

# HUMAN NATURE:

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## THE GOSPEL OF HUMANITY;\*

OR, THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SPIRITUALISM AND MODERN  
THOUGHT.

*"Have faith in God."*—JESUS CHRIST.

Researches in the Phenomena of Spiritualism. By William Crookes, F.R.S.

On Miracles and Modern Spiritualism. Three Essays. By Alfred Russell Wallace.

Thoughts in Aid of Faith. By Sara S. Hennell.

Present Religion: as a Faith owning Fellowship with Thought. By Sara S. Hennell.

The Essence of Christianity. By Ludwig Feuerbach.

The Gospel of the Resurrection: Thoughts in its Relation to Reason and History.  
By Brooke Foss Westcott, D.D., Regius Professor of Divinity, Cambridge.

A General View of Positivism. By Auguste Comte.

Literature and Dogma: an Essay towards a Better Apprehension of the Bible.  
By Matthew Arnold.

The Old Faith and the New. By Frederick Strauss.

The Arcana of Nature. By Hudson Tuttle.

The Arcana of Spiritualism. By Hudson Tuttle.

The Great Harmonia. By Andrew Jackson Davis.

At last man wakes from his dream of centuries. He looks back through the receding vistas of the ages, and he understands, by the help of science, how it is that he was made—how the slow, unconscious, creative power toiled upward through lower forms, till it emerged in man, and became, in man, for the first time clearly conscious of itself, and (now) of its own origin. He sees how intellect gradually appeared—how reason supplanted instinct—how the dim germ of the moral sense first glimmered, glow-worm like, along primeval plains and banks of thought—how, when the moral sense had fairly established itself, the con-

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\* This article attempts to deal with the *theoretical and doctrinal* sides of the subject—which are hardly yet sufficiently discerned by the public—as Mr. Wallace, in his articles in the *Fortnightly Review*, dealt with the *experimental and practical*.

ception of a God, like unto man, only larger and nobler, was not long in following as its resultant—how that idea has gradually become less and less anthropomorphic, till now, at last, man, fully conscious of himself, takes back those attributes of his own which he first, with childish eagerness, transferred to God, and stands forth grand in the simple riches of his own divinity; crowned with the crown of that God whom he first created, and then detected and dethroned; bright with the product of his own fiery, insatiable thought. Man now sees that all the motley crowd of deities who have thronged the past, and made the ways rich with their flashing sceptres and brilliant diadems—the strange gods of India and the East—the Jewish stern Jehovah—the pale, blood-stained Christ of Calvary—the lovely, golden-haired goddesses of Greece, who ruled the hills and watched the streams of that immortal land—the weird divinities of the rough Scandinavian thought—he sees that all these were but the creations of his own fertile brain; that he himself is greater than all these; that they find their fulfilment, as they first had their origin, *in man*.

Now, if this be true; if, as many most able thinkers are now pointing out, the word *God* is a symbol used by man to express all of the highest and widest and noblest that he can conceive, but having no objective significance; if man is, and has always been, the creator of his own deities, and has fashioned them according to his will—that is, according to the measure of insight into what is really true and noble which he has possessed in every age; if the eternal essence or basis of things is, as pointed out by Strauss and others, and hinted at by Mill in his last work, itself unconscious, yet able to evolve consciousness (which then reacts upon its own originally unconscious substance, producing further changes and improvements unlimited in extent); if a personal God is a (necessary) fiction of the human brain, and the eternal power in which “we live and move and have our being” is an impersonal power, which yet, by its upward struggles, blossoms into a consciousness of pure and endless personality at last (a doctrine which the researches of science daily render more probable); if the force which has had no beginning is not a conscious force endowed with will, but an unconscious force possessing attributes, what we call personality and will being not *causes* but *caused*—ultimate results of the action and interaction of those inherent attributes carried on through countless ages; if—to sum the whole matter up briefly, and to set forth clearly the new point of view—the first cause, or rather the perpetual cause, is an unconscious, inevitable producer of consciousness, and that consciousness (our own—upon this planet), again by the inevitable law of things,

turns round, as it were, upon itself, and, naturally ascribing its own origin to a power in all things similar to itself, only greater, exclaims—"I am personal—I have a will and a moral sense—all the elaborate works of human art that I see round me are works of design—therefore I was created, and the world was created, by the authoritative fiat of a beneficent, intelligent, personal God"—arranging, in so arguing, its inferences, as it is now becoming plain to us, in a most inconsequent way;—if all this, in very truth, be so, what is to be said about our personal immortality? Is that too, as Strauss thought, as Feuerbach seems to indicate, a mere symbol—a mere outward expression of our own intense longing for it? Will our own proper personality be torn away from us along with the personality of God?† Must we acquiesce calmly in ideas of mere impersonal expansion along the tides and breezes of things—a mere unconscious mingling with that unconscious universe whence we proceeded?

First of all I would point out that those who believe (Feuerbach, Strauss, S. Hennell, &c.) that God is a mere symbol—the mere creation of *our* personality—ascribe a tremendous force to that personality. I take, for the present, their view; I take it boldly, uncompromisingly; I say that God does not exist at all—never has existed save in our thought of him—save only in the innermost recesses of those creative hearts of ours which first originated the superb symbol, and then breathed upon it and gave it a glorious life and a glorious kingdom to rule over, even the entire universe—and gave it the sceptre of endlessness and the crown of purity—of *our* purity generously transferred to the symbol, even to the imaginary God. This view I take and rejoice in—rejoicing in the exaltation that it confers upon man, who thus becomes, verily, "the master of things"—creating, not created; bestowing, not gifted; the proud giver and maker, and not the poor, humble, depraved, pitiful receiver of life. I rejoice to restore his dignity to man, and the worth of his attributes maligned and maltreated for ages. But then, doing and feeling all this quite as acutely as the scientific atheists or humanitarians, I go on to ask—Why should we limit the results of the human personality, confessedly in itself so proud and supreme, to this life? Why not extend the line of its majestic continuity beyond the horizon of this life—beyond "the red vast void of sunset hailed from far, the equal waters of

\* The Moral and Intelligent Governor of the Universe, at the popular conception of whom Matthew Arnold has launched so many of his keen sarcastic arrows in "Literature and Dogma."

† I am assuming in this article, for the sake of bringing my point of view about Spiritualism clearly to bear, the truth of the modern notion as to the impersonal nature of the absolute essence.

the dead?" If we have, indeed, from the depths of our inner consciousness, *lifted*, with travail and strong effort, as it were, the conception of an external anthropomorphic God, and are now just discovering that this conception was our own, originated from within, not imposed upon us from without, and not necessarily answering to any external reality;—if, so seeing, so knowing, we are now taking back, resuming, with laughter and lordly triumph, that crown and that sceptre of imperial rule *which we first bestowed upon God*—or rather upon our conception of him—how shall not all other things be ours as well, by virtue of our own inherent attributes or those of the universe (the same thing)—even immortality with all its sweetness, and endless love with all its flowers? If man could originate the giant conception of One God (as on the showing of Feuerbach and Hennell he has done), besides creating the countless swarm of smaller flame-winged deities who hovered on innumerable pinions over Greece, over Rome, and the misty recesses of the remote East—if man can do this, he can do something far greater—he can take back from the symbol of God the crown of his own divinity, and pass on in the strength of calm inherent immortality to meet death, which shall be to him as the golden gate of life.

Understand, reader, clearly what I am arguing for. I am arguing for *inherent immortality*—for immortality naturally inherent in man, potentially present in the germ, waiting to be evolved. Just as, according to Professor Tyndall, all our present gifts and capacities were potentially latent in that wide-spread "fiery cloud" whence our visible universe sprang, so, I say, is immortality potentially latent in man. Now, the difference between my point of view and the orthodox point of view is just this—that I look upon immortality as natural and inherent; they look upon it as something inseparably connected with the Incarnation and the Trinity—or even with certain ideas about the Incarnation and the Trinity—as something mercifully given to us by God (and perhaps given only to a few)—something *which we might miss*—which indeed we are all in great danger of missing\*—something given by the Eternal King of Heaven as a boon,† for which we have to be ceaselessly and laboriously grateful, lifting up our praises with loud voices and urgent hearts to the Lord for the riches of his goodness—something of which we might have been deprived; nay, were justly deprived by the sin of Adam or our own, but which has been restored to us in the

\* See Calvinistic and Evangelical views, *passim*.

† "According to his mercy he saved us . . . that, being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." (Titus iii, 5, 6, 7.) And in numberless other passages of the New Testament.

person of Jesus Christ, and for ever securely sealed to us in him—something which the Son of God came to bring and to bestow. From my point of view on the contrary—a point of view which, I maintain, is strictly in accordance with the most advanced scientific views of evolution and natural development—immortality is not a matter of chance or divine gift at all, but a matter of positive certainty. *We cannot help having it. God cannot either bestow it or take it away from us.\** It is wrapped

\* Mr Buchanan has reached this idea by poetic intuition, though he has probably never reasoned much about it. In one of his fine "Coruiskin Sonnets," he says:—

"All things that live are deathless—I and ye.  
*The Father could not slay us if he would;*  
 The Elements in all their multitude  
 Will rise against their Master terribly,  
 If but one hair upon a human head  
 Should perish!"

And in another:—

"I heard a Whirlwind on the mountain peak  
 Pause for a space its furious flight and cry—  
 'There is no Death!' loudly it seemed to shriek;  
 'Nothing that is, beneath the sun, shall die.'  
 The frail sick Vapours echoed, drifting by—  
 'There is no Death, but change early and late;  
*Powerless were God's right Hand, full arm'd with fate,*  
*To slay the meanest thing beneath the sky.'*"

Surely such lines as those which I have italicised indicate a great change of view now passing over the minds of the thoughtful upon these subjects. We may compare also, in reference to the notion of the inherent inextinguishable immortality of man, several very striking passages in Walt Whitman's poems. Take the following, for example, from "To Think of Time":—

"You are not thrown to the winds—you gather certainly and safely  
 around yourself;  
 Yourself! Yourself! Yourself, for ever and ever!  
 It is not to diffuse you that you were born of your mother and father—  
 it is to identify you;  
 It is not that you should be undecided, but that you should be decided;  
 Something long preparing and formless is arrived and form'd in you,  
 You are henceforth secure, whatever comes or goes."

And, from the same poem:—

"I swear I think now that everything without exception has an eternal  
 Soul!  
 The trees have, rooted in the ground! the weeds of the sea have! the  
 animals!  
 "I swear I think there is nothing but immortality!  
 That the exquisite scheme is for it, and the nebulous float is for it, and  
 the cohering is for it;  
 And all preparation is for it! and identity is for it! and life and  
 materials are altogether for it!"

And if any one should say, as it is likely that those of the scientific and sceptical turn of mind may, that in both these cases the poets are speaking with a fine poetic frenzy, which has little real weight when brought to bear upon objects with which the understanding pure and simple should properly



up, sweetly enfolded, among the nobler necessities of our being; it is as natural, in its place and time, as the visible life. It is evolved at a certain point by necessary law, just as the germs of the lower forms of life were evolved from forms still lower by their abiding impulse of upward progress.\* To make my meaning quite clear, I may here quote a passage in Professor Westcott's "Gospel of the Resurrection," in which the view that I am opposing is well stated. He says:—"The Apostles do not teach a redemption to be wrought out by each man for himself, after the example of Christ, but of redemption wrought for each by Christ, and placed within their reach. . . . They do not teach an immortality of the soul as a consequence flowing from any conceptions of man's essential nature, but a resurrection of the body not only historically established in the rising again of Christ, but given to us through Him who is 'the Resurrection and the Life.'" To which I reply generally, reserving for the present what I have to say as to how the details of the resurrection are affected by Spiritualism;—Why is "given to us" better than "a consequence flowing"? Surely our tenure of immortality would be exactly the same in both cases.—rather more secure as a natural consequence I should think, being then safe from all personal caprice of the giver. The hell of the churches could never have been a natural consequence of man's nature; so subtle a torture-chamber requires a personal giver and supporter. Briefly, Why is it better to receive immortality than to take it, or win it or earn it or (best of all) *grow into it* by certain steps, *grounded on inherent power*?

So far as regards the possibility of an inherent immortality—"the power of an endless life"—latent in man, without regard

deal—I reply that in this question of our immortality the fine poetic intuition, whether expressed on its religious side by a Christ, or a Paul, or an A'Kempis, or on its more strictly imaginative side by a Tennyson, or a Buchanan, or a Whitman, is just the very thing we need—the very golden guiding-thread whereby we may traverse those obscure cavernous recesses of our nature, wherein the wished-for answer lies, but which the understanding, unassisted, cannot reach.

\* The able authors of "The Unseen Universe" hold some view as to the "spiritual body," closely akin to this I believe; only they go on (with strange perverseness!) to deduce the theological Trinity, etc., from their physical and scientific conclusions. It is curious that, while condemning the Spiritualistic manifestations of modern times as having "no objective significance," they should have failed to observe how exactly their own theory of the "spiritual body" corresponds to that of the more thoughtful among the Spiritualists. Miss Cobbe, in the same way, in her last work, "The Hopes of the Human Race," started a theory about the germ of the spiritual body being resident in man and gradually blossoming, as if it were an original one—not aware, apparently, that the Spiritualists, and indeed the Christians, had long entertained and promulgated the very same notion. But these are only instances of how we are all treading over the same ground just now; eagerly, so that we run up against one another.

to capricious external divine beneficence of any kind. I now come to the place at which Modern Spiritualism (as a theory, for I am not here concerned with the truth of this or that phenomenon) comes in to supplement and clinch my argument. As a question of fact it must be investigated further, and the results at present attained must be scientifically tabulated and arranged; but as a theory or doctrine—as a system of belief, the uprising of which *was to be expected and predicted* just at this precise epoch of human development—the thing is perfect. Dr. Westcott, on page 50 of “The Gospel of the Resurrection,” says, in reference to Spiritualism, “Exactly when material views of the universe seem to be gaining an absolute ascendancy, popular instinct finds expression now in this form of extravagant credulity, and now in that. Arrogant physicism is met by superstitious spiritualism; and there is right on both sides.”

Just so; but what Dr. Westcott does not appear to see is just the very point which I want to bring out in this article, and in which any originality of view that it may claim consists—viz., how beautifully Spiritualism supplements and completes the positive of Antichristian scientific teachings of modern times by offering positive, tangible evidence of another world such as science may lay hold of and investigate. We may say that the “five hundred” nameless witnesses to Christ’s Resurrection, whom science has so often longed to have in the witness-box, are really present with us now, only tenfold in number, among the Spiritualists. Let science examine them, and make what it can of them, and let us know the results. I look upon Spiritualism, taken in its healthy and general sense, apart from the impostures and the nightmares of cliques, and rightly understood, *as the other world side of modern positivism*—as positivism, in fact, carried across death’s purely factitious boundary. Of course, as Dr. Westcott (who has, I believe, some affinities with the Spiritualists) would no doubt say, Spiritualism, if proved to be true, would in one sense greatly strengthen the hands of the Christians. It would show that the miracles, and notably that of the Resurrection, are possible. If they happen now, they might have happened then; and the presumption would in such case be that they, or many of them, did happen then. But Spiritualism does far more than this, with its strong, free thought, and its habit of pushing things to extremes. It goes further. In its essence it is pitilessly hostile (as the clergy have instinctively recognised) to things orthodox, and is likely, if once fairly established in England or in Europe, to do even more towards overthrowing the State Creeds than the modern advances of science. It overcomes Christianity, in especial, in this way—*by outflanking it*. If Christianity had miracles, Spiritualism has ten times

as many. If Christianity revealed the other world to us, Spiritualism does so far more clearly and nearly—without a hopeless gulf of eighteen centuries between. It is a mistake to suppose that Spiritualism is merely a *rechauffé* of old supernatural doctrines. It is something more. While, as Mr. Wallace pointed out in the *Fortnightly*, it professes to clear away superstitions by explaining the real *rationale* of former miracles, demoniac possessions, and so forth, it extends a hand to modern positive thought, and asks that that method may be applied to miracles, and extended not only to hitherto unreached portions of this world, but to the whole domain of the unseen. Miracles happen, it says; they have happened occasionally throughout history, but never capriciously, always by law strict and unvarying enough to satisfy the most fastidious positivist or scientist. Immortality will turn out to be a thing natural enough; the Resurrection of Christ was perfectly simple and natural. We hope in time to be able to supply science with the means of investigating its method, and finally establishing it—perhaps even reproducing it. This is the creed of the most intelligent among the Spiritualists, and I do think that the general reasonableness of their system, and its amenableness to the requirements of positive or experiential thought ought to be more widely known and understood. It is not too much to say that that unknown quantity—that residue of fact which we have most of us felt still remains in the early records of Christianity after the utmost efforts of the sceptical school—those occurrences which Strauss and Renan have failed to explain away—may yet be explained (having been accepted as actual facts) by Spiritualism. Another Life of Jesus may yet be written, neither on the orthodox nor the infidel basis, but upon the Spiritualistic; and it may come more nearly than any previous life to the actual truth.

I think I may here be forgiven for quoting a portion of a letter which I wrote to a friend when I first began to study carefully the Spiritualistic literature, expressing the conclusions which I formed at the time.\* I see no reason now (the letter was written towards the close of December, 1873—*some months before Mr. Wallace's article appeared*) materially to differ from them, except that I should not now call myself a Theist. The extract will show still more clearly what I conceive to be the relation of modern Spiritualism to that gospel of humanity (as opposed to the gospel of the Resurrection of Christ) which I touched upon at the beginning of this article—that gospel which is being preached, or has been preached, with more or less of

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\* The contents of the letter have all the freshness and force of first impressions, and I cannot state my case better.



variety, and with more or less of success, by Goethe, Swinburne, M. Arnold, Theodore Parker, Miss Cobbe, Miss Hennell, Emerson, Greg, Mazzini, Feuerbach, Strauss, J. S. Mill, A. J. Davis, F. Newman, H. G. Atkinson, Hudson Tuttle, Walt Whitman, Fiske, Herbert Spencer, Huxley, Tyndall, Darwin, Comte,\* and others.

"I am now going to talk a little about Spiritualism, upon which subject I have been bringing my mind to bear lately. I think a few observations may interest you, as you have not yet turned the light of your mind-lantern in that direction. The subject is one which all men of intelligence at the present day ought to spend a certain amount of time (*not too much*) in investigating and coming to an opinion upon.

"I have come to the conclusion that there is truth at the bottom of it, and that (amidst a *mass* of jugglery, folly, and imposture) many of the facts to which it bears witness will have to be accepted, and added to the sum of human knowledge. I shall give up calling myself a Theist, and call myself a Spiritualist, by which I do not mean an adherent of table-rapping and all that sort of thing, but simply (as opposed to a Materialist) a believer in an unseen and supra-sensual world, *and a believer in the creed which holds that this unseen world has acted upon the visible world in certain exceptional cases, and at certain exceptional epochs, in an abnormal, though not unnatural, fashion.* That is what I mean by Spiritualism; and I shall use the word henceforward (and the word Spiritualist) in this significance, distinguishing the creed of mere table-rapping and its adherents by the words Spiritism and Spiritists. Do you do the same, and then we shall have no misunderstanding.

"Now Spiritualism is an advance upon Theism, and is in excess of it just so far as this—that (while accepting *with* Theism the results of modern criticism and of modern science to a very large extent) it affirms where Positivism denies, and where Theism (your position, if I understand you rightly) refuses either to affirm or deny. Positivism (perhaps I had better say Materialism, as they are not exactly the same thing) denies altogether the existence of the unseen world, and (of course) its influence on ours; Theism affirms the unseen world, but denies that it impinges upon ours in any way (or refuses to predicate anything with certainty concerning this—there is a slight vari-

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\* I have purposely thrown a large number of powerful names together, as it is interesting to see how extraordinary is the real strength of the new thought of the age, when its forces are combined. Those teachers whom I have mentioned differ, of course, greatly in doctrine; but they all unite in one thing—in prophesying great and speedy changes to the religion of the civilised world, and in pointing towards new conceptions of man as man, and a new vision of the glory and potential holiness of collective humanity, as the means whereby these mighty and inevitable changes are to be finally achieved.

ance among Theistic prophets at this point); Spiritualism affirms positive law and positive criticism (with Materialism, Science, and Theism), affirms the unseen world (with Theism), and (its differentia) asserts that in rare instances and at rare seasons it *does* impinge upon ours. I think it probable that the Resurrection was one of these instances, and a cardinal one. I think it probable that Westcott was *right (so far)* in his book. I do not see any other way of reconciling the three marked books of my this year's reading—Westcott's 'Gospel of the Resurrection,' Comte's 'General View of the Positive Philosophy,' M. Arnold's 'Literature and Dogma'—each of which has had a very strong influence upon me, and in each of which I think I discern several weak points—also noble truths in *each*. I do not see any other way of combining these books than by affirming that the Spiritual world *has* impinged upon ours at given points (Westcott); that *all* worlds are under the dominion of positive law (Comte); and, thirdly, that the critical spirit must be applied to Christianity, that the day for metaphysical dogmas has gone by, and that *all* religion must primarily repose upon the *Intuition* (M. Arnold).

"What do you think of the above generalisation? I do not think it is a small one. It is the result of much thought, and seems to me to contain and sum up a good deal, and to throw great light upon many hitherto obscure subjects. To me some of these new thoughts have been like a flood of light.

"I have long felt that the weak point of Theism lies in the fact that it *affirms* a Spiritual world, and yet *denies* the possibility of any intercourse between the inhabitants of that world and ours. This is the point that even popular Christian writers see so clearly, and make so much of. I think there is sound sense in what they say. That is why I asked you why, if we hoped to see our dead friends some day, we should not see them occasionally now—asking if it was logical (believing in another world) to attempt to draw a hard line of demarcation between that world and this—pointing out what I thought the inconsistency of Mazzini's addressing the brothers Bandiera in prayer, if at the same time he held positive views about the action of one world upon another, and their Spirits upon his. Perhaps you remember what I said. The truth is, that if you once admit a Spiritual world (as you do, and Mazzini and Parker did), you cannot, without giving a larger encouragement to Materialism than any of you three would care to do, get out of the possibility of that world's sometimes trenching upon ours. . . .

"I want now to clear your mind of the misconceptions which probably fill it (as they filled mine up till very lately) on the subject of Spiritualism.

"You no doubt thought (judging from 'Sludge the Medium' and representations of that sort) that Spiritualism was a mere mass of charlatanism, imposture, ignorance, and vulgarity. Now, I find on examination that it is *not so*. Simply *not so*. I was very much startled by discovering that there is a clear scientific tone about a good deal of Spiritualistic writing, and that some Spiritualistic oratory is not unworthy of Parker. There is a Mrs. Cora Tappan in particular, an American Spiritualistic oratoress, who is possessed of real genius, and whose addresses are in every way remarkable.\* Some time I will send you out some Spiritualistic papers, and you shall judge for yourself. I was surprised and pleased to find a great deal of sound criticism and healthy thought in their work. I think at present that (for me) Spiritualism supplies the wanting factor—the unknown quantity; it seems to fill the gap of which I have long been conscious in Theism, and which has driven me back to Christianity, only to be expelled again by the want of reason in its advocates. But Spiritualism professes to work upon scientific bases. I thought it was a modern reproduction of the superstitious side of Christianity. I dare say you are thinking the same. It is not so. I find that it is, on the contrary, a genuine product of the age in which we live—that Spiritualists profess advanced philosophical opinions (not unlike those of Parker)—that they consider the Christian dogma of the Trinity as a worn-out fable, and worship Parker's Father and Mother of the Universe. Some of Mrs. Tappan's prayers are quite as beautiful as those of Parker, and very much in the same style. All this was new and surprising to me, and, I think, will be new to you. It is encouraging and reassuring, for I had fancied that Spiritualism went in for patching and bolstering up Christianity. I find, for instance, that Spiritualists talk about the superstitions of Christianity, and that, far from shunning, they court scientific and honest investigation.

"I do not place much reliance upon séances or casual phenomena; my main argument is, as usual, an *a priori* one, and lies higher up. The more I think and read, the more firmly am I convinced that there are only two great divisions of opinion in the world, which have struggled together (like Shelley's snake and eagle in 'The Revolt of Islam') through all time, and have taken ever-varying forms and phases—the Materialistic and the Spiritualistic. Between these two the empires of time and

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\* This was written, as above stated, in 1873. I regret to have to add that further experience of Mrs. Tappan teaches me that she sometimes talks and writes the most egregious nonsense. Nevertheless, she is a remarkable woman, and her principal book of poems, "*Hesperia*," has true genius in it, though mixed and overlaid with much that is tawdry, weak, and superficial.

thought are divided. Christianity and Theism, and Spiritism and Comtism and Spinozism, and so forth, are only minor forms of these enormous Creeds—chips torn from the parent rocks. They can always be classified (like stones and fossils in the hand of an experienced geologist) as having originally belonged to one or the other rock-stratum. Theism has hitherto been giving her right hand to Materialism, and all I want to do is to spin the good lady round and give her right hand to Spiritualism, and bestow upon Materialism only the graces of her left.

“Questions like that of Christ’s Resurrection are really utterly unimportant by the side of the question—Is there a Spiritual World at all? Are we to believe in anything besides matter? And the only way to answer this question is to fall back upon the intuition. It cannot be answered (on the one hand) by scientific induction—nor can it be proved (on the other) by historical evidence, though it may be very largely confirmed by this. To this point, I think, men of all creeds and opinions are coming very fast. I find the same feeling among Theists—among Spiritualists—among the modern Christian apologists. They all, with hardly an exception, are falling back upon the intuition, and preaching that Christianity ought to be approached by the intuitional or *a priori* route. To this basis some of them add miracles, and some do not. Once grant the intuition, and this becomes quite a secondary question, and it is coming to be considered so *on all sides*. But, as a secondary question, it is of great importance. I find that the abler Spiritualists themselves are not for pressing the more marvellous appliances of their trade—they, too, preach immortality and the existence of God from the intuition, and only appeal to their modern miracles *in confirmation* of an intuition and a faith previously existent in the mind. (In some instances, no doubt, it may be—and always has been—the other way; startling external occurrences may awake a spirit of enquiry and produce conviction; but the ultimate appeal must always be to the intuition residing in each one’s consciousness; else *how* are you to “try the spirits,” according to the New Testament?) Herein they are in perfect union with the Zeit-Geist, and move in harmonious ranks with the other advocates of progressive thought. The truth is, that though we are “under the dawn,” we are very far from being under the noonday, and for a good deal we shall have to wait. I doubt whether either of us will see in our lifetime a complete ‘System of Science’ or a complete ‘System of Religion’—and the utmost that our modern aspiring philosophico-artistic writers can really hope to do is to lay (perhaps) the stones of a few steps which shall ultimately form a basis for a complete ‘System of Art.’ Now, this fact of our being so far from the noonday bears

upon the question of miracles in this way—that we have not yet got to the end of our destructive criticism, and therefore it is impossible to tell what will be left when that criticism has completed its work and done its duty—namely, its worst. If I may venture to prophesy, I think that the result will be somewhat as follows. A large portion of the results of the destructive criticism will have to be accepted; the mythical theory will account for many of the Biblical legends quite satisfactorily (perhaps for Christ's being born of a Virgin, among others; a prominent English clergyman told me, not long since, that he would be glad not to believe this, and that he thought the time had come for a frank consideration of the question); the naturalistic theory will account for others; but will they account for *all*? I do not feel sure that they will; and I think it likely that a residue of narratives will be left, both in our Bible and the Bibles of other religions, which will never be rightly understood except by admitting the interposition in these rare instances for rare reasons of supernatural (but perfectly harmonious—perfectly *positive*) agency. I really think that the ultimate choice lies between this and sheer Materialism. The Resurrection *may* be one such instance; the Conversion of Paul *may* be another; but I would never press this upon any one as a matter of faith—it is Aberglaube. But where I do not agree with M. Arnold is, that I think the tenets of Aberglaube may sometimes be founded on facts. But I *do* agree with him in feeling that Aberglaube is not of equal force with the Intuition; and this G. MacDonald saw long ago.

“As an example of what I call the Theistic inconsistency, I will quote the following. M. Arnold, talking about the stoning of Stephen, implies that the passage about Stephen's seeing the Lord Jesus sitting at the right hand of God is not to be taken literally. It is to be interpreted, rather, upon the principles of what is called Ideology. Stephen did not behold at that supreme juncture an objective Christ; but he underwent a transfiguration of soul, which he expressed (or which has been expressed for him, by what M. Arnold calls ‘reporters’) in those words. Now I am not concerned to prove that Stephen *did* see an objective Christ—that is a question of importance, but not of primary importance; but what I *do* say—and I think that I have not only true logical argument, but sound English common sense on my side in saying it—is this, that such an objective vision would not be one whit more wonderful than the realisation of the issues which are implied in M. Arnold's own affirmation; for he does (practically) affirm immortality—he affirms “the power of an endless life;” if the feeling of this eternal life never rises in us to a sense of its being inextinguishable, it is, he says, proba-



bly because we fall so very far short of Christ's moral standard that our intuitions are weak, and we feel that we dare not trust them and cast our whole souls upon them as Christ did. The affirmation of the human intuition at all supreme moments is *There is no death*. This affirmation forms the appropriate text and motto of Spiritualism, and stands in precise contraposition to the text engraved upon the banner of Materialism—Nothing exists but matter. Now, all that M. Arnold has shown is, that this broad human intuition, *which reached its personal height (we may say) in Christ of Nazareth*, is the ultimate thing to be relied upon—the primary basis, the ultimate test—and that we are never safe in *basing* any religion upon miracles. He has not shown more than this; he has hardly attempted to show more; and I think that, as far as he has gone, he is on safe ground, and right. His weak point would be, if he ever attempted to deny that the intuition which he affirms may sometimes be confirmed and established (for previous believers in it) by supernatural proofs; at this point you will find (I expect), if you ever read any reviews of his book, that his opponents will get hold of him. They will say (with reason), you affirm a life which transcends this visible life of ours; you assert that Christ possessed in a surpassing degree the intuition of that life, and that we all possess it in our measure, and that it may be largely increased by faithfulness to light or (in your own words) by a rigid attention to conduct—why, therefore, should the Resurrection not be a manifestation—one, probably, among many other manifestations, but the chief one of hitherto accomplished human history—why should it not be a manifestation of that life in which you say that you believe? \* Why believe in the life if it is never to manifest itself? Why believe in immortality if you are never to be clothed with it? The immortal life *must have a beginning*. (Turn those four words—*must have a beginning*—over in your mind carefully; I cannot tell you what a force they have to me.) If the immortal life *is* to begin, it is only a subtle form of Materialism to endeavour to lay down the law as to *when* it shall first manifest itself (that is the weak point of Parker and what is called pure Theism). This seems to me unspeakably important. You will find if you take the assertion of pure Theism that there was no Resurrection, † and that the eternal life never impinges upon ours, but that this life necessarily begins at the given point of death, *and not till then*,

\* See an article in the *Edinburgh Review* for October, 1873, in which this point is well brought out.

† See for a confirmation of my statement that this is the creed of pure Theism—the view as to the Resurrection held by the most advanced Theists—Miss Cobbe's "Hopes of the Human Race," about "Jewish ghost-stories."

you will find, if you patiently follow this thought to its ultimate analysis and proceed to disintegrate it, that you have in reality left no scope for that eternal life or its manifestation *at all*.

"The real difficulty is not to conceive of a spiritual or eternal life manifesting itself in surprising and unusual ways, which to the material eye appear abnormal and monstrous; the real difficulty is to believe in such a life *at all*. Those who have no spiritual vision by nature, or who have lost it for a time through wrong-doing, *cannot* believe in a supra-mundane life; once believe in such a life as a matter of absolute truth, and endeavour to live up to the faith in it, and special convictions as to the truth of the assertions concerning certain ways in which that life is said to have manifested itself upon the earth may well be left to come of themselves—gradually. Here we begin to understand the meaning of 'the natural man understandeth not the things of the spirit—they are foolishness unto him—because they are spiritually discerned,' and the whole mass of evangelical metaphor about the carnal man being like a man who is blind-fold in the midst of a bright room, and similar expressions generated by the seers and sages of all religions through all time."

And again, in another letter written in March, 1874:—"The literature of Spiritualism (of which I have read a great deal lately) abounds with well-attested instances of revelations which you would call 'special' and 'inharmonious.' It makes miracles common, and explains them. This brings me round to the view of Spiritualism which I took at Brighton (when I thought the matter out pretty *ultimately*); I do not know whether it will be my final view. I was attracted towards the subject by my own curious experience; I found that Spiritualists, far from mocking and laughing at such things like the vulgar herd, believed fully in them; nay, dealt almost exclusively in the obscurer phenomena of mind and spirit. I found narratives of experiences not unlike my own. Thus I was led to look further into the subject.

"Next I found accounts of intelligent disembodied agency (you confuse the argument by talking about 'spirit' and 'matter' in that rigid way; we do not know what spirit and matter *are*; what we call spirit may be some exceedingly attenuated form of matter; or, spirits may be clothed in some exceedingly thin tissue of matter—we do not know); I found accounts of intelligent agency acting upon mortals from the outside. I found these accounts confirmed by *hosts* of able and honest witnesses. So I was led to ask myself what would be the effect of this new belief (*if* I found myself compelled to believe it) upon my faith in *Christianity*.

"Now we have got to an interesting point. I saw two ways of regarding Spiritualism (*assuming* its essential truth) in connection with Christianity. The first way was to regard the creed of modern miracles as confirming the old creed. Miracles are performed now; therefore they were performed then. Christ, the incarnate Logos, performed in that capacity the greatest miracles of all—those of raising the dead. This is one view; and it is the view of a large body of men in England and America who call themselves *Christian Spiritualists*. A medium called Harris may perhaps be regarded as their leader.

"This view did not satisfy me, as I then should have had to give up my Theism, with all its attendant liberty and beauty of thought, and regard Christ as an exceptional person, with all the ugliness and bondage of thought attendant upon that conception. Therefore, I sought for another method of reconciling Spiritualism with Christianity. I came to the conclusion that Spiritualism—(I always mean 'modern Spiritualism' when I use the word in this letter—the modern Science of the Miraculous, dating from Hydesville, in the State of New York, where the rappings began in the Fox family in 1848; I cannot further maintain in writing the distinction between 'Spiritism' and 'Spiritualism')—that Spiritualism must be regarded simply as an expansion of Theism—simply as its magnetic or thaumaturgic side. It seemed to me to fill up a gap which Parker and Mazzini had left unclosed. I do not think Parker and Renan ever fairly explained the origin of Christianity; nor do I think that Arnold has done so in 'Literature and Dogma.' Something more is needed; and that 'unknown quantity' is supplied by modern Spiritualism, which takes up the work where Parker relinquished it. The miracles of Christ and of the apostolic era have never become really plain in the light of modern criticism. It is this fact which has given their strength to Westcott and the defenders of Christianity. As long as they brought strong evidence to show that certain wonderful works were wrought at that time which are not performed now, and have never been performed at any other era, it was impossible to dislodge them from their earth-works; but once show that such miracles are common things of almost daily occurrence, that every religion has had them, and that they are going on *now*, and the whole strength of Christianity, as gained from its exclusiveness, totters and stumbles to the ground. This is the true significance of modern Spiritualism, and this is the view which I finally took of it at Brighton. It is the one thing which was wanting to make the fortresses of Theism\* impregnable. It is the one thing which

\* It should be understood that, throughout this article, I use the word "Theism" in the sense of the advanced Theism professed and proclaimed by

was needed to make the gateways of the new creed secure. It is the missing factor which I have been looking for so long; which explains the Resurrection, and all books based, like Westcott's, upon the Resurrection. Christ *did* rise; he appeared to his friends; he made his spirit-form visible to them (as many other spirit-forms have been visible in history); but he was *not* the Son of God in any exclusive sense for all that (here Spiritualistic Theism triumphs over Westcott, and maintains the integrity of *man*, while admitting his facts; it is at this point that I claim some originality of conception). Other risen spirits have made themselves manifest to their friends; they are doing so *now*; they are doing so in *London*!

"If they are doing so in London, why should one man not have done so at Jerusalem? and if they are doing so in London, why should the solitary man who did so at Jerusalem be dubbed the Incarnate Word and the Visible Jehovah for so doing? [I cannot resist the conclusion that many of our higher poets, in those most exalted moments of which they have left to us a record—(as, for example, Byron during the thunderstorm on the Jura mountains, his feelings on which occasion he describes so wonderfully in the famous passage in *Childe Harold*; and Tennyson on the night when, as he says—

' Word by word, and line by line,  
The dead man touch'd me from the past,  
And all at once it seem'd at last  
His living soul was flash'd on mine,

' And mine in his was wound, and whir'd  
About empyreal heights of thought,  
And came on that which is, and caught  
The deep pulsations of the world '\*—

knew something of what the resurrection-life meant. No theories of a swift resurrection and reappearance of Christ could have seemed strange or far-fetched to Byron, after his wonderful experience of the passion of eternal life, as excited and roused into conscious, active being within him in that instance by the marvels of the mountains and the storm; nor to Tennyson, after

Parker in America, by Mazzini in Italy and on the Continent generally, and by writers like Miss Cobbe and Francis Newman in England. But my own faith has, to some extent, veered round lately towards that Religion of Humanity sketched out at the beginning and conclusion of this paper. When I wrote the above letters, "Theism" expressed to me an advanced reasonable creed which should gather into itself all the fruits of the past, and all the young springing blossoms of present thought as well. I now doubt whether "Theism" is a fit name for such a creed. But I thought it best to retain, in the letters, the old expression, while indicating elsewhere the qualifications which I now perceive to be necessary.

\* In *Memoriam*, p. 146. I have been informed, upon good authority, that the brother, and also the sister, of the Laureate are Spiritualists.

his wondrous sense of sudden spiritual union with his dead friend Arthur Hallam upon that memorable night; nor to others who have felt, in their measure, similar hints and intuitions of immortality. I myself had, in early youth, a strange spiritual experience, after which the faith in an immortal life can never seem to me anything absurd or unreal—rather the most natural and obvious thing in the world. The truth is that the Resurrection is not an isolated fact at all. It is confirmed and led up to by multitudes of spiritual experiences in all ages, felt and enounced by those 'magnetic men' of whom Mr. Haweis speaks in his recent volume.\*]

"I am as jealous to define and defend the boundaries of our beloved Theism as ever Athanasius or Origen or Clement were to guard their Christian creeds. Therefore, I say that a man shall not be called the Living God because he happens, casually, to have risen from the dead, or has had any other abnormal Spiritual experience; and here I encounter Westcott with mutual shock of inwoven breastplates, face from face. But I differ from Comte and Arnold in that I accept the chief of Westcott's premisses. Only that I deduce from those premisses very different conclusions. I only establish Theism on a firmer basis, and overthrow Westcott more profoundly, in that I am able to accept his Christian Resurrection and add twenty Theistic Resurrections to it. "Let those laugh who win." The great love wins in the issue, and so does the broad thought. Theism has now finally conquered Christianity; its final victory was to inaugurate a code of miracles of its own, grander and more human than any which preceded it. Andrew Jackson Davis, the Poughkeepsie Seer, is the prophet of this new revelation of unchristian, superchristian miracles; he is your 'coming man,' and he comes from America, as you predicted. Of his works and thoughts more anon.

"I argue as to Christ's Resurrection from my own experience, from the experience of others, from well-attested facts of history and of modern Spiritualism. It certainly seems to me a grand idea that Theism should have its miracles as well as Christianity. If the light that be in Christianity turns out to be darkness, truly 'great is that darkness.' Gerald Massey, 'the people's poet,' is a devoted and uncompromising Spiritualist. They say that Tennyson and Walt Whitman are Spiritualists, and Tennyson certainly ought to be, judging from his intercourse with the spirit of Arthur Hallam, in 'In Memoriam.' He must have been very near to the spirit of his dead friend at one point in the poem. If Theism can perform even the wonders of Chris-

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\* "Speech in Season." Reviewed at length in the *Westminster* for July.



tianity (its inferior material phenomena) better than the Christians themselves, it is truly a sign that the power of God has passed over to the New Creed, and that the Ark is no longer in the Churches. It adds the colour that was wanting to Moncure Conway's book,\* and wrings the last lingering supernatural dyes out of the Christian flag.

"The great movement of the age (as you have yourself said) is towards *decentralisation*; towards republicanism of thought. Now, modern Spiritualism is simply the most republican creed in its tendency that can possibly be found; for it refuses to recognise any excess of personality—any imperialism of religion—affirming that nascent Mediumship exists in nearly every one, and that each, in his measure, can hold intercourse with the Spiritual world. In all this it is at one with the age. And in all this it is at deadly feud with the orthodox Churches and with Christianity, because it takes even the golden handle of their esoteric thaumaturgic weapon out of their grasp. Therefore, the Churches hate this new movement even more than the simple Theistic movement (which is of a more abstract and philosophical character), and accuse its preachers of holding communion with evil spirits, and being instigated by Satan, and so on—the old story. But some Christians, like Mr. Haweis, have had the sense to see that they cannot maintain their own series of miracles intact, and exclude these modern miracles, and all others,—and they recognise, and even preach, Spiritualism.

"In communications alleged to be from spirits, great stress is laid upon the fact that no *one* person is to be the centre of this movement. This was the mistake the spirits made—so they say—in inaugurating and furthering the Christian movement; and that mistake must not be made twice. Now when one finds thoughts of this kind emanating from the obscure brains of illiterate American Mediums, it makes one pause—and think. There is nothing more remarkable in the history of this movement than the way in which the foremost thoughts of the foremost thinkers of the age have been repeated by ignorant and uneducated men under alleged spirit-influence. It certainly looks as if the *Zeit-Geist* of Matthew Arnold were something more than a mere abstraction. Thoughts are in the air, we all know. But the idea that they are not only in the air, but in the hearts and minds of devoted, earnest, disembodied spirits, intent upon educating us upon earth, and inaugurating era after era, is one of the loveliest announcements of modern Spiritualism, and it is quite as philosophical as the conception of an abstract *Zeit-Geist*. Of course, the idea, in its essence, is as old as the

\* "The Earthward Pilgrimage." London: J. C. Hotten. 1870.

hills; Paul had it (compare his 'Cloud of Witnesses'); Swedenborg had it; Christ had it; but some of its developments are new.

"I have now made plain the second view which may be taken of Spiritualism when regarded in close connection with Christianity. It may be called Theistic or advanced or progressive Spiritualism. I thought this view out for myself at Brighton, and, subsequently, upon an examination of the best Spiritualistic literature, could not but be gratified to discover that a similar solution had presented itself to the most advanced among the Spiritualists. There are two parties in their ranks as everywhere else: the negative and the positive party; the obstructive and the progressive; the conservative and the liberal. The acknowledged leader of the Liberal Spiritualistic party is the extraordinary man I spoke of above—Andrew Jackson Davis. He is the author of a vast number of philosophical and metaphysical works, some of which I have been reading lately. He is a man of very real and massive genius—a sort of intuitive Spiritual Comte of the west—and it is an astonishing thing to find this American shoemaker's apprentice (for such he was, I believe), propounding intuitively even in his early days the very same critical Theistic truths, which it has taken M. Arnold a life's perusal of 'the best that has been thought and written in the world' to reach. This, I say, is extremely astonishing; and it is a phenomenon which one encounters constantly in examining the records of Spiritualism."

I have now shown what I conceive to be the relation between Spiritualism, assuming that some of its phenomena shall eventually be proved to be genuine, and modern thought. In conclusion I will briefly recur to the other main purpose of this article, which is to show that if the belief in a personal loving God, constructed after the sanguine fashion of the Christian Church, has to be abandoned, we need not therefore necessarily give up our faith in a personal immortality.

The things, though they may at first sight (naturally) seem similar, yet are in fact totally dissimilar, and have a totally dissimilar bearing. They are based upon different grounds. If it is probable, as maintained at the commencement of this article, that we have ourselves thrown the conception of a giant god made in man's image upon the vacant sky of our own thought; if we have evolved from our own experience of love and tenderness, and the overmastering conviction which we, as a race, have now reached that unselfishness is the one thing superior to all things else\*—the one thing passionately to strive after—the one

\* Dean Stanley, in a recent remarkable speech delivered at the distribution of prizes to the students of St. Thomas's Hospital, said:—"Whatever course physical science might take, nothing could ever destroy or shake in the least: de-

thing wholly *divine*;—if, from this intense conviction (Mr. Arnold's "*Intuition*"), we have evolved the further belief (Mr. Arnold's "*Aberglaube*") in a righteous God who inspires us with the love of righteousness—who wishes to make us like himself, "pure even as he is pure"—and who has sent his Son into the world to redeem us from our sins and to prepare us for the heavenly kingdom—if all this be *Aberglaube*, and only the conviction—the conviction that "righteousness makes for happiness"—based upon experience the one thing sure:—if all this be so, our hope of immortality, based upon that inextinguishable sense of life and eternal permanency which the practice of righteousness invariably gives, remains much as it was before. It is not really shaken in the least. It cannot be shaken. And if Spiritualism can indeed help to explain the Resurrection of Christ upon sober scientific grounds—grounds other than that he was the Eternal Son, the only-begotten of the Father, and therefore could not "see corruption," nor be "holden of death," on account of his aboriginal kingly quality—if Spiritualism can lift us out of the difficulty and clear up, without having recourse to all this *Aberglaube*, the mystery of Christ's Resurrection in a simple human way—as I have through a great part of this article been attempting to show that there is strong hope of its doing—if this, with all its valuable concomitants, shall turn out to be the truth, our hope of immortality will approach an experimental certainty, and we shall be greatly indebted to the much-despised much-calumniated Spiritualism!

In this connexion it is well to say that we do *not* really know, much as has been made of it in priestly argument, that Jesus Christ believed in a personal God at all. Poor Jesus! Centuries of councils and boisterous churches have put so many words into his mouth—so many strange opinions into his heart—that it is becoming a matter of almost hopeless difficulty to know what he really did believe or feel. But this much we may say without fear—that his God was a very different Being from that complex Divinity of the Churches whose body passes into consecrated wafers, and who sustains the lurid dominions of hell with his red right hand!

Christ believed in God as Father—he addressed him as Father, and thought of him as Father, we are told; and it is likely that in this particular we are informed correctly, as the unusual manner of loving and trustful utterance would have rivetted itself in

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grow the glory of goodness, the excellence of purity, charity, courage—the immense prominence of the moral nature of man above everything else in the world. . . . The moral being of man and the moral excellence which exists in man are beyond everything else." With this I heartily agree, maintaining as I do that our moral intuitions are the causes and creators of our creeds, instead of our creeds creating and nourishing *them* (see Lit. and Dogma, pp. 290, 291).

the minds of the hearers, and probably have been reported accurately—without additions or misapprehensions of their own. But even then it remains to inquire, what did Jesus mean by Father—did he use the word as we speak of God the Father, the First Person of the Holy Trinity—did he use the word as the Churches have used it, and are using it—or as Milton used it—or as John Knox,—did he use it out of consideration for popular ignorance and superstition (much the same in all ages), as likely to convey the truest idea to the popular mind—did he not, in his inmost heart, mean by it something very like that impersonal absolute power which modern science presents to us as at the root of all things, and which we may call father, or brother, or mother, not because it is indeed as a conscious father, or brother, or mother, but because it (by the final results of the working of its originally unconscious attributes) *produces* fatherhood and motherhood, and all the tender grace of brotherliness—produces and sustains these in us, so that we naturally call this power father, though it heeds not nor hearkens to our voice? Was not, (to take a very excellent instance) all that loving-kindness and unceasing pity and tenderness which the late Frederic Maurice used to speak about as residing in the Godhead, and eternally manifested to us by God the Son—was not that principle of eternal, boundless, endless love, which he was never tired of expatiating upon, *really resident in the man himself, Frederic Maurice?* and did he not unconsciously cast his own grand shadow on the sky, and hear his own true voice calling unto him as if from the fairest heights of heaven—more voluble now, being as the fancied tongue of God?

These questions are not intended to be irreverent. They are being reverently, but bravely and persistently, asked on all sides now—they will be asked more persistently and much less reverently as time goes on, if mankind is to be drugged in reply with superstitious fallacies, and put off with petulant half answers. Meantime, pending the full discovery in the depths of man's own nature of the answers to these and similar questions, let us remember, in removal, or at least in mitigation of that principal dread which overwhelms him just now—lest in losing the personal God of his own creation, he has also parted with his own immortality—that all the analogy of nature goes to show that from lesser to greater, from simple to increasingly complex, is her constant plan of procedure—and that there is really little reason to fear that that mingling with the eternal elements, of which all the poets speak in such rapturous terms, means anything like what we can only express as the loss of individuality or of personality. We are not likely to return, unconscious, to that unconscious universe from which, by ages

of upward agony, we have slowly emerged. We are, or have become, immeasurably greater than our prolific mother; and we have no desire to return to the unconscious folds of her embrace. Devoted Pantheists, when they talk about mingling with the universe, continually forget how much greater that thought and moral sense which have been slowly evolved are than the forces which evolved and produced them; they continually, without knowing or noticing it, advocate an immense retrogression—a vast passing from the greater to the less great, from the heterogeneous to the homogeneous—when they preach their belief in the annihilation of man's conscious personality—the very thing which all the strenuous ages have been struggling triumphantly to produce. Do not fear, we shall not lose this. Far more likely is it that further evolution, as yet unseen and unexperienced, will increase and intensify it. The powers of air and earth and ocean shall be ours; but we shall not be theirs. We shall rejoice with the winds and the happy tumult of the breezes; but they shall not exult and triumph over us. We shall hold lordship over them—they shall pass into us and become a part of us—we shall not passively pass into them; the universe may be absorbed, in some strange, sweet fashion, into the human spirit, as it has already in some measure been absorbed into the souls of poets like Shelley and Keats—but it will, *must*, re-issue thence in the victorious utterance of human personality, made greater, not smaller, by the electric human touch. It will not absorb us, but we shall, in the end, enclose and absorb all the blossoms of its manifold and enigmatic beauty. We shall pass onward to become greater and more complex in our powers of thought and love and ecstasy; we shall not flee backward into Pantheistic viewless breezes, or Pantheistic fiery star-dust. We have been these things—yea, all of them, or latent in all of them—but we shall be these no more. We have climbed above them to the conscious, glorious height of man; and our superb self-consciousness shall only widen and deepen and increase; it shall become world-consciousness,\* and even the sense of many worlds, without the loss of the central governing self—the central human spirit.

Greater powers of love in especial shall be ours—strange lovely forms of passion unseen and undreamed of as yet—but

\* "I do not doubt but the majesty and beauty of the world are latent in any iota of the world;

I do not doubt I am limitless, and that the universes are limitless—in vain I try to think how limitless;

*I do not doubt that the orbs, and the systems of orbs, play their swift sports through the air on purpose—and that I shall one day be eligible to do as much as they, and more than they."*

Walt Whitman—"Whispers of Heavenly Death."



no loss of passion; no absorption into passionless nature; no eternal mingling with the serene but loveless stars. We pass upward. We win nature; we are not won and conquered of her. It may be that the passions of all planets, or experienced on all planets, shall unite in us, but it will be only to increase and sweetly amplify, as with the sound of many voices, or the scent of many flowers, or the breath of many and lordly mountain winds, the fragrant central yearning and the pure innate desire of each. We shall gain everything by expansion—nothing is to be gained by lingering within the dusty precincts of ourselves. By widening out we gain the universe, but we lose no jot nor tittle of our true eternal selves thereby. These true endless selves abide alway, and they shall not be diminished. Death cannot narrow them; they are unchangeable for all the shocks and perturbations of creeds. The forces of nature must in the end become our servants; they are never (had not Ezekiel the vision of a *man* upon the central throne?) to be our masters and lords. The sea and thunder will not win us, but we may win the passion and the pleasure of thunder, and stars, and sea. When Byron said—

“And this is in the night;—Most glorious night!  
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be  
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,—  
A portion of the tempest and of thee!”

he had a vision of a great ecstatic joy—a voluptuous spiritual rapture in which, too, all the quivering and throbbing senses took part\*—beyond the reach of words; and as what he had (and all true poets have had) a prophetic foreglimpse of was not the loss of consciousness, but the splendid presence of a consciousness which, while it grew (and even *in proportion as it grew*) wider and less embodied, became also more personal and more intense, so shall the loss of life bring to each soul in the end a deeper and wider life; more pregnant with sweet and masterly issues; more safely and nobly lifted above all ultimate arrows of adverse fate.

GEORGE BARLOW.

#### NOTE.

Since the above was written, an article on “Theism” has appeared in the *Westminster Review*, from which the following is an extract:—

“Religions are not made; they grow. Their progress is not from the enlightened to the vulgar, but from the vulgar to the enlightened. They are not products of the intellect, but manifest themselves as physical forces too. The religion of the future is in our midst already, working like potent yeast in the minds of the people. It is in our midst to-day with signs and wonders uprising like a swollen tide, and scorning the barriers of Nature's laws. But however irresistible its effects they are not declared on the surface. It comes

\* See Swinburne's “Essay on Byron.”

veiling its destined splendours beneath an exterior that invites contempt. Hidden from the prudent, its truths are revealed to babes. Once more the weak will confound the mighty, the foolish the wise, and base things and things despised, it may be even things that are not, bring to nought things that are, for it seems certain that whether truly or whether falsely SPIRITUALISM will re-establish, on what professes to be ground of positive evidence, the fading belief in a future life—not such a future as is dear to the reigning theology, but a future developed from the present, a continuation under improved conditions of the scheme of things around us. Further than this it is impossible to predict the precise development which Spiritualism may take in the future, just as it would have been impossible at the birth of Christianity to have predicted its actual subsequent development: but FROM THE UNEXAMPLED POWER POSSESSED BY THIS NEW RELIGIOUS FORCE of fusing with other creeds, it seems likely in the end to bring about a greater uniformity of belief than has ever yet been known."

It will be seen that the writer is here pursuing a new line of thought, which runs curiously parallel to that indicated in my own treatise.—G. B., Oct. 23, 1875.

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### L' A M O U R.

We sat upon the grassy mound,  
 Beneath the ancient cross of stone;  
 We listened to the billows' sound,  
 As far below they played around  
 The jagged rocks with lisp and moan.

We wandered through the ruins gray—  
 The ruins silent, weird and old—  
 Until the sinking round of day  
 Had bathed the ever-restless bay  
 In streams of dazzling molten gold.

We prated of the deeds of fame  
 That legend wedded to the place,  
 Until we chanced upon the name  
 Of a fair, ill-fated dame—  
 They called her Margaret Grace de Grace.

This maiden loved, the legend says,  
 A knight without or fear or blame,  
 Save that his sire's long Border frays  
 Had left him poor; which in those days  
 Was graver fault than evil fame.

Their tale is short: she loved with love  
 As pure as angel heart could feel;  
 Was loved; and each in silence wove  
 Such dreams of bliss, as but above  
 Rewards the constant, brave and leal.

Her kinsmen marked their love, and swore  
 He ne'er should wed a Grace de Grace:  
 They vowed eternal love, then o'er

The seas he passed to foreign war,  
And died before an unknown place.

Long time she waited, hoping e'er  
That he'd return she loved so well;  
But hope at length being dead, she bare  
Her sorrow with a queenly air,  
And aged died i' th' cloister cell.

We prated thus—my love and I—  
Of these sad lovers long ago,  
Until the shades of night were nigh,  
And in the purple western sky  
One star of liquid splendour shone.

My darling stood beneath the rood,  
She gazed upon the evening star—  
Her pale, fair face and form imbued  
With glory from the dying flood  
Of light that flushed the West afar.

I could not look upon that beam:  
I sat and gazed upon her face,  
As fair and lovely as a dream  
That comes in sleep, and which we deem  
Not of the earth—so sweet its grace!

A dimness started to mine eyes,  
A prayer arose within my breast—  
That heaven might grant me such a prize  
As this knight's love, so I might rise  
Above all lowly mundane quest.

She turning saw my tears and read  
The thoughts that filled me with unrest;  
She stood a moment, then she fled  
Into my arms and laid her head  
Upon my wildly beating breast,

And whispered, her dear eyes aflame  
With love, that she'd be true to me  
As to her knight the high-born dame—  
In life and death, in fame or shame,  
My own true love she still would be.

I clasped her to my bosom; long  
We rested folded heart to heart  
And cheek to cheek; then 'mid the throng  
We passed with courage calm and strong,  
Knowing that life had now no smart.

## THE ORIGIN, FORMATION, AND DESTINY OF MAN.

By GUY BRYAN, M.A.

IN the Origin and Formation of the Universe there was a twofold object in view. First, that God might know Himself; secondly, that the souls he had formed out of Himself might know themselves also.

I. That God might know Himself. Thus saith my spirit-tutor on this subject:—"Do you not see it is in the process of evolution from Himself, or creation, that God feels Himself, produces, confirms, establishes, as it were, Himself. We must see Him in the only way we can—that is, in the small mirror of our own existences. What is a man without work—without making his own life about and around himself? Would he know himself as *soul* only? Must he not, as it were, work or develop himself out of himself? So I conceive it is with God. I think the Great Father must *know* Himself—that is, His perfection and greatness, His beauty and divinity, only in His creation. And, therefore, I conceive it must ever become more and more perfect; and, at this age, we cannot conceive what the perfections of succeeding ages may unfold. That is my idea. I think that is God's way of manifesting to Himself. I do not believe that God has any consciousness outside of embodiments. If you conceive a different idea, at once you make God *one person* or being—locate him in *one spot*. That would destroy the possibility of infinitude, and would necessitate a beginning; in all probability, a progenitor. Where, then, would be eternity?"

Thus, we may conceive that God is a progressive being in the sense of ever increasing in knowledge of Himself by His work upon the universe—one stage of perfection in the work suggesting another stage. Thus, by the ever increasing knowledge of God, the universe is ever, and ever will be, unfolding to some higher stage.

It may be said that it is contrary to the idea of infinite perfection that there is any knowledge to which God has not attained. We say also that *there is not*, but *there will be*, knowledge of His which is not yet in existence. To say that God *could* not know anything but what He does know, would be to place limitations to the Infinite; and it would be to shut Him out of an attribute which we, His offspring, believe ourselves to possess—that of *Progression*. The fact is, limitations apply only to *matter* and *material* things—not to *spirit* and *spiritual* things, such as knowledge and love. The essence of spirit remains the same. It is *love*, and always will be love. But its possibilities of manifesting itself through matter, and of thus knowing itself,

are restricted by no limitations but ignorance, which is, after all, but an imaginary barrier having only a negative existence, and, therefore, must ever recede before the advance of spirit, whether the spirit be finite, according to our conceptions, or infinite.

Thus I think it will be apparent that the formation of matter was a necessity in order that the Infinite Spirit might know Itself.

II. And, if it is a necessity for the Infinite Spirit, it follows, as a matter of course, that it must be a necessity for all finite spirits that they should know themselves.

As we believe every man to be an embodiment of one of these finite spirits, it will be interesting for us to consider the Origin, Formation, and Destiny of Man.

#### I.—AS TO HIS ORIGIN.

The Infinite Spirit is Infinite Love. It is love which cannot rest satisfied with *self*, but such love as would naturally tend to produce other beings of like nature, in whom it might manifest its divine attributes in the most perfect manner. There were then spirit-forces at work to form worlds for the reception of souls in their embryonic state. These worlds were of the beautiful form of love.

The material worlds are but types or representations of these worlds of love.—(T. C.)

When these spirit-worlds were ready for the reception of spirit-being, there was a union of the male and female principles which resulted in the production of germs of souls. And these germs were deposited in the worlds of love that were ready to receive them. There they germinate and grow into souls under the genial influence of the beams of love which shine upon them from their spirit-suns. Thus the soul gradually grows into being.—(T. C.)

Souls, during this first stage of their existence, "seemed to be in a condition of sleep. They seemed to be dreaming."—(T. C.)

The state of a new-born infant would, I suppose, be analogous to it. "It could scarcely be said that they were conscious of existence."—(T. C.)

There were spirit-worlds formed and souls nurtured upon them long before the creation of matter. We believe that the process still goes on and is co-ordinate with the formation of material worlds to receive them. Whole worlds of souls have been created since the formation of matter. They remain for a long period in this first state in order to become individualised and gradually prepared to enter upon the physical stage of existence. Souls are as long as worlds last in their material form before they come into contact with matter. It is a sleepy,



dreamy state. But, after a time, the desire to know themselves arises within them. And the natural instinct of the soul leads them to take the proper course to attain this object. Thus they are attracted to those worlds that are prepared for their reception.

A soul was originally spherical; and both male and female. The female principles predominating in the inner, and the male principles predominating in the outer. But, on contact with matter, the male and female are separated, and they each pursue separate courses, for the most part, till their education on the physical plane is completed. It is only by resistances encountered on the physical plane of existence that they can know themselves. For spirit offers no resistance to spirit. Its nature is to yield, not to resist. They want something to do. They begin by forming for themselves an embodiment which they organise into life, and which serves as a medium through which they are cognisant of resistances from the external material world. The corporeal envelope serves not only as something to work upon, but as something to work with. The first object of the soul is to mould such a material form as shall give the most perfect expression of itself, and to construct such an organisation as would be a suitable instrument for it to work with. This cannot be done all at once. For the soul, though pure, is absolutely ignorant. Therefore, it must begin physical life at the lowest stage of organisation—its first expression must be the lowest form of animate life. The soul's experience of that life, aided by the influx of the all-pervading Soul of the Universe, would enable it to form an organism slightly higher at its next embodiment. And at each embodiment, starting with the experience learned from the previous ones, it rises higher and higher in the scale of organisation, until at last the human form, the most perfect expression of the soul, is attained. The human form is the most perfect expression of soul, which is love in its entirety. That is what is meant by man being "made in the image of God." For, as soul is of the same nature as Deity, being the "offspring of God," the most perfect expression of soul must be the most perfect expression or manifestation of the Divine Mind. We can conceive of no shape more perfect than the human form. Angelic forms are of the human shape. Even the highest angels are but souls which have gone through the same process as ourselves. The angel is but the *soul furnished* with knowledge vastly superior to our own, but which we shall one day attain to. The angel's knowledge is expressed by his radiant beauty. But there can be no higher expression of soul itself, irrespective of its acquisitions, than the human form. As it must have been an inconceivably

long period from the first formation of matter by the Infinite Spirit till the time when the worlds were first fitted to become the abodes of vegetable and animal life, so it must have been thousands, perhaps millions of years from the commencement of the soul's work upon matter till it had attained to the human form.

I will now consider the supposition that the soul of a child is derived from its human parents, and, therefore, had not individual existence before its conception.

If we suppose the soul of a child to have had no existence prior to its conception in the womb, then we must suppose it to be endowed all at once with the necessary knowledge for the formation of the most perfect and complicated structure we know of. This is both contrary to the analogy of the formation of the universe by the Infinite Spirit, and contrary also to our own experience respecting the acquisition of knowledge. No individual is born into the world with a stock of knowledge of mundane affairs to begin with. He has to acquire his requisite knowledge by personal experience through laborious effort. We thus make the knowledge *our own*. That knowledge which we take upon trust from others is *not* our own, for it does not depend upon ourselves but upon others who may be deceivers or deceived themselves. We are not *sure* of such knowledge. This is exemplified in the case of those religionists who receive their opinions from others without testing them by the light within. When they hear any reasons advanced against them, they are terribly afraid of losing them, from an instinctive feeling that they cannot stand the tests which they themselves could subject them to if they *would*. That which we have acquired ourselves we *feel* to be our own. Thus, as regards the formation of the human body, by the process here insisted on, the soul makes the knowledge of its structure *its own*, and the work is *its own*. We are not *conscious* of this knowledge, or this work, because such a consciousness would interfere with our external life. But that we do really build up our bodies is evident from the fact that, after a meal, we cannot properly digest our food if our attention is wholly absorbed in something else.

And what is the "*vis medicatrix natura*" but the recuperative power of *the soul* which enables it to repair injuries and eject poisons from the system? We are not *conscious* of these actions, because all consciousness on the physical plane of existence must take place through the mediumship of the *cerebrum*. This organ, not being made use of by *the soul* in its regulation of the vital forces, there is no consciousness of their action. We should be in a rare muddle if our brains were bothered with having to attend to all the works that were going on inside of us as well

as those that are outside. It would never do to have to *think* how to set right every little thing that might be going wrong.

I will not consider the hypothesis that the human body is *not* the work of the soul, but of material forces, or of the properties of matter; for that would be wholly inconsistent with the principle we start with—that *spirit*, not matter, is the first, and therefore the only *essential* principle in existence, and, consequently, that matter must be subjective to spirit, and not spirit to matter. But I may observe that the human form and the human organisation show signs of great *intelligence*, and intelligence is the sole property of *spiritual* beings. There may be the elements of intelligence in matter—and there undoubtedly is—for matter is but spirit in confinement—but matter must become spirit before those elements can exercise the properties or functions of spirit.

We consider that soul, which had an existence ages before the physical bodies of its human parents, is the formative principle of the child from its first conception in the womb. It was necessary that the new formation should combine the male and female elements in the proper proportion. Therefore a union of the sexes was necessary that the soul should have suitable materials to work with. The sex of the child is determined by the sex of its formative principle, the soul. But the male and female principles must be combined in both sexes, though in different proportions. We know a man is none the worse, but rather the better, for having something of the woman in him, and the woman is all the better for possessing some of the manly attributes.

When the human form is attained, the real work of the soul—that of *knowing itself*—has only just begun. All the previous time had been taken up with the formation and preservation of the material instrument by which it was to gain this knowledge. His life formerly may be said to have been quite an animal life. But now begins the glimmering of the dawn of its spiritual life. During its intercourse with souls similarly circumstanced it becomes dimly conscious of duties or obligations of giving up some personal gratification for the sake of others. This it discovers chiefly by the inconvenience it suffers from the neglect of these duties, for still the selfish principle is paramount. It is necessary that it should be so, for nearly the whole of its energies must still be consumed in supporting its physical life. But when the corporeal frame is done with, and the soul quits it for the spirit-world, instead of recruiting its forces with sleep,—(T.C.) as it used to, between its previous embodiments, it retains its newly acquired conscious existence and reviews its past life in the flesh.

Now let us ask ourselves whether the soul would be satisfied with *one* physical life of conscious existence. It can only know itself—become aware of its divine attributes, but by the oppositions and resistances they meet with on the physical plane of existence—for there is no compulsion in the spirit-worlds—compulsion is confined to the planets.—(T.C.) Would one short life be sufficient to render it conscious of its divine attributes so that it should know how to use them aright? I think not. But if any think differently they are quite welcome to their opinion.

And what of those babes who were born to die, as it were, who could have no consciousness at all of physical existence? These questions must be answered first before we can reject so consistent a theory as ours.

There is a long gap between us civilizees and the savage who is but little above the brute, yet the whole analogy of nature leads to the supposition that we must have worked our way upward from that primitive state to the present. It is as long ago as five hundred thousand years since the human form first appeared on earth.—(T.C.) Upon the supposition of its all being the work of the soul, we cannot have leapt *per saltum* into our present advanced condition. *We*, that is, our *souls*, must have passed through several human embodiments, each one rising higher and higher in the scale of morality and intelligence before we reached our present status. But why do we not remember them? The reason we do not remember our former lives will be obvious from the consideration that the *incidents* of earth-life are retained by the spiritual *body*, but the *principles* of conduct we acquire are for ever retained by the *soul*, which is itself a principle. Life in the spirit world is, no doubt, much more delightful and agreeable than earth life if we have nothing particular on our conscience; but as regards the object for which we have entered the physical plane of existence, I don't see how it could be furthered by continuing in it for ever when that object could only be attained in physical life. Suppose Adam and Eve and their descendants had always remained in Paradise—had nothing to do, nothing to encounter—would they have progressed as much as they have done? No. It is the *necessities* of physical life, the various rubs and resistances that life in the flesh opposes to our spiritual nature, that give us a knowledge of that nature, and so enable us to use it to the benefit of our fellow souls, and become competent to enter upon that inconceivably high state of purely spiritual existence.

We may not like the idea of returning again to earth-life. Very well; so long as we do not like it, we shall not be compelled to do so. But we cannot tell what we shall like *hercafter*

by what we like *now*. For we shall be very differently circumstanced. And we know that our likes and dislikes depend, for the most part, upon the circumstances in which we are placed. In spirit-life we shall look upon things more from a spiritual point of view. Here we are apt to look upon things from a worldly or material point of view, and thus to regard ease and pleasure as the greatest good to be desired. But evidently the main object of the soul, when free from material influences, is *knowledge*. It feels itself ignorant of itself, and therefore thirsts and craves for more knowledge, and not all the delights of the Garden of Eden, or the penalties attached to its acquisition, would deter it from "eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil," and thus forfeiting for a time the pleasures of the Summer-land. It is this knowledge of ourselves which is to be gained by conflict with matter and material forces which brings us nearer to God, makes us more like Him in the exercise of our divine attributes. We cannot imagine how God could know himself but through matter. And certainly we have no manifestations of His attributes except through the mediumship of matter. The soul's object in embodying itself in a material form is not purification, for it *is* pure; or expiation, for it has no sins in the popular sense of the word, to expiate. Its moral errors are mistakes arising from its unavoidable ignorance. These are offences not against God, but against itself. Its object is simply to *know itself*.

The dislike felt by many to the idea of re-incarnation is, no doubt, owing to the fear they have of losing their individuality. But, from Spiritualistic principles, it must be evident that the *soul* constitutes the individual. It is not dependent for its existence on either the material body or the spiritual body. Neither of these are portions of *the soul*. They are only the soul's instruments that it has made use of for the purpose of knowing itself. It has, through them, attained knowledge which it will never lose. And, although its past existences are now a blank to it, yet (the spirits tell us) the remembrance of them will return when a review of their experiences becomes expedient for the soul's further progress. The recollection of our past existences now might exercise an injurious effect upon our present life, as would a review of the process of the formation of our physical bodies. But from our present state of progress, we might suppose that our next physical life would be so far superior to this that we might retain the consciousness of the greater part of this life. We have evidently arrived at a new stage of progress in having it placed beyond a doubt that we are really immortal souls, and that the next life is not a thing to be dreaded, but to be looked forward to with pleasure. May we



not in our next embodiment be able to realise our present one, and look back upon it with profit as well as pleasure? We may expect now that there will be no more drinking of the waters of Lethe and passing into a state of forgetfulness; but, having "eternal progress" before us, we shall be able to recall our past existences, and so, from our experiences in them, shape our future lives. And these, even our physical lives, will become "higher, ever higher," on higher and higher planets, till at last there will be little difference between our planetary existence and those in the spiritual spheres; and at length, having attained all the knowledge that is to be acquired by contact with matter, we shall have no more need of either material or spiritual bodies except for the purpose of manifesting ourselves to those on lower planes of existence, and become suns of light in the spiritual worlds; and our blessed employment will be to impart the light of knowledge to those that are still in the lower stages of development. And thus by raising others we shall be continually elevating ourselves. And as with the "Father of spirits," so with us, "his offspring," eternal progress is both our present destiny and our ultimate, or rather future destiny, for the word ultimate cannot properly apply to spirit. For with spirit there is no first and no last, but always self-existent being. With finite spirits—I mean finite in *extent*, like ourselves—there was a beginning of *individual* existence, and a beginning of *conscious* existence, though we could not mark the point of departure. But our consciousness of existence or individualisation must also be proportional to our knowledge of ourselves. And since this knowledge is never lost, but is ever increasing, our sense of individuality must ever increase also, so that it would be impossible we should ever be absorbed, as it were, into the Infinite Spirit; but we should be one in *desire* and *intention* with the designs of the Universal Soul, and thus be "fellow-workers with Him" in all those vast schemes of progress which He will be for ever evolving to all eternity. This must be evident; for the progress of spirit depends upon its *knowledge*. Spirit, in its nature, is expansive. Our spirits are restricted by nothing but their own ignorance; and though they are confined within their present earthly tabernacle, the very object of their confinement—viz., that of the acquisition of knowledge—shows that our emancipation from every thralldom must one day be effected. Every restriction will be removed when the purpose of it will no longer exist. There are positively no permanent limitations to spirit—none but those arising from ignorance; and those dark barriers must for ever recede before the light of advancing knowledge.

And it is a different case with regard to spiritual possessions

than it is with respect to material possessions. Give away our worldly goods, and we become poorer in a worldly point of view. But let our love expand to all around us, and we lose none of it; we receive more in return. Impart all we know to others, and we still have the same amount of knowledge in store. All this shows the *indestructibility* of spirit; that its possessions—that love and that knowledge which intensify our consciousness of existence—cannot be taken from us. For, even if we bestow them on others, they are still our own.

Eternal progress is a *necessary consequence of the effect of knowledge* upon the human soul. Knowledge is our spiritual food—that which strengthens and fortifies the soul against all adverse influences. It is different to food for the body in that it never satiates, never cloy, but creates a hunger and thirst for more knowledge which, when acquired, impels the soul to impart it to whomsoever will receive it. And the more we know the more we want to know that we may do good with what we know. Thus an endless career of an ever accelerating progress and usefulness is ever before the soul. And we need not fear that the stores of knowledge will be exhausted. For the great "Father of spirits" has spread a boundless realm of knowledge before us. He does not say, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther." But the bounties of his providence are co-extensive with his love. And we know that that love is infinite, reaching far beyond the utmost bounds that we can conceive. Suppose we ever got to know all about the universe as it is at present. Still, as we know that the Infinite Spirit must be progressive also, by the time it would take us to attain that knowledge, there would be stretched out before us a universe of much more inconceivable beauty than the present, which would require also an infinite duration to learn all about it. And so on for ever. We know this must be so, from the nature of spirit, and from the infinity of combinations that it is possible to form out of matter.

But we do not expect to confine our attention to the study of material objects, however beautiful. We believe that the Divine attributes are best exhibited in the human form, in the persons of the angels more particularly. We believe that there is and always will be an infinite number of spiritual beings in all conceivable stages of progress above us and below us. Thus, besides the pleasure of always having some in the same plane of progress as ourselves with whom we can sympathise and feel on an equality, there will be always beings of a superior wisdom to learn from, and others whom it will be our pleasure to instruct and elevate. The infinite variety in the states of development in these spiritual beings will afford endless food for the soul.

Thus eternity will never hang heavy on our hands; but, as we master one department of mind or matter new realms of inquiry will ever open up before us; and new and more refined pleasures will solace us in our hours of relaxation. Thus, we shall go on "from glory to glory" throughout the endless ages of eternity.

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#### MR. EARLE'S POEMS.\*

MR. EARLE is a poet and a scholar. He is apparently also a Roman Catholic, but not the less a man of advanced and liberal ideas, and it is in this double—and it may seem somewhat paradoxical character—that we seek to make him known to our readers. "*Light Leading Unto Light*" is a series of short poems, chiefly sonnets, in the composition of which the writer appears to possess a peculiar natural faculty, improved by culture and the study of the best models in that description of writing. His mind is elegant, and lends itself with facility to an epigrammatic style of composition. Force and concentrativeness of idea, with a certain closeness and harmony of versification, aided by the apt and judicious employment of alliteration, will give the volume a charm to refined and scholarly natures, and will retain for it a place in the memory not always accorded to more pretentious compositions. Setting aside a few of the poems attributable to the emotions awakened in the mind of the author by scenes of interest, the characteristics of which he seizes and brings within compass with nice perception and no little skill, and some others, addressed, apparently, to individuals, subjects of local and particular, rather than general interest, these poems may be described as owing their origin to that particular phase of the imaginative nature in which the higher and more intellectual aspects of religious feeling are invoked to illustrate and glorify the experience and observation of the processes of life. The faith of the Roman Catholic is sufficiently apparent, and it is not sought to be concealed, but it is in its larger and more universal spirit that we find it here writ down. It seems to be the constant aim of the writer to marry science to theology by expanding the latter instead of seeking to dwarf the former, and we should be well content to believe that Mr. Earle represents a large and growing class of his co-religionists.

As an illustration of his courage in this respect, we would refer to the repeated affirmation in sonnet after sonnet of the

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\* "*Light Leading Unto Light.*" A series of Sonnets and Poems, by John Charles Earle, U.A., author of "*Lives of the English Premiers,*" &c., &c. Burns & Oates, 17 and 18 Portman Street, W.

doctrine of the resurrection of the Spiritual instead of the natural body—a proposition which, if Mr. Earle is fortunate, may even lead to his canonisation in the "*Index Expurgatorius*." Indeed, from the tone of the book in some particulars, and certain forms of phraseology, we should be rather disposed to claim Mr. Earle as a Spiritualist; and it is in this character and relation that we have stepped somewhat out of our ordinary track to draw attention to the volume.

We give the following sonnet as a specimen of Spiritualistic thought contained in this interesting little volume:—

"ON A PHOTOGRAPH—MAGNETIC BODIES.

"It is her likeness: ay, but, deep within,  
Some say the spirit has another frame  
Invisible, magnetic, beauteous, thin  
And fine as any ether, scent, or flame;  
And when the blast of death dissolves the same  
Gross body, and the soul her way doth win  
Forth to a region free from fleck and blame,  
Or dark and sad with unrepenting sin,  
Immortal continuity of thought  
Is saved intact, invested in a form—  
A subtle organ—exquisitely wrought  
With life intense, with vital fluids warm,  
With new and wondrous powers material fraught,  
To bask in sunshine or aby the storm."

The largeness of Mr. Earle's faith shows itself in the following poem:—

"ALL TRUTHS ONE TRUTH.

"Religion, Science, Spirit, Matter, all,  
All one; and you would tear, with ruffian hands  
And brawling lips, God's garment, which commands  
A perfect reverence, into pieces small,  
And shatter to a noisy waterfall  
The deep profound that comprehends all lands,  
And whatsoever rises, falls, or stands,  
And whatsoever 'fact' or 'truth' we call.  
Ah, be not slaves of cunning names and signs—  
Mere dykes and hedges in creation's fields.  
Learn how to use, without abuse, such lines,  
Till eyes that see but dimly be unsealed,  
And, by the one Truth that all truth combines,  
Your errors be set right, your sorrows healed!"

WOMAN'S RIGHTS IN NEW ZEALAND.—We take the following from a Maori paper published in the native language and English in alternate paragraphs, at Napia (Napier), Hawke's Bay, by Henare Tomoana. The date is August 7, 1875:—"The wife of Eugene Beda, whom we advertised in our last issue, is a pleasing and graceful artiste. She is the first Maori woman we remember who has appeared on the stage in New Zealand. We simply tell our readers to go and see her performances wherever she may appear. She purposes taking her husband throughout the island, and will be forthcoming at Te Kopua and other places.

## IN MEMORY OF HARMONY HALL.

The bright moon cast its silver sheen  
 In dalliance o'er a stately hall,  
 And mellowed all the hues of green  
 On sylvan bank and terraced wall.

Time was, when souls of noble worth  
 strove to unfold a generous plan  
 Of bliss for all! and leave on earth  
 A glorious heritage for man!

Deep fervour stirred each willing breast,  
 And hands toiled bravely to set free  
 The human thing by wrong oppress,  
 And claim a fairer destiny.

A ruling spirit God endowed,  
 Taught there from truth's unfolding page;  
 And showed, 'neath error's ghastly shroud,  
 The learned ignorance of the age!

Like some enchanter grandly wise,  
 That wields the wand of sacred truth,  
 To banish from the human eyes  
 The scales that blinded age and youth.

I saw, methought, his reverend shade  
 Haunting the dear and hallowed spot,  
 That he and kindred souls had made,  
 To make for man a fairer lot.

For, mighty as the thunder peal,  
 Reverberating far and near,  
 The voice he raised for human weal  
 Shall still be heard in accents clear.

The crumbling edifice of clay,  
 That craven hearts had built on sand,  
 Shall perish when men dare to lay  
 One on truth's rock in every land.

And thus he spake,—The hour is nigh  
 When men shall learn their task aright,  
 And schemes of faithless priests defy,  
 When men shall wake from its long night

Oh! men and brethren, cast aside  
 The mammon schemes that blight the soul,  
 And spread the fruitful knowledge wide  
 Of spirit and its certain goal.

Bind up the wounds that time has wrought,  
 In brotherhood put forth your strength;  
 And let the human thing mistaught  
 Unfold the reign of love at length.

Irresolute ye cannot be,  
 While all your labours we sustain;  
 And in the future ye shall see  
 Our efforts were not made in vain.



THE UNITY OF THE HUMAN SPECIES—THE DARWINIAN THEORY—THE DESTINY OF ANIMALS—THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY.

*A Lecture delivered in Gross's Opera Hall, Chicago, by*  
J. M. PEEBLES.

THINKING towards antiquity, peering down through the measureless periods of the past, we see chaos, star-dust, fire-mist; a vast nebulous ocean of matter, within which were potentialities, centres of force, polarised points, floating atoms and conscious soul-germs. There was never a vacuum—never absolute rest in the universe!

Essential Spirit, spiritual substance, and physical matter, are the three factors that constitute actual being. All things in essence are eternal. The term creation must give way to evolution. But evolution implies something to be evolved from. Matter is the sediment of spirit. Otherwise expressed, as ice is congealed water, so matter is solidified spiritual substance. And Essential Spirit—that is, the God-principle, interpermeating and acting upon the various forms of matter—produced worlds, and those clusters of worlds that glitter in the inter-stellar spaces of infinity. At this remote period, our world was a liquid mass of fiery fluid. Then came the Plutonian incrustations, the granitic formations, the mineral, vegetable, animal, and human kingdoms.

But, whence the origin of man? Was he miraculously made some 6000 years since? Did he eternally pre-exist as a typical soul-germ awaiting incarnation on earth; or is he the gradual outcome of apes, monkeys, baboons, chimpanzees, ourang-outangs, and gorillas? And, further, are the human species—the African, Aryan, Turanian, Malay, &c., one? This we answer decidedly in the affirmative. Though there are many tribes and races, there is but *one human species*; and all, whether Africans, Indians, or Aryans, are brothers. The ethnologist is careful not to confound species with race. The different races evidently diverged from a vast group of primal man, appearing originally in the sunny climes of Central Asia.

COLOURS OF THE RACES.

If the human species is one, how do you account—is the inquiry—for the different races, with their different colours—white, black, copper, and olive? Here science must be the guide. Take coffee, says a French scientist. The coffee plant was first found along the foot-hills of Abyssinia that slope towards the Red Sea, something like 400 years ago. It was borne across the Red Sea into Arabia, growing in great luxuriance, and from which we still get the famous Mocha coffee. While sailing up the Red Sea some two years since, our captain pointed out to us the old town, Mocha. From Arabia this coffee plant went through the East; then into Europe, and finally into the West Indies and Mexico. And in thus travelling, it has become wonderfully modified in appearance, quality, and

aroma. The Mocha, Martinique, Rio Janeiro, and Java coffees are singularly unlike,—and why? Climates, temperatures, and mode of culture. Now, then, if climate and temperature can work such changes in coffee plants in a few hundred years, what may it not do in men during several hundred thousand years?

This French scientist (Prof. A. De Quaterfages, member of the Institute of France) takes as another illustration the wild turkey, native of our country. Something over 800 years since, some Frenchmen, while examining the western mounds, were charmed with the flocks of wild turkeys. Returning, they took a pair of them to Paris as an ornament for the park. Finding ere long that their food was delicious, they soon found their way upon the farms and into the yards of the peasants. But in travelling through France now, one is struck with the great variety of turkeys—large, small, brown, white, black, orange-coloured—and all from a single pair. What the causes? Climate, temperature, food, and other modifying conditions. But if known causes produce such changes in birds, plants, and animals, why not in men?

Coffee, though differing in all lands, originated from the same coffee plant. Roses—whether in Persia or Oregon; whether white, yellow, or red—are still roses. Turkeys in France and Europe, though varying in size, habit, and colour, sprang from a single pair, and make but one species. This is true of men—there is but one species—one vast brotherhood.

The smallest known race is the Bushman of Africa; the largest, the Patagonians; and the lowest races on earth are the "black men" of Australia, living in hollow trees, the clefts of rocks, and rude huts. But did these Australian races "descend," or are they a legitimate outcome from apes, baboons, and gorillas?

#### THE ORIGIN OF MAN.

Are men nothing but transformed and perfected animals? Because apes, chimpanzees, and outrang-outangs approach in some directions very near us, are they really our ancestors? Evidently not. Types are eternal. Typal germs do not merge into each other. And further, unlike or different species do not procreate, or reproduce their kind. It is conceded to be a universal law in nature that the offspring of different species are infertile! Different species do not glide into each other. Insects hum, serpents crawl, monkeys climb, but man alone standing erect, walks. Serpents crawl, and gorillas climb because they *are* gorillas, lacking the elements and very possibilities of manhood! Darwinianism and evolution are not synonymous. Among the most zealous opponents of Darwinianism, are some of the strongest supporters of evolution. As a theory, evolution is logical. Facts support it. But here is our genealogy according to the philosophy of Darwin:—

"The early progenitors of man were no doubt covered with hair, both sexes having beards; their ears were pointed and capable of movement, and their bodies were provided with a tail having the proper muscles. . . . The males were provided with formidable canine teeth, which served them

as formidable weapons. At a still earlier period, the progenitors of man must have been aquatic in their habits, for morphology plainly tells us that our lungs consist of a modified swim-bladder, which once served as a float," etc.—(Darwin's *Descent of Man*, Volume 1, page 198.)

For Mr. Darwin as a thinker, we entertain a profound respect. His patiently gathered facts are invaluable; but his groupings of them are imperfect, and his missing links entirely wanting.

This Darwinian theory is overlastingly seeking to get the greater from the less, thus putting the effect before and above the cause. It might be christened, the cart-before-the-horse dogma! Marine ascidians do not ultimate into apes, nor apes become men; the physical organisation does not create the conscious soul; the brain does not secrete the intellect; scientific discoveries and Miltonian poems are not bread and beef transmuted by chemical laws; "nothings and nobodies" are not on the way to intelligent men and women; cold inert phosphates cannot be developed into thought, nor a dead ox into a living epic aflame with truth and beauty. Nevertheless, evolution is true, and development means that the less thing, or life-germ, serves as ground-work and conditions for the influx of new and greater spiritual forces, whereby it is enabled to expand in the directions of its natural tendencies. Primitive man, several hundred thousand years since, was no doubt low, coarse, and exceedingly gross in his organism; but still a man, and in him lay concealed future Shakespeares, Bacons, Newtons, Humboldts, and Emersons, just as towering oaks lie hidden in the acorns beneath our feet.

#### THE GRADUAL GROWTH OF MAN.

Primitive man, on his way to culture and national greatness, necessarily passes three stages of unfoldment. At first, he is an individual thoroughly selfish, an Ishmaelite, a restless wanderer, a rude hunter, living by hunting and fishing, and upon spontaneous fruits and nuts. Such life required a vast territory for subsistence. Later, these people sheltered themselves in caves and overhanging rocks, and busied themselves in constructing arrow-heads and stone implements, laying the foundation of the "stone age."

The second step upward was that of the shepherd and trader. Portions of those primitive races soon discovering that the milk of animals was good for food, and their skins excellent for clothing, began to tame wild animals, gathering them into flocks and herds, and often moving from place to place in search of green valleys and fresh springs of water. This was the common method of life in the vedic period of India. It was eminently nomadic. Abraham, in a later period, had his tents and flocks on the plains of Shinar. Arabic tribes live this life to-day.

The third form of society, in the line of progress, was when men, naturally industrious, turned their attention towards the vegetable kingdom, becoming tillers of the soil, and earning their bread by the sweat of their brows. This mode of life—requiring less territory than hunting, less time than herding flocks—gave man better

opportunities for making tools, constructing houses, engaging in trades, and occupying leisure hours in cultivating the mind. In this remote period different tribes and classes began to unite for protection. Rulers took positions, hamlets sprang up, and a rude sort of society became a fact, with social interminglings, milder manners, and a glimmering appreciation of the law of brotherhood. Thus it is seen, that all through the dust-covered periods of antiquity, we can trace the steady progress of man.

But, by careful observation, do we see the same

#### PROGRESS IN ANIMALS ?

Did the elephants of the punic wars differ from those of to-day ? Are the animals carved on Egypt's obelisks unlike those of the present ? Do we see, dating from the earliest historic period, the least approach in animals to the standard of essential man ? Not the least. " Rudimentary structures " in certain animals are not " prophecies " of use and function in important parts of other animals. It bespeaks no genealogical relationship that the arm of the European, the fore-leg of the ox, the paddle of the seal, and the wing of the bat are all formed essentially on the same type. And there is not a particle of proof that the fins of the fish looking towards, become the wings of, the bird ; or that the " fore-feet " of monkeys prophesy of the hands of civilized man. That the " sap of the tree " foretells the " blood of man," is pretty poetry, and nothing more. And to say, as do Darwinians, that the " furrow, the plough, and the ploughman are all of one stuff," is to indulge in a meaningless jumble, inasmuch as it makes the guiding mind and the plough guided, the cause and effect, one. It is admitted that physical man is built upon the kingdoms below him. But physical man is not *essential man*. The physical is the shell only. It is the soul that constitutes the real man. And human souls are conscious portions of the Infinite Oversoul.

#### LINES OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ANIMALS AND MEN.

As there is a broad and practical distinction between the vegetable and animal kingdoms, so is there a distinct line of demarcation between animals and men. The greatest of living linguists, Max Müller, declares that " Language is the true barrier between man and beast." Aristotle said, " Animals had voice, but man alone had speech." Huxley assures us that " Brutes have feelings, but not conscious trains of thought."

Man alone uses tools for high and noble purposes.

Man alone cooks and seasons his food.

Man alone is capable of moral and spiritual improvement.

Man alone understands and makes use of fire.

Man alone tames and uses animals for service.

Man alone employs the language of moral thought and reason,

Man alone seeks to consciously comprehend himself, and the capacities of his being.

Man alone can appreciate the abstract ideas that relate to moral law and moral duty.

Man alone believes in God, a future conscious existence, and the soul's eternal unfoldment.

"Any anatomist," says Prof. Jeffries Wyman, "who will take the trouble to compare the skeleton of even the negro with that of the ourang cannot fail to be struck at sight with the wide gap that separates them." The volume of brain in man compared with the ourang-outang is as five to one; and further, the human brain contains potentialities and parts not found at all in animals. The learned Scmering has enumerated over fifteen important anatomical differences between the brain of man and the highest order of animals. Insects, birds, and beasts, lack the moral nature—the top-brain organs of conscientiousness, hope, intuition, reverence, and spirituality. On the other hand, from the cranial dome of this sacred temple, man's immortal soul looks up to the infinite soul, "God all in all!" We speak of the "divine Plato," but never of a divine beast, nor of a righteous animal; because righteousness or right-doing implies a moral notion and moral responsibility.

#### DO ANIMALS THINK AND REASON?

That animals have sensations, desires, and purposes, is evidently true. And further, it is admitted, said the speaker, that animals reason and so do plants. That is, they reason upon the plant plane of life. The sunflower turns towards the sun, the vine twines around the tree, oaks push their roots out and down towards the living stream; birds in autumn wing their way southward.

"But this is instinct," says the objector.

Very well, what is instinct but reason on a lower plane of life? God, who is essentially reason, power and life, or the Life Principle, is incarnate in all things. Accordingly plants, trees, and animals, are aflame with conscious life. And this they manifest in accordance with their organisations.

As previously stated, language is one of the lines of demarcation between brutes and men. We cannot think consecutively only as we think in language. Try it. Parrots may be taught to imitate words, and dogs to bark for bits of bread; but man only arranges ideas and then logically expresses them. It is absolutely impossible to teach the gorilla, or the "man-ape," to speak in a train of conscious thought. While, on the other hand, the babes of the lowest tribes of Australians or Africans, transported to England and brought up in that country, speak excellent English, and become fair scholars. Animals though arrested developments, lacking the soul-germs of men, fill their places in the chain of being. Even insects subserve a useful end in the economy of nature. They subsist upon and appropriate matter grosser than themselves; and thus appropriated, it is refined and taken up one gradation higher. But neither insects nor animals, so far as we know, aspire to any immortal existence; and yet, aspiration is the measure of distinction.



## HAVE ANIMALS IMMORTAL SOULS ?

That they have perceptions, thought, instinct, and a certain kind of reason, is admitted. But the God atom, the self-conscious soul-germ, does not form the basic foundation of their being. Though the animal brain is arched, it lacks the keystone—the spiritual nature. The human alone is the perfect structure. Insects, birds, animals, *all* are imperfect structures, arrested developments, unfinished arches, incomplete temples, hence have no conscious individualised life in the realms of immortality. When the creatures of the lower kingdoms die, earth goes to its kindred earth, and the spiritual substance constituting their spiritual structures reverts to, and is absorbed in the surrounding ocean of spirit substance, to form material for other and higher organisms.

What use, what purpose can the insects and animals of this life serve in the angelic spheres of existence ?

It is an established fact, that the lower the status in the scale of being the more prolific. Parsley and “pig-weeds” are exceedingly fruitful in blossoms; while the magnificent century-plant blossoms but once in a hundred years. The fecundity of insects is absolutely marvellous. The aphid, producing by germination, begets some 60,000,000 of offspring per year. The common spider produces 200 of its kind at a single brood; the ant of our country, 5,000; the queen bee lays, in one season, 50,000; a single oyster contains, according to Poli, no less than 1,200,000 eggs; the white ant of India produces, during a part of the season, 84,000 eggs each day; this is 2,592,000 in a month! These figures are not fictions, but solid facts based upon careful observation. And now—saying nothing of unnumbered millions of lions, tigers, hyenas, wolves, hedge-hogs, lizzards, toads, and slimy serpents that inhabited the earth in the past—think—*reflect* upon the countless myriads of aphes, oysters, ants, bees, wasps, flies, fleas, stinging mosquitos and poisonous serpents on earth to-day; and believe if you can that they are immortal, destined to exist in the heavenly life. Why, they would form spheres of animals, spheres of spiders, and spheres of immortal serpents, almost measureless in extent. And what, is still more unpleasant to contemplate—mortals born into spirit-life would be necessitated to wade and wallow through these spheres of insects—these belts of lizzards, and zones of spirit serpents on their way to the angel's home in glory—the Summer-land of immortality!

## ANIMALS SEEN IN SPIRIT LIFE.

“Clairvoyants,” says the objector, “see animals in the Spirit-world.”

Quite likely. So they see ships of prosperity reaching us laden with gold; see oil-wells where there is no oil; lead mines where no lead exists; and psychological pictures that have hardly a shadow of reality in them. When clairvoyance proves itself infallible, it will do to place in it implicit confidence.

"But 'spirits' say there are animals in the Spirit-world."

Certainly they do. And other spirits occupying different localities and more exalted conditions, say emphatically there *are* none. What now? Who shall decide? Both classes speaking from their plane of observation may tell the truth, and doubtless do. Oh, how indispensable the exercise of our own reason and judgment! That there is a higher order of animal life, and birds of beautiful plumage in certain spheres of the hereafter life, is plausible and rational. But they are indigenous to those spheres, and not the products of this earth. Angelic affections flow out to human beings and resurrected souls in the better land.

#### PHILOSOPHERS, AND THE TWO PHILOSOPHIES OF LIFE.

As there is the soul of things and the shell of things—the subjective and the objective—so there are two sets of philosophers—the one continually dabbling in matter, and putting body before soul in order of sequence, frames the formula—from *matter* to *spirit*; the other, considering the invisible, the real, and seeing in soul causation, puts souls before bodies, and causes before effects. Life is the factor used by each class; and both are relatively right, seen and judged from their own standpoints. The shield in dispute had two sides. Admiring idealism, my sympathies are entirely with the subjective philosophy—a philosophy that puts evolution in the place of creation, and pre-existence in place of the soul's descent from apes and other animals.

While essential spirit is as undefinable as indestructible, the *soul*, allied to the Infinite Oversoul, is a microcosmal entity, in which lie the germinal possibilities of all that man can ever become. Only when released from the materiality of earth, do we fully know ourselves.

The lapsed state of human beings, while a general idea with the philosophers of antiquity, was specially outlined in the writings of Plato and the teachings of Jesus. From our native skies, we are individualised down into physical existence, one soul for this, and another soul for that purpose. Like the prodigal son, we took leave of our Father's house in the heavens. Desiring experiences, we descend through natural generation; where, since our incarnation, and while along our mortal journeys, we have squandered our goods in follies and sensual realisations. Drooping, we tread the valley of death. The body is a shell. Earth is a cave of shadows, touched by passing sunbeams. Surely, our souls are prisoners in a foreign land. Starving, we feed upon the husks of earthliness, yet ask for angel's food. In comparative darkness we cry for light, the celestial light of the Christ heavens. Weary, we plead for rest by the "tree of life," that shades the crystal river. And, in charge, and under the supervision of our guardian angels, we are feeling our way back to that pre-existent state of ecstatic bliss where love is law, and life a perpetual Eden. The sheaves we shall bear with us on our return, will be dearly bought experiences, the little wis-

dom gained and the purity attained. The return steps heavenward, are effort, aspiration, self-sacrifice, conquest of the passions, deliverance from selfishness, and a resurrection into the spiritual "walking in newness of life." After the Nazarene's spiritual baptism from the Christ heavens, he could truly say, "I know whence I came and whither I go." "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature." "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

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### MODERN FUNERALS.

Mr. BRONT, M.P., has written a letter to one of his constituents in Birmingham on the subject of mourning, which, as worn by women, he describes as "hideous," and commends the simple style adopted by the Society of Friends. The letter, having gone the round of the newspapers, has called forth numerous comments, not the least excellent of which is the following from the *Glasgow Herald* of 30th October, which will meet the approval of many of our readers:—

If anything could make a man of taste wish for a draught of the elixir vitæ of the Rosicrucians, so that he might live for ever, it would be the desire to escape being made the innocent victim of a modern funeral. No exhibition with which we are acquainted is so oppressively or expensively hideous. One may imagine how shocked and grieved the poor soul must be if it is permitted to see what takes place after it has left its body. The clock is stopped—at all events, it used to be stopped; the room is darkened; the ashes are raked out of the grate; and everything, animate and inanimate, puls on, or is made to wear, an aspect of the most unprofitable ugliness and misery. The very furniture seems to share in the general spiritual and artistic deterioration. Then comes the ghastly apparition of the undertaker, or his man, wearing a face of ineffable, yet shrewdly-calculated, melancholy. If the dead person has been rich, or if the living are so, then the very genius of lugubriousness, clothed in sable, looks from the pale countenance of the man of funerals. He moves about on feet of wool; and never, if he can help it, does he address himself to speech, for he knows to a halfpenny the goldenness of the silence which ought to be observed at a fashionable funeral. The very corpse that he measures for a coffin might envy the unfathomableness of his solemnity. Look at the same man as he enters the house where a common subject lies stretched. He is now quite a man of business, with any number of other subjects waiting elsewhere, apparently impatient to be measured. The intensity of his melancholy is relaxed to suit the unimportance of the case. His work done, he pockets his foot-rule, and goes down stairs like a shot. Then the coffins are made and brought home—the one costing perhaps 20 guineas, the other one; and both extravagantly dear for the circumstances. In the meantime, tailors and hatters and milliners and bonnet-makers have been toiling—the first set for the men and boys of the families; the other for the women and girls. Nor do we forget that during all this sad and weary time a perfect swarm of business people, eager to be in at the death, have been sending through the post, or shoving in beneath the door, printed lists of the wonderful bargains to be had at their shops in materials without which no funeral can be considered respectable. It seems impossible that the dead can sleep in their graves unless their living relatives patronise these sympathetic

and philanthropic establishments. But how shall we describe the funerals? They are spectacles, the recollection of which, after they have been reformed, will make men shudder. The coffin is black, as well as costly; the pall is black; the dresses of men and women are black, with occasional bits of white crape or "weepers," which only serve to make the black more repugnant; the hearses and mourning coaches are black; the very horses are black; and black too are the mutes and the drivers, the latter made, if anything, more black by certain yards of dingy white stuff which are either tied round their necks or dangle from their hats. The whole business is at once so repulsive and so expensive that all, save a few interested tradesmen, will thank Mr. John Bright for his sensible letter on the subject, if it should in any degree aid in the reformation of our funerals. He writes to Mr. G. H. Philips of Birmingham (who had sent him a pamphlet on the subject), advising "sensible people" to copy the simple funeral customs of the Society of Friends. It would be wise, he says, to follow them "in rejecting the fashion of wearing mourning, which is always costly, and, as worn by women, hideous." Mr. Bright points to the curious circumstance, which he laments, that even some of the Friends are falling into the habit of wearing the ugly costume so prevalent among other people. The subject is one of undoubted practical importance. When the colour of black was adopted by man as a means of expressing grief, the standard of taste in art, as in everything else, must have been in a state of barbarism. It is no doubt natural to be grieved at the loss of a friend; but when the higher truth is remembered, that only the body is dead, and that the spirit, which is immortal, has passed from a worse to a better state of existence, feelings of joy should drive out the lower feelings of sorrow; and if any special costume were necessary, the idea of immortality, rather than the idea of mortality, should be symbolised. Undertakers and mourning makers will probably oppose rational reforms in our funeral customs; but as they can have no vested interest in the disposal of the dead, or in the living who may die, it may be expected that by-and-by the people will bring common sense to their aid, and fling off the expensive tyranny of a custom which, like a hag, has so long overshadowed the spirit of beauty and simplicity that should preside at death, the gateway to higher life.

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### MISCELLANEA.

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DR. HOOKE AND THE TEETOTALLERS.—It was with a view to aid the wide and general step in the education of the masses that late in life he joined the Temperance movement, and actually became a sworn teetotaler. He used to tell the story of his change in this direction in the following way:—"I had in my parish at Leeds a man who earned 18s. a week; out of this he used to give 7s. to his wife, and to spend the rest in drink; but for all that he was a good sort of man. I went to him and said, 'Now, suppose you abstain altogether for six months.' 'Well, if I do, will you, Sir?' was his reply. 'Yes,' I said, 'I will.' 'What!' said he, 'from beer, from spirits, and from wine?' 'Yes.' 'And how shall I know if you keep your promise?' 'Why, you ask my Missus, and I'll ask yours.' It was agreed between us for six months at first, and afterwards we renewed the promise. He never resumed the bad habit that he had left off, and is now a prosperous and happy man in business at St. Petersburg, and I am Dean of Chichester."—*Times*.

HERODOTUS relates that as many as three hundred and sixty thousand men were employed in building one palace for Sennacherib.

CHOICE OF WORDS.—When you doubt between two words, choose the plainest, the commonest, the most idiomatic. Eschew fine words as you would *rouge*; love simple ones as you would native roses on your cheeks. Let us use the plainest and shortest words that will grammatically and gracefully express our meaning.

EYES.—Black eyes usually indicate good powers of physical endurance, but they are choleric, and may be, though not always, treacherous. Gray ones denote quickness of temper and desire for novelty. Hazel belong to shrewd natures, and such as delight in intercourse with friends. Clear blue eyes are associated with love of change and progress. A mixed or indeterminate colour of eye may be taken as evidence that the individual is a poor judge of shades and hues, if not quite colour-blind. The organic cause of black eyes is that the sclerotic membrane or outer covering is more tensely drawn. This may be, and has been, demonstrated on the eye of a newly-killed ox, which is rendered black by tightening this membrane. Black eyes are universal among the natives of hot climates; blue and gray are found in cold and temperate regions, where the blood of various races has mingled by intermarriage. The result of such mixture is that relaxation of the system which produces the blue eye and light-coloured hair. Intellectually the effect is to produce progressive nations; and, as a rule, blue-eyed people are more disposed to change, progress, and intercourse than those with black eyes.—*Pictorial World*.

A CORRESPONDENT draws attention to the following extract from the *Medium* of January, 1874, and would be glad if Spiritualists would test the matter, and report whether there is truth in the reality of such a mode of communication:—"The method of obtaining communications through a table, and calling over the alphabet *ciré voce* for every letter of every word once at least, sometimes twice or thrice, is a most laborious and uncertain one. . . . I find that if a rod—a common walking-stick—be firmly held in the hands of two persons (one of them being a Medium), and a printed alphabet under a good light be presented, the rod will point out the letters constituting a message smartly and forcibly—so much so that I can get out matter to any length, and faster than I can write it down. The power which tilts the table, and guides the pencil to write and draw, will quite frankly guide the rod over the alphabet, if the Medium will hold it along with another. Repeated experiments will show that there is no deception in the agency at work, for now and then an unwelcome influence will present itself, which will forcibly do and say the most outrageous things, even kicking boldly at surrounding persons or objects out of perfect mischief. Being freely held in the hand, the rod is at liberty to move about, and will, if there be occasion for it, draw those holding it all over the house, look down a book, turn over a particular passage, and make curious movements upon it, illustrating as it goes in ways so curious, and fraught with a meaning and intelligence not to be understood without being seen and watched. Good influences will search for a Bible, and turn up and explain, giving forth the most holy and God-like teachings. Bad influences will, upon presentation of a Bible, pitch it violently to the far end of the room. Taking to the alphabet, they will abuse the good book as being everything that is vile, and, after doing so, the probability is they will finish up by quashing the light and clearing everything violently off the table. . . . I believe that the alphabet will apply equally where the raps are given on the table. Run over the letters with a pointer, and the rap will be given at the proper letter: thus the practice of calling over the letters *ciré voce* would be done away with here too."