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AN HISTORIC REVIEW OF MAN'S RELIGIOUS PROGRESS; WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE ORIGIN AND INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY MRS. EMMA HARDINGE, AT CLEVELAND ROOMS, ON SUNDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 5.

After delivering an appropriate invocation, Mrs. Hardinge spoke as follows:

Our subject this night contemplates a brief historic review of man's religious progress. Last Sabbath we pointed to the intellectual footprints of the race. In opposition to the general view that science and religion are disunited, the day will come when we shall recognise that science is the demonstration of religion, and that there is no true religion that is not based upon the fundamental demonstrations of science. At present we learn "line upon line, precept upon precept" of that religion which each one is spelling out for himself, and no more receiving through the voice of stereotyped tradition or ancient creed.

Before we proceed in our review we must define still more accurately what we mean by religion. We believe that there was a religion which antedated all forms of revelation—a religion of the human heart, the great necessity of the dawning of man's intellectual nature. Not that any religious belief is cherished by the aboriginal savage; but from the moment when man, with curious, eager scrutiny, begins to contemplate the page of creation, and attempts to reduce it to scientific knowledge, then begins to dawn the nature of religion in his heart. As he beholds the wondrous phenomena of nature, unfolding themselves with ever-recurring tides, and times, and seasons—as he hears the voice of tradition pronouncing upon the eternity of things, and handing down from generation to generation the tale of the same ever-present scenes, the starry plains of heaven, the wondrous beauty of the summer-earth, and the hoarse voice of the winter storm,—he must inquire concerning the nature of causation; he must demand whose he is and whence he came, and by what governing powers these majestic times and seasons are sustained. As he beholds the solemn mystery of death, and perceives the hand of the invisible destroyer striking down every created thing, and only pausing till the set hour shall come to sweep him into the immensity of the same unknown existence, he must inquire, Whither am I bound? As he beholds the writhing of conscience beneath the eternal penalties which accompany wrong-doing—as he reaps the sweet reward of good within his own nature, and perceives the inevitable law of mutual dependence between man and man,—he must inquire, What is the law, and whence does it proceed? These are the elements of natural religion which antedate all Bibles and Testaments, and were written in tables of flesh and blood before ever they were written on tables of stone; which will survive the wreck of churches, temples, synagogues, the decay of books and creeds, and the shadow of human opinions; which was, and is, and is to come; and therefore is the Word of God written on the tablets of the human heart. And this is the religion which we profess this night to defend, maintain, and expound—which we propose to seek in the scriptures of creation, in which it is found—and to which we hope, with God's blessing, to devote what power of light and life and possibilities God has endowed us with.

And now we propose to speak of the development of the religious idea as externalised in the history of the race, always reserving to ourselves the promise to disclose something more of the opening of this very old and very new religion when the fogs and clouds of human opinion shall be swept from it, and the veil of mystery which man has woven before it shall be rent in twain, and the Babylon of priestcraft shall fall, when every man shall be his own priest and know the Lord for himself. We do not trace this night the history of man; we do not propose to inquire after the development of this form of natural religion. But searching for the vestiges of civilisation and the records of revealed religion, we find them, as we do all the earliest records that man has left, in scripture, monument, or tradition, in the land of Hindostan.

The first nation of the earth that has bequeathed to posterity vestiges of civilisation existed, we are told, at a period that antedates all historic records. The wild storm, the tempest, the earthquake, and the phenomenal changes that agitate the land of Hindostan naturally impelled its ancient inhabitants to deep speculation on the mysteries of nature; and for the purpose of better solving these, it is said that certain wise and philosophical men retired from the busy hum of the cities into the solemn depths of the ancient banyan groves, and there, speculating upon the mystery of nature, and deeply questioning of those unceasing tides of inspiration that are ever flowing into the human heart, they began to propound a system of metaphysical answers to the various demands of the intellect. In process of time these ancient men were discovered and resorted to by those who had not the time or the research to think out these problems for themselves; and thus forest schools were formed around these old hermitages, and those who were the ascetics and the monks of antiquity at last became the world's teachers. They became also renowned for their wisdom and for the gifts of the Spirit; for we learn that these antique men were endowed with therapeutic powers: living the pure and natural lives of ascetic men, the strong magnetic gifts of healing and prevision were theirs, and in response to the earnest inquiries of the students of metaphysics who sat at their feet, they propounded those lessons of wisdom that at last began to be inscribed in their most ancient scriptures. The Sanscrit language, we are told, is the oldest known language of the world—the fullest and the most comprehensive. To attain to the perfection of a language is supposed by philologists to require many centuries, if not thousands of years; and it can scarcely, therefore, be supposed that the first writings of the Hindoos could have been achieved ere many thousands of years had elapsed. These are full of the records of the wise metaphysical speculations of the ancient seers and sages of the forests. These men discovered that there exists in nature inevitable penalty for every species of crime—that drunkenness, gluttony, sensuality, anger, avarice, all those passions that we now recognise as criminal, inevitably produce results which we call most justly penalty or punishment. They determined then that there was a system of justice which accurately meted out to every creature the results of his actions. This was a grand and magnificent demonstration of a fundamental principle in nature; but in order to impress it upon their disciples, they invented a system of vicarious atonement, or penalty, or sacrifice for sin, in other methods than the penalties imposed by nature and God. They taught that if the offender would pay in penance or in kind a certain due proportion for sin, he might atone for the commission of wrong, and satisfy the justice of the unknown gods. Thus the system of sacrifice originated. In process of time, as these ancient priests acquired vast power over their votaries, they were elevated even to posts of government, and regarded as mediators between the unknown gods and the ignorance of men: so their dictum was law, and the invention of sacrifice soon brought to their coffers all those rich rewards that finally led to the endowment of a powerful and magnificent priesthood. This was the origin of the famous law of caste; for these priests, determining that those rights and privileges which they enjoyed might be very easily transmitted to their posterity, ordained that the priestly order should become hereditary and permanent. This was the next step in priestcraft, and it flourished amazingly. From this point we trace the origin of that grand system of theology which originated in an observation of the powers of nature, and a worship of their magnificence and their stupendous grandeur. Next we find it merging into priestcraft, and finally into that high and unquestioned authority that was exerted by the ancient Brahmins. Sacrifices became more and more costly—herds, and flocks, and wealth to the utmost possible amount; and finally the sacrifice of human life was laid upon the altars of the angry gods, whom it was the priestly order and the priestly wisdom to represent as only capable of being propitiated by these costly offerings.

We cannot pause upon this point of our review, but simply show

you what, after thousands of years, was the ultimate of the teaching of the ancient Brahmins. They taught that the great and infinite void or space in which floated suns, stars, systems, and worlds innumerable, was filled by an unknown spiritual presence that they called Brahman; that from him proceeded a trinity of subordinate gods—one officiating as the creator, called Brahma; another as the preserver, called Vishnu; and still another as the god of life and regeneration, called Siva,—that each of these subordinate deities was accompanied by a female companion; and that the Preserver, who was the kind and merciful mediator between Brahma and men, from time to time took on himself the human form, became incarnate as man, and when man's sins became too many and too dreadful to be atoned for by other sacrifices, this merciful incarnate deity rendered himself up as an offering, took upon him the sins of the world, and thus offered a complete and godlike sacrifice for the age in which he appeared. The Hindoos taught of more than eight avatars, the two last, the ninth and tenth, being Krishna and Buddha. We do not speak of them in the regular order of succession, but simply show you that this idea is very old, and had existed for thousands of years before being adopted as the fundamental principle of your modern theology.

The next phase of theology of a representative character to which we invite your attention is to be found in a younger nation, Egypt; for, ancient as the Egyptians claim to have been their origin, it is unquestionable that in the most barbarous periods of their dynastic existence they were overrun and conquered by the shepherd-kings of India; hence we claim a precedence for India even over the vast antiquity of Egypt, which pointed to long lines of kings and the rule of long lines of gods dating back for thousands of years ere the Jews were known as a people. They were a highly civilised people, and acquired a considerable knowledge of the arts and sciences; hence their theology, although derived from the Hindoo, partook of a far more artistic and civilised and utilitarian character. They had their trinity. Osiris was the representative of good; the female companion was Isis, the representative of fruitful Mother Nature; and the child Horus signified man, the son of man; and this trinity of principles they represented as the deity governing power. Among subordinate gods also they taught of tutelary deities or spirits who guarded various parts of the earth, as well good as evil. A vast theology was originated by the Egyptians, and their priests, advancing beyond the ancient Brahmins, studied the art of magic. That art was not, as you suppose, a mere fabulous idea; it was the recognition of the fact that magnetism and psychology would produce first artificial trance and somnambulism, and next those conditions of enchantment or fascination by which the psychologist is enabled to control the minds both of men and animals. The study of this now lost art of magic enabled their priests to wield a vast power—one little comprehended by the vulgar; and in order to retain it in the priestly order, those who were instructed in it were initiated into the solemn mysteries of Isis and Osiris.

We now pass to another representative land, the land of Persia, which, though later in date—almost, we may say, a modern land—presents us with an exposition of that universal form of worship prevailing over the East to which we have so often alluded, called the astronomical religion. The Persians perceived that the study of nature was essential to the cultivation of the land and to the elaboration of arts and sciences; they recognised that all times, and tides, and seasons were regulated by the heavenly bodies, and hence they carried the Hindoo and Egyptian idea much further than either of those nations, and projected a magnificent system, of which the sun was the hero, and the twelve signs of the zodiac, or the constellations through which he passed, were represented as the symbols of a vast hierarchy of spirits, good and evil, who alternately contended for mastery with the majestic sun. We shall not refer further to this system, but sum up these three original germs of theology by simply saying that the theological ideas which have elevated the tall steeples of your churches, reared your altars, formed your articles of faith, underlie your creeds, and create the demand for one, two, three, four, up to fifty thousand pounds a year for the endowment of modern priesthoods, have all taken their origin from these two ancient germinal forms of theology; and tracing these back, we are prepared to show that all and each were conceptions of the mind of an Oriental people, impersonating the various powers of nature, symbolising them into form, and representing them, not as principles, but as personalities. It is not necessary in this review to pursue our theme further. The mists are rising; voices from the ancient days are calling down the mountain-side to those still in the valley. And as these mists arise, the forms of antiquity are looming up, and higher and higher the gaze of men, disenchanted, disenfranchised, enfranchised from the rule of those whom they have paid to do their thinking for them, is gradually piercing the sublime heights which point to heaven, where they shall at last learn to know God for themselves. But we are only in the grey of the morning as yet, and we are still leaning on the staffs which support our trembling limbs; we cannot afford to throw them away. Until we can, and stand alone, let no rude hand deprive men of that upon which they lean.

We pass on now to notice the compendium of all these systems as we find it in the theology, if we may so term it, of the Jews, the most modern people of all—the latest, and, according to the traditions of all times, the people who have inherited not only the old garments, not only the spoils of the ornaments, but the relics and spoils of scriptures and ideas from every other nation. These poor wandering Arabs were very early initiated into the mysteries

of Egyptian lore, and from thence they derived their first conceptions of tutelary spirits. The Jehovah of the ancient Jew was the Jah of the Egyptians, a tutelary spirit, or a spirit of the mountain, and this Jah of the Egyptians, whether a mere idea or an actual spirit-influence, calling Moses, unquestionably instructed him in those high and sublime lessons, so wise, so useful in their time and generation, which are recorded, as his teachings. We need not pause upon this portion of the Jewish history; it is one full of wisdom and instruction. Moses was obviously taught the wisdom of the Egyptians, and with it their laws of magic, their knowledge of psychology and magnetism, with it also the pattern of the Temple. The various orders of priesthood, even the dress and the peculiar ceremonials which are recorded with such accuracy in the early books of the Hebrew Scriptures, will all be found to be derived from Egypt, every one. Remember, we stand ready to affirm and to prove every assertion made on this platform. We find, then, that this wise and highly instructed teacher, imparting amongst the savage and barbarous Jews the wisdom of the Egyptians, wisely attempted to form them into a priestly people who should be constant to the worship of the one God rather than descend into the barbarities and idolatries of various nations amongst whom they passed. Nevertheless, you will find throughout the Jewish history that the Hebrews were indoctrinated with the various idolatries of other nations, all and each of whom were sun and fire worshippers. In some form or other all the ancient idolatries of the various Eastern nations were but varieties of Sabæism, or the astronomical religion. To redeem his people from these barbarities, Moses very wisely strove to fasten their minds upon the belief of one God; and now we have the authority of the highest commentators of Scripture history for asserting that throughout the Old Testament there is no direct teaching of the immortality of the soul. With the exception of the one book of Samuel in which the rising of the spirit of Samuel is described as occurring in the presence of Saul, there is not throughout the books of the Old Testament one single evidence that the Jews, as a people, believed in a hereafter. Temporal rewards and temporal punishments were all that were taught them to restrain them from sin or prompt them to good. There are but two portions of the Jewish history upon which we need pause: it is, to point to the fact that the priestly order narrowed down all religious belief to the performance of rites, ceremonies, the observance of fasts, feasts, Sabbaths, new moons, oblations, and the performance of those ceremonials which were called the worship of God. But there was another order of people—there was another class of teachers; a class that arose in ancient India, led on by the noble and unconservative Buddha; a class that arose in Egypt, taught by the learned and wise Osiris; a class that arose in Persia, instructed by the noble Zoroaster; and a class that appears prominent in the history of the Jews, called the Prophets. All of these were inspired men; all of these were priests, not of man, but of God. They did not belong to the priestly order, and their teachings are of entirely another description to that of the priestly order. Take the noble and sublime writings of Isaiah, and there you will find the scorn and contempt with which he speaks of their feasts and new moons—there you will read the strong and uncompromising denunciations of wrong, and the bold and glorious promises of reward and compensation for right. This is the spirit of prophetic writing throughout, and it is this that redeems the Scriptures of the Hebrews from the dark and hideous pictures of slaughter, murder, and mere external ceremonial religion. It was this that inspired the tongue of the noble Buddha, who sought to destroy and annihilate caste, endeavouring to make the whole of the people priests for themselves; it was this that inspired the noble Osiris to teach the people the cultivation of the ground, the nature of manufactures, and arts and sciences; it was this that we find in the beautiful writings of the Zendavesta, where teachings as sublime as any that were uttered on the Mount of Olives may be traced; and it is this that comes from the inspired lips of the Man that God himself called by the Spirit, instructed through vision, dream, trance, and all those methods by which we know that the great and the infinite Spirit never leaves himself without a witness, and that in the midst of all the insolence and autocracy of priestcraft and kingcraft there is a King of kings and a High Priest of the race that never forsakes us, and after some fashion or other gathers together his people beneath the shadow of his own Almighty wings.

And again we point to another order of teaching, and the last which we shall notice in the ancient Orient—it is that which closed the dispensation of Jewish history, and on this point again we call you to notice we do not propose to lift the veil of mystery either purposely or designedly woven or accidentally formed around the biography of the Man of Nazareth. It is enough for us this night that we review the influence of the various religious teachers that have arisen, and point to the characteristics which they impress upon their followers. It is not for us, though it will be in time for the ages, to know the truth of all that God has done, as well as what man has said; and we have no fear that any truth can ever be injured by dragging it into the sunlight, or that any sublime teachings from the Infinite Mind will ever be marred because we discover that the image through which they have been received is human rather than divine. We have tonight this night to say of the historical character of which we are about to speak, but we point to that which we have received—namely, that sublime teaching that was enunciated in the name, through the lips, or by the writings of the four Evangelists which claim to record the biography of Jesus of Nazareth. This great teacher was neither priest nor prophet, nor did he claim alliance with any of

the sects or forms of Jewish orders or authorities that ruled the people's minds. After the Babylonish captivity there were several different sects—the Pharisees, who did believe in the immortality of the soul, and who taught it by the repetition of traditions; the Scribes, who also taught of the soul's immortality, but through the interpretation of writings; the Sadducees, who denied all spiritual existence; and the Essenes, of whom the world will hear more as the truths of history are gradually illuminating the darkness of the past. These persons had all divided the Jews into the various gradations of belief. Jesus professes alliance with none, although He represents so obviously the teachings of the Essenes that it would be difficult to draw a line between them. Now, when we review his teachings we may simply reduce them to these few forms, or rather these few methods of belief. He taught of God neither as the Brahm of the Hindoos, the Osiris of the Egyptians, nor the fire-god of the Parsees; He taught of Him not as the Jehovah of the Jews, turning and repenting, and perpetually changing his purposes at the supplication of man; He taught of Him as a Spirit—as One who ever was, who ever would be, who was ever present, and He taught of his relations to man by the sweet and gracious name of "Father." Of the attributes of this dear and loving Father He gave illustrations in the tender, the precious parable of the prodigal son, of the outcast and the publican, of the Merciful One who had pity upon his children seventy times seven, of the ever-loving Father who was one with Him as He was one with his apostles. He taught of Him in all those sweet and gracious terms with which we ourselves would speak when in our helpless infancy we are told by the priest to go to God, as we turn and tenderly cling to the hand of our loving earthly father. Such was the God of whom Jesus taught. Of the hereafter, of which He assured us that all men were heirs, He spoke but briefly; He merely represented that there was a place where all were gathered up—where Jew and Gentile should stand in the judgment of their own acts and deeds. How numerous are the parables by which He constantly illustrates the fact of this judgment! That there should be no mistake as to the character of the teaching, He perpetually represents it, even to the act of giving a cup of cold water in his name; and that the value of his name should not be mistaken, does He not tell us that it is not those that call upon Him as "Lord! Lord!" that are of Him, but those that do the will of the Father which is in heaven? Does He not tell us again and again what that will is—to perform the works which He performs? Does He not again and again tell us the nature of those works by placing a little child—an unbaptised, unconscious little child—in their midst, as a type of the kingdom of heaven? And of the nature of that kingdom does He leave us in any doubt when He tells us it is not found by crying, "Lo here, or lo there," but that we shall never find it until we have builded it within our own natures? Of the nature of that hereafter there are, from time to time, breathings, low whisperings, that come up to us from the Garden of Gethsemane—from the Mount of Calvary, but chiefly in those words parting the lips of the dying, suffering martyr, as He promises, with his prescient eyes open to the eternity into which He is hastening, that He and the penitent shall meet in conscious recognition of each other—not in the heaven of heavens—not in the far-distant and unimaginable rest which awaits the trumpet of the last judgment to sound, but that very day in Paradise—in the Paradise which was ever recognised throughout the East as a mid-region, as a place of progression.

Such are some of the teachings which this unconservative and glorious Spirit taught the world; and if we seek any further we shall find it in the life—the life which consorted with the humblest and the poorest—the life which held such deep and affectionate ties of sympathy with suffering everywhere—the life which pitied the criminal, which was spent in acts of benevolence; and the life whose divinity could only be testified of by works which none but spiritual power could perform. No creed, no dogma, no writing, no scripture—Christ never wrote a line. If He lived, if it was not a divine inspiration but a personality, there was no record left behind to justify a single creed or dogma that has ever been enunciated in his name. This is a bold assertion; still, we are ready to defend it.

And now we must briefly review no more the germ-seeds of theology, but their fruits. This is the last of the theological teachings to which we need call your attention, because it is the last seedling that has ever been sown—the law of the love of God to his creatures, and the love of the creatures one to the other. There is no other law, no other dogma, no other form of belief that ever was taught through the lips of Him they called Christ. Now for the fruits of this last sublime teaching. So beautiful, so precious, so practical did it appear, that the common people embraced it gladly—that his disciples, those that knew Him and loved Him, taught it with that deep devotion that enabled them to become spectacles to men and angels, to endure stonings and beatings, and at last to die the death of the martyr for the sake of this glorious risen life of which He gave such an assurance. Amongst these disciples was one who was not only learned in the law and the Scriptures of which we have been speaking—who was essentially one of the mystics—who had been taught all the solemn mysteries, and myths, and scriptures of the various theories of which we have been speaking, but was also an eloquent, able, brave, and zealous advocate of those mysteries; and this was Saul. We need not remind you of the fact of his conversion; we need not remind you that Saul, the persecutor, the murderer, the advocate and teacher of all those dark and baleful systems of destruction and human sacrifice, under the influence of a mighty spiritual inspiration became Paul, the advocate of the pure, and

gentle, and merciful religion of Jesus of Nazareth. But we must never forget that when Saul became Paul he did not leave his learning nor his mysticisms behind. He exchanged their names and nature. He no longer believed in the dark and hideous teachings of the past, but he could not forget their mysticisms, and he set up this new, beautiful form of humanity—Jesus of Nazareth, in place of Buddha, Krishna, and Osiris, and Zoroaster, and all the myths of antiquity. The same mysticisms remained, but the characters were changed; and the influence of the beautiful life and the sweet and holy teachings of Christ, fresh from the lips of his apostles, coloured his character, and therefore he commingled that strange mass of doctrine on the one side and pure and holy morals on the other. Paul the apostle was the founder of Christian theology; Christ Jesus of Nazareth was the founder of pure and natural religion. We must not mistake the two. At first, the early Christians were essentially followers of Christ, but as learned Pagans came into the fold they became followers of Paul; they realised that all these early teachings only required to be transposed, and so they found their Astarte, and Juno and various queens of heaven were easily changed to the Mary, to the mother. It was easy for them to transfer this idea of Zeus, Jupiter Ammon, and all the dark and terrible emblems of mighty power, to the God of the Israelites. It was easy for them to transform their incarnate deities from Bacchus, from Prometheus, Mercury, Apollo, and other divinities, into this new incarnate God. And thus we find that as the learned began to enter the fold they adopted the mysticism and theology of Paul rather than the pure and simple teachings of Jesus, and thus it is that we have the learning and the theology, the sectarianism and the dogmatism which follow in the wake of that which wrote no dogmas, enunciated no creeds, and was never calculated to narrow itself into a sect. We shall only point to one or two results of this strange commixture. It was in the days of Constantine the Great—Constantine, whose name is stained with the darkest murders that disgrace the page of history—Constantine, who applied to Greek philosophers and teachers of the Greek religion for consolation against the stings of conscience, and found none, but applied to the learned Christian doctor, and found vicarious atonement; and no sooner did he find this, than, his conscience set at rest, he became a Christian. Scandalised by the various disputes that occurred in the Christian fold, perplexed to find that on the one side the simplicity of these teachings was impaired by the mysticisms of the various bishops and archbishops that were gradually rising into power and disputing with one another, the scandalous combats that occurred in their ranks, and the terrible discord and inharmonious that was following in the wake of the Prince of Peace, he was induced to summon them to a solemn council, and there to determine what Christianity really was. They did not go to the Mount of Olives; they did not go to the Last Supper; they did not go to the place where the kind and the merciful One said, "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another;" but they went to a solemn convocation, where, in the midst of gewgaws and splendour, magnificent followings, rich robes, purple and fine linen, and splendid ecclesiastical endowments, the grave bishops, after two months of deliberation, voted what Christianity was. Now we know—those that choose to examine the creeds, and doctrines, and dogmas of Christendom—that, with the exception of the Socinians, called in modern times the Unitarians, or the followers of Arius, the entire of the foundations of Christendom; every creed every doctrine; that faith which, from the Archbishop of Canterbury to the poorest curate in Christendom, every minister is sworn to defend, is all founded upon the creed of Saint Athanasius. If you do not know what it is, you that are Christians had better learn it; you had better determine, like the bishops in the third and fourth centuries, what you really do mean, and you will find very little difficulty in determining its nature, for it commences, as you know doubtless, with this famous affirmation, "Whosoever will be saved must believe what herein follows;" and that which herein follows may be summed up in one single phrase: "For there are not three incomprehensibles, but one incomprehensible; the Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible; and yet there are not three incomprehensibles, but one incomprehensible." We need not proceed; it is simply enough to remind you that the closing up of this famous creed declares that those that do not render in their faith and intellectual belief in that creed shall be destroyed with everlasting fire. We offer no comment; we would simply recall to you but one passage of the Founder of that system in whose name the creed was put forth: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and yet one of them shall not fall to the ground without the knowledge of your heavenly Father: are ye not of much more value than many sparrows?" "Whosoever will be saved!" saved in the name of Him that declared that not a sparrow should be lost—that the merciful Creator was the Father, and God, and Provider, and Sustainer of the lilies of the field, and had numbered the hairs of your heads. "Whosoever will be saved!" It is not ten years since the lips of Theodore Parker, one who boldly and bravely stood up to defend the character of the Father from the imputations which men had brought against Him as God,—it is not ten years since, I say, that the lips of Theodore Parker called upon the people of Boston to answer this question: "Were there now beneath your feet a raging pit of fire—a fire dark and hideous, and only lighted by its own fierce, consuming, and lurid flames—and should there be one hapless human being that should become by accident precipitated into that fearful and destroying pit, oh, what would you do? If you knew that such a pit was raging beneath your feet this

night, and that there was one miserable creature consuming and burning, and torn and destroyed, in those wild, fierce flames, what would you do? You would close your houses, array yourselves in mourning, toll the bells of your city, tear every hair from your heads in dear human sympathy; or you would wreath your arms together, and man by man, you would form a chain down to the lowest depths, till you had dragged that one unfortunate sufferer from the midst of the flames. And we all believe, and we all know, that in the great burning heart of dear humanity there shall not be a single creature that shall suffer in our sights, but our own hearts shall quail and shrink with sympathetic pain, and reckless of consequences we will dare our own lives to save him." This is the creature that God has made in his image, and this is the creature that the Athanasians for some 1600 or 1800 years almost, for they lived shortly after the days of Jesus, have condemned to everlasting flames, and burning torments, and eternal tortures, with God and his angels looking on, simply because they cannot believe in bad mathematics, that three is one and one is three! And so Paul taught a theology, and Jesus taught a religion.

Now, there is a period very early in the history of the progress of this religion which explains much of its character. About the fourth century there was a certain Bishop Ambrosius, who was bishop of the See of Rome. He was an earnest, faithful, and zealous man in his generation and for his particular faith. He found his church needed revivals, and he did not know how to effect them. He heard that the Eastern church of Constantinople was far better attended than his own, and that they had means and methods of attracting the public ear and gaining the hearts of men that were very well worthy of the consideration of a faithful and zealous bishop. On consulting the elders and authorities of this same Constantinople church, he found that their method of revivalism consisted in the introduction of very sweet and delicious music, responses or antiphons from the people and the choir highly instructed in this method of chanting. The good Bishop Ambrosius introduced these same chants with very great effect into his church, and the revivalism was mighty, and though it was said to be the power of the Holy Ghost calling unto the people, it was very obvious that the power came through the instrumentality of the sweet music. And another bishop, his successor, Gregorius, also a very earnest man in his generation, gradually improved upon this method of revivals, and not only introduced sweet music, but added fair scenes, pictures and statues, and gorgeous decorations, and magnificent robes, and many other imposing psychological appeals to the senses, all of which were formed into what has been termed the famous Gregorian Masses, and from this point was established that magnificent system commencing with music and ending with the Queen of heaven. From this point we find that the church flourished exceedingly, and up to the days of Pope Leo X. became richer and richer, and mightier and stronger; and by the aid of racks and thumb-screws, and dungeons and inquisitions, by aid of strong swords and blazing fires, those whom it could not convert it very wisely put out of existence. And so, in process of time, another witness arose for the holy truths that were clouded and at last almost buried beneath the profusion of purple, and fine linen, and gold; and the voice that was drowned by the sound of the mass—always sung in dead languages, that the people might not judge for themselves,—the voice of the spirit that was hushed in the sound of the mass, and the forms of the precious Man of Nazareth and the humble fishermen, that were lost in the midst of the magnificent frames in which their portraits were set, were at last recalled by the voice of stout-hearted Martin Luther. The brave old Saxon monk, although he could not leap beyond his shadow, nor advance one single step beyond his time, took a vast many steps beyond the men of his time. Standing alone, with the battle-axe of faith in his hand and a ragged cassock on his back, he pleaded for the right of private judgment—asked that the people might know what they were saying to God, what professions they made to God, and what God had said to them. That was his plea, and you know that he carried it into effect—carried it single-handed, because he carried it in the might of that supreme faith which trusted in the God whom he saw darkly, but still he did see Him; and it was in the strength of that power and the witness in that great man's heart that he changed the entire character of the faith of Europe. But remember that, though Martin Luther, the founder of the mighty mission that established Protestantism, pleaded against the corruptions of the church, and against the auctions, which sold out of public booths seats in heaven, and established a tariff at so much apiece on hideous crimes,—although Martin Luther protested against this, it was not given to him nor granted to his day to show the fulness and completeness of that pure religion of love which fulfilled all law. John Calvin, Knox, the Munster Anabaptists, and various fanatics that arose in their track, were all protesters against the corruptions of the faith of Rome, but not against the faith itself. They protested against its luxury, impieties, and abominations, but it was not granted to them to touch the edicts of the faith. Martin Luther translated the Bible, and by giving this magnificent opening to all mankind to judge for themselves, he cast loose upon the world the principle of individual right and liberty of conscience. You know what use we have made of it ever since—we have been growing in justice as fast as we can; we have striven with all our might, not to follow in the steps of Martin Luther, but to make use of the liberty which he offered to us—that of judging for ourselves.

Passing over all the other periods which intervene in the progress of religious development up to the present day, we must close

with a brief review of the present status of religious faith upon the earth. There are certain great subdivisions of faith which now exist; these we may classify as Buddhism, Mohammedanism, Judaism, Christianity, and infidelity to all. Buddhism, Mohammedanism, and Judaism, all and each teach pure morality. When we examine the doctrines that they enunciate—that is, that their originators enunciated—we find very high morals, and a standard of very pure and holy practice, the teaching of one God, and the recognition of the soul's immortality and responsibility hereafter. Yet why are the nations that profess these faiths the lowest and most degraded in the scale of civilisation? Simply because they worship and believe through the men that founded these faiths. Their devotion is severally to Buddha and Mohammed, and to Moses, rather than to the principles they taught. Their devotion cannot exceed the times in which these great teachers legislated; their lives are wasted in forms, rites, and ceremonies peculiar to the ages of the past, and in the total absence of any education and civilisation, they are sunk almost into barbarism. The religion, which only fastens them to the image of their founders, and narrows them down to ages and ages of the past—the religion, which is only expressed in rites and ceremonials, which is a mere automatic performance of certain duties—can never elevate the soul; and, totally destitute of that vitalising principle of universal civilisation and free thought which liberates every creature, they are sunk into degradation and retrogressive barbarism. Their numbers are immense, but their religions will never raise them to the condition of that pure and whole-souled faith concerning which we commenced our address, and which it was the aim of Jesus to restore.

When we speak of Christendom we shall not arraign any of its various sects or forms; we simply put a case. Assume that there were some stranger who should appear in your midst, say from a distant planet, or some place where sects, creeds, and faiths were unknown, and that he should appeal to various ranks of Christendom for instruction in that saving faith which should teach him the true religion; would not the first difficulty he would have to encounter be the very great multitude of faiths of which he should hear, the jargon of many tongues which should enunciate to him the peculiarities of the various Gods whose favour was now to be obtained by sprinkling and now by baptism, now by robes and now by candles, now by vestments and now by none, now by rites and ceremonies and now by ignoring them? Would he not feel perplexed which to choose, and, like the poor Japanese when applied to by different Christian missionaries, would he not say, "Go and agree amongst yourselves, and then come and teach me what you believe?" But supposing that he should overcome this difficulty, and that he were presented with the sweet and gracious history to which we have so often referred, the history which is recorded as falling from the lips of the dear elder brother of the race—the Man of Sorrows. How should he compare the Father taught there with the dark and dreadful God of the creed of St. Athanasius? How, if he were instructed in art and science, should he compare the affirmations of theological teachers concerning the origin and creation, the fall of man? If he were a good mechanic himself, would he believe that his God was a worse mechanic than he was, that He should create a world so imperfect that it should not fulfil its main design? Would he believe that if his God were all goodness He should create a being of pure malignity? Would he believe that man was totally degraded, as he looked into the eyes of his sweet and sinless little child? Would he believe that because one man committed an act of disobedience, the whole race should be condemned? Would he believe, in the name of reason and justice, that the sinner that had committed wrong, by an intellectual act of belief should have his sins washed as white as wool, and be thenceforth transformed into a saint of heaven, because he professed a certain belief? Would he believe in the tale that the Prince of Peace prayed even for his murderers; and that that was the God-like teaching that we should forgive our worst enemies, when he went to our law courts, and jails, and penitentiaries, and saw the hideous revenge that is taken upon those who do not know their right hand from their left, and are then punished for their degradation and ignorance? Would he believe that it was God himself that said, "The hairs of your head are numbered," and that He cared for falling sparrows, when he saw the dark black arm of the gallows erected in the midst of the cities of civilisation, and twelve men in cold blood publicly strangling a wretch to death because he knew not what he did? Would he believe that ten thousand twice told ten thousand men should publicly meet in these days of civilisation and see which could murder the most of each other, and all for the sake of two men to see which could parcel out the land in the largest quantities between them? Dare he read your public journals and then question the fruits of eighteen hundred years of theology? If he did, and happened to read the details of the past week, he would read of a supper to a hundred thieves—he would read that a hundred thieves were gathered together publicly professing their mission of monstrous wrong, infamy, degradation, and violation of one of the commandments of God, in a great civilised city, but he would read that that ghastly assemblage of one hundred were all under fifteen years of age, little creatures, little fellows about whose brow the hand of time had written crime, and yet in whose brain the words of right and wrong had not yet begun to take the shape of any sense,—he would read that this hundred was but the representation of a hundred thousand more who are loose upon society—and why? They are not the children that go to school—they are not the children that have decent suppers at home—they are not the

children that are well lodged, and well fed and cared for by kind and loving fathers and mothers, but they are homeless, vagabond, outcast wanderers; they are lost in degradation—they are sunk sometimes in distress, sometimes in disease—they are ghastly to look upon; and they are the representatives of at least one million creatures upon whom, both men and women, we may look shuddering to-day, and wish to God that they had no existence at all: the world might be better without them. Eighteen hundred years the voice of the Master has pleaded, "Feed my sheep, feed my lambs," and after eighteen hundred years the cost of one of those magnificent festivals that are constantly being held in honour of the gracious Ruler of the land would redeem the souls of all those hundred thieves, and perhaps a hundred thousand more, from the gutter and the gallows. I have not told you the half of the fruits of theology yet. It should be the fruits, for is not religion designed for a threefold purpose?—is it not to teach us first the knowledge of God, then the fact of the soul's immortality, and last, but not least, our duty to one another? and if we mistake this, have not the words of Jesus himself enforced it upon us by telling us that all law and all commandment was fulfilled in that duty to one another which he calls love? There is no excuse, there is no shadow of a compromise with the teachings of Him whom they claim as the founder of this theology which for eighteen centuries has borne no better fruits than the gallows, war, the penitentiary, the jail, Newgate, and hundreds of thousands of thieves and murderers. We know that these underground cities of civilisation, as they are called, exist; day by day we see the outcroppings of them in the land, and day by day we see splendid palaces of power and crime growing up in every direction where these thieves are rooted out. We do not now ask what is to be done, but we are simply reviewing the fruits of that system which we have called theology. We do not pronounce upon it, but God has done so; He has done so after the long experiment of ages, not by taking away from us the beautiful form of religion, but by renewing it again. We do find that of all the various religions we have named—and we have only glanced at two or three representative forms—the highest and noblest thinkers of the day can find no rest for their souls within them. We have not spoken of the ranks of infidelity, nor shall we do so to-night, but they number up some of the noblest minds, the best thinkers, the calmest reasoners, and the kindest hearts in the world. We know that this is so from perpetual observation. Is it necessary to be a fool, to be an ignoramus, then, to accept of dogmas and theological beliefs?—is it necessary to gainsay art and science and knowledge before we can become converts to ecclesiasticism? Why should they be at odds? They are the words of God—must they not agree with the Word, or which shall we accept? The day has come when these potential questions press home upon every heart, and we are answering day by day by crowding into the ranks of those churches which worship before the shrine of the works. In these works we can read God at every turn, and because we are driven off by the swing of the pendulum from ecclesiasticism, and cannot always comprehend the reading, the spirit-world has been opened unto us, and hosts and hosts of ministering angels are come to prove the facts of the spiritual existence, to bring the demonstrations of immortality, and show the absolute nature of responsibility for every act and deed that we commit.

We shall say no more to-night on this subject. It is enough that we are not left comfortless—that in this age of inquisition, when we see the handwriting upon the wall, when that handwriting is performed by the part of a man's hand whose form is invisible, but we know that it is a spirit's; when we read in the great temples of ecclesiasticism, "Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin," when we see every day the ghastly evidences that the kingdom is being rent from the hands of ecclesiasticism, but that not one jot of the true, holy, and ancient religion is to be rooted out of the human heart—on the contrary, we are clinging to it more than ever, we are longing for it, we are perishing for it, we will have it:—God has answered, "Let there be light!" and there shall be light. Light is dawning upon us day by day. We have no fear for that pure and holy religion whose fundamental principles we have so briefly defined. We have no fear that the sweet and holy name of Jesus will ever be polluted by the revelations which ever harmonise—never yet take exception to a word that He uttered. We have no fear that aught that is sacred or good will be rooted out of the heart. We have no fear that in the morning that is to be, which is now faintly dawning upon us, the revelations that are coming like the sound of distant voices, until they swell up the mighty chorus from the ancient past, will ever outroot the facts and principles of the idea of God, the truth of immortality, or the absolute responsibility of human nature for right and wrong here and hereafter.

THOUGHTS ON SPIRITUALISM.

I think no one will dispute this statement, that we are living in one of the most extraordinary periods of the world's history—an age of mighty inventions, and, alas! of miserable ignorance of many of nature's divine laws. There is no doubt whatever that more progress has been made in the religious, moral, and political world than at any previous epoch. How, let us inquire, have these mighty changes—the vast strides of human progress—been produced? I answer, that it is owing to an influence flowing from the spirit-world through various media, such as the press, the writings of great minds, the fine arts, &c., &c. To speak in language more familiar, and perhaps more correct, it is owing to

the outpouring of the divine love and wisdom into the intellect of mankind.

When I speak of the spirit-world, I do most earnestly wish to impress upon the minds of one and all this important truth, that it is not a place situated at some incalculable distance from us, but that, on the contrary, it is indeed very near to us.

Nay, further—there is not a single object, whether a mineral, a vegetable, or an animal, but what is produced by causes from within; in proof of which, the Great Teacher says, "Lo! the kingdom of heaven is within you." How, let us ask, have these stupendous operations of the divine mind on the religious, moral, and civil world been received by scientific and religious teachers, falsely so called?—in a spirit of thankfulness, leading to an impartial investigation of the subject? No; on the contrary, they have been received by these teachers in a spirit, not of inquiry, but too often of ridicule. The reason is obvious; at least, so it appears to me. Men, both in the religious and scientific worlds, have certain fixed (*i.e.*, orthodox) ideas, and any attempt to promulgate any new theory is looked upon as a violation of natural law.

Look, for example, at the ridicule and contemptible sneers of men of science that were cast upon the truly celebrated George Stephenson, without question the greatest engineer who ever lived. When he announced to the world that he would construct a locomotive engine which should far exceed in speed and in beauty of construction anything that had ever preceded it, he was almost universally laughed at. The House of Commons even scoffed at his stupendous plans for building a way through the "Chat Moss." It was impossible, they said; and the man must be either a fool or a madman to think of such a thing. But, notwithstanding all the opposition to his mighty ideas, we are now reaping the fruits of his labours, which are exercising such a mighty revolution in the commercial world. Now, when we seriously reflect on these things, can we be surprised at the way in which modern Spiritualism has been received, and the treatment it has met with at their hands?

Have any of these ridiculers ever put this beautiful philosophy to the test of impartial investigation? No; on the contrary, they have invariably pronounced an opinion, without ever troubling themselves to investigate at all. These "table-rappings" have been far beneath their consideration. "It is contrary to the laws of nature for tables to be moved through the agency of disembodied spirits," in reply to which, I can only assert that men of the highest standing in the religious and scientific world, who have devoted many years to the investigation of this subject, have pronounced that these phenomena (including the movements of tables and other articles of furniture) have been produced not only under circumstances which rendered deception or collusion impossible, but entirely in harmony with nature's laws. That there are spiritual impostors calling themselves mediums, that phenomena have been produced by "trickery," I, for one, will freely admit; but it would be quite as absurd to form our opinions on this subject from cases like these, as it would to condemn wholesale all religious teachers, simply because the world is teeming with religious impostors. Some tell us they have investigated it, and without any results. It is only necessary for us to inquire in what their investigations consisted, to see that they were in nearly every case a miserable farce. They have perhaps, for example, sat for half a dozen times at a table, or read a few pages of some spiritual publication, and then for ever cast it aside. But, in spite of all, this fact must console us: Spiritualism is gradually, though surely, finding favour among men of science and religious professors in all parts of the world.

Of course, I can easily imagine what will be said—"Oh yes; these men are undoubtedly very shrewd thinkers, but on this subject they are of course deranged."

Thus we see that in every age of the world's history great truths have been ridiculed and rejected by men who ought to have known better, who have never troubled to inquire into the subject at all. Let the ridiculer of Spiritualism ask himself this question: "What do I know about the matter?" and the answer must suggest itself—Nothing. Indeed, the most advanced Spiritualists have a very imperfect knowledge of the laws which govern the worlds of matter and of spirit. Every year—yes, every day—this great, this beautiful philosophy is spreading far and wide, in spite of all the sneers that are cast upon it.

So far as regards table-movements, table-rappings, &c., I care little for them, except where great force is exhibited. For instance, a table is moved about sometimes in a most grotesque manner, without the intervention of human hands. Mind, I do not deny the use of any of these phenomena; but I do not, as I formerly did, require them.

Now I am on the question of physical manifestations, I feel that I cannot too forcibly remind the reader that Spiritualism is no more limited to these manifestations than, for example, "homoeopathy" is to "globulism." What, then, it will be asked, is Spiritualism? I answer, it is that philosophy which teaches that man lives after death in a sphere or state congenial to him. It further teaches that the loved ones who have gone before are ever near us—ever anxious to communicate, if we, on our part, are willing to receive.

If these few thoughts are instrumental in leading anyone to look deeper into this matter, I shall feel myself amply rewarded; for let us remember that if it is of man it will come to nought, but if it is of God it will progress, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

JOHN WATSON.

91, Islington, Birmingham.

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SEANCES AND MEETINGS DURING THE WEEK.

- FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10, Seance at 15, Southampton Row, Holborn, at 8 p.m. Mr. Morse, Trance-Medium. Admission 1s.
- Seance at Mrs. Marshall, Sen's, 26, Shirland Road, Bristol Gardens, Maida Hill, W., at 7 o'clock. Several mediums in attendance. Admission 2s. 6d.
- SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, Service at Cleveland Rooms, Cleveland Street, Fitzroy Square, at 7 p.m. Emma Hardinge, "The Earth and its Destiny." Carlton Hall, Kilburn. A. C. Swinton at 7.
- KINGSLY, 10.30 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. Messrs. Shackleton and Wright, Trance-Mediums. Children's Progressive Lyceum at 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- NOTTINGHAM, Children's Lyceum at 2 to 4 p.m. Public Meeting at 6.30.
- ROSS MOUNT, SOUTHWEST BRIDGE, HALIFAX, Children's Lyceum, 10.30 a.m., and 2 p.m. Public Meetings, 2.30 and 6.30 p.m. Trance-Medium, Mr. Wood.
- BRISTOL, Public Meetings, 10.30 a.m., 2.30 and 6.30 p.m. Trance-Medium, Mr. Hingworth.
- BOWLING, Spiritualists' Meeting Room, 2.30 and 6 p.m. Hall Lane, 2 and 6 p.m.
- MANCHESTER, Grosvenor Street Temperance Hall, at 2.30.
- COWLEY, at George Holdroyd's, at 6 p.m.
- MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, Seance at 15, Southampton Row, at 8 o'clock. Mr. Harne Medium for the Spirit-Voice. Admission 2s.
- TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, Seance at Mrs. Marshall, Sen's, 26, Shirland Road, Bristol Gardens, Maida Hill, W., at 7 o'clock. Several mediums in attendance. Admission 2s. 6d.
- KINGSLY, at 7.30 p.m., at the Lyceum. Trance-Mediums, Mrs. Lucas and Messrs. Wright and Shackleton.
- WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, "College of Mediums," at 15, Southampton Row, at 8 o'clock. Ticket for six weeks, 1s.
- Metropolitan Hall (adjoining Gower Street Station).—Mrs. Hardinge's Lecture on "Mesmer," at 8 p.m.
- Seance at Mr. Wallace's, 105, Lisle Street, Kentish Town.
- BOWLING, Spiritualists' Meeting Room, 6 p.m.
- THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, Seance at 7, Corporation Row, Clerkenwell, at 8 o'clock. Meeting to welcome Mr. Jackson, at 15, Southampton Row, at 8 o'clock. BOWLING, Hall Lane, 1.30 p.m.
- Daleston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism. Seance at 74, Navarino Road, Daleston, at 7.45 p.m. (One week's notice requisite from intending visitors.)

* * We will be happy to announce Seances and Meetings in this table weekly. To be in time, all communications must reach this Office by Wednesday morning's post.

THE MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1871.

HEROISM AT HOME.

Humankind are so prone to look to remote ages and distant climes for objects worthy of their veneration and regard, that they are apt to overlook the embodiments of greatness and goodness which exist about their doors. We are no advocates of hero-worship, or the laudation of one particular person above another, however worthily they may conduct themselves. We are aware of the great organic law which separates mankind off into personalities, and limits the acts of all within the capabilities of their peculiar development. We do not accord praise to the powerful nor blame to the weak, seeing that all are more or less circumscribed by the possibilities of their organisations.

Our remarks shall be directed towards actions, rather than individuals; motives, rather than persons. Though human beings cannot alter their organic structures, yet they can so far direct the working of them as to aspire to noble, praiseworthy, and disinterested actions. If all did as much for goodness and truth as they are capable of doing, there would be less fault to find with organic defects.

The peculiar conduct which we consider worthy of special notice is that of Mrs. Berry in connection with the public demonstration of mediumistic phenomena. In doing so,

she has, at much sacrifice of personal feeling, had to occupy a position which few stout-hearted men would have cared to accept. She has had to encounter sceptics and disbelievers of all shades of opinion and manners, which sometimes were not of the choicest description. But, braving the personal insults as well as ignorance of those who came to investigate, this lady has bravely maintained her ground, and by her valour has rendered the most extraordinary phenomena of Spiritualism accessible to the public of the metropolis. The success which has attended this work must not be reckoned merely by the numbers who have witnessed the phenomena—though these have been quite considerable—but the public manner in which these manifestations have been given has challenged the scrutiny of the entire newspaper press, and we are happy to say that though the writers sometimes indulged in unwarrantable insinuations, yet no member of the Press has been able to discover collusion or fraud, while all have been forced to admit that they witnessed phenomena for which they could not account.

The claims of spirit-manifestations have therefore been brought prominently before the notice of hundreds of thousands of newspaper readers, and thereby the credibility of these manifestations has been promoted in the minds of all who have thus learned of their existence. We need not add that Mrs. Berry has had no personal motive in these attending these seances. She found the medium, Mr. Harne, in a weak state of development, and seeing the necessity for such manifestations, and pitying the helpless condition of the medium, she disinterestedly took the matter up, and brought the phenomena to such a high state of development as has scarcely ever been witnessed at any other circle. The visitors have had their mouths shut against making any imputation against this lady's motives, seeing that she has come through cold, snow, and rain, at her own expense, in every instance paying for admission the same as other visitors.

If all Spiritualists did their duty as far as lay in their power, as in the instance before us, Spiritualism would soon become the greatest fact of modern times. Everyone cannot be expected to preside at a public seance, but there are hundreds of other ways in which disinterestedness and love of truth may manifest themselves besides that. We are glad to know that Mrs. Berry's munificence does not end with her labours for the development of the phenomena. Her expenses and contributions to Spiritualism must amount to something like a little income. In this department of labour she does not stand alone. Many who would shrink from the valiant position which she has been pleased to assume, are, like herself, devoting their means and personal influence to the education of the people in this momentous subject. From day to day, and week to week, this work becomes more frequently and more earnestly carried out, and with a few more years of quiet and harmonious labour, we may expect to see the cause of Spiritualism achieve a position and power commensurate with its intrinsic truth and value to the human soul.

MRS. HARDINGE'S LECTURES.

We attach great importance to the course of lectures by Mrs. Hardinge, announced on another page to take place on Wednesday evenings. Though the subjects are not what might be termed Spiritualistic, yet the treatment of them will no doubt sustain peculiar relations to Spiritualism, and claim the warm sympathies of all Spiritualists. The scope and tendency of Spiritualism is very much misunderstood—not only by the public at large, but by many Spiritualists. It is supposed to treat entirely of occult phenomena, communications from spirits, and speculations on the state and occupations of the inhabitants of the spirit-realm. On this account the subject has been derided as absurd, visionary, and impractical; and the universal demand is, Of what use is it? Is it calculated to ameliorate any of the evils that fester in the bosom of society? Can it make us better men and women, or the world, as a whole, fairer and happier? If it cannot throw any light on these momentous topics, or kindred inquiries, then the men of this utilitarian age stand back and withhold their attention from an investigation so foreign to human progress and well-being. Intelligent Spiritualists know that the contrary is the fact, and that Spiritualism throws the fullest light that has yet been vouchsafed to the human intellect on all the issues of life. To demonstrate this position is the object of these lectures about to be given by Mrs. Hardinge. With the exception of the two psychological topics—"Mesmer" and "Joan of Arc," which are themselves fraught with practical issues—

the subjects are all of weighty moment, as bearing on questions of the period. What do Spiritualists think of education—of the amusements of the people—of the exercise of the æsthetic faculties over character—of the bearings of one part to another of the great human mass called “society?” These inquiries are deeply attractive to every person of intellect, taste, or feeling; but how much more so must they be to Spiritualists, when it is remembered that the speaker is the most remarkable inspirational medium that Spiritualism has produced, that her orations will be delivered extemporaneously under spirit-influence—in fact, her utterances will be the views of spirits on these important subjects, and a reflex of the knowledge of a higher world upon the affairs of mundane existence.

Such being a matter-of-fact statement of the position, we need not say one word more to recommend this course to our readers. We bespeak their cordial activities to do all they can to secure good audiences. Many people will attend such lectures who would not be seen at a meeting on Spiritualism, and the diligence displayed in augmenting these audiences may do more for our cause than the methods usually adopted. In conclusion, we call the reader's attention to the easy terms of admission, which must be largely availed of to meet the necessary expenses.

THE SUNDAY SERVICES.

Mrs. Hardinge's power as a speaker was never so heartily acknowledged as during the present course at the Cleveland Rooms. From Sunday to Sunday her orations deepen in interest and significance, but the one delivered on Sunday last was particularly appreciated. At the conclusion there was a universal call for a full report of it, and a gentleman volunteered £1 towards the expenses. We have therefore had our report extended *verbatim*, and enlarge this number of the MEDIUM to twelve pages to meet the necessary demand on our space. We print an extra edition to suit the requirements of those who may be desirous of giving circulation to this address. We regret that the extra expense in getting out the MEDIUM this week will prevent our offering copies at the same low rate as we sold the Christmas number. We are prepared, however, to supply quantities of 100 at 6s., or 20 copies for 1s. 3d., postage unpaid by us. That our friends may not consider these terms illiberal, we may state that though we sold the whole edition at these prices, it would not refund the cost of production. If our readers would enter a little heartily into the work of extending the circulation of the MEDIUM, we would in return endeavour to enlarge it permanently.

MR. JACKSON'S PROGRAMME.

Last week we announced the visit of our good friend, J. W. Jackson, Esq., F.A.S.L. We expect to see him in London the end of this week or early in next. As far as his engagements with scientific societies will permit, he desires to devote his time to Spiritualism. Mr. Jackson will be grateful for any opportunities that can be afforded him to witness the varied phenomena at present taking place in London. We hope those who conduct circles will extend to Mr. Jackson a cordial invitation to be present at some of their sittings. We hope Mr. Jackson will arrive in time to be present at the dark seance on Monday evening, at 15, Southampton Row. On Wednesday he will preside at Mrs. Hardinge's lecture on “Mesmer.” On Thursday he will meet a select company of the friends of Spiritualism at 15, Southampton Row. On Friday he will attend Mr. Morse's seance. In our next number we shall further indicate Mr. Jackson's public movements in connection with Spiritualism.

WE HAVE RECEIVED another letter from Mr. Donnelly, Manchester, in respect to which we beg to refer him and all our “harmony by the suppression of freethought friends” to the wonderful historical facts developed by Mrs. Hardinge in the oration which we print in this number. Look into history, and you will find that all fossilised sectarianism has been the direct result of accepting a string of priestly dogmas as truth, repeating a jargon of impertinent prayers as religion, and performing a catalogue of ceremonies as the most approved moral conduct.

J. BURNS is appointed to lecture on Spiritualism to the South London Secularist Society, in Blackfriars Road, on Sunday, the 19th. The same lecturer contemplates a course of lectures in Spennymoor, County Durham, during the week commencing February 27.

ANNA CORA MOWATT RITCHIE.

Mrs. Ritchie has communicated at the Banner circle in Boston, as would appear from the following extract from the *Banner of Light*, December 24, 1870:—

“To the dear friends who are anxiously looking for my return from the land of the hereafter—the beautiful summer-land of the spirits—I would say, I have realised the truth of my beautiful faith here; I know that I live, I know that I can return, I know that I can manifest to those who still remain on earth, and I have the blessed assurance that in time to come I shall be able to fulfil all the promises I have made to them and to myself. All my fondest dreams of the other life have been fully realised—ay, more than realised. I have met and been reunited to those who were dear to me who passed on to the shining shore before me, and I rejoice to be able to give to-day even one word in favour of the beautiful Spiritual philosophy. Stand by it, defend it, even with your natural lives if needs be, for it is a pearl of great price, and something of which in the hereafter you will not be ashamed.

“ANNA CORA MOWATT RITCHIE, October 11.”

WE OBSERVED that the new organ was in use at the Cleveland Rooms on Sunday evening, but we understand that it is not yet paid for, as the requisite sum has not come in. Will a few of our well-to-do readers not send a mite each and clear this little matter up?

THE COLLEGE OF MEDIUMS commenced its sixth session on Wednesday evening with a select number of sitters, and very extraordinary results were achieved. If the developments proceed as they have begun, we may expect great public events out of powers thus elicited.

MANIFESTATIONS of an incontestable kind occurred at Mr. Herne's seance on Monday night. Mr. Herne's mediumship improves from week to week, and seances of sceptical strangers are well satisfied with the phenomena. Quite as many apply for admission as can be accommodated.

THE ZOUAVE JACOB.—We are very glad to hear that the “French Healer” is quietly doing a great deal of good to such sufferers as apply to him. Mr. H. Collen, of St. Albans, writes: “I took a young lady to M. Jacob some time since, who had a bad knee and used crutches; but on the following day these were laid aside, nor has she used them since. The cure is indeed wonderful, for she can walk above a mile without the slightest pain or inconvenience.” M. Jacob's address is 32, Bryanston Street, Marble Arch, W.

Thy soul, too,
Is governed by a law; but not the law
That governs grosser and material things.
The gentle law it owneth is the law,
Not of compulsion, but persuasiveness.
With the material it is necessity,
But with the spiritual it must still be choice.

“All is vain,”
Taught the stern preacher, but 'twas sourly said;
Life to the vain alone is vanity,
But to the wise it is the precious bulb
That effloresces into perfectness.

S. W. Partridge's “Onward and Upward.”

WHAT IS THE GOOD OF SPIRITUALISM?—Again and again we have heard this question asked, by those who are entirely ignorant of its consoling teachings. A plain card informs us of the passing away of Mary Ann Palmer, *nee* Lingford, of Bishop Auckland. Her body was interred on her 30th birthday. In three weeks the representatives of three generations from this family passed over the silent river. Last week we recorded the transition of the well-ripened and aged mother; we now perform the same duty to her daughter; and the third from the same family is the baby of the latter, which soon followed its mother. The value of Spiritualism may be estimated from the satisfaction with which believing survivors contemplate such “bereavements,” and can congratulate the beloved departed on the companionship derived from their union on the bright side of existence. Faith in Spiritualism is faith in the goodness and providence of God.

ALL nature woos mankind to know it, and thus to ascend to a closer communion with its almighty Author. The flowers are not odorous, nor their forms and colours manifold, to delight the senses merely: the senses, as well as that innate feeling which directs our preferences, are the appointed inlets of our knowledge; and these various circumstances, the wooing aids to our perceptions. To convert the pleasure-giving means of knowledge into finalities is unmitigated sensualism—an error to which even brute natures do not stoop. There is not a blade of grass that points to heaven, but bids thee be intelligent and happy.—E. N. Dennys, “The Alpha.”

TABULATION.—This term, used by Dr. Dixon in a recent number of the MEDIUM, has called forth an inquiry from Miss Houghton as to its meaning, as she cannot find it in the dictionary. This lady's request has been laid before the Doctor, who thus replies:—“The term ‘tabulation’ is allowable perhaps by analogy. For instance, it may be said that by tabulation, or table-motion, a power was manifested.” We have often witnessed the operation of an attempt at kissing—*asculation*. We shall be glad to be corrected and a more suitable term substituted.

MANCHESTER.—A circle is being formed at Mr. B. Broughton's, Greengate, Salford, to which all earnest investigators are welcome.

A “PROPHET” has favoured us with a list of predictions seen by a little boy in a crystal ball. Most of the statements are highly improbable, and we see no use whatever in giving them publicity.

exercising the wonderful power. He gave some account of the progress of Spiritualism in his present locality.

Mr. Harper, of Birmingham, as a travelling Spiritualist, gave a view of the cosmopolitan tendencies of Spiritualism. He gave many cheering accounts of the progress of intellectual freedom, and traced much of it to the enlightening influence of this greatest movement of the present century.

Mr. Morse desired to say a few words in the normal state. He was particularly struck with the change which had occurred in public opinion since he first became a medium, about eighteen months ago. At that time his seances were frequently interrupted by sententious visitors, who would not respect the object for which the seances were held. Now the case was very different; great respect was paid to the manifestations and teachings of Spiritualism, and he earnestly urged mediums to go forth as he had done, and give their powers to the promotion of such a beneficial movement.

The remainder of the speeches were by mediums in the trance. The first to be controlled was Mr. Morse, who gave utterance to a very beautiful speech from his guide, Tien-Sien-Tie. This spirit pointed out that there were three ways of promoting Spiritualism—first, by means of lectures; secondly, by the circulation of books and publications. These aroused the attention of many, and enlightened their intellects, but they contained no demonstration of the truth of Spiritualism. This onerous duty devolved upon the third method, namely, mediumship, which was essentially necessary to educate mankind in the great spiritual truths upon which this movement was based. He urged the friends of Spiritualism to rally round every effort for the development of mediums. The greater the harmony, the more united the motives of those who laboured for Spiritualism, the more striking and advantageous would be the results of mediumship. He pointed out that inharmonious, carping people interfered with the proper manifestations of spirits and the comfort of mediums. He highly approved of the present meeting, and warmly recommended the College of Mediums, around the truly social board of which the receptive soul was capable of receiving good things, which the angel-world were prepared to bestow. Thus they had a free and spiritual priesthood, not governed by dogmas, or sworn to sustain opinions whether true or false, but fitted to stand at the gateway of heaven, and dispense the bread of life to the hungering souls of humanity.

Mr. Cogman was controlled with considerable difficulty, as he shrinks from any unnecessary publicity connected with his mediumship. He spoke with wonderful power. He commenced with a most eloquent apostrophe to Nature as "the goddess of life, who speaks in every tongue and sparkles in every eye." From this poetical moon he passed into the humorous, and briefly referred to the functions of the priests of ancient times, who—"after the order of Melchisedek"—exercised their peculiar influence over the destinies of mankind. In modern times there was another order, not of Melchisedek, but of "Me-choose-myself." These contain within their ranks a host of commentators, upon which word he made a witticism, which provoked much mirth, by saying that the seed of truth had sprung, not from common "taters," but from uncommon "taters," such as were full of eyes, and had their reasoning faculties replete with vital activity.

We should be glad to see more of Mr. Cogman's excellent mediumship. The power and originality with which he can be controlled—even under the unfavourable nervous influence by which he is at present governed—speaks well for his future usefulness.

Mr. Robson was under the influence of a musical spirit most of the evening. At a favourable opportunity he stepped forward and sang "Yes, we will hear your prayer," an answer composed by the spirits to "Sweet Spirit, hear my prayer." The singing exhibited great taste on the part of the spirit controlling; but Mr. Robson's voice does not give sufficient compass and elasticity to the genius of the directing influence. He afterwards sang "The Last Rose of Summer" with Mrs. Hicks, and the exquisite manner in which he harmonised with the soprano showed the high culture of the spirit who operated through him.

Many persons were exceedingly anxious to see Mr. Woolnough controlled. He is a very excellent trance-medium, but has not been used to appear in public, and it was with considerable difficulty that he could get under the influence. Indeed, he rose to speak in his normal state, but before he could utter half a sentence his spirit-guides entranced him and spoke through him in a very pleasant and instructive manner. He exercises a gentle, reverential power over his hearers, and the spirit referred particularly to the very favourable conditions which existed in the meeting, and to the great good which would result from more of such meetings being held. The spirit announced his name as Dr. Smith, and argued that the Creator had provided a means whereby to gratify every desire implanted in the human soul.

We shall now draw attention to the musical part of the evening, which was by no means the least important. Each speech was followed by a song or other musical performance, but as it is not necessary to descend upon the varied merits of the singers, we shall conclude by giving a list of them. We may mention that some of the young ladies appeared for the first or second time in public; and one of the objects of the meeting was to encourage such singers to devote their talents to the movement. They were also, for the most part, members of the Singing Class held in the same rooms on Wednesday evenings, directed by Mr. Taylor, and considering that this class had only met for two weeks, the proficiency which they exhibited was greatly to be admired. We cannot avoid giving special prominence to the valuable assistance of Mrs. Hicks, who so charmingly leads the singing at the Sunday Services. Presided at the pianoforte, and sang several times during the evening. By special request, she, with Mrs. Percy, sang the duet which was so much admired at the Clerkenwell meeting. Mr. Allen and his quartet party sang twice. "Ring the Bells" will become a great favourite with Spiritualists. Miss Mary Wooderson sang "Maggie May," in the chorus of which the company heartily joined. Mrs. Walker and Miss Cogman also sang; and Miss Cox performed a very elaborate arrangement of "Home, Sweet Home," by Thalberg. Mr. Hoeker gave a very appropriate recitation, "The Dying Boy," and several pieces of music on the English concertina. A performance quite unique in its way was the control of the "Strolling Player" through Mr. Morse, who, in the trance, gave the soliloquy of Richard the Third in the most admirable manner. The back of the medium was humped up in the most extra-

ordinary way, and his attitude and expression were highly dramatic and appropriate. We regret that our space will not permit us to do justice to this evening's entertainment, and we can only wish that such pastimes were more frequent amongst Spiritualists.

MR. STOKES'S CIRCLE.

To the Editor of the Medium and Daybreak.

SIR,—Observing a letter in your paper of the 6th of January, signed by Mr. G. Stokes, Kingsdown Road, Holloway, giving an invitation to strangers anxious to investigate for themselves some of the phenomena of Spiritualism, I availed myself of this gentleman's offer, and, accompanied by two friends (total strangers to Mr. Stokes), visited his house on Sunday evening last.

The circle consisted of eleven. The proceedings commenced by reading a chapter in the Bible and singing a hymn. During the singing the table floated to the height of at least twelve inches from the floor, at the same time waving precisely to the movement of the tune—this was before the candles were put out. Then the dark seance commenced with the table floating still higher than before. During the evening we were many times touched by spirit-hands, and each of those present had some article of dress taken forcibly from them, and placed again on the table; rings were also taken from some, and placed on the fingers of others—this was done repeatedly. A paper tube was then put upon the table, with a request to the spirit to speak to us if possible. The tube was taken up almost immediately, and after giving a few taps on the heads of several, the voice was heard, and the names of the different members of Mr. Stokes's family distinctly mentioned, and a promise given that one should be entranced—this was instantly followed by one of the daughters being in a state of entrancement. I should have observed that the spirit previously said, "I will not hurt Kate; do not fear." This remark was made, I suppose, in consequence of one of the sisters expressing fear and alarm. The sitting was certainly a great success—this was expressed by all present.

Your insertion of this will oblige yours very truly, J. SPAREY.
13, Middleton Road, Dalston, E., February 7, 1871.

P.S.—I may also state that this was the first time the audible voice and the entrancement of his daughter had occurred in his own family.

CHRISTIANITY AND SPIRITUALISM.

To the Editor of the Medium and Daybreak.

SIR,—The letter from J. Donnelly in your number of the 3rd inst. contains a deep truth, which you will permit me to say your remarks in reply do not recognise.

I am not anxious to plead for the "Christian Worshipers" as a sect, for I know nothing of them; but if their principle in investigating Spiritualism is to sit en seance with only Christian people, that will account for not only the harmony which you admit such a circle would secure, but also for the purity of their manifestations.

The rule seems to be recognised, that the more harmonious a circle is, the greater will be the success of the manifestations. There seems to me to be an adjunct to this rule; viz., Christianity best secures this harmony, and it only excludes bad and idle spirits; hence, from Christian circles we may expect the highest forms of manifestations and the best teaching, such as will eventually carry on its investigators to wondrous heights and advanced knowledge.

Thus the harmony secured will prevent them settling down, as you term it, into a "fossilised sect, with Pagan notions and absurd observances."

The Christ-life first, and then Spiritualism may be successfully and safely investigated, and only then. MORELL TIEBOLD.

Hendon, February 6, 1871.

[Our experience has been that evil influences predominate mostly in "Christian" circles; we have also found that Christian communities scarcely ever improve in intellectual conceptions of Spiritual things, because their fixed belief precludes the possibility of their being taught without spoiling their Christianity. Our correspondent seems to infer that Christian people are better than other folks. We have found the contrary. When we look at the Christ-life, we find it the very antipodes of Christianity. Jesus was the arch-infidel of his age. Hence we agree with our correspondent that such a person is best fitted to investigate Spiritualism.—Ed. M.]

VISIONS AND DREAMS.

To the Editor of the Medium and Daybreak.

DEAR SIR,—I should feel obliged if you or your spirit-friends could explain the following phenomena:—

1. For about two years past it has happened to me, more or less frequently, that, on going to sleep, at night or in the day, just after the senses have become benumbed, but before losing consciousness, a number of persons of both sexes appear before me, conversing with one another, or one of the party entering into argument with myself, very distinctly, but in a sub-tone. So distinct is the vision that on awaking again I remember the forms and features of the different persons. But, although I awake in the act of repeating the argument and the conclusion arrived at, its purport escapes me. And what is still more tantalising is that the persons present are total strangers to me, and that as soon as I wish to fix my attention steadily on them, they all vanish!

2. Second Phenomenon.—For more than ten years past I have been in the habit of frequently dreaming, generally in the afterpart of the night, of my floating in the air, high above people's heads, sometimes over the houses, thus obtaining a bird's-eye view of the scenery or the streets below. What is singular in this case is that, although in a sound sleep, I seem to know that it is but a dream; for whilst paddling myself along, I determine within myself that I will try the experiment on my awaking! Some time ago, whilst thus taking an aerial stroll in dreamland, at an elevation a little above the houses, I noticed a man coming out of one of them, and deliberately pointing a gun at me. Strange to say, from that time I seem now to perceive the imprudence of soaring so high; but whilst floating only a few feet above the ground, I now go longer distances, leaving behind all who travel on the same road. I call it "floating"—but I simply rise into the air by an effort

of the will only, and propel myself along or upwards by beating the air with the palms of my hands in the opposite direction to that I wish to go.

These phenomena may appear trifling to most people, and would seem so to me if of solitary occurrence; but they have become habitual. What, then, is the philosophy and the significance, the cause and the intention of them?

Our French Spiritualists would doubtless call them recollections of past existences; and Swedenborgians would find in them allegorical representations of the present; whilst others again would discover therein promises of the future. But say, kind friend, what are they to me?—Yours very truly,

X.

WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?

The following was given at a seance held at Mrs. Ayer's, 16, Mount Street, London Hospital, through Laura Daniels, a trance-medium. It purported to be from J. B. to J. B. (J. Bunyan to J. Burns):—

Watchman, what of the night?

If the warriors are resting still,
Be ready for the fight,
And work your Father's will.

Watchman, what of the night?

When the warriors have the will,
Be foremost in the fight,
Brave scorn and every ill.

Watchman, what of the night?

If the warriors all agree,
Be earnest in the right,
And set the captives free.

Watchman, what of the night?

If the warriors are glad
To unfurl the banner's light,
They bring peace unto the sad.

Watchman, what of the night?

When the warriors burst the tomb
That hides the truth and light
'Neath creed's dogmatic gloom—

Say, watchman, what of the night?

Hark now to his answering cry!
"All hail to the spirits of light!
The daybreak is drawing nigh."

When the foregoing had been given, it was not even then known who was the author, and on the medium being questioned (still in the trance-state), the following stanza, characteristic enough as a means of discovery, was energetically enunciated:—

"I would advise you all to drop the pack

Of creed, of doubts and dogmas, from your back."

[Taken down in shorthand from the lips of the medium by A. CUTHBERTSON.]

A REAL GHOST STORY.—During the American war two officers of rank were seated in their tent, and delayed taking their supper till a brother officer, then absent upon a foraging party, should return. Their patience was well nigh exhausted, and they were about to commence their meal, concluding something had occurred to detain the party, when suddenly his well-known footstep was heard approaching. Contrary to their expectation, however, he paused at the entrance of the tent, and, without coming in, called on one of them by name, requesting him with much earnestness, as soon as he should return to England, to proceed to a house in a particular street in Westminster, in a room of which (describing it) he would find certain papers of great consequence to a young lad with whom the speaker was nearly connected. The speaker then apparently turned away, and his footsteps were distinctly heard retiring until their sound was lost in distance. Struck with the singularity of his behaviour, they both rose and proceeded in search of him. A neighbouring sentinel, on being questioned, denied that he had either seen or heard anyone, although, as they believed, their friend must have passed close by his post. In a few minutes their bewilderment was changed into a more painful feeling by the approach of the visiting officer of the night, who informed them that the party which went out in the morning had been surprised, and that the dead body of poor Major Blomberg (their friend) had been brought into the camp about ten minutes before. The two friends retired in silence, and sought the corpse of the person who, as both were fully persuaded, had just addressed them. They found him pierced by three bullets, one of which had passed through his temples, and must have occasioned instant death. He was quite cold, and appeared to have been dead some hours. It may easily be conceived that a memorandum was instantly made of the request they had both so distinctly heard, and of the instructions attending it, and that, on the return of the regiment to Europe, no time was lost in searching for the papers. The house was found without difficulty, and in an upper room, agreeably with the information they had received in such an extraordinary manner, an old box was discovered, which had remained there many years, containing the title-deeds of some property now in the possession of Dr. Blomberg, who was "the lad" mentioned by name by the voice at the tent-door.—*Life of R. H. Barham ("Ingoldsby").*

BIRMINGHAM.—A handbill has reached us announcing a social reunion of Spiritualists and friends on Tuesday evening last, on which occasion there was to be a tea-meeting to welcome Mrs. John Collier, medium, from London. An address from Mr. Collier, and mesmeric experiments by Mr. Jabez Lones, were to form part of the entertainment, with vocal and instrumental music. We hope the meeting passed off well; but no report has reached us. Birmingham contains many Spiritualists, but the principle of union cannot be said to be a feature of their operations. We hope the visit of Mr. and Mrs. Collier will produce the desired effect.

THE RELIGION OF LIFE,

AS EXEMPLIFIED BY THE

MAN, JESUS CHRIST.

A COURSE OF LECTURES BASED UPON TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE.

By EDWARD N. DENNY,
Author of "The Alpha."

The work is printed on fine Toned Paper, in a beautiful type, and is issued in numbers, in a neat wrapper, price 4d. each.

No. III. contains Three Lectures, price 4d.

"STAND UP; I MYSELF ALSO AM A MAN."

Acts x. 26.

ARGUMENT.—True religion is the substance and source of every quality worthy of a man. Man's nature is essentially good; therefore, God is. What constitutes true manhood is portrayed, and also that which is derogatory thereunto.

THE PATH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."—*Prov. xxii. 6.*

ARGUMENT.—What is called "sin" is only nominal sin; the real sin being the neglect of the ecclesiastical and upper classes, who neglect their charges, and thus induce all the sin which might otherwise be prevented. If the leaders of society did their duty. From motives of selfishness, religious teachers impart to their flocks false dogmas, instead of inspiring truth, which would remove all crimes and anomalies which exist in society, and introduce the reign of true religion.

TRUST IN GOD.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?"—*Ps. xlviii. 1.*

ARGUMENT.—The unchangeableness of Nature's method of working. We must know God to trust Him. Has God revealed Himself to Man—and how? The soul, the mirror of Deity. The source of all truth is within Man, and its precious treasures are revealed to all earnest seekers.

No. IV. contains Three Lectures, price 4d.

SELF-TRUST.

"But by the grace of God I am what I am," &c.—*1 Cor. xv. 10.*

ARGUMENT.—Self-reliance depends upon self-knowledge. The relationship between God and Man is defined. St. Paul a noble instance of self-trust, or trust in truth. All human acts which enable Man and produce his comforts proceed from self-trust; and this attribute should be assiduously cultivated.

WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY?

"A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast."—*Prov. xii. 10.* Or, as this passage might be rendered—"A righteous man is merciful to his beast."

ARGUMENT.—True manliness and righteousness are convertible terms, and constitute the Christian, or follower of the natural religion. Priestly ordination is valueless. Righteous acts should not be based upon expediency, but originate in a love of goodness and justice.

THY KINGDOM COME.

In the 8th, 9th, and 10th verses of the 6th chapter of the Gospel of Jesus as rendered by the Evangelist Matthew, it is written: "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

ARGUMENT.—Prayer in general, and this prayer in particular. The meaning of the Kingdom of God on earth. How to attain it.

No. V. contains Three Lectures, price 4d.

WHAT IS MAN?

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him?"—*Psalms viii. 4.*

ARGUMENT.—The importance and wide scope of Bible teaching respecting man favours the view that man is intrinsically good and divine. The causes of his vices and degradation are pointed out, also the errors of theology respecting the nature of man. The religious teachings of Jesus contrasted with those of Moses and Mohammed. Man is not at enmity with God. Orthodox dogmas are degrading. "Prove all things," especially religious teachings, and hold fast to truth, wherever found.

THE "ONE THING" DESIRED BY THE PSALMIST.

"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."—*Psalms xxvii. 4.*

ARGUMENT.—The character of Jesus embraces universal greatness. David desired goodness for himself, but Jesus for all humanity. The true preacher is his disciple, and his topic is as boundless as the love and goodness of Jesus. The great want in the world's religion is a God to vitalise it and make it practical: the result of which would be a faith in goodness and truth, and consequent progress in the improvement of society.

PURE RELIGION.

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep yourself unspotted from the world."—*James i. 27.*

ARGUMENT.—God's highest gifts to man are the divine attributes of the human soul, and the most holy place of worship is within man. To cultivate the highest powers of his nature, and harmonise them with the lower, is the work of "Pure Religion."

No. VI. contains Three Lectures, price 4d.

PHILOSOPHY.

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy."—*Col. ii. 8.*

ARGUMENT.—Philosophy means a system of truth which shows us all we need, what we are, and what we should be, and is synonymous with true religion. True philosophy has a reasonable basis and a righteous end, and is not a superstructure built upon injustice, blind credulity, opinion, and the surmises of ignorance and cupidity, such as the spurious philosophy referred to by the Apostle. Paul was a reasoner, and illustrated the prime importance of reason in matters of religion. The teachings of the churches are tested. A belief in fables and dogmas is degrading. Universal education recommended. A progressive immortality is the destiny of man.

THE CHILDHOOD OF JESUS.

"The disciples came unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and placed him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye become converted as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom

of heaven. Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."—*Mat. xviii. 1-4.*

ARGUMENT.—Childhood is the type of heaven, but our endeavours to attain knowledge drive away the first happy state, which is succeeded by a more perfect one in after years. The child-state of innocence was ever present in Jesus, as he lived in harmony with the ever-springing spring of knowledge within him. His miraculous birth is discussed. Sin and distortion of character proceed mainly from false training and superstitious religious teachings.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."—*John viii. 32.*

ARGUMENT.—The rock on which this freedom must be built is a recognition of the law that whatever is necessary and desirable for me is also necessary and desirable for all men. True freedom is liberty to seek out the truth and practice it. Unless based upon Truth and Right, Liberty becomes Licence. Those teachers of a sentimental liberty and irrational piety who consider truth as beyond our discovery are unfit to teach, and enslave the minds of the people with their specious arguments.

No. VII. contains Three Lectures, price 4d.

ELECTION AND GRACE.

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do his good pleasure."—*Philippians ii. 12, 13.*

ARGUMENT.—The Calvinistic doctrines of Election and Salvation are examined, and their absurdities refuted. The theology which conceives of a capricious and revengeful God, a corrupt and reprobate humanity, eternal torments, and a scheme of atonement for the salvation of the few, is dishonouring to God, a fraud upon the human race, and a barrier to all progress. God hath implanted in man the desire for happiness, and given him reason, whereby he may know and observe law, and thus "work out his own salvation." The true religionist is the promoter of broad and unfettered education.

TIME.

"And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by Him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer."—*Rev. x. 5, 6.*

ARGUMENT.—Much time is wasted and mispent in idleness and pleasures, yet it is natural for us to desire that which is pleasant, great, and good, and our actions seem best to us at the time we do them—hence the importance of our lives being regulated by intellect. The proper use of time is the attainment of wisdom and the human race, and a barrier to all progress. God hath implanted in man the desire for happiness, and given him reason, whereby he may know and observe law, and thus "work out his own salvation." The true religionist is the promoter of broad and unfettered education.

SIN.

"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin."—*John xv. 22.*

ARGUMENT.—Being endowed with angelic intelligence, man is capable of sinning. Ignorance cannot sin, but may commit wrong. Sin is man's shame, but it is his glory that he is liable to it, otherwise he would be no better than the brutes. This liability relates man to all that is glorious and good. The greater the means of enlightenment, the greater the responsibility. The church theory of sin is false, and Satan is a myth. Sin proceeds from the over activity and perversion of the sensual faculties. It is not an offence against God, nor is He angry with the sinner. The sinner offends against himself even in injuring his neighbour, and his degradation and consequent punishment are his means of salvation. There is no atonement for sin, which has to be overcome by knowledge and spiritual progression.

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"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."—*Galatians vi. 7.*

ARGUMENT.—Sinners are not propitiated for sin, but honour to God and obedience to His law. Upright motives and actions are the only acceptable sacrifices. The notion of vicarious sacrifice is a blunder, and an obstacle to the reign of justice amongst men.

THE LAST JUDGMENT.

"We spend our years as a tale that is told."—*Psalms xc. 9.*

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GOD IS NOT MOCKED.

"Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty . . . But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another."—*Galatians v. 13, 14, 15.*

ARGUMENT.—Man by his actions places himself on a plane of being which brings to him an appropriate reward for all his works. Being the creature of Causation, man is amenable to law, but by the cultivation of his nature he may continually attain to the exercise of the higher attributes of his being, and thus to a more spiritual enjoyment of existence.

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