



# SPIRIT WORLD.

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## NATURE.

ASSOCIATION, PROGRESSION, DEVELOPMENT.

### THE SPIRIT'S DESTINY.

BY A. J. DAVIS.

1. Will all matter become spirit?
2. To what end will unspiritualized matter be appropriated?
3. What difference is there between matter and spirit?
4. Are soul, spirit, and mind synonymous, or are they not?
5. Where will the spirit reside?

In approaching a subject so vast and sublime, our minds should be almost totally divested of the impressions and influences of birth and education. We must think upon the questions as one would think who has just entered into this world of life and being, with all his intellectual and reasoning faculties in a high state of development. This state of simple-mindedness is necessary to a proper reception and understanding of the truth. In seeking the truth we must be like untrammelled and unsophisticated infants; but in understanding and applying the truth, we must be like free-born and highly-enlightened men. In this mental condition we will now proceed.

1. *Will all matter become spirit?*—Answer; No. Because matter and motion, or matter and mind, are eternal. We have no grounds or foundation from which to reason, if we attempt to question this fundamental conviction of truth. We must begin to reason (if we desire to reason,) in this manner: God and his Body are eternal. There was nothing prior to Heity by which He could have been created; nor was there ever a period in the depths of time when Matter did not exist. God was not created—matter was not created. Anything that is created contains within itself the elements of change and disorganization. Anything uncreated is beyond the sphere of change and destruction. I mean that if anything was created, as theologians believe that matter was created, out of nothing, then that thing would contain within itself the elements of returning to a similar state—it would change back to nothing. We must admit that Mind (or God) and Matter (or Nature,) are uncreated and eternal.

All we know of creation is simply confined to that unceasing and universal change of atoms which is going on in the vast, immeasurable organization of God, called Nature. Creation, in truth, is simply a change in the form, position, and influence of atoms and elements in the universe in which we reside, and of which we are an important and inseparable portion. A corresponding creation is perpetually going on in our own constitutions. Every element, every fluid, and every substance known in the animal economy, is undergoing some modification or change. Something is, in this sense, constantly being created in our bodies.

The food which we eat is analyzed and appropriated by the gastric fluid and the digestive functions; and one portion thereof goes to the formation of bone, another portion to the formation of muscle, another to nerves, another portion creates new veins and arteries; and the most sublimated part goes to the formation or creation of that spiritual principle by which the whole system is moved and illuminated. This familiar illustration is sufficient to impress a definite idea of what constitutes creation, and how the atoms, fluids, and elements in universal nature change and circulate from the centre of eternal power to the uttermost manifestations of boundless infinity.

Now, to ask if all matter will become spirit, would be admitting into the mind the possibility of that which was uncreated ceasing to exist. This question is not consistent with the fundamental grounds of all our reasoning, and therefore the question answers itself in the negative. God is a spirit, and the ultimate of his creation, or the proliferation of his spirit in nature, develops corresponding embodiments, which we term human spirits. Spirit will produce spirit, as a flower will produce a flower.

The question moreover implies the possibility of a final termination; and I think your mind was impressed with an idea that a time will arrive in the future when creation will be complete; that matter will all be distilled into spirit; that human souls will reach their "final home," and that universal progression will end. All the matter composing our earth will be refined into spirit, and all the matter which we can see in the form of suns and

planets in the boundless firmament, will ultimately be converted into spirit; but then there still remains a universe of matter—a boundless universe of materials—unspiritualized, and material, too, millions of times lower than the earth in the scale of progress and refinement, or than is the granite rock now beneath the refinement of the human spirit. Therefore to our very limited capacity of comprehension, all matter will become spirit; but to the illimitable capacity of the Central Soul, and compared with the inexhaustible materials composing his physical constitution, a very little portion of matter will seem thus converted.

2. *To what end will unspiritualized matter be appropriated?* This question implies the supposition that the process of creation—of progress and development—will ultimately cease, and that final arrangements will take place; that every thing will have a position and occupation assigned to it, and that eternal fixedness will pervade infinity. But although this hypothesis is not allowable in our philosophy of everlasting progress, there is an answer to the question. It is this: When the present structure of the universe shall have served so far as it is capable, the purposes of material refinement and spiritual development, and has converted as much matter into human spirits as its innumerable and immeasurable arrangements will perform, then the refuse materials will fall back into that "unimaginable ocean of liquid fire," and a new structure will be developed. Before the present order of the universe will change, more than what we now term an eternity of time will have passed away. But the change must and will come. And every re-construction of the universe will be an infinite improvement upon the preceding structure. And the ultimate creations or unfoldings of each succeeding structure will infinitely transcend the developments of those universes which have and will thus sink into the oblivious past. Thus the unspiritualized portion of matter will subserve the purposes of a new creation. And it is thus that the principles of Association, Progression, and Development, exert their united and perpetual influence upon the empire of worlds, of which our earth is but a very insignificant portion.

3. *What difference is there between*

*Matter and Spirit?* Almost all words which describe the quality of anything, are relative—they have a relative significance. We speak generally from contrast. Indeed, in a universe like this—so replete with varieties and differences—it is almost impossible to employ any other than relative words to communicate our ideas. The general opinion is, as you are doubtless aware, that spirit is something *entirely* unlike matter. But reason refers us immediately to *this* simple conclusion: that spirit is something; and *something* must be substance, or else it would be *no* thing; or else, in plainer language, there could be no such a *thing* as spirit. Receiving reason, then, as our guide to truth, we cannot resist the conviction that spirit is substance, and in the absence of a better word, we term that substance “matter.” We must not confound the question under consideration with those of a similar character. The question is not respecting the source from which the spirit proceeded, nor the elements and principles involved in its indestructible constitution, but it is, What *difference* is there between matter and spirit?

I answer,—Spirit is a word which signifies, in my mind, an organization of matter in the highest state of advancement, refinement, and perfection. Spirit is an indissoluble *unity* of the finest particles of matter. There is as much difference between spirit and electricity as there is between electricity and the common earth; but electricity is matter, and so is spirit. If we were above the plane of material development, where spiritual organization takes place, then we would be surrounded with illustrations and analogous processes: but as it is, you will readily perceive that a spirit cannot investigate and comprehend itself, and hence the *obscurity* which gathers around the investigation after we pass a certain point in the attempt to get above and look down upon the spiritual organization. But the *difference* between the *apple* and the appearance and substance of the *tree* which gave it birth and individuality, or between the wild rose and the rocky and mossy substances which gave that rose its nourishment and beauty, is not less strikingly wonderful than the difference which exists between the *matter we see* and the *spirit we feel*. Detach the apple from the tree, and compare it with the form and substance of that tree, and you have a no less powerful contrast than that which we find when comparing what we *feel* and *know* of spirit with what we can *see* and *handle* of matter. The phenomena of the former are no more understood and appreciated than the phenomena of the latter. Spirit is *organized* and *eternalized* at the highest point to which *gross*, or what is termed inanimate matter, can ascend. Spirit is, therefore, matter in the highest state of refinement and organization; and the *difference* consists simply in this: *matter* is gross, inferior, and external—and *spirit* is refined, superior, and interior. The terms *matter* and *spirit* are thus indicative of the *difference* in the condition, form, and influence of the same substance, and nothing more.

4. *Are Soul, Spirit, and Mind synon-*

*ymous, or are they not?* I am thankful for this question, because no opportunity has presented itself, since the delivery of those lectures which compose the “Revelations,” when an explanation seemed appropriate. And I have not been insensible to the vast amount of obscurity and contradiction which the diversified employment of these terms has produced among those who have struggled to become philosophically metaphysical, and even among those who consider themselves already accomplished reasoners.

Some philosophers, and Swedenborg among the number, consider and affirm that the *soul* is the outermost enveloping medium; that the *spirit* is the intermediate or conjunctive medium, and that the *mind* is the seat or centre of the thinking principle. Thus what I denominate *Life* is sometimes termed *Soul*; what I denominate *sensation*, is sometimes termed *Spirit*, and what I denominate *intelligence* is sometimes termed the *Mind*. Theologians, I believe, do not attempt to discriminate between these progressive states of human individuality. I except, of course, the metaphysical portion of that profession. Now, in order to prevent misunderstanding hereafter, at least among those inquiring individuals who read what I have produced or may produce, I cheerfully respond to the question:

1. I consider *Motion* the *first* manifestation of mind—an indication of the *Great Mind* which resides back of, and in, Nature; and a *prophetic* indication of the existence of a *corresponding* mind as an *ultimate* or perfection of Nature.

2. I consider *Life* the *first* development of Motion, and the second indication of Intelligence.

3. I consider *Sensation* the *first* development of Life, and the third indication of future or ultimate Intelligence.

4. I consider *Intelligence* the *highest* development of *Motion, Life, and Sensation*, and a perfect manifestation of the internal living and unchangeable organization. And when I employ the terms *Soul, Spirit, and Mind*, I mean the *internal and immortal Individual*. When Motion, Life, Sensation, and Intelligence are conjoined and organized, I term that organization a unity of elements and attributes; and these elements and attributes arrange according to their natural order, under the comprehensive terms of *Love and Wisdom*—terms which are perfectly expressive of the natural characteristics and legitimate manifestations of those internal principles. Therefore when I used the nouns substantive—*Soul, Spirit, Mind, and Individual*—the thought which suggests their employment is resting *invariably* upon the inward *homo*, upon the individual *oneness*, which is constructed upon those principles which elevate that *oneness* above the plane of change and disorganization. Hence the question is answered affirmatively—the terms are unqualifiedly synonymous.

5. *Where will the Spirit reside?* This question was suggested in your mind by admitting the supposition that there will be an *end* to matter in the form of worlds; because, if material worlds cease to exist, the mind cannot reasonably imagine any local habitation for the myriads of indi-

vidual souls which would claim a residence somewhere in the solitudes of immensity. And also it seems that your mind was pervaded with an undefined idea that “*final*” destinations will be gained by all souls and everything. But as matter is eternal, and souls progress forever, according to what has been stated in answer to questions on that head, therefore the present interrogatory demands a different answer.

I have said that the present structure of the universe will ultimately change, and that a *new* universe will come forth, and that *new* and *higher* creations will be the inevitable consequence. Now when all words of material organization shall have performed their respective missions in the individualization of immortal spirits, and each world shall have disorganized and fallen back into its original vortex of chaos, then where will the spirit reside? The question comes in naturally here, and here the answer will be best understood, because it is necessary.

After the individual souls leave this planet (and all planets in universal space which yield such organizations of matter,) they ascend to the *second* sphere of existence. Here *all* individuals undergo an angelic discipline, by which every physical and spiritual deformity is removed, and symmetry reigns throughout the immeasurable empire of holy beings. When all spirits shall have progressed to the second sphere, the various earths and planets in the universe, which once swarmed with life and animation, will be depopulated, and not a *living thing* will move upon their surfaces. And so there will be no destruction of life in that period of disorganization, but the earths, and suns, and planets will die—their life will be absorbed by the Divine Spirit. God is positive—all else is negative. He will expand his inmost capacity, and *attract* the glowing elements of His being which permeate the boundless expanse of matter; and all matter which is not organized into spirit, will die and fall into his original condition. But the inhabitants of the *second* sphere will ultimately advance to the *third*, then to the *fourth*, then to the *fifth*, and lastly to the *sixth*. This sixth sphere is as near the great Positive Mind as spirits can ever locally or physically approach. It is greater than all the others. It encircles infinity. It is in the neighborhood of the divine aroma of the Deity; it is warmed and beautified infinitely by His infinite Love; and it is illuminated and rendered unspeakably magnificent by His all-embracing Wisdom. In this ineffable sphere, in different stages of individual progression, will *all* spirits dwell. They will be held together by the attractive emanations of Deity, like the safe protection of an infinite belt, which will embrace the entire sphere in which will reside incalculable multitudes of created and eternalized souls. The Universal Father will thus gather to himself all the images of his creation—all the diversified members of his household; and thus “the house of many mansions” will be completely occupied by the various members of the ingathered family. This may be considered as the home of the spirit; but still

greater missions and blessings will determine the paths in which every conjugally united *oneness* will tread—paths strewn with innumerable and immeasurable worlds of beauty and harmony.

When all spirits arrive at the sixth sphere of existence, and the protecting Love and Wisdom of the Great Positive Mind are thrown tenderly around them; and when not a single atom of life is wandering from home in the fields and forests of immensity, then the Deity contracts his inmost capacity, and forthwith the boundless vortex is convulsed with a new manifestation of Motion—Motion transcending all our conceptions, and passing to and fro from centre to circumference, like mighty tides of Infinite Power. Now the law of Association or *gravitation* exhibits its influence and tendency in the formation of new suns, new planets, and new earths. The law of progression or *refinement* follows next in order, and manifests its unvarying tendency in the production of new forms of life in those planets; and the law of development follows next in the train, and exhibits its power in the creation of new plants, animals, and human spirits upon every earth prepared to receive and nourish them. Thus God will create a new universe, and will display different and greater elements and energies therein. And thus new spheres of spiritual existences will be opened. These spheres will be *as much* superior to the present unspeakable glorious of the sixth sphere, as the sixth sphere is *now* above the second sphere, which is next superior to the sphere of earth. When the new and superior universe is completely unfolded, or when the new heavens and the new earths are developed, the spirits in the sixth sphere will be again in the second sphere; because the *highest* sphere in the *present* order of the universe will constitute the *second* sphere in the *new* order which is to be developed. Thus there will be *four* spheres for the spirits and angels at the consummation of the *new* unfolding, to advance through, as there are now *four* between the *second* sphere and the sixth which we have been considering.

There have already been developed more new universes, in the manner described, than there are atoms in the earth. And I suppose it is scarcely necessary to state that the human mind is incapable of computing the millions of centuries which are required for even those souls that now inhabit the second sphere, to progress into the one above it—into the third sphere. And it would be still more useless to state that as many millions of such eternities as we can possibly conceive of, will roll into the past *ere we begin* to approach that change of universal relations of which I have spoken.

But I have answered the question.—The spirit will have no “final home;” because, to an immortal being, *rest* would be intolerable,—it would be next to annihilation, and greater than the perfect concentration of all the miseries of the fabled hell. But the spirit will progress eternally! It will always be in harmony with surrounding circumstances, and thus will always reside in heaven. The same

differences will exist in future spheres of life as exist in this world. I mean those differences which are established by the real *intrinsic* perfection of the constitution, education, and harmony of the individual. But the spirit will walk in those shining paths which angels tread, in opening communications between the celestial inhabitants of celestial spheres and those high-born spirits of our earth. Let us, then, live justly, truly, and purely; because by so doing, our position will be commanding and glorious in those numberless spheres where the spirits will reside.

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## SPIRITS.

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PARENTAL, IMMORTAL, HAPPY.

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### DEATH.

The following account of death is from “The Great Harmonia,” by A. J. Davis, (the perusal of which we have often recommended to our readers,) and purports to be a communication which Mr. Davis received from the spirit of the far-famed Athenian law-giver and philosopher, Solon, who thus speaks of his own translation from this world to the one above:

Being prostrated with disease for several weeks, it was easy to mark the progress of those physical changes to the final change, which is termed death.—This final change came upon me as my spirit was audibly deploring the fate of my dearly-beloved country. The sun had not yet disappeared in the West, when I was prompted to bid my friends farewell; and the change, like slumber, crept over me.

As my sleep deepened, the room I occupied, together with the objects and persons therein, gradually faded away. The more I strove to maintain a consciousness of things about me, the more unconscious I became; until every avenue which appeared to connect me with the outer world, was entirely, and, as I thought, everlastingly closed. *Fear* and *desire* constituted the last links in the chain of life, lengthened to the end, which seemed about severing forever. I feared lest the waves should not give up my scattered ashes, and waft them to the New Atlantis Isles; and my *desire* was unto the gods, that their celestial presence should attend my death and revivify the divine power which animated my bodily frame. Immediately upon analyzing these oppressive thoughts, I experienced a sudden rush of all the divine power (which dwelt in the hands and feet) into my encephalon or head. This was accompanied with a soft, tranquilizing sensation that pervaded my entire nature, which peaceful calm was speedily followed by a state of total unconsciousness. How long I remained thus I could not tell; but I experienced a full return of the consciousness of my personality.—This restoration of life was accompanied with many new and sweet influences, and my expanding thoughts caused me suddenly to feel that I could now understand

more concerning the gods, and comprehend the nature of the soul's resurrection. A super-consciousness pervaded me, and my spirit was endowed with immortal sensibilities. The instant I realized, or thought I realized, this truth, my breast freely inhaled the soft and silvery air; my heart swelled with emotion, and beat the musical pulsations which would naturally flow from an harmonious instrument.—Inspired with these exalted sensations, and not realizing my spirit's departure from the body which I had hitherto inhabited, I strove again to open my eyes that I might again behold my friends, and relate to them the melody of my soul. I supposed that I should not die, and that I had but passed through a metamorphosis from illness and suffering to a renewed condition of life, which, endowing me with a superior power, would enable me to instruct and legislate for the Athenians.

Gradually my senses opened, and lo! instead of seeing the external forms of my friends, *I beheld their interior life, and read their inmost thoughts*—I saw them deploring, in tears, the departure of some dearly-beloved one from their midst; and directing my perceptions to where I saw them gaze, I beheld (in their thoughts,) the body which I myself had worn. I strove to tell them that that deserted tenement was nothing, and that I possessed a body and stood among them; but instantly I saw there could be no communication between us, because they were living in one condition of being and I in another; they could converse only through the instrumentality of the material senses, and I could discourse only through the pure mediums of thought and desire. But I was too highly inspired with new and comprehensive conceptions to bestow much desire upon my friends in their attendance beside the lifeless body which lay before me. I internally knew that it would yet be well with them; and this knowledge made me wholly passive concerning their feelings and destiny. Now my interior spiritual senses were soothingly closed; and now my exalted sensibilities gathered themselves into friendly groups throughout my nature. In a few moments I passed into a calm and profound slumber.

I was aroused from this serene and partial state of unconsciousness by experiencing a peculiar breathing sensation upon my face and head, whereupon my eyes opened, and I beheld in the scenes and forms about me, more concentrated love and friendship, more grandeur and magnificence, than thou canst understand. Thou couldst not comprehend, or record, what I saw. Shall I tell thee that I realized the divine resurrection, which the gods had promised the early inhabitants of the earth? Shall I tell thee that I stood upon the New Atlantis Isle? Yea, I believed the gods were faithful, and that the glorious *republic* of immortal duration had arisen from out of the divine Salamis! A pure, serene air constantly entered my breast; my ear was entranced with the most liquid and silvery music, which seemed to float upon the atmosphere; and my eyes contemplated a boundless and magnificent country. Anon,

I was inspired or penetrated with a divinity of ineffable sweetness. And a thought came before me, and said,—“*Seek thou the things which draw thee most.*” And immediately I was attracted to a group of friendly persons, whom I beheld conversing near me. What a thrill of unutterable joy ran through my now exalted nature, when among them I discovered and embraced two of the dearest friends I ever knew in Athens! This meeting so unexpected and sweet, imparted to my soul more happiness than I had ever enjoyed on earth; and from that moment I began to unfold in Love and Wisdom. It was only by perpetual development I learned that the gods did not bring me thither; and that the glorious country of which I had become an inhabitant, was not, as I had supposed, the new-born republic of the isle of the sea. No. I learned of my higher life, and progressed to understand that I lived in a tenfold more heavenly state than my earthly imaginings had dreamed of,—because each inferior faculty of my nature was drawn up into intimate conjunction with the True, the Good, and the Divine!

Thou seest now what a simple and ennobling process it is to die. Thou seest now that there is no “valley” of fearful “shadows” to pass through; and that “death” is *not* “an everlasting sleep.” But I must tell thee that *it is only the good who die sweetly; for the troublesome or troubled spirit is sometimes not quieted*, until after it has been for a considerable length of time removed from the earth, and until it has experienced the subduing and disciplining influences which pervade this divine habitation.

The earth’s inhabitants will now see (even though they do not believe it) that to die is to be born again; and that to die sweetly, they should think, act, and unfold in harmonious order; for the flower must have blossomed, though in rude places, peacefully and purely, out of whose heart rich fragrance flows to heaven!

[From the Spirit Messenger.]

### THE SPIRIT WORLD.

Messrs. Munn & Ambler,—Your beautiful paper, abounding in spiritual food, reaches us regularly through the mail, every Saturday morning, and its contents are eagerly perused by the little group of readers here. I am particularly interested in those items of spiritual responses which occasionally appear; and presuming such matter to be acceptable to others, I will endeavor to give some little account of the manifestations in this city.

As early as August last, I heard, in the silent hours of the night, rappings which I believed to be produced by spirits. Ever after that I had great faith that the advent of spiritual communication in this place was very near. In the latter part of September, my sister, Mrs. E. P. Johnson, made a visit to the family of Mr. Sunderland, in Charlestown, and although a disbeliever till then, she was thoroughly convinced of the reality of spiritual responses, after witnessing the manifestations there. She returned de-

lighted with the result of her visit, and much interested in the progress of spiritual communion. An account of her conversations there with the spirit of my father, (who has been an inhabitant of the spirit-world twenty-five years,) she immediately communicated to the public through the columns of the Providence Daily Post. But her zeal did not end here. In pursuance of instructions given her by Mr. Sunderland, she commenced having sittings, to discover a “medium,” and in a short time was successful. It was my happiness to be present at her residence on the occasion when was given the first spiritual response ever made in this city. The spirit who first communicated with us spelled his own name, and also the name of the young lady whose organism afforded the necessary “medium”—Miss HARRIET THORP. And here it may not be uninteresting to say that the announcement of both the names took each of our little company entirely by surprise. Indeed, the responses had continued for nearly half an hour, while we all supposed *no* other person to be the medium. We remained till a late hour, conversing with our guardian angels, and receiving the most convincing evidence that the spirits of our departed friends are ever near, watching over us with a love unknown on earth.

The news of the “Spirit Rappings” spread through the city as if upon the wings of the wind, and soon the house of Mrs. Thorp (the mother of the medium,) was overrun with visitors, eager to listen to the mysterious noises. So great was the interest manifested, that some of the friends here thought best to send for Mr. Sunderland’s daughter (Mrs. Cooper,) to visit us. An invitation was accordingly extended, and Mr. Sunderland and his daughter came on, and remained nearly a week. Mrs. Cooper gave two sittings a day, to which large numbers were attracted. Many who had buried their friends with the gloomy impression that they would never again hear from them till they, too, had passed the “dark valley,” here, for the first time, found a living demonstration of their presence, their happiness, and their heavenly love and sympathy. Here the “mourner was comforted,” and here the skeptic found assurance of immortality. Never do I desire to forget the happy scenes I witnessed in that circle. While here, Mr. Sunderland gave three public lectures on the Spirit World, and at each of them audible responses were made by the spirits.

A few hours before Mrs. Cooper left her friends here for her home in Charlestown, the guardian spirits of Miss Thorp (the medium above referred to,) called for the alphabet, and spelled out, “Get Harriet to come here.” She was sought out and came, when the spirits proceeded to give her advice in regard to her proceedings as a *medium*. The next day, a few of her friends being together, the spirits gave direction in detail for future sittings, and spelled out the names of persons to act as a committee to carry out the arrangements. Since that time (November 3d,) the sittings have been conducted precisely in accordance with the directions of the spirits, and have been attended

with remarkable success. Here, had I space, I would like to sketch a few of the beautiful incidents which have occurred at the private meetings of the committee, and at the regular sittings. Perhaps at some future time, should this meet with acceptance, I will resume the pen for this purpose. For the present, suffice it to say, that from the first the responses have been of the most elevating character, and have afforded to the friends and lovers of truth “great joy in believing.”

The above is but a meagre outline of the progress of the manifestations in a *single locality* here. New mediums are being discovered weekly, and almost daily. It is computed that there are at least *thirty* in this city, who, in their respective circles, daily afford the most gratifying manifestations from the heavenly messengers. Yet these glorious truths are not promulgated without opposition. Sectarians and bigots are busy in hurling the shafts of wrath and bitterness at this new invasion of their church-patented dogmas. But surely there is no occasion for fear in regard to the ultimate triumph of these manifestations; for have not the hosts of heaven put their hands to the work? and will not God prosper them?

S. WEBSTER.

Providence, R. I., Dec. 9, 1850.

### LITCHFIELD, O.

There have been, the past week, some “Spirit Knockings,” at Litchfield, in this county. The scene of operations has been at Deacon Stevens’s house, and the clairvoyants were the Deacon’s daughters and Mrs. Doctor Fossett. We have conversed with a gentleman of that town, who was present at one exhibition of the rappings, Sunday before last.

Mrs. F. was the clairvoyant, and revelations from deceased friends in the upper world were given by distinct raps on the walls or floor of the house, in answer to the different questions asked of the spirit. Some of the questions were very satisfactory, while others were not answered correctly. Our friend thought he watched carefully, but could not discover the cause of the knockings, and firmly believes that they were from an invisible spirit.

Our friend asked questions of a deceased brother-in-law who had been suddenly killed a short time since, and received answers from him by raps upon the wall or floor, or such other parts of the house as our friend asked that they might be made. He assured us that when the rappings were made upon the floor, that they fairly jarred him from his feet, so strongly were they made.

Our friend is firmly of the belief that they are produced in a supernatural manner. One revelation made last week was that the Orthodox religion was not Orthodox in every respect; and so great was the effect produced by it that the Deacon and his family withdrew from the Congregational church, in consequence, and have since embraced a very different faith. We have not room to say anything further in this paper, but may hereafter.—*Jonesville Telegraph.*

## EDITORIAL.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, JAN. 18, 1851.

## "MEDIUMS."

It is now generally understood in what sense this term is used, when speaking of communications from the Spirit World. In philosophy it means the *space*, or *substance*, through which a body moves, or passes to any point. Thus, ether is said to be the medium through which the planets move; air is the medium through which bodies move near the earth; water is the medium in which fishes live; and glass a medium through which light shines, &c. We find it, therefore, in perfect harmony with the known laws of nature, when we are told that spiritual communications are made to mortals only through appropriate mediums. That is, certain persons, combining a spirit in an external body, are found so constituted that spirits who have left the external body, when near to these mediums, can make themselves known to the external world. Hence, if it be inquired why spirits cannot do this or that without a "medium," we ask why you cannot *see*, or *hear*, or *feel* without a medium? Or rather, perhaps, it might be sufficient to reply, that as, confessedly, we all have everything to learn about the Spirit World, it is scarcely becoming in mortals to commence this investigation by assuming what should or should not be the conditions on which spirits may communicate with us. We can theorize after we get hold of the facts.

Those for whom these remarks are intended, admit the facts. They admit that communications are made through certain persons, called mediums, from spirits who once lived in bodies as we do now. But some have complained that these mediums are not always *reliable*. Indeed, it would seem to be a matter of doubt, whether a majority of all the mediums known are what we should denominate *RELIABLE*. We have found as much difference in them as we usually find in the clairvoyant powers or persons in a state of trance. And out of the hundreds, and even thousands, of somnambulists throughout the country, how very few of them are clairvoyant, or sufficiently so to be always relied upon? And now, as "mediums" for spiritual manifestations are becoming more and more common, as was promised in the beginning, it is to be expected the same difficulties will, of course, occur, which we always have to meet with in the commencement of all of Nature's works.

If, as the Providence Mirror says, there are now "over one hundred mediums" in that city, and they are multiplied in a sim-

ilar ratio in other places, a sufficient reason will be seen for the remarks made here upon this subject.

We know of quite a number of mediums, but candor compels us to add, that we know but very few who are *reliable*. And we mean, by such mediums, that responses are always given through them, which, as we know, are concordant and satisfactory. In the case of mediums not reliable, the answers are often discordant, and at other times, no answers of any kind are given. Through mediums that are *reliable* you always get answers, and such answers as when understood, may be fully depended upon. Through mediums that are not reliable, you often fail to get any answers at all, and those you do get are discordant, and therefore unsatisfactory. In such cases, there may not be any moral fault, either on the part of the spirits, or the medium through whom they attempt to make themselves known. To illustrate: Suppose a mathematician should attempt to answer questions through a mere child. Would the philosopher be likely to make himself fully understood to any but children? But it may be asked, why a philosopher (or spirit) should attempt to speak through a child? Answer,—The child is the only one present, at the time, who understood the language in which *one* of the parties speaks.

How is it with physicians? Are they all equally reliable? And do the most skilful and worthy always attract practice, according to their real merits?

And thus we must be guided by observation and experience in determining with regard to the difference in the reliability of mediums. We shall know when we learn; and what we learn by experience will be the most valuable knowledge in the future.

## HENRY C. GORDON.

We were much gratified on seeing the following testimony, published in the "Spirit Messenger" of January 4th. It is signed by "Members of the Springfield Harmonial Circle;" but whether a part or the whole, does not appear. It would have been better had the names of the Circle been put to it:—

"Having enjoyed a favorable opportunity for investigating the phenomena of spiritual manifestations, as made in the presence of Mr. Gordon, the undersigned take pleasure in stating that in these manifestations the most complete and satisfactory evidence was presented of the presence and power of the invisible departed. From our acquaintance with Mr. Gordon, as a medium, we have reason to believe that so far as the sounds and manifestations are concerned, his integrity is unimpeachable, and that he would not knowingly or consciously deceive the public. It may be stated, however, as a circumstance which seems to

have been the cause of some misapprehension, that the individual referred to is highly susceptible to the magnetic power of spirits, and that under the influence of an impression which he is unable to resist, he occasionally endeavors to perform the very action which he *perceives to be in the mind of the spirit*. Of this peculiarity we were made fully aware at the commencement of our investigations, and throughout the whole have been unable to discover any evidences of deception, or even *secretiveness*, with regard to the assistance which he sometimes undesignedly renders the spirits, in being acted upon by their influence."

We have known Mr. Gordon for nearly four years. And the manner of our having become acquainted with him, (in a state of trance induced in a course of public lectures on Pathetism,) may, perhaps, have afforded us more than ordinary facilities for forming a just estimate of his true character. We believe him to be *truthful* and *honest*. His *Temperament* is *peculiar*. To describe it would scarcely be possible, such is the paucity of language when speaking on the mysteries of human nature. His *Individuality* (so to speak) would seem to be what we might denominate *ingestive* [see Pathetism, ed. of 1847, p. 31.] That is, his nervous system is so little under his own control, that he is involuntarily and unconsciously impressed or affected by human or spiritual associations, so as to destroy his normal condition. He is uncommonly *receptive* of influences; nor does he seem to have power to resist, as he is affected by them before he has any knowledge of what is about to take place. From a child he has been subject to spells of somnambulism, and was always exceedingly disposed to fall into a state of trance. Since he became a medium for spiritual manifestations this susceptibility has been very much increased; indeed, so much so, that it has become necessary for him to be constantly attended by a suitable companion. And such an one, we are happy in believing, he has found in the person of Mr. Horace R. Cooley, of Springfield, Mass.

We have no doubt but this extreme *susceptibility* in Mr. Gordon has been the occasion of the "misapprehensions" alluded to above. When at my house, a few weeks ago, he often sunk into a state of spontaneous trance. At one time, while reclining, in this state, on the arm of Mr. Cooley, I asked him if he had ever seen my spirit son, "Roy." He replied that he had not. This I believed, inasmuch as I had had no communication from the spirit of my son in his presence. Mr. Gordon immediately described my son and his signal, (five sounds, made in a peculiar manner.) Now this proved to my own mind that Mr. Gordon was highly clairvoyant and impressible by spirits, as he described and imitated the

signal of my son, which he had never known in the external world. And we can imagine how easy it may have been for some such occurrence to have suggested the "misapprehension" alluded to in the above, from the Spirit Messenger.

**A MARRIED MAN'S CONCEIT.**—Swedenborg says that though the virgins he saw in heaven were beautiful, the wives were incomparably more beautiful, and went on increasing in beauty evermore.

The above has often been repeated of Swedenborg. Now, will any one inform us when and where Swedenborg was himself married? And what does he say of the conjugal relation in heaven? Is there any spirit there without this relation? In what sense, then, can some spirits be called virgins?

**WASHINGTONIAN HALL.**—The friends of the Harmonial Philosophy meet in this hall every Sunday afternoon, at half past two. Discourses by W. M. Fernald. Subject for next Sunday—"The Compass and Power of Free Thought."

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

Worcester, Mass., Jan. 5, 1851.

Dear Sunderland,—It seems hardly possible for you to conceive of the great pleasure I have felt when perusing the "Spirit World." Still, you, being permitted daily to hold sweet and holy converse with angels, conversing with them with greater satisfaction than any individual can with terrestrial friends, must conceive *something* of the ecstasy that pervades my soul while feasting my mind with spiritual subjects, and those things relative to the Harmonial Philosophy now just dawning upon the world. Yes, the world has long enough been engulfed in the grossest and most absurd superstition, ignorance, and dogmatism. Reason, the highest attribute of man, has vacated its throne, and is the complete slave of that dogmatic and Calvinistic spirit which now fills the earth. But, my dear friend, how should we rejoice and take courage in these "latter days," at these unmistakable and ocular demonstrations of the emerging of the world into a state of peace and unity. The world is now, at the present time, passing into that state denominated, in the primitive history, the "period of a thousand years," or the "Millenium." That the earth is being purified by fire, and ere long there will be a "new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, happiness, peace, and unity."

The present age, to the uninitiated in the principles of the Harmonial Philosophy, is certainly one of wonder; and hence it is that the dogmatist and the wise in their own conceit, cry out "humbug" at the idea of spiritual communications.

This very morning I saw in one of our county papers a *pretended apology*, by the editor, for discarding a communication—written by some true friend, probably—

relating to spiritual intercourse now established in various places.

But we must expect to be scourged, derided, scoffed at, and made to endure all the sarcasm which they may be pleased to employ for its accomplishment. But of one fact we are certain, and that is, we know where we stand.

I wish you all the success which your mission demands. And you have the consoling thought that the angels of heaven are your counsellors by day and by night; and therefore you are not wholly dependant upon an arm of flesh.

Yours, in the bonds of friendship and truth,  
S. W. HIMES.

Bridgeport, Ct., Jan. 2, 1851.

Brother Dear,—Mrs. Mettler is well, and goes on her mission to-day, to New York. The spiritual manifestations are progressing. The spirits entrance numbers of the Circle. Last night we met at Brother Mettler's, and the spirits entranced Rev. S. B. Brittain, and he gave a beautiful lecture while in that state. Mrs. Mettler is also often entranced by spirits. We have glorious times.

Yours, in harmony.

### PATHETISM.

PHYSIOLOGY, PSYCHOLOGY, PHRENOLOGY.

[From the Providence Mirror.]

#### PATHETISM.

On Hearing "Human Magnetism" called "Impious."

BY MISS ANNA SAVAGE.

Call not the gift unholy,  
'Tis a fair and precious thing,  
That God has granted to our hands  
For gentlest ministering.  
Did mercy ever stoop to bless  
With dark unearthly spell?  
Could impious power whisper peace,  
The soul's deep throes to quell?  
Would evil seek to work but good,  
To lull the burning brain,  
And linger in some scene of woe  
Beside the bed of pain;  
To throw upon the o'er-fraught heart  
The blessing of repose;  
Untiring watch the eye of care  
In healing slumber close;  
And as the agony of grief  
Fell 'neath the spirit's will,  
O'er the wild billows of despair  
Breathe tenderly—Be still!  
Speak gently of the new-born gift,  
Restrain the scoff and sneer,  
And think how much we may not learn  
Is yet around us here.  
What paths there are where Faith must lead  
That Knowledge cannot share,  
Though still we tread the devious way,  
And feel that Truth is there.  
Say, is the world so full of joy—  
Hath each so fair a lot,  
That we should scorn one bounteous gift,  
And, scorning, use it not,  
Because the finite thought of man  
Grasps not its hidden source?

Do we reject the stream

Because we cannot check its course?

Has Nature, then, no mystic law

We seek again to scan?

Can man, the master-piece of God,

Trace the unerring plan

That places o'er the restless sea

The bounds it cannot pass,

That gives the fragrance to the flower,

"The glory to the grass?"

Oh! Life with all its fitful gleams

Hath sorrow for its dower,

And with the wrung heart dwell the pangs

Of many a weary hour.

Hail, then, with gladness what may soothe

The aching brain to rest,

And call not impious that which brings

A blessing, and is blest.

The gladdened soul re-echoes praise

Where'er this power hath been,

And what in mercy God doth give,

O "call not thou unclean."

[From the Southwestern Christian Advocate.]

#### A LIVING WONDER.

Within five miles of Huntsville, Ala., there lives a negro boy. He was 17 years old last August, and weighs over 200 pounds. But this boy is not the wonder. It is his mind, if it may be said he has any.

On the 8th of June, 1844, Rev. John C. Burruss, Mr. T. Brandon, and myself, went to see him, and were amazed. From himself and Mr. McLemore, (his master) we learned that he has no idea of a God. When asked, "who made you?" he answered "nobody." He has never been but a few times half a mile from the place of his birth. He has not mind enough to do the ordinary work of a slave; eats and sleeps in the same house with the white folks, having his own table and bed. He will not ask for anything, nor touch food, however hungry, unless offered to him. He was never known to commence a conversation with any one, nor continue one, further than merely answering questions in the fewest words. He speaks very low and tardily. He has never been known to utter a falsehood, or to steal, and seldom gets angry; will not strike a dog or anything else; but when vexed by his sister he will take hold of her arm as if he would break it with his hands. He cannot be persuaded to taste intoxicating liquors. His utter aversion to this bane, is either the result of his having seen its effects on his master, or it is instinctive. He has never manifested any predilection for the sex. There is nothing remarkable in the configuration of his head or his countenance, save that his eye is uncommonly convex, and continually rolling about, with a wild and glaring expression. His laugh and movements are perfectly idiotical. He does not know a letter or figure. With all, in one respect, he is the most extraordinary human being I ever saw. Almost his only manifestations of mind, is in relation to numbers. His power over numbers is at once extraordinary and incredible. Take any number under 100, and ask him its product when multiplied into itself, or into any other number, and he

will state it at once, as readily as any one can give the sum of 12 times 12. He multiplies thousands, adds, subtracts, divides with the same certainty, though with more mental labor. He has, however, no idea of numbers above millions.

With pencil and paper we made the following calculations, and asked him the questions thus:—

"How much is 99 times 99?" He answered immediately, 9801. "Well, how much is 74 times 86 1-2?" He answered, 6401. "How many 9s in 2000?" He answered 222 nines and 2 over. "How many 15s in 3356?" He answered, 323 fifteens, and 11 over. "How much is 307 and 983?" He answered, 1290. "If you take 21 from 85, how many will be left?" He answered, 64. "If you take 5211 from 6920, how many will be left?" He answered, 1809.—"How much is 7 times 9, 22 and 14?" He answered, 99. "How many is 17 times 17, and 16?" He said 305. "If you have to give one dollar and a half for one chicken and a half, how much would you have to give for two chickens?" He immediately said "Two dollars."

"If a stick, standing straight up, three feet long, make a shadow five feet long, how high would a pole be that has a shadow thirty feet long?" At this, he put his hand to his chin, drew himself up and gave a silly laugh. His master said he did not understand such as that. We then asked him how much is 3333 times 5555? In this instance, as in some of the others, he looked serious, began to twist about in his chair, pick his clothes, and finger nails, put the points of his thumbs to his teeth, move his lips a little, and then his countenance would give indications of mental agony, and so on. His master told him to walk about and rest himself. He went into the yard and appeared to be alternately elated with rapture, and depressed with gloom. He would run, jump up, throw his arms into the air, about his head, and then stand still, then drag his foot over the weeds, look up and down; in a word, he made all sorts of crazy motions. We sat down to dine, and when we arose we found him on the piazza sitting perfectly composed. On being told that he had done it, I said, "How much is it?" He answered, 18,514,815. "What?" said I. He replied, 18,514,815.

We could get no clue to the mental process by which he ascertained such results. When asked how he did it, his unvarying answer was, "I studies it up." But what do you do first, and what next? He merely drawled out, "I studies it up." He did not count his fingers, nor anything external, nor indeed did he seem to count at all, and yet he combined thousands and millions, and played with their combinations, just as others would with units. All the instruction he ever received was from his master, who learned him to count one hundred; and would ask him how many twenties in a hundred, and how many fives, &c.

On the following Monday, I saw him again and asked him what was that hard sum I gave him last Saturday. He replied, "3333 times 5555." On Saturday we told him there were 365 days in a

year, and 24 times that would give the hours, which he said was 8760; sixty times that, the minutes; and he said 5,256,000; and sixty times that, the seconds; and he said 31,536,000. On Monday I asked how many seconds in a year, and he recollected the number. Being asked how much is 24 1-2 times 48 1-2, he answered, 1188. How much is 15 times 41, and 78 and 7? He said, 700. How many 33s are there in 777? He said, 25 thirty-threes and 18 over. His recollection of numbers is almost as wonderful as his power to combine them. I submit these facts to the consideration and reasoning of mental philosophers; for whoever has carefully read this paper, knows as much as I know of this living wonder.

JOHN W. HANNER.

Huntsville, Ala., July 11, 1844.

It is extraordinary, and shows the demoralizing influence of slaveholding, that the idea never seems to have occurred to any of these wonderers, that it was possible to educate, or even to emancipate the possessor of this uncommon intellectual faculty.

#### STRANGE ACT OF SOMNAMBULISM.—

A most singular instance of somnambulism is that of a deceased Hampshire baronet. This gentleman was nearly driven to distraction by the fact that every night he went to bed in a shirt, and every morning awoke naked, without the smallest trace of the missing garment being discovered. Hundreds of shirts disappeared in this manner; and as there was no fire in his room, it was impossible to account for the mystery. The servants believed their master to be mad; and even he began to fancy himself to be bewitched. In this conjuncture he implored an intimate friend to sleep in the same room with him, and ascertain by what manner of midnight visitant his garment was so strangely removed. The friend accordingly took his station in the haunted chamber; and lo! as the clock struck one, the unfortunate baronet, who had previously given audible intimation of being fast asleep, rose from his bed, rekindled with a match the candle that had been extinguished, then deliberately opened the door, and quitted the room. His astonished friend followed; saw him open, in succession, a variety of doors, and pass along several passages, traverse an open court, and eventually reached the stable yard, where he divested himself of his shirt, and disposed of it in an old dung heap, into which he thrust it by means of a pitch-fork. Having finished this extraordinary operation, without taking the smallest heed of his friend, who stood looking on, and plainly saw that he was walking in his sleep, he returned to the house, carefully reclosed the doors, re-extinguished the light, and returned to bed, when the following morning he awoke as usual, stripped of his shirt! The astonished eye-witness of the extraordinary scene, instead of apprising the sleep-walker of what had occurred, insisted that a companion should sit up with him; choosing to have additional testimony to the truth of the statement he was about to make, and the same sin-

gular events were renewed, without the slightest change or deviation. The two witnesses accordingly divulged all they had seen to the baronet; who, though at first incredulous, became, of course, convinced, when on proceeding to the stable yard, several dozens of shirts were discovered; though it was surmised that as many more had been previously removed by one of the helpers, who probably looked upon the hoard as stolen goods concealed by some thief.

**DEFECTIVE VISION.**—One of the earliest evidences of old age is defective sight, and the opinions hitherto held respecting the cause of this, have been various. A letter has lately appeared in the London and Edinburgh Philosophical Magazine, from a Mr. R. T. Cranmore, England, respecting a discovery made by him, which will appear singular to many, because the flattening of the cornea has hitherto been held to be the cause of the loss of vision; and this is the reason why convex glasses are employed to restore it, and we believe this is the principle upon which Prof. Bronson acts to restore sight—but Mr. Cranmore, who has been defective in vision, states that he took a card and made two fine pin holes, exactly in the position of the centres of the pupils of the eyes, and he found that he saw the true image as correctly as he ever did in his life. To use his own words, "It supplied the place of a pair of spectacles."

By making the pin holes larger or smaller, the focal distance is increased or diminished proportionably. In sunshine he can read at the natural focal distance, but with faint light there is the common confusion of letters. A flattening of the cornea won't explain this. He thinks the cause to be "some want of contractibility engendered in old age in the iris." There is one curious fact which he has observed, viz: that fine wire gauze, of 1.50 of an inch in diameter, in meshes, enable him, when worn close to the eye, to read small print with great facility, at the distance of six inches; and when the meshes are still closer, he can see the most minute objects with remarkable distinctness. This is something for our optical instrument makers.

**SINGULAR PRESENTIMENT.**—The Baltimore Argus says that Mrs. Dorethea Foss, who died at her residence in Ensor street, near Madison, on Saturday evening, at the advanced age of 90 years, dreamed some nine years since that she would die on the 5th of April, 1845, and her acquaintances have often heard her state her presentiment. About two years ago she accidentally fell out of bed and broke her hip, and otherwise injured herself, so that all hopes of her recovery were given up; but she steadily insisted that she would get about again, and not die until the 5th of April, 1845, and singular though it may be, yet such is the fact, she did live until last Saturday, the 5th of April, and died on that day.

Descartes passionately loved a girl who squinted, and was always affected with strabismus when speaking to her.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

SCIENCE, EDUCATION, HEALTH.

## USE OF TOBACCO.

Whilst the means for the preservation of health have been materially advanced by the attention to exercise, by the external use of cold water, by moderation in food, by the curtailment of dinner parties, and more especially by the vast extension of abstinence from stimulant and intoxicating drinks, there is in one particular a decided and unhappy deterioration of our social habits. I refer to the increased use of tobacco.

Of the three modes of using tobacco, smoking is that which seems to have insinuated itself most extensively among the young of our community. Tobacco, employed in this way, being drawn in with the vital breath, conveys its poisonous influences into every part of the lungs. There the noxious fluid is entangled in the minute spongy air cells, and has time to exert its pernicious influence on the blood, not in vivifying, but in vitiating it. The blood imbibes the stimulant and narcotic principle, and circulates it through the whole system. It produces in consequence a febrile action in most individuals, and especially in those of a delicate habit. Where there is any tendency to phthisis and tubercular deposit in the lungs, the debility of these organs, consequent on the use of tobacco in this way, must favor the deposit of tuberculous matter, and thus sow the seeds of consumption. This practice impairs the natural taste and relish for food, lessens the appetite, and weakens the powers of the stomach. As to the pleasure produced by it, it is, I believe, a well-known fact, that a person smoking in the dark is often unable to determine whether his cigar is lighted or not.

Snuff received into the nostrils to some extent enters the cavities opening from them, fills those cavities, and makes a snuff-box of the olfactory apparatus. The voice is consequently impaired, sometimes to a remarkable degree. I knew a gentleman of the legal profession, who, from the use of snuff, occasionally lost the resonance of his voice and the power of speaking audibly in court. Moreover, portions of this powder are conveyed into the lungs and stomach, and exert on these organs their deleterious effects.

The worst form in which tobacco is used is in chewing. This vegetable is one of the most powerful of narcotics; a very small portion of it, say a couple of drachms, and perhaps less, received into the stomach, might prove fatal. When it is taken into the mouth in smaller portions, and there retained some time, an absorption into the system of a part of it, takes place, which has a most debilitating effect. If we wished to reduce our physical powers in a slow but certain way, we could not adopt a more convenient

The more limited and local effects are indigestion, fixed pains about the region of the stomach, in some cases looseness of the bowels, torpidity of these parts, debility of the back and of the organs in the lower part of the trunk of the body. In regard to this last point, much might be said of a striking character. To the consequences already mentioned, we may add affections of the brain, producing vertigo, (an effect well known to those who are in the habit of chewing tobacco,) and also affections of the mouth, generating cancer.

Tobacco is by some persons recommended as beneficial to the teeth, but while it can have no material effect in preserving the bony substance of the teeth, it has a real influence on their vitality, by impairing the healthy action of the gums. These, and also the adjacent parts, are very subject to cancer, particularly the tongue and lips. For more than twenty years past I have been in the habit of inquiring of patients, who came to me with cancers on those parts, whether they used tobacco, and if so, whether by chewing or smoking. If they have sometimes answered in the negative as to the first question, I can truly say, that to the best of my knowledge and belief, such cases of exemption are exceptions to a general rule. When, as is usually the case, one side of the tongue is affected with ulcerated cancer, the tobacco has been habitually retained in contact with this part. The irritation from a cigar, or even from a tobacco pipe, frequently precedes cancer of the lip. The lower lip is more commonly affected by cancer than the upper, in consequence of the irritation produced on this part by acrid substances, from the mouth.—Among such substances, what is more likely to cause a morbid irritation terminating in disease, than the frequent application of tobacco juice?

No one, I suppose, will understand that I intend to say that tobacco is a specific for the production of cancer. I mean to say that this substance, by its frequent application, irritates and diseases the parts to which it is applied, in the same way that any other acrid substance would do by frequent application. The want of attention to cleanliness, connected with this practice, and the consequent lodgment of the particles of tobacco on the surface of the lip, has, as already suggested, a great influence in these cases. This leads me naturally to inquire whether those who have been in the regular habit of general and exact cleanliness, are so often affected with external cancers, as others? My experience would lead me to believe that they are not so; but I do not feel myself authorized to enter here into detail upon this subject.—*Dr. Warren's Treatise on the "Preservation of Health."*

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