

*FLAMING SWORD,  
Or a Sign from Heaven!  
{illustration}*

*Being a Remarkable Phenomenon seen in the State of New Hampshire in May last.*

Feeling it a duty incumbent on me to communicate to my fellow men, what has been so remarkably revealed to me--I shall attempt to communicate, as far as my memory and illiterate abilities will admit, a faithful Narrative of a most Remarkable Phenomenon of which I was an eye witness.

On the 3d of May last, as I was on my journey from Boston to Grafton, in New Hampshire, I called for entertainment for the night at a public house in Plymouth--after some time spent in the evening in conversation with some gentlemen on the late unhappy situation of our country relative to our late contest with Great Britain, and our present internal divisions, &c. by reason of so many designing characters among us who are actuated more from sinister views than any real patriotic zeal for the general welfare; with a mind burdened with these reflections, I retired to my lodging, at a late hour.-- Whether the conversation of the evening had any tendency to influence the vision of the night, I will not pretend to determine, but as no one ever paid less attention to the rambles of a poet than myself, I conceive there must be something evidently supernatural in the singular phenomenon I am about to relate.

A few minutes before the clock struck one, as I conceived, I awoke, and turning my eyes towards the window, beheld an uncommon gleam of light which induced me to leap from my bed, I looked out but nothing uncommon appeared, it being no other than an agreeable twilight night, I again got into bed with a view of getting a little more refreshment by sleep, but it was without effect.-- After musing some time on the conversation of the evening and the events which caused it, I was surprized at the appearance of an uncommonly bright light in the room, as though the moon in the height of its lustre had shone directly upon me, I raised myself in bed but immediately sunk back with terror and surprise, and lay some minutes motionless, at length I thought I heard an audible voice which I conceived not human, call to me by name, and said arise and give ear to the messenger of Heaven, for you shall be witness of the signs which shall be given of the perilous days which are coming upon the earth, by reason of the innumerable sins and descensions so prevalent among mankind, especially in this favoured land, for saith the Lord-- "I have delivered this people like the children of Israel from the bands of a powerful nation, and I would have gathered them as a hen gathereth her chickens under her, but they would not hearken to the voice of wisdom--they have become a rebellious and disobedient people lasting as it were after the luxuries of Egypt, boasting in their strength and pregnant with evils

innumerable, but their peace is destroyed, wars and rumours of wars shall they abound, both national and civil, the father shall rise against the son and the son against the father--and for a sign of these times shall you be witness of the Angel descending with along Flaming Sword in his hand, which shall turn to every point, to prepare the way for ushering the Glorious Day; then shall the Sword be transformed into an Olive Branch, which shall arise and overspread the horizon, and appear as emblematical of the harmonious day, in which all nations and languages shall be gathered into one family and all become of one heart and mind, to serve under the peaceable government of Him whose Scepter sways all worlds."

After such a discourse, which I conceived more than human, my readers may well think me a stranger to sleep the remainder of the night, for neither tongue, nor pen can describe the agitation of mind or the trembling situation of my frame--I can truly say with the Belshazer when he saw the finger writing on the wall, my knees smote one against the other; though I found myself more composed on mature deliberation, when I could not but consider myself as highly favoured in being a bearer of the divine message.

As the clock struck three, I arose from my bed and prepared my waggon paid my fare and set out on my journey, without making known to the family the singular occurrence of the preceding night, though my mind was so truly fixed on what had past, that it was with much irregularity that I proceeded on my journey. I had not got on my way more than one mile and a half before my team which consisted of three horses, in full speed, were instantly stopped as though hushed by a mighty hand; I unthinkingly bid them go on but without effect; for at the same instant, a bright light appeared to overspread the horizon, and an Angel or some supernatural Being, as I conceived, descend and stood erect in the air but a little distance before me, drest in a long unfoiled robe, with a Flaming Sword in her hand; and I can say with Daniel I was alone and without strength; and she said unto me, "stand on thy feet and give ear to the words which I shall speak." And as I stood trembling and recollecting the vision I was under the influence of a few hours before: I lifted up my eyes and beheld his face which had the appearance of lightning, and her eyes were as lamps of fire; the sword which she held in her hand were to appearance about thirty feet in length, the hilt of which was variously ornamented, it appeared of pure gold set with stones of various hues, the blade of which resembled fire; and I cast up my eyes and beheld her head encircled with a bow, beautifully variagated, much resembling a rainbow, incircling a constellation of sixteen stars, differently diversified, there being nine to the southerly part of the bow, of a deep crimson, and seven to the north of a most beautiful azure, in the centre of which appeared an Olive Branch richly decorated with golden buds, the whole sixteen were all very transparent brilliant, which afterwards separated, the nine of the crimson fell to the south, and the seven of azure to

the north, attended with a heavy rumbling in the air, like the rushing of many armies to battle; at which I fell with my face to the ground, where I lay in a profound reverie for some time, at length I thought I heard an audible voice articulate and say, all these are signs by which you shall know what is to befall the nations now in the latter days.

Woe unto the inhabitants of the Land for their sins and ingratitude in wars and rumours of war shall they abound, their fields shall be crimsoned with blood and nothing but lamentation shall be heard to echo through the lonely valley until all the Tares and Brambles of the whole Earth shall be plucked up, and demolished from the face thereof; by the pestilence which walketh in darkness and by the sword which lays waste at noon day, for there shall be such a destruction as shall greatly thin the inhabitants of the earth, both by war, pestilence and famine, until there shall arise a branch from the root of Jesse, who shall perform such remarkable wonders through the power of the almighty God as shall effectually convince the world of his divine authority, and shall cause eventually the remnant of all nations to be of one heart, one mind, and one Religion, when there shall be no more wars among mankind, who will ever after be in the strictest bonds of mutual friendship, professing unfading love to God and one another; and the Jews and Gentiles shall coincide in sentiments and become one and indivisible, declaring Jesus Christ to be their only king and sovereign and as he ended proclaimed father thy will be done on Earth as in Heaven, and may all the people say AMEN.

And as she spake these words I looked and beheld the Sword which she held in her hand was transformed into an Olive Branch, which grew and overspread the horizon under which a reflection of light presented to my view a long and spacious landscape covered with an innumerable host of Beings like unto the Stars of Heaven worshipping and praising Him who is King over all there; the Lion lay down with the Lamb and the beast of the earth--and the fowls of the air were mingled together in concert, and nothing but Love unutterable appeared among them, and as it ascended a voice proclaimed--"glory to God in the highest, Peace on Earth and good will to men, &c."

All the Echo of which I felt with amazement and terror. How long I continued so I cannot tell, but when I came to myself the mighty appearance so lately before me had vanished from my sight, and I journeyed on, contemplating on the wonderful works which I had seen, and determining to lay them before the public, by whom I hope it will be read with candor.

From their humble Servant,  
THOMAS C. PRENTISS.

The foregoing Phenomenon, happened within the circle of my acquaintance, and the Truth of it here is unquestionable; altho it may appear incredible to many--an Omen which I conceive to forebode threatening and judgement by the

great Ruler of Nations and Worlds, whose penetrating Eye views the proceedings of His Creatures.....S. W.