



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

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THE BEST THING

TO ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF SPIRITUALISM.

A Lecture Delivered at Washington, D. C.

BY JENNIE B. HAGAN.

(Reported by John C. Rowland.)

The first subject I am going to read to you this morning, suggested by some friend present, is:

"What is the best thing for Spiritualists to do to advance the cause of Spiritualism?"

The first is to appreciate Spiritualism; the second, to sustain what we appreciate, and to remember that the best and truest effort that we can make will always be that effort which will bring the greatest good to the largest number of persons. Personalities, individual qualities, should, to an extent, be forgotten when principles and the efforts to sustain them are involved. What I mean by this is, that your particular friend, or mine, if they have any special good to give us, should be received with gratitude, and that other person who has an equal good to give, who may not just please our fastidious notions,—if they have any good to give to the great principle, that individual should be received in the same manner, because he can give, or she can express a quality and an amount that will be beneficial to Spiritualism.

The great trouble with Spiritualists, as it is with all other classes of people, we are prejudiced either for or against persons to a very large extent. What I wish our Spiritualists to do is this: Whenever a truth or real quality can be found in the same manner, because he can give, or she can express a quality and an amount that will be beneficial to Spiritualism.

Spiritualism, in the last year, it seems to me, has been especially successful in many different directions. It has seemed to bring out new and beautiful truths. It has seemed to drop a great many of the burdens that have laid upon the good ship, and truly to have sailed into deeper and clearer water. Men and women who have never been interested in spiritual matters have avowed their determination to stand in its ranks, and to labor for it through the remainder of their lives. New and wonderfully gifted orators, speakers and mediums have come upon our platform, who have been accomplishing a most excellent work, and all this gives us encouragement and promise.

On the other side, I have been delighted to discover that there has been a more careful discrimination among our Spiritualists in regard to what we should receive, and how we should receive it—a more careful search after something marvelous, mysterious, and out from the general order. It appears to me this past summer we have had more solid reasoning, more practical evidence of the realisms of Spiritualism, and less of that strange kind of investigation than of late. I was very much pleased, at some of our meetings, to find the investigators (now I am speaking of that great class who want to know whether Spiritualism is true or not, to find that class asking questions that were right practical, and connected with the matter of Spiritualism. A few years ago I used to be very much amused by the investigations of the Spiritualists, and I am glad to see that almost the first questions asked were in regard to their fortunes—men and women seeking to know whether they were to remain single, and some of them whether to remain married or have a divorce. They seemed to attach all these matters to Spiritualism. I am glad to see that the stronger class rising and saying this has nothing to do with the great eternal principles, to the question whether a man lives after he has passed through the change called death, and has the capabilities and power of returning here in communication with his friends. For this is the great fact of Spiritualism, and this is what we based our question upon when we began our investigation. Fortune-telling, star-gazing, and guessing at futurity are not especially connected with the facts of immortality.

Further than this, the question of what we can do to best sustain Spiritualism now, is to stand in reverence and in awe of the great intrinsic principles and truths that it advances, and always to respect our Spiritualism that we shall demand the respect of other classes. I have noticed in the last year that a great many of our prominent ministers have been kind enough to preach about Spiritualism—some in favor, and some against. Now, wherever I see a ripple upon a large lake or a small pond, I know that something has caused it. The waters do not move unless something moves them, and when the breeze of popular opinion blows hard enough to drive these little waves into "whirlpools," it is a promising outlook for the particular line in which these waves are driving and those winds are blowing.

At Chautauque Lake they proposed to give three lectures that should completely demolish that place called Cassadaga Lake, and three of their ministers gave the lectures. A delegation of the wicked Spiritualists went over and listened, and gave full reports. Our delegation consisted of five intelligent ladies and gentlemen. The delegation that came back from Chautauque Lake, uninvited, but simply coming to see what the ministers had advertised as so thoroughly, was over three hundred people. Now, we are very much obliged to them, and ser-

iously thought of sending each of the clergymen a good letter, thanking him for calling the attention to the Chautauques to Cassadaga, for the three ministers who preached on the three different days gave us at least nine hundred extra people on the ground during the camp. It was so estimated by the class who came there from Chautauque.

Now, what has this to do with your question? I answer this: that by the effort made in a concentrated, practical way at that camp-ground, the large class of people attending Chautauque are agitated and disconcerted, and when some of the best minds there came and listened to the oratory from our platform, and there heard finer sermons and more magnificent productions from Cassadaga than they had heard in the meeting at Chautauque, it meant that it was time for them to do something; and they did, and the result was that a large number of people were introduced to Spiritualism. All this is in my favor, and it means that an earnest desire to gain truth, and a sound mind, and it is a word that we use very much of us to use simply with our lips and never illustrate by our actions. What work can we do for Spiritualism? The best practical work we can do is to speak of it where it is proper to speak, and sometimes be wise enough to hold our silence about it. There are times when words are not needed; there are others when they are. We can, each of us, make a practical rule in our lives to never allow Spiritualism to be slighted or lightly treated in our presence. Sometimes an amusing experience comes to one as he takes the world as a school, and the people in it as tutors, and I have occasionally experimented with persons, just to see what they would do. And I find that human nature is just the same, north, east, south and west. If you respect yourself as a religious person, other people are bound to respect you and it. Let a person ask you if you are a Spiritualist, and you put your hand over your mouth, look confused, and stammer out, "I am interested, have attended meetings, and—well, I should like to know more about it," and in nine cases out of every ten the person who has put the question to you will come out with some impertinent, sarcastic, and oftentimes unjust statement in regard to Spiritualism, saying that it is all nonsense, that it is all chicanery, that it is the work of the devil, that it is one of the improprieties; and you will feel as uncomfortable as anybody can. Let the same individual ask you the same question, and turn to them squarely, look them honestly in the eyes, and say, "Yes, I am a Spiritualist. Are you one?" They will give you a civil answer, nine times out of ten; and if you put the question to them, "Why do you ask—why do you want to know?" they will, in almost every instance, give you a civil answer, saying that they do not know much about Spiritualism, but they would like to find out.

—some such answer as that. Spiritualists, remember this, and respect your own belief. Stand in a position that you are not a bit afraid of others; neither cringe nor quibble, and in that way, by your own personality, sustain what you believe, and through that method inspire and sustain your brothers and sisters who need something at the vertex to support them, for there are a class who have a very weak spinal column. [Laughter.] They need something to aid them. I do not know just what to recommend, unless it be one of those stiff, steel pieces, to be attached to the spine and extending down the back, city. A number of bolts and braces to hold them in place. I sometimes feel for that class of people who lack strength and courage, but I am afraid that my wicked inclination is to give them only contempt. I do not care where they are, that the rank and the person, whoever has a religion and is afraid to acknowledge it, is a dangerous person to have in your midst. [Laughter.] He is a sort of a Judas, ready to do whatever he can, wherever he thinks the best profit comes to him. I do not mean in money profit, but a policy profit, which is still more contemptible.

Now what we need is to strengthen the weak, to rid ourselves of the hypocrites, and to stand for the practical truths of Spiritualism. Spiritualism is unpopular, somebody says. And I ask you, how do you know? Who told you? Are you the criterion of popularity? There are places in the world where everything, to an extent, is unpopular. Among us we believe it would be very unpopular, if we were believers in the Alkorian. If we took that as our special guide we should be looked upon as an unknown class, the Mohammedans. But popular class, the Mohammedans. I wish to ask if it is a sign of unpopularity in another country than this where every man who is considered a Christian is called "a dog of a Christian?" It sounds like an unpopular way of speaking, does it not?

And Christianity among that class is unpopular. It is popular in a certain sense here, but we find that different churches have different quantities of popularity, and that in one it is an advantage, while in another it is quite unpopular, and something of a different nature is recognized as the objective religion. Did you ever think about that? That it is more a matter of education than anything else, whether religious doctrines are popular in different places or not? This matter of popularity? That is nothing at all. If there were a larger class of Spiritualists than of any other

religious denomination in this city, you would find that popular prejudice would be right in, make a sweet bow to you, and that it is not an unpopularity, but a people whom it thought inferior. So there is the secret! There is no principle in popularity; there is every lack of principle. What do you care whether you are popular or not? I know of a man who lived a good many hundred years ago. He is spoken of with great respect and honor. But he was unpopular, then, and he would be unpopular now if he came right among us; and that was the lowly Nazarene, Jesus. How do you suppose he would be received this morning in the more fashionable churches of Washington, if he should walk in, with his hair and beard uncut, his clothing of an unfashionable cast, sandals on his feet, garments well worn; but the sweet tender face beaming upon them? Don't you suppose that he would be considered a little bit of a peculiar individual, and invited to sit some place where observation would not be attracted too much to him? He would not be popular in a fashionable church. Oh, no! So this matter of unpopularity is rather an honor than a discredit to anybody.

We ought to demand, as Spiritualists, that our leaders and our lecturers sustain themselves in a high honest, high moral manner. So many Spiritualists say a medium should not be expected to be any more than anybody else! And I ask the question in answer to that: Should they not be just as much as anybody else? And I answer they should, and more! If a person has a sacred gift (as mediumship lies), they should try to make the lives of the people who are in the gateway between that city of the world beyond and this world, and can bring you or me a tender, loving message from our father or our mother, our husband and wife, or any near and dear one who has gone out of our lives, who can give us the sacred consolation of the proof of that friend's immortality, and what they wish to say and give to us—will they not be fitted to that? If they have the power of standing in the gateway between that city of the world beyond and this world, and can bring you or me a tender, loving message from our father or our mother, our husband and wife, or any near and dear one who has gone out of our lives, who can give us the sacred consolation of the proof of that friend's immortality, and what they wish to say and give to us—will they not be fitted to that? If they have the power of standing in the gateway between that city of the world beyond and this world, and can bring you or me a tender, loving message from our father or our mother, our husband and wife, or any near and dear one who has gone out of our lives, who can give us the sacred consolation of the proof of that friend's immortality, and what they wish to say and give to us—will they not be fitted to that?

Now I know that a person may be the best or the worst in the world, and yet possess the gift of mediumship. It is not a question of your moral or immoral character. It is a question of the construction of your physical nerves, mental magnitude and electric system that decides whether you are a medium or not. But here is the important point: We have hosts of bad, evil persons, going from this world to the next, and we have hosts of good, virtuous, honest individuals going. Here is a law as old as eternity. It is the law of attraction, of repulsion. Like attracts like, and always so. Now, if the person who is a medium is honest, upright, moral, true, he will draw to him that class of individuals as his immediate associates and influences; and when your child comes and gives us his word through that medium's lips, it will be pure, unsullied, straightforward and truthful, given to the best of the ability of mediumship in the person; but if the medium is an immoral character, he will draw to him that class of individuals as his immediate associates and influences; and when your child comes and gives us his word through that medium's lips, it will be pure, unsullied, straightforward and truthful, given to the best of the ability of mediumship in the person; but if the medium is an immoral character, he will draw to him that class of individuals as his immediate associates and influences; and when your child comes and gives us his word through that medium's lips, it will be pure, unsullied, straightforward and truthful, given to the best of the ability of mediumship in the person; 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