

THE SHAKER.

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“WHAT IS TRUTH?”

“THE ETERNAL RELINQUISHMENT OF ERROR.”

Vol. VI. } G. A. LOMAS, }
 } EDITOR. }

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THE WORLD'S EXPOSITION.

—o—
F. W. EVANS.

“Let Church and State be forever separate.”

—Grant.

THE Centennial Exhibition is closed one-seventh of the time. Thus American citizens, and citizens of every nation, are, by priestly diction, called *Christian*, precluded the improvement of this great educational opportunity. A minority compactly organized are lording it over the rights and consciences of their peers — true Americans — the legitimate successors of the so-called Infidel founders of our Government — the only Government on earth not sectarian — Church and State combined; a Government with a constitution that secures the inherent right of all human beings — a right to life, liberty of person, liberty of speech and of religious thought, with its outward expression, such expression not interfering with an equally free expression of citizens of this or any other nationality.

A World's Exposition, indeed, under the management of a committee of bigoted, persecuting theological tyrants, inseparable from Church and State rule! If closed on the Christian Sabbath, it were a thousand times better never to have held this gathering in the City of Brotherly Love, among Quakers, who, as Christians, esteem all days alike good, to those who are good. Nor yet in Pennsylvania, founded by William Penn, who proclaimed liberty of conscience to all Men and Women therein.

Neither should the Exposition for *All the World* have assembled in the United States, under a Government founded by such men as Jefferson, Paine and Franklin, and sealed with the martyr blood of a Lincoln — Infidel to a spurious Christianity, scripturally called the “Great Whore,” because she perpetually lusts after an adulterous association with the Civil Governments of earth, Governments resting upon the sword, and used for the oppression of the people.

The whole American People — Jews, Quakers, Infidels, Freethinkers, Pagan, Chinese, and representatives of all Religions, not *Anti-Christian*, should rise up in mass and open the Exposition on all days of the week, beginning with the Sabbath, or remove the whole *mis*-representation of a World's Exposition into Spain or Mexico — some legitimate Constitutional Church and State Government. In America it is a gross libel upon our Constitution. The same insidious clerical power that has closed the Exposition upon their typical, ceremonial Sabbath, has, thereby, taken one step toward subverting the Constitution itself. Let free America rebuke that power, and, with Grant, proclaim that, in one nation, Church and State shall forever be separate.

In the first Constitutional Convention we were trapped — caught napping. A seed of Slavery was left in the Constitution. We are paying the cost of that error. Shall we commit a second error, and permit subtle priestcraft to sow the seeds of a religious, civil war in our Centennial Constitution? Then shall we have been recreant to our duty as American citizens, false to our profession of liberty of conscience, and faithless to the sacred trust of guardians of the rights and liberties of humanity the world over. Let there be on earth one free government, where the whole world can meet at their own discretion, on everybody's Sabbath day. That will be the great Sabbath of rest from religious persecution — a Sabbath that will forever remain for the People of God.

As a Shaker, I believe the Civil Government should be a Republic of citizens — Men and Women of all races and nations, possessed of equal rights to *life and land* — to liberty, unadulterated by sectarian theology — to freedom from debt, war, poverty or riches. Then we can also have a spiritual church, in God, possessing no earthly power other than the power of truth, as exhibited in holy lives by its communicants.

Mt. Lebanon, Columbia County, N. Y.

STEADFASTNESS.

—o—
BY G. B. AVERY.

THE overruling fault of the great throng of Pilgrim Progressionists — that which blights the visionary harvest of rewards of millions who make a bold start in the pathway of progression, is vacillation. The trials incident to an earnest endeavor to rise out of the vast slough of degradation, ignorance, supine indifference to improvement, and shameless folly and sin which is the characteristic element of the massive millions of earth's inhabitants, which goad the feelings of the pilgrim and prompt a return to former conditions, to plod along with the masses in slothful ease, error and dishonor, the jibes, sneers and rebuffs which a pilgrim progressionist has to meet from the idle, careless throng he is leaving behind, are things hard to bear; and a soul needs the shield and fortification of a firm conviction of the truth and righteousness of the work of progress undertaken, with a godly and heroic philanthropy that points upward the sight, to view a worthier purpose for which to toil through life, and unflinchingly holds up the resolution to live and strive for this purpose, and to accomplish it though companions should flinch and fall on every side.

Every Christian Pilgrim Progressionist should remember that never yet did even one soul perseveringly and consecratedly pursue the Christian's pathway but was scoffed at

by the world, and deemed an enthusiast, a lunatic, or a fool! Even so in the arena of progress in science, art, or literature. The inventive progressionists — the world's greatest benefactors — those who have awakened the world from torpidity, advanced the development of improvement in human conditions, have generally led lives fifty, one hundred, five hundred, or a thousand years in advance of the masses, and, by them, either looked upon as utopian dreamers, insane enthusiasts, or fools.

But those of this class who have had the dignity and philanthropy to persevere and go ahead, despite all opposition, thus showing themselves true men and women, instead of mere human tools, to be handled by the masses at the nod and beck of fashion, public opinion or prejudice, as the wake and wave of public sentiment might flow for the moment, have been the Benefactors, the Saviours, and Redeemers of the race. These are the only human beings worthy of the title of *men and women*. And surely none others justly merit the name of Brothers and Sisters in Christ's Kingdom.

It is related by the biographer of Demosthenes, that he went into the public halls and called out, “Come unto me all men.” The populace began to gather around him, and he commenced to cane them, crying out, “I called for men, these are nothing but excrescences.” They were the masses of *unstable*, weak, foolish, fashionable, giddy and purposeless throng, who were drifting on the ocean of circumstances without a rudder of fixed purpose to guide their barques to a harbor of progressed improvement and excellence.

There has of late been a very great anxiety among Believers in the Kingdom of Christ, to have some council of the wisest and most progressed souls held at some location where such council might discuss the important subject of the most efficient means of awakening a renewed vigor of progress in Gospel Travel, and a manifesto and disbursement of power that should call into Zion's ranks an abundant harvest of souls, to heighten, enliven and quicken the spiritual and social status of Zion, and make her what she is called to be, “the light of the world,” “the salt of the earth.” The city of glory set on a hill as example to the nations of God's righteousness and goodness manifest among men — the true epistle of Christianity to the unbelievers.

Ah, we might multiply councils infinitely, and discuss ways and means with the wisdom of the sages of Solomon, suggest stimulants to fire the resolution, and excitements to progress, as numerous as the pearly dew-drops of the morning, but, like them, when the sun of righteousness should shine upon them, all

would pass off in vapor, without a soul work of conviction of the sinfulness of sin, and the folly and misery of a worldly life, of such force, depth and intensity as to turn souls short about from their worldly career of life, and cause them to be willing, and not only willing but unflinchingly determined to die to its life! to confess sin, repent and turn to God.

At present the prevailing wave of public feeling is as fickle as the colors of the rainbow. And the popular religion of the day is largely verbose and so smally actual that its power is mostly swallowed up in a sea of elocution. Its "salt is largely without a savor." But words are like carriages, they may run empty or full of meaning and power, but their fullness is largely due to the embodiment of their sentiment in the life pulsations of the speaker.

What is needed, without the aid of a council to dictate it, is an earnest, zealous, persevering stability in living the Christ life, so that a power may flow forth to humanity that is like an ocean's wave—mighty in baptism, with salt enough to save!

Mt. Lebanon, N. Y.

BEAUTIFUL RIVERS.

MARTHA J. ANDERSON.

Beautiful rivers, like silvery threads—
Coursing their way over dark sandy beds,
Sweeping through valleys and circling the hills,
Gathering the ripples from thousands of rills,—
Flowing from mountain, from rock, and from dell,
Ocean-bound waters with music to swell,
Brooklet and fountain, and deep placid lake,
Greet the bright waves on your surface to break.

Beautiful rivers that gladden the earth,
Spirit of waters with joy gave you birth!
The smile of her face was impressed on your tide,
Beaming forever as onward you glide;
Joyously singing the song of the free—
(Giving with pleasure your wealth to the sea;
Dancing, and glancing, with sunbeams at play,
Never shall cloud on your sunny face stay.

Beautiful rivers, majestic and grand,
Blessing the desert of Egypt's fair land!
Waking the verdure 'neath tropical sun,
Flowering the sands where your golden streams
run;
Filling the air with the moisture it needs,—
Rising like incense of kind, loving deeds—
Forming the clouds over mountain and plain,
Falling in copious showers of rain.

Beautiful rivers that rolled on your way,
Long before man saw the light of the day—
Long e'er the light gazelle sought you to drink—
Long e'er the wild races dwelt on your brink.
They who made hunting and fishing their aim
Came and passed on, yet you flowed on the same!
Now, all along by your rocky bound course,
Shrieks the shrill voice of the fleet iron horse:
Civilization, with quick pulse and heart—
Rears its bold front and its busiest mart.

Beautiful rivers! so calm in your flow,
Vessels of freight, safely sail to and fro—
Gliding like nymphs o'er your broad open breast,
Ploughing the waves to a foam-beaten crest,
Thus through the means art and science can wield,
Men interchange the rich fruits of the field;
Commerce and trade, with their works of renown
Spread their white sails by the city and town.

Beautiful rivers! your murmurings sweet
Sing to my spirit of concord complete;
Ev'ry clear drop that may enter your tide,
Knows not the spirit that seeks to divide;
O! that life's current thus smoothly might roll,
Free from the care that perplexes the soul,
Stirring its depths, till the whirlpool of strife
Sinks all the good that would gladden our life.

'Tis by the side of some beautiful stream,
I would sleep my last sleep, and dream my last
dream!

Waking to joy on the bright sunny shore,
To walk by the river of life evermore!
Leaving no trace of my pilgrimage here—
Save in the hearts of the loving ones dear—
Ripples shall murmur a song soft and low,
As the tide of my life on forever shall flow!
Mt. Lebanon, N. Y.

PRAYER.

O. C. HAMPTON.

PRAYER is an earnest petition to God or other intelligences higher than ourselves, for certain blessings and comforts positively; or, negatively, for assistance and deliverance from sorrows and dangers besetting us, which those higher powers are supposed by the petitioner to be able to bestow. Sometimes these prayers are addressed to kings, presidents, legislative bodies, right here in our own world; sometimes to angels—Jesus Christ—God. Prayer will continue as long as intercession continues to be a necessity of humanity, and an atonement with better beings and conditions is an active element of man's nature. No matter how much infidelity, nor how many scoffers at prayer there may be in the world—in times of peril, sorrows, sickness (of soul or body) men will continue to pray, infidels and all; and so long as we have sweet and holy aspirations for better things, we shall give expression thereto in Prayer. If I had been one of the ministers to whom John Tyndall proposed to institute daily prayers for the relief and recovery of the inmates of a certain number of hospitals, for some given number of months, I should not have hesitated a moment to have tried the experiment; and they showed a most lamentable want of confidence in their own profession by declining his proposal. His proposal was perfectly fair, and if prayer cannot be vindicated on the grounds of his plan it cannot be vindicated at all. Some honest men who would consider it a grievous thing to be called infidels, assert that all God's laws are of necessity bound in chains of everlasting fixity, and therefore cannot be modified by any amount of Prayer. And yet these same persons describe God as a being altogether incomprehensible to finite intelligences. How do they know, then, that eternal fixity is an attribute of a being they know nothing about? For all that can be proven to the contrary, *unfixity* or *eternal change* is as much an element in the character of God's laws as eternal fixity. Evolution is supposed to be one of those laws, and what of that? Again we do not know how much of the universe, indeed whether or not all of it is manipulated by finite intelligences in an infinitely ascending category of degrees of power and wisdom. Indeed, there are good reasons for supposing that what are called the laws of the universe are and must continue to be dead or dormant negations, only as they are brought into active visible existence by the *finite* intelligences of the universe. Take the laws of the transmission of thought around the globe in one hundredth part of a second! Without a Morse it might have remained a dead negation, incarcerated in a tomb of everlasting silence and inactivity, or had not a finite mind felt the necessity of its active agency and brought the conditions together for its dehibernation. So with steamships without a Watt, Fulton, and so of photographing without a Daguerre. If, then, the laws of the universe appear to be

only *latent possibilities*, with latent powers capable of manipulation by finite minds, not yielding any visible results till they *are* thus manipulated, why should it be incredible that these laws may be modified in their operation, intensified, or even suspended in their activity for a time, by finite manipulations of the conditions upon which these phenomena depend! And as we know that finite minds *can be moved* and propitiated in our favor, how can it be inconsistent to pray for any blessing we are in need of, either temporal or spiritual? and echo answers why.

Union Village, O.

ANIMADVERSION ON PARTON.

EDITOR SHAKER:

In the May number of THE SHAKER I noticed an article entitled "Parton's Apology," and I would beg leave to take exceptions to some of the sentiments expressed therein.

The historian says: "But it was not Calvin who burned him (Servetus). It was the century. It was imperfectly developed human nature, etc., etc."

I would ask, what makes a century or an age characteristic if not the men who are the chief actors in the affairs of their time? When Napoleon I. caused the murder of the Duke d' Enghien, surely no one will ascribe that horrible outrage to the age, and relieve the imperial criminal from the odium attached to that deed. And when a Belknap shamelessly betrays a high trust and brings dishonor upon his country, who will have the temerity to screen him by pleading in extenuation the nineteenth century?

The writer furthermore apologetically suggests, "imperfectly developed human nature." Is a person who can so far forget himself as to cause the excruciating death of his opponent, where the points of difference were at best but trivial, and the unfortunate victim of his hatred, his peer, if not his superior in morality, virtue and learning; a person who at the same time assumes to interpret scripture and to establish a system of religion for mankind, is such a person to be excused by "imperfectly developed human nature?" However charitably we may be disposed toward the tyrant who could so abuse his power, it would be wrong to hide the fact from the world that he never felt remorse or repentance, but in after years ferociously asserted that under like circumstances he would do so again. A deed which would have stained the character of a Nero, becomes a crime of lasting infamy in a Calvin.

But the doctrine is false and pernicious. Men are individually responsible for their acts, and no power in heaven nor earth can change the fact. True, there may be extenuating circumstances in every case, yet the deed remains the same after all, and how will you secure justice to the wronged victim?

Whatever James Parton's opinion may be concerning those dark transactions with which the name of the Geneva divine is connected, he is doing a good work in thus bringing them before the public; for there are millions of the followers of Calvin who have never heard the sad story of the unfortunate Michael Servetus.

Yours,

LOUIS BASTING.

Mt. Lebanon, N. Y.

THE STORMY SEA.

—O—
E. A. SEDGWICK.

WHEN troubles and rough feelings come upon our minds making them like the restless ocean, let Christ arise within us, and "rebuke the wind and wave," bringing a peaceful calm.

Let reason have its rule; then we will sail smoothly on the waters of life, unruffled by the tempests of passion.

Let us try to live above trouble, counting ourselves the master and not the servant.

If the principles of Christ are within us no trouble can sink our souls.

West Pittsfield, Mass.

SOLILOQUY.

—O—
MARIA WITHAM.

MY mind abandons itself to reverie, and is transferred in ecstasy to nature and nature's God. It sees in the simplicity of nature's elements and laws the wisdom and majesty of the great Creator. I feel withdrawn from earth and rise above the little theater of human passions and anxieties to lift my soul in pious contemplation. My mind expands with fervent desires for Truth and Knowledge; and I scale heaven's pure walls with truthful aspirations rather than worship the good opinion of erring man. In the gilded canopy of heaven, Divinity reigns in all the grandeur of its attributes, greatness and strength, and travels through the dominions of an unlimited monarchy. Fancy may take its flight far beyond the power of eye or the telescope. It may expatiate in the outer regions of all that is visible, yet who shall have the boldness to say that the wonders of the Almighty are at an end, because we can no longer trace his footsteps! Let me rather say with the Psalmist, "What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him!" O bounteous one, what have I not received from thee! Throughout the seasons that are past, I see sweet places everywhere. My body and soul have been fed by the most congenial food. Thy chastening hand has proved a blessing; and looking backward through time that has passed, and along the way my feet have pressed, what have I not received from thee, my strength, my stay. A moment from this outward life I joyfully retreat, and in thy presence tell thee, that within I feel so satisfied thy cross to bear. Oh, do not spare the chastening rod that keeps me by thy side. Oh, sweetly give me strength to bear whatever waits me here.

Enfield, Conn.

THE LIGHTED TEMPLE.

—O—
MARY WHITCHER.

"Cast the beam out of thine own eye."

Subdue thyself, then beauty will appear
Where now thou seest it not;
For when the mental sight's not clear,
Motes will be seen, and many a seeming blot.

Only by light within, and heart made free
From sin and all the stains of sin,
Art thou prepared to rightly see,
And cast thy brother's beam from him.

So near to God, then let my spirit move —
So full of goodness let my motives be —
That I may kindly see, and truly love
My fellow men, as God hath love for me.
Shaker Village, N. H.

NOTES BY THE WAY -- NO. 2.

—O—
H. C. BLINN.

As I write the above title, my first thought is to pencil a few religious notes adapted to the necessities of those who are stepping upon the stage of active life. There can be no doubt, that line upon line and precept upon precept will be as much needed for a few years to come, as they were supposed to be in the past.

I had no sooner written my first word, when an illustration of real life that some kind friend had sent to me, attracted my attention, and this was no less than a chicken, just emerging from its shell! Already it had assumed an attitude of defiance, and was ready to contend for its privileges, with a character of a full grown of its species.

Well, I remarked, here is a lesson for the present generation — a picture for precocious children. Indeed, it might be studied with profit by fond but foolish parents, and with no less care by the would-be-wise. And then herein is a *lesson* for our own religious order: Dependent as we are upon the world for all accessions, we should not let the subject of children pass carelessly by. Solomon's wisdom has lost its charm over the child, *if it ever had any*. "Train him up in the way he should go," sounds well, but the attempt to reduce it to practice is something more than sounds. Born into this world, filled to overflowing with an inherited tendency to all the ills of the flesh, it would need an angel on the right and left side to keep him from willingly falling into sin. However, I shall leave the chicken with its fighting proclivities developing so soon after its transition state, and perhaps by-and-by I may learn the great difference, should there be any, between the development of life in this order and that of a class which assumes to be more exalted in the grand scheme of creation. "First that which is natural and afterward that which is spiritual," seems at this time for the writer, as it no doubt often does to others, as an anodyne to the mind. It is, indeed, the legitimate order of our lives in this world and may be all for the best.

I must now make reference to the Apostle Peter who took such an active interest in the happiness of those around him, for he speaks thus pleasantly to us: "He that would *love life* and see *good days*, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile." To those who are young, in an especial manner, I would commend this exhortation, and urge upon them the necessity of allowing it to shape their lives. "Good days" are an inheritance far preferable to great riches. It is a legacy which the wealthy of this world can never confer upon their heirs at law.

Those who are so fortunate as to obtain the treasure, must obtain it through their own labors of self-denial — by the cross of Christ. The professor will "love life" because of the good he may do.

It is not to those only who are addicted to the use of vulgar and profane language that this has a direct application, but it is equally potent to that class, who profess to be cultivated for the society of the virtuous and refined. Indeed, it is to be more dreaded, in its advances, as it comes from what is assumed to be the higher ranks of society.

It is the ferocious beast, lurking under the false garb of cultivation. The viper charming his unsuspecting prey, while the innocent mind thinks only of the external beauty.

Let every young person refrain his tongue from evil, or he may have occasion to mourn when it is too late, — when "those days shall come in which he will say I have no pleasure in thee."

Canterbury, N. H.

FAREWELL COUNSEL.

—O—
WILLIAM H. WETHERBEE.

May God in His mercy be near and direct you,
While passing along the rough journey of life;
May His angels at all times watch o'er and protect you,
Whene'er you sojourn where temptations are rife.

Should the phantoms of earth shine brightly upon you,
With their promised pleasures that fair would allure,
Then stand ye with firmness, let no one take from you
The garment of innocence, spotless and pure.

When far in the west (if perchance you should go there),
And trials and troubles you still there should meet;
When you find in your rambles true comfort is nowhere,
Then hasten ye back to this lowly retreat.

Here peace and true comfort and justification
Are free for the honest, the humble and low;
And though they are found in a meek, humble station,
They are worth more than all this earth can bestow.

A few days will flit, and will end earthly pleasure,
Then tangible objects will vanish like dew;
The spirit immortal will then need a treasure —
Remember this, Rose, for 'tis written for you.
Written for L. R. W. Shirley.

THAT DREAM.

—O—
BELOVED EDITOR:

Your letter, requesting particulars of dream mentioned in *Atlantic Monthly* for June, is at hand. Uncertain that others will be benefited by my compliance, though to me the dream is a remarkable fact. I wish I could give the inspirational force, which accompanies every remembrance of it, even at the present time. We, my whole family, left Liverpool, March 15, 1842, in the then new Packet, SHERIDAN. We were four days and five nights clearing St. George's Channel and Irish Sea, experiencing the equinoctial storm, which was very severe indeed. I kept a daily journal; and among many interesting incidents that may to-day be read therein, I find entered: "Mar. 22: Had a most remarkable dream, during the little broken sleep of last night. I was proprietor of large pleasure grounds and gardens in America. Had Father, mother, Mary Ann (then my wife, now my gospel sister, children, with Grand Fathers, Mothers, Uncles, Aunts, and a great many respectable people, all enjoying these beautiful grounds and gardens! A strange mingling of feelings are mine — bitter and sweet — kind and unkind!" Such is the memorandum. As before intimated, it is quite impossible to communicate the impression made on my mind. And when I came to Shirley, in March, 1849, and recognized that *very spot of beauty*, what could express my wondering surprise? I have not seen here, all the parties named in my dream, some, even then, being dead; but *I have met here, some whom I then did see, and whom I never met before!* The spot is not in as high

a state of cultivation as I then saw it; but what I may realize when my mortal is "put off," or when, like Elisha's servant, my spiritual eyes are opened, I know not. Neither have I, in a worldly view, realized the proprietorship — excepting in the nobler intent of "they that buy, as though they possessed not" — and thus, my dream has been fully experienced. To this day, I cannot approach that particular spot, without a new feeling of gratitude, that my feet were led to Shirley, where I have found so much of good — so much of God manifested. I have ever esteemed the dream as a "special" providence (if you please), to strengthen and confirm my spirit; though what angel ministered it, must be determined in the future. If any others can thereby be comforted, I am glad, and shall feel amply paid for intruding so much of my personal history upon them, in yielding to your request. With never-failing love,

I am, yours,
JOHN WHITELEY.

P. S.— I was very much pleased with your communication to the *Albany Express*, and think you will be equally pleased with Elder Daniel Fraser's criticism upon it. We had 275 copies of Howell's article struck off, and have had copies of your *Express* letter printed to accompany them wherever sent. The world moves! and the call for light and truth is steadily increasing. Let us keep good courage — let it not fail — and if we keep good, we will never be forsaken of God, the great fountain of all good. Farewell.

Shirley Village, Mass., May 30, 1876.

J. W.

LOVE vs. FEAR.

—o—
JOSEPH WOODS.

THE Apostle John says: God is love; He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him.

In love there is no fear. He that feareth is not made perfect in the love of God, for he is still in danger of being overcome by the powers of evil, and by the god of this world. The evidence of our love to God will be the manifestation of our love to our brethren and sisters. If a man love not his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen! St. Paul feared, after having preached to others, lest he should become blinded by the spirit of this world and turn from God. Have we any less need of watchfulness, until we have overcome the world? We have the example of Jesus and many others of being filled with the spirit of God.

Ecclesiastes sums up the whole matter in a few words — Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. Fear may be well for those who, like Moses, Nehemiah, and King David, regarded God as absolute Judge, taking vengeance on those who knew Him not.

Those who conceive God to be such a being, and the devil corresponding in some respects, full of wrath — going about as the roaring lion seeking whom he may devour — truly with such a frame of belief well *might fear* lest they be destroyed in whatever course they *might* pursue.

Fear induces a slavish obedience, and in persons of this class, it may, perhaps, out of servile fear, place some restraint upon their passions, lest wrath overtake them. Not that they see any thing lovely in God or goodness or have any the less inclination toward that which is corrupt.

But close upon this follows the law —

"What a man soweth that shall he also reap." Laws appertaining to the natural and spiritual world are as essentially God's laws, and a violation of either brings a corresponding penalty — we reap what we sow.

This can be no special judgment from God, but rather the condemnation of our own lives. St. Paul says: "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption," and this he describes as adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, strife, seditions, heresy, envyings, murderers, drunkenness, etc., and that they who commit these things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Will those who live after the course of the world and harvest to themselves a part or all of the forementioned evils, charge God as the author of the same? The rational and enlightened mind will no doubt admit that it is the harvest of his own sowing — the fruit of his own labor. It is well for the transgressor to fear God, for falling into his hands is a fearful thing. Some have thought that Jesus taught his disciples to fear God rather than to love him, when he said: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Love casteth out fear, and certainly love is preferable, for they that dwell in love dwell in God.

Why should we make ourselves miserable, when we might, by obedience to the law of Christ, be happy?

Canterbury, N. H.

MUSIC, NO. 7.

—o—
JAMES G. RUSSELL.

ALTHOUGH there are specified points in the musical gamut for change in the registers of the voice, such assertion is not without its modification, that singers meet with difficulties seemingly insurmountable. As "command of hand is the soul of penmanship," so likewise, command of tone is the soul of music. Having a theoretical knowledge of the points where the registers change, the inefficient singer will experience a weakness in power of tone at those points where the changes occur, which can be remedied only by a practical acquisition of tone command. A better explanation is unsought for than that given by Bassini, concerning the junction of the chest and medium registers. He says: "In training the voice, the teacher should commence with the chest register; and this from the fact that where the chest and medium registers play into each other, the voice is weak and uncertain, and it is an extremely difficult matter to equalize it. But this equalization is just the important task to be accomplished. The method to be pursued is this: the tones which are common to both the chest and medium registers, must be practiced alternately with each. For just as the skillful workman, who would join two pieces of wood and make the strength at the points of adjustment equal to the rest, will dove-tail the two, by extending the end of one sufficiently far in upon the end of the other to prevent any weakness at the extremities; so the skillful teacher will extend the limit of one register into the middle of the next, until the weak tones of both are blended, and become equally sound and strong — the point of contact being smoothed and obliterated altogether."

The quoted remarks apply particularly to

the chest and medium registers, as the same author remarks also, that "the medium and head registers do not at all coincide, and have no tones in common — a fact explained by the identity of tube." Prominent, then, in the great field of music culture, is the arduous task of combining the chest and medium registers in a manner, not only to make the tones equally strong where the two registers meet, but also to acquire that command of tone, that the voice never may be injured by an unconscious forcing of the registers beyond their natural position — a fault alarmingly conspicuous, and often attended with most serious consequences on the part of the singer, especially at that critical period of life termed the "age of puberty." At that season the voice is undergoing a decided change in both quality and pitch of tone. With males, the change is peculiarly marked by an anatomical alteration of the larynx, whose enlargement assumes a conspicuous prominence in the throat, the voice descending a whole octave in pitch from the position it occupied in childhood, becomes extremely masculine, and, for a season, frequently beyond power of control. With females, the change is less marked, as the voice retains its pitch, yet changes essentially in quality and volume of tone. But no less injuries are likely to accrue, if due cognizance be not taken of the circumstances attending this peculiar season of voice-changing. The warning words of the eminent Bassini are these: "Many voices are irretrievably lost during this time through carelessness of their possessors, or the ignorance of singing masters." It should become, therefore, the irresistible conviction of every singer, that the laws which govern the musical universe are as fixed and unchangeable as those pertaining to the organism of our physical being; and just as assuredly we must reap the fatal consequences of violated law in the former case, as we would expect to reap them in the latter.

REGRETS.

—o—

*How often for treasures and pleasures we sigh,
Which, when ours, unnoticed, we permit to pass by!*
A. Calver.

On time's hastening current we are carried along,
Each day to our goal drawing near;
But how oft we're impressed by an influence strong
To pause in our rapid career —
To pause for reflection — the past to review,
Its good or its evil recount;
And thus we can test, if our hearts are but true,
The clearness of life's flowing fount.

We sigh for the hours that have passed unimproved;
They are fled, and we sigh but in vain;
Thus moments misspent are as blanks in our lives,
Or as blots we're compelled to retain.
We cannot efface from our memory's chart
The time we have wasted each day;
Thus *treasures* escape and we value them not,
But sigh when they're far, far away.

How many the times, when good might be done,
Have slipped unimproved from our grasp, —
Where help to a friend or brother in need,
Our hearts in true friendship would clasp.
For our light and enjoyment increase every time
That we shed on our neighbor a ray;
Thus *pleasures* escape, and we let them pass by,
To sigh when they're far, far away.

We have health — 'tis a treasure that God has bestowed,
And each has been blessed with a share;
But if we neglect His immutable laws,
'Twill be lost — still we seem not to care.
At last to our sorrow we find it is gone,
We are paralyzed then with dismay;
Thus *treasures* escape, we have let them pass on,
To sigh when they're far, far away.

But there is a tie which binds us to earth.
 'Tis an anchor which heaven has given ;
 Were it not for this bond our frail bark, many times,
 On the rocks of despair might be driven.
 It lightens our sorrows, and brightens our joys,
 Dispelling the clouds from our way ;
 While thro' storms and temptations it bears us along,
 Dispensing a life-cheering ray.

This treasure is friendship—the friendship of those
 Who are toiling along by our side,
 Who have with us rejoiced, and in sorrow have
 mourned,
 By temptations alike have been tried ;
 But how bitter the thought, when, by passion or
 pride,
 Or envy, we've severed the tie !
 Thus treasures escape, and we value them not,
 But lament when we find them passed by.

Then let us take heed of the warning in time,
 While these pleasures and treasures are ours,
 Nor e'er be decoyed from the pathway of right,
 By the sheen of a few fading flowers.
 Our time, health and friendship in season we'll prize,
 Improving these treasures each day ;
 Nor let them escape till they have passed by,
 To sigh when they're far, far away !
 Mt. Lebanon, N. Y.

THE SHAKER.

Monthly—60 cents per annum.

A DUAL ADVOCATE OF CHRIST PRINCIPLES.

THE RELIGIOUS TEST.

WHILE many thousands beneath the influences of revival manipulators are "experiencing religion," it appears proper that we, as religious commentators, should consider in what true religion consists. Ere this we have expressed our joy that any and many should perceive and embrace the opportunity to lead a better life. We need not ask what the motives were that induced this determination, nor to what particular *ism* individuals may have given their adhesion; being satisfied that any motives which have prompted men and women to forsake the bad and accept the better, are constituents of true religion. Such "change of heart" evidences a new departure in life practice, and is of incomparable value, while mere theology remains a dead letter. We are confident that our world is in a measure magnetically influenced and attracted by the Christ Spirit. That there are seasons in human life when the polarity of individuals stands corrected by this magnetic influence. With this polarity of spirituality established, the whole life comes *en rapport* with angelic goodness, and the fruits of true religion are apparent in their *changed life*. Corrected thus, the libertine, magdalen and generally immoral sensualist are confronted by their highest consciousness of right and reform. Thus the drunkard leaves his cups and becomes a saviour to those in his whilom degradation; and the devotees of all crime are, by this same Christ inspiration, helped to experience that true religion which establishes a polarity in all moral rectitude. We have enumerated some of the worst of classes. But the grand majority which as really needs to "experience religion," and move to superior life is composed of those

who congratulate themselves that they are "pretty good," and "not so bad as very many who are worse!" who think their present rectitude an all-sufficient apology for not exerting a more discreet polarity with the heavens. No sooner do individuals arrive at a station they once thought good, than true religion presents the better to their view, and they *travail* toward another satisfactory conclusion, only to be still directed onward. The test of all true religion is nowhere written in theology, but is only expressed by more active, more pure life. Too frequently all the religion people have is in "joining the church," and assenting to certain formulas of theology. Doctrine is fruitless, and mere persuasion that this or that theology is correct is worse than useless, unless the *life test* is made. The test of the Christian religion is manifest in the fact that its adherents come into complete conformity or polarity with the Christ life, manifested by Jesus' example—whose feminine counterpart in identical life we consider was Ann Lee. Would we make the test of how religious we are, let us compare our daily lives with the same of him who invited "Follow me!"

This is the test Shakerism teaches its subjects to make. Unless Shakerism helps the impure to become pure, and these to become exceedingly pure, it is not what is wanted by humanity. Unless it urges laws that change the selfishness of human hearts into active philanthropy for "the household of faith" at least, it will not stand the test. Unless it presents a superior realm of pure and peaceful life than is found on the plane of the best of earthly life, it does not bear the test of true religion. While we urge our brotherhood to an exceeding watchfulness to prevent self and selfishness, like unto an ancient golden calf, from becoming objects of worship, and to be jealous of those heaven-born principles that inculcate, and enforce self-denial to every thing that opposes PURITY, PEACE, EQUALITY and UNWORLDLY LOVE AND PRACTICE, we invite the investigation by all, of the *principles* of Shakerism as a true religious test, and as the guide of those who would live, like him whose kingdom was not of this world. ☆

SHAKER INSTITUTIONS.

[From Albany Express.]

LETTER FROM EDITOR G. A. LOMAS, OF "THE SHAKER," REPLYING TO W. D. HOWELLS' ARTICLE IN THE JUNE ATLANTIC.

To the Editors of the Albany Morning Express:

Your kindly hint, that Elder Evans or myself should reply to the excerpt made by the EXPRESS from W. D. Howells' Article in the Atlantic for June, is responsible for this response. The point, which you well knew would grate most keenly on our feelings—"the unkindest cut of all"—was the one making allusion to "the decay of numbers, which the Shakers confess with so great regret, etc." Instead of having any denial to make of this assertion, we acknowledge the point well taken. It is a truth, that can do us no possible good to deny, that we are not more than half as numerous as we have been in some times past. Nor will we dispute with any that we deeply regret the fact; nor that the decidence which has obtained has been the cause of much discomfiture

to the faithful, and of deep discouragement, to which very many weak and faithless minds have succumbed. If Shakerism is dependent upon a steady increase of numbers, it was a decided failure many years ago. But its principles are just as correct to-day, with its 2,500 adherents, as when 4,000 believed, or as when more or less shall embrace their practice. Being dependent upon those outside our institutions for our increase—upon those who have consciences in their souls, and sufficient stamina of both soul and body, to obey their consciences—we are numerically small, and who is to blame? As Howells says: "I cannot think of one's being a Shaker on any other terms except, of course, a sincere conviction." And he is correct. But the vast majority who have applied for admission and trial, have been those whose conviction is summed up in those seven noted principles, "five loaves, and two fishes!" The regeneration or new creation which we teach of, decidedly requires that men and women should be made right the first time—before they come to our practice. While even the most successful and best of us find that we were made none too well to adopt Shaker principles easily, more than ninety-nine in every hundred that we have labored and sweat over, were those whom we have almost thought even the Almighty would have given up in despair! Like unto a great draught of fishes, a hundred to one have been lampreys; that, unfit for use in our temple, were thrown back into the sea, "whose waters cast up mire and dirt." And we admit the outlook still dubious; for only as fast as you worldly-minded people come to be sufficiently self-denying and spiritual, will Shakerism enjoy flourishing members. And if we, as Shakers, become extinct, the barometrical height of spirituality in the *outré terre* will know no significance whatever, as "the salt" will all be gone! Now, gentlemen, let it be understood that our institutions are made for our better convenience in being Christians; while we are not made for our institutions. When God questions us and others, He will not ask whether we came from this or that institution; whether we were Shakers, Quakers, Methodists, Catholics, Mohammedans, etc., etc., but He will ask us, "What kind of lives have you lived?" and "How nearly do they accord with the best known principles of active, practical Christianity?" Our names and institutions are man-made; and if these or other appendages assist us in being better men or women, God be praised; but in religion, nothing is worthy of our special attention but the practical in Christ, regardless of sectarian terms. We close by saying that Howells' article is good, perhaps too good, as it gives a lustre that we, as a people, are not worthy of, and some of which might be dispelled by active associations; but he appears honest, "almost persuaded," and worthy of thanks from us and all interested. I am, etc.,

G. A. LOMAS.

SHAKERS, May 20.

CRITICISM ON THE ABOVE.

MY DEAR G. A. L.—Last night an *Albany Express*, containing your letter on "SHAKER VILLAGE," in "Atlantic," came to hand. Many thanks for such favors. Elder John Whiteley was very much pleased with it; and I was too, excepting the lack of lustre which you infer therein, and which Howells felt impressed to give us. This Society is the smallest in our Israel, yet I can point to more than a dozen, who shine with more lustre, even in the dark of these days, than any measure of jewels that could be procured!

One branch of my life is devoted to the cause, that will make the true and single-hearted, even though the least, "to shine!" Don't let us say, "perhaps too good;" or think about a lack of lustre; but rather of a burnishing up. If we do so with a will, there will be lustre enough. Permit me, to think our honored friend, Howells, did not over-estimate the brightness which rests on Shirley. And may he, when visiting Shakers, N. Y., and other societies, find you all luminous—earnestly engaged in manifesting a divine humanity, free from the earthliness of lower self-hood. Let us celebrate the "Centennial" by a general shining forth of purity of life, and the reign of universal peace and good will—at home and abroad.

Yours,

DANIEL FRAZER.

SHIRLEY VILLAGE, May 30, 1876.

GRATITUDE.

—o—

For every blessing I receive —
 For every gift that comes from heaven —
 For every ill which I relieve,
 And every smile that's to me given,
 I would give thanks.

For precious love, unspoken by word —
 For each endearment understood —
 For music of the soul, yet heard,
 And growth of a continual good,
 Thanks, more than thanks.

And while amid these silent meads,
 My home must be upon the sod,
 While my humanity has needs
 Which seek supplies from thee, my God —
 Oh, fail me not the blissful thrill —
 A brother's cheer, a sister's love —
 With these my soul has measured fill;
 Without them there's to me no God! ☆

OUR DELEGATE. We were pleased beyond measure to read in the *Voice of Peace* that Elder F. W. Evans, Mt. Lebanon, N. Y., had been selected delegate to, and one of the Vice-Presidents of the Centennial Peace Convention in Philadelphia beginning July 10. This was a most fitting selection. We congratulate all who will be fortunate enough to hear what "the Spirit" shall impress him to utter in behalf of Peace and against the barbarisms of any people barbaric enough to learn and practice war. ☆

VINDICATION OF SHAKER SOCIAL BEAUTIES.

—o—

[The following extracts are taken from a private letter, written by Eunice Bathrick, of Harvard, Mass., to the writer of the article entitled: "SOCIAL BEAUTIES OF CHRISTIAN COMMUNISM" in MAY NO. OF THE SHAKER. Coming from one advanced in years, and a thorough Shaker, the remarks have especial value. ED.]

"I often feel while reading THE SHAKER (which I do with much pleasure), that there is something needed to give more sunshine to Shaker life — to portray in brighter and more glowing colors the beauty of the gains of full consecration. You say: 'Living in the spirit of our gospel testimony, we necessarily renounce many practices which bring pleasure to the worldly mind, and embrace those elements which produce the joys of heaven in our present, social lives, etc.'

"Now, do not all, who make a full consecration of 'soul, body and spirit,'— who have, or are daily divesting themselves of every discordant element, enjoy heaven here? Have not such, a living spring within—a fountain constantly gushing forth sweet waters to supply thirsty and famishing souls?

"If so, let us publish it to the world—let them know that we are "happy and free"—that we have not to wait till we cross the dividing line to taste the joys of a heavenly existence. Let them know that we have formed, or are forming, a heaven within.

"To present the idea to those not of our body, that all present comforts and enjoyments are to be sacrificed, in pursuit of future happiness, must look gloomy and uninviting to them. But once picture to their imaginations the real joy that is to be derived from a life of full consecration to God in this state of existence, with the assurance of never-ending felicity in the future, and they will not be so reluctant to make the required sacrifice; they will see they have only to make an exchange of perishable pleasures for the more exalted and durable.

"While sowing the good seed, let the soil be warmed by love from consecrated hearts—from resurrected souls, illumined by the millennial sun, whose rays will cause the seed to germinate, spring up, bud, blossom, and bear fruits acceptable to God. Love is all conquering; it gives light and life to benighted pilgrims, and by its magnetic power, attracts them to a more elevated state of existence, where they can daily be rising into a pure, ethereal atmosphere. This is what is needed to-day—a greater degree of the Christ-love, to warm into action souls now sleeping in sin, who heed not their condition. Without this divine element all else will fail to draw, and hold individuals in the courts of Zion. It has been my aim from early life, to make the way pleasant, not only to my young companions, but to all with whom I converse; for, having tasted the sweets of a virgin life, I am anxious to have others enjoy the same; and as I advance in this soul-refining work this desire increases. I have no doubts of the success of our Cause in the end; for I see God working through His agents, preparing souls for the millennial harvest. May we all stand ready for whatever work the Father has for us, when his time arrives. I think, as you have observed, that any useful knowledge which Believers have attained, either in the domestic concerns of life, or otherwise, should be noticed in our paper, as many may be benefited thereby. Any improvement is worthy of circulation.

"Your sister in true progression,
 "EUNICE BATHRICK."

A SHAKER VILLAGE.

—o—

[The following extracts are from the pen of W. D. Howells, and have particular reference to Shirley village, Mass. We have endeavored to make them more generally interesting by excluding such matter as does not apply to every "Shaker Village" in our land; at the same time we congratulate Shirley on its success in captivating such an illustrious chronicler. ED.]

(From the *Atlantic Monthly*.)

It was our fortune to spend six weeks of last summer in the neighborhood of a community of the people called Shakers—who are chiefly known to the world outside by their apple-sauce, by their garden seeds so punctual in coming up when planted, by their brooms so well made that they sweep clean long after the ordinary new broom of proverb has retired upon its reputation, by the quaintness of their dress, and by the fame of their religious dances. It is well to have one's name such a synonym for honesty that any thing called by it may be bought and sold with perfect confidence, and it is surely no harm to be noted for dressing out of the present fashion, or for dancing before the Lord. But when our summer had come to an end, and we had learned to know the Shakers for so many other qualities, we grew almost to resent their superficial renown among men. We saw in them a sect simple, sincere, and fervently persuaded of the truth of their doctrine, striving for the realization of a heavenly ideal upon earth; and amidst the hard and often sordid commonplace of our ordinary country life, their practice of the austerities to which men and women have devoted themselves in storied times and picturesque lands clothed these Yankee Shakers in something of the pathetic interest which always clings to our thoughts of monks and nuns.

Their doctrine has been so often explained that I need not dwell upon it here, but the more curious reader may turn to the volumes of the *Atlantic Monthly* of 1867 for an authoritative statement of all its points in the autobiography of Elder Evans of Mt. Lebanon. Mainly, their faith is their

life; a life of charity, of labor, of celibacy, which they call the angelic life. Theologically, it can be most succinctly presented in their formula, Christ Jesus and Christ Ann, their belief being that the order of special prophecy was completed by the inspiration of Mother Ann Lee, the wife of the English blacksmith, Stanley. She is their second Christ; their divine mother, whom some of their hymns invoke, and for whom they cherish a filial love. The families of Shirley and Harvard, Massachusetts, were formed in her time, near the close of the last century; at the latter place they show the room in which she lived, and whence she was once dragged by the foolish mob which helps to found every new religion.

In regard to other points their minds vary. Generally they do not believe in the miraculous birth or divinity of Christ; he was a divinely good and perfect man, and any of us may become divine by being godlike. Generally, also, I should say that they reject the Puritanic ideas of future rewards and punishments, and accept something like the Swedenborgian notion of the life hereafter. They are all spiritualists, recognizing a succession of inspirations from the earliest times down to our own, when they claim to have been the first spiritual mediums. Five or six years before the spirits who have since animated so many table-legs, planchettes, phantom shapes, and what not began to knock at Rochester, the Shaker families in New York, Massachusetts, Ohio, and elsewhere were in full communion with the other world, and they were warned of the impending invasion of the world's parlor and dining-room sets. They feel by no means honored, however, by all the results. But they believe that the intercourse between the worlds can be rescued from the evil influences which have perverted it, and they have signs, they say, of an early renewal of the manifestations among themselves. In some ways these have in fact never ceased. Many of the Shaker hymns, words and music, are directly inspirational, coming to this brother or that sister without regard to his or her special genius; they are sung and written down, and are then brought into general use. The poetry is like that which the other world usually furnishes through its agents in this, hardly up to our literary standard; but the music has always something strangely wild, sweet and naive.

The Shakers claim to be the purest and most Christian church, proceeding in a straight succession from the church which Christ's life of charity and celibacy established on earth; whereas, all the other churches are sprung from the first Gentile churches, to whose weakness and willfulness certain regrettable things, as slavery, war, private property, and marriage, were permitted. Acknowledging a measure of inspiration in all religions, they also recognize a kindred attraction to the angelic life in the celibate orders of every faith: the Roman vestals, the Peruvian virgins of the sun, and the Buddhist *bonzes*, as well as the monks and nuns of the Catholic church. They complain that they have not been understood by such alien writers as have treated of them, and have represented them as chiefly useful in furnishing homes for helpless and destitute people of all ages and sexes. In the words of Elder Frazer, of Shirley, the Shakers claim that their system is "based on the fact that each man has in himself a higher and a lower life," and that Shakerism "is a manifestation of the higher to the exclusion of the lower life. Its object is to gather into one fold all who have risen above their natural propensities," and they think with Paul that though those who marry do well, yet those who do not marry do better. Their preaching and teaching is largely to this effect; and yet I do not find it quite strange that friends from the world outside regard rather the spectacle of the Shakers' peaceful life, and think mostly of their quiet homes as refuges for those disabled against fate, the poor, the bruised, the hopeless; after all, Christ himself is but this. As I recall their plain, quaint village at Shirley, a sense of its exceeding peace fills me; I see its long, straight street, with the severely simple edifices on either hand; the gardens up-hill on one side and down-hill on the other; its fragrant orchards and its levels of clovery meadow-land stretching away to buckwheat fields, at the borders of whose milky bloom the bee paused, puzzled which sweet to choose; and it seems to me that one whom the world could flatter no more, one broken

in hope, or health, or fortune, could not do better than come hither and meekly ask to be taken into that quiet fold, and kept forever from his sorrows and himself. But—such is the hardness of the natural heart—I cannot think of one's being a Shaker on any other terms, except, of course, a sincere conviction.

* * * * *
 We stopped at the office of the Church Family, which is a large brick house, scrupulously plain, like all the rest, and appointed for the transaction of business and the entertainment of visitors. Here three sisters and one brother are in charge, and here are chambers for visitors staying overnight. The Shakers do not keep a public house, and are far from inviting custom, but their theory of Christianity forbids them to turn away one unhoused or unfed from their doors; the rich pay a moderate charge, and the poor nothing—as that large and flourishing order of fellow-citizens, the tramps, very well know. These overripe fruits of our labor system lurk about in the woods and by-ways, and turn up at the Shakers' doors after dark, where they are secure of being fed and sheltered in the little dormitory set apart for them. "And some of them," said Elder Frazer, "really look as if the pit had vomited them up."

* * * * *
 One has somehow the impression that the young people of the Shakers are held in compulsory allegiance, but of course this is not at all the fact. As soon as they are old enough to take care of themselves they are entirely free to go or to stay. Undoubtedly they are constantly taught the advantages of the community over the world, and the superior merit of the virgin life over the married state, which they may be inclined to think of as they grow to be men and women. Marriage is not held to be sinful or dishonorable. "Few things," said one of the elders, "are more pleasing to us than the sight of a happy young couple living rightly in their order," but marriage is earthly and human, and celibacy is divine; as the thoughts are turned to higher things, they forsake husband or wife. Nevertheless, if their young women will marry, the Shakers claim the satisfaction of thinking that they have received in the community the best possible training for wives and mothers—that they have been taught diligence, economy, and all branches of domestic knowledge. More than once there have been secessions of young people, which are nearly always stealthy, not because there could be any constraint, but because they hated to face the disappointed hopes of their elders. In after years, these delinquents from the angelic condition sometimes return to thank their benefactors, and to declare that they owe most of their worldly prosperity to their unworldly precepts. The proportion of those reared in Shakerism whom the Shakers expect to keep is small; they can count quite as much for their increase upon accessions of mature men and women from outside, whom the Shaker life and doctrine persuade. These they invite now, as always, very cordially to join them, and they look forward to a time when their dwindling communities shall be restored to more than their old numbers.

One bad effect of the present decrease, which all thoughtful Shakers deplore, is the employment of hired labor. This, as communists, they feel to be wrong; but they are loath either to alienate their land or to let it lie idle. A strange and sad state of things results: the most profitable crop that they can now raise is timber, which they harvest once in thirty years, and which it cost nothing to cultivate, whereas it costs more to plant and reap the ordinary farm crops, at the present rate of farm labor, than the crops will sell for.

* * * * *
 The decay of numbers, then, which the Shakers confess with so great regret, is but their share of the common blight, and how to arrest it is their share of the common perplexity. I could not encourage Elder Frazer to indulge great hopes, when one day in a burst of zeal for Shakerism he said, "We want cultivated people—half the subscribers of the Atlantic Monthly—to come and fill up our vacant ranks." *

* * * * *
 We often touched upon this subject of the

[* NOTE—This paragraph has had a very extensive circulation by the press of the United States and Canadas, and it is pleasant to observe that our letter concerning it, printed on another page, has been as extensively copied.—ED. SHAKER.]

decay of Shakerism, which they face bravely, and not unhelpfully, and yet with a care concerning it that was not less than touching. What could it matter to those childless men and women whether any like them should inherit them in this world, to which, while living, they had turned so cold a shoulder? Very little indeed, one would have said, and yet they were clearly anxious that Shakerism should flourish after them. Their anxiety was not so unnatural; none of us can bear to think of leaving the fruits of our long endeavor to chance and the stranger. But I may attribute the largest share of the Shaker reluctance to perish from the earth to zeal for the perpetuation of the true faith—faith which was founded, like all others, in persecution, built up amidst ridicule and obloquy, and now, when its practical expression is received with respect by all the neighboring world, is in some danger of ceasing among men, not through the indifference of believers, but through their inevitable mortal decay. There are several reasons for the present decrease, besides that decrease of the whole rural population which I have mentioned.

* * * * *
 Whatever it was, it was a time when men's minds turned fervidly from the hard work-days of this world to the Sabbaths of another; from the winter, the wilderness, the privation of New England, to the eternal summer and glory and fruition of the New Jerusalem. How to get there was their care; it was for this that wives and husbands rent themselves asunder, and shared their children with strangers; it was for this that the lover left his love, and the young girl forbade her heart's yearning; we may be sure that it was zeal for heaven, for the imagined service of God, that built up the Shaker communities.

Their peculiar dress remembers the now quaint days of their origin; it is not a costume invented or assumed by them; it is the American dress of a hundred years ago, as our rustic great-grandparents wore it, with such changes as convenience, not fashion, has suggested to the Shakers since. With all its quaintness it has a charm which equally appears whether it is worn by old or by young. To the old, the modest soberness of the colors, the white kerchief crossed upon the breast, the clean stiff cap, were singularly becoming; and the young had in their simple white Sunday dresses a look of maidenly purity which is after all the finest ornament. The colors we noticed at meeting were for the young mostly white, for the middle-aged and elderly the subdued tints of drab, bronzed, and lead-color, which also prevailed with the men of all ages. Both sexes wear collars that cover the whole neck, and both eschew the vanity of neck-ties; some of the brothers suffered themselves the gaiety of showing at the ends of their trousers-legs the brighter selvage of the cloth; if indeed this was a gaiety, and not, as one clothed in the world's taste might have accounted it, an added mortification of the spirit.

The Shakers used to spin and weave all the stuff they wore, but to do this now would be a waste of time; they buy the alpaca and linen which both sexes wear in summer, and their substantial woollens for the winter. Some relics of their former skill and taste remain in the handsome counterpanes in their guest-chambers at the office, which were dyed, spun, and woven in the family, and the sisters are still skilled in braiding palm-leaf hats and in the old-fashioned art of hooking rugs. But I would not persuade the reader that any Shaker family is otherwise a school of art; one painting I did indeed see, a vigorous sketch in oil of a Durham bull, but this was nailed to the side of a stall far up in the vast gray barn. It was the work of a boy who was in the family years ago; but he never became a Shaker. It would be interesting to know what he did become.

In a community it must be that the individual genius is largely sacrificed to the common purpose and tendency, and yet I believe that among the Shakers the sacrifice is compelled only by the private conscience. So it is with regard to every thing. On joining the community the new member gives up nothing, and is cautioned against a too early surrender of his property. He wears, so long as he likes, the fashions of the world, but these make him look as odd in the family as the Shaker dress would outside of it, and he is com-

monly anxious to assume the garb of simplicity before his mundane clothing is worn out. After due time he may give his property to the family; if he ever leaves it, he receives back the principal of his contribution without interest; for his labor he has already received his support. There are no formalities observed when a new brother or sister comes among the Shakers. It is understood that they are to go as freely as they have come; and this provision is recalled, as a rule that works both ways, to the mind of any brother whose room is finally found to be better than his company. But this very rarely happens; in twenty-five years Minister Whiteley had been obliged to dismiss only one undesirable brother.

The whole polity of the family is very simple. Its affairs are conducted by trustees, who hold the property and handle the funds, and to whom any member goes for money to purchase things not provided for the common use. Reasonable requests of this sort are readily allowed; but it is easy to understand how the indulgence of even very simple private tastes adds to the cost of common living, already enhanced by the decrease of members, and the necessity of keeping in repair the buildings left only partially occupied.

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 At the head of each family there is an elder and an eldress, to whom all complaints are first addressed, and by whom difficulties are settled. I believe there is also a species of confessional, in which those who desire can confide their repentance and good intentions to the elders. Disputes in which the decision of the elders is not satisfactory are appealed to the ministers, whose mind is final in such matters.

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 Of course, nothing like ceremony must be inferred concerning the expression of this regard. They, and all the other brothers and sisters, are addressed by their first names, and it is liked that strangers in addressing the Shakers should be simple and direct, eschewing the forms and titles which could not be accorded in return.

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 They are plain and homely in their phrase, but they are very courteous, and it is impossible to know them and not perceive how little politeness consists in the tedious palaver that commonly passes by that name. Their sincerity gives them dignity and repose; it appears that you have but to renounce the world, and you cannot be afraid of it.

I should be sorry to give the notion of a gloomy asceticism in the Shaker life. I saw nothing of this, though I saw self-restraint, discipline, quiet, and heard sober, considered, conscientious speech. They had their jesting, also; and those brothers and sisters who were of a humorous mind seemed all the better liked for their gift of laughing and making laugh. The sum of Shaker asceticism is this: they neither marry nor give in marriage; but this is a good deal. Certain things they would think indecorous rather than wicked, and I do not suppose a Shaker would go twice to the opera bouffe; but such an entertainment as a lecture by our right-hearted humorist, Mark Twain, had been attended by one of the brethren not only without self-reproach, but with great enjoyment. They had also some of them read Mr. Bret Harte's books without apparent fear of the consequences. They are rather strict in the observance of the Sabbath, but not so much, I thought, from conscience as from custom.

Our Shaker friends are sometimes embarrassed by visitors who ask to be shown all over their buildings, forgetting that their houses are private houses; and I cannot promise the curious reader visiting Shirley a repetition of the favors done us, whom the Shakers were good enough to show all of their communal life that one could see. In each village is an edifice known as the Dwelling-House, which is separate from the office and other buildings. In this are the rooms of the brothers and sisters, the kitchen and dining-room, and a large room for family meetings. The first impression of all is cleanliness, with a suggestion of bareness which is not inconsistent, however, with comfort, and which comes chiefly from the aspect of the unpapered walls, the scrubbed floors hidden only by rugs and strips of carpeting, and the plain flat finish of the wood-work. Each chamber accommodates two brothers or two sisters, and is appointed with two beds, two rocking-chairs, two wash-stands and a wood-stove, with abundance of

SPIRIT VOICES.

ANNA WHITE.

MOUNT LEBANON, NORTH FAMILY, 1876.

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Voices sweet as angel whis - pers, Come to us from yonder clime, Gentle as the evening zephyrs, Is their song of love divine.
Living souls with hope resplendent, And a spirit formed anew, Catch the joyous notes triumphant, Swell the chorus rich and true.

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Tarry with us blest im - mor - tals, We will learn the heav - en - ly song, Press toward the shining portals, Whence the melody was borne.
These have left the world forever, Turned from darkness unto light, Thus renouncing every error, That the spirit's growth would blight.

Ye who still are waiting -- watching,
For the bright and morning star,
See, the dawn is fast approaching,
And the gates are left ajar.
And the Bridegroom now appeareth,
With his Bride in raiment white,
Hear ye what the Spirit sayeth,
Come receive the truth, the light.

Not in measured form 'tis given,
Nor in dogmas of the past,
Word of life flows down from heaven,
Void of priestly cant or caste.
'Tis the "Rock of Revelation,"
'Tis the gift of God to man,
Showing all whence comes salvation,
The established, gospel plan.

rugs. The rooms of the younger people are above so that (as was explained to us) if the young sisters, especially, wish to talk after they go to bed they need not disturb their elders. There were few tokens of personal taste in the arrangement of the rooms; the most decided expression of character was that of the nonagenarian who required his bed to be made up with a hollow in the middle from top to bottom, which he called his trough, and which he strictly forbade any one to meddle with; that was all he asked of earth after ninety-six years, not to disturb his trough. It seemed right that the simple demand should be indulged.

The dining-room was provided with two large tables, at one of which the brothers sat, and at the other the sisters. The monastic rule of silence at meals is observed because, as we were told, the confusion would be too great if all talked together. In the kitchen was an immense cook-stove, with every housekeeping convenience; and everywhere opened pantry and store-room doors, with capacious cellars underneath -- all scoured and scrubbed to the last degree of neatness.

The family *ménage* is completed by a wash-house and a dairy-house; there is an infirmary, and a shop for women's work, and under the same roof with the latter, at Shirley, a large school-room, in which the children of the community are taught the usual English branches by a sister. The Shaker village forms a school district, and their school is under the control of the town committee.

One day, toward the end of our sojourn, the office-sisters asked us to spend an afternoon and take tea with them. After tea we sat down in the office-parlor, and the best singers of the family came in with their music books, and sang those tunes which we had severally liked most. It was all done with the friendliest simplicity, and we could not but be charmed.

READING SEALED LETTERS.

THERE is so much of humbug connected with modern spiritualism, that we cannot censure any for being wary concerning it. But what can we think of the following? When Elder Evans and company were in New York, holding a series of meetings, they called, by invitation, upon Dr. J. V. Mansfield, 361 Sixth avenue, New York. The various tests made by

them, and as narrated to us by Eldress A. Doolittle, were simply, yet pleasantly astounding. We wrote the doctor that we wanted to make an honorable, but very severe, test. The challenge was invitingly accepted. A noble friend of ours wrote the letter (or we supposed he did) upon paper glazed with blue on the outer side. Especial pains were taken in folding up every line, sealing the same, before writing another line, and fastening the ends with the utmost care and glue. I took the letter, sealed it in a double envelope, making every necessary private mark to prevent exposure possible without my knowledge, and sent it. To my own and friend's surprise, the sealed letter was returned undisturbed, with an answer for his wife, who, *unknown to me, had addressed her spirit mother!*

The answer made references to matters known only to my friend's private family. If Elder H. L. Eades will *logically* explain how this is done, we will next ask him to satisfy us by elucidating the materializations mentioned in the first fourteen verses of Ezekiel, chapter 37. ☆

BOOK NOTICES.

RELATIONS OF THE SEXES: By Mrs. E. B. Duffy. Wood & Holbrook, N. Y. This is a bold movement in the right direction, by a brave, high principled woman. She writes plainly upon the theme she has chosen. She will thereby awaken the progenitors of the race to see their duty to themselves and to those whom they would give and have given existence. She visits thunderbolts on the heads of those engaged in sexual abuses, and upon the various apologies rendered therefor; and if warning was sufficient to make the change that nature demands, we might feel better. But, like nearly all writers upon this subject, the authoress grows weak, even to supineness, when attempting substitutes for and preventives of marital distresses. We boldly and forcibly urge the laws of Moses on all generative men and women, as *their* only hope. While to those good enough to compare well in their generations with the beasts of the field, we recommend the superior life, and angelic career of Jesus -- the Christ -- if they would be Christians.

THE NORTH STAR AND THE SOUTHERN CROSS: By M. Weppner. Weed, Parsons & Co., Albany, N. Y. This is the journey of a woman round the

world, and is written with an ability that has made two very interesting volumes. She writes as only a woman can upon subjects, persons and customs of nations, which would be lost sight of by *manly* travelers; and thus the work will please the feminine idea of what a journey round the world should treat of. As the guest of very distinguished persons in other lands than ours, she is made much of, and tells her stories of individuals who used her handsomely or abused her inhospitably, with a keen kindness and rich deserving. Compared with the volumes of Seward, Peebles and others, it stands good.

We speak for it a ready and extensive sale.

TO HAPPIER, EVERGREEN SHORES.

At Shakers, N. Y., May 18, 1876, GURDON HORTON, aged 86.

At Mt. Lebanon, N. Y., May 19, 1876, MELISSA SOULE, aged 31.

At Canaan, N. Y., June 13, 1876, MARGARETTA WILSON, aged 83.

APOLOGETIC.

THE copious extracts which we have transferred from the columns of the *Atlantic Monthly* to this number of THE SHAKER, will prove very interesting to all having any sympathy with, or curiosity about us as a people. Although so lengthy, and necessarily crowding out several very excellent articles from good Bros. Peebles, Russell, Fraser, Leggett, and some from equally good sisters, yet we believe we shall be thanked for the space used, while we promise the "excellent articles" in our next.

For the same reason we offer apology for the absence of our "Spirit of the Farm," and "Useful Receipts" departments. Our farm notes, we learn from many letters, are appreciated; and we return many thanks for the congratulations tendered us, in that our "SHAKER" is filled with choice variety, and very interesting. "I have read every word of June number," writes a Sonyea friend, "and consider it the best." Another from Worcester, Mass., says: "Although I take a multitude of papers, THE SHAKER is the only one that I read from beginning to end." We tally *one* for every such conclusion. Thank you, friends, one and all. G. A. L.