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## AN IMPORTANT QUESTION ANSWERED.

Does Science Harmonize with the Assumptions of Materialists, as Regards Spiritual Existence?

A LECTURE WRITTEN BY HON. J. W. DAVENPORT, AND DELIVERED BY HIS DAUGHTER ADDA, ON MARCH 25, 1900, AT A CONVOCACTION OF LIBERALISTS AT SILVERTON, OREGON.

In all ages of the world, so far as we know, human beings have believed or assumed that man has a dual nature, consisting of a material part, the body, and an immaterial part called the spirit or soul. As to this, there seemed to be no doubt among the ancients; it was only when the question arose as to whether the soul continued to live after the death of the body, that doubts disturbed them.

Of late, however, a class of people whom we may denominate materialists, presuming, perhaps, upon the ominous silence of science as respects continued existence, denies the dual nature of man and affirms that the so-called soul is not an entity at all, but that the intellectual processes, powers of mind, passions, affections and will, formerly supposed to be attributes of the soul, are merely the result of actions of the brain, and of course cease with the dissolution of the material organ.

Evidently, if this be true, there is an end of all rational religions, and should be an end of all human aspirations beyond this transitory existence.

To those who have parted with near and dear ones at the grave, and who cherish the fond hope of a reunion under more favorable conditions of existence, it is rather degrading to be told authoritatively that a future state is all a delusion and a snare; the love they felt and the fond expectations which have sustained them through many sorrows, are nothing but functions of matter, evanescent phenomena, that must cease with the dissolution of the body. But if it be the fact, it is the part of wisdom to conform to them, although thereby this world might become in truth a vale of tears.

And if we go no deeper into the question than the verdict of a coroner's jury, or accept no further evidence than the visual sense of the common people, likely there is no avoidance of the materialistic idea, for it is a *prima facie* case, the man is dead; and the soul being merely a function of matter, in the form of brain, as a separate existence, is unthinkable.

But is it so? How do we know? What additional light has come to the moderns, to take away the longings of the millions who live and move and have their being in the glorious prospect of a spiritual future?

The answer is, Science says so. Evolution has demonstrated the impossibility of such a consequence.

Beginning with a cell of unthinking, unfeeling protoplasm, by nutrition, assimilation, growth and reproduction, by differentiation and the interaction of the cells and physical forces, whereby the impact of light produces eyes, and the titillation of the atmospheric pulses creates ears, and other vibrations produce the other organs of sense, thus building up, through a low succession of inferior orders of animals, for millions of years, the evolving figure of man, the creature, man, arrived upon the scene, having left far behind all of his brute fellow creatures, the products of evolution like himself.

Now, without entering into any discussion as to what evolution teaches concerning the descent of man, whether his remote ancestors were apes, and those more remote were still lower in the scale of being, as it is immaterial how he became what he is, "a being of life, disconcerting to the eye, and after that it be borne in mind that the crucial question is, as to how the initial cells were begotten and endowed with the power and prescience of evolution? Was the beginning, matter alone, or was it matter plus something else? If by the juxtaposition and aggregation of matter particles alone, whether fortuitously or through the operation of law, other than vital law, the phenomena of life appeared, then reason might affirm the cessation of life, upon the dissipation of the matter particles.

But science does not say that animals are nothing but matter; it does not say that the lowest form, protoplasm, is nothing but matter. True, protoplasm, chemically considered, is a composition of carbonic acid, water and ammonia, with a trace of sulphur and phosphorus, and this is dead protoplasm, and no chemist can make a particle of it, or endow a cell of it with life. That substance is a cellular organization, or organization is a result and not a cause of life.

If the materialists, by their logical abracadabra, chemistry, electricity, any form of energy, or any sort of hocus-pocus, can furnish up the particles of inert matter so as to produce the phenomena of life, they may say without contradiction, that science is supreme. But they haven't done it and real scientists, even of the materialistic persuasion, admit that such is an impossible feat.

In a late work upon Comparative Anatomy and Physiology, by Prof. Bell, of King's College, we may read as follows: "After a time a living organism may be seen to be unable to withstand the action of surrounding forces in the midst of which it has lived, grown and reproduced itself; in other words, its activity diminishes and diminishes until at last it dies. From this dead matter, living material can never, by any process now known to us, be produced; for so far as we know, living matter can only proceed from other living matter."

If our materialistic brethren could expand their powers of ratiocination a little, they must certainly see that when they adopt a cell or soul-cell as the beginning, without accounting for it upon their dead matter principles, they admit their whole case away. People who believe in something besides or beyond matter and force, may care little whether the life principle or spirit or

soul, is partitioned by cells or has a residence in the aggregate; it is enough to know that the spiritual entity must precede the cell, in fact the cell is its clothing, its handiwork, and the sine qua non of earthly evolution.

And whether we think of the cell or the evolved product humanity, the same question confronts those who seek to account for organized and living matter by confining with inorganic material, and although they have resorted to unnumbered hypotheses, and incessantly experimented with all known reagents and forces, they are no further along than those who postulate an indestructible spirit existence in nature. To the question, what is life and whence does it come, all must answer, "It is of the unknown."

I do not forget that Baastian's experiments seemed to point towards spontaneous generation as the answer, but that proved to be only an ignis fatuus under the severe experimentation, of Prof. Tyndall.

Prof. Henry Drummond, of Glasgow, writes in his treatise, entitled *Natural Law in the Spirit World*, as follows:

"What essentially is involved in saying that there is no spontaneous generation of life? It is meant that the passage from the mineral world to the plant or animal world is hermetically sealed on the mineral side. This inorganic world is staked off from the living world by barriers which have never yet been crossed from within. No change of substance, no modification of environment, no chemistry, no electricity, nor any form of energy, nor any evolution can endow any single atom of the mineral world with the attribute of life. Only by the beading down into this dead world, of some living form, can these dead atoms be gifted with the properties of vitality; without this preliminary contact with Life they remain fixed in the inorganic sphere forever."

Prof. Huxley, who is an authority with materialists, writes in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (new edition Art. Biology): "The present state of knowledge furnishes us with no link between the living and the not living."

J. Hutchinson Sterling, LL. D., writes: "We are in the presence of the one incommunicable gulf—the gulf of all souls—that gulf which Mr. Huxley's protoplasm is as powerless to cross as any other material expedient that has ever been suggested since the eyes of men first looked into the mighty gulf between death and life."

Such quotations might be continued indefinitely, but it is unnecessary, as there is not a name among scientists to bolster up an opposite opinion. There is no warrant in science to support the denials of materialists, as respects the spiritual principle. They have not been able to account for or explained organization upon any other principle, and they have most signally failed to show that it is an attribute of matter or any modification of force.

Biology, which is frequently mentioned as the science containing positive knowledge as to Huxley's missing link, gives no answer as to the genesis of being. The most that it can say, is that life exists and has no known beginning. And in truth, Biology, at present, is a tentative science only, makes no pretension to being a book of genesis. As to that, it makes no affirmations or denials; it simply treats of what is, and even of that in no dogmatic way.

It must be remembered that when we say science affirms this or denies that, the word is personified and includes all branches of knowledge, concrete and abstract, and quite frequently, such use is indefinite, not to say reckless. Science is the work of enquirers of all kinds and of all times, whom we may call scientists. But scientists are of all shades of belief and unbelief; some are Christians and some are infidels or agnostics, and the work of investigating nature, discovering her laws, arranging and systematizing thereunto the accumulation of knowledge, goes on quite as well under the management of believers and unbelievers. And the reason is not far to seek. The uplift of enlightenment has been to the whole of society, including the church, and so we find orthodox Christians earnestly engaged in scientific research and ready acceptors of every advance in positive knowledge.

The evolutionary theory, the work principally of Darwin, is the most far-reaching assault upon revelation, but it is quite generally received by scientists, whether within or without the church. One great scientist, of liberal religious views, Agassiz, did not consider the theory well established and remained unconvinced until his death.

President McCosh of Princeton, quite conservative in religious matters, saw nothing alarming in evolution. In evolution, in truth, the world's great reformers, thinkers, discoverers, explorers, those who have done the greatest part in pushing back the boundaries of the unknown, were earnest men and women of faith, believers in a god or supreme intelligence, and power, and the continued existence of the human soul after the death of the body.

Copernicus and Bruno were not atheists or skeptics, as respects the essentials of the then existing religion and the latter was not burned on account of his philosophical opinions, but because the teaching of them undermined the prestige and power of the church, diminished the influence of the priesthood over the common people and curtailed the revenues of the sacerdotal orders.

The Inquisitors of Rome cared less for the purity of their religious doctrines than the plethora of their exchequer; it was the love of power, rather than the love of principle which made them torturers and dissenters, and so it is to-day whether in the church or in the state. And generally, we may say that it is the possession of power by the human animal which makes him dangerous to his fellow creatures; but power comes from organization and the beginning or nucleus of organization is creed; and it makes but little difference what the creed is, liberal or illiberal, the organization, sooner or later, if not successfully resisted, becomes despotic. A dominant church without a hell is just as dangerous as a church with one; for there are other successful means of terrifying and controlling human beings besides the fear of hell fire; and that the latter was inadequate to prevent heresy is shown by the superadded devices of the Inquisition, the thumb-screw and iron boot, the bed of spikes, boiling oil, and fagot.

The heretic had no rights of conscience, for to admit one, destroyed the church's claim to inferracy of doctrine and the infallibility of its visible head, and without these the church could not have existed as a governing institution. Hence, while punishment was for the declared crime of heresy or unfaithfulness to the sacred cause of religion, which put the heretic seemingly in opposition to the Almighty, the real aim of Inquisitors was to be found in their dread of the loss of temporal power. Therefore, the so-called sacred laws and religion and science, has been rather a conflict or struggle on the part of the church, to suppress any investigation or idea promotive of change. And that the influence of religious opinions, per se, in restraining or diverting the human mind from the search for scientific truth, has been much overrated, by infidels, is found in the fact that increased knowledge and reforms have come, in the main, from those within the church.

It is difficult to conceive of any world more radical and revolutionary than that of the Romish priests, Luther, Melancthon and others, who were chiefly instrumental in bringing about the Reformation; any discovery in science more profound or fruitful than those of Tycho Brahe, Kepler and Newton, all of them men of strong faith in religious matters. Indeed, it is not discernable how a belief in a Great First Cause, as Pope expressed it, or the Infinite and Eternal Energy of Herbert Spencer, or the Over Soul of Emerson, or the Spiritual and All-pervading God of advanced Christians, can interfere with philosophical research and love of scientific research. Very likely, Newton believed in a God sufficiently omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent to "shape the suns and pillar the blue firmament with light," and also that himself who had the subtlety of mind "to trace the stars and search the heavens for power," was something more than a function of matter; but if such childish beliefs really thwarted his intellect, or narrowed the scope of his observations, what a monster of a monster would have been, if he had been, like our modern materialists, wholly free from any belief as respects the great mystery of existence.

Since Newton's time, most astounding advances have been made in knowledge, in fact, the greater part of the sciences has been built up, but the mystery of Biogenesis is as great a mystery as ever to everybody except school-boys.

The convergence of all knowledge throws no light upon it, and in this negative condition the Hindu conception of emanation or the cognate Jewish idea of creation, which is sufficiently indefinite to admit of almost any conceivable construction, should not be treated contemptuously.

In this connection, I am reminded of the remark of Epicurus to one of his pupils, who was attending the orthodox Platonist, asked his master if he did not think it very foolish, in the then existing state of knowledge, to assert the existence of a God. Epicurus answered yes, and added that he knew of one other assertion just as foolish, viz., the assertion that there is none.

Likely, this is the point B. F. Underwood had in his mind while writing a recent article for the "Torch of Reason," in which he said that "For the word agnostic, as used by those who say 'I don't know whether there is a God or not, I have no use. I think such use of the word indicates the a b c state of thought.' He also said in the same connection, that 'Agnosticism proper is only in regard to the nature of ultimate being, of that of which phenomena are manifestations; of the essence of matter, or of 'spirit'."

Mr. Underwood, for many years, was regarded, next to Ingersoll, the ablest materialist speaker and writer in America, but some time back in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, in replying to an ill-tempered remark of an old friend, concerning his apostasy from the ranks of Materialism, he said: "May you think Materialism is on trial, but it is a mistake; Materialism has been weighed in the balance and found wanting." And quite lately, in the *Torch of Reason* article above referred to, he said: "Popular Materialism and popular Spiritualism are arch-foes; they belong to intellectual childhood."

Yes, without a doubt, popular Materialism is archaic, is out of date, obsolete, and belongs to intellectual childhood. If he means by popular Spiritualism, the show business under the name of Spiritualism, likely, that too, belongs to intellectual childhood. Very likely B. F. Underwood does not include, as popular Spiritualism, the phenomena of which are accounted for given in a book of 352 pages, entitled *Automatic or Spirit Writing*, by his wife, Sara A. Underwood, with an introductory chapter, written by her husband.

Mr. Underwood commences his introduction with a quotation from Dr. W. F. Barrett, Professor of Experimental Physics in the Royal College of Dublin, as follows:

"It is well known to those who have made the phenomena of Spiritualism the subject of prolonged and careful inquiry, in the spirit of exact and unpassioned scientific research, that beneath a repellent mass of imposture and delusion there remains certain indubitable and startling facts which science can neither explain nor deny."

And Mr. Underwood continues his own testimony: "Such a fact is automatic writing, the reality of which is not in dispute, among those who have examined the subject, and further experiments can be of scientific value only in determining the physiological conditions and psychological implications of the phenomena." Mr. U. says: "The writing called automatic does not, in the thought or in the movement of the hand which holds the pen, form a part of any activity, that is the result of repetition of previous mental experience, or what can be properly classed under the term habit or instinct. It is automatic in the sense that it is written without mental or physical effort on the part of the person by whose hand the writing is produced. The planning, thinking, arranging of thoughts and putting them into sentences, as well as the mechanical work of writing, are somehow done in a way to relieve the psychic of all conscious effort in the process of thinking and reduced to the thoughtless writing. The psychic knowledge of what is written is obtained by reading it in the usual way. Another person looking on may learn what is being written while the person whose hand is used to write, is still entirely ignorant in regard to its meaning. The views expressed are often at variance with the idea held by the psychic writer of the handwriting, and bear the least resemblance to that of the same hand when moved by the will and effort of its possessor."

Mr. U. gives the speculations of several psychologists, trying to explain such occult phenomena, but the so-called explanations are more difficult of belief than the Spiritualistic view, which Mr. U. says is the most simple, and the one from which many of the best thinkers see no way of escape.

But automatic writing is only one of innumerable ways by which embodied spirits may leave the continued existence of those who have shuffled off this mortal coil. Mr. U. very fully remarks: "Probably automatic writing and trance speaking are of a kindred nature, and the less common phenomena of voice hearing may have a similar basis."

Socrates, who is regarded as the wisest man of the ancient world, had his daemon that warned him against danger, and often, as he believed, guided him in his private life. Joan of Arc, following the voices, led the soldiers of France to victory.

It is not improbable to my mind that much of the so-called sacred literature of the world was written by scribes who were moved to write by intelligence which they could not identify with their own, and which they believed was divine. The Koran, the sacred authority and guide for many millions of people was, I believe, produced in this supernatural manner, and may it not be true of some of the books of the Bible?

Spiritualism wisely teaches that all "communications" and revelations, from whatever source they profess to come, should be tested by their intrinsic merits. It is said by Mr. Underwood's former co-workers in the lecture hall that he does not "possess" as a Spiritualist; but he is no deluder of his belief that the spiritual hypothesis is the only one that rationally accounts for the real phenomena, and according to the Newtonian maxim, that is the proper guide for reasonable beings. He says, however, that Mrs. Underwood, whose hand has been used in the way described, during the last five years, is personally convinced beyond all doubt, of spirit agency in these communications. And further that "those experiences have proved to me that the spiritual hypothesis is the only one that rationally accounts for the real phenomena, and according to the Newtonian maxim, that is the proper guide for reasonable beings. 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## LIFE AND EXPERIENCE IN SPIRIT LAND

A Series of Letters from Spirit Franz Petersilea to His Son, Carlyle Petersilea.

## LETTER NUMBER EIGHTEEN.

If the higher did not assist the lower in all things, creation would be at a standstill—chaos would result.

My dear son, in one of my previous letters I spoke to you of a time when angelhood was reached, when the two rightful halves or counterparts were blended together and became a completed angel. Now the higher heavens are all composed of angels; completed, bright, glorious angels; far—very far on toward bliss, wisdom, love, and truth; until, at last, they arrive at a point where they understand nearly all natural laws—comprehend them fully in all their details. When an angel reaches this attitude, the angel is in a sphere where there are no children and nothing is in this sphere that is crude or undeveloped; but, do not suppose that the angel selfishly remains here at all times, selfishly enjoying bliss. It is just here that the orthodox makes a grand mistake. Selfish bliss would be as bad as a millionaire of earth, and would immediately fall into a miserly, selfish, grasping angel, and would become like many on earth who know it all and a little more; by that little more we here mean, they will, at last, think they know all about God, can analyze him thoroughly, tell you just how he looks, of what he is composed; in fact that he is composed of a peculiar light in the form of a man.

Well, now, one can readily see that as soon as one can get God under his finger, something as one might a flea, and, perhaps, examine him with a microscope, that one becomes greater than God; in fact, that one has mastered God; for anything that one can understand, one has mastered—becomes the master—consequently is higher than the thing mastered. Now, when one can tell you how God looks and of what he is composed, that one is higher than God—above and beyond him—for that one can tell you all about him and consequently, God sinks into insignificance—has been thoroughly analyzed and mastered, and is beneath the feet, so to speak, of the one who has so analyzed and mastered him.

Is not this the height of folly? Who has ever yet mastered God? I have been in the celestial life for more than twenty years, have been an angel or completed whole for a greater part of that time, have associated with angels of a superior order, but among the countless host have never yet met one who had ever seen God—who could analyze him or knew of what he was composed. Great, eternal laws we are trying to comprehend—to understand; and, as fast as we understand them, we have, by so doing, mastered them; mind and spirit have become greater than the laws they have mastered; perhaps a step nearer toward understanding God's methods or great natural laws; yet, after all, we are subject to those laws and may not transgress them; in fact, we are a part and parcel of them. This brings us back to the point from whence we started—angelhood.

Now we have mastered the laws pertaining to angelhood, consequently have become an angel. If we could master all the laws pertaining to God, or see God, or understand God, or know of what he is composed, we should be God or Gods; but this could never be until the limits of eternity were reached. Eternity has no limits and we can not reach that which is not, consequently can never see God or understand him or analyze him; and, as you have a saying, that no man has ever seen God or looked upon his face and lived, we can say that no angel has ever seen God or expects ever to look upon his face and still retain existence; for to see God—or in other words to reach the limits of eternity which is limitless—would be to cease to exist. Anyone can see that such a postulate is null and void. When anyone of earth tells you God is perceived as a peculiar kind of light in the form of a man, that one really perceives an angel and nothing more.

As we said at the commencement, an angel cannot selfishly remain in bliss, but must go forth—which is the meaning of the word angel—and be a messenger of good to those who have not reached angelhood. Whatever knowledge an angel may have attained must be imparted to those who have not reached the same altitude. Children and all undeveloped spirits must be instructed and all beings still within the material body must also receive knowledge in all its various branches, from us, and we, also, must constantly receive from angels who are beyond and above us in wisdom. Certainly all that we have said must be self-evident; it would seem to need no other proof than the mere stating of the fact.

We often hear those of earth say: "O, we can know so very little about a future life, after all. We hardly know, and really cannot know, much about a future state."

Friends, this is an error. Very much can be known about our life here by those on earth; and right here the Colonel wants to say a few words, and we are more than willing.

"Good friends, don't fall into the error of saying, 'We don't know—we don't know,' but go immediately and try to find out. This, forevermore, shall be my watchword. Uncover. Discover. Find out. If at first you don't succeed, try, try again, and forever quit saying, 'We don't know—we don't know.'"

"Now good Herr Franz and myself are trying to tell you some of the things that you don't know, so that you may know something about this life. Personally, I have no home here yet composed of granite. Personally, I am not yet an angel and must aver that I am still a spirit and expect to be for an indefinite period; but, when you ask me if there are homes here, I answer decidedly in the affirmative—homes so beautiful that I can scarcely look upon them—homes of the spirits and homes of angels—elegant halls and institutions of learning. O my friends, I want to describe to you some of the things that I have seen since coming here. I don't need an especial home at present, for I have enough to do to visit all the places to which I am invited, and what time I have to spare I spend at my earthly home with my wife and children. This, at present, fills my cup more than full, running over, pressed down and shaken together. Don't think that the spirits and angels are all insane when they tell you that they have homes, halls, institutions of learning and so forth; and don't think them untruthful when they tell you that these homes, temples, halls, etc., appear to be composed of marble, granite, alabaster, mother of pearl, diamonds, gold, silver and precious stones; for they certainly look like such things; and yet, far more beautiful; neither does a spirit simply imagine a thing that is not. That would be worse than the Christian Scientist.

"The Christian Scientists say, that all matter is mind, and if you say that the spirits imagine like an insane person that all they see does not exist at all except in their imagination—why you are running at the other end of the gamut.

"Now, let us examine the facts as they really exist. Matter exists as sure as you exist and as sure as the earth, sun and planets exist. Spirit exists as sure as that you have a living principle with or within you, for all life is spirit. Soul exists as sure as that you are yourself or ego—I am—the great I am—that is what the old philosophers called it. Now all existing things are composed of spirit and matter and yet another principle, soul. Some very erudite ones call it force, but why not use the good old word soul, and then the common people, and those who think themselves uncommon or of better matter and spirit than their brother, can comprehend us. When you drop the material you only drop the coarser part of it, that is, the heavy cumbersome part of it, and enter the celestial realm, or the more sublimated part of matter; for the celestial world is composed of sublimated matter which is interlarded with its corresponding spirit also its corresponding soul or entity, ego. I am, each, that I am; and this means a tree is a tree, a flower is a flower, an animal is an animal,

a map is a man and so forth. Whoever thinks that man alone has a soul is in error. Each thing in existence has its own corresponding soul or ego or individuality. Now when a soul or ego enters the world of sublimated matter, it immediately clothes itself with that matter, and everything is clothed according to its kind, for it is the ego which draws to itself its own clothing, covers itself.

"All natural things that arise up from the earth clothe themselves, or take on sublimated matter and appear as formerly except more intensely beautiful; but all works of art which are created within the soul of man must be recreated here and clothed upon with sublimated matter. When a man on earth builds a house composed of marble, granite, wood or stone, or other material, you do not call that man insane and say that that house does not exist except in the imagination of the man and other men, but you say that man has clothed the house, which existed within his mind, with marble, brick, stone or wood, and it is real—an object to be enjoyed by that man and other men. Now we must ask: what are the composites of marble, brick, wood, stone, and so forth? Why, my friends, they are of chemical composition, chemically combined. What is granite? A hard, chemical combination of what at first was sublimated matter. Suppose, then, we enter a world where all matter is in a sublimated condition? We here find sublimated marble, sublimated granite, etc."

"Now a soul says: 'I want a beautiful home. I would like a marble palace; and the soul being more powerful than the sublimated or chemical properties of marble, gathers, by the force of its more powerful will, the sublimated chemicals of marble about it and fashions the house to suit its mind or the pattern existing within the mind. Now this palace is built of real sublimated marble, as real to the spirit or soul as marble is to earthly man or men. The sublimated marble corresponds to the ethereal man as the hard material marble corresponds to the material man, and so of all works of art."

"Now a spirit child does not play with an imaginary cat, or any other imaginary pet animal. The Indian does not ride an imaginary pony. The child plays with a real spirit cat. It would not know how to imagine a cat if it had never seen one. The Indian would not be at all satisfied with an imaginary pony, for the Indian is about as material as he can be, but his pony is the spirit of a real pony. A child must be taught from real objects and not imaginary ones, for small children have not the art of imagination at all developed.

"No; the child must have its real doll, its real cat or dog, or bird, or book, or blocks of figures, or the alphabet—its real pictures and so forth, and it must be clothed in real clothing, else it would be entirely naked, for it has not yet arrived at an age where it is capable of eliminating its clothing from its spirit. The clothing must be eliminated from the mind of its parent, guardian, teacher, or spirit who loves it, and it's little spirit sheltered and cared for."

"The clothing of a spirit or soul is also manufactured from chemical affinities, drawn together by the will of the spirit or soul, and fashioned according to the pattern within the mind. It is the mind working on sublimated matter that causes it to coalesce into the shapes desired, so that it becomes real and objective to all; and remember that these things apply only to works of art. All natural objects exist as they do on earth and draw to themselves their own covering of sublimated matter. All matter is chemical in its nature and can readily be made invisible to the sight of man. The sun is doing this every instant of time—dissolving all material things as rapidly as possible and drawing them upward into the celestial world."

"If water is drawn up by the sun in countless millions and billions of tons, do not you think that gases, carbons, and all chemical properties whatever are also drawn up? But, whatever one may think, such is the case. Not only are they thus drawn upward, or rather outward, but all material things, whatever, first existed as elementary or chemical properties within the never ending ether."

"Now this doesn't sound much like the old Robert, or at least the ego, has drawn to itself and assimilated a little more knowledge. I have clothed myself with sublimated matter instead of condensed or hard matter and it suits me much better. Why, friends, I have simply gotten a new coat, that is all. How do you like it? Looks well, doesn't it? It feels all right and is as easy and subtle as can be. I don't want to say too much this time, else you may think I am telling all I know, and I propose to save a little for another time. Au revoir. ROBERT."

(To be continued.)

## HOW THE DEACON MADE A SKEPTIC.

"Pray! Pray!" said Deacon Nathan, "whatever ills befall! The Lord is always ready to hear his children's call."

"Have faith and pray in earnest, and thou wilt quickly see How powerful a helper thy God will be to thee."

You know how "little pitchers" catch talk in little ears, And children's minds are busy when so it least appears.

The deacon's list'n'g "low-head" remembered what he taught;

"I'll test the matter some day," the little skeptic thought.

One day in brisk hay-making the men folks, hard at work, Were moving, tossing, raking, all trying not to shirk.

When pert, the blond-haired youngster, with eyes so big and blue,

Said, "Let me have a pitchfork, and, father, I'll help too!"

"Here take the very best one—steel-tined and bright it is;" The boy bestrode it quickly in childish ecstasies.

Proud as a knight to battle he rode into the fray, Where man and beast were busy making the fragrant hay.

He pranced off where the lilies were nodding in the wind, And rode along the fences wild raspberries to find.

Upon a knoll where sunshine was playing on a rock, A young snake lay disporting in long, gaunt striped frock.

The boy had been instructed to hate a snake because He tempted Adam's lady to break God's Eden laws.

So up he raised the pitchfork to slay the harmless thing, When on the rock the forked lance struck with terrific ring.

And lo! a time was broken! It rolled off in the grass; Ah, woe and consternation had quickly come to pass.

Dazed by the fell misfortune, down fallen in his path, The spirited young rider foresaw the deacon's wrath.

He thought the grand occasion had come for testing prayer;

And he would have God help him, and mend the pitchfork there.

He fixed the tine together, and held it fast in place; Dropped down there in sunshine and upward turned his face.

"Oh, God! you know my father, and what he'll likely do; If you will mend this pitchfork, I'll do as much for you."

"I never was a troublemaker, and will not be again; Please come and mend this pitchfork, for Jesus' sake. Amen!"

His hands were white and bloodless, so tight the tine they grasped;

Slowly the blue eyes opened, slowly the hands unclasped;

And down the piece went rolling, not mended in the least! He felt the misinstruction of deacon and of priest.

And from that very moment a skeptic he has been— Who never thinks that Jesus will answer for his sin,

Nor that the Great All-Father, whose laws work all a-line, Will crook them for the asking, more than he fixed that tine.

Christianity commands us to pass by injuries; policy, to let them pass by us.—Franklin.

## The Fifty-Second Anniversary of the Spiritualists' Union.

The Spiritualists' Union of Denver, celebrated the Fifty-second Anniversary of Modern Spiritualism, April 1. The ceremonies were also in the nature of farewell services of Mrs. Ada Foye, who has for some years past been the beloved leader of the association.

The hall was beautifully decorated for the occasion. The platform was draped with a thick carpet of bouquets in vases, offerings of the devoted to the spirits of the departed, fringed the stand of the speakers and filled the room with their perfume.

The services of the afternoon were simple. J. M. McMichael, president of the union, presided. The invocation, an impressive call to the hovering spirits in the air to show their powers to the gathering, was delivered by Mrs. Ada Foye. The address was given by Mrs. Emma Bullene. She made a rapid and interesting survey of the tenets of the Spiritualist faith and the purposes which it served, urging a development of everyone of the mediumistic gift, because it put mortals nearer to the perfect spirit life. W. E. Mansfield also spoke, and somewhat in the same strain. He was followed by other speakers, who led the floor but for a few minutes each.

In the evening the hall was crowded to its utmost. Every believer in Spiritualism that could be there came to hear Mrs. Foye give her last public speech in Denver, and to press her hand in farewell. President McMichael again presided, and Mrs. Bullene delivered the invocation to the spirits. Then came the most interesting features of the evening's proceedings. Mrs. Foye made her first appearance on the stage with a poem written especially for the occasion of the Fifty-second Anniversary of Modern Spiritualism, by Harry T. Davis. The revelation and writings were made through a medium last week. Harry T. Davis was at one time state inspector general and also paymaster. He died August 6, 1897. The following is the poem in full:

"Poem for our Fifty-second Anniversary of Modern Spiritualism. Given by the spirit of Harry T. Davis, through the mediumship of Miss E. M. Weatherhead, of this city."

From the village of Hydesville years ago,

The news went out o'er the world,

That a bird, west, from north to south,

Bearing a message to troubled souls

Of a life beyond the gloom,

Piercing with strange and sudden light

The shadow that veiled the tomb.

To many the heaven-born tidings

Brought surprise and sudden joy,

Others said 'twas the work of the evil one,

Whose mission was 'but to destroy

The proofs of immortality.

A theory, nothing more,

Was the lesson science gave to the world

And wafted from shore to shore.

But the cause was good,

It had come to stay.

No science or creed

Could keep it away;

It flourished and grew

In the walks of science,

With sought to crush it

With tongue and pen.

From the Rochester knockings of '48

Up to the present time

The cause has grown till it circles the world.

Take a beautiful shining vine;

Is it not as lovely

Far-seeing and kind,

Unfurling for those

Who've been spiritually blind.

Science, love and the truths of the spirit

Through the years shall go hand in hand,

Scattering the seeds of spiritual growth

Broadest o'er the fertile land,

And the sting of death shall be healed away

By God's almighty love,

And death's dark victory be swallowed up

By revelation sent from above.

The glorious truths of Spiritualism,

Brought down from the days of old,

Have reared from earth to the heights beyond

Bright ladders of shining gold;

And not by faith but by sight revealed

Shall the glories of heaven appear,

And those it seemed you had lost awhile

You may feel their presence near.

We honor the name,

'Tis a glorious one,

We honor the cause

For the good it has done;

'Tis the key of heaven wide open

For the traveler's weary feet;

'Tis the healing balm for the sin-sick soul,

For the troubled a refuge sweet.

Let us rejoice upon this day

That opens to man's soul the broader way

Where Spiritualism, its truths shall prove,

And mighty achievements the world shall move;

Where a vista of beauty shines Out o'er the view,

Revealing bright scenes That are ever new.

## Anniversary Exercises at Buffalo, New York.

The New York State Association and the Buffalo Spiritualist societies celebrated the anniversary of Modern Spiritualism at the Spiritual Temple, March 30, 31 and April 1. Mrs. Carrie E. S. Twing, president; H. W. Richardson, vice-president; Mrs. T. H. Reynolds, second vice-president, and Frank Walker, ex-president, were present and took part in the exercises. The mediums present were P. Cordell White, Mrs. E. J. Chase, of the Buffalo Spiritualist church society; Mrs. A. G. Atchison, of the First Spiritual church, and Mrs. Reynolds, all of whom did good and honest work. Mrs. Twing, Mrs. Reynolds, Moses Hull, A. J. Weaver, H. W. Richardson, Miss Taylor of the Queen City Society, and Rev. Mr. Sayles the Universalist minister from East Aurora, delivered appropriate addresses. Mr. Walker gave some short but practical and valuable talks. Miss Emma Train of North Collins, gave an original poem appropriate for the occasion. Mr. Schow and Mr. Way added to the interest of the occasion by their happy renderings of humorous recitations.

Mr. Sayles does not profess to believe in, or to have any special interest in Spiritualism, but he said he came to give us a word of encouragement, because he belonged to a sect which had been through the fires of persecution as hot and scorching as those which Spiritualism is enduring. His sympathies were always with the under dog. He believed Spiritualism should have a chance to be heard. He had opened his church for Spiritualist lectures because no claim for truth honesty made by a considerable number of intelligent persons should be condemned until it had been heard and its truth critically examined. If the continuity of life could be scientifically demonstrated, it becomes a fact of great importance to truth and of great value to man.

Mr. Sayles is a young man and has been a member of the First Spiritual church for eight years. He is refined, educated, honest and loving. He speaks slowly and with much deliberation, but every sentence hits the mark. He was heartily cheered and after the meeting was greeted by many congratulations. Mr. Sayles belongs to that great body of independents which is growing up outside of actual and definite Spiritualism and which is increasing in numbers and influence and which is preparing the way and getting the world ready for the open reception of our truth.

If all Christians were as fair and honest and courageous as Mr. Sayles, what a bond of sympathy would be created between Christians and Spiritualists, and with what increased speed would spiritual truth be conquering and conquering. If all Universalists were like him, a new power and a new glory would come to that body of Christians.

Sunday afternoon was given exclusively to the work of the lyceum. Under the energy and wisdom of Mrs. Hull the lyceum has come to the front in Buffalo. At the last business meeting the church adopted it as its own, and will sustain it as one of the departments of church work. The temple was well filled by those who came, not to listen to speeches on the importance of the lyceum, but to receive instruction in full operation. The Sunday lesson as it is given in Thought Gems, and as it is put before the school each Sunday, the postoffice work, the drill exercises, the recitations, the responses, the banner march and the noble discourses work all together, occupied the whole of the forenoon, and no half day of the whole meeting was more interesting or more helpful to our cause. Not the least important item in the program was the fact that all the Spiritualist societies united with heart and hand in this celebration. There was not a discordant element. For the first time for years, the Spiritualists of this city were a unit, and it seemed to be the idea of all, that local jealousies and contentions had been permanently cast out and that from this time on, harmonious relationships would exist among the varied Spiritualists of Buffalo.

At the Sunday evening meeting, eight new members were publicly received into the First Spiritual Church. They occupied special seats in front of the rostrum, and Mr. Hull gave to each the right hand of fellowship, and read to them their respective following preamble to the Constitution:

"We whose names are hereunto attached, in order to promulgate and strengthen, by word and example, the facts and truths of Modern Spiritualism, have organized ourselves into a body known as the First Spiritual Church, and agree to abide by the following Constitution and Rules:

"Furthermore, we solemnly and faithfully make the following promise:

"To walk together in unison,

"To assist those who are in need,

"To pity those who are in misfortune,

"To enlighten those who are in darkness,

"To sympathize with those who are bereaved,

"To assist those who are sick,

"To give aid to those who are poor,

"To reclaim those who are erring, and

"To make our own thoughts and lives beautiful and acceptable in the sight of our arisen loved ones and of each other."

At the last church meeting it was voted unanimously to engage Mr. and Mrs. Hull for another year.

The Spiritualist Training School will open at Lily Dale on May 14. Write for circulars. A. J. WEABER.

72 York street, Buffalo, N. Y.

## Indiana Association.

The Executive Board of the Indiana Association of Spiritualists held their semi-annual meeting at the Chesterfield camp-ground, April 4.

Mr. E. B. Channess, of Alexandria, was elected first vice-president in place of T. O'Neill, who had resigned. Carroll Bronnerberg was elected trustee in place of Mr. Channess.

Much business pertaining to the next camp-meeting was discussed. Several improvements were contemplated, among which was the building of a new and larger hall, the most again the first of May to decide the matter.

This year the association will take full charge of the dining hall, lunch stands, etc., and will not let out those privileges as heretofore.

All mediums, both mental and physical for the meeting of 1900, will be selected and their presence solicited by the executive board. No others will be permitted to do business.

The new electric car line now building and cars running by the first of July. The fare from Anderson to Chesterfield will be five cents.

FLORA HARDIN.

Anderson, Ind.

Reading the Yall: This volume is a compilation by J. W. Nixon, of psychic literature, most given by spirits through and by means of full form visible materializations, at seances of a certain Psychic Research Society, known as the Aber Intellectual Circle, the medium being William W. Aber, 507 pp., octavo. For sale at the office of The Progressive Thinker. Price \$2.

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Any three of the books in our premium list that you may select will be sent to you for \$1.10. You are at liberty to select any other books in the list that you desire in connection with this order, at 40 cents each. You can only make one order for three books at \$1.10.

## Offer Number Four.

Our regular premium, The Encyclopedia of Death, and Life in the Spirit World, Vol. 3, is only 25 cents. If you wish to add thereto one of the other premium books only, the same will cost you 50 cents. If you wish two additional books, the cost of the three will be \$1.10. You can add thereto any other books you desire at 40 cents each.

## Offer Number Five.

If you wish to order only one book in connection with a year's subscription, and that one not our regular yearly premium, the price will be 50 cents.

## Offer Number Six.

Vol. 3 of The Encyclopedia of Death, and Life in the Spirit World, and the Occult Life of Jesus (including the Hull-Cover Debate), will be furnished for 25 cents each. You can add any other books in the list to this order for 40 cents each. Take due notice. After May 30, 1900, the Occult Life of Jesus will no longer be sent out as a premium for 25 cents, but will take its place among the other books and have the same price.

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**PLEASE RESPOND.**

W. E. Bonney, who expects to be State Missionary in Nebraska, desires the names of all the Spiritualists in the State. Send him a postal at once, with names and postoffice addresses. Don't delay. Direct to him at Blair, Neb.

power is limited now, is the fact that the light of reason, through the aid of true Spiritualism, is shining into the souls of humanity. It will be difficult for the Reverend to prove that the race has not attained this somewhat exalted height of spiritual unfoldment through the partial extinction of the power of (so-called) religion. Then let not the brother give all honor to the churches and its creeds for our civilization—rather give praise to the gray-haired

ing the Progressive Lyceum held a appropriate service, and at night the celebration was brought to a fitting close with an inspirational lecture by Mr. John W. Ring, from the Bible subject "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you." The proceeds were applied to the "Temple fund." Messrs W. St. Geran, of New Orleans, and George W. Banner and F. C. Brandon, of Canada, are doing very satisfactory work here at present. **COR.**

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