

# THE SHAKER.

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“Go preach the kingdom of God!” *The testimony of eternal truth.*

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## Discussion.

MARCIA E. HASTINGS.

Discussion and free thought seem to be occupying the platform more and more; may it continue thus till error is swept away, and truth and right prevail. Discussion, and even contest, managed in a good, earnest, loving spirit, may be very profitable on many subjects; but when the debate becomes so heated and strong as to merge into antagonism or total egotism, and unkindly dispute and wrangling, it might be well for the contestants to pause and take breath, imbibe a little more moderation and self-examination. Review the page to see if, in their ardor to win the mastery, they are urging their point consistently and to the enlightenment and conviction of other thinking minds; or whether, in their earnestness to prevail, they are becoming a trifle vexed, (wrathy?) that their opponent does not readily see eye to eye with them and accept all their theory, (which they themselves on more mature deliberation may possibly see cause to change). Since no one writer for THE SHAKER, to our knowledge, assumes the super-human position of *infallibility* of judgment or opinion, why should not each be willing to accord to others the same freedom of expression that he would reasonably claim for himself? How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to work together in unity! that is, unity of purpose to secure the genuine metal, the true and the sound.

We hope and trust that all our good brothers and sisters who are interested in obtaining and diffusing light and true knowledge, will take heed to this matter, battle errors and wrongs with suitable weapons, and sharp, but be careful not to hurt the oil or the wine. Let all communications be savored with love in the heart and christian earnestness to do good and benefit others, (which course will also bring home benefit,) exercise the golden rule and cherish love and kindly feelings towards all mankind; and our little missionary may be the means of dispelling many clouds and dispensing much blessing. With sincere desire for the success of the enterprise and the prosperity of its managers, aids and many friends.

Canterbury, N. H.

“THE earth is as much God’s residence as heaven,”—*Dr. Bellows.*

## Awake to the Danger!

DANIEL OFFARD.

THE SHAKER is intended for the enunciation of truth; and what truth is more important to human welfare than that the American government should be very unsectarian? Believers should realize how great the dangers of a church-and-state combination in our government!

THE SHAKER should awaken such as are asleep to the dangerous fact that old anti-christian, persecuting theology would injure unto death those who would not, could not think as it does. There is no crime known to men which church-and-state governments have not committed, and in the name of God and Jesus Christ too! I do earnestly hope that THE SHAKER may be true to its name, and wage spiritual war, in battles of shaking, against every evil principle and power that is at work against the good of humanity. And let us, as brethren, true to the faith, hating the lusts of the flesh and of the mind, have our entire lives in accord with the sincerity of truth; and though there may be differences of opinion theologically, the main purposes of our faith will be accomplished.

## Hot-House Christians.

E. T. LEGGETT.

How lowly were the saints of old,  
Who, from the grove or cavern wild,  
To God their sins and sorrows told  
In language artless as a child;  
While winds and waves and tides are still,  
Their heart-warm songs and prayers arise  
That echo wafts, o’er dale and hill,  
To heaven from the list’ning skies.

But progress moves with time apace,  
And *art* succeeds to *nature* now;  
And those who seek God’s saving grace,  
Their churches, not their hearts endow:  
How well devised and shrewd the plan,  
To build to God with brick and stone;  
And *buy* His choicest gifts to man,  
With consecrated gold alone!

How piety walks hand in hand,  
With ostentation here below;  
And pomp and potence now command  
All *gold-fleeced* reverends *dare* to know!  
What gorgeous structures now obtain,  
With spires that pierce the Heav’nly blue,  
As though to cleave the skies in twain,  
And let man’s gilt-edged off’rings through!

The heart now beats to man’s control,  
Nor dare beyond his biddings soar;  
And ice has fossilized the soul  
That warms to God and heaven no more:

The world that war’s red sins subdued  
To bold imperial Cæsar’s sway;  
The world God’s angels loved and wooed,  
Is fashion’s willing slave to-day!

Learned priests now daily *interview*  
The Deity on things below;  
Suggesting much He ought to do,  
And many things He ought to know;  
Or broaching some transcendent plan,  
(More suited to the time, and higher,)  
To save intact the soul of man,  
Without the slightest use of fire.

Now fashion’s found a fairer road,  
That all her glitt’ring hosts pursue,  
With palace-cars to Heaven’s abode,  
And *passes* for the favored few;  
Urbane conductors, just secured,  
With music daily by the choir;  
And every passenger assured,  
From damages or loss by fire.

How tempting this on fashion’s line,  
With ease and safety promised there!  
Yet many still to doubts incline  
That all is gold that shines so fair:  
Perhaps ’twere best for those who doubt,  
Where fashion’s *cream-cheese* votaries go,  
To take the less attractive route,  
Tear-worn by saints of *long-ago*.

I wonder if ’way up on high,  
Man’s piebald thoughts and acts they know;  
And if they oft’ner smile or sigh,  
At his queer capers here below:  
Perhaps they think this world a stage,  
And saints and sinners actors all;  
And trembling wait the closing page,  
To see life’s star-gemmed curtain fall.

## Bitter, but Wholesome.

RICHARD FLETCHER.

The festive holidays in New York city had clouds whose dark side we must look at in spite of the transient, surface merriment of the masses. “Child frozen to death in the public street.” Not merry talk at the breakfast table. Some say the passers-by were all to blame; others that they did just right to hurry by,—plenty of their own to provide for,—careless alms-giving makes matters worse; others still, that liquor-sellers must answer for this and a thousand daily cases of “man’s inhumanity to man.”

Now, what right, human or divine, have people coolly, voluntarily to add to the drifting, useless, shiftless swarms of beings that disgrace the name of humanity? Face the sad fact, look at the dark side a moment, that we may learn truth sweeter than sensual pleasure, more lasting than holiday merriment. Is America to be a land of hopeless poverty? This question is a serious one for to-day,—not to be put off to the future, when it may be a problem for civil war to settle. Humanity is somewhat “off the track.” All admit it. It might be worse. Thank God, the bridge is not broken yet! The sooner the passengers get out of the lazy, shaky, risky seats, and lend willing hands to the work of private and public reform, the sooner humanity’s train will be “on” again, and

the bridge of redemption will hold if we do our part.

Laugh and jeer as people do at the mere mention of self-denial, society’s best lesson to-day is this same curbing of all useless, riotous desires of the senses and intellect. The man or woman who learns to control one single desire within bounds, so that it does not run away with sober judgment of what he or she knows to be right, noble, healthy, useful, will receive strength to rule over mightier forces than brutal armies. Even our strongest propensities,—too often worthy the name of “passions,”—can be held from their willful, natural courses, and turned to nobler work. Thus only can God’s first beautiful, orderly plan be brought back. Self-denial for individuals is the very spirit of christianity. If more of it were with us, it would indeed work like a “holy” spirit, which is prayed for so much, and grieved away by unholy deeds.

Do people never think of a more radical cure for pauperism, and milder forms of poverty, disease, and degeneration than alms-giving? Or are they afraid to advise unlucky mortals, who are morally and physically unworthy of multiplying God’s image, to abstain? Afraid to, because they know how all unworthily they live themselves?

Some may reply in the words of Dickens’ Christmas ghost: “Why should one speak of animated dust complain of the too-much life among the hungry brothers on myriad leaves around?” At first thought, true, it does look like disrespect, almost blasphemy, to find fault with increasing population. For does not the Infinite give souls to earth-caskets, and what have mortals to say about it? Would that there are no worse ways of checking population than the total abstinence called celibacy! Is it honoring God to think he cannot give immortal life—souls—to better earthly forms than many specimens we see?

“But,” say some; “your plan is too radical. Humanity must gradually work into better conditions.” How can it, unless some few people commence thorough home-work? Nay, radical cures are needed. Reform will be slow enough among the masses anyway. So let thoughtful ones reflect on the signs of the times, especially on present bodily health, comparing with the past, and ask, “Are coming generations likely to inherit an average standard of health? or more, or less?” For on healthy bodies depend the well-balancing of minds and the progress of soul-life.

Once, a mere handful of persons were all in the world who were able to understand, even partially, the wholesome, sin-cleaning spirit of Christ’s testimony. Not many, now, know the fullness of meaning which the light of to-day unfolds from the ever-ripening teachings of the New Testament. We are called upon to live higher, christian lives than the world was able to grasp an idea of, a few centuries ago.

One strong proof is in the physical degeneration of the race. Religion that does not control the most important vital function of men and women is worse than no religion.

Moody revivals do not reach the root of the worst sins among the people. Sad, sad is the need, as honest physicians can tell, of some motive strong enough to turn man's appetites and passions to a nobler work than dishonoring God's gifts of immortality with poor, imperfect, imbecile, lust-consumed tenements of clay.

Consumptives are kept from spreading their misfortunes among posterity, as far as common-sense can rule over passion in general society. Why should not many other forms of hereditary disease and deformity be cut off by noble, honest sacrifice of carnal lives? Let unlucky heirs of the sins of parents and grandparents take up crosses like followers of Christ, and say: "We will do what we can to check the increase of sin that threatens the coming twentieth century more than the nineteenth."

This is the call to large numbers to-day. Happy are souls who give up carnal, selfish lives for any good motive; for they receive the promised hundred-fold, and grow toward divine life, with a joy the world knows not of.

*Sonyea, N. Y.*

#### Wisdom, the Principal Thing.

John Phillips of Pleasant Hill, Ky., sends us the following report of a short, pithy address, by Larz Erickson of that place:

"Let us gather heavenly things. We stand in greatest need of wisdom, to lead us to be happy and satisfied and dutiful. A wise man or woman is of inestimable worth on this earth. Each is like the rising sun, manifesting the glory of God to all men. All who receive wisdom as a guide, flourish in temporal and spiritual blessings. Whoso is governed by wisdom, does not think nor say much of self as being exalted above his fellows. Wisdom never controverts; it teaches by example the better way. War is not of Wisdom. Peace is one of Wisdom's children, her rule is "peace on earth, and good will to men!"

[To which we add "Amen!" even at the expense of being *so much* a Methodist. Preach on, brother; it is just such thoughts as feed the would-be wise, and many of our readers will bless you for so doing.]

#### SOCIAL LIFE TOPICS.

SHAKER VILLAGE, N. H., }  
January 28, 1877.

*Beloved A.:* How very singular, indeed, that you should have addressed me upon subjects which form so much the essential feature of our whole life. I think that you have more readily anticipated me than I could hope to do in my reply. I am so thoroughly convinced of the essential necessity of a rigid discipline for the mind, and no less for the body, that I almost reverentially look upon the requirements of the originators of our order, and hesitate at the thought of changing or repealing, unless fully persuaded that it will be for the development of protection for the order, or open an avenue more spiritual, and consequently place us nearer the city of God.

Very well do I know, as you remark, the times that our order are each day in the attitude of prayer. As commonplace as its frequency may seem to make it, the believer whose soul is awakened in the interest of the gospel cause, finds it an exalted position before God. To the children and youth it evidently has a most salutary effect, in that it demands of them, for a few moments, reflection. While they bend their knees in prayer they should be conscientiously instructed in their thank-offering before God.

That the ceremony may become formal we cannot deny. That we may suffer from abstraction, forgetting the place we are in, may also be true; and the same might be said of many or all ceremonies which are of frequent occurrence.

I am fully persuaded that the discipline which forms the essential part of our work comprehends, measurably, the saving grace, on the principle which Jesus taught: "Deny thyself, and follow me."

But I have thus far been so interested in your remarks that even now I reluctantly pass from them to another subject. Ah, shall I in this anticipate you, and with you a large body of our brethren and sisters, as I make reference to the signal-call of the morning? It is generally conceded, order is characteristic of the kingdom of God, and hence the imperative necessity of its strict maintenance by every body of professing christians. Confusion, or disorder, belongs to Babylon. When we publish that our signal for rising is at 5 or 5 1-2, it is by many received with astonishment. One says: "I rise at 6, and consider that early," while another begins the day at 7. This may do for those who have no systematic order for retiring, and it may do for families organized on the basis of selfish relations; but a prominent feature of protection in the Shaker order, and an active testimony against a morbid indulgence, is found in the careful attention to the hours of retiring and of rising. The old adage says: "Six hours of rest for a man; seven for a woman; and eight for a fool." The Shakers have given the extended margin. Some do not wish the greatest number; others readily accept it.

As we have no slaves, no servants, our religious compact is formed of brethren and sisters, who stand on a foundation of equality, covenanting together to abide by the rules of the institution, and to bear the cross of practical self-denial. Sickness, infancy and old age form exceptions to this rule. It was only a few mornings since, as I was passing from one dwelling to another, at a few minutes past 5, that I met a little boy, as bright as a lark. "Why are you not in bed and asleep, my little man?" said I. When he as readily answered: "They have rung the bell, and I didn't want to sleep any longer." He had in all probability enjoyed the luxury of "rest from his labors" some nine or ten hours. The amount of rest that a person needs may be an open question. Health reformers sadly disagree on this point, as they do on every other. Nervous temperaments plead for an indefinite extension, while the indifferent and indolent of every phase still say, "yet a little sleep, a little slumber."

As my correspondent, whoever he may happen to be, dwells with so much interest upon certain religious forms, I trust that he as faithfully begins the day, by a strict observance of that religious discipline which calls us to a renewal of life as "the morning dawn is breaking." Respectfully, H. C. B.

#### An Unanswered Prayer.

ROSIE MORSE.

Oh, saints on earth, and powers above,  
Do grant one boon we pray!  
For it we ask, for it we plead,  
Oh, turn us not away:  
Oh, give us one breath of pure air,  
Our waning strength revive;  
One sniff of oxygen, O grant,  
To keep our souls alive.

Our vital energies are weak—  
Our aspirations dead!  
Our inward fervency is spent—  
Our zeal and ardor fled!  
All for the want of God's free air!  
Essence of mortal life—  
That all-supporting element,  
Which warms us for life's strife.

In church, I cast my eyes around,  
To find an open door;  
But through no crevice comes the air,  
My dull brain to restore.  
And here, we're breathing o'er again,  
The air that's been exhaled!  
I think, O whither can I go,  
And oxygen prevail?

Ah, might I roam through trackless air,  
And like the eagle soar!  
To this benighted, mundane sphere,  
I would return no more.  
I'd take my flight most joyously—  
In the air of heaven I'd lave—  
I'd feed and feast on oxygen,  
As pure as God e'er gave.

But while I'm destined here to stay,  
I must not soar too high;  
To earth, I turn reluctantly,  
But give me air, I cry.  
Throw up the windows, ope the doors—  
Give nature broader scope!  
We shall be paid in better gifts,  
In spirit, life and hope.

Now should we be denied this boon  
That serves to vitalize?  
Nay, let us heed before too late,  
Exhausted nature's cries.  
I do implore, with all my prayer,  
In supplication's voice:  
Oh, gospel friends, let's breathe pure air,  
And then *in truth rejoice.*

*Shirley, Mass.*

#### Every Child of God Saved!

We are always glad to add admiration to any churchal declaration; and we find so little to object to in the following, from the *Christian Leader*, (universalist,) we copy, asking how many genuine *universalists* there are? Every child of God being herein provided for, what of the "lost sheep," according to the universalist creed?

"A man's mere belief that God will finally save all souls, does not, in itself, make him a universalist. His life will give some evidence of his creed. He will be merciful and loving. Humanity will shine in his countenance, and wax eloquent in his speech. His sympathies will be enlisted in behalf of every true charity and reform. He will not be ashamed to confess his faith before men. He will be proud and glad to declare 'I am a believer in the ultimate salvation of every child of God.'"

#### A Word to Grumblers.

The *Dansville (Ky.) Record* says: "Don't be a grumbler. Some people, old and young, contrive to get hold of the prickly side of everything; to run against all the sharp corners, and to find out all the disagreeable things. Half the strength spent in growling would often set things right. You may as well make up your mind that no one ever found the world quite as he would like it; but you are to take your share of the trouble, and bear it bravely. You will be very sure to have burdens laid upon you that belong to other people, unless you are a shirk yourself; but don't grumble. If the work needs doing, never mind about the other one who ought to have done it and didn't. Those workers who fill up the gaps and smooth away the rough spots, and finish up the job the others leave undone, they are the true peace-makers, and worth a whole regiment of growlers."

#### "Is this a Christian Country?"

Rabbi Jastrow of Philadelphia, in a discourse demanding the opening of the centennial exhibition on the Sabbath, answered the above question, No!

"I confess my inability to understand what a christian country means, and I defy any of those who make use of this argument to explain it satisfactorily. Is christianity a nationality by which a country may be defined, that we should be permitted to say, 'This is a christian country?' Should a compound of two terms, which have neither a political nor a geographical connection, one of which designates the soil, and the other a religious creed, be allowed to be made use of for denominational purposes in a country where, one hundred years ago, liberty of conscience was made the basis of all government? Just as absurd as it is to speak of a christian soil, it is to use the expression of a christian country in the sense of a christian government, with christian political institutions. Where is that christian country? Thanks to the Lord, we look for it in vain on the map of the United States.

"Here where the separation of church and state has been laid down as the foundation of our government; here should we, in the sight of our liberties, in the year of their jubilee, speak of a christian country in the same sense as we speak of a French or a Spanish country? Are the citizens of this country christians, by either birth or adoption? Are her officers christians? If this be so, let there be, in spite of the constitution, a test established for every one who lands on our shores; let him swear that he is a christian, though it may be hard to state what sect he belongs to; let there be no one admitted to the privileges of citizenship who refuses to swear allegiance to christianity. Until such a test shall have been established, no one has a right to say 'This is a christian country;' and whoever says so perverts the truth for the sake of misleading the people into intolerance and fanaticism. This is no christian country so long as the first amendment of the constitution stands unchanged, and we trust in the good sense of our people that it will stand so forever."

KINDNESS TO ANIMALS.—Van Amburgh could handle his lions and tigers with impunity. No animal will fail to respond to kindness and good treatment. And especially will the noble horse respect and confide in and faithfully serve a master who deals gently and kindly with him. We have ourselves taken a spirited Morgan mare which had been rudely handled and become entirely unmanageable through harsh treatment, and by appealing to her intelligence and respecting her needs, in three weeks' time made her entirely safe and reliable for wife and children, and all who would treat her kindly and handle her gently, and we have, after five years, seen the same mare resume her old vicious habits when again under the control of one who resorted to arbitrary or brutal treatment. Always appeal to the better instincts of the horse, the mule, the ox, the cow, as well as the dog and other domestic animals, and they will never become vicious nor unmanageable.—*Semi-Tropical.*

LISTENING TO EVIL REPORTS.—The longer I live, the more I feel the importance of adhering to the rule which I have laid down for myself in relation to such matters: 1. To hear as little as possible whatever is to the prejudice of others. 2. To believe nothing of the kind till I am absolutely forced to it. 3. Never to drink into the spirit of one who circulates an evil report. 4. Always to moderate, as far as I can, the unkindness which is expressed towards others. 5. Always to believe that, if the other side were heard, a very different account would be given of the matter.—*Carus's Life of Simeon.*

THE BEST FRIEND. The most agreeable of all companions is a simple, frank man, without any high pretensions to an oppressive greatness; one who loves life, and understands the use of it; obliging alike at all hours; above all, of a golden temper, and steadfast as an anchor. For such an one we gladly exchange the greatest genius, the most brilliant wit, the profoundest thinker.—*Lessing.*

A REFORM is needed; when shall it commence? Right here in Boston, where there is wealth sufficient to support ministers at enormous salaries—to save souls—and to build churches and furnish them extravagantly, in which to worship God on Sundays, are men and women starving and freezing, and no “man of God” to stay their feet in the course of ruin. Saloons bright and cheerful invite them to enter. Churches dark and dismal are closed against them, for these latter places are *God's houses*, and must not be desecrated by the poor, the hungry, and forsaken. So Satan has it all his own way in his alluring hells. Why not open the churches, or the vestries at least, every evening through the winter, make them as comfortable and cheerful as Satan's realms, and have it an understood thing that hot coffee and substantial food will be served to the cold and hungry, and lodgings furnished—if not there, then from a fund for the purpose, instead of furnishing tracts for the millions and money for the heathen—to those who have no homes; thus making the churches *God's houses* in very earnest, and causing the hearts of the suffering to rejoice that at last humanity has discovered a new way of saving souls through warming, feeding and clothing the body?—*M. S. Wetmore, in New Age.*

THE Rev. Joe Cook has drawn a picture of the church of the future. He says: “If the churches continue to develop in accordance with present indications, a few centuries hence the members will be fanned with eloquent sermons, as they swing in hammocks, one end of which will be fastened to the cross and the other held by mammon.”

People frequently reject great truths, not so much for want of evidence, as for want of an inclination to search for it.

WHEN Cornelius Vanderbilt departed this life, the clergyman at his funeral said that his last moments were happy because Christ had died for him, in whom he had “a singularly child-like faith” as his Saviour. Of course. Jesus said that a camel might go through the eye of a needle easier than a rich man enter the kingdom of heaven; and Vanderbilt thereupon proceeds to amass fifty or an hundred millions, to show his “singularly child-like faith.” We don't see how it was child-like, except in the sense that shows a babe's wisdom. But it is not necessary for a man of property or good position in society to get converted. We never knew such a man to die, who, however destitute his life might have been of any religious purpose, was not at once, by the hand of some theological exponent of the divine counsels, safely landed in Abraham's bosom.—*New Age.*

REV. DEWITT TALMAGE says: “If I were on trial for my integrity or my life, I would rather have my case submitted to a jury of twelve lawyers than to a jury of twelve clergymen. The legal profession have a keener sense of justice than is found in the sacred calling.”

A CHRISTIAN is not safe and reliable unless he has sent a tap-root down into hard, strong foundations of christian doctrine. Surface-roots of sentiment and emotion have their uses, but they are not good for much, either in a dry time or in a tempest.—*Words of Faith.*

HOW THE DUMB CREATURES LOVED HIM.—A French writer says of an old Bordeaux sailor of sixty years ago: He was so kind to dumb creatures that I have known his boat was coming sometimes through seeing the pigeons start off seaward, and wheel and hover around her till she touched the landing steps, when, almost before he had stepped on shore, they would perch on his shoulders; and then, when his head appeared above the quay, the goat would come capering down, bleating. Old Tinker, the donkey,—such a rascal that it was said he could open every gate in the parish, and the cattle all knew it, and would follow him, and he had to be tethered,—would, as the old man advanced, whisk his tail, prance, throw back his ears and bray; and the very pig, who was often let loose for a run, would come shambling down, and grunt, and arch his back for a rub, not to speak of the tortoise, which would follow him about, and eat out of his and no other hand.

HEBREW DARKNESS.—In a Jewish synagogue in New York, one of the pew-holding brethren has been convicted of being a receiver of stolen goods, and now the trustees refuse to take his money for the rent of the pew. They are glad to have him come to church and get good, but they won't touch his money. Suppose a Protestant church was run on such principles, and prohibitionist clergymen compelled to decline money the brethren made at rum-selling, for example, there would very soon be a coolness among the brethren. An exchange hints that some Christian churches would be exposed to bankruptcy.—*Boston Advertiser.*

“WHAT'S IN A NAME?”—The pious Cincinnati *Enquirer*, and the evangelized *Democrat*, are holding up their pious heads in holy horror at Col. Ingersoll, as an “infidel.” History informs us that Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence, and father of the democratic party, was an infidel. John Adams, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was an infidel. Benj. Franklin, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was an infidel. Thomas Paine, one of the most distinguished of the revolutionary patriots, was an infidel. And Jefferson says, in his “Notes on Virginia,” that even Washington himself was an infidel. In fact, a very considerable number of the leading and wisest politicians of to-day are infidels.—*Common Sense.*

To hundreds of Shakers, and professing christian people, this will not read pleasurable. But when we think how very infidel true Shakers are to “orthodox” theology, we do not know of greater infidels anywhere!

## THE SHAKER.

Monthly—60 cents per annum.

A DUAL ADVOCATE OF CHRIST PRINCIPLES.

### Organization of Spiritualists.

THE SHAKER has no ill-will toward spiritualists of our own country, nor of other lands. The constantly-recurring evidences of courtesy from the columns of the spiritualistic press in behalf of our medium, leave us without an excuse for uttering a word of unpleasant criticism upon its almost universal position of organization. Our strictures must be considered, therefore, as an earnest for its welfare, and for the millions for which it continues to live so healthily. It is pretty generally known that THE SHAKER is the organ of the earliest organization of the most spiritual body of spiritualists in our country, or that has existed as such an organization since the days of Pentecost.

Our organization is eighty-five years of age; and its every pulse-beat tending to an increase of organization, has meant a stronger, purer, unselfish spiritualism. For twenty-five years we have admired the opposition of spiritualists generally, to any suggestion of organization, upon bases that formed the foundation of the popular churches; and the spiritualistic press is worthy of all praise for its continued persistence in thus encouraging its people. A few months since, a large congregation of spiritualists met at Philadelphia, among which were found some of the leading, and most worthy lights of that unorganized persuasion of spiritualism, known as “modern.” The object of the meeting was for organization, upon a basis of deeper, genuine spiritualism than the body had known before; and which was there declared as a positive necessity, to keep within the fold those who had been faithful members, but who were leavening back to the old arks from which they once had departed, as sincerely and suddenly as Abraham ever

left his kindred, or Lot and his family went out from Sodom. There is no doubt the proper time had come for their organization; that the proper parties had there met for this purpose; and that most properly did they report a basis which any and all of the popular churches of all lands could pattern to their greatly increased spiritual benefit. None of the old saws of theology were embodied in the reported constitution; and we remember of reading the resolutions with much pleasure, as being good grounds for abandoning further opposition to organization.

Again the press of the persuasion raised a warning cry, and particularly vented anathemas against the admission of “christian” as defining “spiritualists.” One by one, however, this press has abandoned opposition to organization, but seem desirous of a new deal in resolutions; the formation of a new, and, to us, most indefinite and impossible platform to organize upon.

The *Banner of Light*, and *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, two most widely known and respected journals of spiritualism, seem to have due appreciation that mediumistic impostors are abundant, that honest mediums are persecuted, that “social freedom” overrides morality and purity; and that many of the best educated and more religiously inclined spiritualists have connected themselves with liberal, christian denominations. Yet these, and other periodicals, have just roused up from a Rip Van Winkle-like sleep, to come out zealously for organization.

But the motto—the platform—a plan upon which they propose to found and organize a church, would excite our pity more, if it did not make us laugh! Here it is—all there is of it—all!

“THINK FOR YOURSELF AND EXPRESS THAT THOUGHT!”

FREE THOUGHT WILL GIVE US TRUTH!!” “Precisely so,” says the atheist of Paris, and the mormon of Utah. This may be an effort to organize spiritualists, with spiritualism left out—without any admission of communion of spirits! Think of it; *spiritualists* trying to organize their scattering forces without a recognition of God, of Christ, of morality! without any recognition of repentance, of confession of their sins, or a communion, and communication with their superiors in the world of spirits! The plan may be proper with atheists, deists, radicals, religion-haters, and a few spiritualists, but what will J. M. Peebles, Dr. Watson, A. J. Davis, Nellie T. Brigham, Dr. Child, and a host of other spiritualists, say of it?

In a former article, we expressed our disappointment in spiritualists. We had hoped they never would organize until they could agree upon a basis that was less earthly, more spiritual, fuller of brotherhood and stronger in the bond of love than the organizations of the Shakers; and when we read of the spiritual platform arranged in Philadelphia, we still had hope. For realizing, that though it was not “as strait as

straitness," nor "pure as the heavens," it tended largely that way, and to lift spiritualists up, and out of themselves and selfishness; and until this resurrection takes place, spiritualists will continue to wear the swaddling clothes of its childhood, while thoughts and talks of its growth into more genuine spirituality will be all bosh! The spiritualism of the Shakers is none too intense, neither approaches too near the life of the heavens; and until our spiritualistic friends determine to excel the Shakers in angelic occupations of body and soul, they had better live here, as spiritually as they do. Until they take some course more radically spiritual than the platform noted above, the decimation of their ranks will be hailed with joy by the old systems which they once so gladly forsook, and toward which they never more can give faithful adherence. \* \*

### Our Biographical Studies. No. 1.

#### I. JOHN BAPTIST.

Every important movement from good to better, and best,—from conservative to more radical goodness—has had its forerunner; and between Judaism and the mission of Jesus, there came John Baptist, crying to the bewildered people, "Prepare for Jesus"—for something better than you have ever heard! The testimony of this Baptist is valuable: "I indeed, baptize you with water, while you are confessing your sins; but he that cometh after me, will baptize you with fire, while you confess, and give you the holy spirit to help you refrain in the future!" Again: "I saw and bare record that this is the son of God!" So far, John is to be admired. After a time, this same John—unwilling to yield to his convictions, and submit to the superior authority of Jesus—doubted, and sent some of his followers to Jesus, to ask of him whether he was the promised Messiah! Jesus replied by sending back the fruits of his works. The next we hear of this John, he dies by violence. This Baptist has many scholars—faithful followers in our time—in all excepting his tragic death. He has, incomparably, more followers than Jesus! Professing allegiance to Jesus, and acknowledging his life as that of the son of God, they to this day doubt the propriety of giving up their selfish sovereignties to become his disciples; while the majority will be beheaded, and die, before they will admit that Jesus' life was the proper life to be copied by christians! The lives of the majority are like the Baptist's, too selfish to submit to christianity! John was a nice man, a splendid Jew; too proud-spirited, however. "None greater has been born," said Jesus, not even excepting himself. But because of the want of an humble, self-denying, obedient spirit, neither John nor the multitudes who follow him in arrogant opposition to the unselfish, angelic life of Jesus the Christ, "the least of the kingdom of heaven is greater" than

these followers of John out of heaven.

#### II. NICODEMUS.

We must be excused from the condemnation of Nicodemus. "He came by night," 'tis true; and he may thus have shown a want of moral courage; but his admitted testimony, "We know that thou art a teacher of God," places him far ahead of tens of thousands, who, condemning Nicodemus, will not come to the acknowledgment of the truth of Christ's life, neither by day nor night! We except from this number some known individuals, who, having faith in the correctness of Shaker testimony and life, "come by night" with offerings as genuine, as that of Nicodemus. We cherish the confidence of very many, who, sick of the carnally fleshly life, realize no more pleasure in such worldliness, but find it corroding, corrupting, and very unspiritual to the soul, who yet are so strongly bound, Nicodemus-like, by the fashions of our day, that they cannot "come by day," cannot come out and own their genuine convictions, and brave a scorning world; and so they "come by night," in loving epistles, in tokens of remembrance; come themselves under cover of our confidence. Our sanctum library denotes scores of volumes, presented by living, loving, modern Nicodemuses, and our editorial chair, admired by so many, is the gift of a "comer by night." Letters from all parts of the English-speaking world are abundant; and sincere protestations of these infant souls into christianity are at no time wanting. We love them, nevertheless. Their half-loaf admissions by starlight are better than no bread by day; and for their kindly donations by letter and otherwise we have only grateful returns to offer, for which they shall lose nothing, but be remembered as those only wanting daylight to make them "near the kingdom of heaven." And yet we encourage none to be Nicodemuses.

#### III. PETER.

Peter, it is said, denied his master, fulfilling the prediction of Jesus that he would. Jesus was a natural phrenologist, a ready reader of human nature; and with Peter's inordinate expression of what he would do, Jesus coupled his knowledge of Peter's want of firmness when the time of trial came, and said to him, "You will deny me three times, more easily than you think." We all love Peter's future. How well he contended for the faith afterward, and died head downward from choice! And from this future we may learn a profitable lesson. There are millions of persons whose characters are like unto Peter's when he denied his Lord. There are only a few who repent as sincerely as he did after his Lord had been crucified.

There is no doubt that Peter, on discovering his weakness, determined to strengthen therein, and accomplished his determination; and when others

would have denied the Christ in doctrine, saved them and the testimony before the world. The denial by Peter is to be severely condemned, there being no christian apology therefor; but there should be all charity for his admitted and repented-of weakness.

There are some who offer Peter's mistake as an apology for their own misdoings; but this will never do for christians. Let us condemn whatever is wrong in Peter, Paul, Appollos, or ourselves; and then let us be as encouragingly repentant as any one. As a denier of his master, Peter was, is condemnable; and wherein we at all deny his life in our lives, we are therein condemnable. Peter's repentant and estimable future, so far as he represented Christ, we should copy as closely as circumstances demand. In the absence of physical martyrdom, let us crucify the world, the flesh in us, heads downward, being vigilant for the cause to the end. With the truth ever apparent, that there are myriads who deny Christ, not only three times, but all their lives, might we be more able to make as apparent that a few more hundreds might own and represent Christ than now do, as "him crucified unto a sinful world," and themselves offered to "follow him," the exemplar Jesus, the brilliant pattern of the Christ life.

\* \*

DON'T CRITICISE. — Whatever you do, never set up for a critic. I don't mean a newspaper one—some people are obliged to earn a living that way—but in private life, in the domestic circle, in society. It will not do any one any good, and it will do you harm—if you mind being called disagreeable.

If you don't like any one's nose, or object to any one's chin, don't put your feelings into words. If any one's manners don't please you, remember your own.

People are not all made to suit one taste; recollect that.

Take things as you find them, unless you can alter them. Even a dinner, after it is swallowed, can't be made any better.

Continual fault-finding, continual criticism of the conduct of this one, and the speech of that one, the dress of the other, and the opinions of the other, will make home the unhappiest place under the sun. If you are never pleased with any one, no one will ever be pleased with you. And if it is known you are hard to suit, few will take pains to suit you.

[We copy the following from *The Dew-Drop*, a beautiful little sheet, published at Shaker Village, N. H. As it is the only rival THE SHAKER has, we are happier for thus noticing it. It is printed anonymously, a favorite pastime with the people there, but it may be had by addressing itself, as above, enclosing a two cent stamp.]

BE A CHRISTIAN. In journeying through this life, long or short as it may be, the highest ambition, and greatest desire of the mind should be to become a christian; not after the common acceptance of the term, which is often a mere profession, but the inward life should be so guided by the spirit of Christ, that no evil thing would find a place of abode therein.

The spirit of retaliation—an evil that

has ruined the happiness of many homes and made its inmates narrow and selfish—should never take possession of a christian's heart; for where the true spirit of Christ reigns, there will exist love, charity, peace, forgiveness, and all the heavenly graces that tend to develop the true character.

The golden rule will be the christian's guide instead of selfishness; and we shall find that as, step by step, we ascend the hill of progression, to be a christian is to be a savior.

#### Theological Questions Answered.

"Do you not believe that Jesus was an atonement for the sins of all who have believed, and all who may believe in him as such?"

G. D. W.

As Shakers, we do not so believe; although some who are now living circumspect Shaker lives have not yet fully persuaded themselves to the contrary. We believe Jesus atoned for the mistakes of Jesus, if he made any; or, if he made none, illustrated how each might atone for his or her own misdeeds. The grand feature of Jesus was not as a proxy, but as an exemplar; by which others, seeing his good works and godly life, might "go and do likewise." Herein, alone, is the index to true atonement.

"What was the mission of Jesus, while on earth?"—*Ibid.*

To save all who would be his people from the necessity of committing sin—by setting an example for all who would be his disciples, by which even the temptations to sin would become numbered among the circumstances that were, but are no more. Jesus never even intimated that he came to save people from the penalty of wrong actions committed. "According to your works, so shall your reward be."

"What is your opinion of baptism?"

A. SEELEY.

We have a very sacred opinion of it. Without it there is no Christ, nor work of Christ in the soul. The baptisms of John were good, as a figure to the baptism which was an antitype—the baptism of fire and the holy spirit. Immersions, and sprinkling of water by the priests, may well be classed with the sacrificial overtures of the Jews and heathen. But far better is that inward baptism that convicts (teaches what is wrong) and converts (turns from sinful ways). We have no confidence in any baptism, conversion, nor church-membership that does not speak a reform to a better life.

"Do you think the married can never go to heaven?"

C. S. T.

That necessitates a question from us. Heaven means a happy condition; and there may be many who are very happy in marriage. If marriage is no barrier to your highest conception of and desire for heaven, then you should marry; for the Jews thought so of old before christianity was broached. But do not think of living in the heavenly condition of Jesus, nor of christians, while marriage is your highest ideal of happiness. True christians do not condemn marriage, but live higher and better than it permits. Do not mistake us

in this: Marriage is good in its place—in the world—good “for the children of the world!” But there is a life as far above the happiness of marriage as the heaven of Jesus is above the reproductions of Adam. Are you *now* happy in marriage?

“Is not the Shaker cross very unwillingly borne?” A. V. SECOR.

My dear Secor: You will be surprised when I tell you that a faithful Shaker, by bearing his cross against “the lusts of the flesh and of the mind,” enjoys a satisfaction and justification daily, which he would not exchange for all your pleasures of the flesh! A Shaker not only bears the crosses assigned him willingly, but finds it far easier than to engage in any or all sensual pleasures. In fact, relieve a Shaker from bearing the crosses of his faith, and you put him in hell immediately. You are mistaken. It would be very difficult, if not impossible, to induce a Shaker to resign his cross, for he has worn out its unpleasantness, and it is now his crown of glory.

“When will the Shakers give up the idea of Christ’s duality?” ANDREW JUDSON.

Never; at least, not

“So long as sun and stars give light, And Reason sways her scepter bright.”

There are, and are to be, female Christs as really as Jesus became Christ. Christ means anointed; and of the saviors that shall yet rise up on Mt. Zion, we opine the majority will be female Christs.

“What proportion of those who become Shakers, remain so through life?” J. D.

Although not a theological query, we answer: Every one, without exception, who loves the life Jesus lived better than gross or refined sensuality. Young man, as soon as “you are able,” not before, you had better become a candidate of christianity, “for the kingdom of heaven’s sake.”

“Can you advise me, as a christian, to relinquish my love and faith in the man Jesus, and to rely on my own efforts for salvation?” E. STACY.

Our conscience commands us to advise no such thing. We do advise, as a christian, that you love Jesus more than you have; and with an increase of genuine love, will be an uncontrollable desire to live like him. Whatever we really love and worship we will strive to be like. We grow in the likeness of God, or the god our lives worship. Our fault-finding, is that people do not love Jesus sufficiently, nor have sufficient faith in him, to aid them in doing the work every man and woman must do for himself and herself.

**A Cement unequalled by any in the World.**

“There is an excellent cement, which ought to be used freely by everyone. This cement is good for family jars and social cuts. It heals wounds, and leaves no scars; mends life; binds enemies together; mends damaged reputations; and is splendid for hurt feelings. This universal cement is love. Love is a thing to be cultivated, as you would a solitary stalk of wheat, supposing that there was not another grain of wheat in the world.”

The above was copied from the *Am. Phren. Journal*, and sent us by Joseph Slingerland, of Mt. Lebanon, N. Y. It is very good ce-

ment,—good, like gold; its scarcity making it extremely valuable. Of this cement, an ancient Shaker hymn thus engages:

Is pure love and union my only free choice?  
And do I this union possess?  
When others are honored, then do I rejoice  
And pity all those in distress?

Is my heart delighted, when others are blest?  
And do I their happiness seek?  
Or am I e’er striving their peace to molest?  
I call on my conscience to speak!

For by this criterion I now can decide,  
And know just the truth of the case;  
If I have that love that will ever abide,  
It will selfish nature abase.

I shall not be lofty, nor haughty, nor high;  
But little, and simple, and mild!  
I’ll learn to esteem others better than I,  
And be an obedient child.

And the hymn goes on et cetera. If this cement proves cankerous, caustic, clashing, and contentious; corroding, corrupting, lustful, or longing for lascivious legitimacy; if on the tongue’s end always, and never in the active heart’s engagement, the same is composed of spurious materials, and should be refused immediately. As good pudding is best known, sometimes, by “chewing the pudding-string,” so let us test all so-called love by what it heals,—what it does that hate cannot do!

“And though its name  
Has been usurped by power,  
And profaned to unholy uses through all time,  
Still the eternal principle is pure”—

pure love. And where *in* the world can we find it? \*

**Encouragement.**

HORTENSE HOOSER.

Let all who believe in the second appearing  
Of Christ, the anointed, through good  
Mother Ann,

Resolve to go forward, by faithful cross-bearing,  
And practice true peace and good-will unto man.

By daily obedience and strict self-denial,  
The soul is enabled to prosper and grow;  
Through many earth-conflicts and many sore trials,

Be joyfully leaving all sorrows below.  
Remember, this work is not done by the slothful,  
The crown is not won, nor the treasure secured,

Except by the brave, the devout, and determined,  
And such have their passports to heaven insured.

Should all within Zion live to their profession,  
How sweetly and smoothly the moments would roll!

The weak, inexperienced, be nursed and protected,  
And love’s cheering pinions wave peace to the soul.

The streamlets that flow very small at beginning,—  
They deepen and widen while rippling along;

Just so doth the soul that’s established in Zion  
Gain strength,—swell the ranks of the glorified throng.

Then let all unitedly move on together,  
The life-giving water will bear us safe through;

While angelic guards are surrounding the faithful,  
Diffusing rich blessings like heavenly dew.

This earth-life is only the time of probation,  
Through which living pilgrims are willing to go;

Well-knowing elysian fields lie before them,  
Where shortly they’ll reap all the good seed they sow.  
With hearts of thanksgiving, we’ll adore  
God forever,

That we have a place in his kingdom of peace;

With hearts of thanksgiving, we’ll praise  
Christ and Mother,  
Whose fountain of love will forever increase.  
*Pleasant Hill, Ky.*

**CORRESPONDENCE.**

PLEASANT HILL, KY., Feb. 20.

*Dearly beloved brother—G. A. Lomas:* After expressing my thanks for your zealous and persevering labors of love, in defence and support of our glorious cause, I present as a brief apology for my protracted silence, the throng of duties consequent upon the heavy loss we sustained by fire, and other adversities not convenient now to enumerate, the preponderance of which has fallen upon the writer, in which his time is closely occupied. In a concise correspondence with the dear friends of Canterbury, N. H., we mentioned the demise of our very worthy and beloved Elder Thomas Shain, in the eighty-fourth year of his age, by which it found its way into our precious literary gem, THE SHAKER. I then thought it unnecessary to write any further on the subject; but learning since that as it transpired so suddenly, there was some anxiety abroad to hear the particulars of the case, we thought it would be proper to explain the sad event, which, though it may be prized as a blessing to him, has deprived us of his useful and much-needed help in things spiritual and temporal. It is believed the primary cause of his death was a fall from his horse, occasioned by a splint of the fence catching in the stirrup, which threw him to the ground before he could check the horse, his head striking the turnpike road, producing a concussion of the brain. He walked home, a quarter of a mile, and was confined to his room a week or two, but revived enough to ride out over the premises, perhaps too soon, and was again taken down with vomiting, when paralysis ensued, which soon proved fatal. We could say much touching the long, useful, and exemplary life of our beloved brother and earnest toiler in the christian cause, in which he enlisted in his youthful days, and consecrated his whole life to God, never faltering while life was spared; but as we perceive your views accord with our own on the subject that lengthy obituaries would not be expedient, we refrain. But we deeply regret the loss of so substantial a pillar at this time.

Dear friend, we enjoyed a rich feast of good things with our beloved ministry of Mount Lebanon while on their western tour, whose ministrations were with demonstrations of power in the holy spirit. Their gift of quick perception enabled them to readily comprehend the situation and direct their labor of love where most needed for the protection, blessing, and prosperity of Zion. It is to be hoped that their words of wisdom, their admonitions, and their living testimonies may long live in the hearts of their children in this branch of Zion, and bring forth the fruits of righteousness and peace an hundred fold.

Concerning our temporalities: After the fire that destroyed our barn and other buildings, we went to work as soon as we could make the necessary arrangements, to rebuild in part, and the barn, including horse and cow stables, was ready to be occupied in just three months after the fire. We have since added a wagon-shed and crib. We were very opportune in stabling the stock the first cold night of a severe spell of weather at that early season. And when it moderated, got up the crib and shed just in time to escape a deep snow and one of the severest spells of weather ever experienced here; during which protracted cold the thermometer frequently ranged below zero,—at one time 12° below. It has, in our remembrance, been lower, but the cold was not so protracted. This

may sound like child’s play compared with your climate, but it was literally awful for us! The weather is now quite mild; but we find all the tender fruits destroyed in the bud, including peaches, cherries, plums, etc., our principal preserving fruits, except strawberries.

Dear friend, we had been talking of sending for some copies of “Plain Talks,” if any were to be had, and were pleased to learn they were to be reprinted, as we think it the best document for sincere inquirers, for general circulation, and a good home instructor. We shall be pleased to have our order filled for two hundred copies. \* \* \*

A wail of hard times and dull business goes up from all parts of our great country, in which, of course, we are included; and our rebuilding has so exhausted our available means that we shall have to suspend business till we can recuperate our finances a little.

The religious element in this part of the world is a scarce article, and it is difficult to find all the subscribers we want for our precious missionary, THE SHAKER, because, instead of bringing peace to their order, it brings “rather division,” being a minister of Christ, whom they yet reject as did the Jews of old; but the flood will eventually overtake them. We are pleased, however, to find our friends from the “evergreen shores” visiting our children and youth of late, which is having some good effect; and may the Lord prosper the good work, is our fervent prayer. In love unbounded and ever-renewing to all, and do not fail to impart from our order to the good ministry. Your brother and fellow-laborer in the cause of truth,

B. B. DUNLAVY.

NICHOLVILLE, N. Y., Feb. 20, 1877.

*Dear Friend Briggs:* To you, as the publisher of THE SHAKER, and to the united societies of Shakers, I do hereby tender my heartfelt thanks for the official monthly, called THE SHAKER. \* \* \* I have carefully read every number of the last year, every article therein, by which I have obtained a more thorough knowledge of your moral and religious positions as a christian community than I ever had before. In 1829, I was a member of the New Hampshire legislature; and one Saturday, after adjournment, myself and two others,—John Kent and John Peavey of Barnstead,—walked from Concord to your place, a distance of twelve miles, and tarried in the society until Monday, attending your meetings on Sunday, and were treated as kindly as if members of the society. There is no other community of worshipers of God whose character for honesty, sincerity, and uprightness stands so high in the estimation of the public of the nineteenth century, through the length and breadth of our land, as does that of your people. Free from the abominations so common in the world, satisfied to labor in your modest, unassuming methods, which are very worthy of imitation. There is an economy in your system that all should know of; and that is that your earnings are not expended for useless ornaments of dress and buildings, so common for show, but without benefit. Had I known as much about the Shakers years ago as after reading last year’s volume, I can hardly tell you what the consequences may have been. I am very happy to realize that there are such good people in America as the Shakers; and in my eighty-ninth year I happily, thankfully subscribe myself your well-wisher, while wishing the utmost God-speed to THE SHAKER.

SAMUEL NEWELL.

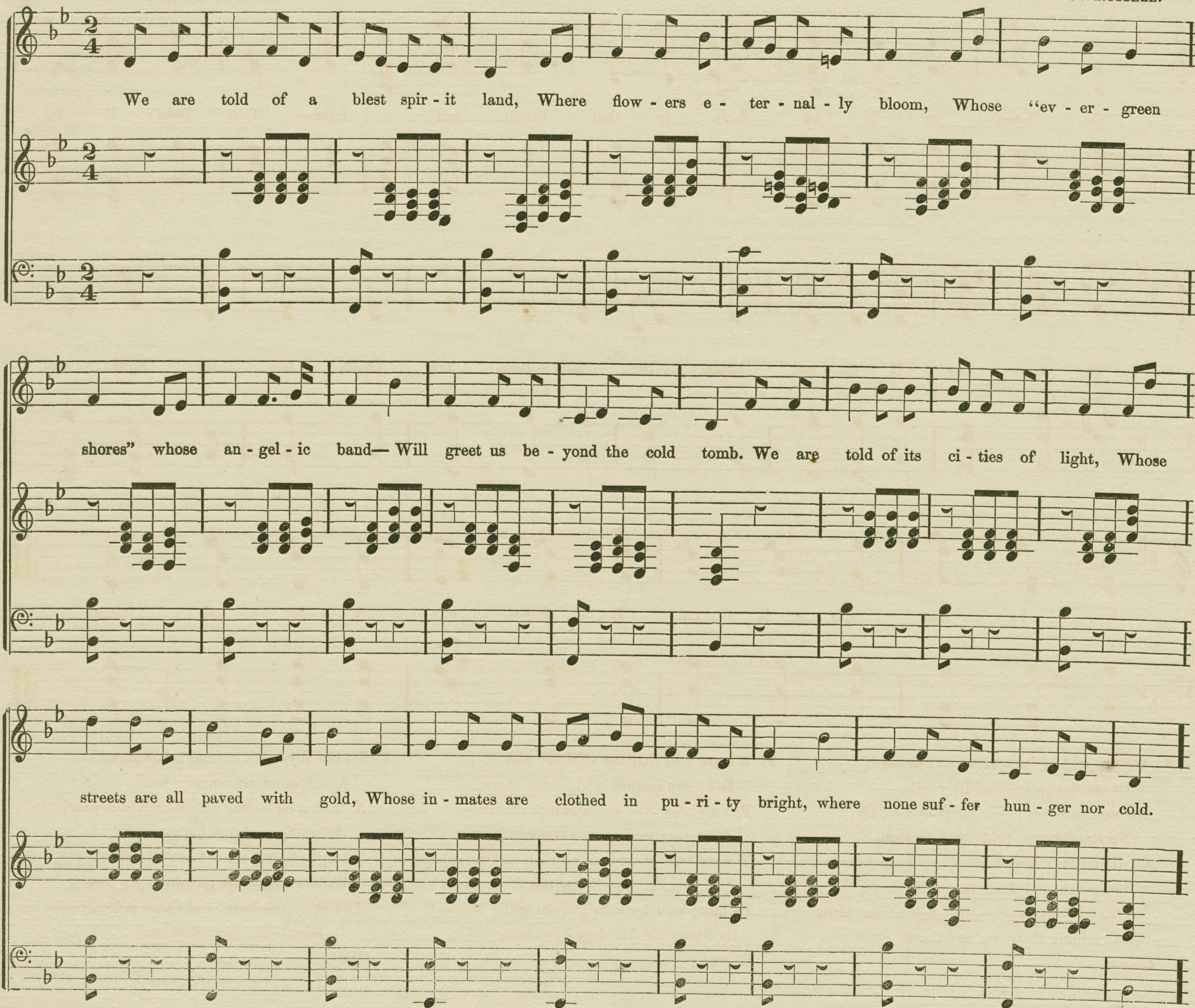
SHAKERS, N. Y., March 1, 1877.

*Editor Shaker:* The article in the February SHAKER upon “The Shaker Covenant,” clearly defining our obligations as a community to stand unflinchingly in its support, not only meets my warm approval, but I do not see how it could have been materially im-

## SPIRITUAL EDEN.

GEO. ALBERT LOMAS.

JAMES G. RUSSELL.



We are told of a blest spir - it land, Where flow - ers e - ter - nal - ly bloom, Whose "ev - er - green

shores" whose an - gel - ic band— Will greet us be - yond the cold tomb. We are told of its ci - ties of light, Whose

streets are all paved with gold, Whose in - mates are clothed in pu - ri - ty bright, where none suf - fer hun - ger nor cold.

proved. None of us can deny the binding force of this sacred compact upon us, as members of our societies. And our obedience thereto, or our non-compliance with it, determines whether we shall stand or fall by it, from the christian standard. Its justness is clearly manifested, in that it controls each and all alike; and if delegating superiority to any, it is upon the gospel principle, "let him be servant of all." Our rights are all secure, so long as this covenant remains in full force; and no privileged class can exercise an unchristian power upon any, but all are bound to the most unselfish brotherhood by its wise provisions. But there is great danger, beloved editor, as believers in our faith grow in the wealth of this world's goods, that selfishness and a worldly ambition for place and power may seek to exercise an un-Shaker dominion over the weaker brethren. A vast amount of trouble may be made or avoided by carefully studying your excellent treatise upon this subject, and guiding our conduct thereby. Man naturally loves to exercise authority over his fellows; and if he is not brought under christian influences, becomes oppressive by a little brief power. Aware of this fact, let us jealously guard our sacred charter against any entering wedge that ignores the golden rule and the rights of all the brotherhood. Thanking you for

the ringing clearness of that article, I am yours,  
ORRIN BEAVER.

*N. A. Briggs, publisher—Dear Sir:* Please find sixty cents inclosed for THE SHAKER, for 1877. Have you last year's numbers for sale, and at what price? The Lord bless your paper and the good work it is doing. May the Lord use it as an instrument to bring souls to Christ; that they may take the waters of life freely, and be thereby saved from their sins, is the prayer of your brother in Christ.  
L. A. BURNS.  
*Leominster, Mass.*

LOUISVILLE, KY., Feb. 15, 1877.

*Dear Bro. Eades:* I have this day received another evidence of your kindness in the welcome visit of that highly-prized periodical, THE SHAKER. I recognize my indebtedness to you for its regular visits, which afford me so much instruction, refresh my spiritual man, point me to a purer, higher life, and elevate my aspirations above that sordid and sensual plane upon which humanity plods its weary way to the grave. I feel that I cannot sufficiently thank you for having placed that periodical in my hands. But for you its existence might have been unknown to me, and I would have been deprived of that valuable information which I receive from its columns. It is no ordinary

periodical, intended to advocate mere selfish human interests. It is not set for the defence of worldly organizations, founded for the acquisition of worldly honors, emoluments, or personal aggrandizements; but it is a harbinger of the reign of peace, purity, and true holiness; and I earnestly wish it may find its way into every professed christian home; that it will reach thousands of firesides, where at present it is unknown.

You will excuse me for saying that with all due deference to the judgment of the publisher, I think the selection of the present quarto form instead of octavo was injudicious, and is regretted by many friends of the periodical. Its present form makes it very ephemeral, and from being frequently folded and unfolded in its perusal, it is soon and easily worn out, and few of its subscribers have an opportunity of reading the pages a second time, though much of its matter is worthy of being read many times, and preserved in a bound volume. In its present shape it would make, if bound, a large, cumbersome, and unhandy volume of 11 1-2 by 15 inches. By changing the form to an octavo it would be 7 1-2 by 11 inches. It might then be read and laid aside for subsequent perusals previous to being bound. \* \* \* I make these suggestions only on account of my high appreciation of the work, and my firm belief

that the matter contained in it is worthy of frequent perusal; and will make any man or woman better, who shall diligently study its teachings, and act upon the principles inculcated therein. Present my kind regards to Elder Jno. R. Cooper, and believe me to be fraternally thine,  
J. H. B.

*Elder H. L. Eades.*

[We would make all Kentucky stare if we should print the above initials in full name—and we do not care for the stare particularly; but hope that THE SHAKER may find its way into a good many more homes in Kentucky, and be as highly appreciated as by this highly-honored individual, equally well by state and nation! ED.]

## Christian Culture. No. 2.

## KNOWLEDGE.

Knowledge in the human being is the foundation of all culture—physical, mental, and moral. It is so intimately connected with all true thought that it is impossible for the one to exist without the other. The Infinite possesses infinite knowledge, and hence devises and executes all his plans with unerring certainty. Man is limited in all his faculties, and necessarily limited in his knowledge, and thus liable to errors. There is no necessity of supposing a self-existing devil or principle of evil to account for the zigzag course of mankind ever since its existence

Chorus.

Oh, what joy to be there in that bright land a - bove— That beau - ti - ful  
 Zi - on,— our E - ter - nal home. No dark - ness, nor death, but life, light and  
 love In that Spir - it - ual E - den— our e - ter - nal home.

2. We are told of its seasons so fair,—  
 Its eternal spring and its youth,  
 No sickness—no pain, nor poisonous air,  
 No slander—no pride, nor untruth.  
 Of its bright “sea of glass” we have heard—  
 The pearls and the gems on its shore,  
 No troublesome noise—the songs of the birds  
 Are adding their joy evermore.

Chorus

3. We are told that the spirit of war  
 Is known in that land, never more,  
 But halcyon love and union are there—  
 A brotherhood scene evermore.  
 We are told, would we reach that blest sphere,  
 And earn an inheritance there,  
 To labor with care for heaven while here—  
 By living the life they live there.

Chorus.

4. To the joys of a heaven made here,  
 Add bliss of the angelic band,  
 A heaven on earth, sure then will appear,  
 A foretaste of that happy land.  
 Let us press for the “evergreen shores ;”  
 We’ll make all its pleasures our own ;  
 And be angels here, and there evermore—  
 In Eden—our eternal home.

Chorus.

upon the earth. Ignorance in the beginning may be the cause of early faults and mistakes, and the effects of early mistakes transmitted may and do form proclivities to still other faults, proceeding in an increasing ratio, unless checked by some superior power. Knowledge is not the saving principle, yet it must precede the internal power that checks, restrains, and delivers. Whoever invoked God that had no idea of God? Conscience, the internal monitor that warns, reproves, or approves, takes its name from the fact that knowledge is always its attendant when it is in its normal condition. The more extensive and accurate the knowledge of duty, when the judgment is well-poised, the greater the power felt of obligations to duty. An unenlightened conscience—if that is not a misnomer—has been the originator of unnumbered wrongs done in the name of conscience—wrongs of the most aggravated character. It is true, there are those “who know their duty and do it not.” Many are accomplished villains, polished scoundrels, who avail themselves of their knowledge of law the more effectually to evade law. But where must the blame be laid—upon knowledge itself, or the moral condition of the individual person? Perversity of character may turn the very best of blessings to curses. A broad assertion respecting knowledge has been ascribed to the Apostle Paul,—“Knowledge puffeth up.”—*I. Corinthians, viii. 1.* But our English translators are re-

sponsible for that rather than Paul. If they had rendered the two words, *he gnosis*, in the first verse as they did the very same words in the seventh verse, “that knowledge,” they would have made the statement particular rather than general, as Paul did. The apostle evidently alluded to some in the Corinthian church who had much self-satisfaction in their knowledge that there is but one God, and could therefore eat with impunity the meats offered in sacrifice to idols, without regard to their weaker brother who was still influenced by his former superstitions. They were “puffed up” with their knowledge instead of possessing the “love which edifies.” It was a just reproof given them, “that they knew nothing yet” respecting christian love, “as they ought to have known.” There is much in the world that passes under the name of knowledge which is not really such. It is found in connection with theology, medicine, jurisprudence, and science, generally. The doctor of divinity professes to be teacher of sacred things; the doctor of medicine claims to know something about human health and disease; the doctor of laws to be acquainted with the methods that should regulate human society, or with the laws pertaining to the physical universe; but, compared with the vast fields that yet lie unexplored, how little do they all know! And, if they sift from the mass of what appertains to their several departments that which they positively know, what heaps

of rubbish remain! The fact of their ignorance is made very evident by the want of harmony among those who listen, week after week, and year after year, to those who profess to teach divine truths; by the vast amount of disease still existing even where physicians are most numerous; and the discords that still prevail in spite of the efforts of politicians, statesmen, and rulers generally to govern the world. What, then? Has nothing been gained to repay the time and labor spent in making the vast accumulations displayed in those several departments of human effort? Not so. Truth is evolved from error. It has made its appearance, little by little, all along. First the seeming and then the real. Man’s resurrection is nothing more than a succession of steps from the lowest depths of earth to the sun-lit realms of the highest heavens. Something can and will be acquired all along the way. It matters not, though the process be slow, if the ultimate acquisition be sure. The divine forces are ever active, and have already formed a world of wondrous beauty and splendor. Yet there are deserts here and there; and, if we would see them “rejoice and blossom as the rose,” human efforts, conjoined with human wisdom, must unite with divine power to bring about the glorious consummation. The streams from the river of life must be directed wherever they are needed to produce the desired fertility. If there are inequalities throughout, then so much

more the need of knowledge to convey the waters over hillock and hill, as well as through ravine and valley. **What is Duty?** ABRAHAM PERKINS. For a very long time my mind has been exercised upon the condition of our Zion; how the gospel of Christ was maintained by our spiritual fathers and mothers; how, unto the present time, it has been perpetuated and its powers preserved; and how, by the present and coming generations, it is to be supported and preserved inviolate, free from the impurities and amalgamations of human influences and worldly principles. The effects of the demoralizing influences of society, almost universally in all ranks of life, are largely realized; even in the quiet, peaceful, christian Shaker church, so peculiarly characterized for its religious devotion, consecration, and sacrifice, the young and inexperienced are not unfrequently befogged and ruined; and older members, superficially planted in gospel soil, correspondingly suffer from the blight and infection of the spirit of the times. The highly-revered testimonies of our church, “Take no thought for the morrow,” and “Live to-day as though you had a thousand years to live,” are in the letter conflicting; yet both have their valued significance, and in their significance and meaning a principle

is involved. The idea of living only for today is contracted and selfish; it unveils low mental conditions and discloses lack of judgment and absence of reason. Again, living principally for the future is miserly and inconsistent with reason. It deprives man of present enjoyment, and is eminently calculated to weaken the power of protection and destroy the basis of progress. The two principles of the foregoing quotations are as essential to promote the growth, development, increase, and prosperity of Zion, as it is necessary that the two great principles, conservatism and radicalism, should not be lost sight of, but should be faithfully cultivated and unremittingly maintained, if we would retain an unadulterated existence, and find an unfoldment of greater truths.

As dear to us as have been the form and manner of carrying out the order of our gospel institution, as transmitted to us by our spiritual leaders; as great sticklers as we have been to orthodoxy, for the maintenance of principle in the support of pure society relations; yet, as we find conditions, legitimate or illegitimate, so we must meet them, shaping our course as our wisdom will best subserve the object for which we labor most successfully, to meet the end and give justification to our own souls.

The momentous question before us is,—What is duty? The peace, the justification, and comforts of life hang upon this lesson; and however wantonly or superficially the subject is considered, future welfare is largely predicated upon present calculation, and present action. Although in a variety of forms, principle may be sustained; yet under no circumstances can we depart from it in justification. This is a fundamental axiom. Change of condition often requires change of operation, but will never justify abandonment of principle. It may sometimes be in our power to control circumstances, by which we secure more favorable results. Napoleon the First, under a pressing trial, strove to impress this idea upon his generals; to this principle of action were very much owing his success and prosperity in life; yet the poor man was sometimes amazingly misguided, and with all his talent, wisdom, shrewdness, and strength of intellect, he failed in the end, closing his days in misery and suffering, produced by miscalculation, stimulated by pride and unworthy ambition. From fruits of others' and personal experiences, we may learn lessons of wisdom; or we may, by our conceit and selfishness, unprofitably and blindly toil, making life worse than a blank, ending in dishonor and shame, and emblazoned as a curse on the pages of history.

Although this production may shed no light, may present no other than cogitations of a personal character, yet some may be able to indorse them as painful truths.

**THE CHILDREN'S GROTTTO.**

Again, dear children, I sit down, with an exceeding pleasure, to have a talk with you. I say exceeding, because I have received very flattering evidences from some of you, and your friends, that I am doing good thereby. Let us talk of THOUGHTS. Do you know that thoughts are real things? that they have an existence as really as trees, flowers, birds and men? There are things that are thoughtless; but there are few or no animals but have thoughts. The steam engine, the water-wheel, the wind-mill, etc., are powerful, but cannot think. But thinking beings made these and all other machinery, to aid the development of thought. Once, the steam engine, as all other mechanical and artistic arrangements, was as chaotic as thousands of inventions yet unthought of. Our thoughts at first, may be compared to stores of crude material, out of which we take a mind-full, as of clay we take a handful; and of our mind-full of material, we can form figures fair or foul, just as we please. Knowing this,

my children, I am anxious you should always make good images from the much thought-material at your command. When you make a thought, it becomes an image of some kind, and we call it imagination—which being defined, means, the act of making images. Now let us discover where our actions come from. Before we act at any time, we necessarily think how we shall act. Some of you may be prompted by your experiences to unfavorably criticise this; for, you may ask: "Does not a boy or girl sometimes act without thinking?" To which I reply: Never! Too commonly, we all act without sufficient maturity in our plans of thought—without due consideration. Now, as we must first think before we can act, then let us carefully train our modes of thinking, and our deeds and words will illustrate this thought-training. Who thinks only good thoughts, always speaks and acts goodness! Every word we speak, every little or large act we perform, every good and every evil we speak or do—all are formed in the mind, mapped out ere they are committed! Sometimes, we pause, consider, make a new image, mark out a new course, and do differently—because we remodeled our intentions. All the causes of good and ill feeling lie within the limits of our thought-factory—in our imaginations. Now for the application, children: Make good thoughts, beautiful pictures of the mind, and beauty, and love, and blessing will be the certain fruits. Resolve not to make up an unworthy figure to think upon; not to think angrily, uncleanly, jealously, enviously, avariciously. Resolve to be noble men and women! manufacturers of godly thoughts—images we know that God looks on with pleasure. Would you resist evil temptations? Deny them formation in your mind; for, when you have made evil images, and permit yourselves to worship or admire them, your heart is getting ready for the full act of commission of sin! Now, dear children, think how great is your power, if you deny to yourselves the practices of making evil thoughts. A little child, in this self-denial and at the time when plans of mischief are laid, has more power for good, than the giant intellects, who, failing to work in the mind, for proper guidance of imaginations, become the subjects of the worst of tyrants—the passions!

Kind Editor:

I read your article to "youth and children" in the last number of our paper, at the opening of school as soon as in my possession. The children seemed to appreciate the paternal advice; and Henry Clough has written his thanks, and the expression of our little school. You will accept it as a purely original letter, and know, should you feel to give him any advice, it will be acceptable.

He seemed afraid I might alter the letter somewhat, and thus I gave entire place to his expanding, manly powers, knowing the keen eye of the editor would detect any blunder; and should he offer amendments it might do quite as much good as though from one who has the constant discipline.

With many thanks for past favors, and especially those kind words to we little folks, I subscribe myself your humble sister,

EMMA J. NEAL.

Mt. Lebanon, N. Y.

MT. LEBANON, Feb. 14, 1877.

Dear brother ALBERT:

As soon as the February number of THE SHAKER was committed to our keeping, my eyes fell upon the beautiful piece, entitled, "The Children's Grotto," "Talks to youth and children." Perusing it, I could not refrain from thanking the author. Such considerations for the young, should not and cannot (by the thoughtful) pass unnoticed, among believers or by others. Being one of those fortunate, or unfortunate boys, possessed of much life, I am capable of making things rattle a little sometimes, and perhaps

when I ought not to. But there is life in children as you remark, and it must come out one way or another.

I have read your article several times, but will do more than read; I will impress it on my mind and mould my actions by the principles it contains. I really wonder a brother, having so many things to occupy your mind, and things that are above childhood too, could spend time to have such an interesting talk with us; and so we have reason to be thankful for this also.

I may not appreciate your remarks as deeply in my ignorant condition, as in riper years, but hope to show an increasing appreciation by my future deportment.

I am not alone in appreciating your sentiments, but many others of my schoolmates have resolved to discipline ourselves that we may make agreeable and useful men at some future date.

In love and respect I subscribe myself,

HENRY CLOUGH.

[Thank you, little friend, for the comfort yourself and companions return to me. We do not know how old you are, but your penmanship is admirable. We could scarcely do better ourself. Try on. ED.]

**METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS, for the year ending January 31, 1877; taken at Mt. Lebanon, N. Y., by LOUIS BASTING.**

Elevation of station above sea-level, about 1200 feet. Result based upon two daily observations, taken at 5 a. m., and 12 m.:

Mean temperature, . . . . . †44 1-2  
 Mean temperature at 5 a. m., . . . . . †38  
 Mean temperature at 12 m., . . . . . †50 1-2  
 Lowest temperature, Dec. 17, . . . . . -9  
 Highest temperature, July 12, . . . . . †93

Months.	Lowest.	Highest.	Greatest Range of Mercury.	Range, 18 deg.
February	-8	†47	†20-†38	28
March	-2	†54	†16-†44	30
April	†28	†65	†20-†50	30
May	†28	†82	†52-†82	30
June	†48	†86	†48-†78	30
July	†43	†93	†43-†80	37
August	†42	†90	†51-†80	29
September	†40	†90	†36-†90	54
October	†20	†67	†20-†44	24
November	†22	†74	†54-†74	20
December	-9	†45	†24--0	24
January	-4	†40	†18-†40	22

216 cloudy days. 150 clear days. Rained on 24 days. Rain-fall in September, October, and November, 3 5-8 inches. Snow-fall in November, December, and January, 4 feet.

MEAN TEMPERATURE, at Labrador, †25; Archangel, †44; Lomborg, †44; Gottenburg, †46; Trieste, †58; Vienna, †51; Melbourne, †59; London, †50; Algiers, †63; Barbadoes, †80; Manheim, †50; Bahamas, †83; Batavia, †78.

WINDS. West, 167; northwest, 38; southwest, 11; south, 57; north, 35; east, 32; rest scattering.

**EVERGREEN SHORES.**

At Canterbury, N. H., Feb. 13, SARAH AMELIA CROOKER, aged 50. Mentally, morally, spiritually, a brilliant adornment of our Israel; but physically fragile. Pity it is that such could not have bodies that would last a thousand years.

At South Union, Ky., Feb. 10, 1877, POLLY JONES, aged 93.

At Canaan, N. Y., Feb. 15, 1877, CAROLINE WEBBER, aged 80 years. Influential in bringing some of the most staunch supporters of our faith into our ranks on earth, she has ever deserved the grateful thanks of all Zion.

**Our Congratulation.**

Our noble publisher writes us: "The general verdict is such, that I congratulate you upon the improvement of our PAPER. Your editorials are very worthy of consideration. I am unchanged in my opinion, that it is far better to say pussy sometimes, than to say CAT always! (This advice prevents our saying things very plainly, except in 'PLAIN TALKS.')

Even Jesus, the radical, was reticent upon subjects which he knew would not be appreciated nor understood. He was wise. The gospel, though so simple that 'a fool needs not err,' cannot be sustained by fools, nor will a foolish, rash zeal tend to its increase."—N. A. Briggs.

**We are Remembered.**

The dear, good sisterhood of a certain mountain home, appreciating our labors on our little SHAKER have most kindly sent us a set of nice shirts. We do not know what we have done worthy of such a compliment; but we are full of resolves to work more earnestly for the cause, because of such kindly remembrances. We should be pleased to publish the loving letter accompanying—so full of the clear, sweet, tangible gospel love and sentiment; but they will not permit. Unsalaries, but we are remembered!

**PARTICULAR NOTICE.**

The American Agriculturist is a very worthy monthly. Its subscription price is \$1.60. We will send THE SHAKER and it together during 1877 for \$1.50!! Now take advantage of our offer, and get both for less than quarter cost. Address the Publisher of THE SHAKER.

"THE DAYS OF MAN'S YEARS" would be much more rounded and sweet did he understand and appreciate the real object of existence. To keep alive the divinity within, at whatever sacrifice of reputation, fortune or sensuous enjoyment, should be his highest endeavor. Standing in awe, as we sometimes do, at the heights and depths of thought and feeling, we know our own spirits to be capable of reaching, dwarfed and marred as they are, we are dumb with wonder at the glorious possibilities of peace and power that await the more enlightened human soul. Why are we not better taught in childhood? Why does not some friendly guide show us the paths that surely lead to the azure heights of contentment and trust whereon man was meant to dwell? So much time is lost in retracing false steps; so many days are consumed in waiting for wounds to heal before we can attempt further progress, that lo! old age finds us still gasping amid the noisome fogs of the valley. I believe that man, by being true to his highest conceptions of right, can surround himself by such an atmosphere of love and hope, that the crimson glories of each rising day will be but faintly typical of the glowing aspirations that shall fill his soul each morn, and the golden splendors of eventide shall pale before the sacred fires that give light and warmth to all who come within the range of his affections.—A. A. W. in New Age.

"I have been and seen the wants of people, and returning to my own home, have fairly hated the comforts that surrounded me."—Dr. Hall.