

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

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

VOL. I.

SPRINGFIELD, SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 1851.

NO. 36.

The Principles of Nature.

RELATIONS OF MATTER AND MIND.

EXTRACTS FROM A SCIENTIFIC LECTURE, BY DR. R. BUCHANAN.

We are called upon at this time, to examine, by the various lights of modern science, a fundamental and momentous question.

We are conscious that we live. We are called upon to determine the true nature of our life, and the probability of its future duration. To determine the great question, whether the life of man is one of the evanescent phenomena of matter, rich in its nature and beautiful to behold—but a phenomenon only, ceasing with the peculiar organization of matter by which it was caused, and possessing no substantial permanent substratum.

Beautiful, indeed, is the world we live in—grand and far-reaching are the thoughts of man—but in the midst of our enjoyment, when climbing from height to height in the lofty paths of science, and obtaining in each successive hour a broader and grander view—the question arises, is all this glorious life in which we revel now, but a brief gush of vital melody, which dies away like distant music, and ceases then forever? Is the light of life which glows in the eyes of the friend whom I love, but the transient phosphorescence of organized cerebral matter, or does it come from some more permanent source? Does it resemble the beauty of a sunlit cloud which ceases when the particles of oxygen and hydrogen have assumed a new arrangement, or does it resemble the light of a star which comes from a substantial and lasting source?

We are conscious that we have bodies and that we have minds, and that our true life is in the mind or spirit, whatever we may call the conscious principle. We are called upon to determine what is the essential nature of this conscious principle or power within us. Whether it is a mere phenomenon, a mere consequence of the organization of matter, or whether it is itself possessed of a substantial existence, and capable of maintaining that existence when the organized matter of the body is dissolved into its chemical elements, and diffused through the earth, the air, and the sea.

I know that many will say there is no need for any scientific research upon this question—that it has been settled by the establishment of the Christian religion, and that no rational man can possibly doubt his own spiritual and immortal nature. But I affirm the voice of science is needed upon this subject. The voice of Christianity has not settled this question in the minds of all men. Christianity has established firmly in the minds of millions the spirituality and immortality of man; but there are millions of those who profess to believe, and millions of others who wish to believe, but have no definite understanding of the subject, in whose minds the spiritual nature of man stands as a mere dogma which they do not understand, but which they dare not dispute. There are millions who do not realize this doctrine with sufficient force to have any effect upon their own lives, and there are millions still who, in their inmost thoughts, sincerely disbelieve the existence of any thing in man which can survive the destruction of his body.

If, like them, we come to the conclusion that all the powers of man are the mere effects or phenomena of organized matter, we render the science of man nothing more than the highest department of chemistry—and we dissipate at once all theology, for it becomes nothing more than a mass of poetical superstitions, like the fables of Grecian and Roman mythology.

But if, on the other hand, we conclude that man has a permanent, substantial, spiritual entity within him, capable of surviving the destruction of his body, we are compelled to go farther, and to inquire what becomes of that spiritual nature when the body has been laid aside? We are compelled to ask the question, whether, after we lay aside the body we may still possess the same faculties in a more expanded and powerful, or in a more restricted manner? We are compelled to ask whether we may continue to look back, after death, upon the scenes of this life, and to take an interest in its progress—whether we may or may not be conscious of the thoughts of those whom we have left behind, and whether we may or may not be able to commune with them—to act upon their minds—to make them conscious of our presence, and to give them the higher knowledge which belongs to spiritual life.

I can see no intermediate ground between these two positions. Either mind is a mere phenomenon of matter, and religion a mere superstition or play of the imagination, assisted by exuberant enthusiasm, or, on the other hand, we must look into the spiritual life and destiny of man, here and hereafter.

We must frankly, directly, and honestly meet the question, whether our departed friends are or are not living—whether our departed fathers, brothers, friends, and children are still alive and conscious as we are now—capable of giving back thought for thought and love for love, or whether all spiritual doctrines belong to the superstitions of a darker age, which must disappear in the light of the nineteenth century. Either there is no spirit in man, or if there is, the Spirit-world is the sublimest subject of scientific investigation.

A rational solution of the questions now before us, requires a thorough understanding of the constitution of man, as illustrated by human and comparative physiology, and by experimental explorations of the brain. Without going into the details of these sciences, I would merely state the great results and principles which they give us, that have a decisive bearing upon our present inquiry.

In all departments of the animal kingdom, we observe a vital power, possessing endowments of a higher or lower character, alike in kind, but differing vastly in degree. Perception, sensation, desire, and volition, belong to all animals, and all have some portion of the various passions of man. They love and caress, they hate and fight, they seek their food, they build, they plan, they observe, recollect, infer and understand. The difference between the higher and lower, especially between man and animals, is that the same powers are in the lower, but rudimentary—in the higher, fully developed. But the great characteristic difference between the lower and higher orders of being, is that *in proportion as we ascend in the scale, the vital and mental endowments are more centralized, and in proportion as we descend, they are more diffused.*

In man and the mammalia, for example, the circulation is mainly carried on by a central organ, the heart. In fish and reptiles the circulation depends comparatively more upon the capillary blood-vessels. In all animals below the grade of fish, belonging to the two great divisions of Articulata and Radiata, the circulation depends upon blood-vessels alone; in other words, the power is diffused through all parts, and depends upon no central organ. The dorsal vessel of the Articulata, their substitute for a heart, does not possess the same peculiar propulsive power.

Of the four great divisions of the animal kingdom, only the higher class, the Vertebrata, possesses a central nervous system, the remainder having no brain; the powers reside in their ganglia, or little masses of nervous matter, distributed in different parts of the body. In the Zoophytes no distinct nervous system exists, and what

ever nervous matter exists is diffused through the body. While thus the mental endowments at one end of the scale are equally diffused through the body, so that the animal can spare its head as well as any other part, at the other end of the scale, we find, as we ascend, the central organ, the brain, becomes relatively more and more developed, more and more controlling, more and more the center and concentration of conscious life.

Even among the Vertebrata, or animals possessing a brain, a great portion of conscious vitality is diffused through the body (not concentrated in the brain), and consequently remains after the loss of the head. It is a familiar fact, that the body of an insect, after the loss of its head, moves about with apparent intelligence. But it has been shown by the experiments of Dr. Dowler, that even an animal with a brain may possess a diffused consciousness in its body. The body of an alligator, after the loss of its head, performs movements which show that it is still conscious, and has a species of understanding in its actions so as to avoid whatever inflicts pain.

As the animal kingdom thus presents a diffusion of conscious life through the body, an amalgamation of mind and matter, it is only in the higher orders that we find any thing like separation or concentration of the conscious principle.

In man only do we find this concentration complete so that we may say he lives in his brain, and not in all the subordinate structures of his body. Hence we are enabled to regard his spiritual principle as something definite and distinct, not subdivided and diffused through the matter of his body, but concentrated into a conscious entity.

We have ascertained, by the hasty survey of the constitution of man as compared with animals, that his mind concentrates and centralizes his being in the anterior and interior region of the brain. From this commanding position it holds its communication with the body by means of an extensive nervous system, of which the most conspicuous portion is the spinal cord, and its ramifications of motor and sensitive nerves, which fill all parts of the body in which any distinct vital action or sensibility is perceived. In this picture you perceive the position and relations of the spinal nervous system, by means of which all voluntary movements are accomplished, as every muscle which we are capable of controlling is connected through filaments of nerves with this spinal cord, which connects, as you perceive, with the basis of the brain, receiving at the place of connection the name of *medulla oblongata*. Lying in the trunk just anterior to the spinal cord, and parallel to its course, are the series of ganglia, or small bodies of grey nervous matter, which govern all those internal operations and chemical changes which are independent of our will, and which proceed unconsciously in the usual course of nature, although not to be affected or materially changed by the action of the mind. These ganglia, although involuntary in their action, are in intimate communication with the spinal cord, and receive from it the various impressions produced by the action of the mind. By these means the appetite, digestion, nutrition, circulation, and animal temperature are placed under the control of the mental power, whenever it is sufficiently intense to extend beyond its ordinary sphere in the spinal system, and modify the vital processes controlled through the ganglia.

In all invertebrate animals these ganglia exercise all the powers of life with no superintending power. In the lower classes of vertebrate animals the ganglia are controlled by the spinal system. In the higher classes the brain more and more decidedly controls the spinal system, and in the matured man the brain itself not only governs all subordinate portions of the nervous apparatus, but is itself governed by the central region in which its functions culminate to their highest spiritual perfection.

If, then, we have traced up mentality from the ganglionic to the spinal system—from the spinal apparatus to the brain—from the posterior and middle lobes to the anterior lobe—and have found in the anterior lobe, upon its internal aspect, the seat of a higher and purer mentality than at any other portion of the brain—a point from which mental illumination appears to radiate to all other portions of the brain and body, it may be pre-

sumed that we have approached the point of contact between mind and matter, above and beyond which we will find mental power reaching far beyond the limits of the body. We do thus find it. We find at this point at which mind concentrates, that pure transcendent mentality, which is far above the restraints of the body, which visits distant places, which explores the events of past time, which looks far on into the future, and which seems to be in sympathy with the thoughts of other minds, however remote in space. The mind which, in the exaltation of clairvoyance, has become unconscious of its own body, and keenly sensitive to the influence of other minds and bodies, may be considered as already partially disembodied, for it is less affected by its own body than by another's.

If, then, we would seek to know whether a more complete disembodiment may occur—whether after the last link of connection has been severed, the mind would still retain its powers and its conscious existence, we should ascertain whether, in the development of its higher powers, its progress depends upon any physiological operation of the brain, or whether it proceeds in a more independent manner.

It is a very ready and natural supposition, especially to the phrenologist, that all displays of mental power, of whatever character, depend upon the activity of the brain. But we find that displays of the far-reaching intuitive faculties are generally best accomplished when the body is in a state of repose, and the brain under no arterial excitement. A state approaching catalepsy develops the highest clairvoyant phenomena. And even beyond this, when all the bodily functions are suspended, as if by death, we find the mental powers still vividly active.

When the Reverend Wm. Tennant apparently died, and his friends were about to bury his body, a medical friend, perceiving that the body did not exhibit the complete signs of death, by coldness and putrefaction, induced his friends to preserve the body three days longer. During this time he lay as if dead; the circulation and respiration were apparently completely suspended. If the action of the mind be merely the effect of the action of oxygenized blood upon the fibers of the brain—if mental power is merely a secretion of the albuminous matter of the brain, proportioned to the supply of blood, it would follow that during this period of suspended circulation and respiration there must have been a suspension of mental action, producing unconsciousness, and rendering the period a total blank in his memory. But this was not the case. His mind, in the midst of this apparent death, was highly active. When he recovered, he reported his mental exercises as being of an exalted character—he had been enjoying visions of a heavenly nature—had been in communion with spiritual beings, and received instruction and impressions which had a permanent and religious influence upon the remainder of his life.

Since, then, we find that intellectual action is adverse to corporeal or physiological development, and that the most exalted and wonderful functions of the intellect are manifested when the body is in repose, or in a state of apparent death, it is not a violent or far-fetched inference that functions which are thus developed, in opposition to, and at the expense of the physiological life and power, and which attain their highest condition when the corporeal functions are completely arrested, would be still more fully developed and active if the arrest of the bodily functions should become more decisive and permanent, as by an actual death. It would be a legitimate inference that, in such a case, the mind would permanently continue in a more exalted condition than any which it had previously known while in the body.

Yet, however plainly this may be indicated by certain analogies and tendencies, we need more decisive evidence upon a subject of such importance, and should, if possible, determine, by direct observation, the nature and reality of this *post mortem* existence, which seems to occupy so lofty a sphere. If mind maintains its permanent existence and identity after the total suspension of the physical vitality, a benevolent plan of creation would require that the fact should not be concealed from us by any impenetrable veil. Mind in the living man should be competent to perceive disembodied mind, and the spiritual world should be as

much a subject of scientific investigation as the world of minerals and plants.

Such observations I have heretofore endeavored to make. A considerable number may be found in every community who are capable of perceiving the reality of spiritual existence. The power is most readily developed in connexion with experiments in Psychometry, of which many are capable. Under ordinary circumstances, we may find five or ten individuals out of a hundred who are capable of perceiving the mental influence of the writer of a letter by placing it upon the forehead. Those who have powers of a high order, not only perceive the general influence of the writer's mind, but enter into full sympathy with his character and thoughts, identify themselves with his consciousness and thus perceive his social position, and the general tenor of the events of his life up to the present time.

But the evidence is vastly more extensive; the same intuitive and spiritual faculties have, time out of mind, been coming forth in spontaneous development, teaching to a few the existence and condition of departed friends, and thus preserving to mankind an imperfect knowledge of their spiritual career.

Clairvoyants, seers, sages, poets, and theologians (from the earliest records of history) have distinctly perceived the existence of disembodied spirits, and held communion with the departed. Volumes might be filled with their testimony, much of which proceeds from men of a high order of mind, and of the most unquestionable integrity. In modern times, we have an illustrious example in the life of *Swedenborg*, one of the most profound and correct philosophers of Europe, who, for a large portion of his life, enjoyed, according to his own account, free and intimate communication with the inhabitants of the Spirit-world. Whether we are disposed or not to receive his entire system of philosophy and theology, we cannot doubt the fact that he possessed the clairvoyant power, and perceived, by the interior sense, things beyond the reach of other mortals; and it is equally certain, that not only were his direct perceptions thus exalted, but his general penetration into the system of nature was far greater than that of his contemporaries. If blameless integrity, ample learning, remarkable mental acuteness, and a position above the influence of any surrounding temptation—from necessity or a love of popularity—if such conditions constitute a claim upon our credence, surely the testimony of *Swedenborg* is entitled to an honorable recognition; nor can we in any way avoid the force of his testimony concerning spiritual beings, unless we suppose his imagination exalted and perverted to an extent that might constitute a form of chronic insanity, yet co-existing with the most perfect sanity, wisdom, and rectitude upon other subjects. The existence of such a condition would constitute one of the most remarkable phenomena ever known, and if we indulge in such hypothesis, we may with equal propriety impute insanity to all whose opinions deviate greatly from the fashionable standard of the times.

An example more recent, and perhaps not less convincing, is furnished by the wonderful experience of the American seer, *Andrew Jackson Davis*. This young man, by the assiduous cultivation of the spiritual or intuitive power, has arisen from a condition of ignorance to an eminent rank as a brilliant and pleasing writer—has, beyond all doubt, attained a power of clairvoyance, enabling him, in many instances, with great accuracy, to recognize distant objects, and to explore the world of mind. He testifies in strict harmony with the testimony of all intuitive observers of all ages—that he not only perceives the spiritual power in the living man, but perceives its separation from the body in the act of death, and its continued life thereafter.

Yet notwithstanding all the facts in nature which point to the development, elimination, and emancipation of a spiritual being in man, as the ultimate aim and highest accomplishment of the natural world—notwithstanding its intimate alliance with our loftiest and most generous emotions, and its elevating influence upon mankind—notwithstanding the vast collected mass of evidence upon this subject, there may still be those whose minds resist such evidence, and who cannot feel a calm and firm reliance, even upon this broad basis of evidence. Analogy may be pronounced delusion; and the perceptions of those entranced

and seemingly dead, may be referred to imagination. The testimony of good and wise men may also be referred to imagination impelled by enthusiasm; and even the testimony of the most accurate clairvoyant seers may be considered unreliable.

To demonstrate the existence of the Spirit-world, with an inevitable force, requires something more than all this. It is necessary not only that all nature should point, by her laws and analogies, to spiritual life; and that all intuitive clairvoyant seers should distinctly perceive, and recognize, and communicate with spiritual beings; not only that the testimony of millions should be unanimous, but a still stronger evidence is needed; an evidence not dependent upon elaborate reasonings, nor upon our faith in human testimony; but more direct and forcible than either—it is necessary that the Spirit-world should speak for itself. If it be possible for the disembodied to make themselves visible or audible to those who have no exalted intuitive powers—to those who perceive only by gross and earthly media—assuredly it is desirable that we should hear its voice.

If this world be constructed in accordance with the highest powers of benevolence, it is not probable that our departed friends will be for ever barred from all communication with the living. The time has come at last for free direct communion of heaven and earth—the dead have held converse with the living, not by the interior sense alone, but by sounds produced in our gross atmosphere; these sounds originating in no physical cause, have been heard so often in the East and in the West, by hundreds if not thousands of our most enlightened if not accurate observers, that it would be folly and arrogance to deny their existence. If human testimony be not all false, if history be not all a fable, these sounds originating in no material cause, and conveying messages of an intellectual and elevating character, have been often heard. They have been heard in our city by the most critical observers. Our departed friends have thus spoken to the living, giving words of wise counsel, of friendship, and of consolation, and promising communications hereafter.

The fact is established—it has passed beyond all controversy; the Spirit-world has spoken—the demonstration is complete, that man is a spiritual and immortal being—that the departed still live in a higher realm than ours. The solution of this great mystery, the final and irresistible demonstration of this holy truth, has already begun to elevate and spiritualize the thoughts of men; and it is destined to lead us on by an irresistible attraction in a grand career of progress. In view of the great moral results that are to be attained—in view of the great mysteries of science that have thus been solved, I cannot but regard these manifestations of departed spirits, by means of audible sounds, as one of the highest and holiest facts in history; a commencement of a new era, the first rays crossing our horizon from the sunrise of the nineteenth century.—*Buchanan's Journal of Man*.

Effects of Music.

Sultan Amurath, the cruel prince, having laid siege to Bagdad, and taken it, gave orders for putting thirty thousand Persians to death, notwithstanding they had submitted and laid down their arms. Among the number of these unfortunate victims was a musician. He besought the officer who had the command to see the Sultan's orders executed, to spare him but for a moment, while he might be permitted to speak to the Emperor. The officer indulged him with this entreaty; and being brought before the Emperor, he was permitted to exhibit a specimen of his art. Like the musicians in Homer, he took up a kind of psaltery, resembling a lyre, with six strings on each side, and accompanied with his voice. He sung the taking of Bagdad and the triumph of Amurath. The pathetic tones and exulting sounds which drew from the instrument, joined to the alternate plaintiveness and boldness of his strains, rendered the prince more susceptible of the softer emotions of his soul. He even sought to proceed until, overpowered with harmony, he melted into tears of pity, and relented of his cruel intention. He spared the prisoners who yet remained alive, and gave to them liberty.

THE SPIRIT MESSENGER.

R. P. AMBLER, EDITOR.

SPRINGFIELD, MASS., APRIL 12, 1851.

SPIRITUAL DISCLOSURES.

The present era of the world is becoming replete with remarkable achievements of mental power, and is rendered glorious by the increasing manifestations of human progress. From the dark and unlovely sphere of the Past, the race has emerged into a more exalted state, where the deep gloom of the ancient time has departed, and rays from the orient stream over the slumbering soul. In addition to the advancement which has been made in Science, Literature and Art—the inventions, discoveries, and new-born conceptions of the exploring intellect, by which the temporal blessings and advantages of society have been promoted, a superior and more startling wonder has been revealed to the astonished world, in the form of spiritual disclosures. While from the illuminated mind of the clairvoyant have flowed beautiful revelations of God, Nature, and Heaven, the most direct and unmistakable manifestations have been presented of the presence and agency of supra-mortal intelligences. A deep and universal want of humanity has in this way been supplied. The skeptical and faithless mind which relies for evidence only on that which appeals to the external sense, has been gratified with the most convincing demonstrations; while the lurking unbelief which has entered even into the Christian's bosom, and prevailed to some extent among every class of religionists, is rapidly giving place to a living and realizing faith. We are now furnished with the particular kind of evidence which the world has always required. There are many minds which cannot believe on the mere testimony of others, but demand a sensuous demonstration. Such have naturally been moved by a desire to *feel* and *know* the presence of spirits, using the same method by which they become convinced of the existence of outward objects. Evidence of this nature has now been furnished. All that the skeptical mind could desire in the form of absolute proof, has been given to the world. The great truth of immortality is now established. Eternal life has been brought to light in a new way; and even those who have relied so long on the teachings of old records, and the testimony of ancient saints, begin to see, in the wondrous developments of the present, a higher and more substantial evidence. From proof which is strong as the divine principles of Nature, and irresistible as the obvious realities of sense, man is now assured that he has entered on the course of endless being—that death is but the line which divides the earthly from the heavenly, and that beyond the shadows which gather over the sepulchre of the departed, are the unfolding beauties of celestial Spheres.

These disclosures seem to be the natural result of the unceasing progress of man. The several sciences which have been established, and all the various stages of intellectual advancement, have been so many steps leading to this grand end. After the more material sciences had become generally understood, attention was first turned particularly to the teachings of Physiology, embracing the great laws of life and motion which are manifested in the human frame; then came the science of Phrenology, by which it was discovered that the characteristics of the mental constitution may be determined by the external developments of the brain; next in order appeared the lowest manifestations of Mesmerism, in which the power of will was exhibited in changing the condition and functions of the animal body; and then were revealed the far-reaching vision of the somnambule, and that wondrous communion of mind with mind—the interchange of thought and feeling, which are dependent on no external signs. Having arrived at the perception and experience of these things, men were measurably prepared for the great demonstration of spiritual presence. From the fundamental principles revealed in the established science of the soul, it was an easy

transition for many minds to receive the external evidence which shows the reality of an intercourse between men and angels. It is true that a subject so inharmonious with the teachings of the old theology, was destined to encounter a powerful opposition. The same fiery denunciations which have fallen on all new and unpopular truths, were reserved also for this. Men treated with scorn the sensuous demonstrations of the spiritual power, and the loud cry of "delusion" was long the prevailing argument. Still the work moved on. The stream which seemingly issued from a small fountain, grew wider and deeper as it flowed, and the impediments which were thrown in its way by sectarian bigotry, served only to augment its force. The spiritual disclosures seen now to be moving the very heart of community. A deep and longing desire is experienced to know whether these things are so—whether the revelation of a higher life in the blessed ministry of the departed, can be made manifest to the very eyes and ears of men. With this growing desire, the evidence appears to be proportionately increasing. The manifestations which have been so loudly decried, are now spreading rapidly through the land, and the audible utterances of invisible beings are becoming heard in almost every community. In this respect, the prediction of the spirits at the commencement of their intercourse, is evidently in the progress of fulfillment. Like the stone cut of the mountain, as beheld by Daniel in the vision, this reality of the present age seems destined to extend over the earth. Before its march the errors and bigotry of the world will gradually disappear, and in its train shall be established a higher and more congenial system of truth, which shall be as a temple of Liberty in which the pure in heart may live and worship forever.

The effect produced by these spiritual disclosures on the conservative and sectarian classes of society, seems to be very similar to that which was exhibited at the introduction of the Christian religion. Now, as at that time, there are individuals occupying elevated positions, who begin to sensibly feel that *their craft is in danger—that their salaries are at stake*, and that it is therefore necessary to take active and speedy measures for the suppression of this new-born heresy! A sensation of alarm is creeping into the bosom of the Church, lest the old idols which have been worshiped so long should be dethroned. The cry is not now as it was once, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," but the low murmur, at first suppressed, is becoming earnest with fear—"Holy is our Sect"—"Sacred is our Theology." All this should cause no wonder when it is remembered that it is the *interest* of those engaged in the upbuilding of sectarianism, to preserve the ancient superstitions which their fathers received, and shut out the gladdening light which might flow into the seeking mind from the higher ministry of spirits. Since it is one of the great objects of the ruling priesthood to keep the people in darkness, it is not strange that, while truth is advancing—while spiritual disclosures are becoming more and more startling, they should hug the cherished creed more closely to their bosoms, and raise the alarm-cry on the battlements of their Zion. This wide-spread consternation which strikes so deeply into the hearts of sectarists, may be regarded as but a prophecy of the world's redemption—the approaching downfall of superstition and error, and the upbuilding of truth and righteousness in the earth. No mortal power can stay the rolling tide which is fast flowing over humanity. That tide shall move ever onward, sweeping away the crumbling altars of sectarian worship, and removing from the world its corrupting filth; while high above the rising waters shall gleam the never-setting star of hope, leading the troubled mariners of life into a deep and tranquil sea.

For the encouragement of those who love truth, and feel an interest in its progress, it may be said that the spiritual disclosures which have already blessed the world, shall be farther multiplied and elevated, in proportion to the advancement of the general mind. Such should not imagine that the mere appeal to the external senses through electrical sounds, is to constitute the acme of spiritual intercourse. This, on the contrary, is but an introductory address to the dull ear of the unbelieving world; it is but a primary step in the advancement of the gross and sensual to a more exalted state of spiritual communion. While, then, we re-

voice in the introduction of that evidence which the unrefined soul is best fitted to appreciate, let us prepare for the unfolding of still higher disclosures; for in the future, as in the past, the light of truth will become more and more radiant, as the film of ignorance and error is removed from the vision of the soul. R. P. A.

Communications from the Spirit-world.

The writer has recently cherished a strong desire to hold communication with some of the more advanced spirits of the Second Sphere, particularly with Swedenborg. Attracted by this internal desire, the enlightened spirit here alluded to was pleased to appoint an interview through the medium of a highly impressive clairvoyant, who is now residing in this vicinity. At the time appointed, this individual being thrown into the abnormal condition, the spirit of Swedenborg expressed his communication in the following language:

"This is an opportunity I have long sought for. I have been in your presence before, and have impressed you with many things. In answer to the inquiry in your mind, I will say, would that my writings could be committed to the flames; they have been a stumbling-block to many, and still will be. The day of superstition is now nearly passed, and the time has arrived when the spirits of men soar away to this beautiful land, and bear back tidings of heavenly things. Long and wistfully have the spirits looked forward to this time, when they could descend to earth and impress their friends with the reality of their presence. In sorrow, trial, and vexation, they can hover around the troubled brow, and impress upon the mind thoughts which elevate it from the gross earth to the holy Spheres. So one will imagine that the music borne on the breeze comes from the Spirit-land—he will forget his troubles, and his spirit feels anxious to burst the fetters that bind it to his earthly prison-house. Brothers, I tell you that superstition has broken more hearts, and crushed more flowers of hope and joy, than war. How happy must be the humble cottager, returning from his daily labor, to be surrounded by his little family, and to know his destiny. He can forget awhile the troubles of earth,—he can commune in his thoughts with angelic spirits, and they whisper in his ear:—

Fear not; guardian angels are watching near,
Trust in their voice thy lonely heart to cheer;
And oft in the still night when thy body is at rest,
Thy soul wanders far away to the land of the blest.

He awakes in the morning refreshed, and goes forth to his daily labor with a cheerful heart; he thinks of death, but thinks not as many—he looks forward to the time when he shall die, as being the happiest period of his life here below. The skeptic may start and say, 'What! the happiest period of his life to leave dear and happy friends—friends he has loved and cherished here!—can it be a happy moment when he is called to experience this separation—when his body is clothed in the winding sheet of death, and borne to the narrow, silent grave! Say you to me that he feels this to be the happiest event of his earthly life?' Ah! man, could you but see that spirit take its parting farewell of the body—see it borne away to the Spirit-land by beautiful angels—hear the music that peals forth in the domes of heaven;—I say if you could but see such a scene, you would not wonder that the humble cottager is willing to die. The skeptic may ask—'Is this true?' Nature replies—'It is.' With eagerness he exclaims, 'Can I gaze on such a scene?' No. The mortal eye could not behold it; for the spirit would leap forth from its prison-house—no human hand could stay its flight—it would soar away to join its kindred spirits in that heavenly Sphere, where no discord disturbs the quiet harmony."

Such is the language with which my spiritual visitor addressed me; but it would be difficult to portray the pathetic and impressive manner in which it came from the lips of the clairvoyant. The remark of Swedenborg in relation to his writings, was made in answer to an inquiry formed in my own mind, but not expressed, with reference to the truthfulness and utility of certain doctrines which he had taught while upon earth. The answer is brief and emphatic.

In connection with the foregoing, it may be proper to introduce a communication from the spirit of Napoleon Bonaparte, which has been lately received through the same medium, by the Harmonical circle at Chicopee Falls. It is as follows:

"You have all heard of my past history while on earth. Many years have passed since my body was borne to the silent tomb. Many centuries will pass ere the name of Napoleon will be buried in oblivion. Yet this is not my object here. I wish to give you advice concerning the holy circle which you have now formed. Let your course be heavenward, and when gathered together, commune awhile with spirits, and contemplate their happy state. Let nothing that is not virtuous enter your minds, and remember when trial and trouble visit you, that a spirit is ever nigh."

The same spirit then related the following impressive dream, which he said had visited him while in exile on the isle of St. Helena, and which he desired to be published as an interesting event in his life, of which history could take no note:—

"It was a beautiful day in June. My mind was oppressed with grief. I had been meditating on my past life, and I fancied myself once more upon the battle-field. Then the thought rushed back upon my mind that I was a lonely exile—that I who had caused thrones to tremble—I whose name had sounded through nations, was confined to the narrow limits of a lonely island. In this mood, I walked to the beach, and gazed upon the deep blue ocean. I knew there was a God. Nature told me this. Then tears came to my eyes for the first time in years. The lonely exile was ready to die. With a slow step I returned to the garden near the house. Being fatigued and weary, I sat down upon a bench, and leaning my head against a tree, soon fell into a deep sleep and was visited with a pleasing dream. Four angels came to me and whispered in my ear the following beautiful and consoling words: 'Napoleon, ere many months have passed, you will be no more. Your body will return to dust, but your spirit will be like ours, and with us you will go to the Spirit-land!' I awoke, and believed it only as a beautiful dream. But ere five months had passed away, disease had wound around me its mortal coils, and at the close of this period my spirit took its departure. Believe me when I say that I was escorted to the Spirit-home by the same angels that I had seen in my dream."

While communications of this nature may be regarded by many as the mere products of excited fancy, we have the happiness to believe that they are among the most joyous realities of this earthly life. Pleasant indeed is the reflection that those who have departed are not dead, but may yet speak;—that the blest immortals may descend from their world of light to impart joy and hope to oppressed humanity.

R. P. A.

Use of Beauty.

It is not in vain that God has made everything beautiful in its time. There is a use in all the pleasing variety of Nature, which is separate from the enjoyment afforded to the senses. Beauty speaks, not only to the eye, but to the soul; it has a language which appeals to the sense of the inward being, and awakens there a silent, but blissful melody. To the stern utilitarian, who can see no good in that which is unconnected with external advantages, the beauteous forms and decorations of Nature may seem only as an extravagant waste. But he who is susceptible to the influence that flows from the heart of Beauty—who attunes his soul to the heavenly harmony that pervades Creation, can perceive in all things lovely a use that pertains to the highest ends. In every fair and attractive scene—in flowery fields, and gliding streams, and cheerful sunlight—is felt the presence of the central Spirit. So it is the beautiful of earth that presents the reflection of the divine countenance, and it is through this, also, that that reflection is enstamped upon the soul. Therefore while we appropriate to ourselves those physical objects which have merely an outward use, we may rejoice in the presence of that living beauty which forms the attractive garment of Nature.

R. P. A.

Conversation of Clairvoyants.

The following is the record of a conversation which took place between two clairvoyants in the city of New York. We received the manuscript sometime since, but it was unintentionally laid aside and forgotten until now.—Ed.

Mrs. M.—The great desire of the Spirit-world is to produce harmony. If this does not prevail among all, there will be obstructions, and it is for want of this that we have not had communications more freely. An innumerable company of spirits surround us, all desirous of holding intercourse, but owing to mental and physical disturbances, their presence has not been outwardly manifested. We must come to this spiritual fountain with the simplicity of a child, be prompt as to the time, and cherish a strong desire for instruction;—then shall we receive responses, and gain a knowledge which will do us good.

E.—Our circle often labors under difficulty from misplacement. It is necessary that we should form a united and harmonious whole. Could we really see the change which is about to take place in this world, we should hardly yield credence to our perceptions. It seems to be already near. Developments in the sciences and arts will go hand in hand with the developments in spirituality.

Mrs. M.—It is not book knowledge, so much as spiritual or intuitive impressions, which is to open a new era in the world.

E.—Water is soon to become a generator of heat and motion, by a simple process of decomposition;—after that, simply air will become a substitute.

Mrs. M.—Each circle has its own mediums through whom it may receive communications, and these are now rapidly increasing.

E.—The time will come, and is now fast approaching, when the human soul will be gloriously developed, and these discordant sounds will be exchanged for the most tranquilizing melody. Why should we allow this body to draw us down to earth, and prevent us from holding sweet communion with the higher Spheres? The time will be known when the inhabitants of this earth shall become as perfected as those of Saturn or Jupiter;—and even now that day has dawned.

When the spirit becomes too far perfected to remain in the body, the latter being incapable of performing its functions, the two must necessarily separate—the one returning to dust, and the other attaining an independent existence.

When the revolution in society which is about to occur takes place, man will not be compelled to labor incessantly as he now is to preserve the conjunction of soul and body, but will be able to employ a larger portion of time in the investigation of truth.

Mrs. M.—When this state of earthly perfection is attained, we shall be free from all the distrust and skepticism which we now feel, and shall be enabled to comprehend all this progress.

Responses from the Departed.

NEW BRIGHTON, PA., April 1, 1851.

DEAR BROTHER :—The experiences of the last month have been to me the most eventful and interesting of my life. In this vicinity and in Pittsburgh, we have had most satisfactory and elevating intercourse with the inhabitants of the "superior country." Dear friends, whom we loved on earth, and in whom we had every confidence, have come to us, and, through the spiritual or electrical vibrations, have renewed their assurances of love, and cheered us with the tokens of their presence. How significant and beautiful have been some of the messages and communications, none can fully realize, except those to whom they were addressed, and who could know all the circumstances connected with the remembrance and acquaintance formed with the loved ones on earth. Like notes of music in the lonely eventide, vibrating upon the finer chords of the soul, has come to me a voice long silent, and uttered words of tenderness and love, which will be cherished evermore in my heart of hearts! The utterance of this loved one shall go with me to cheer me in every hour, and to bless me in the silent watches of the night,

while I shall ever have a more real and abiding assurance of her angel-presence!

The medium through whom these responses have been made, is Miss Clara Cronk, a young lady of this vicinity whose clairvoyant powers and susceptibility I recently discovered and aided in developing. Mrs. Bushnell, the well-known clairvoyant, who has been sojourning in Pittsburgh a short time, afforded us, on different occasions, the opportunity of spiritual intercourse—both by giving expression to the thoughts and impressions of our spiritual friends while in the clairvoyant state, and by furnishing the "medium" for the electrical vibrations.

Many communications and answers have been received from friends who have recently passed into the Spirit-world, who, while here, were greatly interested in Psychological subjects, and the Harmonial Philosophy. Among these, were Wm. E. Austin of Pittsburgh, and Dr. J. W. Parker of Cincinnati—the former of whom left this sphere, solemnly promising to do all in his power to aid and forward this spiritual communication between the two worlds. Their instructions have been elevated, beautiful, and inspiring.

At a future time, I will send you some of the messages and instructions received. But for the present I must conclude. Adieu.

Most faithfully yours,

MILTON A. TOWNSEND.

Presence of Spring.

Cheering and joyous is the return of Spring-time. Nature seems to be undergoing a glorious resurrection, bursting forth into new life and a more resplendent beauty. The streams, relieved of an icy weight, flow onward in their native freedom; the earth, reposing in the sunlight, presents the indications of renewed vigor, and the trees, disrobed of the cold frost-work of winter, are preparing to assume a more lovely garment. The bleak winds and angry tempests have now sunk to rest, and over the green fields and through shady groves, float the gentle breathings of reviving Nature. An anthem of joy and praise seems to rise from the green earth and echo in the bending sky, proclaiming the beneficence of the great Author. Every thing has a voice, though silent, to which the conscious spirit may listen and respond. That voice whispers of a Supreme Intelligence; it teaches in tones most eloquent the lesson of divine love; it unfolds the sublime principle of progress, and portrays that wondrous process by which the cold and inanimate earth becomes clothed in living beauty. Thus the presence of Spring invites us to the study of Nature;—it brings with it the inviting smile of the Divinity, and opens a new leaf in that sacred volume where God has written the teachings of immortal truth.

R. P. A.

CRITICISM.—We observe in the last number of the "Spirit World" a lengthy article which seems to be designed as a criticism and review of Mr. Davis' recent work. The writer of the article in question has forcibly illustrated the fact, that it is much easier to find fault with words and phrases, than to overthrow a truthful and well-grounded principle; while even in several instances of verbal criticism, he appears to have mistaken the beam in his own eye for a mote in his brother's. The work alluded to being now before the public, it is as well perhaps that its merits should be determined by each individual, as that these should be referred to a spiritual arbiter.

BUCHANAN'S JOURNAL OF MAN.—This publication is devoted to the elucidation of the various subjects embraced in the science of mind, including Phrenology, Psychometry, Physiology, Medical Philosophy, &c. It is ably conducted by Dr. J. R. Buchanan, and contains a large amount of interesting and valuable matter. Those who are attracted to the field of intellectual and spiritual inquiry, will do well to subscribe for this work. It is published monthly in Cincinnati, Ohio, at the low price of \$1.00 per volume.

☞ The world is approaching an important crisis. Let the friends of Truth be strong and active.

Poetry.

TRAGEDY OF THE NIGHT-MOTH.

(MAGNA AUSUS.)

BY THOMAS CARLYLE.

'T is placid midnight ; stars are keeping
Their meek and silent course in heaven ;
Save pale recluse, all things are sleeping,
His mind to study still is given.

But see ! a wandering night-moth enters,
Allured by taper gleaming bright ;
Awhile keeps hovering round, then ventures
On Goethe's mystic page to light.

With awe she views the candle blazing ;
A universe of fire, it seems
To moth *savante* with rapture gazing,
Or fount whence Life and Motion streams.

What passions in her small heart whirling—
Hopes boundless, adoration, dread ;
At length, her tiny pinions twirling,
She darts, and puff !—the moth is dead !

The sullen flame, for her scarce sparkling,
Gives but one hiss, one fitful glare ;
Now bright and busy, now all darkling,
She snaps and fades to empty air.

Her bright gray form that spread so slimly,
Some fan she seemed of pigmy queen ;
Her silky cloak that lay so trimly,
Her wee, wee eyes that looked so keen,

Last moment here, now gone forever,
To nought are passed with fiery pain ;
And ages circling round shall never
Give to this creature shape again !

Poor moth ! ne'er weeping I lament thee,
Thy glossy form, thy instant woe ;
'T was zeal for " things too high " that sent thee
From cheery earth to shades below.

Short speck of boundless space was needed
For home, for kingdom, world to thee !
Where passed, unheeding as unheeded,
Thy slender life from sorrow free.

But syren hopes from out thy dwelling
Enticed thee, bade thee earth explore,—
Thy frame, so late with rapture swelling,
Is swept from earth for evermore !

Poor moth ! thy fate my own resembles :
Me, too, a restless, asking mind
Hath sent on far and weary rambles,
To seek the good I ne'er shall find.

Like thee, with common lot contented—
With humble joys and vulgar fate,
I might have lived and ne'er lamented,
Moth of a larger size, a longer date !

But Nature's majesty unveiling,
What seemed her wildest, grandest charms,
Eternal Truth and Beauty hailing,
Like thee I rushed into her arms.

What gained we, little moth ? Thy ashes—
Thy one brief parting pang may show ;
And withering thoughts for soul that dashes
From deep to deep, are but a death more slow.

Miscellaneous Department.

THE ORPHAN'S TEAR.

AN ALLEGORY.

In a deep forest, where the Æolian murmurings of waving forest trees mingled with the gentle complaining of song-birds to their absent mates, and a rivulet smiled sunnily, as it flowed like a thing of light on the green bosom of the sylvan wild, a mother, in the sombre weeds of widowhood, clasped the cold hand of her fatherless daughter. They stood beside the stream, and, as their pale features were mirrored on its bright surface, the mother weaved for her daughter a story of her dead father's life, recalling a thousand deeds of gentle tenderness—his caresses and his smiles—his kisses and fond embraces—dwelling, with all a wife's tenderness, upon his many virtues and manly graces ; then with a trembling voice and quivering lip, she painted his dying bed ; how, when the low beatings of the pulse had nigh ceased, in husky accents he asked to see his " own sweet Nell ; " how, when the little daughter pressed his icy lip, and felt for the last time the beating of his heart against her own, he had faintly whispered his dying blessing, and his heaven-winged spirit bore upon its pinions a prayer for his wife and child. And as the sad story melted into the young girl's heart, her pale lip quivered, and her heart's fountain welled up its waters till the eye was full to overflowing, and a tear trembled for an instant on the eye-lid, kissed the pale cheek, and clung to it as though loth to leave the rich couch—then, for an instant, glancing through the air like a ray of sunlight, dropped into the bosom of the stream.

Away ! with a laugh and smile through the green forest, glanced the stream ; prattling here to a bed of pebbles, kissing there a group of wild flowers—laving here the roots of a giant tree, and dashing gaily yonder through the arches of a rustic bridge ! Away, through forest and meadow—mingling here with the bright waters that gush from a sylvan spring—meeting yonder a sister stream ! Away, the twin sisters glance along, bearing in their bosom the Orphan's Tear !

The stream has reached its goal, and, with a laugh as clear and a smile as sunny as ever, dashes into the bosom of a river ! And away, past hamlet, and town, and city—past forest and meadow, and mountain and valley, swells the broad river, bearing on its bosom the Orphan's Tear !

The river has found its home, and, foaming, boiling, madly plunging, as though loth to loose the contest, rolls its waters into the ocean's waves, and borne on billows mountain high, the Tear gleams upon their snowy crests.

The sun is gilding the ocean with its crimson beams, and leaving a pathway of gorgeous light upon the waters. Thick mists ascend to meet his warm embrace, and mingling with the skyward vapors, the Tear mounts upwards, gleaming in the light of the morning sun ! Upward—higher—ascends the Tear, till it seems forever lost in the thick clouds that hang like wreathed spirits in the sky !

But not lost forever ! When the sun has gone to his evening rest, and shadows are closing over the world, those vapors seek again the earth, and to-morrow's sun will find the Orphan's Tear a dew-drop on the flower that grows upon the dead father's grave !

Need we write the moral ? Like the Orphan's Tear is a gentle word. Though mingling with the thousand accents that fall upon the ear, still it is never lost ; but as we are borne o'er the stream of youth, and the river of life flows distinct and clear ; and when we find at length the ocean of eternity bursting upon the view, that word may have won our hearts to heaven, and even then, through an angel's smiles, may speak to earth again !

The belief that guardian spirits hover around the paths of men, covers a mighty truth ; for every beautiful, pure and good thought the heart holds, is an angel of mercy, purifying and guarding the soul.

Lesson of the Spider.

A boy accompanied his father into the vineyard, and there discovered a bee in a spider's web. The spider had begun to kill the bee, but the boy liberated the bee and destroyed the web of the spider. The father, who saw it, inquired, "How can you esteem the instinct and the dexterity of this animal so little, as to destroy its web, on which so much skill and labor have been bestowed? Did you not observe with what beauty and regularity the tender threads were arranged; how can you then, at the same time, be so compassionate and yet so severe?" The boy replied, "Is not the ingenuity of the spider wicked, and does it not tend to kill and destroy? But the bee gathers honey and wax in its hive. Therefore I liberated the bee and destroyed the web of the spider." The father commended the judgment of ingenious simplicity, which condemns the bright cunning that springs from selfishness and aims at mischief and ruin. "But," continued the father, "perhaps you have still done injustice to the spider. See, it defends our ripe grapes from the flies and wasps, with the web which it spins over them." "Does it do this," inquired the boy, "to protect the fruit, or rather to satisfy its own thirst for blood?" "True," answered the father, "they concern themselves but little about the grapes." "O," said the boy, "the good which they practice without designing it is of no value. A good motive is all that makes a good action estimable and lovely." "Very true!" said the father, "our thanks are due to nature, who knows how to employ what is vicious and unfriendly, in the preservation of what is good and useful." Then the boy inquired, "Why does the spider sit alone in its web, whilst the bees live together in social union, and work for general good? Thus the spider ought to make a large common net." "Dear child," replied the father, "many can unite only in noble designs. The alliance of wickedness and selfishness carries the seed of ruin in itself. Therefore wise nature will not attempt what man has so often found impossible and destructive. As they were returning home the boy said, "I have learned nothing to-day from that vicious animal." "Why not?" answered the father. "Nature has placed the malicious along with the friendly, and the evil with the good, that the good may appear lovelier and brighter in the contrast. And thus man can receive instruction even from the vicious."—*Krummacher*.

The Useful and the Beautiful.

The tomb of Moses is unknown, but the traveler slakes his thirst at the well of Jacob. The gorgeous palace of the wisest and wealthiest of monarchs, with the cedar, and the gold and ivory, and even the great temple of Jerusalem, hallowed by the visible glory of the Deity himself—are gone; but Solomon's reservoirs are as visible as ever. Of the ancient architecture of the Holy City, not one stone is left upon another; but the pool of Bethesda commands the pilgrim's reverence at the present day. The columns of Persepolis are mouldering into dust; but its cisterns and aqueducts remain to challenge our admiration. The golden house of Nero is a mass of ruins; but the Aqua Claudia still pours into Rome its limpid stream. The temple of the sun at Tadmor in the wilderness, has fallen; but its fountain sparkles as freshly in its rays, as when thousands of worshippers thronged its lofty colonades. It may be that London will share the fate of Babylon, and nothing be left to mark its site save mounds of crumbling brick-work. The Thames will continue to flow as it does now. And if any work of art should rise over the deep ocean of time, we may well believe that it will be neither a palace nor a temple, but some vast aqueduct or reservoir; and if any name should still flash through the mist of antiquity, it will probably be that of the man who in his day sought the happiness of his fellow men rather than glory, and linked his memory to some great work of national utility or benevolence. This is the true glory which outlives all others, and shines with undying luster from generation to generation—imparting to works something of its own immortality, and in some degree rescuing them from the ruin which overtakes the ordinary monuments of historical tradition or mere magnificence.—*Edinburgh Review*.

A Father's Counsel.

FROM THE GERMAN.

Truth will not accommodate itself to us, my son, but we must conform ourselves to truth.

Hold yourself too good to do evil.

What you can see, look at with *your own eyes*.

Fear no man so much as yourself.

Learn gladly of others; and whenever they talk of wisdom, honor, happiness, light, freedom, and virtue, listen attentively. But do not believe at once all that you hear. Words are only words, and when they drive along so very easy and swiftly, be on your guard; for horses that draw a valuable load travel slowly.

It is easy to despise, but to *understand* is far better.

Teach not others until you have learned yourself.

Take care of your body, but not as if it were your soul.

Meddle not with the affairs of others, but attend diligently to your own.

Flatter no man, and permit no man to flatter you.

Depend on no great men.

The Ghost of Solomon.

On a sultry, hot summer day, an honest old man was plowing his own field, when suddenly, under the shade of an oak, he beheld a god-like figure slowly approaching him. The man started back.

"I am Solomon," said the phantom, in a confiding voice.

"What art thou doing here, old man?"

"If thou art Solomon," was the reply, "how canst thou ask me? When I was a youth thou didst send me to the ant; I saw its method of living, and it taught me to be diligent, industrious, and persevering, and gather the superfluities for a stormy day. What I then learnt, I still continue to do."

"Thou hast studied thy lesson but half," replied the spirit; "go once more to the ant, and learn from it also how to find rest and quiet in the winter of thy years, and how to enjoy that which thou hast hoarded up."

PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTIONS.—I am so much accustomed to the vicissitudes of fortune, that, when any unexpected advantages accrue to me, I calm the turbulence of joy by the reflection that some counterbalancing ill is most probably near; and when I am plunged into gloom, perplexity and grief, I console myself with the probability of some approaching blessing. It is as vain to rest secure in the possession of joy, as to yield passively to the influence of sorrow in a world so proverbial for changes. Occurrences at first regretted, often lead the way to real good; and others, hailed with unalloyed pleasure, are frequently in reality fraught with danger and distress.

☞ The BOOKS and CHART of Mr. Davis, comprising all the works on the HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY that have been published, can be had at our office, and forwarded by express or otherwise, to any part of the Union. PRICE—REVELATIONS \$2; GREAT HARMONIA, Vol. 1, \$1.25; CHART, exhibiting an outline of the Progressive History and approaching destiny of the Race, \$1.50; PHILOSOPHY OF SPECIAL PROVIDENCES, \$0.15. THE PHILOSOPHY OF SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE; being an explanation of modern mysteries—50 cts.

We have also for sale an interesting pamphlet, entitled "Philosophy of Modern Miracles, or the Relations of Spiritual Causes to Physical Effects." By "a Dweller in the Temple." Price 25 cents.

TERMS.—The SPIRIT MESSENGER will be issued every Saturday, by R. P. AMBER, from his office on the South-east corner of Main and Union Streets. Price of subscription \$2 per annum, payable in all cases in advance. For a remittance of \$10, six copies will be forwarded.

Printed for the Publisher, by G. W. WILSON, Book and Job Printer, corner Main and State Streets, Springfield, Mass.