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“MAN KNOW THYSELF.”

THE PROBLEM OF LIFE.

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

Spiritual Science and Philosophy, as related to
Universal Human Progress.

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EDITOR.

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THE PROBLEM OF LIFE.

THE INTENTIONS of "THE PROBLEM OF LIFE" are: To present to the public, clear, concise statements of thought, relative to all the great religious and social questions of the day; to prove the relation forever existing between mental harmony and physical health, and by such means to assist practically in diminishing the load of sorrow now pressing upon the race; to report and comment upon matters of interest to the general welfare of the race, the world over; to "render unto all their due," and thus oppose no person or party as such; but seek to point out a better way to those who are now sojourning in the darkness of mistake. To review books and pamphlets calculated to enlighten seekers after truth in the various fields of human effort, without respect to person or precedent, holding that a work must be judged by its intrinsic merit, wholly irrespective of the celebrity of the author. Finally, to treat every subject from the standpoint of the higher nature of man, therefore to point the way for an amicable settlement of present differences on the basis of the one Life of which we are all partakers.

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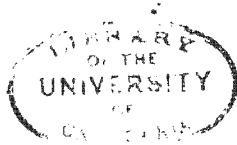
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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
Practical Spiritual Science. The Problem of Life. <i>W. J. Colville</i>	1
Our Policy, - - - - -	17
Heredity and Environment, - - - - - <i>Ellen</i>	19
An Interesting Interview, - - - - -	22
Notices, - - - - -	24
The Gospel of the Lord, - - - - - <i>Frederick</i>	29



PRACTICAL SPIRITUAL SCIENCE.

THE PROBLEM OF LIFE.

By W. J. COLVILLE.

Living as we now do, in an age when everything is doubted, and everything is questioned; in the midst of agitation of every sort, we are all led more or less often and more or less earnestly to ask the old questions, whence came we? what are we? and whither are we drifting? Are we waifs upon the billowy ocean, at times carried hither and thither by the tempestuous breakers without our knowledge or consent, or are we as human entities, ourselves responsible for our voyage, and capable of steering our barks safely into ports of happiness and rest by the exercise of our inborn faculties. Did we believe man to be an irresponsible creature, the plaything of blind fate, we should counsel ourselves and all our acquaintance to eat, drink, and be merry; for having so soon to die, it would seem scarcely worth while to trouble ourselves with the cultivation of our nobler possibilities; for if the mortal appearance, called physical life, be all there is of us and for us, this puny, short-lived heritage is by no means worthy of the thought and care we so universally bestow upon it; and again, if a conscious hereafter be in store for us, but of such a nature that its employments and enjoyments are in no way related to our present studies and activities, we scarcely see the utility of bestowing very much care or attention upon pursuits, the object of which is so transitory and the tenure so painfully uncertain. On the other hand, if we consider ourselves here and now immortal spiritual beings, capable of unfolding limitless capacities both on earth and in states invisible to mortal perception, and grow into the certain conviction that there is but one life, and that life unending, the practical commonplaces of our earthly existence are at once dignified and elevated, and the scene and scope of our ambitions immeasurably improved and enlarged

The problem of life, to the solution of which all thinkers are untiringly devoting themselves, is an all-including problem; to solve it requires not only diligent study of nature, but the broadest charity and most enlightened appreciation of the numberless efforts put forth everywhere by all sorts and conditions of minds, to answer the ever-recurring question of the ever-interrogating sphinx, the mystery of living which encompasses us each and every one, continually. Now the first difficulty most earnest students have to encounter, is the conflict of ideas, which at present transforms many societies into towers

of Babel, or Bedlams. How can we discover truth when all these clamorous tongues are calling loudly to us "lo, here," and "lo, there," as tho', if truth were "here" it could not be "there," and *vice versa*? We need before we proceed to pay any attention to these numerous discordant voices, to take carefully into account the all-important fact that the spirit of Truth invariably speaks with mankind through divers instrumentalities, no one of which can rightfully lay claim to exclusive genuineness. The exoteric claim of the church of Rome is probably accepted without qualification by very few enlightened minds at the present day, and all similar claims outside the Roman hierarchy have not even the authority which springs from antiquity to support them, unless we argue that several at least of the oriental religions are considerably older than christianity, and that this claim can be substantiated by well nigh irrefutable, monumental, as well as documentary evidence. But it is extremely doubtful whether any system of religion, even in its own accepted text books, ever makes the stupendous claims upon human credulity and submissiveness afterwards made for it by arrogant power-loving priests. In their original essence, all religious systems are but crystallizations of the highest thought of a particular period and people, by no means infallible, and entirely destitute of the over-weening importance fastened on to them in a later age, by often designing and always ambitious prelates. Probably no single individual has done more to save the bible of the English people than Matthew Arnold, a man whose extreme tho' scholarly heterodoxy—notwithstanding his remaining within the pale of the church of England and his counseling others to do the same—has caused him to be regarded by many pious tho' not very broad-minded christians as a stumbling block, and certainly not a help to the cause of religion. The day has however already dawned when the problem of man and his relations to the universe must be discussed in a manner never attempted by controversialists of departed centuries. Paley, Whately, Butler, and a host of other brilliant defenders of christian orthodoxy whose utterances were long considered unanswerable, are now set aside in favor of the arguments of such men as Prof. LeConte, and others of his or a similar school of thought, who instead of seeking to prove personal deism and convince their readers that God is an extra-cosmic moral and intelligent governor of the universe, turn from the old paths of argument and seek in new pastures of deeper and diviner thought to discover the living heritage upon which an otherwise famished humanity may feed their hungering souls. That man is a spiritual being, with spiritual wants and aspirations, admits of no denial; the history of man is verily the history of man's search for God, rather than a record of an unceasing quest for material dominion.

"What is that which stirs within,
Loving goodness, hating sin,
Always longing to be blest,
Finding here below no rest?

Tis' the soul, mysterious flame,
Him it seeks from whom it came.
It would, mighty God, like Thee,
Holy, holy, holy, be."

In these words of a truly inspired modern poet, we have in the form of question and answer a statement of the nature and aspirations of our common humanity. "You must take the world as it is and the people as they are, and not seek to alter them," may be very good advice, provided we know what the world really is and what men really are, but in the present multitude of wrong beliefs and false estimates concerning man, we have to accept such counsel very charily. We propose in a series of consecutive lessons, or rather studies in spiritual science, to look at man as he really is, "best side up," or, if we may so express ourselves, "inside out." Human nature has been far too long traduced; we have heard of the wickedness of the human heart until at times we have almost come to believe that man is after all a wretched failure, in whom no goodness dwells; but whenever we have turned to one or the other of our two ever handy bibles—the written volume, and the living man, we have found they neither of them contain any such doctrine as that of total or well-nigh total depravity, which they have been made to teach by the lips and pens of pessimists. We can only account for pessimism by conceiving of a very unhappy, disgruntled or abnormally sensitive individual looking upon the world through his own seriously distorted optics; such an one can scarcely be expected to see anything straight when his own organs of vision are distorted, as they certainly are. He sees a reflection of his own diseased condition and imagines it is a true picture of humanity, while it is nothing but a false view taken by a wrong-seeing eye; and not only do our errors and limitations prevent us from seeing things as they really are about us, our own grievances and errors when we hug them to us, cause us to attract their correspondences wherever we may go. "In my flesh dwelleth no good," said the apostle Paul, if he is correctly translated, but let any impartial critic review the epistle to the Romans and he will see that its author even when styling himself wretched and seeking to be delivered from a body of death, gloried in the assurance that he was dying daily, and as frequently rising to a new and better life. David, or whoever wrote the fifty-first Psalm, was certainly in a desperately sorry state of mind, and deeply imbued with a realizing sense of hereditary transmissions of a most undesirable character, but the very same Psalm ends in jubilation.

The second chapter of Genesis gives an account of the fall of human nature, when man and woman were innocent but unclothed in a paradise of arcadian simplicity, but the first chapter describes everything as the work of the Divine Mind, even including reptiles, one species of which is regarded as the symbol of temptation, and the form assumed by the arch-enemy of God and man according to mythology and mythological theology. But let it never be forgotten that there is no theory of a Satan or of devils extant in any country which does not declare these fallen spirits to have been originally pure and beautiful; the Egyptian Typhon and the Persian Ahriman, both of which were

probably prototypes of the different views of some mysterious power of evil in the universe hinted at in the old testament, were both virtuous, not only originally but ultimately ; and now that comparative theology is growing into a popular science, studied by the reading masses, not simply by a few specialists as formerly, we are hourly nearing a state of general sentiment favorable to an optimistic view of all things closely akin to the philosophy of the most renowned sages of antiquity, but never universally accepted and understood in days of old, unless there have been periods of civilization and high moral attainment on earth entirely unrecorded. Life to-day presents itself to us all as a mysterious sphinx, forever propounding an unanswered but not unanswerable riddle. As the grim-visaged, lion-bodied, woman-headed, monument in Egypt is ever asking her question of every passing traveler,—tho' it is prophesied she will at length be answered and then destroyed,—so does the problem of human origin and destiny ever present itself to succeeding generations, while the answer to be final must be broader and more inclusive than any to be found in any solitary system of religion or philosophy. As all the wise men of the ancient orient worshipped Deity under the figure of light, and there are traces of similar solar worship in Peru and all through Central America, may we not perhaps find in this brilliant similitude a better reply to our query than though we spurned old truth and looked elsewhere for mental illumination? Light is one, its color is white ; white is all color, black, its direct opposite, is no color ; between white and black we find every conceivable hue, shade and tint. Light is manifested Deity, knowledge, understanding, wisdom. Darkness is unmanifested good, good of which we are ignorant, therefore we speak correctly whenever we say the light of knowledge and the darkness of ignorance.

While not at all intending to devote ourselves exclusively to biblical exegesis, or to quote from no other volume in these lessons—the bible being in everybody's hands and everywhere talked about, we shall from time to time endeavor to throw light on enigmatical portions of that ancient and venerated lore, not so much for the purpose of defending the bible against adverse criticism (though that work is by no means unnecessary or unimportant), as for the sake of the light we may be able to bring to bear upon many controverted questions concerning our present life and the mystery which everywhere enshrouds it. In the forty-fifth chapter of Isaiah we read that God told that prophet that He, the Eternal One, was the author of light and darkness, of peace and strife ; this view of the Divine Artificer seems quite at variance with the oft reiterated declaration of many christian scientists, that God knows nothing whatever of evil ; that sin, sickness, and death are quite unknown to the Infinite Spirit, and will become unknown to us so soon as we outgrow our misbeliefs and awake to an understanding of truth and a life of righteousness. Let us now look at a passage in Job (chapter eleven, verse ten.) " What |

shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" It is self-evident to every careful student and unprejudiced mind that the "darkness" and "evil" alluded to by Isaiah and Job, have no connection with the mortal error common in the world, which is to the effect that man transgresses the divine law, and is right in so doing, if God is the author of evil as well as good. Sophists who argue thus may seek to bolster up their false premises with scriptural texts, but in doing so they are execrably maltreating the ancient prophets who were before all things, men who stood up for sterling integrity of character and were persecuted often to the death on account of their steadfast refusal to condone degrading sensualism and enter into complicity with idolatry. The "darkness" and "evil" referred to in Isaiah and Job are simply the unknown quantities in our algebra, the x which stands for what is as yet unrevealed to us; not the agnostics *unknowable*, for nothing is necessarily unknowable but the *unknown*, and this *unknown* of to-day may be a portion of the *well known* at no very distant future. ALL IS GOOD, THERE IS NO EVIL. In this pregnant sentence, brimfull of absolute truth, the gauntlet is thrown down to be picked up by any who may choose to enter the ranks of combat; it is liable to be misunderstood and grievously perverted by those who jump at hasty conclusions and are not cultivators of the analytical faculty, we admit—but it need not be perverted or mistaken; it is the fundamental proposition of spiritual science, the rock on which we build the whole of our moral and mental edifice, and to understand this cardinal verity is absolutely necessary before we can pass on to an intelligent *elucidation* and eventual *application* of the principle of Being, which is the ALL-ness of good and the nothingness of evil.

As darkness is no light, ignorance no knowledge, etc., etc., and as all educational efforts are directed toward the unfolding of the race and the supply of felt deficiencies, so when we take a student or a patient and endeavour to give him a first lesson or a first treatment, which to be of any value must necessarily be an *education*, we seek to disembarass his mind of error or false belief by letting the light of truth shine in upon the mind so long imprisoned in the shades of darkness. We begin all our teaching or healing by demonstrating to our students and patients that they are in need of light and truth, and that when they receive this light and comprehend this truth, they will then be in a position to work out their own salvation, and very soon the "fear and trembling" of which some people make altogether too much, will be happily exchanged for the perfect love of truth and goodness which will cast out all tormenting fear, remove all dread, and introduce the freed spirit into the liberty of those who know themselves to be children of Infinite Light and Eternal Good. All is good; there is no evil. Stress needs to be laid particularly upon the word *is*, which is frequently confounded with other terms of totally differ-

ent original meaning. When Pope declared "whatever is, is right," he no doubt spoke of *being* in the sense in which we use the word when we speak correctly. *Esse*, to be, and *existere*, to exist, are quite distinct Latin verbs, yet, strange to say, in their English dress they are almost invariably treated as though their meanings were identical. *Cogito ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am), is a sound statement, but *I am* is not at all synonymous with *I exist*. Two other words are frequently confounded with equally misleading results; *truth* and *fact*, which are no more interchangeable when rightly employed than *being* and *existence*.

Truth is eternal and unalterable: truth is God's word, God's word is truth. Truth confronts us in the form of an unchangeable law of being, an unalterable law of necessity, if anybody likes that word. Now this immutable ordinance or order, which we know to be irreversible, which we cannot change or ever so slightly modify no matter how much we may desire, or how hard we may try to alter it, is the infallible expression of the boundless Force, Energy or Power, which agnosticism says can never be defined, but which pure theism regards as a conscious, wise and loving Parent, without attempting to limit the Infinite to any personal mould. God is principle and not person; "God is the principle of man," and similar equally wise statements in "Science and Health," by Mrs. Eddy, are perfectly in accord with the best thought of all times and countries; they are the common property of enlightened humanity, and are necessary deductions from the constitution of the universe as discovered by the most truly illumined minds the planet over. Facts are mortal appearances, as the word manufacture from the Latin, *manus* (hand), and *facere* (to make), signifies a thing made by hand, a human operation; surely what an operative has put together he can take to pieces.

The two accounts of creation in the first two chapters of Genesis, are called by scholars the *Jehovistic* and *Elohistic*; chapter one attributes everything to one sole God. The second gives the Elohim (sons of God or subordinate divinities), credit for making man of dust after God had already formed mankind, male and female, in His own image (*vide* Gen. i, ver. 27). Now these seemingly discrepant narratives are easily explained, if we remember that the Pentateuch deals first with *truth*, the *truth of being*, and then with *fact*, the *fact of existence*. God, we are told, formed everything before it grew, which means that the imperishable vital germ, *was* prior to its expansion into form, as the germ of life must be in every seed before it can sprout and develop into flower, plant, shrub or tree; and as the essential germ of animal or human life must be in the embryo, or it cannot proceed from the fœtus during gestation. *Evolution* necessitates *involution*, as *effect* ever argues pre-existent cause; cause can be greater than effect, but the reverse can never be the case. Now, into the midst of the materialistic speculations of this agnostic age, a new spiritual

solution of life's mystery is forcing its way into current literature, transforming the teachings of pulpit and platform alike, and giving to academical professors a new basis of reasoning. Theosophy, Christian Science, Spiritualism, these are three terms which convey some meaning to all ears; many we know would gladly dismiss them whenever they are mentioned with a shrug of their shoulders or a supercilious sneer, but the great principle they stand for cannot be driven thus contemptuously from the arena of public thought.

We are to-day confronted at every turn with fresh and startling confirmations of a series of occurrences, which seemingly defy the known laws of nature; it takes more than the feeble witticism of Burdette, or any other humorist to silence the utterance of the unseen world with an "Alas! poor Ghost." It is indeed ludicrous to read much of the flabby nonsense which is to-day circulated in opposition to a class of facts which lie entirely beyond the reach of the bigoted and shallow minds which delight in bluntly denying what they can never logically refute. A naturalist of the rank of Alfred Russell Wallace, publishes a work entitled "Miracles and Modern Spiritualism," in which he gives an account of numerous marvelous phenomena which have transpired in his own house, and under his strictest personal supervision, and the sneering, addle-pated critics who think they are in possession of all the ascertainable knowledge in the universe, cry "imposture," or "hallucination," and why, but because it has become fashionable in many quarters to either worship dumb matter as the Deity, or to take refuge in that castle of cultured ignorance, *agnosticism*, which is only Greek for ignorance, and ignorance expressed by a long Greek word is just as dark and valueless as though written in briefer English. The recent conversion to Theosophy of Mrs. Annie Besant, one of the brightest and most gifted leaders of the secularist movement in England, has created more than a ripple on the surface of agnostic thought; that a woman of her confirmed materialistic tendencies should identify herself publicly and permanently with the theosophical cause, has necessarily taken a great deal of wind out of the sails of those to whom any allusion to spirit as a reality independent of matter, is detestable.

Mrs. Besant has become a convert to "*Karma*," the law of sequence, the demonstration of divine justice, of absolutely impartial equity throughout the universe; she has struck the bedrock of the unalterable, and has laid hold upon the only solid foundation upon which any theory of the universe can be built, acceptable to those who hunger and thirst after justice. The immutable law or irreversible order which governs all, and to which all must conform, demonstrates how and in what sense all is good and nothing evil. Every *thing* is an expression of an indestructible force called *No Thing* in

Rosierucian and other mystical treatises. From that which is beyond all *things*, things proceed, and when these objective forms have served their purposes and vanished from our senses, they return into the *no thing* from which they sprang. Henry James, one of the most instructive of modern philosophers, in his "Society, The Redeemed form of Man," affirms in a series of profoundly interesting and edifying letters to a friend, that God creates everything out of Himself, having nothing else out of which to create anything ; thus the creation is a procession or emanation from the Divine Mind. What is this but a higher view of the eternal Energy or Power, which all agnostics concede to have necessary being ; some force must be eternal, and to call this force God, is only to declare that it is all good, for God means the Good One.

Unfortunately for the benefit which the world might otherwise receive from their teachings, a number of assumedly *spiritual* as well as *liberal* teachers have not got away sufficiently from the old devil idea, which has been the curse of christendom and of many nations prior to the birth of christianity, though their devil-doctrine is atheistic instead of orthodox. Even Swedenborg, that prince of seers, does not appear to have completely overcome his early Lutheran beliefs, though his writings as a whole constitute a matchless refutation of Lutheran, Calvinistic, and other European delusions concerning good and evil ; but while mentioning Swedenborg, we would like to testify that we have seen in his diary many passages of rare excellence and beauty, with which many statements in his better known works do not compare for insight into the real nature of being ; in some of these choice fragments of a higher philosophy than appears in the bulk of his productions, we may find the secret of Swedenborg, which is pure universal Theosophy, for which spiritual science is but another term. Now there are two views of evil advocated by many enlightened thinkers, and both of these we must consider : The negative view, viz: that evil is the absence of good, as darkness is the absence of light, etc., we have already considered, and to this view we can offer no opposition. In the bible it is found in Gen., chapter ii, where the state of Adam alone, prior to the evolution of Eve, is pronounced "not good," or in other words imperfect, less than perfect.

If oxygen and hydrogen are both necessary to form water, and a chemist has only one of these necessary gases, he can make no water ; the oxygen or hydrogen, as the case may be, may be of the purest and best, but alone is inadequate and insufficient to produce the desired result. In the same way we may argue that if Adam and Eve are both necessary to produce the perfect state of humanity, an Adamless Eve or an Eveless Adam, no matter how pure, must of necessity be incomplete, therefore less than perfect. A hungry person needs food, a naked form needs clothing, and so on, *ad libitum* ; this we

must master at the very outset of our career as teachers or healers ; we must understand our work to be affirmative, a constant series of givings, pure reasonings, but having mastered that point we must turn to another, and consider evil secondarily as the inversion, perversion, or abuse of something naturally good.

All reasonable minds are surely prepared to admit that though everything is good and useful in itself, no two things are adapted to precisely the same ends. The wise man is he who discovers the use of everything, and by putting everything in its rightful place, demonstrates its beauty and utility. We frequently speak of the right men for certain places ; other men, as men, might be quite as praiseworthy, but they could not so ably fill the special spheres of action we have in mind. How often do we see excellently disposed persons failing lamentably in some laudable undertaking for no other reason than their personal unfitness for the work they have attempted. Human society, as at present organized, by no means expresses perfectly the idea of solidarity ; here and there we find people united in harmonious endeavors, and once in a while a co-operative community works successfully, but these oases in the wilderness are at present exceptions rather than the rule ; the great majority of people seem misplaced, therefore their condition is in a sense evil, *i. e.*, it is discordant and diseased ; discord and disease are inseparable abnormalities ; to overcome the latter we must vanquish the former. Physicians attribute much disorder to the presence of foreign matter in the blood. Dirt has been aptly described as matter out of place ; earth is very desirable in a garden, but we object to it on carpets or children's pinafores.

All the manifold evils which afflict the race are inharmonious, and to successfully battle with crime, poverty, disease, or sin in any of its forms, it is imperative that we go to the root of the matter, which we shall ever find to be misplacement or derangement, instead of orderly arrangement. Now, as we cannot conceive of *character* without freedom, we must allow that a certain measure of liberty is essential to individual development, and this liberty of mind or freedom of will, without which man would be an irresponsible automaton, is the basic cause of all transgression ; we can obey or disobey immutable law, but the law being immutable, we cannot change it in the minutest particular. Once this position is clearly seen, the mind, which has grasped this fundamental postulate of true science, can prosecute its anthropological resources so as to intelligently solve the problem of evil without recourse to any mythical devil. The serpent of temptation is the animal nature of man, which though naturally subordinate, is by no means a bad nature. Swedenborg in his teaching concerning the three loves which abide in the heart of every man, very clearly points out how these affections are all good,

but if harmony is to ensue, they must be subordinated in the rightful order. Love of God must be first, love of neighbor second, and love of self third ; let them be developed in inverse order, and man from being an angel becomes a fiend. Now what is the love of God but love of all we conceive to be good ; it is idle to say that man does not know right from wrong, for he does, and nowhere is the distinction between justice and injustice more clearly marked than among children at play ; any act of unfairness at once lowers the perpetrator of it in the eyes of his juvenile companions. Not only among well bred children, but among "roughs," is this innate love of goodness evident, for where can we find an audience more in sympathy with true heroism, and more opposed to villainy when depicted on the stage, than in the upper gallery of a common theatre, where the *gamins* of the street flock to witness a sensational melodrama. That most wonderful book of the day, Edward Bellamy's "Looking Backward," which has already achieved an unparalleled circulation, is one of the most important factors in the social development and moral regeneration of the masses of the people, because its leading tenets, clearly expressed and reiterated in a variety of telling illustrations, are the inherent nobility and essential divinity of man. The very vices we most bemoan are but misdirected virtues, so have said all the greatest thinkers of the world from the days of Socrates and long before.

The Socratic definition of good and evil is also substantially that of the new testament. The Greek sage taught that knowledge and good, evil and ignorance were inseparable ; one of the most touching utterances attributed to Jesus is that first sentence from the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." What meaning can be put upon those words contrary to the evident one, that whoever said that concerning wrongdoers was deeply imbued with the idea proclaimed by Socrates. But we are considering evil under another head than that of ignorance ; we are regarding it as a perversion, inversion, or abuse of some intrinsically good faculty, and from that standpoint we can solve the problem more effectually than when we confine ourselves to the thought of evil as exclusively ignorance, though in a final analysis of the theme we shall discover that both views melt into one.

Phrenology, even though not as yet an absolutely exact science, is at least an approximate guide in matters anthropological, and on any phrenological chart of the human head, we shall see marked several divisions of faculties ; those in the posterior region are animal, those in the anterior and coronal sections are moral, intellectual, artistic and spiritual. Man's animal impulses are *self-preservative*, and only become *selfish* when too prominently developed ; the spiritual promptings are altruistic, and may lead to fanaticism if not modulated by proper relation with the other groups. A man, for

instance, may have much secretiveness, acquisitiveness, amativeness, and combativeness, and at the same time be well developed in benevolence, spirituality, veneration and conscientiousness ; such a man would be in no sense dangerous, as he would be a controller, not a victim of passion. A cruel libertine would possess a large showing of the first named, and scarcely any expression of the last named faculties, while an enthusiastic philanthropist, whose zeal is insufficiently tempered with discretion, will be very largely developed in the moral, but scarcely unfolded at all in other directions. Of course, if an alternative be presented, and we must choose between the indiscreet philanthropist and the brutal sensualist, we instantly choose the former, but the former though admirable and estimable in many ways, is far from our ideal, as a deaf man with powerful sight, or a blind man with an exquisite voice, would be imperfect, though very charming in certain directions.

The principal dogma in popular theology which really stands in the way of human progress, is the theory of human depravity, a doctrine which though very greatly modified during the course of the last half century, still holds sway over a multitude of minds, oppressing and confining them. Among the books which may be classed as exceptionally popular at present, we may name "John Ward," which is gaining a circulation second only to "Robert Elsmere" in the category of religious novels ; this book probably overdraws the portrait of the average Presbyterian, but the "John Ward" type of preacher is still a familiar figure in many parts of Scotland, and is by no means a rarity in many sections of England and New England. The sacerdotal churches have always greatly modified their belief in the ancient hereditary curse, through the stress they lay on baptismal regeneration, but what of the multitudes who live and die unbaptized ; what of the myriads of "heathen" on whom the light of the gospel, as it is in ecclesiasticism, has never shone ? With agnosticism rampant on every hand, we surely need a solution of the problem of human nature, its origin and destiny, such as the prevailing church doctrine does not supply. Free religion is too often agnostic religion ; the platform of Unitarianism is frequently too negative, though always excellent morally. Modern Spiritualism has too many fraudulent persons and practices hitched on to it to enable it to command the thoughtful masses, unless these barnacles be gotten rid of ; Theosophy as interpreted by Blavatsky, Olcott, Sinnett, Judge, and others of the same school, is too archaic and oriental in form to win the bulk of occidental truthseekers ; Christian Science has been stated in terms too abstract, and has moreover been too much regarded in many quarters as Mrs. Eddy's specialty to lay hold of the great crowd of earnest unsectarian hunters for light, whose number is already legion and increasing daily—where then shall we look for the dawning glory, for the promised revela-

tion which shall be indeed the answer to the world's long and earnest prayer for light. We must candidly reply, nowhere in the exclusive, everywhere in the *inclusive* sense. A new school of philosophy is now forming, truly eclectic in nature if not in name; this school is steadily growing, being composed of recruits from all the schools which have preceded it; its definitions are yet but imperfectly stated, its membership is hard to gauge, for its adherents are followers of no personality, yet they gladly welcome and esteem all who bring credentials of spiritual aptitude and moral probity.

During the course of our recent travels up and down the Pacific coast, from San Diego to Victoria, we have met with hundreds, we might almost say thousands of earnest men and women of all ages, and representing the utmost diversity in education and occupation, all seeking for some fraternity in which the amalgamation of seekers after spiritual truth can be made practical. What is termed Liberalism can never meet the wants of these people, for its leaders are mostly rabid iconoclasts, whose utterances shock refined susceptibilities, and starve those who are hungry for definite spiritual food. Such books as the various works of the late Dr. W. F. Evans, have done a great deal for such people, but the time has now come when literature, no matter how excellent, will not fill the entire want; associative effort, organization of some sort, is imperatively demanded, and feeling that the time has fully come to establish a definite School of Spiritual Science, we invite the co-operation of all interested to use our magazine, *THE PROBLEM OF LIFE*, for the ventilation of suggestions concerning ways and means toward this most desirable end. So far as we know there are very few schools or colleges of spiritual science where persons of the particular stamp to which we allude can turn for the light and free interchange of thought they so much need and so ardently desire. Some people want us to distinctly understand that they are *not* this, that, or the other; some are decidedly not Theosophists, others are decidedly opposed to Spiritualism, etc., etc., and the worst of it all is that these people who are so anxious to let the world know what they are *not*, as a rule know very little indeed of what they antagonize, repudiate, or ignore. Convinced as we are, that no existing system of thought when taken by itself fully solves the problem of life, we are desirous of uniting the various lines of thought as much as possible, and we anticipate immense good from a union in which there will be solid strength. Uniformity we despise; it is slavish, abortive, and unnatural; trees, flowers, birds, and all beautiful objects in the universe are dissimilar and distinct, the one from the other, but they are not therefore disunited or antagonistic. The peculiar charm which, as a halo of glory surrounds the record of the life of Jesus, is its amazing breadth and versatility. Jesus, according to the Evangelists, was sometimes an ascetic, at other times a feaster at banquets; sometimes we hear of him surrounded with a great multitude of

followers, at other times he is completely alone on mountain top, in desert wild, or in a boat upon a lake ; at one time he is speaking to a crowd, at other times he is whispering in the ear of a handful of chosen disciples ; at one time he is participating in the public service of Temple or synagogue, again he is advocating secret prayer in an inner chamber ;—and then, when we review those ministries of healing which are so intensely touching, and so deeply instructive, we find his methods various in the extreme ; sometimes he speaks to a patient, sometimes he touches one, at other times he heals at a distance. Whether the historic personal Christ be accepted or rejected by modern thought, the central figure in the gospel story commands the wonder and admiration of all great minds, and calls forth the vulgar criticism of small ones by reason of its stupendous complexity. Then when we close the Gospels and turn to the Acts and the Epistles, we find the apostles and the early Christians as a body following very closely in the track of their Master ; there are diversities of gifts but only one Spirit, numerous administrations, but only one Lord, declares Paul to the Corinthians ; the second chapter of Acts tells us of the many languages in which the Apostles spoke on the day of Pentecost, when the multitude were gathered in Jerusalem, and the Holy Spirit inspired them.

It is not to be denied that the gift of tongues in its literal sense was one of the spiritual gifts exercised in the primitive church, but the prophesying which Paul placed far before tongues, was the ability to so proclaim truth that the infinitely diverse needs of humanity might be met. Now, is not one of the vices of many schools professing advanced thought and liberal sentiment to-day, an unwarrantable tendency to dwarf the expression of Truth to some one especial language. Is there not sadly often a lamentable absence of the “all things to all men,” taking those words in their best sense ; do we not far too often plead for a special terminology, for the name of the rose, rather than for the beauty and perfume of the flower, that by another name would still appear as beautiful and smell as sweet ? We hate indefiniteness, but breadth and variety in expression and ministry need never imply ambiguity. Let us now attempt ere we close this first lesson in a popular course of introductory instruction in universal Spiritual Science, to illustrate something of what we mean, by the following summary of our convictions, which may serve as an outline of our system of thought and style of teaching. We meet, say, a dozen excellent persons, who say they are Spiritualists pure and simple, and nothing else ; our next dozen callers declare themselves Theosophists and nothing else ; our third dozen visitors are Christian Scientists ; now these people have restrictively labelled themselves, or we should never have labelled them. We talk to our spiritualistic friends with a view to discovering what they really intend to stand for, and what they really hold to in spite of all opposition and dissent, and we find

they rest their all upon evidences of a conscious life after physical dissolution, and communion in some manner with those who have passed on before ; they declare themselves Spiritualists on this basis ; very well, we accept those premises ; we are therefore Spiritualists as much as they. Our assumedly theosophical brethren insist very strongly upon curbing the lower appetites, and seeking to liberate the soul power in man during his sojourn on earth ; they enforce the doctrine of universal brotherhood as a basis of union, and show a great desire to discover the truth hidden in ancient oriental bibles ; we endorse their wishes and we too are Theosophists.

Our Christian Science friends are loud and earnest in their protest against sin, sickness and death, all three of which nightmares they pronounce errors of mortal belief, phantasm, illusions, false conceptions of " mortal mind," and they assure us that we can conquer this trinity of woes if we come into an understanding of ourselves as spirit, and not matter, and place sole reliance upon the One Mind, the Infinite Spirit, who is eternal goodness ; we can cordially answer Amen, so be it, so it is, to our Christian Science pleaders. But now to unite these good people who are all proclaiming so much truth, but are often so unfriendly to each other's views ;—what is the matter with them ? Why should they disown each other ? Examination of causes has led us to the conclusion that prejudiced shortsightedness and hasty judgments are keeping many apart who could quadruple their usefulness were they to consolidate their now scattered forces.

Prejudice against a name, rather than against a truth, is very often the cause of much mischievous dissention. From the north, from the south, from the east, and from the west, are workers now coming into the vineyard. From the frigid North where materialism reigns, many are bringing cold negations, and when the sunshine of the higher reason has warmed them a little more, their ice will melt, they will thaw out and be no longer intellectually sterile and emotionally dead ; from the warm South some are bringing clusters of fanciful legends and poetical traditions, but some of these are mere children's fairy tales, ill adapted to the maturer years of manhood and womanhood : these must be relinquished for sounder views, and better based philosophy ; from the East comes veneration for whatever is antique and mystical, love of silent meditation and lonely contemplation of the abstract ; while from the vigorous, bustling, nascent West comes love of novelty and change, impatience of the antique, and determination to drive ahead and find happiness if possible in perpetual motion. Now from the four points of the compass the four winds must blow, and we are very foolish and shortsighted if we let ourselves feel troubled because of outward variance between those whose early education and chronic mental habits have made them what they seemingly are ; in truth they are " all one," they only *appear* different.

If death is only a "belief," as Mrs. Eddy styles it in "Science and Health," then as "there is no death" and no one therefore dies, Spiritualism is taught in the pages of the first Christian Science text book, even though the author does repudiate it, and that ungracefully, bringing statements to bear against it which are no valid objections. If Theosophy teaches, as it surely does, that we are all brethren and must translate the theory of brotherhood into daily life, and if *Karma*, or the law of sequence, be held universal and immutable, then the spiritualistic doctrine of a progressive hereafter is perfectly reasonable, and we can waive "reincarnation" if we accept the axiom "God is no respecter of persons," and agree that "whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." As to intercourse between the living and the dead, there are no "dead," and as necromancy really signifies divination with a dead body, which Spiritualists do not practice, we can surely allow mental communion between friends independent of the physical body, especially if we practise giving absent metaphysical treatments. Spiritual communion need not and should not be *control*; friends do not coerce each other because they fraternize, take counsel together, serve each other in many ways, and enjoy each other's company. The great uniting truth now dawning upon the world is no revival of ancient prelatical hierarchies; it is essentially democratic in its spirit and results, as it is a revelation adapted to the universal enlightenment becoming so prevalent. The public school system of to-day educates the poor man's child equally with the son or daughter of the richest, and it needs no very far-seeing eye to predict that during the course of the Twentieth Century, if events continue to progress as they are now progressing, the words millionaire and pauper will both become obsolete, together with the detestable nickname, *menial*. Though all may not see it, the great evolutionary changes now transpiring in the realm of thought, must inevitably transform the outward order. Swedenborg foretold the New Jerusalem as long ago as 1757, and announced its advent to the earth from that date; perhaps his avowed followers are right in their chronology, but be this as it may, a new inward order invariably precedes a changed outward state, as all progress is from within to without, from center to circumference, and never otherwise.

How many are there who enter the ranks as teachers and practitioners of Spiritual, Mental, or Christian Science, who realize anything more than a very small part of the work they are called upon to do, and how many are there who even attempt to begin at what is really the right end of the line, if true progress is to be made? The moral elevation of the race is of primary importance, its intellectual advancement is of secondary value, its physical soundness comes third. Dissolute habits are said to destroy health by polluting the blood and corrupting the very centres of vitality; medical men and women

know and teach this, but where is the power in *materia medica* to subdue the animal proclivities of the race? echo answers, where! and experience replies, nowhere. Spiritual Science is not a competitor in the field with allopathy, homœopathy, magnetism, and all the innumerable systems which undertake to provide nostrums and specifics for bodily ills; at the same time Spiritual Scientists are instrumental in raising up many physical invalids whom medical science has abandoned, having exhausted its resources in vain. Sickness proceeds from violated law; so we are told by all lights in the medical firmament, as well as by metaphysical teachers, but what law are we bound to obey so as to secure and insure health and happiness. There is surely a higher law than that fabrication of mortal belief which ordains that we should suffer for getting our feet wet or sitting in a draught. The one law of the universe is immutable and never deviates from its course to favor or punish anyone; the numerous laws of mortal enactment we falsely call "laws of nature," are human inventions, capricious in their operation and altogether uncertain in their results. One person takes a cold after getting wet, another takes no cold though he gets much wetter; one person takes a cold after standing or sitting with his back to an open window on a cold, damp day, another person sat or stood longer in a similar position on a colder, damper day, and escaped all unpleasant consequence; or, to make the case stronger, the same person is completely floored at one time by what fails to disturb his equilibrium in the slightest at another. How is this? Nature's law, or, to be more correct, *divine law* manifested through what we term Nature, has decreed nothing of what our superficial hygienists boast save when hygiene is placed on a spiritual and moral base, as it was by that noble reformer and truly illumined woman, Dr. Anna Bonus Kingsford, whose "Perfect Way in Diet," owes its well-earned celebrity far more to its spiritual tone and humanitarian protest than to any dissertation upon the teeth of the *carnivora* and the *herbivora*. To know ourselves as spiritual beings here and now; to recognize the divine equality of all the children of the one Infinite Spirit; to live in thought, word, and deed, according to the golden rule, is to find the secret of health and happiness, and on this base, the square of perfect equity, must we build our pyramid.

N. B.—The Second Lesson in this course, subject, "Prayer," will be published in our next (February) issue. "Faith," will follow in March.

OUR POLICY.

GREETING TO OUR READERS.

The **PROBLEM OF LIFE** is started to supply a long felt want and meet a popular demand. Four years ago in Boston we were importuned to start a **Spiritual Science Monthly**. We intended doing so at that time, but owing to almost incessant travel and a multiplicity of engagements of various kinds, we found ourselves unable to carry the project into effect. Meanwhile excellent periodicals sprang up all around us, and we felt that possibly another venture in the field might not be a success. We never dreaded financial failure, but we had no desire to seemingly compete with others for public patronage and make it appear as though we rivaled rather than co-operated with our brethren. The time has now come when a company of independent, fearless, disinterested truthseekers, all metaphysicians in the broadest sense, and of a purely unsectarian type, are determined to issue the **PROBLEM OF LIFE**. Several of them have said to us repeatedly, "If you will not edit it, some one else must," and as these persons are in every instance valued personal friends of ours, and object to our abandoning the work to others, we have taken counsel with our "higher self," and feel impelled to assume editorial duties herewith. Our introductory lesson which forms the first leading article in this, our first number, has sufficiently outlined our platform to obviate the necessity for any lengthened statement concerning our platform here, but there are a few points we hope all our readers will kindly bear in mind and thereby save themselves and us much useless labor and possible ill-feeling.

First. This magazine is entirely unsectarian, and cannot be used for the purpose of exalting one system of thought to the degradation of all others. We **KNOW** there is truth in all systems, but the **WHOLE TRUTH** in none. Those who wish to send us contributions must write in a friendly, truth-seeking, teachable spirit, and remember that while we shall never avoid making kindly mention of people and institutions who do not stand just where we do, we shall never permit our organ to be used for purposes of acrimonious controversy. As we shall always find great difficulty in making room for even a tithe of the matter we would gladly print, we cannot promise to publish *all* suitable communications, but as our space is necessarily limited we shall be compelled to use our judgment in selecting such contributions as appear to us of the greatest general interest and most practical value.

Second. This magazine will never become an advertising sheet; our rule in this respect is absolute. No advertisements will **UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES** be received **AT ANY PRICE** unless in perfect harmony with our editorial policy; that we may be fully understood on this score, we declare *point blank* that when we accept advertisements we do so on very moderate terms for the convenience of our readers, and to add to the value of our periodical by supplying information which many people will find serviceable. For instance, a railway time card, if accurate, enhances the usefulness of any journal in certain localities; again, everybody needs food, clothing, furniture, stationery, lodgings, and a thousand other things at some time or other; we are therefore glad to be able to

inform our patrons where these useful articles can be obtained of good quality and at moderate price. Books and periodicals are often very helpful, and to call attention to them is often both a privilege and a duty, but we will advertise nothing we cannot conscientiously recommend for some reasons; then again teachers of music and languages are rendering useful service to the community. We can advertise all these things without entrenching in the slightest upon the domain of the questionable; but we will not make mention of medicines and other things used only in sickness. We intend to keep our columns entirely free from everything suggestive of disorder, and trust that they may carry a healthful, happy influence wherever they go.

Third. Business in our estimation should be sacredly and graciously conducted, and while people must "make a living," and all workers are worthy of recompense, we abominate extortionate charges for anything. This periodical will not be published at a loss, as getting into debt is immoral whenever avoidable, but the terms for subscription and advertising will always be as reasonable as now. If our subscription list and general circulation warrants, we shall enlarge to at least fifty pages in each monthly issue, and also give many supplements with the regular numbers, but we shall *never raise the price*. This is a ONE DOLLAR magazine, single copies are TEN CENTS; these terms enable us to pay expenses and a margin over. In England, owing to the added cost of transportation, the terms at present will be 5s. per annum or 6d. for single number. We want an English agency established, also an Australian one. Our agents receive the magazine at exactly what it costs us to produce it. For terms to agents we must be addressed personally or by private letter. Any approved eight line advertisement printed on the cover is taken at \$2 per annum or 25 cents for one monthly insertion, and the advertiser receives the magazine free of charge as long as his advertisement stands. All terms strictly in advance.

Fourth. We invite authors and publishers to send us books for review; we are glad to look into everything but cannot promise to notice all that are sent; in reviewing books and pamphlets we shall invariably give precedence to those which treat on the subjects in which we are chiefly interested, but our range is very wide, and we acknowledge the mission of the theatre and the novel equally with that of the pulpit and the Bible.

Fifth. So long as this periodical has its home in San Francisco it will of course receive a slight local coloring from its surroundings, but though some brief items of news and some longer articles may take their cue from events happening in this locality, local information will soon become delocalized under our treatment.

Sixth. Communications may be anonymous when strictly impersonal and dealing with universal themes. Under all circumstances correspondents must give their full names and post office address; not necessarily for publication.

Seventh. The author of a signed article is of course wholly responsible for the views expressed in his own effusions, but we are editorially responsible for its insertion in these columns. Therefore while giving all reasonable latitude to contributors, we shall print nothing unless we consider it of upward tendency. We have already an excellent staff of contributors, and take great pleasure in introducing their thoughtful and inspiring words to our at present largely unknown circle of readers.

HEREDITY AND ENVIRONMENT.*

*"Thought in the mind hath made us. What we are
By thought was wrought and built. If a man's mind
Hath evil thoughts, pain comes on him as comes
The wheel the ox behind.*

*"All that we are is what we thought and willed :
Our thoughts shape us and frame. If one endure
In purity of thought, joy follows him
As his own shadow—sure."*

—Edwin Arnold.

In considering this subject from the spiritual stand-point we must arrive at some definite understanding of the term Spirit, the foundation stone upon which the whole structure is reared. We shall all agree that the spirit of a thing is that which animates, which causes the thing to exist—First cause, the Life. Then life is expressed by the intelligent operation of the positive principle upon a material or negative condition. The positive principle is represented by the male element in nature, and the negative or the female, which is only the expression of the male principle, is attracted, formed and bound within the positive. The spirit is spoken of as the principle, which informs the soul of things, and keeps it from annihilation. Life and Spirit are synonymous terms. Hermes Trismegistus, says, "God the Father is Light and Life, by which man is made. If therefore thou knowest thyself to be of the Life and Light thou shalt again pass into the Life." "God is immutable and unalterable Good." Here you notice that Life, Light, and the term Good are used to express one and the same thing.

Man being a self-conscious individual is working to express on Earth the eternal idea of God, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." If man believes himself to be made in the image and likeness of God, he is quite sure to wish to understand how he may reconcile apparent inharmonies with this belief. The Spirit is perfectness, the workings of the Spirit are all good ; and the Spirit, which is light, must reveal to all earnest seekers that light which is always shining in the darkness but the darkness comprehendeth it not. There was certainly a purpose in creation, and that purpose was that God might become manifest ; not only in the world of the stars but in the world of man, who is His highest expression ; and it is only by co-operation with the Divine law that man can express perfection.

**This paper was read in answer to a paper on the proportionate value of Nature and nurture from the ordinarily accepted standpoint.*

Let us consider what it means to create. Before a manifestation of any kind can take place there must exist in the mind of the Creator or Thinker a thought of that which is to be produced. In order then for a creation three things are an absolute necessity, a Thinker, a thought, and its appropriate word or manifestation, A Trinity in unity. In man this Trinity is represented by Spirit, Soul and Body. Now if all manifestations are appropriate to the thought, what must be our conclusion? That thought is the ideal through which the Thinker expresses. Thought unexpressed in word rests in eternal mind; as it is expressed through the will-power it becomes an act. Thought and existence are identical. If thought and existence are identical would it not follow that a change of thought in the right direction would change and modify our surroundings. St. Paul said, "Be ye transformed by a renewal of your mind." Some one was asked how he thought Jesus looked. He answered "As he thought and felt." And as his thoughts were those of purity and undying love, what wonder that he is always represented with a halo of light above his head. Outwardly He expressed the Light as inwardly He was the Light. Man's character and education depend upon his thought. It was Paracelsus who said, "Each man possesses one kind of knowledge as much as another, and he who does not find that which is in him cannot say he does not possess it, only that he was not capable of successfully seeking for it."

The progress of humanity is due to our unceasing efforts to solve the problem of existence. Where then must our search begin so that we may come into our inheritance of perfection? Man's consciousness is represented or expressed as the soul, and placed thus between the spiritual and the material looks inward as well as outward; that is, being pure in heart she looks to Spirit and perceives God, and looking on the material universe sees His creation. Through her experience she learns the method of God, and according to her purity manifests perfection. There is always freedom in the choice of the soul. It is written "I have left you free to choose between life and death and good and evil." The law of God is the law of harmony. Attune our thoughts to that key-note and we work out of our inharmonious conditions. Inharmony is caused by ignorance. The laws of men which are forever changing, can throw no light on the questions and perplexing problems of life. Life is itself the unchanging Law, and in its light only can we solve its problems. The thought plane is a plane of creation; all those souls on the same plane are brought together by this unvarying law. Any soul which seeks in a home, conditions in which it may manifest, will necessarily seek such a home as it is at home in; it will associate itself with like thought, for like is always attracted only to its like. This law is commonly illustrated on Earth where people of like habits attend their own assemblies. "Birds of a feather flock together."

Why should that reign of bloodshed, the civil war, have been fraught with such an aftermath ! The reason seems apparent :—What is meant by waves of thought ? An idea is started, those who are receptive or waiting for the thought pick it up and perpetuate it, and so like a seed it finds lodgment wherever the conditions are ripe to receive it. The supply is always equal to the demand. This is the law in the spiritual as well as in the material world. The man is always ready to the occasion. The thought of the majority may be that there is no justice in the holding of a man's body as a subject of barter ; the thought grows ; it ripens. The man, who with one dash of his pen is to free numbers, arises. There has been no need of two such men, one has responded to the thought and the work has been accomplished.

Any one who is a student of nature will see that a separate environment has not been provided for each tree and each flower, but all alike breathe the same air, drink in the same dew and rain, and draw nourishment from the same earth. There may seem to be an especial environment peculiar to each soul, but all draw from the same source, and if each one can understand how to seize, as the plant does, upon that which nourishes, and reject that which is unprofitable in thought, he will then understand that within what we call our especial environment “ exists all the conditions and advantages necessary for us to reach the very highest ultimatum of all our power.” Destiny is nothing but the ultimate of a tendency, and a tendency is nothing but a habit of thought. Knowledge of our innate tendencies gives us power to overcome whatever suffering—mental and bodily—they may cause us. Many physicians request patients to seek change of scene ; as a result comes change of thought, unless the patient will not allow anything to interfere with his original thought ; in that case his condition is not alleviated. If by thought man creates his conditions, and we are told that “ As a man thinketh in his heart so is he,” which means so is he in expression ; if we shake off those thoughts that keep us in bondage to the old conditions, and dare to be what we are, we shall not only lift ourselves out of our undesirable surroundings but we shall find that all others are uplifted out of their undesirable surroundings. That which has brought success and purity out of the most degrading environment is the constant thought “ I will be what I desire to be.” This explains the problem as to why one member of a family rises above the others. The upward tendency which is in every soul receives its impetus from constant aspiration. That is the true prayer, which makes our condition a higher and a happier one. A philanthropic woman once told me she received a lesson in the Industrial School—a place of confinement for what is supposed to be the worst element. She said, I asked the boys to tell me, if they were at liberty to choose occupations, what would be their choice. To my utter amazement the doctors and lawyers were in the ascendency. Do you say there is no redemption for those

who by birth and surroundings seem to be hopelessly entangled? In the 18th Chapter of Ezekiel the question is asked, Doth the son bear the iniquity of the father? The answer comes, When the son hath done that which is lawful and right and kept all my statutes and hath done them he shall surely live. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son.

So long as we think inharmonious thoughts, which are those of heredity, disease and inability to rise superior to our present condition—for we are all longing for the fulfilment of some ideal—we shall remain crushed with our weight of woes. In order to serve our Creator and gain peace we must be free from old habits of thought. Through fear of ridicule we submit ourselves to serve the world and to remain in the world's thought. When we once rise above limitations we shall see that God is the only giver and that all his gifts are good, and that heredity or the gifts from an earthly parent to his children are only ours as long as we consent to remain bound by them, and when we rise to new heights we know them to be delusions.

We do not inherit conditions; we make them.

ELLEN.

San Francisco.

AN INTERESTING INTERVIEW.

We give below a portion of an interview published in the *San Francisco Daily Examiner* of October 12th, between a representative of that paper and Sir Edwin Arnold. After dwelling for some time on the ethics of Buddhism, the eminent author thus expressed himself on the doctrine of future punishment and orthodox beliefs in general.

"Do you believe that Christ was divine," was then asked, "or that he was a great moral teacher who has been deified by the enthusiasm and devotion of his followers?"

"I suppose I ought not to disagree with the Bishops," said he. "What have I to do with that?" he added, smiling. "I will answer you out of the 'Light of Asia.' This is what I think:

'This is that Blossom on our human tree
Which opens once in myriad years—
But opened, fills the world with Wisdom's scent
And Love's dropped honey; from this royal tree a heavenly root.'

"This is all the answer I will make to that. Who forgets that Christ said: 'Why callest thou me good? There is none good save one; that is God.' You remember that and many other things of like import."

"Do you consider the standard of morality higher, taking the population of Buddhists, thousand for thousand, than that of the people who profess Christianity? Are they more moral?"

"Yes, in regard to certain points, as for instance, in tenderness toward the animal creation; second, in placidity and gentleness of temper, and third, in disregard of death and freedom from the fear of it."

In answer to the question as to how he would define the difference between the moral standard laid down by Gautama, Confucius and Christ, Mr. Arnold said:

"Language and time fail, but I repeat that the ethics of Christ are beyond all comparison the highest possessed by mankind. You recall what He said of the sparrows: 'Are not three sparrows sold for a farthing, and yet not one of them shall fall to the ground without the knowledge of your Heavenly Father. Fear not, little flock, ye are of more value than many sparrows.' And then He goes on to say that the very hairs of your head are all numbered."

When it came to the question of miracles, Mr. Arnold shook his head and smiled.

Dr. Arnold was then asked if he believed, according to the old and the present orthodox plan, that a man must be converted to be saved.

"By no means," said he. "That idea is perfectly preposterous. There are a thousand ways to heaven. Do you not remember, 'Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom?' 'The last shall be first, and the first shall be last?' 'If you, knowing good gifts, give them to your children, how much more shall the Father give them to you?'"

"An eternal hell! Ah, that was the idea of morose and dyspeptic men, and not of God. It is an awful doctrine. I cannot too emphatically condemn it. It is terrible. The idea that because a man does wrong he will be burned forever. That the good which is in all men, too, will not count for any thing. Oh, that is awful. God is just, not unjust, and somewhere, sometime, all will be received by him. If a man dies wrong, he must atone for it. He must settle. That is all. I must. Every man must. If I stop at the Palace Hotel, as I do, I must pay my bill. My conscience tells me I must, and when it is done I am free. We suffer here for the wrong we do."

"Oh, that idea of an eternal pit! that old superstition. It grinds on me. Men ought to throw it off. There is no foundation for it, no truth in it."

"The trouble is that the people do not understand the Scriptures. There are great truths that men have not seen, deeper depths than most have sounded."

"I once thought of writing a book on Christianity, as a companion to 'The Light of Asia,' to be called 'The Light of the World.' Some time I may, and if I do I will try to show that God is not the enemy of man whom



He has made, but that He loves him, and that love, not fear nor hate, is what we must attribute to Him, and that it is the mainspring of the world."

Dr. Arnold grew very eloquent as he proceeded.

"But I shall go on a long time if I do not stop now," said he. "But this awful doctrine knaws at me, with all its horrors and its injustice, turning God from a God of love to the very opposite of what the Scriptures teach."

NOTICES.

SPECIAL OFFERS TO OUR PATRONS.—Intending subscribers to the *PROBLEM OF LIFE* can obtain from us by sending postal note for the amount to W. J. Colville, 1119 Sutter street, San Francisco, the following books at greatly reduced rates, with the magazine, for one year :

Spiritual Therapeutics, or Divine Science, by W. J. Colville. A complete course of twelve lectures, followed by one hundred and fifty answers to ever-recurring questions, and a lecture by Dr. Anna Kingsford; 333 closely printed pages, very handsomely bound; published at \$1.25. With *Problem of Life*, \$1.75.

Theosophy. A study of man and the universe, by W. J. Colville. A complete hand book for all students of Theosophy, Spiritualism, Comparative Theology and cognate themes; just published; nearly 500 pages, very handsomely bound, price \$1.50. With *Problem of Life*, \$2.

Christian Science Healing, by Frances Lord, (see extended notice). The only work on Christian Science yet published, which gives a thorough systematic course of directions for practical healing, as well as a remarkably able and lucid course of lessons and reviews of a large number of valuable books; price \$2.50; with *Problem of Life*, \$3.

The Mystery of the Ages, by Lady Caithness (see extended notice). A work displaying amazing research and genius. Price \$3, with *Problem of Life*, \$3.25.

BOOKS WE VERY HIGHLY RECOMMEND.—*Christian Science Healing*, by Frances Lord. This is, in our opinion, the very best book in the market for those who wish a clear and concise system of treatment, coupled with reverent and beautiful allusions to whatever is of permanent worth in the best literature of the world. This book is entirely free from dogmatism and contains no objectionable feature. No reasonable person can possibly be offended at it. Reviews of many valuable works of theosophical tendency constitute it an unique publication. It is a large, handsomely bound volume of 450 pages; the cover is a poem. We can supply it at \$2. *Lily Words*, by the same author; very suggestive and instructive. Six copies for \$1. Published by the Lily Publishing House, 161 La Salle street, Chicago.

The Mystery of the Ages, by Lady Caithness. As a manual for students of universal theosophy it has no equal, indeed no other work on the subject in any way compares with it. Having read it a hundred times, the student will desire to peruse it again. We unhesitatingly pronounce it a mine of wisdom; a sacred anthology of the highest

type; 541 pages beautifully and substantially bound, with excellent portrait of the noble and highly gifted authoress. Supplied by us at \$2.50. Published by C. L. H. Wallace, Oxford Mansion, London.

To Bear Witness, by Cecil St. Clair, a most fascinating story, illustrating the triumph of spiritual healing when all else had failed. Very finely written and containing pearls of the purest religion and philosophy. Price \$1. Published by Carter, Beacon street, Boston.

The Secret Doctrine, by H. P. Blavatsky. Students of the above marvelous work and all anxious to know something of the wonderful facts it discloses are respectfully reminded that a class for study of the above is forming at 1119 Sutter Street. For particulars apply to W. J. Colville, personally or by letter.

NEW BOOKS.—Facing the Sphinx, by Marie L. Farrington, is a very remarkable book containing much reliable information calculated to open the eyes of the public to many theosophical facts of which the multitudes are yet ignorant. The work is exceedingly well written, the style is clearly concise and logical. As this book is a *multum in parvo* it will doubtless meet the wants of a number of persons who have not the inclination or leisure to begin their studies with very bulky volumes. We are glad to see that the candid and talented authoress, tho' extremely bold and independent in the advocacy of her own convictions, pays a deserved tribute to the indefatigable labors of Mme. Blavatsky by freely quoting from the *Secret Doctrine* and giving that work the credit. As a treatise on Symbolism, *Facing the Sphinx* is a reliable and very interesting hand-book. Gerald Massey and many other distinguished authors come in for recognition and liberal endorsement. Concerning the ancient continents Atlantis and Lemuria, the former destroyed by water and the latter thro' the action of fire, the author gives much scientific information in many respects corroborative of the statements put forward by Ignatius Donnelly in *Atlantis*. The great antiquity of the earth is proved by references to incontrovertible geological facts. The symbolism of the various bibles of the world is very lucidly interpreted; the author gives evidence of deep and careful study as well as of a singularly perspicuous intellect: her work will not find much favor with persons in whom the emotions hold sway, but intellectual students will be greatly delighted with the cogent reasoning and plain statement; a feature which gives the work a distinctly legal flavor. The cover and frontispiece are very fine, and the emblems throughout the work are very well executed. We can supply it at the published price, post paid, \$2.

What shall we do to be Saved.—A National Catechism by Rabbi S. Freuder, member of S. F. Nationalist Club. This is a 5-cent pamphlet admirably gotten up, full of sublime sentiment and convincing logic. Everybody interested in the live issues of the day should read and circulate this valuable document. We can supply twelve or more copies at half price.

Onesimus Toole.—A psychological romance, by W. J. Colville. One of the most extraordinary narratives ever published; founded on fact, it introduces a record of some of the greatest psychical and electric marvels of the age, and at the same time shows how an orthodox preacher can outgrow the limitations of narrow creeds and proclaim a universal gospel without needless suffering or drifting into agnosticism. Persons who have read *Robert Elsmere*, *John Ward*, *A Knight of Faith*, and such works, will find *Onesimus Toole* of great interest. Orders for the paper edition, now in press, are taken at 25 cents per copy, postage 5 cents extra.

Our day and our bread, by Amy Pushing. The clearest statement of what Christian Scientists really believe about health and circumstances that we have ever come across; thick paper cover, price 10 cents.

MRS. L. A. ROOT, one of the most successful teachers and practitioners of Mental or Christian Science before the public anywhere, is now in San Francisco; she gave a very interesting address at the Metaphysical College, 106 McAllister street on Monday evening, November 25th. All persons in need of advice and healing should apply at the College.

"*Ardath*." Among the many deeply interesting books provocative of deep thought and earnest study now before the world, we know of none better calculated to interest and instruct honest seekers after light on mystical topics than "*Ardath*," by Marie Corelli, author of "*A Romance of Two Worlds*," "*Thelma*," etc. Whatever this author writes is sure to be excellent. As a word painter she has few equals and no superiors among modern scribes; her deep sincerity and nobility of aim distinguish her writings as literature of the very highest spiritual and moral type. We can commend all her works most conscientiously. Those who read the "*Romance of Two Worlds*," will be delighted to find "*Ardath*" a most fascinating sequel to that inimitable tale. 497 pages, paper, 50 cents.

METAPHYSICAL COLLEGE, 106 McAllister street, directly opposite City Hall. Public services conducted by W. J. Colville every Sunday at 10:45 A. M., and 7:30 P. M. Admission free. Voluntary offerings for expenses. Meeting of Theosophical Society, free to all, at 2 P. M. W. J. Colville gives lessons in Spiritual Science as practically applied in healing, etc., every Monday and Friday, at 2:30 P. M. Admission, 25 cents.

The lecture hall of this College can be rented for approved purposes on moderate terms on application to the Committee, members of which are in attendance before and after every meeting. Lending Library loans books at 10 cents per week. Choice literature always on sale, and any approved book or pamphlet or periodical supplied to order. N. B.—During the present holiday season the college is open incessantly, and interesting exercises are continually being held.

OAKLAND SYNAGOGUE, 13th and Clay streets. W. J. Colville conducts public service every Sunday at 3 P. M. Instruction in Metaphysics, Tuesdays, 3 P. M. Lectures on Theosophy, Thursdays, 7:30 P. M.

MASONIC HALL, Park Street, Alameda. Lecture on Theosophy and special exercises, at this season, every Tuesday at 7:45 P. M. Lessons in Metaphysics, Thursdays 2:45 P. M.

AS NO JOURNAL devoted to a promulgation of the advanced thought of the day can possibly afford to be silent on the question of Nationalism, and believing as we do that the Nationalist movement is destined to peaceably revolutionize the existing industrial condition of humanity, we take great pleasure in offering to our readers for careful perusal the declaration of principles common to Nationalist Clubs in general. The San Francisco Club is a powerful organization, including many of the brightest minds in the city. The public meetings held in a large and popular hall on alternate Monday

evenings have called out large and influential audiences. Speeches have been delivered by able men and women representing the learned professions, and every rank and degree of culture in the community. Excellent music has formed a pleasant part of the proceedings, and it has been delightful indeed to witness such fine concourses of representative citizens meeting to reflect upon ways and means to elevate society out of the pit of error into which the vicious competitive system has hurled it. Among the sermons delivered on Thanksgiving Day, Dr. Voorsanger's, at the Temple Emanuel, called for special notice, as he preached on Bellamy's great novel, "Looking Backward," which is the text book of the Nationalist movement; unfortunately he failed to steer clear of the prevailing error, which is, that to remove competition would be to destroy the proper incentive to individual exertion and development, while, singular to relate, the reverend gentleman ventured the assertion that if Bellamy's dream were realized people would cease to be religious, as prosperity is not favorable to religious growth. What kind of religion we should like to know is that fostered by the competitive system, which can be, so successfully arraigned at the bar of both law and gospel? If anyone who reads this magazine is deluded by such palpable sophistry, we hope he will at once commence a study of "Looking Backward," and we are sure if his mind is not blinded with prejudice he will find the ethics of Nationalism conducive to the highest morality and the deepest spirituality. A system of religion which needs competition to foster it, is a tare which needs uprooting. Judaism and Christianity would both flourish much better were co-operation to become universal, though both these systems and all others will have to part with many foibles before they can melt into the religion of the future, which will assuredly be unsectarian, non-restrictive and all-inclusive. The pulpit must preach co-operation and frown upon the injustice of competition, or it will lose its influence for good forever. Next month's (February) issue of *THE PROBLEM OF LIFE* will contain among other articles on living topics, an essay by the Editor on "The Future Commonwealth," in which Nationalism will be fully and fearlessly discussed. We will supply Clubs and the trade at bare cost (5 cents per copy), so as to gain for that number a wide reading.

The Nationalist Club of San Francisco.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

The principle of the Brotherhood of Humanity is one of the eternal truths that govern the world's progress on lines which distinguish human nature from brute nature.

The principle of competition is simply the application of the brutal law of the survival of the strongest and most cunning.

Therefore, so long as competition continues to be the ruling factor in our industrial system, the highest development of the individual cannot be reached, the loftiest aims of humanity cannot be realized.

No truth can prevail unless practically applied. Therefore those who seek the welfare of man must endeavor to suppress the system founded on the brutal principle of competition, and put in its place another based on the nobler principle of association.

But in striving to apply this nobler and wiser principle to the complex conditions of modern life, we advocate no sudden nor ill-considered changes, we make no war upon individuals; we do not censure those who have accumulated immense fortunes simply by carrying to a logical end the false principle on which business is now based.

A government, law and order, are absolutely necessary to the existence of society, we will pursue only those methods which are law-abiding; all others will be discountenanced.

The combinations, trusts and syndicates, of which the people at present complain, demonstrate the practicability of our basic principle of association. We merely seek to push this principle a little further, and have all industries operated in the interest of all by the nation—the people organized—the organic unity of the whole people.

The present industrial system proves itself wrong by the immense wrong it produces: it proves itself absurd by the immense waste of energy and material which is admitted to be its concomitant.

Against this system we raise our protest: for the abolition of the slavery it has wrought and would perpetuate, we pledge our best efforts.

MRS. J. ANDERSON ROOT, the author of the book entitled "The Healing Powers of Mind," has returned to San Francisco, and will remain for some time to heal the sick and teach classes in the science of metaphysical healing. Those desirous of entering the class for instruction may do so at the beginning of each; members of the first classes admitted to any subsequent class.

For any further information regarding either treatment for those who are sick, or instruction of those who wish to learn, call on Mrs. Root, at the Grand Hotel, any day from 9:30 A. M. to 1 P. M., or at the Metaphysical College, 106 McAllister street, after the lectures.

Mrs. Root was the pioneer in teaching and demonstrating this method of healing on this coast, and still holds a leading place among the teachers and healers in this work. Her work is well known, both in this city and throughout the United States, and thousands testify to her success in healing. Her books may be obtained from the Purdy Publishing Co., McVicker's Theatre Building, Chicago; of Mrs. E. DePrans, Christian Science Healer and Teacher, Portland, Oregon; or at the Metaphysical College, 106 McAllister street, San Francisco. All sufferers, whatever their troubles may be, and especially the so called incurables of Medical Practitioners, are invited to meet and confer with Mrs. Root at her rooms at the Grand Hotel, or by letter when that is not possible.

Consultation gratefully free, and correspondence promptly attended to.

HEALING IS NOT ACCOMPLISHED simply by "purity," if by the word you mean negative virtue. Purity in its larger sense implies *power*. The physical body is completely charged with human electricity through the action of correct thought when truth is understood. *Microbes* cannot enter a thoroughly electrified organism, and moreover, they are destroyed by electricity when coming too near the human battery.—*Answer to a Physician, by L. F. S.*

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHRIST.

- 1, *The Logos.* 2, *Mission of John the Baptist.* 3, *The commencement of his baptism and teaching.* 4, *His testimony before the priests and Levites.* 5, *His teaching as to The Messiah.* 6, *The immaculate conception.* 7, *A census of the Roman Empire is taken.* 8, *The birth of Jesus.* *Shepherds perceive the sign of The Messiah, and visit Jesus at Bethlehem.* 9, *Jesus begins to teach, and announces his work.* 10, *The baptism of Jesus.* 11, *His fasting and trials.* 12, *Jesus teaches by the Lake of Gennesaret.*

Sec. 1. The Logos.

1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that hath been made. And the Word dwelt among us.

1. THE LOGOS. Every word has its own meaning; each word has its exact significance; different words have their different meanings; but all true words—that is, all words that have truthful signification may be summed up in one Word, and all their meanings summed up in one Meaning. That one Word is God, and that one Meaning is Omniscience.

Because the Word is spoken of as existing in the beginning, it must not be supposed that there ever was a time when the Word did not exist. The Word has always existed, and shall always exist. It is the everlasting proof of Omniscience—All-Knowledge. Thought is the form of the thinker, or it is what one is thinking. If it were possible to cease thinking, consciousness would also cease to be; then there would be no thought or form, and consequently no word or body. But Omniscience is consciousness, and the same yesterday, to-day and forever; therefore His Thought and Word constantly exist.

Omniscience, Spirit or Mind is Substance.

Thought or Soul is ideal.

Word or body is real.

There is an axiom in Philosophy, which is read, *What is below is like that which is above; and what is above is like that which is below. As is the outer, so is the inner; as is the small so is the great. There is but one law; and he who worketh is one.* One may perceive what a word is, when he perceives his own word; and for this purpose a man has senses. But only Omniscience can perceive His Word. Now, anyone's word is his body; and as not two men think alike, there are no two words or bodies alike. His body is the expression of what a man thinks; the meaning of his body is himself. This body may be a representation of a great many ideas—all his ideas upon all subjects; but all these ideas are summed up in one title—for example, the title John, or Abraham, or some other. Then the title John is what we call some particular body; but the meaning or name of John or of the body is the man himself—the thinker. And he may think a great many truthful thoughts, and a great many untruthful thoughts; so that

2. In It was The Life ; and The Life was The Light of men. The Light shineth in the darkness, but the darkness apprehended it not.

3. He was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and they received Him not But as many as did receive Him, to them gave He power to become Sons of God ; even to them that believe on His name, which were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Sec. 2. Mission of John the Baptist.

4. There came a man from God, whose name was John. The same came to bear witness to The Light, that all men through him might believe.

Sec. 3. The Commencement of his Baptism and Teaching.

5. In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea ; and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee ; and his brother Philip tetrarch of the regions of Iturea and Trachonitis ; and Lysanias tetrarch

his body may represent truth and untruth. The word God is that title for Omniscience, which is always manifest in heaven. The word Christ is that title for Omniscience, whenever Omniscience is manifest in the World. And just as there are not many Gods, but one God ; so there are not many Christs, but one Christ. Christ is God on earth ; and every Son—for example, Jesus—is Christ. God is Christ in heaven ; and every Son—for example, Jesus—is God. Whether Omniscience be manifested as the Word God, or as the Word Christ, he who manifests either or both is The Father, whom we have called Omniscience. There is no other creator than Him ; by Him all things have been created ; and the life of every creature is The Life, God or Christ. When Omnipresence manifested himself on earth, he came to his own, that his own might know him. But his own, being not yet grown to the full stature of Christ, knew him not ; for like only can perceive like. But that they might know him, and manifest Christ-likeness, he dwelt amongst them in the flesh. And whoever manifests Christ-likeness is a Son of the Father ; not born as a child of man, who awakens from his mother's womb to behold earthly things ; but as one, who awakens from his dream of sense to behold heavenly things.

Awaken ! for the Light shines ; but how can it be apprehended through the closed eyes of the Sleeper ?

2. JOHN, THE BAPTIST. John, the Baptist, is the connecting link between Moses and Jesus. He was the last of the prophets under the Mosaic or Old Testament dispensation ; Jesus was the first of the prophets under the Christ or New Testament dispensation. The two main characteristics of the old dispensation may be summarized in these few words. Under it the enlightened amongst humanity awakened to the knowledge of an immortal Soul and Life. But each man did not yet identify his life (i. e. himself) with the one life, but rather considered it as a ray that proceeded from The Life. The reason for this belief may be found in what is termed the psychic perception, which formed the basis of judgment in those

of Abilene—the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the region about Jordan, baptising and teaching repentance unto remission of sins.

Sec. 4. His Testimony before the Priests and Levites.

6. And this is the witness of John, when the Jews sent Priests and Levites from Jerusalem asking him, Who art thou? And he confessed, saying, I am not the Messiah.

7. Then they asked him, Who then art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of The Lord; as said the prophet Isaiah.

“Prepare ye the way of The Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be

days. With their five senses men come in contact with this world of words; with their psychic senses they come in contact with the world of thought. Now, the world of thought is also a world of form; and to those, who judged psychically, it did seem as if the life of each man streamed into his body as a ray. Those were the days of visions, and dreams, and audible voices; the present are the days of understanding the inaudible voice. Those were the days of perceiving the Lord literally; the present are the days of perceiving the Lord spiritually. Under the Mosaic dispensation men believed that the ray of life of one individual was not the ray of life of another individual. But the teaching of Christ is, that life is not imparted by rays, nor is it divisible; but that it is One, and that it is given without measure to any man.

The second principal feature of the Old dispensation is its negative character, which forms a marked contrast to the positive character, of the New dispensation. The negative character of the old law—Thou shalt not, and, Thou shalt not; together with all its provisions *against* wrong-doing—need not be particularized here. The positive character of the new law—Thou shalt, and, Thou shalt; together with its provisions *for* right-doing—distinguishes it from the old. This distinction is yet but little understood, and less carried out; so that the laws of the nations at present are directed almost entirely *against* wrong-doing, instead of *for* the furtherance or encouragement of right-doing. But this will not always be so. The Old is passing away; all will be New.

John, the Baptist, marks the Old, which is passing away; therefore he said: I must decrease. Jesus marks the New, which is being established; therefore he said, I am way. John baptised with the symbol (water) of the Old, at the same time declaring the symbol (fire) of the new.

The most striking illustration of John's position as a teacher merging out of the Old into the New, out of the form into the formless, is to be found in verse 7 of this chapter; where he said, in answer to those who were seeking a sign: *I am the voice*. To hear voices was what the Priests and Levites expected of a prophet; and they could have understood him, if he had said: I hear a voice crying, etc. But, *I am the voice!* This was something quite new. So with the people, who came to Jesus, seeking signs; if he had said, I have the Life, etc., they might have understood him. But, *I am the Life!* This was something quite new.

made low. And the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain ; And the glory of The Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of The Lord hath spoken it."

Sec. 5. His teaching as to The Messiah.

8. And John taught saying, I baptise you with water to repentance ; but he that is stronger than I shall come, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear. He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Whose fan is in his hand ; and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into the garner ; but the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire.

Sec. 6. The Immaculate Conception.

9. The birth of Jesus was on this wise. When Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. And Joseph, being a righteous man, and not willing to defame her, intended to put her away privily. But as he contemplated these things, behold an angel of The Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take Mary unto thee ; for that which is begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus ; for he it is who shall save his people from their shortcomings.

10. Now all this was accomplished that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by The Lord through the prophet, saying—

Behold the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and

3. JESUS ; SAVIOUR. Whatever any man shall have demonstrated becomes a possibility recognized by others for them to demonstrate likewise. When any example is shown to men, they judge, criticize, or in some way note it. A perfect example shall become to all men an ideal to which to attain. And there is essential to the being of every man that which disallows that his goal of attainment shall fall short of the perfect. There is in every Soul that which must be fully expressed. This is the Life or God ; whose being is eternal Rest, whose thought is everlasting unrest. Therefore, in every man is the impulse to be doing—to be expressing himself, and the search to find rest. We must learn to rest while we work ; and to work while we rest ; for rest is man's eternity, yet his work is everlasting. This goal of perfect consciousness—rest with work—having been reached, man is saved. The way to rest and work has been demonstrated, the way of salvation shown. He, who trod the perfect way as an example for men to follow to-day, was Jesus.

The way, then, is to be active in Rest ; to live attentive to the Creator, and not to become lost in attention to creation ; to remain discovered to yourself, and not to become entangled in your works, no matter how beautiful or charitable they may be. He, who will walk in this way, doing right for the sake of right, and heedless of praise or blame ; who will walk, teaching and healing, because he is the Truth, to whom a miracle is as his every act ; and who, being centred in principle, studies, not his works, nor can be drawn out into seeking effect of his thought—he, who will walk this way,

they shall call his name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted is, God with us.

11. And Joseph did as the angel of The Lord commanded him, and took Mary unto him as his wife. And knew her not till she had brought forth a son. And he called his name Jesus.

Sec. 7. A Census of the Roman Empire is Taken.

12. It came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Augustus Cæsar, that all the Roman world should be enrolled. This was the first enrolment made while Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, everyone to his own city.

13. And Joseph, because he was of the house and family of David, went up with Mary—she being great with child—from the city of Nazareth in Galilee to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem in Judæa, to be enrolled. And it happened that, while they were there, the days were fulfilled that she should be delivered.

Sec. 8. The Birth of Jesus. Shepherds Perceive the sign of The Messiah, and visit Jesus at Bethlehem.

14. And Mary brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in

has found himself; he is safe from being lost again in nature, works or what is changeable.

This is the way—to love God only. With him, when you have discovered yourself, you shall find that you are one. This is the way—to love your neighbour as yourself. With him, whoever he be, when you have discovered yourself, you shall find that you are identical. All may walk this way; no one is incapacitated. If the way were by some intellectual attainment, by some learning of Arts or Sciences, salvation would be for few. But salvation is for all, because the way is simple, truth is simple, life is simple. Walk in the way that a child may walk, even as Jesus walked, and all power, or knowledge, or wisdom is yours.

4. THE There is only one Creator, Father or Cause, who is the Omniscience.
IMMACULATE There is no physical cause. All that is cause is spirit; all that is
CONCEPTION. physical is effect. We must understand what any conception is.

Anyone may write a letter; such a letter as shall represent him or do him justice; or such a letter as shall not represent him. The writer of the letter is its creator. The creation takes place in this way; before the creator writes, he thinks what he is going to write, then writes it. Thus the writer produces his letter in thought first, and in word afterwards. A similar process goes on at every creation. Every thought takes place in Mind, every word takes place in thought. *There is but one law; and he who worketh is one.*

Every man is Mind, and must therefore think; by thinking he creates thoughts, then words. Every man is free-will, and creates according to his will. If he wish to write or create what will represent himself, he may know how to do so, for everyone who asks in the name of truth shall receive the light of truth.

Pen, ink and paper are but conditions for the writer; they are not the writer.

swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger ; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Similarly the hand, the nerves, etc., are but conditions for the same writer. So also flesh and blood are only conditions for the man or mind, they are not the man or mind. Similarly the body of a parent is only a condition for the same man or mind. He who conceives any body is the life, or mind, or man, who animates it or causes it to live. One's word is the expression of his understanding ; if he do not understand all, his word is not the expression of all. But the expression of Him, who understands all, is The Word. The Spirit of God is perfect understanding. The body that is begotten by the Holy Spirit is, therefore, begotten by a clear or immaculate understanding. The body that is not thus begotten is begotten by an understanding that is to some extent absorbed in matter, or taken up with worldly affairs.

Every one creates ; for every thought is a creation. His understanding is Purity whose thoughts are all clean and pure, his thoughts are immaculately conceived. But his understanding is clouded whose thoughts are tinged with selfishness, malice, or untruth. Jesus was the offspring of Purity, of an understanding unclouded and thoughts undefiled. The offspring of Purity is a representation of Purity ; but that which is born of lust is a misrepresentation of Purity. Lust has its conditions for conception ; Purity makes different conditions ; but the method of creating is the same.

5. THIS NARRATIVE. In all the history of the world the three events, which stand out most prominently to the Philosopher, are—first the coming of God, the Creator ; second, the coming of God, the Saviour ; third, the coming of God, the Comforter. The coming of the Father in the day of Creation ; the coming of the Son in the day of Salvation ; the coming of the Holy Spirit in the Day of Awakening. Doubt not the coming of the Creator, for there could be no creation without the Creator. Doubt not the coming of the Son, for there could be no salvation without the Saviour. Doubt not the coming of the Awakener, for his day is now manifest. After which is the end.

No narrative, however true, should be accepted literally, but spiritually ; for he who accepts the letter, accepts that which perishes ; but he, who accepts the Spirit, accepts that which abides for ever. The end and purpose in creation is that Truth be made manifest. It were a pity, then, if, when the purpose is accomplished, a man merely inherited the manifestation ; it were a pity, if the rich man's son inherited only his tomb ! Doubt it not but that Jesus Christ lived and taught ; but it is a foolish man, who hangs only on the lips even of the divinest teacher ; for the days come when the lips no longer utter his wisdom. If a man have not his own understanding, he will not understand another's, for only the like perceives his like. The history of Jesus is the history of every one, who has, or will, overcome the world ; of every one who has entered, or will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. He has shown the way, that all may walk in it ; he became the example that all might follow. The same Spirit, who led Jesus to the Father, will lead you also ; because there is only one Spirit ; and because the Spirit alone knows the way of the Spirit.

All doubts about this narrative—from the birth to the death of Jesus—being true may be dismissed ; yet that avails him nothing who does not find for himself the eternal life. The whole narrative—from beginning to end—may remain unread or

15. And there were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field, and keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of The Lord stood by them, and the glory of The Lord shone round about them ; and they were greatly afraid. And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid ; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which also shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ, The Lord. And this is the sign to you, Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

16. And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good-will. And it came to pass, when the angels were gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, Let us go straight to Bethlehem and witness this fulfilment which The Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph ; and the babe was lying in the manger.

17. And when they saw it, they made known the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all that heard it wondered at the things which were spoken unto them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things to herself, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned,

unbelieved ; yet that is no disqualification to him, who finds the Saviour in himself. The birth of Christ in any man is his awakening to omniscience ; his overcoming of death is his final redemption on earth through the continued recognition of omniscience.

Awaken. Then, continue awakened ; and the effort to continue thus will soon cease, and never more shall you sleep, nor shall you die ; for the desires and lusts of the flesh are the sleep and are the death.

6. THE

SHEPHERDS.

The incident of the Shepherds, who learn from an angel of the Messiah, illustrates the coming of Christ to mankind—to any man. Just as the shepherds were minding their own business, faithfully discharging their own duties, doing with heart what was at hand to do ; so shall every man be engaged, when Christ is perceived by him. But to the man, who shirks his own duties, flies from difficulties, is negligent of his trusts, no angel of the Lord appears. No man receives his occupations by chance ; no man is out of place. It is most profitable for every man to do his best in his natural position.

And by this shall a man know if Christ be born in him, that he will say, Glory to God ; he will do all to His glory, and think all to His glory. But this cannot be till he recognize and accept his own oneness with God ; for only then does he understand what it is to give glory to God. By this shall a man know if Christ be born in him, that he will be in that peace, which follows his own universal good-will, his good-will to all equally—friend and foe alike. By this shall a man know if Christ be born in him, that it shall be to all people also ; that he is not a favoured one, for God is no respecter of persons or discerners of distinctions. Then indeed is the Messiah born in the manger of his simplicity, in the city or body of truth.

glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, and as it was told unto them.

18. And when eight days were fulfilled for the circumcision, his name was called Jesus, as named by the angel when he was conceived. And when the days of their purification according to the law of Moses were fulfilled, Mary and Joseph brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to The Lord.

Sec. 9. Jesus begins to Teach; and Announces His Work.

19. And when they had performed all things according to the law of The Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city Nazareth. And the child grew and waxed strong, and the grace of God was upon him.

20. Now Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. And when Jesus was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem as usual. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem, and they knew it not. But they, supposing him to be of the company, went a day's journey. Then they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance; but finding him not they turned back again to Jerusalem seeking for him.

21. And it came to pass after three days that they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when Joseph and Mary saw him, they were astonished; and Mary said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? But they understood not the saying, which he spake unto them.

22. Then he went down with them, and came to Nazareth and was subject unto them. But Mary kept all his sayings in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

Sec. 10. The baptism of Jesus.

23. And it came to pass that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee to be baptised by John in the Jordan. But John protested, saying, I have need to

7. JESUS' Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

Whoever is born of God will do the will of God; for then it is the QUESTION. Spirit or understanding of God, who works through that which is born.

Whoever is born of the world will do the will of the world; for then it is the spirit or understanding of the world, who works through that which is born. The Sons of God are of the understanding of God; the children of the world are of the understanding of the world. Whoever, then, is a Son of God let him proclaim it by doing his Father's will. It is a wise child, who knows his Father; but all men know whose son he is, who does the will of the world.

be baptised by thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now ; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

24. And when he was baptised a great light shone around from the water ; and Jesus went up straightway from the water. And, lo, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending upon him as a dove ; and a voice from heaven saying, This is my Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Sec. 11. The fasting and trials.

25. Then was Jesus led up into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after he had fasted forty days and forty nights he hungered. And the tempter came to him and said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of

8. THE BAPTISM OF JESUS. Jesus came among the children of Israel as an Israelite, and received baptism as they were receiving it, and in all that was righteous he conformed to their customs, that they might know him as one of themselves.

The rite of baptism by water belonged to the Mosaic dispensation only, as a symbol of the understanding or unfoldment of those days ; for water signifies the soul or psychic perception. To understand the significance of the baptism by water we must refer to the days of Noah and the flood. The attention of men on the earth just preceding the days of Noah was almost entirely occupied with material things ; they expressed little or no understanding of spiritual or even of psychic things. Now, the water that covered the earth in those days symbolized a psychic perception that took the place of a material perception. The necessity for this cleansing is thus stated in Genesis, The wickedness of man was great on the earth, and every imagination of his heart was evil. So the rite of baptism by water symbolized cleansing the heart or thought from the materialism of ante-diluvian times, and thus signified that mankind should occupy their thoughts with something higher and more important than mere worldly things. In other words, whoever was to enter the kingdom of Moses must be born again of water.

The work of Jesus was to build up ; to establish, not to dis-establish. This method of procedure is a necessary feature in the labours of every true ambassador of Christ, and indicates permanent strength. All that the world has received is to the end that it may build up its Temple of Truth on a sure foundation ; therefore the teacher of truth takes not the foundation away, but by adding to and strengthening it completes it. In the baptism of Jesus by John the teacher of Nazareth indicated that his work was to build up. He virtually said, I am not come to take from you your baptism by water, but to supplement it. Just as in the days of Noah the new awakening to a psychic perception took nothing away, but added more ; so my (Jesus') baptism by fire will not take anything from you, but will add to your knowledge of the Soul the knowledge of the Spirit. I am not come to destroy the Law, or that it may be evaded, I am come to fulfil the Law. Whatever teacher, then, is no longer engaged under the Mosaic dispensation, but under the Christ, and to fulfil the law, baptises not with water but with the Holy Spirit.

God. Then the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, To thee will I give all this power and the glory of it ; for it hath been delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it ; if therefore thou wilt worship me it shall all be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee hence, Satan ; for it is written, Thou shalt worship The Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve. Then he led him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down ; for it is written, He shall give His angels charge over thee to

9. THE FASTING AND TRIALS. To fast is to abstain from food ; but this does not necessarily mean to abstain from that which passes in at the mouth. There is other food than the meat of every day consumption. People, who are wrapped up in their studies, give little thought to eating and drinking ; they find food in what they are engaged in. People, who are wrapped up in their meals, give little thought to study, and cannot understand how thought can be food. Let us put aside the question of eating of that which enters the mouth, and consider the partaking of that which enters as thought does. Whatever we perceive to think about is " food for thought," or more correctly *food of thought*. All men are constantly thinking about something, they are therefore constantly digesting or, at least, partaking of thought. When, however, men partake of the world's thought for food, they partake of uncharitableness, envy, murder adultery and deceit. From all these things or thoughts, the disciple of Christ must fast even as Jesus fasted. Whoever will partake of the food, that the world offers, eats the food of condemnation ; but whoever will partake of the food the Father offers, shall not be condemned but find eternal life.

Again, if anyone be a partaker of what he sees in the world to think about, he is a partaker of error ; for every judgment from appearances is unrighteous judgment. If anyone, therefore, will be a disciple of Christ, he must altogether cease to judge from what he sees, feels, hears, or touches ; he must abstain from this food, even as Jesus fasted therefrom.

But after forty days—that is, after some definite term—when, perhaps, a man thinks he has conquered his appetites, he will hunger, and the old habits of thought will return, and then is The Temptation. But he who takes his stand in the only Power there is, as that Power, cannot be shaken.

What is it that Ambition whispers to a man? Get rich! Look what power and happiness wealth represents! With wealth you can obtain anything. Get a great name! If not such as a famous soldier, then such as a famous scholar; and all the world will worship you, you have history for it. But if you cannot get riches or scholarship, be great through poverty and humility! convert the world by your philosophy and all will be your followers! What better to live and die for humanity—what better, tell me?

Such are the thoughts that at times beset every man. Who is there, who has not desired to excel? Competition is the beloved of Ambition. Such temptations are the trial of every man, when he is not yet sure of being able to succeed in his ambitions ; but a time will come, when he will be sure to succeed, if he choose ; and this is the time of The Trial. Jesus knew that he had power over all things, and to do all things, even to making bread of stones ; and he was hungry. To make bread of stones, when one is

guard thee ; and on their hands they shall bear thee up, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt The Lord thy God.

26. Then the devil, having completed every temptation, leaveth him; and angels came and ministered unto him.

27. From that time Jesus began to teach, and to say, Repent ; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Sec. 12. Jesus teaches by the Lake of Gennesaret.

28. And it came to pass that as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God. And he saw two boats by the shore ; but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. And he entered into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people out of the boat.

29. When he had ceased speaking, he said unto Simon, Put out into the deep and let down your net for a draught. And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all night, and have taken nothing ; nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had done so, they enclosed a great multitude of fish ; and their net was breaking. And they

hungry, is to make the Spirit serve the body in an hour when the passions cry aloud for life.

As to the devil, no more need be said in this place than as follows : if any man will know what satan or the devil is, he need not go further than his own thoughts to find it. Every man has the remedy within himself by which to cast out lying thoughts ; for every man is the thinker of his own thoughts. Get thee hence, Satan ! Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God ! But this is not all ; the end is not yet. Remain firm ; abide and dwell in truth. Then is the end.

All temptations are overcome by good. When good thoughts take the place of evil thoughts, misunderstanding leaves and right understanding is present ; that is, the devil leaves and angels minister ; for an angel is nothing else than a good thought, even as a devil is nothing else than an evil thought.

10. REPENT. Repentance is an expression of sorrow for a sin or mistake. Now, no one would learn of darkness but for the light ; no one sees wrong till he sees right. So that no one can be happy in the wrong, because he knows better ; and for happiness' sake everyone must manifest as rightly as he can. The cause of all unhappiness is that men do not act as they know they ought to. Repentance will be a necessity until wrong is entirely outgrown by the right being entirely perceived and carried into act. The right act is proof of repentance ; but without it repentance is insufficient.

The kingdom of heaven is the right ; and nothing but the right can enter therein. But this right is perfectness ; for there are no degrees of right. There are different ideas about the right ; there are men, who do the best they can ; but ideas about right do not

signalled unto their partners, which were in the other boat, that they should come and help them, And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.

30. When Simon saw it, he fell down at Jesus' feet, saying, Depart from me ; for I am a sinful man, O Lord—for he was amazed at the draught of fish, which they had taken. And so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto them, Fear not ; from henceforth thou shalt draw men alive.

31. And when they had brought their boats to land, they left all and followed Jesus.

reduce or affect it. Nor does it follow, when men are doing the best they can, that their best is The Right. The Right is absolute ; there are no degrees of it ; it is perfection. *The kingdom of heaven is at hand* ; this means that perfectness is within your reach.

Every man is Spirit ; and has soul, and body ; and has the power to perceive each. So, naturally, we see that in the earth's education, man is occupied with bodily concerns, and this we call his material perception. Then comes repentance, when the psychic perception or knowledge of the soul is accomplished. And the final repentance, when perfection or the knowledge of the spirit is perceived. Consequently, neither the material nor the psychic perception is The Right, but the spiritual only. Yet there is no perception to be taken away, but all perception is to be understood.

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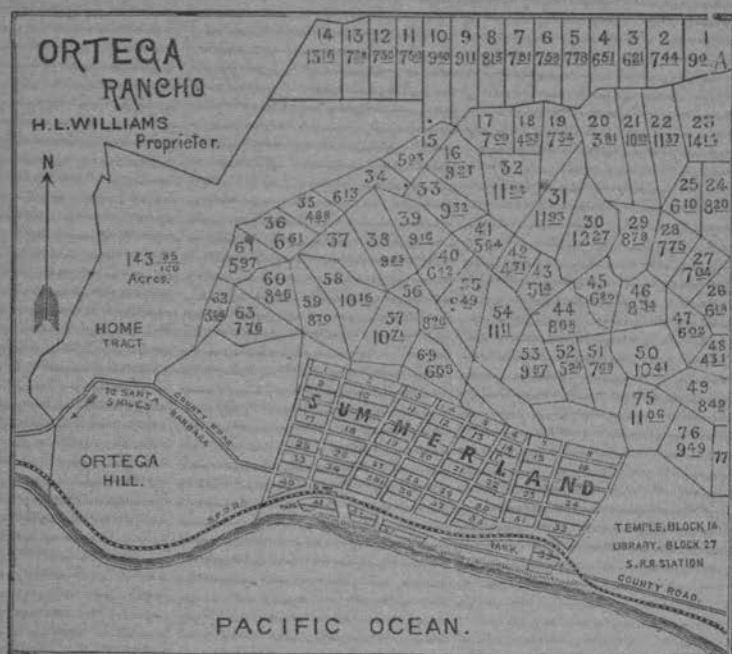
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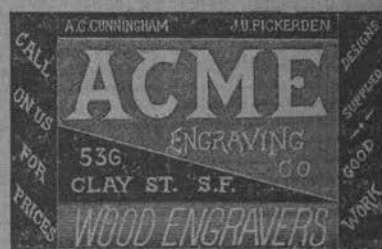
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