



SPIRITUALISM.

ITS HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY.

Its Facts and Teachings.

A Lecture Delivered to the Jewish Young Men's Association in Scotland
BY GEO. W. WALLACE.

The Apostle Paul, over 1800 years ago, is reported to have written as follows: "Now, concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. For to one is given by the spirit the word of wisdom; to another, the word of knowledge by the same spirit; to another, the gift of healing by the same spirit; to another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, the discerning of spirits."

Let me open my discourse by asserting that these gifts are as common and as universal to day as they were in any previous period of the world's history; and in Spiritualism, those interested gifts are being continually demonstrated, to the satisfaction of every person who has ever investigated the subject in an unprejudiced spirit.

Briefly speaking, Spiritualism deals only with knowledge and facts, and teaches the laws of correct living, both physically, morally and spiritually. This is the essence of the subject, and the present stupendous structure of Spiritualism has been built—Knowledge and Facts. From the facts—bare, stern facts, have sprung a philosophy, a science, a religion, and a knowledge of life, physical and spiritual, unobtainable through any other source. Spiritualism, philosophically defined, is understood to mean "a conscious communication between the two worlds, the annihilation of death, and the demonstrated proof that all the hopes and aspirations we have ever entertained regarding immortality are true; that there is a fair and radiant world beyond this one of today, and that over there you shall have a life as good as this, and that which has been a while in the flesh; that that world is not far away, beyond the clouds; so near at times that its pleasant breezes sometimes fan your cheek; and that at times our eyes can and do catch glimpses of its glorious scenery, while the inspiring sound of its celestial music is heard in every breeze, and what is dearer and more precious than all, that our own hands can and do sometimes clasp those of our loved ones who have passed from this valley of death into the living sunlight beyond."

Spiritualism also tells us that the good and the noble spirits who are inhabitants of the Summer Land still take an interest in the welfare of those remaining on the earth plane; that the inspirations of the divine and pure ones are still working among this world's inhabitants, as much and as powerfully to-day as in the days of the seers and prophets of old.

The origin and progress of Spiritualism, the outcome of the most interesting studies that have ever been submitted to the criticism of students. It presents to the rational thinking man or woman a wide range of thought, while to the skeptical mind it affords an admirer of amusement and doubtful reflections.

Of its history I need scarcely say. From the dawn of time, when man first breathed the breath of life and became an eternal soul began the work and mission of Spiritualism. The insubstantial of this eternal principle placed man's ego en rapport and harmony with the unlimited realm of spirit. As man's physical nature is in every respect in harmony and in communication with the physical world; so is his spiritual nature in equal harmony and communication with the world of spirit, providing the essential conditions are forthcoming. Let us search ancient history as far back as it is possible to find traces of spirit communion and unmistakable testimony that from the world of spirit have streamed forth golden fountains of magnetic influence and heavenly inspiration, telling the world that the loved ones are still living, are still progressing, and ever taking an interest in our sorrows and surroundings. From the limitless realm above millions of spirits come back to earth to lap at the windows of loving hearts and learning something of the sorrowing world below, they return again to their Summer-land homes with tidings of love and sympathy to kindred souls who, like them, have crossed the borderland, or, as we generally express it, passed from death to life.

In all ages, from the first reckoning of time, we have not only this irrefutable evidence of their return, but that there has been a conscious intelligent communion ever going on between mortals and spirits, and that, furthermore, they come back to earth in shape and form as capable of recognition as they were before passing over.

It has been a common fallacy for centuries past that the world, history and the age of mankind are limited to a portion of about 6,000 years, but the evolution of reason following the advance of science tell us what a stupendous error the world has labored under. Why, China was imperial when our history commenced. We have corroborative testimony that the sacred historical records of China, that the Chinese measured their time by dynasties, and that their records carry Chinese history backward in continuous genealogical order for 44,000 years or more, and that through all these thousands of years in-

has Spiritualism been known, and what is the most convincing element in the truth of philosophy and in the reality of its phenomena, there are the same universal teachings and results everywhere. This may be, so much despised by the skeptic, and other physical manifestations are the same in every country, the messages of comfort from spirit friends are of the same nature, no matter in what language uttered, and the conditions necessary to produce the desired results are essentially the same throughout the world.

The sacred and philosophic of the old testament are pregnant with records of spiritualistic phenomena. We have the account of Lot, seeing, riding up and meeting angels at Sodom. You all recollect Jacob wrestling with an angel to such an extent that even the hollow of his thigh was put out of joint when the angel touched it. On another occasion, while walking, Jacob was met by an angel. An angel appeared to Hagar, by a fountain in the desert, and said "God is with thee." Now, what thing was it? Eliza lay and slept under a juniper tree, a spirit touched her and said: "Arise and eat." Balaam's spiritual eyes were opened and he saw an angel standing in his way, and so are the spiritual eyes of men and women opened to-day so that they, too, can see angels and ministering spirits, and so on. The Witch of Endor, and she said: "An old man cometh up and he is covered with a mantle," and Saul perceived that it was Samuel.

Let me direct your attention to what Eliphaz, the Temanite, said on the subject of ghosts in the vision which was brought to me and mine our received a little thereof. Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face. It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof. An image was before mine eyes. I heard a voice saying "Abraham! Can I be more just to God?"

Job of old said: "Thou hast clothed me with skin and with flesh and hast fenced me about with bones and sinews." The me was Job's spirit (Dan. ix. 21).

Turn to Daniel, and we read that "even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen at the beginning of the vision, and who had stood before me, and who had said: 'I heard the voice of his words, and beheld a hand touched me; one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me.' Indeed, Daniel exhibits one varied series of spiritual manifestations: visions, spirit forms, prophecies, writing on the wall, trance, spirit touches, rappings, the direct voice, and even the power of being able to withstand, under spirit influence the elements of fire.

In Ezekiel we find recorded most interesting accounts of the return of spirits to mortals. One spirit levitated Ezekiel by the hair of his head and carried him on an aerial voyage to Jerusalem, and then, entering the temple, stood before him seventy spirits who appeared as men, men who had lived many centuries before Ezekiel's time; seventy men of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah, the son of Staphan. At another time the spirit lifted him up and carried him to the edge of the great deep, and there he saw many spirits, among whom two were recognized as Jezebel and Jezebel No. 2, the son of Azur, and Jezebel, princes of the people.

Further instances could be given of biblical phenomena, but those referred to will, I trust, be deemed sufficient to show that Spiritualism stands out prominently among the many rare spiritual gifts which the Jews of old possessed, among whom may be traced many selected mediums through whom revelations were especially made.

If we retrace our research back into the remotest ages of antiquity, prior to the dawn of the present age, and we have records of revelations through spiritual and trance mediums. The Chaldeans claim, according to Cicero, to be able to carry back their astronomical and divine observations to 400,000 years and more, but whether this is merely a speculative calculation or not, it is quite irrelevant to the subject at hand. We have records of revelations through spiritual and trance mediums. The Chaldeans claim, according to Cicero, to be able to carry back their astronomical and divine observations to 400,000 years and more, but whether this is merely a speculative calculation or not, it is quite irrelevant to the subject at hand.

The history of India and China extend back to the pre-Adamite age, and we have records of revelations through spiritual and trance mediums. The Chaldeans claim, according to Cicero, to be able to carry back their astronomical and divine observations to 400,000 years and more, but whether this is merely a speculative calculation or not, it is quite irrelevant to the subject at hand.

Our own John Wesley was not far wrong when he said: "As well give up the bible at once as our belief in apparitions." And yet the faith and knowledge of the latter has grown up in the literature of all nations, and all that is valuable in history, poetry, and philosophy.

The genuine books which form the heart of all literature are few in number, yet rich in principles, and one of the first marks by which they are characterized is that of a noble faith in a future life and its objects. Such are the Sagas of the North, the Vedas and Shastras of the Hindus, the books of the Kings of China, the Iliad of the Greeks, and the Bible of the Hebrews, which is named in this connection on account of its absolutely distinctive character. The Hebrew scriptures, Talmud and Kabbala, a work deemed by Chaldean mysticism, all abound in dramatic, omens, prophecies, angelic interpositions, and spirit communications often beautiful and sometimes absolutely grand, bearing a close resemblance in form and purpose to those marked manifestations of spirit power that have thrown such transcendent glory on the olden nations of central and

Southern Asia. But may I have said enough regarding the history of Spiritualism, which to-day has acquired wings strong enough to soar far above the globe and uplift her to the stars. The invitation into greater secrets than even those of antiquity, is thrown open to all, without distinction of race or faith, and the revelations of the Spirit-world are spreading in every direction, and even permeating our religious teaching and literature to an extent almost beyond belief.

As a philosophical system, it embraces whatever relates to spirit, spiritual existence and spirit forces, especially all truths relating to the human spirit, its nature, capacities, laws of manifestation, its disembodied existence, the conditions of that existence, and the mode of communication between that existence and earth-life. It is thus a system of universal philosophy, embracing all phenomena of life, motion and development, all causation, immediately and mediately, all existence, whether human and divine. It has, therefore, the phenomena of philosophical and ethical departments. Whoever believe that disembodied spirits can and do manifest themselves or make known their presence and power to persons in the earthly body, and hold that the human mind, as we know it, is a spiritual entity, in the ordinary sense of the term, no matter what else they may believe or disbelieve in theology, philosophy or morals. This will account for the great diversity of thought that exists among Spiritualists on theological questions. Some believe the Bible to be the direct word of God, while others look upon it as a human production in the same light as any other book. They are, however, as one on the subject of spirit return, as also on the great truth that every human being is in reality a ghost or spirit enveloped for the time being in an earthly body. Sebastian, in Shakespeare's Twelfth Night, says: "A spirit I am, indeed, but I am in that dimension grossly clad, which from the womb I did participate." Philosophically speaking, Spiritualists believe that the spirit, which is the man, is in the human form as much as the body is. History, in all ages, confirms this. The scriptures indicate that the spirit invariably entered the human form, as the one who guided the young Tobias to Ragus in Media, was in the human guise of a traveler. The spirits who loosened the bolt and bars, opened the prison doors and released the apostles, were in human form, while the one who appeared to Joshua was apparently garbed as a warrior. There are a variety of other ways in which spirits make known to those on earth their presence, though invisible: by dreams, writings, movement of material substances, by rushing winds, perfumes, by rappings, by predictions, by voices, and many other means known to those who have studied the subject or have enjoyed the experiences of spirit presence.

There is a common opinion among many people that Spiritualism, with its facts and philosophies, is a gigantic myth, and that the day is coming when the supposed superstition and beliefs in ghost-seeing will be obliterated in oblivion under the scythe and pruninghook of civilization. This is a mistake, and one which is cutting away the roots of the ecclesiastical weeds and thistles of bigotry and priestly intolerance and cleaning the theological jungle of the superstition which has prevented the Spirit-world from communicating to the earth. The professing Christian sticks to his superstitions like a limpet to a rock, and as he believes, very firmly too. In the Baron Munchausen's tales and doctrines with a relish beyond credit. Of all the superstitions believed in the world, there are none more so than the modern Protestant's; he is really and truly enthusiastic in his superstitions. Examine the testimonies in the light of reason, and you may safely back the modern evangelist, revivalist, salvationist, or whatever name they adopt, against any of the most ignorant barbarian you ever heard of, for right down genuine, unadorned superstition, and the superstition of the Christian, but who are more false than the most case-hardened criminal who was ever hung.

The Spiritualistic philosophy is, however, of too strong a nature; it holds its own and expands in every direction, owing to the very nature of the facts which have proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that presentiments, visions, and apparitions of spirits do testify of an invisible world of spirits, from whence they, the spirits, can and do come back with a consciousness of their spirit existence and the conditions of their previous earthly life; and, grander than most teaching, it teaches the great truth of rewards and punishment after death, or that every good action and noble deed will meet with its just reward, while bad actions, and wickedness of every rank and station, of every class of mind, and of every degree of talent.

Once a Spiritualist, always a Spiritualist, is a truth to be proud of. While hundreds of thousands have been converted back from the superstitions of the past, and a recognized fact that not one has been converted back from it. This phenomenal fact is inconsistent with any theory of fraud, imposture, or self-delusion.

True, there are now and again exposed of these charlatans, who have simulated mediumistic power, or produced the pretended phenomena by means of trickery for the love of gain or notoriety, but a thousand exposures cannot establish one well-authenticated fact.

Thousands, yes, hundreds of thousands of persons—and the numbers are daily on the increase—have testified that they have received unmistakable proofs of the continued existence of their so-called

dead friends; that in numberless cases they have been brought face to face with them; have received spoken and written communications, and information known only to those concerned; in fact, have received undoubted evidence that the communicating intelligence must have been, and was, the spirit of the person the spirit professed to be.

What are the facts? That the dead can and do return to us. Many people will think this is a very absurd thing, but the Christian world says that things exist that we are able to prove the reality of the phenomena that Spiritualists proclaim, and we demand from other religions the same proof. The result is, in fact, on the Spiritualistic side, and assertions upon any other. There are also visions and trances, prophesying and speaking in the spirit, speaking in tongues and the interpretation of tongues the same to-day as in Palestine over 1800 years ago. Men handle fire, prophets prophesy, seers see, the apparent laws of nature are inverted, and a thousand other things which are as absolutely true to-day as they were true as recorded in the sacred writings of all ages and countries. The apparent miracles of a bygone age are facts to-day.

Bring the light of Spiritualism on the darkened pages of the scriptures and history in general, and the so-called miracles of the Bible will all be found to remain hidden problems. The facts therein stated can only be properly interpreted when the interpreters are acquainted with the spiritual phenomena of the present century.

Viewed in the light of Spiritualism, you will understand the voice that called Samuel, and the wonderful experiences of Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah and Jeremiah; also the manifestation of Samuel to Saul through the magnetic mediumship of the woman of Endor. All the varied phenomena in the Bible, already partly referred to, is easily understood when the investigator has become an experienced Spiritualist. The inspiration running through the scriptures and other writings of the ancient philosophers is also comprehensible to the Spiritualist, who knows that inspiration is just as universal to-day as it was in the days of the Patriarchs. Take away the phenomena of the Bible, and what remains? Just a secular history of the human mind.

That man beings have, from time to time, in all epochs, been controlled by spirits, is a recorded fact, and this extraordinary and exceptional power is as much a fact to-day as ever. Mediums are controlled by spirit influence, become entranced, and speak (though unconsciously) the words and language which the controlling spirit desires to utter. (xvi. 16.) Paul, the apostle, was followed for many days by a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination. Paul, feeling grieved, turned at last and said to the spirit, "I command thee to come out of her," and he the spirit came out, the same hour. It is quite evident that this woman was controlled by a male spirit and that there was no deception or collusion. The woman and her masters professed she had a spirit of divination. This was not denied, but acknowledged by Paul, who expelled the spirit. The church acknowledged the fact, but asserts that the subject was under the influence of a difficult thing to believe that if an evil or undeveloped spirit has the power to effect an entrance into the human organism, surely a good spirit must have also a similar power, and be able to control mediums for a good purpose? The very injunction in the New Testament, "Ye shall not be drunken with wine, whereby ye shall become ignorant of your senses, as the Gentiles do: but be ye filled with the Spirit; and one another with psalms, and hymns, and songs, which are spiritual, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord; and ye shall be able to discern the things which are of the Spirit, and to keep the commandments of the Lord, that ye may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, meekness, goodness, faith, mildness, and temperance, against such as are the work of the flesh." (Gal. v. 22.)

I had intended, when commenting this paper to have instances of more advanced phenomena, but believing that there are not many people in this enlightened age who have not read of many authenticated accounts of the return of so-called apparitions, ghosts or spirits, I have refrained from giving illustrations on this occasion. Still, the subject is of sufficient interest, and induces in the minds of the members of this club generally a desire for further information. I will, if requested be pleased to treat of the phenomenal aspect by itself entirely.

I will now proceed with the teachings of Spiritualism, and put forth in a brief way, outlining generally what we learn from the philosophy as enunciated by the spirits themselves, and understood by the body of Spiritualists at large.

THE TEACHINGS.

The primary and most important teachings of Spiritualism is that every human soul is possessed of a thinking reasoning power, and that this power must have free action to its own thinking and reasoning, and not be dependent on any species of theologians, religionists, or a paid priestcraft, to do the thinking for them. Reason must be liberated from the hands of every sort of dogma, and ecclesiastical intolerance. Until this heaven-born freedom is accomplished human beings cannot be men and women, much less Spiritualists. Let every person's reasoning faculties have full play, and the result will be a new era of progress, and advancement. Christians will become a thing of the past, and a subject future generations would rather forget than hear about.

Spiritualism teaches us that we must separate ourselves from the superstitions, traditions, errors and dogmas, alike of philosophy and religion, and of conventional thinking, and embark upon the broad, deep seas of universal reason, and be guided by such inspiration as we may find therefrom. In other words we must be prepared to stand alone upon the platform of a physical existence, and think out our own salvation, and lift our own souls upwards. True Christianity admits of the right of independent judgment; but not on the creeds of the church, for it distinctly asserts that unless you believe every little contained in these creeds and confessions you will be everlastingly damned. There is no independent judgment there. So,

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weary with the continual struggle, and finding no satisfaction why the very bishops and priests are falling out among themselves over a variety of doctrinal subjects that have not the slightest concern to the real religious life, Spiritualism teaches and advises all to become independent thinkers and make the needs of your own soul the best of what that soul requires, and not the ideas of another, so that you may walk your own road to eternal life, to that divine source of truth that lies so far beyond us all, that, if we are to reach it, we must be working by your own hands and cultivating in the garden of the soul the necessary spiritual growth of good deeds, words and thoughts, which alone is the passport to the bright world beyond. Every soul must work out his own salvation, not by believing, but by behaving.

The proper study of mankind is man. He is a miserable creature, as his Essay on Man; but centuries and centuries before the Christian era, Thales, the Milesian, the prince of the philosophers, contemporary with Josiah, king of Judah, said that "Man, know thyself, the most useful and comprehensive precept in the whole moral system," a maxim held in veneration and esteem by all Spiritualists, as it was by the ancient philosophers of almost every country. Not so the Christian world, whose wise and learned say: "Oh, we fully understand the nature of man; he is a miserable creature, as his Essay on Man; but centuries and centuries before the Christian era, Thales, the Milesian, the prince of the philosophers, contemporary with Josiah, king of Judah, said that "Man, know thyself, the most useful and comprehensive precept in the whole moral system," a maxim held in veneration and esteem by all Spiritualists, as it was by the ancient philosophers of almost every country. 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