

New York July 4/69

J. W. Evans.

My Esteemed friend!—
Your favor of the first has come to hand, and as some days may elapse before I can answer it definitely, I think I should write you at once to inform you that I shall attend to it with pleasure.

I recollect that some years ago persons going down and up town, had to avoid going into the City Hall park in order to avoid the worms hanging down by their own filaments from the branches of the trees. This was the case with the other parks and with the trees in some of the streets. But now there are no such nuisances to be seen—not one of the insects to be seen hanging from the trees—but this is not all, for the

leaves and the trees look beautiful
and green and fresh.

Now the Parks and the trees in
the streets have their domiciled ten-
ants, the little plump and dumpy,
Sparrows flying around - Every body
likes them and nobody hunts them; -
Sparrow houses are in the streets up
in the trees and they are as busy as
bees at their vocation. In the snowy
weather there is a Company of them
alights in my area in front of my
house but inside of the Iron railing
and my youngest child Frankie -
is delighted with them, throws out
from the basement window, crumbs
of bread for them to pick up which
they industriously do.

Now - You could not have a
better thing on your farm for your
fruit trees than those little English
Sparrows - They multiply very fast

and they would save your fruit
on the trees and the bushes very
much indeed.

I shall make enquiries about
them and it will be time enough for
you to get some of them in March
or April, so I think as you are so
far up to the northern hills. I
shall have to enquire about the
best way of getting them up to Lebanon
If I do not write soon, I ask your
patience in advance - But I shall
lose no time in doing what I can
to enable you to acquire what I
truly believe will be a blessing to
the North Family

Give my paternal wishes & blessing
to my daughter Charlotte and to all
the sisters that know and remember me
for I remember many of them with
the kindest feelings - And my good
friend Daniel Frazer remember me

to him and to friend Timothy as well - Each and all of them & myself are friends for life here and I know I often think of the North family and its Elders - May the consolations of the Holy Spirit be always with them

By the by, have you seen the revelation of Noyes the patriarch of the Oneida Community on spiritualism? It appeared in the New York World some four or five weeks ago. - The World styled it American Positivism - but I am of the opinion it is higher than that

I must conclude by subscribing myself in the simplest direct words of truth
Your friend

J. W. Byrdsall

Cat. NO.
10,198

New York Feb. 9/69

Friends Evans

A few days ago, I wrote you a letter in answer to yours on Sparrows; and I now write you again on the same subject.

Well - I have busied myself about them - I have gone around making enquiries, but I cannot find them in the shops of the Bird fanciers, nor are they in private hands - though they are very abundant in the City.

They belong to the public authorities so to them I went and was directed to apply to the Officers of the Police who are in charge of the Public Parks. Well I have seen the one in charge of the Union Park and have arranged with him as follows - He will get a cage, price one dollar, and two pair of Sparrows

price five dollars a pair.

He will have them ready in a few days to be forwarded by Adams Express to Canaan four Corners. They will be sent on by said Express on Tuesday next. I know not what the Express agent will charge for freight, but I suppose it will be better to pay the freight on the delivery of the cage and birds at Canaan four Corners.

The Officer instructs that when the birds reach you, put the cage in a room with the windows down and let them have a few days to fly around in the room and to rest on the windows and see the outside trees &c. You will leave the door of the cage open of course in the first place.

They have brood four times a year and thus you will see that the population of Sparrows will wonderfully increase in Lebanon. But I am told

that they are so destructive on small grain such as wheat and oats so that in England they are a nuisance. But they will not eat grain if they can get worms and other insects.

In a short time the North family will be able to supply all the other Shaker families in Columbia County with Sparrows.

As I supposed you were fully determined to have them at any cost I agreed to pay five dollars a pair for them. But if you want more than two pair of them write me without any delay - freightage of three or four pair will not be more than the freightage ^{as they can be put in one cage} of two pair. The order to give you time to answer on this point I will not send them until Tuesday morning the 16th of February.

Yours Very truly

J. W. Byrd's all

There will be Card on the
Cage addressed as follows

J. W. Evans

Canaan four Corners
Columbia County
New York

New York July 15/69

Respected Friends,

Elder Evans in-
formed me per letter the Friend Levi
Shaw would call on me and take the
sparrows in charge. I waited two or
three days in expectation, and as Elder
Evans stated he had written to him
at 15 Leight Street, I called yes-
terday at 15 Leight Street and was
informed that Levi Shaw had not ar-
rived, but there was a letter for him
there from Elder Evans.

Under these circumstances I see no
other course for me to pursue, but to
send the Birds on by Express to mor-
row morning. - But if Mr Shaw
calls on me to day I will have the
birds delivered to him.

On Tuesday morning the 16th of

Of February - 4 small cages tied to-
gether fast as one package each small
Cage containing one Sparrow. They will
be placed in charge of the National
Express Co. whose receipt I shall send
you a day or two after. The packages of
little Cages will be delivered at 8 A.M.
so as to leave by 8½ O'clock train of
Cars. A card of direction will be
attached - J. W. Evans

Canaan 4 Corners
Columbia County
New York

Now you or either of you - (Friend Evans
having gone to Boston) will ride over
to Canaan four Corners in the afternoon
of Tuesday and get the Birds

When you get them home you will
place the Cages - separated - in a room
for a day or so and afterwards have
a string to ^{the} door of the Cages to pull them
open in the night time - This will

Give them freedom to fly around in the room in day light. You will let them remain at liberty in the room a week or more and have perches for them near the windows in order to familiarize them to the surroundings before letting them go out of doors.

And you should put up in the trees little bird houses for them to pick and choose for themselves.

I am told they have four or five broods in the year -

When you think they are sufficiently familiarized to the surroundings you can give them liberty -

Yours as Ever

J. W. Boydall

Tell Elder Evans that I thank him for the newspaper he sent me containing a long article of his production which I think must have cost him

a great deal of mental Consideration in the grouping of the parallels he adduces. As a Scripturarian he excels the Doctor of Divinity, but that ^{is} not much - for they dont know much they are like as Dean Swift said of certain writers that - "Dogs do piss where dogs have pissed before"

I will write to him soon

Yours Very truly J. M. N.

207. No.
10, 199

New York Feb 26/69

My dear friend Rayson

I have just received your esteemed favor of the 24th. and proceed to answer it immediately.

You inform me that the sparrow that died on the passage to Canada four Corners, was a female. If so, it strikes me, that as I am informed by the Officer from whom I got them, that these birds associate in pairs of male and female, the lot should be supplied.

On enquiring how the male is known from the female - he states that from the throat or root of the bill extending down on the breast the feathers are black $\frac{3}{4}$ of an ^{long} inch by $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide or thereabouts; and that all the plumage of the males is darker than the females.

Now I give you all the information I can get as relates to the birds and you of course will judge for yourselves, being assured that I will gladly co-operate with you as much as I can

I am informed that the authorities of the City of Philadelphia sent on an Agent to England for a lot of English Sparrows but that on the return of the Agent with the birds they died on the passage and that Philadelphia was supplied from New York

In haste
your friend

J. W. Byrdall

P.S. - I have had a talk with the Officer & he consents to let you have a female Sparrow for two Dollars.

Is Canada & Cornwall the best place to send the Bird? write me if you wish me to direct him to send the Bird

10, 199

P.S. I am awaiting the return of
Friend Brown from Newark. He prom-
ised to see me when he came back to
the City in order to take the Sparrow-
up with him to Lebanon. I enquired
about him at 15 Laight Street in the

10, 199 - 27

early part of last week - He had
not then returned.

J. W. B.

And wants one of the following:

Cat. No.
101,200

New York March 2/69


J. W. Evans

My esteemed Friend

I have the pleasure of receiving this morning both of your favors of the 26 & 27th one of them enclosing draft for Eleven dollars

I shall order the other female Sparrow to be delivered to Express Company on Friday morning so that you can get it on same day afternoon and I shall read to the Officer what you have written in relation to the birds and direct him to get a receipt for delivery alive if he can

Before you let the birds loose make two little bird houses with projecting eaves, a small entrance or door way at each end in this form

—  large enough for a bird to enter

and a partition in the center of the little house so that there can be ² pair of birds in each house they increase so fast that you will have occasion for many of such houses before long. The two pair of Sparrows will enable you to have as many as you may want for the North family and all the other Shaker establishments.

I shall watch with interest for the forth coming number of the Atlantic Monthly. . . Yours as ever
J. W. Byrdsale

Postscript

I paid Mr. Shan the Officer in charge of Union Park, ten dollars for the four birds on the 15th of February. Enclosed please find his receipt for the same

The female Sparrow is to leave this city on Friday Morning the 5th March to be delivered at Canaan 4 Corners

J. W. Evans

New York March 29/69

Well my friends, On Saturday afternoon I saw the Atlantic Monthly and read the autobiography of J. W. Evans the Shaker. It got hold of me - It compelled me to read it - It engrossed my mind completely. It attracted beyond any thing I ever read before, and I have not yet got clear of thinking about it.

It is a gospel manifestation after more than Eighteen hundred years perversion of the Gospel of Jesus. It has proven to me that the Greek Church, the Romish Church, the English Church and all ^{so} called Christian Churches are vitiations of Christ's teachings. It has set me into an examination and consideration ^{there} of them and of the question - are any of these churches in, doctrines, in their forms and ceremonies, in their ministers and organization - in any respect like what Christ taught?

Did he not teach that his ^{kingdom} was not of this world and is not all these Church establishments of this world.

Did he ever teach the heathen mythology of plural Gods - a God the father - a God the son - a God the holy ghost? On the contrary he continually designated himself as the Son of Man and when he spoke of himself in a higher relation to God he meant in the Spirit as is proven by his declaration that whosoever did the will of him that sent him was his father his mother his brother his sister?

His coming was announced in the beginning of the Gospel of Saint Matthew as the one who was to bring into the world Peace and good will amongst men. But have not the so called Christian clergy kept the world in a condition of contention bad feeling - war - robbery - persecution & bloodshed ever since?

I perused your biography with fraternal interest for I had myself passed through the phases of life you have so well described. I was considered by the Atheists as one of themselves because I denied the existence of a personal Deity inasmuch as a personality could not be every where at the same time. and I was looked upon as an Infidel by Christians when I asserted that the material Universe had always existed was continually changing and would always exist without annihilation but that Spirit was the unchangeable, the eternal existence, the only reality, the only permanent thing in the Universe. In short the Atheists, the Deists, the Trinitarians and the Christians designated me as a Visionary. I did not like to be pointed at as a Visionary so for the last thirty years I have kept dark as to my opinions and held my peace in order to escape from the charge of mental aberration.

The fact of your biography having been read by me with deep interest reminding me of the same experiences which you have so admirably described in connection with the events and associations of your previous years came to me like the Manna in the wilderness. If your biography is in accordance with Shakerism - if your sentiments are the religious ideas of the Shakers, then indeed have the latter been wonderfully progressive far far beyond all other religious sects; and by them is brought to view a new Heaven and a new Earth very far superior to priestcraft Christianity, which is indeed of the Earth Earthly. I write slowly and have to think as I write, with the effort to make myself understood. A physical language cannot express spiritual things. Let Friend Fraser read this and tell him to write to me about your biography. It has taken me nearly two hours to write this so I must stop to think. Yours fraternally

J. W. Byrdsale

New York April 2/70

Friend J. W. Evans

A few days ago I received by the letter carrier a newspaper entitled "The Springfield Daily Republican" dated the 23^d March 1870 - and in it I found a communication from J. W. Evans on the "Shaker Ideals of ^{the} future World and the future ~~Heaven~~."

Your views on the future World on Earth add great force to the Matthew's theory of "the struggle for subsistence" and that therefore "Peace on Earth and good will amongst men" cannot exist without Celibacy, which was taught by Jesus of Nazareth, of which he was the first Exemplar and first Martyr as well.

I have not for many years believed in the horrible doctrine of Eternal dam-

nation which portrays the Creator
as the most fiendish of Demons
I can conceive of no worse demonism
than the providing of an Eternal hell
for the eternal torture of human souls
There can be no worse abominable
blasphemy of God.

I am as willing to believe that
Ann Lee was religiously and Spirit-
ually the daughter of God in the ^{best} ac-
ception of that word as ^{truth} Jesus of
Nazareth ^{was the son of God} but
who on all occasions styled
himself the son of man. As to the
word Christos ("the anointed") it
is a Greek word which he never
heard in ~~all~~ his life time (probably)

Your elucidation of Shakerism
places that New Testament on a
higher plane of morality, of religion,
of humanity and of Divinity, than
ever was taught in Christendom pre-
viously, and if it be erroneous

false and abominable so is every
other religious denomination in Christen-
dom Romanism, ~~Greteism~~, Protest-
antism, &c, for they are all at enmity
with God and man, and hence
there is no peace in Christendom

I am obliged to you for sending
me the paper with your communication
which gives me a larger idea of Shaker-
ism than I had before

Remember me to my friends Prasen
Timothy &c &c and the Sisters at Se-
bamin and let my daughter Char-
lotte know that I shall write to her
in a few days

I am Dear Friend
Yours truly

J. W. Byrdsall

As an amendment to the foregoing
I shall enclose with this a letter to
her which I request you to hand to
her with my blessing

Cat. No.
10,323

New York April 13/70

My esteemed friend

J. W. Evans.

Your welcome

box of the 6th instant came safely to hand
and the contents duly noticed, And
first with regard to the twenty dollars
I did not intend to enclose but to
apprize her that I had twenty dollars
for her on hand subject to her disposal

I did this under the supposition
that she would instruct me to send
her the money or the money's worth
in what she would prefer and it is
still subject to her Order.

I have besides a pair English
Cuttery scissors for her as I intended
when I got six pair of Scissors, one
for her step mother one for Anna one
for Louisa one for Charlotte, one for
Josie and pair for Lemmie. Now if

She will direct me what she desires me to do with the twenty dollars and the pair of scissors, that she would wish I shall endeavor to obey her instructions

I am gratified that my letters give you any food for reflection. I write them without much reflection at the time when I write them. In my earlier years I read much & thought much and was designated as a visionary, and the more I gave my mind up to thinking about the Infinite Spirit manifested in Infinite Space, Infinite time - Infinite Number and Infinite Variety - the more did I see and feel the limitations of my own Capacity and mental vision, and consequently I have no mental Vanity

When of a night I cast my eyes upward and behold the starry heavens and consider that they are in number

infinite suns and satellites no two of them alike but infinite variety of living beings and productions - that the soul of the universe is infinite in power in magnitude and duration but the material universe is ever temporary & ever changing. Such thoughts as these cause me to think but little of my own importance I assure you.

The statement of Catherine Beecher that there are 230 000 more marriageable women in New York than there are men, is astounding to me and if true is a strong natural fact in favor of polygamy. Van Amringe published a book some thirty years ago in which he stated that in Asia and other parts of the Earth wherever the dark skinned races exist this social feature polygamy has prevailed in all ages. What he meant by dark skins were of the Asiatic and northern African ~~side~~ types of mankind.

It is very clear that Celibacy
is a higher plane of existence than
the sexual as much so as the spir-
itual is above the physical - as
much so as the Eternal is above
the Temporary. All human beings
have, in common phraseology,
living bodily souls - but all have
not everlasting Spiritual souls

But these ideas may shock
you, so I had better not say any
thing startling to what is called
Common sense. It is a remarkable
fact that the Old Bible says nothing
of the immortality of the soul and a
future state after earthly life - It
was Jesus of Nazareth the first Celib-
ate that taught Spiritual life and
immortality in view

Yours in haste

J. W. Byrdsall