

# The Progressive Thinker

Progress, the Universal Law of Nature: Thought, the Solvent of Her Problems.

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## SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES.

BY THE SPIRIT, WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING.

Through the Mediumship of Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond.

Delivered at Chicago, Nov. 9, 1890.

"One cannot understand the splendor of the heavenly kingdom by measuring it with the glories of the earth or the beauty of the physical universe. To perceive the spiritual light one must needs have spiritual awakenings."

It is no part of the purpose of the one addressing you to give the entire history of the experiences that, if measured by human time and standard, would occupy years; but rather to epitomize those experiences and give you some intelligent perception of the nature of spirit existence as viewed from the standpoint of the one addressing you; and indeed there can be no perfect knowledge of spiritual existence excepting from the individual standpoint.

There is no arbitrary manner by which the life of the spirit, in spirit states can be judged as is the external life of earth. You have your seasons; you have the earth and its physical formation; you have the stary firmament above you and the unalterable laws which govern and guide the material universe as seen in the physical form around you; everything seems to be fixed in the kingdom of outward life. Man is in a great measure fettered by these bonds of the physical body, and it seems in many instances to limit the conditions of life. There are very few minds sufficiently aware of spirit life in the earthly existence, to break the fetters of the senses, to be free in mind, free in spirit while animating the physical body. Such has been the nature of the teachings of theologians in the past as to cause man to turn in fear, in absolute terror unto immortality, while through intelligence, such as science and philosophy have wrought, man slowly toils to attain the fulfillments of prophecy and inspiration which have ever had to wait the tortuous method of science and the growth of years for recognition upon the earth.

In spirit state all is changed. I do not think it too much to say that the transition called death works in nearly every instance an instantaneous change. I mean in the standpoint from which the universe is viewed by the spirit thus set free. If one is tethered by the standard of the senses wholly, the change which is wrought is that one is even more powerless in spiritual or even in material things than when in earthly life. But if one's mind is in any way free, or if there is any intuitive or other knowledge concerning spiritual existence, the change, as said before, is instantaneous in this: that one suddenly becomes aware of being placed in a different position with reference to material things with the dissolution of the material body, or rather the expression of the spirit through the body. In the case of the one addressing you there was a consciousness of a gradual transition, that instead of things being prominent, or objects being aggressive, or material things being real, there was a gradually awakening to the perception that things were unreal, were shadowy, and that thought, feeling, emotions, perceptions, and principles were so real, that they became dominant while the others receded. One is sometimes aware, even in mortal life of being absorbed by themes; any great reformer must be possessed more of the theme which he seeks to advocate than of his external surroundings; even dreamers and reformers are subject to the conditions of the material body; the personal spiritual consciousness is, that one changes places with one's body; that instead of the body being dominant, the mind is dominant.

It is a joyful feeling after the first surprise, to become aware of having freedom; that instead of being bound by the physical limitations, instead of being obliged to walk as the body will walk, to work as the hands have strength to work, to see as far as the eyes can see, or hear with the dull sense of hearing that gradually grows less and less as age encroaches; that one is really not so fettered, that if there is limitation it is the limitation of the mind and spirit and not of the body. The consciousness of being where one thinks and wishes to be is very startling at first, since there is no consciousness of locomotion; there is no time and space seemingly consumed in arriving there. The consciousness of being where the affections are, where one's nearest and dearest are; though they are scattered there seems to be no time occupied in passing from one to the

other, and the startling consciousness of knowing the thoughts, feelings and emotions of your loved ones, though they may not be aware of one's presence. In spirit there seems to be an added perception which takes the place of every sense and faculty of the body, and more than takes their place; takes the place of what one would wish to be in the earthly life if the body would obey the mind absolutely.

There are probably none of those I am now addressing but what feel cramped and dwarfed in the limitation of the body; feel when weakness of form, or fatigue and weariness come, or when they are hungry and cold, that they are in bonds and fetters, and all feel bound by these fetters when some friend at a distance needs one's presence, or when one would wish to be engaged in some pursuit where it is impossible to take the body or compel the body to perform it. Such is the awakening from the consciousness of being fettered, that almost the first perception of which the one addressing you was aware, was a joyous sense of freedom; as in some chemical combination certain gases are set free to expand, so there was an almost limitless expansion, as though the cramped and dwarfed conditions that one had been compelled to act in, the narrow, limited lines that had compelled one to do only certain things were removed; and when the spirit released itself from the body there was the consciousness of almost unlimited power.

The spirit receives, however, a reaction from this, for almost with the consciousness of unlimited freedom and the sense of power, there comes a sense of lacking in knowledge, and that proves the one fetter. Whatever wisdom is wanting, whatever inexperience, whatever there is in the knowledge of the spirit that is not complete, there instantly becomes a check upon this sense of freedom; one feels the limitations of one's self. One cannot blame the body if one needed to have that excuse. Oftentimes when people are unwilling morally to do a thing, it is a convenient pretext, and without wishing to simulate or deceive, people often avail themselves of the imperfections of the body to make excuse for lack of mental purpose or moral courage. More than once I detected myself trying to do this in earthly life; to my great amazement, in spiritual existence I had no such excuse; that which I could not do was from lack of knowledge and growth. One is brought face to face suddenly with his imperfections, just as one is launching into the consciousness of freedom, he is somewhat shocked to find his own weakness. But always there is something to modify this; the spirit is not allowed to brood over its imperfections beyond the point of recognition; in endeavoring to overcome them, one is not allowed to slide into the realm of despair, unless he is determined to be there.

The spiritual presence that surround one on entering the consciousness of spirit-life are those that seem to be waiting for him; there is no idea of journeying through space to find them, or that they have come a long distance or a great way in order to bear one to the spiritual realm. It is as though a veil was suddenly removed from the eyes and the perception, and one finds his loved ones here, finds them waiting for one as though they were aware that he was coming, and were in attendance during the weeks and years of suffering, ministering, as if knowing every step and change, so that when one feels exultant in the change there is the sympathizing spiritual friend, the companion, the father, mother, all with whom one is allied, beside the perception of the spirit itself. This is marvelous; how natural it seems to see them there, considering the earthly education, the theological training. Even so liberal a school of religion as that in which the one lived who is addressing you, and for the most part that in which all the years of manhood had been trained, it still was marvelous. How natural it seemed to find them there, to feel that they had been watching and working beside me; that there was nothing out of keeping with the usual order or things in their recognizing the presence and change that had come to me.

Moreover, it seemed the most natural thing to enter into this possession of spiritual consciousness without any great perturbation, without either encompassing fear or violence to the physical form. I believe from observation as well as from personal experience, that nearly everyone has some sort of preparation for the change; even those who are not accustomed to a religious train of thought or to spiritual experience have some inner promptings, premonition or warning that makes them ready, so that the change is not such a great surprise after all. Of course I refer to the average human beings; with those who are fettered in any

particular manner, who are bound and fettered by hatred, fear or worldliness, unquestionably it is different. But with the ordinary mind, especially those who are accustomed to view the subject of the spirit from the usual standpoint of human life, I believe that there is preparation, and that that which our ancient Puritan fathers used to consider the sole perquisites of the dying saint; a certain preparation during suffering of lingering sickness, is really vouchsafed to most people; that even the ordinary sinner on approaching the supernal realm finds that there has been preparation; that it is not so great a surprise after all. With the passing away of the physical form most of the dread and fear depart also, unless that dread and fear are interwoven with the very fiber of the mind, unless the spirit has been so cramped and dwarfed that the terrors of hell take possession of the mind instead of the terror of death; then, of course, there must be a different state.

With my own theological views and the largeness of thought which I had been accustomed to cultivate concerning Infinite goodness, with the idea that the future life would be adapted to our needs, I did not find the change so surprising, and yet with all that seemed natural and full of sympathy, friendship and affection in the recognition of those around me there still was a surprise. The surprise came in the thought that it did not seem more strange, in the idea that I was to be surprised and was not, in the knowledge that I was in spiritual existence and did not feel it a marvel to be there. And so from being surprised by the wonder of it, I was surprised because there was not more wonder to me.

Even this state also had a change and reaction; I forgot to think whether I was real or not; I forgot to try to measure my spiritual form with the form of earth; I forgot to test in any physical way my sensations, since it seemed to me that these were all consciousness and perception. But I noticed, however, that all the appearances about me were secondary to the consciousness of knowing that the spirit of the appearances was there; and if I were obliged to tell anything absolutely how I knew that these spirit friends were with me; if some one were to ask me if I saw them most, or felt their presence most, or heard them speak, I could not tell. I seemed to know with all my consciousness that they were there. I knew by all the faculties that I possess in spirit, but it never occurred to me to decide whether these faculties were similar to those of the body; it never occurred to me to inquire whether it was mostly sight or hearing, but I knew it was mostly perception; it so far transcended sight and hearing of the limited senses of earthly life that I felt myself one with my friends; they knew my thoughts; they understood my feelings, and answered every question which was not even formulated in the mind; seemed to know me better than I knew myself.

The perception of the knowledge of spiritual things or conditions must be the basis for the measurement of spirit life. While this proposition was not new to me, of course the application of it was new, because it was a new experience. I do not believe that any one existing in the human form or pervading life through the senses, unless such an one is gifted with the power of absence consciously from the body, can have any realization of what it really is to be free from the physical form. I do not think it necessary for those who are still in the senses to apprehend how the spirit feels that passes through the change called death; to know that the spirit still lives, to know that there is still an intelligent consciousness, and all that constitutes the individual is alive and aware, it seems to me is quite sufficient; but when you ask us as spirits having passed through the change called death: how every one felt, or how did you feel? I invite you, as the only answer to that question, to become one of us, and then you will know. It is like asking a child to know how a man feels, or like asking one who is not in the position of a father, how he would feel if he were in the position of a father, which is a logical impossibility.

Suppose I were to ask you how you would feel, who have not the spirit of a criminal, if you were confined in the place of a criminal; not how you would feel if you had committed that crime, which you did not; you do not even know how you would feel if you had. Even the committing of a criminal offense for the purpose of knowing how criminals feel, and the having of more charity for them, will not suffice, for even then the one has not the state of the criminal, and no one, unless he is insane, would attempt to accomplish it. When one tries to place himself in the position of another, he is utterly unable to do it. In the qualification and praise of human charity, I did not find it necessary to place myself in the position of the one committing an offense, but I concluded it was my duty to be charitable without taking the place of the offender, because I found it impossible to do that, I could not tell how I would feel if I were any other individual. I only knew how I was bound to feel, being myself. That, in its largest construction, is all there is to spirit life. The change is to each one according to the state of each one. While it is an universal law that the physical body and the spirit must separate, there can only be resemblance in experience, in proportion as there is resemblance in mind and spirit, in affection, in aspiration, and the

spirit-world must seem to each one from the individual standpoint, just what the spirit and mind of that one can perceive.

Of course, in viewing this subject, and in giving experiences, it is most natural that the spirit should give those experiences in the symbols of things which can be understood by the human mind; of scenery, houses, dwellings and lands, which no doubt, they experience if they think they do, but one perceiving differently, must endeavor to explain away these things as unnecessary, and only invite your consciousness to the knowledge of spiritual existence *per se*, to the spiritual state modified by the state of the individual.

Did I see the earth? If I wished to. Did I see my friends? If I wanted to; through the rooms, through the surroundings; the very form in the casket, all that pertained to my earthly existence, if I wished to. But I found myself suddenly away from earthly scenes, suddenly in possession of the spiritual states of friends who were still on earth. I found that, excepting as a part of their surroundings, I did not care for the physical form, physical circumstances in which they existed, excepting as these affected their states of mind; those who were dear to me I found it quite easy for me to discover in any place or condition upon the earth they attracted me; but unless there were some person to attract, why should I be there at all? I found greater reality in the thoughts and communings of friends than any of their surroundings; I found myself suddenly almost in possession of the personal presence of many whom I had never met on earth, but had desired to meet.

It seems to me as though it might have been a short time; that almost in the space of time that I take to tell these things I came to know what my spiritual possessions were, to realize the limitations of my power, to set myself to work to endeavor to overcome; where there was a limit of power, a barrier seemed to lie between me and what I wished to accomplish. I could see where I had fallen short many times in the achievement of moral purpose, in which I thought myself strong. I could see if in grasping propositions and principles, I had failed, there would be my spiritual weakness; but I could also fully see that in many ways where I had not supposed myself strong, I was strong; that one is not always aware of his strength; in fact, there was that which had crossed my mind, even while on earth, that where one thinks one's self strong there is liable to be one's weakness; in the direction which one prides himself, if he pride himself at all, there is liable to be the one failure. I found this nearly true literally. It seemed in the direction where I had the greatest hope for myself I was the least strong; in the direction that I had not noticed, I had gone on from day to day fulfilling my part, there was great strength. I suppose the fact of one's recognition of his own weakness is in itself a proof of weakness, and that if one really possesses to a perfect degree any exaltation, he is not aware of it any more than the sun that shines or the lily that grows.

In the conditions of human life our earthly ties are those, of course, which absorb us most. In spirit I came directly into contact with those whose minds I had admired, whose lives had been my watchword; those who had won from me the most exalted praise. Whatever pertained to liberty of conscience, to largeness of human worship, to freedom of individual choice in connection with religion, to the uplifting of humanity from any state of darkness and bondage, it seemed to me was my life aim, and yet I found myself on entering spiritual existence and being measured by the height of others, almost a pigmy in that direction. I found that the aims for the exaltation of humanity had been some times largely mental, or a matter of sentimental endeavor. The freedom of choice of worship, I found had its limitations even in my own mind. As I came in contact with other minds, greater in similar directions, I could see my endeavors had been weak and futile after all. I thought myself the most earnest advocate for freedom; still I could see where I had placed bonds, limits, and fetters, upon my own mind by limiting others. I thought in the sense of worship there was largeness. I could trust the Divine Love; still I could see where I had questioned that Divine Love at almost every turn, had limited my own conditions by endeavoring to correct the methods of that Divinity. I thought in the advocacy of the principles which were my religion, usually denominated Unitarian, that I had entered into the broadest plane possible; I found there was even a limitation in thinking so; that no one has a right to believe oneself more unfettered than another; that the very fact of comparing one's religious views with another's religious sentiment, in thinking that another has bonds, one is fettered; I could see even many whom I supposed fettered were freer than I. It was humiliating at first to think that with all the intellectual power, with all the knowledge and struggle of an age in which the earth and human society was just entering the broadest freedom, with the thought that I belonged almost to the advance guard of liberal thought, of freedom of opinions and conviction in religious ways, that I found a great many people, and some shining lights from among those whom I supposed to be fettered, who were freer than I; that their bonds had been merely nominal, not real; that although

I had great reason to think myself so far in advance of them, as I supposed, that they would not reach me, to see them so far ahead; through their greater sympathy, larger human patience they had won a position that I had not found. I believed myself in sympathy with all suffering; so far as my life was concerned I was; but there was still a height that I had not found. I found that there were limitations; if you cannot run, you can only walk; if you cannot fly you can only run; if your eyes will not see hundreds of miles when you wish them to, how must one feel? I ask you this question. With all that earthly knowledge can afford, who placed the reason before the perception of the spirit, to know that one is fettered by one's consciousness of having knowledge, and that many thoughts which seemed to possess me for the larger growth of humanity had been possibly as well lived out by those who had no pride of liberal thinking to maintain?

In some ways it seems to fetter one to be a reformer, for the very reason that he is so absorbingly conscious of it, and in that absorbing consciousness of being a reformer in thought, or leading the way he is liable to be tethered by that very consciousness. I had seen it in other movements and thought that I had been comparatively free from thinking myself a leader. But still if one occupies a certain position in the world and the world compels that one to feel that he is a reformer, he can hardly help it. Now I notice that many spirits that have felt this have been forced by the very nature of the world's judgment against the subject which they advocated, they feel themselves compelled to think themselves leaders, that the thought is in advance of the age.

One will readily admit that Spiritualism keeps pace with the advance guard; that it is the advance guard in the world of spiritual truth, but Spiritualists do not all become free, and the most frequent fetter which I find among them is precisely that which I found upon myself: They are too conscious of being leaders and reformers, not to say in many instances almost martyrs. Of course they suffer measurably for opinion's sake, and for the truth that is dear. Even if it is another truth than that of the freedom of opinion, we seem to pay a high price for it. Many times what one individual passes through, one mistakes for the truth itself; people often judge of their position in a movement not by the principles which they accept, but they abide within the personal experience and activity of those opinions and proposition. For instance, one's belongings, surroundings, relations and friends are very orthodox, and one passes through a struggle to obtain the liberty of thinking as one wishes to; with the suffering, the ostracism and even the cruelty and persecution one receives, he is liable to think that he is a martyr. At the same time, it is certain that consciousness prevents him from really being one.

The martyr knows no such word as sacrifice. I am perfectly aware of this by the lives of heroes and saints who have in triumph perished for the truth, marching to the guillotine or scaffold, or funeral pyre triumphantly, and to suppose that one should question his course at every step, should feel the persecution that is around him, that this heroic forbearance for them is too great, is in itself preposterous.

Though as I was not posing for a martyr, I simply accepted the truth as it came to me. I uttered the words of conviction as they appeared all around the criticism and caviling of those who could not understand. I believed myself serene in that particular degree which I thought I had attained. How different is the perception of the spirit, face to face with clear minds; with those more richly endowed than myself, the work of my own life came upon me with all its imperfections and shadows. I questioned wherein there was aught that I could praise; especially I could see that fictitious height which I had supposed myself to occupy. So while I was kind, loving, generous and tender with those who believed with me in regard to human freedom, in regard to liberty of conscience, in regard to excellence of life, while I was conscientious to do all that was done, could I have spoken then as I speak now, could I have declared myself and been recognized in the presence of my loved ones as I am here to-day, I would have said: It cannot be that this spoken word can reveal one's consciousness of his shortcomings. I felt sure it would be a thousand degrees more than that which could be declared.

In the light of a larger truth how meager one's small fragments seem; in the splendor of the sunshine, the fire which we have kindled in our study or dwelling fades away; our lesser lights fade in the light of the spirit; we come to know the difference between mind and spirit; we come to know that rare as is the intellect, we often mistake it for perception, and that our philosophy often takes the place of our religion. Profound in religious conviction, I still did not know the meaning of heaven, perfection, possessions, and there was that in going away from the old fastnesses of creed and dogma; although it seemed to bear me nearer to human interests in certain directions it still deprived me of the exercise of the only faculties by which alone man approaches the Infinite. In learning to doubt man's interpretation of scripture I neglected a deeper and more profound perception, the deeper and more profound intuitions and affections of the soul, too many times solving

the problems of life in the grasp of intellect rather than that of religion.

If I say this of myself it is not because any spirit said it to me; nor does there seem to be any lack in the fellowship and communings of those whose minds have been to me a light in all my earthly career. I turn to them now as teachers, and they recognize me as a brother. I turn to them as guides for my strength; they hold out their hands to me as an equal; still aware that they most know the conditions between their light and mine, I only could seem to follow where they led.

Soon after the passing of my spirit into its new state there were swift successions of events occurring in many lands; especially in this country where my efforts and allegiance had been placed; the war for the freedom of the slaves, the rapid culmination of all those events for which my spirit had looked forward. Alas! I did not look forward to bloodshed, though often and often had my friends, Theodore Parker, Wendall Phillips and others, said to me: "We shall not settle this question of slavery without war;" still I had hoped that it might be settled in another way, though there seemed to be little upon which to found that hope. When the tide of war swept over the land, when all the events so rapidly followed culminated at last in the emancipation of the slaves, there was not in my spirit state so deep and absorbing an interest as there had been while I was in the earthly state. I suppose the reason for this was that I saw with larger vision; it did not seem to me the important thing that it did upon the earth, because I saw a larger and more profound agitation. I mean the subject of man's immortality, the light of the spirit; and it seemed to me that every thing less was swallowed up.

During that period of great trial there came this truth into my mind: that I must give or endeavor to give to others a knowledge of this spiritual light wherever I could reach them, in whatever condition; whether bond or free, whether a soldier or citizen, whether an intellectual leader or politician, wherever a mind was willing to receive the spiritual light, the smaller question of physical slavery largely sunk out of sight in the larger question of the bondage of the spirit to the senses.

I believe if one theme has occupied me more than any other in spirit existence it has been this: to have the human mind perceive the individual conditions of spirit life, particularly to perceive the spiritual state, to know they are immortal in spirit, to know the immortal realm. As I view humanity now, the fetter is not in any physical bondage, but the intervening bondage. That which may be the next great struggle in nations, or commerce, or society, does not seem to possess me so much as it does some spirits whom I meet, and who are most active in those directions; but that which does interest and pervade me is this advancing tide of spiritual light, and that wherever human lives are placed, under whatever different conditions, this knowledge is most valuable.

To the captive in the cell, of course the first thought is of freedom; to those who have of gyves and fetters physically, theirs is the first proposition to be free from bondage; but some of the slaves to whom freedom was offered at the price of the blood of their masters, they said we can wait. God has promised us freedom; we know it will come.

Such largeness of faith may not belong to periods of human revolution and action, when great subjects press upon the minds, that are to be engaged in the conflict; but certainly it seems to me that there is no subject of human interest, and no condition of human affairs but what an intelligent and spiritual mind can afford to wait for its fulfillment. I do not say wait idly, I do not say wait supinely, but I say wait for growth of events.

Undoubtedly the human race has precipitated itself forward through violence, and change among such lives as are violent; undoubtedly if called upon or put to the test under the stress of great conflict you would take up arms for the South or the North, according to your allegiance. I could but say I must take up arms for the North, if the question be human slavery. When Mr. Garrison, witnessing the great struggle all around, was appealed to be went so far as to abandon his life-long principles as to say: "I would not, had I had my way, have settled this conflict by war, but since it is evidently God's way, I must acquiesce."

There is nothing else for the conscientious man to do in all that relates to immediate issues, but to step to the very side of that which best expresses what he believes to be true. But in spiritual states I find myself wholly unable to come in direct contact with any element of violence. I find myself perfectly able to influence minds, to reach thoughts and even to prevail upon lives to carry forward the light of spiritual truth.

I see independently of the surging storm clouds and the dark abysses into which human lives may be plunged, the separate line of spiritual labor, and the mooring tide of spiritual light which before and during and after the storm, it is my duty to aid in shedding upon the world. If one is in the conflict he may be in spirit and above it, and if amid the storm of battle the life-boat of spiritual love may come to strengthen and quicken those who are in peril; or if upon the shore while the rescuers are out upon the sea, those who guard the watch towers see

Continued on fourth page



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SATURDAY, DEC. 13, 1890.

A STRIKING TEST.

Materializations—Dematerializations.

A Poor Woman's Fear of Purgatory.

The afternoon conferences are well patronized in New York. Last Sunday Mr. J. W. Fletcher gave an interesting lecture, and supplemented it with some fine tests. One of them was so marked that I obtained the striking facts from Mrs. H. who knew all the parties, thinking it might interest as well as instruct the public to whom Adelphi Hall is not accessible. As THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER has a large audience, I offer it for your readers, omitting, for obvious reasons, the full name. A spirit named R. B. wants to reach M., and says there is a friend here who knows her. One accompanies her whose name is R. and she holds a large golden cross. They are sisters. R. has but very recently left the body, and her sister helps her to manifest. She says: "Tell M. I come to fulfill my promise made to her just before I left the body. Tell her it is all light, rest and peace where I am." Mrs. H. lives in Philadelphia and knew all the parties. R. was a devoted Roman Catholic, and her sister M. is a Spiritualist. The family are wealthy, but when M. apostatized, and announced herself a Spiritualist, her father disowned her and cut her off from all interest in his estate, and the family ceased to recognize or associate with her. When R. learned that she could not live, she suffered in anticipation of her doom; for she thoroughly believed she must go to purgatory. In this trying hour when the awful pall of her religion hung over her like an infinite cloud, her sister M., whose heart was sweetened and thrilled with the blessed gospel of Spiritualism, hastened to her side ready to minister to her needs and follow her tenderly to the gate that opens to the eternal day. She found her sister not only in physical weakness and pain, but infinitely worse; she was trembling in mental agony and fear, for the safety of her soul. She was sure she would go to purgatory. M. assured her it was not so; but that she would be with friends and be happy, for her life had been blameless and she was in no danger. But R. was sure that purgatory was her doom. M. finally exacted a promise of her, that if she was not in purgatory she would, if possible, come back and tell her; but if she were in purgatory, of course she could not return. She thus passed from sight, and in less than a week she reports to her friend, Mrs. H. that she came to fulfill a promise, and send word to M. that she is happy and "all is light, rest and peace."

Since phenomena are to the front I will add that last week I attended, for the first time, one of Mrs. M. E. Williams's seances. A large company was present, and apparently, all superior people, and I was told that they represented some of the best families in the city. I saw no evidence of collusion, trick or fraud; nor could I see any chance for confederates. Certainly Mrs. Williams alone did not produce the manifestations. Two came out at one time and walked and talked, and neither of them was Mrs. Williams. "Bright Eyes" performed a feat I never before witnessed, though I have seen several attempts which others accepted as genuine and astonishing. In this case it seems very real, and I could not see how it could be simulated by any magical device. "Bright Eyes," who did much of the talking, came out in full view and slowly diminished in size and stature until only a white spot as large as my hand was visible on the floor, and finally that disappeared, and seemed to go into the floor. In a minute or so it reappeared, a faint glimmer at first and gradually enlarged and rose up tremblingly, taking shape as it arose, until the full form of "Bright Eyes" was visible and able to move about and talk as before. If this was not a spiritual manifestation I was not able to detect the delusion, nor to even guess

how it might have been made to appear by some device of magic. The entire seance had the appearance of straightforwardness and honesty, and therefore I accept it as such until I have evidence to the contrary. I do not regard materialization as the highest form of evidence in its present stage of development, and as I have witnessed in the majority of cases I could hardly claim it as any evidence at all, since conditions were such that it must be mostly taken on faith. Any phenomena that admits of two explanations lacks the element of proof. To be valuable as evidence there must be but one explanation possible. Nevertheless these uncertain seances may be highly useful in several ways. They may furnish opportunity for experimentation, which is doubtless as essential to the exorcism as the earnest investigator; and the faith and freedom from all exacting restraints may provide much better opportunities for experiment and for testing the delicate forces and their possibilities in the chemistry of a seance than is possible under fraud proof conditions. Then, too, the sitters in such an unsuspecting frame of mind may derive spiritual benefit and strengthen the hidden resources on which successful phenomena depend. The seance at Mrs. Williams did not present the doubtful points which in many cases compel honest people to doubt and distrust. If there is a manifest opportunity for fraud, and a medium insists on that place being left unguarded, the fair presumption is that there is a reason for it; and in the absence of any better explanation the investigator naturally infers fraud. The medium may be innocent of any such thought. But the intelligent skeptic, however well disposed, and desirous of being convinced cannot escape the impressions forced upon his mind by conditions that plainly imply a trick to supplement what mediumship may fail to supply. I have witnessed materializations that I am sure were genuine, and I believe much that appears doubtful and deceptive, is in whole or in part the work of exorcism men and women. While this phase does not at present appear to be the most competent scientific evidence, there is doubtless a large field of potencies and delicate and complex agents at work in this department of which we as yet have scarcely a hint, and centuries of patient study and diligent experimentation may be necessary to possess the rich mines of truth now covered with mystery and confusion. The great need of the present is patience, perseverance, pains-taking care and a broad and generous interpretation of human life and all the delicate factors and conflicting appearances that disturb superficial observers and mislead the faithful.

LYMAN C. HOWE.  
New York, Nov. 25, 1890.

Signs of the Times.

Immediately after the Liberal Christian Alliance came the conference of Jews and Christians. This is a movement as much in the line of evolutionary progress as the one preceding it.

The ostensible purpose of this conference was to discuss the past, present and future of Israel; but it has a deeper meaning and may become historical. Rabbi Felsenthal evidently spoke under protest, in reply to the question why did the Jews not accept Christ as their Messiah? He threw back the burden of proof on those who did; and demonstrated the fact which has been a stumbling block to many of the best Christian scholars that "many prophecies of the Old Testament taken by Christians and even by the writers of the New Testament as proofs of the Messiahship of Christ, were entirely irrelevant; that the Jews looked for a political Messiah, not a superhuman religious character; that the religion of Jesus was that of the prophets, and has a future, but Christian theology has not."

The condition of the Jews, past and present, was gone over by both sides, and Dr. Scott made the humiliating acknowledgment that the Jews suffered more from Christians than the Christians suffered from all the Roman Emperors.

THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER is glad to see this evidence of progress, which would have been impossible a few years ago, and hopes that whatever may have been the motives of the Christians engaged in this conference, it may have a tendency to destroy the intolerance and prejudice which caused the persecution and social ostracism of the Jews.

The radical Jews and liberal Christians have been unconsciously approximating each other, and both are unconsciously approximating Spiritualism, because they are led by the same spirit of progress, which is the spirit of God and the law of the human soul; and in the millennium they will be all one.

A Few Lines of Appreciation From a Noble Woman.

My pen has long felt a desire to send a few appreciative lines to your most worthy and enterprising journal. Among your many valuable contributors, Mr. Hudson Tuttle and his talented wife, Emma Rood Tuttle, have given me fresh courage in the battle for our cause by the unfaltering sentences of vital import dictated by the inspiration of their gifted pens. That we had more souls of such true leading as instructors, is my sincere wish. Mrs. Tuttle's article in THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER of Nov. 22, fairly thrills me with its great souled thought and masterly picturing of human conditions as they are. One feels a grand sense of exaltation while reading the glorious lines of her poem heading the noblest sermon I've heard in many a day, "Children; Their Ethical Education." In Mr. Hudson Tuttle's contribution to your columns, "A Narrative of the Summer-Land," I find teachings and penetrating truths of the highest order. Being endowed with the gift of clairvoyance, I have for years been a student of life in the Spirit-world, my spirit friends and guides kindly and patiently explaining whatever might be for my spiritual enlightenment. I have intensely pursued Mr. Tuttle's inspired effort, and would urge the readers of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER to give it the study and intelligent consideration it richly deserves.

GEORGIA DAVENPORT FULLER.  
Lookout Mt., Tenn.

THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER!

It Now Leads in Circulation.

IT IS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF LEADING MINDS.

See Next Week's Issue for the

"CROWNING TRIUMPH."

Enterprise, Ambition, and Our "Lucky Star," Coming to the Front.

Arisen.

Mrs. Roxy G. Heverlo, of Ashley, Ohio on Sunday evening, Nov. 23, 1890, at the age of fifty-nine years, five months and a day. Withdrawn from pain and mortal strife she passed to spirit life, being one of a family of ten children, two of whom, with the parents, preceded her to the Summer-Land. The first of her three children died in infancy, and the husband passed over two years since, leaving a son and daughter to mourn her transition from mortal view; but their loss is her gain, as she cheerfully crossed the mystic river, happy in a knowledge that dear and loved friends would meet and greet her, and was a firm and true Spiritualist for several years past. The large funeral of friends and citizens assembled at the home, and thence to the Opera House at 2 o'clock p. m., Nov. 25, where the beautiful and appropriate services were held, the audience attending the mortal part to the grave being ample testimony of their esteem and love of this truly good and noble spirit. Our Bro. D. M. King, of Mantua Station, O., gave the discourse, the first of the kind ever given in Ashley, taking for his theme "Life, its Unity and Diversity, Death and the Future." It was treated in a manner very satisfactory, and elicited the highest admiration and favor from his many hearers, which fact is very gratifying in thus properly presenting the spiritual philosophy.

Truly the light will shine through endless time and all shall mount to heights sublime.

FRANK G. WILSON.  
Sec'y National S. and R. Camp Association.

Cleveland Progressive Lyceum.

TO THE EDITOR: The Cleveland Progressive Lyceum will celebrate its 25th Anniversary, January 18th, 1891. It is the only Lyceum in the country that has had a continuous existence, for a quarter of a century, and we propose to jubilate in a style worthy of the occasion. The Lyceum Theatre in Public Square has been secured for the occasion, and a special invitation sent to Andrew Jackson Davis, the founder of the Lyceum System and the organizer of the Cleveland C. P. L., in 1866.

Negotiation are pending with several of our prominent speakers, among whom are Helen (Stuart) Richings, Hudson and Emma Tuttle, A. B. French, etc. Mr. J. Frank Baxter being our regular speaker for the month, he will, of course, give additional interest to the programme, the details of which will be forwarded as soon as completed.

THOMAS LEES.  
Cleveland, Ohio.

Complimentary.

Lyman C. Howe, a veteran worker, writes: "Readers of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER will find a nice treat in Hon. L. V. Moulton's review of Rev. J. J. Phelps. It is brimming with sense and suggestiveness. Bro. Moulton is a valuable accession to the spiritual rostrum. 'Is Ours a Christian Civilization?' by Geo. A. Shufeldt, is a stinger. It condenses a whole volume in its telling pointers. If all Spiritualists would devote one hour out of every six to reading the spiritual and liberal papers, the cause would soon feel a new impetus, and the field of work would be indefinitely broadened and wonderfully fertilized. The heaven is working."

Note From a Prominent Lecturer.

Helen Stuart-Richings, a prominent lecturer, writes: "Inclosed find postal note for \$1, subscription for THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER for one year. I have just read a copy (No. 8, 1890), handed me by G. W. Stigleman, of Richmond, Ind., and although the time I can give to reading is already fully taken, I think I shall have to test its elastic qualities, so as to secure the benefits of your excellent paper."

The Best Paper.

G. W. Rogers of Newton, Kansas, voices the opinion of thousands as he sends a subscription for John Buxwell. He says: "We think THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER the best spiritual paper published, and we have tried them all."

S. K. O. Hall, of Washington, D. C., writes: "THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER is the best paper in all the list of Spiritualistic literature."

Five Little Girls.

A. B. Dillibough, of Centralia, Wash., writes: "I was one of the sixteen weeks subscribers; now you may count me a life subscriber. To say I like the paper is putting it tame. I have been for years a subscriber to the grand old Banner of Light, but how many times have I wondered if, after buying shoes for my wife and nine little girls and myself, I would have \$3 left

to send for the dear old paper, and how often I have wished that it could be furnished for one dollar per year instead of three. THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER fills the long-felt want."

A General Survey.

The Spiritualistic Field—its Workers Doings, etc.

We are glad to learn that a society under the name of the Progressive Society of Spiritualists has been organized at Springfield, Mo. The following are the officers: President, Prof. W. J. Black; Vice-President, John A. Shauk; Secretary, S. A. Dixon; Treasurer, E. Sander; Trustees, F. J. Underwood, L. M. Williams and Mrs. R. C. Black. In reference to the work proposed, S. A. Dixon Secretary, writes: "The trustees of our Society have leased for one year the G. A. R. hall on Commercial St., opposite the Ozark hotel, where we will give public meetings every Sunday at 7:30 p. m. Our local mediums will hold forth until such times as we can procure a good lecturer. We anticipate having J. M. Allen and wife at no distant day. I could say more in the interest of the cause here but will not take up your valuable space. Every one that takes THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER here express themselves as being well pleased, and wonder how you can publish so much for so little. Those desiring to change locations, and to come to the South-West, would do well, we think, to stop and see the many advantages of our city and country. Further information will be given, by addressing me at box 186 Station D., or Prof. W. J. Black, lock box 1082 Springfield, Mo.

J. W. Dennis, of Buffalo, N. Y., writes: "Owing to unforeseen circumstances, the engagement of Miss Jennie B. Hagan, at Buffalo for March, 1891, has by mutual consent been cancelled. Her friends here very much regret the condition of things that debar her from the platform at present, but we sincerely hope to see her in the near future, for she is our favorite."

J. W. Eastman, of Mohawk, Village, Ohio, speaks as follows of the lectures of Prof. Geo. P. Rudolph the ex-Catholic priest: "By invitation of myself and people, Prof. Geo. P. Rudolph delivered three lectures in the M. E. church of this place, which were listened to with great pleasure and profit by all who heard him. His lectures are of a high character, morally and intellectually, and cannot fail to please and edify the intelligent seekers after truth. I only voice the sentiment of my congregation, when I say that I most cheerfully commend and endorse Prof. Rudolph's lectures."

We are under great obligations to Mrs. E. Jones, who conducts meetings at Douglas hall, 261 35th St.

Mrs. E. Wright, an appreciative reader of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER writes as follows of a South side meeting: "The once small spiritual circle held at 129 22nd St., Metcalf's Hall, has progressed, through the aid of our spirit instructors and earth friends seeking the truth. Dr. Geo. A. Ferris will lecture there each Sunday evening at 7:30, and at the close of each lecture comes the grand good tests, and psychometric readings from articles by Mrs. Alice Turbett. All who have visited these services can testify to the wonderful powers displayed in the past; also the rapid development of her mental gifts. Good music is another new feature. Dr. Ferris will also speak on Sunday, 2:30 p. m., for the People's Spiritual Society. Subject: 'Our God-Given Gifts and their Development.'"

Mrs. L. Reynolds, formerly of this city and an excellent medium, is now sojourning in California. We take a brief extract from a private letter written by her to Mr. and Mrs. E. Jones, prominent Spiritualists of the south side. She says: "I take special pleasure in thanking you for the papers you have so kindly sent me. THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER, I am just delighted with it. I believe it is destined to have a wide circulation all over the world. The friends tell me to say so; also that Brother Francis has friends on the spirit side that are helping him to bring about a change, looking to high results for good in a noble work. Like the spirit friends, I am sure it will have unparalleled success. I am interested particularly in the subject of Old Rome in America."

The announcement for the meeting at Hartford, Mich., Dec. 6 and 7, came too late for last week's issue. Hon. L. V. Moulton and Mrs. A. N. Wisner were the principal speakers. Others prominent in the cause were invited to be present. Officers should see to it that meetings in Michigan should be announced at an early date.

Thomas Lees, of Cleveland, Ohio, writes: "I would like to mention that Mrs. S. F. DeWolf, of Chicago, who has been occupying the Cleveland rostrum the past three Sundays, has made many friends during her stay here. Although she had never been here before, she attracted large audiences, by her plain, common-sense lectures preceding her platform seances for independent slate writing, a phase of the Spiritualistic phenomena which never fails to interest the public, because of the proof positive it usually carries with it. It is a pity, though, that a table-cloth is used to hide the slate; in some minds it leaves a bad impression. Mrs. DeWolf while here was the guest of Mr. J. W. Buttes, and later, of Mr. Thos. A. Black, where she gave private sittings during the week, with good satisfaction. Should this Chicago medium ever visit here again, we predict a more pleasant and profitable time for her. Clevelanders are proverbially slow in enthusiastic demonstrations of approval to strangers until they pass the regulation standard, then they thaw out quickly, and present ever afterwards their warm side to the proficient, whether it be author, actor, singer or medium. Although we feel that it must be very trying for a sensitive to visit a place they were never in before, and wholly unacquainted therein, yet we trust our friend's visit on the whole, was both enjoyable and profitable."

Miss Zade L. Turner, a scholar in the Cleveland Progressive Lyceum from infancy, was united in wedlock to Mr. Geo. H. Mickey, formerly of Shelby, Ohio. The ceremony took place on Thanksgiving Eve., at the residence of the bride's aunt, Mrs. Kate Tracy, 71 Cross St., Mr. Thos. Lees officiating. Quiet family affair; no cards.

W. H. Vosburgh, of Troy, N. Y., an excellent medium, has removed to 609 River St., that city.

G. G. W. Van Horn writes as follows from New York: "The second Sunday services of the Progressive Spiritualists, held at Arcanum Hall, 57 West 25th St., on 23d ult., were of unusual interest. Mrs. Harriet E. Beach, an earnest worker, had on exhibition a large collection of spirit portrait paintings, produced under satisfactory test conditions by well-known spirit artists. She gave her interesting experience of 22 years in spirit art. The audience were delighted. Last evening, 30th ult., Mrs. Amelia Mott Knight, independent slate writing medium, gave an exhibition of slate writing without a pencil, under a committee of five persons, who testified to their genuineness. The writer gave scores of undisputed tests of spirit identity at the close of each service. Large and interested audiences greeted the several services. All were pleased, and went away rejoicing at the power of the Spirit-world."

Mrs. H. S. Lake, regular speaker at the First Spiritual Temple, Boston, will lecture each Sunday of December in Washington, D. C., her place being supplied by Mr. Albert E. Tisdale, of Merrick, Mass. Mrs. Lake has served the Fraternity Society meeting in the First Spiritual Temple, for three consecutive years, and under her ministrations these auxiliary societies have been created, which bid fair to meet some special and pressing needs connected with the Spiritualistic movement. Her permanent address is 52 Worcester Street, Boston, Mass.

J. W. Fletcher, the well-known medium, lectures every Sunday in Conservatory hall, Brooklyn, N. Y.; Wednesday evening, before the Psychical society, N. Y. City. He will visit California in '91. Address for dates en route, 263 W. 43rd St., New York City.

Dr. J. K. Bailey spoke at Liberal, Mo., Nov. 30. His home address is 812 South Washington Ave., Scranton, Pa., to which place he can be addressed for engagements.

Bishop A. Beals, after a successful engagement at Detroit, Mich., goes to Indianapolis, Ind., to fill an engagement. His address there will be 98 Mississippi St.

Emil F. Josselyn, of Grand Rapids, Mich., writes: "Mrs. Adah Sheehan has just closed a very successful engagement here. Too much cannot be said of this worker's power for laying the foundation for a thoroughly clear understanding of our philosophy, practical and candid, yet teaching at the same time the most sublime truths. Her earnestness and honesty impresses the disbelievers until they are constrained to follow yet a little further to see for themselves the truth of her assertions. Our meetings are held Sunday morning and evening, also Thursday evening. Friends visiting our city are invited to meet with us at Greenwood Hall, 64 Canal St. Mrs. Glading is with us during December."

Lottie Fowler, an excellent medium, who has been living in England for many years, has returned to this country, and may be found at the Clarendon Hotel, Baltimore, Md.

A subscriber writes: "The Peoples' Spiritual Society, held Sunday, Nov. 30 at 2:30 p. m., at Bricklayers' Hall, 93 South Peoria St., one of the grandest harmonious, and unusually interesting meetings of the season. The Rev. Dr. Martin opened the meeting. Subject: 'Mind over Matter,' which was well handled. He was followed by Dr. Ferris in a few remarks, in which he exhibited so much enthusiasm, every one was greatly surprised. Then came Mrs. Dr. Preston, with her eloquent remarks; then John A. Johnston came forward and gave some fine tests, and was greeted by rounds of applause. Mrs. DeKnevet gave some fine tests. Miss Della Savage closed the meeting with a fine recitation. She was greeted with rounds of applause; it was one of the finest ever given in this city. The Lyceum opened at 1:30. Prof. Leroy Van Horn and Mr. Clarke, with his juvenile martial music band, from three to ten years each, surprised the audience in the rendering of several patriotic airs."

Solomon W. Jewett, of California, writes as follows in reference to Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond: "Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond is not only one of the finest mediums, but through her special gifts, in my opinion, there has been transmitted more general intelligence from the other side of life, to enlighten the human race, than given through any other one person. I am delighted to hear that we are to have a continual treat, once a month, during one year,

through Mrs. R's control." Mr. Jewett has many life-sized portraits of Bible characters, which he would like to exhibit at the World's Fair.



GOOD OF THE ORDER.

Many hundred of letters have been answered by mail during the past two weeks. But some questions are so general, and have been asked by so many, that we think best to make public answer.

G. W. C., Boston, Mass.:—Yes, we are pleased to say that ladies are admitted to full membership in the order, and are eligible to the highest honors. They are our brightest ornaments, too, both here and in the higher life to come.

Wm. H. S., St. Louis, Mo.:—The benefits arising from coming a Neophyte of the order, when looked at from a pecuniary point of view, are nothing. Those who care only for this life, and want only that which will benefit them while in the physical form, had better not join the order. But the benefits arising and conferred upon a person who is suitable to become a member, are so great in another way, which I am not at liberty to explain, that any amount of money weighs nothing in comparison.

O. W. T., Capac, Mich.:—The best way to proceed in organizing a Court, is to first become a member yourself, and then, armed with your certificate under the Seal of the Grand Temple, you are in a position to obtain members.

Mrs. R. E. P., Long Beach, Cal.:—There seems to be a grand awakening in California, as we are receiving many applications from there. Those who are suitable for membership, will join without any persuasion, being under a certain power. Others are not wanted. "Guard well the gates of the Temple" that none pass who should not.

C. P., Cincinnati:—You can aid the cause best by helping to extend the circulation and usefulness of our official organ, THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER. No! The order has no pecuniary connection with the PROGRESSIVE THINKER, or any other publication whatever.

GENERAL ANSWERS.

Persons making application for initiation as Mystics should visit the Temple in person as soon after as possible, in order to make arrangements as to the night to come etc. We wish to see all applicants, if possible, before the night of initiation.

Neophytes must present themselves personally at the Temple some time before taking the Mystic degree, to obtain the endorsement of the proper officers, and to have the necessary mathematical calculations made in their case. Out of town applicants can be allowed to pay this visit on same day of initiation if more convenient for them so to do.

OLNEY H. RICHMOND.  
17 Thirty-third St., Chicago, Ill.

Dr. A. Dobson was in the city last week. He has been visiting the South for some time. We are always glad to see him.

A. L. Doane, writes: "Dr. G. W. Frost is giving lectures every Sunday in Russell, Mass. Subject for a course: 'The Experience and Investigation of a Spirit that has been in Spirit-life 950 years.'"

Solomon W. Jewett writes: "I am in receipt of number fifty of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER, and feel a deep interest in its circulation broadcast. I only wish the world at large knew how Romish paganism is sowing the seeds of discord over this glorious Republic, and unless there is a sudden check to its progress, in the political and ministerial ranks, we shall be bound down to a Roman hierarchy, that cannot easily be unloosed."

A. G. Hollister writes: "Is it not a pitiable spectacle to see people who assume the role of liberals, spirituals, and philosophers, qualified to lead the human mind from error, pitching in, to blackball the truest, the bravest, and cleverest spiritual teacher, Jesus, that ever gave his life to uplift and benefit the people. How much do they know of his teachings, who quote his sayings from the record to offset one against another without even trying to understand the spirit of them, by attempting to live as he taught, nor by hearkening to those who do. Are they yet free and liberal enough to bear comparison with him, or to bear him company?"

Mrs. O. E. Daniels, who has for the past year been engaged by the south side society, and given excellent satisfaction, will now answer calls to lecture. She gives tests, life-readings and spirit names from the rostrum. Her permanent address is 3136 Emerald Ave., Chicago, Ill.

Dr. Hudson, of Stockton, Cal., institutes some interesting comparisons this week between Jesus and Socrates.

Wm. Ellery Channing's experiences in the spiritual realms are decidedly interesting. He wisely gives the reader to understand that he only speaks for himself.

LIBERAL LECTURES.

The Liberal Lectures by A. B. French are embraced in a volume of 140 pages. They contain rare gems of thought, beautifully expressed, and will enrich any mind that is brought in contact with them. Thousands who have listened to this gifted speaker will want to see his thoughts in print, and come more directly in contact with them than by the sound of his voice. The following constitutes the table of contents: 1.—Conflicts of Life. 2.—The Power and Permanency of Ideas. 3.—The Unknown. 4.—Anniversary Address. 5.—The Evolution of Our Age. 6.—The Spiritual Rostrum: Its Duties and Dangers. 7.—What is Truth? 8.—The Future of Spiritualism. 9.—The Emancipation Proclamation. Price, 50 cents. For sale at this office.

HUNDREDS of different secular papers, with immense circulations, are published for one penny each per copy. We follow with as nearly as possible offering THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER on trial sixteen weeks for 25 cents. We ask the 10,000,000 Spiritualists to give it, too, an immense circulation. Our appeal will not be in vain.



Written for The Progressive Thinker.

## SATES AND JESUS.

### THE TWO ARE COMPARED.

#### Interesting Conclusions in Reference to Them.

The dower of knowledge conferred upon Christian criticism in the last decade and a half eclipses the lore of the ages. What was formerly suspected to exist is now proved. Negative evidence that is doubled equals the positive. Preliminary to comparing Socrates with Jesus a few notes touching antecedent literature will be proper.

1 Nearly three quarters of a century ago Rev. Robert Taylor, one of the most learned men of England at that time, opened the eyes of orthodox concerning pagan origin and mythical history of Jesus, the hero of Christianity and the Savior business. The personage of Jesus exists in the hazy multiple. There were Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus Ben Panther, Jesus Maltheal, and others. Taylor's "Diegesis" shows Jesus to have had many predilects, as Christian, Prometheus, Hercules, Apollo, Bacchus, and others. Christianity is conclusively proved to be reconstructed paganism. *That light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world is naught but the mundane sun.*

2 Not many years later, Godfrey Higgins, a learned lawyer of England published his "Anacalypsis" (the unveiled). This work set forth the Jesus myth on the basis of Philology. Though man was created in the image of God, the color of that image was shown in Anacalypsis to be unblushingly black. This was made apparent by the representations of him as the savior in pictures and in statuary. This agrees with the studies in the evolution of man.

3 About the beginning of the last decade, the carefully written review and criticism of Mr. Wait, late Chief Justice of the U. S., came to light. He confirms Taylor or Higgins in tracing the Christian scheme to Christ and to ancient pagan astronomical myths. He reduces the sacred records to a beggarly thin skeleton of dry bones. He shows the gospels to have no legitimate paternity, and their putative authors are utterly void of a single witnessing testator. "In all the mass of Christian literature there is not to be found a single mention of any of the canonical gospels"; and a Christian presbyter relates that Mark—who is said to have written one of them, never heard or accompanied Jesus, the hero of his story.

4 A few years later Mr. Jerrold Massey, the English poet and scholar, published his "Historical Jesus and Mythical Christ." This rather small-sized book was the fruit of thirty years study and of twelve years direct application in a difficult and an untrod field. He proved the fabulous Jesus from ancient Egyptological lore, and traced the God of christology to Krishna and the Christian cult to astronomical and astro-logical sources. So complete and thorough was his treatment, that a long time must elapse before an attempt will be made to answer his argument or confute his conclusion.

5. Nearly contemporary with Mr. Massey's book, there appeared a little volume by an English author and an American editor, on the same absorbing theme. But this opened a new phase. It coupled confession with explanation. The old bible makers were called upon to come forward and explain their finger-marks on the mutilated page of Christian history. The title of this work is, "Jesus Christ a Fiction." By Michael Faraday A. C.\* or from the spirit side of life.

We note this is the second volume that has appeared by supermundane author and a mundane editor. Dicken's "Mystery of Edwin Drood" was the first. Faraday's book is thrilling, dramatic, and shameful to the guilty actors in the play of the world's cruel delusion by prelates for priestly power.

6. The latest contribution to correct Messianic mistakes is "Researches in Oriental History," by G. W. Brown, M. D. This is a fresh American work, and its author is nearer home. Indeed, like Judge Wait of Chicago, is one of the fellow citizens of the proud state of Illinois. The book is a credit to its author and throws light upon the subject in hand.

Here is a large amount of historic and forensic matter directly controverting the basis of the current faith of christendom.

It seems strange that any body can read even the first one of this list—the "Diegesis," if he be honest with himself, and be a Christian thereafter. It takes the props from under this offensive edifice. And Faraday to say nothing of the five others, brings the bible makers before the tribunal of modern thinkers as convicted criminals, self-confessed perjurers and the wickedest of wicked forgers.

JESUS	SOCRATES
1. Jesus, a poor Jew aspired to be king.	1. Socrates, a plain Greek statesman, "accused" for himself an independent opinion, and might go about his appointed business. He aspired to wisdom and was chosen one of the rulers of Rome.
2. Jesus was born without a natural father, and claimed a heavenly father. He was born in an irrational manner.	2. Socrates was legitimately born with a natural father in a natural manner.
3. Jesus claimed to be the son of God, and the equal with God.	3. Socrates made no supernatural claim, but often spoke of his friendly attendant voice as a monitor.
4. Jesus claimed to work miracles.	4. Socrates made no such pretension. No bon est nian can.

\*Let not the plain language of secular speech be accused of improper levity or lack of respect for sacred things. Since we know "Solemnity is the essence of impiety," words of pious sobriety become dangerously misleading.

"Now the bugbear of death is abolished and we find there is none, we cannot properly say 'post-mortem' or 'after death.' But we might help out the problem by the use of the monogram A. C. That would stand for After Christyism, which is the literal fact, minus winge.

5. Jesus was not a reasoner. He was a poet, a fanatic, a demagogue, a demagogue, a demagogue.

6. Jesus spoke one language, Hebrew, while his sayings are reported in another foreign tongue Greek. This is wrong and fraudulent.

7. The historians of Jesus, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, are fictitious; they are in dispute and need vouchers as much as their hero.

8. The historian of Jesus never wrote any thing else but about this fabled God.

9. Jesus never wrote a line in his life—if he had, never left his autograph in any mark X.

10. No contemporary writer even mentions Jesus. The passage about Jesus in Josephus is admitted by scholars to be a forgery. Josephus, from the spirit side of life, said in And Athens, gorges, who lived A. D. 170, returns and says it was not in the copies of Josephus in his time.

11. Not a scrap of writing of, or about Jesus ever written during his life time, or in the century he is said to have lived.

12. At his death Jesus betrayed trepidation. In despair he asks "why his God had forsaken him."

Publius Argenti, who lived between the third and fourth centuries and who from the spirit side confesses himself a pagan priest, one of the bible makers, and helped on the savior invention, reports: "There was no authentic mention of a personal Jesus previous to the third century. Certainly it was not known at Rome, and we took good care to leave it in such obscurity that all subsequent investigators could not tell whether we were giving truth or error."

The above statement finds corroboration in an avowal made by Julius Frontinus, a Roman who lived A. D. 87 or 97. He said I have no evidence whatever to furnish you that such a man or man-God as Jesus ever lived. I know that the three letters IHS were engraved at the foot of the statue of Saturn at Rome at that time. We understood them to refer to the Greek God Bacchus, but changed to our god Saturn, and related to the sufferings of those Gods."

Now in all candor, we ask Mr. Davis, in view of this testimony, in view of this dozen discrepancies, the several essential withouts, most of which apply to no other character in history—how is it possible for him (in PROGRESSIVE THINKER, Sep. 27, '90) to hold the history of Jesus of Nazareth to be fully as well established as the history of any eminent man who lived as long ago? We see this Jesus almost drops out of sight in contrast with Socrates, who is nearly 500 years more remote in time, and therefore gives five centuries the advantage to the god of christology, if advantage there be. The monuments of Socrates are rational and normal. Those of Jesus are irrational and abnormal. The one abides in fact. The other dwells in fiction. The contiguity of Christian history resembles the patchwork of the modern crazy quilt; it points equally to Jesus, Jupiter, Hercules, Hamlet, Odin and Melchizedek. Most of the nine essential withouts respecting Jesus apply to the above four, but not to Socrates or to any other known personage. In looking through a collection of some three to four thousand messages from the denizens of the Spirit-world, a significant fact stands out. Many of these messages are from clergymen, but includes popes, cardinals, bishops, friars and a goodly number of ancient worthies, bible makers and pagans. This stalwart fact is eminent, that all testify, through special observation that they have never met Jesus, nor have they seen any one who had.

Many are disappointed. Many are in despair. Many are still hunting for God, for their Savior, for years and fail to find them. Some are waiting in dismal monotony expecting to see Jesus, God, Allah, Brahman, Jupiter, Mary, Adonis or whatever god was their pet delusion. Here below, when one of our number drops away, he is out of sight and soon almost forgotten. There they wake up to behold the prodigious sight of the teeming multitude of the past. The millions that have for ages been going over—with their superstitions—their absurd conflicting sentiments—meet the astonished gaze of the new arrival. Therefore a report from some of these people from that far country to this, cannot fail to arrest attention. That report being freighted with wisdom born of a mixture of fact, experience and second thought, becomes pith extraordinary. Let us note a few whose mundane life dates the first half century, which includes the period in which Jesus is said to have lived.

1. JIRUS LIVIUS, A Roman historian A. D. 17: "I was contemporary with the alleged Christ, and intimately acquainted with Pontius Pilate. I have never been able, either in spirit or mortal, to discover any positive, or I may say any negative evidence, of the existence of Jesus of Nazareth. I am certainly one of those spirits that Christians may call devil, because I violate the precepts of their sacred books. Man unfastured by priests, and deny that Jesus Christ was ever in the flesh. No learned Jew knew aught of his existence. . . . The books I wrote have been tampered with first by Eusebius, afterwards by Innocent III., and almost destroyed after the council of Basle. Otherwise there would have been no mistake by moderns about the origin of Christianity."

2. DRUSILLA LIVIA, Empress, A. D. 27:—"I lived at the precise time that the Christian Savior is said to have lived. I was a lady of literary tastes and occupied the highest position in Roman society, namely that of Empress. I was the mother of Tiberius Claudius, the Emperor that ruled the Roman empire at the very time it is claimed that Jesus lived. The whole Christian story is a fabrication from Christia of India.

3. HERMAS, An apostolic father, A. D. 30, '90.—This is an aged sinner who has advanced but little. We give but a part of his message also. He says: "I was one of the founders of Christianity. I knew that the Christian religion and its God-man was nothing but a new version of the old story of Prometheus dying upon the Sythian crags, for the atonement of the sins of mortal man to appease an angry God. . . . If I had had the least conception of these long dark ages of blood which have been the result, I would have withdrawn in horror of such scenes as were enacted on this mortal plane after my death."

4. RABBI GAMALIAL, (A. D. 50). This witness was a philosopher as well. He said: "I lived at the same time of the so called Jesus of Nazareth—and what is more, in the same country, and I say positively that there was no Jesus of Nazareth—no apostles—Christian religion in that day and generation."

The last witness on this occasion is Calus Cassius Longinus, A. D. 50, who was a Jurist, Judge, and Governor. He reports "I was Governor of Syria about A. D. 50. I had every means of knowing what took place there at the time of the alleged life of Jesus. The name of Jesus was as common in Syria as the name of John is with you. . . . I know no such man as the Christians claim was crucified. . . . Before I left the mortal flesh there was a man defiled at Rome called Apollonius of Tyana. After passing to spirit life and returning again A. D. 350, I found that the same statue that had been dedicated to Apollonius when I lived, had been changed to represent the celebrated Jesus of Nazareth."

Neither was there such a man—a so-called God—a philosopher—nor what you spiritualists term a medium—ever crucified at Jerusalem."

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This statement is corroborated by the confession of Pope Urban III., who adds that Christianity has borrowed every thing from the pagans."

Should the reader or Mr. Davis, Sr., still persist in holding to the fallacious Savior, how will they manage the death dealing proofs of Judge Wait? He finds:

1. Nothing was ever written (on this question) during the first century. What would we know of Lincoln or Garfield if, themselves never writing a line, not even an autograph, and nothing have been written for a hundred years after their departure?

2. "No one of the gospel is mentioned in the New Testament."

3. "No authentic autograph manuscript of any of the gospels has ever been known. Nor is there any authentic record of any credible witness ever claims to have seen such manuscript."

4. "In all the mass of Christian literature, there is not to be found a single mention of the canonical gospels."

The above statement is doubly sustained by Anastasius Librarian to the Vatican library in the ninth century, who says: "There is not a scrap of authentic writing in existence to show that such a man or god as Jesus Christ ever existed; but there is this kind of evidence, and plenty of it, to show that the real Jesus of Nazareth was Apollonius of Tyana, the Cappadocian Savior."

Stockton, Cal. A. S. HUDSON, M. D.

Written for The Progressive Thinker.

## THE ABER MEDIUMS.

Letter From J. H. Pratt.

### He Nobly Comes to Their Defense.

I am in receipt of letters from prominent Spiritualists, stating it is rumored that I expelled Mr. and Mrs. Aber from my house for having detected them in fraudulent practices. Such a rumor was furthered by its own wish no doubt. Since September, 1888, I have been present at above a thousand seances with these mediums, and with unsparring criticism, which extorted from them the remark to others, that they believed I suspected them; but in all this time, in not one instance, did I detect the least evidence of fraud; during the most of this time the mediums were members of my household, giving me unusual advantages for their study and detection if amenable to it.

Mrs. Aber's mediumship has been developed in my own house, and under my special direction since February last. While with me they had no inducement to practice fraud, and if the investigating world returned them according to their merits, I guarantee that no fraud will ever emanate through their mediumship, unless hypnotized (mesmerized) by some abominable fraud, seeking honor and notoriety through such nefarious practices.

In conclusion, I have this to say, that for some phases of phenomena I regard them as among the best mediums in America, and perhaps Europe, and I boldly assert that any man or woman with a strong analytical mind, investigating the phenomena through these mediums for three months, can have proved to his or her consciousness, that the mind and soul has an immortal progressive existence. My own nature is instinctively and naturally an enemy to credulity, and had it not been so, I would not have expended the time, money and labor, to have proved to me that the human mind groups within itself such a constellation of powers as ultimate into a state of eternal happiness; the natural heritage of every human soul.

I may say now, after two years consecutive study, at a cost to me of \$1,600, that faith, or an opinion is displaced by such knowledge as rests the mind on the same basis of certainty and confidence as any other thing known of the mind in the world of science. Had I been credulous, and my thinking done by proxy, this I could not have done.

This field of study is inexhaustible, like all others, and the more we attempt to explore it, the more clear and rational does its knowledge become to my mind.

With this experience, and with its fruit of gratitude to these mediums, I cheerfully recommend them to all seekers desiring to know more about intelligent life than they can learn from the pulpit and the schools.

Treat them fairly as you would treat a chemical analysis of soils, and through them you will solve the great problem of life.

Spring Hill, Kansas. J. H. PRATT.

## A PHANTOM DRIVER.

### A GHOSTLY VISITOR IN THE SOUTH.

#### It Startles and Puzzles the People.

Great excitement prevails among the people living on the southwestern extremity of McKinney street, in Houston, Tex., over the nightly journey taken through that portion of the town by a phantom cart, horse and driver. They say that at 2 o'clock the vehicle appears near the corner of Hamilton, and, turning into McKinney, moves rapidly down it, into the open country, where it vanishes in plain view of the beholders. The more ignorant of the community are frantic with terror over the apparition, which they say portends evil, and of which they seem powerless spectators, unable to stop or destroy. Even the more intelligent citizens profess themselves completely at a loss to explain or account for the appearance, which all have seen and followed, only to see it dissolve like a mirage. The thing has kept up for nearly two weeks, pursuing its journey in spite of obstacles, attempts to halt it, and even shots which have been fired into it, but have apparently produced not the slightest effect.

The cart is a very ordinary looking one, with two wheels and an elevated seat, the horse a small gray pony, moving as if lame in one foot, and very poor and miserable in appearance, and the driver, a large man, dressed roughly in shirt and dark pants, with a large black hat slouched over his face hiding it except for a long, straight mustache falling nearly to his breast. He sits bent forward, whip in hand, but never alters his position or even turns his head. There is nothing spectral in his appearance nor his horse's nor his cart's, and the latter rumbles along with a good deal of noise, the unaccustomed sound of which, repeated at such an unusual hour, was the first means of calling attention to the mysterious journey it performs. Application was recently made to the authorities to place policemen along its route, who were to forcibly detain the cart and its occupant and solve, if possible, in some natural manner the problem of its character. This was granted and the street patrolled by Officer John Murray and six men for several nights.

Murray gives the following account of his attempts to stop the strange vehicle: "I had stationed a man on every corner, and kept myself a keen lookout on every side, for, to tell the truth, I was convinced that some fraud or joke was being worked, as I did not believe in spooks. The city clock had just struck 2 when I heard the sound of a horse's feet and the jolting of a cart that needed axle grease mightily bad. I ran back and saw the man who had been stationed at Hamilton street, trying to catch up with the cart. I stopped him and asked him where it had come from, when he told me that while he was staring directly down the street, without warning, he saw the cart moving where the moment before there was nothing. The electric light was only about forty feet away, and it was impossible for it to have approached without his noticing it. I blew my whistle and the other men came running, when I directed them to stop the thing, which was going slowly down McKinney street, into which it turned. Hal Parker then ran on to catch the horse's bridle. I was to cover the driver with my pistol, and Dick Tomlinson was to spring in the cart and see what it carried. I saw Parker make a snatch at the horse, and I called out 'Halt!' to the man, but the next moment Parker was down in the street, the cart going over him, and I had fired half a dozen shots at the man who was driving, and had never even turned his head to look at me. The other men who had been kept back to help us if we had need were gathered around Tomlinson, who was leaning on one of them, so I went over to see what was the matter with Hal Parker. He was insensible and all drawn up in a knot."

"It took us nearly an hour to bring him to, and it wasn't till late next day that he could do anything but shiver and cry when the subject was mentioned, but he finally told me that when he tried to lay his hand on that ghost horse something caught his arm with a grip like a hand of ice, and flung him to the ground, when he knew no more till he found himself at home. It is mighty hard to believe, for I know I saw the cart run over him as he fell, but there ain't a mark on him to show that it did. Tomlinson says that he had made ready to jump when he looked in and saw an open coffin setting in the wagon and the white face of a dead man lying in it. It scared him so that he ain't out of bed yet. He told me that a smell like twenty graveyards struck him nearly down when he looked in that cart."

Major Robinson, who lives on the corner of McKinney and Willow, when interviewed on the subject, professed himself wholly at a loss to give an opinion.

"I am not a Spiritualist," he said, "or I could very easily explain the thing. At first I was amused at the furor it excited, then worried by the crowds that followed it every night, shooting at it, throwing bricks and even small hand grenades at it, and making the night hideous, and then I undertook to solve the mystery and rid the neighborhood of the nuisance. I went out one night just before the thing comes along and tied a wire clothesline right across the street, and then sat down to wait for the cart, thinking it would have a time going through that wire. But, as I am a living man, sir, that devil's contrivance kept on down the street, and when I went to look after my line I found it unbroken, though with my own eyes I had seen the cart pass me."

Last night the phantom was watched for by a crowd that lined the street for blocks, and who followed it until it vanished before their eyes in open country more than half a mile from a tree or house, but in the midst of all the hubbub and excitement he produces the spectral driver never for moment loses his lame horse or turns his head."

ON TRIAL, THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER is only 25 cents for sixteen weeks, or \$1 per year. For that amount you get the best thought of the ablest writers in the United States and Europe, and also ad in establishing in Chicago the largest Spiritualist Publishing House in the world.

Written for The Progressive Thinker.

## The Land of the Lonely.

BY O. W. BARNARD.

There's a land where the sun never shines,  
Where the gloom is so heavy and chill—  
Away down in the depths of the mines,  
Where cold damps do forever distill—  
Where the demon of darkness doth reign,  
On his ebony throne of despair,  
And his subjects are driven insane  
By the torturing demons of care.

'Tis the land of the lonely and sad,  
In the prison's unpeepable den,  
Where the wicked, unholly and bad,  
Are confined by their good fellow men,  
Where for something, or for nothing at all,  
They are doomed to this darkness and woe—  
Where for mercy they ever must call,  
And where none to their mercy will show.

In their dungeons most loathsome they live,  
And the sunshine never lights their abode,  
And no angel of mercy can give  
A reprieve, nor lighten their load.

And the world all the long ages through  
Has been deaf to their cries and their pain,  
And my heart bleeds to think this is true,  
And to know that their tears fall in vain.

And to see that no respite appears,  
As I gaze down the ages to come—  
But this land, full of phantoms and fears,  
And its people with sorrow made dumb.

Yet sweet hope, that pure light of the soul,  
Does sometimes show a smile on her face,  
And somewhere, as the ages may roll,  
Man may yet be a friend to his race.

Mundru, Ill.

Written for The Progressive Thinker.

## There Shall be Light at Eventide.

BY MARY E. VAN HORN.

Press on, faint heart, though dark the night,  
And velle the sun—to outward seeming,  
Be sure, though hidden from thy sight,  
Behind the clouds 'tis brightly gleaming.

You catch the radiance even now,  
'Twill soon burst forth in its beauty,  
What though life's shadows cloud thy brow,  
Still be content to do thy duty.

To win the prize, to reach the goal,  
Cannot be done by idle dreaming,  
So the rich treasures of the soul  
Come forth through work, with beauty teeming.

The day is equal to the night,  
And love divine can never ebb,  
At eventide there shall be light,  
Best thought! It will be faithful ever.

Missoula, Wis.

## Transition of a Noted Medium.

### Memorial Services at Kansas City.

The Kansas City, Mo., Spiritual Literary Society met Sunday, Nov. 23, for memorial services for Mrs. Lavinia Perkins, who passed away some time in October, at San Diego. Mrs. Perkins had lived sometime in Kansas City, and had requested the Spiritualists to hold memorial services in case of her death, and she would try to be present. The following address by Mrs. Sallie C. Ely came first:

FRIENDS,—our meeting to-day is a tribute to Mrs. Perkins, a test and trance medium, who lived in Kansas City a long time, and had many friends here. Orphaned at an early age, she was adopted by a New York family. Soon after the Fox girls' experience, she, too, began to sense the presence of angel visitors. In her country home, close to nature, they gathered around her with glad tidings from over the mystic river, and bade her go forth and feed hungry hearts with spiritual manna. It is a trying ordeal to be a public medium. She shrank not, but was faithful to her light, and her moral courage then has won for her now a crown of immortal beauty. In that land of the sun, only the other day, she passed away in the golden October. Like a sheaf fully ripe for the harvest, she was gathered to the garner. She so loved all beautiful things, I deem it very fitting that the change took place in California, the land of fruit and flowers.

In her palmist days she traveled far and wide on her errands of mercy, scattering spirit messages all around her in this country and across the sea. Her sweet full grains of Spiritualism made green and bright many a somber home, and filled sorrowing hearts with gladness. I well remember her first visit to our house. Our hill was aglow with spring flowers, green grass and budding trees. All was sunshine without. Within was the dark shadow of bereavement. The patter of little feet was stilled, little voices no longer called "papa and mamma." Our buds of promise were blighted by the cruel death frost. We walked benumbed, as in a nightmare.

When I met Mrs. Perkins, with her wand of mediumship, and touched the dark cloud, and the mists were cleared away and our spirits rose to meet the loved ones. First came our dear old grandmother with a greeting all her own. Then a tender father with words of love and cheer. They brought our little boys who died and helped us see them on our laps and by our side. Henceforth our home was glorified, for that day was the veil lifted and we communed with many spirits, and ever since we have known to a verity that our home is filled with angel friends—that we do not tread our paths alone. And what treasures are so priceless as this knowledge which our mediums are sowing broadcast? How lovely now must be the pleasant face and kindly smile of our friend, with the added halo of spirit scenes and spirit reunion.

She had many earthly disappointments, but she bore them bravely, looking upward and over to the shining shore, where stood her only child long gone before, with all her nearest kindred. She bore the cross with a martyr's patience, and how glad I am that she is now wearing the crown! I fancy I can see her borne to her new home by loving hands whose suffering hearts she had so lightened, to a bower of roses, and there she is resting, listening to sweetest music, gathering new strength for work just begun. Around her are the white walls of her spirit home, glowing with beautiful pictures, wrought in answer to every good deed done by her on earth.

Mrs. Ely was followed by Mary Marsh Baker, in a beautiful poem, commemorating the event.

Then followed short speeches from nearly all present, testifying to her worth as a medium and a woman. Among them might be mentioned, Judge Morton, Dr. Whittington, Mr. Marsh, Mrs. Marsh, Dr. Hammond, Mr. Gates, and Mr. Smith. Mrs. Goodrich, a seeing medium, said Mrs. Perkins was present, and described her movements, as a lost Mrs. Clary. It was a

very enjoyable meeting, and heaven and earth seemed blended.

DR. L. MANN HAMMOND, Sec'y.  
Kansas City, Mo.

### J. G. Jackson to Prof. Buchanan

TO THE EDITOR:—Our friend Prof. J. R. Buchanan does not seem to like that "four columned letter" I lately addressed to him.

It was rather long, so long that you may remember I made a half promise it would be the last I should write upon the issues that seem to exist between us.

But would it not be cause of rejoicing, could forty columns be written, that would lead the world of mankind out of the meshes of miracle, superstition and idolatry, into the clearness of the light of natural truth as revealed to the careful student of "The universal reign of Law."

So many letters of thanks and congratulation for the preparation of those "four columns," were received as almost to prompt vanity, did I not reflect that there are probably an equal number of readers, like brother B., who might incline to disapprove.

A few words of explanation, that seem to be needed, are all that I will now ask room to add.

Brother B. thinks he is misconstrued and judging from his last response, it would seem that he, also, misconceives some of my own expressions. Was injustice done to him, when I asked: "Ahl why then do you cling to any last lingering cord that binds you backward to the Juggernaut car of superstition?"

Surely not, for Jesus of Nazareth is the figure-head behind which all the world-ickening superstitions of Christianity have been built, and to which the oldest and most representative church still clings with the unrelenting grasp of death.

In saying that the Nazarene "was the noblest teacher of the past" without the warrant of authentic history (for of such positively there is none) and without the verdict of noble fruits borne through the ages by teachings and manifestations attributed to him, is a strengthening of the powers of evil, a clouding of the sun that is striving to burst forth and melt the frosts of centuries.

It is not my own view, but brother Buchanan's, of the special abilities of the man of Nazareth, to bless the world by his influence, since becoming a denizen of the Spirit world, that made me ask the searching questions I did in those "four columns."

My ideas of influence from the spheres are unperfected. They were alluded to in that same letter, but not after the manner of brother B., who surely "knows."

Neither an omnipotent spiritual "father" nor the denizens of the home of human spirits, appear as a matter of fact, to have any perfected law whereby they can or do at all times work in specialties for the welfare of humanity. As remarked before, it would seem, that in an enlarged sense, this life is a school of experience and development, wherein it is the duty of every one to work for their own salvation, and in aid of their fellows materially, intellectually and spiritually.

Since brother B. expressed the belief in the continued and increasing power and ability of Jesus to influence the affairs of men, I had a right to ask, wherein was his benign influence made manifested during the 1900 years that have elapsed since his departure?

Since the gibbering of unknown tongues on the reputed day of Pentecost, forward until now, those instances wherein goodness and purity have seemed to spring from Christianity or from the special and avowed influence of Jesus of Nazareth have truly been "Like Angel visits few and far between," unless it be during these later days of Spiritualism.

My controversy is mainly, not with brother B., but with Christian churchianity, ancient and modern, and it is with its ascendancy or repression, the human world must now sink to another reign of the dark and bloody centuries of the past, or rise to the glorious sun light of truth and righteousness.

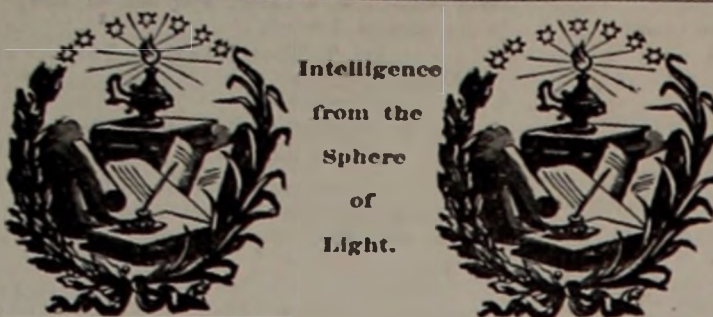
J. G. JACKSON.

## What is Life?

"Why am I? Whence came I? Whither do I tend?" was the query of a writer and deep thinker. We are mysterious beings; here without our knowledge or consent. Life is but a mere hand's breadth of years; short days and weeks flying; years rolling on toward eternity; our wishes and longings ungratified, our aspirations unfulfilled.

We form schemes for life, and arrange our future plans for living with unending pleasure, in this great world of wonders, only to find them fruitless and vain, simply building castles in the air—for the knowledge comes with sorrow, that too often life is a desert waste; and we must wrestle with all our powers, if we would win the race in the world's unequal fight. Life's greatest secret





## A NARRATIVE OF THE SUMMER-LAND.

BY HUDSON TUTTLE.

Author of *Arctura of Nature; Origin and Development of Man; Career of Religious Ideas and Ethics of Science; Studies in the Outlying Fields of Psychic Science; etc.*

### CHAPTER XIX.

#### CONTENTEDNESS NOT GOODNESS.

"We are marching on, we are marching on,  
To the fair lands bathed in light,  
Where wisdom rules in majesty,  
And Heaven is doing right.  
We ask no pledge that a crown of gems  
Upon our brows shall glow,  
For the silver flowers of immortal bowers,  
Within each heart will grow."

"Here where all is order, and individuals aggregate according to their attractions, what would be the result were one from a lower plane introduced suddenly to a higher?" This question having disturbed the mind of Leon, he addressed to the Sage.

"If you are in doubt, it is easy for you to ascertain by trial! It will be a valuable lesson to your pupil, as well as yourself," replied the master.

Acting at once on the suggestion, he went to the earth, and soon found a spirit such as he desired, standing by the side of his mortal body, gazing around in bewilderment. He had been a man satisfied with everything, because too negative to offer opposition. He revered the doctrines of the church because he had been educated therein; he believed because he did not think. He loved his fellow men because he did not hate them. It was indeed doubtful where such a passive organization would gravitate.

Leon took his hand and asked him if he knew of the transition.

"Yes, I am dead," he replied, "but where am I?"

"In heaven, or rather, the world of spirits. Look yonder, through the blue expanse, and the zone you see is the Spirit-world. Your mind is so peaceful and composed, you seem prepared for its enjoyment."

"I trust I am, for I have lived four score years on earth, and have never had any difficulty with my neighbors, or a dispute of any kind. My relations are harmonious with all men. I can safely say no one can bring a charge against me before the throne of God. I have done right, as far as possible, and have gone truthfully, according to my knowledge of God's Holy Book."

"Well, then, be it for you, and you should receive your reward. Come with me and enjoy the fruits of your good deeds."

He conducted him suddenly into the midst of the highest society possible for him to enter. It was composed of philosophers and naturalists; active students who sought to wrench the mysteries of creation from the innermost shrine of creative power. The light overpowered his senses. There was nothing in common with him and them. He could not comprehend their actions; but in the brilliancy of colors which flashed around him, the forms he saw seemed a council of the gods met in consultation over the destiny of worlds, and he was completely bewildered and confounded. He intuitively understood that there was no enjoyment for him there, and happening to cast his eyes upon his garments, in the brilliancy around them were as black as night. This overpowered him, his passive mind was excited to action, and in agony he exclaimed:

"Oh, take me away! take me away! I shall perish in the intensity of this light. Take me where I am equal, at least, to those who surround me!"

"Come with me, then," said Leon, taking the hand of his companion; you here behold what you and every other spirit are capable of becoming."

They approached a society of the same grade of the aged man. They were not of that shining purity of Leon, nor as dark as those described in previous chapters. Here was a man where *passive* goodness resided. They possessed not the energetic qualities which cause crime, and were consequently good—not because of noble virtue, but because they had no inclination to evil. They crowded around them, knowing that a new member was to be added to their number, and thankful that so developed a mind as Leon's should visit them. Leon, when about to depart, spoke as follows:

"Your goodness has been of a passive character. So far, you never have had any difficulty with any one. You have always agreed with the world. So the Quakers strove to live. But I say to you, that this is not the goodness that elevates man in the spheres. It is no virtue for a person devoid of passions to be virtuous, nor for a person devoid of animalities to be good, for we cannot measure the goodness of the man until we know how well he governs his baser faculties, if he possessed them. The morality having nothing to combat, becomes dormant. Contentment, or rather lethargy, is not the law of nature. Everything is striving and aspiring to attain a higher state. The infant looks forward to youth; youth to manhood, old age to the Spirit-world. He who sits down content amid the scene of strife will speedily find himself on the retrograde. You should not be satisfied with your present lot, but strive to elevate your minds, that some time in the ages of the future you can comprehend the condition of those whose presence has now so blinded and confused you. Strive with holy aspirations to ascend upward forever, to the comprehension of causes. The shaded garments you wear to-day will grow brighter to-morrow."

### CHAPTER XX.

#### ADDRESS OF THE SAGE.

I saw the Spirit-world, its mighty minds,  
Had used my vision to its vast domain,  
The spheres spread round me and I looked far through  
Into the ocean of space's ether blue.

It was evening when the spirit hand departed from their ethereal home to re-visit earth. They paused to gaze for a passing moment on familiar scenes. Silence oppressed them, which Leon interpreted:

"These scenes produce a melancholy which I would gladly throw off, and yet a flood of memories of the old time thrills me with a strange emotion."

"Melancholy is often of a holy character," replied the master.

"I wish I might feel its influence." Said Hero with a smile.  
"It would not accord with your light heart, and for the hour not our seeking; let us at once devote ourselves to the object of our coming."

They entered a mansion in which a large circle had convened. The Sage said in satisfaction:

"I have long desired to meet with those to whom I might with at least partial accuracy transmit my thoughts."

After several preliminary tests, he proceeded to speak through the organism of the sensitive, and his thoughts appeared in the words of the following:

#### ADDRESS.

Man has an eternity beyond the grave, that his insatiable thirst for wisdom may be satisfied. The perfected Spirit is the end of creative force. For it, the gaseous ocean of the beginning existed; for it, the igneous ball rolled through the vast space for ages; for it, one form of life after another came, type following type, and degree ascending degree in endless mutations. Man is the bud, the spirit, the unfolding flower of Nature, which will go on unfolding its powers until it reaches the throne of Omnipotent mind.

There is no end to the acquisition of wisdom, and through the weary soul pitches its camp each day a day's journey nearer God, the number of those days' journeys are as countless as the leaves of the forest, or the sands of the seashore. March forward as far and

as fast as you will, and you need never speculate on the consequences of arriving at a point where progression ends.

Draw a circle about you to-day, and to-morrow's circle will encompass it. The growth of the soul is like that of the tree, each new growth encompassing all the rest. The soul is exogenous and endogenous in its growth; not only from within, but also from without. Each age draws its circle around all those which are past. You may think cohesive attraction comprehensive—yet gravitation draws its circle around attraction, and a thousand forces beside, and gravitation itself is not a final cause. Some one will, in the distant future, stretch forth his hand and describe a circle which will include gravitation and all its antagonistic forces. We learn to comprehend great principles, and classify facts. By observing isolated instances, you lose the connection and become confused. Nature is a whole, and should be studied as such.

Men are striving to describe circles around their predecessors. The circle which bounded the mental horizon of the ancients has become, as it were, the center, a point in the circle of to-day, while to-day's circle will be lost in the efforts of the future. A circle which can not be outgrown exists only in the imagination. Whittier would tend all these efforts? To mingle in the grand circle of OMNIPOTENT MIND. The men who draw circles around their farms and cottages, around their stores, their warehouses, or the countries to where their ships go out; those who circumscribe the range of thought to the earth, or in their efforts after wisdom include the stony host in their mightily-expanded sphere—all are for the same object—the advance of mind in its efforts after the unattainable.

The savage reaches out into the future state, and feels the presence of a supreme intelligence. Man has progressed by the efforts of his intuition, in receiving impressions from the Omnipotent Mind. Thus all races, in whatever clime or country, however disadvantageously situated, in every age, have acknowledged an incomprehensible wisdom. From this, too, each nation has its own peculiar mythology. Even the half animal, naked savage, on the bleak rocks of Patagonia, has a glimpse of that Infinite spirit whom he imagines sighs in the evening breeze, and echoes his thundering voice in the hoarseness of the mad waves which forever lash the rock-bound shore of his inhospitable clime.

The human intellect has astonishing powers. It grasps solar systems at a thought. It would solve the mysteries of the Divine character. The undeveloped mind feels that the external world is controlled by an invisible force which it cannot comprehend. And from this arises the idea of the *cosmos*, or universe, being a machine, with a superior intelligence to direct its motions. Of the character of that force the savage knows nothing, and the civilized man, the theologian knows no more. The savage regards God as a separate and detached being. The civilized man, as the author of creation, penetrating through every atom of matter.

This is well expressed in the ALLAH of the Mohammedan, "the only." How beautiful is the idea contained in this: "God is the only!" When we speak of him there is no Nature, for we mean everything. All is a part of the Omnipotent. God is the "Only," the "All," the "I am." He speaks to you through every sense.

Here the question arises, "What and where is God?" This vast subject has engaged the attention of theologians and philosophers through all recorded time, and yet nothing but a vague, unsatisfactory conception has been gained. Still the mind manifests its inward dissatisfaction in striving for something more—something beyond. In early ages, the chiefs and rulers gave their ideas, and their followers were satisfied. They recognized God as a personal being, and their followers worshipped him as such. This idea of God's personality has descended to the present time, and the mass still worship a monstrous human potentate, instead of the controlling principle of universal nature; the Over Soul.

Say to the churchman that you believe the Deity to be the mind of Nature, and he will exclaim in horror, "You are a disbeliever in a God; you cannot worship Him unless he is personified." The Chinese bow before their idols, the Hindoo prostrating himself before the crushing wheels of Juggernaut, the fire-worshippers venerating the rising king of day, are no more idolatrous than those who worship a personified Deity. The germ of true veneration is deeply planted in man's nature, and cannot be suppressed. From beneath the weight of ages of superstition, the holy aspirations of our nature will flash out like beautiful stars from behind the rolling clouds. In olden time I often uttered to myself the sentence, "What, and where is God?" Civilization sent back its sullen echoes in a host of answers; individuals and classes assailed me for a separate hearing; all was uproar and confusion; but above the universal din arose the voice of the priests, that God was a potentate in the human form, dwelling in high Olympus, surrounded by a court of demi-gods. To deny was to accept the scourge and death.

I wandered over the sands of the desert, revolving the great inquiry in my mind. A son of the waste stood before me. Here is a child of Nature, thought I; he cannot be prejudiced by the myths of their fathers. In this, however, I was mistaken. For a moment, free thought broke through the clouds which hung over his mind, and Nature spoke through him:

"Behold," said he, "these sands are bordered with plants. They grow and give me sustenance. In their growth I behold life and wisdom, and, in proportion as my mind expands, I behold intelligence. Look abroad over this water. See yonder moving pillar of sand. God has moved his breath to do his bidding. I feel his presence in the broad sunshine and in the serene night. The stars reflecting the dim shadows of the waste remind me that he is far off, yet near."

Turning to the Indian, who passes his life chasing the deer through the forest, or pursuing the bear to his den—who dwells most with Nature, and never been led astray from her truthfulness, I presented my bold inquiry. For a moment he was amazed and confounded, when he exclaimed:

"View the mighty forest, the birds caroling in the branches. I hear his voice mingling with the wail of the spirits of my fathers in the breeze. In the echo of the thunder he speaks to me. Where is he? You are now in his presence. He is ever speaking to you, for he dwells in everything and in everywhere."

Untortured child of Nature, from whence derived you so much truth? Theologians have long striven to grasp thy simple explanation, and failed. Preconceived opinions and tradition exercise great influence over the mind, and, although fully convinced that the Deity is an intelligent principle our fancy will personify Him. Reason alone can set the matter right. As soon as you personify and give God a shape, you circumscribe his limits and power. As soon as you measure him by man, in power or shape, and thus bring him down to finite comprehension, you make him a finite personage. You must not compare him with man.

The fact that man stands apparently at the head of creation, is no evidence that there may not be inhabitants on other planets differing entirely from him in form, yet as far exceeding him in comprehension and power of thought as the most acute philosopher on this globe exceeds the Hottentot who imagines the horizon to be the boundary of the universe. The finite cannot comprehend the Infinite. The idea of God's personality leads us immediately to believe that he is of the human form. The Caucasian thinks he is a Caucasian; the Indian, a red man; the African, a black chieftain; and so to the limits of intelligence, where God's existence ceases to be recognized. It also compels the assigning of a locality. If God is local, he cannot be universal; he must be finite, and not infinite. A finite being cannot control an infinite empire—hence there would be systems of worlds, situated far, far beyond the control of such a God. The great code of principles created the earth in its present form, and so far as they acted in creating, they now act in controlling. God is eternal, so are these attributes. They are co-eternal, co-existent with matter, and can never be annulled or altered. As man's soul and body are one, so is the Infinite mind and the whole universe.

But this idea of Deity will lead to Pantheism. What if it does? Can there be no truth in Pantheism? I care not from whence truth is derived. I never trouble myself as to the origin of an idea. If reason approve it, I am satisfied. Pantheism may contain some correct views, as may the lowest depths of Atheism. All errors begin in myth, and would be immediately condemned if not for the few truths upon which they rest. Men who dare not use a new truth, for fear of being styled infidel, are in want of moral courage. Such are willing to skim the surface, never daring to go deeper than their predecessors and contemporaries.

"But how can you worship a principle, or a code of laws?" If the ancients called those attributes manifested in Nature by the term God, and we now recognize in what this Deity consists, and if our devotion thus comes, it is no argument against our conceptions. This objection is similar to the plea for ignorance, because the learned do not feel the same degree of awe and wonder as the

savage when gazing on the fearful tempest, or the roaring cataract. If increase of knowledge destroys devotion, then it should be destroyed. But does it do this? The man who regards Deity as the Omnipotent Intelligence, will not fall down with blind zeal or bigoted devotion—with fear and trembling—as in the presence of an angry tyrant. Perhaps he will have no stated time to go through the mummery of a formal prayer, only lip-deep, but his veneration will speak in the still, small voice, and he will adore the great cause of universal harmony which spreads around him, in which he recognizes the action of those great and comprehensive principles to which his fathers gave the name "Jehovah." The ignorant devotion paid him is the result of superstitious fear, and has not the semblance of true devotion.

If man strives to be devout, he immediately loses his object; when he strives not at all, he is most devout. When the man who has violated law prays, whence cometh his prayer? Not from the moral organs, but from the selfish and the animal. After men have become miserable by violating law, they pray God to forgive them. After doing wrong through the day, they pray for forgiveness at night. God receives the homage of the animal propensities. True devotion to Deity, of the developed mind, is the obedience to all the laws of his nature. There is no distinction between Nature and God, Matter and Mind, which have ever been separated, are an indivisible unity. Let this lead to Naturalism or Pantheism; these impressions rest on the immutable basis of creation. The laws of Nature are the will of Deity; the wisdom and intelligence displayed, are his mind; and though in speaking of these it is well to preserve a partial distinction, yet, in reality, all is one inseparable unity. I recognize nothing superior or external to Nature; nothing above, or controlling, this unity, but within dwells perfection of principle, working forever with indefatigable energy.

We have but one guide in the study of Nature, and that is reason. The field is open, and though "Infidel" is branded on all who pass through its portals, followers are not wanting. Why has the pursuit of the natural sciences always been thought dangerous to the mind? Why has materialism been said to be the result? Simply because such investigation opens the path to free thought—free communication with Deity.

God's attributes are revealed in Nature, and constitute the justice, benevolence, wisdom and love of the external world, from which springs harmony and progression. From these man absorbs the attributes he possesses. If they had not existed in Nature, they could not exist in him. His ideas are all absorbed in this manner. His conception of mathematics is derived from the precision he recognizes in all things. He observes that matter pursues certain fixed courses to accomplish given results, and he calls these laws. Nature is the "All," and from her crystal fount, mind absorbs as much as it will, and still the clear stream flows as bountifully as before, in never-ending currents of truth, love and intelligence.

In all your pursuits after knowledge you will make Nature your text-book, and Reason your guide; and learn from every babbling brook, from the majestic river, rolling its tranquil waters to the ocean in its sublimity; learn from every mound, towering mountain, tumbling waterfall and fruitful plain. A wonderful intelligence is displayed on every flower. Its signet-ring is impressed on every shell of the sea and on every leaf of the forest. Every dew-drop contains a lesson of creation. He who sees not this intelligence in shell and leaf, is blind. He who hears it not in storms, and in thunder, is deaf. He who feels it not around and within him, speaking all the time, has not clear intelligence to feel. This is Deity ever present, addressing man and spirit from age to age. You stand forever in the presence of Jehovah. He is your teacher; all your mentality and morality are absorbed from him. How, then, should you act? Act true to those attributes. How you can do so, I will now inform you: Charity is the basis of greatness.

You preach temperance and abolition, yet you shun the drunkard as you would contagion, and the negro, whom you have so shamefully wronged, with disgust. You are against capital punishment and the barbarous abuses of the criminal. Why do you not use all your influence to abolish these abuses?

The infant must travel the same road his ancestors have traveled for these thousands of years. The road is a beaten track, and easily followed; hence, under favorable circumstances, at thirty he has traveled over the whole vast space. But one may be hindered, or entirely stopped on the way, and then he becomes a savage, a barbarian, or half-civilized, according to the point he reaches before encountering the obstruction. Who arrests the upward journey of a child? Society; and society must bear the recoil of its arbitrary power.

If you were in the circumstances of the drunkard, slave-holder, or criminal, you would act as they do. Considering this, you should have charity for crime in all its forms.

How have the past ages treated the criminal? Humanity, shudder and, hide thy blushing face! Look down into the loathsome dungeon, where a bundle of straw on the dirty floor is the resting-place of what might have been a man—a mouldy piece of bread and a bottle of water his only sustenance for days together. Look yonder at those State engines, the gallows, the gibbet, the guillotine, the inquisitorial prison, whose secret chambers are the portals of hell, whose officers are incarnate demons!

(We expected to be able to conclude this Narrative this week, but its length being greater than we anticipated, it will be concluded in our next issue.—EDITOR PROGRESSIVE THINKER.)

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## SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES.

(Continued from first page.)

that the light is not extinguished, is it not as valuable?

I may not name those with whom I have most frequently mingled in spirit life chiefly for the reason that their names have been considered of too much value in the past, and but for the personal remarks made to you to-day I would not even have attached my own name. Still in company with those with whom I work, work profoundly, filled with the knowledge that this spiritual light will illumine the world by the lives that look trustfully toward it. That by far the greater and wiser minds of earth believe in the light that is coming, perceive its greatness, its wonder, its bounty, and its potency; and they are not in a hurry; they perceive that they must wait until the dawn comes, until the light can shine; are perfectly well aware that whatever may ensue between the night time here you see the dawn, this truth will always be in keeping with the divine love and wisdom.

Yet we all must labor in certain ways. If one chooses to be a messenger of mercy instead of strife, if hovering along the lines of battle those angels of human sympathy who take up the thread of human lives that are broken, or if one falls in the conflict they speak a cheering word, they bear him into spirit life. Each have their own work to do; so in the larger conflict of human existence always placing truth ahead of error; always making the honest conviction of the spirit that which each one must follow, I still see that to do and to be the best that will light the world spiritually, is all that I can do. If I have a truth I hasten to avow it. If I have a word of comfort I hasten to speak it; if I see a light that others do not see I hasten to declare it, that I may strengthen those who are in darkness, may aid with this light those who are in conflict; that I may show that out of the shadow of this night-time the brighter light of the spirit comes surely even though it comes slowly.

One word more. I had always looked to a light like that which Spiritualism affords. I believe that such a light as my friend Mr. Parker perceived would be the light of the world, was coming. I believed that the inflowing tide of spiritual truth would sometime and somewhere fill all the world and be as potent as the light of knowledge in any other direction. I did not know how soon this might come; instantly my spiritual knowledge was aware of spiritual existence. I became certain that it was imminent, as it proved to be. With that certainty all the tides of my being flowed towards the knowledge of the spirit for all in human existence.

It is not possible here and now, I said in the beginning of this discourse, for you to have a knowledge of the daily life of the spirit. Many people criticize us; why, if Mr. Channing or Mr. Parker are talking to us, do they not make us know and perceive what their surroundings and conditions are as nearly as if we visited them on earth. Precisely so; if you will visit us in spirit life we will make you know. If one enters into the studio of an artist, the artist, if he receives him there, is quite ready and willing and anxious to show the work of his hand and the spirit of his art, but if one cannot enter at all, shall the artist take his sketches, his sentiments, his poetry, his work here and there, and hawk them about the street? Enter into my dwelling and I will tell you how I live.

### Appreciative Note From a Prominent Worker.

TO THE EDITOR:—Allow me to congratulate you for the able manner in which your paper is being conducted. I do not believe that in the whole range of Anglo-Saxon literature there is anything half so good at the price, and if what everybody says be indeed true your paper is filling a long felt need, and is bound to be successful. Well, I have great pleasure in writing that our cause in this city is more than holding its own, a long list of public speakers having ably ministered to the society during the past year and their labors have been in every sense fruitful.

One great sign of the times is the ready appreciation that the writings of your correspondents meet with. Articles that a few years ago would have flown over the heads of people are now generally welcomed and thoroughly understood, and knots of spiritual thinkers may be found eagerly discussing the salient features of every thought advanced. It is indeed a wild cry from the old sectarian magazine, with its missionary tracts always highly colored, and too frequently entirely fictitious, interspersed with nursery tales of the fate of the good little boy who died, and the bad little boy who didn't go to Sunday school. To your able and comprehensive PROGRESSIVE THINKER, filled with the best thoughts from advanced minds, the change, I think, is one to be proud of, and we can never sufficiently thank the true and earnest workers of both sexes who have wrought such a transformation. My address is 79 White St., Saratoga Springs, N. Y., and I shall be pleased to communicate with societies or circles desirous of securing my services as a lecturer.

R. H. KNEESHAU.  
Saratoga Springs, N. Y.

E. A. King, editor of the New London Times, Wis., writes: "Number fifty of vol. two of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER is before me. I have read with deep interest the story of the assassination from Chiqui's 'Fifty years in the Church of Rome.' I believe the history to be true and the conclusions to be correct. I believe and have long believed that Rome is working along every line of approach to the overthrow of our Republic. While the republican press and party leaders are assigning our defeat to various other causes, I seem to discern the handiwork of Rome. I am not so over our defeat, but view it philosophically as a present evil that will work an ultimate good—an eye opener that will prove our salvation. It will precipitate the inevitable, and arouse a slumbering people are the serpent coils of Rome have bound us in utter helplessness."

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