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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.

W. J. COLVILLE,

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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## PRACTICAL SPIRITUAL SCIENCE.

### *THE PROBLEM OF PRAYER.*

#### LESSON II.

Having been particularly requested by many friends to devote some space this month to a consideration of Prayer, we respond with great pleasure to a request which we know meets with an echo in the minds of many who have not proffered it in words. We invariably esteem it a favor when our friends favor us with their opinions as to what subjects may most profitably be discussed on our platform or in this magazine, tho' the limited space in the paper excludes much we wish we were able to insert. Suggestions can be made to us either by letter or personally. Of course we do not pledge ourselves to take up every subject proposed, even should space permit of our doing so ; but the nature of the subjects will be the only reason for some gaining precedence over others.

We will now at once proceed candidly to express our convictions on a question which has from time immemorial engrossed the deepest attention of the most learned, philosophic and speculative, as well as the humblest and most trusting minds. Rev. Heber Newton has delivered several remarkable discourses in All Souls' Episcopal Church, New York, on this great theme. From reports of these and other sermons in the New York and other large dailies, it is patent to all readers that the Episcopal Church in this country, as well as in England, holds a great number of broad, liberal-minded men, whose field of work doubtless lies in a certain section of the Christian Church to which they are bound by strong and enduring ties of tradition and early association, though their teachings are so catholic in the true sense of the word, which is universal, that they are really universal theosophists in all but their name. Such men do not divorce the Essential Life of the universe from the universe, but speak of the Infinite Spirit not only as of a loving Parent, but also as of a Life Indwelling as well as Over Soul.

There is really no reason whatever why religion and science should not shake hands, and acknowledge that there is no quarrel between them. Soon the confession must everywhere be made that religion is itself a science, and the highest of all sciences. It is the science of right living, the science of man's moral and spiritual relations to the universe. Universal religion, or pure Theism, has nothing whatever to fear from the cold negations and ribald jests of materialism. The highest and most sacred affections of the human soul cannot be made fun of or ridiculed out of being. Truth will step in and

enforce its right to live. Phenomena will occur, convincing the most obdurate sceptic that, even though nature be everything, nature holds infinitely more than she is supposed to contain by the sciolistic negativists of the present century.

Many people listen to so much negative teaching to-day, that they sometimes wonder if everything is not a delusion, themselves included. Some seemingly intelligent persons start the theory that there is no reliable history extant, no reliable biographies; in a word, nothing to which we can turn with any degree of confidence, in the hope that we may obtain some clear and trustworthy insight into the doings and sayings of people of the past ages.

Among those who deny history, there are indeed a few of the most learned, sincere, able and conscientious of modern scholars. They are guided to their conclusions, not by a spirit of carping criticism, but by an ardent longing for truth, a hatred of fraud and imposition, an intense desire not to be imposed upon, and a yet greater abhorrence of being the means of imposing upon others.

Now let us ask, is the world losing anything really worth having by turning its back upon what was once regarded as infallible history, and now appears little better than a mass of incongruous legend and tradition? Are people losing anything they cannot well afford to give up, and which they had not better have given up long ago? We think we may safely affirm that, as a race or a community, we are steadily gaining, for it has always been true that the *records* of inspiration were praised and valued most when there was no open vision. When there was a living oracle at Shiloh, when the divine voice was heard speaking through the prophets and between the cherubim, whose wings veiled the mercy seat of the great temple at Jerusalem, the living voice took such powerful hold upon the people that parchment scrolls were not deified; but when in an age of materiality the avenues of direct spiritual communion were closed, when there were no more prophets in Israel, the only resort was to the law and the testimony,—to what poets have called records of a happier because a holier age, as holiness and happiness are indeed inseparable.

This is certainly an age of revelation, for revelation is discovery, and no recorded age of the world has witnessed greater discoveries than the present. It is just because the best minds of the present day are so actively engaged in discovering truth, that ancient testimony is fading into smaller proportions than it ever assumed before. One reaction always produces another; human progress seems to be accomplished only through an endless series of reactions; the golden mean, the happy medium, so often spoken of, is rarely attained. It seems well nigh impossible for most minds to steer clear of extremes, to nicely balance and carefully weigh merit, for either does the past loom up before us in such gigantic proportions that it screens the present from our

view, or the importance of the present is so exaggerated that we begin to speak slightly of the past; either do men's minds dwell so entirely upon things of the present that they are blind to the future, or they are so engaged in preparing for futurity that the present life dwindles, in their estimation, into utter insignificance.

The old orthodoxy, both of Jew and Gentile, which is now happily vanishing, always dealt with the idea of a God who once spoke to the human soul, and who will speak again, but is not now speaking. At Horeb and on Sinai God was supposed to have drawn especially near to man, and it was expected that He would in the future again draw near to earth in the person of a special messiah, who, as an anointed king and supreme head of the chosen people, would, in a special manner, proclaim the presence of the Almighty.

Though such views as these are being daily modified among all intelligent people, it cannot be denied that they still influence, to a considerable degree, communities of decidedly pious and earnest people, who propagate them with evident sincerity, while multitudes connected with the Christian churches point to miracles as evidences of the truth of Christianity, declaring that some supernatural events which took place nearly two thousand years ago constitute the base of the entire fabric known as the Christian religion; and the second advent of Jesus, who is termed the Christ or Anointed One, is daily expected not only by the Irvingites and other sects of limited dimensions, but by all Christians who adhere strictly to the tenets of Catholic or Protestant Orthodoxy.

Now science steps in and seemingly denies miracle; men declare there is a fixed, immutable law of nature with which God never interferes; they deny every premise of supernaturalism, discount all miracles, and attribute every occurrence in the universe to immutable law. Science, so-called, is avowedly agnostic in its attitude toward all things spiritual; it knows nothing of Theosophy or that divine wisdom which is infinitely higher and more important than all knowledge pertaining to the material world, and therefore limited to man's earthly sphere of existence. True science, however, is in no sense atheistic or materialistic; for science is far too wide a word to be confined within the narrow boundaries usually assigned to it; it is, correctly speaking, a most comprehensive term, being derived from the present participle of the Latin verb *scire*, to know, which is *sciens*, knowing; therefore, the noun science is equivalent to knowledge. Speculation, conjecture, theory or hypothesis is not science; it may not be anti-scientific, but it is certainly less than scientific, while agnosticism can be nothing but confession of doubt, ignorance and uncertainty.

Herbert Spencer is called a scientific man; he is a great specialist, whose strictly scientific conclusions are totally distinct from his agnostic statements,

for he declares, concerning many important facts connected with sociology, for instance, that we can, and do definitely know something ; in this field, his knowledge and demonstrations are of priceless value to thousands of thinkers ; but his bold assertions that God is unknowable, and that spiritual life, if there be any, is a profound and insoluble mystery, though neither irreverent nor idiotic, as are the blatant puerilities of aggressive atheism, are of no value as affirmative philosophy, as they can add nothing to the sum of human information ; they are at best but the honest laments of an aspiring mind, which, seeking for light on the mighty problems of eternity, finds only darknesses ; and tho' perhaps listening for celestial voices, is met only by awful silence and bleak solitude. No one can be more anxious for clear light on spiritual matters than a true scientist, who, having bent his whole energy to the task of interrogating nature, and wresting from her her deepest secrets, sometimes finds her voiceless as the interrogator in one of Mrs. Hemans' poems found the stars above and the earth beneath, the rolling ocean and the mysterious winds, when questioned on the most absorbing theme that can ever engage human attention, " Where has the spirit gone that I have known and loved on earth, but which has now vacated its material shrine and passed into a state of being beyond the reach of all my straining sense ? " The answer of material nature to her interrogators is always a profound and unbroken silence when they ask of her for a reply, which, if it comes at all, must come from the spiritual universe. Bishop Butler, in the last century, published a work which was for many years a standard treatise on theology—a collegiate textbook, a minister's *vade mecum* whenever the evidences of Christianity were called in question. " The Analogy " is doubtless familiar to many of you ; it is still well worthy of perusal. If you read it seriously, you cannot fail to be impressed with the sound logical and deductive powers of the author ; but Bishop Butler's writings, clear and valuable as they certainly are, do not meet the requirements of this generation.

A liberal-minded clergyman of the Church of England, said in our hearing some years ago, and many others agreed with him, that Bishop Butler's book might now be put on the shelf, for it is time we ceased speaking of an analogy between the material and the spiritual worlds, for, said he, they are one. You have all heard much about the atonement ; the word, correctly speaking, at-one-ment, means reconciliation simply ; you have all heard of God being reconciled to man only through an atoning-sacrifice ; you have also heard it often affirmed that man must be reconciled to himself, that an at-one-ment must be effected between the jarring and discording elements of human nature, until mind, body, soul, and spirit, working together in sweetest concord, produce divinest harmony. We can readily settle the question of God's reconciliation to his children, when we admit that there can be

naught but unity and perfection in the divine attributes and operations ; we cannot tolerate the idea of a God at variance with Himself. God is not a Being in whom contending emotions can have play ; He cannot be influenced by changing feelings towards his creatures so that in one mood He is merciful, and in another, vengeful ; He cannot be moved out of his eternal track or turned aside from his eternal purpose by any wishes, words, or deeds of ours ; and as a great portion of the old idea of the efficacy of prayer reposed upon the base of imaginary changeableness in Deity, prayer, in its ignorant and superstitious forms, must of necessity be abandoned as fruitless, and only remembered as the product of an unenlightened mental condition.

Man's cruder religious ideas and ceremonies grow up naturally, as do vegetables and animals. The carboniferous age produced types of vegetation which could not now exist on earth ; the gigantic animals, tall as the highest modern houses, when standing upright on their hind legs, which inhabited ancient forests, are now the creations of a scarce remembered dream, and they could not now exist, yet they may have been necessary to pave the way for man, and for his sustenance. The law of the survival of the fittest, so manifest in nature, does not lead us to ignore the uses of forms not fitted, and therefore not destined to survive ; they doubtless appeared and disappeared in obedience to a law of necessity originating in a law of divine love and wisdom ; and just as these denizens of the planet grew up and vanished only to prepare the way for the superior forms which should succeed them, so in the religious and moral world, and in the arenas of political and social conflict, ideas, practices, institutions, grow and fade in orderly succession, only to make room and conditions for the advent of a religion, a government and a social condition, which shall conform in all things to the deepest needs of human nature.

Wise positions are always more affirmative than negative ; when we are destructive, we should only endeavor to root up weeds and burn stubble ; we should never try to cut down venerable trees, until we perceive that they being dead, are mere cumberers of the ground, occupying space which can be devoted to more useful purposes than preservation of barren wood. If ever we do strike our axe at any root, or seek to hew a tree down, it should be because such have passed their fruit-bearing stage, and no longer afford either the nourishment or shelter they afforded in the days of their youth and vigor. Many antiquated theories and institutions are practically lifeless now, though once they were as trees full of sap, bearing luxuriant fruit and foliage. They can never live again, their like can never be reproduced, unless some wonderful experience in harmony with the theory of circular motion should bring about conditions which gave them birth ; but in the uprooting of these dead trees, our object must never be to work for demolition's sake, or to invite the

world into a dreary wilderness where men will sadly miss the grateful shade and welcome fruit those now dead trees afforded them of yore. Prayer is a tree under the shade of which millions of weary travelers have rested and found refreshment when hot, weary, and dusty on the pilgrim road of life ; prayer is a tree which has borne such copious and delicious fruit, sustaining many, who, without it would have utterly failed and fallen prostrate on the road of life, that any flippant or sneering remarks concerning its supposed ridiculousness always fill us with disgust at the heartlessness and folly of those who treat contemptuously one of the greatest sources of comfort ever available to weary and suffering humanity. Prayer has a history, it has credentials which none can pronounce worthless, and the duty of all reformers and liberal thinkers is to explain philosophically why prayer is efficacious, or else remain silent on the question. Prayers are of many kinds, and those who say work is the truest prayer, are quite correct.

It is indeed true that God helps those who help themselves ; and there is indeed a law of self-help in the universe. When we attain to the stature of the perfect man, called by Paul " the fullness of Christ," we shall be in one sense self-made, self-educated, self-developed ; that is, we shall, to use another New Testament phrase, have worked out our own salvation, not necessarily with fear and trembling, but most certainly by means of earnest work and long-continued effort.

Materialists only take into consideration the material side of the law of nature ; they acknowledge the immutability of law, but do not understand the origin and nature of law. Mind is the source of law. Will is the sustenance of law ; the law of a country or state is Will in operation ; in a despotism it is the will of one, or a small minority, opposed to that of a multitude ; in a republic, it is presumably the will of a majority over-ruling that of a smaller number ; in an absolutely perfect state of society it will be the united will of all, flowing harmoniously in a peaceful and undivided stream of upward tendency. Now, all the laws of nature are revelations to us of an infinite purpose that can never be turned aside from its regular course ; no prayers or efforts of ours can possibly change the law which is beyond us all, and to which we must all submit ; that law prevailed before man appeared on earth, and will continue when all the human race shall have passed on to brighter spheres of being. We must all admit that there is a law, iron-like in its inflexibility, and yet that law, which seems to the Stoic only a relentless force, propelling everything forward to some unknown and possibly frightful goal, cannot but reveal to the careful student that its motions are all guided by infinite intelligence ; it geometrizes with perfect accuracy ; it maps out the heavens in shining constellations with absolute precision ; it brings light out of darkness, gladness out of gloom, and good out of evil ; it cannot be



changed, but it can be discovered, analyzed, understood, complied with ; and when we secure its co-operation, instead of fighting against it, we are in harmony with our environment, we go with the stream of tendency, instead of fighting against it ; the current is stronger than we, we cannot successfully battle with it, we cannot change its course, but we can so go along with it that we reach that condition of perfect oneness with the law that enabled Jesus to declare that He and His Father were one. The law to him was the matchless love and wisdom of the Eternal Parent ; the parent knows better than the child, the parent will not deviate from his course to please the child, solely on account of his superior knowledge. The Eternal Parent frames the universe to meet the highest requirements of all the beings he has called into existence, and, being possessed of infinitely greater knowledge than his creatures, never answers the foolish and ignorant requests which they in their blindness proffer, vainly imagining that what they *think* best for themselves and others is really what is best for them.

We do not seek to impress upon our readers the idea of an Almighty Sovereign, seated upon a throne of state in some inaccessible location in the universe beyond all human sympathy and emotion ; we rather picture the All-Good as the Eternal Life which dwells within as well as acts upon every creature. Practically, you deal with God when you deal with your own highest nature ; the *atma*, which according to Theosophy illumines the mind and endows humanity with life immortal, is the very breath of God, the essence of divinity within us ; it is this divine life that Jesus alludes to when He speaks of the Father who dwells within him doing the works. To arrive at a perfect union with our highest nature, to subdue the *anima bruta* to the *anima divina*, is to have attained to that supernal height of adepthood, that highest standard of spiritual unfoldment, that has caused the "*twice-born*" to accomplish spiritual wonders, even to command the elements by grappling with the underlying forces of the universe, and has led to the ever-fostered belief among all peoples, that there is really such a thing as deific incarnation. To comprehend truly the nature of prayer, and the means by which it becomes effectual, we have only to study the law of nature in its relation to material activity first, then raise our thoughts to a contemplation of this same law operative in the realm of mind, then go another step higher and endeavor to realize its working in the domain of spirit. Now it is a fixed conclusion in the realm of physics that certain causes produce certain effects ; if we can influence the cause, we influence the effect as a matter of necessity, but we cannot possibly change the relation of cause and effect. Certain results inevitably follow certain courses of action, but we are not in matters of agriculture, for instance, solely dependent upon influences over which we have no control. How do the farmer and the gardener work ? they know well enough that grain, fruits and flowers must

have light, air and moisture, they cannot grow without these essentials ; but the cultivators of the earth assist nature, they do not trust entirely to her operations outside themselves, they co-operate with her, she works through them, and they accelerate results by compliance with her demands. You cannot say that, if it is so ordained by God or nature, that you shall be clothed, housed and fed, it is unnecessary for you to make any effort, for whatever is to be will be, and you cannot prevent it ; you cannot sustain fatalism by declaring that seed-time and harvest, famine and plenty, are entirely beyond man's control, and are regulated by forces in the hands of which man is a mere puppet, for every year proves more and more clearly that man is a medium for regulating nature, that what man does or leaves undone affects nature to a very considerable extent ; nothing can alter the law, but the law is that effort shall be rewarded, and that certain actions constitute causes which produce certain and inevitable effects. Now, just as nature does not usually throw the pearls which are in the ocean bed at your feet, but gives you to understand that you can have them if you dive deep into the ocean, and work for them ; as the gold, silver, copper, iron, gems, and all the precious, beautiful and useful things lying in her bosom, are for you if you seek for them, but not otherwise ; as you can, if you will, cut down the forest trees and build yourselves cabins, and if you will work hard enough, get marble and granite from the hills and build yourselves sumptuous palaces ; as you can by industry till the ground, sow the seed, gather in the harvest, and then cook and masticate the food your labor has produced, and thus be nourished by your own efforts ; even so the experiences of daily life all go to prove that man, though unable to change the law, is able to comply with it and so act that he can alter his relation to most things around him, though he is at the mercy of a Power, greater than himself, that supplies him with sunshine, air and rain, without which all his efforts would be unavailing.

We may say that we *know*, that every force of being is intelligent, conscious, possessed of volition, and that all these forces emanate from pure Spirit. Spirit is the primal fountain whence all forces spring ; it is the one absolute self-existent Being, which projects from within itself the visible universe, and receives back into its bosom all that is objective to the senses.

The human mind must develop ; man's intelligence must improve, soul must liberate itself from the thralldom of sense, before genius, talent, or invention is possible. What control has a savage over nature : to what extent is a barbarian free ? his strength of limb and power of muscle cannot avail ; the largest and strongest bodies are not those which eventually survive to subdue the earth and carry all before them. Potentialities are all in mind ; the physical universe is a gigantic spirit-materialization, and that phase of spiritualistic phenomena now creating so much discussion is inviting you by a statement of

its claims to study the true relations of the invisible to the visible, of mind to matter. We go far enough to say that we believe the time is coming when there will not only be a weather bureau for foretelling the weather, but a bureau for controlling it; rain is largely in the hands of man; the planting of trees and the establishment of electric wires will bring rain from the clouds, while the uprooting of trees will prevent an abundant rainfall. It is man's mind, his intellect, his invisible part, that makes discoveries enabling him gradually to arrange the world to suit himself. The earth is given into the hands of the children of men, its population must remain mere creatures of circumstance until will-power and intelligence enable the human family to use what a celebrated novelist has called *vril*, and which in its highest condition or last analysis is the absolute power of creative thought. There is indeed, an immutable law, but the law is that every door in the universe can be opened by you if you will only work to make or find a key, that when properly inserted in the lock, will cause the portals to swing open; the key is a purely mental one, and can only be forged as the active spirit bends all its energies to the task.

Prayer has been duly defined by the poet Montgomery as the soul's sincere desire; it is will power, it is mental effort, it is spiritual fervor, it is the very opposite of idleness, and harmonizes fully with the most advanced ideas entertainable concerning the need and the reward of effort. Many people complain that prayer exhausts them; they are both physically and mentally weary after they have prayed earnestly; they have literally wrestled with an unseen power like Jacob of old; they have had dealings with unseen influences, and have come off victorious; so great has been their effort that they feel for the time being as though they must have expended a vast amount of their own individual power, and by means of it answered their own prayers. We do not deny that people in great measure do answer their own petitions, but no one stands alone in the universe; the spiritual forces which surround us every moment are like the sunlight and the air; prayer opens spiritual doors and windows, it pulls up blinds and ventilates the chambers of the mind; it is an act of intelligent co-operation with existing agencies, standing ready to enter and work for us and with us if we will only summon them in. You know how instinctively people pray in times of danger and necessity, and you know how very frequently prayer has given courage to the fainting heart and the sinking spirit, and has brought relief to those whose maladies were beyond alleviation by any material remedy. Laugh at prayer if you will, attribute what you may be pleased to call its fancied success to imagination; you have not yet told us what imagination and fancy are. If fancy or imagination can heal the sick, revive the despondent, cheer the lonely and do, in a word, what all the skill of learned doctors often fails entirely to accomplish, surely as the

human mind is capable of these emotions, fancy and imagination are factors in human life, and a place must be assigned them commensurate with the degree of use they are to the human family.

We hope we shall always be eclectic and liberal enough to value results more than theories, attainments more than modes of arriving at them, ends more than means. We trust we shall never become so carried away by the enchantment of a single system that we repudiate all others, at the same time we do announce ourselves out and out metaphysicians ; we do not call our system Christian science, and we by no means endorse all the views of people who assume that title ; they are too *exclusive* to satisfy our *inclusive* demands. Magnetism, galvanism, light and color cure, magnetized paper, flannel, etc., etc., roots and herbs, even drugs and patent medicines, are all doing an amount of good ; but at the core of all systems we discover a mental principle, a something that begets faith, confidence, hope,—mental states so needful to recovery. Any means you may employ will be effectual or ineffectual in proportion as they raise your thoughts to overcome an unhealthy condition of mind. Any so-called remedy is a remedy in your case, if it cheers and uplifts you.

The application of this fact to our subject is self-evident ; the prayer of faith is the only prayer which saves the sick, because the prayer of faith, or at least the prayer of hope ( which is a lesser degree of faith,) is the only prayer that is really earnest, importunate, energetic, and therefore a means of setting in motion active and powerful spiritual agencies. Prayer is utter folly, even blasphemy, when it is a request that God will do your work for you instead of your doing it yourself. Prayer meetings have been so absurd, and have been the scenes of so much hypocrisy, that we do not wonder that the very name of them has brought prayer into disrepute in many quarters. It is no uncommon thing for a man to pray on a Sunday evening for honesty ; to stand up in a meeting and ask God to make him honest, and yet know all the time that he has no intention of conducting his business during the ensuing week in any different way from the dishonest manner in which he has transacted it hitherto. He knows that the tricks of trade in which he indulges are thoroughly dishonest ; he justifies them in a lame way by saying that he must cheat a little in order to get on in life and make provision for his family ; well, if he feels that cheating is a painful necessity, that his duty to his family demands it, that he must therefore silence his troublesome conscience, let him never dare to pray for honesty until he believes that honesty is the best policy, or better far, that policy aside, he will follow conscience come what may, and look to heaven to sustain him in the path of integrity. It is empty formalism that makes prayer the hollow mockery it often is ; it is asking with the lip for what the heart does not desire, that renders prayer blasphemous as well as

ineffectual, and it was against that hypocritical sanctimony that Jesus so loudly protested when he uttered his bitterest denunciations against those of the Pharisees who consumed the substance of orphans and widows, and then for a pretense made long prayers in public that their victims might the more easily fall into their clutches. Many modern religionists wax very eloquent when dilating upon the enormity of the Pharisees of two thousand years ago ; abandoned wretches, Christ-killers, they call them, as though such enormities had never been practised since as were practiced by a small minority of the Jewish community in Palestine in the days of Jesus, while alas ! the vices they condemn in others (and exaggerate if those others happen to be Jews or anything but nominal Christians), they perpetrate themselves whenever they hold prayer meetings and make "beautiful prayers" in public, to be seen of men and so disarm suspicion, for the makers of such "beautiful prayers" are looked upon as saints in society, and can therefore engage in deceit with less likelihood of discovery than if they claimed to be nothing more than ordinary people of the world.

Public prayer has a value in bringing thought and desire to a focus, in suggesting to an assembly the particular blessings of which the mass of mankind stand in need ; everything is both suggestive and infectious in some degree and in some direction, and thus whenever we endeavour to lead the aspirations of an audience, the utmost we aim at is the opening up, by suggestion and infection, of the spiritual natures of at least some who are present, for we cannot fail to perceive that, though spiritually as well as physically, blessings lie all around us,—though the ground be covered with heavenly manna, we must pick it up. Prayer for the sick is at the present time so wonderfully efficacious in many parts of England and America, as well as on the continent of Europe, that to deny its efficacy would not only be to deny an overwhelming amount of testimony from the most competent persons, but to deny also an array of facts which have come under our own immediate notice, and which we can refer to no other cause than to answered prayer.

Many people assume that answers to prayers are evidences that their own particular theories of religion are the only true ones ; but the nature of the cures themselves, and the results obtained equally by persons of widely different beliefs, go to prove that dogma has no part in determining the efficacy of prayer. The Roman Catholic at Lourdes believes the Virgin Mary works the cures ; the Evangelical Christians in England attribute everything immediately to Jesus ; Theosophists claim the power of Will ; Mental Scientists, the power of Thought. Now, as the same results are performed by these four classes of persons, and by many others also, each party holding views distinct from all the others, and each claiming the effects produced as evidences of the superiority of their own peculiar system of doctrine, an impartial observer can

see at a glance how utterly futile it is to ascribe universal power and results due to compliance with a great spiritual law to any particular kind of theology. Prayer is an effort of the soul : the soul works and gets paid, just as the mind and hands work and reap a reward. The student burns the midnight oil, applies himself diligently to his books, while his classmates are frittering away their time in dissipation or profitless amusement ; therefore the gates of learning are open to him, while they remain closed against his idle and dissolute companions. So with the spirit's energies ; heaven opens to those who knock upon its door, the petitioners receive, the seekers find, the workers win.

A materialistic friend said to us one day when we advised him to pray for his daughter's recovery, that he should not think of wasting time and breath in any such absurd and useless task, and wondered that any person of intelligence could recommend so ridiculous a recipe ; " the laws of nature," he said, " allowed of no interference, and to ask any power that we called God to work a miracle was ridiculous." We replied to him, " You often speak of logic and of reason ; you claim to be both a rationalist and a logician yourself ; now if you are consistent, you have surely done nothing to promote your daughter's recovery, if, as you say, any interference with the ordinary course of events on the part of any power beyond ourselves would be a miracle, and miracles are impossible ; then the gist of your conclusion must be this: whatever is to be, must be and will be, and we can do nothing to alter it." He in turn replied by saying that it was his duty to use all possible means for his child's recovery, and that if he had not sent for a nurse and a doctor, and done all he could to raise her up, if she died and he felt he had neglected something which might have prolonged her life, he would never forgive himself. His kind, fatherly heart had thus far broken away from his cold, cast-iron theories concerning the inexorability of nature's laws. Then we said to him, " all we mean by prayer is the setting in motion of a force that is as much in harmony with nature's law as any means which you employ ; prayer procures an invisible nurse, doctor, and medicine. Its power is real, substantial ; it is the most real thing of all to heal or destroy. The emotions of the mind so work upon the body, that the body's condition can be entirely changed when the mental currents are altered. This truth, which is fully susceptible of scientific demonstration, and is constantly being proved, leads only to the acknowledgement of invisible as well as visible agencies, which abolish suffering or work relief."

Prayer for the conversion or salvation of others is a branch of the subject which we must not entirely overlook, while prayer for the departed is also an interesting and very pathetic question. You know our views on foreign missions well enough to know that we are thoroughly unorthodox on that score,

as we never tolerate the thought that the eternal destiny of human souls depends upon the success of missionary societies ; every soul must be its own savior ; the savior is the spirit within, which can be always called out when a sufficient appeal is made to it. All that prayers for others can do, is to arouse the dormant spirit to work out its own salvation. Example, influence, precept, moral suasion, are all influences we exert upon one another constantly, and just as we call into active exercise one or another set of emotions and faculties in those with whom we come in contact, so when we pray for others if our prayers are answered, we have been the means of stirring up within those for whom we pray, a divine element which is their own, and which when in exercise lifts them to a higher life. No one can escape the consequences of sin, but all punishments are remedial, reformatory, purgative ; there is indeed a "comfortable doctrine" of fire and brimstone for those who need purification, whether before or after death, for sulphur, fire, and brimstone are most effectual purifiers, and are symbols not hard to understand when used as correspondences to means of purification in the spiritual world. If any of you need cleansing, you cannot escape the necessary scouring-out of your moral nature either on earth or beyond the grave ; no one can save you vicariously ; no other's prayers can avail to save you from the consequences of already committed evil, but through earnest prayer, through pure desire for your welfare, beloved friends and faithful angels may so work upon the divine within you, that through their influence you may forsake evil and at length attain to a high and noble life. "Pray without ceasing," never let your good desires falter, or your earnest longings for another's good relax ; pray in unswerving confidence the prayer of faith, and through your instrumentality, health, righteousness, and every blessing will fall in refreshing showers upon all the ground across which your thoughts as ministering angels move. "God helps those who help themselves ;" honest toil is always rewarded. Bear these truisms ever in mind, and then whatever cold cynicism or ignorant scepticism may sneer or rave to the contrary, you will demonstrate the efficacy of fervent prayer in your own experience as clearly as you prove a proposition in mathematics.

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## Co-operation vs. Competition.—Bishop Potter and Edward Bellamy.

### A REVIEW OF "LOOKING BACKWARD."

The subjoined words of Bishop Potter, of New York, are taken from an article entitled "THE COMPETITIVE ELEMENT IN MODERN LIFE," in *Scribner's Magazine* for February, 1889. After speaking of the literal horrors of some Chinese competitive examinations, the Bishop goes on to say :

"Whatever the terrors or discouragements of the competitive examination among Westerns, they do not equal these. Nor indeed if they did, could we hope, by any modification of them, to eliminate that element of rivalry which, after all, is at the basis of all the competitions of life.

"And yet nothing is more undeniably true than that such rivalries are among the most fruitful sources of evil in every department of life. The world lately has witnessed the spectacle of a great people, agitated by a heated political contest, which for the hour has absorbed every other interest. We may laud the superiority of our institutions, and compare them boastfully with the monarchical governments of other countries, but I fancy that some of us, seeing the heat and acrimony that our political contests so easily engender, catching the echoes of the harsh speech and bitter innuendo and half smothered strife that have often filled the air, have seriously questioned whether that form of government which involves such strifes is, on the whole, so surely wiser and more wholesome than any other. And yet the rivalries and excitements of political life are by no means the largest or most conspicuous element in any ordinary experience. At most they are awakened but seldom, and by contests which occur at considerable intervals. But of other rivalries—the rivalries of the street and the shop, and the drawing room, when and where do we not hear the echoes? How many men and women are there who, witnessing the success of their fellows, are not constrained daily to cry, with that soldier of old, 'The triumphs of Miltiades will not let me sleep!' What is there that is really worth having which can be won except at the cost of another's disappointment? All are in the race, whether it be for place, or power, or fortune, 'but one receiveth the prize.' And when he does, at what cost he wins it! The disappointed competitors who take their punishment so bravely, does anybody believe that defeat does not wound them? When one has set his heart on a coveted possession, and has spent years in training for the arena, and then for other years has strained every nerve in the race to reach it, does any one suppose that failure costs him nothing? And if, on the other hand, the struggle has been successful and the outstretched hand has snatched the prize, can any of us imagine that even success is without its



sting? To lose what you have toiled and schemed and striven for, and to see another finally possess it—yes, that is hard, but is there not a wretchedness quite as real in the consciousness that your success has caused another's failure—that your momentary triumph is his lasting misfortune, and that what you have gained for yourself you have gained by snatching it from him? Is there no element of misery in the consciousness that, whatever you may be in possession of, there are scores of other people who honestly believe that they have a better right to it, and will find no pleasure so keen as the pleasure of pointing at your defects and of detracting from your achievements? Would it comfort you to live in a palace if you knew that every time your neighbors passed it, they dropped a sneer at your ostentation, your extravagance or your unfitness for your surroundings? The world has spoken and sung a great deal of sympathy for the unsuccessful, but I have sometimes thought that the men and women who succeed have a claim upon human sympathy quite as genuine, and quite as imperious. To feel that, bear yourself as meekly as you may, your very existence is an affront to somebody else, to know that, live as uprightly as you will, there are others who think your very prosperity a crime, and who will find in your very virtues material for calumny, to know that there is nothing that the world counts worth gaining, which you can win without awakening an envious animosity in the breasts of others who are less successful, this surely is a thorn in the rose, a cloud in the sky which is sufficient, with many a sensitive nature, to rob success of its best perfume, and to quench the sunshine out of the fairest noon-day of achievement. It is impossible not to sympathize with that successful statesman who, when retiring to private life at the very height of his fame, answered to those who reproached him for forsaking the political arena, 'I find that I am happier when I court the shade. In obscurity I can at any rate be sure that I provoke no man's envy; and, in a lowly station, there are some, at least, who are willing to admit that I am not the sum total of all perfidies and the incarnation of all the vices.'

"And yet, when we turn from these results of the rivalries and competitions of life, how universal is the training that produces them! It begins in the school-room and it ends only in the grave. From childhood all the way on, boy is matched against boy, cleverness against industry, man against man. If there is anything really worth having, competition is becoming daily the more common (and who will dare to say that it is not also the more equitable) way of attaining it. Once, when a boy wanted to go to West Point, his friends made interest with some personage of influence, and procured him an appointment. But nowadays we have a competitive examination, and that principle of competitive examination as the basis of a large proportion of civil or political appointment or promotion we are daily recognizing more and more clearly to be an indispensable principle. Nay, if we look closely, we shall see that

even in the matter of many of our amusements it is the element of competition and rivalry that lends to them their greatest charm. Who would be left as spectators of a boat-race or a cricket-match if all the people were withdrawn who had assembled, not to witness the contest itself, but the triumph of a particular crew or eleven? The ardor of the explorer in the wilds of Central Africa, or of the voyager amid the ice-floes of the Arctic Circle, is fired not merely by the ambition of widening the circle of human knowledge, but also of overtopping the limits of previous achievement.

“And when we pass from the competitions of our more public or professional life, the spectacle is increasingly suggestive. How many people are there who covet a thing because it is intrinsically good, compared with those who covet it because it is relatively better than somebody else’s? The race of competitive display which has been run nowhere else on earth, during the past quarter of a century, with such heat and at such a cost as we have illustrated right here—that race whose wrecks are strewn along the shores of the past in a mass of commercial ruin, the jetsam and flotsam of many a fair vessel that will never float again, was there ever rivalry more intense or competition more vehement and unrelenting? What department of life, what form of undertaking is there so sacred as to be free from it? Nay, listen to the speech of children, and you shall find it but an echo of the strifes and rivalries which are inflaming the breasts of their elders.

“And yet, as I began by saying, nothing is clearer than that rivalry and competition are not merely actual but inevitable elements of human life. And therefore is it our wisdom not to pretend that they do not exist, and even less to pretend that there is something so naughty in them that they ought not to exist, and least of all, to pretend that though they are naughty, they are nevertheless necessary, and we must compete and strive and struggle to excel and outwit our neighbor just as hard as we can, only taking care, if possible, not to let anybody see what we are doing, or suspect in us the competitive spirit. In a word, this is just one of those questions which wants to be ventilated with a strong breeze of candid and courageous common sense, and there could be no fitter moment for opening the windows and letting such a breeze blow through than just now.

“Let us understand, then, that competition—a strife to excel, nay if you choose, downright rivalry—has a just and rightful place in the plan of any human life. A prize fight is probably the most disgusting spectacle on earth, but it has in it just one moment which very nearly approaches the sublime; and that is when the combatants shake hands with each other and exchange that salutation as old as the classic arena, ‘may the best man win.’ It is the equitable thing that the best man should win. When we turn to the most august and eventful conflict which human history records, we find it described

as the winning of a prize, the reaching of a goal, the conquest of an adversary. Of course it is possible to suppose such a thing as a life without rivalries and competitions, and to look forward to a time, when, amid other conditions, they will be at once needless and incongruous, but in such a life as ours is now—in a life, that is to say, which so plainly has discipline and education for its end—to take all rivalry and competition out of it would be to rob it of one of the mightiest and most wholesome agencies for the ennobling of human character.

“ But to be that, the rivalries and competitions of our daily life must be rivalries exercised under manly and generous sanctions. Let no one of us be afraid to say to his fellows : ‘ I am your rival in this race and I mean to beat you, if I can.’ But having said this, let us see to it that no eagerness for victory persuades us for one moment to forget that greater than any other triumph is the triumph of inflexible principle. It is just here that we touch what may be called the heroic side of human rivalries. There are some of us who, in these tamer days,

‘ Would fain the old heroic ages back,’

and yet our age affords as fine a field for heroism—of a kind far higher, too, than the heroism of the camp and the fray—as human heart can possibly desire. To see to it that in the hottest competition and amid the fiercest rivalry the worst defeat is not experienced by our own integrity, this is sometimes the hardest strain of all. And whether it be success or failure that awaits us, what a fine school for virtues that grow weak and flaccid in retirement is to be found amid the fierce heats of our daily competitions. Granted that no rivalry is possible without a certain admixture of evil, what is there in life from which we can as yet wholly exclude that inevitable ingredient? Granted that any competition is almost sure to engender strife and malice and envy, and sometimes, alas, a miserable spirit of exultation over another’s defeat which is meaner and baser than all the rest—granted that failure, when, as often, we strive and are beaten, leaves a sting that rankles long and deeply—still here, as always in life, the evil in our own experience becomes an element in our training—a potential factor in that best resultant which is an invigorated and ennobled character. In the eagerness of business competition, in the race for a prize, whether it be social, or commercial, or political, what a rare field for that magnanimity which will not take an undue advantage of another, and which counts any and every success subordinate to unspotted uprightness in the winning of it ! To be intensely in earnest in the race—to summon all our powers for the contest, and yet never to bend them to a mean use, this certainly is a victory on the side of righteousness more priceless than any prize. And then when defeat comes—when the student has burnt the midnight oil and paled his cheek in ineffectual studies—when the artist has mixed his colors almost literally with

his own brains and put upon his canvas the loftiest conceptions and most conscientious and patient endeavour of days and months—to see our best accomplishments extinguished by another's better and more dazzling performances, and still amid it all to preserve a temper unsoured by defeat and a judgment uncorrupted by our own failure, this is a victory nobler than all besides.

“ And still more I think, when there comes that harder strain upon the nobility of our nature which comes with our successes. How few men and women there are who can bear meekly and generously the intoxication of their prosperity ! Very often, the most deteriorating result of human competition is success—to win an advantage over another, and then meanly to exult in it—to take, even for an instant, delight in the thought of another's baffled aspirations and to gloat over the spectacle of his failures, this is often a more degrading consequence of our human rivalries than all others put together. And this it is that makes victory so much more dangerous to most of us than defeat. Milman has told us how Pope John the XXIst, bursting into exultant laughter as he entered for the first time that noble chamber which he had built for himself at Viterbo, is crushed by its avenging roof, which that instant comes down on his head. And thus it is true, in a deeper sense, that many a triumph crushes and extinguishes all that is noblest in him who has won it. Doubtless, failure and defeat are bitter, but hardest of all to bear are not our losses but our victories.

“ And so may it not be that the competitions of life are for its best and largest developement ? To be beaten, but not broken ; to be victorious, but not vain-glorious ; to strive and contend for the prize and to win it honestly or—lose it cheerfully ; to use every power in the race and yet never to wrest an undue advantage or win an unlawful mastery ;—verily, in all this there is training and testing of character which searches it to the very roots, and this is a result which is worth all that it can cost us.”

While we agree entirely with the closing words of the Bishop, we are by no means convinced that his view of competition throughout is the correct one, and to present quite the other side of the question while Bishop Potter's view is fresh in the minds of all our readers, we shall at once introduce a review of that most remarkable advocacy of co-operation.

### “ LOOKING BACKWARD.”

Probably most of us have read this singularly clear, bright, and comprehensive production of the fertile mind and generous soul of Edward Bellamy, still, there may yet be some to whom the work is a stranger, and for the benefit of such, as well as with a view to presenting a review of the book for all who may desire to know our views of its teachings, we will briefly sketch the

main incidents of the story, and then proceed to consider the singularly felicitous views expressed in its pages. Here, we may safely say, is an epoch-making volume, written by an unassuming man, at once a scholar, a thinker, and a philanthropist; one, moreover, who adds to the charms of great literary ability and evident deep sincerity, a delightful modesty which prevents him from falling into the very prevalent error of intruding one's personality unpleasantly and unwisely before one's readers.

Mr. Bellamy is indeed a John the Baptist of the New Dispensation; he speaks as an echo of that all-present voice, which is pleading in the great heart of our common humanity against tyranny and oppression in their every form, and urging the adoption of measures whereby all people can feel their interests to be truly one. Unity is the basic principle of reality; "United we stand, divided we fall," is an ever true motto, and until it is practiced as well as preached, neither America nor any other portion of the earth can be "a home of the free," except in name, even though in a military sense it be ever so much a "land of the brave."

In the new era, the soldier's occupation happily will be gone; military training schools will have become obsolete; gun-powder will, if used at all, then be employed exclusively for subduing hard rock and other substances over which man, with ever increasing intelligence, will exert fuller and fuller dominion; while those hideous monsters, monopoly, and competition, which now menace human safety and happiness at every turn, will have sunk into the bottomless pit of oblivion, from the depths of which there can be no resurrection. Such has ever been the prophet's and the poet's dream; and no matter how pessimistic, so far as the present is concerned, people may be, we can hardly find any one, certainly no considerable body of persons melancholy enough to hold no bright view of a future state here or hereafter, in which such glowing predictions shall be actually fulfilled.

"Looking Backward" is, and is not, a religious romance; it treats incidentally of religion, but mainly it deals with the great industrial problem which seemingly is becoming more and more difficult of solution day by day. Evolution is the watchword of science and of progress, therefore we hardly expect to hear any scientist denounce as too utopian, the scheme of industrial co-operation advanced by Mr. Bellamy, but many evolutionists (those of the school of Herbert Spencer, for instance), are apt to take a very leisurely view of human advancement, for while they do not question the forward tendency of all events, they would be apt to radically differ from our author with regard to the length of time required to consummate the marvelous changes said by him to be now on the very verge of complete fulfillment.

Many of you are no doubt aware that it was Mr. Bellamy's first intention to place Julian West's strange adventure in the year 3000, but after mature

thought and deliberation, he decided that that date would be entirely too remote if the tale were to exert any great influence for good on the present generation, as, however much people may revel in the contemplation of bliss to come, it needs to be shown, or at least suggested, that something is attainable in the near future to stir up much enthusiasm in the modern mind.

To proceed immediately to the narrative—Julian West (the hero), is a cultured young Bostonian of the year 1887, who on the 30th of May (Decoration day) of that year, goes with a party of friends to visit cemeteries and decorate soldiers' graves according to revered custom. Among the party is a young lady belonging to an excellent family who is his affianced bride. The young couple were to have been married as soon as the bridegroom could get a house ready to receive his bride. This work was greatly delayed by strikes among workmen, which circumstance opens the way for an easy slide into the defects and wrongs of the present industrial system, and for presenting a glowing picture of life under other and far happier conditions, where equity instead of injustice will prevail. Julian West was a sufferer from sleeplessness, and to induce sleep when particularly restless, he was accustomed to employ the services of a professional mesmerist, under whose manipulative treatment he soon fell into refreshing slumber, from which a faithful attendant knew just how to awaken him at a desired hour.

On the particular evening when the story opens, the mesmerist gave Mr. West the usual treatment, which soon succeeded in producing the state of somnia desired, but two events occurred which kept the young man an unconscious prisoner in his sleeping apartment for one hundred and thirteen years (it must be here stated that Mr. West's chamber was a subterranean apartment built in the foundations of the house, of the stoutest character, so constructed as to shut out all noise of the city, and afford a burglar proof receptacle for valuable documents, perfectly ventilated and comfortable, and ingenious in every way conceivable). The mesmerist left that night for a distant city, and as was afterward discovered, a fire burnt the house and probably the man who was sleeping in it, but did not leave any clue to the whereabouts of the subterranean room, of whose existence people in general knew nothing, and which it (the fire) completely covered with ashes and other *débris*.

More than one hundred and thirteen years later, in September 2,000, Julian West awakes to find himself in a pleasant room, certainly not his own, attended by gracious friends, but persons with whose appearance he is quite unacquainted. Thinking he must have singularly overslept himself, sleeping probably entirely through one, or even two, possibly three whole days, he eagerly inquires where he is and how he came there; to these questions he receives answers he cannot possibly accept, for he is informed (as soon as Dr. Leete, his new host, considers him sufficiently refreshed with food of which

he has partaken), that it is now September, 2,000. He cannot possibly arrive at any conclusion except that some acquaintances are playing a practical joke on him ; but as the Doctor appears a staid, sensible man, not at all likely to practice boyish folly, he grows angry, thinking he may be the victim of some plot, and insists on an immediate explanation of the affair ; whereupon Dr. Leete conducts him to the roof of the house, where, from a spacious balcony he beholds a scene of splendor, such as could be beheld nowhere when he went to sleep.

• Boston, it certainly was which stretched out before him, the old familiar Charles River still wended its sinuous way in the same direction as of yore ; various points of interest familiar to his childhood days, were still to be seen as natural landmarks in all directions, but the city itself was completely metamorphosed ; where formerly streets had been narrow and tortuous, they were now wide and regular ; where wretched hovels had contrasted hideously with sumptuous palaces, such frightful anachronisms were no longer visible ; where stores and places of trade of every kind had formerly been thick as mushrooms after a rain, no vestige of the old style of doing business could be discerned, and where once the air was thick and foul with smoke from countless chimneys, it was clear and pure, with not a sign of smoke rising anywhere.

Such a startling and resplendent picture of a thoroughly regenerated city, almost made the new spectator's reason reel ; had he been conscious of long absence from home, and heard or read of great changes meanwhile, he would have been indeed extremely surprised at alterations so radical and immense, but to be conscious of nothing but going to sleep at night, and waking up apparently the next day, and then beholding such matchless transformation, was more than unassisted human intellect knew how to grasp without tottering. But as is always the case, when wonders are suddenly brought face to face with us, we do not realize them as intensely as we do later on ; it is therefore quite in harmony with science and general experience to record the fact that this uniquely situated man did not grasp the wonder of his situation in any degree fully until the following morning, when he awoke for the first time alone, to find himself a dweller in a new age, among people, not the oldest among whom was born when last he mingled among mankind.

The old order of things, Mr. Bellamy has aptly likened to a coach struggling up a steep and toilsome ascent, drawn with great difficulty by a number of unfortunate persons who have no respite from the constant strain and danger of their arduous toil ; while seated on top of the vehicle are a number of passengers who add to the weight and burden of the crowd who are pulling it along, but while they do nothing but add to the labors of others, think themselves entitled to the very highest esteem, as well as total exemption from every form of labor. If an accident happens to one who is pulling, some one

on top contributes a trifle to ease his suffering, but no one thinks of stepping down and assisting to lighten the load or relieve the sufferer. As the law of compensation, however, can never be argued or driven out of the universe, or made to take its departure from human affairs, those who revel in luxurious idleness while others' backs are almost broken with the loads they carry, are by no means, as a body, happy or secure. At any moment they may fall from their elevated seats, and if they do there is nothing that can save them from the disagreeable necessity of helping to drag the coach.

This picture presents vividly and truthfully the condition of society as it is to-day (1890), for do we not read often of opulent families being suddenly plunged into abysses of poverty, and occasionally of the very poorest being lifted to the highest rank. Uncertainty is felt on all sides, and for this reason alone, many who are comparatively wealthy, as well as multitudes who suffer from distressing poverty, are eagerly desirous to lend a hand to the reconstruction of society.

Henry George, and all advocates of the single tax system, realize that the present system of land tenure is unjust in the extreme, that it encourages avarice and a host of kindred ills, and positively discourages attempts which would otherwise be made to improve the present condition of the earth and humanity ; such reformers are not as a rule full-fledged Nationalists, though they advocate nationalization of land, but their reason for not advocating the whole of the system described in " Looking Backward," is that reforms, if lasting, are always accomplished gradually and (say they), we should bend our energies to a given point and seek to redress some special grievance before passing on to consider measures adapted to coming generations.

The particular beauty of Bellamy's picture is, that it is a complete portrait of a coming age, not a far distant period, but within the next one hundred years at furthest ; for when Julian West sees Boston, thus beautiful and complete in the year 2000, what he beholds is not very recent, it is an established order, fully as established as any system which traces its origin even to antiquity. The striking difference between shopping in 2000, and shopping in 1887, consisted in the fact that when Mr. West accompanied Miss Leete to the co-operative stores of the new era, he found her method of transacting business totally different from anything to which he had been accustomed ; he had seen ladies rush from one establishment to another driving bargains, and trying to get articles at the lowest possible cost ; he had known of one shopkeeper competing with another ; he had seen and read sensational advertisements in newspapers flatly contradicting each other, and was well acquainted with clerks whose principal occupation was trying to force goods upon reluctant buyers, making them believe they positively needed things they didn't want, and assuring them that they were paying very little for articles actually dear.



In 2000 no such stores, advertisements, signs or clerks exist ; purchasers enter handsome public buildings, with fountains, pictures, etc., to increase their beauty ; and in these resorts they find printed lists of all the articles purchasable in the country, all of which are accurately and fully described in catalogues issued by the government. Miss Leete selects from one of these the articles she wants ; calls for samples, and without further to do, presents her credit card to the clerk who takes her order and punches out the amount of her indebtedness. In a very short time the order is filled from a great central reservoir of goods, and she knows if she traded all over the country she could get nothing better or cheaper than what she has procured at the office nearest her own door.

Money is abolished, but the old terms, dollars and cents, are still employed for convenience sake ; and while under the new system every citizen, male and female, receives an equal allowance,—over and above all that is needed to provide for everybody handsomely, there is a large surplus fund, out of which public buildings are erected and improvements constantly made. This charming picture calls to mind the “miracle” of the loaves and fishes, for when Jesus handled what appeared to others a scant supply, there was not only enough to supply the actual necessity of the throng, but after they were all filled twelve baskets full of fragments remained ; a beautiful and most instructive metaphor of how far things will go when rightly handled, which seem oppressively insufficient when ignorantly mismanaged. We hear a great deal about the folly of seeking to divide the wealth of the world into as many parts as there are people, and then giving each one an equal share ; and constantly are we reminded that were this division of wealth made one day, everything would be as unequal as ever the next ; and, moreover, we are told, there could be only a scanty pittance for each individual, a sum so small that no one could encourage the arts or live in anything like comfort. This foolish statement grows out of several vital misconceptions concerning capital and labor. Capital is creator and so is labor, but creative capital is natural, not artificial capital. Land, water, air, light, mineral deposits in the bowels of the earth, must all be regarded as natural capital, which term includes also, human intelligence and the physical power of the workman. Such capital is universal, and affords opportunity for labor ; but artificial capital, which includes everything to which the alleged owner is not rightly and naturally entitled, is a curse and hindrance which can never become a blessing.

If one thousand or one million able-bodied, intelligent men and women were to found a colony somewhere where virgin soil has to be broken up, and not one of them possessed a particle of money, these people could create wealth, not only sufficient to support themselves in comfort, but enough to export so as to directly and materially add to the aggregate wealth of mankind.

Where would this wealth proceed from but from man's co-operation with nature, which means a power within man, acting in concert with what is without man ; in this way is wealth subject to immeasurable increase, but there cannot possibly be any increase unless there be labor, and there can be no labor where there is no field for it. Exchanging commodities and coin can never add to the aggregate of wealth, for it is only moving it from one place to another ; speculation can only add to wealth as it developes new industries, and no industries can be carried on where there is no land at the disposal of the industrious. A little reasoning will show therefore, that man on earth is so circumstanced, that he is alike dependent upon capital within and without, viz., upon the resources of his own nature and those of the earth on which he dwells ; but these are insufficient to supply his necessities, unless he adds his own industry in developing both these sets of resources, the inner and the outer.

Many theological critics of " Looking Backward," have objected to what they term " Bellamy's dream of an improbable future," on the ground that complete industrial co-operation would rob men of that stimulus to exertion which competition supplies. Others have contended that the whole scheme is repugnant to the spirit of the gospel which teaches that man must be righteous from an inward impulse, not by reason of a perfected external machinery for making men good in spite of themselves. Now there are plainly two answers to these objections:

*First*, Man can never evolve a perfect or approximately perfect state, until he is sufficiently perfect within himself to conceive and carry out the plan ; for the coming industrial order is not to be brought about by revolution but by evolution, not by compulsion from without, but by growth from within. When this is duly weighed all objection ceases, for surely no one will deny to man collectively as well as individually, the power to evolve more perfect order in externals than prevailed in the days of general barbarism, we know not how many thousands of years ago.

*Second*, It would be the height of absurdity to claim that surroundings should be as bad as possible, so as to give men an opportunity to resist more temptations and thereby win loftier moral attainment through more difficult conquest over error ; for were that theory acted upon by Christians, we should scarcely find the many noble women who constitute the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and other useful organizations struggling might and main against aggressive iniquity. If it is good for man to have every possible stumbling block placed in the way of his moral advancement, then we should license as many drinking and gambling saloons as possible, that the utmost opportunity be given to the masses to fight with evil and overcome it. Individual character or inward worth is no doubt in exact ratio with what one has contended against ;

we mean by this that every soul on entering the invisible state, or at any time, anywhere, waking up to a realizing sense of its actual condition, must recognize advancement or the reverse, exactly proportionate to individual effort. Many therefore whom we are accustomed to consider as very depraved, are doubtless much higher in the moral scale than we have the least idea of, but in dealing with the general condition of society at large, we have to consider the influence of environment upon an exhibition of character, not simply upon the formation of character which belongs to another department of ethical science.

We all grant that people *do* better under some circumstances than under others; this is not saying, however, that they *are* better; all we know is, they act and appear better; they are far more useful and far less harmful than they otherwise would be. Here comes in a need for plain, practical application and interpretation of the oft repeated saying, "You must take people as they are;" or, "You must take the world as it is and make the best of it." Nationalists are prepared to do exactly this, take the world as it is, with just its present capabilities, and take people just as they are by nature, and make the best of everything and everybody. The objection to the old industrial system we are now outgrowing, is that it takes people and things as they are, and makes the worst of them. We cannot change human nature or alter an irreversible law, but though it be indeed impossible to gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles, it is not impossible or even very difficult under some circumstances, to plant grape vines and fig trees, and gather grapes and figs from the trees and vines which naturally yield such produce.

Now, there is a way of calling forth the thorn and thistle, and there is also a way to bring out the grape and fig in human nature; we have to choose which we will evoke. Long ago, in England, Bishop Butler declared all natural emotions to be good, and argued zealously to prove that the worst traits of human disposition are at root excellent and necessary. We agree with Butler in this most certainly, though we do not by any means accept all his after conclusions. The worst vice in man we are told is selfishness; so long as selfishness rules, there can be no millennium. Now what is selfishness but inverted self-preservation, which is a divine, natural instinct? People who are troubled about definitions, should read Swedenborg on this question, and see how clearly he shows that self love is one of the three loves natural to man, all of which are in the angelic as well as in the diabolical man, though in reverse order of ascendancy. Self-preservation and self-culture are not selfishness, for if we are all members of one great family in which the interest of any one member is identical with that of every other member, how can one rejoice without bringing joy to the whole? A very little reasoning on this question must convince every intelligent and fair minded reasoner that men

are not naturally selfish, but only self-preservative ; and indeed, animals are no more than this.

Without entering into details for which we have no space, we will ask your consideration of why so many business men who are next door to angels at home, appear positively fiendish in trade ; is it not because they deem it necessary for the welfare of their families as well as themselves, that they should grasp and strive, or those dear to them will not have the necessities of existence ? Under a correct view of life and a reasonably equitable industrial system, no such dire contingencies could possibly arise, as now meet the tradesman at every turn ; the welfare of himself and family would be secured, provided only that each one did the necessary amount of work to insure maintenance, and this work, instead of being irksome and laborious, would be delightful, as a proper system of industrial education must precede the classification of recruits in the industrial army.

If every child could attend school forty weeks out of each year until the age of seventeen, and be so dealt with and instructed during the school term as to leave school thoroughly equipped to enter a trade or profession adapted to his or her natural qualification, there would not be the slightest difficulty in everybody having plenty of work to do, and being well remunerated for doing it. Poverty is quite unnecessary, and while it is charitable to relieve suffering when it presents itself, it is far more so to work to prevent it, and this can scarcely be done either by private or associated charities, though the latter in many places are devising means to raise the moral and industrial tone of all inmates of public institutions, and what is still better, to provide good homes for homeless children ; and it is to the rising generation we must indeed look for the carrying out of our " utopian " schemes of social regeneration. Under present conditions the children of wealthy parents are at very unfair advantage over the children of the poor. Of what use is " free education," if those wishing to attend High Schools are compelled to work for a living before they are old enough to enter them. If schools furnish education including books, do they furnish food, raiment, shelter and other indispensable commodities ? If not, how are bright, talented boys and girls to fit themselves for the positions nature intended them to fill ?

As things are at present, a widow has often to provide for herself and a large family ; to do so, she has to almost starve herself while her children are little ; as soon as one of them can work, she is compelled to take him from school and send him to a store or factory where his scanty earnings, earned at the expense of necessary schooling, are imperatively needed to keep a roof over his head and that of his smaller brothers and sisters.

We are disgusted with the idiocy and inhumanity voiced by those who persistently take the wrong side out of sheer willfulness, and assert that one

man has no right to pay for the maintenance of another's offspring. Are we not all members of one family, do we not frequently have to pay a great deal more to support criminals in idleness, than we are ever asked to contribute for educational purposes, by those who demand the most? Every child is a prospective citizen, and as such belongs to society, and it is a crying shame (not to be endured a moment longer in silence) that in a country where equality is lauded, prated of on every available occasion, the grossest inequality is fostered unrebuked, and even justified by blind leaders of the blind, who, if they have their way much longer, will lead the nation into the pit of anarchy of the most revolutionary kind. When Edward Bellamy presents a finished picture of the social state in the year 2000, and puts a retrospective sermon into the lips of a Boston preacher of that year, he causes the preacher to compare human nature under the most unfavorable conditions to a rose bush planted in a swamp; a blighted, withering bush, whose leaves and blossoms fail to reach maturity, an unsightly object covered with blight and mildew, but a shrub which only needs transplanting to make it appear what it by nature is, a fair and lovely tree. As Spiritual Scientists, we cannot be too thankful to Mr. Bellamy for having taken the ground he has throughout his charming work. Nationalism stands on the rock of recognized human divinity, and on that pure foundation it is secure forever.

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#### NEW BOOKS AND CURRENT LITERATURE.

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*Food, Home and Garden*, 50 cents per year, or 5 cents per copy; published for the Vegetarian Society of America by C. M. Loomis, Grand Rapids, Mich., is very excellent in all respects; we cordially welcome it as an indicator of refined feeling and an organ of refining ideas.

*Psychic Studies*, by Albert Morton, 210 Stockton Street, San Francisco, always interesting. Mr. Morton is a veteran Spiritualist, and in all cases seeks to inculcate the highest moral truth in all he essays to expound. His views on mediumship are sound and valuable.

*U. R. Leaflet*, is the title of a valuable and instructive eight page monthly, published by Universal Register Centres for distribution among all classes of readers, for the encouragement of the universal practice of love and justice. Readers are requested to send to "U. R. Centre", San Francisco, Cal., the names and addresses of institutions and persons to whom copies may be sent. All who will and can, are invited to co-operate in this work, either by subscribing or by giving some time or other help toward the effective distribution of the Leaflet. The subscription price per copy is 10 cents a year, or 1 cent, single copy.

*Seeking the Kingdom*, by C. B. Patterson, Hartford, Conn., is a handsomely bound book of 132 pages. (*Price \$1.*) It is a clear, reliable statement of Spiritual Science, well worthy the perusal of all truthseekers. We have known the author several years, and have often spent many pleasant hours in his company. We heartily commend his new literary effort, and trust it may have a wide circulation.

*International Magazine of Truth*, edited by A. A. Chevallier, 13 West 42d Street, New York; \$2 per year, 20 cents single number. Is a very handsome journal abounding in well written articles; we strongly commend it to all in search of light.

*Harmony*, a monthly magazine of Truth published by M. E. Cramer, 324 Seventeenth Street, San Francisco; \$1 per year, 15 cents single number. Is always full of pure thought, expressive of the conviction of the true unity of life universal.

*Golden Gate*, published at Flood Building, San Francisco; a weekly newspaper devoted to evidences of the future life and the general elevation of humanity, edited by J. J. Owen. This paper is always excellent; it has a large and ever increasing circulation among the thinkers of the world. \$2.50 per year—with *PROBLEM OF LIFE*, \$3. Single copies, 5 cents.

*Banner of Light*, reaches us weekly from Colby & Rich, 9 Bosworth Street, Boston. It is always a pleasure to read its well filled columns. It advocates Spiritualism out-spokenly, and discusses in a frank and cultured spirit all the great questions of the day. \$3 per year—with *PROBLEM OF LIFE*, \$3.50.

*Better Way*, Cincinnati, O.; another good Spiritualistic weekly always worth reading. \$2.50 per annum.

*The Weekly Discourse*, published by William Richmond, Rogers Park, Ill.; contains in each 5 cent number an excellent discourse delivered through the mediumship of Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond, a lady whose reputation as a speaker is world-wide and deservedly so.

W. J. COLVILLE is open to lecture engagements on very moderate terms. He will speak on any of the great questions of the day, whether social or religious, and will also teach classes in the theory and practice of Spiritual Science, elucidating metaphysical healing so as any intelligent child can understand it. The following 12 lessons constitute the elementary course.

- Lesson 1. Basic statement of the Science of Being.
- " 2. The creative power of thought.
- " 3. Mortal man and the human mind.
- " 4. The evidences of Sense, of Reason, and of Spirit.
- " 5. Identity, individuality, personality; how they differ.
- " 6. Belief versus understanding.
- " 7. Heaven and Hell, and intermediary conditions.
- " 8. Regeneration and atonement.
- " 9. Affirmation and denial, or the science applied in healing.
- " 10. A spiritual declaration of independence.
- " 11. Manifesting the signs.
- " 12. Final directions and advice to students.

## NOTICES.

W. J. COLVILLE has hired a handsome and commodious house, No. 931 Post Street, San Francisco, which he is furnishing as a Home and Headquarters for work. Visitors to the city wishing to avail themselves of the privilege of attending the classes or receiving treatment, can be accommodated with very pleasant rooms, and excellent board in the immediate neighborhood, should the house itself be fully occupied. A class for thoroughly practical instruction in Mental Scientific Healing is formed every month. W. J. Colville will teach the February Class which commences Wednesday, February 5th, at 10 a. m. Eight lessons will complete the course, which will begin on Wednesdays and

Fridays at 10 a. m. An evening class will also be formed, if necessary to accommodate those unable to attend in the daytime. Terms, reasonable.

Arrangements have been satisfactorily made with Mrs. J. A. Root, also.

THE editor of the *PROBLEM OF LIFE* desires to inform all who have written to Mrs. Spottiswoode, care this magazine, that she is now residing in a distant city from San Francisco, and all letters have to be forwarded, which takes time. A recent communication from that lady addressed to us contains the following, "I am preparing a complete course of instruction in Spiritual Electrical Science, which I shall send written in type as soon as completed to all who comply with my first request, which is that no one shall use the MSS. for any purposes save their own instruction. I hear much of Theosophy, and know more about it than most of my friends imagine. I have an article ready for the *PROBLEM OF LIFE* upon the true life history of Jesus the "*A dept*;" it might open the eyes of some persons who persist in styling ignorance, divine wisdom. My instructions are intended for honest Christian people; mere curiosity seekers and lovers of queer novelties will find nothing of any merit in any of them."

THE young ladies of the "*HELPING HAND*" SOCIETY, auxiliary to the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association, propose giving, at Odd Fellows Hall, during the second week of April, a series of entertainments under the name, "*Festival of Mother Nature's Daughters*." It will be very unique and original in character. A story is to be written by Mrs. Sarah B. Cooper, descriptive of the entire scene of the Festival, including the successive pictures presented by its many booths, participants, etc. This story will be the *Programme* of the entertainment.

MISS SUSIE CLARK is still at Henry House, 9th Street, Oakland; she is an excellent healer and very lucid teacher. In introducing her to our readers who may be feeling "under the weather," we know we are recommending to their regard a noble woman and true scientist.

THIS magazine commends itself to the advertising public as an excellent medium for making their wants known, as it not only circulates in all parts of America and beyond the oceans, but is THOROUGHLY read by at least 20,000 persons each month.

WE send out 2,000 copies regularly, and hope soon to increase our list to at least 5000, which allowing for all expenses actual and incidental, will place it in a sound financial position. To our positive knowledge one copy is often read by as many as ten families in a country district, while in public news rooms and libraries it is impossible to estimate the number who peruse it. As stated in our first number, we receive only such advertisements as we can conscientiously insert; all our present advertisers are thoroughly reliable people whose interests we esteem it a privilege to serve. Our rates for a standing advertisement are \$2 per annum for one square, on the cover, or \$3 for a reading notice inside. A single insertion costs 50 cents in any position. All orders under this heading must be personally addressed to the editor, 931 Post Street, San Francisco.

Our agents and the trade are allowed 25 per cent discount on subscription for a year. Single copies furnished to the trade at 7 cents each, or \$6 per 100; also to Clubs and Societies at the same rate. Sample copies free with paid orders only.

Our patrons will greatly assist us in our endeavors if they will favor us with orders for books which we can obtain at trade discount; the profit arising from such enables us to send the *PROBLEM OF LIFE* free to those unable to purchase it, and also to more readily meet our current expenses.

## THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD.

### CHAPTER II.

#### BEFORE THE SERMON.

*1, A centurion's servant healed. 2, Healing at Simon's house. 3, Jesus teaches and heals in the Synagogue. 4, He controls a storm. 5, Many devils cast out of Legion. The people fear the power of Jesus and request him to depart. 6, Concerning those who might follow Christ. 7, Jairus's daughter is raised. 8, As to breaking the Sabbath. 9, Jesus heals a blind man at Bethsaida.*

#### Sec. 1. *A centurion's servant healed.*

1. Jesus entered into Capernaum. And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and at the point of death. And when he heard of Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews unto him to ask him to come and heal his servant. And Jesus saith unto them, I will come and heal him.

2. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion himself came to him saying, Lord, trouble not thyself ; for I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof. Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee. But say the word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers ; and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth ; and unto another, Come, and he cometh ; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

3. When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled ; and turning said to the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith,

#### 11. THE CENTURION'S FAITH.

The term faith bears a far deeper significance than is generally supposed. Generally it is thought to signify a belief. For example, a man is said to put faith in some business-man or physician, because he believes him to be able. Indeed, he may say he knows him to be an able business man or physician, because he has proven himself such in a number of instances. Thus, he places his faith in a physician, because of his belief ; which belief, is founded not upon his own knowledge of the physician's ability, but upon the physician's knowledge of his own ability. A business man shows his knowledge of his business by successful management, and a stranger, therefore, places faith in him. A physician manifests his knowledge successfully, and the masses place their faith in him ; not because of their knowledge of physic, but because of his knowledge. Such trust or confidence, is what is generally called faith. The centurion's faith, however, was based much deeper than a mere blind belief in another's power of knowledge. When one physician places his confidence in another physician, he exercises his own knowledge in his choice ; his faith in the other physician is because of what he himself knows, and not simply because of what another knows. To put implicit trust in God, is a very different thing from having belief in him. A man believes God to be all power, and all



no, not in Israel. And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way ; as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in that hour.

*Sec. 2. Healing at Simon's house.*

4. And when Jesus came to Simon's house, he saw his wife's mother lying sick of a fever. And he touched her hand, and the fever left her ; and she arose and ministered unto him.

5. And when the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils. And he cast out the devils, and healed all that were sick.

knowledge, and though not knowing Him, trusts Him; but the pure in heart know God, and put faith in Him because they know Him.

Now, the centurion was a man set in authority over men. And he occupied his position because of his ability to exercise his authority. His lightest command was obeyed instantly. So the centurion saw in Jesus, a commander, a man who exercised authority over all things—a man to whom the Father had delivered all things. The great faith shown by the centurion was in this : that just as he was instantly obeyed because he had authority, so Jesus was instantly obeyed because He had authority ; and so he knew—not simply believed—that Jesus need only give the command, and his servant would instantly be healed.

**12. THE WORD.** Any word is but an effect, a sound. There is no power in any word. The speaker is the power. It is a mistake to speak of the power of the word. A word may not be a perfect expression of The Power. The Word is a perfect expression of The Power, it is the power manifest. The power of Christ accompanied his works, because he spoke with understanding. Power accompanies every word spoken with understanding. It is the understanding who is the speaker, who is the power ; and not the speaker's words. The centurion understood this ; his faith was his understanding.

**13. DEVILS.** The word *diabolos* (i. e. devil), being derived from two Greek words, which, together mean *to cast between*, signifies exactly what should be understood by the word devil. The idea conveyed by *diabolos* or devil, is of a wedge that would block a wheel, or of a barrier thrown across one's path so as to hinder progress. The progress of a car upon the road may be stopped by a block cast beneath the wheels ; a car upon the railroad may be thrown off and destroyed by a wedge thrown in the way.

The progress that a man makes on earth is what he learns ; idleness and inattention are obstacles that he may cast in his way. It is the duty of every man to walk by the light that he has, then will he receive more light ; but if he turn aside into the darkness he casts a wedge beneath the wheels of his car, that forms an obstacle to be overcome. Everyone should live up to the knowledge they perceive, and so living knowledge will be continuously unfolded ; but, if they allow themselves to be allured into sensuous

*Sec. 3. Jesus teaches and heals in the Synagogue.*

6. And on the Sabbath Jesus entered into the synagogue and taught. And they were astonished at his teaching; for he taught them as being the authority and not as the scribes.

7. And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth! Art thou come to destroy us? I know who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of the

by-paths, thoughts of ignorance will accumulate to form a barrier between the traveler and his destination.

Any thought is a form, and exists just so long as a man gives it place in his mind. If it be a good thought, then the consciousness of good animates it. If it be an evil thought, then the consciousness of evil animates it. If any man has given place to evil thoughts, he has created for himself devils for companions; and only the pure in thought can cast them out. If any man has given place to good thoughts, he has created for himself angels for companions, and these remain with the pure only. And as devils only associate with devils, they will lead a man to their like, unless he repent and return to his true way. But angels associate with angels, and the path of the righteous is a path of peace.

By thought, a man recognizes whatever he does recognize. By thinking, a man learns. So that one's progress is what he evolves by thought. A devil is a bad habit of thought; and so long as it is indulged in, it effectually blocks out a good habit of thought; and thus acts as a wedge to throw one off the true path of progress. Anyone who follows a bad habit lends himself to be led by a devil that seeks its own associates; and whither shall it lead him? He is no more himself, but has become insane, being led about by an evil spirit. His way is barred; the impediment must be removed, the devil must be cast out.

A man's devil is of his own making; it is his passions and appetites firmly held in thought. A devil is not a being; it is an existence which abides as long as a man gives it place; it dies when he gives it place no more. A devil is not a power; no thought is a power—there is no power of thought. But if a man serve a thought or a habit, it will appear to him to have power over him; for one's master is to them what they serve. And thus does a man come to think a devil has power, because he serves it. But every man who is not a servant of a bad habit, will confess that God only is power; but everyone, and these only, who lend themselves to bad habits, will believe in a power of evil.

14. **AUTHORITY.** It is one thing to have authority; it is another thing to be authority. A man who has authority, receives it from another. People who do not speak from their own knowledge, are not authorities, but quote from the teachings of others who are their authorities. A man who is an authority, speaks from his own knowledge; and in his teachings he imparts himself and not some other. Jesus was the authority; he imparted himself. Nor in truth did he receive his authority from any. He who was God—from whom could he receive authority? The Author is the Creator; and there is no authority other than God. Customs, traditions, sayings—these are not authority. The Spirit alone is authority—life, the letter is dead. That

man. And the unclean spirit convulsing him, and crying with a loud voice, came out of him and hurt him not. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves saying, What new teaching is this? for with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.

8. And his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

*Sec. 4. He controls a storm.*

9. Now when Jesus saw a large crowd about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side. And when he entered into a boat, his disciples followed him.

10. And there arose a great tempest on the sea, insomuch that the boat was covered with the waves. But Jesus was asleep. And his disciples came to him and awoke him saying, Lord, save us ; we perish. Then he saith unto

man alone is authority who speaks or writes as the Father ; but neither his words nor writings are authority, but only The Spirit that expresses them. Jesus spoke with authority, because he was the Father. And whoever shall receive the Comforter, who is from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, he also shall express with authority. God speaks to man in all ages through many different instruments, that man may have but one authority—one God. Men may do many marvels in the spirit of imitators as having authority ; but that which declares that Jesus was the Son, is that He is the example, the authority.

15. **MIRACLE.** Nature is the creation of God. That which is above nature is the Law, i. e., God. Nature is a constantly changing panorama, it is the disclosure of the working of the Law. All Law is—not merely spiritual, but—spirit ; not merely good, but—God. That which is called law on earth, has only any true being in so far as it is The Law. There are not two laws, one natural and the other spiritual. Nothing is miraculous to him who is familiar with what others call wonderful ; things miraculous are only so to those who are unacquainted with them, or do not understand them. To God there is nothing miraculous ; that is, in truth there is no such thing as miracle. But to those who understand not The Law, its workings are marvelous. For him, who does the will of God, it is natural to heal and exercise command over the elements ; for him who does the will of the world, it is natural to enter into commerce, and to supervise worldly affairs. He who does the will of God, does without marvel what God does. He who does the will of the world, does what the world does, and marvels at the works of God, not understanding them. The works of Jesus Christ were the simple manifestations of the Law—the only Law.

16. **OF LITTLE FAITH.** We have seen in the centurion, an illustration of great faith ; we now see in the disciples, an illustration of little faith. If the disciples had recognized, as did the centurion, that Jesus was a man of authority, they would have had no fear. If they had recognized as he did, that the power of Jesus was not his physical presence, but his spiritual presence, they would not have been disconcerted because of the appearance called sleep.

them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there followed a great calm. And the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?

*Sec. 5. Many devils cast out of Legion. The people fear the power of Jesus, and request him to depart.*

11. And when he arrived at the other side at the country of the Gadarenes, there met him a certain man, which had devils, and for a long time had worn no clothes, and abode not in any house, but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? I beseech thee torment me not. [For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For often times it had possessed him; and he was kept under guard and bound with chains and fetters. But having broken the bands asunder, he was driven by the devil into the wilderness.] And Jesus asked him, What is thy name. And he said, Legion; for many devils were entered into him. And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the abyss.

Now there was there a herd of many swine feeding on the mountain; and they besought him that he would allow them to enter into these. And he

Again, the disciples manifested little faith because they feared a calamity. Because they feared; for fear is the result of distrust or ignorance; whereas the manifestation of faith is the result of perfect trust or knowledge. Now, it must be remembered that knowledge means consciousness in Cause, not in effect; it means living in the Spirit, not living in the letter. Living thus, no man will manifest fear, for the Spirit is beyond all calamity. Accidents can only happen to the body, and fear arises through man thinking that he is his body; and thus attracting disaster to him. Like is attracted to its like. He, who fears, attracts what he fears. But if men live in faith—that is, in knowledge—they cannot attract to them any such result as a disaster or failure. Therefore the rebuke, O ye of little faith! is against all who fear.

The belief which was expressed by the disciples in these words—Lord, save us: was also an indication of their little faith. They were like the masses, who, without knowledge of physic, trust a physician. But when the disciples know their Master, they will exercise faith instead of belief.

**17. OBEDIENCE.** Even the winds and the sea obey him. The winds and the sea, like the body, must respond to the will of some one. A man obeys, when he carries out the Law; not when he is acted upon and made to carry it out. That which is acted upon is the wind, or the sea, or the body; even as when a chair is made to move from place to place, by the will of man. Winds, and tides, and bodies can do nothing of themselves; but man makes them conform to his will. If a man will understand the movements of winds and tides, and control them, he will find the explanation and power in his own mind.

allowed them. Then the devils came out of the man, and entered into the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep into the lake, and were choked.

12. When they, that fed the swine, saw what had happened, they fled; and told it in the city and in the country. Then many people went out to see what had been done; and came to Jesus and found also the man, from whom the devils departed, clothed and in his right mind, sitting at the feet of Jesus. And they were afraid. And they also, who saw it, told the people by what means he that was possessed by devils was healed.

13. Then all the people of the country and neighbourhood of the Gadarenes besought him to depart from them; for they were overtaken with great fear.

14. Now the man out of whom the devils were gone, begged him that he might abide with him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, Return to thine own house, and relate what great things God hath done for thee. And he went his way, publishing throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

*Sec. 6. Concerning those who might follow Christ.*

15. And it came to pass that, as they went on their way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus

18. **FOLLOWERS OF TRUTH.** No man can follow Truth except in spirit. A fox or a fowl, may follow a fox or fowl to its lair or nest, but the house of Truth is in Spirit.

No man can follow Truth without becoming Truth. Therefore, he who prefers anything before truth, cannot be a true follower. Neither can they be followers of truth, who live in recollections, regrets or experiences; for all these are past and dead. These being past and dead must be left with the past and dead, for truth can only be perceived in the truth and in the life.

And no man who is a true ploughman, will look back at the furrow—the effect of his work—to see how it looks; but looking continually before him, attentive to his work, the furrows will be straight, and his work will be done worthily. Likewise, he who looks for results of spiritual work, who looks to the opinions of men, who looks for reward of work, is a false servant who is seeking to exact himself, and is unfit for the Kingdom of Truth.

19. **THY FAITH HATH HEALED THEE.** In no case is any person healed except by faith. Either by faith in an object, or by faith in the subject. This will become clearer when it is understood what there is to heal. For this purpose look upon yourself as a free actor, your thought as your first action, your word as your second and last action. Then you are like a scholar working a problem of mathematics upon his slate; if it be correct in thought, it also will be correct in word (upon the slate); but if it be not correct in thought, it will not be correct in word. In either case the principle or actor remains the same and unaffected; it is infinite. But the thought is subject to change; it is finite. And just what change is made in thought

said unto him, Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests ; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.

But he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Leave the dead to bury their own dead ; but go thou and proclaim the Kingdom of God.

And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee ; but let me first go and bid farewell to them, which are at home. But Jesus said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God.

16. And Jesus entered a boat and returned. And when he returned, the people welcomed him ; for they were all waiting for him.

just that change is made in word also ; for a word is the shadow of the corresponding thought. In the principle there can no correction be made, it is perfectness ; all seeming error is in thought. And in the shadow (the body) of the original object (the thought), there will be disclosed the same seeming error. Now, all thoughts and all bodies are forms ; but the thinker is the unbounded or formless. It therefore follows, that all that is called error is in the form only ; likewise, that if it be eradicated from the thought, it shall also be eradicated from the word ; for nothing can appear in the word which does not also appear in the thought. From this it will be seen that that which must be first healed is the thought, then the word or body shall be made whole also. The thought and word are respectively the mould and clay of the Potter or Thinker. Since, then, neither mould nor clay are able to alter themselves, it rests with the potter to alter them. That is, since neither thought nor word are able to correct themselves, it rests entirely with the thinker to correct them—it rests entirely with the thinker to do all healing. Now, this thinker or healer is principle or perfectness, who is Faith. Thus there is no other healer than Faith.

Faith is the being or life of everybody. So that in Being man is Oneness—is the same faith. Jesus might with truth have said, *my* faith hath healed thee ; since his and her faith were the same and only healer. But it was his way, and should be the way of every teacher, to teach men who *they* are, rather than to bear witness of himself. The teacher of understanding, even though he bear witness of himself, still his witness is true ; for in bearing witness of himself he bears witness of the Father, from whom he is no different. But the followers of a teacher are looking to the example, not to the Principle ; and to these such testimony, though true, would appear but egotism or personality. Therefore, wherever he could, Jesus pointed his followers to *their* Being instead of to *his* Being ; nevertheless the Being or Father in all cases was and is the same.

In the case before us the sufferer believed in what she saw ; because doubtless, it did seem to her that the healing power was in the spoken word, or hand, or person of the Master. She surely thought that Christ was a different power or being from herself. But he, turning around, intimated : Daughter, I am no different from thyself ; I do no works that thou canst not also do, for we are one, and God is the worker. And, that thou mayest also know that thou art not that which is to be healed, I say unto thee, Thyself heal thy word ! for in touching my garments thou hast already manifested thy faith. Therefore, be comforted, thy faith hath healed thy word.

*Sec. 7. Jairus' daughter is raised.*

17. And many people gathered unto him. And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the Synagogue, Jairus by name. And when he saw Jesus, he fell down at his feet, and besought him to come into his house ; for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay dying.

18. But as he went the crowd thronged him. And a woman, who had an issue of blood for twelve years, having spent all her means upon physicians and could not be healed by any, came behind him, and touched the border of his garment. For she said within herself, If I do but touch his garment,

**20. NOT DEAD, BUT SLEEPETH.** The healing of the woman with an issue of blood took place while Jesus was on his way to James' house. But, no doubt, the followers' attention was chiefly occupied about the approaching visit to a dying child ; and the idea of death would be prominently in their thoughts. What would their opinion of death be ? Somewhat similar to the common opinion about it to-day ; there is no need to state it. And when they arrived at the house everything indicated that the end had already come to the ruler's daughter. A cloud of sorrow shrouded the home ; and dirges from the hired mourners told the lamentable tale.

Let us turn away from this picture to another ; and as we have imagined the thoughts of the followers, let us imagine the thoughts of Jesus—Father, thou art myself, and I am thyself—Creator. When in the beginning of creation, I gave to man free-will, and having warned him that in the day when he should go out seeking his own experience he should die. And, since man has partaken of experience, the fruit of the tree of knowledge, and is now seeking his experience in matter, he has surely died ; for it is death to live upon the earth as man now lives. But to those, who now seek release from matter or the dead, who now follow me thinking they are living, I will proclaim that life is knowledge of the worker, not his work. And thus by truth I will raise man from the dead.

Such might have been some of the thoughts of Jesus. And if at this time some one should have come to him saying, My friend no longer lives on earth, he is dead ; the master would have thought, This that you speak of is not death, but what you call life—the living here on earth a few short years—this is death indeed. Lament ! mourn ! because you are buried in earthly treasures ; but sacrifice these and you shall live ; therefore the mourners at the ruler's house must give place ; the maid is not dead, but sleepeth.

Sleep is commonly considered a state of unconsciousness that comes over an individual at times. This is not so, however ; for he, who is consciousness, can never become unconsciousness. Consciousness is Being, and is forever the same ; and cannot, therefore, become non-being.

A man is like a carpenter, who has two workshops ; by day he works in one, by night he works in the other. A stranger coming and finding his day-workshop closed will say, Lo ! the carpenter is asleep, his shop is shut and blinds all down. But the carpenter's neighbor will say to the stranger, It is true his day-workshop is shut up, but you will find the carpenter at work in his night-workshop. By day a man works in one body—his day-workshop ; by night the same man works in another body—his

I shall be healed. But Jesus turning and seeing her, said, Daughter, be of good cheer; thy faith hath healed thee. And the woman was made whole from that hour.

19. When Jesus came into the ruler's house and saw the mourners and the crowd making a tumult, he said unto them, Give place; for the maid is not dead but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. But when the crowd was put forth, he went in and took the maid by the hand, and she arose.

20. And the report of this was spread abroad through all the land.

*Sec. 8. As to breaking the Sabbath.*

21. At that season Jesus went on the Sabbath through the corn fields. And his disciples were hungry and began to pluck ears of corn, and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which it is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath. And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not so much as read what David did, when he and they who were with him were hungry? How he went into the house of God, and

night-workshop; when he is working at night, we who only see his day-workshop shut up, say he is asleep—unconscious. But it is not so; if you will go to his other workshop you will find he is at work. However, the man's *workshop* is unconscious, even when the man is at work in it. But there is a longer day than the twelve or fourteen hours that we commonly call day. From the beginning of your daily work on earth to the end of your daily work on earth, this also is a day. We shall also sleep when this day's work is done. When the shop in which we have been working three score years and ten is closed for the night, a stranger passing by will say, The carpenter sleeps (he may say, The carpenter is dead); but the carpenter's neighbour, who knows the carpenter's habits, will say, Not so, friend, the carpenter is at work elsewhere.

The maid is not dead, but sleepeth. That which you call the maid is indeed dead; for no body is ever other than dead, it is but the potter's clay, which the potter moulds as he wills. The Creator is the Potter, and out of the clay or matter He, and He alone, moulds all nature. But I know that this earthen vessel, which you call the maid, is not the maid. Harken, ye mourners! I am the maid. Even as I and the Father are one, so am I one with this maid. I am the life who moulded this vessel: I am the resurrection, who will make it to rise again. And they, hearing his words, but not understanding his meaning, laughed him to scorn.

**21. THE SABBATH.** "Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy works; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; on it thou shalt not do any work. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is; and rested on the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath, and hallowed it."

Thus is stated the law which the Scribes and Pharisees persisted in having kept literally, nor did Jesus find fault with them therefor, nor for their narrow interpretation of the law. Nevertheless, the Scribes and Pharisees could not fail to remark their own limited view of the six days' creation, and seventh day of rest, in the light of the Master's broad and universal interpretation. Will you, O reader, keep in view the



did take and eat the shewbread, which it is not lawful to eat—except for the priests—and gave it also to them that were with him? And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath; but the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath.

22. And the Scribes and Pharisees watched him to see whether he would heal on the Sabbath, that they might find an accusation against him. And, behold, there was a man with a withered hand. And that they might accuse him, they asked Jesus, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath. And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if this fall into a pit on the Sabbath, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?

Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole as the other.

23. But the Pharisees took counsel against him, how they might destroy him. And Jesus perceiving it withdrew from thence. And many followed him, and he healed all their sick.

*Sec. 9. Jesus heals a blind man at Bethsaida.*

24. And he cometh to Bethsaida. And they brought a blind man unto him, and besought Jesus to touch him. And he led the blind man by the hand out of the village. And when he had spit on his eyes, and laid his

above statement of the law, in order that we together may form and understand the following contrast:—The Scribe thought, since Moses, whose servant I am, received the Law direct from God, it is my duty to insist upon its being carried out according to my understanding of it. And I understand myself to be the person which you see, and which is living from day to day, and from year to year, until two or three score years shall have passed and brought me release from earth. Six of these days are my week, on which I will work, but on every seventh day I will do no work; even as the God of Moses worked on the six week days, but did no work on the seventh day.

Thus the Scribe's or Pharisee's standard of the Creator and his methods and works, was the Scribe's self or the Pharisee's self and his methods and works. With this Jesus found no fault; there is nothing faulty herein. But the view may be broadened, and Jesus demonstrated this. Jesus thought, At no time can there be or have been another worker than God; He who is working now, did work, and will work. The days of his week last as long as any manifestation takes place in matter. At the present time it is one of His days of creation; and any one of his days lasts for ages. But let us consider your standard of a week's work. You commence your work on the first day and finish it on the sixth; after which you rest before commencing again a like piece of work. In like manner my Father works; but, whereas the piece of work you set about to finish is such as ornaments the earth on which you execute it, the work my Father begins and ends is the building of the heavens and earths, with all therein and all thereon, including this which you have set about to finish. And I and my Father are one. Therefore 'tis I who work all work, 'tis I who do your work. I am thyself, my

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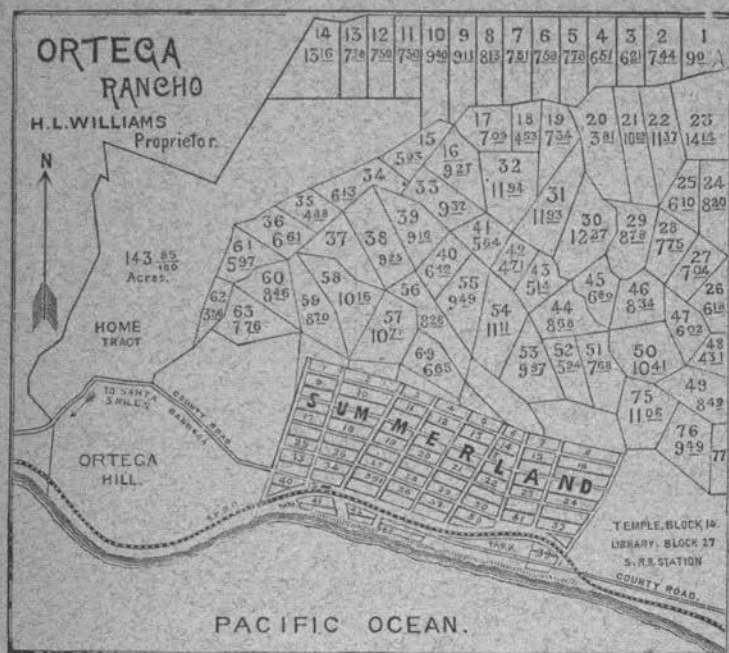
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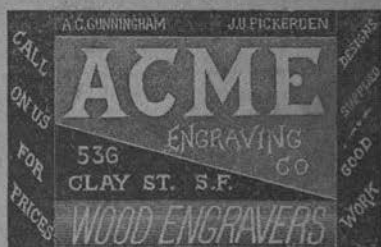
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