

# UNIVERSALIST WATCHMAN AND CHRISTIAN REPOSITORY.

"I HAVE SET WATCHMEN ON THY WALLS, O JERUSALEM! WHO SHALL NEVER HOLD THEIR PEACE DAY NOR NIGHT."

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(From the N. Y. Christian Messenger.)

## Prison Discipline—Effects of Kindness.

No philanthropic mind can look abroad in the world, and witness the increasing attention to the subject of Prison Discipline, and the improving state of public feeling as to the treatment of prisoners, generally, without a thrill of pleasurable emotion. He sees in it the sure indications of a brighter era than has ever yet dawned upon the world—the germs of an influence that must reach, and affect, vitally, our whole criminal jurisprudence; and directly or indirectly touch all the springs of moral action. For when it once becomes apparent to the public mind that the great object of punishment should be the good of the offender—his reformation so far as possible—the public effort will be directed to that important end; and successfully too, in a good degree. And it requires but a small degree of perception to estimate the moral advantage of reforming one half or two thirds of the present subjects of our prisons, and qualifying them for paths of usefulness and virtue, over the present or former plan of procedure—so treating them, that when discharged from prison, they are only let out to be again committed, and re-committed, (with only a brief interval between discharge and recommitment,) ad infinitum, almost.

And there is another important consideration connected with this subject. When men come to regard the spirit of human laws, as "requiring mercy—not sacrifice," then there will be hope that the odious character which has long been given to the law and government of God, will be seen and properly felt. Then there will be hope that men may see the laws of heaven "require mercy—not sacrifice;" that God is a Father, not a tyrant; that human sympathy and kindness cannot rise higher than its infinite and eternal fount—the source of all good—God!

Under these views and feelings we cannot better occupy a portion of our columns, than with this subject. Indeed, it is directly connected with them—involving the same great principles for which we labor, and which pervade Christianity—kindness to be the erring, and overcoming evil with good.

The beautiful article we copied last week—Story of a Sister's Love—though originally appearing in a reputed orthodox work, is nevertheless a link in the same chain. The whole spirit of the article strikes at the very root of the popular religion of the day; and yet who among all the professors of that popular faith, will dare to say, it is not the very spirit of the gospel of Jesus—a spirit that will follow the wanderer, through all the by paths of error and sin, and never rest till it has returned him to the fold of love and peace.

We have, also, been greatly pleased with an account, by the Editor of the New York Tribune, of a recent visit to the Massachusetts State Prison, at Charlestown. Some of our readers may have seen it in the Tribune, but many, doubtless, have not, and we copy it. It strikingly indicates the current of public feeling toward more humane laws and regulations, in the punishment of crime, and government of the erring. It presents facts—and they are always "stubborn things"—demonstrating the power of kindness, even over the most obdurate hearts.

We would call the attention of the reader especially to the reply of the Superintendent on being questioned as to the effect of the lenient treatment introduced into that prison. Yes, the prisoners loved him, because he loved them! How strikingly illustrative of the true Scripture doctrine—"We love him because He first loved us!" "Love begets love." "Love worketh no ill to

its neighbor." "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

The closing question by the Editor of the Tribune is an important one. But the world is learning the great lesson inculcated by the sublime Teacher—that of overcoming evil with good. The very facts noted by the Editor, is an evidence of it. The growing repugnance, in the public mind, to all sanguinary and revengeful laws is an evidence of it. The great changes which are marking the popular religious faiths of the day, also, are a strong evidence of it. And these will go on, with accelerated force from each new accomplishment, until that glorious lesson is universally attained. God speed the day!

After alluding to the remarks of Gov. Briggs, touching the management of the Massachusetts State Prison, the Editor of the Tribune observes:

"A few weeks ago we visited that institution in company with one of the Matrons of the Female Prison at Sing Sing, and were impressed with what we saw and heard with a conviction that Mr. Robinson is admirably qualified by his thorough acquaintance with human nature, his kindly deportment and wise sympathy with the erring and unfortunate, to fulfil the high duties of his station. He entered the Prison soon after his predecessor had been murdered by a prisoner in open day, when the temptation to adopt a rigorous and severe course of discipline would have been too strong for one who had less faith, than himself in the susceptibility to improvement of even the worst of criminals. So far from endeavoring to repress the risings of discontent by restricting still more the privileges enjoyed by the inmates of the Prison, he manifested toward them a degree of kindness and compassion which at once secured their respect and confidence, and thus laid the only solid foundation for a proper system of discipline—a system which looks to the reform of the prisoner not as something opposed to the welfare of the State, but identical with it, or at least indispensable to its complete security. The error of supposing that the interests of society are inconsistent with the mode of treatment adapted to work a proper change in the moral character of the inmates of our prisons, has sometimes led to cruelties in contemplation of which the mind of every humane person must be filled with indignation and sorrow; and, although in the general progress of the human mind—better and more enlightened views are beginning to prevail, this error is not yet entirely exploded. In Mr. Robinson's mind, however, it has no place; and we were delighted by the information that his faith in the magic influence of Kindness and Love, when exercised toward those whom Society, from a regard to its own safety, deprives of their liberty, had been strengthened and confirmed by the experience of years. There are a thousand ways in which the Superintendent of a Prison, without any sudden or startling change in the forms of discipline, may win the esteem—aye, the love of those placed under his care; and when this has been done the work of Reform has been relieved of its main difficulty.

"As we moved about in the workshops of the Massachusetts Prison we were struck with the apparent cheerfulness of the inmates. Except their dress there was nothing in their external appearance to indicate their situation, and but for the strips of red and white in their garments, we might have supposed that we were standing in the presence of a company of laborers on whose movements there was no other restraint than that which was self-imposed. When we mentioned this pleasing circumstance to the keeper, he remarked that a great change in the demeanor of the prisoners had been produced by abolishing the old rule

which had prohibited them from looking up from their work in the presence of strangers. Under that absurd rule—absurd, if for no other reason, because it could not be enforced—the prisoners wore a sheepish, downcast look, and were constantly stealing glances at visitors in a way which tended to destroy in them all remains of self-respect. There was, however, no unmannerly staring in consequence of the abolition of the old rule; in fact, the prisoners, relieved from the unnatural stimulus of curiosity checked by arbitrary arrangement, probably take far less notice of strangers now than formerly.

"It was Saturday afternoon when we visited the Prison, and there were two circumstances which interested us deeply. One was the sight of the prisoners coming one after another to a window through which they received books from the hands of the Librarian. The other was the meeting in the chapel of the Prison Choir, composed of such prisoners as had learned to read music before their imprisonment. The leader had been a teacher of singing, and performed his duties with admirable skill. Two violins and a clarinet answered as a substitute for female voices, while the bass-viol skillfully played, imparted strength to the fundamental part. We have rarely heard better music even in the most tasteful churches. Ever since we were privileged to witness the effects produced by the delightful harmony of the Hutchinson Family upon the prisoners at Sing Sing, our faith in the power of music to repress unholy passion and awaken the best feelings of the heart had steadily increased, and we were pleased to learn that the Choir in the Charlestown Prison were allowed Saturday afternoon to prepare themselves to perform their part in the Sunday services and at daily morning and evening devotions. The Warden and the Chaplain spoke in the strongest terms of approval of this arrangement and of its happy effects upon the whole body of prisoners. We wish the Inspectors of the Prisons in our own State could be persuaded to copy this excellent example. We are confident that such a measure would exert a highly salutary influence and be attended by no evil whatever.

"Flogging in this Prison has almost entirely ceased. We think Mr. Robinson informed us that the lash had been used only once in a period of six months. This is in itself a great triumph of Christianity over barbarism.

"We shall never forget the answer given by Mr. Robinson to our question, whether the prisoners appreciated his kindness and treated him with a proper respect and deference, or were inclined to take undue advantage of his leniency. 'Sir,' said he with great emphasis, 'they not only respect but LOVE me; and for the best of all reasons—THEY KNOW THAT I LOVE THEM.'

"We are not surprised, therefore, after what we saw and heard during our brief visit, that Gov. Briggs should have given this emphatic testimony in favor of the system pursued at the Charlestown Prison. His words should be pondered by our Legislators and all who are in any way concerned in the administration of Prisons, and abide in the memory of every citizen:

"The fruits of a mild and humane treatment manifest themselves much to the credit of the officers, and, going strongly to confirm the correctness of such a system. Generally, those who leave the Prison, leave it with a respect for the laws whose penalties they have been made to feel and with kind feelings toward the officers. They go again into the world many of them with the purpose and hope, by a correct course of conduct, of restoring themselves to their friends instead of breath-







## Poetry.

(From the New York Tribune.)

## War.

BY AUGUSTUS SNODGRASS.

A hymn to thee, O War! Earth red with blood,  
Shrinks at thy foot-tramp! Thou hast been of old;  
Long ere the pyramids, and ere man learned  
To fashion the strange Temple, and build roofs  
For worship, thy red hand had plucked out life  
From vain-glorious Strength, and seared the world  
With Rapine. Earth! bear witness with thy graves  
And dust of nameless warriors! From the fields  
Where Heaven descended in its love of old,  
Even to this quiet spot, where now mild Peace  
Hath nourished with kind hand the gentle Arts,  
Armed men have left their bones and poured their blood.  
E'en from those dark and fabulous days, when wild  
The Assyrian hunter with his shaggy hordes  
Swept from the world its offending tribes,  
Hath the red sword been bared. Prophets and priests  
And Pharaohs of all times have vexed the Earth—  
Setting up man 'gainst man, to fill the world  
With their dead bones and with their populous graves—  
Scouring with fire the patient teeming ground,  
And laying desolate dwelling and shrine.—  
With sacrilegious hand tearing from its place  
The rough, time-honored altar, and the child  
Dashing from its mother's arms to the hard ground,—  
Despoiling the white heart of innocence,  
Until Earth, groaning, hath arrayed thy name  
With the relentless Famine and foul Plague,  
Thou, with thy sword, and proudly nodding plume,  
Look back where Time, grown reverent with age,  
Sits reigning over the down-trodden thrones,  
And the pale kingdoms of the sad World!  
What seed hath sprung from the decaying bones  
Of Earth's war-lost millions? Earth and Sea  
Are full—and glens where solitary war [been?  
Sheathed his red knife in blood. What hath the fruit  
Revenge has followed Wrong, until revenge  
Came after the Avenger, and the Truth  
Sunk blackened in the unholy fight.  
What hath the fruit been? Have men grown more pure,  
And Evil driven headlong from the world?  
Hath Justice been established? Have high thrones  
Been shaken and men's chains shivered and torn?  
Hath Freedom sprung from the foul wreck, and built  
Her temples on the hills, and with loud voice  
Led the wide nations to her worship?

No!

The tyrant keeps his throne; the serf kneels down,  
earing his chain; the slave feeds in his stall,  
rankful for his poor pittance, and the Good  
Wonder that the heavens bend not as of old,  
And scourge high-handed Evil with its fires!  
Glorious in array! Thou with thy plumes,  
Thy marshaled squadrons and thy gleaming arms,—  
Thy painted standards flaunting the pale Heavens  
Emblazoned with a sanctifying lie;  
Earth, all forgetful of its many scars,  
Shouts at the inspiring sight, and bids them hail!  
Aloft she bears the chieftain proud in might,  
Builds him an altar in the hearts of men  
And deifies his bones. In some far land,  
Where ice eternal binds the wintry year,  
Or raging suns consume the parching ground,  
A Nation's strength and manhood vainly fall.  
A thousand homes are bathed in burning tears,  
Vineyards forget their masters, and rank weeds  
Choke them; old halls grow bare and tenantless,  
And the plow rusts in the uncultured field.  
Yet do ye give the Conqueror his car  
And drag him 'neath the proud triumphal arch!  
'Tis in man's nature thus to tyrannize;  
And whether like the pard that prowls at night,  
Secret in villainy, or threatening, herds  
With the insensate mob, or with the strength  
Of nations backed, he plucks out life, or chains  
Limbs born not to the thrall; he wars 'gainst thee,  
Thou letterless and holy influence  
That with an Angel's voice bringest Hope to Earth,  
And with a giant's arm striketh at Wrong.  
O! for the time when the sharp sword shall rust  
And men forget its use. Is there no bow  
That spans the warring world? No covenant  
That man shall clasp his brother as a friend,  
Unthirsting for his blood? That customs old,  
The unholy Dragons of the slavish world,  
Shall loose their fetters from the souls of men  
And leave them free? Trust on; for we are not  
Without a token of thy coming, Truth,  
When on the mouldering wreck of falsehoods old  
Thou shalt an universal altar build,  
And the far nations shall their weapons bring,  
And lay them at thy feet. Then, thou, O War,  
Shalt be remembered only as a dream  
Which tortured the old world,—or if thou shalt  
Rise from thy slumbers, then Evil shall shrink  
And Virtue bless thy pure avenging hand.  
Norwich, N. Y.

## Going to Law.

An upper and a lower mill,  
Fell out about their water,

To war they went—that is to law  
Resolved to give no quarter.

A lawyer was by each engaged,  
And hotly they contended;  
When the fees grew slack, the war they waged  
They judged were better ended.

The heavy costs remaining still,  
Were settled without bother—  
One lawyer took the upper mill,  
The lower mill, the other.

## Miscellany.

## Lectures by a Clairvoyant.

Br. Price—Permit me through your columns to make an important announcement, which will doubtless be of interest to the public. Many of your readers have already heard of A. J. Davis, the celebrated Poughkeepsie Clairvoyant. He is now in this city in company with Dr. S. S. Lyon with whom he is engaged in treatment of diseases. I will not trouble you with a description of the wonders which he has accomplished. Suffice it to say, that he is among the very few Clairvoyants in the world who are capable of being put in a state of mental exaltation, in which neither the will of the magnetizer, nor any influence of the external world, can pervert his vision; and what he says in the *transic state*, can be depended upon. In his examinations of the human system and prescription for its diseases, he uses the technical nomenclature of anatomy, physiology and materia medica, though in the waking state knows nothing of the language of those sciences, never having received an education of beyond five months schooling.

Mr. Davis has recently commenced a course of lectures of the most astounding character, whilst in the Clairvoyant state, into which he is thrown by Dr. Lyon. That the public might have the means of testing the authenticity of the lectures when published, Mr. Davis, while in a state of Clairvoyance, made choice of three witnesses, all or a part of whom are to be present during their delivery, that they may testify to the *medium* through which the communication is given to the world. These witnesses are Rev. J. N. Parker, 139 Avenue D., J. S. Smith, M. D., 384 Broome street, and Mr. Theron R. Laphan, 256 Canal street. The choice of scribe has fallen upon the writer.

In this brief communication, we can give but little idea of the plan of Mr. Davis' work. We can only say that it is to have a general bearing upon the evils of society and their remedy. He establishes a new foundation of reasoning, and some of his lectures we can only say, exhibit cogency of argument and a clearness and expressiveness of phraseology that scarcely have a parallel. He clearly and intelligibly explains the phenomena of Animal Magnetism and Clairvoyance; and from these and various other premises, he clearly and fully establishes the important conclusion that the proper *reality* of all things consists in an *inward, hidden, and invisible principle*; the all visible and tangible substances in the outer world, are but transient *forms and effects* of this principle; and that from this principle, considered as a *cause* we must *reason*, if we would arrive legitimately at *specified and particular* conclusions. He shows that matter came from spirit; and that in its progress of refinement, from the earth to the plant, from the plant to the animal, from the animal to man, &c., it will finally form spirit *individualized*; and that this is endless progressive in knowledge and refinement, continually approaching nearer and nearer to the Great Eternal POSITIVE MIND, the Fountain and Controller of existence! These and other things which are yet to come, are to serve as a *key to REVELATION!* Which is to compose the second part of the work. And from the whole he is to deduce practical rules which he promises shall be of the utmost importance to the world.

Permit me, Br. Price, as a personal witness, to express my deliberate and earnest conviction of the solemn importance of the work, judging from the lectures that have already been given. Independently of the forthcoming portions, that which has already been delivered, is destined to be read in all languages and admired by all who are capable of appreciating *thought and instruction*. It is by no means a senseless jargon, presuming on the credulity of minds tinctured by marvellousness; but it appeals directly to *REASON*; and will sustain itself independently of the almost supernatural phenomena connected with its production.

The curious are earnestly requested to institute such inquiries as may satisfy them as to the truth or falsity of the foregoing announcement. If there is imposition in this affair, let it be exposed *now*, before the work is published? Is not this fair?

Father inquires may be made of the appointed witnesses as named above, or of

WM. FISHBOUGH,

Appointed Scribe, No. 24 Vesey-st.

This is to certify that we have severally been present at the delivery of one or more of the above named lectures, and that the announcement thus given to the public is true.

ISRAEL KINSMAN, No. 1 New-st.

T. LEA SMITH, M. D.

C. C. WRIGHT, 139 Avenue D.

—Christian Messenger.

THAT BOY WILL BE A MAN YET.—The other day we saw a bright little boy, some seven summers old, tugging away through the snow with a large armful of wood. We were just on the point of speaking a word of praise to him, when the little fellow's feet slipped from under him and down he fell, wood and all, upon the side walk. We expected to see him burst out crying, when to our surprise he arose with composure, saying, "darn it, I'll try that over again." With much energy of purpose he gathered up his wood and went on his way. We'll bet a rusty copper that that boy will yet be a distinguished man. —Manchester (N. H.) Messenger.

Not long since it fell to the lot of a young gentleman, at one of our New England hotels to carve a fowl at a table surrounded by some twelve or fifteen hungry stage passengers. He exerted himself to the utmost for a time, but finding joints whose time-callosities defied the sharp steel, relinquished the undertaking, passed the aged creature to a grey-headed gentleman, observing at the same time, "Sir, I must beg your pardon, and make an apology to the whole feathered tribe for this unceremonious attack upon one that must have at least 15 or 20 years the advantage of me in age."

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