

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

"Brethren, fear not: for Error is mortal and cannot live, and Truth is immortal and cannot die."

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The Principles of Nature.

Relations between the Ideal and the Actual.*

CONTRIBUTED FOR THE SPIRIT MESSENGER,
BY FRANCIS H. GREEN.

This is, super-eminently, a practical age; and in our self-gratulation at the demonstrative character of all our doings, we are inclined to overstep, or overlook, the means by which they became so. But if we should for a moment invert our lens, and, turning it backward, survey through its medium the long vista of distant and receding ages, we shall discover that our boasted Fact is a lineal descendant of the ancient Fancy; and that our much-lauded Actual is but an embodiment and demonstration of the Ideal. We shall perceive, if we look closely enough, that while the philosophical, or demonstrative principle, was the growth of later times, the Imaginative faculty, that which has a determination to something beyond the immediate and unassisted human Senses, has stood behind and below, as well as beyond and above, all Science, all Philosophy, all Truth.

And the reason of this is very clear. It was a necessary result of two combined forces, the Nature and Position of Man, in the first stages of being. The human Soul, occupying a point whose beginning and whose end were darkness and mystery, was continually reaching forward, seeking to explore the unexplored. The Imagination, which is ever a spontaneous and impulsive faculty, was developed before the Reason; and the Ideal was indicated before the Actual had been recognized, in any of its most important principles. Thus we find that the Mythical always preceded, prefigured, and prepared the way, for the Mechanical, the Mathematical, and the Ethical.

Mercury, the winged messenger of the gods, was but a shadow of the Telegraph, by which the lightnings of heaven are made to run on human errands; and Minerva, who sprang forth in full stature, and complete armor, from the brain of Jove, was not all fable; for she was a type of the united power and wisdom, which, embodied in the art of Printing, have gone forth from the mind of Man. Æsculapius, with his supernatural power over disease, and his superhuman knowledge of the vegetable world, and Medea, with her herbal enchantments and sorceries, prepared the way for Hippocrates, Democritus, and Plato; and these, again, contributed toward the production of Galen, Harvey, and all their eminent descendants in the professional line. Euripides and Pythagoras, with their fanciful theories of vegetable life, were but the heralds of Aristotle, Theophrastus, Linnæus, and Jussieu.

Astrology prepared the way for astronomy; and Alchemy made a path for Chemistry. Before the advent of Copernicus, and Newton, and Franklin, it was necessary that the Sages of Chaldea should weave their mystic lore, in which the mysterious influence of the eternal stars was interwrought with the frail web of human destiny in its terrestrial confines.

* To the readers of the American People's Journal, it may be well to throw in a word, in regard to the several coincident passages, and similar forms of expression, between this article and that by the Rev. T. L. Harris, called "The Authority of the Ideal." This I think can be explained only on the principle of spiritual sympathy; and that idea seems to be strengthened by the fact that they both must have been written about the same time. After receiving Mr. Harris's article, I had a mind to alter some expressions in this; but finding no other form that suited me so well as the first, I have let the matter rest until now. But believing that it is still capable of sustaining its own individuality, I send it forth, with its marks of mental affinity all unshorn; and this will, I trust, be sufficient to satisfy the gentlemen himself, and all who have read the beautiful production referred to.

When Marcellus, the Roman consul, besieged Syracuse, he beheld the warfare of the Cyclops and Titans, reduced to a demonstrable fact, in the explosive machines of Archimides. Even the wonderful lever, which was to move the earth, is not without its parallel, nay, its rival, in modern times; for what with new Theories, new Inventions, new Discoveries, and especially, new Magnetic forces, the world is turned completely upside down several times a year, at the least; and that, too, without the supposed necessity of a point of rest. If Archimides were living at this time, he would blush at his own simplicity in supposing a single fulcrum at all necessary, when we can do the thing so much more expeditiously and successfully, by a simple process of ebullition—by just infusing some expansive principle, which will rouse the elements; and then every particle will turn for itself—as it were on its own hook; or, to speak more scientifically, on its own axis; and thus a more perfect and astounding revolution is effected. The Artist Sage of Syracuse has slept the deep sleep of more than two thousand years; and now his burning glasses, which were long supposed to be fabulous, have been demonstrated by Buffon; and his art of detecting alloy in gold, which gave him the reputation of a sorcerer, is familiar to every tyro in modern Hydrostatics.

Vulcan wrought iron, at the forges beneath Mount Ætna, long ages before Arkwright could establish his spinning jenny in the manufactories of England. Fiery dragons, huge birds, and monsters of the deep, bore ancient heroes to the scene of their exploits, before Watt could discover and tame the Spirit that dwelleth in the wild region between Water and Air, and yoke it to the car, an obedient steed, before Montgolfier could conceive the idea of aerial navigation, or Rosier could demonstrate its practicability.

The search after the Philosopher's Stone, and the Elixir of Life, visionary as they were, unfolded great realities. It is impossible to tell how many useful inventions and discoveries came out, like unexpected angels, from the vain attempt to discover these. The impetus they gave to study the chemical properties and forces of matter, greatly accelerated, if they did not absolutely create, the enlightened period we now see: and thus the shadowy conceptions of the Mythic, ere they were dissipated in a purer light, left their traces in the field of Truth.

The investigations of the Alchemists have been equally serviceable to the Medical profession, and all those arts which are depending on Chemical science. If the Arabs of Califate, and the Sage, Herwes, had not experimented with a view of converting baser metals into gold, and of discovering a universal panacea, by which life might be indefinitely prolonged, the concentrated acids, and Phosphorus, which they immediately unfolded, might have remained secrets to this day; and with them would have slept all the other discoveries which naturally followed in their track. It is true that the old Alchemists, in their vain search after the unattainable, almost wholly neglected any useful application of the principles they discovered. But they collected a vast amount of isolated, yet important facts; and there was a constant tendency toward induction from experiments, which is the true and exclusive basis of chemical science. We can trace the direct progress of the light they put forth, through Basil, Valentine, Hœbener, and Glauber, to their immediate successors, down to Boyle, Hooke, Priestly, Volta, Franklin, and Davy.

Look at Architecture. There is more substantial than the pyramidal structures of the ancient times; yet Thought—a Dream—a Fancy, which, if we follow the clue far enough, we might see, and with the airy vagueness of morning light and delicate, on some enthused

recipient of that embryo revelation had been wholly circumscribed by the Actual—if the ideal, or inventive faculty, had not gone forth from its burrow in the earth—if it had not been invested with a power to wonder at, admire, and measure the lofty arches of the sky—to perceive the beauty and fair proportions of the majestic pillars of the wood—both he, and all his race, might have been—nay, they would have been, content in their caves to this hour. But he gave body to his Thought—at first but rude, and ill expressing the Idea, whose spirit made it animate. But as it lived, it grew and sprang forth, ever into fairer proportions—ever into more excellent uses—ever into more perfect beauty. And thus arose all the wonders of Egyptian, Grecian, and Roman structure—all the massive towers, castles, walls, and churches of the later ages—all the splendid palaces, and arcades and spacious mansions, and fairy-like colleges of the present. They all point alike to one common origin in the imagination. Even from the silence of old cities, excavated in the heart of the eternal mountains, the philosophic ear may catch a voice, which, as it echoes through the long dim aisles of the distance, acknowledges the parentage of an Idea.

Behold the massive fixtures and all the stupendous operations of Commerce—the laden warehouses, the ponderous ledgers, with their well-kept diary of loss and gain—the solid wharves, and the gigantic ships, which go and return, obedient to the will of their master, freighted with the products of every clime on earth. Look at the heaps of masonry which are piled together in the form of cities, with their paved walks, and their iron roads that radiate to every point of the compass. All these things, certainly, appear most substantial—most real; yet in contemplating them we look only at results, and forget the exciting cause. We wholly neglect the motive power—the originating force. These are all but concretions of Thought—the embodiment of Dreams.

Survey the complicated machinery which operates a steamship, or great manufactory. What a wonderful display of power is here? Wheels operating within wheels—motion within motion—and force within force. Results are multiplied and varied almost to infinity; yet we are wont to regard the whole panorama superficially, as if we believed it operating by virtue of its own vitality. We transfer the power from the informing mind to the insensible iron. We forget the Thought which first put the wheels in motion. We perceive the light, yet we reach not back to the luminary whence it first issued. The outlines of all this machinery, before they could take being, and form, and motion, were mapped out, in lines delicate and frail as the gossamer of a spider's web, on the excited brain of some poor student. He sat still in his cabin, and thought that others might act. He lived, perhaps, and went down into the grave, unknown—or known only as an idler. But he left as a legacy to his race, himself, it might be, wholly unconscious of its richness—a picture of his rudimental Idea. This Thought spoke to other Thoughts. The electric properties of the mind were aroused, put in motion, and made to bear on the principles in question. Invention suggested invention, and one improvement another, until, in the fulness of time, an Arkwright, a Watt, a Fulton, arose—that they might completely demonstrate the ancient problem, and thus engraft it on the sound stock of the Actual. But could it have been expounded by its first projector, he would have been crucified for sorcery, or hissed from society as the idlest of visionaries.

And it is precisely because we overvalue the concrete form, and undervalue the interior principle, which makes it unsafe, or uncomfortable, that a man should be in advance of his times. Almost all the master-spirits of the world, have been, by their immediate contemporaries, regarded as vain dreamers, or as manifestations of some hostile or evil power. Nor have we, with all our boasted intelligence, yet learned to discriminate between the extrinsic and the intrinsic, or to recognize our highest benefactors, unless they unfold to us some *specific* charm, by which empty pockets may be directly filled. We demand immediate, tangible results, in the shape of profits. But by a great law of development, we are disappointed. Whatever is most excellent is of slow growth. None of the most important inventions can be perfected at once. It is only by a series of gradations—by successive stages—that they finally reach their ulti-

mate, and are recognized, endorsed, diplomæd, and embodied with Science, or practical Mechanics. In all the testing and experimenting processes, money is expended, instead of being produced; hence great geniuses and inventors, almost always live and die poor. But if society could only understand their true importance, they would be pensioned, and waited on by princes, with stately attentions.

The feeble light of yonder penny candle seems but a shadow on the brilliant gas-lights, that are streaming abroad through the outer air. Bending near it, you may see the pale and wasted form of a young student. He sits there, in yonder seventh story attic, alone, desolate, cold, and perchance hungry. Of all the aggregation of comforts and luxuries, which his brethren of other times have contributed to produce, and to which he, also, shall furnish more than his full share, he can now claim but a pittance barely sufficient to support life; and even that is uncertain. Yet from the electric fibrils of that luminous brain, are to be wrought out principles which will give a new impulse to the Arts, to Science, and which will thrill with a new power throughout all the machinery of Civilization. Yet the very man who is first to grow rich out of the product of that poor student's Thought, which is barren to none but himself,—he who is to be enriched, until he feels himself metallicised into a personification of his own money-bags,—even he, should he meet his benefactor, though he were formally introduced and recommended by all the the Geniuses under Heaven, could not recognize him. And why? Because there is no apparent connection between his poverty and the wealth which is its ultimate. He is externally poor; and the gross mind being able to reach only facts, and without ability to comprehend principles, must stop there. So if that forlorn Thinker should ask of him he is yet to enrich, the loan of a dollar, to pay the rent of his attic for one week,—or of a shilling to purchase bread for his supper, he would be recommended to the alms-house, or spurned from the common side-walk, as a graceless vagabond.

As it is with Medicine, Architecture, Commerce, and Mechanics, so it is with all other arts and sciences. Thought was ever the parent of Action; and the Actual is the offspring and nursing of the Ideal.

Reason deals only with facts; and had it not been for the inventive power, which resides in disembodied spirit, and which reaches over, through, and beyond these, Man would have been, universally, and to this day, a naked savage, sheltering himself under rocks, and feeding only on such natural products as could be obtained. All the comforts, conveniences, luxuries, and adornments of life, had the same common origin, in a bodiless Thought.

We perceive in a button, a knife, a pin, but a simple implement, whose obvious utility might, apparently, have suggested itself and its invention to any mind. But go behind these, and look at the complicated processes by which the simplest of them is produced, and you will see that each, in its turn, ere it could be finally evolved, must have been elaborated through volumes upon volumes of meditative structure, combined with experiences, which, because they were never written with tangible materials, and thus made apparent, and visible, had none the less a being. Thus we see that the Ideal bears the same relation to the Actual, as the Soul to the Body, or the vital principle to those phenomena, which, in their aggregation, we denominate Life.

There is an instinct in the young bird, which tells him, as soon as he is fledged, that the nest is no longer his home. He hears a voice calling from the blue depths of the atmosphere. He must go out, and be free. Thus the Soul, nesting in the covert shelter of the senses, sees mysterious forms robed in the light, hears mysterious voices thrilling in the darkness; and though in attempting flight, it beats against its prison bars, it yet catches glimpses of the infinitude beyond. It feels the presence, and the power, of something, which neither the rocks and hills that wall the horizon, nor the closely-shutting arch of sky, may intercept, or confine. But in the infant stages of society, men, being undeveloped in their superior faculties, and gross in their conceptions, fashion the Ideal from the image of the Actual.

Bound by their senses to the facts which immediately surround them, they clothe their spiritual ideas with the same forms they observe in nature. Thus the visible instrument of the Divine Power passed from a symbol, into an embodiment of the Power itself; and the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, the Winds, and Waters, became invested with governing spirits, and were made the ministers of wrath, or love. In this manner sprang forth the Jupiter and Apollo of the Greeks, the Vishnu of the Hindus, the Ormuzd of the Persians, and the Thor and Odin of the Scandinavians; and Earth, Air, and Sea, were peopled with presiding genii. So were created all the wild legends, and the faith in Fairy Land. Thus were unfolded the crystal palaces of the deep, and all the gorgeous splendors of the subterranean, where giants sat, in the form of mountains, with their feet in mid earth, and their brow in the heavens, while the obedient dwarfs worked out their wonders of metallurgy, adorning their subterranean halls with silver, and gold, and gems, wrought in the most curious and exquisite forms. All these conceptions, vague and unsubstantial as they were, yet shadowed forth the future reality; nay, they contributed to produce it. They at least preserved motion, which is the simplest attribute of life; and, doing this, they secured development; for wherever motion exists without any paramount opposition of forces, there must be progress. Thus they gave scope and exercise to the creative faculties, which, without such stimuli, must have become wholly inert.

The reaction of a gross superstition was, necessarily, an age of skepticism; and accordingly such a period came. The human mind had run to riot in the enormity of its creations; but at length Imagination was hurled from the throne, and Reason, — cold, severe, imperious Reason, — was invested with crown and sceptre; and this also was necessary, in order that the true equilibrium might be obtained, by the inventive and testing principles fairly balancing each other.

And thus the way was opened for the advent of Mechanical science. Could the ancients behold the embodied conceptions of his age, they would be stricken aghast at the absolute tangibility of their presence; although their finer spirits might trace them, link by link, and point by point, to germs of thought which occasionally shot up amid the darkness long ago, though still doomed to lie inert, until the accomplishment of their full time.

And we have giants, too, in these days, before whom the Cyclops and Titans of old would stand abashed. They are not, indeed, embodied in monstrous masses of flesh and bone; wonderful machines of mere physical force. They are to be measured by capacity of soul. It is true they do not make the rocks into scaling ladders, by which to mount the walls of Heaven; but, winged with Thought, they leave the orbit of planet and star through distant and still receding systems. They follow the comet by its eccentric path to the utmost boundaries of space and appoint the period of its return. They bring distant spheres into friendly neighborhood, and scatter books as the wind the autumn leaves. They unfold myriads of worlds hitherto invisible. They discover cities in a grain of sand, nations in a drop of dew. They yoke the Spirit of Steam like a patient ox to the iron car, and goad him with fire, until he rushes with almost inconceivable energy along the sounding track; or invading the dominions of the Sea, they defy the hitherto invincible Wind, and, taking the huge Billows by their hoary beard, hurl them from the path. They measure the plane of the Universe, and bind fetters on the Lightning.

Let us not forget the Spirit that works in all these splendid achievements. Let us not undervalue the suggestive, the motive, the creative Principle; but remember that all the Actual is but the body and clothing of the Ideal.

There is truth in the wildest scheme that imaginative heat hath engendered. And a man may gather somewhat from the crudest theories of fancy.

There is no error so crooked, but it hath in it some lines of truth. Nor is any poison so deadly, that it serveth not some wholesome use.

Psychological Department.

Sensations in a Trance.

In observing the process which separates the soul from the body, we are sometimes liable to be deceived as to the extent to which this is carried. The vital forces occasionally linger in the system and retain the spirit, even after all outward signs of life have departed. Many cases might be mentioned in which persons have been supposed to be dead, while the conscious spirit, still connected with the body, could perceive all the arrangements which were being made for its burial. The sensations of a seemingly dead person, when on the point of being interred, are mentioned in the following instance related by Binns:

"A young lady, an attendant on the Princess —, after having been confined to her bed for a great length of time with a violent disorder, was at last, to all appearance, deprived of life. Her lips were quite pale, her face resembled the countenance of a dead person, and the body grew cold. She was removed from the room in which she died, was laid in a coffin, and the day of her funeral fixed on. The day arrived, and, according to the custom of the country, funeral songs and hymns were sung before the door. Just as the people were about to nail down the lid of the coffin, a kind of perspiration was observed to appear on the surface of the body. It grew greater every moment, and at last a kind of convulsive motion was observed in the hands and feet of the corpse. A few minutes after, during which fresh signs of returning life appeared, she at once opened her eyes, and uttered a most pitiable shriek. Physicians were quickly procured, and in the course of a few days she was considerably restored, and is probably alive at this day. The description which she gave of her situation is extremely remarkable, and forms a curious and authentic addition to psychology.

"She said it seemed to her that she was really dead; yet she was perfectly conscious of all that happened around her in this dreadful state. She distinctly heard her friends speaking and lamenting her death at the side of her coffin. She felt them pull on the dead-clothes and lay her in them. This feeling produced a mental anxiety which is indescribable. She tried to cry, but her soul was without power, and could not act on her body. She had the contradictory feeling as if she were in the body, and yet not in it, at one and the same time. It was equally impossible for her to stretch out her arms, or to open her eyes, or to cry, although she continually endeavored to do so. The internal anguish of her mind was, however, at its utmost height when the funeral hymns were begun to be sung, and when the lid of the coffin was about to be nailed down. The thought that she was to be buried alive, was the one that gave activity to her mind, and caused it to operate on her corporeal frame."

Remarkable Case.

A young woman, named Ann Comer, Farrington, Devon, has remained in a decided state of unconsciousness for the past fifteen years. It is thought by many that she is in a "trance." Her mother assured the writer that for eleven years she had not partaken of the least particle of food. She is certainly in bed, has a placid smile, and, though possessing vitality, has no consciousness of the approach of any party, neither can she distinguish any object. She has been visited by some of the most eminent in the medical profession; and others, whose names have been made known, have called to witness the phenomenon, and have justly termed this phenomenon in nature. — *Medical*

Who is able to fathom the mysteries of the mind? The farther we advance in the investigation of the human mind, the more endless seem the wonders which are to be discovered. No boundary can be discovered to the limits of human thought is lost in searching for the limits of the human mind. Reverent, then, as we contemplate the human mind, this we may see the image of the Infinite.

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APULLOS MUNN AND R. P. AMBLER, EDITORS.

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SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE.

Next in order to the general truths relating to the future existence of the spirit, the inquiry arises whether there exists any tie of connection between the material and spiritual world, whereby an intercourse or communication may be established. It has been usually supposed, even by those who admit the reality of the future life, that departed spirits are so far removed from earth that there is no possibility of any communication between them and man. While it is acknowledged that in the time of the ancient patriarchs and prophets, angels were sometimes employed as agents in the impartation of divine truth, it is presumed that this season of special and precious privileges is now past, and that the gates of the spiritual world have been for ever closed. To believe, therefore, that we now enjoy the presence and influence of spirits, and that it is possible to hold communion and intercourse with the departed, is regarded by many pious souls as a speculation exceedingly wild and fanatical. By a careful investigation, however, it may be found that the opinion commonly received on this subject, is based more on educational prejudices than on the principles of reason. Does it not appear strange indeed, that all the communications which were ever intended to be given from the spiritual world, should be made at one particular point in the earth's history, and at a time too when gross and impenetrable darkness covered the universal mind? Besides, if it is true that spiritual communications were ever given to man, we may safely say that they were imparted, not by any special interposition of God, but in accordance with certain established laws, which laws we have reason to believe are in existence and action at the present time as much as at any former period. Indeed, the communications received in ancient times, appear to have been comparatively limited, in correspondence with that particular stage of human progress; while in the higher developments and increased enlightenment of the present, a more regular, extensive, and satisfactory intercourse seems to have been established. Some of the grounds on which the idea of spiritual communications is based, will be unfolded in the course of the present investigation. It is only desired that the reader may lay aside for a time the prejudices he may have previously entertained, and preserve that freedom and independence of mind, which are essential to the discovery of truth.

As a preliminary consideration, serving to show the probability that communications may be received from a higher sphere, allow me to refer to the exalted position which man occupies in relation to the spiritual world. It is not, we should remember, the low and degrading station of inferior animals in which he is placed. He is endowed with a glory possessed by no other earthly being, and exercises dominion over all inferior creatures. He contains in his own nature the essential elements of the whole universe; he forms the connecting link between the brute and the angel; he stands on the last verge of mortal being, close to the very boundaries of the spirit-land, and, looking through the darkened pathway of time, he can almost gaze on the glories of that brighter sphere where flow the streams of immortal life. Such being the exalted position of man, and the near relation he sustains to the celestial world, it is highly rational to presume that some communication may be established between him and spiritual beings.

Again, let it be observed that there exists an intimate and necessary connection between the world of spirits and the sphere of earth. In speaking of the character of the future life, in a previous article, I remarked that that is but a continuation of the present, and that there exists no wide and impassable gulf between this and the future state, as has been sometimes imagined. This is eminently true. The spiritual world is but the unfolding of the physical. There is a peculiar nearness and an

intimate relation between them. The one rises from the other through the natural process of refinement, and is gradually developed from it as the soul is unfolded from the body. It is therefore reasonable to suppose that the spirits of the departed so far from being confined to any distant locality, are near us around us—that they at times pervade the very atmosphere we inhale, and are present with the still-loved kindred they have left on earth. Heaven is no distant place that constitutes an exclusive residence of the spirit; it is not the far off country where the soul is separated from its loved ones here by an immeasurable gulf. Wherever the Great Spirit of love and mercy may dwell—wherever the presence of the Infinite and Eternal may extend, *there is heaven*. The vast and immeasurable expanse of space is thus opened for the wanderings of the free spirit. It is entirely unrestricted as to any local habitation. It is here, and there, and every where, uncontrolled but by the laws of the sphere in which it dwells, and the desires and inclinations which are engrafted in its nature. May we not believe, that that earth is ever hallowed by the presence of the departed? *Must* we not believe that the same ties of love and sympathy which bound them to their kindred here shall still exert their attractive influence? Yes—

“ We are not alone, nay, never alone,
Beautiful spirits, wherever we roam,
In the summer's sigh and the wintry moan,
Breathe around us.”

Such has been the firm conviction of some of the most eminent philosophers of all ages. Zoroaster, it is known, claimed to be surrounded by the inhabitants of the spiritual world; Socrates professed to be under the constant influence of a guardian spirit; Jesus and the disciples were enabled to perceive the forms of Moses and Elias, and Swedenborg, with other writers of more recent date, has given evidences of the constant presence of the departed. If, then, we are disposed to recognize the intimate connection between the world of spirit and the sphere of earth, it becomes highly probable that an intercourse may be established, and communications conveyed, by the inhabitants of the celestial home.

Another consideration having an important bearing on this subject, is that spirits, having attained to a superior sphere, and being possessed of a more exalted wisdom, are naturally fitted to act as the teachers and guardians of man. It is the appointed office of all in the higher stages of development to aid in the elevation and improvement of those who have not yet reached the same point of progress. Thus the parent guides and instructs his child, the philosopher imparts his knowledge to the ignorant, and the man who is purified from the corruptions of the world sheds down his kindly influence on those who yet linger in the labyrinths of sin. It is so with spirits. One of the prominent objects of their mission is to watch over, guide and guard those who are below them in the scale of being. They are above man, and hence are fitted to be his teachers. They are pure, bright, and happy, and hence are permitted to come down to him, that they may elevate his own spirit, and prepare it for a brighter world. Moved by a strong affection for humanity, and cherishing a deep desire to ameliorate the condition of their kindred here, they descend from their lofty plane of existence, and come to us as gentle and loving guardians that they may minister to our happiness, and throw around us the tranquilizing influence of their presence. Such being the case, it may be presumed as probable, that in order to more perfectly fulfil their mission and render their influence direct and effectual, a regular intercourse may be established between them as spiritual agents, and man as the object of their care.

The next point which it will be well to consider, is that spiritual intercourse is necessary to answer the yearnings of the human heart. The ties of affection that unite kindred souls are not broken by the stroke of death, but, extending beyond the shadows of the tomb, they reach to the loved ones in their heavenly clime. Those ties still existing, a desire to communicate with the departed—to receive some message from the spirit-home, rises instinctively in the heart. This desire may be suppressed by the tendencies of early education, or may be crushed

by the teachings of a false theology; but when the heart is left free to feed on the memories of the past, and is brought to feel and realize that the departed still live, it springs up with mighty and thrilling power, and sinks into a craving, insatiable thirst. Indeed, so deep and absorbing is this yearning for spiritual intercourse, that, like some fond dream lingering in the mind, it freshens at times into a seeming reality, and the weeping mourner, looking up from the dark grave, whispers the name of the departed, and breathes in prayer,

“ Spirit, sweet spirit, from thy cloudless home,
Answer, O answer me.”

Thus, as the hart panteth for the water brooks, or as flowers thirst for the dews of heaven, the human soul naturally and instinctively yearns for communion with its departed kindred. It is necessary then, in order to satiate this desire, that an actual communication should be opened with the spiritual world, and that the privilege of an intercourse with the departed should be in some way enjoyed.

I now come to an important point in the present investigation, and remark that, in answer to the necessities of man, and in accordance with the intimate relation existing between the material and spiritual spheres, *genuine communications from the spirit-land are now being given to the world.* It is true that spirits have in all ages communicated in some degree with mankind. They have spoken to the listening soul in dreams and visions of the night; they have painted on the mind the landscape of the future, and given to seer and prophet the inspiration that breathed from their lips; they have shed their holy influence on the chosen apostles of truth, and impressed their spirits with the lessons of wisdom and the strength of purity. At present, however, the world is favored with more demonstrative and satisfactory modes of communication. Aside from the revelations received through the medium of clairvoyance, the blessings of spiritual intercourse are enjoyed by means of other wonderful phenomena which have been more recently unfolded. I refer particularly to the mysterious *sounds or rappings*, which are now attracting very general attention. These sounds, after being subjected to almost every conceivable test, remain perfectly inexplicable on the supposition of any physical cause. The peculiar nature of the sounds themselves, the circumstances under which they are produced, and the fact that they are made to correspond to ideas, and manifest the highest degree of intelligence, positively preclude the idea that they result from fraud and imposture, and sufficiently prove to every person who will reason on the subject, that they are produced, as they purport to be, by the agency of disembodied spirits. Through this medium, therefore, we may commune again with the loved and lost on earth, obtaining the most satisfactory testimonials of their identity, becoming acquainted with their condition in the heavenly sphere, and receiving the consoling assurances of their presence and protection. The communications received in this manner bear upon them the impress of their spiritual origin. A lofty intelligence, purity of thought, and truthfulness of conception are here displayed. Especially when, turning from the secular affairs of life, they impart to us a knowledge of more exalted and spiritual truth, a field of beauty and moral grandeur is presented, in which the noblest dreams of man are more than realized. The philosophy of our being, the duties we owe in the several relations of life, the nature of that change which separates the immortal from the earthly, the holy and ineffable delights of the spirit-land, and the long, interminable line of progression, which reaches through ascending spheres upward towards the Infinite, are all portrayed in a manner simple, intelligent and truthful.

Thus we may perceive that spirits are made the messengers of God to do his will on earth. They come to guide, elevate and harmonize the mind, seeking to lift it above the dark corruptions of the world, and impart the glorious light which flows from the divine presence. Gentle, peaceful, and heavenly is their ministry. They are with us as we wake from the slumbers of the night, and as Evening throws her mantle over the bosom of Nature. They would impress our souls with the purity and joy which pervade their own being, and would quicken and deepen

the aspirations that rise within us for a higher and diviner state.

“ Oh, then, let us list to the thoughts they breathe,
That when we this for a brighter sphere leave,
We may of their gathered beauties weave
A glorious crown.” R. P. A.

THE FADING OF THE EARTHLY.

It is a natural and established law, that the various forms of matter which adorn the earth, must be subjected to the inevitable action of change and decay. The productions of the vegetable kingdom, while they are fair and beautiful in their time, remain to delight the senses but for a season, and then pass away to mingle with their native dust. We behold the marks of decay stamped upon all that is earthly. The beauteous forms that meet our view in Nature are not designed to endure forever, but are exposed to the innumerable accidents and effected by the ceaseless changes, which are incident to their transitory nature. It is true that these objects in the glory of their being, seem to give evidence of a long and permanent existence; and as we gaze upon the plants and flowers, clothed with the beauty of the reviving year, or teeming with the freshness of their summer bloom, we might almost deem that they were immortal and could not die. But alas! the elements of dissolution are within, and as the bleak winds and chilling frosts of autumn breathe upon the earth, they fade and fall beneath their ruining blight. “The grass withereth,”—that which formed the verdant carpet of earth is sere and yellow; “the flower fadeth,”—the blooming ornament of nature droops upon its stalk, and its petals are cast to the devouring winds.

This principle of decay is not only manifested in the works of creation, but extends also to the productions of human art. Being material and earthly in their nature, these works must share the stern fate of all that is temporal. The throne on which the monarch sways his scepter, the mausoleum that towers above the buried great, and the massive temple that seems to bid defiance to the power of time, are destined alike to crumble and dissolve amid the broken ruins of the past. He who sighs for the possessions of the world, would gain but a perishable treasure. The conqueror may view with haughty eye the vast dominions that lie beneath his sway; but what in reality is the object he has attained? It is but a fitting shadow which may pass away. The glory and magnificence may soon grow dim; the regal scepter may fall from the palsied hand, and the imposing insignia of a nation's strength may be swept away by the power of the invader. The history of the past bears ample testimony to this truth. The mighty cities, which once flourished in their pride and glory, have fallen in ruin. Their splendor has been soiled by the moth of time; their strength has been brought low by the destroyer's hand, and the place which once knew them in their former greatness, has become a solitary and silent waste. Where now is haughty Babylon, which once reigned as the queen of cities? Alas! it lies buried beneath its own dust. The prowling beast may make his refuge where its beauteous palaces were reared, and the moaning wind sighs over the lonely desert which was once the dwelling-place of its proud inhabitants.

But passing from the works of art, I observe that the same universal law of decay applies also to the human frame. The outward constitution of man is frail and transitory in its nature; the mighty principle of change is constantly operating within unseen, and when the flickering flame of life is extinguished by the breath of time, the crumbling frame—whose body must mingle with its kindred earth. In this earthly life, man enjoys but a momentary and transitory existence; he stands, as it were, upon a lonely rock, surrounded by ocean billows, which are ever ready to sweep him from his station, to be swept away into the deep. He may see him, perchance, in the midst of his life, a cheerful spirit, laboring and struggling for the good; but when he is no more, we may look upon his angel has laid his

away with the millions of the past. Such is the irrevocable destiny in store for all mortal beings. The earthly, on which the visions of human hope are based, must pass away. Like the chilling frosts of winter, disease preys upon the stricken frame, until at last the beating of the heart is stilled, the luster of the eye becomes dim, the bounding step of joy is no longer heard, and the ringing voice of mirth, or the low, sweet tones of love, resound no more in the lonely home.

The truth which we are now contemplating is of a somewhat sad and mournful character. It is sad to see the beauties of earth, which have formed the delight of the eye and the joy of the soul, fade and perish; it is sad to see the noble structures of art moulder and decay—sad to see the glory of man grow dim, and to view the flower of the affections wither and die. In contemplating this process of decay, the heart of man may well grow serious and pensive. As he gazes upon the wreck of that which was once glorious, and beholds the things of time fading and perishing before him, he may well experience an impressive sense of his own weakness, and perceive how transitory are the objects of his earthly love. With mournful thoughts may he muse on the fading glories of the earth, the wrecks of human greatness, and the crumbling ruins of time, and feel that he too, like them, must pass away.

But while we contemplate the perishable nature of all that is earthly, we may look within the outward form and behold the unfading beauty of the spirit by which it is pervaded. The varied physical objects which delight the eye may pass from our view, but the divine *idea*,—the eternal *truth* contained within them, can never die. So the works of human art may crumble, and

"The sweeping storm of time
May sing its death-dirge o'er the ruined fanes
And broken altars,"

but the living *genius* of which they were the impersonation, still remains. Still farther, the human frame itself, exposed to the action of decay, may dissolve and return to its primitive elements, but the presiding *spirit* which dwells within,—the internal *soul* which is immortal from its birth, lives on through the circling ages of eternity. Let us remember, then, as we gaze on the fading objects of earth, that it is only the passing shadow which dies, while the substantial reality,—the spirit which dwells within the outward, and forms the essence of all that is beautiful and pure, is destined to live for ever.

R. F. A.

The Spiritual Philosophy.

An esteemed friend, residing in New Brighton, Pa., in referring to the spiritual truths communicated through the Messenger, continues his remarks as follows:

"We need not expect that a philosophy so beautiful, elevated, and comprehensive, can be appreciated and understood by those who have not outgrown the teachings of a gloomy and discordant theology, and who are influenced and controlled by the bigoted religious instructors of the land. Some who are still members of sectarian organizations, but who begin to feel the want of a more elevated faith, a higher standard of goodness, are asking for surer foundations to stand upon, and a brighter light than that by which they have hitherto been guided. They feel the thirstings and longings which their theology fails to satisfy. They ask for *bread*, but their unrighteous instructors give them stones. Alas! for the multitudes of earth, who, with such confiding trust, look to these teachers for guidance and wisdom. Better would it be to learn of the ant, of the blooming flower, of the murmuring water-fall, of "the soft flowing rivers," of the starry sky, and of the ten thousand objects and harmonies of Nature, which speak far more impressively and eloquently of the Truth which is to save, and of the glory and wisdom of our Supernal Father. Men will learn sometime, where to look for *light*, and for that "Wisdom which is better than weapons of war." Then they will not repair to sectarian churches, nor to those who stand in the pulpits thereof. The light that is now breaking in upon us from the beautiful realms of the Spirit-Home, shall bless and illuminate every

earnest and sincere soul, and exalt and happily more and more, as it 'grows brighter and brighter unto the perfect day!'"

The Attractions of Heaven.

While gazing upon the beauties and enjoying the delights of this lower sphere, we are prone to forget the more exalted attractions which belong to the heavenly world. We should be reminded of the fact, that all which is lovely and attractive on the earth, is presented to the view of the spirit in a more refined, sublimated and perfect state. Flowers that flourish here for a brief season and pass away, bloom with immortal life; streams that here flow through verdant vales and shady groves, are radiant with the glory of God; and the silvery light that here mingles with the shadows of evening, is changed to the all-pervading brightness which emanates from the great spiritual Sun. Little do we know of that supernal glory which shall hereafter be revealed; little may we conceive of that ecstatic joy which thrills through angel-bosoms; little may we comprehend of that celestial beauty which robes the mansions of the blest. I know that this earth, all marred and blighted as it is, is beautiful; I know that its scenes are dear and pleasing to the heart, and that the strong ties of love and affection bind us to it; I know that it is hard to close the eyes forever on the world, and break up all those endearing attachments which have clung so mightily around the soul; but amid all this we should remember that we are only pilgrims here, traveling towards a better country. This earth is not our home. Our Father calls us; angels whisper "come away," and the spirits of loving kindred would welcome us to their world of light.

R. F. A.

Clairvoyance.

It is known that some individuals of susceptible temperament and proper mental qualifications, are capable of being thrown into that peculiar condition in which the body becomes fixed, rigid, and deathlike, while the spirit seems to be almost withdrawn from its earthly tabernacle, and permitted to roam in celestial regions. Having attained to this condition, the individuals affected realize that the body has been demagnetized, and that through this process the internal being has been immeasurably exalted. A clear and radiant light gradually bursts upon their vision, and the interior perceptions being opened, they behold with delight the beauties of the spiritual world, and perceive and converse with its inhabitants. They now occupy a position which enables them to recognize the forms of departed friends, to receive consoling messages as radiated from the countenance of the spirit, and obtain a knowledge of those sublime and glorious truths which they are prepared to comprehend and appreciate. In this manner beautiful revelations may be received from the superior spheres,—the gates of the celestial world are opened, and Heaven is no longer that distant country from whose bourne no traveller returns.

R. F. A.

☞ We are pleased to learn, from a friend residing in Athol, Mass., that the sounds, or electrical vibrations produced by spirits, have been recently heard in that place, and that, through this medium, the friends there are enabled to communicate with their departed kindred. Intelligence of this nature encourages the hope that the privilege of spiritual intercourse will soon be universally enjoyed.

☞ Owing to circumstances which cannot be readily explained, we have thus far been unable to receive the spiritual communications which were designed for the Messenger. If our readers will be as patient as we endeavor to be, they will undoubtedly be gratified in due time.

☞ The health of Mr. Munn is now so far improved that he will furnish an article for our next number, and hopes to be able to continue his labors for the advancement of spiritual truth. With the assistance derived from his pen, and that of other writers, we hope to make up a still greater variety in the matter of our paper.

Poetry.

THE MINSTREL MAIDEN'S SONG.

FROM "TIME AND THE AGES."

BY FANNY GREEN.

Dweller of the arching sky!
 Angel of the blooming earth!
 In the starry bowers on high
 Was thy radiant birth?
 Beauty! Beauty! answer me,
 For my soul flows forth to thee.

Painted on the blushing flower
 Are the features of thy face,
 Waving in the forest bower,
 Vine-wreaths catch thy grace;
 Thou the rainbow's lovely form
 Settest on the passing storm.

Flowing rivers, fountains clear,
 Shell, and bird, and insect wing,
 This cerulean atmosphere,
 All, abroad thy radiance fling;
 And we catch thine image true,
 Orbed within a drop of dew.

Tendrils waving in the air,
 Golden with the early day,
 Simulate thy clustering hair;
 Ardent Noon, with sunny ray,
 And the starry, midnight skies,
 Beam with glory from thine eyes.

Morn and evening both are fair
 With the blushes of thy cheek;
 Zephyrs breathe thy music rare;
 Murmuring brooks thy language speak;
 Beauty! Beauty! ever free!
 Thou inspirer all we see!

THE STILL, SMALL VOICE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SPIRIT MESSENGER,

BY R. P. AMBLEE.

'Tis not in Nature's angry mood,
 When threatening storms and tempests rise,—
 'Tis not when fearful lightnings flash,
 And rolling thunders rend the skies;
 But when the dismal clouds have passed,
 And angry winds are hushed to rest;
 When earth is left to sweet repose,
 And silence steals upon her breast;
 There comes, in cadence soft and low,
 From smiling vale and streamlet's flow,
 The voice that breathes in spheres above,—
 The still, small voice of heavenly love.

So when the soul to peace is lulled,
 And angry passions rage no more;
 When wrath and hate have spent their breath,
 Like waves that die upon the shore;
 When still and calm the spirit moves
 In harmony with Nature's soul,
 And breathes its gentle music forth,
 As worlds in endless circles roll;
 There flows the sweet, inspiring breath
 Of angels, round the couch of death,
 And softly floats from spheres above,
 The still, small voice of heavenly love.

Miscellaneous Department.

THE LAST HOUR OF MOZART.

***** The composer threw himself back on his couch, faint and exhausted. His countenance was pale and emaciated, yet there was a strange fire in his eye and the light of joy on his brow, that told of success. His task was finished, and the melody, even to his exquisite sensibility, was perfect. It had occupied him for weeks, and, though his form was wasting by disease, yet his spirit seemed to acquire new vigor, and already claim kindred with immortality; for oft as the sound of his own composition stole on his ear, it bore an unearthly sweetness, that was, to him, too truly a warning of his future and fast-coming doom. Now it was finished; and, for the first time for many weeks, he sank into a quiet and refreshing slumber. The apartment in which he lay was large, and lighted by a window, in a small recess that opened to the east; near it his couch was placed, a table for writing stood at his feet, and just before him his favorite, inseparable piano. The window was shaded by a curtain of crimson damask, and, as the sun (which had scarcely attained its meridian), stole through it, there was a rich glow cast upon every object. One beam fell upon the head of the composer, and then passed, appearing to say, "Like this shall your day of life be, bright and glorious; but even so shall it vanish and pass away, though shining in noontide splendor."

A slight noise in the apartment awoke him, when, turning toward a fair young girl who entered, "Emilie, my daughter," said he, "come near me—my task is over—the requiem is finished. My requiem," he added, and a sigh escaped him, as present fame and future glory passed in vivid succession through his mind, and the idea, how soon he must leave it all, seemed, for a moment, too hard to endure. "Oh, say not so, my father," said the girl, interrupting him, as tears rushed to her eyes, "you must be better, you look better, for even now your cheek has a glow upon it; do let me bring you something refreshing, for you have had nothing this morning, and I am sure we will nurse you well again."

"Do not deceive yourself, my love," said he, "this wasted form never can be restored by human aid; from heaven's mercy alone can I hope for succor; and it will be granted, my Emilie, in the time of my utmost need; yes, in the hour of death will I claim His help, who is always ready to aid those who trust in Him; and soon, very soon must this mortal frame be laid in its quiet sleeping-place, and this restless soul return to Him who gave it."

The tender girl stood in pallid, though mute distress; not a sigh, not a tear, escaped her. The idea of death broke so suddenly on her mind, that it checked every mode of utterance, and she gazed upon his countenance as if in a dream. Death, at any period of life, wears an awful aspect, but never more so than to the youthful heart, whose every step has been that of health and joy, and whose bounding pulse, yet swayed by hope, has never been chilled by the sorrow or distracted by the doubts and fears that hang over our earthly existence. Thus it was with Emilie; united by the tenderest sympathy to her father, and living, as it were, in a world of music, no wonder that she beheld death with terror, as the destroyer of her all—of happiness.

The dying father raised himself on his couch, and said, "You spoke of refreshment, my daughter, it can still be afforded to my fainting soul; take these notes, the last that I shall ever pen, and sit down to the instrument, and sing with them the hymn so beloved by your mother, and you will more hear those tones which have been my constant comfort, since my earliest remembrance." Emilie, who had been sitting by his side, started, and it seemed as if she sought a relief in tears, but, after running over a few chords of the piano, she was so much soothed and encouraged in the sweetest voice, the following was the result:

"S

introduced shore,
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Spirit! look not on the strife
Or the pleasures of earth with regret,
Fence not on the threshold of limitless life,
To mourn for thy day that is set.

Spirit! no fetters can bind,
No wicked have power to molest,
These the weary, like thee, and the wretched shall find
A haven, a mansion of rest.

Spirit! how bright is the road
For which thou art now on the wing,
Thy home it will be, with thy Saviour and God,
Their loud hallelujahs to sing."

As she concluded the last stanza, she dwelt, for a few moments, on the low, melancholy notes of the piece, and then waited, in silence, for the mild voice of her father's praises. He spoke not—and, with something like surprise, she turned toward him; he was laid back upon the sofa, his face shaded in part with his hand, and his form reposed as if in slumber. Starting with fear, Emilie sprang toward him, and seized his hand, but the touch paralyzed her, for she sank senseless by his side. He was gone! With the sounds of the sweetest melody ever composed by human thought, his soul had winged its flight to regions of eternal bliss.

The Lesson of Humility.

One day the calif Almansor, one of the vainest of the Arabian monarchs, was conversing familiarly with the famous poet Fazelli, with whom he delighted to talk, when retired from the cares of his empire.

"Thou thinkest," said he to Fazelli, "that I am not wiser than my father? Why is it so; doth not every succeeding generation add to the wisdom of that which preceded it?"

"Dost thou think thyself wiser than the prophet?" answered the poet, bowing his head reverentially.

"Assuredly not," answered the calif.

"Dost thou think thyself wiser than Solomon?" asked the poet, bowing still lower.

"Assuredly not," again answered the calif.

"Dost thou think thyself wiser than Moses, who communed with Allah himself?" a third time asked the poet, bowing to the ground.

Almansor was for a moment thoughtful, and held down his head.

"Assuredly not," replied he at length, "I were foolishly presumptuous to think so."

"Then how," resumed Fazelli, "canst thou prove that each succeeding generation is wiser than another that is past?"

"The aggregate of knowledge is certainly increased," replied the calif.

"True, O my king," replied Fazelli, "but knowledge is not wisdom. Wisdom points out the road to happiness and virtue; knowledge is only an acquaintance with a mass of facts, which are not necessarily connected with either wisdom, virtue, or happiness, the only objects worthy the pursuit of a wise man. The knowledge of things has certainly increased, but, O king! remember that wisdom is always the same; as much so as the Great Power by whom it is dispensed. Thou mayst perhaps know more of the moon, the stars, the earth, and the seas, than thy father, but of thy organization, thy soul, thy passions, appetites, the power to direct them, and the Being who bestowed them upon thee, thou knowest no more than the meanest of thy father's slaves."

"Thou sayest true," replied the calif, bowing his head reverently. "Allah teach me humility."

"Great king," said Fazelli, "lament not thine ignorance. Every thing we cannot comprehend furnishes proof of the existence of a Being wiser than ourselves."

Some men of a secluded and studious life, have sent forth from their closet, or their cloister, rays of intellectual light that have agitated courts and revolutionized kingdoms: like the moon, which, though removed far from the ocean, and shining upon it with a serene and sober light, is the chief cause of all those ebbings and flowings which incessantly disturb the world of waters.

The Drop of Water.

A drop of water, that sparkled like a jewel in the sun, once fell from the clouds into a little mountain-stream, and, ere it lost its identity, exclaimed, in all the anguish of dissolution, "Alas! what a catastrophe—I am swallowed up in immensity." The little stream laughed, as it leaped down the mountain side, at the lamentation of such an insignificant thing as a drop of water, and, vain of its consequence, continued brawling its crystal way, in all the pride of conscious superiority, until, at length, with a sudden plunge, it fell headlong into a mighty river, and, like the drop of water, was lost in a moment, crying out, in its last agonies, "Oh, fate! who would have thought a brook of my size could be swallowed so easily?" The river murmured its contempt for the little foolish stream, and continued its course, gathering strength and pride, breaking through mountains, tearing the rocks from their seats, and coursing, in a thousand graceful meanders, through flowery meadows, until it found its way to the vast and melancholy ocean, in whose boundless waste it lost its being, like the drop of water, and the little mountain-stream. "Is it possible," exclaimed the mighty river, "that I have been thus collecting tribute from half a world, only to become nothing at last?"

"Tis thus with thee, oh man! Thou beginnest in insignificance, like the drop of water; thou becomest a laughing, leaping, brawling thing, like the brook; thou waxest proud and great, like the mighty river; and ere thou canst say, in the vanity of thy heart, "What an illustrious mortal am I," thou art lost in eternity.

True Virtue.

When I set before me true virtue, all the distinctions on which men value themselves fade away. Wealth is poor, worldly honor is mean; outward forms are beggarly elements. Condition, country, church, all sink into unimportance. Before this simple greatness I bow, I revere. The robed priest, the gorgeous altar, the great assembly, the pealing organ, all the exteriors of religion, vanish from my sight as I look at the good and great man, the holy, disinterested soul. Even I, with vision so dim, with heart so cold, can see and feel the divinity, the grandeur of true goodness. How, then, must God regard it? To His pure eye how lovely must it be! And can any of us turn from it, because some water has not been dropped on its forehead, or some bread put into its lips by a minister or priest? or because it has not learned to repeat some mysterious creed, which a church or human council has ordained?—*Channing.*

There is a Divine Idea pervading the Universe—the Universe itself is but its symbol; having in itself no meaning or even existence independent of it. To the mass of men this Divine Idea is hidden; yet to discover it—live wholly in it—is the condition of all virtue, knowledge, and freedom.

The violet grows low, and covers itself with its own leaves, yet it is among the most attractive of all flowers. Such is humility.

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