

# SPIRIT MESSENGER

AND

## HARMONIAL ADVOCATE.

Behold! Angels are the brothers of humanity, whose mission is to bring peace on earth.

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### Revelations of Nature.

#### NATURE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE SOUL.

BY WILLIAM FISHBOUGH.

In a previous article, it was argued that every particle in the human body is surrounded and pervaded by its own peculiar aromal and magnetic essence; that the essences of contiguous particles must necessarily intercommingle and cohere with each other, and that *all* the particles and compounds of the body thus associated together, must necessarily form an interior magnetic, invisible body, pervading the outer body, and taking its precise shape, as water pervades and takes the shape of the sponge. It was shown that this interior and ethereal organism is indeed the *spiritual* body, and that coming forth from the *tangible* body at the death of the latter, and exercising all its vital functions, and preserving all its anatomical parts, even to the most minute, it enters into a world of ethereal forms and organisms related to itself.

It has been alleged, as a principal objection against this theory, that it proves too much; for if every human being is pervaded by this ethereal, magnetic, and spiritual organism, which survives the dissolution of the outer body, why, it is asked, may we not suppose the same to be true in reference to every *brute* form, and that all such have, in like manner, a conscious existence after the dissolution of their visible bodies?

Space, at present, does not admit of such a reply to this question as would probably be satisfactory to every mind. We will say, therefore, in brief, that every living brute possesses an interior and ethereal organism somewhat similar to that which is here supposed to belong to man. But the brute differs from man in that he is not a complete system of himself, as man is, but is only a *part* of that complete system comprised in the whole animal kingdom. The pervading psychical essence of the brute, therefore, though it is indestructible and loses none of its inherent vitality, yet in coming forth from the form which contained it, commingles with corresponding essences with which it has an affinity, and thus loses its individuality.

But each individual man is a complete system or kingdom of himself; and concerning his interior or spiritual organism, these three things are predicable: First, it can not commingle and lose itself with *inferior* essences, inasmuch as this would be inverting the order of progression; and it is not the nature of the lower to assimilate and appropriate the higher, but the higher the lower; secondly, it can not intercommingle and lose itself with other human spiritual organisms, because every other spiritual organism is sufficiently dif-

ferent from it to preclude the necessary affinity; thirdly, it can not be assimilated with, and be absorbed into, *higher* kingdoms or organisms, because there is not, and can not be, any kingdom or living creature higher than man. There might, it is true, be a higher race of men, but they would still, in every essential principle, be *men*, and man in his present state possesses all the elements of their being, and is capable of progressing to their state of refinement and elevation. He is even, under the influence of superior and divine attraction, capable of progressing, in the course of an *eternity*, to the plane of elevation *now* occupied by the highest angel, unless it be supposed that that angel is infinite.

But our object in presenting our theory of the interior constitution, was not so much to *prove* the generally admitted doctrine of the immortality of the soul, as to *explain* it, and to establish a basis on which may rest some more definite conceptions of the philosophy of the soul's operations and outer manifestations. And as we have as yet seen no adequate cause to modify this theory in any essential particular, we will proceed, upon the assumption of its truth, to a consideration of some phenomena in the soul's manifestations, in the *waking*, the *sleeping*, and the *dreaming* state.

The internal organism of which we have spoken, is the *real* man, of which the outer body is only the visible form or vehicle. It is directly related, both as a whole and as to its individual parts, to the outer universe, and also, as to its more interior and as yet comparatively undeveloped nature, to all spiritual spheres and beings *above* itself; and the action and reaction between the soul and the various outer things to which its faculties are related, together with the digestion of sensuous, and the elaboration of supersensuous, impressions *within* itself, constitute perception, consciousness, emotion, and the various processes of intellectation.

#### THE WAKING STATE.

Wakefulness consists simply in the normal and functional activity of the mind, whilst the latter freely employs the body as an instrument to execute its mandates. It is in the wakeful state that all the *ordinary* mental and physical operations are performed. But during this state, deposition of particles from the blood, in the form of bone, muscle, cellular and vascular tissues, &c., is suspended in proportion to the degree of activity, whilst in the same proportion, the process of secretion, and evolution of aromal essences from the solid materials of the body, is accelerated. It is for this reason that habitual and long continued vigilance is generally attended with loss of flesh, and exhaustion of the powers both of body and mind. It is easy to see, therefore, that perpetual wakefulness would be incompatible with the health and even the physical existence of the individual. On the basis of this fact, persons

guilty of atrocious crimes, have, in some countries, been put to death by a deprivation of sleep. The culprit has been surrounded by armed soldiers, whose orders were to keep him in a standing position, pricking him with their spears whenever he showed a disposition to somnolency. It has been found that when wakefulness was thus prolonged beyond the ordinary period, the pulsations would become gradually accelerated, until almost undistinguishable; fever would ensue, frequently accompanied with insanity, and finally, sometimes after the lapse of several days, the unhappy subject would fall dead from sheer exhaustion, caused by the extraordinary wear upon his system. To prevent a similar catastrophe from happening with every individual, there is a wise provision, which is the state of

#### SLEEP.

The phenomenon - profound and dreamless slumber, when all thoughts are suspended, has by some been considered incompatible with the idea of the independent, extra-corporeal existence of the human soul. But this thought can be entertained only by those who are in ignorance or unbelief of the theory we have propounded respecting an interior and ethereal organism; for if this theory is duly comprehended and admitted as a truth, the soul's unbroken continuity, as a substantial entity, during the hours of slumber, follows as a matter of course; and the mode of its suspended, or rather modified, action becomes easy of conception. The truth seems to be, that as wakefulness consists in a peculiar state or degree of action, especially of that portion of the organized essence which resides in the brain, so sleep consists in a suspension of that state and degree of action, without a destruction of the divinely appointed and unexplainable life-force which produces that action, and which, during sleep, is mainly operative in the ganglionic system.

It can not be denied that this subject, in some of its ramifications, involves questions difficult of solution, and concerning which it becomes us to speak with diffidence. Yet facts and analogy seem to authorize the following conclusions as being at least a close approximation to the truth: During wakefulness, and owing to increased and continued action, interaction, and friction, among the particles of the body, there is an evolution, not only from the surfaces, but from the interiors of the particles, of an increased quantity of the magnetic or spiritual essence surrounding and pervading each of them, whence would follow a corresponding increase in the bulk and density of the united ethereal essences pervading the whole visible body. These essences at the same time, by partaking more and more of the comparatively gross qualities of the physical particles of which they are the ultimate comminutions, become themselves more and more gross as the process of their evolution is prolonged: until finally they become too gross to allow of the subtile and harmonious correlative vibrations which constitute mental consciousness and clear thought. Hence, after a long day of activity, the mind and whole sentient system become heavy and sluggish, which disposition increases until the yearnings of the exhausted physical constitution for rest and recuperation, overcome the tendency to sentient action, and that repose which we call sleep is the consequence.

And now the processes which go on in the system, are the reverse of those which occurred during the waking state. What there is in the spiritual essence that is too gross, now

condenses and descends to the surfaces of, and is absorbed into, the particles, in the same way as the atmosphere of the earth, (that particle of the great universe,) on becoming overloaded with aqueous vapor and other gross substances; forms clouds, and discharges the superabundance of its contents to the earth, and is clarified, whilst the earth itself is refreshed and reinvigorated. In waking and sleeping, therefore, the soul-essence only performs one of those innumerable processes of action and reaction, exhaustion and recuperation, inspiration and expiration, ebbing and flowing, which are prevalent in all departments of universal nature, and upon which all more complex movements depend.

Moreover, there is evidence that during slumber the main portion of the depositions of solid materials from the blood takes place. It is because of these processes of physical recuperation, and of clarification of the internal, spiritual essence, that the individual, after a night's slumber, arises with body invigorated and mind refreshed and active. If, however, the slumber has been too profound and protracted, the mind is weakened and rendered torpid, simply because too much of the spiritual essence has been absorbed in the physical particles, and absorbed so deeply as not to admit of its free and sprightly action.

The theory of the contractile state of the spiritual essence during sleep, finds a confirmation in the fact that, in the state of sleep the brain is somewhat decreased in volume, and is, to appearance, in a state of partial collapse. This fact has been ascertained by observations upon a female whose skull had been so fractured as to expose a portion of the brain to view. It was found that when she was awake and engaged in sprightly conversation, the brain protruded considerably through the orifice; when her mind was in an unexcited state, the brain protruded in a less degree; when she was asleep and quietly dreaming, it was still more shrunken; but when she was in a dreamless slumber, it was shrunken quite within the skull.

Much of the health and vigor, both of mind and body, are dependent upon a just equilibrium between the physical constitution and its pervading spiritual organism, and upon the regularity and naturalness with which the conditions of waking and sleeping follow each other. Admitting foregoing conclusions, it becomes doubly plain that any violation of the laws of alimentation and excretion, must necessarily, in some degree, destroy the equilibrium between the body and its pervading spiritual essence—must necessarily tend, not only to oppress the body, but to clog, stupefy, and materialize the mind. If one introduces substances into his system which can not be digested and appropriated in particles sufficiently refined to be the basis of an absolutely spiritual emanation, he introduces just so much death into his system. Gross and imperfectly digested food, when converted into blood and deposited in the solid substances of the body, generates gross spiritual essence; whilst the presence of imperfectly vitalized particles in the body attracts downward and absorbs spiritual essences that might otherwise be employed in mental operations.

#### DREAMING.

In view of the foregoing psycho-physiological principles, the true theory of ordinary dreaming becomes obvious. During sleep, the nerves, as channels of sensation, and even the convolutions of the brain, as organs of thought, are closed

up, or quiescent, in a greater or less degree according as the slumber approaches to completeness. The more refined portion of the spiritual essence—the portion which does not contract and descend to recuperate and revitalize the exhausted physical particles of the body—ascends, and becoming thus purified from grosser essences, and at the same time partially liberated from the bodily organs, it acts in measurable independence of them. Its action constitutes the thoughts and various other internal experiences known as *dreams*.

It is impossible, however, in the mere state of bodily *sleep*, for the internal essences to be *entirely* liberated from the bodily organs; and hence its action, owing to inharmony between itself and the bodily organism by which it is still held and partially obstructed, is generally irregular. Hence the incongruities and inconsistencies which often characterize the mental operations of the dream-state. In proportion, however, as the mental essence is freed from bodily obstructions, and acts from its own interior powers, its action and the resultant thoughts, will be orderly and consecutive, and will be similar in nature to its mental experiences after it is *entirely* liberated from the body by physical death.

Thus it is shown that the dream-state is a semi-spiritual state—a condition of the mind between its embodied and entirely disembodied state, in which condition it may in some degree exercise the powers peculiar to both states.—[*Phrenological Journal*.

### VITAL MAGNETISM.

BY JULIEN LE ROUSSEAU.

Magnetism is simply somnambulism artificially produced by the action of one person upon another, under peculiar conditions. "The action of one person upon another is made possible by the force of imagination in one of them," said Bacon; for as bodies are acted upon by bodies, so, is the mind quick to receive the action of another mind. The whole science of magnetism is contained in this proposition.

The action of man upon man is so simple and natural, that it has been known from the highest antiquity. Magnetism was employed as a curative means by ancient pagans, and it was said, that in order to obtain a cure, the diseased must sleep in the temples consecrated to the god of medicine. One sees also in Egyptian temples persons placed in a manner to represent magnetic operations, that is to say, having one hand placed upon the back and the other upon the breast of an individual seated.

Many men have laughed, and laugh still in our epoch of light and perfectibility, at experiments in magnetism. The marvelousness which is attached to its use, the charlatanism and abuses which can creep in, give fine opportunity to the jesters who have no need of science whereby to judge, and who make themselves all the more merry that they are ignorant. Nevertheless, nothing is more evident, than that the principle of magnetism—this concentrated action which every one exercises in a greater or less degree over his fellow creatures—really exists. In fact, every living being is surrounded by an aromal atmosphere or nervous fluid, which proceeds from him and modifies itself according to the action of the will and attending circumstances. When this sphere meets an analogous one in another individual, there arises spontaneous sympathy. If, on the contrary, the quality of the affections, and passions, which are transmitted secretly with this

nervous emanation, is opposed to the character of the affections and passions of the other person, there is repulsion and antipathy, making it impossible to establish intimate relations—unless one of the two controls the other by a very energetic will.

We believe that the so-called magnetic fluid is nothing but the vital heat saturated with the nervous influx, which escapes from the pores with an intensity proportioned to the state of health and will. The existence of this fluid not only can not be doubted, but its properties are even now confirmed by numerous and conclusive facts. If the nervous matter is of superior quality, the amount of the magnetic fluid is considerable, and its transmission is easily effected, as if this fluid was a kind of volatilization of the bodily substance. The existence of magnetic power is manifested by the brilliancy of the eye, or as it is called, the fire of the glance. Men called eagle-eyed are apt to exercise great magnetic influence, and have always more or less authority over their fellows. Their energy communicates itself by the eyes to those who surround them, and electrifies persons upon whom they wish to act. The power of a man's glance is incalculable, especially when it is backed by his intelligence and a strong will, and by the prestige of high social position.

Every reasonable and candid mind will assent certainly to the real existence of this subtle emanation of which we speak, and also to its action, more or less limited, upon the individuals who come in contact with it. That which alone might cause them to hesitate is the marvelousness of the results which are occasionally obtained; but that is a question of pure verification. The important point to be determined is whether the principle is absurd and the facts illusory. Now, if nothing is more rational and more conformed to all analogical data than the atmosphere which radiates from and surrounds human beings, and if nothing is better established than the influence which results from this fluid sphere, ought not magnetism immediately to be classed among positive phenomena?

The phenomenon of magnetism, which is nothing but vital attraction between beings by means of aromal relations, whose extent is proportioned to the power of the individuals to whom they belong, and which is common to all beings from the insect to the largest globe balancing itself in space, still shows itself with greater intensity in some beings than in others, although the law which determines its distribution may not yet be known. We should not be surprised if the magnetic power were to be found to exist among individuals in direct proportion to the power of the organs of motion and of digestion. The magnetic fluid seems to be most abundant and most energetic in the carnivorous animals which move with flexibility and rapidity, (feline and serpent races, &c.) and in men of an energetic and passionate nature. And, in fact, the more powerful the focus of heat is in an individual, the greater his faculty of increasing it at his pleasure, and also of transmitting easily the caloric which he throws off by means of interior action.

We know that the magnetic power of reptiles is very great, and it constitutes almost entirely the means which they possess for supplying themselves with food. M. Raspail thus explains this astonishing phenomenon.

"I have attained," he said, "by examinations pursued with great perseverance, to the conviction that the power of fascination which has been attributed to serpents, vipers, or

snakes, is not a vulgar fable. No fact presents itself more frequently to the observation of persons who travel in the woods than the sight of poor little birds descending, crying piteously, from branch to branch, as if drawn by an unseen power, and surrendering themselves into the mouth of a serpent hid in the branches, docile victims at the nod of their executioner.\* What is the mechanical operation of this incredible fascination, which has given rise to the fable of the sirens? There is certainly a physical cause for it, an emanation which envelops the bird with a net-work of gas, producing asphyxia, just as surely as the spider envelops the fly with his web of gauze. To give an account of the phenomenon in a graphic manner, let us admit that the serpent has the power of throwing from each side of his mouth jets of venomous and narcotic gas, which flow together over the head of the bird. If the bird undertakes to fly from the danger, he can do it only by descending, because there only will he find free space. In proportion as he descends the jets will continue to approach him nearer; and thus it is, that to escape the asphyxia, the poor bird falls into the mouth of the serpent.

Another fact reported by the same author proves that the magnetic process is much more diffused amongst animals than has been believed:

"The spider seems to possess a power of fascination equal to that which the serpent exercises. On the 8th of August, 1840, I had occasion to observe an instance which appeared to be very curious, in a house spider; he had just taken, in a horizontal web a large *taupin*, and held himself as if clinging by the end of his claws to his prey, a little below the abdomen. I did not see him apply his mouth to the insect or make any wound; but only approach and withdraw himself alternately without even touching him, making, so to speak, magnetic passes. The poor *taupin*, still full of life, was incapable of disengaging himself from a web which ordinarily he could have broken in pieces by a single movement of his legs, and remained paralyzed between the claws of a weak spider."

## THE SPIRIT OF FREEDOM.

BY JAMES RICHARDSON.

Oh, Nature! thou daughter of God! how free thou art, in thy glory! The winds! what types of liberty are they—when they gently kiss the leaves of the tree, that softly whispers back its love—when they wildly gambol with the crested wave of the mighty ocean—when they sweep with all the fury of enthusiasm, through the troubled sky, and heap clouds on clouds, for thirsty earth to drink. Thy brooks and merry streams—how they leap and dance, in their errand of love to the green meadows and valleys! The torrent, thundering out its tremendous anthem, that makes the earth and heaven to shake with its sublime music, frees too our shackled souls, by the power of sympathy, and makes us take part in the grand **ABOLITIONISM OF THE UNIVERSE**. The soaring eagle, the tree, the wave, the gentle flower itself; all preach unceasingly the sublime doctrine of Universal Freedom. Let us spend a moment in listening to their words.

The winds in their sportive wrestlings with the ocean, purge

\* One can cut the thread of the charm with a simple wand flourished through the air, because without doubt the whistling of the air frightens the serpent and thus disturbs the magnetic effluvia.

from themselves the heat that burned, and the corruption that lanted them, returning cool, and calm, and pure, to bless the land again with their refreshing breath; while old ocean, stirred to his very sands, carries down into the bosom of earth, the scum that defiled its surface. "Be free; and be pure;" says Nature. Freedom forever throws off, more and more, the foul, the false, the fearful—rids itself of the heat of passion, the corruptions of the world, and brings us to the purity of heavenly peace at last.

The gushing water, in its new-born instinct of freedom, wears the rock away with a resolute determination to find its destined place.\* Mountains piled up in the gentlest river's course, awake the soul of freedom, that God inspires in Nature's every child; but mountains are cast down in the glorious enthusiasm of their power; and the tranquil, child-like streamlet, becomes a roaring impetuous, sublime Niagara. "Resistance to Tyrants is obedience to God," says Nature. The meekest, gentlest creature, with right on its side, will overcome the mightiest. Mountains are leveled in the resistless course of the free Right. The free air of heaven, cooped up in prison walls, grows stagnant and foul; the fountain without an outlet, becomes a pool mantled o'er with filth. Dare not then restrain the spirit of liberty in the meanest of God's creatures! If it has not the might to burst away from the fetters that hold it—the life within it will become dead—and corruption will ensue. So speaks Nature.

The running stream, how beautiful it is, meandering through verdant fields, amid nodding flowers, and the mossy trunks of waving trees, singing its song of happiness unceasingly, as it never pauses in its onward course! The free wind, how musical its every tone! from its gentlest whisper, to its deepest roar! The tree that spreads its branches up to the heavens—the flower that smiles upon the rising sun—all grow in freedom and grow in beauty.

"Grow in freedom, and ye shall grow in beauty, too!" says mother Nature to her children. "The forest-trees, the streams, the plants, look! how beautiful they grow with me! My flowers! what beauty in every line—what grace in every movement—as they wave in the waking air! What awkwardness—what a poor pretence are thy finest gardens, oh, Man! to my wild prairies, untrimmed woods, and varied landscapes! Thou blushest to place thy painted scene—thy waxen flower—beside my works! My son, the roaming savage, with his free limbs unfettered by your 'woven bonds'—how noble, graceful, manly in his form! Even the child of the civilized man, as he comes fresh from my hand, is not without beauty—though this is soon defaced by thy slavish life of so-called civilization. Wilt thou not come out of the abominable slavery in which thou art? and live in, and be filled by my pure spirit of freedom? Then shalt thou be graceful, and beautiful, and noble; then shalt thou be strong as the mighty cataract, pure as the breath of morning, lovely as the dewy flower, free as the enthusiastic wind! Thou canst return, and drink deep at the fountains of my holy spirit—of my infinite, unbounded, free inspiration—and be again living in the 'freedom of God'—in the liberty where-with Christ can make you free. An humble workman—the boy of a poor carpenter, was my obedient son. The same

\* How truly does this picture the career of Genius. It is the impediments it meets with; the difficulties to be overcome; the obstacles to be surmounted—that creates the magic and the might of character.—ED.

creating, free, Almighty spirit that is my life, dwelt and manifested itself in him, and made his life as one with me, and proved his spirit one with mine—one with God. Grace, and truth, and beauty, and goodness, met in him. His life was like the sun. His words flowed as the music of a stream. His love, like mine, embraced all things. Kings and priests, tyrants and hypocrites, trembled before him; and all that was artificial and unsound, fell, and still keeps falling, before the strong free words of this, my darling son. The same free spirit—**THE CHRIST** that was in him, shall 'set you free—and ye shall be free indeed'—with 'the liberty of (the) sons of God.' The slavery of low custom, and of blind authorities, **then shall pass away forever; and that freedom, which is the** life of all beauty, of all grace and eloquence—shall fill and crown the life of man."

Thus speaks dear Mother NATURE, from her divine and glorious book, that God's finger ever writes—the living exhibition of God's word—the Universe of Nature, the testimony of the Universal Spirit! Why is not this word of God as worthy of our study, as the word of the *most* inspired of men? "In all things that have beauty," says Milton, "there is nothing more comely to man, than Liberty." What lifelessness, what corruption, does the restraint, the servility of our present life throw over all things! Our words, our fellowship, our church, our prayers, our songs—how does this want of a free spirit belittle all we do—degrade and deform our whole life! Let us grow great in Nature's Spirit of Freedom, which is the holy Spirit of God, that lives in, and creates, Nature—that renews the life and soul of man.

#### FALSE HISTORY.

The hero of the historian has been, too long, the fighting man; and, if a large portion of history might be believed, the great problems of society have all been solved by the sword. History, in the classical times, like the bard of the romantic times, was little more than the retainer of the worldly great. The virtue of the Roman was valor, (*virtus*;) and the march of the world's destinies was all represented by the march of the legions. It was impossible that history so written should not be, occasionally, an unconscious satirist of itself,—though the satire, recorded in "invisible ink" for that time, remained to be read in the light of an improved intelligence; and its page is, accordingly, full of morals of the kind, which are legible enough in our day. The great and attitudinal figure of Quintus Curtius, mounted on his war-horse, clad in glittering armor, and riding, full career, before assembled Rome, into a hole in the forum, for the salvation of the city, is rebuked by the less showy, but also less equivocal service of the goose of the Capitol; and Alexander the Macedonian shares his historic immortality with his horse, Bucephalus. And, by the way, this same showy and dramatic figure of the armed Curtius, engaged in his sacrifice, may stand as, in itself, an expression, in the form of apologue, of the entire philosophy of a great part of ancient history. Overlooking all the hidden causes, the inevitable moral sequences which mould the destinies of men, it has been ever the man in armor who, according to its crude teaching, ruled the issues of his age. The emergencies of the Commonwealth could only be met, or the wounds of humanity closed up, as the gulf in the Roman forum could only be filled by the warrior. All the earth of Rome's Seven Hills, and all the labor of her citizens, could

do nothing toward closing the gap in her soil;—add the armed man—and he filled it of himself! A better philosophy, in our day is reversing many a historic sentence; and history itself is, to a great extent, being rewritten. Amid the soft, clear peace-lights of the world, the false glare of what once seemed human glory, stands detected; and in the review of even those wars which have had the argument of a national necessity, real or fancied, the world will scarcely make the mistake, to-day, of ranking the hero of battle in the first class of heroes. Still, in the hour of contest for interests ill-understood, and amid the artificial morality which all such contests engender, it is intelligible enough how the warlike conqueror should have so long imposed himself upon the world in gigantic dimensions. The wielding of great physical forces has the same effect upon the imagination, that the directing of great moral ones should have upon the reason; and the pictures of events are written on the imagination at once, as by a moral Daguerreotype,—while their truths are impressed on the reason, through the slower process of analysis and induction. Imagination is a mirror that reflects merely the figures of events—and does so instantly; while reason is a scale that measures their qualities,—and, to make no mistake in the reckoning, must do it slowly. To the imagination, then, those who have had, or thought they had, an interest in war, have been careful to appeal—surrounding the latter by all such lights and colors as make the most showy impression on that faculty. It is the "pomp and circumstance of glorious war" that, in the eyes of men, have so long "made ambition virtue." The clamor of the trumpet and the roll of the drum have stifled, many and many a time, the "still, small voices" in the mis-giving heart. Like the great gong which was kept sounding in the temple of the Mexican Dagon, while the human sacrifices were performing, the shout in the train of conquerors has been sedulously excited and fed, while widows and orphans were being made, and humanity was receiving those deep wounds, from which she could not recover in many a year of peace.—[Athenaum.

#### DUTIES TO THE DEPARTED.

A false, sad notion has injured many, that we owe it to departed friends to die to those who remain, to die to our race, to feed on dark pictures of life, to reject the blessings which our kind Father has strewed in our path, because some have been taken from us. It ought to be the influence of bereavement—of the banished loved ones from our sight, to give us a more reverent and quickening conception of the spiritual nature of the undying soul, of that futurity through which our faculties and affections are to expand into diviner life and felicity, and under this hope we should desire to enter a nobler field of action, now the departed have gone to see, to love and serve the infinite Father with a fervor and elevation of spirit—and we should strive to sympathize with them, to be joined with them by participation in their progress. We are apt to feel as if nothing we could do on earth bears a relation to what the good are doing in a higher world; but it is not so. Heaven and earth are not so far apart. Every disinterested act, every sacrifice to duty, every exertion for "one of the least of Christ's brethren," every new insight into God's works, every new impulse given to the love of truth and goodness, associates us with the departed, brings us nearer to them, and is truly heavenly, as if we were acting in heaven.—[Channing.

## Voices from the Spirit-land.

## WHAT IS DEATH?

M. B. RANDALL, M.D.I.M.

As spirits survey the broad expanse of human thought, they see the question—What is death? answered so entirely at variance with truth, that they have desired, me to say a few words to our deluded, and hence unhappy brothers of the earth-life, upon this subject which is fraught with so much vital importance to all.

Before the dawn of the present Spiritual Era, the answers to this question were divided into two general classes: The one class claiming death as the finale of all individual consciousness, either through an unconditional annihilation of both soul and body, or by a general absorption of all spirit into the original fountain—God. The other class looked upon death as the door-way or entrance to that dark abyss, which mediates between time and eternity, wherein is nought but darkness, doubt and despair,—and which the greater part of the human family must pass, only to be plunged into a deeper and more awful gloom. Such, in the main, have been the generally received views of death; and is it strange it should be considered the “king of terrors?” But thanks to the Great Father of the universal progress, the light of the present begins to illumine many of those dark scenes; still man fears to believe ~~his own new-fledged senses, lest he shall be ensnared by~~ the great Power of Evil, whom he has been taught is so much more subtle than God, as to rob him forever of nine-tenths of all his children.

There is a class now who answer the question—“What is death?” by saying it is physical dissolution. Now while this is strictly true, we see that many, very many who assent to this answer with the tongues, fall far, far short of an appreciation of this view. For while they say they believe death to be but the dissolution of the flesh, and not in the least affecting the soul, ~~spirits see they can not contemplate scenes of death without a shudder; which would not be the case, did they firmly and understandingly believe what they assert.~~ For the dissolution of the flesh merely, could no more disturb the harmony of the soul, than the wearing out of an old garment of cloth. Who among those who least prize dress among you is not pleased to exchange an old worn out coat for one that is new and comfortable? This would be the case in reference to his garment of flesh, did he fully appreciate the idea, that it was merely an exchange of the old body, for a new and better one. Therefore a general belief, even in this view of death, would be a great improvement upon that fear, which is almost universally felt, concerning this, to men, most important, most interesting change.

What then must be the result, could we inspire our broth-

ers of earth, with the glorious truths which we see and know concerning things? Oh happy day, when all shall know that Death is but the bursting of the chrysalis shell, and the introduction of the free spirit into the light of the spirit spheres. Thus Death will no more be a word of darkness and misery, but all will look forward to its embrace with the most pleasing anticipations. Death is indeed the peaceful entrance to our bright and happy home. How long! O how long, dear Brothers, will you keep yourselves in the darkness of such fearful ignorance! When death is rightly apprehended by you, it will be no more to die, as you call it, than to sit or lie down to a quiet rest after a day of toil.

When man through, an increase of wisdom attains to a degree of perfect health, he will be able to step from his body of flesh clothed in the lighter garments of the spirit, the moment the earth-body ceases to be the proper casket for the jewel-mind; and this change will then be effected with as much ease as you see some of our purest media step from what you call the normal to a clairvoyant or spiritual state. Indeed, this is the true type of Nature's death; and when you all learn those truths, you will know that when one of your fellows is in the spiritual condition he is really and truly one with us, as well prepared to stay with, and enjoy our society, as though he had passed through all the sufferings of a protracted illness. But in the present dark condition of the human mind, upon this subject, ~~we are not permitted to receive to our yearning breasts,~~ the few who are thus prepared, in development, to come to us; for did we allow this, it would strike terror to the hearts of thousands who were leaning inquiringly toward the better faith. For with their present view of things, did they see those who are in the new faith, suddenly pass from their midst, they would at once conclude that modern spiritualism, was of the Devil, and that God in his righteous judgment, visited those who embraced it, with sudden death, to prevent the spread of the fatal delusion. Therefore, it is necessary for the best good of all, that the few should suffer martyrdom, by being prevented by those who see deeper than themselves from taking the step which some of them so earnestly desire.

But when the facts of the present manifestations are fully established, and have been incorporated into the general faith of earth, then, then will the restrictions be removed from those who feel that they would exchange the cares of earth, for the brighter country. For when this state of confidence in truth is established, Earth-life with its duties will be better understood, and be more attractive; and hence there will be more willingness to fulfil its mission, and less desire among believers, to cast aside the flesh before the end for which it was given be attained. And when this point is reached, the body will be put off with joy, and the freed

spirit be prepared to enter earnestly and understandingly upon its new mission of love and progress in this our happy World of Light.

Praying for this glorious day, I am as ever truly thine in Love.

R.

—[*Light from the Spirit-world.*]

### SPIRIT MESSAGE.

TO A YOUNG ARTIST.

Let her mind be quiet. All things will be done in good order, and good time. She has the gentle nature of a true and loving child of Art. Visions of beauty that flit before the eye in dreams, or in moments of waking rapture, will be like visits of angels, pictured in her soul.

Fear not, little sister of a divine and living faith. Let your heart never falter; let your hand be true and strong; let your mind be clear and peaceful; for the sweet days of peace will come trooping through the serene and loving air, like doves to their sheltering windows. So shall peaceful and beautiful thoughts of rest, come home to your soul.

O, my sister! when will the fair pictures end? Will they not brighten, and glow, and deepen, and stretch away—away—away—into the far-off, the unknown, the infinite? Yes; the white-winged angels of Peace and Love shall still be near; and the limnings of a more perfect beauty shall gradually unfold beneath their sheltering wings; and your mind will reach out to grasp thoughts so high, so grand, so inconceivable now, that you would shrink into humble unconsciousness, or almost die of ecstasy could you now behold only their shadow.

O, beautiful, divine Art! O, gentle and gifted Artist! There is love in human bosoms—there is beauty for thy pencil—deep, perfect, pure, spiritual beauty, even in the waste places of Earth! Go forth into the streets. Speak for the Poor with thy magic pencil. O, it shall be so eloquent! What songs—what hymns—what anthems of divinest rapture shall it unfold—picturing, as it were, visible harmony—sensible impersonation of the sweetest, the most entrancing melody. Paint music. Paint poetry. Paint all that is divine in nature and in art, in that one word, Beauty; so shalt thou hear thy name heave on the great true heart of the World's purest love, as music on the surging billows; for thy name is Power, and its spirit shall be manifest in all thy utterances, even in tones and shadows, soft as the breath of dying summer winds.

The kind guardians that are so lovingly watching over you, will soon see you more harmonious, more heavenly-hearted, more spiritual; for know, beloved child, that there is no stop. The wheels ever turn. They always go forward. They can not go back. You

will soon see that heart, and soul, and mind, thought and sense and spirit, will all be stronger, truer, finer, more exalted, and every way worthier, for the discipline you have known. See what you will do to justify all this.

### THE REST OF HEAVEN.

WRITTEN THROUGH E. P. AMBLER.

The heaven of the soul in its high and holy state of freedom from the trammels of the body, is the glorious rest which only the soul can enjoy. But this rest is not like the rest of the body. It does not consist in sloth and inactivity. It does not consist in lying down in green pastures or in slumbering beside the still waters. It does not consist in reposing on couches of ease and luxury, or in treading the streets of a golden city. More than this is the rest of heaven. There are no sensational pleasures included in this sweet and holy blessing, like those which the sighing and thirsting mortals of earth blindly seek. The rest of the soul is the relief which it experiences when it has laid aside forever the burdens of earth. It is the joy which the soul feels when it has arisen triumphant and rejoicing beyond the darkness of the grave. It is the bliss which thrills through its depths when the radiance of celestial spheres breaks upon its vision. It is the progress which the soul ever makes from circle to circle and sphere to sphere of angelic being, beholding at every step new beauties, gathering new strength, and breathing the inspirations of a diviner life.

Thus the rest of the heavenly world is only that which is consistent with the laws of the human spirit. This, from the force of the unchanging principles that dwell in its very heart, could not repose in lethargy. It could not sink down into the dreamless slumber which enchains the senses of the body. For in the depths of the spirit is the seat of all action—here is the exhaustless fountain of life and love which never can become stagnant—here is the beauty, the purity and the glory of the divine image which must ever become brighter and brighter amid the celestial day. The night of death overshadows the body that man may take his last repose. He dreams not, but is cold and silent as the drapery of the tomb is drawn around him, and his closed eyes behold not the watchful angels that gaze through the chilly darkness on his slumbering form. But not forever doth the night endure. Slowly pass away the dreary mists of the sepulcher—silently breathe the zephyrs of heaven on the spirit of the sleeper, and behold! the darkness has passed and a new day dawns on the opened vision. Now the season of slumber is over, and the spirit enters on its course of unending progress, resting in the truth which forms the pathway along which it travels, and in the wisdom which moves and governs the mighty system of being.

## THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

R. P. AMBLER, EDITOR.

NEW-YORK, APRIL 2, 1853.

## UNFETTERED THOUGHT;

THE ONLY AVENUE TO TRUTH.

*"I know of but one safe thing in the universe—and that is TRUTH. And I know of but one way to Truth for an individual mind, and that is UNFETTERED THOUGHT."*

An essential prerequisite to the progress and elevation of our race is *Thought*. Mankind must learn to think, each one for himself. Men must no longer employ or *permit* others to think for them. This has been done too long already. While men allow others to think for them, they will be degraded and miserable slaves in the hands of the designing, and the ambitious. How very few of the uncounted millions who have peopled earth's surface have ever dared to give utterance to a thought which would be considered hostile to the prevailing prejudices and superstitions of their times. Here and there, indeed, a man has appeared with a mind too vast and too deeply imbued with the love of freedom to be cooped in the narrow bounds of the age in which he lived, and given utterance to an idea which startled the nations, and called down upon his devoted head the wrath and vengeance of those whose craft was **endangered by the truths he proclaimed.** Yet slowly and almost mechanically the world has gathered around the standard he erected. His truth is in theory eventually embraced, and incorporated among the established order of things. After his death they build monuments to his memory. He is worshiped as a saint, or adored as a benefactor. They make pilgrimages to his ashes, and establish festivals in commemoration of his birth. They are astonished and indignant at the persecution he received; while they pursue with unsparing vengeance and unrelenting hatred, the succeeding reformer, who, **seizing perhaps upon the great idea of his predecessor, attempts to give it a practical application, or carry it out to its more ultimate results.**

In the time of Jesus none were more untiring in their efforts to garnish the sepulchers of the prophets, than those Jews who thirsted the most strongly for his blood; and in our own day, none are more loud or boisterous in their praises of our revolutionary fathers, than those who manifest the most deadly hostility to the principles they fought to establish, in their application to universal man.

But the great mass of mankind in all ages, seem to have had little desire to think beyond the ordinary routine of the prescribed formularies. In the few instances where such desire has existed, its exercise has not been permitted beyond a certain limit, marked out

by those interested in keeping them in ignorance. The dungeon, the sword, and the faggot, have been the instruments with which those who trample upon man's deathless nature have sought to stay the progress of the mind, in its search after the Good, the Beautiful, and the True. They have been but to successful in this work of death. What rivers of blood have been shed in past ages to smother the undying energies of the immortal soul; though the blood of the millions who have fallen for the right, proclaims in the ear of the startled oppressor that man will not surrender his birth-right without a struggle.

Not only is this true of the past, but even now if a man dare utter a sentiment contrary to the "voice and will of the brotherhood"—if he dares to call in question any of the received dogmas of the age—if his soul agonizes for the oppressed, and gushes forth in effort to assert the oneness and brotherhood of the human family, should he fail to encounter the tender mercies of the mob, he meets the still more formidable obstacle in the cry of "Infidel!" "Agrarian!" "Jacobin!" which is rung through the land, and which is about as fatal to his reputation as the stiletto of the assassin is to the victim of his dastardly vengeance; and exhibits about as much cowardice; and at the same time shows a want of faith in both God and man, which assures us that those who utter this cry are the *real* infidels, if any there are.

Is it any wonder that the night of ignorance and superstition covers so large a portion of our globe? that the great mass of mind has made so little progress in knowledge and virtue? Is it not strange, rather, that it is not sunk even deeper than it is? It has been bound hand and foot. It has scarcely been encouraged to make a step of progress. On the contrary every obstacle has been thrown in its pathway. And therefore it is that it is yet in its swaddling bands. Therefore it is, that it has never reached the stature of manhood; but is groping about among the accumulated rubbish of centuries, rather than reaching out into the future, and soaring upward toward heaven. The mind **must break away from this thralldom, and assert its right to freedom of thought and action.** One great obstacle to the progress and freedom of the mind, (to notice which was the principal object I had in writing this article,) is the disposition so widely prevalent, to follow *men* instead of *ideas*. A man gives utterance to a great truth, and straightway he becomes with many an *impersonation* of truth. All his words and actions are noted, and repeated until they are so interwoven with the idea to which he has given utterance, that they become an established part of it; and if any one has the hardihood and temerity to doubt their infallibility, and their legitimate connection with the truth he has been instrumental in proclaiming, he is at once branded as a heretic and infidel.

There is no measuring the mischief which has been wrought by this almost universal propensity to make individuals the personification of ideas. We should not follow MEN, because, in the first place, truth does not depend upon man for its existence or character. In the second place men seldom, if ever, see the full limit of their own ideas. They may have some conception of this nature, but rarely do they see the full extent of their application.

Not only do men seldom see the full extent of their own ideas, but still more rarely do they live them out, even to the extent they apprehend them. Hence they become doubly unsafe guides. How often do we see men grasping at a great idea, and following it with zeal for a time, until they find it will conflict with their own sect or party. Then they either attempt to twist it in harmony with their own selfish views, or to arrest its further progress.

All truth is from the same great fountain of light and love. Men are but the *conductors* which God makes use of to convey his truth to the outward world. We, instead of fastening upon it, attach ourselves to the conductors. These, though they may to-day be pouring forth the waters of truth as they bubble up from the well spring of the Eternal, to-morrow may be drawing from a stagnant pool, and oozing out mud and filth from the depraved human heart. Those who regard the *conductors* as the personification of truth, greedily drink it in, and stoutly maintain that it is the same they drank before, clear and fresh from the throne of God himself. ~~It is no wonder then that mankind should have stumbled so often, and so fatally.~~ Truth is eternal and unchanging. Man is mortal, and as variable and uncertain as the winds that fill the air. As he did not make truth, so he can not destroy it. Men, at best, are but *mirrors* employed to reflect the truth; and to such a degree of *opacity* do these mirrors sometimes obtain, that even reflection is very indistinct and imperfect. The *Truth* we may always safely follow; *man never*.

"Trust thyself. Every heart vibrates to that iron string." Follow your own thought. Obey the impulse that God has given thee. The light which dawns up on thy darkened soul, feeble and flickering perhaps, is radiated from that Universal Sun, whose all-searching and vivifying rays have lit up and animated the thousand forms of life, which are flitting so busily and joyously around thee—which has ever wrought in the deepest recesses of the human soul; and whose life-giving and purifying influences may be seen in the lives and sayings of the bards and seers of olden time. Open thy bosom, O man! for the reception of this light, that it may consume utterly the dross and corruption, which obscure and debase the soul!

Follow it wheresoever it shall lead thee. It will lead thee into all truth and enable thee to solve that great problem of the ages, "What is man, and whither does

he tend?" Do nothing, and receive nothing, solely because another does it, however wise and good in his general character, he may be; nor because it has received the sanction and support of by-gone ages. You live now. You have Understanding, Reason, Conscience! Cause every thing to pass through your own crucible, and have your own analysis and synthesis of all that is, or has been. Remember, that by thought, *your thought*, truth is to be elicited, which is to save yourself, and redeem the race.

N. H. W.

MARSHFIELD, MASS.

### LET THERE BE LIGHT.

Is it not a glorious thought, that of blessing others? He who indulges it, feels himself *gradually rising above* all that is little, and mean, and transitory, into the atmosphere which is breathed by angels, and drinking of the *aqua vite*, the true water of life, which gushes cool, sparkling, and ever undiminished from the Throne of God. How can the spirit which was made to soar, and expand itself into the infinite, be content to grope and grovel around the little, dark center—self? Not if he could feel the rapture—not if he could conceive the ecstasy of catching the same spirit, of cherishing the same feelings—of sharing in the same action—with the angels, with Jesus, with God—could man forget himself, till the spirit's wings become palsied under the larve-envelop of sense, until they lose the power to burst away from the feeble bonds, and soar into their native heaven! *Let us learn, then, the high and holy pleasure—the rapture, which springs up in the soul as a very element, in the act of blessing others! By such a soul, whose higher and purer affections are cultivated, truth is received more readily, and the intellect becomes capable of elevation and expansion, in proportion to the expansion and elevation of the soul.*

If it is benevolence to minister to the wants of the poor and perishing body, how much more so is it to feed the starved and famished soul! Was man created, with all his vast, his unsearchable capabilities, to toil and struggle through *three-score years and ten*, only that his body may be nourished—only that his body may be covered or admired—only that he may have wherewithal to feed and clothe his immediate posterity? Yet how many rise above a perception of these gross facts? How few even suspect what they are, or that there is any other end in life than such as this! The rich man, corrupted and sensualized by much wealth, without necessity of labor, *knows not that his soul is surfeited, nettled down as it were, to one insensate mass, whence the volatile—the ethereal essence has well nigh fled; and the poor man, compelled to toil even from the cradle to the grave, to get bread for himself and his helpless family, feels not, perhaps, even in his dreams, the power that is in him. Almost equally adverse to*

mental advancement, are wealth and poverty. Even Religion, is made either a complete abstraction, which can have no influence on the conduct, and consequently none on the state of the soul's affections; or else a sordid principle, whose beginning and end is selfishness. When we look at these facts, would any sacrifice seem too great, any labor too severe—by which we might assist in developing this chrysalis-nature, this larve-soul, which, having lost its original power—and even a knowledge of itself—can not struggle up and free itself from the incrustations by which it is entombed! When we look abroad upon the dull inane faces of men, how can we forbear to invoke the spirit within; which, if it were once aroused, would make them shine forth as the faces of angels! O, is there not a brother, or a sister soul—veiled, humbled, well nigh lost, though it be—but still a kindred soul, that looks forth from every such unfortunate human being, unfortunate though born the proprietor of a castle, chiding us with mute eloquence, that we withhold our light—that we give not words of encouragement and hope, to one whose steps are retarded in the race, toward that goal which is in the midst of Eternity!

Is it not a delightful thought, that of awakening mind to a companionship with kindred mind? And this, by the correlative influence which we exert over each other, we may all do, in a greater or less degree. Can any one who has this power preëminently, fail to exercise it, and be guiltless? "No?" the very soul itself answers, from its innermost depths of being. There is a waste of intellect, of morals, to be accounted for; and hard will the reckoning be to him, who hid his light under a bushel, so that his poor benighted brother, lost his way—and perished amid the darkness. F. H. G.

#### WHY IS MAN HERE?

[We find the following appropriate remarks on the above question, in the *Golden Era*, a Universalist paper of the West:]

On this question Science will afford us much valuable information. The only object of life is clear and grand. It is all summed up in two words—*discipline and development*. It all relates to *mind*. The body is simply a temporary habitation, and is valuable only on account of its occupant or the use to which it is put. We know something of the powers of mind, its reason, love, worship, its elasticity, vigor, and improvable quality. Plants and animals may be cultivated, but there is a limit to their improvable capacity. The same is true of our bodies, but we have never proved it true of mind. No limits have yet been found to its capacity for thought, love, or power. The more it learns, thinks, grows, expands and rises, the more it loves to and can. Its capacities in every direction increase with their use. Large stores of wisdom increase its capacity for still

larger stores. Great affections make room for greater. Powerful labors give strength for others more so. Severe trials augment our powers of endurance. Great temptations resisted give existence to great virtues. Hard schooling confers a hardy education. Thorough discipline makes perfect in any and every art; it is equally so in life. Labor is the price of reward. Fatigue is the cost of rest. Temptation is the trial and test of virtue. All this being the clear result of what we have learned in life's school, the answer to our question can not be difficult. Man is placed here to school him in the stern experience of life; to lay the foundations of a grander virtue, a broader wisdom, and a fresher and more unselfish love hereafter than those he is capable of giving existence to here; to plant the seeds of a tree of life more beautiful, fruitful and glorious than earth can produce. He must have a beginning, a planting place, a nursery, a primary school, an apprenticeship. This is all in earth; and not a meaner nor inglorious beginning is his. Not to a hard master nor a profitless servitude is he apprenticed. He is to have the profits of his own labor, the fruits of his own industry. Nobody can take them from him. No being 'neath the heavens above can wrest them from his possession. The robe he wears for his spirit, the crown he moulds for his brow, the statue he carves for his ornament, the house he creates for his mind's perennial habitation, will all be his so long as he exists a conscious, moral intelligence. He lives then for wisdom, goodness and love, for truth, right and virtue, for refinement, improvement, and growth, lives for himself and his fellows, for time and eternity, for human progress and divine glory.

It has been asserted by many and is generally believed that man in time is a probationer for eternity, that here he is to choose endless life, or endless death. This to us is very erroneous. That in time he is to prepare for eternity, just as to-day he is to prepare for tomorrow, we most cordially believe. But *preparation and probation* for eternity are two very different things. The former is rational, inspiring, and just; the latter is unaccountable, awful, and ungodlike.

Scripturally speaking, man is here, "to grow in grace and in a knowledge of the truth;" "to become holy as God is holy, and perfect as he is perfect;" to become the spiritual child of his Father, to love God and man with all his mind and strength, to secure for his heart all the christian virtues, and adorn his spirit in all the christian graces; to robe himself in the white washed habiliments of the Lamb's bride, and crown his brow with the gemmy coronal of spiritual life, that both here and hereafter he may shine as the angel-star of light. Glorious object is this for his sojourn in the earth, and wise is man if he improves it properly; a child of folly is he if he wastes the precious moments of his earth-life.

## SPIRITUAL COMMUNION.

[By the favor of a friend, we are furnished with the extract from a letter which is copied below, the author being a lady who has become recently interested in the subject of spiritual intercourse. Though not designed for publication, the letter contains those elevated and truthful sentiments, emanating from a refined beauty of spirit, which will naturally render it attractive to our readers;—and so we humbly crave the pardon of the writer for the liberty which we take. May we not place her among the list of our contributors?—Ed.]

\* \* \* But the question arises, how are we to be entirely certain that these spirits are *the* ones they profess to be, since the evil and good both communicate? Your answer will be, that so long as their revealed mission is to bind up the broken-hearted, administer the balm of sympathy, and advance the cause of suffering humanity, there can certainly be no harm done. I think so too. I have no objections to offer—certainly not. I believe in spiritual communications; indeed, no one can subscribe to this doctrine more heartily. If I did not, I should consider myself far in the rear of this eventful era—the nineteenth century—and violating the law of eternal and infinite progression to which the soul is forever subject. O yes! she must stretch her flight onward! There is no power that can stay or bind her upward course! She must not only grasp in her expansive embrace a universe draped in resplendent imagery, but she must pass beyond!—penetrate the mysteries of the Spirit-land—feel the pulsations of her own immortality—catch the sweet minstrelsy of the angel-choirs, and pluck laurels from the ever-green bowers to wreath her brow!

\* \* \* I wish to say only one thing more, which is relative to the mode in which spiritual revelations are received. I have no sympathy with those communicated by rappings, the moving of chairs and tables, and the like, farther than this: I think they are the manifestations of a lower order of spirits that converse in this way, who naturally seek their own level, being attracted to those in a congenial sphere—such as can believe only through the medium of the senses, and must see with their eyes and hear with their ears, to be convinced of the truth. But I believe that spirit meets spirit in sweet and holy converse. So far as my experience extends, it is so, that spirits most delight to communicate *spiritually*. This seems to be not only more congenial, but more in accordance with their nature; and that inward voice, which, in all times and places—in morning light and evening shade—in society and solitude—speaks from the inner sanctuary, the deep, solemn shrine of the spirit, is more startling, more tangible and *certain*, than any other sound can be. I say it not without emotion that I trust I am now obeying its commands.

Yours truly,

L. S. C.

HOMER, N. Y.

## Spiritual Convention.

The next Quarterly Convention of Spiritualists, in Massachusetts, will be held at Springfield, on Wednesday and Thursday, the 6th and 7th days of April next.

At a meeting of some two hundred decided and earnest friends of the Cause in Springfield, it was unanimously voted to invite the Convention there; and the Committee, after due consideration, have thought it best to respond to that invitation, in behalf of the friends generally, throughout the State.

It is earnestly desired that the Convention may be one that shall "keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," and thereby promote in a degree, the real prosperity of this great and most beneficent movement. Friends from abroad, throughout the United States, are most cordially invited to be present, and join with us, in the deliberations, the hopes and the joys of the occasion. In behalf of the Committee,

S. C. HEWITT, *Chairman*.

Boston, March 23, 1853.

## Notice to our Patrons.

We are desired by the Harmonial Association to state that the MESSENGER, at the close of the present six months, will be presented in a new form, greatly enlarged and rendered in every respect more attractive, the terms of subscription remaining the same as before. The next number, therefore, will be the last in the present form of the paper; but our patrons are assured that all which has been promised in the past, will be more than fulfilled, and that the change contemplated will be an evidence of progress and expansion which will be cheering to every friend of harmonial truth. Farther particulars with regard to this subject may be expected next week.

By an official notice which we publish above, it will be seen that there is to be held a convention of spiritualists at Springfield, Mass., on the 6th and 7th days of April next. We indulge the hope that this meeting will be conducted with order and wisdom, and that it will thus be made not only pleasing and profitable to those who shall attend, but instrumental in advancing the cause of truth. It has now become a settled maxim that "in union there is strength," and we have no doubt that the plan of conventional gatherings on the part of our spiritual friends, will, if wisely carried out, result in much good. We shall hope, therefore, to see a large meeting at Springfield.

The next number of the MESSENGER will contain an index of subjects, that being the last of the current volume, preceding the enlarged form of the paper.

We are desired to state that W. BOYNTON, writing medium, is at present located in Milford, Worcester County, Mass., to which place all communications for him should be addressed.

## Facts and Phenomena.

### CHARACTER OF MRS. ELIZABETH A. HANKINS;

AS DELINEATED PSYCHOMETRICALLY,

BY MRS. J. R. METTLER.

[The subject of this delineation was born in the State of Pennsylvania, and lived until her marriage in Trenton, N. J., after which she removed to Philadelphia. Two years since she went to the State of Illinois. She has been clairvoyant from the age of three years, and in her later spiritual manifestations has been exhibited a wonderful illumination. The drawing of Mrs. Mettler is one of her finest. Nothing could exceed it in truthfulness and power.]

This is a lady. The spirit is illuminated, and the ideas brilliant. She is sensitive, and her feelings delicate and refined. She appears to have a reverential feeling, which causes her disposition naturally to be prayerful. I should think that her brain often became affected by her extreme mental exercises. Her spirit seems intuitive, and easily impressed. She has a very strict regard for truth; and nothing pains her more than deception, wherever found. She seems to have become cautious from her connection and intercourse with society at large.

She is scrutinizing, and quick in her perceptions of right and wrong. If she is displeased with any individual, or sees any principle carried out which to her seems wrong, she is bold in her proclamation of it. She gives me a feeling as though I desired to uplift my fellow beings—to help those who are in distress, or affliction; and she seems to have learned sympathy from her own sad experience. She is very firm and fixed in her principles, and yet is yielding and affable in her disposition and nature.

Her concentration amounts to abstraction, and she seems many times dwelling in the interior, and following its dictations. Some of her happiest thoughts seem to have originated in this way. She would make a very kind and devoted wife, and a tender mother.

She seems to have a desire to see everything in nature happy and joyous; and if she can not always be so herself, she has no envious feeling on that account; but her large and beautiful sympathies are excited; and her sensitive spirit is inspired and warmed with the reflection of that joy which she beholds in others.

She is very fond of the society of her own sex, and would contend strongly for their rights; and she is likewise very fond of an intelligent gentleman. But she hates anything sensual, or degrading. Her main desire seems to be to become useful; and in her generous humility of heart she would assist in any wise, in promoting and elevating the cause of Truth. There is

nothing that will excite her anger so much as to hear those who are engaged in this blessed cause—or the philosophy itself—spoken against. And in speaking of these matters, I should think she would often be heard to say, "What I know to be true, shall never suffer for want of an advocate in me."

Her memory is good on most subjects; and I should think she would often interest her friends by the anecdotes and facts which she must have accumulated. She has many interesting thoughts to communicate, and a most happy manner of delineating them. Her sphere interests me. Can it be Mrs. Hankins?

### A YOUNG CLAIRVOYANT.

A Mr. Jackson, of Ohio City came into our office yesterday with his little daughter, a fine, rosy girl about seven years of age. It surprised us to learn that so young a person should be a clairvoyant. Mr. Jackson states that she has possessed such powers of vision for about seven weeks—that she received intimations one evening from the Spirit-world that she would be magnetized and receive the gift the next day. Such accordingly was the case. She also became a medium, produced the rappings, and has frequent intercourse with the spirits of the departed inhabiting other spheres. In the experiments performed in our office, the most doubting skeptic admitted that there was no collusion, and that her mortal vision was completely obstructed. A kid glove filled with cotton, was placed upon each eye, a bandage applied over them, and securely tied around her head. A Spanish quarter of a dollar was then thrown upon the table and she was requested to tell the date. She took it up, and instantly read—"1790." A bank bill was next presented, and she read it off promptly, "That's one dollar, State Bank of Ohio." On one bill a steamboat and sail vessel were engraved in the vignette so minutely as to be just discernible by the naked eye. She described them exactly. In fact, anything that was placed before her was read or described just as correctly as if she were examining it with the natural eye. She has the power of putting herself into the clairvoyant state, as also of throwing it off. Another singular experiment is this—a row of cents are laid on the table, under one of which is secretly placed a three cent coin. She will instantly designate the cent under which the piece lies, appearing to possess the power to see through the copper.

It is certainly a most remarkable case, and presents some new and singular phenomena. Those who are disposed to skepticism may draw their own conclusions, but we believe that the powers and influence of the human mind are but dimly known, and that these and other facts will rear up an entirely new and more simple philosophy. The old doctrines do not account for these things, and man will have an explanation. Hence

such developments will tend to overthrow many of the old theories of the mental organization, and introduce a new philosophy.—[*Plain Dealer.*]

## Poetry.

### To my Cousin.

BY MRS. EFFIE FORREST.

I know that thou art beautiful, although I have not seen  
The loveliest by the circled fire, the merriest on the green—  
I know that Nature gave to thee, with no illiberal hand,  
A talisman that binds thy life with a most precious band;  
That round thy fair and open brow, young Genius hath entwined  
A wreath, whose clustering buds will burst with richest bloom  
of mind.  
Cousin; there have been those who say that, woman ne'er  
was led  
By intellect to happiness; that round her drooping head  
The laurel-wreath will moulder, and leave a gangrene there,  
Which will corrode and blacken with the anguish of despair;  
That she who wakens genius, and rashly fans the fire,  
"Like the poor Hindoo victim, lights her own funereal pyre."  
It may be so—it may be so—yet who may ever say  
To the strong tide of poetry, "Thus far I own thy sway?"  
As well we might attempt to stay the billows in their course,  
And turn the stubborn ocean back to its untrodden source.  
Jehovah, only, binds the Sea by his own high control;  
And He awoke the living flood that gushes in the soul—  
And bade it live—and made it strong. Then who shall dare  
to bind  
A principle that God, himself, hath planted in the mind!  
It may not be—it can not be. The spell is strong as Death.  
The poet's poetry is still his being's vital breath.  
And if within a woman's form that fiery spirit wakes,  
O smother not the music which its very anguish makes;  
And though her sensibilities will quicken at its glow,  
Her sense of happiness will be keen as the sense of wo.  
Yet, cousin, dear, I pray that thou, whate'er thy course  
shall be,  
May'st meet with flowers in every path, and fruit on every  
tree—  
That thy young spirit's gentle chords may ne'er be doomed  
to wake  
Beneath the World's cold fingers, that jar first and then  
break—  
That He who watches o'er the young, and guides the gifted,  
still  
May keep thy placid spirit in obedience to his will—  
So when all earthly pleasures shall at their fountains stay,  
Thou shalt have unwasting treasures that can not pass away.

### To Ma Chere Amie.

BY THE LATE MISS HETTY W. HURD.

When life is o'er, and I'm at rest,  
Wilt thou one tear of sorrow give,  
And shall my memory in thy breast  
With tender recollections live?  
Or from thy heart shall absence sever  
The one whom thou hast said shall never  
Forsaken, or forgotten, be,  
So long as life is lent to thee?

Think not, think not, *ma chere amie*,  
That I would bind thee to my tomb,  
Bid gladness from thy bosom flee,  
And plunge thee in perpetual gloom:  
Oh no; I only ask of thee  
To breathe one gentle sigh for me,  
Sometimes, above my lowly dwelling,  
Affection's choicest tribute telling.

### The Voice of God.

WRITTEN DURING A THUNDER-STORM,

BY LYDIA S. COOK.

I hear it in the zephyr's sigh,  
Floating on airy pinions by,  
And in the leaves' low murmurings,  
That quiver 'neath its ambient wings.

I hear it in the solemn Night  
When Earth is hushed, and Heaven is bright,  
And all her starry minstrelsy  
Is waked to loftiest harmony.

I hear it when the darkling cloud  
Has robed the sky in fearful shroud,  
And mighty winds awake! away  
To join the Storm-King's dread array.

And when the vivid lightnings fly  
Along the dark, portentous sky,  
I hear the voice of God alone  
In the deep thunder's awful tone.

O then I feel His presence nigh,  
By consciousness, sublime and high;  
The great Jehovah's spirit-form  
Shines forth amid the passing storm.

And in that dark and fearful hour,  
When Nature wakes to all her power,  
And weal or wo, and life or death,  
Are in her hand, float in her breath.

O, then I know that he is nigh  
When winds and seas are loud and high;  
I hang on his Almighty arm  
In grateful trust, secure from harm.

My spirit spreads her wings on high  
To swell the chorus of the sky,  
Giving for all that he hath done,  
Praise unto the Eternal One.

### Weep not for those who Die.

Weep not for those who die  
Where the red storm of battle sweeps the van,  
Still pressing on, while craven recreants fly,  
Sublimely true to God and suffering man.

What boots a moment's pain?  
A moment passed in yielding up the breath?  
They live, they rise, for evermore they reign,  
Conquerors, triumphant o'er the sting of death.

The sting of death is sin.  
They only die whose moral life expires;  
For them, e'en while they outward live, begin  
Consuming tortures and avenging fires.

Then weep no more for those  
Nailed and extended on the martyr's cross.  
Strike, O grant, strike! but know thy murderous blows  
Recoil on thee to thine eternal loss.

O, it is gain to die!  
When standing sunlike in the immortal dome  
Waits the strong Angel of Eternity  
To lead the conquering spirit to its home!  
—[*Mountain Cove Journal.*]

## Miscellaneous Department.

### VIEWS OF HEAVEN.

BY WILLIAM E. CHANNING.

Descriptions of Heaven too often convey the impression that heaven is a state of rapturous ecstasy, suspending reason and the calm exercise of understanding. It is indeed true, that the Scriptures teach us that in the future life the affections will be powerfully excited. New sensibility will be communicated to the heart. God will be loved with a vastly purer and intenser love than is known on earth. But still, the understanding will not be sacrificed to the feelings. Devotion will be calm, deliberate, reasonable. It will be the fruit of extended knowledge. All the faculties of the understanding will be exerted and invigorated, as well as the affections; and the happiness of heaven will possess that serene and reflecting character which it is becoming and honorable for rational beings to enjoy.

Another representation of heaven which seems to me unfavorable to a strong impression of its happiness is this;—heaven is often described as a place where eternity will be spent in immediate acts of Divine worship. This error arises from a too literal and narrow interpretation of passages in Scripture. Their true meaning is, that at all times, and in all places, spirits in heaven will possess that sensibility to God which places of worship are particularly designed to promote. Whatever region of this vast universe they may visit, they will regard it as God's empire, God's temple; his presence will be felt, his perfections be traced and adored, his will be cheerfully obeyed. This spirit of devotion, which we ought to cherish on earth, will indeed, be the habit of heaven; but its exercise will be consistent with the greatest variety of scenes and employments, and very unlike that wearisome monotony of an endless round of religious services which some seem to anticipate.

I proceed to consider another view of heaven which renders it uninteresting. Heaven is sometimes described in a manner which excludes the idea of improvement, of progression. The thought of a stationary existence, of remaining the same through eternity, of a world where the mind, as it looks forward to endless ages, will see no change, no progressive ascent to superior virtue, is a most discouraging and melancholy one. The human mind seems so impatient of limits, it so delights in boundless prospects, that we can hardly feel as if it would be happy, even in heaven itself, were it to find that it had reached its goal; that no accessions were to be made to its knowledge and goodness; that no nearer approach could be gained to God and superior orders of being; that all above it was forbidden ground, an inaccessible felicity.

Such conceptions of heaven are altogether inconsistent with what we know of the faculties of the human understanding, which seem capable of indefinite progression, and with what we see of the works of God, which teach us that he delights in a progressive creation. We ought rather to conceive of heaven as a state which will offer far greater means of improvement than the present, which will open new fields for thought, new worlds for research, which will inspire a more intense desire of moral greatness, and give continually increas-

ing energy and splendor to all the virtues which ennoble our nature. . . . .

Another error in the description of heaven, which I think renders it less interesting, is that the thought of society is thrown too much out of sight. Now human nature is essentially social. It wants objects of affection, companions to whom it may communicate its thoughts and purposes, and with whom it may act and enjoy. Pleasure is tasteless without friendly participation, and every view of heaven excluding this is unfavorable to an impression of its happiness. We are too apt to think of heaven as a solemn place. It ought to be viewed by us as a place of cheerful society. The countenances of its inhabitants should seem to us irradiated by a benign smile in their intercourse with one another, and their piety, though reverential, should seem to us a filial and happy sentiment, which enters into the conversation, and which they delight to manifest together.

Another view of heaven which seems to me to weaken its interest is this;—its inhabitants are often described as forming a world by themselves, as having no connection with any other beings. Heaven seems to be considered as a region separated from the rest of the universe. Now an improved and benevolent mind can hardly escape the desire of extending its acquaintance with this boundless universe of which it forms a part, and heaven would seem a place of confinement, did it shut up its inhabitants for ever from every other region. But we ought not to conceive thus of the future state of good men. We need not doubt the fact that angels, whose home is heaven, visit our earth and bear a part in our transactions; and we have good reason to believe, that, if we obtain admission into heaven, we shall still have opportunity, not only to return to earth, but to view the operations of God in distant spheres, and be his ministers in other worlds. . . . .

It is not impossible, that, in our intercourse with other worlds, we shall meet with beings who are passing through the first stage of discipline, like that which is now assigned to ourselves,—beings exposed to pain, temptation, and sorrow, beings who may need our sympathy and aid, and to whom we may render the same offices which we have reason to believe angels now render to the human race. It seems to me that we do not render heaven a less interesting or less happy world, when we suppose that its inhabitants retain the tenderest sensibility, and feel for the sufferings which may be endured in other regions of the creation. There is a sympathy which, though in a measure painful, gives a peculiar charm to existence, and which a good man would not wish to resign; and we ought not to believe that this is excluded from heaven.

Once more, the descriptions which are given of heaven are often, I think, rendered less interesting than they should be, by false ideas which are entertained about the perfection of its inhabitants. It seems to be thought, that, because good men are to be perfect hereafter, they will all resemble each other; and hence that diversity of character, of taste, and habits, which contributes so much to our happiness, is made to give place to a monotonous and unvaried excellence. But all God's works are marked by variety, and to this they owe much of their interest and beauty.

Will all this variety be blotted out in heaven? No one, who reflects that this life is a preparatory state, can doubt that our future character will be a continuation of the present,—that, if we enter heaven, we shall carry with us essentially

the same minds which we possess on leaving the world, and thus all the peculiarities of earth which are consistent with goodness will be transplanted in the future state. The Scriptures teach us that it will be part of the happiness of heaven to meet there the good and excellent of former times,—the patriarchs, and prophets, and apostles, and other benefactors of mankind. But this happiness would be wholly lost, were men in heaven to lose their peculiar characters, were all to be cast into one mould, were all, in becoming perfect, to become perfectly alike. No,—heaven will not present this unvaried and dull uniformity. The strong lines of character which marked men on earth, we may suppose, will distinguish them hereafter. **Paul will retain his ardor, John his kindness, Isaiah his imagination.** In heaven we shall witness every form of intellectual and moral excellence. Some of its inhabitants will exhibit to us the milder, and others the sublimer virtues. Some will be distinguished by glow of feeling, some by profoundness of thought, some by activity and energy of will. There will be, too, different degrees of the same excellence, and different employments corresponding to the character.

The true view of heaven, that which the Scriptures give, that which reason sanctions, and that which we can most powerfully realize, is, that it will not essentially change, but rather improve, our nature. We shall be the same beings as on earth; we shall retain our present faculties, our present affections, our love of knowledge, love of beauty, love of action, love of approbation, our sympathy, gratitude, and pleasure in success. We shall probably, too, have bodies not very different from what we now have,—the eye to behold creation and receive its beauties, the ear to hear the voice of friendship and to receive the pleasures of harmony, and even sense refined and purified. This we know, that Jesus in a form like ours ascended into heaven, and when Moses and Elijah conversed with him on the Mount, they appeared in the human form, differing from ours only in its splendor; and from these facts it would seem that our future bodies will bear a general resemblance to the present.

In heaven the understanding will be called into vigorous exercise, and will be continually enlarged and improved by exertion. Some persons seem to conceive that the mind will at once attain its full and perfect growth in the future world, that it will ascend immediately from this region of darkness and error into the brightest light of heaven, that it will expand at once to the full extent of its capacities, that every thing which is to be known will at once be acquired, and therefore that new acquisitions will not be proposed, and will not of course awaken its activity. But this is an imagination altogether unauthorized by Scripture, and it differs so entirely from present experience, that nothing but positive declarations of Scripture can give it a claim to belief. In this life progression is the universal law. Nothing is brought into being in its most perfect state. Every thing rises to maturity from feeble beginnings.

The all-wise Creator delights in a progressive system, in gradual improvement, not in immediate perfection. It is his uniform method to conduct beings through various stages, not to fix them at once in unchangeable condition. Now, such being the method of Providence, and such the nature and experience of man, is it not natural to expect that in a future life our nature will be progressive, that the knowledge with which the Christian will commence his future being will

be a point from which he will start, a foundation on which he will build, rather than a state in which he will eternally rest?

Freed from all the passions and prejudices which now darken and disorder his mind, loving the truth with increasing ardor, clothed with a spiritual, vigorous, refined, immortal body, released from all pain, disease, languor, and relaxing toil, and, above all, associated with enlightened and benevolent minds, with apostles, prophets, sages, with Jesus Christ, who is the wisdom of God,—blest with all these aids and guides, with what rapid steps must the Christian advance in the knowledge of God and of his works! And when we consider that this progression will be eternal, will never end, what an astonishing conception is given us of the future greatness of man! We can not follow him on his path of glory. To an ever-progressing being no limits can be prescribed. There is no rank of created existence to which he will not ascend. Where seraphs now worship, there man will one day worship, and the purest praises which heaven now hears will ascend from once human lips. Are there orders of beings whose expansive minds embrace the interests of worlds as we do the concerns of business and families? The mind of man, continually improving, will enjoy the same expansion. I am lost when I attempt to represent to myself human nature perfected in heaven and through endless ages approaching its wise and holy Creator.—[Channing's Memoirs.

#### SECTARIANISM.

Sectarianism is the embodiment of all the inconsistencies belonging to man's nature as an educated and enlightened being.

A bold assertion, and one that truth envelops and sustains. **All eyes can see it, yet few tongues will express it.** In these days men are not educated to think, but to believe; men are taught to be dependent, not independent. Dependent upon the theories of others, that have become systems that teach by assertion, not explanation.

If a system becomes general, or universal, it either destroys the evils that exist, incorporates them with it, or produces them. Sectarianism is universal, and what does it profess to do? Does it not claim to be that all-emancipating power which is to set the soul free from the bondage of a dark and hideous degradation, to teach men honesty, truth, simplicity? Why, it marks out a great highway through the forest of evil, and sets its workmen to felling the mighty oaks, which fall directly in the path, instead of at each side, so that the way may be clear.

There they lie, body and branches, and the traveler must clamber over them until he becomes, not the light hearted and joyous, but the weary and careworn pilgrim of despair. Let the heaven-hunting wretch but falter or complain, and he is consoled with the admonition that these obstacles are purposely thrown in his way by a loving, merciful, and just Creator, that the triumph of the one may be greater! and the glory of the other exalted!—[Washington Daily Star.

The Cynic is one who never sees a good quality in a man, and never fails to see a bad one. He is the human owl, vigilant in darkness, and blind to light, mousing for vermin and never seeing noble game. The Cynic puts all human actions into two classes—*openly* bad, and *secretly* bad.

## Gale at Sea.

In a gale, you are struck with the tumultuous restlessness of the ocean. Instead of lengthened waves, it mounts and swells irregularly, as if too full of life, too impatient, to submit to any rule. The waves chase one another eagerly, and with an intractable vehemence, and break and whiten through excess of spirit. They do not seem to rise by a foreign impulse, but spontaneously, exaltingly. You are reminded of the agency of the wind, not by the large, precipitous masses of water which are tossed so confusedly around you, for these seem instinct with their own life; you see the wind in their torn, and ruffled, and swept surfaces, and in the spray which flashes and is whirled and scattered from their tops. It is truly an animating scene. You feel yourself in the midst of life and power, and hear air and ocean joining their voices of might to inspire a kindred energy. There is awe—not a depressing, but a triumphant awe. Our spirits mix with the elements, and partake the fulness of their power.

There is a constant variety in such a scene. The "trough," as the sailor calls it, is, in fact, a valley in the ocean, and on each side, waves higher than the ship bound your view. In a moment, you ride on these mountains, and a wide horizon opens on you, the distinct line of which is broken by heaps of ocean, sometimes rising into peaks, which break as soon as formed, and give place to new creations. Vast structures thus grow and vanish almost instantaneously, and the eye finds no resting-place in the perpetual revolutions. The waves, swelling above, and approaching, as if to overwhelm you, though they do not alarm, show a power so akin to destruction, as to give a momentary sensation of danger, and the spirit feels something of the pleasure of escape, when the ship is seen to triumph over its invaders.—[Channing's Memoirs.

## Energy of Character.

I love the energy that lasts until the end. There is something noble and dignified in it. The man that possesses such a trait of character must be respected, when this energy is employed in a good and worthy cause; and when his hands rest from their labors, and the busy mind sinks in its laden sleep, science shall weep over departed glory, and society mourn an irreparable loss.

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