

J.W. Thompson & Son

SPiritual Telegraph

DEVOTED TO THE ILLUSTRATION OF SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE.

"THE AGITATION OF THOUGHT IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM."

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WHOLE NO. 178.

The Principles of Nature.

THE INSTINCT OF PROGRESS.

BY JAMES RICHARDSON, JR.

WHEN the poor worm feels his old coat growing too narrow for his free growth and expansion, and finds that he must have more room in which to develop himself, he neglects his food, forgets all other instincts, and is uneasy and restless till the desired change be accomplished. So, forever, the earth-worm, man, if true to his divinest instinct, is never content with the forms, and methods, and customs of the past, that confine him in their straitened limits, and restrain his free motion and development, but seeks new forms in which to expand himself. The old no longer satisfies him; he desires the new. The known ceases to suffice him, the unknown tempts him forward, and, as he goes continually onward and upward, the restless spirit cries out upon the past, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." And yet, as we listen to this restless cry, how apt are we to regard the wise preacher of the Hebrews as a discontented and unsatisfied soul, "seeking rest and finding none;" and to condemn, in no measured terms, that spirit of unrest, of never-ending and never-successful seeking, which he manifests.

It has been the custom to regard any discontent a man may manifest respecting his position and circumstances, and his physical or mental condition, as worthy of censure and rebuke; to look upon all, who are in any way restless and unsatisfied, as either foolish or impious, and to consider the man who is contented and mentally inactive, and at a stand-still, satisfied with what he has and with what he is, as alone wise and good. That not only a man must not desire a better position, a more comfortable house, finer grounds, and more elevated and influential sphere; but more especially, that he must not seek a truer Theology, a more perfect Religion, a purer Church, a more reasonable and consistent Philosophy, or a loftier Morality. That to cry out with a dissatisfied spirit, as he passes through the various forms, and ceremonies, and modes of faith about him, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity," is the weakness of an unstable nature. That any endeavor, any wish even, to modify his theology is but a foolish weakness—that it is heresy to overstep the bounds of his creed, or to go beyond the narrow pale of his sect; impetuosity to throw aside, or doubt even, the old book; irreverence to question the old priest; infidelity to forsake the old church; and very blasphemy to receive any new or farther revelation. That if a man is born a Catholic among Catholics, a Catholic he must always continue to be, no matter how much new and brighter light may dawn in upon his soul to lift him above his present darkness. That if he is born a Calvinist among Calvinists, or a Unitarian among Unitarians, he must remain so throughout eternity, no matter how much farther, deeper, and higher he may see, or how earnest may be his aspirations after something truer, better and happier. If he has begun life a Baptist, he must die a Baptist; if he was born a Mohammedan, a Mohammedan he must die; if he was at first a bigot and an ignoramus, he must live on a bigot and an ignoramus still; if he is born a brute and a slave, a brute and a slave he must remain forevermore.

A man who has belonged always to the same party—he is respectable. A man who has been always firmly and unchangeably bound to one sect, is quite venerable. He who has never gone beyond what he was first taught, or advanced beyond his earliest notions of truth; who has stood still at the very point where he first started; who has never grown a single inch beyond his boyish stature; who has progressed in nothing; who has never gone forward and reached upward, but has remained forever the same, fixed, stationary, rigid, immovable and lifeless; he alone is the man to be admired and respected—the one most honorable, most venerable, most worshipful. To think what always has been thought—that is praiseworthy; but to reach forward to new ideas, and thus to enlarge the sphere of human thought and knowledge, is altogether unpardonable; and to outrun his party, or out think his sect is damnable. He must rest content with things as they are; take the world, its customs, its institutions, and its beliefs, as it is, without any exertions, any expectation, any thought even, of improving it. "Choke up the little stream, lest it flow on and grow into a mighty river. Dwarf the tree into a poor, stunted bush. Drug the child, lest he shoot upward into a man. Check the over active, progressive, thinking mind, lest it outrun our creed, our sect, our party, or our church. Stint and crush, if need be, the aspiring spirit and the expanding soul. Perish all fresh, living thoughts, all new ideas, lost our old musty notions, our rotten institutions, our ancient and moldy doctrines, be overshadowed and destroyed." This is the view, far too commonly felt, expressed, and carried out in the conduct and lives of men. "Let the full grown man keep on the boy's jacket, no matter how much it may fetter the free action of his limbs, no matter how tight and chafing it may be to his expanded muscles, or how awkwardly his long arms may protrude the scanty sleeves. Keep the coat—the coat is old and time-honored—then keep the coat, though the man be fretted and worried—aye! though the man be destroyed. Keep the form, the institution, the creed, whether the man's soul can be expressed in it or not. Aye! keep the form and the creed, though the soul perish. Give the grown-up man the childish toy, the infant's rattle, still, and let him content himself with these; they sufficed him once, and why not now?" "That house is small and inconvenient; a man six feet high can not stand up in it without stooping; the windows are but sorry loopholes in the wall, and let in too little light for him to see." "What

matter? His fathers lived there, let him rest content; is it better I pray you than his fathers?" "It is old and rotten, it has been mended and patched till it can be repaired no longer, and the elements of nature must soon sweep it away. The house is no longer tenable." "What godless irreverence for ancient authorities, for the wise and good of past generations! Impious man! was not that house built by your pious grandfather?" "But the walls are decayed, the posts are failing, the building is falling into ruins." "Then perish in its ruins; better perish with the old than live in the new."

Such is the tone of the popular thought; such is the popular doctrine, and the popular life. With such a philosophy as this in the world of action and of business, where would have been our Manufactories, our gigantic Steamers, our Railways and our Telegraphs, with the stimulus to life and activity they have given to man—with the comforts, the luxuries, the blessings they have brought in their train? Where all our discoveries, inventions, and improvements in the physical sciences and useful arts of life? Where would have been the outward culture—the intelligence? Where would have been this glorious and ever-increasing civilization, that spreading over earth like a garment of light, is continually beautifying, elevating, and emboldening, more and more, this world of ours? And can we consent to be men in Science, gods in the wonderful creations of Art, and mere children, infants, ignoramuses, in morals, religion and theology—in the knowledge of our minds and souls, and in lofty and spiritual wisdom, as the popular rule would make us?

I thank God that this is an impossibility! I thank God that you can not build a Railway for the *physical* man to advance more swiftly on, without adding greater speed to thought, and quickening, by the diffusion of ideas, and the extension and reciprocal interchange of knowledge, the progress of the *Spiritual* man: that every invention in Art gives us a new proof of the divine power and wisdom in man, and thus humanizes and enlarges our Religion: that the discovery of every new law of the Universe increases our knowledge of the great Law-giver and thus widens and deepens our piety. That every advancement made in Science, which is the understanding and interpretation of Nature and her revelations, advances our acquaintance with the *Omniscient* Author of Nature; and that thus art and true piety, science and religion must, despite all opposition of ignorance, bigotry, and fanaticism, move forever hand in hand. That even the narrow-minded conservative and the very bigot himself, sees and feels the truth of this, their frequent bitter hostility to the progress of science and art, and to the advancement of philosophy, sufficiently proves. And he who thus stands forth in opposition to the advancement of science and philosophy, and to all progress in morals, theology, and religion—who chooses to remain where he is, without moving onward and enlarging his sphere of vision, widening his field of thought and attaining to higher and nobler views, and fuller and more extensive knowledge, seems to me a full grown man in the little coat and breeches of the boy, that are everywhere bursting out, revealing his poverty and his nakedness; or like a swathed and swaddled infant, sprawling on the ground, that can neither stand nor go save in leading strings, tickled still with the noise of his shaking rattle, and delighting still to be fed with pap from the spoon of the nursery priestess. And surrounded by such, we feel ourselves among imbeciles or savages. And whatever may be their circumstances and condition, and the outward and apparent civilization of their lot, they but resemble those barbarous chiefs, that the traveler sometimes meets in the wilds of benighted Africa, their heads adorned with the plumed hat of some plundered English officer, and their uncled shoulders glistening with shining epaulettes, but they themselves, despite their foreign adornments, naked, imbruted, ignorant, and savage still. Such are the men who have nothing of their own—no inward convictions of right, living principles of truth to depend on—but only the authority and traditions of the past and dead.

But however much the world—and that most worldly portion of it, the popular church—may ensure this restless and unsatisfied spirit, this desire of progress, this *moultling* of the Soul, that is ever aspiring after greater freedom, wisdom, and excellence; and however much it may exalt that inactivity of thought, that fixedness and rigidity, and that reverence for the past and authority, that stands in the way of all advancement, we shall endeavor to show that this dissatisfaction with the past—this discontent with our former views and opinions—with the ancient theology, the old sect, the worn out and insufficient philosophy—is not only natural, but noble and praiseworthy, but that it is necessary to all real improvement and progress.

And first: we say this dissatisfaction is natural.

As the infant grows into the child, as the child blooms into the youth, as the youth ripens into the man, he looks back with a smile of derision, with a sneer of contempt, or it may be with a tear of regret or pity upon the ideas, the pursuits, and the ambitions of his former state.

He says, with Paul of Ephesus, "when I was a child I thought as a child, I spoke as a child, but when I became a man I put away childish things." With him, too, "he counts himself not to have apprehended" or learnt all things. The chrysalis in its silken tomb has no desire to be again the poor crawling worm of the past, but is longing and preparing earnestly to spread its mystic and beautiful wings and soar aloft. The child never looks backward with the wish to be an infant again. And the youth scorns the childishness of those early days, and looks forward and presses onward to be a man. The man derides the ignor-

ance, the crudities and follies of his youth. And if the old man longs for youth again, it is no earthly rejuvenescence that he craves, but the pure, serene and immortal youth in the Spiritland, to which he is ever advancing. Man's eyes are not placed behind, that he should look backward, nor is his head like the brutes bent down to the earth, whence he sprung; but his eyes gaze forth from his forehead, and his face looks ever onward, and turns upward to his destined Heavens. And thus is it natural for man to be dissatisfied with the past and old, and reach forward to the future and the new. The infant drops the old accustomed toy when the new plaything is within its grasp. The child soon tires of the old play and the well-thumbed book. The smart little boy of the nineteenth century, true to the age in which he lives, plays horse no longer, nor mimics the rattling stage in his sports, but now he plays Railroads and sets up Telegraphs. And so the man, the real *live man* of active mind and soul, is never content with his present, but aspires ever to a higher, nobler future. The pictures that pleased his eye so much but yesterday, to-day seem coarse and soulless daubs. The music that so lately charmed his soul, as he comes to hear some deeper, grander harmony, some more thrilling melody, seems now but a poor discord. The writings that delighted him but one short year ago, and the preacher that stirred the very depths of his spirit then, seem now, perhaps, stale, flat and unprofitable, for he has gone beyond them now. "Milk for babes," he says; "strong meat for grown men!" What nourished his soul once, feeds it now no longer. And so his appetite rejects with loathing that which it craved of yore. The old book is thrown aside: "dust to dust, ashes to ashes." The old coat of theology or philosophy has become too straight and narrow for him; he has all outgrown it now. Thus the child discards, or breaks in pieces the old toy; the youth is ashamed of the child's play;—the man of the youth's folly. The living scholar tires of the stereotyped and musty folios of the past; the thinker wears of the old philosophy that fails to satisfy his queries; and the earnest seeking Divine is sick at heart of the foolish old theology of Jewish Savages, and of the Dark Ages. *So natural* is it for man to look forward and upward—to be discontented with the old and past, and to seek for something newer, fairer and better in the future! And still and forever, "the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing," neither will the nature of man consent to be limited or restrained by any bounds. Put the active child to play in the narrow ground, and he sighs for the field; give him the field, and he is soon through the fence, into the streets, and over the whole town. He can not be contained in any limits. Tell the youth of quick and generous mind, that he must not open this book and hear that preacher, and though he knew of neither book nor preacher, and cared for neither yesterday, yet before to-morrow he will have heard and read them both.

The desires and aspirations of man are as imitable as the Universe. The old boughs are still strong, perhaps, and bear fruit, but the ancient moss covers them, and decay already threatens them; then let the young limbs grow with greener foliage and larger, fairer fruits. Because I have a cottage now, is it any reason why I should not have a palace by and by? The more anxious the youth is to have a silver watch to-day, the more likely he will be to want one of gold to-morrow. Because I have learned so much of truth this year, I am not content. What I have known makes me eager to know more. Still the unknown provokes my mental appetite—excites my knowing faculties as their natural food and stimulus; and I am better prepared and more strongly incited by what I have learned and thought this year, to learn and think the more, next. It is not enough for me to see France and England, I must visit China and Japan also. After I have examined the moon through the telescope, I want to see Jupiter and Saturn all the more. I am restless, in the limits of the old knowledge. The old science refuses to satisfy my questions. In my new strawberry-bed, I am not content to set out the old unproductive roots, with meager berries, that the old gardener cultivated, but I must plant new kinds with more promise and mammoth fruitage. Calvinism was my book of A B C's. Among the Baptists I perhaps was taught to spell. Unitarianism was my School Reader, where I learned to help myself to knowledge; but I found a world of books beyond all these. A sect that seemed wise and liberal enough yesterday, to-day is found to be one-sided, and foolish, and narrow.

The soul outgrows all sects, all creeds, all philosophies; makes and unmakes them at its pleasure. They are but the cast-off skins of the caterpillar, and the soul grows at every moult. Thus it is not only natural, but noble and praiseworthy, to feel the vanity of our past opinions and past experiences; to be discontented with what we have been, and with what we are, and to reach forward to something higher and fairer in the future. And however the stationary, unprogressive and bigoted may condemn and anathematize, the world, in its innocent heart, cherishes those who enlarge the sphere of human knowledge—it's great thinkers and reformers, its distinguished inventors, and its world-renowned discoverers—as the noblest of the race. Admiring posterity reverences their memory, and History, in its immortal records, deifies them as the Heroes of the World. Copernicus, Galileo and Newton, with their new System of the Universe, and their new revelations of its laws, are held up to our admiration; while the memory of their opponents or persecutors has fallen into quick decay. The fame of our American Channing grows with the growing years, and his glowing words of new and higher truth are extending throughout the civilized world; while the old drivellers of ancient and moldy creeds, who were so bitterly hostile to his teachings, are

dying out of our memory with their decaying faith. And Columbus, who left an old world to seek a new, is held in deathless remembrance; while the nameless navigators, who remained behind, are buried in oblivion. The history of Socrates is immortal; yet will you tell me who were his poisoners, and what their occupations? And can you repeat to me the names of those old Pharisees who crucified Jesus? Praise me not then for my adherence to a time-worn faith, or an ancient and fashionable theology—for the fixedness of my views and the unchangeableness of my opinions. Blame me rather for my want of mental activity and spiritual advancement. Command in me no false consistency—the consistency of remaining always the same in my opinions, theories and belief. *The only true and worthy consistency is that of constant improvement, perpetual, never-ending progress.* If I am to be respected and applauded for anything, I would be for that. In all things but theology, man dares always to desire the new. The pious old lady loves the new cap-crowned bonnet, but, strange to say, she hates and curses the new and higher and purer Religion. Away with your old theories, your antiquated notions of man to be limited or restrained by any bounds. Put the world rapidly outgrowing; that the true soul has already outgrown. Away with your moldy philosophy, your tattered creed, your misty system of ethics and philosophy. I will be fettered no longer by your parties, your sects, your leaders and chief-priests, or by your tyrannic "POPULAR OPINION." I will be no longer tied down by your formulas and dogmas, by your antiquated customs and conventional usages.

"Old opinions, rage and tatters,

Get you gone—get you gone!"

I will be henceforth free to think, to speak, to act. Free to follow the truth, untrammeled by human fashion, unfettered by ancient notions and systems, "where'er she leads the way."

Do not let us indulge in any dread of "freedom of thought," nor fear that the enfranchised mind shall lead us astray—shall carry us to a fabulous perdition. For the mind is created, inspired and directed by the great God; and if the mind could lead me to perdition, I am not afraid but that I should reach through hell to heaven. But fear not, there is no danger in the advance of thought. *Ideas, opinions, can not damn the soul, even should they prove false.* Slavery, confinement, the repression of thought, the destruction of mental activity—of mental and spiritual life—that is damning; its free growth and progress—that is saving. "This is the damnation," says Jesus, "that light hath come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." The tree that grows in the open sunlight and free air of heaven, is vigorous, beautiful and fruitful. Confine it, dwarf it, crush it down, and its vigor, beauty and glory are gone. And so with the fettered and enslaved mind; it becomes poor, and mean, and meager; narrow, distorted and deformed, degraded and darkened, and almost extinguished in intellectual night. Look around you and see if this be not the case. *The intelligence of man is a breath of the Almighty, and man himself, like nature, is a fact of God;* a creation, a revelation of the divine mind; then fear not its freest, fullest development. In such free and full development does it alone manifest itself most truly and most nobly. Neither dread the destruction of old systems, institutions and forms of faith, for the good can never die—

"'Tis but the ruin of the bad,

The wasting of the wrong and ill,

Whate'er of good the old time had

Is living still."

Aye! must live forever! The old, dead leaves must fall before the fresh, new foliage can start into luxuriant life, and the tree can grow and bloom and fruit afresh. Every time the old, dead leaves fall, and the young foliage puts forth, the tree renews its youth and strength, its beauty, and its glory. The old house, now tottering, must come down, before the new and nobler edifice can be erected. The more thoroughly the land is cleared, and the deeper it is plowed, the more flourishing and abundant will the new crop be. Then away with these groundless fears at the destruction of the old and the coming of the new. Put not your new cloth into an old garment, your new wine into old bottles; but "put the new wine," says Jesus, "into new bottles, that both may be preserved." I have always found, that when I trembled for the results of mental freedom, and feared that new views and new theories would bring destruction in their train, that my still encumbered mind was troubled by some scarecrow of old superstition, or frightened by some bugbear phantom of ancient error, or time-honored absurdity. Then let old opinions be exploded, let ancient systems perish, but let the new spring up more vigorously from their decaying beds, till man be enfranchised forever from slavery of Error and of Wrong.

Onward move the earth and planets and great sun himself, through the infinite regions of space. Onward move the streams to their destined sea; upward grow the trees; and so the human world moves over onward, and grows ever upward. Mankind is just beginning to perceive that the great, eternal, all-powerful law of the Universe and of the Soul is "progress," and this must forever put an end to all sectarianism and bigotry. Put the seed into the ground, then, quietly and without fear, for it will spring forth and grow upward to the heavens. Without anxiety, aye, joyfully, scatter your great ideas and earnest thoughts—those living seeds of eternal truth—into the seed field of the world, and no indifference, opposition, or hostility—no power in the Universe, can prevent them from springing forth, and shooting upward, and spreading throughout the nations.

"From out the little fountain,

There swells a mighty tide,

Upon whose broad and crested waves

The broods of commerce ride.

And on the winged tempest
A little seed there flies,
Whose roots strike down, whose giant arms
Reach upward to the skies.
And so the little slighted truth,
At length more mighty grown,
Shall fill the nations with its power
And make the world its own."

Superstition, ignorant bigotry, and intolerance, trouble me not, for I know that, sooner or later, the truth I see shall be seen by all; that the great idea I may chance to hold, the noble principles I am blessed to cherish, shall, ere long, be received in the hearts of men everywhere; and that, as civilization and intelligence increase in the world, large, liberal, and noble views of God, of man and of religion, shall flourish with them, by the eternal and glorious necessity of PROGRESS.

"They may veil their eyes but they can not hide
The sun's meridian glow;
The heel of a priest may tread the down
And a tyrant work their woe;
But never a truth has been destroyed:
They may curse it and call it crime,
Pervert and betray, and slander and slay
Its teachers for a time;
But the sunshine eye shall light the sky,
As round and round we run;
And the truth shall ever come uppermost,
And justice shall be done."

MYSTICAL NUMBERS.

SCENE.—The Electrical Ocean of the Solar System in close proximity to the Planet Mars.

"There are seven degrees in the holy Sphere
That girdles the outer skies;
There are seven hues in the atmosphere
Of the Spirit Paradise,
And the seven lamps burn bright and clear
In the mind, the heart, and the eyes
Of the angel-spirits from every world
That ever and ever arise.

"There are seven ages the angels know,
In the courts of the Spirit Heaven;
And seven joys through the spirit flow
From the morn of the heart till even;
Seven curtains of light wave to and fro
Where the seven great trumpets the angels blow;
And the Throne of God hath a seven-fold glow,
And the angel-hosts are seven.
And a spiral winds from the worlds to the suns,
And every star that shines.

In the path of degrees for ever runs,
And the spiral octave climbs;
And a seven-fold heaven round every one
In the spiral order twines."

A company of Spirits, whose white arms
Are twined like lilies, float above the deep.
Their music lulz my spirit into sleep."

Lo! one most beautiful unvalued nymph—
My thoughts are drawn to her as dew-drops to the morn.

"Oh, rose-lipped Scaph, whose celestial charms
O'ercome my being with a calm divine—
Whose heart of love in love inflows through mine—

Whose eyes are twin born spheres that blend together
As the sweet ocean and the enamored sky,

Feeling thy presence dear,

SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH.

S. B. BRITTON, EDITOR.

"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, SEPT. 29, 1855.

MAHAN'S MODERN MYSTERIES.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

The reputed social, scientific, and religious position of Rev. A. Mahan, First President of Cleveland University, had prepared us to anticipate from his pen a work of decided interest and power.

With the name we had long associated our ideal of the man, which ascribed to him superior natural endowments, liberal culture, and a degree of ingenuity and logical acumen which are certainly no where discoverable in the volume before us. Entertaining our first impressions respecting the author, and learning that his book was in press, we ventured to indulge the agreeable expectation that the claims of the spiritual facts and philosophy were soon to be tried by one whom nature, education, and "the means of grace" had thoroughly qualified for the task.

The prospect, though dim and uncertain, was full of novelty and encouragement; for since the time when there was a "Richmond in the field," no independent and magnanimous champion of popular materialism had appeared undisguised before the people. True, the Spiritualists had, from time to time, been introduced to a number of curious automatic machines in human shape, all of which were ascertained to possess the mysterious instinct of knowing which way the wind blows, and a self-adjusting power to spread themselves, more or less as occasion requires, whenever the popular breeze is in the right direction. Inspired and moved by this same invisible agency, many learned and unlearned pretenders to a knowledge of occult forces, abruptly appeared in the polemical arena, and challenged the whole spiritual world to meet them!

But the innumerable angels and spirits of the Universe did not appear to think that the occasion demanded their immediate presence with the whole "artillery of heaven," and so they kept about their business, leaving those inflated souls to amuse themselves, to feed on their own empty speculations, and to shame even monkeydom by their fantastic tricks.

But at length those who once relished this kind of fare began to be dissatisfied, and the most erratic and reckless opposer seemed to feel the need of something more substantial than the air he had himself corrupted. Even skepticism could not long subsist on that, and hold its own. The opposition had a chill and was unable to be out much. Knowing that it was daily becoming more feeble and might ignobly perish for want of suitable nourishment, we were not inclined to complain if, in one way or another, its most pressing necessities were to be supplied at our expense. Indeed it was a satisfaction to reflect that the opposition had at least one man of more liberal and substantial resources, who was really able and willing to offer the public a respectable entertainment, even though we might be disengaged to serve the guests at his table.

The late work by Prof. Mahan has disappointed one reasonable expectation, and it will require but a cursory examination to satisfy the critical reader that the author is out of his appropriate sphere. In reasoning against the spiritual theory of the manifestations, he generally assumes his premises without proof and against probability, and at the same time his method of reaching a conclusion suggests the idea of substituting locomotion for logic. The author puts forth the most chimerical notions with as much confidence as philosophers assert axiomatic principles. Indeed, the book abounds in arrogant assumptions, and the most transparent sophistry. Almost every page reveals the author's want of careful observation in the department of Spiritual Science, while his knowledge of the psychological laws, which underlie the most significant phenomena, is manifestly superficial. We should be pleased to pause here, but a more serious objection remains to be stated. Professor Mahan is equally unscrupulous in his methods, whether the opinion of an individual, or his reputation, is to be disposed of. His limited information rarely prevents or restrains the expression of his judgment. Whether treating of principles or men, his dogmatic philosophy admits no doubtful issues. All his conclusions are irresistible. Even when his knowledge of the subject under consideration is extremely limited, he often preserves the same confident manner and impudent tone. The well-known attributes of an individual are disregarded, the incidents of personal history overlooked, and the testimony of responsible witnesses is set aside as wholly unnecessary in forming a righteous judgment of his real character and peculiar claims. The first part of the author's work, wherein he essays to canvass the personal claims of A. J. Davis and the principles of his "Nature's Divine Revelations," will be found to justify these remarks. Even the beggar in the parable, who depended on the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, was not more in need of respectable clothing and wholesome viands, than this writer is of genuine facts and reliable information—in this part of his work—and what is still more surprising, he seems unconscious of his poverty. Prof. Mahan may be a gentleman of liberal scientific attainments, for aught we know to the contrary. However, he has not been able to render his learning available in this case; and if Nature ever designed him for an expositor of her subtle mysteries, her purpose has been signally defeated. As a pretended explanation of spiritual phenomena, the claims of his book are simply preposterous. The author himself may, for the present, be held in higher estimation than those who preceded him in the hazardous experiment of writing on a subject which they did not understand; but it is only because he is a fresh sacrifice at the shrine of popular ignorance and prejudice. Being the last to break his devoted head beneath the unyielding walls of the Spiritual Zion, he may hope to be remembered until the advent of his successor.

CHAPTER II.

MR. DAVIS AND HIS REVELATIONS.

We design to limit the present Review to a brief discussion of the general ideas and positions which Prof. Mahan assumes in the first and second parts of his book, wherein he considers the Revelations of A. J. Davis, and attempts to explain and expose the phenomena of Modern Spiritualism. The remaining portions, in which he examines the claims of the Bible to a divine inspiration, and analyzes the clairvoyant revelations of Emanuel Swedenborg, we shall probably have to leave unnoticed.

We do not propose an exposition or defense of the principles comprehended in "Nature's Divine Revelations." There are ideas which appear to the present writer to be fundamental in the philosophy of that book, which we have never believed, and can not now accept. But it is not necessary to defend its cardinal

principles and doctrines; we need not so much as accept a single idea it contains, in order to perceive its significance and value as evidence in behalf of Spiritualism. Our author takes a very narrow view of the whole subject. He views the wonderful experience of Mr. Davis and his remarkable Revelations, not in the calm light of a rational philosophy, but as a violent partisan or an intolerant dogmatist might be expected to regard them. He even denounces, by implication, the passive instrument through which the Revelations were communicated, as guilty of "imposture before the world," in the simple act of unconsciously giving them utterance. He assumes this illiberal and untenable position in the first paragraph following the preface to the book. A brief extract will suffice to show the author's position, and also to expose the arrogance, ignorance and injustice which disfigure no inconsiderable portion of the volume. We copy from page 1:

"When any new and very gross absurdity is commended to public regard, men of real science, theologians especially, pass it by, under the impression that should they expose the imposition, they would appear to the public in the repulsive light of 'answering a fool according to his folly.' It is this fear, we think, rather than a prudent regard to the public welfare, which has shielded modern 'Spirit-revelations' from that degree of scientific scrutiny requisite to unmask the imposture before the world. Whatever may be thought of the subject in general, the writings of the individual whose name stands at the head of this article seem to demand a critical examination.

Here all modern media for 'Spirit-revelations' are virtually charged with *imposture*; but as the chapter under review is especially devoted to Mr. Davis and his first book, we shall give our own observations a similar direction and bearing. The writer of this review was personally well acquainted with Mr. Davis long before the latter commenced dictating the Revelations. Being on familiar terms with him and his principal associates during the very time he was thus employed, and having been present as a witness on several occasions during the progressive unfolding of the work, we are doubtless better qualified to speak with confidence than Prof. Mahan, whose very positive assertions are contradicted by our own positive knowledge. During the delivery of "Nature's Divine Revelations," Mr. Davis was profoundly entranced, and so far removed from the sphere of outward consciousness as to be temporarily absolved from the obligations of the earth-life. At that time his states were preeminent distinct. It is true that the impressions derived from the realities of the inner life, have since progressively descended to the external memory, and have thus, in a good degree, become incorporated with the ordinary powers and possessions of his mind. But in Mr. Davis' early experience there was no such blending of the two states. In the ordinary condition he was untaught, destitute of extraordinary gifts, and totally unable to converse on any literary, scientific or other important subject. But the trance measurably released the spirit from its mortal restraints, and give him the key to vast treasures of knowledge. So clear and comprehensive was his vision, that neither distance nor the most solid substances appeared to offer any barrier to his observations. The essential principles and uses, and the technical nomenclature of many arts and sciences, were at his command. Of all these things his mind, in its outward relations, was uninformed. Of course, in his state of waking consciousness he was no more accountable for what had been uttered during the trance, than the reader is responsible for his dreams or for unconsciously talking in his sleep.

The Revelations which Prof. Mahan undertakes to review in the book before us, are far more remarkable than any of the recent works of Mr. Davis; and yet, as has been observed, they were spoken before time had developed his manhood, or his faculties had been roused to action by intercourse with the world. At that time his habits were extremely simple; we often saw him under the most trying circumstances, and yet he manifested extraordinary gentleness and forbearance. All his acts were apparently unstudied, and on every occasion he exhibited the artlessness and spontaneity of a child. He was alike indifferent to fame and the advantages of a commanding social position. The little circle of his thoughts was comprehended within the narrow limits of his youthful experience and observation, save when some hand, visible or invisible, was laid upon him, and he was born away in Spirit to the wider spheres of his interior life. Of these early revelations we may affirm that they were prompted by no *mercenary motive* on the part of the medium. A single fact is worth a thousand conjectures, and one will suffice to settle this point forever, in the mind of the candid reader. As soon as the work in question was completed, and while it remained in manuscript, Mr. Davis made a donation to a personal friend of his entire interest in the same. He has never had any worldly concern in the sale of the work. The book has passed through twelve editions in this country, and has been republished in England, and yet we believe, that up to this very hour, all the pecuniary advantage which Mr. Davis has derived from its publication has not amounted to a single shilling.

In the light of the facts just presented, Prof. Mahan will find it extremely difficult to justify the imputation of *imposture*, at least so far as the implied charge rests on the origin of these or any similar revelations. To constitute a man an impostor, three things are especially necessary. 1. He must assume a character not his own. 2. He must be conscious of what he is doing at the time. 3. It must be his object to practice deception. Admitting the general correctness of this definition, it is easy to perceive that the Revelations of A. J. Davis contain about as much evidence of *imposture* as the growth of his hair or the beating of his pulse. We may further add, in this connection, that the trances mediums for Spirit-intercourse are equally irresponsible. Many of them are totally unable to resist the powers which come to them from the invisible and unknown realms. They are therefore, no more guilty of *imposture* than those who unexpectedly take cold or "catch the measles." Whoever asserts that they are, not only perverts the English language, but he libels humanity without a cause.

Respecting the intrinsic character of "Nature's Divine Revelations," we have a word to offer. They certainly contain much important truth that must serve to enlarge the reader's conceptions of Nature, to quicken the mental faculties, and to inspire the heart with deeper human sympathies. We also find many things which do not admit of demonstration by any one of our recognized methods of testing the truth of a proposition, while some things are *positively erroneous* in statement, and of questionable tendency. Similar elements enter into the composition of all books, so far as our knowledge extends. It is not our purpose to attempt a further illustration of the truth embodied in the Revelations; nor shall we seek a solution of their doubtful problems; and, least of all, are we disposed to sanction the theories it contains, by so much as an implied endorsement. Mr. Davis himself, we venture to presume, will never defend them. What, then, can Prof. Mahan reasonably hope to accomplish by proving, what no one pretends to deny, viz., that the Revelations contain some important errors? (What Revelations do not?) Yet our author seems to imagine, that if he can only find a few false facts (!) or scientific, theological, and historical errors, they will serve at once to neutralize the truth in the book, and to dissipate its legitimate claims forever. To such absurd conclusions does theological dogmatism lead its willing victims! It must have a revelation to which reason and nature are subservient or it will have none at all. The conscious manhood, and

the divine attributes in man, are all of less account in its estimation, than the mere records and relics of an ancient inspired life. The orthodox classification of sacred books admits of no reasonable discrimination. It makes one broad distinction and recognizes no intermediate degrees. It virtually assumes that any book which claims to be a revelation is either all God's word, or it is literally a device of Satan. Thus do men pervert their natural instincts and the God-given attribute of reason. And while they invest the dead letter of the Jewish and Christian revelations with a divine, uncaring authority, they seem anxious to choke the spirit of a living inspiration.

Prof. Mahan assumes that the Revelations of Mr. Davis claim a similar authority over the human mind. We are told that because the Seer is "impressed," others are required to believe. It is not so. On the contrary, this is a gross misrepresentation of the whole spirit and purpose of the book. We quote from the first and last paragraphs of the "OPENING ADDRESS TO THE WORLD":

"Brethren: Fear not, for Error is mortal and can not live, and Truth is immortal and can not die! Duty demands serious analysis and investigation of all conspicuous subjects. Truth may be found in the following Revelation: if so, Nature must be the standard, by which all men may judge whether the truths therein contained are pure, practical and elevating. Inasmuch as all terrestrial creations are the spontaneous productions of the Divine mind, no truth is lessened by disbelief—no error is made true because the learned received it as such. Nothing can be changed that is unchangeable, by man or his actions. Then press onward! Exercise your choicest gift, which is Reason—and fear no corruption from truth, though new; and expect no good from error, though long believed."

Your duty is to search; and after searching, ask Nature and your own superior judgments how much practical truth there is herein revealed. In doing this, you will display the dignity of your natures, perform your highest duty, receive the most unbounded interior approbation, and obtain MENTAL HAPPINESS.

The despot whose word is law is not accustomed to explain the principles of his government, much less is he disposed to recognize, in the subject, the right to approve or to disapprove of his administration. The man who vainly supposes that he is competent to teach absolute truth, utters his *ipse dixit* and retires. But no such spirit pervades the Revelations. Throughout the volume the reasoning faculties are everywhere addressed; facts are stated, principles are discussed, reasons are assigned and objections anticipated; and the reader is exhorted to subject every theory, hypothesis, philosophy, sect, creed and institution, and all books to the ordeal of a calm and searching investigation.

Spiritualism is chiefly concerned with the extraordinary physical facts developed in the life of Mr. Davis, rather than in the contents of his books. Whether truth or error predominates in the latter is a consideration of secondary importance, as it regards the question of our immortality and the nature of the soul's life. But his experience is a lucid revelation of the most significant and sublime truths. It demonstrates that there is an inner and more perfect life, wherein the lusts of the flesh are sublimated or forgotten, the senses quickened and spiritualized, and the mind immeasurably expanded and exalted.

During the last six years we have been less familiar with Mr. Davis than formerly. How far the powers of this world, which lead most men astray, may have modified his disposition and character, we can not so positively affirm. Suffice it to say, that no act of his recent or his future life can blot out his experience or render his revelations an imposture. A critical examination of his life might possibly disclose some of the imperfections which are so conspicuous in his reviewers. But if we are to discredit the truth because men make mistakes, who will hereafter honor the claims of Moses, David, or Solomon?

The question which regards the psychical experience of Mr. Davis, and its importance to Spiritualism, must be decided at last by an appeal to facts which no one will presume to deny. In the attempt to decide such a question, by assailing the *man*, our author justly forfeits his claims to the character of a scientific investigator. No *moral issue*, founded on specific acts of his subsequent life, or deriving their existence from improbable rumors in Ohio or elsewhere, can influence the final decision.* Mortals may err, but no man has ever uttered a great thought or performed one God-like deed in vain. What if great men have fallen from high places, and the pure in heart have been corrupted; the laws of Nature are immutable and God is true. The very bones of the ancient philosophers, poets, seers and prophets were long since reduced to impalpable dust; my friend weeps over their ruined and forgotten sepulchers, but the truth that was spoken can never die.

* We refer to the statement in Prof. Mahan's book that Mr. Davis, in the course of a lecture at Cleveland, suddenly paused, and pretended to go into an interior state, read, as he affirmed, from a manuscript in the possession of Horace Mann. Our author claims that this was a false pretense, and that Mr. Davis copied said paragraph from a report of Mr. Mann's lecture, which had previously appeared in the New York Tribune. We know not whether the real facts accord with this statement, since the Professor neglects to call the witnesses.

THE "TIMES" ON "FREE-LOVE."

TO HENRY J. RAYMOND ESQ., EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

In your article, entitled "the Free-Love System," published in your daily, of Sept. 8th, and your weekly of the 15th, you do Spiritualism great injustice in the following remark: "It is the (Free-Love system) pervades the works of Spiritualists and Socialist writers." Whether you really mean to say that Free Love is an essential element in the writings of Spiritualists and the writings of Socialists, or whether you would be understood to mean that it pervades the writings of some persons who entertain both the Spiritualist and Socialist theories, is not very clear;

that the trances mediums for Spirit-intercourse are equally irresponsible. Many of them are totally unable to resist the powers which come to them from the invisible and unknown realms.

They are therefore, no more guilty of *imposture* than those who unexpectedly take cold or "catch the measles."

Whoever asserts that they are, not only perverts the English language, but he libels humanity without a cause.

In the light of the facts just presented, Prof. Mahan will find it extremely difficult to justify the imputation of *imposture*, at

least so far as the implied charge rests on the origin of these or any similar revelations.

The divine attributes in man, are all of less account in its estimation, than the mere records and relics of an ancient inspired life. The orthodox classification of sacred books admits of no reasonable discrimination. It makes one broad distinction and recognizes no intermediate degrees. It virtually assumes that any book which claims to be a revelation is either all God's word, or it is literally a device of Satan. Thus do men pervert their natural instincts and the God-given attribute of reason. And while they invest the dead letter of the Jewish and Christian revelations with a divine, uncaring authority, they seem anxious to choke the spirit of a living inspiration.

Very possibly Spiritualism has not as yet reformed the passions, appetites and errors in the lives of all to whom it comes. It does not find it necessary to suppose that a Spirit made the journey and brought back the intelligence; but he thinks rather the spiritual faculties, rendered objectively potent by the trance state, were fully competent to that branch of the case. A person in the deep trance state is, in a very full sense, in the spiritual world, and to a wonderful degree in possession of his spiritual faculties.

Mrs. FRECH said, on Sunday last, at her own house in Pittsburgh, Pa., while seated with her family, the door bell rang, and a neighbor entered, which impressed her that he wished to know of the welfare of his wife and sons who were then in the far West. She was not in the state at the time, that she was aware of, but immediately a picture was presented of a log cabin on the banks of a stream, in which were the wife and sons of the gentleman whose presence induced the inquiry.

She described one less than he supposed to be a Spirit, who told her why he was not there.

A letter received by her while in this city has confirmed the correctness of the statement.

You do Spiritualism injustice in using the words "Spiritualist and Socialist writers" in the above connection, because it covertly deceives the casual reader with the idea that periodicals devoted to Spiritualism and spiritual books generally, have a vein of Free-Love running through them, which is far from the fact and entirely untrue. If a person who holds the Spiritual, Social and Free-Love doctrines should undertake to write a book on Spiritualism, we might, perhaps, expect to find those ideas foreshadowed in its pages; but who that holds these views has written a book on Spiritualism? Not one. I find Partridge and Britton's catalogue of Spiritual books, published in the SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH, contains one hundred and two different volumes upon Spiritualism, from nearly as many authors, and not one of them can be fairly cited in defense of the Free-Love doctrine.

Modern Spiritualism has demonstrated the immortality of the human soul to thousands of infidels, so called, who could not be convinced of this fact by the records of ancient spiritual manifestations; neither through the intelligence, skill and eloquence spent in elaborating and enforcing their significance. But this fact no more warrants the conclusion that its tendency is toward infidelity, than the fact that Christ preached to demons, or as some say, "devils in hell" warrants the conclusion that he was a devil.

Instead of Spiritualism sanctioning the errors of mortals to whom it appears, its influence is morally reformatory, developing true human charities and Christian graces.

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In 1839 she was entranced for five days, during which she saw the death of an individual two hours after its occurrence, with all the attending circumstances, and many minute and interesting particulars (which she detailed), though miles intervened between her external person and the scenes and facts she was observing. Now, said Mrs. French, who narrated these facts with unusual dignity and composure, what is the meaning of all this? It could not have been the influence of mind upon mind in the common conception; yet it was a mental phenomenon, and therefore must have been the influence of mind in the Spirit acceptance. She closed with an eloquent appeal to common sense and experience for the truth of Spiritualism, and with an invocation that its blessings might speedily find their way to the individual hearts of the race.

R. T. HALLOCK.

VEGETARIANISM VINDICATED.

In our issue of the 8th inst., we published, with remarks, an extract from an Exchange, setting forth opinions adverse to an exclusive vegetable diet. A correspondent, deeming that article injurious in its tendency, has sent us the result of his experience and cogitations relative to the subject broached, and the essential portions of which we give below. After quoting the extract at large, which we here omit for the sake of brevity, our correspondent says:

"Now what claim has this to the confidence of one who, like myself, has enjoyed uninterrupted health for twelve years, and his strength, on a diet from which *train oil, candles, flesh, fish, fowl, cheese, butter and eggs*, have been *carefully excluded*? And this after having been sick eight years on a mixed diet! But instead of living on the *over-coats* of grains exclusively, I have eaten their entire substance, together with fruits, etc. And instead of macerating my body in rivers of water, I have taken my daily bath. This is the way "to make weak men strong." That's my opinion, and I have tried it."

The exchange quoted says: "It is well known that persons in good health, of sound digestive organs, who take plenty of exercise, and are free from anxiety, may eat almost anything, and in quantities which would kill those in other circumstances." Indeed, so they may, for a time, and perhaps *feel no bad effects*, but the veriest tyro in physiology knows that *Nature is keeping a "running account"* all the time, and that all violators of her laws must sooner or later "foot the bill." Such gormandizers will find themselves within

Original Communications.

LIGHT IN DARKNESS.

BY E. A. KINGSBURY.

Light in darkness, gently beaming
From that lone and quiet star,
Now obscured by clouds, now gleaming
Kindly on us from afar;
High above the storm it walketh,
In a clear and azure sky,
And it ever to us talketh
Of a sunshine by and by.

Light in darkness! When with anguish
Mourns the sorrow-stricken heart,
As it sees a dear friend languish,
And like morning flowers depart;
When the world seems cold and dreary,
Then come whispers, full of love,
Speaking to the spirit weary
Of a peaceful home above.

Light in darkness! Lo! descending
From the glorious sun of Truth,
Brilliant beams broadcast are wending
To the hearts of Age and Youth—
Scattering clouds of doubt and error,
Driving guilt and fear away,
Banishing the reign of terror,
Ushering in the perfect day.

PHILADELPHIA.

MARRIED,

At the Brandreth House in this city, on Wednesday, Sept. 19th, by S. B. Brittan, editor of the SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH, BENJAMIN F. SWARTZ, Esq., of Albany, and Mrs. MARY E. MECH, of New York.

A SHAKER ON FREE LOVE.

FRIEND BRITtan—Many thanks for your letter to the *Herald*, in answer to Nichols, purging Spiritualism from *Free Loveism*. It will take many such articles, published at proper intervals, to keep the public mind right upon that subject, as the morning note sounded by Adin Ballou evidently demonstrates.

I think it will be generally conceded that, not only "all advanced Spiritualists," but also all true reformers, are rapidly verging to the conclusion that, while every other department and phase of human society is obnoxious to censure and rebuke, the "holy ordinance and sacrament of Marriage," with its sequences, is not so immaculate as to be entirely proof against all criticism.

And while the transition is easy from the perception and condemnation of the inherent and irrevocable evils of matrimony, to the abnegation of the institution itself, we also does the "repudiation" and rejection of the marriage system inevitably lead to and land the searching mind either in the more purely abstract and higher forms of *Christianity*, as understood and practiced by its originators and founders, the noted *Twelve*, and more particularly by their leader, the spiritual-minded and simple-heated Jesus, who taught his followers that such as practiced marriage were the "children of *this world*" out of which he and his had been elevated or "raised," into what he designated the "*resurrection*" state—that is, a *religious celibacy*, like the *Shakers* of our own time; or else in what, in the early days of Christianity, was so bitterly denounced by the greatest revelator and most pure-souled Spiritualist of that age, as the practice and "*doctrines of the Nicolaitanes*," "which doctrine I hate!" (the vehement and emphatic language of the Spirit who spoke through him as a medium) and which doctrine is now advocated and lived, not only by the advocates of Nichols in the Ceresco community, but also by the six or seven communities of *Perfectionists*.

With your permission, I propose to show that both these extremes (the *Shakers* and *Community Free Loveites*) are no new thing under the sun; but that in and during the first four centuries of the Christian era, we have the record of similar antipodes in faith and practice.

Previous to the advent of Jesus, the earth was divided into two worlds, with their respective inhabitants, the Jewish and the Gentile; and although the former, in point of numbers, was the inferior, it nevertheless looms up in the pages of sacred history as by far the most conspicuous and important.

The different views entertained by these respective parties, on the *Marriage* question, lay at the foundation of all the differences and distinctions between the Jew and Gentile. The Jew was circumcised, the Gentile was uncircumcised; and circumcision evidently had reference to the principle of propagation, of which marriage is but an adjunct.

Abraham was a heathen—a Gentile, who, in his dream in the night, had a Spirit appear to him, who made to him such and such promises, to be fulfilled upon such and such conditions; the first and ever the most important of which was, that he should practice upon himself and upon all his male posterity a mutilation called the rite of *circumcision*, nothing being said by his spiritual friend respecting the females.

But the man Moses subsequently supplied this deficiency, he also having been directed by some spiritual intelligence to enjoin that every woman who became a "mother in Israel" should pass through certain forms of purification, and be excluded from the camp which was called "holy," forty days for the crime of giving birth to a boy, and eighty days for the crime of giving birth to a girl; and then, before her re-admission into the "holy" camp, she was required to bring a sin offering to the priest as an acknowledgment that, however right it might be for the Gentiles to "multiply and replenish the earth," it was sinful and wrong for the Jews, who were called to be "a holy people," and that they could not do it without "transgressing also the law" (which was "holy and good"); for which transgression they must pay the prescribed penalty to appease its offended majesty. (See also Leviticus 15 : 18.)

All of which goes to establish the fact that the spiritual being who dictated the Mosaic institutes thought that there were some concomitants of marriage in the present fallen condition of the human race, had that were sinful—perversions of the original process of simple generation, as still exhibited in all orders of animals except man—he who, as the lord and the most noble and intelligent head of creation, ought to set an example of law and order, of the due observance of times and seasons, of keeping ever in sight the use and the end and object of every action, to all the inferior races of sentient creatures—he, man, is himself and herself the most lawless, irrational, and sensually-debased of all God's creation; and more especially in all that pertains to marriage, or the union of the sexes, which is subject to abuses and errors that ought to be abated, either by the re-institution of the spiritually originated *physical circumcision*, with its checks and restraints, as enacted by Moses; or by the still more highly spiritually-derived *spiritual circumcision* (of which the former was the significant type), with its perfect celibate virgin life, inaugurated by Jesus, of whom an ancient Spiritualist or prophet said, "his life was cut off from the earth; and who shall declare his generation?" No one. For he was the end of generation to all who fully entered into the spiritual order of which he was the founder and the most perfect exponent.

In contradistinction to the above exposition of the great characteristics of the Jewish world on the subject of marriage, the

Gentile world recognized nothing wrong, either before or after the deluge, in the indiscriminate and most unrestrained use (or rather abuse) of the reproductive faculties. Most of the famous gods and goddesses were worshiped by acts of licentiousness; and their religious assemblies were mere scenes of debauchery. It was this that constituted the great attraction and incentive of the Jews to idolatry; the allurement and temptation consisted in the manner of worship, and not in the object worshiped. Thus, when Israel worshiped the golden calf, and "corrupted themselves," it is said "they sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to commit fornication."

That this great distinction between Jew and Gentile on the Marriage question was continued even in the Christian Church, may not be generally known, *except to the theological student*. Yet that such was the fact can be readily shown. Nor do I consider it possible for any person, without this understanding, to derive clear and connected views and ideas from the New Testament writers. For all the converts to the new faith, called Christianity, made by its founder up to and at the spiritual day of Pentecost, were *Jews*; not a Gentile as yet was admitted into the Church. *It was a Jewish Christian Church.*

All property was held jointly, "in common;" and marriage was *entirely prohibited*.

After entering that Church, some who professed to give up the whole price of their houses and lands, which they had "sold," and "kept back part of the price," dropped down dead by the same spiritual agency which had revealed to the church officer their deception.

And some females who entered the Church, but who, by and by, "waxed wanton against Christ and married," are said to have incurred "damnation, because they had cast off their first faith," of living a *virgin life*.

But, when one of the twelve preachers began to expound Christianity to the Gentiles, which event was brought about by a simultaneous vision or visitation of Spirits to him and a noted Gentile, all the new converts were allowed to marry. "Every man might have his own wife, and every woman her own husband," as also they might retain their private or individual property. *This was the Gentile Christian Church.*

This Church has existed for eighteen centuries, and is that which at this day fills Christendom, under as many names as a chameleon has colors; but is recognized as one by the Spiritualist John, to whom it was represented in a vision, under the figure of a *mighty woman*, of most notoriously bad character, gaudily dressed, sitting upon a beast; denoting that she subsists by ministering to and gratifying the animal (or beastly) sensual nature of mankind, instead of crucifying it, a true Spiritualism or Christianity would surely do.

The existence of Jewish and Gentile Christian churches; the falling away of the former, and its suppression and enslavement by the supremacy and continued ascendancy of the latter or Gentile Church, together with its hidden abnormal life, under the character of "two witnesses," running parallel with the history of the Gentile Church, until its entire destruction; and the final and triumphant re-establishment of the Jewish Christian Church in all its transcendent and far more than its pristine glory, in consequence of certain principles, called "the accuser of the brethren," which caused its overthrow, being now "east out," are all graphically and beautifully represented, under certain tropes and characters, by the medium before spoken of as the great Spiritualist of that age, as the practice and "*doctrines of the Nicolaitanes*," "which doctrine I hate!" (the vehement and emphatic language of the Spirit who spoke through him as a medium) and which doctrine is now advocated and lived, not only by the advocates of Nichols in the Ceresco community, but also by the six or seven communities of *Perfectionists*.

With your permission, I propose to show that both these extremes (the *Shakers* and *Community Free Loveites*) are no new thing under the sun; but that in and during the first four centuries of the Christian era, we have the record of similar antipodes in faith and practice.

The temple was the Jewish Christian Church. The court, or Gentile Christian Church, would rule forty-two months, or twelve hundred and sixty years, after it had destroyed and trodden under foot the order of the Jewish Christian Church.

The two orders of *Monks* and *Nuns* of the Roman Catholic Church have always witnessed to the two principles of *community of goods* and a *celibate life* being the true apostolic order of the primitive Jewish Christian Church.

In that Church seven deacons were appointed to distribute the necessities of life to its communicants every day. One of these, named Nichols, introduced into the Church, in place of the old marriage system of the world, and instead of the celibacy of Jesus and his apostles, a *community of wives*, as well as a *community of goods*. This was the "falling away" of the Holy Ghost Church—the using of the religion of Jesus as "a cloak for licentiousness," turning the truth of God into a lie, being the "abomination of desolation" itself.

Now, I do not know that there is anything particular in the similarity of the names of Nichols and Nicholas; but I think there can be no doubt at all but that their *faith* and *practice* are homogeneous. The "*doctrines of the Nicolaitanes*" and of Nichols are evidently one and the same.

It is a question to be pondered, how far "all advanced Spiritualists" will finally "repudiate marriage," and hold a *community of goods*; not, however, by ceasing to marry, in order "to do worse"—plunging into the very slough of sensual degradation, unknown to brutes—practicing the *community of goods*, and at the same time holding "the doctrines of the Nicolaitanes"; but in order to live a more spiritual—a purer and higher—a *Christian life*; in breathing, from the very heavens a Spirit of love, purity, and universal brotherhood; that they may again establish upon earth the *lost order* of the primitive Jewish Christian Church, with its *virgin life* and "all things common" actuated with all the signs that were to "follow those who believe"—speaking in tongues, healing the sick, casting out demons, seeing of Spirits and angels, and, in fine, a practically useful, and perpetual intercourse, in a divine order, with the invisible, spiritual world—this being, as we suppose, the true *Resurrection*.

FREDERICK W. EVANS.

SHAKER VILLAGE, NEW LEBANON, CO. CO., N.Y.

MRS. LORIN L. PLATT.

Mrs. L. ROBINSON, of Bristol, Conn., in a recent letter speaks in terms of high commendation of Mrs. L. L. Platt. We have known Mrs. P. for several years; her sympathies are easily and deeply excited by the sufferings of mankind, and no person has a more sincere and earnest desire to relieve the afflicted.

We extract a paragraph from Mr. Robinson's letter.—Ed.

I know that many of the sick and suffering will bless the memory of Mrs. Platt, and the poor can not but remember her sympathy and kindness.

Mr. and Mrs. Platt were my guests several weeks, and during the time her examinations and prescriptions were quite numerous and satisfactory. One examination was made publicly, and another under the close and critical scrutiny of one of our ablest physicians. The Doctor saw it done, but the *modus operandi*—that bothers him. There is but one way to get round the dilemma, and that is, to *own up* every time Science shouts "humbug." Facts send back an echo, that the deaf hear, the blind see, and the sick are made well.

TEACHINGS OF "KING."

MILFIELD, ATHENS CO., OHIO, August 26, 1855.

MR. JOSEPH P. HAZARD:

Dear Sir—I received your letter of the 5th inst., and avail myself of this opportunity to reply to your inquiries.

You wish to know whether "King," who claims to be much more ancient than Adam, remembers anything of the early history of man and the events related in the Old Testament. The account which we have received is this: Adam was a medium, and held some high office at the court of a great Emperor, whose dominions are represented in the Old Testament under the symbolic representation of a garden. The Spirits compare the position of Adam at this Emperor's court, to that of Daniel at the Court of Belshazzar. Adam, like Daniel, had enemies who were jealous of his preferment, and who, in the end, succeeded in having him banished from the Emperor's dominions. Adam became the founder of a sect; his descendants, who were mediums, and who continued to have spiritual manifestations, may be traced down to Noah and through him to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

At that early period of the world, the records of great events were transmitted to succeeding generations by means of hieroglyphics, or symbolic representations. It was in this manner that the history of Adam and his descendants was preserved, until the time when the children of Israel, having emigrated into Egypt, became the slaves of the Egyptians, and the records of their history fell into the hands of their conquerors. Moses, who was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, associated this early hieroglyphical history with the Egyptian theory of the creation of the world, and not being conversant with those ancient hieroglyphics, produced the absurd history which we find related in the first few chapters of Genesis.

The history of Noah's flood is also founded on fact. Noah had communications from Spirits who foresaw and predicted that there would be a great inundation in that part of Asia where he lived, and he, in his turn, warned his countrymen of what would happen; but they were unwilling to believe what he told them as modern skeptics are to believe our spiritual manifestations.

Moses was a medium, and the Spirit that appeared to him in the burning bush, was the Spirit of his ancestor Noah, who announced himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, meaning that he was the same Spirit who had appeared to them. Noah had wilfully his possessions to descend to his posterity through the eldest son of each successive generation, and considered that the children of Israel had still a right to possess those lands, which had been held by their ancestors.

It was by using Moses and Aaron as positive and negative mediators, that the Spirits performed their wonders before Pharaoh and the people who were at war with the Hebrews, and that the Spirits of each people were at war with the other; but it appears that the Spirits of the Hebrews were more highly developed, and consequently prevailed over those of the Egyptians. The Spirits tell us that the pyramids of Egypt are of very remote origin. They were erected at a time when that vast portion of Africa, which is now occupied by the Great Desert, was a fertile and inhabited country, peopled by a race far anterior to the ancient Egyptians.

The history of the life of Jesus Christ has often been the subject of our conversation with the Spirits. The limits of this letter will not permit me to write all that has been given on this subject. King was a witness of his so-called miracles and sufferings, and was among the number of angels who, at last, transported him from this earth to the celestial regions. At his crucifixion the Spirits threw him into a trance, or what we call a somniferous sleep, giving him the appearance of death. The manner in which his ascension was effected is thus explained. A great multitude of Spirits united in a circle over him, and, by the power of their will acting on the atmosphere which surrounded him, produced a circular motion, which formed a vacuum rising from the earth in the form of a funnel. Then admitting the pressure of the atmosphere below him, they caused a suction, by which the attraction of gravity was overcome, and he was raised from the earth with inconceivable rapidity. When raised to the electric region, which we term open space, beyond the reach of the law of cohesion, the atoms which composed his organized body sought their affinities in the surrounding elements, while his Spirit ascended to its destined sphere.

With regard to the size of Spirits, I have another observation to make. When I see Spirits in a diminutive form, they appear to be surrounded by a luminous effulgence; but when I am enabled to view them as they exist on earth, there is no such brightness round them. I give you this fact, and leave others to deduce their theories from it. To corroborate this statement I will add the testimony of Mr. J. D. Duncan, one of my neighbors, who, though he does not profess to believe in the present spiritual manifestations, yet relates the following story:

"When I was a boy, I was hired out to labor, and it fell to my lot to sleep in a garret, where I was regularly visited by human forms of various sizes and appearances. Sometimes the forms were small, bright, and luminous. They appeared to enter by a gable window, and placed themselves in a row in the chamber. At other times there were forms of a darker appearance, and of a large size. The sight of the latter excited in me such feelings of terror that I have frequently screamed out and alarmed the family, who, on such occasions, never failed to come to my assistance." These visitations he affirms to have been made when he was in a perfectly conscious and normal state, and offers to affirm them by oath, if requested to do so.

As to your question concerning trees, flowers, etc., this is how we understand it: From the fifth sphere ascending, Spirits have the power to produce plants, trees, and flowers; which exist as long as the Spirits hold them under their influence; upon a principle similar to that by which they form a tangible hand in our circles. From the sixth sphere ascending to what the Spirits denote the God-sphere of intelligence, the Spirits can grow durable plants, trees, and flowers upon what they term the magnetic principle. These productions are grown from magnetic germs or seeds, which are formed by the celestial inhabitants of the God-sphere; which is the first sphere in which the power of forming such germs can be exercised. The Spirits of the sixth and seventh spheres receive those germs from which they cultivate those celestial productions to their own fancy and taste, and such productions are held sacred by them in honor to the giver. Please publish this letter in the SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH, for the benefit of its readers. I shall be happy to answer any other inquiries which may be of public interest.

I am, dear sir, yours, as ever,

JOSEPH P. HAZARD.

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Interesting Miscellany.

A CONCERT BY THE INVISIBLES.

The editors of the Portland *Transcript* and *Ecclectic* have recently attended a musical soirée, the subjoined description of which appears in their editorial columns, under date of the 15th instant:

We have, in the course of our lives, "assisted," as the French say, at a great variety of musical entertainments. We have heard all sorts of *artistes* from Ole Bull to Jim Crow, but never, until last week, did we attend a concert given by invisible performers. It happened in this wise.

We had heard of strange things done in the spiritual circles of this city—of persons taken up bodily, of mysterious writing by invisible hands, and in one instance, of a gentleman who was locked out of his own house by the mischievous spirits. Not being wonder-seekers, however, we had seen none of these things. At last a friend said, Come and hear the spirits give a concert! We went, incontinently.

A small, unfurnished room—a company of a dozen pleasant men and women—a framework from which hung two drums, while upon a sort

of table beneath, formed in the framework, lay violins, tambourines,

drumsticks, a guitar, etc. In one corner, fenced off by the framework

upon one side, and a melodeon upon the other, stood a bass viol, in such

a position that a performer in the flesh would be greatly troubled for want of elbow room. A circle was formed, the medium—a young lady—taking her place with her back to the instruments. A profound silence, during which intense expectation sat on every face. "Are there any spirits here who can respond?" Three quick taps upon the table, as if done with a finger-end, indicated "yes." "Is it brother Black Hawk?" "Yes." "Good evening, brother Black Hawk!" now went round, every one being expected to salute the chief, he responding to each and all with rapid taps upon the table. The gravity with which we all bowed and spoke at vacancy would have been highly edifying to any disinterested spectator!

The old chief was quite communicative, responding heartily to casual observations made by members of the circle. He informed us that he had formed a band of seventeen, sixteen of whom were in the Spirit-world, and one in the flesh—a gentleman present who accompanied the Spirits on the violin. We were somewhat surprised at this, as we never heard that Black Hawk was gifted with musical talents, he having spent all his life in fighting the pale faces. However, he called for a hymn, and the circle gave him "Come, Holy Spirit," rolling out the good old tune with greatunction.

Previous to this, however, it became necessary to seat the circle, Black Hawk as master of ceremonies, giving each one his proper place. This ceremony was performed with as much gravity as the Puritans observed in "seating the meeting."

All being seated, it was asked, "Is the Chinese Emperor present?" "Yes, yes!" and that was the last we heard of his Celestial Highness. After the singing of the hymn, the light was extinguished, and we remained in thick darkness. Presently there was a great rattling in the corner where the bass viol stood, and the word went round, "There's the Squire Simmons." "Squire Simmons, of Canton, gentlemen." "Good evening, Squire Simmons." To all of which the worthy Squire responded with hearty thumps, all the while resounding his bow with great vigor. The viol was one he had played upon in the flesh, for thirty-five years. A hymn was now sung, accompanied by the Squire in very good style. He was rewarded with hearty applause, in which he joined with great apparent good will. Meantime all at the table declared he had touched them with his bow.

A great clatter now arose upon the bass drum, and all cried, "There's brother King!" "Glad to see you, brother King!" "Are you going to touch me again to-night, brother King?" To all this the good brother responded with a most deafening thumping upon the drum. After tightening up the instrument he drummed out a tune, accompanied by the violin player present in the flesh. While he was playing, we—as also several others—placed our hands upon those of the medium, in order to be assured that she took no active part in the performance. In every instance when the hand touched the medium's, which lay upon the table, it received a stroke from the drumstick in the hands of the invisible performer. This being done in the dark, it was difficult to understand how he managed always to hit so exactly. But of course darkness is no obstacle to the Spirits!

A black hawk now undertook to give us a tune upon the tambourine, but not succeeding very well, King David came to his assistance, and the two made most horrible discord. At last, apparently disgusted with his want of success, Black Hawk sent the tambourine whirling over our heads into the middle of the floor! The spirit of Miss Emily Macomber then played several tunes upon the bass viol, in very good style. Hers was decidedly the best performance of the evening. After a few more minor manifestations a bell rang, and we were informed that the Spirits had dismissed us. The concert was over.

"And do you believe it all?" Well, we will tell you what we don't believe. We don't believe that the instruments were moved by any sort of machinery—examination satisfied us upon that point. Neither can we see how any person present could have used the instruments in the positions in which they were. We are therefore forced to admit that the music was made by some power unknown to us. As to the agency of the Spirits, we will only say that we could not see what affinity of spirit could exist between Black Hawk, King David, the Emperor of China, and Miss Emily Macomber. A motley company, surely.

"But why was it done in the dark?" Well, upon that point we are in the dark ourselves. They say, however, that the Spirits have more power in darkness, on the principle, we suppose, that during all time, ghosts, witches and hobgoblins have been forced to depart at break of day. There were numbers of well known and intelligent citizens present, and they all concurred in believing that no deception was practised. We should state that some of the company were positive they saw a light for a few seconds, in the vicinity of the instruments. As we were not looking in that direction, we did not see it.

MORE OF THE VANDALISM OF THE ALLIES.—We have already noted many of the outrages perpetrated by the allies, after the capture of Kerisch, on private property. A writer in the London *Standard* furnishes the following, which he styles an *amusing* account:

I went on shore to see the troops land at Yenikale, and was highly amused. About two hundred fellows, soldiers and marines—English, French and Turks—made for a large house, from which the occupants had fled in such haste that they left their dinner on the fire and the cloth laid. The dinner consisted of a leg of mutton, pudding and vegetables, and I happened to be one of a few who got a good dinner. The house was magnificently furnished. During dinner two Frenchmen played on the piano, while two others danced on it. Presently our fellows (who evidently had no taste for music) chopped the instrument in pieces with a pickaxe. As the company finished their dinner they threw the plates and dishes through the windows; some ran their bayonets through the pictures—some oil paintings, perhaps valuable; others amused themselves by burning the beautifully bound books, and there appeared to be competition between half a dozen to see which could destroy the greatest quantity of furniture in the shortest time. By and by some eight or ten Frenchmen came out of the cellar, where they had been locked up, when every one began to regret that he had not found out there was a cellar before. Of course a general rush was made, and in an incredibly short time there was not a full bottle or case left.

While this little piece was being acted within doors, a "grand diversion" was being performed without. The conservatory, a very handsome building, about one hundred and fifty feet long, was totally destroyed. To see the fellows chasing the poultry and pigs was amusing enough, which were all killed as soon as caught, and cooked too. The village of Kamisch was set on fire to cook by; several fine cows were killed and cut up with swords, cooked, and eaten in what is often called "no time." Some got possession of a carriage, and some were drawn about by others, who acted the part of draught animals, either horses or asses, which you please.

Another writer gives an account of the sacking of a beautiful musc.

ACCIDENT FROM SOMNAMBULISM.—A few nights since a lady residing in Washington-street met with a serious accident while in a state of somnambulism. She had no knowledge that she ever rose from her bed while asleep, nor did any person in the house know that she was a somnambulist, though they had frequently heard voices in the night time for which they could not account. On the night in question she took her child, about a year and a half old, out of bed, descended the stairs and went out to the safe for something to eat. The table had already been set for breakfast the next morning, and she put the food upon it after which she treated herself and child to a hearty meal. Without removing any of the dishes, she returned to her bed-room, laid the child down, and again started down stairs. As she descended she came in contact with a swinging window sash, which awoke her, and with out knowing where she was, stepped forward and fell headlong to the foot of the stairs. One of her arms was broken by the fall, and she received a severe contusion on the frontal bone, which, however, fortunately did not prove of a serious character. The noise created by the fall awoke some of the family, who immediately got up, supposing that the house had been entered by robbers, when the unfortunate lady was found on the floor, and in a state of insensibility. She soon recovered, but could not tell how she came in that condition. Medical aid was called and the wounds attended to, the fracture proving only the small bone of the fore-arm. She subsequently remembered and related what she called a dream, in which she thought she had taken the child and gone to dinner. On several occasions previously, the food put away at night was found to be much less, and the domestic of the family was suspected of the theft, though the lady herself always took charge of the keys. It was fortunate she did not fall the first time she went down, or the child would in all probability have been killed.

A great clatter now arose upon the bass drum, and all cried, "There's brother King!" "Glad to see you, brother King!" "Are you going to touch me again to-night, brother King?" To all this the good brother responded with a most deafening thumping upon the drum. After tightening up the instrument he drummed out a tune, accompanied by the violin player present in the flesh. While he was playing, we—as also several others—placed our hands upon those of the medium, in order to be assured that she took no active part in the performance. In every instance when the hand touched the medium's, which lay upon the table, it received a stroke from the drumstick in the hands of the invisible performer. This being done in the dark, it was difficult to understand how he managed always to hit so exactly. But of course darkness is no obstacle to the Spirits!

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