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SPECTRAL VISITANTS,

OR

JOURNAL OF A FEVER:

BY

A CONVALESCENT.

ARMY MEDICAL LIBRARY
WASHINGTON, D. C. U. S. A.

"Fantastic forms — chimeras strange and wild,
Spring from a fevered brain."

PORTLAND:
S. H. COLESWORTHY,
BOSTON:
HALIBURTON & DUDLEY.
1845.

Psychiatry

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Annex
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INTRODUCTION.

Sickness and pain are often teaching us important lessons, which we learn slowly and reluctantly. These lessons are sometimes of great value — more instructive, doubtless, to the sufferer than they can be to others.

Few attempts are made to explain to others one class of lessons in sickness, which are doubtless more frequently learned than remembered. I refer to the strange phantasies and hallucinations of a disordered brain.

There is reason to believe, that these are very common in fevers, and in some other forms of disease, and that they sometimes occasion great suffering, which might be wholly relieved, or greatly mitigated, were both the patient and the attendants acquainted beforehand with such phenomena.

It is greatly to be desired, that the operations of the mind, both in its normal and its disordered states, should be more thoroughly and generally studied than they have been. The happy influence of this, both in sickness and in health, will be distinctly seen when the subject is better understood.

It is a happy omen, that obstacles to the study are diminished, and works on the mind are beginning to attract attention in schools and academies, and in the family circle; and, that successful efforts have been made to present the subject in a manner to be studied and understood by the young.

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The "Youth's Book on the Mind"* is now studied with deep interest in common schools, and can be profitably introduced universally to the more advanced classes of our common schools, and prepare youthful minds to enter upon more extensive and difficult works at an early period. It may be studied with profit in every family.

The more extensive works of Professor Upham† are becoming deservedly popular in high schools, academies and colleges, and his treatise on "Disordered Mental Action,"‡ ought to be as extensively known. Indeed, it ought to be thoroughly studied by all who are in danger of being sick, or liable to be entrusted with the care of the sick.

Readers of The New Englander‖ will thank President Hitchcock for a very interesting description of his own experience of optical illusions in sickness, and they will find instruction in the effort of Prof. Fiske, to explain the same on philosophical principles, whether they adopt all his conclusions or not.

The letters in this volume were written as they purport to have been, and at the place and dates they bear, while the writer was recovering from sickness. They were written not for publication, but as a means of employment to the mind, which would be constantly active in some way, although the body was too weak to endure much action. They were sent to a distant, anxious wife, as a means of beguiling the time of our separation, and giving her a distinct view of the phenomena, described while they were fresh in the memory.

They are now given to the public, in accordance with wishes frequently expressed by those who sympathised with

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* Published by William Hyde, Portland. Embracing an outline view of the three departments — the Intellect, Sensibilities, and Will.

† Elements of Mental Philosophy, in three vols. Vol. I, The Intellect; II, The Sensibilities; III, The Will. N. York, Harper & Brothers.

‡ By Harper & Brothers.

‖ New Englander for April, 1845.

the writer in sickness, or who have since learned something of the hallucinations here described. They are given with very slight revisions of the manuscript, and will not, perhaps, endure a severe criticism as to style, any better than the feeble frame which penned them, would then bear rough handling. But the writer has chosen to leave the letters essentially as first written, rather than re-write with a view to more elegance of composition.

It is hoped these descriptions may be of some service, to those who may read them, if they shall ever experience similar illusions, and that they may aid those who have care of the sick in understanding and properly treating the case of patients visited by similar spectres.

The writer is deeply indebted to a previous acquaintance with works on Mental Philosophy, and previous observation and analysis of mental illusions. Without this knowledge some of the spectres would have been distressingly annoying, whereas with it they were easily disarmed or controlled, and in most cases were exceedingly amusing.

THE AUTHOR.

May 24, 1845.

LETTER I.

PREBLE ST. HOUSE, PORTLAND, JAN. 29, 1845.

MY DEAR WIFE:—It is three weeks to-day since we parted, and what scenes have passed in this brief period! I have been on the borders of the grave, and you have experienced anguish such as has never been your lot before in the more than twelve years of our married life. I can believe you when you say "The bitterest grief of all has come; that you should be sick and I not able to come to you." And again "It may be that I may be called to bear the only trial which seems past endurance * * * You know better what I am suffering than I can tell you, and you know that God has given me a strong heart, but this suspense is racking. O if you were but at home so I could nurse you, or at least pray with you! But it cannot be—we have learned to submit, let us do so now."

Yes, I can understand you when you write thus. A strong heart and a true one gives utterance to its swellings in truthful words which a husband can well understand when recovering from sickness so

sudden and severe as mine has been. Thank God the pressure of disease is removed and I feel that I am rapidly recovering.

I can now understand how my first letter should have given a heavy blow after the days of suspense in which you expected my return. Yet when I wrote it I supposed it was a very sensible letter, and one that would relieve your anxiety. The truth is I was half insane—reeling under the second, or pleuritic attack of my disease; and the letter was a desperate effort to relieve you of anxiety and bring S. to my help. But I trust the last mail has carried you evidence of returning health which will lift "the black cloud" you speak of and bring sunshine to your heart. My Physician encourges me in the hope of riding out to-morrow, and thinks if very careful, and if no accident occur, I may ride home in a week from that time. I sometimes feel a ittle impatient at so long delay, but have assured the Dr. I shall wait for his *pass-word*. I am strongly inclined to fill up this time, in part, in writing you a description of my sickness, and of the *Spectral Visitants*, of which I gave a hint in one of my letters. Some of those visitors will amuse you if I can succeed in describing them.

I believe the premonitory symptoms of disease were upon me before I left home; and during the remainder of the week there were frequent sensations unusual with me. I had a capricious morbid appetite; and an indescribable heaviness, and an indecision, which I could not shake off. I had several items of business which I found it exceedingly difficult to summons resolution to attend to. Sev-

eral attempts to purchase a cooking stove all proved failures ; although the most favorable terms and conditions were offered. Finding I should not finish my business till late on Saturday, I sought and secured an exchange for the Sabbath in the parish in Falmouth, where we had lived for a time ; and where you had enjoyed life so well.

On Thursday evening I attended the Installation of Officers in the Ancient Brothers Lodge, and on Saturday evening, in the Ligonia Lodge, in both of which I was courteously invited to officiate as Chaplain. Friday evening I spent with the Washingtonians, in the City Hall ; and addressed them, by request. After the Installation on Saturday evening, which closed a little before 9 o'clock, I came to this house where I had put up, found my horse in readiness as I had directed, and started for Falmouth as the bell was ringing, having engaged to reach there by ten o'clock. The lodge room was warm and comfortable, and the services delightful, the Grand Master, Rev. James Pratt officiating. I think I had unusual enjoyment in the devotional services, and the solemn, breathless stillness, during prayers was very impressive. But there was a sense of weariness and a dull pain in my side and back, which made it hard to sit up-right. In riding to Falmouth, I found the night air chilling, although it was not a very cold night, and unfortunately, as it was dark, I missed the road, and strayed away on to the Plain road. I could not see the track, the "pony" troubled me with efforts to call at the houses, so that I came near being thrown out, more than once.

When I arrived it was five minutes past ten o'clock ; and my feet and hands were suffering with cold. I could not unharness till I had warmed, and found relief from this suffering. After thoroughly bathing my feet, and taking warm drink, I retired in a warm bed and was soon lost in sleep. But about midnight I woke in great distress in my side and back, and with a strange diziness in my head. I at first resolved to rise immediately, and let my sufferings be known, but then I remembered that there was no man who could go for a physician, and I feared the chill of the night air if I left a warm bed. I also doubted my ability to put on my clothes and go down stairs, and find the way to the sitting room. So I tossed and groaned and sought relief in vain, till five o'clock. My breathing had become groaning, and gasping ; and every respiration seemed like driving a sharp knife through my body. I knew I must get relief or die. With a desperate effort I dressed and went down stairs, I knew not how. The cold air of the house increased the difficulty so that for a time it seemed as if every breath must be the last. Mrs. G. was suddenly roused by my groans, and arose and kindled a fire so that my breathing was slightly relieved. I then called for cold water and drank two tumblers which had stood in the pail and was nearly frozen. She went to the nearest house and sent a man for Dr. S. During her absence I found the water and drank some four tumblers more. This checked my raging thirst, and relieved my breathing greatly ; and soon the pain subsided, so that when the Dr. arrived, scarcely any remained. He was anxious to take

blood, but I desired delay. I was not reconciled to being sick away from home, and I felt afraid of the effect of bleeding on my intended journey, and also on my system. I did not think it necessary, after the pain was relieved, but consented to send for him, for that purpose, if the pain should return. I took from him an emetic and its effect was to relieve the stomach of a large amount of bilious matter of a formidable character. In the P. M. I was so far relieved that I prevailed on friends as they returned from meeting to harness my horse and suffer me to go into Portland. This was opposed with great earnestness, and I suppose they thought me insane to attempt it. But my reasons were cogent. I desired if possible to go home next day.— If this could not be, I wished to write home. If I must be sick away from home, I greatly desired to be in the midst of brethren of the order which I already regarded with interest. I reached this place without serious injury, and immediately sent for Bro. R. to counsel me as to a Physcian. But I must close this letter here abruptly.

Your Affectionate

HUSBAND.

LETTER II.

PREBLE ST. HOUSE JAN. 30, 1845.

MY DEAR S.—You will remember this as my birth day, completing my fortieth year. You have heard me sometimes express a sort of presentiment that I should not see forty years. This feeling probably had no more substantial basis than that my father died at 38, and the fact that so many brothers and sisters have fallen around me. But here I am, after a severe attack, passing the day which closes two score years, with fine prospects of recovery, and of permanent health. I left the narrative of my sickness at the point of my return to this city. I was now in the care of Odd Fellows and soon found by my side Dr. G. a Physician, whose views of my case seemed just and reasonable, and in whom, from the first, I had implicit confidence. He is the nephew I believe of a late Governor in New Hampshire, of the same name, and has had a first rate medical education. Then his sagacity, and penetration; his clear eye, looking right through ones difficulties, and his cool persevering decision in directing his remedies—the most simple that will answer—right to the point, and stopping short when the point is gained. All these qualities have commanded my admiration and won my heart. I verily believe that the entire confidence I reposed in him, has had great influence in securing the results his prescriptions were designed to reach. On Sabbath evening I think he ordered nothing but hot bathing of the

feet, with a generous portion of mustard in the water, and a free use of not lemonade as a drink. The brethren desired I would have watchers but I thought it needless ; and I do dot think I suffered in consequence. I think it very certain that one event occurred that night which might have been interfered with, had watchers been present, I mean a solemn review of the past, and a careful survey of my present position, and prospects. I saw by the Dr's. manner that he viewed me as in a critical, yet hopeful situation ; and learned that his plan of treatment would delay my return at least one or two days. I knew you would expect me Monday without fail, and would be very anxious. I supposed I could send no word which would reach you till it should go by Tuesday's mail. I felt that my case was critical—that a slight cause would prostrate me. I was not sure but my ride from F. had been seriously injurious, although I had suffered nothing till after I had been in the house for sometime—and then it was but a slight difficulty of breathing and pain in my side, which the hot bathing had nearly removed.

As I lay upon my bed my mind seemed instinctively drawn to such a review as I have mentioned above. It required a great effort to follow the impulse of my feelings referred to. I was very weak and my head seemed heavy and oppressed. I could not but reflect how desparate would be my case, now if I were "without hope." I had freedom in prayer and some delight in it—and what was more important, I obtained at length great strength and support in going through the scrutiny which seemed to be demanded.

I thought first upon my ministry ; and there were some recollections very pleasant—I could see some fruit and rejoice in it ; but still much of it looked dark and barren. I felt some desire to be restored to my pulpit again ; hoping I might preach better. The impenitence of numbers of the young people of my Congregation hung heavy on my heart, and the tears flowed freely, as I thought perhaps my want of fidelity may be the cause of their ruin. I plead for mercy in view of the defects and imperfections of my ministry, and for my young friends who for two years had attended upon it with no saving benefit. The answer to prayer seemed only "God will do right." And this was enough.

I then reviewed my relations to my family. I seemed to look in upon you all as in a quiet afternoon, but you could not see me;—and, as yet, knew not of my sickness. The boys were busy with books and play. The little twins were sitting on the floor and you were sewing, and rocking little Charlies cradle, with your foot. The rest of the family were busy about the house, so I did not notice them. All at once, the little twins seemed to see me and Agnes, in her arch way, sung out, "tate tare there," "see there," Marion lifted up her hands with that quiet imploring look which asked me to take her up; and her sweet voice thrilled through me as she said, "eh, eh, eh." But I could not get to them.—I seemed fettered, and my heart ached. The burning questions came home to me, as the sternest reality, "Can you leave this little group? Can you trust them to the Providence of God, in a world of sin? Can you believe that the widow's God will

sustain that mother and those helpless ones?" My heart faltered a little time, but then firmly answered, "YES, I CAN." I WILL—*Father I leave them in thy care.* Then I seemed to see how you would be provided for. I saw that S. and M. would stand by you so long as you needed them. I thought with their help, you would be able to open a school which would yield some support, while educating the children. Or else you would have some boarders. I saw that the members of the church and society, would be kind to you, and I knew the Odd Fellows would not let you suffer. I saw clearly that if the little band at H. were to be unable to provide for you as they would desire, here were scores of strong hearts that would be open to your necessities. I was content; and felt perfectly at rest.

I thought on my pecuniary embarrasments, and felt as if the strongest desire of my heart, on this subject, was to be frustrated. I should not live to pay the last debt. But I did not feel condemned or reproach myself with intentional wrong, either in contracting the debts, or in my inability to pay them. I thought of the man who had deprived me of the power to pay these, and stripped from me, by sheer fraud, more than four thousand dollars, which was more than six times the amount of all my debts. But I could forgive him, and say, Father forgive him, he knows not what he has done. My heart bled for him, in view of what seemed to be the retribution awaiting him, even in this life, for pecuniary transactions like that, which had prostrated me and my dependent family.

I thought of your severe sickness ; and felt as if I had never been able to sympathize with you as I could now, having never been sick myself. It seemed to me that if I should be well again, I could do better in these matters. As to my prospects, if called to die, I could say little for them, save that my trust in God was strong and unwavering. I had no rapturous anticipations—no *certain* evidence that I should be permitted to dwell with God. But I had an overwhelming sense of the justice, goodness, and Glory of God, which made me keep whispering, God will do right.—*He will do just right.* I close again in haste, Your Affectionate

HUSBAND.

LETTER III.

PREBLE ST. HOUSE, JAN., 31, 1845.

MY DEAR S.—My sheet was full yesterday, before I thought to tell you that I rode out, and breathed the free, bracing air ; and felt it thrilling through my whole system. I also went down stairs to breakfast and dinner. I have also taken breakfast below this morning, and am gaining strength rapidly. I enjoyed, last evening, pleasant visits from three of our H. friends. One of them Bro. G. has promised to call and tell you that he has seen me, which I suppose will be some satisfaction ; although, at his first call, I was rather stupid from weariness ; it being one part of my system to gain strength by tasking myself to weariness every day.

My last letter closed with a review which occurred on Sabbath night, and which has left my mind in a very peaceful state ever since. It also left me in a state to secure a tolerable share of quiet sleep that night, so that on Monday, I rose quite bright, yet with considerable fever upon me. It being necessary to secure an effective operation of physic, Dr. G. prescribed accordingly, and with complete success; so that my fever was considerably reduced. I felt at night that watchers would be needless, and prevailed on the brethren to dispense with them again and leave me alone. The night passed quietly and on Tuesday morning my symptoms were better; so that the Dr. gave me encouragement, that if I would keep quiet through the day, I might possibly ride a little way towards home on Wednesday, should no reverse occur, and should the day be very pleasant. But there was still upon me a good deal of fever, notwithstanding the great relief I had experienced. I can now see that my mind was reeling, and I unwittingly committed a serious fault. Intent on going home next day, I forgot, almost immediately, the condition prescribed by Dr. G. of keeping quiet through the day; and I reasoned somewhat plausibly from the premises which I retained into the conclusion that it was proper for me to walk out. The reasoning was on this wise: If I can ride a considerable distance towards H. tomorrow, it is surely safe to walk out a little time to-day; and especially as I need additional flannels for my journey. So being pretty much at my own disposal, I wrapped up with some care, borrowed a cane at the office, and went out, and made several calls,

purchased flannels, and spoke for a piece of plank or board to heat for our feet, as I was to have a companion. I was out as I supposed but a short time, and thought I felt much better for it; although it was very annoying to have people stare at me with such anxious, earnest gaze, as if I were doing some strange thing. The entreaties and remonstrances of Mr. F. and his family, also made me feel unpleasantly, yet I persevered and went out, even a second time, and I am told that I walked down to the Post Office, but of this I have no recollection.—Nor dare I depend upon memory as to the length of time, of these excursions. My impression has been, that one was about ten minutes and the other, about fifteen. I am told that I was out an hour at one time. It was a very cold raw day, and had I not been beside myself, I should have known that it was very wrong to go out thus. But as it was, I thought I felt better, and should be better prepared to go to H. next day. My friends, I afterwards learned, felt far otherwise. One Brother said he would rather have given fifty dollars than to see me coming into his store. I suppose my letter to Bro. B. reached H. that evening, but I have no recollection of its contents. I believe I was more nearly insane, or more insane that evening than I had been, yet this was not discovered, and I remained still without watchers, notwithstanding the wishes of my brethren. A boy brought in two pieces of board which we were to put at our feet next day, and I recollect putting them near the stove to heat, and of thus filling the room with smoke. I rose from sleep nearly suffocated, and I then put them on top of the

stove—it being an air tight with a high border.—Here again they filled the room with smoke, and again woke me, to find the room excessively heated. I then placed them back near their old position, behind the stove. I recollect going to open the door, and ventilated the room three times, in the course of the night; and of suffering very much from extremes of heat and cold. I now feel sure that I must have heated the stove red hot, more than once, otherwise I could not have burnt the boards as their appearance shows.

I suffered much in the course of the night, and in the morning was in a very miserable condition. I knew that a new attack was upon me, and that I was in a worse condition than before. Yet I rose in the morning burning with fever, and a severe pain in my side. I saw it snowing furiously, but I put on two pairs of flannels and drawers, called for, and settled by bill, and put myself in readiness to start before the Dr. came. Yet I felt that it would be only going home to die, or starting to die on the way, and when the Dr. came, I was quite ready to yield the point, lay aside my extra clothing, and take my bed. I do not know the time of day when he called, but I recollect that before noon Niss F. came and offered to take care of me, and I gladly accepted the offer. I believe I had previously consulted the Dr. about sending for S. and he strongly recommended it. I think the letter I sent you must have been written in the P. M. and I sent for Mr. M. the driver, to come and see me, so as to be sure of seeing S. by the next stage. I think it was in the evening call that Dr. G. having learned that I walked

out the day before, questioned me in regard to it and seemed to feel much grieved, and as though I had done very wrong. As I can now view the case I do not wonder at this. It was indeed treating him very rudely, but I thought nothing of it at the time, and supposed I was doing right. I did not think the walking out had injured me, and I still feel sure that the injury I received in the night, was far more serious than that I recieved by going out during the day. I believe it was on Wednesday that he first ordered a mustard poultice upon my side, which had become very painful. My cough was extremely annoying, and the mucus which was thrown off freely, was highly colored and very offensive. Still the lungs were not affected, but my apprehensions were quite serious, that the disease might soon attack my lungs or brain, and in either case, I felt that the result might be fatal. I have been in the habit of tasking both so severely, that I supposed I must meet a heavy penalty in case of disease in either. On Wednesday evening I was quite content to have watchers, and Bro. M. of the H. L. and another Br. were with me through the night.

I have already brought the journal of my sickness beyond the time of the commencement of my spectral visitants, and it will be more simple and intelligible, if I continue the narrative down to the crisis of my fever, and the commencement of my recovery. I can then group the visitors into a more definite and distinct view. But my sheet is full. I have only time to say that I rose at six this morning, and did not lie down till near four P. M. Rode out and

made calls—Dined at Bro. C's. and was absent from half past eleven, till half past three.

Your Affectionate
HUSBAND.

LETTER IV.

PREBLE ST. HOUSE, FEB. 1, 1845.

MY DEAR S.—Your letter is received, and like all from the same source has been read three or four times, and with increasing interest. I regret to learn that your own health improves so little, but perhaps we could not rationally expect it to be otherwise, under the pressure of such anxiety as has been upon you of late. I long to return and have strength to relieve you of some part of the load of care which you cannot easily shake off in my absence. We will hope that Dr. G's. prescriptions will meet your necessities, and that soon we may meet with renewed vigor, and increasing faith, to pursue life's journey with a firmer step than ever.

My letter of yesterday brought down the thread of my disease to Wednesday evening, January 15. How much allowance must be made in that narrative, and in the three or four days following, on the score of disordered mental action, and impaired memory, I will not say. I write in accordance with my recollections, having daily recorded incidents after S. came to aid me. My spectral visitants commenced on Tuesday evening, and continued every

evening till the crisis of my disease, on Sabbath evening the 19th. But these I omit, till we have traced the progress of disease to that point. The disease was now *Pleuretis.* The pain and inflammation in my side was becoming more and more formidable. The mucus membrane was also much inflamed, the mucus being streaked with blood, and otherwise highly colored. The fever still continued with considerable violence, my cough very distressing, and no permanent relief gained by milder means, on Thursday evening about nine o'clock, Dr. G. resorted to the Lancet, and with some difficulty took from me a considerable quantity of blood. A sensible relief in some respects followed this.— The pressure and haziness of my head were less. My cough and breathing did not distress my side quite so severely.

The attention given me by night, and by day, was now of the most thorough and effective kind. Two good brethren of the Order, were by my side every night, acting out with the feelings of a brother, the principles of Odd Fellowship, as applied to the care of the sick. Every thing necessary for my comfort and well-being was sent in to me, from various quarters. By day Miss F. did everything which could be done, supplying a lack of experience by a tact and skill, which few could so well exhibit. Through the day on Friday, the disease continued with only slight and temporary checks in those features I can most distinctly recollect. My side having been pretty thorougly irritated with mustard, was crowned with a blister. The annoyance of this upon the surface was almost equal to

the pain within, and I sometimes fancied there was a sort of contest between the two, to see which should be most successful in securing my attention, and trying my patience. At evening S. arrived bringing your letter, and warm sympathies, and warm flannels. I believe I cried for joy, for I had become a mere child, and when I had fairly enwrapped myself in the flannel dress, it seemed as if my prospects of recovery were greatly increased. I recollected you had two or three times recovered in it from severe sickness, and it became to me at once a sort of talisman. Then I had such unbounded confidence in sisters skill in nursing me that I almost fancied I had begun to get well. The blister was dressed in the evening, and in the morning was found well filled. I have little recollection of the day on Saturday, except of the unwearied and cheerful exertions of S. while I could not help discovering that her heart was heavy, and her fears great. I remember too having numerous calls from brethren of the Order, and from personal friends, among whom were four ministering brethren. Bro. D. had been in to see me previously. I remember how very soothing was the voice of Prayer, leaving a sweet refreshing sensation long after the brethren left me. Yet I was so weak in body and mind, that I seemed incapable of following them, except as I took fast hold of their hands. I never before conceived what power there is in prayer, in certain stages of disease ; although I have often noticed very visible effects when officiating by the bed of the sick. The reading of the Scriptures too by my watchers, was very soothing. I was generally able to designate

chapters I desired read, and it seemed to me that those passages were never half so lovely and impressive before. My sickness seemed a vivid commentary or expositor, which made the simplest passages radiant with light, and full of power and sweetness. On the Sabbath my disease was less violent, and my mind in a state to appreciate the day in some degree. I had numerous visitors, and among them Brs. D. at noon, and C. at evening. I had a strong conviction that my case was mentioned, and prayers offered in each of the Congregational Societies in the city, and also in the beloved church in H.; and I knew very well that in my own family there was such prayer, as none but a Wife and Mother can offer. During the day I seemed to be getting strength of faith, that some good would come of all this. Then the prayers of the ministering, and one or two lay brethren by my side, where I could grasp their hands, seemed full of encouragement.—This feeling was peculiarly strong about sunset, when Bro. C. visited me, and gave me to understand that prayer had been offered for me in the congregation. He gave me some ideas of a sermon from 1st John 3: 2. which he had preached that afternoon to Mr. D's people, as they had exchanged.—This at once revived some previous thoughts upon the passage which I had enjoyed, having preached extempore upon it several times, in different parts of the State. After he left, in the dusk of evening, as Bro. M. was sitting by me, I fell into a sort of reverie, and a scene of transcendent loveliness and beauty passed before me, producing intense emotion and enjoyment. I reserve any description of the

scene to the closing up of my spectral visitants. It is sufficient to say here that this scene seemed to stand in immediate connection with the crisis of my disease. When I returned from the fancied excursion, it was with a degree of mental energy and self-possession, I had not before experienced since the beginning of my sickness. I could then see that I had from the first been laboring under strong mental excitement, and more or less of disordered mental action. I felt that the violence of disease was now broken, and that I should again recover. I was then conscious of my weakness. Up to this time the excitement of fever, and of my mind had given me a sort of forced and unnatural strength. Now I felt great weakness of body, and yet great strength of faith. I thought I understood what Paul meant when he said, "When I am weak, then am I strong." "His strength is made perfect in my weakness." I was happy—happy for your sake and the children. I knew that my escape had been narrow indeed, and I felt that deliverance had come in answer to prayer. From that hour my recovery has been rapid—wonderfully so. The hand of God is in it, and I hope to join you soon to speak of his goodness.

Your Affectionate

HUSBAND.

LETTER V.

PREBLE ST. HOUSE, FEB., 2, 1845.

MY DEAR S.—It is the holy Sabbath. Its stillness is very little disturbed by secular movements, and it seems indeed a day of rest. I do not propose

to continue the journal of my sickness, or to meddle with those spectres, of which I have bid you to expect a description. I reserve all these for another day. But I can hardly refrain from writing you a few reflections which crowd upon me, and which I have no disposition to restrain. One is the surprising change in my health, and the progress of recovery since the period where my last letter closed. Two weeks ago to-day the fever was still upon me, and till evening my mind in some degree reeled and staggered under a load I could not easily throw off, or sustain. Now I seem to have no disease, I enjoy food, and find strength greatly increased. Then it was with trembling limbs and faltering step I could go from my bed to a chair, with one to steady and sustain me. Now I walk with a firm rapid step. I went yesterday to the P. O. and made several calls.

Then I could sit up but a short time in a day; now I rise at six, and scarcely lie down till eight or nine in the evening. Then I could follow a ministering brother in a short prayer, only by grasping his hand firmly. To-day I have been to church, and listened to the ordinary morning services, though it must be confessed, with some weariness of body and drowsy dullness of mind. Yet I enjoyed it so much as to determine on another trial this P. M.— No other effort yet seems so easy to me as writing; perhaps because in no other effort does the affection and sympathy of wife and children come so fully to my aid.

Another thought which fills me with wonder and gratitude, is that with all this disease and exposure, my brain and lungs have been spared. I felt this even

in the most hazy periods of my sickness, as I have before stated. It seemed to me certain that if either my lungs or brain, should be attacked, my case must be hopeless. I have used and tasked both so severely, that I could expect no release if either should be seriously inflamed. I can but adore a merciful Providence that shielded and sustained me, and spared to me these important organs. I would hope for farther use of them in his service ; whether with more fidelity or more prudence than before, remains to be seen.

Another pleasant thought is the wonderful care and skill, with which my disease has been treated. It seems to me as if there were hardly another physician living, who could have done for me what Dr. G. has done, and stop just at the right place. Then too, you know that while your hands are tied, no one else could take care of me like S. So careful—constant—efficient—safe—gentle. Every thing was done right. My watchers also, seemed to be selected with special reference to my case. They came in at the right time, prepared to do just what was needed, and with the kindness and affection of Brothers, giving us no care, or anxious feelings in selecting and securing them, and no solicitude about their fidelity. This feature of Odd Fellowship is most admirable. It calls out and disciplines the body of its members for service at the bed side of sickness. It brings them there to illustrate the principles of Friendship, Love and Truth, and there is a charm in the development of fraternal feelings, among those of all trades, professions, parties and

denominations, in a way to exert a most soothing and salutary influence upon the spirit of a sick man. It is a great thing in sickness to be free from all care and anxiety, and to feel that all will be well.

Sabbath Evening.—The twilight is again here—the still sacred twilight of a day of rest. I have returned from the afternoon service to muse and wonder and adore. For three Sabbaths in succession I have been kept from the sanctuary by disease, an occurrence which has not taken place before for twenty-five years. For thirteen years, I have scarcely been prevented from preaching for a single Sabbath. The privation I trust will be profitable. It does help me to value the privileges of the sanctuary, as I could not value them before. The day has been peculiarly interesting. Although we divided the day between two churches, the same voice proclaimed the gospel in both, and it was the same that two weeks ago about this hour, in soothing accents of conversation and prayer, was instrumental in prepairing my mind for the revery to which I have alluded, and which stands closely connected with the crisis of my disease, and the commencement of recovery. That voice will ever be dear to me on account of the delightful associations connected with that event. The text in the morning was Ecc. 8: 11. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore, the heart of the sons of me is fully set in them to do evil." It was a faithful sermon, fitted to probe the heart and conscience, kindly, and thoroughly.

In the P. M. the sermon was based upon the

declaration in 1st Peter, 2: 7. "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious." The discussion of the subject was worthy of the text, and of the occasion. It was a communion season, and after the sermon we were privileged to celebrate his love, and enjoy his preciousness in the memorials of our Lord, which are fitted to keep us in remembrance of him. My heart struggled with emotions which sought utterance, as Bro. C. invited me to take part in the administration of the Supper, but I felt that I ought not in so much weakness, to attempt to speak. I need not say that I very much desire to occupy again my own pulpit, and preach of Christ more earnestly than I have done. It seems to me as if I could preach better for this sickness. I am very sure that many parts of the Bible read to me by watchers never seemed so full of light and truth, and glory before, as since; and during my sickness.—Never did I have a more full and satisfactory evidence of the truth and stability of the evangelical system of doctrine in distinction from every system which opposes it.

The doctrines of revealed religion, as unfolded by the puritan fathers, and held by orthodox congregationalists, I believe will stand the test and scrutiny which they must pass, and it is certain that the soul can rest its hopes upon them with great composure in the hour of trial, when heart and flesh are failing.

It has been a matter of surprise and joy to me, that, in the severest stages of my sickness, when my mind was in its most excited and bewildered

state, at the very time when spectral appearances were occurring every evening, with the exception of one or two nights the Bible should have had such power over me. I could hear two or three chapters read in succession by the watchers without weariness, and every chapter and verse seemed pervaded with heavenly light and comfort. I could scarcely refrain from following up the reading with a running comment, or preaching a sermon on each verse. I must say one word also as to the power of music. Two sisters of Col. F. have very sweet voices, and they would occasionaly come in and sing some gentle airs with soft soothing tones which thrilled through and through me. Even at times when it was necessary to exclude company almost wholly, their music was to me a perfect spell, and its happy effect would linger with me long after they had ceased. My sheet is full, and I have only to write,

Your affectionate
HUSBAND.

LETTER VI.

PREBLE ST. HOUSE, FEB. 3. 1845.

MY DEAR S.—The sweet light of another morning finds me wakeful and ready to greet it. My rest last night was unusually quiet, refreshing, and almost uninterrupted. No injury was received by going out to *church*, and a sweet savor of the services of the sanctuary remains with me still. I have strong hopes of securing the Dr.'s "Travelling pass word," so as to leave here for home to-morrow, but I shall be entirely reconciled to his decision. This

chamber has for me, precious charms, which the recollections of my sufferings here has no power to destroy. I have had joys and discoveries here, which I might well consent to purchase, at almost any expense of suffering. Still home — "sweet home," sends in a plea to my heart that urges me in that direction, with a force I cannot describe; but, while detained, I will continue to write you, and it is now time to introduce you to my spectres. In the narrative of my sickness you will readily see that some stages of it were well fitted to invite such visitors. I esteem it a great favor that I had studied such phenomena in books on Philosophy. The lessons we have learned together on these subjects from Rush, Abercrombie, and more particularly the works of Prof. Upham, enabled me to get along with these visitors, and entertain them as I could not have done otherwise. I knew how to manage them, and thus was saved from a great deal of distress. Indeed, they often gave me great amusement, when, if I had been ignorant of their nature, they would have driven me nearly or quite frantic. Enthusiastic as I have been in reference to the study of Mental Philosephy, I never felt its value so deeply, as in this sickness. I never felt so much gratitude for having been permitted to prepare a book on the mind for the young, and thus attempting to bring the study of Mental Philosophy in a systematic form in our common schools. When a second edition is called for, I shall desire to add a chapter on disordered mental action, and apparitions. You recollect that some four or five causes of apparit-

ions and spectral illusions are mentioned in the various works we have read. Neglect of letting blood where persons had formed the habit of being bled periodically, is one of those causes. Another is inflammation on the brain. Another, fever, or a high state of febrile action. Another, high excitement of the nervous system. Another still, the effect of opium. Doubtless, in many cases, two or more of these causes may be combined. I am inclined to believe that the chief cause of them in my case, was fever. Perhaps the slight quantity of opium in the powders I was taking, may have contributed their share, acting upon my highly strung nervous and sanguine temperament. I do not think any of the other causes had much to do with them. My brain was not inflamed, although somewhat excited —I have never been in the habit of periodical blood-letting, and it is certain that bleeding did not destroy the spectral visits, although I believe that were a little shorter, and less vividly defined after that. My nervous system was doubtless much excited, but I believe it was generally under a pretty firm and steady control of my will when awake. It is also certain that the spectres disappeared with the breaking up of my fever on Sabbath evening. We are now prepared to be introduced to

THE FIRST VISITORS.

This group, I believe, came in on Tuesday evening, not long after the twilight. Their position was near the window, at the foot of my bed, and precisely where they must be effectually concealed from me by the high foot-board; but the foot-board,

you must know, presented no obstructions, for I could see through that as well as through my closed lids. The most prominent figure in the group was an old physician. He was a very tall, gaunt, round shouldered man, with a low, retreating forehead, a totally bald head, save a few white locks that streamed straight back from the back of his head, just above his shabby coat collar. He had on an old pair of iron bowed spectacles, resting on a very long nose, so crooked as almost to form a semicircle. His chin was long and sharp, so that it was almost painful to see his nose and chin in such formidable attitudes in relation to each other. I thought to myself, you look more like "time in the primer" than any one I have seen this long time. You only need the "foretop," the hour-glass, and scythe, to complete the picture. Then I thought, perhaps he has some other instrument of death that will do as well as a scythe; and the old couplet passed through my mind as distinctly as if I had repeated it:—

"Time cuts down all,
Both great and small."

I was struck at his vacant stare and perplexed appearance; but immediately I saw the cause of it. There were some twelve or fifteen elderly matrons in earnest conversation with him, and trying to influence his prescriptions. They were none of them persons that I knew, but the general features of their characters were written in their faces as distinctly as one could desire. The faces were not in general very ugly, but nearly all were such as you would not care to live in the house with, even in health.—

Several of them were egregious snuff takers, of the most offensive cast. The larger part of them wore glasses, but not all; and about two thirds had on their bonnets and shawls. This was some comfort, because I thought they did not all intend to stay. But their bonnets and extra garments were very annoying. They all seemed to pride themselves on being superior nurses, and I wondered how they could think of coming into the room of a sick patient with bonnets on. While they were talking very earnestly to the doctor, one after another would steal away from the group, and stand close to me and there adjust her spectacles, and hitch back her old bonnet and look at me with such a doleful look as made me shudder. I was more than disgusted. I was almost vexed enough to cane them. And yet I saw they were all very well meaning people, and desiring to do good, but I could plainly see they had little hope in my case. But there the Dr. stood, encircled by his advisers, desiring to please them all, and seeming to have as much confidence in their opinions as in his own. But he was very much perplexed. One was for giving me a hemlock sweat. Another wanted to bathe me frequently in saleratus water. Another thought salt and vinegar rubbed on with a hot flannel would be altogether better. Another insisted that there was nothing like new rum to bathe with, as that would prevent the fever from *striking to my stomach*, and bring it out on the surface.

One was very earnest that I should have good hot penny-royal tea: but another insisted that before

taking that, I ought to have a good strong dose of Thorough-wort. Another was equally confident that balm tea was the best thing I could possibly take; and still another insisted that Hysop was better than that. In the midst of all these pretensions the old doctor was very much tried. I thought of the maxim, "In the midst of counsellors there is safety;" but instead of *safety*, the word *perplexity* would come in, and I could not help it. But then I thought, perhaps it is *my* safety. In such conflicting counsellors, you are not likely to do either one thing or another for me, and I shall luckily escape. I saw there was very little chance for the Dr's. lancet, epicach or jalap, and I was coming to feel quite encouraged. One and another of the old ladies gradually and mournfully retired. I began to reflect farther that I had not sent for this physician, and that he had no business with me. I was under the care of Dr. G., who knew what he was about, and could prescribe without any such dictation. I began to suspect that what I had seen were spectres, and was about to address them as such, and show them that I did not care for them, or want their services; but just then I opened my eyes and they had fled, Dr. and all. This was a great point gained. I thought that spectres could not deceive me again.

Your affectionate

HUSBAND.

LETTER VII.

PREBLE ST. HOUSE, FEB. 3, 1845.

MY DEAR S.—I find spectres so much more easily disposed of now than when I had to wait upon them, and my strength is so much improved that I have commenced a second letter, and I will proceed at once to introduce you to the next group of spectres.

THE SECOND VISITORS.

This company visited me on Wednesday evening, I believe before the watchers came in. Miss F. had taken care of me through the day, and I believe was sitting in my room when the visitors came. I had closed my eyes as was natural, to exclude the light of the lamp. They were very weak from excess of light through the day, as I had not realized what was necessary to remove the annoyance. As I lay in this state, a group of young persons assembled. They came in, one, two and three at a time, till their number was ten or twelve. They seemed to have come in to see me, and manifest their kind sympathies; but, after bestowing a little attention upon me, they very naturally gave their attention to each other. They were well dressed young people from the country, and with such notions of social intercourse as sometimes prevail in country villages. None of them were very beautiful, and none were decisively plain, or homely. Among them were about four of the most mirthful, fun-loving faces I ever saw; and all were in good spirits. There were three young men, the rest were

females, and all were ripe for a gale. They began by playing button with all its forfeitures and penalties exacted to the last farthing, and thus in various games they spent a long time talking and langhing merrily. I thought they were rather noisy for a sick room, and if they knew how sick I was, I felt sure they would not be so boisterous. I thought, "How they will feel if I should die! They will think of this evening with deep sorrow." I was about speaking to them, and telling them that their noise disturbed me very much; but then I reflected, these are not young men and women, they are nothing but spectres, and why should I let spectres trouble me again when I have detected them once. But this did not satisfy me. Something seemed to say, "That cannot be—spectres never wear such young funny faces as those are. You are not spectres, are you?" By this time I remembered the effect of opening my eyes in dispelling such appearances, and as soon as my eyes were opened, all the company fled.

THIRD VISITORS.

Thursday evening.—I am not quite sure whether the group I am now to describe, appeared before the watchers came or not. It was of so queer and novel a character, that I despair of giving you any thing like a just impression of it. First came a box nearly filled with water, and stationed itself directly across my bed, about six or eight inches above my person and about midway from my face to the foot board. The box was about eighteen inches wide, and some fourteen or 15 inches deep, and four

or five feet long, being just long enough to reach across my bed. The box then canted up, water and all, so that the water, remaining stationary, as when the box was level, stood at an angle of about forty or forty-five degrees, so that with my head pretty well raised by pillows, I could look directly on the surface of the water with the greatest ease. I now saw that the water, except a little space around the border of the box was covered with a group of living creatures, and all in unnatural positions. My attention was at once arrested, and I was greatly interested. I thought within myself, if you are spectres, you are exceedingly instructive ones. "You teach me lessons in human nature. You are all acting out of character, but so are a large portion of the human race. How many there are who have no personality, no character of their own, and are mere imitators of the foibles and follies of others." I saw that all my visitors were lying on their backs, on the surface of that water, and all trying, in one way and another, to attract my attention; but no one in his own appropriate character. I now began to examine them separately and leisurely, being fully aware that they were nothing but spectres. The first was a medium sized toad, lying, like the others, on her back, and endeavoring to look at me through a common opera or quizzing glass. But the position of the eye in her head was such as to render this impossible. She tried every method to get the glass fairly before her eye, but when this was accomplished, she could only look back into the water. Then a desperate

effort was made to twist the head or the body, far enough to bring her eye in the right position to look at me. But the effort was a failure. She was obliged to give it up after all the kicking, scratching and twisting it was possible for her to perpetrate. I was about giving her some sage counsel in relation to *acting out of character*, but my attention was attracted by her left hand neighbor. This was a large, resolute Bull-frog. Lying in the same position, he was attempting bolder feats. He was endeavoring to put on a pair of common spectacles, and at the same time to tie upon his nether jaws a large pair of whiskers. One of the fore feet was engaged in trying to confine the spectacles, and the other in tying the whiskers; while the hinder legs were in desperate commotion in trying to help the others; but really, in making matters worse, and spattering the water about in various directions, to the annoyance of his associates as well as myself. I thought, as I looked at him and his utter failures, "Well, you are, if possible a greater fool than your neighbor, and yet many of my fellow creatures are as silly as you are; and then you are nothing but a spectre.', About this time my attention was attracted somewhat, by an interloper. A spider of considerable size, had fastened a strong web, or thread to a little iron staple in the plastering over one of the foot posts, and thence to the upper corner of the box, and having secured that quite thoroughly he had made several ineffectual efforts to continue it, and make it fast to my nose. But owing to the distress I had in lying down, I had been bolstered

up, and my head was too high, so that his efforts to get from the box to my nose proved a failure. He finally gave it up, and retreated half way from the box to the plastering, and there waited to watch the progress of events, or lay other plans. I then returned to examine more of my water visitors.

Next to the frog was a common mouse of medium size, lying on his back, and endeavoring to tie on a dickey. He had actually tied it on, and so tight as to make him pant for breath, but then it was not on right. The open part of it was directly under the right ear, and one corner of his dickey, which was a thoroughly starched one, stuck up even higher than his nose, and the other corner rose in the same way, passing directly up the backside of his head. The poor fellow was screaching and scratching, and trying to turn and adjust that dickey, but all to no purpose, only to annoy him still more, by drawing the string still more closely round his neck.

Next to him was a large house rat. He had either been guilty of some misdemeanor, or was afraid of some impending mischief, and was attempting to conceal his real character. He was trying to tie on a mask which would give him partly the appearance of a weasle, and partly that of a lion. He had succeeded in tying it, but now the trouble was, to conceal the ugly strings. He seemed to know that these would betray him, and tried to conceal them behind his ears; but in spite of all efforts they would show and tell every beholder that he wore a mask. It seemed strange to me that he

had not wit enough to know that his long tail would betray him. This was flying round all the time he was trying to conceal his mask strings, and nobody could doubt that this was the tail of a rat. This, I thought, was very much like human conduct. Many seem perfectly satisfied if they can only blind their own eyes, so as to fancy that they are something different from their real selves, and yet the effort to conceal only serves to fix attention on their true character.

Next to him was a large sized, broad-winged grass-hopper, trying to swim on his back. He had no difficulty in floating, for, like all the others, he lay up entirely on the surface of the water; but then the difficulty was to make any progress. He had no propellers, save the raw-boned, elbow-looking joints which rise above his back in his natural position, and which, when used right, answer very well to hop with, but as for swimming, and on his back, it was entirely impossible. It was *acting out of character*, and he made no progress.

At this stage my attention was drawn again to the spider, whose web was in such commotion as to shake him violently. I soon saw the difficulty. A small green snake, about five inches long had crawled up over the corner of the box, apparently to join the company inside. Coming in contact with the web, he had got entangled; and in his struggle to escape, had wound it fast round his middle, and hung struggling, suspended over the water. The spider seemed greatly delighted, and dancing backward and forward on his web, as if here was

a prize of some value. He was cautious about approaching too near, while the snake struggled violently, but after he became quiet and seemed rather lifeless, he run along down the line to despatch and make sure of his prey. But in this he was mistaken. He had not counted the cost. For almost as soon as the spider reached his body, where the web was wound round him, the snake opened his mouth, and darting up his head, seized the spider by the middle, and almost closed his mouth upon him, holding him like a vice. There that poor spider lay a prisoner, with some of his legs sticking out on one side of the snake's mouth, and some of them with his head, feelers, and forceps, on the other, stuggling in great agony and terror. He made all manner of gestures to me with his head, and feet, and feelers, to release him from the grasp of the snake. I thought he was a queer fellow, to get caught thus virtually in his own trap, and then apply to me to release him with so much servility in his manner, and this, too, after his varied attempts to fasten his vile web on my nose. But then I reasoned thus; "You do imitate human conduct wonderfully for a spider." I felt some disposition to help him, determining to show fair play and release the snake too, but I could not reach them. I could not easily move in the bed. But I knew them to be spectres, and that there was no need of sympathy. Before I could return to the box to examine farther the gambols there, something caused me to open my eyes, and they all disappeared at once. I believe this was caused by the coming of the Dr. about

nine o'clock to bleed me. The group gave me so much amusement that I would have welcomed their return, but I saw them no more. I examined minutely only those I have described, and these were but a few among several scores. I could only see that there were little fish, bees, wasps, hornets, and almost all manner of insects and reptiles, but all acting out of character. This group visited me at about the severest stage of my disease. I could not at this time lie down, and could only retain my breath by being bolstered in an almost erect position.

Your affectionate

HUSBAND.

LETTER VIII.

PREBLE ST. HOUSE, FEB. 3, 1845.

MY DEAR S.—Three letters a day you will think rapid writing for a convalescent. But my thoughts set towards home with such a strong tide that I may as well give them scope, and let them run on before me, even if they are various, and if they bear nothing to you but spectres. I have been making calls since closing the above, and feel inclined to write a little at twilight, especially as I have just read your letter by to-days' mail. As it is drawing near the time of evening when spectral visitors were wont to come to my room, perhaps I can array them more nearly in their true dress than I could in the light of day.

FOURTH VISITOR.

Friday night visitor was a solitary one, and not very amiable; but I was able to manage him so

completely, that I am sure it will not give you the night-mare to read a description of him. This fellow choosing darkness rather than light, and seeming conscious of evil designs, did not come in till after my watcher had been in some time. Probably it was near midnight, when who should come in but a staunch, savage looking negro, with a heavy club or bludgeon, about two feet long. With a threatening aspect he came uninvited and seated himself on the back side of my bed, about midway of the rail. There, after raising his club, and showing his ivory in formidable style, he demanded my money. At first I viewed him with a little earnestness, and questioned with myself, "Are you a real negro, or only an apparition? You talk and act like a very vile fellow, but I believe you are nothing but a spectre." Then I opened my eyes, and as usual the spectre vanished. But the moment my eyes were closed, there he was, at his old tricks, with violence and threatening sufficiently formidable to make up for previous defeat. As a farther precaution, I looked out the other side of my bed for the watcher. I could distinctly see the outlines of Bro. D's honest face, quietly reposing in the arm chair, and another was on the sofa. I knew that all was safe, so I closed my eyes again to see what my visitor would do, and to give him a fair chance. There he was again, brandishing that club, and using very bad language, but I did not fear him. I could even lie there and laugh at him. He seemed more and more excited, till, in one of his most violent motions with the club, his arm dropped off at the shoulder, and club and arm all disap-

peared together behind the bed. But nothing daunted he clenched the other fist, and swung that, and scolded and threatened if possible, more wildly than before. Soon the other arm came off at the elbow, but this did not check him; for although disabled, he still demanded my money as resolutely as before. While talking in a most violent rage, his under jaw all fell off, so that there were no more words. Still he sat there in violent agitation, and piece after piece of his face and forehead fell off, till at last no part of a skull or brain remained, except a small piece of angular bone on the backside of the head; and then the unsightly spectre all disappeared at once.

I have no doubt that this visitor would have given me great trouble if I had not studied the subject of apparitions so thoroughly before my sickness; but as it was, it gave me no uneasiness or fright, but rather amusement.

FIFTH VISITORS.

My Saturday night visitors were rather a shabby set, and hardly worth describing except as they mark one stage in the progress of spectral visits. In this case the personages were numerous, and all in human form, but they were dwarfs, not more than 13 or 14 inches high, and all of them buffoons, but it was impossible to determine whether they were male or female, by any particulars of dress or manner. The first group appeared to consist of some sixteen or eighteen, and they hopped upon the bed just forward of my face, or midway between my face and the foot-board. Here they commenced

a sort of general dance, each one by him or herself, and each making all manner of wry faces and grimaces that could be conceived. They were very closely grouped, yet each seemed to have scope enough to play the fool, with every part of his liliputian frame and members. Their design seemed to be to make me laugh, but they were ineffably silly and contemptible; and after they had become rather tardy, up came another group, and danced between them and me; but there was very little to choose between them, The group in the rear now took every measure to get sight of me, and attract attention by looking over the shoulders of the interlopers, and soon there was an irregular sort of skirmish to break through and again secure the precedence. While this game was going on, a third group came in, and then a fourth, of similar appearance. A general scramble, and even riot now took place between these different groups, so that their attention was diverted from me, and I was glad to lose sight of them; for spectres as I knew them to be, I thought they were very silly ones. Pretending to be human beings, and debasing themselves thus, I could not but feel for them a great deal of contempt. They interested me less than any of the other visitors. My next will unfold to you scenes of a very different character, and will, perhaps close the period of disordered mental action, in any thing like a permanent form. If the reading of these hasty descriptions shall beguile a weary hour, while the time of our separation lingers, I shall not have written in vain. I attempt no philo-

sopical explanation of them at present. Indeed I do not knowthat any other can be given than that the excitemeut of a fever may produce strange phantasies, which cannot be explained with entire satisfaction.

Your affectionate
HUSBAND.

LETTER IX.

PREBLE ST. HOUSE FEB 4, 1845.

MY DEAR S.—I approach the subject of this letter with a degree of reverence which almost forbids me to proceed. There is something so sweet and sacred in the recollection, and the whole impression of the scene referred to, that I almost fear to disturb it by any written or verbal description. Yet as it must evidently rank among the varieties of disordered mental action, I feel that to omit it would be to leave my description of phenomena under this department entirely incomplete. I stated in a previous letter that the violence of my disease had been checked in some degree before the Sabbath. At least the intensity of my bodily suffering had, in some measure, been relieved, and I felt on this day, very weak and dependent. It was peculiarly comforting to have Bro. D. come in at noon and praÁ with me, although it was very difficult for me to follow him, as I did not take his hand. It was also a matter of joy that my case had been mentioned in the churches, and the prayers of christians enlisted in my behalf. Several lay brethren, and brethren of the order called to see me near evening.

one of whom led in prayer; and, as I seized his hand firmly, I could follow him very well, and with satisfaction. Not long after, Bro. C. came in, and his conversation and manner were very soothing. He told me what he had been preaching from that afternoon, and gave me a little idea of his sermon. It was on the text, i John 3: 2. *"It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."* My mind instantly recovered and seized upon some precious thoughts I have had at various times in preaching extempore on that same passage, as I had several times preached thus upon it in different parts of the country. I believe I gave utterance to two or three strong expressions in conversation with him, but then I did not speak near as long or as earnestly as I had on various passages read me by the watchers on previous nights. He led in prayer while I held his hand firmly, and seemed to repeat the words of his prayer in concert with him. After the visitors left, Bro. M. volunteered to stay with me till the watchers came, and release S., who had been very much exhausted with care and anxiety. When all was still, and the darkness of evening curtained us, about the usual time of my spectral visitors, a very pleasant looking man appeared to invite me to ride with him. He was a stranger, but I seemed to know him at once, and believed him to be an earnest and deeply experienced christian, and also a brother of the order. I felt great confidence in his guidance, but everything looked singular for a ride. There was a very beau-

tiful, easy carriage, just large enough for two of us to sit in, without any covering, and we were to ride with no extra clothing and with our heads uncovered. This seemed a strange adventure for a sick man, and the ground covered with snow; but without hesitation I took my seat, and he followed and sat at my left hand. There was another difficulty. The car was mounted on a slight rail or track, elevated considerably above the surface of the earth, but there was no steam engine, and I was quite sure the track was not strong enough to bear one, and I saw no hope of motion, unless a strong wind should rise to propel us. But, by the time we were fairly seated, the car began to move with inconceivable rapidity. I perceived we were moved by electricity; and was very glad to think that this discovery of moving machinery by electricity was at length made, and applied to practical purposes. But I perceived that our car was not moved by any artificial application of lightning. We had no galvanic battery to look after, no machinery to superintend, but were moved by the lightning as it exists in the atmosphere. There was no rumbling of wheels—no tremulousness of motion. We moved silently and steadily as the moon in her orbit. But I discovered that my mind had acquired new power, and moved even more rapidly than our car, far out-stripping the speed of lightning. For rapid as was our flight, I could perfectly note and understand every object we passed, and I reflected upon all with the utmost clearness, and, at the same time composed and delivered discourses on all things in the whole range

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of vision, so as to keep fully up with our journey. The cold snows of winter had been exchanged for the most beautiful summer scenery that the sun ever warmed into life, and joyously smiled upon. Our journey commenced in the later half of the afternoon; and some of the first scenery which attracted my attention seemed to be a combination of parts of views which I had seen. Some of the most beautiful features of numerous Islands in Casco bay, were grouped together, with points and parts of the main land, to form one of the most splendid landscapes that imagination ever painted. Trees, fields wavy crops, water views, dwellings, villages, cities, with the speed of lightning, we were continually passing, and my mind as rapidly grasping and maturely considering every object, composing essays upon them and delivering them to my companion; not in words, for these would answer no purpose; but they seemed to fly off from my heart to his, with the same facility that they rose in my mind. Gradually the sun went down in a fleecy cloud of glory, too bright for the natural eye, but which my own eye was strengthened to gaze upon, as upon every thing else within the range of vision. My vision was enlarged, fully equal to the operations of my mind. Mercury was distinctly visible, and about the size of our half-moon. Venus was apparently two or three feet in diameter, and Jupiter presented a disc apparently about seven feet in diameter. Saturn, too, appeared in similar proportions, with its rings in the most favorable attitude to display the peculiar glory of that planet; and what deeply

interested me was, that I could distinctly see living beings in human form, moving upon the three planets last named. My enlarged vision enabled me to see into the starry heavens, far beyond what any telescope has penetrated, and I felt assured that with proper instruments and opportunity, I could secure an angle, and measure the size and distance of any of the fixed stars of the first magnitude. My discourses embraced a survey of the starry heavens, with various philosophical discussions, and comparisons of hypotheses, all of which seemed to be absolutely complete; and I felt sure my researches would aid greatly in the progress of modern astronomy, and correct many errors and false notions which now retard its progress. Thus we travelled far south of the equator, and then easterly, so as to make a circuit which brought about one half of the surface of the globe within the range of sight, and a similar portion of the starry heavens; all of which was subjected to the close examination that a mind fully enraptured, and moved by lightning, would naturally give to it. The earth was at peace. As the evening advanced, the voice of prayer and praise seemed to ascend from every dwelling.—There was no distressing poverty — no grasping avarice. Plenty and prosperity everywhere abounded, and the temples of God which were everywhere seen, gave evidence that his worship and his blessing went hand in hand through the wide circuit of our journey. Every view of the earth, every human dwelling, every waving field seemed full of God's presence and glory. The name of Christ

was everywhere a perfect talisman, and it was easy to see, that with all the bright beams of God's glory which shone in every part of creation, still the theme of redemption touched a richer chord, and unsealed deeper fountains of feeling than any other. The clear views of the starry heavens were intensely grand and sacred on this account. The whole celestial hemisphere seem radiant with the presence and glory of God, and the heaven of heavens seemed pervaded with the majesty of the Son of God, and the influence of his heavenly mission. It seemed very plain that his incarnation and atonement, and the redemption he wrought out here upon the earth, sent forth a mighty influence, which was felt in the most distant planet, and the sun that shines upon it; and that the transformation which had taken place on the earth was viewed with wonder and adoring love through all the hosts of heaven. When my mind was wrought up to the highest point of wonder and adoration, in view of such glorious manifestations, and my soul was full of inexpressible delight, then, as with the voice of an angel, the passage rung through my ears, and thrilled through my soul again and again, "*It doth not yet appear what we shall be; when He shall appear we shall be like Him; we shall see him as he is.*" My discourses continued embracing every subject, and unfolding the fullest emotions of my soul. They were thrown off, one after another, and such power of language, beauty of expression, and eloquence of style, no mortal tongue ever uttered. You need never ask me to give you a specimen of the style of

those discourses. I can neither write nor utter a single sentence in such words as we employ to convey our thoughts. Nothing but words of fire enchanted and conveyed by electricity could do it justice. In other words, the mind must be in a disordered state, to imitate or originate such compositions. As I closed the last discourse, which dwelt particularly on the influence of human redemption on other orders of intelligences, and upon the moral government of God, and the happiness of the universe, our car gradually checked its velocity, and at length stood still at our starting place. I saw that my discourses, if they could be understood and printed, would make an octavo volume, of some five or six hundred pages, but that it could never be published in the language of sounds. I was soon conscious of lying in my bed, quiet and refreshed. So far from feeling any weakness or weariness from the excessive mental effort of the last half hour, (for it was not above thirty or thirty-five minutes that the vision lasted,) I was perfectly refreshed. I had not felt so much bodily or mental comfort since first attacked. I felt that a change had come, that I was better, and should soon recover. I was directly more fully in possession of myself than I had been, and saw with the utmost clearness that I had been laboring under a state of disordered mental action, almost constantly from the first of my sickness. This evening, as you already know, was the turning point in my sickness. From that very hour I have been recovering with a rapidity which seems almost as wonderful as my excursion.

I hope soon to see you, when I can speak of what I have now written, with less embarrassment than I can write. If I am not mistaken, I have succeeded in writing a more accurate description than I had supposed would be possible. I cannot review it now — no two or three previous letters have so tasked my strength of body and mind as this.

Your affectionate

HUSBAND.

LETTER X.

PREBLE ST. HOUSE, FEB., 5, 1845.

MY DEAR S.—I commence this letter almost with the feeling that it is my last date from the Preble St. House, a place, however, made very dear to me, both by suffering and enjoyment. Were there not another place called "home," with attractions too strong to admit of a moment's comparison, I could very cheerfully remain here weeks longer, and review the scenes of the last four weeks, and write their lessons more deeply on my heart. But there are strong chords fastened on my heart, drawing me to the domestic fireside, where wife and children await our return, and to the beloved church and congregation that have attended on my ministry, and shown their love to the gospel by so many acts of kindness to us. I never felt so anxious to be again in my pulpit, as I now do. Friends here, are afraid I shall go into it next Sabbath, and that this would be hazardous. I feel perfectly at rest in

the matter, that the Providence of God will direct aright, and that we can safely trust his decision. My task is almost done, so far as my spectral visitants, or the journal of my sickness is concerned. The rest is rather the history of my recovery, which need not be minutely recorded. One or two circumstances, however, deserve attention, as they throw light upon the condition and necessities of the sick. One was, the extreme weakness after the crisis of the fever. Up to that period, the feverish excitement kept up a semblance of strength, so that causes and occurrences became painfully annoying, *after the crisis*, which did not disturb me at all before. The light, which till Friday night had been freely admitted, with nothing but thin white curtains to protect me, after the crisis, I could not endure at all; and it became necessary, for two or three days, to make the room so dark, that persons coming in, could not see so as to recognise each other, or find the way to my bed without a guide. But when by experiment I could endure a little light, the joy it gave me was intense; and when, in a cloudy day, I could have the curtain removed so as to look out a few moments upon the snow and the buildings, which certainly, from our windows, are not the most beautiful, it seemed to me I had never seen anything which could awaken deeper emotions of beauty and grandeur. And, till my strength of vision was restored, so as to see as usual, whenever I looked out, my mind would be constantly revolving that passage, "Truly, the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun." So of hearing; our

room, situated near the door of entrance, exposed us to a considerable noise from those who put up at this house. There were times before the crisis, when noises were very annoying, but still more so afterwards; especially anything out of the usual course. One evening two young fellows came in, who seemed determined to prove themselves rowdies of the lower sort. Outraging the general quiet and order of the house, they must talk nonsense and sing some low, silly songs; and then, they must dance after the most approved fashion of cowhide boots, when the chief end is noise and bodily exercise. This was almost insufferable, and especially as their sleeping room was directly over mine, and they seemed to feel, that they must consecrate that with their devotions to the god of nonsense. But when I made known this grievance to the master of the house, it was soon abated, and finally removed. Visitors, of whom we had large numbers, did not seem to weary or injure me at all, till after the crisis of my disease. I could talk earnestly, and on various subjects, and felt as much delight and enthusiasm on favorite subjects, as ever in my best health. But after the crisis, it soon became manifest to friends, that frequent visits were injuring me. Brethren of the order at once set themselves to correcting the evil, and on Wednesday they posted on my door the following notice.

I. O. O. F.

Ligonia Lodge, No. 5. F. L. & T. Jan 22, 1845.

Brethren of the order, and others are respectfully requested not to visit Bro. P., unless they are inti-

mate friends, or call on special business; and when they do, to converse as little as possible.

Per order, ——— ———

Chairman Visiting Committee.

This seemed to me rather a hard case, for I desired very much to converse with all I saw, and to see many visitors. I prevailed upon S. to write under it in pencil mark the following:—Clergymen may be admitted at all times, unless Miss S. thinks it is not proper. I can now see that this measure for excluding visitors, was a measure of vast importance to my recovery. I doubt whether it would have been possible to have saved me from serious injury of brain or lungs, if visitors had not been restrained. Another feature of extreme weakness, was developed in my sleep. I had slept but little for some nights before the crisis, and the same difficulty remained for a time afterwards. But there was this difference. Before the crisis, free perspiration was uniformly a source of relief, and evidently contributed much to diminish the febrile action. But after the crisis, for several nights, I could sleep only from ten to fifteen minutes at a time, before I would be thoroughly drenched in perspiration, and then a sudden change would come, seeming like the condensing of steam; and then the saturated garments, and the drops that stood upon me, would seem like ice; and nothing but a sudden increase of covering, and brisk friction could prevent very severe chills. And if I slept beyond fifteen minutes, my mind, on waking, would be totally bewildered. So late as Friday evening, after I began to recover, and when I had

come to incline to sleep, and fall asleep ... the evening while waiting for the watchers, S. sat by the bed, very much exhausted with a week's incessant care, leaned her head upon the bed. I soon fell asleep, and the first I knew was a sensation of coldness, extending from my chest, nearly to my feet. I thought I had been laid into a pool or puddle of water, and I could distinctly trace the process of freezing in. There I seemed frozen in solid, with only my feet and head and shoulders out, and they were exposed to a cold winter atmosphere, and then there was no one to help me. I thought S. had gone off and left me, and I could not make any noise, nor could I get to the bell cord to ring; that I was about resigning myself to my fate, when I felt a soft hand on my face, but still I was sadly bewildered, and came near tearing my clothes from me as means of getting out of the ice. It was sometime before I knew where I was, or who I was, and probably seemed more like a grieved helpless child, than during any other period of my sickness. I resorted to friction with brush and flannel, as soon as I had sense enough, and when I found that S. was there, and pileing on clothes, and doing all that could be done, I believe I cried for joy. I could not have slept more than thirty or forty minutes, but the effect was great. I did not fully recover from it till towards night the next day. Although in all other respects I was gaining, my mind and nervous system still trembled under the shock. These night sweats were very unpleasant, and, but for the most careful attention of my watchers to wake me at the

it moment, it seemed to me I could hardly have survived them. I should have been chilled, or taken cold so as to renew my disease. Two or three times I had slight seasons of mental aberration from this cause. It seemed a great point gained when I could sleep an hour, and not awake in the cold chills of these night sweats. And now that for four or five nights I can sleep most of the time without injury, and awake refreshed, the time past seems almost like a dream. But surely, whether dream or reality, the arms of our heavenly Father encircled me, and his angel watched over me.

Your affectionate

HUSBAND.

LETTER XI.

PREBLE ST. HOUSE, FEB. 5. 1845.

MY DEAR S.—My pen still runs on, so that I must give it scope enough to write one more letter before leaving this consecrated chamber. In your last, speaking of my rapid recovery and prospect of return, you say, "It seems like a dream to think of it. 'Seeing is believing.' My faith does not extend much farther than that. * * I am always sure that if Christ should speak to me audibly, his first words would be, "*O thou of little faith.*" I am always repenting, but never believing. I have been puzzling my brains in vain to conjecture what necessity there could be for your having this fever in Portland. What good it could do at all for you to be sick away

from all who love you. Doubtless you have formed some new friendships, but such a sickness is a most exorbitant price to pay for new friends, when you have more old ones than you can treat with common civility. Doubtless it is for a wise purpose. If it was that you might be an example of faith and patience, very much benefit must result to many persons, to meet my ideas of loss and profit. If Satan desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat, I hope you will, to his great disappointment, come out of the sieve, not chaff, but "Pearl of great price." Whatever the lesson may be, I trust and believe, and hope and pray that you may prove an apt scholar, that one lesson may suffice, and that you will not, like me, be compelled to repeat, and repeat every few months. till you all but sink under the task, while the *why* is still a mystery, and you remain as ignorant as ever." I write out this passage, because I see it in your very heart, flowing out in all its fulness. I am reminded also of those kind words of the Great Teacher. "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Faith reels and staggers sometimes through infirmity of the flesh. For when we, through weakness, dare believe only as far as we can see, and then through disease can see only a little way, and that but faintly or unsteadily, then it is hard for us to understand the "why." But there is one thing which I always notice, and that is, when a crisis comes, and you have no other resort, you always have faith enough to meet it, just as well as if you could see the *why*. You recollect too, that it has been a favorite maxim

with me, when the *why* is not visible. "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." John 13: 7. Now I think this is broad enough to cover all the clamorous whys that come up to question and perplex faith in the sorest extremities that arise. But as it regards my sickness, and the reasons and circumstances of it, I believe there are many things that we may know already. Aside from all the queries you mention, each of which may have its meaning, I may mention several things.

1. It has taught me a great lesson in relation to the value of health. You know that however much I have enjoyed life and health, I have not so valued health as to be always careful of it. Your frequent cautions to me on this head, and your own sufferings before my eyes, have still left me a dull scholar. I have learned a great lesson on this subject, if it will but last.

2. It has taught me a better estimate of my own constitution. I have almost felt as if this was invincible, and could not easily be shaken. Now I have learned that a slight cause may break it down and leave me weak and helpless as a child; and what a mercy is this lesson! learned too, as I hope, without the ruin of my constitution, for surely it has rallied with energy, and my rapid recovery is evidence, that with care it may serve me yet for a time.

3. I have learned lessons in regard to sickness of great value to a minister, or to any one who has to deal with the sick. The narrative I have given you

will show this in some degree. I have learned how unsafe a guide may be the wishes and plans of a sick person in certain stages of disease. I have learned how easy it is for the mind to be unsettled and disordered so that its action is all unnatural. I have learned how important are prompt and careful attentions, and skilful nursing and watching, and confidence in all these, and in a physician. Confidence which leaves the mind at rest — frees it from anxiety, and inspires it with hope. It seems to me that neglect, or serious deficiency in any one of these particulars, during the first two weeks of my sickness, would have been fatal to me. What a source of joy it was to me every day, with slight exceptions, to feel that everything was done just right.

4. I have learned that it is a blessed thing to have a firm hope in Christ to rest on in sickness. It is an anchor to the soul. What could I have done without this anchor? My poor brain was like a ship tossing on the billows; but the name of Christ was at all times a strong hold. Prayer, and the word of God were among my most efficacious medicines. They seemed to be operating on my mind with as direct effect on my health as were the medicines upon my physical system.

So it was with sweet, gentle music. It was like the breath of heaven causing the very fibres of my soul to vibrate so soothingly, that it was like a refreshing cordial. It was not musical *sounds* alone, for the effect depended very much upon the sentiment. Those tunes were most effectual, which were

ded with Christ and the spirit of pure devotion.

5. I have learned that the doctrines of the gospel as I have embraced and preached them, are as precious in sickness as in health. I have before referred to this, and here repeat, that the great features of the evangelical system of faith, the way of salvation, the character of Christ as a Savior, and the methods of his grace as I have received and preached them to my fellow-creatures, seemed to me indescribably precious in the times of greatest weakness and suffering. I felt as if they were all matters of personal experience with me, and they seemed to lie upon the very face, and be engraven on the heart, and constitute the essence of those parts of the Bible read to me by the watchers. These embraced a large portion of the shorter epistles, besides parts of the Romans, Hebrews and Corinthians, and considerable portions of the gospels by John and Luke. I recollect repeatedly entering at once upon the exposition of passages read by the watchers, so full of light they seemed on the christian system.

6. Another lesson learned, is, that sickness is a most unfavorable time to prepare for death. I do not see how it would have been possible for me at any stage of my sickness, till nearly removed, to have taken up the matter of personal salvation as an inquirer, with any hope of coming to a right and safe decision. The review of my hopes and my condition mentioned in a former letter, was as much as I could possibly summon my mind to at the time, although drawn by a powerful impulse, which seemed almost

like instinct. And I do not see how I could have done that, if surrounded by watchers, or at any later period for the first fifteen or sixteen days. O I have felt as if, should I be able to preach again, I should preach more earnestly the great truths of the gospel, and urge upon my hearers more solemnly the necessity of embracing them, and making sure of Christ while in health and vigor.

7. I have learned lessons of great interest in relation to the power of the mind in its disordered states. I esteem it one of the special favors of God that in nearly all of my wildest mental reveries, and in the highest stages of disordered mental excitement, I was so nearly able to trace, recognize and remember what passed. It is to me an extremely interesting view that it is possible to be visited with apparitions and spectral visitants, with so little annoyance, and that by previous acquaintance with them, and with Mental Philosophy generally, their power to annoy a sick person, can be almost wholly destroyed. I have no doubt that the suffering occasioned by them in fevers, and in cases of severe excitement, and then of prostration of the nervous system, is very great; and it would be a great point gained, if children and youth should learn the actual character of these visitors, and the disordered states of the mind which lead to them, that, whenever they should occur, they would be no more distressed by them than by their shadows, or the echo of their voice.

But I speak of the *power* of the mind in its disordered state. I have no doubt that my mind was frequently in a state to take up and discuss a sub-

ject with more clearness and strength, and beauty of language, than I could ever command in health, and this at times when I could not possibly walk across the floor. I am satisfied that some views of geology, and philosophy, and expositions of scripture, and criticisms on the sentiment and style of articles read to me by watchers, and upon the character of the authors, were more vivid and striking than I could write when in perfect health, while perhaps at the times these were given off, I was so feeble in body, that it was very difficult to utter words; and even what little strength there was, resulted rather from the excitement which the mind in its disordered state produced upon the bodily organs. In the last reverie which I described, beside being filled with the vivid conceptions of such myriads of natural objects, and with the most intense delight while viewing objects with the speed of lightning, I am very sure that my mind, in that half hour, actually composed, and in the most glowing and finished style of composition, such as I was never yet capable of producing in health, matter enough, could it be put on paper, to fill a closely printed octavo volume of some six hundred pages; and this, too, without the least weariness or exhaustion; but on the contrary producing the most soothing and salutary effects upon mind and body both. What doctrines or hypotheses this fact might seem to confirm in reference to the power of the mind, when unencumbered with this frail body, or invested with a spiritual body, I will not attempt to say.

You will readily call to mind certain speculations of Coleridge, and views advanced by Prof. Upham, where Coleridge's views are recorded.

I can readily believe the truth of Dr. Beecher's description of the rapid action of memory and conscience, he says "The retrospections of the mind are as rapid as the flashings of lightning. More rapid are they than the transmission of ideas by the telegraph between Washington and Baltimore, or than that transmission will be when, as such may happen, thoughts are carried in a few moments round the earth.

"I knew a man who said that, in falling twenty feet, when he expected to die, the thoughts of a lifetime crowded through his mind. He thought of his business, of his wife, of his children, and of that eternity to which he was going. A life seemed to pass through his mind, and nothing was lost. So it will be when memory summons the acts of life at the last tribunal. Nothing is lost. Thoughts once impressed, but apparently lost, will come out again. A life is written on our memory, as with invisible ink. It is apparently lost to our frail sight while here. But in the judgment light, it will be seen enveloped around us, and will be unrolled till every line and letter is made visible. I knew a sailor once, who said that when once in a storm on the giddy mast, while trying to furl a sail, and could not, he cursed God. It passed out of his mind for twenty years, but now, in a season of excitement, he said, now I remember it, I am lost."

There is nothing improbable in such statements, after the experience of excited mental action I have realized in this sickness.

Another topic I intended to speak of in this letter, but its length forbids this, and I reserve it for another, or for familiar fireside talk.

Your affectionate

HUSBAND.

LETTER XI.

MY DEAR S. — My last letter enumerated several important lessons learned in this sickness away from home, and closed with the intimation that another might be added. It is this — *The practical test and illustration of Odd Fellowship.* This illustration has been the more full and impressive from the circumstance that I was away from home. Had it been in the midst of my own beloved people, and had the members of our own Lodge done all that has been done by the brethren here, it might be supposed that it was done from feelings of attachment growing out of the pastoral relation and the workings of Odd Fellowship had not been so distinctly manifest. You already know the general fact that I was at once adopted and cared for as a brother and every provision made for my comfort by day and by night, which human skill and sympathy could devise. The chairman of the visiting committee of Ligonia Lodge was the first to know

of my case. The committee consists of seven, each of which has his day in the week to look after any case of sickness among brethren, and secure watchers and whatever may be needed, and all co-operate and communicate with each other through the chairman. The case of a sick brother is promptly reported in the Lodge to which he belongs and my case was reported to all the Lodges in the city, as well as to the H. Lodge. Watchers were drawn from the different Lodges, and great care manifested to select skilful watchers. As there are some eight hundred men in the prime of life in the three Lodges it was not difficult to secure a good selection. For thirteen nights two brethren were promptly at my side each evening at a suitable hour—men of intelligence —and one or both of them having previous experience in care of the sick. When so far recovered as to need less attention, but one was needed, and young men with less experience could then take their first lessons. About 30 different members of the order were called to my bedside as watchers, and the interview enjoyed with them in this brief acquaintance will not soon be forgotten. Daily my table was furnished with whatever could be useful or administer to my recovery or comfort. The kind sympathies which were daily overflowing were fitted to soothe and rejoice my heart. When it was seen that company must be restrained, the promptness and delicacy with which this was done was a delightful feature of the arrangements. It is difficult to see how any arrangements could be more

skilfully made or better adapted to promote a speedy recovery.

1. One interesting feature of the order is that it becomes thus a school of sympathy and kindness. Is a brother sick? His case is reported and the state of his disease at each meeting, and the hundreds of members are all thus led to sympathize in his suffering. The feelings of humanity are thus called into play, and the sickness of one awakens sympathy in the bosoms of scores or hundreds.

2. Another feature of the order, is, that if is a school for training the members to take care of the sick. Each member is liable to be called to watch with the sick, in the fulfilment of a voluntary pledge or obligation. He feels assured that in acquiring skill in watching with the sick, he is only discharging a reasonable duty imposed by his obligation, but one which others at some day must perform for him in accordance with the same obligation.

3. Another feature is that four times every year each member is laying aside and consecrating a small portion of his earnings to meet the necessities of the sick, to bury the dead, to cheer the widow and to educate the orphan. This habit of consecrating a small sum periodically to the cause of humanity exerts a happy influence in resisting selfishness and promoting benevolence.

4. Then every case of sickness, suffering and necessity which draws assistance from the treasury of the lodge draws a voluntary offering from each member's heart through the act of his vote. In all

these ways are the feelings of humanity and benevolence called into play, and the exercise of such feelings is fitted to do good. It makes the individual better. It is idle to pretend that the practice of these duties leads men to overlook and treat with indifference, or in any way operate unfavorably upon those who are not members. The cultivation and development of the benevolent feelings in a limited circle prepares them to act in a broader one, and the example of benevolence practically acted out in a community, operates beyond the limits of the circle in which benevolent acts are performed The temperance pledge, where members act consistently, operates far beyond the limits of the society embraced in the pledge. So with Odd Fellowship. With all the prejudices against secret societies in general, and this in particular, at the outset, it is manifest that the princlples of benevolence and charity have been materially increased in the community by the establishment of the Order in this city.

5. Another feature of interest is, the cementing of the bonds of society and promoting fraternal feelings among those of different professions, parties and denominations. Among my thirty watchers, and scores of visiters, were members, I believe, of every church and congregation of the city, unless it be the Roman Catholics and the Millerites. There were lawyers, publishers, brokers, merchants, bakers, bread carriers, tavern keepers, tailors, barbers, cabinet makers, blacksmiths and sailors, besides clergymen of some seven or eight different congre-

gations. Then there were Democrats and Whigs, and men who are not unconditionally pledged to either of these parties. Men of all these callings, professions and parties are associated in the fellowship of this order, and it exerts a powerful influence on their social relations and sympathies, in overcoming the repellances of party and sect, and cultivating a blander and broader humanity. Taking our common humanity as its basis, and honor, integrity and benevolence as its conditions of membership, there is a platform on which honest men of all parties can meet and exchange the friendly greetings, the kind courtesies of benevolence and charity, and find sympathy with truth-loving minds to which they might otherwise be strangers. It has been delightful to feel the warm gushings of human kindness flowing from such variety of sources, and in so many different channels.

6. It has been interesting to see that a very general impression favorable to spiritual religion is made upon the members. With all the diversity of religious sentiment and profession it was easy to approach each member on the claims of personal religion; and all were ready to admit that the obligations, the emblems, and ceremonials of the order imperiously urged upon them duties, such as religion enjoins, and such as they could not fully meet without divine assistance. Every one was ready to admit most freely that he ought to be a better man for the instructions and privileges of the fraternity, and that the motives to a religious life were increased by their connexion with the order. The

effect of these instructions and obligations in curing habits of profanity and others of a kindred character, in those given to such practices before seeking admission, is an interesting feature. If one were unwittingly admitted with such habits, be has seen and felt the inconsistency of them with the plainest principles he has professed, and felt constrained to relinquish them. Several interesting cases of entire reform in these respects have come to my knowledge. And if a member fall into any such habits, the principles of the order enable and constrain the brethren who understand his case to counsel and reclaim him, if kind and faithful reproof can do it. The association becomes thus a sort of mutual insurance office, in relation to morals as well as in relation to care and pecuniary aid in sickness. The order is thus in its natural tendency, directly favorable to morals and vital piety, and gives a minister of the gospel favorable access, and the facilities for doing good to numbers who otherwise might not be accessible.

I am satisfied that a faithful minister in this city may increase his influence, and do immense good directly, and indirectly, by a connexion with the order, and an intelligent participation in its exercises. Probably a residence in the city for months, in health, would not have given me so decisive and impressive a conviction of this truth, as the scenes of this sickness have occasioned. There is, in the mysteries of the order, a key to the heart and consciences of men, as well as to the pecuniary benefits,

secured by its constitution and laws. I could illustrate this by examples, if it were necessary.

7. I have found by experience that the workings of the system are very favorable to recovery in sickness, and in my case at least, a real help. At first I felt as if I must come home. That I could not be reconciled to being sick elsewhere, and that if I were to die, it must be in the bosom of my family, and among my own people. I knew not how to meet the expenses of sickness here. I was however ob liged to learn the lesson of submission, and wher this point was gained, how perfectly was every necessity met, every want anticipated! I had no care or anxiety in relation to watchers, or their skill and capacity. There was no room for anxiety or disquietude. It might be said perhaps, that all would have been done which was necessary without Odd Fellowship; and I have reason to believe that christian friends would have exhibited commendable sympathy; but it is impossible that the same perfect system and arrangement could have been made without a similar organization. It is the perfect system and order secured by Odd Fellowship that is the charm of its action in sickness, where properly understood, as it seems to be here. Had it not been for the entire freedom from solicitude secured by these arrangements, my sufferings must have been increased, if my recovery had not been defeated.— Then had it not been for the benefits conferred in sickness, I would have been unable to pay expenses incurred. The sum guaranteed by the laws of the order were promptly paid over to me by the Li-

gonia Lodge, and with what I had in possession, as my physician declines any fees for services, enables me to pay all bills and our passage home. For such a result I feel truly grateful as I know you will.

8. I have found, too, when apparently on the borders of the grave, that it is a privilege, if I must leave wife and children in poverty, to leave them encircled with the sympathies of Odd Fellowship. I know that if I were called away while connected with our beloved church, that their sympathies would surround you; but I know too, something of the hardships and privations of the families of ministers left penniless in the bosom of kind people, and I could feel assured that in this Order there was an *additional* safeguard, so far as human sympathy can relieve the pressure of widowhood and orphanage. I am more and more impressed with the idea that this institution is to be one of the great instrumentalities to soothe the horrors that death throws in upon the family circle, and to develope that broader humanity which is yet to bless the earth. It is to do this not by superseding the blessed influences of the gospel and the appropriate mission of the visible church, or by the discovery of any new principle not embraced in the gospel, but by the peculiar method of employing established principles and revealed truth, and bringing multitudes to contemplate, acknowledge and act upon the principles of Friendship, Love and Truth, before they are prepared for membership in the visible church. I am persuaded that if intelligent christians shall em-

brace the facilities afforded by the order, to impress its great principles and lessons upon those who, in form, embrace them, a powerful antidote to scepticism will thus be applied and a healthful religious influence diffused, in place of a careless indifference or a narrow sectarianism. In this hope I cherish the progress of the order with deep interest, as it will tend to counteract that sectarian, exclusive spirit which is wont to sever christians of different denominations. The principles of the order summon the brethren of all sects around the couch of a sick brother, and around his open grave, and then around his afflicted wife and children, without inquiring what was his religious creed, or what may be theirs, and without inquiring after his political relations or preferences. But it was not my design to detail all the bearings of Odd Fellowship, or attempt its eulogy, or defence; but to notice rather its practical developments as exhibited in this sickness; and with this I close the journal of my fever and leave the scenes of the sick room, with its spectral visitants, to join you and our loved ones in the endearments of home.

Your affectionate

HUSBAND.

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