

SORROW AND EVIL, THEIR CAUSE AND CURE

The Subject of an Able and Important Lecture.

Delivered by Mrs. Annie Besant, One of England's Most Brilliant Minds.

SHE APPEARS BEFORE A LARGE AUDIENCE OF SPIRITUALISTS, THEOSOPHISTS, AND OTHER ADVANCED THINKERS AT STEINWAY HALL, SEPTEMBER 10, 1897, AND DEEPLY INTERESTS ALL—SPECIALLY REPORTED FOR THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER, BY A. M. GRIFFIN.

AN ANCIENT STORY RETOLD.

There is an ancient story familiar probably to most of you, the story of the Eastern prince brought up in luxury and defended from all touch of the sorrows and the evils of the world, brought up amidst surroundings that were fair, that in every respect were full of joy and of delight, where nothing was allowed to intrude that was old, or diseased or that could suggest sorrow and decay. Kept continually within a palace and its surrounding gardens, where everything was drawn together that could delight the senses, that could charm the mind, that could in any way rouse and delight the emotions, this boy grew into youth and from youth into manhood with never a ruffle of sorrow in his life or within his knowledge. Wedded while still young, with one child born to him by his wife, the cup of human joy seemed full, and there stretched before him an existence of power, of pomp and of delight, an existence with every promise that the world could give, with everything threatening and evil carefully warded away; and yet within the heart of that prince there were strange stirrings from time to time, strange stirrings of the outer world which had not yet reached him in any of its rougher aspects.

Upon going out into the city one day, driven by his chariot, while near his friend he met an aged man tottering, and he asked what was that, and he was told it was old age, to which all people come at last if they live long enough; and he went home and pondered on old age, having seen none but the young. Another day when he drove out he met a man who was leprosy and miserable and he asked what was that, and he was told it was disease which struck many a one in his prime and reduced him to physical misery ere yet he was old; and he went back and he thought of disease; he had seen nothing but health. Another day going out he met a corpse that was being carried along, and he asked what was that, and he was told it was death, death that came to every one—man, woman and child.

And the heart of the prince was sad within him, and he pondered on old age, disease and death, and heavier and heavier grew his heart as he knew that these sorrows pressed on the outer world.

One other sight he saw that also was strange. A man who was poor, who was aged, but who yet was happy; a man who possessed nothing, but still was glad; a man who was aged, but yet was bright; a man who looked as though he ought to be sorrowful, but who was calm and serene exceedingly; and when he asked about that man, the answer came that he was a man who had renounced everything and lived in the light of an eternal life; and the prince went back and brooded a while on that, on the man who although he lived in the world and was old and poor, was yet happy and at peace; and as he brooded the sorrow of the world flooded over his heart and well nigh broke it, and he grew weary of palace and of beauty, weary of delights and of music, weary of all that had made his life so glad, and of the youth and of the beauty and the health that stood in such strange contrast with the outer world of which he had caught a glimpse.

And at last his heart being so weary he decided to go out from the palace and the gardens, and to search for the reason of the world's sorrow, and whether or not some cure for sorrow might be found; and rising while wife and child were sleeping, he bent over them in farewell and vowed within his sad and heavy heart that he would never again look on the faces that he loved until he had found the reason of the world's sorrow and its cure; and he left the palace in the night time with sleeping wife and sleeping child, and he went out beyond the boundaries of the city and cut off the long hair of the prince and put off the robes of the prince and sent back the steed of the prince in the care of his chariot, and he put on the garb of the mendicant and went out barefoot and alone into the world, to understand sorrow, its cause and its end; and he sought it first in philosophy and he spent his days in bitter asceticism; he struggled with his body and well nigh brought it to death.

But for all his vigils and his fastings, for all his thinking and his struggling, he failed to find the reason of the world's sorrow, much less to find its cure.

And so he left the ascetics, with whom for a time he had harbored, and went on again alone into the wilderness, and alone he stayed for a while, searching deep in his own heart, searching deep in the heart of nature around him, and at last he sat down beneath a tree and the inspiration that long had been brooding over him came rushing in upon his heart and the light within him began to dawn, and he resolved to sit there meditating until the eyes of the spirit should open and the world's sorrow and its cure and its ending should be seen. And he sat for many a day and many a night beneath the tree meditating on sorrow and on evil, and meditating on their causes and on their cure, until the illumination came down upon him, until the eyes of the spirit were open within him, until he saw the roots of the world's sorrow, and seeing the cause saw also the cure and the end.

And then in great joy he entered into Nirvana, and in Nirvana he abode for seven days and nights, and then coming back he brought with him the knowledge he had sought and went forth to give that knowledge again to the world.

And you know that in telling again that ancient story I have told the story of the prince who became the Buddha and who for many and many a long year wandered over the plains and through the villages of India teaching of the world's sorrow and its cause and its ending, beginning his preaching as you know at the ancient city, the city of Varanasi, now called Benares, and there first proclaimed the secret of the past once more given to the world, that which sages had learned, that which teachers had taught, but that which every great teacher learns again for himself in all its fullness, in all its extent, for only that which a man learns for himself can be spoken to the world with the strength that comes from knowledge, and every one who would be a world's savior must tread the path alone, must alone work out his knowledge, win his illumination. There is none that can do for the human soul that supreme task, which is the union of the soul with the spirit, and every savior of the world accomplishes for himself that union and then comes back to the world with his message and speaks it to all who have ears to hear.

THE LESSON OF THE BUDDHA RETRACED.

And the Buddha taught again the ancient lesson, the lesson that we are going to retrace in its broad outlines to-night and see whether in the nineteenth century we can so realize the truth that he found and taught as to make it a practical truth for our daily living, which shall make our lives the easier to bear, which shall make sorrow

easier to face, which shall point us to its ending and enable us to solve the riddle of the world. For each one who even partially solves that riddle, who even intellectually can grasp that teaching makes by the intellectual knowledge a sign post, as it were, showing him the road to the real solution, the solution that comes not by the intellect, but by that which is above the intellect, and which changes into the deepest conviction of the soul that which first the intellect rationally and intelligently recognized.

Now, the very essence of the teaching is easily put. Let me state it first and then work it out more in detail.

TWO FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES.

Two great principles we have to grasp; first, the principle of evolution both of life and of form. That must be one thing to study and to understand. Then, the principle that man is ever seeking happiness and seeks that happiness by uniting himself to the object of his desire; that all the world is seeking happiness, every heart is pursuing it. Each seeks it in his own way; each tries to find it after his own fashion; but it is a universal truth of human experience that the heart is seeking for happiness, and you will recognize if you think a moment the truth of the further statement that every one seeks happiness by uniting himself to the object which he believes will give him the happiness that he seeks.

Those then are the two fundamental principles, following which we shall find the cause of sorrow clear and the ending of sorrow clear; following which we shall understand what is meant by evil, how it arises and what is its ending. Along these lines I shall try to take you, taking them up in turn and showing you whither they lead us.

QUESTION OF EVOLUTION.

Let us first take up this question of evolution, a double evolution of life and forms. Science of course recognizes the evolution of forms. That has been the great study of our own days, and you know how wonderfully illuminative that study has proved to be. Think how the world's thought has changed since Charles Darwin first wrote on evolution; how the principle that he then proclaimed has permeated every region of thought; how it has been introduced into history; how it has been introduced into economics; how it has been taken as a clew in all the tangled webs of human life and human thought. Only by going back to the intellectual world before this idea was largely accepted can you realize the change that has come over thought by that illuminating idea of evolution. But it has chiefly been an evolution of forms. Science is always dealing with forms, the things it can see, that it can look at from the outside, that it can break in pieces, that it can dissect out bit by bit, that it can test with its chemical reagents, that it can weigh in its delicate balances. Everything is the world of form with which science has been dealing these many years, and science has shown us the world as a place where forms are continually breaking up. Forms are always changing; one form gives place to another; death as natural as life, a form comes and is born, it grows to maturity, it begins to decay, it perishes; it cannot be destroyed so far as the material is concerned, but as a form it perishes; the material of which it was made goes on to make other forms. The breaking up by death is a preliminary to a higher building, and science shows us continually that without death there would be stagnation, without death there could be no growth. If it were not for death we should have no animals to-day but those animals whose monstrous forms we find in the ancient deposits come down from the highest antiquity. If they had not perished, if they had not been broken up, how could the fairer, the more beautiful, the more finished forms have come into existence?

Take a few fishes from the Silurian ocean, take a few of those vast creatures that roamed over vast bogs and that trampled through mighty forests when the world was young; place these beside the creatures of our own day and see how vast the difference, how grace replaced clumsiness, delicacy replaced grossness, agility has replaced clumsy strength. Everything in form has evolved, and without breaking up of forms that could not have been; without the destruction of forms there would have been a universal stagnation, and to-day nature would still be struggling with those monstrous forms of the past; but the merciful hand of death everywhere triumphant has broken them one after another, and the material that built them has been reformed into fairer shapes, and the world has grown more beautiful as millennium has succeeded millennium.

Science studying this evolution of forms has carried us at least to this point: We see the value of death; we see the value of destruction. If it were not for the destructive agency in nature there could be no growth. If it were not for the breaking down of forms there could be no evolution.

TWO PHASES OF LIFE.

And so the Divine Life has been symbolized in two great aspects, the life that forms and the life that destroys; the constructive and the destructive forces in nature, both equally divine, both equally necessary, both wanted for the progress of the world. If either disappeared stagnation would result. If either vanished, growth would no longer be possible; and the first ray of light breaks upon the darkness when we recognize that God is as much in destructive agencies as in constructive, as much in the action of death as in that of life; as much in the breaking in pieces as in the building up. Nay, that there is no such thing as death but only continual rebirth, and that death is a stage in growth and in evolution. It is transformation and it is nothing worse than that.

But more than this we need to know. We recognize even in looking at the forms, that their breaking up is necessary, but when we turn to look at the evolution of life instead of the evolution of forms, then indeed does the obscurity quickly vanish away, for we find that these forms we have been watching, that have been born and have been broken up, that have developed and have been destroyed—that all these forms as they perish hand in their results to the life which is within them; that the form after all is nothing more than the mere material coating in which the life was veiled; that the form has only its importance because it is the expression of that life; that the life is always going on from form to form, and that the reason that the form breaks is because the life has grown too strong for it, too large for it, too complicated for it and this growing and developing life bursts the forms in pieces the moment it needs a fresh form for its better expression, and the life continues unbroken and is ever building itself fresh form after form.

So that looking at evolution from the inner side instead of from the outer side, the evolving life instead of the evolving form, we see in that evolving life a mighty plan, a divine purpose, a gigantic evolution; we see the mighty Oversoul, to borrow an expression from Emerson—we see the Oversoul brooding over the ocean of matter, and the Oversoul sends down its rays, which are itself, into that ocean of matter the matter clothes each ray, as it were, and gives it shape in the lower world; and as the

Oversoul pours down a ever more life into each ray that ray bursts the forms asunder and attracts a fresh form more complicated and able to express more of the impinging life. And looking at it in this way all nature becomes full of a sense of joy inexpressible, and instead of breaking forms, instead of disintegrating shapes, instead of the shattered creatures that we saw looking at the world of forms, we see an ever extending life, an ever growing thought, an ever increasing consciousness, immortal youth and life unchanging but ever widening out and extending its yonderous flow, so that in the world of matter form after form more wonderful is made, shape after shape more exquisite appears, until at last we see these rays of the Oversoul that have been dividing over and over again and ever expressing more and more of the source whence they come; we see them, as it were, coming at last into individual existence, clothed in the form of man, building the human soul and down into that soul again, an outflow from the Godhead, the spirit coming down to inhabit the receptacle made for it by evolution, and the progress of individualized man taking its beginning in our earth. And realizing this vast evolution of life and that every form finds in the life that is within it the results of its experiences and thus brings out from the responding life ever more and more of the music that lies silent within it—realizing that we begin to understand a little more of one part of the world's sorrow that comes from death and this evil that we connect with the idea of separation, and so far as those phenomena are concerned we find ourselves no longer puzzled and confused, for if death is only of the form and the life goes on unchecked, if the form is only destroyed when it is outworn and its purpose is over and the life is ever clothing itself again and again in ever higher and higher forms, then all that destructive side in the world which looks so wonderful at once becomes pregnant with joy, for we no longer trouble as to the form that perishes; we know that the life is eternal, that in the evolution of that life is the promise of the perfection of the world.

So far we feel ourselves on firm ground. We have swept out of sight as evils death and the steps that lead up to it, for the decay that precedes death is simply the gradual breaking up of the form; and so far as nature is concerned, untouched by man, life might pass in that way in the form until the use of the form is over, until it is gradually outworn and drops away from the upspringing life.

But we know that there is more than that in the sorrow and in the evil that we see around us; that there are other forms of sorrow than those caused by death or by decay, and evil does not seem susceptible of so easy an answer as that it is merely a passing incident, as it were, in the evolution of life.

INDIVIDUAL SOUL EXPERIENCE.

Let us look a little more closely into evil and see whether we can find also its cause and its ending. Let us think of a soul individually just beginning its life experience—not the soul as we know it now, coming into the world with great mental and moral faculties characterizing it as with the children that are born to us to-day; but let us look backward into the past, take the soul in its germinal condition just when the outflow of Divine Life had come into the receptacle built for it by evolving life in the sub-human conditions, and let us try to realize what would be the state of such a soul when first it begins its individual experience. It is a mere germ, a mere seed, a mere beginning of a soul, nothing in fact that you would call a soul, any more than you would call an acorn an oak tree—a spark from the Divine thrown out from the Divine Life in order that it may develop into a mighty flame; a drop of the divine ocean thrown out into the receptacle prepared for it that it may continually increase until it itself becomes an ocean; a life, but a life in germ; a life with all possibilities within it and with nothing showing externally; a life exactly in the sense that there is a life within the nucleus of the growing cell in the plant or in the animal with no more resemblance to the full-grown individual than the tiny speck of protoplasm is like the full grown plant, the full-grown animal or the full-grown man, and yet that speck of protoplasm will develop into plant or animal or man, just according to its progenitor. So with this tiny germ of a human soul. It is the life of God, and although there is no likeness there to the divine when it comes forth as spark from the flame, it has everything within it that will make it develop into the divine image until according to the command of the Christ to his disciples it is perfect as the Father in heaven is perfect. But at first a germ, a speck, an embryo. To that embryonic soul there is neither good nor evil, only experience; around it all sorts of possibilities; nature stretches out her hands full of gifts of every kind, stretches them out full of things that give joy and things that give pain, of things that will give delight and others that will cause sorrow. Her hands are full of every gift, and this embryonic life is ignorant and knows nothing of the result of the taking. How shall it learn? A great problem has to be solved. To develop that human soul as a machine were easy; to develop it into an automaton were easy; to develop it without any knowledge of good and evil but ever going right by a divine compulsion, that were easy. But then it would never grow into the image of its Father; then it would never develop divine knowledge and divine power.

THE PROBLEM AND SOLUTION.

The problem to be solved is this: How to develop a will that is free as the will of God and yet is always determined to the highest and to the best because it is guided by universal knowledge and motivated by universal love. A difficult problem. The will is to be free, yet always to choose the best. How can it learn such a lesson?

The problem is solved in this way. I said that nature held out her hands full of gifts. The soul takes whatever comes in its way, according to its fancy, its desires, its opportunities, but to everything it takes the law joins the result that comes from the taking. It may choose what it likes, but in choosing it must take the whole of its choice. The results of what it takes belong to it and none shall interfere with the working out of those results. It may choose whatever attracts it. Out of all the infinite treasures of nature the soul may take what it will, but it must also take the results of that choice. It shall not escape from them, be they pleasant or painful. It shall not get away from them, bring they sorrow or joy. It shall not be able to shake them off, though, when it realizes the results it would give anything to have chosen otherwise. It shall live in the world of law, and by the law it shall gradually learn knowledge. Thus in the world nature offers it food; it grasps food and delights in it; its joy is in harmony with the natural order and pleasure results from his choice, for where the law is followed there is harmony, evolution, progress. Always with the going with the law, happiness results. And so it finding pleasure results from taking food takes more and more to increase the pleasure, and finds that it has gone too far and has brought pain instead of pleasure, and the soul stands puzzled before the strange result that that which gave it pleasure first gives pain afterwards, and it realizes two possibilities, pleasure and pain, and realizing both it learns to distinguish. Without having pairs of opposites it could never distinguish. Without change there could be no growth of mind, for the mind can only think by difference and it only realizes an object by the characteristics which it discerns in that object.

Pleasure and pain as a result of experience. The soul registers that and remembers. Over and over again the soul goes through these experiences; life after life it passes through them till there is a dawning conscience, a dawning moral sense, a dawning mental faculty, and when the soul has reached the stage at which the mental faculty distinguishes between object and object, when it has learned to know this subserves my growth and that delays me; this gives me health and that gives me disease, this increases my powers and that diminishes them, then the soul is beginning for the first time to learn the difference between right and wrong, for all is right that helps forward the evolution of the soul, and all is wrong that retards the evolution of the soul; and it is only

when the experience has been gained, the result has been registered and when it has been found that a certain experience clogs instead of helping it onward—it is only then that the experience becomes evil, because it begins to retard instead of quickening the progress of the soul.

ILLUSTRATION OF THE LAW.

Let me take an illustration to make this clear. We are all agreed that murder is wrong, within certain limitations of course. We have reached a point at which we recognize that we must not murder each other. Looking back thousands, millions of years, to the time when our souls were young, at that time we knew nothing about murder, had no experience of it at all. Some one came in our way, frustrated our object; we struck at that person who came in the way of our will; he fell dead. Had we committed a crime? Will you be surprised if I say no? At that stage we were incapable of committing a crime; we did not know; we did not understand. All that we realized was an obstacle in our path and struck it out of the way to reach the object of our desire; but we had done a wrong though we did not know it and the law asserted itself; it brought us trouble, trouble with the relatives of the man we had killed, trouble perhaps if he was a friend and we had lost our friend by giving away to the passion of the moment, and we learned by the stern touch of experience that that act brought sorrow in its wake. Thus life after life we learned that we must not slay those who were near to us, and after many more lives we learned that we must not slay anybody within the limit of our own tribe; and after more lives yet we learned that we must not slay anybody within the limit of our nation. That stage most of us have reached at the present day, but we are still in the very elementary stage of morality as far as the learning of the evil of murder is concerned. We do not recognize it when it is done on people outside our own nation provided it is done on a large enough scale. So that we think murder is wrong if it is done on a man of our own nation as an individual, but not wrong when it is done on a man of other nations in a wholesale fashion, and then we call it war and glory and never make it with the ugly name of murder; but that is a very elementary stage in regard to the evil of killing. It shows that we have only climbed a very little way up the ladder of the knowledge of good and evil. Some of us have climbed further and we know that murder is wrong though it be called war. It is just as wrong done by a man in a red coat as by a man in a smock-frock, just as wrong when it is done on a man of another nation, as when it is done on a man of our own; just as wrong when it is done under the name of glory, as when it is done under the name of private hatred; just as wrong when we do it because as a nation we covet another nation's property, as when as an individual we do it because we covet another man's pocket contents. But the popular view has not reached that point yet; does not yet see murder to be wrong when done wholesale and nationally; much less have we reached that point that regards murder as wrong when we come to deal with the non-human creatures, and yet they also have the sacredness of life as all of us will know a million or two years hence if not before. After a little time we shall recognize it to be savage and barbarian to kill the lower creatures as now we regard private murder to be savage and barbarian, and looking back at our own civilization as it is to-day from the vantage ground of thousands of years hence we shall see how degraded we were, how brutal, how evil, how shockingly barbarian that we murdered thousands of beautiful living creatures for the mere sake of satisfying our carnivorous instincts.

That is how evolution goes on, how the soul of man develops, and there are many of you to-day who do not recognize that as evil, who do not see that that is a crime, who do not realize that you are living on the results of murder, simply because the soul has not yet developed to that point. Presently you will recognize it.

Supposing that, recognizing it, you do what you know to be wrong, then you pull back the soul. There are many who commit murder to-day on other men and on animals who are not so terribly degraded as at first sight you might imagine. There are many soldiers who are not barbarians merely because they kill; they do not recognize it is wrong and criminal; therefore their souls are not much injured thereby. It shows that they are in a low state of evolution, but in that condition of evolution they are learning their lessons. They have not yet recognized that they are committing a crime, and as the essence of committing the crime is the knowledge by the doer that he is committing a crime those souls are not degraded by fighting as souls more highly evolved would be. They are rather gaining experience. They will suffer. When they pass out of the body they will find themselves surrounded with those they have slain, and when those who have lived on the animals slaughtered for their satisfaction pass out of the body they will find all the astral world against them, antagonistic to them. They learn their lessons in this way. They learn by experience that it is wrong, and it is when that lesson is learned and the soul understands it that the repetition of the experience becomes an evil. Up to that stage it is an experience, not a crime.

Now, if you followed that line of thought, and recognize it in your own growth at the present time, you will gain a great light on the presence of evil in the world.

Evil is the choice by the soul of gratifying the lower nature at the cost of the higher, in choosing a present pleasure knowing that it is against the law; taking anything that offers itself, conscious that in so doing it is delaying its own evolution. One of the slaughtermen, for instance, in Chicago, is not committing evil as I should be committing evil if I took the results of his action. He has not reached the point where he recognizes it as wrong. He is not degrading his soul. If I took what he provides by his murdering, I should be committing a crime, because knowing it to be wrong, recognizing it as degrading, understanding that in doing so I was sacrificing the higher to the lower, then I should be deliberately delaying the evolution of the soul and stooping to a stage out of which I have grown.

So with every other evil; so with every other form of sin; the moment a soul knows it to be wrong, that moment it becomes a degradation and an evil. Until that recognition has been made, that which is being done though against the law is a thing which the soul is experiencing by which it will learn the existence of the law.

LESSON OF THE SOUL.

Now, if you realize that you will find it a wonderful help to you in those times of trouble that come to almost all of us when some one whom we love tenderly, some one with whom our very heartstrings are entwined, goes away from the path we know as right and plunges into sin. Take some young man, the hope, the joy of father and mother, think of the bitterness of grief that rends their hearts when their son plunges into evil, perhaps into dishonor and disgrace. What message must be brought to the broken-hearted parent in regard to that beloved son thus consumed with dishonor? The lesson of the soul. That soul is learning a terrible lesson which it refuses to learn in any other way. Brought up amid fair surroundings, taught by parent and by teacher, with the good set in front of it in all attractive colors, warned against evil and protected against it through childhood and on through youth, with the pleadings of a mother's love, with the pleadings of a father's experience, with everything to induce it to choose rightly, that soul has chosen wrongly. If that be so it needed that bitter lesson ere it would learn the evil of that course. If it would not learn by love, by pleading, by good training, by the gentlest education, by the love of father and of mother, by all the tender ties of home—if it refused to learn by those and the passion nature was so vehement that the soul was carried away as by unbroken horses attached to a car, then the meaning is that the soul needed that lesson ere it would learn to choose the right; that choosing the wrong in despite of everything, choosing the wrong in face of all good influences, then nothing but the bitter scourge of pain can teach that soul to choose the right in all lives

to come; and which is the better, that the soul should face that lesson learned, bitter as it is, experience it, terrible as it is, and then for all lives to come rise above the possibility of the fall; or that, still desiring the evil, still longing for that experience that promises delight, the soul should miss the lesson and go ignorant on its way certain to fall when the temptation comes back again with less favorable circumstances surrounding the soul, often to fall with a deeper and more terrible fall if evolution has carried it further, if it has climbed higher with that weak spot left untouched within?

Those who are able to realize the long life of the soul can take even that bitterest pain of wrong-doing by a beloved one with equanimity and with patience. They will not lose that soul; they will not in any fashion be separated from that soul. Let the lesson be learned. The soul will be the wiser and the ties because that lesson has been learned and garnered in the experiences of the soul.

So that we say the world's evil is teaching first by experience and later by suffering the souls that will not learn in any other way. We realize it as a necessary stage and it loses its horror and its darkness.

Still further we begin to realize that the facing of evil makes us strong; that if that were not present in the world we could not grow; that in the world we would not grow; that we could not develop, and that we should remain always children in virtue were it not for the struggles that make us gradually develop into spiritual athletes. Exercise is needed everywhere if any living thing is to grow, and the exercise which is struggling against difficulty is that which develops all that is good, all that is noble, all that is true, all that is real. Why, if you wanted to realize it even down on the physical plane, how great luxury, how great could be desired—how great could be the mental and moral fibre of any soul that is submitting to those conditions of youth. It is far harder to withstand luxury than to withstand poverty. It is far harder not to be enervated by excess than it is not to grow under difficult and struggling conditions; and if you take the greatest need of any nation, whether they be great materially or morally, you will find that they are encountering struggle, that by struggling they have grown strong, and that hood is the result of struggles against evil. Those who are issued in the hardening of the muscles of the soul.

FORM AND LIFE.

But I said that man must learn another principle as well as this of evolution if he was to realize the cause and the cure of sin. Remember the distinction drawn between form and life. Remember that the one is always growing and breaking; the other is eternally evolving and losing nothing it has gained. Man seeks happiness; he seeks to grasp the object he desires. He grasps the form, the form crumbles away after he has grasped it. He unites himself with the form; the form crumbles; he has lost it. Follow in thought a growing soul, a soul that first seeks to satisfy itself by wealth; happiness is to be found in wealth; it follows wealth; it seeks wealth, gathers wealth, unites itself with wealth; it draws wealth in and holds it, it is to gain happiness by uniting itself with gold. It gains it. In the midst of the gold it is hungry and discontented and unsatisfied, and having given life to uniting itself with the object of its desire, it has the old again, lonely, unmoved. What a lesson for the soul that that union did not give happiness, that that union was a mistaken union and could not bring satisfaction; and all those to-day who are seeking wealth, who think that in wealth is happiness, who toil early and late to be rich, who are struggling for it and living for it, who are spending their lives to unite themselves with gold—they will have their lesson, life after life. United with gold they will find unhappiness with the union; united with gold they will find discontent and the treasure, united with gold they will find it a degraded manhood unable to enjoy; encircled with glittering treasures they will learn by that bitter experience that to join themselves to gold was a mistake, to join themselves with wealth was a blunder.

And the soul seeks pleasure, seeks to grasp the object of its pleasure, perhaps in beauty, the outer beauty of form, and seeks the man or the woman, attracted by the mere fact of resemblance outside, to gain possession and in that union find happiness. The union is attained; happiness is grasped; it crumbles, either by age, or sickness, or decay, or death. That beloved form disappears and he who had clung to the form finds his life empty and misery succeeds upon that union.

And so as the soul grows it tries form after form, higher and higher as it evolves, and it joins itself to every kind of emotion and the emotion wears it and it find weariness instead of satisfaction; and then it tries intellect and science and literature and science, and exhausts itself in uniting itself to these higher objects yet, and in the end dissatisfaction, weariness and restlessness and the hunger of the soul ever returning, fed on stones instead of on bread. And so by countless lessons repeated life after life the soul finally learns that union with form brings sorrow, that union with external things brings grief; and then the soul begins to seek within the forms, begins to search within the forms.

What is this keen instinct in the soul that ever sets it seeking union everywhere however mistaken in its search? It is because the Divine Life is within every form and the Divine Life is the attractive power though the soul only sees the form in which the life is clothed. The real attraction as magnet to iron is divinely within the outer object, and inasmuch as the spirit of man is divine, just as water seeks to rise to its own level and only at its own level has rest, so the spirit in man, divine and imprisoned in matter, seeks ever to rise to the divine which is of its own nature, and will never rest until it finds its rest in God; but it is the Divine Life that is the magnet power that draws it. It is the broken rays of the Self that the broken rays of the Self that are the real attractive power in everything no matter how low and how base the form, and man in blindly grasping after objects is following the impulse from within and is trying to find the Self under every form, only he clings to the form instead of piercing within it to the life.

How else should the soul learn its lesson save by the breaking of the form? How should the soul ever come onward to seek the life if the form ever remained within its grasp? How should the soul ever find its deeper, its higher joys, unless disappointment broke it away from everything that is transient, that changes? And so in love and in compassion the divine which is alone eternal lets every form break within our grasp, and gradually we learn to look to the life, the life that is within the form, and joining ourselves to that we have found a place of happiness.

(Continued on page 100)

DR. J. M. PEEBLES VS. THE ANTI-SPIRITUALISTS.

A REMARKABLE SEANCE,

In Which Pictures and Messages Are Given.

DR. PEEBLES' GENERAL EPISTLE

To the Preachers and Members of the National Anti-Spiritualist Convention,

A FATHERLY EPISTLE—COMBINING INSTRUCTION AND CHASTISEMENT, COMMENDATION AND ADMONISHMENT—PROPOSES A PRACTICAL TEST, WHICH WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Beloved Brethren:—Like the apostle of old "I beseech you by the mercies of God," to ground your weapons against Spiritualism, which is of God. I beseech you in tenderest tones to pause in your fight against spiritual manifestations, which are God's living witnesses of a future-immortal existence.

"God," said Jesus, "is spirit"—that is, the infinite Spirit power and presence of the universe. And men being made in the image of God are necessarily moral and spiritual beings; and spirit responds to spirit in all worlds visible and invisible just as naturally as music responds to music. Accordingly in all ages and among all nations, there have been various spiritual manifestations, for God is no respecter of persons. Socrates had his attending spirit and Jesus conversed with Moses and Elias upon the mount of transfiguration. Take Spiritualism out of the Bible and it is a lifeless shell. "Where there is no vision," say the Scriptures, "the people perish." Do you, beloved brethren, have visions? If not, is it not one reason why your churches are so empty on Sundays? Paul declared that he "was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." Signs, trances, visions, clairvoyance, and the "discerning of spirits" accompanied the apostles, disciples and primitive Christians for three hundred years after Christ. Then there came a "falling away" of Christianity. It became political, commercial, worldly, creed-enrusted—in a word, unspiritual. And you Christians, because of your schisms, sectarian creeds and scheming worldliness have lost the gifts of the spirit—spiritual manifestations; and you seem to be mad because Spiritualists, or anybody else have these gifts, and hence the inauguration of this unchristian "anti-Spiritualistic" movement.

ADMONISHETH AGAINST PROFANITY.

Accustomed as I am to associating with physicians, cultured scientists and the learned literary bodies of this country and Europe, I say it with sorrow, I have not in years heard such coarse profanity as I heard in the pulpit of the "Church of God" on Thursday and Thursday evening last. Listen: "Hellishness," "The hell-holes of seance-rooms," "Dammable teachings," "Devilish doctrines of Spiritualism," if mediums are influenced it is by "The Devil and his imps," "Vipers of hell," "Dammable heresies." Such pulpit profanity shocked my sensitive nature, aflame with love and charity. Beloved brethren, try and shun such profanity, such unchristian, uncharitable language. When rude street boys use such words as "hellishness," "hell-holes," "devilish," and "dammable" it is called swearing. Dear brethren, give heed to Paul: "But the fruit of the spirit," that is Spiritualism, "is love, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness," etc.

ASKETH PERTINENT QUESTIONS.

You repeatedly declared that the Bible, the infallible Word of God, condemned Spiritualism. But if infallible, how dare you revise and correct it? What audacity to revise the infallible Word of God! But what Bible, dear brethren? The Donay version of the Catholics, King James Protestant version, or the revised version, where Devil reads "demon," hell, "hades," damned, "condemned," and heresies read "factions." And then, there was published in England the "Breeches Bible," the "Vinegar Bible," the "Wicked Bible," from the printers carelessly omitting the word "not" from the seventh commandment. And there was also the "Molasses or Treacle Bible," arising from translating "no balm in Gilead," "there is no treacle at Gilead." The Woman's Bible is now attracting a great deal of attention. But the most brand new Bible, the "Polychrome Bible," is being brought out by Prof. Paul Haupt, with his assistants, of the Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore. But which—of these Bibles, brethren, do you choose—which do you select as the Word of God? Not one of them condemns true Spiritualism. They sustain it. They condemn the false just as they condemned the priests—the fraudulent priests. Listen to the Hebrew prophet: "Oh, priests, ye have been a snare on Mizpah. . . ye teach for hire and the seers thereof divine for money."

"Spiritualism is of the Devil," you said, and "would live as long as the Devil lived." I deny the existence of a personal devil. What do you preachers know about him? If he exists, what did God create him for? He certainly did not create himself, because self-creation is self-stultification. Where is the Devil? Who has seen him? Can you bring him onto your platform, something as you have challenged mediums to bring spirits there? You are in want of money; now then, I will give you my check for \$1,000, the moment you will give us a Bible manifestation of that Devil that you believe in. Bring him out. You certainly have good conditions, profanity is one, slander is another, and hypocrisy still another.

HE EATETH GRAPES IN GEHENNA.

If a personal devil exists, and is rapidly converting so many millions, and among them multitudes of Christians, to Spiritualism, as the Rev. Mr. Haganman admitted—if he is roaming about ruining souls, why doesn't God kill him at once? An all-powerful, omnipotent God can destroy the Devil, but will not; or he would destroy the Devil, but cannot! How is it brethren? I see no use in the world for the Devil, do you? Preaching him does not scare people as it once did, and neither does the preaching of hell. In the revised version hell is polished down to hades. Another word rendered hell, is Gehenna, the Valley of Hinnom, originally just outside the walls of Jerusalem, where the worm should never die, nor the fires of hell be quenched. But the worm has died, and the fires of hell have been quenched, (Mark ix: 43, 44, 45) and I saw vegetation and vines growing there luxuriantly in this valley called hell in the New Testament. Later in the season I plucked and ate most delicious grapes in Gehenna, this hell mentioned in Mark's gospel. Think of it, brethren, clusters of luscious grapes growing in hell! Let us now sing:

"Oh! what would it be to be there!"—

in the fruit season.

HE MAKETH A CHALLENGE.

While you padlocked the lips of Moses Hull, myself and all others who were not members of your anti-Spiritualist convention, you challenged Spiritualist mediums to come onto your platform under your conditions and give tests, demonstrations, or spiritual manifestations. Swords are two edges, shields, two sides. I propose to test you; propose to weigh you in Christ's own scales. Jesus said, Mark xvi: 17, "These signs shall follow them that believe." What signs, what tests? They shall cast out demons, speak with new tongues, take up serpents, drink deadly things, lay hands on the sick, etc. Brethren, you say you are believers in Christ—do these signs follow you? No twisting or dodging! Last night you offered to give thousands upon thousands of dollars to any medium who would come onto your platform and give a spiritual manifestation. I follow your example. One of the signs, one of the tests of a believer in Christ is to "take up serpents!" Now, I will put a box of rattlesnakes onto

your pulpit-platform. And if you Christ-believing preachers will thrust your hand into that box and take up those serpents, I will give you convention \$1,000; or if you preachers, professed believers in Christ, will drink such "deadly things" as prussic acid, carbolic acid, belladonna and strychnine, a vial each, which I will hand you, and not be hurt, I will give you my check for \$5,000.

Beloved brethren, you said you wanted money to carry on your work. Now, by drinking these poisons, and taking up these rattlesnakes—if not hurt—you will accomplish two objects, viz.: get money and prove that you are really are believers in Christ. Will you do it? Will you? Dare you try? Last year 3,000 died in India from cobra and other snake bites, and among them was one Lutheran missionary on the Malabar coast. His belief in Christ did not save him, and the promised "sign" did not follow him. How do you account for it, brethren?

COMMENDETH THEIR GOOD WORKS.

Your work in exposing fraudulent mediums is very commendable. Moses Hull, myself and other true Spiritualists, bid you in this, God speed. But why did you not extend the scope so as to take in the fraudulent preachers and fraudulent church members? This very hour I read in the Indianapolis News that the Rev. B. L. Prather, of Crawfordsville, Ind., had been arraigned and found guilty on "eight charges of gross immorality." Yesterday's dailies from the great cities had accounts of three preachers and two Sunday-school superintendents arrested for different crimes. I have a printed list of over 2,000 preachers and Sunday-school superintendents that in serving "the world, the flesh and the Devil," have in the past been arraigned, convicted and sent to jails and penitentiaries. How many that ought to have been there, have escaped justice, I am not prepared to say. And yet you speak of the "demoralizing influences of Spiritualism." . . . Yes, yes, brethren, let us unite and expose these hypocrites, these "frauds" and fraudulent Christians before they further disgrace Christianity.

Spiritualism, while inhering in and originating from God who is Spirit, does not rest merely upon phenomena, but upon Spirit—upon the spiritual and moral constitution of man, which constitution requires such spiritual sustenance as inspiration, prayer, faith, vision, music, trance, clairvoyance and heavenly impressions from the divine spheres of love and wisdom.

Spiritualists, many of them, open their seances with prayer. They sing hymns. They cultivate the higher spiritual graces. They cherish that charity which is of more importance than faith or hope. They see in every crystal stream a flowing Jordan; in every verdure-clad mountain a present Olivet; in every well cultivated prairie a Canaan flowing with milk and honey. They consider true Christianity and true Spiritualism to be in perfect accord. And ignoring all blood, and all blood atonements, whether pagan or Jewish, they teach deeds—good deeds, rather than creeds. They teach salvation by character, or by life, as did Paul, who said, "being reconciled we shall be saved by His life." (Romans v: 10).

TELLETH OF WISE AND GOOD SPIRITUALISTS.

The great and the good of the past and the present were, or are Spiritualists. Sir William Crookes, Dr. A. R. Wallace, Prof. De Morgan, the great mathematician, Prof. Challis, astronomer of Cambridge, J. Herman Fichte, the distinguished philosopher and metaphysician, M. Leon Favre, Consul-General of France, who honored me with a seat in his seance-room several times. I never met Victor Hugo but once, and then in a spiritual seance in Paris; Mrs. Hollis Billings was the medium. Dr. Robert Chambers, of Edinburgh, was a Spiritualist. M. Thiers, ex-president of the French Republic, wrote: "I am a Spiritualist and an impassioned one, and I am anxious to confound materialism in the name of spiritual science and good sense."

Dr. Adam Clarke, the great Methodist commentator, says, pages 208, 209: "I believe there is a supernatural and spiritual world in which human spirits, both good and bad live in a state of consciousness. I believe that any of these spirits may . . . have intercourse with this world and become visible to mortals." The Wesleys had noises, raps and spiritual manifestations in their house for years. Surely, brethren, Brother Haganman would not brand Wesley's home or prayer-room a "hell-hole of the Devil and his imps," if spirits did there manifest.

William Howitt, Judge J. W. Edmonds of New York, Prof. Hare, of Philadelphia, and William Lloyd Garrison, of Boston; and Longfellow, when upon his last European tour attended spiritual seances at the residence of the Guppies in Naples, and of Baron Kirkup, in Florence. I saw his card in their card baskets. Stanford, who built the California University, costing millions, was an avowed Spiritualist.

The thinkers, a majority of the great and good men of the enlightened world to-day, are Spiritualists. Massive-brained Moses Hull, right here in this convention, walks an intellectual giant among these theological hilleupians who, I believe, will be ultimately saved, because the "Holy Scriptures" declare that "the Lord preserveth the simple."

It pleased me to meet in your convention, brethren, my old friend, Prof. J. Stanley Grimes, who honored me with a most favorable notice in one of his books published over thirty years ago. Now, over ninety years of age, he still lectures and continues to be a free-thinking materialist. And by the way, the future religious and scientific battle touching immortality will not be fought between Christians and Spiritualists, but between materialists and Spiritualists. "If a man die shall he live—live again," is still a world-wide question. And the only organizations that can rationally answer it with tangible demonstrations are Spiritualists and Theosophists.

The rector of the Episcopal church in Anderson would take no part in this bitter, unchristian tirade against Spiritualism. Evidently he believed that men not only have a right to their honest beliefs, have a right to be respected for their conscientious convictions; but that "God maketh his angels" ministering spirits. The Apostles' Creed teaches the "communion of saints," and after the reading of this, there is often sung:

"The saints on earth and those above,
But one communion make."

REPROVETH THEM FOR THEIR UNBELIEF.

Beloved brethren, of this convention, your unbelief, your materialist infidelity is to me, exceedingly painful. To wit: You cannot believe in the present ministry of spirits, in clairvoyance, clairaudience, vision, trance, in brief, spiritual manifestations though witnessed and attested to by your neighbors, friends and many of the most eminent men of the country. Yet, at the same time you believe that "the Lord took off the Egyptian's chariot wheels." Believe that the "Lord made woman out of one of Adam's ribs." Believe that God "wet Gideon's sheep-sheep." Believe that "Abraham was circumcised when ninety years old;" that the "Lord sent lying spirits to Ahab;" that the "Lord wanted offerings of ram's skins dyed red and badger's skins;" that the "sun and moon stood still;" that "Samson chased and caught the foxes;" that the Devil "carried Jesus up into the mountain," and that the "whale swallowed Jonah." Yes, you believe, piously believe all the above things, though reported to have occurred two or three thousand years ago among those old semi-barbarous Jews. Indeed, facts have to come two thousand years old before they can make entrance into your hard, dry, bigot-enrusted craniums. May God have mercy on your cold, skeptical souls! Spiritualism is a fact, and so acknowledged by psychic re-

search societies and the most erudite men of the age. It is a fact freighted with many frauds and fraudulent mediums. Let them be exposed—all of them exposed. Let the tares be pulled up and cast into the fire. I repeat, let them be exposed whether fraudulent mediums or fraudulent Christians in pulpits, wearing the livery of heaven. In this matter we are as a unit, dear brethren.

But as the heavens are higher than the earth, so is Spiritualism higher than spiritism. Spiritualism is a truth, and all truth is immortal. "I am the way and the truth and the life," said the Christ of Nazareth. Spiritualism is also a religion and a philosophy. It is the complement of primitive Christianity, and the antidote to materialism.

SWEET THINGS OF SPIRITUALISM.

Spiritualism, with its loving Father in heaven; its brotherhood of man; its present and perpetual ministry of spirits; its fatherly chastisements for wrongdoing; its open heart towards all reforms; its sweet charity for human misfortunes; its encouraging, inspiring words to the sick; its comforting voice to the mourner, and its musical whisperings of love and precious memories from those who have crossed the crystal river, putting on immortality and summering in the eternal verdure and bloom of those elysian fields of the blest where souls never lapse nor suns never set—is of God. I repeat, this Spiritualism is of God. It has come to stay and it will stand forever.

Grace, mercy and peace be unto you, brethren. Farewell.
J. M. PEEBLES, M. D.
Indianapolis, Ind.

LIGION MAKES HIM NARVOUS.

I's been preached 't'bout dat hebbin an' dat hell an' likes er dat,
Till my brains begin ter rattle up agin my anshent hat,
'Bout de faddah an' his daughtah an' de mangah an' de cows,
An' de baby dat wuz bo'n dar, an' widout de marriage vows;
'Bout ole Adam an' de woman dat wuz made ter be his bride,
Dat dey tuk while he wuz sleepin', fum his right er lef'-han' side.
'Bout ole Noah an' his floatin' in er stable, house er boat;
'Bout de whale dat swallered Jonah down his greasy, slimy throat;
Till I kaint git back my senses long ernuff ter sleep an' eat,
An' I feels lak I is crazy jest ter reach de mercy seat.
Dey's done gone got me rattled down undehneath my hat,
An' fo' de Lawd, its sartin, I down know whar I's at.
Dey tole me 'bout de debbil runnin' 'roun' erbout de lan' an' er ketchin' ob de sinnahts till I's mos' er crazy man,
Fer I knows I's been er sinnah now fer many, many years,
An' I's made de faddah angry wid me—'scuse dese burnin' teahs—
Ap' I'd lak ter ax Ijis padhon but I down knoy whar He's at,
An' I lit makes me mouty narvous down undehneath my hat.
Fer I knows dat I's er sinnah an' de Lawd he knows lit, too,
An' de gates am locked ergin me till de debbil gits his due,
I kin feel dem crooked fringah ez de tech my kinky ha'r;
I kin heah de heahy treadin' ob dem hoofs, and feel de jar,
An' de yearth hit farly trembles when de preachah makes him glow,
But I's done gone got so rattled dat I kaint pray any mo'.
DR. T. WILKINS.

ALL LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL.

All life is beautiful, the humblest flower
That cheers the dusty highway with its smiles,
Has something in it of a heavenly power
That off my heart of weariness beguiles.
The blue-eyed violet of the glen and grove,
Spring's sweetest offering, is a thought of God—
A tiny poem whispering of his love
And making eloquent the soulless clod.
A shining pebble in the river's bed
That scarcely makes a ripple where it lays,
May teach a lesson worthy to be read
By all who murmur at the world's dull ways.
The soft green moss we tread beneath our feet,
The waving grass that carpets hill and plain,
Take to their generous hearts the dew or sleet,
And, uncomplaining, greet the autumn rain.
They do not question of its use and power,
But meekly they receive what'er is given,
Thankful alike for sunshine or for shower,
As we should be for all the gifts of heaven.
There's nothing comes within our scope of vision,
From flower to star, from insect up to man,
But seems to say to us, I have my mission,
And fill my place in the Creator's plan.
The world is filled with elements of power
Which only want the chemistry of Thought
To make them known, and fill each passing hour
With wonders mightier than the e'er wrought.
Earth, air, and ocean, teem with life unseen—
Undreamed of by the sages of our time;
Its subtle links pass not before the screen,
On which are shadowed all our hopes sublime.
Seminary, Belvidere, N. J. BELLE BUSH.

THE GOLDEN SUMMERLAND.

Adapted to the tune, "The Pride of the Ball."
Oh! the beautiful summerland,
Just beyond the veil,
Where our hopes and joys never fail.
Countless the hearts that are longing now,
Longing for the time
When they will reach that land sublime.
Chorus:—
Happy will we be when we reach that golden shore;
Happy in the arms of our loved ones evermore.
Joy to the souls that have reached that shining strand,
Over there in the golden summerland.
Joy'll be to those whose earthly life,
Free from selfish gain,
And all who seek not worldly fame;
But that other lives may happy be,
In this world of strife—
Dealing kindly, bettering life.
Chorus:—"Happy will we be," etc.
Now let us all unite as one
In shouting huzzas;
For the spirits merit applause.
They come our aching hearts to cheer,
Filled with doubts and fears
Of the future. They dry our tears.
Chorus:—"Happy will we be," etc.
Columbia City, Ind. D. D. GLASS.

At the home of the medium, Mr. William Means, of Williamston, Mich., on the evening of August 30, 1897, was held a seance which, in the strictness of its test conditions and the remarkable quality and quantity of its results, has never been equalled in the experience of the writer.

There were twenty-eight persons in the circle surrounding the table upon which the spirit friends did the work.

The specialty of Mr. Means' mediumship is independent pencil writing of messages, and the production of spirit engravings.

Mr. Means was thoroughly searched by a committee of two to make sure there was no paper about his person; the paper was torn from a tablet and each leaf held to the light in full view of the sitters, and at the suggestion of Mr. Henry Collar, each piece was marked in the corner with a punch which he took from his pocket, making a clean-cut hole in the form of a Greek cross, and the punch returned to its owner. The marked paper (one piece for each one in the circle) was laid on the little table, and, after a few appropriate and touching remarks by the medium and an invocation by Mrs. J. M. Walton, the circle joined hands, with Mr. Cubot at the medium's right-hand and Mr. Schooley holding his left. The light was turned out, the audience joined in singing familiar hymns, and the medium immediately passed into a trance condition, with his usual contortions and heavy breathing. His principal guide and control, Dr. Henry Crooker, announced to us that they were intending to produce a wonderful picture for the medium, more beautiful than anything they had before executed, and asked for our united help and kindly feeling toward the medium. At the end of an hour, by direction of the controlling spirit, the lamps were lighted, revealing the medium in an unconscious condition, leaning heavily against Mr. Schooley.

The papers were scattered on the table and floor, all folded exactly alike, each with the mark of the punch in the corner, and each containing a message or picture, and directed on the outside to some one in the audience.

The messages were many of them beautiful and appropriate, and all were signed by spirit friends of those to whom they were addressed, but some were just a word, saying that the medium was exhausted and they were unable to write more.

Four pictures were found, one addressed to Mr. Vance Taylor, with a message from his father, J. C. Taylor; one to Mr. and Mrs. James Little, nicely executed and containing appropriate messages from different friends of theirs in spirit life; one to Mr. Chas. Schooley, of Lansing, Mich., containing an excellent picture of Abraham Lincoln, with a short message pertaining to our national interests, signed A. Lincoln, in his hand-writing; also a message from his daughter, who was drowned six years ago at Haslett Park, and another from his wife, who passed out two years ago.

But the wonder of the evening was the picture produced for the medium. It was announced to us during the seance by Dr. Crooker that a wonderful picture was in process of execution by their spirit artists, by the use of carbon taken from the atmosphere, and that a message would be given as a key to the picture and its symbols. I copy a portion of the message as a help to a description of the picture. It is as follows: "The picture which we present to our medium and the world, though not as fine as our spirit artists intended, is nevertheless ingeniously designed and executed, and, under the all-seeing eye of celestial discernment, will be awarded its place and appreciation. The picture was designed by the old Magi—Old Man of the Mountain—and bears emblems belonging to both Magi and Mason. Every figure is emblematic—they are found in their respective places, the counts are correct— suffice for us to say that the figures are in three, counting either way; that with the banner message, which is in three sections, there are seven counts—3-7-21—which will be understood and appreciated by members of the ancient orders herein symbolized."

Like the medium, I am neither Magi, Mason nor Odd Fellow, and the symbols in the picture are meaningless to me. I can only do my best to describe the picture in its beauty, and the perfect arrangement of its lines and angles, and give the messages that are inscribed upon it. The picture is eight and one-half inches in width and five in height. In the center above is the "All-Seeing Eye," or "All Father." Underneath the "Eye" is a fine picture of the Capitol Building at Washington, and at the left of the Capitol is a picture, or map, of the world, in the form of a sphere two and one-half inches in diameter, upon which is presented the profile view of Abraham Lincoln, inclining toward the Capitol, and just back of him is a front view of Thomas Jefferson, while above and in the background is the picture of an old man with flowing hair and beard, supposed to represent the old Magi—"Old Man of the Mountain." Above and attached to the sphere is a beautiful dove, bearing a streamer, upon which is inscribed this quotation: "You shall not rob these creatures of God of their equal right with you to share that land, to share those bounties."

Beneath the Capitol and overlapping the lower portion of the sphere are three beautiful banners, bearing this message to the nation:

"Yes, over your nation's Capitol rests the sympathy of heaven. Arisen ones, partakers of the fullness of love, who have come to know the true science of government, will direct in bringing men and world's nearer together for the good of all. 'I and the Father are one,' because the individual is a part of the infinite ALL. Upon this basic principle must your national events be controlled. Instruments in the clay timent must co-operate with heavenly ones. Your finite globe is not a world distinct; it is only an individual mite, belonging to the great whole. Know your dependence; recognize this principle evolved through the Nazarene; ally yourselves with an immortal congress whose coin current bears the fiat of oneness, equality, love," etc., etc.

(Signed) A. LINCOLN.

THOS. JEFFERSON.

The signatures of Lincoln and Jefferson were in their own hand-writing, in perfect form, as shown by comparison.

At the lower left-hand corner of the picture is an anchor crossing a sword, at whose point is a naked heart. At the lower right-hand corner we see a circle of peculiar construction. Within the circle is a triangle with strange characters upon it, and within the triangle we see the rising sun shining upon the dim outlines of the pyramids.

At the lower center under the central banner we find the ark of safety floating upon peaceful waters, with the three links of the Odd Fellows imprinted upon the end, and upon the roof ten ciphers with the figure 1 at the left, and the sign plus with two ciphers at the right. Upon the side of the ark is a symbol which some one may understand, consisting of a horizontal bar with a short perpendicular bar at each end, the one at the left end being a little the longer, while from the center above rises a short perpendicular bar surmounted by a horizontal bar of about half the length of the lower one. Little idea of the beauty and symmetry of the picture can be obtained from my description, but I have done my best.

In conclusion, I wish to say that Bro. Means is a newly developed medium, who was only converted to Spiritualism five years ago, but whose ministrations among us have been fruitful in the spread of the truth, whose honesty is unquestionable, and that he is entitled to the support and encouragement of all true Spiritualists.

Williamston, Mich. HIRAM RIX, JR.

The flower she touched on dipped and rose.—Tennyson



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