

Devoted to the Spiritual Elevation of Humanity.

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CONSOLATION.

By BISHOP A. BEALS.

In this world of human blindness,
How my heart doth grieve,
For a lingering word of kindness
That may gently breathe,
Of the soul's unselfish love,
Pure as sun-kissed flowers
Drawing from the clouds above
All their heavenly powers.

Though my heart is riven
Oft with anguish here,
Yet this life hath given
Me a world of cheer,
From the storm-thoughts pealing
Thoughts the stock of Time,
Often I see revealing
God's dear Word sublime.

And from sorrow's bed I rise
Stronger in endeavour,
Strong to work till evil dies,
Every link to sever ;
And in deeds of kindness
To sweeten life anew.
To those in moral blindness,
Reveal the good and true.

Were it not for this—
That my heart hath seen,
In my dreams of bliss
Of the beautiful unseen,
I might doubt God's best giving,
Talking from above,
Or the wisdom of earth living
Were it not for this sweet love.

Now I see that in giving
Of the soul's best gifts
It is aiding the living
And a fallen brother lifts.
And the words and angel touch
Makes the impress strong,
"Do not live for self so much,
Live to conquer every wrong."

Whittier, Illinois, Sept. 8, 1882.

LITERARY NOTE—John W. Lovell Co. have arranged with the Rev. R. Heber Newton, to publish in their popular "Lovell's Library," the sermons now in course of delivery, on "The Right and Wrong Uses of the Bible." The whole series of sermons, seven in all, will be issued in one volume, printed from large type in neat 12mo form, paper covers, for 20 cents.

THE EAGLE'S NEST OR THE OUT-LOOK OF AN AGE OF SCEPTICISM.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED BY THE REV. E. P. POWELL AT THE UTICA OPERA HOUSE.

Without a text I shall be warranted in giving you as a preface to my discourse the following extract from the Lenten Pastoral of Bishop Huntington :

"It is often inquired whether this is not an 'age of less religious belief than the past. The question cannot be answered. Nobody knows. What is more important is the undeniable fact that with a large proportion of unbelieving men unbelief is nothing but an attorney resorted to and retained to justify a self-accused heart. Setting aside some scattered constitutional, reluctant, sincere doubters, the greater share of sceptics want to live a kind of life which Christianity rebukes but atheism does not. It is of but little use to ply them with arguments drawn from history, or human experience, or from the Bible, because these arguments speak to that part of them not open to conviction, holding a brief for its client, selfwill. It is not often worth while to fear in the world of thought what we can not respect. By its repeated failures to meet fairly the position of Christian scholarship ; by its constant recurrence to disproved assertions ; by its unscientific habit of substituting for an investigation of the system it assails plausible appeals to shifting moods of passion or prejudice or pride ; by its disregard of an indestructible district of human nature which nothing but the religion of Christ has ever satisfied, or set in consistent relations with all knowledge or all the sorrows and aspirations of life ; the disbelief of our day in all its forms and phases is forfeiting its claims to intellectual esteem."

This from the reverend Bishop in the face of the fact that the disbelief of this age shows its product, Herbert Spencer, Charles Darwin, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and their peers or their fellows by the thousands ! The charge of immorality and a lack of intellectual work ! To such an absurd position, orthodoxy is driven in its strait.

It is now about one hundred years since Benjamin Franklin stood with his kite string in hand, while his kite went up to the clouds to investigate. Franklin doubted the current ideas of physics ; he inaugurated a reign of scepticism. From that time to this not a thing in earth or sky has escaped the daring investigator ; not a theory but has had to endure criticism. In the old days of the inquisition, when they bound a man to the rack and pulled out his joints, they called it putting him to the question. During this last century things and theories have been put to the question instead of men. Those that could not endure the test have been tossed aside, and even the label holy, has not been able to secure them immunity. For the first time since the world be-

gan, we have had a century of the crucible. During this century, steam has become the family horse, and the steam car the chaise in which we take our neighborly drive. The daily press has been an absolute creation ; and from being a mere subject force has risen to be the first power in the world. Home is absolutely revolutionized by the machinery that has taken from the housewife carding, spinning, weaving and almost knitting. Not one thing remains as it did on the farm ; the old ploughs, hoes, scythes, are discarded for what will save labor. The farm boy of to day if left on the farm has so little to call out his skill and set his wits to work, that he is actually an inferior of the farm lad of 1800. The uses of iron and its manufacture from the ore ; as well as into steel, are inventions practically of the past hundred years. And for good reason it is called the iron age. In 1831, the flint and steel were put to the question, and in their place a simple invention called a match was invented, which small and cheap as it is, has done as much for human comfort as any one thing that has ever been devised. It was the work of A. D. Phillips ; you may almost call him Anno Domini Phillips, for his wit is master of our hearth stones, where the ancients used to set up their household gods. Illuminating gasses for our cities and oils for our houses have been farther products of inquiry. Cotton mills and puddling furnaces and rolling mills, have revolutionized every department of labor and life. You and I can go around the world to-day in less time than you could have gone in Franklin's day from Albany to Buffalo. You can now go from Albany to Buffalo in nine hours. But you can sit in Albany and talk with Buffalo as if your two stores were not three hundred miles apart but only three feet apart.

Governments have been put to the question and absolutism so far as it remains at all, remains where it used to put its victims. To-day the czars are the prisoners, and the people are the freemen.

The American Republic came in as a consequence of the same bold sceptic who sent up his kite to force a secret from the clouds. But since that day the milestones and finger posts all point the way to universal republicanism and freedom.

In 1814, Napoleon burst in the doors of the Inquisition and let out the ghosts of 90,000 victims to haunt forever more the pride and arrogance that would "merit Heaven by making earth a hell."

The spectroscope has been devised as a supplement of the telescope in investigating the heavens, and it is even more wonderful in its power to unravel the mysteries of the stellar realms. Astronomy has by such

aid declared that not only was the world not made in six days, but that there is every reason to suppose it was never made at all. Geology has arisen as a new science to conjoin its labors with astronomy and while it declares that the world in its present condition is excessively old, it adds that man has also been upon it from the drift age down, for a period in which the old chronology of 6000 years is but a unit. Evolution is not only a new science of the past 100 years; but the science of science. It grasps the date of all things and shows us not only a steady progress of man after creation, but the steady progress of creation into man; and it as promptly points onward into an eternal progress before us. It is the generalization of all the facts man has ever yet accumulated summed up in the word onward. Education meanwhile has not only become a more universal affair, but it has been steadily turned away from memorizing and speculating, to the accumulation and handling of data. Very slowly the grip of medieval method has been loosened from our schools; but its power is at least broken. The boys and girls of the next generation will be scientists and investigators from the outset. The sign of the 20th century will be an interrogation point.

At the dawn of this century, religion was a part of the state. Its institutions were of primal influence. Its laws were of binding force on the conscience. It did not tolerate doubt of its supremacy and its character. Reason and liberty were denounced as inspired by the devil. A sceptic was outlawed and his memory execrated, Licentious and brutal kings were in higher favor than inquiring but honest thinkers. Theology brooded on men's souls, and on the spirit of progress, stifling free thought. Old traditions and customs emptied of their meaning were more binding than the laws of nature. Steadily the rights of reason to the throne, have gained a hearing. Liberalism, rationalism are now words of honor. There is no one word that so completely signifies the age as progress. No other age ever sought anything but perpetuity; its institutions were always the best. It fought, it worked to retain them intact. It had nothing to learn, and little to borrow. What it did learn it learned by accident. But the century of scepticism believes it has everything to learn and has achieved but little. Its eyes are in its forehead, its hope is in the future. It sees nothing as fixed, it believes only in movement. The Golden Age used to be in the past from which men had lapsed; it is now in the future toward which men aspire. Man was created perfect, and had fallen into brutal savagery, but now we count our origin with the brute, but our end with the gods.

So in every way this is the century of investigation. Investigation presupposes doubt. Scepticism is simply to doubt, inquire, investigate and make sure. Fifty years ago, Goethe said, doubt must always precede certainty. You cannot believe wisely till you have wisely doubted. The supreme absurdity is to claim that any one thing is above investigation. You throw doubt upon that which you claim to be above doubt. Right faith is confidence in that which has been proved and not in that which does not bear examination. What we needed to make the human race a magnificent family of God, growing up into a manhood of rational and moral power was,

- (1) To learn its ignorance.
- (2) To learn its possibilities.
- (3) To learn its rights.
- (4) To break off the chains of superstition.
- (5) To glorify reason.
- (6) To question all things.

In other words what nature wanted to make us rich in intelligence and moral power, was an age of scepticism. In has at last been inaugurated.

But pre-eminently this has become an age of religious and theological investigation. It would be strange if it were not so. No questions so much concern a man as such as these, Is there a personal God? Am I a creature of a Creator? Am I to settle my eternal condition in this life without chance of remedy? Am I sure of Immortality? Is there a heaven and is there a hell? Am I to be eternally separated by righteousness from some of my best friends? Is the Bible a supernatural book? Is it a crime to doubt its doctrines and to deny its statements?

Are Emerson, Longfellow, Bryant, Greeley, Sumner, Adams, Alice and Phebe Carey, Lydia Maria Childs, Goethe, Lessing, Shelley in Hell because they were sceptics?

Are twenty millions going down yearly to eternal torment, as the American Board of Foreign Missions teaches?

Is it an unpardonable crime to receive the doctrine of Evolution as probable?

Was Jesus God when born, when he ate and drank and wept and died?

The enormous enlargement of our views of the universe compel us not only to ask these questions but to answer them. Our increasing sensitiveness of moral nature compels us to doubt the character of an angry God as that of the really Divine and good.

Just at present there is no field of inquiry that is so intensely interesting to scholars and to the people at large. But it is this field of questioning that a certain class of men brand as peculiarly scepticism. And to scepticism in this sense attach the charge of immorality. Look at the ruin that you are working is the cry, and behold the natural consequences of unbelief. Joseph Cook, the other day, in one of his Boston Lectures, echoed the spirit of such orthodoxy, when he said that if it were known that immorality did not debar students from the Theological Seminary of Leyden, Americans would as soon take their water from the gutter as theology from that school. But he adds these things can only be whispered. The arrogant rascal! Does he not know what his Bible says about whisperers, liars and backbiters? And why does he whisper? Because Dr. Kuenen, the leading Professor of that Seminary, is recognized as the head of investigators in Old Testament History, and because he is teaching the world that an honest Church no longer believes in nonsense as revelation, or wickedness as inspiration.

But you know how general is this charge, and that you yourselves have half feared that the outcome of modern study was after all to be the ruin of souls and of society. Religious journals ring with lamentations over the disastrous consequences of unbelief. It is as if Jeremiah had risen from the dead, and taken to writing editorials. The object, of course, is to stop investigation which endangers received theology and to fix on doubters the stigma of all the crimes of modern society.

With the magnificent progress in art, science, liberty, government, intellectual power, education and industrial enterprise that we find to be in every direction the consequence of investigation, it would be strange if scepticism were not equally valuable in the realm of theology.

My propositions are:

- (1.) The world is not growing worse.
- (2.) The world is growing better in rapidly increasing ratio.

(3.) The lack of moral power in modern society is attributable largely to the Church.

(4.) The improvement of society is attributable to science, education and a general accumulation of experience.

(5.) Scepticism and investigation are co-existent. Belief and ignorance are co-existent.

(6.) The true end of Religion is optimism. Pessimism is the religion of sin.

First. The world is not growing worse. I do not know that any one brings statistics to show that it is. If in London there are 30,000 professional thieves to-day, the proportion is vastly less than in the last century. Our own land is so largely the yearly recipient of a flux of Europe's poorer element that we see more of poverty, and much of crime. But I believe no one doubts that this element is rapidly transformed into an honest and wealthy integer of our population. Occasionally a pessimist or croaker is heard to declare the degeneracy of the age but he never brings down his statements to verifiable figures. I know of only three serious charges with which writers of standing have impeached our times. Lecky says that with all the advance materially and intellectually we lack the grand spirit of personal sacrifice which distinguished the earlier Christian centuries. I do not believe he is correct. Martyrs for theology are not a feature of our times; but can history show any era when for the sake of an oppressed race, for ignorant and despised slaves, without compensation, contrary to personal comfort, and at the expense of outlawry and often death, men of the highest rank, the highest intelligence, the Ciceros and Mecenases of the day, men of the highest wealth deliberately stood as champions. I know no heroism like that which endured the obloquy of the battle before the war of Emancipation. The Apostles died for Jesus, whom they thought to be God; but Lovejoy and John Brown died for the negro, whom they knew to be the least of men. The age of faith led thousands to brave death with no other reward than the consciousness of doing right.

Carlyle also charges our age with reducing manhood to a dead level—the level of Quashee, and forgetting to worship heroes. The charge is partly true. Men are more on a level than in any previous age. The terrible mass, the crush of humanity is differentiated into individuals. Each man counts for more; one man counts for less. But we have our heroes also. He is the grandest hero, who can be such and not seek to be worshipped. Scepticism does not make Gods; it calls for their credentials. Carlyle was the one greatest and meanest of men with more of cynicism and less of humanity, than any other the age has produced. He was the sneer of the 19th century.

A third charge is that the age of scepticism, honoring the unseen world less, and the tangible more has become sordid and mean. The statement has no facts to warrant it. Gold has been imperious; but it has been used in the most extensive and self-sacrificing way for the elevation of the race. Croesus to-day builds railroads. Lucullus to-day founds vast Universities. Money kings are not only the result of enterprise but the fathers of progress.

But we are met more persistently by the theologian. The age of scepticism, in his estimate, is chargeable with high treason to God. It has exalted reason; it has ennobled doubt; it has despised faith; it has undermined the institutions of religion; it has dared to question the revealed will of God; it has profanely dealt with holy things.

The charge was thus stated in a discourse by a prominent theologian, preached and pub-

ished in this city: "It is against the doctrines which lie at the very basis of our orthodox system that scepticism arrays itself. These are the points at which it infringes on our holy Christianity. Admit that there never was a personal Adam—that the Bible story of the creation and Fall is not history, that man is included in the evolution of things from primordial cells, that conscience is a gradual development from such small beginnings as we now see in the domestic dog that the Lord Jesus was nothing more to our humanity than a good example and a wise teacher; that justification and regeneration are only symbolic terms; and the advanced thinkers of our day will cheerfully allow the Church to remain as a place where jaded minds may revel in poetry and imagery." If it be true that the Church is compelled to combine with faith in Jesus a belief in Adam; to oppose evolution as infidelity, perhaps it will be necessary to allow that this writer is correct. Is the Church compelled to include in its system that the universe was made in six days, that the ten commandments were carved on stone by God's finger, that diversity of languages arose from the impudent effort to build a tower too high for God to drown the race; that Samson pulled a temple down by his individual force; but that he could not have done this had his hair been cut; that Abraham was ordered to kill his son, and that Jesus was born without a father, and yet needed a mother, and that before birth he was the Infinite God; if the Church *must* teach all this, and we are coming to doubt it, is it not evident that the charge against scepticism as an evil remains unproved.

The substantial point made is a presumptive argument that the theology of this land and of the Church is revelation from God; that its doctrines are holy, and its institutions sacred—that to oppose them in any way, yes, even to question their absolute authority is a crime. What is doubted is from God and therefore to doubt it, is to doubt God himself. To doubt implies a challenge of God, and implies antipathy to God's will. It is not only scepticism but essential atheism. It denotes a bad state of heart, or in other words a malicious desire to oppose good and help on evil.

To this presumptive atheism and wickedness, I answer, you have no right to assume the holiness of your notions until they have been questioned and endured questioning. If your theology will not endure questioning it confesses its weakness. If it be true questioning can only strengthen it. Nor have you a right to presuppose a bad motive in those who question the authority of a church, a book or a doctrine.

The day is past for making the community believe that only wicked men doubt supernaturalism, and that God visits such men with condign punishment, and that only good men believe unqualifiedly in the doctrines that are current as orthodox. Men and systems alike stand or fall by inherent character, not by their questions or their faith.

It really is a magnificent surety of the safety of recent religious inquiry and doubt that its product is not merely a larger individuality of the masses; but the creation of such grand men as are the leaders of free thought. From Franklin and Jefferson to Channing and Longfellow the noblest characters in American life, have been those who by the test of theology are the promoters of immorality and will be justly consigned to Hell.

The investigators and doubters include not only Darwin and Spencer and Draper and Carpenter and Huxley and Tyndal as well as nearly all leading scientists, but also Whittier, Longfellow, Sumner, James, George Wm. Cur-

tiss, Holland, Charles Francis Adams, Col. Higginson, Mrs. Livermore, Greeley, the editors of the leading dailies of the whole United States, the quarterlies and monthlies.

These names are certainly not a guarantee that scepticism leads to evil, and you have yet to prove that although the press is overwhelmingly opposed to supernaturalism that it is consequently wrong in being so.

So far as religious institutions are concerned the struggle is to day mainly between Germany and New England. Germany as the latest comer will conquer. She has already given us her Christmas of gift-giving in place of the Puritan Christmas of eating and praying. On the other hand her Sunday of genial relaxation is displacing the Puritan Sabbath of rigidity and worship. The German is nature. The Puritan is supernature. The German is Luther at large. The Puritan is Calvin at large. As a matter of fact the new Christmas is a vast improvement over the old.

It quickens every instinct for the good and beautiful. Art gets no more popular stimulus than that which gives us the superb gift books and rare bits of art for Christmas presents. There is no day in the year less given to dissipation; none more full of gayety, joy and hope. Whatever is childlike is always good. The child is near nature. The German Christmas is first of all for the children, its saint is the boyish old Kris Kringle. Gluttony and drunkenness are never heard of on this day. The Christmas turkey with chestnuts and cranberries, is a very different affair from the boars head and rosemary with roaring drunkenness that it displaced.

I am not inclined to meet lightly this charge that the age is suffering for lack of a great central religious power—an authority which can speak to the masses as from God. I am aware that the decadence of such a power cannot but have a vast influence in the world.

The churches are being sadly vacated. The attendance is less; the membership less in proportion to population; and the general interest of the people in church matters is less absorbing. To prove this they say look at the contrast between New England one hundred years ago, and New England to day. The Unitarians have carried over to Channingism the large majority of the once orthodox, and they have latterly gone still further over to Parkerism. Look at church statistics. In New York city, out of 800,000 protestants, only 97,000 are church members; and of those reported as church members, not less than one-fifth are dead or non-communicants. All this I am prepared to believe, for in looking over the list of members of a Church in Utica, I saw the name of one person dead over forty years, and another dead half that time. How largely the roll was made up in this way I have no means of knowing. I was pastor of a Church numbering 360 members; of those, we could muster at a Church meeting for religious purposes about one hundred; and for a Church quarrel about fifty more. St. Louis by actual count, gave as Church attendants on a fair day, 120,000 out of a population of about 350,000. Of these 34,000 only were Protestants. In New York city between 1870 and 1880, the number of Presbyterian societies fell off three.

Zion's Herald said, not long since, "If we take the Churches right through the country, we should probably find that not more than one-tenth of their numbers are ever in the prime of life. The other nine-tenths are women, men who have passed their meridian, and youths who have not reached their maturity. It is also to be observed that in almost every community

the majority of the energetic, enterprising business men are not avowed Christians; and if they are identified with the Church at all, it is usually in the most superficial way."

It is not without concern that I see the inevitable tendency of my old religious home-stead and its institutions to decay. Yet the facts are undoubtedly as stated. But do you not see that the essential question is all this time avoided. The real matter of interest with you and me is whether the age is less moral, less true, pure, honest, and whether in fact it is going to the dogs for lack of reverence for the Church and its institutions.

The Church can show that a large list of things that it has called morals are going down with the spread of investigation. (1.) The Holy Church is no longer Holy. (2.) The Holy Bible is no longer Holy. (3.) The Holy Sabbath is no longer Holy. (4.) The Holy Faith is no longer Holy. (5.) The Holy Saints are no longer Holy. It is an age when nothing can stand on its sanctity. It must come into the arena of investigation and fair criticism.

Second, I turn with pleasure to my Second Point, that the world is growing morally better and in rapidly increasing ratio.

(1.) I know no evidence that comes so forcibly home, as a review of our own surroundings. I have never seen the man who after a cry of horror or despair could be induced to carefully compare his own neighborhood with what it was 25 years ago, without he stifled his lamentations with exclamations of joy. I have my home to-day where I had it 50 years ago. Then of the inhabitants of College Hill from base to crown, ten families, seven were cursed with drunken fathers, or sons, or both. Now of fifteen families there is but one in any way identified with the traffic or use of intoxicants. In the same way consider the habits of young men who were your companions in school. Not only will you be compelled to note a vast improvement as regards drunkenness, but as concerns chastity and general decency.

On the farms of to-day, the men whose language is most unchaste and gross, are those whose grey hairs should be a guarantee of something better. The narrow life of the past, left them more sensuous and selfish. The larger range of topics now before the young men, leads them out into more intellectual and less sensual ways of living and talking.

Utica has a history of mobs, arson and hanging involving its leading citizens and highest families, that it can never repeat.

But step out beyond your own neighborhood.

A man whose single life spans the rise and progress of the temperance reformation; the downfall of human bondage; the establishment of international Peace Congresses; the education and civilization of eight millions of our citizens, who were forbidden to know the alphabet; the abolition of concubinage and the establishment of marriage over half our states; the establishment of equal rights for all religions; the abolition of the vestiges of intolerance and mob law; the rights of children secured; the emancipation of woman almost a fact; prison punishment changing to prison reform; punishment for debt, the stocks and human degradation in public avoided; and not least a wondrous development of mercy to dumb brutes, which is more Buddhistic than Christian. I say a man whose single life spans all this must be a natural pessimist if he does not trust God, and trust man, and trust the age.

But you and I have seen not only America but the whole world rolling forward into nobler ways of living and thinking. Absolutism has

largely given way to milder government, and with the kings "by God's grace," have gone down the ecclesiasticism that stood also on its divine claims. I observe that whatever a man may think of the decadence of his own theology, he is sure of the advantage to accrue from the weakening of that of his neighbor. No criminals in the history of the world have been such criminals as churches and government. Individual murders stand to those caused by absolutism in Church and State as one to one thousand. The one great advance in morality which has recently been made, is this, that wrong is still wrong, and vice is still vice, though done in the name of the King or the Church, or the State, or of God.

(2) I count it one of the most important factors of progress morally, that we are beginning to believe in human nature. Strange as it may seem we have for 5000 years gone on the presumption that man was inherently vile and naturally depraved. The ruling religion has not aimed to save him for this world; but merely to save a few for another. Man as man was incapable of inspiration from God. Morals have been openly derided as not weighing an ounce in our favor with God. The sum total of rightness was to believe. Man as man was not a progressive being, but a fallen one. But the change has been an absolute revolution. We believe in man to-day—man as a child of God. Evolution bids him look before him for his God and not behind him.

As a consequence the abnormal prominence of priests is reversed. We see that the least important of all the professions, is that which concerns another life.

The physician is incomparably the most important professional factor in society. His work directly concerns life and those conditions of health which underlie the possibility of all human happiness. The investigating sciences are represented in him and his work. He is able to remove more of the hindrances and burdens of progress, than any other. He is so related to the inner life of the individual, and the family, that he can give advice where no other person can. So this age begins to see. The old idea placed sin prominent, as a mere matter of a depraved will and the devil. The new idea emphasizes the underlying disease, and pronounces it impossible for diseased tissues and organs to lead to healthy thought and healthy desires. An absolutely perfect body would necessitate an absolute balance between functional desires and determinations. So the stress of our modern theories is to depress the minister and exalt the physician. The minister deals only with symptoms, moral symptoms based on chronic ailments. The physician, if he knows his work, is dealing with the causes of physical and moral disturbances. This is so in society at large. The object of reform to-day is to get at the causes of crime, the underlying disorder that breaks out as poverty, robbery, lust, murder and degraded methods of living. The priest relieved the poor, the Church organized institutions to pick up the results of bad causes, and put them in hospitals and finally in Heaven. It never tried to get at the causes. Science says we must get at heredity, at the false social ideas that breed poverty.

One volume of sermons by Huxley, is worth a cord of sermons by Spurgeon. They teach the laborer to build right houses, breathe right air, eat right food, get right rest and not specially to get a right creed or go to a right Church, or get to Heaven. Good blood in good lungs pulsates toward purity. A ghost may enter a heaven of gold and silver, and music and prayer; but a poor sinner in the flesh cannot get up a heaven with-

out oxygen and eight hours sleep. So the physician comes to the front. The oldtime people had a levite in the house; a priest in every hamlet, a god or two in the pocket and then they went with dirty hides into nasty hovels and asked the gods for two cents worth of incense, and tuppence worth of prayers to give them a better world. But now when a man prays for a mansion in the skies, the scientific conscience says, wash yourself, eat less gluttonously, obey the laws of self government, and you will find that you are already in Paradise. A muddy puddle said to the moon, "Oh moon let your face smile in my bosom;" but the moon said, "clean yourself, and by that time I shall be there."

Ruskin says, "The best prayer a man can utter in the morning, is that he may not lose the moments of the day; and the best grace before meat, is the consciousness that he has earned his dinner."

If the Church wishes to hold its prominence, it must do so by becoming an essential factor of this world. Scepticism says justly that what belongs to another globe, is of no great importance here. We can spare it. But where the Church does become a power simply to teach morals and earthly ennoblement, it loses its character as a Church and becomes a school. And that is just where we are driving on the high tide of an investigating century. The school will hereafter be our Church; not the school as it is, but the school as it is to be; the school that concerns the whole man and his whole power as a moral as well as intellectual being.

The two professions of the future will be the physician and the teacher. Huxley says: "I would like to see in every parish, a scientific Sunday school to teach the elements of those laws which must be His laws."

(3) The world is rapidly improving in its code of morals. I remember well when the temperance reformation first began. Before that the most reckless use of intoxicating drinks went on without a thought of its mischief. The best of men were distillers and retailers. The enormity of the crime of tempting our fellow creatures to drunken habits, did not dawn on even the Church. In my boyhood, five of us going home from school stopped every night at a groggery kept by a Church member, and owned by a deacon, and there all of my mates drank themselves boozy or worse. I say, our moral code is improved. The morals of the age of faith were largely to keep the Sabbath, to abstain from dancing, card playing, theaters and novels. These held the emphasis of the code. Nearly parallel with these stood, doubt of the creed, irreverence toward the Scriptures, abstinence from evening prayer, absence from Church; distaste for sermons and religious reading.

The code to-day is very mild on all these; and presses home the duties of self culture, of honor for the truth, faith in the right, respect for humanity, courtesy to the heathen, honor for honest thought and sincerity. Then it was right to foster lies about sceptics, to teach a wicked God; to advocate a divine right to build Hells; to believe our neighbors were to be damned for lack of baptism or faith; to hate those of different creeds. A survival of the old code is still too evident, but questioning and investigation have written its death sentence.

(4.) You may set it down as a law of progress that with increase of intelligence comes an increase of moral sensitiveness; we feel evil more keenly and detest wrong with more vigor. We are no longer capable of confining our ideas of responsibility to our own race. Foreign missions sprung out of our widening sense of human

brotherhood. They are merging in a broader conviction of universal inspiration. Narrowness and bigotry die out of a heart that finds all the world a-kin. We can no more enslave a man who is a foreigner than one who is a native. The Jew in Bible times could do it. The Puritan could do it. Universal justice to all men of all races is our recognized moral code. The American Constitution could not rest until it assured the rights of all men in the land; it will not rest until it insures equal rights to women as well as men. One hundred years ago our statesmen framed it with an eye only for a privileged race. There is a sort of moral restlessness abroad: a gad fly of duty that stings us to see to it that injustice exists nowhere under the sun.

The wrongs of Ireland or of the Afghans become your wrongs and mine. Every morning the telegraph comes and tells you the pitiful tale of sufferers from a flood or a fire in Bohemia or India. The woe is that of a brother. Humanity is so much larger.

Mohammed is no longer the False Prophet. His work gets justice and his gospel of monotheism is honored. Buddha's gentle face appears beside Jesus, and no man scorns his lessons of upward looking. To day if any man should dare to utter such words in the pulpit as were common before the growth of scepticism the people would rise en masse and leave the house. It seems to us amazing that in any age men could have endured such a sentence as this from a sermon of Mr. Mather, "God took delight to see the wicked sin, as one that sets ratsbane to kill rats; looking through a keyhole to see the rats eating the ratsbane, knowing that it would kill them; so God looks at the wicked through his fingers knowing that it would kill them."

(5.) The motive to morals has undergone as great a change as our natures, under the influence of investigation. The one power relied on up to the present age, certainly the chief motive to virtue was that of rewards and punishments in another life. I do not question the tremendous strength of this argument, but that its tendency was toward superficial morality, toward inherent hypocrisy and self deceit is most certain. The waning of this power is one of the happiest features of the day. In its place has by no means been left a moral vacuum; but the vast increase of this conviction that virtue is in and of itself a reward; that goodness is itself heaven—that no future Paradise can make happy the inherently bad; that Church pardon and baptism and priestly blessing weigh not a farthing toward righteousness, that the one thing needed is character, and that all deeds good and bad have their compensation now and forever as a natural consequence.

Finally the world is growing rich in its accumulation of moral forces. It has a literature that is reduplicating its power to save. Books are not only the poor man's heritage, but good books are crowding out bad ones. The superb monthly magazines lay the culmination of the world's progress in art, in culture and in thought in the humblest cottages. Gross or coarse thought is resented by the popular conscience. Whitman and Swinburne cannot be forgiven for a sensuous atmosphere. Shakspeare is expurgated; and our pure mothers as well as our honest pastors say that even the Book of Books brings up out of the past an element too gross for our modern conscience. Thank God for science. Thank God for scepticism. Thank God for that power which purifies human nature and gives the soul to the literature of this age.

My friends I have thus tried to take you up to the eyrie of the 19th century, the Eagle's

Nest of scientific faith, the outlook of human hope and moral betterment. The crime of all crimes is to give the lie to the age, to deny the light, to cry out as false prophets. The world is not going down in morals; but gloriously onward to a high tone of universal righteousness.

Forecasting the future and prying into the unseen life has of late been largely waived for the higher pleasure of searching the past records of the race and of the world. And I know no delight so rich, no study so satisfactory as that which shows us far in the distant geologic ages, man as a mere waif, in the drift period existing almost by sufferance, with no art, no knowledge of iron, silver or gold, hardly able to make or use a tool of stone; then to trace him down the ages of stone, when he is fast beginning to tame the dog and to be able to hunt animals hardly more wild or ignorant than himself—on on, down the ages until within the past 8,000 to 10,000 years, he has been a creature of poetry, theology, religion, and finally of science and arts. But as yet we only touch the threshold of our human homestead.

We have been accustomed to divide man's history into that of stone, of bronze, and of iron. We may also divide it into that of wonder, that of faith, and that of scepticism. We are now passing into the age of scepticism.

Not the least ludicrous feature of this age of sceptical glory is the sight of the mitred and cassocked churchling, relic of the age of faith, with his one book in hand, crying out we did this work of progress; but for us you would to-day be in the darkness of the middle ages. The sceptic quietly answers, who made the middle ages? Who ruled them? and have you yourself changed in all this while? Not we, cries the priest. We are divine, holy, revealed, supernatural, unchangeable. Then answers the age we have no use for you. It is only that which is plastic and progressive that the age of investigation can use. Begone; and he goes; and there is no man who is so thoroughly ignorant of the origin, meaning, facts and purport of his own book as the man who preaches from it every Sunday. Surely says the bat all light comes from our cave, we are sure of that; for outside of our cave we cannot see anything. But the sky-lark says the reason is that your eyes cannot endure the light. The sun shines only for those who having eyes see.

Loving, as you also did, Emerson the most Jesus like man of our century, I could not but feel that his loss was irreparable. When Longfellow went the world seemed to be no longer the same poem it was. When Darwin went, the very spirit of the age seemed to die. Spencer is a fragile reed and liable to die at any hour. I do not wonder that Jesus' disciples were bewildered when he died. Their world was so small; their man was so great. They could not see how they could get on without him. They had to deify him, and then look for his re-coming. But I have begun to learn that very hard lesson that men may die, but humanity never does die.

Emerson and Darwin and Longfellow and Jesus worked at the great divine incarnation of goodness that is slowly taking shape—the divine man which we call humanity. They were all children of the Light and the Love. They died, but the light and the love did not die. Humanity moves right on. It lives a wiser, richer life for having had so many saviors. Such men save not only individuals but the sum total of the race.

He who never changes any of his opinions never corrects any of his mistakes.

THE OLD COUPLE.

BY LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.

They sat in the sun together,
Till the day was almost done.
And then at its close an angel
Stepped over the threshold stone.

He folded their hands together,
He touched their eyelids with balm,
And their last breath floated upward
Like the close of a solemn psalm.

Like a bridal pair they traveled
The unseen mystical road,
That leads to the Beautiful City,
Whose Builder and Maker is God.

Perhaps, in that miracle country,
They will give her lost youth back,
And the flowers of a vanished Spring-time
Shall bloom in the spirit's track.

One draught of the living waters
Shall restore his manhood's prime,
And eternal years shall measure
The love that outlives time.

But the shapes that they left behind them—
The wrinkles and silver hair—
Made sacred to us by the kisses
The angel imprinted there—

We'll hide away in the meadow,
When the sun is low in the west,
Where the moonbeams cannot find them,
Nor the wind disturb their rest.

But we'll let no telltale tombstone,
With its age and date, arise
O'er the two who are old no longer
In their Father's house in the skies.

CURIOUS FEATURES OF ACTUAL LIFE.

On a Woodward avenue car, recently, one of our solid citizens, whose weather predictions have never been disputed since he was rated worth \$50,000, remarked to an acquaintance that this was unusual weather for the last of December. He had hardly spoken when an old man, with a bundle under his arm, hopped up and replied:

"It is, eh? I'll bet you an even dollar that you are mistaken!"

"Isn't this unusual weather?"

"No, sir! I'll bet you two to one we had just such a December week three, five, and eight years ago. Put up your cash."

"Oh, I don't bet on the weather; still I think such soft weather at this time of year is singular."

"Bet you three to one it isn't singular," cried the old man.

"I told you I wouldn't bet."

"Then don't be deceiving people with your weather talk! Bet you four to one you can't tell what the weather was in September."

The solid citizen was bluffed into silence for a moment, and then he remarked—

"Looks as if we might have snow."

"Bet you five to one we don't see a flake this week," piped the old man. "How can you expect snow when the air isn't cold enough to congeal this moisture?"

"Then it may rain."

"No, it won't! Bet you six to one you never saw rain with the wind where it is!"

"Well, the barometer indicates a storm of some sort!" shouted the solid man.

"I'll take you on that, too, and bet you seven to one that it doesn't."

The prophet seemed about to hand out a dollar, but he changed his mind, and fell back in his seat and growled:

"May be my thermometer doesn't stand at fifty-four degrees above."

"No, sir! No, sir! I'll bet you eight to one that you are at least three degrees out of the way. Come, now!"

But the solid man came not.—*Detroit Free Press.*

TONING UP A BEAN DINNER.

A few days ago a minister on one of the Western roads sat down to dinner at a station restaurant, and bending over his plate murmured a silent grace.

"Always do that?" inquired a rough-looking specimen who sat beside him.

"Yes, my friend," replied the dominie; "I never miss returning thanks to the giver of all mercies. You don't know how much good it does."

"Does it do the grub any good?" asked the stranger, becoming interested. "If it was going to do any good at all, I should want it to commence with the grub!"

"It certainly does!" returned the parson earnestly, hoping to make a convert.

"Think that piece of boot-leg has been benefited?" and he pointed at the dominie's dish.

"I think so," said the preacher, sincerely; "I think there is no doubt about it."

"And it is a thing that you can make work right straight along, or is there a limit to the game?"

"It never fails," persisted the minister, who had an especially nice steak before him.

"Then!" exclaimed the stranger, grasping the parson's plate and substituting his own dish of doughnuts and beans, "you pray this business of mine up to a square meal while I get away with the grub already sanctified! Go it, stranger! Don't leave off a lick on my account, and if you make the raffle you can bet your eternal fortune is made right on the line of this road! Any man what can tone a bean dinner up to a satisfying meal can't go broke in this country, not while the raw material holds out, and my mouth is in order!"

But the parson finished the beans and doughnuts in silence, and the stranger wrapped up the "sanctified grub" with the further suggestion that if the dominie missed his grip on that plate there were plenty more beans in the cellar for him to practice on until he struck the combination.—*Drake's Magazine.*

Bishop A. Beals, inspiration speaker, will be in Los Angeles next Sunday to fill his engagement there. From there he returns to Sacramento, where the progressive friends have engaged him to succeed Warren Chase. He has had good and appreciative audiences all along the line where he has spoken. The friends of Modesto tender to him their best wishes for his continued success, and return to him many thanks for the cheering and comforting words truth and wisdom vouchsafed to us through of his ministration among us. We hope to hear him again at no distant date.—*California Paper.*

EVENING THOUGHTS.

Shadows are lengthening o'er grain fields and meads,
Soft zephyrs are fanning the quivering leaves,
Wild birds are singing in evergreen trees,
Rich fragrance is carried on every breeze;
From the neighboring town comes the music of bells
Concord and harmony reverberate and swell,
Echoes and re echoes, lower, softer still,
Till it dies away o'er the distant hill.

Fragrance, music, and visions of light,
Are the angels of nature to do a good work,
They bring types and shadows of things that abound,
In that stage of existence that lies just beyond
The soul that vibrates in unison pure,
With the laws of its being, alone can secure—
The joys that await us in infinite store,
When we tread the green fields of the evergreen shore.

How! Oh how! can we so attune
This thread of life in its infinite span,
That when touched by the finger of nature's fair hand,
That musical ripples shall unceasingly flow.
The God of nature is all the God we know,
The voice of nature speaking even and slow,
Gives inspiration, eternally true,
With a magical hand rough souls will subdue.

The religion of nature, none has more charms,
We need no conversion, we are born in her arms,
We are nature's production, she gives us our life,
We rest on her bosom, aye we are nature herself.
So study her working in every phase,
The more you will love her, the more you embrace,
Blessings unnumbered she holds in her store,
Pure thought and action alone will secure.

Charleston, Tioga Co., Pa.

L. W. W.

LYMAN C. HOWE, one of the veteran workers in the cause of spiritualism, writing from Chicago, Ill., says, "I spoke here last Sunday and am to speak again next Sunday, the 28th of January, 1888. I am making my home while here with Col. Bundy and I like him and family very much. He is, in my judgment, one of the most candid, honest workers for the spiritual cause we have. He is outrageously vilified by many who profess to have the cause at heart, and I do not dispute their devotion and good intentions in many cases, but I am either blind or idiotic, or they are inconsistent and weak in their attitude toward Bundy and frauds.

I have always admired the resolute, manly course of the OLIVE BRANCH, in standing squarely for honest mediumship and progressive consistent spiritualism. I deeply regret the necessary discussion and conflict, for I love harmony and fraternity, and I can see no good reason why we may not express our convictions and differences without a acrimony and personal abuse. I believe Bundy is as devoted to pure spiritualism as any man in our ranks, and I love and work for the *R. P. Journal* and OLIVE BRANCH, notwithstanding I know it subjects me to their classifications and charges of being leagued with the enemy against mediums and physical phenomena."

We have no more devoted worker in the cause of spiritualism than Bro. Howe, and his opinions are worth something; being somewhat of a traveling missionary, he has a better opportunity of noticing the results produced by harsh criticisms of editors and their friends, than editors themselves. Why can not all spiritualists agree to disagree; all people can not see alike, no two are constituted just alike, we look through different eyes, we hear through

different ears, we cannot know the motives which actuate another unless we are in their confidence; we do not regard spiritualism as a religion or philosophy intended to arouse the combative elements in our natures. We have all the war on hand we can well attend to in defending our cause against the unjust attacks of its avowed opponents; "in unity there is strength," dissension only weakens our cause. The right of private judgment is one of the basic principles of our philosophy; why not leave every one free to enjoy what is their individual rights. We hope to see a change for the better and that soon, still if we have enemies in our camp we want to know who they are, and if after thorough examinations they are proven to be enemies, the public should be informed of the fact—this we consider to be the duty of every journalist, spiritualistic or secular; people have come to rely more upon the press for information regarding current events than upon the pulpit, the press is acknowledged to be the conservator of public morals, and is the public teacher of the nineteenth century, and in order to perform their work effectually, they must be free to express their honest views upon all matters coming within range of their distinct fields of labor. Errors in judgment may occur, for all men are finite. We do not believe there is to be found in the ranks of spiritual journalists, one person who would knowingly say one word to injure the reputation of anyone engaged in the propagation of spiritualism; every one seems to have the good of the cause at heart, but may differ in the methods and plans of operation. "Let us have peace," at the same time be true to our highest conceptions of right and justice.

ASPIRATION.

BY A. A. HOPKINS.

Our life is but a meager thing
If into it there never creeps
A longing that we soon may wind
A flight to nobler, grander steep;
If with the plains where now we grope
We feel a satisfied content,
Nor care to climb the upward slope
Where broader growth and life are blent.

All living is a sorry cheat,
That has no earnest, hoped-for aim—
No cherished purpose to complete—
A sorry cheat, a very shame,
The blood that courses in the veins
Which feel no warm incentive fire,
Flows slowly at the best, and wanes
From lack of vigorous desire.

Speed on the heart that beats with strong
Pulsations, born of good to win,
That labors on with cheerful song
To finish what it dared begin!
Aye, speed it onward to its goal,
With hopeful word and faithful prayer,
And know that with it blnds a soul
Deserving of a crown to wear?

The simple faith which little asks,
But willing works and willing waits,
Which bravely sets about its tasks
Nor vainly pines for kinder fates,
Shall full reward for labor find,
And to its perfect works attain,
For willing hands and hearts combined
The grandest victories may gain!

If you would retain the respect of others
you must respect yourself, and never do an
unbecoming deed.

THE CRUSADES.

Religion has many sins to answer for, and among them are the crusades. They lasted nearly two centuries, and such religious nonsense and barbarity as they produced, the world has never seen. They began in 1096, and were undertaken to defend the cause of religion against the Turks and for the conquest of Palestine. An opinion prevailed all over Europe that Christ was to descend from Heaven and judge the world, and immense multitudes of pilgrims flocked to Palestine to witness his descension! "All Europe," says a historian, "seemed ready to precipitate itself in one united body upon Asia."

Voltaire says that the number of these religious lunatics who perished in the different expeditions was upwards of 2,000,000. The Christians who captured Jerusalem committed the most horrible cruelties. No age or sex was spared, not even infant children. The conquerors marched over heaps of dead bodies toward the holy sepulchre, and while their hands were polluted with the blood of so many innocent persons, sang anthems to the Lord. When Jerusalem was taken, 70,000 Mahomedans were put to the sword.

The crusades were originated and carried on by Catholic Popes, commencing with Gregory VII. The object was to unite all Christendom against the Mahomedans, under the blasphemous plea that it was the will of God! In reading the butcheries of the crusaders, we wonder why, if there is a God in Heaven, that he did not send a thunderbolt to blast the monsters who murdered his children in the name of religion.

When one reflects on the butcheries caused by the murderous crusaders, which lasted almost two hundred years, and then think of the continued boast of Christians that their religion has "brought peace on earth, good will to men!" he is forced to the conclusion that if there ever was a mockery, a delusion, or a snare, it was the Christian religion as practically illustrated from the 10th century to the 15th. And it is very doubtful whether it would be any better to-day if it were not imbued with some of the reason, humanity, and common sense drilled into it by Liberalism.

Here is an account of a droll incident related a day or two since that has never been in print: An old lady who had purchased a new bonnet received it on Saturday. Not long after she was missed, and her absence was so protracted that the family became concerned about her and instituted a search. After looking the premises all over, her daughter found her in the chamber sitting quietly with the new bonnet on. The daughter exclaimed: "Why, mother, what are you doing here?" "Go along down," the old lady replied; "I am only getting used to this thing so that I shall not be thinking about it all the time in church to-morrow."

"Don't you think," said a husband, mildly rebuking his wife, "that women are possessed by the devil?" "Yes," was the quick reply, "as soon as they are married."

SHALL I LOVE HER LESS?

Selected.

What though her cheek be faded now,
And care be written on her brow,
Oh, shall I love her less?
What though her eye be dimmed in light,
Where once there beamed a lustre bright—
Say, shall I love her less?

What though her smile be not so gay—
Her dimples now forget to play,
Oh, shall I love her less?
What though her step be not so free
As when it seemed so proud to me,
Say, shall I love her less?

What though her voice be sadder grown,
And milder be each thoughtful tone,
Oh, shall I love her less?
What though the bloom of youth made fade
Where once the rose in blushes staid,
Say, shall I love her less?

Her cheek may lose its rosy hue,
Her lips forget its early dew—
I'll love her none the less.
The charms of youth may fade away
Like sunbeams at the close of day,
I'll love her none the less.

She came to me when morning fair
Played with her wavy silken hair,
Came then my soul to bless;
She gave to me her pure young life,
I loved her then—my virgin wife—
Now I'll not love her less.

She came to me a budding flower,
Unfolding graces every hour
In virtuous loveliness;
She came with sweet inspiring air,
Filled my young soul with pleasures rare,
And taught me happiness.

Then every day she brought fresh charms
And laid them down within my arms,
And sought love's pure caress;
And though her cheek be faded now,
And care be written on her brow,
I'll love her none the less.

For though the life she gave to me
Seemed one of Angel purity,
Lost to all selfishness—
The life she proves from day to day,
Is brighter than its morning ray—
How can I love her less?

THE QUEEN OF WOMEN.

When you want to get the grandest idea of a queen, you do not think of Catherine of Russia; or of Anne of England; or of Maria Theresa of Germany; but when you want to get your grandest idea of a queen, you think of the plain woman who sat opposite your father at the table or walked with him arm-in-arm down life's pathway; sometimes to the grave, but always together, soothing your petty griefs, correcting your childish waywardness, joining in your infantile sports, listening to your evening prayers, toiling for you with needle or at the spinning wheel, and on cold nights wrapping you up snug and warm. And then, at last, on that day, when she lay in the back room dying, and you saw her take those thin hands, with which she toiled for you so long, and put them together in a dying prayer that commended you to the God whom she had taught you to trust—oh, she was the queen! The chariots of God went down to fetch her; and as she went in all heaven rose up. You cannot think of her now without a rush of tenderness that stirs the deep foundation of your soul, and you feel as much a child again as

when you cried on her lap; and if you could bring her back again to speak just once more your name as tenderly as she used to speak it, you would be willing to throw yourself on the ground and kiss the sod that covers her, crying, "Mother! mother!" Ah, she was the queen!—*Talmage.*

"BLEST."

BY MARION BERNSTEIN.

Blest be the tongue that speaks no ill,
Whose words are always true,
That keeps "the law of kindness" still,
Whatever others do.

Blest be the ears that will not hear
Detraction's tale;
'Tis only through the list'ning ear
That falsehood can prevail.

Blest be the heart that knows no guile,
That feels no wish unkind,
Forgetting provocation, while
Good deeds are kept in mind.

Blest be the hands that toil to aid
The great world's ceaseless need—
The hands that are never afraid
To do a kindly deed.

Blest be the thoughtful brain that schemes
A beautiful ideal;
Mankind grows great through noble dreams,
And time will make them real.

Do good in thought. Some future day
'Twill ripen into speech;
And words are seeds that grow to deeds,
None know how far they reach.

Like thistle-down upon the breeze,
Swift scattered here and there,
So words will travel far, and these
A fruitful harvest bear.

Where goodness dwells in heart and mind
Both words and deeds will be
Like cords that closer draw mankind
In peace and charity.

The popular belief in a day-of-judgment portrays God on the throne as a vindictive despot, his wrath [what a word to apply to the Infinite maker and ruler of the universe if there be one] placated by the blood of innocent victims, even by the foul murder of his best-beloved son; and Christ himself judging souls by arbitrary technical tests that do not touch character or destiny. Punctilious ritualism, a creed shibboleth, or the momentary enthusiasm of a deathbed conversion, is accepted as the substitute for a well-spent life. The pious heathen or the saintly heretic is rejected; while many a stained character is elected into bliss. Not by personal purity, but by Christ's payment of our penalty, this unnatural judgment shall give the passport to glory.—*Rush R. Shippen's Judgment-days.*

If you shake up a basket of fruit or of gravel the smaller portions will go toward the bottom, the larger ones will come toward the top. This is the order of Nature. There is no way of evading it. And the same order prevails in the basket of human life. The world's shaking will send the small characters downward and bring the larger ones toward the top. The larger ones are not to blame for this, the smaller ones have no right to complain of it. It is the shaking that does the business.

WHITTIER ON SPIRIT COMMUNION AND THE FUTURE LIFE.

The following is from a late interview with the Quaker poet as given in the *Churchman* by Ellen Dickinson:

"I related something of a conversation between Mr. Longfellow and myself on Spiritualism a few months before his death, or rather, a conversation on the influence and nearness which many persons experience in regard to those who are dear to them and have gone into the mysteries of eternity. Mr. Whittier listened with interest, adding that he was aware that Mr. Longfellow had some remarkable ideas and sympathies of the kind, but he had never talked with him on the subject; 'and for myself,' he added, 'I have felt very slightly that closeness and nearness of the unseen of which you speak.' After a few moments, in the progress of our talk, he remarked: 'Life is a mystery. I am like the Chinese philosopher, Confucius, who, when he was asked, 'What is death?' answered, 'Life is such a mystery that I do not seek to penetrate what is beyond it.' 'May I ask if you believe in the progress of the soul after death?' 'Why not? Surely we are not to be placed in niches to remain forever. We shall doubtless have there what we lack here, harmony, and that is my idea of heaven.' 'No troubles, no vexations?' 'Well, I do not think so. It seems to me we must there, as well as here, have some annoyances, to be quite content, in contrast.'

This was a novel idea, and I laughed in appreciation of it and said, 'Then you do not fancy a supreme satisfaction and content.' 'No, no, not I,' laughing merrily. 'But we meet people who are thoroughly delighted with themselves and their surroundings very frequently.' 'True, and thou hast seen clams at high tide; they remind me of such people. Ah! we shall have some trials in the life beyond, (and here the poet's fine dark eyes lighted up with a rare intelligence.) Our happiness will be all the sweeter, and everything will be harmonized.'

It is common to talk about the work of the school in making good citizens. The school can aid in this work but the homes of a country, far more than its schools, determine the character of its citizens. It is in the home that the foundations of character are laid.—*Geo. McDonald.*

I see no proof of a personal God, who sits aloft and makes butterflies and counts hairs and conjures up squalls to upset the boats of Sabbath-breakers. I see an ever-active force in nature, and all things are subject to law.—*R. C. Adams.*

An Ohio minister is charged with opening a prayer at a Monday evening class meeting in this fashion: "O Lord, thou has seen in the morning papers how the Sabbath was desecrated yesterday."

If you have been once in company with an idle person, it is enough. You need never go again. You have heard all he knows. And he has had no opportunity of learning anything new; for idle people make no improvement.

OUR HEREDITY FROM GOD.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED BY REV. E. P. POWELL, IN UTICA CITY
OPERA HOUSE, SUNDAY, FEB. 25, 1882.

Three weeks ago I opened this topic; but occupied your time with an answer to the question which stands in the way to such a discussion, Is there a personal God? Modern science not only requires us to consider whence is man, but what is man. If there be a personal God, what is our relation to him? It is evident that all theories of morals must be shaped by the answer we get to this question.

In my previous discourse, I tried to show that one may be very hasty in denying the existence of a personal God; when he only means to deny a man shaped God—a being who is essentially a huge man with no distinctive qualities except size and power. The Atheist is not a man who denies such a God, but one who denies any spiritual personality that can be called infinite. Now to deny a God that is a huge man or who can be either in this life or some other looked at face to face, is simply to deny an idol. I tried to show that personality involves three things. (1) Intelligence, (2) Will or self directive power, (3) Self consciousness; and those three elements of personality, I showed you to be universal and natural. The universe is permeated with intelligence, with moral will or purpose, and with self-consciousness. In this respect it is analogous to the microcosm; the human body.

You can look on the universe in no other way in the light of science than as a personality expressed in matter, or the expression of all pervading personality. As Frederick Robertson has it, "The universe is the body of God."

As Fichte says, "There is a Divine Idea pervading the visible universe, which visible universe is without meaning or even possible existence but for the inner soul."

As James Martineau says, "The universe which includes and folds us round, is the life dwelling of an eternal mind."

Even the oldest religious writings of the world, convey the same idea. One of the Vedas says, "The All pervading Spirit, which gives light to the visible sun, the same in kind am I; though infinitely distant in degree."

Perhaps no one has ever better expressed this idea than Miss Doten in that remarkable hymn:

God of the granite and the rose,
Soul of the sparrow and the bee,
The mighty tide of being flows,
Through countless channels, Lord, from Thee.
It leaps to life in grass and flowers,
Through every grade of being runs,
'Till from creation's radiant towers,
Its glory flames in stars and suns.

This is essentially the idea of Herbert Spencer, that there is an unknowable yet undeniable power that lies back of all phenomena. So that I do not understand why anyone who understands the weight of words need say that he does not believe in a personal God. Haeckel, however, and other distinguished scientists still use the word personal so carelessly, that it is no wonder that very many people believe the drift of science and the philosophy of evolution is toward Atheism. Haeckel says, "We certainly lose the hypothesis of a personal Creator; but we gain the undoubtedly more worthy conception of a divine spirit which permeates and fills the universe." We do lose the idea of a creator, but not of a personal spirit. Wallace, who ranks next to Darwin as an evolutionist authority, says: "It does not seem improbable that the whole universe actually is the will of one Supreme Intelligence."

Now you must readily see that man differs from all other things in the possession of the idea of infinity. No matter that he does not measure the infinite. He uses the word to cover a very positive idea, so that when he says God is infinite intelligence, infinite will, and infinite self-consciousness, he has a very positive idea; and he means that beyond his mere sense of experience, he has no reason for judging that there is any limit to this personality.

What we really do deny and most certainly lose, is the idea of a God who with certain shape and size, makes worlds and rules them; who dwells in a Heaven; to whom we are to go by and by; a being who can be born and incarnated; who, in fine, talks, acts and feels as a man; who is fairly represented in the Bible and Christian theology. We deny and must deny the whole machinery of creation, and judgment, and Heavens, and Hells, as wholly a fiction of man's wishes and fears. What we affirm is an infinite personality that fills the universe, as your soul fills your body, in whom we live, and move, and have our being.

This was the digest of what I had to say in answer to the preliminary question,—Is there a personal God? If there be no Infinite personality, you cannot explain man himself. Indeed you would have nature producing a product higher than herself. You would have a problem of creation more absurd than the one you flee from; for the theologian only says a spirit God makes something from

nothing; you say, unconscious impersonal force, makes personality; or immoral nature creates moral man. You deny that a God could make a universe from nothing; but assert that a spiritless universe could create a spirit; that lawlessness works out law; that a cell climbs to a brain; that a monad climbs to a man; that mindlessness creates Shakspeare; that chaos climbs to stellar universes and that soul intelligence, moral will, self-consciousness is created from nothing. When the watch makes a watch maker, when a reaper creates a McCormick, when a telescope creates a Herschel, when a house creates its tenant, then such a line of argument will be open.

To-day I take up the argument to consider our personal relation to this Infinite personality—a relationship that cannot be expressed in any weaker phrase than our heredity from God—a relationship that lends to us all our dignity and out of which springs all of our hopes—a relationship that in all ages has been felt by man, and that has been the most magnificent inspiration to raise him above the clod.

But, first of all, I want you to realize in all its fullness that we have found ourselves in a universe of moral life, where the universal beauty and rhythm of nature is correlated by, or rather interpenetrated by as beautiful and rhythmical moral life. In the one is born the tree, the flower, the world, the star, the human body; in the other, love, truth, honor, duty, philanthropy piety. By the wedding of the two comes, man's kingship over nature, reason and conscious sonship with the eternal.

On the one side we are children of that nature which from the violet that stars a woodland turf to a world that stars the infinite meadow is full of beauty and glory; on the other, we are children of that nature which from the smile of devotion on a mother's face to the cry of heroic self-sacrifice that flows down the ages from the cross of Jesus, is always morally good and true.

On the one side we get our bodies wonderfully wrought and yet the direct product of the dust; on the other that subtle personality which we can never sense, but can above all things never deny.

On the one side we are Incas, children of the sun. On the other side we know not what, but children of Eternal Reason.

I want you to feel that the moral universe is as real as the physical, for in the wonderful development of physical science, we are liable to drift into a condition of conscious automaton; a part of the vast machinery that we study.

But I want you to realize even farther that the moral universe, the idea, the thought, the purpose, the will, the motive universe is primal. When you see a man, your first thought is not of the body that walks toward you with its admirable adaptment of pulleys, cords, joints, hinges, its reticulation of bones, its muscles interplaying into a symmetry that is a final poem; but your first thought is of the character, the will, the personality, the power that controls and is expressed in that body; that something that is not dust born, that which flashes through the eye, love, hope, desire, thought; and turns an otherwise dull ball into a terrible glory of power. So in facing the universe, your first thought should not be of the automaton, the machine, the magnificent skeleton of matter; its inter play of laws, its loveliness, its truth even; but of that more true, more real character, that in it all and through it all, speaks to our souls, soul to soul, mind to mind, Father to child.

(1.) Then man is by heredity not only a child of eternal matter, but a child of eternal spirit; and he inherits tendencies not only from the one side but the other. He is literally not only an inheritor of the force that we feel, the matter that we see, but of the self-conscious personal intelligence we call God. Materialism makes man a relationless being. It ignores his relation to infinite manhood, but you may analyze him into every possible faculty or power, and you find he is not an isolated being. Reason is not his alone, for the universe is so thoroughly reason that it is one consecutive train of cause and consequence. You do not doubt when you find a result that an exact and adequate cause is near it. Memory is not his alone, for the universe is a vast record book of past events. Man holding on to the thread of figures, traces the stars back to Chaldean days or even to stellar phenomena that antedated the world. In the rocks there are memoranda of Silurian epochs and of life that had its days preliminary to man. Every rock is a memoriter of what has been done; and when we have studied long enough, we shall be able to pick out every day of the world's history. Events are also photographed, and not a motion is lost. The universe is a photophone, and sound as well as sight is preserved. It may not be possible for men ever to recollect all these dates; but there they are, the memory of God. The universal personality has no lack of memory. Nor is man alone in his esthetic faculties. The universe is a poem, and it is as thoroughly charged with beauty as it is with fact and power. You wonder at the way Spring rollicks in her May-flowers. You are amazed at the marvellous snow crystals that fill unseen dells and cover the mountains above the clouds. You say all these things are beyond the eye of man to enjoy. You make this mistake. Man is not the center of the universe; it does not exist for him; it is not for him and the insects, birds, and animals all combined. The Infinite personality is the center. In him all is lovely, and for him, and by him.

So we trace ourselves in that which is outside ourselves. Do we simply project ourselves outward upon the universe? Not at all. The data is verifiable that makes the universe an intellectual and moral life; not a jangle of forces. But what do we make of the vast cataclysms, the terrible eras of chaos. Precisely what we make of the fear-

ful mistakes and catastrophies in our individual lives. They are a part of the preparation for higher life; they are steps hewed in the mountain sides; precisely what we make of our days of chaotic orthodoxy or equally chaotic materialism; days that have in them the raw elements of sublime and reasoning manhood. You are not sure when you see a convulsion of nature, that it is not to end in higher natural development. Nay, you are sure that it will. John Tyndall walks on the edge of a glacier, and the problems that he there solves are more valuable than if all glacier moraines were simply fields of flowers and butterflies.

Now face to face we stand, man and God; man born of God; a true and legitimate child of the universal life; on the one side reason, on the other love; but the heart that pulsates the whole, hope. If hope becomes despair, reason becomes credulity, and love becomes cursing and hate. The hope child sees progress; the despair child ends his righteousness in gilded heavens, his badness in brazen hells.

(2.) As a child of God, man is a part of the intelligent life of the universe; an integral part of the universal reason. And as the object of reason is always to know itself, so man's position as a thinker is to search out God. Instead of creeping after him in the care of belief, to find him, by the power of reason in all things and at all times. By birthright there is nothing beyond the ultimate reach of thought. Baffled in one direction, man must master the problem in another. The sum of all intellectual duty, is to assert my heredity.

Nature thus becomes something more than a machine, and a machine that had no adequate purpose or object. It is home and in it is my Father's presence. And when you thus approach the universe, you recognize that the study of matter does not end in matter; that you are climbing thereby toward God. Study becomes inspired, and your mind communicating with infinite mind everywhere, in all things, is engaged in that most marvelous of all things, communicating with God. This is prayer, the only legitimate prayer. All true study is aspiration. All aspiration is prayer.

(3.) Man by heredity becomes also a part of the moral life of the universe; and passes into the range of moral duties. I am bound to all life to aid, to help and cherish. For the moral universe is as literally held together by universal moral law as the physical universe is by the laws of gravity and attraction. Such moral laws are these "All things work together for good to those that love God." This is the great law of moral gravitation. The soul that charges itself for the general good finds that in turn all things work for his good. Or this law "The soul that sinneth it shall die;" for there is in every moment a tendency to weaken and obliterate wrong. Compensation tallies closely on the heels of evil. Or this, "The truth shall make you free," for lies inevitably tangle the soul in their meshes. Or this "To the pure all things are pure," for the finger of Midas no more surely wrought gold from dross, than the soul of a pure man turns corruption to loveliness. It is as when the sun weaves apple blossoms out of the manure at the roots of the tree. Or this "Whatsoever a man sows that shall he reap," for life is ever harvesting, as it is ever ploughing and seeding and no man ever yet cheated nature as to the seed he sowed. Label it wheat, or drill it like wheat, or fertilize it like wheat, if it be carnal nature will give you a multiple of nothing else. So if you sow fraud, you shall reap it as the Star Router reaps to-day. Or this vast and all embracing law, "Thou shalt love God with all thy heart and thy neighbor like thyself." So you exist as a child of God under family law. You are related to all the moral beings and to the universal moral life.

(4.) We come to the moral unity of the whole human race. We are not simply creatures made of dust into which was breathed a life breath—but we are matter interfused with mind. We are the divine life expressing itself in matter. As self conscious wills, we determine whether that expression shall be more or less perfect. Inspirability is a common faculty of the whole human race. Through the reason God can illumine the spirit just in proportion to the desires that direct the operations of reason. Moses and a few ancients in no way stand apart from the common race. The Holy Spirit, which is the very best term for God, lightens every soul that comes into the world. So said the old Greek and Persian thinkers; and so said Jesus. So the family of God and the family of man are one; and all are near of kin. As far back as you can get into antiquity you see the Egyptian and the Chaldean looking upward and saying God Father, and recognizing the general duties that come from this relationship. All religions are only phases of one religion. There is a germinal religion which has no creed but natural duty. Germinal religion is keeping right before the universal conscience; just as morality is keeping right with the human conscience; and they merge in one. Religion does right for God's sake; morality does right for man's sake. Religion you see is thus a human factor, not a product of Jew prophets. Manhood is inspirable by its heredity. The father must dwell in the child. I do not need to ask the Jew if it is right to steal. I do not need to go to Jesus to find the Golden Rule. Human nature may, however, destroy its inspirability. But in that case second hand inspiration is not likely to help. A Bible is of use only to one who already has a Bible in him. If I am below the Golden Rule do not repeat it to me. If I can hear it, then I shall never cease to hear it. Parrots may repeat it, but not be the better for it.

It is on this basis of common spiritual heredity that all social morality

must finally rest. We may believe in special inspiration and damn the uninspired. We may sell them as slaves, build inquisitions to bring them to our inspiration; hate them because they do not see our creed wit. But God is the common moral father. Inspiration is not a matter of choice with him any more than light giving is to the sun. The mirror will surely get the reflection of the sun. The soul will surely get God in it, if it does not foul itself. By birthright it is inspirable. So we are at once under no creed nor religious limitations; but under obligations to all human beings primarily and inherently as brothers in God. To lend a hand is the universal family obligation. So come to birth, charity, honor, self restraint, toleration, forgiveness, love; the beatitudes; the whole law of natural morals—good will to all.

(5.) This heredity measures a man's moral obligation by his intellectual enlightenment and his moral freedom. It has no question concerning the responsibility of heathen and no trouble concerning the possible damnation of babes. A man's responsibility is in exact ratio to his moral power. And this becomes a question of far more importance to the highly enlightened than it does to those whose opportunities are exceedingly limited. Henry James says with exceeding shrewdness, "Let me assure you my sleep is never disturbed about the destruction of the wicked; I am more concerned about the future condition of the righteous." No citizen is so responsible as the citizen of a free republic; no man is so responsible as he who has freed himself from the fetters of churchly superstition. The freedom of great intellectual power and superior advantages for study is very much like the freedom of the Milky Way. There every star and every cluster of stars gets its perfect orbit, and sustains its unblemished brilliancy and its individual identity only by submitting to an exact relation of attraction to every other. Law only contains salvation for either organized matter or for souls. Jesus does not say to his pupil licence but law; my yoke I lay upon you. The absolute yoke of obedience which he bore while it wrought out for him the kingship of mankind, he would have all others bear until their lives shall be perfect in God. No conception of liberty is more blighting than that which breaks moral laws. The king takes off his own crown and flings it into the gutter.

(6.) Heredity places God under the same moral bonds that it places man—only in infinitely greater degree. God's obligation is to his infinite self, as mine is also to my own selfhood. If I am bound to honor him by a noble life and true worth he is bound not to quench my aspirations, much more not to quench my life. There is not an infinite code of morals that permits of damnable deeds on the part of an all powerful being. Might does not become right because it is almighty. For if that can be then the higher and stronger any intellectual force be the less it is bound by moral law. Plato is less bound than the hod carrier. Kings may justly be unjust, and you get an apology for all the crimes that have ever trodden humanity into misery and death. Dei Gratia on the coin of an imperial devil means literal truth. You obliterate the boundary lines between Satan and God. There is no God but an imperious autocrat. Jehovah is not God, but a projected tyrant. He is Nero magnified.

Be sure that there is no definition of God so exact as the one most obligated being; the infinity bound, bound by right and justice.

The ten commandments are not sectional. The Golden Rule is the staff with which the Almighty treads when his footsteps drop with fatness. He can be unjust with less apology than a tender mother. All fatherhood is in infinite fatherhood. Jesus' life thought was divine because it was good will to mankind.

The church has lost itself among demons; the bats that fill the cave of despair and put out the torches of Hope.

(7.) And just here is the only basis of Immortality. The argument is two fold. (1.) Partaking of the divine life, the personality of the Infinite, it is not possible to destroy me except through my own destructive desires and death dealing will. (2.) God is morally bound to waken no true and high aspirations which natural laws must dash. Immortality is a universal hope of moral nature. The Eternal stands pledged to fulfill his pledge; his moral nature is morally bound.

I referred to this topic in my previous discourse. I desire only to reiterate the point taken that the stronghold of this belief is the Divine Paternity. We are one with Him as the early Christian Philosophy grandly put it; or as the Greek philosophy stated it, we are his children; and this relationship, substantial and moral ensures our highest interest. Here comes in the only rational doctrine of faith. We trust ourselves our highest welfare, all our interests to the Father—not because we pray, or sacrifice, or glorify him, but because we perceive he is good. But let us understand that there can be no perpetuity in a lapsed moral condition. It is death. Our heredity is a general propulsion forward. An accumulation of life implies virtue. Those who fail of progress lapse into death. But death or dying involve decay. Sin is moral rot. Virtue is moral growth. Immortality is a perpetuity of moral growth. It can be of value in no other sense. A completed soul is a dead soul.

Immortality is of value to us only as a perpetuity of a growing power for good. For mere continuance of being I have no claim. Immortality, therefore, depends upon my will to perpetually widening claims; depending on continually enlarging knowledge.

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Selected.

REST, SWEET REST.

My feet are wearied and my hands are tired,
 My soul oppressed,
 And with desire, have I long desired
 Rest, only rest.

'Tis hard to toil, when toil is almost vain,
 In barren ways;
 'Tis hard to sow and never garner grain.
 In harvest days.

The burden of my day is hard to bear,
 But God knows best;
 And I have prayed, but vain has been my prayer,
 For rest, sweet rest.

'Tis hard to plant in spring and never reap
 The autumn yield;
 'Tis hard to till, and when 'tis tilled to weep
 O'er fruitless field,

And so I cry a weak and human cry,
 So heart oppressed;
 And so I sigh a weak and human sigh
 For rest, for rest.

My way has wound across the desert years,
 And cares infest
 My path; and through the flowing of hot tears,
 I pined for rest.

'Twas always so; when still a child, I laid
 On mother's breast
 My wearied head; e'en then I prayed
 As now for rest.

And I am restless still. 'Twill soon be o'er;
 For down the west
 Life's sun is setting, and I see the shore
 Where I shall rest.

SPIRITUALISM UNDER A CLOUD.

Such was the heading of an article which appeared in the *Boston Investigator*, of Feb 21, 1883.

It is amusing to read the opinions of some men who desire to have the world regard them as notably wise; they have a way of their own of throwing a cloud over all matters with which they are not familiar, and one would think sometimes as though all the wisdom of the world centered in these cloud shadows. One man attempts to prove clairvoyance a fraud, unless some one claiming this gift, will reveal the number of a check for \$1,000, which he says he has deposited in the First National Bank of Milwaukee, Wis. A few years ago, a similar test was proposed by a gentleman of Brooklyn, N. Y., the subject being Mollie Fancher, and she not only, after the check had been torn in small pieces put, them together again, but gave the number and amount of check, but we never learn that the check was paid by the man making the proposition. When we see propositions of this character, we find how little the one making them, knows of the laws governing spiritual manifestations. Common reason will satisfy any man willing to be convinced, that clairvoyance and every other phase of manifestation, depends upon the conditions of the mediums, and their surroundings. The best manifestations occur when the medium is in a purely negative state. The moment the positive element gains ascendancy, there is a bar to farther manifestations. If the gentleman desires to have some medium reveal the number of his check, let him place it in an envelope and without stating what it contains, ask to have the contents read. We think he can dispose of his thousand dollars; though all persons claiming clairvoyance may not be able to read the contents of a sealed letter, yet there are some who can.

Failure to read a sealed letter does not disprove clairvoyance; but it does prove that men cannot control the actions of spirits; all they can do is to put themselves so far as in their power into a condition to be operated upon; the result may be favorable or may be unfavorable; still the medium is not to be credited nor blamed in either case. It is about time that men understood that they have not got the spirit world by the ears, nor is their failure to comply with some personal request, or to accept any or all the challenges so boldly proclaimed, in any way detrimental to the cause; neither does such failure or refusal cast any cloud on the cause of Spiritualism or impair the credibility of mediumship.

The following communication was sent us to publish or not as we thought best, and we concluded to do so, on account of the strong proof furnished of the individual identity of spirits after leaving the physical body. This communication was given in answer to questions asked and sealed by the writer at De Ruyter, mailed and directed to J. V. Mansfield,

of New York city; the letter was returned unopened, accompanied by the following communication. Will any one of the opposers of spiritualism explain to us, how such a correct answer could be given if it was not by the spirit mother of the lady who addressed to her these questions?

DE RUYTER, May 27, 1882.

MY DEAR MOTHER:—

I am thinking much of you of late and as I firmly believe in spirit communications, I am becoming very anxious to receive one from you, and I verily believe I can, for if you cannot control this medium J. V. Mansfield, you can call to your aid Berthier, who has once communicated with me through him. I might ask you many questions, but I do not wish to ask so many that you would consume all the allotted time in answering them, and not have any in which to give me something from your storehouse of accumulated knowledge in spirit life. I will ask a few, but without reference to them, give me what you most desire.

Did you find spirit life what you expected? Who did you first meet of your spirit friends? Have you ever been to see Sister Lucia on the Islands, or Marcia in Illinois? Are there any particular times when you are with me more than at others? Tell A. B. I am still looking for something from him through the OLIVE BRANCH, or the old *Banner of Light*.

CATHARINE.

DARLING, EVER DEAR KATIE, MY OWN DEAR, DEAR DAUGHTER:

Have you in sorrow and yet love of your heart, thought of mother dear, who now is separated from you by what is termed death. O my daughter dear, could you but know how often, and yet how near I come to you from day to day, you would not think mother was so far from you. At times I fancy I do make you realize my nearness—then again I fear you have not—but be that as it may—mother is by your side day and night. When I reached the spirit land—I must say I was happily disappointed, for although I had anticipated finding a beautiful world—yet beautiful is not the word, it is just magnificent, a thousand fold more so than the human mind anticipated, or would be able to describe were they permitted to do so. Some time, dear Katie, I will come and tell you and A. V. as much as I may then be able to describe. I go to see the dear ones in Illinois, and at the Islands as well; but they do not see me; O that Lucia and Marcia could, how happy would they be. You wish to know when I am with you, (in particular;) well, dear one, I am with you not only when you are busy with your duties in life, but with you when you retire for that rest nature demands, with you on your awaking from your nightly slumbers, with you dear Katie all the day. Oh! that you could see mamma as she now is; well you will by and by, and that never more to be separated. Will not that be heaven enough for us—I am often with A. B.; would that he were present at this time to speak if but a word. Do, do let the dear ones speak with you. As I now look far out into the broad expanse and view towering mountains, dense forests, broad lakes, deep ravines, extensive plains, viewing

the shady walks, the beautiful gardens decked with great variety of fruits and flowers, sweet singing birds; in fact every thing calculated to make us happy, I say to myself: Why! why! why are not the people of earth better informed of it? Oh my daughter, dare, dare to proclaim this evidence vouchsafed to man of a continuous life of mortals beyond the cold, cold grave. Live then, my darling daughter, as though you had but a day to live on earth. Have all charity for those who do not see these things as you do, by the light of eternity; nor care you what the would-be-wise say of you or about you. Know you, my daughter, that you are in talking distance of those who have crossed the Rubicon and now dwellers in the "sweet by and by." If A. B. can control your friend and brother Jones, he will, and speak to you through that source. I have so much to tell you, my daughter, but too excited at this time to tell it you. Love to all such as knew me, kindly, and with kisses for you and yours, I am always and will be your loving mother,

PATTY D. SMITH.

To my daughter, KATIE BENTLEY, DeRuyter, Madison Co., N. Y., Earth Sphere.

For the OLIVE BRANCH.

ARE WE NOT DOING GOOD?

A few days since, a friend of mine called the attention of a Methodist clergyman to Mr. Beecher having said that "any minister who says that he believes in eternal punishment, lies?" And further, that the Presbyterian clergyman in this place does not believe in Hell, the Devil, or eternal punishment. To this the Methodist preacher replied: "Well, suppose these things do not exist, if we can make the people believe they do, and frighten them into living better lives, *are we not doing good?*" This naturally raises the question, can a man be morally benefited by being frightened through a lie, or does God require some seventy thousand clergymen in this country, at the expense of thirty to forty million dollars, annually, and that to lie about his moral government, in this world or the life to come? It is true that Paul says (Romans iii: 7) "For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lying into his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner." That Paul did not consider lying for the glory of God an evil, he makes it a little clearer in the next verse—"And not rather, (as we, slanderously reported and assume affirm that we say,) let us do evil, that good may come; whose damnation is just." It is pretty certain that Paul, with such views as he entertained, would cut a sorry figure among scientists of the present century, who believe in demonstrated facts for evidence.

The proof that clergymen are growing more tolerant, crops out in various directions. A few weeks since, a Spiritualist living near me, lost his wife. Some of his relatives and friends and those of his wife, are very liberal in their religious opinions, and others very orthodox. He desired to please both parties if possible, in the matter of the funeral service. My wife was persuaded to join with the Baptist clergyman residing here, in conducting the services. The clergyman first read from the scriptures. My wife then rose, and spoke impromptu from

some of the passages read. The clergyman then followed, supporting her views expressed, and further closed the ceremonies with prayer. The whole affair passed off satisfactory. But ten or fifteen years ago, no orthodox clergyman in regular standing with his church, would have presumed to place himself in such a position before the public. It is very clear that the religious world does move.

Not far from eighteen years since, I made an appointment for my wife to speak in a Methodist neighborhood, where I had lived in my boyhood. At the same place the Methodists held a meeting in the forenoon, my wife speaking in the afternoon. The Methodist clergyman was there with his flock. I requested the clergyman to take the Bible, select a text, and read it to my wife as she rose to speak. I do not now remember the text, but it struck me at the time that it was given in a spirit of unfairness, supposing no one could make anything out of it; but my wife spoke for an hour directly to the point, without hesitation for thought or word. When she had taken her seat, in order to settle with the clergyman for the little *red fox game* he had played, I handed him back a *silver grey*, by saying to him,—"Now, if you will take the platform and speak straightforward for an hour without hesitancy for thought or word, and that from a scripture text that I will give you, then I will present you with one hundred dollars. This challenge he dare not, and did not accept.

While I was boarding at a hotel in Oswego, a very imposing gentleman stopped over Sunday. I invited him to go with me and hear Mrs. Harding speak. The subject was given by the audience. This stranger, at the dinner table seemed much excited about what he had seen and heard at the Spiritualist meeting, but declared there was no spirit intercourse about it. He could do all Mrs. Harding had done, himself. I then said to him, let us test that matter. If you will stand up and talk right along, logically and consecutively from a subject I will give you, I will present you with twenty dollars for twenty minutes talk. At this point the gentleman mellowed down very much, saying if he could not do it, his father who in his lifetime was a clergyman, could do it. His evidence was out of the world, as such evidence is likely to be, unless the speaker is well inspired.

W. C. W.

THE LIVERMORE PEN.

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PEN SKETCHES.

DEAR OLIVE BRANCH:—Since my last communication to your readers, I have held meetings at Hanford, Lemoore and Los Angeles and have now commenced an engagement here for the first spiritualist society of Sacramento.

At Lemoore I was the guest of Dr. Moore, at whose pleasant home I received the sympathy and kindness of his excellent wife and interesting family. Long shall I remember those pleasant days of social intercourse at the Doctor's genial fireside among a large circle of acquaintances, and the affable way spirit "Mixie," my Indian girl controle gave to each their spirit names and a poetic communication. I left there for Los Angeles bearing many a heart wish from the dear friends of success, and a cordial desire that I return and minister to them again.

At Los Angeles I found the spiritual cause languishing and at a stand-still and discouraging to your tired-out, dusty-worn Bishop, but I soon engaged the assistance of a few true-hearted friends in the cause of spiritual progress, and arrangements were made for a Sunday meeting. The first meeting drew a large intellectual audience, and by the suggestion of Bro. Earl a subscription was circulated among the friends to raise means to retain my services for one month, that being the limit of my stay, having made previous engagements to serve the society at Sacramento. The audiences increased until the close of my engagement, and a request made that I return as soon as my engagement closes here, and lecture for them three months; the friends making ample provision for my accommodation and pecuniary support.

At Los Angeles I was the guest of Bro. Schiefelin, a wealthy gentleman, at whose beautiful home I received all the courtesies that wealth and refinement could bestow. Bro. Schiefelin's home is an ample sized cottage embowered with climbing roses and trailing vines and surrounded by an orange grove rich with the golden fruit from a thousand trees. The entire grounds are surrounded by a well trimmed evergreen hedge arching the gateways, completing the whole as a rare picture of home felicity.

I must here confess on paper that all my rebellious spirit that had so valiantly held out against the arts and enticements of California gave way at Los Angeles, and I yielded submissively to the bewitching spell that her love-smiles showered upon me, according it the most beautiful place in the world.

I am informed that the Franciscan Fathers from old Spain called it La Reina de los Angeles or Queen of the Angels, for so beautiful is the situation, and abundant are the tropical fruits and the genial atmosphere now fragrant with the sweet scented orange groves and the graceful pepper trees and innumerable exotic flowers, that when they began to settle upon its productive soil they attributed to it both queenly and angelic attributes. This place derived its name from the same source, and means the River of Sacrament. In fact the geography of California abounds in this saintly theological nomenclature, which adds interest to its wild romantic scenery.

The streets of Los Angeles are full of active life and present a fair sample of the more finished cities of the East; numbering only twenty thousand inhabitants it has the activity of a much larger town. Here and there a trace of an old dark arcade tells the story of the earlier architecture designed by the Spaniards, now fast giving way to the new buildings of a more imposing style. Some of those sunny houses seem like enchanted land, and with a variety of fruits and flowers almost endless.

I reached this place last week and found a welcome home with Bro. Owens. The distance by rail from Los Angeles to Sacramento is about four hundred miles and from Sacramento to San Francisco about eighty miles. The town numbers nearly forty thousand inhabitants and is the capital of the State. The Capitol building is an imposing structure modelled after the one at Washington. The town itself is uninteresting; built on low land it often in times of heavy rains suffers by inundation. For this reason the houses are built at an elevation sufficient to protect against such freshets, and so it gives the city the appearance of being wonderfully stuck-up.

There are many fine homes and palatial residences and well cultivated grounds, which speak well for the wealth and enterprise of the place.

The spiritual society here has been dormant for sometime and needs a revival. Warren Chase has just finished a month's engagement with them and to good audiences. I commenced my engagement last Sunday afternoon to a good audience of attentive listeners, and in the evening the hall was filled. The warm words of approbation given me at the close of my meetings, attest to the good work my spirit guides are able to perform through their humble instrument. Bro. Owens is a genial hearted gentleman, and in a quiet way is doing much to sustain the cause of spiritualism in this place. His sitting-room abounds with the spiritual literature of the age, and the sunshine of harmony goes in and out of his home daily.

I shall return to Los Angeles at the close of my engagement here to fill an engagement, and also visit San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, Riverside and San Diego. You will hear from me from those places and I hope to write you something as interesting and pleasing in regard to country and people as I have already experienced in this wonderful country.

BISHOP A. BEALS.

Sacramento, Cal., Feb. 19th, 1883.

Editor of the OLIVE BRANCH:

You've seen Tom Paine, you tell me friend,
A kindly face above me bend,
And whisper in my inmost ear,
His inspirations, and good cheer.

Dear Thomas Paine; I like it well,
That you should thus escape from Hell,
And help me fix the wicked lie on
Those who consigned you to Apollyon.

'Twixt Calvin John and Thomas Paine,
The age of faith, and reason reign,
It shows in me but common sense,
To give good Tom the preference.

But if John Calvin, you should see,
At any time obsessing me,
Just tip the wink, and by my soul—
He shan't get back to heaven, whole.

Cordially yours, E. P. POWELL.

THE FUTURE STATE IMPLIES LOCALITY.

EXTRACT FROM SERMON OF REV. W. L. GAGE, ON THE FUTURE STATE. DELIVERED APRIL 9TH, 1871.

Taking our theme up and looking at it in its most rudimentary form, we may conclude, without doubt, that the future life is not one merely of condition but of place. There has been a powerful drift in our time towards the conception of heaven and hell as purely states of the soul; and with this new conception there has been a strong tendency to ignore the fact that although they may be an inward state of the soul, they imply a place and stage of being. The soul born in this life has all its happiness and misery within itself; yet it does not on that account dispense with a local habitation. In the future life it will still retain its springs of happiness and misery within itself, and so will bear about with itself either hell or heaven, yet it will none the less be compelled to find room for itself in this great universe.

Where that place is we do not know.

That there is any remote corner of the great spaces above us which gather together all the good in some great Coliseum, cannot be believed; a huge spirit enclosure, where souls are hedged in and from which they may not wander. But far more rational and probable is it that in their embodied state they wander freely up and down the great tracts of space and mystery, flitting from star to star and from sun to sun. It chimes with the highest reason that they come close to us and almost fan our faces and touch our garments. We cannot see nor hear them, "for this muddy vesture of decay doth closely hem us in;" yet there are moods and exaltations of the spiritual sense when even in this grosser state we become conscious of presences and forms and mute and wondrous intelligences, close to us and touching our spirits with invisible fingers. Ah, pity is it, that all this which is consonant with the highest reason and purest faith, has been so vulgarised by the pretensions of charlatans, and these pearls have been given over to the swine. Yet even though pretenders have defiled this precious truth—yet truth it may remain for all that; and as such it will be believed by the good and true that the spirit world is just outside of us, and that in all these vast and seemingly vacant spaces, swarm multitudes of the disembodied. Now flitting away to the distant stars, outrunning the boldest excursions of our grandest telescopes; now moving, as Milton says the angels move, "swift gliding without step" from planet to planet, from the fiery Mars to the silvery Venus, from the placid moon to the fiery clouds that envelop the sun, making new discoveries every hour, and becoming enriched with knowledge which makes our highest learning seem like the prattling of a babe.

OBITUARY.

Passed to a higher life from Silver Lake, Kansas, Mrs. Heslet, aged 53 years, and 4 months. We can not do any better than to give the words of a member of her own family. To them her secret life was known, while friends and neighbors only knew from occasional visits. Her son writes us and says:

"Mother has long been a subscriber for the OLIVE BRANCH, and an earnest worker for the cause of spiritualism, of which society she has long been a member. She realized that it was 'not all of death to die,' she knew that she was entering upon a field of more active duties. She said she was ready and willing to go, her only regret was to leave her family." What more need be said of any one, no angry God to fear, no place of terror to shun, but trusting in all that is good either in earth or heaven. Our sister may not be resting in Abraham's bosom, but she is with her own family and friends, which is much better. As she has sowed so shall she reap, as she was a worker in the spiritual vineyard; all who received assistance from her, will return the same in kind to her. May we all so live that when called home there will be no regrets.

LONGFELLOW ON THE DEATH OF HIS WIFE.

Alone I walk the peopled city

Where each seems happy with his own;

Oh! friends, I ask not for your pity—

I walk alone.

No more for me you lake rejoices,

Though moved by loving airs of June;

Oh! birds, your sweet and piping voices

Are out of tune.

In vain for me the elm tree arches,

Its plumes in many a feathery spray;

In vain for me eve's starry marches

And sunset day.

In vain your beauty, summer flowers,

Ye cannot greet those cordial eyes;

They gaze on other fields than ours—

On other skies.

The gold is rifled from the coffer,

The blade is stolen from the sheath,

Life has but one more boon to offer

And that is—Death.

Yet well I know the voice of duty,

And therefore, life and health must crave,

Though she who gave the world its beauty

Is in her grave.

I live, oh lost one! for the living,

Who drew their earliest life from thee,

And wait until with glad thanksgiving

I shall be free.

For life to me is but a station,

Wherein apart a traveler stands—

One absent long from home and nation,

In other lands.

And I, as he who stands and listens,

Amid the twilight's chill and gloom,

To hear approaching in the distance,

The train for home.

For death shall bring another mating,

Beyond the shadows of the tomb,

On yonder shore a bride is waiting

Until I come.

In yonder field are children playing,

And there—oh vision of delight!—

I see the child and mother straying

In robes of white.

Thou then, the longing heart that breaketh,

Stealing the treasured ones one by one,

I'll call thee blessed when thou makest

The parted—one!

—Love is the essence of all religion, its purest and best principle, without which it would fail in its aims and effects.

THE KIND OF RELIGION NEEDED IN THE WORLD TO-DAY.

A SERMON BY THE REV. MR. KIMBALL.

The sermon of the Rev. Mr. Kimball Sunday morning was on the subject named above. The efforts now being made, he said, to get up a revival in our city gave a special pertinence to the question of what its kind ought to be. There is much in these movements, beyond doubt, which is crude, earthly and human; but an element also which is spiritual, heavenly and divine. They are the rivers of God coming down from the far off mountains of the spirit world and supplying the cities and villages of earth with a grand motive power, but it is left for men to decide what sort of mills shall be built on their banks and what the quality of meal shall be they are made to grind out, whether the harsh doctrines of woe and despair, or the sweet, nourishing truths of faith, hope and love. And every time a new one comes along, the question of the special work it shall be set to doing ought to be considered afresh.

We need to-day the revival of a genial, rational and fervent piety, not the kind that shall make us think less of earth and time, but more of God, the soul and eternity; want the spiritual faculties that are given naturally to every human being revived and kindled; want not only to read and believe, but to see and feel there is a God; want the love which embraces, uplifts, and completes all other love brought into action; want the hope which amid all the fluctuations of our earthly lot is as an anchor to the soul, to get a fresh hold of the heavenly world; want in short the realm of spirit and of spiritual realities brought into a prominence that shall match the emphasis which science has justly laid on the realms of matter and of material law.

With the revival of piety itself we need a revival of the soul's grander motive powers to carry it into action. The world in the past has had too much of the religion of fear; too much of fleeing to God from the wrath to come. The church is filled to-day with weak, languid, distorted, half-made Christians,—why? Because at the beginning of their religious life they have been fed so largely on a diet of damnation. Spiritual soothing syrup, such as Liberals are accused of using, may not be the best sort of nutriment with which to feed babes in Christ, but surely it is infinitely more nourishing than spiritual vitriol and fire. There is no necessity for either. What we want is more of simple Christian love. Religion must act on the soul as the breath of Spring does on the brown and withered earth, not to scorch and burn its products, but to nourish and revive them, unfolding the flowers to brighter beauty and the grass to greener hues; and instead of the old rallying cry, Repent, for the kingdom of hell is near, it must learn to use Jesus's own words, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Still more, the world needs to-day, as it always has, a revival of direct and positive righteousness, a revival that shall give men not only a new heart and a new hope, but new characters, new hands, new business principles and a new life. The revivals of the past have relied too much on imparting to men a mere

substituted righteousness, have had too much to say about the worthlessness of mere morality, the filthy rags of men's own righteousness, the impossibility of being saved by good works, and the all sufficiency of being washed simply in the blood of Jesus; and too often while the work of grace was going on in the church the work of hell was going on in the world around it within the sound of its very hymns, undisturbed by a hint of its wrong.

Only a few years ago the country was swept over by the great Moody and Sankey revival, conducted, professedly, on the basis of this old theology. The salvation which comes through good morals, good works and a good life was denounced and despised; the salvation which comes through the blood and the atonement powerfully proclaimed and upheld. Great buildings were crowded with eager listeners; converts made by the scores and the hundreds. The preachers were sincere and honest men. No laborers ever used their tools, such as they were, more earnestly or more faithfully. And yet there was not a vice or sin or wrong in society that relaxed its grip; not a railroad corporation or telegraph company that was one dollar the less grasping; not a list of cheats, defaulters and adulterers that had its average diminished one figure; and three years afterward it was the testimony of orthodox brethren themselves that hardly a trace of it could be found even in their churches;—all of which shows not that revivals are useless, not that the spirit of God is not in them, but only that in this case they were not of the right kind and not applied to doing the right thing. What is needed is their force brought to bear directly on the moral nature and on the world's reform. We want a salvation that really saves, want a baptism that washes sins not only out of the book of God's remembrance but out of human souls; want a conversion that changes men not only into good believers and good worshippers, but into good merchants, good bank trustees, good railroad directors, good mechanics, good brakemen, good legislators and good citizens; want a regeneration that out of every twenty-five sinners that it takes into the church will turn out into world twenty-five honest men; want a revival that will give society not only a sound faith but sound bridges, sound boilers, sound steam-boats, sound insurance companies and sound banks; not only pure hearts but pure sugars and pure teas; and not only a conscience void of the offence against God, of hypocrisy and sin, but of the offence against man, of a cloth filled with shoddy and starch.

And the world needs to-day a revival of more love to man, more of the sentiment and practice in all classes of society of the great law of human brotherhood. It must bind together as one body the rich and the poor, make the sewing girl and the wife of the millionaire clasp hands in mutual sympathy, solve the great problems of capital and labor with a political economy one factor of which shall be human kindness, put a soul under the ribs of great corporations, and enable the worshippers of God that wear silk to take some notice, when the worship is over, of the worshippers of God in the same church that wear cotton. Sectarian walls must be broken down by its

influence. Damning must be stopped by it in the pulpit as well as in the street; the color line of theology not less than of the skin be wiped out; Jesus-honored in the form of the naked, poor and hungry as well as in the form of the Son of God; and when converts are examined for the church it must make the test not so much the largeness of their faith as the greatness of their charity.

There is no danger that a revival with such elements in it as these will be opposed. The reason why they have been criticised and stood aloof from in times past has been not a dislike of religion itself, not a disbelief in the spirit of God, but because of the feeling that they were too much on the surface, that they did not go down to the real seats of the world's need, that the spirit of God was being misapplied, and that the salvation they brought about was in a large degree technical, formal and useless. A revival, however, that really revives, a salvation that saves from actual sins—shuts up brothels and dram shops, makes debtors pay their debts, directs directors to do their duty, keeps engines as well as engineers on the right track, affords safety from fire to hotels as well as to hotel-keepers, and fills the world with more piety, love and light, there is not a person on earth not even an infidel and sceptic, not Robert Ingersoll himself, who would not give it a cordial welcome.—*Hartford Times*.

THE RIDICULOUS FIGURES ADAM AND EVE WOULD CUT NOW-A- DAYS.

Adam and Eve may have been all right in their day, but to copy after them now-a-days would not be popular. His going into the apple speculation, at the instigation of the devil, shows what kind of a man Adam would be to run a farm at this age of the world. Why, he was a regular sucker, and any patent right man, or lightning-rod peddler, could have sold him a county right or put up a lightning-rod on his barn, and he would have given them his note for any amount. And Eve was not much better. With her easy going manner, and lack of decision of character, she would let a book-agent, or a sewing machine peddler give her taffy, and she would get mashed on them, and they could sell her anything they had, and she would give them Adam's note. If Eve was living here now, and didn't know any more than she did in the Garden of Eden, a plaster of Paris image peddler could come along and trade her an image of Shakespeare or Guiteau and get the last pair of pants Adam had. She seemed to be a woman who could not say no, and if she was here now she would be a picnic for tramps, and agents for the amelioration of the condition of the heathen could get her to subscribe the last dollar Adam had. But we should not blame Adam and Eve. They did not have the advantages of society and corsets and tight pants that we have, and we must overlook any errors of judgment on their part. However, it is not a bad idea to profit by their errors and lack of experience.—*Sunny South*.

—A good time now to pay up what you owe us for subscription.

THE POETRY OF LIFE.

Every step in the journey of life, furnishes a subject for a poem. If we begin the history of an individual, we should commence at the dawning of childhood; yes, we should if possible extend our researches two or three generations back, in order that justice may be done to all, and injustice to none. If the incidents, the joys, and the sorrows attendant upon human existence were recorded, what a volume every person's life would make. In the treatment of our subject, we do not propose to give the sunny side alone, for some have far more of shade than sunshine. Poetry is not always written in a style or metre to suit all readers, neither is every life history a poem embracing only the beautiful and ideal; human existence is said to be a struggle from the cradle to the grave. If this were true, there would be little that could be said in its favor, but we do not so understand the mission of life. It is true there are hours of sadness and gloom, so there are days of sunshine and gladness, but in making up the volume of poems, it will be found that there is such an intermingling of the pathetic with the more soul-stirring cadence of the joyous and mirthful, that few would recognise their own life history.

If there was only sunshine, we should never know how to appreciate the shadows of twilight; and if every step was in the dark, we would not know how to appreciate the sunlight. But when we look over the world of mankind, we find a struggling, surging mass; some being born, others dying; some singing songs of gladness, others repeating their tales of woe; and each have their listeners, and every one finds some one to sympathize with them, and others who turn deaf ears to their songs or tales of woe. If death was the end of human existence, the picture seen by us would be a sad one; but even though there be but little to cheer the child of trial in its struggle for subsistence; there is the happy assurance that, in the fulness of time the tides of adversity may change and the soul weighed down by adverse circumstances, will know what it is to taste of the sweets of life, and drink from nature's flowing streams; and though they never knew what it was to feel happy and free, that pleasure will be theirs. The religious sentiments of the world are not taken from the Bible but from the inspired poets of every age. The human soul can be stirred to its utmost depths by the reading of a poem; the same matter written in prose, would fail to kindle a spark of divine sympathy in their natures. A surging crowd can be hushed to silence with the melody of music, while the cold rehearsal of prose they would scoff at it.

The soul of man is a key instrument upon which unseen performers touch the keys so softly as not to arouse suspicion, lest the object of their mission be not perfected. Every person has a chord in their natures by which they can be approached; no matter how low the man may have fallen, he remembers the cradle songs of his mother, and though stained and scarred by crime, if approached through the channels of mother love, he will forget for a time his evil ways and live over again the days of childhood. The songs a mother sings as

she bends over her little ones, may prove the key that will unlock the doors of heaven and let the weary soul into its home of final rest. Every aspiration of the soul is a poem breathed into the ear of Deity and the soul is lifted up and brought into closer rapport with the source of all life. Every prayer offered in accordance with nature's laws is a poem, for then the soul of the petitioner is in perfect harmony with itself and all kindred spirits. But all prayers are not poems. When man asks God to suspend natural laws for the especial benefit of a few individuals, and to the discomfort of the greater number, such a prayer never leaves the soul in a harmonious condition, because invariably he never expects to have such prayers answered. Good deeds are poems that the soul sings to charm the hearts of the unfortunate, and angel throngs join in the chorus and make the dome of heaven resound with their melodies; every newly discovered truth fills the soul of the discoverer with harmony and carries him closer to his God.

Religion, we said, was born of poetry; but this needs to be qualified, a religion that embraces the whole human family, is poetic because it makes glad the hearts of all. But a religion that make God appear as a task master has no poetry in it, whenever there is music in the grandest compositions, there must be responsive chords in the soul or there can be no music to charm. The Christian who believes that he can be made happy by listening to the groans of those in torment, is a fiend, and has neither part nor lot in the religion of humanity. John Calvin could not write a poem, because he saw only the dark side of human life; a poet must be a person with a soul so finely attuned that even the rustling of leaves will find a response. The literature of the world has many contributions in verse, but few poems. The genius of men may invent a machine that will make audible sounds resembling the human voice, but a mother's lullaby has more real music in it than all the machine work the world contains. There is a soul influence in a true poem that grows sweeter as the years flow on.

The poetry of life is seen and felt in the rhythmic actions of the mind in its researches after the hidden things of nature, but there can be no harmony in a soul which refuses to recognize in the world surrounding it, grandeur and beauty. He who looks upon the universe and says it is an accursed thing, and men an object of divine creation, is not fit for the companionship of true loving souls here, and such a heart will find no congenial companions in spirit life, so long as such ideas are entertained. A man at peace with himself and the works of nature around him, is on the highway to present and future happiness, nor is he far removed from the kingdom, even in this present state. Of all people who should find their souls touched with angel's fingers, it is they who are in daily communion with the spirit world. Think of a home where there is to be no more separations, a home where each member thereof bring into the home circle an influence of love, whose study is to make others happy; and you have a dim picture of what home in spirit life is, and why not make your earthly homes equally lovable? It is not necessary

that another life be entered upon in order that love and charity may abound. These are elements of the human soul and are to be found in physical; life if not there, what assurance have you that they will be enjoyed in spirit life? "As you sow here, so will you reap there." As you court the pure and lovely here you will view the pure and holy there. No one can separate the two worlds or conditions in life without doing injustice to both; we begin one book of poems here, but complete the first volume in another world; but the end is not yet. Life in the spirit world is full of experiences that would be interesting to mortals could they be given as we would like to, but the mind of man is not in condition to receive the whole truth, we can only give an incident now and then, and these are not fully comprehended. It is almost impossible for physical beings to separate spiritual things from material things; if we tell you of our homes in spirit life, you have to draw comparative lessons from what you now enjoy, and often the contrast is so striking that our reports are regarded as visionary. The time may come when the faculty of reason will be divested of much of its materiality, then spiritual things will be seen not through darkened glasses, but in the light of the noonday sun.

The object and purpose of Spiritualism is to unfold the interior soul forces of mankind, and bring man in harmony with nature, which is in close communion with the Father of all living things. We never resort to force, but approach you through the reason and love element. If men are to be won from error's ways it must be through these avenues. For centuries force and fear has been adopted and appealed to without effect; the results of such practices are as well and fully known to spirits as mortal; what effects one, creates sympathy in the other. This could not be if the two worlds were separated; this fact alone should be sufficient to satisfy any reasoning mind, that spirit life and material life are only separated in degree, by a thin veil that palpitates with every breath. He lives the truest who makes the most of the present, for in so doing they are brought in closer relationship with the spirit world.

The harmonies of life are the property of those who cultivate them. Law and order are poems of nature, they are always correct as to time and metre; special providences would be discordant notes in heaven's melodies, and if permitted would change the plan of evolution into discord and death. To live with the recognition that what ever is in the form of nature, are for the good of all, is to live at peace with God and nature. Before Spiritualism were revealed to the world, special providences was supposed to be of momentary occurrence; men thought no more of asking God to put money in their purses than they did of asking a favor of an earthly friend, and if refused, they supposed the gift was withheld on account of some unknown sin they had committed; they never thought of the effect such petitions would have upon them were their requests granted. Suppose all the prayers offered for divine favor or interference, were collected and published in a volume, how many would acknowledge their own petitions? But

since the advent of modern Spiritualism wonderful changes have taken place; even the Christian hardly realizes how far he has antagonized the creed of his Church; but we who are laborers in the spiritual vineyard know, that out of the darkness of religious night, has dawned a bright spiritual morning. And we are but standing on the threshold of the new dispensation. Our work thus far has been preparatory, it was necessary to get the intelligence of man aroused to get their mental powers quickened, and their souls brought into harmony with the forces of the unseen. Some men say show us a spirit and then we will accept your spiritual theory; but when asked to look, they close their eyes. Is there no such thing as convincing a man of a truth unless he can lay hold of it? Is the same thing true in relation to physical things? If men accepted only what each one could see and handle, the intelligence of the masses would not be of a startling character. No one will deny the influence of music, but no one can see or handle it, they may have seen musical instruments and heard them played upon but will anyone risk their reputation for truthfulness by asserting that there is no such thing as music or that it cannot influence them. The spiritual medium is an instrument played upon by angelic fingers; you hear them speak, you see the movement of bodies, but you never see the moving power, and yet it is present with you, and there are responsive chords in the souls of men which vibrate in harmony with what they see and hear, and if you will only give this credit to some other power, other than spirit, they will accept it; but why be guilty of a falsehood, supposing you were sure of interesting a friend and causing him to inquire into the matter; your loss of manhood could not be made up to you through a friend's conversion. A true life always carries its reward with it, their own soul brims full of music and rhythm. While a false life is discordant and out of joint. An honest man needs no formal introduction, his honesty speaks for itself, and the influence of such a man extends beyond the boundaries of mortal life; an honest man's life is a power that grows in interest as you become acquainted with it.

All religion was born of poems, but all religion is not poetic. The religion that lifts the soul of man above the bickerings of sect, and away from the contentions and special providences, is the religion of humanity. When a man entertaining such views passes beyond the vale, his loss is felt by all, but who ever missed a shriveled up soul who could only think of heaven as a place invented to accommodate a few. There is no poetry in such a soul, they do not deal in life's richest commodities, their views will be in accord with the soul development, they never look on the bright side of life, they are always delving down into the crude and non-satisfactory. Religion was intended to bless humanity, but its blessed influence has been changed into curses. Instead of broadening out it contracts; instead of lighting the soul upward, it draws all things downward; instead of making men charitable it makes them dogmatic; instead of making them children of the one parent, it makes orphans of the majority of the human family. Who can sing praises to God, who only know

of such a power to fear it? What man can ask God to bless him who can not find it in his own soul to bless an erring sister or brother? We want more of the purity of love and charity in our souls; we want to learn to look upon mankind as members of a common family, with whom our lives are to be spent; for as death is but a change of scenes, those we love here we shall there, but man is not constituted a judge of his brother men; when they know the origin of a brother or sister's existence, then they may form an opinion as to how much should be chargeable to the past.

The world is full of repentant souls. We love to read the writings of a Longfellow and Emerson, they sang their way through the world, and in every poem we catch glimpses of the internal soul. But those royal souls are not lost to the world, the poems speak to every one who read them, and even we are aware of the fact—we find our spirits holding communion with them. Edgar A. Poe is as much a poet to-day, as when he penned the Raven. His soul was attuned by angel fingers, and spirits from higher spheres breathe their thoughts through the inspired mind of the Spirit Poe. No one can read the life of Jean D'Arc without feeling the presence of some inspiring power present with them. There is a chord in our sympathizing souls, that goes out toward the peasant girl, and we are drawn to her as by magic. But who can feel any sympathy with the history of Calvin and Edmonds; we regard their best productions as injurious, for they erected a barrier between man and his God; they consigned unbaptised children to hell, and what would Heaven be without the melody of prattling babes; we love to see them grow in spirit life, we love to take them by the hand and lead them to the homes of their bereaved parents; and we love to see the smile that lights up the features of parents when the little ones return to them—though they see them not they feel an influence upon them and their minds go back to the cradle and in spirit they chant the sweet lullabys as if the little ones were with them in the form. The man or woman who would rob a parent of these joys is an enemy; they may be called Christians, but they are not Christ-like. He said: "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not," This is what we say, suffer little children to return to their parents, and by their presence bless those who so sadly miss them. There is music in the thought that there is no death; this knowledge should cause a smile to overcast every countenance and sing them to sleep in the arms of their loved ones at night.

Every poet is known by some particular trait of character embodied in his person. If they sing the songs of nature, they stamp their productions with their conceptions of nature; if their poems are in the form of prayers we learn what their ideas are of God; if they sing of man, we learn what were their views of him; if they write songs of a religious character, we readily perceive the school of thought which they have been educated in; the diversity in poetry gives us the diversity in mankind, and the more we learn of man the greater will be our appreciation of him and the power evolving and directing him. There are al-

ways three conditions in which we find man living, two extremes and only one medium or conservative condition either he is up among clouds or down in the depths. The object and purpose of spiritualism, is to equalize these powers, to teach him how to maintain and possess a medium course; it will not harm him to wander away from either, if he has sufficient balancing power so as not to float away and lose his bearings. The natural aspirations of the soul lead men upward; the immaterial things of life make him a plodding slave, and what slave can sing in his soul. Freedom not license, is the birthright of all men; it is given to every man, woman and child the right to be happy, for this thing was the heavens and earth brought into existence. What ever is, is for mankind; he is given the ability to think, he is given the power to reason, and he has been given the use of tunes and a language by which he can make known the thoughts which swell within him. With all these blessings, what right has any one to say that the earth is not good, that God is not good, that all men are bad and inclined to evil. The best all can do is to stop thinking of themselves as outcasts, but to regard themselves as belonging to God's family and have an inheritance in all that belongs to their heavenly parent.

If all men had such views of life, is it to be supposed that Watts would have written "Hark from the tomb a doleful sound," or—

Plunged in a gulf of dark despair
We wretched sinners lay,
Without one cheering beam of hope,
Or spark of glimmering day.

Or as Cowper writes:—

There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

Or as Charles Wesley has it:—

Sinners, obey the heavenly call;
Your prison doors stand open wide,
Go forth, for Christ has ransomed all,
For every soul of man hath died.

Or as Watts says:—

Lord, we are vile, conceived in sin,
And born unholy and unclean;
Sprung from the man whose guilty fall
Corrupts his race, and taints us all.

Or—

Thou hidden God, for whom I groan,
Till Thou Thy self declare,
God, inaccessible, unknown,
Rejects a sinner's prayer.

What shall we say of such poetry as the preceding verses. Who can sing them and feel drawn to the author of all life and being? We do not regard such poems as these as inspiring; there may be rhythm and metre, but there is no music in them. A poem that fails to reach the soul, may as well be banished. We only cherish those which breathe love and sympathy. The poetry of life is as varied as are the habits and dispositions of men; the one whose spiritual nature has been unfolded, loves to sing of a God of love and the man who has never looked beyond the grave, repeats his poem but never sings. The departure from old methods of religious thought, has created a demand for poems of nature; men are beginning to find their God, but when we take into account that a certain class of men have for at

least two thousand years, been attempting to hide him away from the world, had not the veil been rent in twain by spirit hands, the world would have continued groping its way in darkness and gloom. The saving power of the world is knowledge, and that never dies, neither can men crucify it. They may resist its influence but they cannot stay its progress. Every life has far more of the beautiful in it than we are willing to admit; there is more music in the souls of men than we have ever dreamed of. The children of earth may never know how much poetry there is that lives, until they pass to spirit life, but they will know then, and even though we do not possess this truism to-day, the knowledge that we shall enjoy it will give life and buoyancy to thoughts and actions.

Life is a priceless treasure. To know that you will live forever, is enough to make you tremble at its responsibilities, but yet you cannot help feeling that all will be well. There is a righting power in the world, and every wrong will be banished and every virtue woven into song.

ACHSA W. SPRAGUE.

YE CANNOT SERVE TWO MASTERS.

Some men are foolish enough to think that if they could ride two horses at a time, they would get along the faster; but experience has proven that he who makes the attempt, will find that he is liable to fall between them; and if not dashed to pieces, will be disabled for riding even one. Hobby riding is dangerous, for no one, no matter how skillful they may be, but what will find that they cannot confine themselves to one. Every thought begets another, and so every hobby becomes the progenitor of one or more hobbies; and when attempting to ride more than one, always unhorse the rider. We find among all classes of men, hobby riders; and some of the hobbies, poor things, have been ridden so long, and so hard, that there is little life or vitality left. Yet they are brought out on all occasions and made to do service. We invariably find that what a man was or is, in one sphere of life, his habits form corresponding traits of character by which he will be known, even though he change the general tenor of his way. It is a difficult thing for a man to regenerate and make over new himself; there are a few exceptions to this rule, but they are rarities, and when discovered should be placed in conspicuous places so that the rest of mankind may see who they are, and the kind of material they are made of.

Seeing that these traits of character are so general, it is not to be wondered at, that we occasionally find them in the spiritual ranks; but of all hobby riders most to be pitied, are persons who admit the genuineness and advantages they have derived from a knowledge of what Spiritualism teaches, yet try to keep one foot in the spiritual stirrup and at the same time are trying to keep their other foot in the old theological stirrup. Now picture to yourselves the ludicrous position such a person must occupy; and to carry out the figure and show them where they do stand, we will, by way of illustration compare the two principles to two horses, both saddled and bridled and ready for the road—the rider mentally brings them

alongside of each other, and with one foot in each stirrup, starts out on the journey of investigation, feeling sure that both horses will respect their rider's feelings sufficient to keep side by side, and by so doing the rider will escape the criticism of both parties. But as soon as a start is made, one of the animals being more fleet of foot, gains on the other, but the rider feels confident that he can by use of spur and whip, make the slow horse keep pace with the other; but forgets that the more fleet one is so by the nature of its construction, while the other having been ridden so long, has grown stiff and clumsy. But the gap widens and the position of the rider becomes if not critical, ludicrous, and finding himself in danger of physical injury commences to reason with the fleet one, and says to him, "what are you going so fast for, don't you see where I am, don't you see how I am using spur and whip to make this old theological nag keep up with you?" But the one in advance says, "Let him go, his days are numbered, he has been ridden to death already, and I cannot gauge my speed with his creeping gait. You just get on my back and I will carry you through, there is no danger." But the rider says, "What will people say?" "Well, if you care more for the speech of people than you do for your own safety, then stay where you are; but if you are torn asunder don't blame me."

There is another class who may be found ever sitting astride a fence; and though their seat is very uncomfortable, they lack the necessary force of will to dismount on one side or the other. But when Mr. A comes along, they salute him with a pleasant good morning, and begin to deplore the depravity of mankind, and suggest how much better it would be if all people could dwell in harmony; to which A assents, but asks, "What are you doing on the fence, why not come down and go with me, I am on the road to heaven?" But the fence rider replies: "Public opinion is so strong, I fear some one will accuse me of being inconsistent. I would like to go with you, but then I must be all things to all men." Presently Mr. B comes along, and seeing this man sitting on the fence, asks: "What are you doing there?" "Well, my friend, I am trying my best to serve God, but somehow I don't derive much consolation in it. What do you suppose is the matter? I sit here from morning until night but I don't seem to be making much progress." B says: "Get off the fence." But the rider replies: "People are accustomed to look for me here; if I was to get off they would not know where to find me, and I am afraid some of them would say 'he clings to his old theological opinions yet.' Others would say he has gone over to the spiritual camp, and while my sympathies are with the latter, it requires more nerve than I have got to so declare it publicly; so you see I content myself by remaining where I am." Then Mr. C comes along, and he has the reputation of being decidedly heterodox; and seeing the man on the fence, says to him, "What, you there yet? I supposed you had worn out the fence ere this." "No not yet, though I feel better now than I have before, but I cannot quite make up my mind to go with you yet, but will by and by when your heterodox views become

a little more popular, then you can count me as one of you." But C replies, "too much popularity would kill our cause, I find my pleasure in combatting the superstitions of the age." But say the rider, "that may do for you, but what will people say if I should join your side, why, my neighbors would pass me by, they would not invite me to their social gatherings; and don't you see I should be the loser." C says, "how much do you gain by sitting astride the fence?" "Well, I make out to cheat the whole world; they all think I am with them, when the truth is I am not with any one in particular. But don't say anything about it; and if you promise not to tell again, I will tell you something. Do you know I attended a seance last evening; we had good manifestations; I tell you these things are grand; why I saw my old mother who has been gone for over twenty years, and she looked as natural as life; and if you could only have heard her talk to me—it was she, I know it; why I was carried clear up to heaven." "Well," says C, "what are you doing on the fence this morning?" "Well, people don't understand these things as you and I do, and I am only waiting until Spiritualism becomes more popular." But C asks: "did you tell Mr. A and B of what you saw?" "Why no, I wouldn't do so for the world. They don't know anything about spirit manifestations, and then they hold important positions in the church; they move in the first circles of society." "Well," says C, "my friend, do you know what a moral coward is like?" "No, I don't, are there such people?" "Yes, and you find them all along life's highway, sitting on the fence. How do you like your company?" "My friend, don't be too severe on me, you don't comprehend my position, and I can't explain it to you. But this fence is getting sharp, it hurts me, but I am afraid if I get off, I should find thorns along the path. Oh I am so unfortunate." Mr. C leaves him in disgust.

Presently Mr. D comes along, who is known to entertain rather materialistic views; and he seeing the man on the fence salutes him and asks: "What are you doing there, trying to serve God and keep in the good graces of the world? Well, how do you find it?" "Rather uncomfortable, I can assure you." "Well, why don't you get off?" "Well, that is just what A, B and C asked me. To tell the truth, I don't know which side to get off; how I wish some of our enterprising citizens would build an elevated railroad right along where the fence stands, you know they cannot charge only five cents fare, and I could ride to glory and no one would know where I had gone." But D asks, "What do you mean by glory; you cannot get out of this world; don't you see those monuments on the hill yonder? Well, there is the end of the journey. How old are you now?" "Thirty last June." "How long have you been on the fence?" "Ever since I was born." "When are you going to get off?" "Don't know. But my friend, last evening I attended a spiritual seance, and we had wonderful demonstrations; if I was to tell you the truth, I am a Spiritualist, but don't tell anybody about it." "Well," says D, "I did not know before that they tolerated moral cowards in the spiritual ranks; if they will fellowship with such as you

I will not. So my good friend, hang on to the fence, I don't see as you can be of any use to either party," and D. moved on wondering what such men were created for, and in that he expresses our opinion; what use are they in community?

As we take a survey of human life we see the fences which make the pathway of human life lined on either side with beings wearing the human form, sitting there watching the the crowds as they pass onward, and we ask of what use are they to the world. They neither sow nor reap, nor assist in gathering up the grain scattered by the spiritual reapers. But it must be not supposed that all those fence riders are christians and materialists; there will be found a goodly number of spiritualists in the crowd; they know that all the claims of spiritualism are true, but lack the moral courage to so declare their knowledge to the world. "Ye cannot serve two masters."

If there is anything in which a person should have fixed opinions, it is in matters which effect their most vital interest, and we know of nothing so important as thequisition of true knowledge regarding the objects and purposes of human life; not that any one should disregard the essentials to one state of existence, hoping thereby to enjoy greater happiness in another state. Material life well and truly lived, is as essential to the soul's welfare as spirit life will be after the spirit leaves the body; there is a chain linking man with the dim future; one end of that chain is fastened to the earth, the other reaches into the boundless realms of space. Each link represents the grade of mental improvement that man may acquire. The lower links or those nearest to the earth we shall designate as the materialistic links, and they who see not the continuation of the chain, declare there is nothing beyond what they do see; but because they cannot see any farther than present environments, is no evidence that there is not something beyond. The christian may claim that there is a chain linking man to the dim future, but is only for the use of a few; that does not prove that all may not raise their eyes to the heavens and by honest purposes reach a condition higher in spiritual unfoldment than ever the christian aspires to.

Human aspirations is not the property of any class or creed, it depends upon the amount of spirituality there is in man; if he has none of this element in him, he will continue to grovel amid the baser elements of his nature, and all spiritual thoughts and aspirations must be cultivated after spirit life is begun; but there are a great many who seem to feel that they cannot live in accord with their highest aspirations, and at the same time give proper attention to their material necessities. They feel as though in order to become active workers in the cause of spiritualism, all things on this mundane sphere must be considered as "filthy rags;" in this they show that they have not been thoroughly emancipated from the old puritan ideas of past ages. It is not men for nor angels to divorce one form of life from another; if it had not been essential for mankind to have one earth experience they would not have been born human beings, all would have been born into angelhood at the beginning; man is the product of law and not a result of chance or fate. Before him are infinite possibilities; no one, neither spirit nor angel, can give the boundary lines of human attainments, no one can determine the extent of the soul's aspirations; we see

man standing low down in the scale of life, and we see that some of the most humble have by force of will, and decision of character, reached the highest round in the ladder of fame; but men and women who reach these exalted positions are now hobby riders, neither are they seen sitting astride a fence like McCawber "waiting for something to turn up," but they seem to grasp the problems of life with an iron will, and once they commence the ascent they never stop to enquire what Madame Grundy may say.

We find also that there are a great many who prefer to be hangers on rather than doers, they want to be on the popular side of all questions, and never do anything to make the one cause popular. Every circumstance in life masters them, instead of they mastering circumstances; every thing they do is burdensome to them, all their neighbors are better situated in life than they are, they cannot do anything because they have not the will to do. We find some of these kind of persons in the spiritual ranks; their inability to do is their hobby, but they never look at home for the cause of their failures, but lay all the blame on circumstances, and they ride their hobby from youth to old age, and take it into their coffins with them. A man may not be censured for a lack of brains, but he is a proper subject for criticism if he fails to put to the best use what brains nature intrusted to his care. No one ever reached a heavenly state in mortality without a struggle, no one will even reach to a place of eminence in spirit life unless they earn it. Angels are not waiting with beds of down to bear the released spirits to mansions of glory; deploring circumstances will not win heaven, all who have gained renown have had to win it by force of will and decision of character, not by trying to serve two or more masters.

Spiritualism will never fully perform its mission so long as spiritualists spend more time quarrelling over non essentials, than they do in creating harmony, the battle of spiritualism has been fought and won, and there is no necessity of planting your blood stained banners in each other's faces there is enough to do in presenting the facts which are daily given in spirit life and by consistent living to prove to the world that spiritualism is not a disturbing element, but a conserving force. No one can be one half spiritualist and the other half materialist or christian, and all who make the attempt will meet only failure; nature unless her laws are interfered with never begets monstrosities, it builds no fences for riders, it has no place for growlers or grumblers—all such persons are stumbling blocks in the path of progress. There are a great many people who feel that they have some important mission to perform for the spirit world, and if they fail, the heavens will fall—mistakes are natural to the human family, not on account of law, but on account of misdirected energies; very few there are but what think they could instruct the spirit world in its duties, they feel qualified to fill the highest positions in the gift of the people; but there are failures in the most common walks of life. The best and most profitable study for man is man. If those missionaries would study themselves more, they would learn that they were not adapted to the task they have undertaken, and if they have been instructed by some one in spirit life, they had better enquire into the peculiarities of that spirit, and we have no hesitancy in saying, that they will find that their spirit guide was a hobby rider, and is such still, and will continue to be so long as human hobbies can be found willing to be ridden.

But many of the eccentric characters who drifted into spiritualism in its early day, are learning wisdom; many of them find upon examination that it was not so much the fault of the spirit, as with themselves, and they are quietly setting down to work upon a more

natural basis. The nineteenth century is not an age for the propagation of idiots. There never was so much knowledge in the world before, nor so widely diversified. This in an age of investigation; we have passed through ages of faith; men ask for facts to day, and they are not particular how they get them so long as they are facts; every hobby rider is known, every fence rider is known and the world weighs them and the spirit world misses them, and they are as well known in spirit life as they are upon this mundane sphere. Moral worth never goes begging; if you possess it your neighbors know it, if you are trying to ride two horses at the same time your neighbors knew that too, and no amount of duplicity will change their opinions, the change must be made by the individual. High and pure aspirations are subject to growth; we never reach heaven by long strides, but by gaining a little every day; knowledge is only acquired through and by application and adaptability. Lecturers should study themselves, and try to assist the spirit controlling them, and not leave all for the spirit world to do. Mediumship should be cultivated so that the controlling spirits can do themselves justice, but it is not essential to ignore the claims the country has upon you. The advocates of spiritualism should be reputable citizens; you cannot keep your garments clean if you draggle them through filth and mire, some of the filth will adhere to them and mar their beauty. A great many who profess to be the servants of the spirit world are in the same position as the man was who thought he was called to preach the gospel. Appearing before a council of Bishops, he began telling how the Lord had called him; he was asked what evidence he had; he said he had such beautiful dreams, and he saw written on the wall, P. C., P. C., P. C. The presiding Bishop asked him how he interpreted the vision; he said, preach Christ, preach Christ, preach Christ. You make a mistake in the interpretation, said the Bishop; it was plough corn, plough corn, plough corn. Where there is not adaptability a person is liable to be mistaken in the interpretation they give to visions and messages.

Egotism is one of the evils in human life; no one has got the spirit world at their command, all power resides in spirit, it is the controlling force of the world, man is but an instrument to be operated upon, and he must learn to distinguish between what is from spirit sources, and what is purely human. Humanity is a virtue that needs to be cultivated, and the more we have of it, the less egotism we shall have, and you will never find a humble conscientious man riding more than one horse at a time, and you will never see him on the fence; his humility will make him a close observer of things, though he may not be gifted in speech. He may not be a poet, but he will be a man wherever you find him. As spiritualists you need to cultivate humility and character. This is the object the spirit world has in view. They are not circus performers but educators, their business is to lead you up the steps of time to where your souls can find rest and peace, but individuality, will, determination are qualities essential to growth—the two worlds must work together if you would achieve success.

Spiritualism languishes to day not on account of real merit, but on account of a lack of interest on the part of Spiritualists. There are too many of them trying to ride two horses at the same time, or sitting astride the fence. There is a lack of will force. Madame Grundy is more to them than their spirit friends; popularity is placed in the foreground, and moral stamina lost sight of. A faint heart never won a victory yet, and never will; it is contrary to law. Hobby riders can never gain heaven riding their hobbies; one master is all any man can serve faithfully, and they who attempt more than this will fail.

W. H. REYNOLDS.

THE MYSTIC RIVER.

BY MRS. W. S. MOORE.

When shall I cross that river,
To yonder distant shore,
I know the boatman's waiting,
To row me safely o'er.
And oh my soul is weary,
And my spirit longs for rest,
And across that mystic river,
There's a land so pure and blest.

Many friends have gone before me,
O'er its waters dark and wide,
And they beckon me to follow,
From across the other side.
From across that mystic river,
Come their voices sweet and low,
Come those well remembered voices,
That we loved so long ago.

Just across that mystic river,
Is a world so bright and fair.
Should we dread the crossing over?
When our friends are waiting there?
I can hear them sweetly singing,
And I see the waters flow,
Hark! I hear the boatman calling,
It is time for me to go.
There's manhood's brow serene and high,
And woman with her loveliest eye,
And youthful swains, and maidens fair,
And age, and childhood waiting there.

Stony Fork, Pa.

YES, IT IS COMING.

Standing as we often do in a position to note the workings of unseen intelligences upon mankind, we find ourselves in a situation so surrounded by these active forces, that is difficult to find language to describe them, and we can only compare ourselves to a person standing on an eminence and noting the action of the elements, and seeing a cyclone bearing down upon us, can only shout to those lower down in the valley, it is coming. No one familiar with the history of this country for the past thirty-five years, can fail to realize the rapid progress made by mankind in developing the spiritual faculties and powers they possess; it is not alone the sensitive medium who discerns this fact, but men and women in all the walks of life, feel that there is a tidal wave sweeping down upon them, and they stand appalled at its approach, and can only give expression to their feelings in wonderment and awe. If this tidal wave was charged with political destructive forces, individual resistance might have some effort in counteracting the results which must necessarily follow. If it was a tidal wave of religious thought, such as swept over the world two thousand years ago, its progress might be impeded by persecution, and by putting to death the principal actors in the movement; but those who are instrumental in producing these disturbances are beyond the reach of mortals, they are unseen. They are not amenable to state or national enactments, but are not to be regarded as law-breakers and disturbers of the public peace, their mission is of a higher order, they only disturb your slumbers in order that you may take advantage of the inflowing tide, and anchor your vessel inside the harbor, where there is safety from storm or tempest.

Men have in all ages experienced revolutions and changes in political matters, but to anchor the state or nation would be political death. The state must show, life and activity; nations

must legislate in accord with the progress of her people, hence we see empires and kingdoms crumbling, and republics established upon the ruins. No one feels called upon to step aside and let the wave pass them by, but they breast the tide, and are borne onward by it, nor do they ask to have the tide of events stayed or changed, but rather they are anxiously looking forward to the time when another wave may come and carry them further along in the path of wisdom and progress. It is only in regard to spiritual matters, that men are willing to be anchored. When once a man makes a profession of religion, he permits himself to be chained to church and creed that has not been modified for at least two hundred years, and in some cases as many thousand; when you anchor a vessel it is to hold her in place, she may drift a little with the wind, but as long as the cable holds, you know just where to find your vessel, and when you get a man anchored and the theological cable holds, you know just where to find him. Can any one explain why it is more essential to anchor a man religiously than it is politically? Is there not as great necessity for action in one department as in the other? Is it not more essential for mankind to exercise more sense, more consistency regarding things which will effect him for a longer period of time? We know how necessary sleep is to the body, but the mind never tires, only the body weakens under the strain of mental activities. It is necessary that the body be cared for, but this is temporal; the spirit requires equal care because immortal. Men have been so long anchored to creeds and religious dogmas, that they are afraid to cut loose and drift with the tide; they are afraid some one will charge them with infidelity, and with seeking after strange gods. But is there no balancing power in man; is it possible that he has been set afloat in this world without a guide, and if he has a guide is it not required of him to follow where his guide leads? Would it be consistent in any one to say, when they should manifest some life and some anxiety in regard to the welfare of the spirit, we cannot cut loose from our mooring, and to say we have reason, but dare not trust it? Upon whom does this reflection rest, upon man or upon the power causing him to be. It may not be theologically speaking a healthy sign of the times to see men drifting into infidelity, but what can be expected of them when from an inward sense they realize that for years they have been anchored to something that they can neither reason upon nor receive any satisfaction from, strictly unreliable. When a man finds himself so hemmed in on all sides, we think him excusable if he in attempting to free himself wanders to the other extreme. There has been a great deal of hard work performed by the spirit world, assisted by mortals, in revealing to the world a pathway combining both the spiritual and material wants of the race. Those who select this path find that they have need of an understanding of the political measures necessary for the government of the people, for without law and order there can be no true spirit manifestations; law and order are nature's harmonies, and we question whether the universe could be kept in motion without order, and if order be essential to an Infinite power,

it is all the more essential to finite powers. We regard the spiritual development of the race as a manifestation of healthy, vigorous mental growth; we find also, that whatever effects mankind internally and externally, is being enquired into in such a manner that there is no mistaking the tendency of the times. We remember to have heard men say that great success or prosperity was owing to the shrewdness of men, but the fact is, men have very little to do with the inflowing tide of spiritual growth only as they can be used as channels for transmitting to others what they themselves receive; in this respect it may be said of them by persons ignorant regarding the action of those unseen forces that they were fortunate or successful in a special sense. Success in material affairs is not to be made use of as forming or predicting success in spiritual matters; both have distinct fields of labor, and while one is dependent upon the other in one sense, different modes of thought and different avenues for securing information must be resorted to; a man may be a successful merchant or manufacturer and manifest but little spirituality, and there is abundant evidence to prove that some men are rich in spiritual knowledge and information and yet poor as to material wealth; therefore to form an opinion as to a man's standing it becomes necessary to qualify the term. In ancient times wearing sackcloth, putting ashes upon the top of the head and repeating numerous prayers was taken as evidence of a man's spirituality; but in this age all such practices have been done away with. We estimate a man by the amount of good sense he manifests, we estimate the ability of a merchant by the success achieved, we form an estimation of a man's moral character by evidence he furnishes not by what others say of him, we estimate the moral worth of a statesman by his far seeing legal abilities and honesty of purpose; so in all the walks of life men are measured by what they are and not what they seem to be.

But it is only of recent date that men have ventured to express an opinion pro or con in reference to priests or clergymen; they were once the rulers and are in a degree rulers to-day, but their hold upon the consciences of the people is weakening not because they are priests or clergymen, but because they are no longer able to answer the questions put to them and on that account they are made to stand aside, and the laity moves on without them. It may be pertinent to ask where this assurance comes from, and why is it manifest at this time and nor at former periods? Our answer would be, that it is necessary for the development of the spiritual faculties that they begin in the rudimentary conditions of existence and receive their education gradually; to let in a flood of spiritual light would dazzle and confound them, they must be brought into it by degrees, and when we take into consideration the unnumbered centuries of time it has taken to bring the race to their present position spiritually, it will be readily seen that marked wisdom has been displayed, for if left to man to manipulate, in their greed for what they do not possess, but what they think is just within their grasp, they would wreck the whole movement and their own immediate happiness.

The spiritual instruction of man has been, either by chance or law, placed in the hands of the spirit world, and they deal out to mortals what in their judgment they are qualified to receive or digest; at times there seems as though there was going to be a general outpouring of the spirit, but just when the whole community seems charged with its influence, there comes a lull in the storm, and you are left as it were alone; and for what purpose? Certainly if it were best that there should be a flood of spiritual light thrown out upon the world, and it was being added to continually, men would forget their temporal wants, and instead of proving themselves good citizens, you would have a class of sceptics, and their ambition to live at ease without labor would unsettle their mental balance; hence spiritualism comes in waves, at one time strong at others weak, waiting for the world to reach a position where they can accept and digest it. The Christian when he first begins to investigate the matter feels shocked when the divinity of Jesus is brought into question; and they will tell you that no matter how much truth there may be in the spiritual philosophy, you must not attack the divinity of Jesus, you must not speak of him as a man; but what is to be done? Because the world has hugged an error for two thousand years is no reason why they should continue on in the same lines of thought another two or more thousand years longer. Whatever the present race detects or discovers that is wrong in past history, doctrines or dogmas it is their duty to revise and expose the wrong, and if there be anything, or any man standing in the way the objectionable part or party must be removed. Now it cannot detract from the real value of history to correct an error known to exist; it will not destroy a doctrine to examine it and expunge what is nonessential; no dogma will suffer by being placed under the microscope, neither will any man be any less a man, morally or spiritually, by disassociating him with any thing that is not essentially human; if we are dealing with men, we must know them as such, and if we are dealing with gods, we must know they are gods; and here is where spiritualism brings us to know ourselves, and other new principles and things as they are, and estimate them for what they are worth and no more. In the same manner we should estimate all religious schools of instruction, take every one for what they are worth, and no exception should be made in favor of spiritualism—that must prove its value in order to be accepted. There are many things associated with spiritualism that do not add to its value, but those things are to be expected they are, the outcropping of ancient doctrines not yet outgrown.

Spiritualism like every other movement not recognized nor understood is made the scapegoat for the sins and follies of all preceding ages; the church has kept the indiscretions of her members concealed from public gaze and whenever one of these offending ones by some process becomes convinced in regard to spiritualism, and announces that as their belief, all these buried sins are resurrected and given publicity to and charged upon spiritualism. But the time is coming when there must be a radi-

cal change in the manner in which all new measures of reform must be received; there are too many avenues of communication open between the mundane and spiritual spheres whereby facts can be obtained. We are just emerging out of the age of theory and speculation, and entering upon an era of facts; faith only will be accepted and exercised in so far as it will lead to the possession of proof. The experiences of the coming ages will be of a different character entirely from what was the case in former ages; you are learning to look on both sides of every question and there will be established a principle of cross examination so that every one will know how and where they stand.

But some may claim that all this is not to be credited to spiritualism, but that every school of liberal thought should be credited with a certain amount of it; let us examine the matter and see if the honors should be divided. What shall we say of the materialistic class; they are in one sense liberal, that is they deny the divine right of the church to control human thought and action, they attempt to remove the stumbling, the past has placed in our way, but they age a war of extermination. They say down with the church and in this respect show an equal amount of bigotry as does the church; they are only partially liberal while the spiritualist feels the necessity of granting to every person or organization the same rights they claim for themselves. It is not the policy of spiritualism to send missionaries up and down through the land proselyting, but the advocates of spiritualism are required to state facts and leave the results with those who listen; there may be at times a feeling in individual cases where they would like to demolish every church organization in the land, but this is more a spirit of resistance or retaliation from wrongs suffered. Not even the most advanced spiritualists can conform to the lesson given by Jesus, "when smitten on one cheek to turn the other," resistance is a law of nature. Liberalism consists in being liberal to all classes; if you destroy the foundation upon which a man rests, if you are truly liberal you will help him build a new and more firm one; it is not liberal to lead a man along a path that ends in oblivion no true humanitarian will do this, but having brought a friend out of darkness they will lead him to a brighter sphere.

The times are propitious; true liberalism is being revealed through and by spiritualism. This revelation never leaves any one in the dark, every manifestation is a step forward and upward; the light is placed ahead like a beacon light to guide the mariner into a harbor where there is safety, but this light cannot be extinguished; it is not in the keeping of mortals, it is for them to follow; they may if so inclined, take another course, we shall not insist that they do just as we do, we have performed our duty when we proclaim to the world the treasures we have found, and by example prove ourselves worthy of confidence and emulation. But if our spiritualism does not inculcate charity, fraternity, and brotherly love then there is something lacking in the person or persons and it is for them to cross-examine themselves and find out wherein the fault lies. It should not be expected that spir-

itualism can revolutionize the world in a year or in fifty years, but the time is coming when old things will not be carried forward as they are at the present time; if the world would cut loose from former prejudices and bury all feelings of hatred toward one another; if the church would manifest the spirit of him they pretend to follow, and say to the spiritualistic neighbor, show us the principles upon which you ground your confidence and knowledge of spirit life, and we will examine into it with you. But some may say this is too much like the lion and lamb fable but the time is coming when caste and creed will be swallowed up in spiritual unity. Just how long before this time will come we cannot say, we can only say it is coming; but like all social and religious reformations it appears to make slow progress, but while mortals judge from outward appearances, we in spirit life base our opinions upon the secret workings of life's interior forces, which are doing their work slowly and surely.

There is no class of people who are so well prepared to assist the natural development of matters as spiritualists, for if practicing the principles they profess, each one becomes a factor in the grand work before them; and each one if true to the principles professed are helping to bring about this glorious coming time; but while there is positive evidence of growth there is also a luke warm feeling that acts as a counter balance to the power carrying forward this spiritual reformation. The most effectual stumbling blocks in the way are to be found in the spiritual ranks, opposition from outside parties is expected; but opposition or studied indifference when a cause needs the assistance of every one bearing its name is in one sense criminal; and the excuses offered by these spiritual drones show that they are lacking in moral courage and true manhood and womanhood. Suppose that at the time Luther inaugurated the reformation in Europe his followers and co-laborers after a few months or years warfare had retired from the field and let Luther fight his battle single handed, what would have been the result. Had our forefathers after one or two engagements with the armies of the mother country retired from the field and left the few political and military leaders to carry on the war which resulted in American Independence, would this country have ever been freed from the yoke of England's rulers and armies; had the rank and file in the late war refused to act in concert with head of the nation would slavery have been abolished?

People are too sensitive regarding popular opinion; had Wm. Lloyd Garrison shown any of that weak, puerile sensitiveness, would he occupy the place in the history of this nation that he does to-day? His cause was quite as unpopular as spiritualism is to day, but he faltered not; but seeing with prophetic vision what must come in the future he never looked back not even when dragged through the streets of Boston by a mob with a rope around his neck. He saw the good time coming and was willing to work on regardless of what the slave holding power and its allies might say or do. We want more of the spirit of manliness and independence of character; we are moulding the characters of future generations

and are furnishing material for history, and who, if they will think for a moment, would like to be written down as coward and traitor? The good time coming must of necessity depend largely upon the assistance mortals are willing to give to the spirit agencies who have this matter in charge. Spirits cannot do this work alone, neither would it be wise in them to do it if they could; whatever is worth enjoying is worth working for, whatever is of value to an individual is worth fighting for if need be. The time is near at hand when there must be some decisive action taken by the Church in regard to this matter; it will be impossible for that institution to much longer hold up her head and claim divine sanction, she must prove herself either a friend of men, and a servant of God, or go to the wall; there is no such thing as separating mankind from Deity, they are linked together by birth, by origin, and by all the attributes which mark them as distinct from animal matter.

The soisms in the clerical ranks are strong indications of which way the minds of men are leaning. We see the old systems crumbling, and the new order of things growing stronger, and it is only a matter of a few years before there will be such a revolution in religious matters as was never dreamed of by the founders of Christianity; but there need be no fear of the moral standing of men. Morality is not a Christian virtue; if we were to attempt to define these bases of moral obligation, we should have to enter the realm of civil law. Men have a natural moral conception of the differences between right and wrong, and parents instill these principles in the minds of their children, and at the same time inform them that there are laws for the protection of society. The Church only repeats what some law making body enacts, and their code of morals are not above the standard of countries who know nothing of Jesus or his crucifixion. So that whatever may grow out of the present unsettled state of affairs, the good sense of the people will not permit anything of a reacting tendency; the tide of events carries us forward. Refusing to take part in the work in progress shows a lack of mental vigor, a disregard for the welfare of the race, and breeds a spirit of selfishness that will become a tormenting influence in future years. Spiritualism offers to the world what cannot be found in any other school,—a positive knowledge of human life; there is not a department in human experience but what you will find some evidence of spirit interposition and influence, and all that is required, is, that every one possessing a knowledge of these facts embraced in the spiritual philosophy place their evidence before the world in its true light, and leave the consequence with God and humanity. When men will be men, and women women, then the good time will have come, and the whole human family will be blessed and grow in knowledge and truth.

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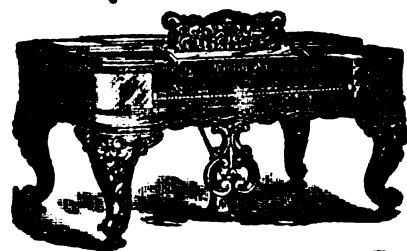
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