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OUR SPIRIT FRIENDS.

Selected for the OLIVE BRANCH by F. Bolles.

When the last glories of the sun's red splendor
Melt in the dull gray gloom,
The faded rays from eyes once bright and tender,
Light up my lonely room.

No intermediary incantation,
Recalls the loved and lost;
The gentle shadows bearing consolation,
Come when we need them most.

When the tired soul oppressed by earthly troubles,
With shattered wings drops feebly in the dust,
When hollowest, frailest, seem life's foolish bubbles,
These spirits whisper, "Trust in God."

Trust as we trusted; trust through toll and trials,
In the heart's sickness and the soul's despair;
Trust as we trusted, strong in self denial,
And comforted by prayer.

Regretful memory and fond affection,
These are the media that recall the lost,
In lonely hours of sorrow and dejection,
They come,—that spirit host.

They gather in their old familiar places,
With wondrous meaning in their ghostly eyes,
With tender smiles and mild reproachful faces,
They teach us to be wise.

Teach us—the left behind—the broken hearted,
With the strange wisdom learned in wider spheres,
Reminding us how they, the loved, departed,
Regard their wasted years.

How with eternal wisdom shining on them,
They see all earthly riddles read aright;
And humbly own the burden laid upon them
Was mercifully light.

So do they warn us of life's dim delusions,
These pleading spirits whispering to our souls;
How through this world's worst trials and confu-
sions,
One purpose rolls.

One hand the web of life forever weaving,
Guides the small mystery of each spirit thread;
Strengthening the weak, upholding the believing,
And garnering the dead.

Thus in the twilight speak these spirit teachers,
These shadows melting dimly from our sight;
Yet wiser far than any mortal preachers,
Wise with an earthly light

So may they ever haunt us—lost, yet cherished,
Cold though their ashes in funeral urn,
That better holier part that has not perished,
The soul will yet return.

LAURA CUPPY SMITH.

SATAN OR DEVIL.

By Rev. Dr. Bushnell.

According to the Manichees or disciples of Zoroaster, a doctrine virtually accepted by many philosophers, two principles have existed together from eternity, one of which is the cause of good, and the other of evil. With sufficient modifications their account is probably true. Thus if their good principle called God by us, is taken as a being, and their bad principle as only a condition privative; one as real cause, the other as a bad possibility that environs God from eternity, waiting to become a fact whenever the opportunity is given, it is even so. And then it follows that the moment God creates a realm of powers, the bad possibility becomes a bad actuality, a satan, or devil (in esse,) not a bad omnipresence over against God and his equal—that is a monstrous and horrible conception—but an outbreathing evil, an empire of evil in created spirits according to their order.

For Satan or the devil taken in the singular, is not the name of any *particular person*, neither is it a personation merely of temptation or impersonal evil, as many insist, but the name is a name that generalizes bad persons or bad spirits with their bad thoughts and characters, many in one.

That there is any one of them who, by distinction or pre-eminence is called satan or devil, is *wholly improbable*. The name is one taken up by the imagination to designate or embody in a conception the mind can most easily wield, the all or total of bad minds and powers.

Thus it is seen that the late Rev. Dr. Bushnell was not a believer in a personal devil. I copied this article from one of his books—Nature and the Supernatural.

F. BOLLES.

INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGE.

By Mrs. A. BAILEY.

We live in an age of steam and electricity. Thought is being carried on lightning wings to all parts of the civilized world. Continents and islands have been brought out of their isolation and made to echo to the hum of busy life that is going on all around. The nineteenth century marks an era of progress in human history, such as the world's poets and philosophers had not dreamed of; it has shaken the theological belief of many, and sent many errors to a timely grave beyond the possibility of resurrection; so that the generations that

are yet to come will tread with a firmer, more elastic step, because some of the rubbish has been got out of the way; but enough remains to warrant all in not slackening their energies on account of what has been done. There are new fields of thought and untried possibilities yet to encounter, and every new truth that has for its object the moral elevation of humanity has always been hooted at and derided, if its exponent has not met with fine and imprisonment or martyrdom at the stake, amid fire and faggots, that we think it will be well enough to mind what we are about and not give our adversaries a chance to again triumph over us.

The car of progress will roll on, but we may be ground to powder if we are not up and doing. It is the business of every Spiritualist and Liberalist to aid it on and not to sit down with folded hands, saying I have nothing to do. The ship of state needs careful watching lest the death knell of liberty be sounding from her watch towers and a nation who are to-day freemen made a nation of slaves. Woman needs to be enfranchised with all the rights of citizenship, that she may enjoy all the rights and privileges the Constitution guarantees to every individual, the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness by every legitimate means the same as man. Until this is accomplished there will be one great drawback to the machinery of American government, and the whole world must ultimately acknowledge this as a principle of divine justice and let their hold on error and tradition go, since it amounts to nothing but a stultification of all that is good and pure.

The world is to be redeemed, but it can not be accomplished without woman is free to act her part in the great drama of life. She must not be enslaved nor compelled to a life of servitude, simply as a household drudge. She must be educated to perform her part in the affairs of nation, to furnish a grander maternity, so that souls shall not be born in darkness and depravity, but pure as the breath of heaven, kissed into life by all that breathes of grandeur, nobleness and sublimity. Then we shall have a new heaven and a new earth, then will justice come and everybody will seek to be just and true to each other. Peace and plenty will smile upon all and there will be no depravity of any sort, because depravity will be impossible under such conditions. Let us one and all work for the good that is in store for us, and it will surely come.

THE CONSOLATIONS OF THEISM.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED IN THE UTICA CITY OPERA HOUSE, BY REV. E. P. POWELL.

Atheism is disbelief in a God; Pantheism asserts that all is God; Theism asserts that there is a spirit life inherent in all things.

But Theism having made this its first principle, ennobles man as the spiritual child of the universal God. These two points taken, the universe becomes a family homestead, and we are infants feeling our way out from the cradle to a reasonable conception of our relations to all things.

To many the modifications of view that result from Theism seem to destroy comfort. This is true especially at death; for the theist has none of the ordinary assurances to give that the dying have gone to a world of extatic bliss or to eternal peace. But it is equally true that in the midst of life Theism fails to give the comfort of supposed revelation; for it has no assurance of rewards in another life for troubles endured here. At first appearance Theism is cold and cheerless, and is to be accepted only under the necessity of its being absolutely demonstrable. I lay aside every effort to demonstrate its truth to-day, or its verifiability and only aim to show that if really understood Theism is full of comfort and more genial to a tired, sick and troubled soul than any other religious doctrine.

I shall take my standpoint at the bedside of the dying where, if any where, it will be difficult to demonstrate that there can be a comfort in any theory of facts. Yet it is the place where both the going and the left are most in need of comfort and where religion concentrates its power to cheer and strengthen. No religion can live that fails at this point. If Theism is valueless here, it is useless as a religion and will not be worth our adoption.

Now I do not mean to try to make theism gratify the senseless wishes of those who care for no comfort except a brazen assurance that tells imaginary stories as well assured facts; and I shall make no pretense that theism can unfold the future. If you have a bundle of questions to ask about eternity and will take the word of somebody that knows just as much as you do about it and no more, then go to the priest. Theism is not without a revelation, but it is that kind of revelation which you get at the forge and the bench and the plough and the cradle—the revelation of what is to come along the line of those natural sequences and laws where you work. All I know about the harvests of 1893 is what I learn from previous harvests and from astronomy and the recurring rains and the change of seasons. We foresee the future along the range of what we judge to be sure results from fixed causes. This is the revelation that Theism has. It stands at the bedside of the dying, not looking into the future as dark or unreadable, but precisely as the farmer lays up seed corn for next year; so Jesus says lay up for yourselves treasures for the spirit-life.

Nature is a bible that has a new page written each day, and it is largely prophetic of what is to come. The farmer does not feel inconsolable until someone comes along and

says, I have a supernatural revelation that tells you that winter is only a passage from life to life,—that another year will come with the same forces in operation to produce new harvests. The farmer would say, I do not need you. I can see all that from nature. It is only when the stretch of vision is very far into the future that men give a class of priests the chance. So at death they come to console us. The theist says, I do not need your assurances. Nature itself is life, not death. The system in which we live is not one of destruction but of progressive development.

So at the outset Theism, you see, has this superb advantage. It does not reject the voice of nature. It studies the laws of universal life, while the priest begins with the assertion that nature has nothing to say. Nature has a great deal to say, and we cannot know the least thing concerning the future except as we learn it out of to-day.

The theist consequently gets in the habit of seeking consolations in nature. For every trouble there is a compensation in nature, and generally right here and now. Now what is the consequence of all this. I will show you. The theist soon gets to dropping all talk about being a stranger here, and about some other world as being home. He falls into a habit of considering himself a part of the natural movement of the universe.

The theist soon also gets to utterly ignore the machine part of prophecy—the judgment bar, the court scenes, the panorama of priestly story. A man who has been at a judgment bar all his life is not to be terrified with a threat of one to-morrow.

But I must not forget that we stand at the bedside of the dying. One we love is going away forever. The ties of intensest love and self interest are to be broken. What can Theism say! Are we to be severed forever? Is there an immortality beyond? Theism cannot bring the authority of Moses or Paul and call it revelation, but it goes to its own bible, nature, and from that it draws these facts that man is an outgrowth or development of the spiritual forces of the universe, or as we say in familiar way, he is the child of God; and then it says with a faith that is absolute, let us trust our Father. It draws no picture of the future which would inevitably be misleading and engender false faith. It simply says trust the Supreme One in whom you live and have your being. Can supposed revelation say more? It can only talk of eternal rest and a heaven, which for ease and luxury is very barbarian. Theism says if you live forever, you must think forever, you must work forever, and endure forever; you are a part of nature's forces and a force by the very definition of it is activity; you involve duty. But theism has this also to say, that the only fear that lies before the dying is the same fear that lies before the living; that is the fear of your own wrong doing. It is absolute in this, that the deity of orthodoxy is a survival of barbarism. But that the divine nature, which is the soul of this life, is the same divine goodness forever. Theism is full of faith, but it is faith not in priests but in God. It goes quietly into the future, seeing no being ahead who has an eternity of torture for those who hap-

pen to die. The traveler who stumbles on the rites of savages does not fear lest their grim idol represent the processes of eternity. So when you listen to the grinding of the teeth of Calvinism, do not fear that it is God's machinery of revenge. Here is the true statement:

If you have been in the hands of absolute Benificence here, you will continue so to be. The priest readjusts all things at death. God and goodness here on this little globe for a brief few years; there God and terror forevermore. Theism is intensely indignant in the name of God at this insolent perversion of his character. Is God merciful and tender and helpful only to the babes, and hardly that. Is it his character to be helpful, or is it only a suspension of his real nature. My good friends, Atheism is infinitely better than Calvinism—no God at all rather than that bitter mockery, who laughs at us with a salvation that hardly gets to the ear of a millionth part of the race.

Shall we live forever? Theism answers what you call death is a dissolution of the body. If you are anything apart from the body, as you well know you are, the loss of the body is only a stage of that evolution which you steadily undergo. Nature is a very gentle mother and holds her babes in her arms when needed; but she sends them each night through a sleep that if we saw for the first time, would be as dreadful as death. But we have seen both sides of sleep—the morning of renewed vigor, as well as the night of relaxed consciousness. Theism says emphatically whatever is before you is the best. It is a necessity in the great evolution of life; it is not death.

But theism says further weigh this fact; that the older you grow, the stronger is your love for the universal good and right—it is what you call piety—or a personal relation to the Supreme will. In this growth lies your capacity for increased joy. It is a widening of spiritual thought and spiritual force.

But theism has something more to say. It does not decry life as something to be escaped from. The priest, to magnify his paradise, fouls his earthly nest. Theism says weigh well the past. You are to-day to separate; but you have had years of mutual love. All that to a true soul is property. A healthy soul looks on his past life as a treasure house. He lives backward as well as forward. No good thing is ever lost. He owns the friendships and good deeds and kind words of old years. Why then talk of life as brief and a comparative failure? To a decent soul it is a marvelous success. When I love a dear one who has been with me for ten years, I have ten years of lovely memories, and in those memories many lessons that have ennobled me. Good mother, the joy of having had a lovely boy is no trifle. Instead of giving up to mourning his departure, relive what you have had. Rehabilitate the ten years you possess. You can never be motherless again. Nor can anyone go into another life in any way different from the way he would grow away from us here. Not ten out of five hundred of your life friendships continue ten years. We grow quietly apart, each to our own needs and responsibilities.

Nor does theism refuse to consider questions of probabilities. It does not refuse to reason about such problems as our future relation to our departed friends,—to our great heroes like Jesus and Buddha; to the noblest minds of our race, like Shakespeare, Bacon, Socrates, Spinoza, to the most lovable characters and the dear babes of our own flock; to our parents and our kinfolk. But it only reasons concerning such questions and wisely warns us away from credulous and narrowing hopes. There is great danger in the theories of orthodoxy that false hopes will be nourished; but that would not be so much matter if such hopes were not narrowing. The truth is always enlarging; falsehood is always narrowing. Now the false hopes in this case are something of this sort: 1st, That we shall meet all our friends as of old. But reason answers they have grown older, and if children when they died, are now mature. 2d, That we shall all hover around and behold Jesus; but good sense shows us that only a few can be in immediate intercourse. The future life must move on as rapidly and even more rapidly than now. Bear in mind that as we grow older time is briefer. It is a wise provision to make life less tedious. If a year at fifty seemed as long as a year at ten, we should get weary of life. Time is short in proportion to what we have done and what we have to do. Eternal time is only time prolonged. A thousand years will become as one day.

So the expectation that another life will recall this one and renew the old is not reliable. Revelation may assert this, but theism warrants only this, that the future days shall be grander, nobler, busier, briefer, with joys proportioned to our attainments. If the boy says when I am a man I will eat all the sugar plums I like, and will play marbles all day, be sure when he gets to be a man he will not have his boy desires. Neither will we have a thousand years hence the same tastes or powers as now.

We make a good deal too much of even our friendships. The reason we need our babes so much now is because they need us. Our parents are very dear to us because they need us. Sympathy depends largely on weakness and dependence. That something of this sort will always exist between souls seems probable, but not as now. Boys grow out of our arms and go away to build new families. We do not expect them to come back to their cradles; nor do we wish it.

Here then is theistic rational comfort in the face of life's worst trouble:

1. All change is part of a law and process of progress and life—a tendency not toward the worse but the better.

2. All change is under and in the will of Supreme Love and Wisdom.

3. All change has so far had its compensation in unexpected good to the good.

4. No change can take from us the joys of the past. A love loved is a perpetual possession.

5. The next life is continued life with the same divine Father and it is part of the reign of justice.

Will you allow me briefly to line the consolations of priestly revelation?

1. You shall live forever; you such as you

are,—your body raised again and your soul joined to it.

2. You shall be free from care and pain and sorrow; and therefore must be out of range of sympathy with the sorrowing and troubled.

3. You shall go to a world where you do not grow old, or die, or essentially change.

4. You shall be united to those you loved, if they have been saved; if not, they and you are eternally, hopelessly separated. This separation is a frequent occurrence.

5. Your joys will not be decreased, though your children be in eternal misery.

6. You shall behold Jesus and praise him forever and ever.

7. God will fill you with all delights and though your sins be as scarlet, he will for your faith call you white and clean.

8. In heaven the redeemed will live in close contact, and be separate from all who are not pardoned for the sake of Jesus.

At every death bed these consolations are reiterated over and over again with great variation, but always you will mark, 1st, That this world is portrayed as only a sinful, wicked place forsaken of God. 2, Heaven is portrayed as the great hope of the redeemed. 3, That for all this death is spoken of as an enemy. Now theism does not look on this world as a bad place; nor on any secluded paradise as a good place; nor on death as an enemy.

Theism furthermore rejects this schedule of consolation as,

1, Little short of Atheism, for it makes God to be only in heaven. Hell is godless; the earth is little better.

2. It makes of God a localized being living with his elect.

3. It robs the good of goodness and makes them selfish.

4. It makes moral joy to consist in physical surroundings.

My good friends, will you consider what a sad perversion of a moral nature it must be when a good person, say a sweet mother, can come to any of the following conclusions:

1. A large portion of the human race will suffer forever, but I shall be happy.

2. My children may be lost eternally, but I shall be happy.

3. Whatever is the will of God and whether it be what seems to me good or bad, I must heartily acquiesce in his will.

4. I may even myself be lost; nevertheless, I must and will praise God and bless him for his righteousness.

5. A true soul is made noble by forbearance, endurance, pity and the performance of duty, nevertheless, I ought as a Christian duty to pray for deliverance, and a safe rest in heaven.

6. Many poor creatures need my help, yet I am religiously obligated to desire to depart and be with Jesus.

7. This world is in reality a marvelous place in which I might live a thousand years and hardly begin to comprehend it; yet I am doing piously when I decry it and despise it.

I need not say that a religion that deals thus with the moral nature is of very improbable value.

I cannot but recur to her who left me but one month ago without one shadow before her;

and I well remember the horror with which death was best for her until she forsook orthodoxy. "I am no more afraid of God," she said, "no more." But had she died ten years ago she would have gone in excruciating fear. Calmly theism led her into and through the valley, and God was peace and love and rest.

I contrast what was lately said by the son of a Congregational deacon. His mother, after years of brooding misery, passed away into the region of judgments, hell and heaven. "Sir," said he to his pastor, "my poor mother's life was made wretched by that infernal theology." Does the hope of heaven sustain your sinking spirits? Not if there be one lingering, faint doubt of your possibly coming short of heaven. And what believer feels sure that after all he may not be a castaway? And why? Why after all his prayers and moans and belief? Why, but to add to the glory of an autocrat of all the worlds.

Theism is emphatically this,—the doctrine of God in all things. It emphasizes the soul in nature, the love in the soul, the wisdom in the love. The universe is not only a superb machine, but a moral homestead. It strives to bring up our moral view of the universe to the standard of our advanced physical views.

Now tell me, ye who long have trod,
Hath priest a better comfort taught
Than this Our Father at the loom has wrought.

Or this, there is no broken law,
No plan divine with human flaw,
No devil ravening tooth and claw;

Or this, what to our human right,
Is at the best but partial sight,
'Tis but the valley seen at night.

THOUGHTS WHILE GATHERING LEAVES.

Come out, come out to the woods and fields,
And gather the beautiful autumn leaves;
For every tree its glorious crown
Of wondrous beauty is shaking down,
And through the woodland paths are spread
A carpet fit for a queen to tread.

To every sheltered nook they creep,
And along the lanes in piles they leap,
They are quivering down through the lazy air,
Silently falling everywhere.

And in my mind the wonder grows,
(For nature ne'er her plans will disclose,)
How were their varied colors wrought,
And where their glowing radiance caught?

A fairy bird must have been o'er the land,
And touched them all with a charmed wand,
For never a painter with subtlest art
Could half their hues to his work impart,
Holding in their gorgeous rays
The glory of these autumn days.

Oh! memory, as I weave my rhyme,
You bring me thoughts of the olden time;
I stand again in our cottage door,
And gaze on the scenes I loved of yore,
I can see the crooked orchard trees,
And the leaves that reached above the eaves,
With the maples turning from green to gold,
Scattering down their wealth untold,
And as I here the picture scan,
Knee-deep in the drifted leaves I stand.

Oh! the hopes that I cherished then have fled,
With the withered leaves now lying dead,
But for flowers gone I will not grieve,
While I bind a wreath of these beauteous leaves,
For soon will end this gala day,
So gather the bright leaves while we may.

SCANDAL SEED.

A woman to the holy father went,
 Confession of her sin was her intent;
 And so her misdemeanors, great and small,
 She faithfully to him rehearsed them all;
 And, chiefest in her catalogue of sin,
 She owned that she a tale bearer had been,
 And borne a bit of scandal up and down
 To all the long tongued gossips in the town.
 The holy father for her other sin
 Granted the absolution asked of him;
 But while for all the rest he pardon gave,
 He told her this offense was very grave,
 And to do fit penance she must go
 Out by the wayside where the thistles grow,
 And gathering the largest, ripest one,
 Scatter its seeds; and that when this was done,
 She must come back again another day
 To tell him his commands she did obey.
 The woman, thinking this a penance light,
 Hastened to do his will that very night,
 Feeling right glad she had escaped so well.
 Next day but one, she went the priest to tell;
 The priest sat still and heard the story through,
 Then said, "There's something still for you to do;
 Those little thistles' seeds which you have sown,
 I bid you re-gather every one."
 The woman said, "But father, 'twould be vain
 To try and gather up those seeds again;
 The winds have scattered them both far and wide
 Over the meadow vale and mountain-side."
 The father answered, "Now I hope from this
 The lesson I have taught you will not miss;
 You cannot gather back the scattered seeds,
 Which far and wide will grow to noxious weeds,
 Nor can the mischief once by scandal sown,
 By any penance be again undone."

SHALL WE KNOW EACH OTHER THERE?

Knowledge is the key which unlocks the secret holds of nature and reveals to the world what has been hidden away from the gaze of men for unnumbered centuries. It also is the key which unlocks the doors of the spirit world and permits mortals to look upon the faces of those they have numbered with the dead. Knowledge is the Paul Pry who discovers the secret outreaching of human affection and sometimes startles even the most self-confident and secretive, by publishing to the world what was supposed to be known only to the individual. Therefore it can be truly said that knowledge is power. To know a thing, places the individual upon a sure foundation, a position the theorist never reaches; hence the real advantage the Spiritualist has over those who only theorize and believe, but are never sure. The assertions of Spiritualists may seem extravagant to one not versed in the teachings of Spiritualism. With them knowledge is the ultimate. It makes no difference what route they travel, nor the means employed to arrive at facts; if honorable means are employed and persevered in, there is not one of the millions now inhabiting the earth but what could say in reference to a future state, we know there are no dead; but life is here, there and everywhere, for all time and through all eternities.

With these preliminary thoughts, it will be noted that we have changed somewhat our views regarding this subject, being at all times susceptible to truth when it could be demonstrated, which was done in our case, and the same nature of evidence will be furnished to every one. No one person is an exceptional character before the Just Law-giver of the universe. Every man, woman and child

stands upon a plane of equality, but in the realm of spirituality and mental acquisitions there are marked differences, and no one is more sensible of this fact than the individuals themselves. Men sit in judgment upon themselves and their own actions daily, but how few really know what they are doing when passing judgment upon certain acts of their lives. The Christian theory has always been and is to-day, that what we call self judgment is not the reasoning power and consciousness of acting under the direction of some unseen intelligence, whose object and desire is to lead the prisoner at the bar to a mental condition whereby any wrong contemplated or committed will so baste their bare backs as to cause them to make full reparation. It will be a propitious moment when the facts of Spiritualism, now in the possession of a comparative few, will be the property of the world. Men have supposed that so long as they were concealed from mortal sight they were safe. The all-seeing eye is not so much feared as the eye of an earthly friend. But in some cases our dearest friends, those whose presence has done the most to keep us in the path of rectitude and honor, have passed to other conditions of being. They are seen no more with the physical sight, and perchance they are only occasionally remembered; but yet they live and have the use of all their mental and comparable qualities. They not only see what is being done, but they know the nature which prompts to the act indeed.

Statements of this kind may seem visionary to all who would prefer to have them so, but to the man of honor the knowledge is a source of pleasure.

Very few receive their just reward as they journey on through life. We know so little of each other, and the craving for knowledge runs in more superficial channels; it is glitter and show which moves the masses. But there must needs be a balancing power. One man who knows the principles and workings of law can silence a multitude of speculations. The negative element is subject to the positive in all cases. A person who says he knows and can give a reason for his knowledge, is prepared to do battle successfully against the whole world; while he who doubts and stammers is like a dried leaf, driven about by every wind that blows, with no resting place here or there.

The demonstrated facts relative to the immortality of the soul, while shadowed out by some of the sages of former ages, may yet be truly considered as a something belonging to this age. If the human soul could be read, the ground work of modern Spiritualism would be formed, but principally in theory. They did not understand the laws of control any more than some celebrated divines do to-day, and for this reason we find very little in ancient or modern history bearing upon this subject, and we can best compare the condition of the spirit world during these ages with that class of men who oppose every movement made in the direction of organized corporate bodies among spiritualists. The spirit world could never work effectually until after there had been some definite plan of operation agreed upon. It was essential to both mortals and

spirits that some basis of operation be agreed upon; each one must have confidence in the truthfulness and fidelity of the other. With such a platform to stand upon, effective work becomes possible, with knowledge as the ultimate.

The enjoyments of life are the natural outgrowths of personal honor, confidence and trust. In the company of strangers there is a natural reserve or coolness. Neither party knows how far they may go and not feel that they are intruding. The mind of man is not an open book to be read at all times and by every one. There are laws of attraction, as well as laws of repulsion. We are drawn to some, though we cannot tell why, and we repel the advances of others, yet cannot give any reason. The only reason that could be given is, there is no attraction; no channel of sympathy drawing them together. They never learn to love each other. Knowledge under these circumstances is an impossibility, and the same law must continue unless there be a complete change in conditions and environments. To say that death destroys the laws of attraction and repulsion would be false. Though changes take place, they are in the outer and not in the interior soul of being. Therefore it cannot be laid down as a rule of law that we shall all of us know each other after the change of death takes place, any more than we know each other here.

A person possessing a finely organized spiritual nature cannot fellowship with one of opposite traits of character. They may occupy corresponding planes of mental influence, but their fields of labor will be in different directions. The difference in organic structure makes them strangers to each other. And here we will point out a few of the fallacies in the Christian religion.

The Christian claims that death destroys all barriers between souls providing they are of one faith, no matter how divergent were their views before the change occurred. Being brought into what they are pleased to term the presence of God, all feeling of selfishness is lost, and their love for the whole human family increased. But how can this be when the God before whom they now stand is lacking in these qualifications? It would be equivalent to saying that men possessed more love and charity than the power creating them. For we are told that beyond the river of death there can be no reparation and no forgiveness of sins. It will be seen that the position is unalterable. Those who have passed on to spirit life return, and by their reported statements refute all such accounts; and if traced far enough it will be found that they originated in the human mind. Men endow their God with their own natures, only enlarged and intensified.

Shall we know each other there? The meaning is:—In spirit life shall we be as one family? We answer most emphatically, no! but we shall know those who know us. It is supposed that there will be a reunion of families in spirit life. They may all meet, but we know there are in earth life families as widely separated in tastes, thoughts and habits as the north pole is from the south pole; there is no mutual bond of sympathy between them

To compel such persons to live in the same conditions, to breathe the same atmosphere, would be equal to the tortures of the Spanish inquisition.

Nature has provided a place for every one, but leaves her work in an unfinished state. She provides houses but it belongs to those who occupy them to beautify and adorn them. Nature gives to men seed time and harvest, but if men neglect to plant seed they will not receive any returns therefrom. Man is a factor in the economy of things. He has his place in the world and he must fill his position or be looked upon as a failure. Opposite mentalities can never blend, because they cannot know each other. A great many people seem to think that Jesus is waiting with outstretched arms to receive them, but in mind and soul there is a gulf between them, so wide and deep that not even the love of God can span, and they may be very pure minded, conscientious people, according to their inherited qualities, but they cannot know anything about Jesus. They may have a fancy mental picture, but like all pictures, they can be improved upon by more skilled artists.

There are perhaps as many widely diverging views as to the conditions of spirits as upon any one matter which men have to deal with; and it will be safe to conclude that outside of Spiritualism nine-tenths of the ideas expressed are speculation, borrowed from fancy, that never can be realized, and would be a curse instead of a blessing if they could be. When facts are sought for, very little attention will be given to the adverse opinions of others. Facts are the foundation pillars upon which truth rests, and when certain principles have been found true there is no power in untruth that can alter or change the facts. Spiritualism has run the gauntlets of public opinion, and despite all unjust criticism it continues to grow and has become a power in the realm of religious philosophies and scientific thought.

Thus far the spirit world has led the way, and there may be some things which need explanation. We all know that next to God's love comes mother's love. Should she have one of her babes taken away from her in infancy, neither time nor change of condition can eradicate the image of the lost one from her mind though years pass away and her once glossy looks have turned gray, her step once so elastic has grown slow and unsteady; yet her mind is as clear and she can describe any feature of that child as perfectly as though it was but yesterday that it was with her. She knows how the child looked. But according to the Christian theory of a future life her babe, though many years have passed away, is to her a babe still; for growth in stature is not taught by any class of religionists, outside the ranks of Spiritualism. This Christian doctrine is therefore not only misleading, but it is subversive of human happiness. With a correct view of things no one would expect a child to remain as such eternally; there must be growth in stature as well as in mind. Any faculty having a special part to enact in the drama of life, must by exercise and application progress towards maturity. This is true of spirit life, as well as in

the earth life, for there comes no particular change to the individual.

We shall know those who have passed on to spirit life as they are, not as they were; and mortals must learn to look upon these matters rationally. It is the pride of parents' hearts to see their children grow in beauty and strength; they watch their every step from infancy to maturity. The growing child feels the necessity of parental counsel and companionship; and when there is a mutual blending of the affectional natures of both parents and children, there is not power enough in the world to separate them. The law of attraction is one of the strongest known to science or law, and it will make no difference how many years may intervene between the physical death of two or more persons in whom there is such a blending of forces as we have cited. They will know each other in spirit life, because they know each other now. There friendship is not subject to the mutations of atmosphere or changes of fancy. It may be said of them, they have two hearts that beat as one. Parents who have lost children must not expect to meet them as children in spirit life, unless both cross the stream at the same time; but keeping the image of loved ones engraven upon our hearts will strengthen the circle of soul affection, binding together spirit and mortal for time and eternity.

"There will be no sorrow there," says the poet, but it is evident his words were not inspired by angels; for they know that sorrow is as natural to mankind as joy. We could not reach true happiness unless we knew by experience the effects of unhappiness. Spirits have their joys and sorrows, their moments of sadness and their hours of gladness. How can it be otherwise seeing, they are human? There is pleasure in anticipating the meeting of friends long separated, and the joy felt will be greatest to the recently released mortal; for though scores of years have passed since the first change took place, the spirit has never lost sight of the mortal. They have traveled side by side through all the vicissitudes of life, but the eyes of the mortal have been closed and the spirit has not been seen. Many of the expressions made by departing souls are tokens of surprise to them,—it is the opening of their spiritual vision and they see that they are surrounded by crowds of witnesses. There is no longer any hesitancy about leaving one condition for another. In a moment of time the immortality of the soul is made clear, and that closes the long mortal strain of trying to find out "if a man die will he live again?" The problem of problems is solved.

The question is frequently asked, will there be a continuance of present family relationship in spirit life? We answer yes, and no. Where there is soul attraction there will be no separation, but when that element is lacking there can be no reunion. Ties of blood do not in a true sense constitute family relationship; only the true relationship of souls continues. Union of the sexes from convenience or from mercenary motives is only a union of the interests affected; they are earthly and end with the death of the body; there can be no excuse for continuing them; the purposes

for which they were enacted are fulfilled. Both parties are as free in spirit as though they had never known each other, because there was no soul attraction binding them together. And the same law obtains in relation to children. There are in the natural order of things many beautiful lessons that are profitable if studied carefully and honestly, and what may appear unjust from a Christian standpoint will be found just and equitable when joined in harmony with nature and law.

LEONIDAS POLK.

The London *Christian World* publishes a series of letters, from one of which we clip the following:

Of what use is it to tell people a world of things of which they never heard and can form no idea? Our great and delightful writer, Washington Irving, tells us of a great Dutch preacher, who really deserves to be held in immortal honor, not only as a pulpit orator, but as one who knew how to do it. For a long time the village had been discoursed to by a preacher who described the joys of heaven after the approved fashion of ceasing from sin, singing, playing upon harps, walking in white, etc., etc. The church was empty and continued empty until this new orator came, who tried quite another tack. He showed how heaven was a place of canals, and the new Jerusalem cut up into beautiful dykes; and how the "places prepared" there were in the most approved fashion of Dutch houses, shining with paint, varnish and glazed tiles, into which should 'enter nothing that defiled or made' any kind of dirt—horse nor ass, nor dog, nor cat; and where the pleasant years of the long eternity should be spent in scrubbing and rubbing, washing and painting. The church was crowded, and all the good housewives turned their faces Zionward. Did not this great preacher know what he was about, and illustrate that great principle of all good acting, putting people on good terms with themselves?

Mr. Spurgeon recently made a very witty speech before the London Baptist association. Among other things he proposed to found a society for "bigots," for everybody who believed anything nowadays was a "bigot." In ridiculing the over-niceness and fastidiousness of some ministers, he told a story of a venerable divine who said that "Jonah was three days and three nights in—the society of a fish!"

Not long since Father Shipman told a good anecdote of the Rev. Dr. Strong. That witty divine, in his earlier days, was candidating in some place and was told that his services would no longer be required. On asking the reason he was told that the people thought he favored the doctrine of universal salvation. "Gentlemen," replied Mr. Strong. "I am not aware that I have ever preached the doctrine of universal salvation, nor do I think I shall ever preach it, but if I ever do, I promise to make this parish an exception!"

THE DEAD CHILD.

How often I live over that hour in which a precious one struggled with the angel Death. "Oh, papa! this is the river. Beautiful! Beautiful! Let us sing,—" "Yes we'll gather at the r-i-v—, and the water hushed his voice forever. There is a drawer, a sacred drawer, and folded away are tiny things as sacred as a shrine, and each has a voice, sad but ever sweet.

LINES TO A RAY OF LIGHT.

O, thou beautiful ray of light,
Coming from that great orb so bright,
Ninety-five millions of miles away,
To disperse our darkness and give us the day.

Your journey was made in few moments of time,
Through regions of space or matter refined :
Did you stop on your way some new comet to trace,
Or to see if some planet worn out, was erased.

You glad ten earth's children, you come with good cheer,

On the wings of fresh morn and in brightness appear,

We thank you, kind ray, as love's mission you fulfil,
In obedience to law, by which nothing stands still.

O, tell us somewhat of that grand orb, your home,
As it stands in its majesty seeming alone.
Do vegetables, animals, men there have birth,
And do they live and die like those of this earth ?

Did your grand orb have its birth
With the planets, or was it evolved first ?
Was it from nebulous matter formed,
And how came it in such glory to be adorned ?

What is that brightness that dazzles our eye,
And those clear corruscations it throws in the sky ?
What are those dark spots we see on its disc,
Are they caused by convulsions, turmoil and strife ?

Do not the planets that roll round your home
Give and take from it while traveling alone ?
And when in clusters they approach your bright sphere,

Is not the power greater than when one is near ?

Is this why our earth is so convulsed to-day,
By earthquake, cyclone and electric display,
Causing this glorious agitation in thought,
Of which our earth to-day is so nobly fraught ?

Do the roaming comets, the great and the small,
Ever assist you or make you a call ?
What elements compose both nucleus and tail,
And when they appear have we reason to quail ?

O, did you pass through what we mortals call space ?
Through the azure blue on your earthward race,
Were our loved ones in those beautiful spheres,
Have they dwelt there in love all these many, many years ?

If so, could you feel their breath of love,
As it comes down to us in showers from above,
Was your light too material for them to see,
As you darted by them in your joyful glee ?

Answer, I pray, thou lovely bright ray,
Those questions we think of so much in this day,
The earth is alive and the cause we would trace,
Of all nature's phenomena concerning our race.

Good bye, little ray, O, where will you stay,
When the curtains of night shut out the bright day ?
I know you'll stay somewhere, that surely must be,
As nothing is lost in eternity.

F. E. B.

THE INFLUENCE OF MUSIC.

All the religions of the world were born of poetic parentage. Turn wheresoever you may and you will find a musical element largely predominating in the natures of all men ; and were all other means of grace denied them they would sing their way out of a life of care into a world of divine beauty and song. That man does not exist but what can be brought into harmony with nature by the influence of music. No matter how low down in the scale of manhood he may have fallen, his former sensibilities can be reached and made to keep time with the charms of music. Argument appeals to man's reason ; music goes beyond this ; it stirs up the affectional nature and brings them in sympathy with rest

of mankind. In the case of a criminal, it seems to recall days of long ago, when innocence was stamped upon every feature and when joy blossomed in the soul like a rose in June. Not only does the soul of man respond to strains of music, but even the animal kingdom is largely affected and is more easily subdued by it.

It is but a few years since the tuning fork was the only instrument possessing a musical sound permitted in any of the Protestant churches. The violin was regarded as an emissary of the evil one and was debarred the means of grace allowed the tuning fork. The Roman church was not so sensitive, but knowing that there were charms in music, cultivated that element among their worshippers, and made it an important feature in the religious services ; and we all know what the effect has been. Men, women and children are attached to the Catholic church by their music quite as much as to listen to the recital of masses or the eloquence of the priest. Dispense with music in the Catholic church, and there would be as much confusion as is said to have occurred at the building of the tower of Babel.

At a recent meeting of the Presbyterian Synod, there was an attempt made to banish all instrumental music from religious services held by that society ; and the basis of argument against music was that God had not so directed its use. But the opposition was too strong, and so for a time things will be permitted to take their usual course. But supposing that the church should confine itself strictly to what the bible does teach, what would be the future prospects of mankind ? or suppose both church and state should ignore the lessons taught by nature and experience and by the demands of society ; the result would be a return to the days of primitive ignorance. As the matter stands at the present time, the church is five hundred years behind the age. Who desires to see polygamy supercede monogamy ? Who wants to see human slavery restored ? Who would be happy knowing that all the advantages now enjoyed by the use of the telegraph, the use of steam machinery of all kinds ? Who would fall down upon their knees and thank God that all scientific attempts and inventions had been legislated out of use ? Would the average citizen of civilized countries enjoy having some one thrumming upon a harp and singing, and the harpist dancing before a procession in the manner King David did ? Imagine for a moment the procession crossing for the first time the bridge recently completed in your largest cities, and the President of the United States leading the procession in a nude state playing upon a harp, and yet such things are reported in the bible with God as its reputed author. We think the people who witnessed the grand pageant would much prefer listening to a good band of music, playing modern melodies.

The influence of music cannot be estimated, and if offensive to Deity, he has the power to silence it ; but so long as he does not, some recommend its cultivation and continuance. Let the church discard it if she is so inclined ; the masses will encourage it and it is easy to determine to whom the people will congregate.

When we are asked to revive the good old

days of bible history and conclude to do so, we must accept what we find there. If our sense of modesty is shocked, we must bear it ; if by so doing we can add to the glory of God and the upbuilding of his cause upon the earth. We must throw away all scientific attainments, and useful improvements must be cast aside, because they have a tendency to the exaltation of genius in man. It is said God gave King David the plans of the temple afterwards built by his son Solomon, but who gave the gentile nations the plans for building their costly temples of worship. Has it ever been known when God refused to accept any of the buildings dedicated to him ? Has he not grown rich upon the hard earned money of the poor ? Does he ever pay them any interest upon their investments in church property ? We do not remember ever to have heard of a dividend declared or a check given. Does he assist in the support of governments ? Does he pay any insurance upon his property ? Does he contribute to the funds for the support of a police force to guard his property ? Does he not accept their services without compensation ? Has he not done so through all time and in all countries ? This may seem to the warm-hearted, religious devotee sacrilegious, but is what we have here stated not true ? Is not the Jehovah of the bible the most aristocratic ruler the world has ever known ? Having been emancipated from such slavish dominion do we want to be again brought under his rule ? Rather give us increased advantages for leaving. Give the world more railroads, more steamboats, more telegraphic lines, more telephones, more scientific improvements in machinery of all kinds ; but at least give the world more and better music ? Give the people anything that will make them better citizens, more charitable and benevolent, with less desire to harshly criticise and pass judgment upon their fellow-men.

Whatever is natural to a man, if it does not infringe upon the rights of his fellow-man, he has the legitimate right to allow full scope to any gift possessed. The church claims this right as well as Spiritualists. They profess to have a channel opened through and by which God announces his selections of men to represent him ; and if we were to question the veracity of those set apart no greater offense could be committed. But we want to ask a very simple question : Gentlemen, how do you know that it is God calling you ? May it not be the evil one ? Tell us how you know that you are called to perform a specific work ? By what authority do you place yourselves before the world as the interpreters of Deity ? Do you hold communion with him ? If so, how and when ? Do you know whether he has an ear for music or not, and if so, how did you learn it ? Have you ever listened to his singing ? Is he a skillful harpist ? Is he a judge of good music ? Let the world know the results of your investigations ; for if you are ambassadors of the Most High, you must have received your credentials from the celestial courts. We want to see them before you can be acceptable. The mystery of Godliness is a good thing to use as a cloak to cover up our ignorance, but we are dealing in facts to-

day. Every man is upon the witness stand, and the testimony given is being weighed and what is worthless is being cast to the winds. All that is beneficial is garnered up and put to practical use.

Music enters largely into all forms and systems of worship, and a religious service without it would be of very little benefit to those who listened. The average church goer is as deeply interested in the musical part of church exercises as they are in the sermon, and a public speaker who has no music in his soul had better retire from the ministry before he is asked to resign. Now this natural outgrowth of the soul in song is a part of man's inherited nature and it makes no difference where you place him he will sing, and we contend that there is just as much real devotion in music as there is in prayer.

But if instrumental music is offensive to Deity, believing as the christian claims to be lieve, that in him there is not a shadow of turning, and accepting the bible as his revealed will, what relationship exists between God and the angels and elders, who chant his praises continually? The generally accepted idea is that every angel is a skilled harpist; and night and day they sing and shout "hoseannas to the Highest," and those who cannot sing shout amen! So by the nature of things there must be young and inexperienced pilgrims, as well as the more proficient; hence there must be degrees or grades of music in heaven and hell as upon earth. An angel who has thrummed a harp for a thousand years should have obtained greater proficiency than an angel new born, though they may not be one-half so zealous; and if the soft mellow tunes of an organ played by skilled hands is an offense to Deity, what of the angelic harpists? Has he an ear for their music, and none for his earthly children's? Is there so great a difference between the Children of a common parent as some would have us believe?

There seems to be a desire on the part of some religious persons to ignore material things altogether; to think of earthly matters as sinful; but to love the beautiful of earth is an offense against God. Hence when entering the sanctuary of the Most High, all things pertaining to the world must be banished from the mind and in place of the beautiful you must paint a hell with millions writhing in anguish, gnashing their teeth and calling upon God to send some one to relieve them. Instead of a true idea of heaven the mind must contract itself until it can only see in the distance a little garden-spot and a narrow path leading thereto. If there was ever any music in a human soul such conceptions of divine goodness would turn it to gall and bitterness, discord and inharmony. The finest organism ever brought forth from the womb of mother nature would come to loathe itself and curse its creator. We ask what can be the essential difference between music produced by an instrument and that of the human voice. Both keyed upon the same letters? If one is an offense to Deity, the other must be, for we have the same time and melody.

The quality of music produced depends upon the performer, either vocal or instrumental; but if moved by an invisible power to chant or

play something which stirs the soul and sets the whole frame in motion, who shall determine whether the influence is from above or below? We judge people by their motives. If one man can worship God with his feet better than with his head, he should use his feet, and there need be no doubt as to the result. But such an one has no right to say the whole world ought or must learn to dance. This is a private matter with the individual. If one man finds himself moved to put on a garment of sackcloth, let him do it until he learns better.

The world advances toward the beautiful with slow and uncertain tread. People are afraid to let go the old lest they may not grasp firmly the new, or that it may not be sufficient for them. But having passed from a state of uncertainty to a condition where knowledge obtains, no one possessing ordinary intelligence would ever think of retracing their steps again, and yet this is just what these astute clergymen desired should be done. They ask to have us discard all instrumental music from religious worship, reinstating again the antiquated tuning fork.

There are charms in music that cannot be produced by any other power. When the heart is sad and the head bowed in grief, the charms of music will lift the clouds of grief and chase away the shadows which dim the pathway of life. There are divers places where music is indispensable and one of these places is the spiritual seance. There is nothing else in the known world that harmonizes a homogeneous mass as readily as music. Every Spiritualist knows that without music little could be done in making conditions when physical or other forms of manifestation are expected. Therefore it behooves every spiritualist to cultivate this faculty; if they have only one talent make that one tell to the glory of a redeemed humanity. In all Spiritual gatherings music forms an important feature, though sometimes crude and inharmonious to a cultured ear. But if the soul can find no other form of expression, there need be no fears of being cast off when God's jewels are counted.

There has been no mistake made in saying man was formed to be what he is at the present time. Every step of the way has been in accord with natural laws. Every new generation has carried forward what was fittest to survive from previous generations, and any faculty now possessed has been used and added to year after year until the present became a possibility. It is all folly to attempt to block the wheels of progress at the present time. It might have been done years ago, but the track is in such complete working order that no matter how much some of the more devout ones may desire to see a change backward, that is like too many of the public prayers; and there is no one to listen to such appeals within this world nor in that to come.

The present is notably a scientific age. Having got through theorizing, men have settled down to practical demonstration; improvement and invention are the watchwords of the nineteenth century. Nor is it possible to direct all human energies into one channel? Every life is a stream from the natural fountain, starting out on a journey alone, either to become a blessing to the world, or a clod that

no one can or will respect. A well ordered life is a blessing to the world. Every man who becomes a practical teacher adds to the wealth of nations. When we look over the records of the illustrious dead, we find the names of Mozart, Beethoven, Handel and Hayden like shining stars in the firmament above us, and we ask why those men are not forgotten, or why are they referred to as authority, as though it was but yesterday that they left the shores of mortal life for the immortal. They sang themselves into the music-loving souls of men and those who honor their memories most will have the pleasure of listening to those celebrated authors as they chant the musical exercises in spirit life.

It is very mortifying to feel that any body of men in this age would attempt to cheat the being they pretend to serve out of the most acceptable part of Christian worship; but what can be expected of men who claim that only the elect can be saved? Robbery is a crime against the laws of all civilized lands; but he who robs the soul of its enjoyments is twice guilty.

The object we had in view in introducing this subject is to remind the Spiritualists of this age that while they may attain a little of worldly popularity by mingling in the devotions with such men as they who advocate the suppression of instrumental music in churches; they must needs sacrifice their honor and their manhood by so doing. A clear conscience is the greatest blessing any one can enjoy; and that can only be secured by exercising those rights which nature has bestowed upon mankind. There are men so organized they cannot serve God only through the stereotyped forms of the ancients. To the man of the present there is music in the shrill tones of a steam engine, because it tells him that the world is moving, that the trains of cars attached are bringing thousands of happy souls towards the setting sun, where they can find homes for their little ones. When we think of priest ridden Ireland and other Catholic countries flocking to the shores of America, we can enter into the enjoyment, as they listen to the sounds of the steamers' wheels striking the waters of the ocean. There is music in those sounds to them, for they feel that every revolution carries them nearer the land of freedom. So it is with the traveler leaving the theological shores of the past. Every thought is an aspiration. They no longer look down into the surging waves below them; but upward and onward toward that goal where art and music blend in sweet accord, their gaze is fixed. Let us have more and better music. It is soul food and heavenly manna to every aspirant for a higher and better life.

T. STARR KING.

—Every human being has a work to carry on within, duties to perform abroad, influence to exert, which are peculiarly his, and which no conscience but his own can teach.

—Man is nothing without an object; that alone calls out the activity of his powers. In an object he sees himself as in a mirror; his object is his own revealed being.—[Feuerbach,

PRINCIPLES OF EVOLUTION APPLIED TO SPIRITUALISM.

The study of spiritualism not only unfolds the secret forces of nature now, but carries us back to primitive times, and a voice like one speaking from out the misty clouds, says: Would you learn the origin and destiny of human existence, you must begin with cell life and trace the growth of man through all the variations and stages of being, up to the present. As a religion, spiritualism differs widely from the more popular theories of to-day. Instead of directing all human energies to soul saving, paying little respect to body building, it begins first with the body; and its theory is, that when you get a healthy body and a well balanced brain, the soul or spirit of the individual is in no great danger of being lost.

The opponents of spiritualism see nothing in its phenomena to interest them, for the reason they look at it in the same light that they do their own religion, as outward show—with temples—an idle priesthood, and a vain glorying in the merits of another. Hence it possesses nothing beautiful and true to them, and they boastfully ask where is the evidence of your superior attainments? Where are your schools, colleges, hospitals and asylums? Spiritualism in its modern phases is thirty-five years old, and one asks, what has it done for the amelioration of the human race? It has broken the shackles which popular religions have used to bind and enslave the world. It has given the world a religion founded upon facts; it has united the divine with the human; and is fast making one family of all men. Is it a blessing to demonstrate the soul's immortality, or are such demonstrations to be counted for naught?

If man was a created being the creative power would be responsible for its work; the created could not justly be held accountable for thought or action; the creation of heaven and hell would be an arbitrary act; and the demands made upon mankind would be as unjust as they would be arbitrary. Spiritualism steps in and says man is not a creation, but is the result of forces in nature, working in and upon him, developing those finer or spiritual powers which he has been endowed with. The interior forces of a man grow and expand as the flowers bloom in spring time, and as experience proves that some seasons are more productive of flowers and plants than others, so there are seasons in which the soul grows and unfolds with greater rapidity than in others. If asked to explain in detail all these things we could not do so, because we are not possessed of infinite power or intelligence. We can only judge from effects, and then exercise our best judgment in tracing out the cause producing them. Just why spiritualism was for so long a time hidden from the world, is not for us to say, but we can venture an opinion and if it seems reasonable it should be accepted thus far. But of this we are assured, that if man had been created according to the account given in Genesis, there would have been no spiritualism in the world to-day, nor religion of any kind. A thing made is so far as the maker is concerned, a finished piece of work. If the maker is supreme in knowledge to every one else, there could be no improvements made

and as God is supposed to be infinite in all things; whatever is done by him is well done, man could not improve upon it. But when we take a survey of things we find nothing retaining its primitive condition. All along the line of human travel we see the genius of man displayed in improving upon what God is said to have made perfect at the beginning. Look at the barren wastes of country left by nature in the primitive state, not even affording shelter for beasts or birds; but by the genius of man they have been transferred into gardens and are now teeming with vegetation. The horticulturist has developed the wild forest rose and made it one of the most beautiful of garden ornaments. From a single bulb we have now countless varieties of bulbs and plants. In the animal kingdom in their primitive state they were all wild and at war with mankind, but man has tamed them so that they are his most obedient servants; showing that there were natural forces, implanted in each species subject to improvement and development, and there is no proof that man ever received any direct revelation as to the ways and means to be employed to bring these things about. But the changes have been wrought and man is entitled to the credit for doing so much for the benefit and welfare of his race.

If we are asked to explain from whom man derived his spiritual powers, we can only answer they were born in him. We can find no beginning to any thing. We cannot say when mind originated, but we know that so far back as we can trace the race of men we find that in their most crude state they thought some were controlled by mental powers, but not as we see things to-day. The advanced condition in which men live to-day, is the result of evolutionary forces implanted in them. They have simply complied with the law of their being, and by so doing they have arisen to a state of mentality that their earlier predecessors could never have dreamed of; the stretch of imagination would have been too much for them. They would have become lost in the wilderness of thought, and not having any one to guide them, they would have said as the materialist of to-day says: beyond the present there can be nothing, because we cannot see beyond present surroundings.

The spiritual faculties of man are as much a growth as the physical body. The body could not reach a state of maturity unless it was supplied with the requisite food, air and water to make blood, bone, and muscle. Certain conditions of a physical nature demand special supplies. The mind of man would never learn to master the problems of life without the necessary elements upon which it can feed and draw sustenance; but when it is furnished with all the requisites, growth follows as a natural result. The reason the present is in advance of primitive ages is owing to a greater demand and supply of mental food, and the supplies are not the result of revelation but of studied effort. We first feel a craving for something not possessed, and are forced to make inquiries into the nature of these demands for the supplies necessary to suit each individual case. Now the Christian claims that God by some mysterious power operates upon man, making him to feel the need of certain

kinds of food; but we find the same thing in animals and plants; hence we assert that the Christian theory is not true, for there is nothing spiritual to man only so far as he differs in nature and tastes from animals and plants. And we see that when there is no effort made by man himself he never gets above and beyond his animal instincts.

The moment a child begins to reason the first inquiry is—where did I come from, and who am I, how long am I going to live, and when I die is that all there is of me? These are inborn qualities of mind that are peculiarly human; there is something back of this that the eye of man cannot see. They can only read in the mind of the child what was in their mind when they were children, but having passed from childhood they have broader views regarding themselves and of the world surrounding them. Evolution in a materialistic sense is a misnomer. There can be no development in what is called matter without first mind action, else we would be creatures of chance, living in a world of chances. Law and action are results of mind action, and if the world is governed by law and there is order in all these movements of things, that proves the existence of mind; because if things were left to chance or fate, the world would be a wilderness where now we see beauty and fertility. What we are to-day is a result of law. It has taken millions of years to bring the race to its present state of development. Every age has contributed to make the present age what it is, and we have not come to a stopping place yet. The religious views of the world are not now what they were one hundred years ago, though there are those who claim that man's religious instincts can bear only a certain amount of enlightenment. When he reaches that pivotal point it is presumptive for them to attempt to go any farther. No matter how far they may go in other matters, in religion they must stop at the last verse of the book of Revelation. Hence if these views obtain we can only travel in a circuit. Death will find us just where we started in childhood, and so on from age to age, never getting beyond a certain point. But the better class of thinkers refuse to stop. They say let us go further; let us search into the mysteries of life, let us feed our minds on the food they crave, regardless of what men may say or books define.

All true devotion has its origin in the spiritual forces of man and as these forces become unfolded, as they must if the mind is left free to act in accord with its own and nature's promptings, greater degrees of spirituality will be obtained. If devotion was as some would have us believe it to be, of mushroom growth, the presumption would be that its life would correspond with its birth; but experience teaches a different doctrine. Now men reach an eminent position not by spasmodic bound, but by slow growth and perseverance. When we go back to the earlier histories of the race we find very little spirituality manifesting itself. Only in individual cases do we find any recorded. The masses were grossly material and sensual, delighting in blood and carnage; their worship was directed to Gods like themselves. True soul devotion must be akin to

nature, and the farther we wander away from nature, the further are we removed from the power which, acting in and through us, draws us nearer to the central soul of the universe. The Christian worships a God outside of himself. Spiritualists find their God within, and feel it their duty to make their outer lives correspond to the teachings of this interior power.

We have stated that spiritualism is a growth, but where did the germ come from, and how has it been developed? These are questions which are of interest to every one whether recognized as such or not; we hold that the spiritual germ is co-existent with life—it is the life force which causes us to be. There will be no disputing that fact; but when we attempt to prove or trace it back to its fountain head, we are met with countless numbers of ifs and reasonings from as many different sources. There is no trouble with the Christian for they will believe any theory if it only hinges upon the creative theory of Moses. They hold that the spirit force which is the real person, was breathed into man after he had been moulded out of clay; but if we read the narrative aright and comprehend its meanings, it does not say the spirit was breathed into man, but it was simply the respirating organs which were set in motion, and the narrative further states that he became a living soul; and so he became a living body as well. But the narrative says God said let us make man in our own image. Now it is fair to suppose that in the creation every thing was supplied, body, soul, spirit, lacking only the motive power to set this piece of machinery in motion. While we do not believe in creation of any kind, yet there is underlying this crude story a grain of truth, and when we take into consideration the ignorance of the world at the time this story was written we can see very clearly how easy it was for such errors to occur, and being labeled holy, they grew in strength until they became the belief of nations; but had the same story been read in any other book, the author would have been declared a fool and this would have been the end of both narrative and narrator.

We hold that the spiritual germ in man is a part of the universal life force which furnishes life and motion to every thing that is, that had its existence before man, but reaches its highest status of development in man. Here is the pith of the Bible story where God said let us make a man in our own image. It is in spirit that man reaches his highest state of development. The body, like the plant, serves its specified purpose in forming the workshop in which spirit forces carry forward their work, and when that work is completed the spirit has no further use for it, and it drops out of the race and is buried out of sight. But what of the spirit? That still lives on. But the materialist says no; when the body dies all that was known as man, save the record he has left after him, is ended for ever. How do they know this, can they prove it? If so, we would be pleased to have them do so. Egotism reaches its most sublime heights in the man who makes a statement that he cannot prove, and at the same time asserts that it is a fact. Every person at one time in their lives had confidence in the doctrine of a future life. All who have not the confidence now, have

through study brought themselves to believe the opposite. It is in most instances simply a matter of belief with them. Not one can say they know anything about it. It is in one sense strange how far a man can be carried on the wings of his own imagination. Some fill heavens and people them with the elect, others build hells and they can see the meeting and hear the cursing of the damned; but it is all in the imagination. No one has returned from such a heaven and none ever will; neither has any one escaped from hell and given any account of it.

But the materialist is quite as imaginative as his brother the Christian, only it runs in another groove, that is all the difference. The former professes to believe the evolution doctrine true, but in order to make it apply to man they are forced to the conclusion that there is no such thing as soul or spirit that man is matter only. The Christian attempts to make evolution harmonize with creation, but stops all progress with the death of the physical body. We see very little to choose between the two, and find neither hypothesis presenting anything rational. As both deny the ability of a spirit who has passed out of the body, we fail to see what they have as a basis to rest their theories upon, but assumption.

The doctrine of Evolution sustains the theory of the survival of the fittest, but in the hands of the materialists, it is only applied to physical bodies, while the spiritualists see its application equally tenable when applied to the spirit—to religion. The spirit of man is most fit to survive the changes of dissolution. The life of plants and vegetables may be reabsorbed—carried forward and made more perfect—and finely reaching the human, which is the ultimate. Evolution is equally applicable in religion and politics. The present developments of the age in a religious sense, prove conclusively that old forms of religion are dying out and more liberal and advanced conceptions are taking the place, but we do not think that there will be a total destruction of present systems. What is non-essential or what has done its work in them will be sloughed off and the new adopted, in which spiritualism will be an all important factor. The Bible will not be cast aside as of no use, but the people will learn to read it with more comprehensive views than heretofore.

The tide of human affairs is setting in favor of an enlightened humanity. The glorification of God must include the ennoblement of man, who will no longer look upon themselves as outcasts and aliens, but as children having an inheritance in their Father's estate. Evolution means progress forever. The body that dies, passes through a process of chemical mutations, is redistributed; again is taken up, and appears in other forms. Thus what is recognized as the body of one man may through these changes appear in a number of bodies. But the spirit, being non-distributable, proceeds in the line of its material unfoldings. The length of time required to bring a low debased spirit up to the higher standing of mental attainments must depend largely upon its inherent qualities. Some men are vicious because born with those qualities, or become so through association. Change their conditions

or environments and you change their whole lives. But it is unwise to defer this work until after death. What can be done before should be done at once. Men may as well begin their work to day as to leave it for a more favorable opportunity. In spirit life we know no time so valuable as the present. The past is beyond recall. Of the future we can only speculate and lay plans, but as we have before stated, every moment of time has its cares and responsibility. It is wrong to attempt to crowd into to-morrow what can be done to-day. The more active we are, whether spirits or mortals, the more will be accomplished and the greater will be our enjoyments.

Spiritualism is a material outgrowth of all religious principles the world has ever known. It is the objective point all have endeavored to reach, but like the advent of Jesus the most rigid observers of form and caste are disappointed because it did not come to them instead of to the more humble. Christianity as it is to-day, is an uncharitable product. The Church holds the same relative position that the stock board does to moneyed securities. Some times stocks are up, then there comes a bad moment and they fall. There is a great deal of watered religious stock afloat in the world, it has a speculative value only, and we may say that spiritualism is the power behind the throne that bears this watered stock and shows to the world what its real value is. The good will survive, the worthless will be cast out and trodden under the feet of men.

The religious views and principles of men are the true gauges of character. An honest man will be just in deal, in proportion as he is honest in religion. Honest men are never defaulters; they never assume to know what an infinite mind alone can know. They never forget that they can be only scholars in the great school of nature. They are ever willing to learn, but rarely ever aspire to be teachers. But there are those who in a few years assume to have mastered all the problems of human life. The will of God is to them what the alphabet is to more meek and humble souls. Beware of them! in church or out they are the "blind leaders of the blind," and all must eventually reap the rewards of their ignorance.

A. L. THACHER.

DETROIT, MICH., JUNE, 1883.

To the Editor of the OLIVE BRANCH:

I have just read in your OLIVE BRANCH a message purporting to be from that noble pioneer of Universalism, John Murray: "What went ye out for to see?" If his discourses when he was on earth had the clear sense, good judgment and spiritual insight of this, his influence is no marvel. It is really one of the best articles on the method and mode of investigating spiritualism, and the significance of the spiritual philosophy, I have ever read. Your subscribers had best keep the June number to read over the golden words of John Murray. "Spiritual Brotherhood," over the name of Dolphus Skinner, is worth keeping, too, and the fine poem from Longfellow's Michael Angelo on the first page. I want to leave my testimony to the growth of your OLIVE BRANCH. Its leaves and fruit improve. With best wishes, truly yours,

GILES B. STEBBINS.

The Olive Branch.

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HINTS TO THINKERS.

It is a most remarkable circumstance that, while all other schools of thought turn the cold shoulder to modern science, Spiritualism welcomes its advent and runs parallel with its advance movements, urging it onward to further discoveries and conquests. The parallelism between the two is the more manifest when considered that both deal exclusively in ascertaining facts, and neither of them builds theories on any other foundation.

Modern physical science is peculiarly experimental. It spurns at authority, however ancient, and adheres to truth as its only and all-sufficient guide. Modern Spiritualism is the only school of mutual science that has ever dared to govern itself by the same law. It started out with an experimentally demonstrated fact, and its first theoretic deduction arose from that fact in the mind of a young and unsophisticated child. It bore the stamp of an experimental science as its very birth-mark. Yet there are learned men in abundance, who, after a third of a century of experiments and demonstrations, deride the idea that spiritualism is a science.

Experimental physical science has led on to the deduction that all natural forces are one: that is, that they are different modes of manifestation of one universal force. There is no conclusion drawn from the facts of physical science on which Herbert Spencer insists more strenuously than on this, of the *unity of force*. Spiritualism has been able to trace a perfect analogy between physical and spiritual forces; and not only an analogy, but a *correspondence* between them. Spiritual forces, being *intelligent*, while physical forces are not so, another problem presents itself for solution; and that is, whether the intelligent spiritual forces actuate and give law to the intelligent physical forces; as in the human body the brain-forces govern and actuate the muscular forces. The mind would jump at once to an affirmative conclusion, were there not in the human body involuntary functional motions, over which the intelligent brain-forces exercise little or no control.

At this point, we invite attention to the question whether the same doctrine of unity which is deduced from the phenomena of physical forces, may not be deduced from the phenomena of spiritual forces. Is it not demonstrable that one universal force governs the spirit worlds as well as the material worlds? Aye, more; is it not true that one intelligent force or power, controls equally and entirely both the spiritual and the physical universe?

As all known entities are essentially forces, the demonstration of the last mentioned proposition would prove that this unit force, which we may call God, is indeed the "All-Father" of the theists—the "All-in-all" of St. Paul—the "Sum and essence of all things" of the Hindoos. This established, we should be pre-

pared to agree that in Jesus was "God manifest in the flesh," and in addition we should assert that the same is true of every human being. We should then have a clearer and more adequate idea of the true quality of divine love; namely, that it is *compassion* on actual sharing, or participation, in the sufferings of his human children—not merely pity for our woes, but an actual feeling of them. Then indeed, we should be able to appreciate what was asserted by one of our contributors: that "the whole universe palpitates with Divine Love!" This demonstration would not only confirm the conclusions drawn from the facts of physical science, but would rescue it from the imputations of "Atheistic materialism," and vindicate its title to acceptance by men of all shades of religious opinion.

CLAIRVOYANCE.

Almost every physician, during the course of his professional life, hears stories regarding clairvoyance. Some individual has had a vision or dreamed a dream which is subsequently found to have represented, most marvelously, actual objects or persons that were at the time far away.

An organization in London has been investigating the alleged phenomena of this class, endeavoring to apply scientific methods to their study. The *Nineteenth Century* and the *Fortnightly Review* have at different times published some of the results of this work. Quite recently the latter journal has published an article by Mr. Edmund Gurney and Mr. Frederick W. M. Myers, claiming very positively that the mind may at certain times be capable of receiving impressions through other channels than those of the various senses; in other words, that the so called *clairvoyance* is an actual physiological fact. As an example of the class of phenomena alleged to be real, we append the following:

"One Sunday night last winter, at 1 A. M., I wished strongly to communicate the idea of my presence to two friends, who resided about three miles from the house where I was staying. When I next saw them, a few days afterward, I expressly refrained from mentioning my experiment; but in the course of conversation one of them said, 'You would not believe what a strange night we spent last Sunday,' and then recounted that both the friends had believed themselves to see my figure standing in their room. The experience was vivid enough to wake them completely, and they both looked at their watches, and found it to be exactly one o'clock.' (One of these friends has supplied independent testimony to this circumstance.)"

We have ventured to furnish our readers this account of the work of these gentlemen because of the strong indorsement that has been given to it, and because of its important physiological and pathological significance. If it could be proved that the mind can perceive through other agencies than the senses, it would establish a fact which would antagonize the present physiological theories (based upon evolution) of the development of these senses; for it is now believed that they were developed in order to enable the animal to adapt himself to his environment. They were made *by* the environment primarily, rather than *for* it, and in the history of animal evolution there are absolutely no data which enable us to account for the development of a super-sensual perceptive power.—*Medical Record*.

Certain materialistic writers have denied that there was such a thing as clairvoyance, because they could not comprehend it; and they have repeatedly asserted that if there was such a

thing, scientific minds would have discovered it long ago. This article we clip from the *Scientific American* and present it as a proof that scientific men have recently discovered what spiritualists have known for years. Score one for the claims of spiritualism. What will be the next scientific discovery? Would it not be strange if, after all the hard words that have been said about spiritual mediums, it was found at last that they were after all the previous clearing away the materialistic debris and opening up to science a field they never dreamed of. The end is not yet.

A SCENE OF HUMAN DEGRADATION.

Mrs. Scott Stevenson, in her "On Summer Seas," gives the following account of a Russian pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Nicholas, at Bari, in Italy: "They were all dressed in a kind of uniform, the men in gray, bare-footed, with staff slung over their shoulders, on which were tied bundles of clothes and a pair of boots; the women wore blue serge skirts, gray jackets, and red handkerchiefs around their heads, and, like the men, carried bundles, with a water-bottle and tin mug on their backs. They were all slowly crawling up the steps with bleeding knees and torn, travel-stained garments, muttering prayers and endless litanies as they went upward. On entering the church we saw a shocking sight, so painful that I hesitate to describe it. Four pilgrims were on their knees with their heads bent down to the ground in the most unnatural attitude, their eyes shut, and the swollen veins standing out like cords from their crimsoned foreheads. A man walked by the side of each, holding one end of a handkerchief, while the wretched penitent held the other and was thus guided along the pavements. For a few seconds we did not realize what was taking place, but as they crawled we noticed four marks like a dark ribbon behind them; and it dawned on us they were actually licking the floor! And such a floor! Thousands of only half-civilized human beings had been in the church since daybreak, as the tainted atmosphere but too plainly showed. For over eighty yards these wretched creatures kept their tongues on the rough pavement, over every pollution that came in their way. We were chained to our seats by horror and disgust, and in spite of ourselves stayed till they at last reached the altar steps and were permitted to rise. Their faces haunt me still; the small cunning eyes turning stealthily toward us, and as hastily turned away; the half shame-faced, half-ferocious look; the coarse, dirt smeared features, the matted heads of hair, and the lolling, lacerated tongues bleeding over their chins. And these were fellow creatures, these benighted wretches, looking like scared wild beasts! What religion can that be which permits such a frightful exhibition, such a loathsome scene of human degradation?"

LOST—Yesterday, sometime between sunrise and sunset, two golden hours, each set with sixty diamond minutes. No reward is offered, for it is gone forever.

PEN SKETCHES.

To the Editor of the OLIVE BRANCH.

I salute my dear readers from the far-famed town of Santa Barbara situated on the sea coast in the southern part of the county and 288 miles southeast of San Francisco. I reached here by steamer from Los Angeles, a very pleasant trip of half a day's ride. At present there is no way of reaching this place except by stage or steamer. A railroad is in contemplation and will soon be built connecting with the Southern Pacific.

The town numbers about five thousand inhabitants, and is built upon a beautiful slope gradually rising from the ocean back for a distance of two miles to the foothills of the Sierra San Rafael, which rising to an elevation of over 3,500 feet encircle it about from the seashore along the north and east and the western suburbs.

Of all the places I have visited none has a more beautiful situation than Santa Barbara, and it has deservedly acquired a world-wide reputation for its mild, equable and salubrious climate.

This part of the coast has been the abode of the aboriginal tribes dating back in pre-historic times. The Spanish priests established a Mission here nearly one hundred years ago for the conversion of the natives to the Catholic faith. The great white church of the old Mission is the most prominent building in the place, and from its elevation on the foothills 340 feet above the ocean is a most conspicuous landmark.

Whatever errors the religion of these Franciscan priests and friars may have contained they undoubtedly inculcated good moral precepts and industrious habits among the inferior tribes of Indians. The Santa Barbara Mission was founded in the year 1786, and was the most extensive and prosperous one in California. The picture of life in one of these missions during their prosperity must have been a novel scene of industry and romance. The whole place must have been simply a community of active life, a system of labor both indoors and outdoors, with stated hours for amusement, social improvement and religious devotion.

That there were cruelties practiced by those in power, there is no doubt, yet such absolute control of hundreds of undisciplined human beings could not exist without more or less abuse of power. To-day in company with a friend, we drove to the mission, some three miles from the town, overlooking the sea. The mission is still in charge of the old Franciscans, only eighty remaining of the order. One of them is very old and well known in the country for his benevolence and rigid devotion. As we entered this ancient structure the lofty walls, grim with age, still wearing the time-worn pictures of the apostles and saints, the silence that falls on the ancient altar and creeps over each relic and sacred charm, there comes crowding over your senses the spell of some subtle charm that for a time folds you in its embrace, crowding your mind with the memories of the past. In the dim-lighted aisles we saw kneeling in silent devotion the gray-robed old friars, their crossed hands and placid faces upturned to the

altar, murmuring in broken accents their prayers. I am told that these old friars often kneel from midnight to dawn on the stone floors of the church praying and chanting psalms.

The sun was gilding the western hills as we left the church, gently bathing the valley in peaceful tranquillity, and I felt as I turned from those old crumbling walls of superstition the holy benediction of nature:

Earth like a mother whispered low
Her sweet consoling words of love,
And o'er my heart and burning brow
There fell a benediction from above:
And touched with nature's holy fire,
My soul awoke to new desire!

Santa Barbara has an interesting record of our spiritualistic times, which to the progressive mind is more important than its past historic times, however interesting that may be to the antiquarian. A few years ago the spiritualists had a flourishing society here numbering some of the best people in the place, and also a well organized children's lyceum. Both the society and lyceum are things of the past and only a remnant left to tell the tale.

The old veteran spiritualists relate the once prosperous condition of their society here, as though it was an event for all time, and henceforth a crown of righteousness was laid up for them in heaven. This lamentable disorganized condition is very discouraging for the public worker to meet, tired and weary and often disheartened, laboring for the world's redemption from its creedal bondage and blind belief, and instead of meeting sympathy and encouragement from the professed spiritualists, they are oftener repulsed by their cold indifference and downright selfishness.

Through the kindness of Dr. Mohn and lady, of this place, whom I met at my meetings last winter at Los Angeles, the announcement of my coming to lecture had been well advertised and an interest somewhat awakened before I came, and I am pleased to report that my lectures have called out a large and intellectual class, and the liberal contributions attest to the appreciation of my lectures.

A pleasant reception was given the Bishop at the residence of Mrs. Severence of this place, where a large circle of friends assembled and received spiritual instruction and encouragement through my mediumship, after which some fine music was rendered by Mrs. Severence and refreshments served. The evening was pronounced a very enjoyable occasion by all present, and many desired that I should continue my ministrations among them still longer. Considering the society had been so long dormant, I may feel flattered with the measurable success which my efforts have aroused, hoping when I depart the angel comforters may remain, brooding like the deathless fires of a vestal virgin, and flame anew in each one's heart, inspiring to renewed interest in the spiritual cause of truth.

I cannot close this somewhat lengthy sketch without relating a delightful trip I took with Dr. Mohu, who kindly drove us up to the hot sulphur springs, a distance of six miles from town up the mountain pass, at an elevation of fourteen hundred and fifty feet above the level of the ocean. The rough, irregular roadway, through wild canons and precipitous cause-

ways, the gurgling streams dancing over precipices, in their wild pursuit of the valley, the parties of campers you meet in sequestered nooks, and sheltered by projecting rocks, made the ascent one of the wildest romances of my life. And the grandeur of the scene as you reach the Hot Springs and Mountain Home beggars description. It is a view replete with grandeur and beauty. Away in the distance lays the silvery looking ocean; the islands in the distance seem like fairylands, while the straggling farm-houses and the luxurious landscape of the valley complete the wonderful picture. As evening spread her soft mantle over the dreamy scene, we reluctantly bade adieu to each rock and cliff, and the new friends we had formed sojourning at the Mountain Home, and turned our faces toward the wide spread valley and vine-mantled homes; and thus ended one of the most enjoyable experiences of my life. From here I go to Yreka.

BISHOP A. BEALS.

For the OLIVE BRANCH.

LETTER TO A CLERGYMAN.

MY DEAR FRIEND.

The *Christian Advocate* which you had the kindness to send me, contained some excellent reading. The article by Doctor Trafton is a gem of good thinking. It is rational, philosophical and scientific in its method. Most happy are his illustrations to prove that human character is molded by natal, antenatal conditions, and subsequent circumstances, and environments. These facts, fully recognized by free-thinkers, give them a broad basis from which to wrap a mantle of charity about the shortcomings of the human family generally, not only the prowling midnight thief, but the persecuting religious fanatic, whose hands have sometimes been red with the blood of the innocent. The article is written from the stand-point of the Spiritual Philosophy. The view is the same as would have been taken by Judge Edmonds, Professor Hare, Peter Cooper, or any independent thinker, and broad soul philanthropist. If the Methodists could fully accept Dr. Trafton's mode of accounting for sin, then there would be no further necessity of resorting to a fabulous Satan to help them through on their theology.

I will reply briefly to some of the points in the letter that I had the pleasure of receiving from you. You seem confident that you find nothing in the Trinitarian or Spiritual papers I sent you, at all satisfactory, concerning a future life, and state that, "it is only through our Saviour Jesus Christ, that life and immortality are brought to light through the Gospels." To refute such a statement it may be sufficient to call your attention to the fact, that as we turn the pages of history far back into the past, we find that all nations held intercourse with their friends, departed from the outer form; therefore the existence of human souls in a future world was well known, many centuries before the lowly Nazarene was born. Doubtless it would be safe to say that any day within the bounds of the United States, through inspired persons, there is more evidence given concerning a future life, than all that can be found within the lids of the Bible. It is certain that Moses taught

nothing about a future state. There are incidental allusions to the subject by other writers, but there no direct essay, or set purpose to teach the doctrine in the book, yet is evident that some of the writers believed and some did not believe in a continued existence.

You would find no difficulty in discovering plenty of evidence in the current spiritual literature, "that if a man die, he shall live again," if you were not turning your back to the light of the present century, and worshiping far back into the dim shadows of the past. This tendency of mind has been manifested by clergymen, all along the line of history. They have a fancy for riding in the last car in the advancing train of progression, and if they had any special influence with the Sublime Conductor of the train, it would have been brought to a stand-still long since.

Like other men of your calling, you abound with Scripture texts, to use as scarecrows, un-mindful of the fact that in that way, one may prove almost anything good or bad from the Record. I sometimes think that clergymen use texts not a little as a parrot says, "Molly put the kittle on," or "Polly wants a cracker," and that without thinking what would naturally follow if the text were literally true. You say, "for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." It really matters very little about the name of Jesus, or which of the many names in use we apply to the Supreme Intelligence. None of us are saved by a name, but by unchanging and universal principles. Most of the people who have lived and died in this world, departed for the Higher Life before Jesus was born or named, and the larger part of those who have lived since he was born, have known nothing about him, his name, or the claims set up for him; then why talk about being saved by a name. I noticed a short time since that an officer in the Mexican army, supports the name of Col. Jesus. How much importance would you attach to the name?

You say:—"Now in view of the miracles which were wrought by Divine Power in attestation of the truth of the teaching of Christ and his Disciples, and in view of the Prophecies which have been *literally* fulfilled and are now being fulfilled to the letter, as contained in the word of Divine truth, I cannot but accept it as being *genuine*, and authentic."

Your estimate of the infallibility of the Scriptures seems very extravagant in view of facts that you do not take the trouble to state. Rev. R. Heber Newton is evidently a good scholar, bold enough and honest enough to admit some truth. He says:—"The Old Testament historians contradict each other in facts and figures, tell the same story in different ways, locate the same incident in different periods, ascribe the same deeds to different men, quote statistics which are plainly exaggerated, mistake poetic legend for sober prose, report the marvelous tales of tradition as literal history, and give us statements which cannot be read as scientific facts without denying our latest and most authoritative knowledge. . . . The historical books are seen to be the work of many hands in many ages. They gather up the popular traditions of the race, carry down on their slow stream fragments from such far back ages

that we have almost lost the clue to their story; glacial boulders that now lie strangely out of place in the rich field of later eras, songs of rude periods, nature myths, legends of semi-fabulous heroes, folk lore of the tribes, scraps from long forgotten books, entries from ancient annals, pages torn from the histories of other peoples to fill out the story; the whole worked over many times by many hands in many generations. . . . The prophecies break up into fragmentary collections, in which the words of many different and obscure prophets are grouped under the name of some great prophet, as was quite natural in an uncritical age; the whole mass being arranged with little chronological order. . . . Our critical glasses bring out, clear and strong, the fact of a human, literary craft in these books, the signs on every hand of the labor of brain and skill of pen through which the literature of a venerable nation, and of the infant church born of it, took slow shape into our Bible. Such a work needs must have in it the traces of human imperfection; and these limitations of thought and knowledge, these mistakes of fallible writers, are to be seen by every one, save those who will not see.

My friend, in reading the 24th chapter of Matthew, you should have gathered a better estimate of the value of Bible prophecies. If such statements were reliable, a more important prophecy could not be made, than we find in that chapter. It was to be fulfilled in that generation, but many generations have passed away, and now, in the very nature of the case, it can never be fulfilled in the manner stated. It has been shown by competent students, again and again, that the old Bible prophecies do not refer to far off events and circumstances as claimed by the New Testament writers, and the churches, but apply to matters not distant from the time of their being uttered, and this has been carefully pointed out, and shown to be so from the pages of the Bible.

You say the question as to whether sin can be forgiven, "has been satisfactorily answered in the case of hundreds and thousands of individuals, myself included. And in reference to my own case, I can say that there was a time when I felt myself resting under condemnation, and God's wrath was kindled against me, but there came a time when the load which was resting upon me, was lifted off and my heart filled with joy. It is a little strange that you should not have made yourself acquainted with the psychological laws through which such mental phenomena as you speak of is produced. It is not necessary to attribute such things to a supernatural cause, they should be relegated to the domain of mental philosophy. Many hundred thousand, who have had the same kind of experience you mention, have been turned out of the churches and left to wander down the "cold streams of Babylon," and that because they found their experience a delusion of the mind. It is very late in the present century even, for a minister to talk about "the wrath of God" you should blush with shame to speak of the Great Doer—Soul of this vast universe as being in anger towards any finite soul. It is a low degrading view that more properly belongs to a dark and barbarous age. The Omnipotent Power which instituted

cause must have known very well the *effects* that *cause* would produce, consequently there can be no disappointment and no anger in that Holy Spirit, which wraps a mantle of tender love and mercy about us all.

The Bible miracles of which you think so highly, are still more unreliable than the prophecies. Miracles are placed far back in the past—proof is out of the question, and now that the forces of Nature are better understood we have no miracles. The more intelligent of the people know very well that this world is ruled by law, and not by Supernaturalism.

You hold that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins, but that the blood of goats, calves &c., are not sufficient, only the blood of Christ will avail to satisfy the judge of all worlds. The idea that our Heavenly Father delights in blood as "a sweet-smelling savor" was born out of heathenish darkness of intellect. It was conceived at a time when men had risen but little above the brute. They thought God might be as blood-thirsty as themselves. But such misapprehensions have no application to the intelligence of the present age. It is impossible to trace anything like cause and effect between the blood of the innocent and the sins of the guilty. You state that, "those of us who fully accept the Bible as the word of God, and as the infallible rule of faith and practice, have peace of mind."

I know pretty well how to discount such a statement as that, having been personally acquainted with many sectarians in my life time. You would convey the idea that those who believe as you do are happy, peaceful and joyous to an extent that people of a different faith are not. It is somewhat difficult to comprehend how a man sincerely holding your religious faith can be as happy as you claim to be. Can it be that your religion makes you cold and unsympathizing? Can you rejoice in a religion that sends nine out of ten of the human family into endless misery? Your father, your mother, sisters, brothers, the wife of your bosom and your darling children, all being liable to share that fate. It would better become you to clothe yourself in sackcloth and ashes, to walk in solemn gloom, to mourn day after day and year after year. It seems incredible that you can be happy and above all to boast of it. If happy at all, you are so in defence of your terrible dogmas. You are happy because deep down in your most interior consciousness, there are whisperings that your terrific theology is false. It insults and mocks your better judgment, enslaves your reasoning powers, and makes you a crouching coward in the presence of a supposed offended Deity. It is much easier to understand how a man can be happy who has held sufficient intercourse with friends in Spirit-life to learn that there is no such thing as an angry God, no endless torments, no misleading Devil; but all in that grand life of the future have equal opportunities to rise up out of lower mental conditions into lofty altitudes of knowledge, wisdom and moral excellence. The most belated and lowly wail along the dusty highways of this life, will pass onward and upward, step by step, from point to point, from glory to glory. We shall all clasp hands with those below and above us, and in one unbroken chain, from the most humble child of earth to the shining seraph rise forever in soul beautitudes towards the Great Soul of all love and wisdom.

W. C. W.

THE RELIGIOUS WORLD.

The discussion of religious questions is so closely confined to clerical circles, that the outspoken sentiments of an intelligent layman are as welcome as they are unexpected. Our readers do not need to be told of the high standing, in church and in society, of Professor Simeon E. Baldwin, of New Haven. He had been appointed to prepare a paper on the state of religion in the North church, and at the annual meeting of the church, fulfilled his appointment in the presence of a large congregation. It is safe to say that many of his hearers were surprised, and the pastor of the church has since administered antidotes in abundance. But Mr. Baldwin's opinions are well worth consideration, and we give a synopsis of them. After speaking of the gradual improvement of public worship which is going on, he comes to discuss the "prayer-meeting," which changes little from year to year, is to some a source of strength, to some a field of duty, and to others neither the one nor the other. Our religion governs by principles rather than by rules:—

A small attendance at a prayer-meeting, particularly of men who alone are liable to be called upon to take part in it, is not an index of a feeble church. Many have been repelled from Congregational churches to those of other denominations, for no other reason than that they disliked either to be present at or absent from the weekly prayer-meeting, and yet found it an irksome and burdensome service. It should be no ground for discouragement to our church or pastor that the prayer-meeting is not better attended. For thirty years now the condition of the prayer-meeting has been much the same as now. If one finds it neither pleasant and profitable, and considers the matter conscientiously, he has good reason for staying away. Those will attend who find such meetings helpful. This is the common experience of every church.

Mr. Baldwin says some wise things concerning contributions of money. "The vitality of a church is not shown by the magnitude of its contributions, for a few rich men may easily give largely from their abundance. But it is shown by the universality of giving as the part of all who have anything to spare." He then proceeds to discuss the reasons why many who ought to be in the church remain outside, and finds these reasons partly in the church.

The fault of the church is that it requires of everyone seeking admission a formal assent to certain statements of theological belief as to which honest Christian men differ widely. The New Testament churches were not formed in that way. I would not dare to exclude anyone from this church who asked to enter in a sincere desire to acknowledge and serve Christ as his master. Whatever his beliefs or doubts as to the duration and character of punishment for sin, as to the nature of the Godhead, as to the personality of the Holy Spirit, if he came to enter our communion that he might serve Christ therein, I should deem it a cruel wrong to shut him out.

Theology is not religion. Religion is to live the life of Christ.

Somebody has said, "I hate botany, but I love flowers; I hate theology, but I love religion." Our churches have sinned and are sinning in asking too much of a confession of faith. We should find out what Christianity is from the teachings of Christ himself, "not blind to the fact that he was continually misunderstood by the very apostles." What right have we to mourn over the decline in

members of a church which makes conditions of membership which neither Jesus nor his apostles knew anything of?

The old theology of New England has passed away, and is giving place to a more Christ-like faith. In my boyhood we read the Bible through the medium of Dwight's theology. We hesitated to own that any of the apostolic writers could be mistaken in any question of fact, however clearly they might differ in telling the same occurrence. We feared that children dying in infancy might be lost. We heard chiefly of God's wrath. All this is changed or is changing. Clearer views of truth are gained. The old Calvinistic theology is giving place to the doctrine of Christ.

Mr. Baldwin then passed to discuss certain matters of Christian conduct and behavior and freedom.

Thirty years ago many Christian families in the church thought dancing was necessarily wrong; there are few such now. Then many Christian families thought card playing was necessarily wrong; few think so now. A Sunday walk is not regarded as Sabbath-breaking now. There are many now who have as clear a conscience in attendance upon a good opera or play, as if they were at a dime sociable or at a lecture on political economy. All these things mark a new kind of religious life, which, for a generation past, has been becoming the prevailing type of religious life among New England Congregationalists in New England cities. While many regret this change, I see nothing to regret in it. If we are careful to partake only of innocent enjoyments, to be temperate in partaking of them, (and in the main I think this is true among us,) there will be nothing to regret in the change which has come over us. If we have come nearer to the world it is because we were formerly too far away from it. The truest and best work of the Christian is in the world.

We have given but a meagre synopsis of Mr. Baldwin's paper, but the trend of the paper cannot be mistaken. Mr. Baldwin stands in the front rank of the legal profession in this state, and for many years has been one of the pillars in the North church of New Haven. He is a gentleman of gravity, sobriety and piety, and "the remarks" of any such man are of great value. Whether he is right or wrong in his opinions, or partly right and partly wrong, good brethren will question, but there can be no doubt that he has uttered the sentiments which hundreds of clear-headed laymen silently cherish. Fifty years ago he might have been excommunicated.—*Hartford Courant.*

JOHNATHAN EDWARDS.

Mr. Edwards was ostensibly a missionary to the Indians, but I don't believe he amounted to much as a missionary. I have been unable to find any record of any conversions of Indians he ever made. The fact is, he spent most of his time while in Stockbridge with his legs twisted into a knot under that table, wailing aloud about his own depravity, and in the intervals of weeping, writing for dear life about the "Scheme of Salvation." "Often since I have lived in this town," he wrote to one of his parishioners at this time, "I have had very afflicting views of my own sinfulness and vileness, very frequently to such a degree as to hold me in a kind of loud weeping, sometimes for a considerable time together, so that I have often to shut myself up." The narrow little alley that he called his study was the place where he used to "shut himself up" to

cry and write. What was such a man good for as a missionary to the Indians? He was not a man of expedients. There was nothing practical about him. He was awfully in earnest. Hell seemed to him yawning to swallow up everybody, and the only question which was important to him was how a few could escape it. In the light of this vast and awful problem, the mere temporary hunger of an Indian, or the conduct of an Indian, or the ignorance or barbarity of an Indian, was of very trifling moment. He kept severely away from the Indians, and I have not the slightest doubt that they were glad of it. He shuffled his feet over that one board in his study, and shoved his pen over that one table, and wept softly to himself, or vociferously when he felt like it—now in terror lest his own soul should be lost, now in joy because he thought it would be saved, while Mrs. Edwards was patiently raising a mortgage and 11 children out in the kitchen. If walls could listen and recollect and repeat, I know I should hear a sad voice still piping in the front hall: "Jonathan! Oh, Jonathan! for heaven's sake, and all our sakes, stop crying and take care of these babies while I hang out the clothes, set that hen, feed that good-for-nothing Injun, bake the pie, mend Uriah's trousers, chop some wood and churn the butter!"

He must have been as unaccountable a person to live with as John Milton was. He felt that he had a mission to define the methods and motives of redemption—and he neglected everything else to fulfill it. "From my childhood up," he says in one of his celebrated works, "my mind has been full of objections against the doctrine of God's sovereignty in choosing whom he would to eternal life, and rejecting whom he pleased, leaving them eternally to perish and be everlastingly tormented in hell. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well when I seemed to be convinced and fully satisfied as to this sovereignty of God. . . . From that day to this, I have scarcely ever found so much as the rising of an objection against it. . . . These have often appeared to me as sweet and gracious doctrines. As a missionary, he was a failure. His place was among ideas, not Indians. He was disqualified by his reserve, his contemplative habits, his love for abstract speculation. An Indian was of no consequence to him unless he could be hitched on to balance a syllogism.

He was always dreamy and abstract. An old citizen tells me a story of him which is characteristic. His only exercise was horse-back riding—out through the fields, as there were no roads then, and if there had been they wouldn't have led anywhere, as all around was a wilderness. One day he rode out and turned toward a pair of bars, which a neighbor's boy took down to let him pass. "Good morning, my little man," said the dominie, "whose boy are you?" "Mr. Sargent's," said the boy, a little piqued that he was not recognized by one who saw him so often. Presently Dr. Edwards rode back, pondering and dreaming as he came. The youth let down the bars again for him. "Good morning, my little man!" said the missionary, mooning along; "whose boy are you?" "I'm the same boy I was ten minutes ago!" broke out the spirited youth, and the old man, ceasing for a moment to soar after the illimitable, and dive after the unfathomable, cast upon the urchin a surprised smile.

TWILIGHT MUSINGS.

Near me stand the solemn mountains,
 Balmy zephyrs gently fan,
 And the streams like crystal fountains,
 Dash along o'er rock and glen ;
 I can hear old ocean's tide,
 Rising billowy far and wide.

Down the vales I watch the cattle
 Graze and lash their lazy sides,
 And the children's merry prattle,
 On the evening's zephyr rides ;
 While the music of a stream
 Mingles with my waking dream.

All alone I watch the fading
 Of the twilight in the west,
 While the red gleams softly playing,
 Slumber on the valley's breast.
 But one lone bird keeps singing
 In her leafy bower swinging.

She is singing for her mate,
 And her love-song is so clear
 That the echoes seem to haste,
 O'er the landscape far and near ;
 Could I reach my mate as well,
 I would call my absent Nell.

Once a time so long remembered,
 We were floating down the stream,
 Of enchantment that slumbered
 In the valley of a dream ;
 Now in memory I roam,
 And among the hills alone.

But the shadows darkly deepen,
 Shutting out the mountain scenes,
 While a vision comes to sweeten
 What the trancing twilight screens,
 And I feel a holy joy
 That old Time cannot destroy.

BISHOP A. BEALS,

AN HUNDRED YEARS AHEAD OF
THE TIMES.

The subject matter selected at this time was suggested by the remarks of a clergyman while discussing the position of a gentleman now holding services in the city of Utica, and who years ago was identified with the same school as the one above referred to. The positions of the two gentlemen differ so widely that it is a query how the one referred to as being an hundred years ahead of the time could ever have been associated with the other, and it seems strange that one man could have made such rapid strides in the direction of free thought and free discussion of all matters of a religious character, and the other still permitting himself to be bound by the Westminster catechism; but so it is, and this simple question suggests itself to us, Whether it is better to become a pioneer in the advancing army of human mental freedom or to stand as a monument of divine mercy, indicating where the church has stood for the past five hundred years—Whether is it best to lead or like Peter follow the advancing forces a great way off? It seems to us there can be but one truthful reply given to the question.

We find in all countries men claiming to be called of God for a specific duty, and that duty is to educate the people. But instead of keeping abreast with the age these chosen ones are like John in the wilderness crying out. Half of you are fifty years ahead of the times and if you continue on in the same course, you will soon be a hundred years ahead, for having cast off the old theological anchor, there is no telling how rapidly the mind may unfold,

and then what is to become of the church? Must her creeds and catechisms be cast overboard? Will it be safe? Can the people be trusted? These and similar questions suggest themselves as we view the position of the church. Our answer is, the world has no use for creeds and catechisms, only such as reason and education may suggest to the individual. It will be perfectly safe to trust the good judgment of mankind in regard to their spiritual matters, as we trust them in matters of business. There may be a few who will prove defaulters, but the world at large will continue to gain better wisdom and be more charitable if allowed the free exercise of their own judgment.

In Egypt may be found pyramids and monuments, relics of past ages. They serve a scientific purpose to-day. They are landmarks erected on the shores of time by former generations. They show in which direction the minds of men were educated by the priests and rulers of those ages. The people of this age look upon them simply as wonderful in a mechanical sense. The hieroglyphics are curiosities which cause the people of this age to wonder; but that is all; they possess no intrinsic value, and when brought in comparison with the railroads, telegraph and telephone systems of to-day they sink into insignificance.

Who wants to go back to the days when pyramid building was the ultimate of scientific attempts? What is the value to the world of their largest pyramids, when compared with the latest scientific achievement—the building of the Brooklyn bridge? The men of to-day study the needs of a growing world. They tunnel mountains and build railroads under rivers and seas. Every thought of the age is what can be done for the good of the people. Which is it better to be, a leader in works of this kind, or to stand pointing to the mountains of past ages, saying, "See what we have done for the world."

There are two distinct classes in the world to-day, the public spirited citizen who studies the wants of mankind and devotes his time and energies in that direction, and a class of monument builders who work for a being they are pleased to call their God, but who never builds anything himself, but who amuses himself by sending cyclones and earthquakes to destroy what the people have done. And these same monument builders are certainly crying out the world is going ahead too fast! May it not be that they are too slow? There are two sides to every question, and we are willing to leave the cause in the hands of an intelligent jury to decide, whether the genius of man is unfolding too rapidly or is the progressive qualities of the church man the best guide for us to follow.

There exists to-day a very imperfect comprehension of what is really needed in the line of spiritual instruction. The whole drift of Christian theology is in favor of God instead of man. The theory is the more a man fears God, the better Christian he must be; this is very strange logic. Which does a child reverence most, the parent he fears or the one he loves? How can a man truly worship what he fears? Will not his devotions be forced upon him through fear, and in fact not be de-

votional at all? How can a man say "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come," when he has just read an account of hundreds of human lives destroyed by a cyclone or earthquake? For according to the christian theory it is the same God acting in all cases. What does the christian know of the management of God's kingdom in the skies other than what comes with such distinctive forces to the earth? Far better, we think, to extend your knowledge of science and the study of natural laws, so as to be able to determine whether pestilences, tornadoes and cyclones are such as annoying forces or can be accounted for from natural causes; and we will guarantee that these ruling forces of earth and skies will not charge any one with going too fast.

Every reformer the world has ever had has been compelled to meet the opposition of these prevailing sentiments of their time. Copernicus and Gallileo were martyrs to science. Their discoveries conflicted with the astronomy of the Bible; and which was right, the men or the book? Socrates was regarded as a disturber because not understood, and is being imperfectly understood at the present time. Jesus was a disturber of the peace; so said the Jewish priesthood, and they put him to death; but we know very little of the character of Jesus even now. The men who signed the declaration of American Independence were declared outlaws by the English throne. The staid old barons said the leaders of the people are going too fast; but they succeeded and to-day we honor their memories. Thos. Paine, according to the views of the average man, lived a hundred years before his time. Paine was an agnostic and this is an age of agnosticism, and the name of Thomas Paine is being spoken with more respect to-day than at any time since his departure to the spirit world. Wm. Lloyd Garrison saw clearly the emancipation of human slavery, but all men did not see it. It required years of personal labor and sacrifice to accomplish this great object. The church opposed it and charged Garrison with going too fast, with being an hundred years ahead of his time. But it did not require all that time to accomplish the object he had in view. In a quarter of a century, with the assistance of a few brave souls, freedom dawned on the black man, but there was no cessation in the advance guard. Other methods for the relief of a growing world suggested themselves and will be perfected, and still the world moves; but it has a heavy weight to drag after it. We regard every orthodox church as mountains thrown up to block the car wheels of progress; and we know of but one way to overcome them, and that is by calling to our aid science and the genius of the age and temporal things; then leaving these lofty spires as monuments to mark the spot where once creed bound souls did congregate to do homage to an unknown God. All buildings which cannot be put to every-day, practical use, are as so many barnacles clinging to the sides of a vessel, and requiring the same kind of treatment given to the vessel; to wit: scraping off; thus enabling the vessel to make better time and bring larger returns to its owners.

The active Spiritualists of to-day are at least an hundred years in advance of the church, and for this reason they are not understood, and their motives are empugned. But because one man or one denomination turns their back to the sunlight, and says it is all dark, is not to be taken as proof that the sun does not shine; yet there are thousands who fail to see the dawning light of Spiritualism, because they are looking through eyes dimmed by prejudice and clouded with superstition. A noted divine said in a recent discourse that the word of God was immortal and could only be found in the Bible; thus discarding all the teachings of nature; and this man is a leader among the people, but is at least one hundred years behind the age; and we ask if the church regards a man who is at the front in any battle as too far ahead of the masses to be understood, what shall we say for those who are so far in the rear that they cannot hear the sound of the enemies' guns? Of what use are they in a growing world? They are simply the fossilized remains of ancient days clinging to life, demanding regeneration. But the advance guard of Spiritualists cannot afford to waste any time on them. The fields are white and ready for the harvesters. There is work to be done, and more are wanted. To such constant employment will be given, and they will not need to wait until Gabriel blows his trumpet in order to receive the rewards of their labors.

The Christian contributes of his means with the hope of receiving a large percentage as interest on their investment when they reach the kingdom of heaven; poor souls! Why deprive yourselves of the blessings at hand, for no other reason than a fancied promise of something greater by and by? Why live amid the clouds and shadows, when by moving out into the world you can be warmed by the sunlight and fanned by the warm breezes of angelic love?

Are we going too fast? We answer, no; so long as the hosts of reformed spirits lead us on. Men with imperfectly balanced heads may grow fanatical on the revelations of Spiritualism, but the clear thinking see with prophetic vision the guiding hands of angels, and when they lead, there is no danger in following. There is a wide and deep gulf between the Spiritualist of this age and his creed bound neighbor. He who is bound to a printed book that cannot be revised nor added to, will die in the same spot where he was born, and he cannot help it; the very nature of things makes him a slave to the book. To him there is something specially sacred in the words, "holy Bible;" but if that were all the revelation the world has to lead them onward darkness would brood over the land and every human soul would become a sepulcher for buried hopes and pleasures. Such was the condition of things when Spiritualism dawned in the land. Have we as Spiritualists been going too fast? Have we done too much by riding the world of all the theological excrescences attached to it by the leaders in past ages? Are we going too fast when we assist our spirit friends in opening the way, revealing the soul's immortality? If we can be justly charged with too much zeal, what shall we say of those

who are so far in the rear as not to be known in the ranks at all? Which is the greater evil, to lead or to use all the powers possessed in trying to hold the world from the investigation of vital principles in which every one is deeply interested? It hardly seems necessary that we should deny the charge, and would not were it not brought forward for personal gain. There are many who have not got any fixed principles established. They fear to leave the theological creed, lest they may become outcasts from the Father's heart. To such we can only say, have no fears. The same hand which has led you thus far will not desert you so long as you are true to the honest convictions of your own soul.

This is a growing age; thoughts like plants need cultivation and he who neglects to care for his own interests will be left in the rear. What is a hundred years in the development of man's spiritual forces? 'Tis but a day. The sluggard says, give us more time to sleep; let us have shady groves to wander in, lest we grow weary with the duties of the hour. Heaven to such is a place of idleness. They may be justly termed, theological tramps,—men willing to live upon the industries of others, but unwilling to produce anything for the benefit of the world; and yet these are the men who charge Spiritualists with going too fast—living an hundred years ahead of their time.

But there is a question in connection with this matter which needs to be considered and it is one of knowledge. How can one man charge another with being ahead of the times, unless he has an intense understanding of the position occupied by the one so charged? One man may be in hourly communion with the spirit world. The fact that he is, is a fact in nature, and if all people were similarly organized, they would all enjoy the same communion; but nature seems not to be so lavish with her gift; hence only here and there the favored ones are to be found. But are Spiritualists really so far in advance of their works, are they indeed the leaders in religious thought? They live humbly, strive to do their duty as citizens, contributing from their supply to the general fund for the furtherance of humanity. There is none of that aristocratic spirit so noticeable among Christian leaders. There is not a Spiritualist no matter how advanced in thought, who would presume to dictate to the God of nature changes they might conceive to be beneficial; but being students of nature they recognize the relation of cause to effect. In brief they occupy the same ground that Jesus did two thousand years ago. The doctrines of Spiritualism outgrow the religion of creeds and customs. As a class they have discarded old efforts, laws and dogmas, and are living in a different and clearer atmosphere than the Christian. They believe it to be their duty to keep abreast of the tide in human progress, and this makes them leaders in the acts and thoughts of the age. Any attempt to drag the car of Juggernaut after them would only retard their movements and keep the world in darkness. Hence, from the very nature of the case, they must press forward. Any other course would be unmanly and ungodly.

The present is an age of activity. Thoughts flash through the brain with the rapidity of lightning. Ideas are born in the twinkling of an eye. The two connections of being are drawing closer and closer to each other, and at no distant day spirit intercourse will be as common as the communion of mortals is to-day. We are interested in the race, and he that lacks the spirit and energy to keep neck and neck in the race must and will be left behind.

The reforms inaugurated by Jesus two thousand years ago are just being brought into practical use to-day. He lived two thousand years before the time when his doctrines could be comprehended, but there never was a time when he was more honored than at the present time. As a spiritual medium and a teacher he was a failure at the time he dwelt upon earth, but to-day his lessons are studied with interest because they can be made more practical. So it is with Spiritualism. The people must grow to understand it. It must become a living-spring, giving life, health and beauty to their every day lives. Let us then keep the wheels in motion, for if not understood to-day the time will come when the humblest medium will be honored, and the truths taught through them will become the guiding principles of the world.

T. STARR KING.

For the OLIVE BRANCH.

A WAKING IN THE BETTER LAND.

Down to the borders of the silent land,
He goes with halting feet;
He dares not trust; he cannot understand
The blessedness complete,
That waits for God's beloved, at his right hand.

He dreads to see God's face; for though the pure
Beholding him are blest,
Yet in his sight no evil can endure;
And still, with fear oppressed,
He looks within and cries, "who can be sure?"

The world beyond is strange; the golden streets,
The palaces so fair,
The seraphs' singing in their shining seats,
The glory everywhere;
And to his soul he solemnly repeats,

The visions of the Book. Alas! he cries,
"That world is all too grand;
Among those splendors and those majesties
I would not dare to stand;
For me a lowlier heaven would suffice."

The light is fading in the tired eyes,
The weary race is run;
Not as the victor that doth raise the prize,
But as the fainting one,
He nears the verge of the eternities.

And now the end has come, and now he sees
The happy, happy shore;
Oh, fearful, faint, distrustful soul, are these
Thou fearest before,
The awful majesties that spoiled thy peace?

This land is home; no stranger art thou here,
Sweet and familiar words,
From voices silent long, salute thine ear;
And winds, and songs of birds,
And bees, and blooms, and sweet perfumes are near.

The seraphs—they are men of kindly mien;
The gems and robes—but signs
Of minds all radiant, and of hearts washed clean;
The glory, such as shines
Wherever faith, or hope, or love are seen.

Oh, happy soul, be thankful now and rest!
Heaven is a goodly land;
And God is love; and those he loves are blest.
Now thou dost understand
The least thou hast is better than the best
That thou didst hope for; now upon thine eyes
The new life opened fair;
Before thy feet the blessed journey lies,
Through home-lands everywhere;
And heaven to thee is all a sweet surprise.

REV. WASHINGTON GLADDEN,

LET JESUS REST!

Of all the men who have ever lived there is no one that has been made a packhorse of so much as Jesus. Every Christian in the whole civilized world has added to the load, he is made to bear; and they do this with as much earnestness and devotion as though they were invited to a feast. Not only once in their life time, but every day they add a little, and urge their friends to go and do likewise. Conscience they have none. Self respect lost—manhood dead—they see only Jesus; and he growing deformed by this everlasting burden bearing. It is well known that mental burdens are more exhaustive than when only the physical body is used, and a person over-taxed mentally must sooner or later reap the reward. For two thousand years Jesus has been made the scape goat of the christian world. He is prayed to and importuned continually, to try and influence Deity to look with favor upon some repentant soul, to secure divine interposition in favor of some sect, or to accept some building recently completed, as an equivalent for past and anticipated favors.

In one section of the country prayer is offered for rain, in another section fair weather is asked for, in another crops are ripening too fast. God's attention must be called to this condition of things. In other sections worms and bugs are destroying the crops, and divine interposition is invoked; and a million other things are asked, but the christian never goes to the fountain head. Jesus is appealed to in every case, and if he was to attempt to keep any record of what is asked of him there would not be angelic book-keepers enough to note down what is asked. Poor Jesus; let him rest for a while!

It may be urged that Jesus is able to care for himself, and therefore we need not concern ourselves about him. This kind of an argument is good from a christian standpoint only. Any man who has a spark of humanity burning in their bosoms cannot help feeling as we do, that it is time reason called a halt in their blind marching, and a season of rest and reflection be enjoyed. There are many who deny that there ever was such a person as Jesus; the character given to him is imaginary. It is not alone among the atheistic portions of countries that the existence of Jesus is questioned; but we see the same spirit manifest among certain ones professing to be spiritualists. The bible narrative says he was born at Bethlehem. One certain spirit says he was born at Rome. Some claim God to be the father of Jesus; others claim that he was born in wedlock, and that Joseph is or was his father. Others again say his father is unknown, but is supposed to have been a priest at Jerusalem. No, as for the real issue in the case, it does not make any difference whether he had one father or twenty; whether born at Bethlehem or Rome; only so far as Bible and church history is concerned. We know there is such a person; have both seen and counseled with him; and he is as truly human as any man living upon the material plane of earth to day, and really gives as much attention to the prayers of the world as any spirit occupying the same plane with him. It must not be understood that Jesus is the most ad-

vanced spirit known to-day. He was not a learned man, but possessed a loving heart, and it is this which makes him the scape-goat of all Christian nations.

It was natural to suppose that with the knowledge obtained through spirit agencies there would be less controversy about Jesus, for one of the first things enquired of by a man about Spiritualism is, is Jesus more than any other man? and the answer has been invariably given that he was not.

Self responsibility is one of the first lessons presented to the new scholar by the spirit world. Following in the same line comes lessons in rationalism, self culture, natural law, cause and consequence. All these are legitimate studies; but they in no way involve the character of Jesus. He has nothing whatever to do with you, only if he should see that you were in error, he might by impression seek to set you aright; and this is no more than most any other advanced spirit would do. It is a fact to-day and admitted to be by every honest man in the land, that the plan of salvation adopted by all evangelical churches is a failure. It fails to reach the cases for which it was inaugurated; hence a change is absolutely necessary. We want to let Jesus rest and try some other plan.

Salvation armies in the church and out of it are making desperate efforts to win souls to Christ, but in doing so, they win them away from themselves, and the part saved is not worth the time and trouble spent in the effort. The spiritual plan of salvation differs from the christian plan in many particulars, and one of the first and all-important is the saving of manhood integrity, character; in fact the first thing shown a man is that he is immortal, that his spiritual existence can not be traced to a beginning, neither can any end be prophesied. Spiritualism makes a distinction between mortal and spiritual forms. The form belongs to the temporal affairs of life, while the other is eternal. The spirit world does not want to save a part of a man or a part only of the human family. If men are worth saving at all, they are worth saving whole, and if one man is worth saving the whole world is. Even the most vile has a spirit of goodness left, that can be through love warmed into new life, and made to shine forth like a star in the heavens.

It is not for us to say who shall be saved and who shall be damned. This is a clerical prerogative; but how they distinguish between saints and sinners is more than any one in spirit life can tell. We are lost in wonder at the marvelous shrewdness manifested at times in determining who are the elect and who are the reprobate. Herein, if any where, is the science of Christianity to be found. But when found, self will be written all over it. Jesus will be importuned to lend his influence, and at the end of the season an estimate will be made of how many souls have been saved. The Christian scheme embodies so much that few can comprehend it. In the first place a repentant sinner is absolutely essential. He is Hamlet of the play. Next to be considered is an angry God, who is unchangeable; but unknown to God the Holy Ghost has been at work upon this poor fellow. The minister

discovers him and strengthened he goes to Jesus, lays the case before him, and implores him to intercede with Deity, who finally relents and all is peace in heaven and on earth again. We don't like the plan; it is too complicated. We do not approve of a Holy Ghost interfering in the plans of Deity; for if infinite in wisdom, any change made from an original decree proves that when the decree was issued he was not infinite in wisdom then, and we have no assurance that a second and third change may not prove more clearly that there was nothing infinite about it at any time; no great wisdom displayed; and upon the whole there is nothing transcending human powers.

The whole scheme of Christian salvation hinges upon Jesus. If he was what is claimed for him, then the plan is perfect; if he is what we claim that he is, the whole scheme is a fraud. But in either case we fail to see how any one can justify themselves in refusing to employ all reasonable measures to satisfy themselves beyond a doubt in reference to their responsibility. The phenomena presented to-day furnish food for thought and reflection, and why are these phenomena given if the spirits of the so-called dead are held waiting for the judgment day? Who is it that raps out their names and sends greetings to the living? It cannot be that Jesus is playing imposter, for occasionally he comes and announces his presence. The intelligence derived through spirit communion and through phenomena more than anything else strips orthodoxy of its cloak of sanctity, and leaves it standing alone, naked and a stench in the nostrils of any lover of truth.

It is not essential that we go back to the time of Jesus, in order to learn the laws of health and life. It is not necessary for us to go to him for our religion. What is born in a man is his own property, and every man has inherited instincts of right and wrong. It is these inherited qualities we should cultivate, regardless of whether there ever was a Jesus or not. Let him rest for a time. Stand out upon the broad highway of manly principles and see if at the end of the year you are not as good a citizen and as charitable as the most devout worshiper of Jesus.

There is a large percentage of humbug and nonsense wrapped up with what is called religion, and we feel that if we can clear away these obstacles, we shall have done for the world what no church has ever done. But to attempt this single-handed and alone would be unwise. We require the assistance of every honest soul living on the plane of material life. The errors which are to be removed have been rooting in the human mind for thousands of years, but by the aid of science and the exercise of reason the decline of religious errors will be more rapid than were they in taking root. What is needed to-day is more knowledge, broader views of the object and aims of life, and less worshipping Jesus; and we say this with due reverence for the character of this much abused person.

There appears to be a feeling of dread which comes over a person when their attention is first called to the subject of spiritualism; for they see that in order to secure the blessings of the latter, many of their former beliefs must

be cast aside, and prominent among the things to be forgotten is that of being saved by having the righteousness of another imputed to them. We know this is a critical period in one's life, but if they have been traveling in the wrong path for months and years, even though it be pleasant, and there is plenty of company to entertain them, yet it is the wrong path; the sooner you turn about the better it will be for you, even though the other path be not so smooth and friends are fewer, and scoffers many; if it is right to make the change it should be done, no matter what the sacrifice. Many persons lack confidence in themselves. They have for so long a time been counting their own best efforts as "filthy rags," that when called upon to act in an independent capacity they feel as though there was nothing to lean upon. What better staff can a youth have than a firm will, with a consciousness that they are living in harmony with nature's laws, and that every step in the new path emboldens them to press forward with greater speed and firmer confidence?

Cannot Spiritualists let Jesus rest, and not be forever quibbling over historical statements, which can neither add to nor take from the facts in the case? Equally uninformative are the frequent discussions of who and what is God? Why puzzle your brains over abstract questions and reject the more practical matters of to-day? It cannot be supposed that we can readjust ourselves to the prevailing customs of two thousand years ago. If we could it would be a sin to do it. Every age is distinctively its own; as much so as a man's life is his own property; both good to draw lessons from but not for adoption. And the same is true in regard to Jesus. We can draw lessons from his life, but his manners and customs would be out of place. We may be charged with blasphemy in speaking as we do, but are they not facts, and if so then they should be so declared? One of the objects the spirit world has in view is the establishing upon a permanent basis the religious belief of the world. Not that they expect everyone to think alike, but to establish a fountain from whence supplies can be drawn whenever needed. This is not the invention of any one spirit, but it is the result of combined action, and, after due consideration, the disintegration of religious bodies will be more rapid in the future than in the past. Not that church buildings will be destroyed, but they will be put to a new, general and practical use.

Spiritualism is truly the religion of to-day. To enjoy it in its fulness, we must cut loose from the traditions of past ages, and build up on the foundations which the architect of the universe has prepared for us. Creeds and caste do not make men, but they build up a religious oligarchy, tyrannical and opposed to the principles of free government. All the religious views of all ages are counted in this. Spiritualism embodies all there is of vital importance in all of them. It is the condensed thoughts of all ages merged into one system—one philosophy—one science. The mission of Jesus was completed two thousand years ago. Were he with us to-day, he would be one of us. Then why not act in accordance with those principles and labor for the good of

humanity, and leave such cruel creeds to be buried beneath the accumulated intelligence of present attainments.

Let Jesus rest. He has done his work. We must do what belongs to us, and while we honor him for what he did, let his life stimulate us to activity that the same may be said of us by future generations.

JOHN MILTON.

THE FACTORY GIRL'S LAST DAY.

ROBERT DALE OWEN, in the Atlantic Monthly.

'Twas on one winter morning,
The weather was wet and wild,
Two hours before the dawning,
The father roused his child;
Her daily morsel bringing,
The darksome room he paced,
And cried: "The bell is ringing;
My hapless darling, haste!"

"Dear father, I'm so weary!
I scarce can reach the door,
And long the way and dreary;
Oh, carry me once more."
Her wasted form seemed nothing;
The load is on his heart;
He soothes the little sufferer,
Till at the mill they part.

The overlooker met her,
As to her frame she crept;
And with his thong he beat her,
And cursed her when she wept.
It seemed as she grew weaker,
The threads the oftener broke;
The rapid wheels ran quicker,
And heavier fell the stroke.

She thought how her dead mother
Blessed her with her latest breath,
And of her little brother,
Worked down, like her, to death;
Then told her tiny neighbor
A half-penny she would pay
To take her last hour's labor,
While by her frame she lay.

The sun had long descended,
Ere she sought that repose;
Her day began and ended
As cruel tyrants chose.
Then home! but oft she tarried;
She fell, and rose no more;
By pitying comrades carried,
She reached her father's door.

At night, with tortured feeling,
He watched his sleepless child;
Though close beside her kneeling,
She knew him not nor smiled.
Again the factory's ringing
Her last perceptions tried;
Up from her straw bed springing,
It's time! she shrieked, and died!

That night a chariot passed her,
While on the ground she lay;
The daughters of her master
An evening visit pay.
Their tender hearts were sighing,
As negro's wrongs were told,
While the white slave was dying,
Who galed their father's gold.

A lady correspondent sends us the following communication from St. Louis, Mo. :—

"It is not possible to impress mankind too thoroughly with the importance of controlling their thoughts; for on entering spirit life, the form, the clothing, the habitations all partake of the thoughts indulged in during earth life, whether debased or elevated. The thoughts are tangible, they are matter, though invisible to mortal sight; and during the whole journey

of earth life, the spiritual body is attaining strength and development by the accumulation of ideas, the earthly body attains its growth, first in height, then in size, and when arrived at full maturity, commences the downward course of decay; the thoughts, too, change. What pleases at five years of age, will not please at fifteen, and the thoughts which the young at twenty years of age indulge in, are seen by the man of fifty to be too often only misleading. These changes are seen by us to be only the growing of the spiritual body, and as the thoughts are engaged in elevated or low debasing subjects, so is the spiritual growth beneficial or detrimental to the standing of the spirit in the true life. There is one great difference in the material and spiritual body; the material body, flesh and blood, must decay or wear out, but the spiritual body has no limitations to its progress. It may while in the earthly body become torpid or numb; but this is overcome when freed from its earthly environment, and there is no old age for the spirit, but ever onward and upward is its natural course. Let men but realize this truth, and their constant endeavor would be to so cultivate harmonious, benevolent thoughts as to produce the fruit of noble, kindly deeds, which bind man to man in one vast family or brotherhood. This is the most important idea for humanity; but individually, the thoughts of investigators in any branch of art or science will be continued with much greater satisfaction in spirit life. The chemist will continue his studies enlightened by seeing the processes of nature on the spiritual side; new combinations and forces will occupy his attention.

The astronomer will gaze into illimitable space and feel no limited his knowledge when confined to earth. To the lover of nature there are no bounds to the pleasure of gaining new thoughts as the wonders of the universe gradually open to his vision. The taint of selfishness has no place here, and all beautiful ideas are freely given to all who can appreciate them. Thus all are employed in increasing their own happiness, and the happiness of others, while growing more and more like unto the giver of all goodness, wisdom, and power through a never ending eternity.

"A HOLE IN THE WALL."

The Hebrew prophet was sorely distressed when he discovered that great numbers of his people who professed to worship Jehovah, were in secret addicted to the service of heathen duties. The fact to-day is so far different that the barbaric religion is the fashionable one, while the purer religion is under the ban of public reproach. Of the purest form of religion known at the present day it is true, as of Christianity in its early days that—"This sect is everywhere spoken against."

The deification of man, as absolute God, must be abandoned before men can learn to discern the divine in the human. Jesus said not—"I am God;" but—"I and my father are one." His followers, as they call themselves, say that Jesus was God, and that he and his father were two. Which shall we believe—him who called himself the Son of Man, or those who call him God? In deifying Jesus men follow heathen precedent, of immemorial antiquity. In denying that Jesus was "very God," we break away, once for all, from the one distinctive idea of heathenism; namely: that God is only an exaggerated man.

PEN SKETCHES.

To the Editor of the OLIVE BRANCH:

I again greet my dear readers with sketches of my recent experiences at San Diego and Riverside.

I left my new found friends at San Bernardino with sincere regret, for during my brief stay with them their kind hospitality won my heart-felt gratitude. The Tuesday evening before my departure some of the enterprising ladies of that society gave the Bishop a public reception at the Spiritual Hall, and also prepared a grand banquet.

The hall was very tastily decorated with beautiful flowers and vines festooned gracefully, and the table fairly groaned with fruits and a collection of the most tempting home-made confections. Something like one hundred and fifty persons were present from the best families in town, and both old and young joined merrily in the social festivities of the occasion until a late hour and all pronounced it the most enjoyable evening of the season.

Leaving this evergreen valley by rail, my journey wound along the Coast Range and through rugged rocks and mountain canons, here and there lashed by the Pacific surf. The humid air of San Bernardino valley gradually disappears as you near the southern Coast Range, where fogs and rains are less frequent.

San Diego lays on the bay at the water's edge like a summer dream, and reaching it late in the evening, one feels it may be some fairy-land, so beautiful is the situation with old ocean on the one side and the sleeping city on the other, while the soft light of a full moon lent a mystic charm to the scene, giving it the spell of some enchantment.

San Diego is the land of tropical fruits and exotic flowers; and the balmy atmosphere from the ocean tempering it with a health invigorating tonic, makes it the most desirable place in the world for invalids and pleasure seekers. There is at present, however, a depression in business and financial stagnation that lessens somewhat the interest of the town, but it is only a question of a few years when the commercial advantages there, and its rich productive soil will be brought into requisition again, making it one of the finest countries in Southern California.

I was the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Bushyhead, whose cosy cottage overlooking the bay and embowered with climbing roses and beautiful vines and flowers seemed like a fairy home, so perfect the harmony brooding like an angel presence within and without. Too much praise cannot be given Mrs. Bushyhead for the moral influence she wields in that community for the cause of true Spiritualism, giving the cause tone and character in her large circle of acquaintances. If we had more such noble, true-hearted women our cause would become the world's religion.

Thursday evening by invitation I spoke at National City, a new settlement situated five miles from San Diego, on the bay. I was the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Blackmore, formerly Mrs. Kimball, editress of the Children's Lyceum Banner, so well known in both the eastern and western states.

If space was allowed me I would like to give a description of that growing country, its

gardens and groves and most exquisite fruits and flowers, overlooking the bay, its cultivated fields now gradually extending up to the mountain's base.

National City is the terminus of the Southern Pacific road and when it is extended connecting with the Northern Pacific roads, as it will be, it will give increasing wealth to the country and greatly increase the population.

Closing my engagement at San Diego with many kind wishes from the friends I had formed, I returned to fill an engagement of one week at the beautiful rural town of Riverside. The Spiritualists of this place have united with the Universalist denomination and sustained the pastor, whose teachings have been so spiritual and liberal they flattered themselves he was fast becoming committed to the truths of Spiritualism. As they do not use the church Sunday evenings or week nights, an application was made for the use of the church for my lectures, but what was their astonishment to find the reverend pastor greatly opposed to it, and stoutly insisting that the church should not be defiled by unorthodox teachers. The trustees gave their consent in spite of the bitter opposition of the reverend minister, and to the entire satisfaction of a large liberal element both in and out of the church.

Riverside is a garden of tropical flowers and the choicest fruits, encircled by snow-clad mountains. An avenue ten miles in length and watered by the artificial rivers, bounded on either side by hedges of evergreens with here and there the palm, cypress and graceful pepper trees, half concealing the groves of orange, olive, lemon, lime, apricot and the vast vineyards reposing in the sunshine of a cloudless sky, presents a delightful picture to the eye. Elegant residences nestling among the vines and half-twining fig trees meet the bewildered gaze as you ride along the avenues laced and interlaced with an arcade of arching branches overhead.

By these irrigating yanjias or small canals that are fretted and tortured into fields and groves supplying moisture around the roots and plants of fruit trees and flower-beds, the fertilization goes on. If you clamber up a hill and look over the dreamy landscape you seem to be gazing upon a vast piece of lace-work that sparkles in the matchless sunlight like some strange land or deceptive mirage.

A few years ago the antelope and deer held undisputed possession of this valley; only now and then disturbed by some strolling hunters. The first settlements were mere grazing ranches, not worth a dollar an acre; now they reach the fabulous price of one to three thousand dollars an acre. The transformation that has been wrought in this semi-tropical country will still continue to go on while a foot of soil remains uncultivated.

I am the guest of Brother Tibbets, whose beautiful cottage home surrounded, by a well cultivated garden of fruit trees and flowers, seems a perfect Eden. Mrs. Tibbets is a fine medium and a cultivated lady, and has a marked influence in this community for the cause of Spiritualism.

My lectures here in the Universalist church have been eminently successful and called out

a large class of Christian people of the best society. The opposition from the Universalist pastor has resulted in the resignation of his pastorate. "Whom the Gods would destroy they first make mad." The good work goes on in spite of priest and reverends. I go to Santa Barbara for the month of June.

BISHOP A. BEALS.

For the OLIVE BRANCH.

SENDING MOTHER TO HELL.

Over a score of years since I knew a worthy old farmer who was a spiritualist. If it be true that an honest human being is the noblest work of God, then that farmer and his wife are among Heaven's nobility. They had ascertained that spirit intercourse is a fact, through the mediumship of their two daughters. The wife was taken sick and died. There was but one meeting-house in the place, and at that house the funeral of the wife was held. The farmer went to the meeting-house with the other mourners; but when the minister began to open his theological budget, the farmer saw that his dear old wife was to be sent to that tropical country, to which orthodox clergymen delight to send those who live outside their theological bailiwick. This so displeased the farmer, that he left the meeting-house and did not return until the services were near the close. After the funeral was past, one of the daughters asked her father what caused him to leave the meeting during the funeral service. He replied that he thought he would go home, feed the stock, and by that time, "the minister would be through sending mother to hell." This I had from one of the daughters, who was present at the funeral. However discourteous it might seem for the farmer to leave the house at such a time, to my mind it was no greater offence against good manners, than for a clergyman to seize upon such an opportunity to outrage the feelings of relatives, by sending the deceased to perdition.

Some miners in California gave a clergyman a golden lesson on the subject of funeral sermons. A miner died who was held in high esteem by his fellow-miners. But the officiating clergyman sent the miner directly to the land of sulphur. This the miners took in high dudgeon. The funeral being over, the miners informed the clergyman that he could have twenty-four hours to leave that part of the country; but if found there after that time, they would throw a rope over a limb, and give him a chance to find out where his specific gravity would carry him to in the land of the hereafter. The clergyman, not feeling quite ready to walk the streets of the New Jerusalem, and thrum on golden harps, did not allow the grass to grow under his feet in departing. I see no necessity for passing judgment on the life of a deceased person at their funeral. It is an unwarrantable assumption to send any person to regions of endless woe; and many of the fulsome eulogies had better be left unsaid, as the relatives and friends know the statements are extravagant. It were well to step backward with averted eye, and drop a mantle of charitable silence over many that go down to the gates of death. The Power that gave them their leanings and tendencies, that ruled their lives, knows how to deal with them in

justice, kindness and mercy; and those who pass harsh judgment, would do well to look to the weeds in their own gardens. Most persons who have lived to years of maturity, have heard ministers explain the reasons why God kills a mother's darling baby. Too much affection for the child, is the cause usually assigned. According to their statements, we are to suppose that God becomes jealous and revengeful because the mother lavished more affection upon her child than upon her Creator. But we do not hear of husbands becoming jealous in such affairs. They are delighted to have their wives love their children. Of course, the proof is entirely wanting to show that God ever takes the life of any human being, as a special act outside of natural laws. The last time I attended an orthodox funeral there was a large audience, from the fact that the deceased man was a member of a secret order as well as the Baptist church. In looking around upon the audience, I saw free-thinkers there who seldom go to church, and I thought to myself such an audience as this should listen to a grand sermon. But the discourse was made up of small orthodox platitudes. The clergyman undertook to tell why God had taken the deceased away from this world, since he was an exemplary church member, a good citizen, a good husband and left a wife and three children dependent on his labor, and departed too in the prime of life. The conclusion which the preacher came to, was that, had not God removed him at that time, he might have lived to commit some crime, and perhaps swung upon the gallows. What balm this must have been to the wounded spirit of the weeping wife, and what an insult to his relatives, his friends and to his memory! When Spiritualism has been in the world thirty-five years more, such absurd talk at funerals will most likely be a thing of the past, never to return.

W. CHURCH.

For the OLIVE BRANCH.

"AULD CLOOTIE" AND ORGANIZATION.

"O, thou! whatever title suit thee,
Auld Hornie, Satan, Nick or, Clootie,
Who in your cavern grim and sootie,
Closed under hatches,
Spairges about the brimstone cootie,
To scand poor wretches,
Hear me, auld Hangie, for a wee,
And let poor damned bodies be;
I'm sure sma' pleasure it can gie,
E'en to a deil.

* * * * *
But, fare you weel, auld Nickie-ben!
Oh, wad ye take a thought and men!"—Burns.

During the year 1861, I met at Geneva, N. Y., O. S. Fowler, the renowned phrenologist and lecturer. I inquired of him if he was doing well in his lectures in that town. He replied that he never had done as well in lecturing in Geneva as at other towns in the state of equal population. He said there was about sixty retired clergymen residing there and their influence was ever exerted to defeat his lectures, which was owing to the fact that his lectures had a tendency to kill the orthodox devil, and that greatly displeased the clergymen. Mr. Fowler was in the habit of illustrating in his lectures from the skulls of dis-

eased persons, who had manifested diverse mental qualities during their earth-life. Where the divergence in character had been prominent, he would point out, from the external configuration of the head, the causes which had produced given manifestations of character. Of course anything like an intelligent audience would readily perceive that "auld Nickie-ben" had his home in the organization; that is, in the well organized man, must be a good man, and the badly organized man must be a bad man; and this would account for all the different grades of character. Perhaps nothing could more thoroughly disgust the average clergyman than to see his pet antagonistic divinity, disposed of in that common sense way.

One of the popes observed that a certain little church rendering of Scripture, had been of great financial advantage to the church, and it might be difficult to find a clergyman who would not think that to turn even a fabulous devil into a kind of pandora box, in which to tumble all causes of evil, is otherwise than a great advantage to their profession. It saves the trouble of any philosophical, or analogical reasoning on the cause of evil. The devil being the universal instigator, the subject is easily disposed of. But the ancient prophets did not dispose of evil in that way. Lying spirits are sent from the presence of the Lord. "Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets. And the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee." (1 Kings 22:23.) "Then said I, Lord God, surely thou hast greatly deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying, ye shall have peace; whereas, the sword reacheth unto the soul." (Jer. 4:10.) "O, Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived; thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed; I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me." (Jer. 20:7.) "And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I, the Lord, have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and I will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel." (Ezekiel 14:9.) "Therefore it shall come to pass that as all good things are come upon you, which the Lord your God promised you; so shall the Lord bring upon you all evil things, until he has destroyed you from off this good land, which the Lord your God hath given you. (Josh. 23:15.) "But he said unto her, thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips?" (Job. 2:10.) "I form the light, and create darkness. I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things." (Isa. 45:7.) Though the book of Job, it is admitted, was not written by a Jew, but by some one of a different religious faith, still the writer seems to hold the same view as to the source of evil as did the prophets.

It was God who repeatedly hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he would not let the children of Israel go. Had these ancient writers known of any such character as the Book of Job and the New Testament writers speak of, doubtless they would have been as free to set him down as the author of evil, as the Apostles.

But a devil and a future life did not seem to be subjects with which the ancient prophets were familiar. But slight reference is made to Satan in the Old Testament, so slight that it must occur to the mind of the unbiased reader, that the translators have in some instances introduced the word Satan that it might not seem strange that so much should be laid to his charge in the New Testament, and nothing in the Old Testament.

In 2 Sam'l 24:1, it is recorded:—"And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, go number Israel and Judah." But for obeying the Lord in this matter, David had to select as a punishment either seven years of famine, fly three months before his enemies, or three days pestilence in the land. In 1 Chronicles 21:1, it is written: "And Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel." The penalty is the same, except the famine is set down three years instead of three months. As the cases are the same, referred to by different writers, it shows that translators should have good memories, good enough not to make God and the Devil interchangeable terms, or paint them in the same colors.

Those who have read books on ancient heathen mythology must have been forcibly impressed with the perfect analogy between the style of heathen mythology, with the story of Adam, Eve and the serpent in the garden—that of Jesus being led into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil, set upon a pinnacle of the temple by the same power; also taken up on to an exceeding high mountain and shown all the kingdoms of the world. The story of the Lord holding a conversation with Satan concerning Job, is of the same mythical character. "And the Lord said unto Satan, hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? And still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause." (Job 2:3.) This, as an oriental fable, is all well enough; but we cannot admit that the God of this glorious universe was ever moved by an arch enemy of the human race to destroy any innocent man, and all that, to please the Devil.

If it be true, as claimed, that God is the author of both the Old and the New Testament, it seems very strange that in the old Testament he should have so freely admitted himself to be the cause of evil, but in the New Testament charged it so fully to the Devil. Those who do not feel at liberty to use their reason in such matters, would find no objection to this inconsistency; but to my mind it is stamped with finite imperfection, partaking in no sense of the sublime character of the Ruler of all worlds.

W. C. W.

—Why cannot men glorify God with a yardstick, a pair of shears, a hand-saw, or a pen in their hands, and not wait for golden harps?

—He who expresses in his conduct justice and charity accomplishes the most beautiful works: the good man is, in his own way, the greatest of all artists.—[Victor Cousin.

PROFITABLE KNOWLEDGE.

To the Editor of the OLIVE BRANCH:

We are solely concerned in the basic principles of reform, and the true culture of children. The doctrines of total depravity, and vicarious atonement we affirm to be wickedly fallacious, obstructive to soul purification, and the development and growth of the prototype angel in man. Rather than being born depraved, there are legion proclivities inbred in children to be immortalized.

The reactive forces of nature developed the world from a germ. The greatness of a generation depends upon the nature of gestation, and influence brought to bear on innate powers from infancy to manhood. The culture given to the gestating and maturing of pure offspring, is for the eternal heavenly life of children, men and women, and when trained to the best use of their faculties, they grow progressive.

It is according to the intelligence of a people that art and science are evolved from immutable laws. Grand exemplary characters are inherently founded, while upon the shoals of infamy, talented lives are wrecked by an unwise parentage and poor culture. The rights of children are to be well born—to be taught a knowledge of their physical structures, to be naturally nourished and vitalized, and ruled by their goodly instincts. With these inalienable rights, the youths rise to manhood and womanhood wisely influential. We rejoice there are many self-commanding, promising young men and women seeking for positions of honor in life; but sad to realize that others are indifferent to their best impulses.

Consequent suffering is the atonement for moral laws violated. Nature's true teachers lead to reformation, while exemplary deeds are the most effectual instructors to men. The power and responsibility is weighty upon those whose germinating forces involve the greatness of kingdoms in perpetual life.

EDWIN CHENEY.

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MOTHER.

Early one summer morning
I saw two children pass;
Their footsteps slow but lightsome,
Scarce bent the tender grass.

One, lately out of babyhood,
Look'd up with eager eyes;
The other watched her wistfully,
Oppressed with smothered sighs.

"See, mother!" cried the little one,
I gathered them for you,
The sweetest flowers and lilies,
And Mable has some too."

"Hush, Nelly," whispered Mable,
"We have not reached there yet,
Wait till we get there, darling,
It is not far, my pet."

"Get where?" asked Nellie; "tell me."
"To the churchyard," Mable said,

"No! no!" cried little Nellie,
And shook her sunny head.

Still Mable whispered sadly,
"We must take them to the grave.
Come, darling!" and the childish voice
Tried to be clear and brave.

But Nellie still kept calling,
Far up into the blue,
"See me her, see how pretty!
We gathered them for you."

And when her sister pleaded,
She cried and would not go:
"Angels don't live in churchyards,
My mother don't, I know!"

Then Mable bent and kissed her,
"So be it, dear," she said;
"We'll take them to the arbor
And lay them there instead."

"For mother loved it dearly,
It was her sweetest place!"
And the joy that came to Nelly
Shone up in Mable's face.

I saw them turn, and follow
A path with blossoms bright,
Until the nodding branches
Concealed them from my sight."

But still like sweetest music
The words came ringing through;
"See, mother, see how pretty!
We gathered them for you."

MARY MAPES DODGE.

Not a system of religion the world has yet believed in has been free from errors; not one that has been true. All were based upon mistaken notions of gods and devils; all originated in fallacies and absurdities, or which were copied and adopted by one system from another.

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