HUMAN PROGRESS.

Twenty-first Anniversary of the Friends of Human Progress, at Waterloo, New York.

THE NEW ISMS OF THE AGE.

Christianity, Our Social System and Our Moral and Physical Lives a Failure and Deception.

The New Platform of Civil, Moral, Political and Social Government and Welfare.

WATERLOO, SENECA COUNTY, June 13, 1869.

A few miles outside this curious little town, which nestles among the hills and lakes that dot this picturesque region, and within about thirty miles of Lake Ontario "as the crow flies," stands an old meeting house, used for many years by the Hicksite Society of Friends. It is a large frame building, just off the dirt-road running through the town of Junius, and is situated upon an eminence within a fenced area, which encloses also a small willow Quaker cemetery, comprising, perhaps, fifty graves. The house is probably thirty or forty years old, and its interior arrangement is in accordance with the rules of construction adopted by the Friends for their places of meeting. There are doors on three sides, or, more properly, at the front and both ends. A narrow platform, about two feet high, with a railing along the front and a low seat behind it, occupies the back interior of the meeting house, and a primitive gallery runs around three of the walls and is furnished with rude, straight-backed benches. The house has a front of about fifty feet and a depth of twenty-five, and may be divided inside into two compartments by elevating from the floor and lowering from the ceiling by pulleys a plank partition, built in sections, which slides in grooves, and which, when adjusted, as effectually separates each apartment from the other as a good panelled partition built stationary would do. This was used in former times to separate the males and females. The ground floor also is supplied with a number of wooden benches of a similar pattern to those in the gallery, and the walls are plastered and whitened. Not a square inch of painted surface is to be seen in that quaint building, but the galleries, the floor, the upright posts and beams, the platform, the benches are almost white, being of plain pine wood and bearing marks of frequent scrubbing, which gives the planks the appearance of the inside of a newly scalded churn or a dairy table. Everything about it is plain, neat, simple, clean, Quakerish in fact. A large sycamore tree stands in front of the building, a rich grassy turf, cut only by a narrow, dusty wagon track leading to the road, surrounds it, and at its eastern end are situated two large wagon sheds, beneath which those who attend services here shelter their horses and vehicles.

A fine rolling country stretches away on either hand from this particular scene, and by dint of good farming yields fair returns of potatoes, corn, wheat, barley and rye to the agriculturist. Some parts of the territory, however, are rather poor in soil, or, as one of the residents of the locality put it, when interrogated as to the quality of the land, "There is plenty to do, and little to get." The people as a class throughout the region are intelligent, "well to do" farmers, and, together with the Quakerish proclivities which adhere to them from the existence of the old society among them, and their nearness to Rochester, the home of the Fox sisters, and the scene of marvellous spirit rapping, spook seeing and ghost invoking exploits, have originated and evolved some very remarkable religious and psychological beliefs and theories.

The most antique as well as the most flourishing body of these quasi-religionists is now known by the distinctive appellation of "Friends of Human Progress," and this society to-day closed its twenty-first annual meeting, celebrated by services occupying two days, at the old meeting house above described. The object and aims of the society may perhaps be best explained, and most briefly, by an extract from their circular calling the meeting, as follows:—

This meeting seeks to know no fellowship but the fellowship of truth, no church but the church of humanity, and invites to its deliberations all who do or would belong to this communion. There are signs of cheer in this time; the opportunities and encouragements for work are greater than ever before known, and it is hoped there will be a large gathering of those interested in this behalf for mutual counsel and co-operation.

The deliberations will dwell especially upon the religious aspects of truth, its practical bearing upon the relations and forms of human life and activity.

Revs. Samuel J. May, Charles D. B. Mills, William J. Linton, Aaron M. Powell, Dr. Lydia A. Strowbridge, Charles Lenox Remond, Giles B. Stebbins and Geo. W. Taylor are expected to be present and address the meeting.

With this avowed object about 150 persons assembled on Saturday morning, a large proportion of the number being men of more than middle age, and a goodly share of young and good looking women, most of whom seemed well acquainted and were very friendly in their greetings. The remainder of the assemblage was composed of young men, ranging from eighteen to twenty-five years, a few clubby, grinning boys and girls, and, perhaps, a dozen reserved strangers. Of the whole party there were about two or three from New York city, half a dozen from Rochester, two or three from Syracuse and a few from local towns, the rest being residents of the immediate vicinity. In the afternoon the company was reinforced by the arrival of the veteran Fred Douglass, an old associate of the Friends, by the way, and apparently in excellent health and spirits. He looked the same identical Fred that he has appeared for ten years past, with the exception that his crown of bushy, frizzled, kinky, grayish-black hair was less ample than usual, he having but recently submitted himself to a vigorous tonsorial operation, with a view to comfort during the approaching dog days. Among other persons prominently noticeable, from the peculiarity of her attire, was Mrs. Dr. Lydia A. Strowbridge, a dark-complexioned, thin-featured lady, about thirty years of age, with sharp brown eyes, a pleasant demeanor, and intelligent expression of features. She was clad in bloomer costume of gray, trimmed with a narrow cord or gimp of black silk, her trousers being loose and hanging well, and her skirt descending an inch or two below the knee. The body of her coat fitted tightly, and the collar and lapels were rolled back; her hands were encased in black kid gloves, and a jockey hat crowned the complete person. There were none of the stereotyped class of lank, long-haired men, and acute, incisive, short-haired fraternity of women present; the women as a body were plump, healthy, good-natured farmers' wives and daughters, and the men as a rule were strong, burly farmers and farmers' sons, a few professional men merely serving to make a contrast.

The meetings were some years ago attended by Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Parker Pilsbury and other persons of eminence in their peculiar sphere, but latterly they have not been among the number of participants.

GILES B. STEBBINS, a modest though fluent speaker, from Rochester, called the meeting to order on Saturday morning, and suggested the propriety of the Committee of Arrangements preparing a list of officers to conduct the meeting. The committee, composed of men and women, retired to the lawn in front of the building, and during their absence Mr. Stebbins said that inasmuch as he had not attended for several years past he was not informed as to the present precise method of organizing the meeting. The present attendance of the Friends was rather thin; but, if the rule of former years could be accepted as an omen, a sparse opening audience was the promise of augmented numbers as the proceedings progressed. It was in fact a trait of all these meetings that as they went on the interest in them awakened and increased up to the close. While the committee were in deliberation, however, he would suggest that if any Friend present were "moved" he or she might, perhaps, profitably address the meeting.

Mr. POWELL, of New York, shortly arose and after some brief introductory remarks said that the aim of the friends here was the advocacy and extension of the simple, unpretending message of truth which this meeting had always promulgated. Among the useful, efficient instruments for reaching the public mind he had always noticed this Waterloo meeting as a centre of spiritual and moral influence. Of course it had had its aggressive opponents, but the principles by which it was actuated were the highest tidewater mark of American civilization, and so far as the question of aggression was concerned he did not himself always agree with everything he heard here. Among the aggressors were at one time those who proclaimed the domination of chattel slavery, but where was chattel slavery now? It was gone, and the same spirit which had overthrown it had been heard throughout the world and was even now active in Cuba. He did not regard the method of war for the accomplishment of such objects as the best, but it seemed to be the only and inevitable one; and in that great warfare this little primitive Waterloo meeting played a prominent part, and the voice which it sent forth was even now ringing in the land, and the fifteenth amendment to the constitution, when adopted, as it would be at no distant day, was destined to work the brightest revolution the world has ever seen and to lift the standard of government higher than the world has ever beheld it. And when, in addition to that, the proposed sixteenth amendment shall be ratified, and the ballot box thrown open, here and everywhere, to women and to men, the whole aspect of our political life would be changed for the brighter and the better. He remembered the time when there was a smile of ridicule evoked when the idea of women voting was mentioned; but to-day it was the earnest, practical problem of the hour.

At this juncture the committee returned the following nominations for officers:—President, G. B. Stebbins; Vice Presidents, Mrs. J. C. Bowdish, of Waterloo; Mrs. Dr. L. A. Strowbridge, of Cortland; Secretaries, Mary Bowdish and William Barnes, of Waterloo. The nominations were then adopted unanimously and the officers took their seats on the platform.

It was then announced that the Business Committee would retire to draft resolutions, and that in view of the fact that other prominent speakers were expected by the afternoon train the morning would be devoted to informal discussions, and that after the noon recess the meeting would proceed to the regular business before it.

Miss MARIETTA BOWEN, of Clyde, N. Y., a young lady of prepossessing manners and appearance, and possessing a fine, sympathetic contralto voice, played a voluntary on a melodeon, and afterwards sang a piece of music of the "progressive" order with good effect.

Mr. GEO. W. TAYLOR, a tall, gentlemanly appearing man and a reputed trance speaker, was then invited to say a few words if he felt so "moved," and made, in response, a brief address, expressing the opinion that "all the elements in force in the spiritual world were now combined to eliminate us from any great superstitions which should keep back our progress and power." When we were talking of universal emancipation and suffrage we were taking the first necessary right step towards the accomplishment of the highest attainable object towards mankind; and as he thought of these things he could not but express his admiration of the lines of the song they had just heard:—

It is coming up the steep of time,
And our old world is growing brighter;
We may not see its dawn sublime,
But it makes the heart to feel the lighter.

Mr. STEBBINS, in the course of some remarks made by him when Mr. Taylor had concluded, said that our society was now on the eve of the most complete and ample and necessary reformation—reform among the churches, in politics, in the government, in the social circle. The influence of truth and justice and freedom was asserting itself among humanity, and it must prevail; the truth was never permanently vanquished by wrong; error and superstition and evil were ever sure to fall before the power of truth and reason, as asserted by the dictates and aspirations of the soul after purity, freedom and truth. It was an error in the system of Christianity that the devil was made immortal, and theology thereby showed its lack of philosophical principle in a fundamental point. The devil should have been mortal instead of immortal. The good always had and always would prevail over the bad, and, if theology was consistent in its reasoning, God should be longer lived than the devil. It was a sign of the progress of humanity in the path of right and truth that the late orthodox meeting at Boston awakened the inquiry and attention of a large number of clergymen to the new religious society. After alluding to the gratifying results of the Farmington meeting of a year ago, and stating that no one could foresee the grand results which these awakenings would produce, he referred briefly to the question of woman suffrage, and said that he believed that he would live to see women exercise the right to use the ballot.

A recess of one hour was taken, during which the meeting partook of lunch on the sward in front of the building, and which had been brought in baskets by the neighbors, who participated.

Afternoon Proceedings.

About half-past two o'clock the meeting reassembled and letters were read from Rev. William J. Linton and Alfred H. Love, of Philadelphia, expressing their regret at not being present, and assuring the friends of the lively interest they felt in the cause of progress. In the letter of Mr. Love some allusion was made to the efforts of the various Christian churches to secure "what the ministers call the recognition of God in the constitution of the United States."

Mr. STEBBINS expressed the opinion in regard to the matter that there was "about as much likelihood of inserting the clause in the constitution, which these gentlemen wish, as there was of building a railroad to the moon. Just as likely."

CHARLES D. B. MILLS, of Syracuse, next addressed the meeting and said there is at the present time scarcely any ecclesiastical establishment in which there are not existing some schisms and differences of opinion. There is a great deal of idolatry in the Church. The Old and New Schools of Presbyterians have professed recently a reunion and propose to do their work together, but he thought the government of that Church had not vitality enough in it to do anything. This was simply a stroke of policy that had brought them to unite. It pleased him, however, to find in all these ecclesiastical organizations young men whose souls were becoming too big for their bodies under their system, and all these things only augured a grand and glorious future for the great Church of Progress which was destined to found a religion brighter and more powerful than the Christianity of the sixteenth century. It would be, indeed, a Church as broad as humanity and as free as the light and air. These instances of disruption and revolution in the Protestant Church were the Baptist's cry in the wilderness.

Mr. STEBBINS again spoke at some length in reference to the inconsistencies of the clergymen and in advocacy of the principles of spiritualism, concluding by suggesting that if any of the friends were "moved" to say something they should do so. They were here sure to be welcomed, whether strangers or not, and, whatever their views, they were earnestly invited to express them, even though in antagonism to all that had been said. This was a free platform, free to all who chose to use it for the expression of his or her honest, earnest views, without reference to what those views might be.

FRED DOUGLASS took the opportunity of expressing a bit of his mind, and said that he did not know what was meant by this talk of getting "moved." He thought that if a man wished to say anything or had anything to say he would say it without being "moved" by anybody or anything. It was a free, voluntary act, the impulse of his own mind. Men were never heard of as being "moved" to take dinner, or being "moved" to go out and hoe potatoes. There was no power in the universe which compelled us to do anything or could control us—no power of any sort higher than our own soul's convictions.

Mr. POWELL, on behalf of the Committee, then offered the following resolutions:—

Resolved, That we recognize as inherent in human nature an unlimited capacity for growth and progress.

Resolved, That cheered and encouraged by the many evidences of progress since the origin of this yearly meeting, we renew and emphasize our past testimonies in favor of the reforms of the day, and we deem it of vital importance, as the foundation work for character and attainment of true manhood and womanhood, that freedom of the soul be asserted and maintained, such freedom as is loyal to the truths of the spiritual world, truths immortal and to grow in power and beauty as superstitions and decay as, creeds, we put aside, and as books are used as helpers, not accepted as masters.

Resolved, That since the real issue is between the authority of the Church and the truths of the soul, we accept and hail the rise and growth of Progressive Friends, true religious associations, the spiritual and kindred movements, with the decreased of the power in a compromising so-called Protestantism, as signs of the times, prophetic of the final victory of spiritual freedom.

Resolved, That we hail with great satisfaction the adoption by Congress of the pending fifteenth constitutional amendment; and we urge all friends of freedom, especially of the States wherein it has not yet been acted upon, to do all in their power to secure its certain and speedy ratification, to the end that political proscription on account of race or color may be at once and forever abolished.

Resolved, That we urge Congress promptly to adopt and submit to the State Legislatures the sixteenth constitutional amendment, offered by Hon. George W. Julian, guaranteeing the right to vote and to hold office to all women upon equal terms with men; and we also urge immediate legislation for the enfranchisement of the women of the District of Columbia and of the Territories.

Resolved, That we renew our testimony against the unjust, cruel and unnatural prejudice against color, born of the iniquitous slave system.

Resolved, That caste and a true Christianity are incompatible; that in society the Church, business and the State all men and women should have such recognition as character merits, irrespective of complexional distinctions.

Resolved, That we rejoice in the praiseworthy action of President Grant in the appointment of colored men to responsible positions of official trust, and we hail gladly the day in which the nation may be represented abroad by men hitherto identified with the enslaved race.

Resolved, That we see with much satisfaction the inauguration of the more humane policy of dealing with the Indians; that the President's proposition for the co-operation of the society of Friends is creditable alike to the President and to the society, and we earnestly hope that it may contribute largely to hasten the day of equal citizenship for the Indian.

Resolved, That as intemperance is one of the great enemies of society and the human soul, we express our abhorrence of the traffic in intoxicating beverages; and we urge the adoption of all practical means, moral, social and civil, for its abatement.

Resolved, That we congratulate the friends of freedom and civilization in Spain upon their great victory over tyranny, corruption and bigotry, in the successful and peaceful dethronement of a dissolute Queen, the establishment of a liberal government and the practice of enlightened toleration to men of all religions and to men of no religion—prophetic of the early triumph of a true republicanism.

Resolved, That our sympathies are with the cause of freedom throughout the world, and especially with those who are bravely periling their lives in its defence and maintenance, and that we especially hail with hope and satisfaction the heroic efforts of the patriots of Cuba for the freedom and independence of that long oppressed island.

Resolved, That for the political and personal safety, independence, influence and improvement of the landless peoples of the South, and especially of the freedmen, it is important that they should become landowners, and we urge them to take all steps possible to that end by availing themselves of the Homestead law of Congress, and in all other possible ways, and we would also earnestly ask the attention of capitalists to plans for securing lands, to be sold on easy terms to the freedmen and others in that section.

Resolved, That the fearful insecurity, the repeated murders and assassinations of loyal men guiltless of crime, and the unchecked lawlessness of rebels in Georgia call for speedy and efficient measures to restore that safety and protection which is the right of every American citizen, and that Congress and the Executive should make no delay in responding by such measures to the cry of our outraged people, "let us have peace."

Resolved, That we hail with satisfaction the researches and inquiries now being made in physical science, particularly in studying the relations of man to the earth, to the support and health of the body, the occasion and cause of diseases and their remedy; inquiries already richly fruitful in result, and we look confidently for the hour that shall bring such light and illumination, such enfranchisement as shall lift man physically, and, in consequence, spiritually, to full manhority and perfection as a human creature.

Resolved, That we commend earnestly to all, and urge especially upon the young, reverence for the body, a solicitous observance of all the laws of the physical being, the practice of perfect sobriety, restraint and self-possession in regard to all the appetites, worship of health and high spiritual use, as among the prime ordinances of religion, among the most sacred and benign of human obligations.

The resolutions were accepted by the meeting and debate invited preparatory to their adoption.

Mr. DOUGLASS then rose, and after expressing his hearty concurrence in the terms of the resolutions relating to the proposed amendments to the constitution and to complexioned distinctions, said he desired to say a few words regarding Spain. He believed that the right and truth had to a certain extent been victorious in their first struggle with the errors of that dark and cruel government. Spain had been the darkest land on the earth, but there was now at least some hope for future light, for the abolishment of slavery under her rule, for religious toleration and a greater breadth of freedom—the freedom of truth and justice, which were the foundation and source of a true and happy existence as nature intended for us. The time, however, was fast coming when men should know very little of religion in their relations with each other—when they would be governed by some other law than that of Christianity, and not by a human law, either. There was, in fact, very little to help us along in this world, except we exert ourselves to find out what and where we are and what is intended for us.

A PROGRESSIVE EPISTLE.

Mr. MILLS then read and submitted to the meeting the following document for their action, as a circular of the Friends of Progress:—

TO THE FRIENDS OF HUMAN PROGRESS, THE LOOKERS AND WORKERS FOR ENLIGHTENMENT AND LIBERTY SCATTERED ABROAD;—

DEAR BRETHREN—It seems to us fitting that in this hour we should send you greeting. Never was there such an one before.

The signs of our time indicate plainly changes, great changes, at hand; a new era dawns, a new page is turning in the history of man. All the omens and portents that have foretold the great epochs that have marked signal steps in the growth and advance of the race are essentially present to-day, and with an added emphasis.

Christianity came, proclaimed and prepared by heralds and harbingers, unmistakable preachers in the wilderness, announcing the advent of a new kingdom. The world seemed ripened and stood waiting for its coming. Grecian thought and culture, quickened by fresh contact with the gorgeous East, its wealth of meditation, insight and repose, had taken on new life and inspiration; there was intense mental activity all abroad, the old forms and beliefs had become effete and a juggle, revolting to the worshipper. There was a wave of inspiration upon the world, deep soul-longing and prophecy for a larger, higher life. Jesus was the birth of his century, the Child of the Age, while also Son of Heaven, and the finest ripeness of Jewish thought and love. He had parentage running back not only to Jerusalem but also to Alexandria and Athens. The wealth of the world was poured into His soul; He met and fulfilled the wants and aspirations of His age—came for them and came of them. Christianity had its origin and found its reception because humanity travailed and humanity expected it. Circumstances not dissimilar obtained in Europe, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and proclaimed the reformation. Great improvements in the material condition, increased protection and comforts to physical life and well-being, the enlargement of individual and social freedom, invention of printing, the compass, maritime discovery, Copernican astronomy, revival of learning and of thought, awakening in all ways of men's consciousness—these were the parentage from which sprung Luther and the ninety-five theses. He was in the loins of Faust and Guttenberg. Like facts, doubtless, we should find could we penetrate the history of that period in India, in the sixth century before Christ, paving the way for and necessitating the great reform of Buddha. These epochs of human enfranchisement all come through ameliorations and Baptist ministers making the paths straight and the rough places smooth for the advent of the Most High. Not less but more distinct are the omens that mark our time. The old Hebrew word foretold that in the latter day many should run to and fro and knowledge be increased. Never was there such fulfilment as now. The mental activity of to-day is unexampled, wide-ranging, and, what is of far more worth than all, largely charged with practical tendency and fruitful in result. The improvements in the material arts astonish the eye; day by day they stride on, outstripping all anticipation. They bear for man, go to lighten labor, to elevate physical condition, to reduce or abolish the rough toils, and bring liberation. New light is constantly being poured on the relations of man to the earth, the laws of his physical life and well being, the causes of disease, its prevention or cure. Religion is seen more a practical affair, concerned with the human creature here and now, seeking his redemption from the bondage of present evils, respecting and reverencing the human body as the appointed shrine and temple for the soul, and so religion, taking the word in its just sense, clasps hands with science and warmly welcomes it to this hallowed domain. The telegraph and the steam car are drawing the ends of the earth together, commingling the nations, bringing closest intercommunication, and must unspeakably hasten the hour of universal enfranchisement and union.

Physical science is free and dauntless, breaks utterly with the popular theology, pushes its explorations on every side, and the earth and the heavens are successively and surely yielding up their secrets to its hand. There are no barriers it shall not surmount, no depths of knowledge it shall not penetrate and possess, and all the discoveries shall be laid—ay, are being laid—as votive offerings upon the altar of humanity, made free for the appropriation and enjoyment and exaltation of the race.

The treasures of wisdom from the fields of literature, especially in past ages, are being renewedly sought and cherished. There is unprecedented desire to form acquaintance with the ancient thinkers, the philosophers of the olden time—especially those, as some of them were, who had genuine elevation and insight—earnestly and also successfully seeking to soar to the realm of substance and rest alone in the worship of being. The hints, maxims and Scriptures they have left are being gathered up as precious legacies, profitable for the enrichment and quickening of the spirit. There is now more of a true worship of the life and inspiration of the past in this regard than our world has ever before seen. The ethnic Scriptures, too, the ancient sacred books of the Gentile world, are becoming objects of careful study. These records of the religious consciousness and beliefs of the olden time have for the most part lain unknown and unregarded, deemed unworthy the notice of those who of all men had the sole and final revelation. The very existence of some of them was until lately unheard of, and it is only within a recent period that the sacred books of the Zoroastrians, of the Brahmins and the Buddhists have been even partially known to a few scholars in Europe. At no previous time has there been to any extent in Christendom the liberality that would approach them with candor and treat them fairly. The prejudices fall away and these books are now being studied and elucidated with great care, and the day is not distant when we may each read them in our own tongue wherein we were born. It is, perhaps, not to be expected that when fairly interpreted and brought near they will enrich our religious literature to the extent that some anticipate; they will doubtless be found partial and unsatisfying, overlaid here and there with darkness and superstitions, mainly, however, the growth of ages subsequent to their first writing, but their study will go far towards infusing catholicity into the minds of Christendom and breaking the chains of its haughty narrowness and exclusive assumption. Gleams of divinest wisdom, priceless gems of truth shall be found, which must go towards making up the volume of inspiration and Life that is some day to be gathered for mankind. As the broken fragments come more and more to light genuine scriptures shall be seen in all the records, in the oracles of sybils and priestesses in Greece and Rome, in the liturgies and burial services of the Egyptians, the inscriptions upon their temples and their tombs.

And coupled with this is the freest examination and criticism of the Christian records, not now unfriendly or in the interest of denial, but of a larger affirmation, a determination to purge away all the dross, eliminate everything partial, temporary or unworthy, and rest in the fact and verity alone. Never were such questions asked, never such stern, searching catechism as now. It is not destructive, but constructive, in its character and tendency. Contributions are constantly being made, from which the science of religion will ere long be successfully treated, the genetic development of the religious idea among men shown, and the relations of the Jewish and Christian religion to others and theirs to it exhibited. Within the last quarter of a century—we may, indeed, say within the last decade—the languages of the world have been subjected to far more fruitful examination than ever before, and new principles of classification ascertained, deep lines of affinity, hitherto unsuspected, uniting tongues remotest in place and frequently in time together in one single stem, discovered. Large progress has been made towards reaching a fundamental science of speech, the laws of its origin and entire growth, and this shall quite probably eventuate in the devising of a single universal tongue, which, so far at least as writing is concerned, shall serve as a medium of communication for all throughout the globe. Perhaps it will be finally realized again that the whole earth shall be of one lip and one speech. How much a universal written language will facilitate the advancement of man, the diffusion of light and knowledge, and the blending of the race into one brotherhood of humanity, all may somewhat anticipate, but none can foresee.

Besides these facts we name here one other, which to us seems not least significant—the faith that has found its expression in the beliefs of so-called Spiritualism. As a thing of to-day, an historic result, Spiritualism is partial and poor enough, crude and earthy, needing to become more ethereal and unsensuous, in all senses more spiritual. Under illusion it may be in its impressions of the nature and source of the phenomena it dwells so upon. Still we may accept it as a testimony, a declaration, of the quenchless faith of the soul, a confession of the increasing longing to penetrate to that realm of substance where is unbroken possession, where no death can interpose and no change withdraw. It is prophecy—dim, perhaps, and unconscious to itself of a larger life, a deeper and more inward communion and fellowship that man shall have with the abiding; a communion that shall reach all the real of past and present, shall feel the throb of humanity throughout the ages, the warm breath of souls upon him and shall leave the spirit, in the midst of whatever solitudes, never alone. It shall be more a communion with the substance than the form, with the spirit, with qualities than the person, and shall be coextensive with time and history. The last enemy—death—shall be destroyed, for such is the intimacy of fellowship and possession that no blight, no removal can touch it. Then shall be no night, for the light of the perpetual presence shall yield one unbroken day. There shall be constant stay and repose; no withdrawal, no separation, no sorrow. As the dim intimation of this the child's groping and unarticulated prophecy, we assign its place and value to Spiritualism. Little as yet historically, important potentially, the forecast shadow of something yet to be.

We note also that in the preaching of many of our pulpits there has been of late years a great transformation. It is made indefinitely more practical, home-coming and natural than formerly, emphasizing the present and every day duties, respecting the intelligence and the reason, addressing the true reverence of man, that awe and love in one which always arises in presence of the great commanding laws, the divine ideal of the soul.

These things we view as omens of a new day, harbingers of the dispensation that is to be. Coming latest it must be the best of all history, a reformation greater than Protestant, greater than Christian. All the past shall pale before it, the highest prophecy hitherto be found but its faintest intimation. It must be the finest bloom of all civilizations, the ripe fulfilment and fruitage of every culture and piety. It shall plant upon nothing outer, no historic name or any book or institution, but rest in the inner and living, worshipping the ideal possibilities. It shall recognize and use gratefully the symbolic, drawing from it its full worth and inspiration, but holding all subordinate to the higher—soaring from shadow to substance, from time to the eternal. It shall sanctify existence, make every hour hallowed, every work an inspiration and a song.

What shall be the mode of this life, what specific organization and institutions it shall take on, none can foretell. This belongs to the sealed volume, to be opened only by time. It must be large as liberty, spontaneous as love, natural as speech, practical as character, high as truth and grand as excellence. The spirit taketh on such form as pleaseth it. We may well leave the details and specific adjustments to the hour, to the spontaneous inspirations and promptings of the mind.

We do not flatter ourselves that this kingdom of light and redemption has already come, or is at the door. Long reaches of time may stretch between us and it; wearisome marches of humanity must needs be made ere the approach is possible. Arduous conflicts are yet to be fought; preachings there must be in the wilderness and ministries of manifold repentance. Great questions of labor, of social order, of the apportionment of the tasks of life, adjustment of the sanctions and rewards, the arranging of all the relations so that existence shall, for each individual, net the utmost for use, freedom, blessedness. These are looming up among us and lie unsolved. Many groan under the inequalities, and the full deliverance, however slowly and painful, is to be wrought out. Our country, in abolishing slavery, moved thereto in large part by the divine necessities, seems but to have just opened the questions that are to agitate, and perhaps to rock and convulse it for years and ages. The main battle remains yet to be fought; we have only thus far seen the first shots of the skirmish. A higher fidelity, a loftier devotion to truth and the absolute right is a pressing need, even among the Friends of Progress. Work, work, stern, unremitting, is and must be our allotment here. It is ever the same old world to live in, with its trials and pressures, and the advances marvellous, seen at intervals, as they may appear, are all wrought gradually through individual effort, often lone and unrewarded, through continuous sweat and toil. There are ever stakes to be contended for, and the amelioration is conditioned upon a steadfast fidelity of the true and chosen. Friends of Progress have quite other business to do than spend their lives singing pæans to progress and glorifying and exulting in the good time coming. We may fall in our armor; we and our children after us may all die, not having received the promises. But, sure as there is faith on the earth and hands and hearts to labor and to suffer, the destiny shall not fail. The prophecy upon the iron leaf shall all be fulfilled. In the fulness of time it shall visit and illumine the world. We, therefore, take to ourselves and we bid you, our brothers, trust and cheer. The salvation is nearer than when first we believed. We will look and wait for the hour of man's majority, the full enfranchisement and peace. We will look for the religion that shall be perfect freedom and perfect faithfulness, the dispensation of truth and grace, that shall enrich, bless and hallow all our life—for the Church that shall be the church of humanity, with its communions and its sacraments of blessing, deep as the soul, broad as the world and rich as history. It must have the universe for its temple, normal human life for its orison, its psalm of worship, its incense offering to the Most High. In the plenitude of that enrichment perhaps the name religion will pass away, and language find no word to describe a fact so large and all-sufficing, save it be the life, the beatitude of the soul.

SPIRITUALISTIC TESTIMONY.

Discussion of this circular was then invited, upon which

Mr. POWELL proceeded to remark that while he greatly admired the theory and principles enunciated in the letter of Mr. Mills, which it had been suggested by the president should go forth, if adopted, as the address or circular of the meeting, still he felt constrained to say that he could not endorse the expressions contained in it with reference to Spiritualism. Spiritualism was not the creation of a day, nor was it unreal, a thing without substance. He felt that there was before him a world of unexplored mystery and of beautude, which his spirit would explore and in which it would linger, and that after this life there was a personal immortality beyond. That hope of personal immortality was the sublimest hope he enjoyed, the anticipation of a realization of the purest aspirations of the soul.

Mr. DOUGLASS, at the close of Mr. Powell's remarks, which were somewhat lengthy and delivered with great fluency and clear and elegant expression, said he "didn't see" this idea of Spiritualism. It wasn't by any means satisfactory to him. He had nothing to say against the views of other persons on the subject, but merely wished to record his testimony against the theory as at present advanced. He wasn't going to say that other people had not good reason to believe in it; they must be different to him, though. Perhaps they could see more or see clearer. He would admit, however, that whatever a man believed was true—true to the man who believed it just as much as any fact, however apparent, to other individuals. But that was no reason why it was true to those who did not believe it. Of course if a man who believes in Spiritualism says that he has actually seen the spirit, or does now see the spirit of a person who is really and honestly dead, it was hard to dispute that assertion. But he did not see it for all that and never had. People had told him some things about spirits and had asked him some things he could not answer when he denied their assertions, but it was easy to ask a question another man could not answer. A person once called up a spirit and claimed to hold intercourse with it in his presence, and said it was the spirit of his (Douglass') grandmother.

Mr. Douglass here broke out into a good-natured giggle, which set the meeting folk tittering, and continued:—Well, I said it wasn't my grandmother, and he (this person who "called up" the spirit) finished me off by sayin', "Well, if it isn't your grandmother who is it?" Of course he had me there—(laughter)—'cause he had asked me a question I couldn't answer! All that I can say is that I have never known of a case where any person who was honestly dead ever came back again. I own up that once I saw a ghost. It was the ghost of a person I had been acquainted with and who had been dead for some time. But I was in a place that was intimately associated with recollections of him, and my mind was on him, and I had been thinking very deeply about him, when all at once he appeared to me. Well, I know what that was. I saw him in my mind and believed it was him; but it was all owing to time and place, and coincidence and condition. Therefore I say that whatever a man believes is true, just as true as anything can be to him, whether it is real or unreal, and however real a thing may be in fact it is not true to any one who does not believe it, because he has no faith in it under the condition in which it may be presented.

Mr. MILLS argued that we were in the midst of a world of mystery—mysteries which it was not in the power of human imagination to fathom. But science was now making such rapid strides that there was some promise of these mysterics being unveiled to us in time. He was not prepared to accept or to admit Spiritualism. He simply knew that he was here, but could say nothing about the infinite life beyond the grave, and he took it that beyond that we should not get much further, and while doing the duties of the hour we shall do well to trust in the infinite Father for what lies without and beyond.

Mr. POWELL said that there were plenty of high evidences of the reality of the substantial existence of spiritualism. Wendell Phillips, it was well known, had been confined in the cabinet of the Davenport Brothers, and had actually felt the hands and arms which had been presented. So he himself had stated; and he had stated further, that there was no duplicity about it. Professor Denton also asserted that he had taken models of "appearances," of actual limbs in clay.

The PRESIDENT said, that while concurring in the general tone and sentiment of Mr. Mills' letter, he felt that he could not accept its principles regarding spiritualism. The letter was here, however, for discussion and for the action of the meeting to adopt or amend it.

Several persons expressed themselves as of the opinion that the document should rather be promulgated as the address of Mr. Mills than amended by the insertion of views which were not his.

In opposition to this the ground was taken that the document having been accepted by the meeting, was the property of the meeting and was no longer in Mr. Mills' hands.

After some further discussion the meeting adjourned till Sunday (this) morning, after the singing of a song by Miss Bowen, assisted by Mr. James S. Boughton.

The Last Day's Meeting,

to-day, was somewhat more largely attended, not less than two hundred persons being present. In former years the last day of the meeting, usually occurring on the Sabbath, was generally marked by the attendance of large crowds of visitors, many of whom undoubtedly attended from mere idle curiosity, sometimes leading to slight confusion, and filling not only the building but the space surrounding it.

The proceedings this morning were opened by singing, after which Mr. Stebbins made a brief address in response to some of the views advanced in the discussion of the previous day. He took the ground that there were some things in the world which did not require argument to prove their existence, and yet they were as substances intangible. They were great vital powers and influences which underlie our natures, our very being, our existence. No one would attempt to argue against the existence of the essential existence of justice, a principle without tangible existence, save as it is developed in the exercise of the quality, not made manifest by itself but manifested by its effects. He remembered hearing that grand performer Ole Bull, when by the power, the inspiration of his genius, he swayed an immense audience and controlled their sympathies by the music he evoked from his violin until they seemed as though they would burst, and finally gave way to the magnetic emotion he had excited within them by repeated and thundering echoes of applause. Again, he had known of an instance where a sick girl had, under the aid of a subtle spiritual influence, described the local appearance and furniture, and the persons who were present, at her home, which was distant a thousand miles from where she was then lying. Two weeks afterwards intelligence was received from that home sustaining in every particular the details given by that girl, when, under the influence of the magnetic touch of the hand of the physician, who was gently smoothing her brow to ward off impending fever, she made the revelation. And, further than this, he (Mr. Stebbins) had also an intimate friend, an official in a high government position, at Washington, who in the presence of the speaker and his wife had had an interview with a medium, in the course of which that medium had advised certain measures on the part of that official; and, by watching the subsequent course of that officer, Mr. Stebbins claimed he had seen in his official acts the evidence of the counsels given by that medium, and some of those acts were of the most vital import to the country at large.

Some further discussion ensued on the subject of the resolutions and the circular, when they were finally put to the vote of the meeting and carried, though not unanimously.

It was then resolved that the next annual meeting of this body shall take place here, at the old meeting house, on the Friday preceding the first Sunday in June, 1870, and be continued throughout Saturday and Sunday following.

At the afternoon session addresses were made by Fred Douglass, Mrs. Strowbridge, Mr. Powell, Mr. D. Taylor and others, and at about five o'clock the meeting adjourned, and the friends of Human Progress dispersed to their rural homes.

THE CASE OF THEODORE ALLEN.

The Examination Yesterday.

The examination in the case of Theodore Allen, more familiarly known as The. Allen, proprietor of the notorious St. Bernard Hotel, at the corner of Prince and Mercer streets, was continued before Justice Ledwith, at the Jefferson Market Police Court. There were not as many of the prisoner's friends present as at the former examinations, owing to the fact that many of them have made their exit to Boston for the purpose of attending the Peace Jubilee to be held there to-day, as we understand several of them had very important engagements there of a peculiar nature. The prisoner is charged by Robert F. Townley, of No. 68 Exchange place, in the employ of Pinkerton's Detective Agency, with rescuing a prisoner from him on the 27th of March last at the corner of Broadway and Prince streets, named William Forrester, an escaped convict from the penitentiary at Joliet, Ill., who was in his custody, and who had been sentenced to the above prison for a term of thirteen years on a charge of burglary committed in that State. Mr. Charles M. De Costa appeared for the prosecution and W. F. Howe for the defence.

The only witness examined was David L. Price, a carman, residing at No. 316 West Twenty-first street, for the prosecution, who testified as follows:—I am a truckman in the employ of Ball, Black & Co. and others; I saw the disturbance on the corner of Prince and Mercer streets, between Allen and Townley; Townley had hold of Forrester and asked for help while he could put handcuffs on him; I saw Allen come up, take hold of Townley and Forrester and separate them; Forrester ran towards the St. Bernard Hotel; Townley had a death grip on Forrester; I have seen persons die under the same grip; don't remember who they were, where they died or when it occurred. (Here the witness began giving a very interesting account of what the death grip was, which was objected to by the counsel for the prosecution, when the counsel on the other side stated that, from the contradictory manner in which the witness was testifying it was about time he was choked off.) I was first spoken to in reference to the case about three weeks ago, at the corner of Prince street and Broadway, by the complainant, when I first became acquainted with him; this was the first time I ever spoke to him; it was a short time after the occurrence happened; don't know whether it was two months ago or not; it might have been; Townley introduced himself at the corner, where I was attending to my business; don't recollect whether I had a coat on or not; was aware he first asked me if I was Mr. Price; I informed him I was; he then asked me if I witnessed the occurrence between Allen and himself; I informed him I did; he then asked me what I knew about it; don't remember whether he made memorandum; he asked me where I lived; I did not make any appointment to meet or see him; we talked a short time, when he left; I next saw him when he subpœnaed me, about fifteen days ago, on the corner of Prince street and Broadway; don't know whether I was alone; I read the subpœna to come to this court; don't know the day; I saw policemen just after the affray occurred, but did not go with them to Allen's; Allen went into his place after the occurrence; I stood on the opposite side of the street; I told the engineer employed at Ball, Black & Co.'s the same afternoon there had been a muss around the corner between Allen and a man I did not know; told him that an esca