirit of the world cannot touch the vital relation. That principality may wrench our external sensations with agony, and flood our consciousness; but it cannot cut off our central communication with Christ, because his spirit goes right through it. And as we are driven back by suffering, or as we voluntarily retire upon the center, we can always find there an outlet into God. But besides the increased facility that we have in the art of vanishing, we have positive weapons of aggression by which we can push and vanquish for ourselves and the world, this hideous blasphemy. And this is the interesting point; for the law of human solidarity is such, that if we are to live in this world in peace, the spiritual power that excludes God must be driven out; unbelief, on the great scale, must be destroyed. You will recollect that Paul claimed to have the weapons, and the capability of doing this, where he says, 'the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.' 2 Cor. 10: 4, 5. And again, in his allusion to the gospel armor, Eph. 6; and to the piercing power of the 'two-edged' word, Heb. 4: 12.

I apprehend that what we are called to is expressed in John's epistles and in the Revelations by the term 'overcome.' 'I write unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and have overcome the wicked one.' The fact that Paul and others in the primitive church had the weapons and did actually overcome this horrible power of unbelief, is an assurance to us. I was interested in John's statement of the way they overcame the accusing dragon, which, I take it, was the same evil presence that we have to deal with. 'They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.' I believe the same means are with us, and that we are rapidly getting, if we have not already, the death-careless desperation that will use them, and overcome as they did. We have overcome thus far, and we have reason to know that God values too much the faith he has started in us, to see it quenched or thrown back. His sovereignty, the honor of his Son, the reward of apostles and prophets who suffered on this earth, all are pledged to sustain faith in this last wrestle with the powers of hell.

Yours affectionately,

G. W. N.

FROM ONEIDA.

Oneida, Feb. 22, 1852.

—My experience on the 20th is a matter of much thankfulness. I feel that it is a new era with me in respect to confidence in, and coöperation with the Primitive Church. My experience is better felt than described; but I can say in truth that to me it was a real convention, as much so as if I had gone to Brooklyn or Putney for that purpose. It fully settled in my mind the practicability of concentric fellowship; and that time and space are not impassable barriers to it.

My union with the whole body of believers is greatly increased, not only in this world but in Hades; and also my perception of and union with the Primitive church. I feel as I never did before, that they are an actual, living, glorious church; nigh at hand, even in our hearts, waiting for an entrance into the world through us. It stirs my deepest ambition to give myself to them.

I feel like addressing my whole heart to the

business of the convention, viz., seeking the 'unity of all believers, and the coming of the Kingdom of God on the earth.' My love and confidence has been increased, in seeing the inspiration of the Primitive Church manifest in the call of the convention. With a rejoicing heart I am one with you.

H. M. WATERS.

—I was sensible of an enlargement of heart, on the 20th, and of meeting our great Family in my innermost. How manifest it is, that the same life and consciousness pervades us all, and that by turning to the 'interior' we are present to each other. I have thought sometimes that I had more fellowship with my friends when we were at a distance from each other, than I did when we were together. Perhaps presence with each other drew our life outward, or perhaps there was some other reason, but the fact shows the reality of invisible fellowship. This has been my experience with Brooklyn to some extent. I had an excellent visit there, but since I returned my attractions and remembrances of you have been so vivid that I could almost imagine myself with you.

L. F. D.

—The day of the Convention, I found myself trying to realize, what I knew to be truth; and as really as though a voice had spoken to me, a sweet spirit bid me be simple enough to fall back upon the truth in my own heart. This I did; and be assured my dear sister, my expectations were more than realized. I had not to ascend into heaven, or descend into the deep, but the word was nigh me, even in my heart and in my mouth. There was a beautiful, quiet spirit of unity in our evening meeting—we were with one accord in one place. We feel that we have but just begun to know what God hath in store for us; and now every day and hour, I might say, I begin anew to live—stirring up my heart to let in heaven. We live by faith—walk by faith.

S. B. C.

FROM CANADA WEST.

Port Dover, Feb. 13, 1852.

—I had much pleasure in receiving the Circular as ordered in my letter of December last, and observe, by some of your first numbers, the plan (which I most heartily coincide in,) for monthly contributions towards the support of a Free Press, or I would otherwise call it a free gospel—as the matter contained in your publications is in reality, glad tidings to man. Long before I had the pleasure of becoming one of your community, (which I now consider myself,) or knew there was such a body—being apparently an isolated being—I saw that the gospel must be re-preached as in the days of the apostles; for I could not find it in the churches of the present day; and the faith which the Primitive church possessed, seemed lost to us. And until I met with your publications, I could not see how those beautiful words of Paul were to be realized.—'Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.' I now can behold the power of his resurrection, and feel that we are risen in him, and that our life is hid with him in God. I can understand Paul's wish, that we should leave the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, and go on to perfection; and with him, I long for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge—yes, and of the Godhead bodily. I can also realize that we are complete in him, having been delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son. What a glorious declaration, and how happily do we now see, that we become heirs and joint-heirs, with him, in God. Well may we proclaim with Paul 'that the kingdom of God is not in word (as the churches now have it), but in power; that our faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God; that he hath not given unto us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.' And again, John says, 'the anointing which we have received of him, teacheth us of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even at it hath taught us, we shall abide in him.' What a glorious security, when coupled with those words in the New Covenant, that 'he shall be unto us a God, and we shall be unto him a people.'

As I have already stated, I will most heartily coöperate with you in the support of a Free Press, and beg to enclose a small sum as the commencement of a monthly contribution. I wish my pecuniary means were as enlarged as my heart is in the good cause. Yours in the love of the truth.

HUGH ROSS.

Letters Received.

R. Holmes; G. C. Mix; N. Potter; H. N. Leet; C. Blakely; T. Graham; J. Hale; A. Barron; S. Chapman; G. W. Robinson, 2; R. Pratt; Daniel Long.