

Propositions respecting the principles of Good and Evil and their operations upon the principles of universal life.

I. The principles of Good and Evil are real & substantial - not imaginary.

**Proof.** - If the principles or elements of Good & Evil exist at all, they must be both real: for, if one is imaginary only, then the other must be equally so - otherwise they are not opposites or contrary one to the other. But how can there be an image without a reality? If we say Good is real & Evil only imaginary, or merely the want of Good, & yet is opposed to Good, we make nothing opposed to something, which is a self-evident impossibility. Hence we just prove that Evil does not exist at all, upon this hypothesis: since of course it must be nothing - having no existence. But this cannot be, for there can be no image formed in the mind without some reality to form it, and though the form of the image in the mind may be different from the form of the reality; yet the elementary principle must exist, otherwise nothing produces something - this negatives itself by making an effect without a cause; therefore, something must exist contrary to Good, to cause an imagination contrary to it.

II. They are in themselves sensible, active and everlasting Powers.

**Proof.** - That they are sensible and active needs no demonstration but our daily experience. If they are not everliving, then all things that spring from them may die and come to an end and of course a complete state of nonexistence of all things may take place. But this cannot be,

because things do exist, both Good and Evil, and certainly that which is capable of originating existence, must be able to increase and continue it: wherefore they must be the most substantial of all powers.

III. - As these powers and elementary principles are diametrically opposite to each other, they could never have proceeded from the same source; but ever have been, and ever must be eternal opposites.

Proof. - We may as well admit that the principle or power of Good sprang from Evil, as that the principles of Evil sprang from Good. As soon as we admit that the principle or power of Evil is not self-existent and eternal; but by any means, however remote, sprang from Good, or the powers of its creation, we destroy all distinctions of opposites and directly declare, that real Evil does not exist at all; since it is impossible for any thing to produce, of its own nature, its own opposite. Upon this plan, apparent Evil is only a deceptive delusion - has no real existence, and is therefore, in fact, nothing.

IV. These primary principles are both necessarily self-existent and eternal; but Good is more powerful than Evil.

Proof. - If there ever was a time when one of these powers did not exist then one must have sprung by some means from the other. Since one can not be an opposite to itself. Hence if one is not self-existent, that one must have been created by the other, and of course must always have operated for and not against its creator, for it could not operate contrary to the source of its life nor change its nature, any more than a stream can run against its fountain, or change from fresh water to salt

unless attracted or impelled by a foreign power, or changed by some foreign infusion - in which case, that power or infusion must have been an anterior opposite. But both being self-existent does not argue that they are equal in power, any more than the existence of darkness argues that it is equal in power to light. For two beings or principles could not possibly exist exactly equal in power, because they must become one, if not opposite; and if opposite, by their clashing they must exactly destroy each other, and all that spring from them. But we see that light is always able to dispel darkness as far as it operates. So is the operation of the power of Good upon Evil.

V. There is a primary Agent or Being in the principle and element of Good, which is called God, and a primary Agent or Being in the principle & element of Evil, which is called the Devil or the Prince of Devils.

Proof. - If there were not first beings in each of these elementary principles there could be no second beings, nor any beings at all; but, as we see that there are good and evil beings, we must know that there are first or primary beings in each of these principles; and those beings must be the primary authors or respective fathers of all other beings in their own elementary principles. Hence God is represented in Scripture &c as the father of all good spirits - Angels and Men - and the Devil as the father of all evil spirits and beings.

VI. The supposition that there is but one Eternal, Self-existent Principle and that to be the Element of Good, negatives the very nature of the Gospel & its testimony & destroys the distinction between Virtue and Vice.

*Proof.* - The following are self evident propositions: -

1. The effect is like its cause in nature and quality - so that the cause is known by the effect: "Ye shall know them by their fruit". No effect can therefore be of a nature superior to its cause - hence, if we see real good fruit, we know that there is a good principle of real life from whence it springs; but if it be said that evil is only a want of good, and is not a real sensible active principle in itself, we must conclude that, when we see evil fruit, it springs from nothing; which fruit not being superior to its cause, must of course be nothing. Therefore no such thing as evil fruit exists.
2. "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth that which is good, and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil; for of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," not that the man's actions produce the evil, but it is the production of an evil treasure or principle in his life; But, upon the above hypothesis there is no evil treasure, and of course no evil can be brought forth: which negativer, the assertion of our Saviour.
3. If we say Virtue is real Good, Vice must be real Evil or it cannot be a real opposite. But it cannot be a real evil unless there is a real principle for it to spring from. Upon the above hypothesis Vice does not exist; for if it can only derive from nothing, it must be nothing in itself - thus all distinction between them is lost - for being but one principle, and that Good, Virtue and Vice must both be equally good.
- 4<sup>th</sup>. The "invisible things are understood by the things that are made". Throughout all creation, we see that all things of the same nature of any elementary principle, will attract to that element and finally be

united with it. If therefore, there is but one principle of life and that Good, all must come forth from that element - of course must attract to it - then all distinction between Good and Evil is annihilated.

5<sup>o</sup> But all creation shows that there are two real substantial opposites, Good and Evil, and that Evil is as really active as Good. How can a man be tempted, even against his will, if there is not a power of Evil? We can, therefore, make no consistent system without we consider that there are two primary self-existent Eternal Powers; that Man, in his probationary state, is placed between their operation; and that he has the power of free choice. The goodness of the Good Principle is shown by so overruling the Evil, that no intelligent being can be finally overcome by it without his own free and sensible consent, and the evil of the Evil Principle is shown by the unreasonableness of its operation, and the vexation and misery it finally produces. Here we have a consistent system which does not contradict itself.

Positions concerning the principles of  
Life and Existence.

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I. The principle or elements of life have a necessary existence through all things, and all Worlds - it pervades the Universe.

Proof. - Wherever there is an existence, there must be a certain life to produce and support it. And as the universe is formed and directed upon a consistent, connected and regular plan, and produces rational and intelligent beings, there must be an intelligent reasonable and everlasting producer and director, connecting, setting in order and operating through all things and supporting all, otherwise they could never have been set in order. The same power is necessary to preserve this order; or all things would jumble into confusion & come to an end and loose their existence; for, when life ceases to operate death must take place - and if it is the life of existence that ceases, annihilation must follow; and this must be the case if the life of a sensible power ceases. Though life may be so modified that it constitute what we call inanimate matter, or the mere life of earthly particles - yet it has a direct connexion with the great principle of life, and is supported by it; otherwise this life or matter could not exist. As the universe is infinite, it must require an infinite Agent, endowed with infinite power and wisdom to direct and support it.

II. - It is in itself necessarily everliving and everlasting.

*Proof.* If life did not exist and circulate in every element, living beings could not be produced through nor in them - hence, if life ever ceases to be in any portion of the universe, so far real death must ensue and of course annihilation must follow; and if any portion of real life can be annihilated, then positive death may take place and destroy all life - and of course, universal life may be succeeded by universal death: for it is as certain that all life may be positively annihilated as a part.

*III. Life is action - therefore, to destroy action would annihilate life.*

*Proof.* It is self-evident that real life must act: otherwise it is not life; therefore, if action is destroyed, life must cease to exist. To put the body in such a state that the life by any means cannot act, you would at once destroy or separate life from it - thus it is with every thing else that ever had life.

*IV. The external operations of life may be bounded and obstructed, changed and disorganized; but the real Spirit of life can never be annihilated, nor ever cease to act.*

*Proof* It is evident that the intelligent rational powers of the mind are a completely organized system, and constitute the real man - and that they have the superior power of, and over, the physical body; or, at least they are capable of it. This physical body is therefore but an outward figure of this intelligent spirit and organization. This intelligent body is what gives man his superiority over the animal and vegetable creation; and in this his life is of a higher order

than any thing on earth. Since, then, this intelligent system is superior to the physical body and able to govern it; and also, to make all the natural elements subservient to its own use, it is inconsistent to suppose that it can be disorganized and loose its sensibility for want of that body to which it is so superior, any more than to suppose that the power which impels any machinery looses its existence by the disorganization of that machinery. Besides, if real life is once organized and then goes back to a disorganized state, it is not of an increasing nature; but condescends, and of course may cease to exist. for it is incontestible, that any thing that can decrease in its real life or matter, can, by the same process, come to an end and cease to be.

V. The life of man acts primarily in and by sensible powers: therefore those sensible powers must act free.

Proof. It is evident that every effectual action, of an intelligent being is first conceived in the mind and operates there by sensible & knowing powers to produce the action. Otherwise the action must be forced by a foreign agency; and in that case, the action is not his own, but the agents: as much so as the action of the machine, is the action of the agent who sets it in motion.

VI. The life of man must necessarily act free and independent of compulsion in its sphere; because, to deprive a sensible power from acting freely, must deprive it from acting at all and consequently annihilate it.

Proof. 1. If there be any thing that operates irresistably upon an

intelligent being, whatever it may be and however it may operate, (whether externally or internally - whether in thought, word or deed), if the operation be forced beyond the free choice, and action of his sensible and knowing powers, who cannot see, that the being in this case, is as much a machine (as to the action) as inanimate matter impelled by wind, fire or water?

2. We may destroy the organization of the eye, so that the corporeal eye can see nothing; - yet, if the man ever had the sense of sight, he will see every object in the mind that his eye ever saw, and doubtless will dream of new sights as well as any one whose corporeal sight is ever so good. This is the operation of the sensible power of sight. But let this power or operation in the mind be lost or destroyed, and man must be shrouded in total darkness as to the sense of objects; but while this is alive it will act free in its operation. Present an object to the seeing corporeal eye and it is not all the power in the universe that can prevent its perceiving it and transmitting a sense of it to the mind - nor is there any power that can hinder the mind from forming some idea upon the object thus perceived. Again, touch the living body with any object, and the sense of feeling cannot be prevented, by any means, from transmitting the sensibility of the touch, according to its degree, to the mind; and the mind will immediately through the sense of sight and feeling form a figure of the object - And thus we see that the only way to prevent the above results of free action, is either to prevent the presentation of the objects which excite the aforesaid actions, or else to destroy the sense of sight and feeling - So, also, of the rest of the senses. -

for, according to the state of those senses where the presentation or touch is made, the results will be completely an uncontrolled action. But, as there is a superior power to man, the channel for any of his senses to operate in his corporal body may be disorganized so that the sight, touch &c cannot be presented; in which case those senses cannot physically act; but if the sense itself is finally promoted from acting in its internal state it must be annihilated: for the very existence of sense is action

VII. It is necessarily the nature of real life to improve and increase; hence it follows, that when a portion of real life is framed into an organized and sensible being, that being cannot be dissolved.

Proof. Life may by its operation organize or disorganize matter, but this no more proves the disorganization of life, when once organized, than man's organizing or disorganizing any machinery proves that he himself is disorganized - in fact, it only proves his own superior organization.

VIII. From the above positions it results that the spirit or real life of man, is a completely free agent in its sphere - as free as God is in his - & hence Jesus Christ properly saith "he called them Gods unto whom the word of God came" It was to this intelligent life to whom the word of God came.

Proof. We have seen from the foregoing proofs that, though the senses of seeing, feeling &c may be prevented from acting by keeping from them the objects which excite to action, yet when such objects come in contact with them, the results are uncontrolled operations,

according to the nature of the connection with the objects coming in contact with them; and so of the rest of the sensible powers. Here is the sphere of man - here only is he bounded. Whatever object man is prevented [externally or internally, physically or mentally] from seeing, hearing, feeling &c, and thus from having his senses to come in contact with it, he can have no operative knowledge concerning such object - whether of a spiritual or temporal nature - and of course no agency; but whatever is presented and comes in contact with his senses; those sensible powers will have an uncontrolled operation respecting them: - that is, they cannot be prevented by any foreign power - hence the agency must be free. Thus we see that such a free operation cannot be prevented unless the senses can become dead - and if life, after having been organized into sensible faculties and powers, can go back and leave its sensibility, then life may die and of course all life may cease, as proved by the IV. th. Position - which is an untenable supposition - But, the senses are, from their mixed state, liable to be disordered by clashing principles - the objects presented to them may also be in deceptive positions; therefore the operation of the senses may be more or less delusive. Hence results the necessity of a judge to decide rightly and prevent deception. This power of decision cannot be a power foreign from the creature - it must be a present acting power in the senses; for the senses would immediately protest against any foreign decision not understood and agreed to by a judge of their own - as may be easily seen. Man is endowed with reasoning powers - that is, the faculty of trying and comparing causes and effects, and thus coming to a consistent

judgement of right and wrong, according to the light and knowledge in his sphere of action. He has a seat in the mind for this faculty, which seat is the element of consideration and is the centre of the mind, round which all the senses revolve. Here he can try, judge and decide rightly and properly respecting all things in his sphere. Beyond this, nothing concerns him. "Thus saith the Lord, come now and let us reason together;" that is, look fairly into causes and effects and you will leave your evil ways - again "thus saith the Lord consider your ways" and in obedience to this, he promises "from this day will I bless you". This is the only path of wisdom - "consider your ways and be wise" this shows that wisdom, to know what to do, comes by consideration. Here is man's agency - here he may reign uncontrolled Lord - that is, he is not compelled to act contrary to his best judgement. And he never can be faulted - never, by any process, can he feel any rational condemnation in his mind while he brings every presentation of cause and effect, according to his best light and knowledge, to this judge and carefully and impartially abides by its decision. What person does not know by experience, if he will carefully consider the matter, that he never felt any rational condemnation when he had truly done this? His rational judge above stated, is God's Vicegerent in Man - it is that which gives a true account to the Divine Governor, and from this account there is no appeal - his sentence leaves man finally in exactly that state of justification or condemnation which he justly merits: for it is always given according to the power, light and knowledge of the rational being - therefore, his happiness or misery are in exact proportion thereto.

IX. Man being proper Lord of his own sphere, does not render him independent of the Divine Agent who is Lord of all Spheres. Though he must necessarily operate and act, man is not compelled to act in his own sphere in any particular manner; but has the power of self-action and self-direction. This is so far from taking away his accountability to the Lord of all, that his accountability for the improvement of his sphere springs from this very cause and is therefore the only foundation to shew the benevolence, goodness and justice of God.

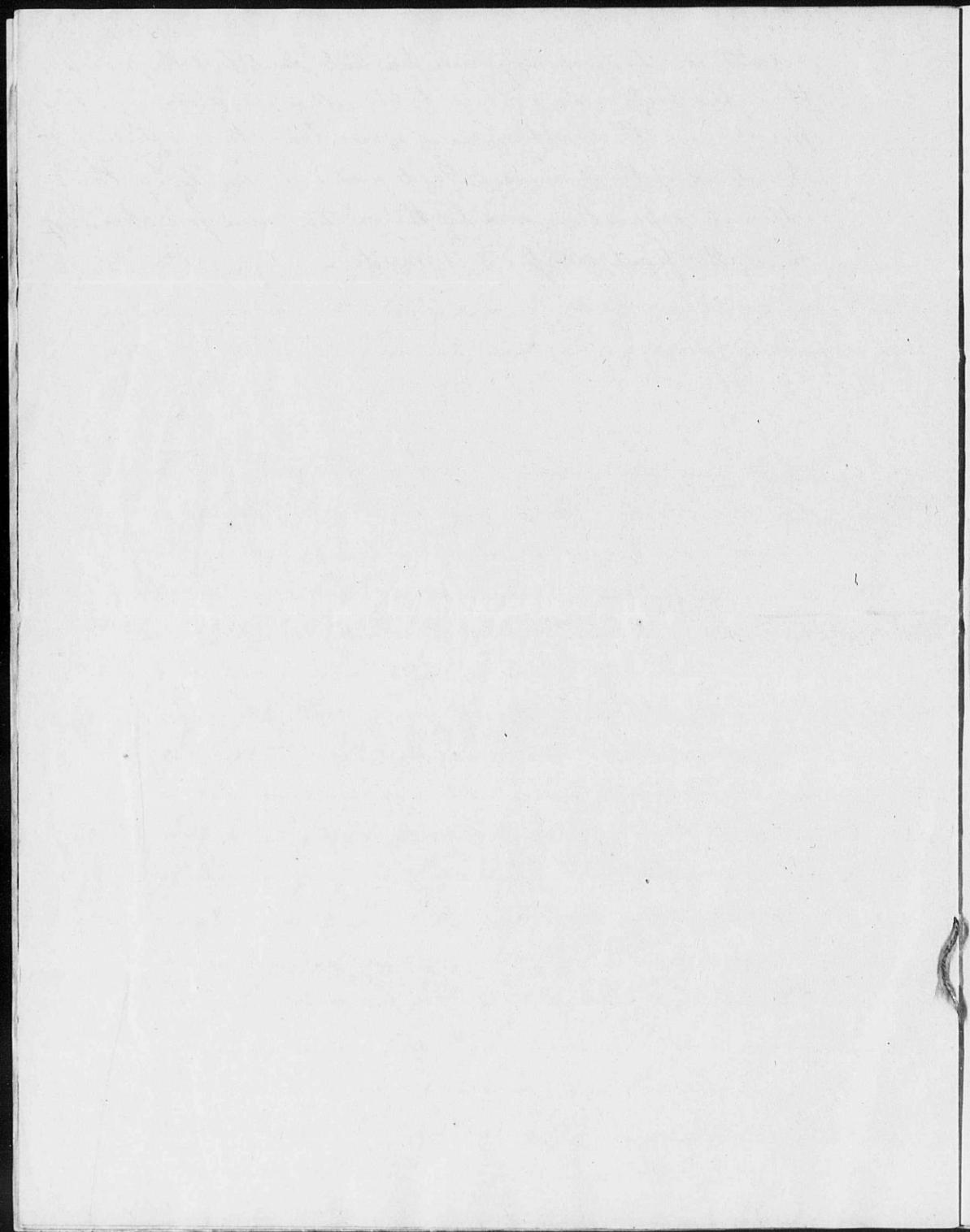
Proof.— If man had not self-acting and conscious powers he must be a mere machine and therefore could not be accountable for any thing done by, or rather through him (for of himself he would not act at all); but that power which acted upon or rather through him must of necessity have all the praise or blame and feel the rewards and punishments. But, seeing man is endowed with self-acting powers, and is consciously Lord of his own sphere of actions, the praise or blame, rewards or punishments of necessity fall upon himself, and no power can finally hinder it. Here, then is seen the benevolence and goodness of the Divine Power and Wisdom in organizing intelligent life into beings in such a manner that they can, by their own labor procure honor, glory and happiness; and sensibly enjoy these blessings, with all their consequences, as their own just right, being the production of their own doings. In this is displayed the unalterable justice of Divine Power, because intelligent beings ultimately enjoy just what they procure for themselves and are endowed with a capacity of procuring and fitting to the utmost of their extent, their sphere with happiness or misery. For it would

be as impossible for an intelligent and good being to organize a rational being and place a barrier in his system to prevent the operation of Good from finally filling that system, as it would be for the Good Principle to create its opposite.

X. The illustration of the preceding Positions bring to view a conclusion in which ~~we~~ may be clearly seen the power, wisdom, goodness and justice of the Divine Principle, and the free agency of man in all things that finally affect him.

*Proof.* The following results evidently appear: That man's actions are derived from the necessity of life's operating in itself, and though this operation requires the necessity of a primary unobstructed choice, man has a judge competent to decide rightly in all things that concern him in his sphere, and he is not compelled to act contrary to this decision. That the Divine Being has endowed him with the means of finally filling his sphere, to the utmost of its extent, with glory, honor and goodness, and he never can be accountable for any thing which is not his own free action. That his happiness & misery therefore will be finally the result of his own perfectly free actions. That these results are the ultimate consequences of the improvement or misimprovement of everlasting and unchangeable elements or principles - That, by using his powers and judgment, he may so overrule his trials and temptations arising from the Evil Principle, as to make them subservient to his glory and honor; and this because he thereby proves the dignity of his nature, powers and order. That whatever may, in a probationary state appear to the contrary of these

results, is only temporary and partial, and but the process through which man arrives to his ultimate destiny. - This process and these appearances arise from the conflicting operations of the elements of Good and Evil, until by the ultimate separation, and by the mature and free choice of man, the final decision is made.



A communication or Conversation between Jane Wardley and Daniel Thomas, a young believer who had been among Believers but a few months; and who previous to his coming was a Materialist. Given by Inspiration to him.

1<sup>st</sup> Position. Good and Evil exist. Admitted.

And existing, they live - and living, they act - and acting, they operate - and operating, they become transitive - and being transitive, they pass over to and act upon an object. This power of passing over to an object necessarily implies agency.

2<sup>nd</sup> Good and Evil run opposite lines. Admitted.

And possess opposite properties. Admitted.

And running in opposite lines it is impossible for them to run parallel - Admitted - And as it is impossible for them to run parallel, it naturally follows that it is impossible for them to coalesce, consequently when they meet it is to clash and crop each other at right angles, of which the X crop is a true emblem.

This is a mystery peculiar to Shakerism.

Again. It has already been admitted that Good and Evil possess opposite qualities or properties, consequently they possess opposite inherent and opposite Energies, and can never commingle. From which we may infer, that the attempt at admixture of opposite Energies will produce a War of Elements.

Again. Good and Evil though possessing inherent and opposite properties peculiar to themselves, yet through the medium of Agency they are communicative - Example, Fire and Water are opposite elements, yet through the medium of an Agent -

(a Boiler for instance) fire can impart its nature (Heat) to the water, and still the water remains water without producing a war of elements - save and except what is lost in combustion and evaporation. From which we may infer that as the process of water boiling, combustion and evaporation will continue until one or the other is destroyed. So, Good and Evil operating through a natural or supernatural agency will war with each other until one or the other ultimately prevails. — Cease to administer fuel to the fire, it will be extinguished, evaporation through the process of heat ceases - Water prevails. — Cease to feed the boiler with water - Fire prevails; the water is ultimately consumed. Therefore, cease to do Evil and you will learn to do well — Cease to do well and you will learn to do evil; and so on vice-versa ad. infinitum. —

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