

Answer to Combskey  
Letter by Wm Leonard

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No 20

No 6. W. L.  
On deck

Lat. No.  
10,281

New Lebanon, N. Y., March, 1853.

Beloved Elder William & Brother Alpheus -  
Kind and often remembered friends:

Your friendly and comforting letters of the 3rd. instant were timely received by me; but I have not heretofore been able to notice them, and now I am taking a beautiful Saturday morning, on which the sun is shining brightly, to make some reply; but I much fear that it will but illy meet the wishes, and perhaps expectations of my much loved and respected friends, the Elders

I wish, in the first place, to return our thanks for the love you sent so liberally, - and in particular, please say to Elder Sister Roxalana that if she knew how pleased I should be to receive a line from her direct, I almost think she would find time to write me. Still I would not be burthensome, for well I know that all hands and hearts are full.

Elder Richard, who is quite comfortable in health, and Eldress Antoinette, whom you all loved so well; and our little sister Harriet, whom you will ove when she goes to Harvard and Shirley, all join me in love to your lot in particular, and then let it radiate from that centre to

the good friends all around. Your gathering is very similar to our own in character. We have no Brief Expositions to spare. The edition is about exhausted, and I think ought to be reprinted.

We know nothing about the persons you name, unless Foster has assumed another Christian name. Is he subject to fits? Is his father a sea captain?

The papers I send occasionally I am glad to learn are of some little interest. I send them mostly for union.

My faith is, like your own, unshaken in the principles of the Gospel - the Second Appearing of Christ and being harvested from the world of generation, especially. I was much pleased to learn when at Harvard and Shirley that our Gospel Parents affirmed that Believers would go through seven degrees of travel. I had long been established in that opinion; but had no authority, except intuitional revelation. If I believed that what we have now got was the whole of the Gospel, it would confound me at once; but believing, as I do, that we are now in the decadence of the first degree of the seventh; that the fact of the second appearing, a virgin life, revelation, non-resistance, and a visible lead to receive confession of sins and obedience, were the prominent principles of the first degree, and that in

each succeeding degree other important principles ( distinguishing each degree from the other), will be added, I abide my time. And, inasmuch as it is a general law, observable in all cycles, and cycles of cycles, that near the ending of one and the commencement of a succeeding one, an apparent decay always occurred, I remain hopeful, - although, as in such cases, previous good seemed to have been lost, or turned into evil. Yet this was more in appearance than in reality. That is: in particulars, it was a falling away; but in generals it was an increase. The existing cycle became the seed of the succeeding one and, agreeable to a general law of nature, in such cases made and provided, the organized external body of the seed became disorganized and its life elements were absorbed and appropriated, by the rising new living body.

There is more in the present organization of Believers that will remain and be retained than in any preceding organizations, for the order is eternal by reason of the absolute true principles that are the foundation of the Society organizations. These will remain, and other equally true principles being added to them, will form the new bodies.

It is my opinion (and is of some 20 years standing), that physiology will be one of the principles of the next degree. The shape and form it will assume; the

mode and manner of operation, I do not profess to understand. It may be as different from what I should now lay out as the reality of a thing is from the shadow. I only say that neither God, nor Nature never designed the existence of a nation of toothless invalids, and that, consequently, man in the exercise of his free agency, has created his diseases and ~~bre-~~brought sickness and premature death unto him; that man, and not God, is accountable for all the fevers and colds and consumptions, - and, in short, all the ~~pla-~~plagues enumerated by Moses as being the legitimate results of disobedience to the laws and principles which are as eternal as God himself, and upon which the laws of Moses were based, and of which they were but an imperfect exposition.

If Israel had been examined, when they had been cured by the physiological treatment of Moses in their forty years sojourn on the Wilderness, "of all the diseases of the Egyptians," and when "all sickness had been taken from the midst of them," - I do not suppose that the latter statement would have been found to be absolutely true, but relatively so; for I do not think it possible to purify the physical blood in the human body absolutely, except by purifying the ~~life,~~ blood, or life of the soul - and to effect that will take all the accumulated power and

virtue of the seven degrees of the Gospel travel - probably some five hundred years in the future.

But as a natural traveller wishes to know the end of his journey - the place, city, or town, to which he is going - so it is equally as essential to the Zion traveller in temporal and spiritual things. I know that some may say that the Gospel is purely a spiritual work, and has nothing to do with the physical body, physiology, health, sickness, or disease; that the latter the Lord sends upon us, and we must not be looking for natural causes for everything, etc. But I take note that an individual or family who are too spiritual to observe the causes that produce physical sicknesses and to take measures to avoid them, is not too spiritual either to be sick, or to use natural means and study natural laws, by which to effect a restoration to health. Where then is the difference in principle between learning the physiological laws by which to preserve your health, when you have it in possession, or, after living in blind violation of these laws and principles until prostrated with disease, then applying to some person who professes to understand them (and perhaps falsely), that under his direction you may, by now obeying them, be again partially restored, by virtue of the recuperative powers of the system, which have not yet been entirely exhausted through disobedience. I ask wherein is there any-

disobedience. I ask wherein is there anything more spiritual in this course than in the former. I confess I have never been able to discover it.

I think it is just as consistent Gospel to eat coarse bread as it is to eat salts, or jallap, or mercury, or anything else designed to effect what good, coarse ground wheat, or rye, or Indian meal will always and better accomplish. I think it good Gospel to keep the house and the body clean, - to keep good fences, - and not use poisonous acids or alkalies, or any other kinds of deadly drugs in common food; and to study the principles of Agriculture and Horticulture so as to know how to raise a plenty of good, wholesome articles of subsistence, - and then study Chemistry and the laws of life enough to know how to use them.

And, finally, I suppose we are to have a new Heaven, of which the soul is the chief object, and its perfect health, or freedom from sin, salvation - is the principal and great desideratum. So also are we to have a new earth, in which will dwell righteousness, and that in this new earth, the human body is the central ~~object~~ object of influence and attraction, and its health, or freedom from disease, is salvation, - the end, the great ultimum.

It is quite as certain that the prophets predicted a time when no inhabitant of Zion should have it to say, "I am sick;"

as it is that they predicted a time when "the iniquities of Jerusalem should be looked for, and not be found, and her sins be sought after and there should be none." Yet, because I thus clearly see the principle and boldly affirm it, I do not therefore claim any right to dictate when, or how, it shall be carried out. I am quite willing to move in unison with the visible lead and head of the body, as I am confident that God will work through his established order. But while the members of the body may not supplant the lead in any increase or reform in Zion; so on the other hand, neither can the lead sound the alarm to move forward against an enemy, until they first hear "a sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees."

Kind friends, you ask me to give some of my conclusions of a practical character on dietics &c. I do not know that they will be much worth; but such as they are I will endeavor to give some of most prominent for your edification, or amusement, just as the case may be.

1st. - Man was originally made with a bony substance in his mouth, called in former times, teeth. I, having seen several specimens with my own eyes, do the more readily credit this astounding fact. These teeth could be retained only by using them. They were sufficient to the



mastication of any kind of grain, the cracking of nuts etc. The use of soft food caused them to drop out of their places. It is found that the teeth of cows (which are sufficient to masticate hay), will drop out in a short time, when the cow is fed exclusively on distillery slops. So long as grain was used without grinding, or was merely pounded in a mortar, dyspepsia was as unknown in the human animal, as in any other. Without something coarse, the stomach becomes coated with phlegm, or mucus, and is almost as smooth as your hand. The intestines are also, lined with it, and hence the valves, or mouths of the lacteals, or absorbents, are closed.

Rule I. - Supply a family with at least one kind of grain flour as coarse as fine samp and offer a premium (HEALTH), to all who will use it the most. Entirely cease the exhibition of all kinds of cathartic medicine, to any body that has a soul in it. Rely exclusively upon the coarse meal for the unfailing regulation of the bowels. In one year's time, there would not be an old fashioned dyspeptic in the family.

Rule II. - Let all the sickly and weakly cease the use of animal food in any form; but especially must fat, or grease, not be taken in the least possible quantities. A Jew who used animal food was excommunicated. Youmans says that fat is absorbed by the system, but not digested.

He is of the old school.

Rule III. - Keep a clean skin and conscience. To all who wish to preserve or regain health, washing of the skin once on twenty-four hours is perfectly indispensable. The rule for the use of water is to apply it at such a temperature, and in such quantities, as will enable the person to get up a reaction, or warm glow, directly afterwards. This rule applies to all possible states and conditions.

Rule IV. - Get down as soon as possible to a temperature of  $60^{\circ}$  and never exceed it. About as much debility and weakness is induced by too much fire and the wrong application of it, as from any other one source. It is not generally known that the more fire is used, the colder the patient gradually becomes; until, finally, he may be roasted externally, but cannot be warmed through. Mother Ann said on a certain occasion that if she should rely upon fire to keep her warm, it would be sin unto her. The Jews were not allowed to build a fire on the Sabbath day. The Catholic churches have never used fire, however cold it might be, until quite recently some of them have introduced it. Dr. Kane, in going to the North, did not allow any fire on the ship, except for cooking, until the cold was  $40^{\circ}$  below zero. Animal heat is generated in the system, and the supply will not in the system, and the supply will not

long exceed the demand; and there is always a constant effort made by the system to supply the actual normal demand. The rule is to use a little less fire than the mere animal feelings instinctively crave.

Rule V. - Clothing should be regulated upon the same principles as the use of water and fire. Always use a little less than you could possibly bear. Young people should dispense with underclothing, if practicable, such as drawers and flannel shirts. In warm rooms, they do more harm than good. Out of doors, an outer garment can be used as a regulator of bodily temperature. Sleep under as little clothing as possible.

Rule VI. - And by far the most important. - Breathe, at all times, the air as pure as it exists out of doors. It is the oxygen in the air, combining with the carbon of the food meeting in the lungs, that makes the fire that warms the house we live in, i.e. the body. The wood in a stove can just as well burn without a due supply of oxygen as can the fuel in the lungs. More than that, the carbon in the lungs, if there be not air enough to burn it, passes on into the circulation - and you have a smoky house - bad blood. And bad blood produces some form of disease, by which it can make an outlet from person system, and so not kill the unlearned person, who let it get in there.

Two and a half minutes will deteriorate all the blood in the body, if the person breathe foul air. At each exhalation, it is computed that a man throws out enough carbonic acid gas to kill three men. Every room and house should by some means be so ventilated as to save heat - not have a cold draft on one part of the body only, but be of equal temperature top and bottom, and contain pure air only. To effect this is a thousand times cheaper than to pay all the expenses of breathing impure air, for they are legion. Bed rooms should be so ventilated that a person coming in from the fresh air cannot perceive any taint of impurity. Indeed, the same rule applies to all rooms.

Rule VII.- A thorough ventilation of beds and bedding. Without an observance of this rule, health is impossible and sleep unnatural. The skin breathes, and when it has exhausted the oxygen of the bed clothes, suffocation ensues. Let those who cannot sleep remember this. Bedding should be left to air every day for hours. (All of which you no doubt understand and are more familiar with than I am; for I have not forgotten that it was at Harvard that I found some of the best ventilated houses that I met with on my journey last summer.

Rule VIII. - Is to be always comfortable in mind and body - for uneasiness of mind begets sickness of body, - creates

chronic disease. Therefore, keep as comfortable as is convenient. For many years the North Family have been well supplied with good coarse wheat bread, and we have not had a case of dyspepsia for I cannot remember how long.

We are a great deal favored about colds and influenzas, and fevers are of very rare occurrence indeed. Our sisters set us one of the very best tables, (as far as health is concerned), that there is to be found, either in the old or in the new creation.

The family may almost be said to use no physic, no poisons in their food; practice no bleeding, and use an exceedingly small amount of any kind of medicine, - and that of a mild, harmless character. But it is not quite perfect, nor altogether free from infirmities; and there are some in it, I think, who are liable to be caught unawares one of these days by the old grim messenger.

The sum of the whole matter is: that unless your sisters are interested in the preservation of health, there is not much chance for improvement. In our family, there has been but little said about these matters for many years. What the brethren and sisters can agree upon is quietly and perseveringly carried out. And thus we get the good of that class of truths, without having them take the pre-eminence over those things that are of still greater importance.

The motive, or object, of all attention devoted to the physical body should be that it may not, through disease, become a clog to the soul in its spiritual travel, inasmuch as it is demonstrated by experience that the travel of the soul is arrested by physical infirmity, (as a general rule, applicable more especially to the young). A ripening process may continue, but growth is well nigh impossible. The travel of those whose spiritual faith and zeal control their bodily infirmities approximates nearer to that of disembodied souls than to the normal earthly travail of those who are called to be the first fruits unto God and the Lamb.

There is no record of Jesus ever suffering from physical disease. He was a perfect Jew and was never sick. Yet his suffering of soul was such as to cause real bodily anguish, even to the blood pressing through the pores of the skin.

With my kind love, - farewell

F. W. E v a n s .  
N. F.