

The PROGRESSIVE THINKER

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

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SPRIT LIFE.

Experiences of a Spirit.

Searching for Jesus and the Kingdom of Heaven.

A Lecture Delivered by MRS. CORA L. V. RICHMOND, Before the First Society of Spiritualists, Chicago, III.

REPORTED EXPRESSLY FOR THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER.

INVOCATION.

Infinite Power! God of all life, Guide of all souls, Creator who hath summited atoms and worlds into their places, Ruler whose laws are ineffable and divine more suns and systems to their appointed places; Light who hath kindled the firmament of stars; Life who pervaded all forms of being; unto Thee the manifold existence turn in praise; and from the leaf that unfolds its emerald scroll, to the world and suns of dazzling splendor, every form reveal Thy law, every creature respond to Thee! Unto Thee the spirit of man turns, conscious that while the outward form is the result of complex and manifold powers, creation that is itself is most wonderful, it is the feeble, fleeting and transient, and must pass into nothingness, while the life divine pervading all must forever and ever abide the eternal kingdom. We praise Thee for that consciousness that sweeps in and through thy shadowy form of dust, and in the dull shadowy lighting up narrow windows, until the soul gleams forth and the life immortal is there. We praise Thee that though suddenly the dust may be shut out, the glass may be broken, the shining light of eternity gathers all the treasures in the kingdom of life eternal and they abide there, while shadow and doubt, uncertainty and gloom, and that term of death, broods over them; but the bright, term of which shall come after death, pass away into the oblivion from whence they came, and the life immortal gleams pure and fair and perfect from Thy divine love.—AMEN.

THE LECTURE.

"He that believeth shall have everlasting life; and he that believeth not shall be damned."

"I am the way and the light."

"The kingdom of heaven is within you."

"We mingle the dust with the dust. To the earth whence it was taken assign the body of our brother: to the God who gave it command we the soul."

These were the last words over the mortal remains of the one whose experience will tell here-to-night.

The words left distinctly on the hearing of the spirit, though he was not aware of having an earthly form, and knew that the body so consigned was once his tenement.

A lurid kind of light suddenly seemed to envelop him, and it was as though flames were bursting forth all around a dull, leaden-colored sky. A prairie on fire, or a ship burning at sea in the night time, would best illustrate the seeming flame that grew nearer and nearer as the consciousness of being in the life immortal dawned more and more upon his perceptions.

He had believed in the literal power of the saving grace of Christ's blood. He had accepted at that fountain the boon of salvation and had, as seemed to him, fulfilled all ordinances and requirements, praying at such times as were enjoined, and attending faithfully to the worship in the house of God. Some strong doubts concerning the efficacy of this belief had latterly clung to his mind tenaciously, and as the time for the dissolution of the spirit and body drew near these doubts increased; but he attributed them to the tempting wiles of Satan, who at the last moment was trying to snatch him away from the saving power of this divine grace. So, with added prayer and added pleadings that these doubts were not right and might pray and implore that the clergyman might pray, he passed into the consciousness of eternal life; that is, of existence beyond the body. But this flame, this flame, this lurid light, this shadow, this darkness only lighted by the terrible glow—yes, the doubts were well-founded; he had awakened in hell!

What was, then, the saving grace, and how had he been induced to think that he was secure in the strong and absolute certainty of salvation in the life and blood of the Christ that he had served? How was it that he had been so self-deluded, and at last even the narrow thread upon which he had clung for salvation had failed him and he was plunged into the fire? Still, the flames were not around him and the light still seemed to be afar, and the bursting of the blaze over and anon lighted up something that was like water, the waters of the sea, or the undulations of the tall grasses on a vast and unlighted plain. Added to this was the consciousness of motion, an impetus that seemed to impel him ever and ever forward—a ceaseless, restless motion like waves that were impelling but that never seemed to take him any nearer to this wonderful blaze.

Was Hades then dark and the flames only afar? Was it to be a perpetual restlessness in this dim and darkness, for ever and ever urged on? What was this into which a consciousness had entered that still seemed to be in no place and partake of no surroundings, but could see the glare and lurid flame afar, and feel the impelling force of this mighty darkness urging him, this ocean of darkness, ever on? Was this the type of Hades?

Then all thoughts, feelings, emotions behind him, as urged on by this impulse, he seemed to be going nowhere. But the restlessness current of thought, the consciousness of deeds in earthly life, these now stammered and persistently before the mind in the order of their occurrence, began with childhood, taking up the thread of the first consciousness of moral

moning all his power, he prayed to the infinite God and to the Jesus whom he had turned, to aid him in searching for that heaven and the Jesus whom he loved; prayed as fervently as ever he had layed upon the earth, with the added impetus of the mighty conviction that he was either floating in a sea of immensity where there were no souls, destined to exile and banishment forever, or that he was condemned to hells, and this was but the preparation for the awful final plunge! He prayed, but instead of being able to walk, he was weak. Instead of being able to fly, he could not even swim against the impelling tide that urged him on. He could only shout, and his voice came back upon his own ears, like the sound one hears in a cavern. He could not hear an answer. He could not feel a response. There was seemingly nothing to hear.

Was it possible that the idea of the materialist was true, and that he was only momentarily existing after the decease of the body, and as an offeree, fleeing out into the sea of annihilation, and might this not be, after all, the dark passage between knowing and not knowing, between the existence he had left and the annihilation which was to come, and was not that lurid light that he saw around the horizon just the dim and outer verge of this consciousness, and then he was being impelled by this overwhelming tide, and would at last be plunged into annihilation? Horrible thought! Could he endure it? Was there any way that he could turn back? Would he live in his body again? Could he come back and be human life? No, not one iota could he turn. Not one portion of the thousandth millionth part of an inch could he change his course from this impelling tide that urged him on. And then the thought seemed overpowering. He wished that he could swoon that he might forget; that he might pass into darkness at once, and if he was to be blotted out, why not then? Why wait, and have this continued, prolonged agony?

And what had he done? Merely followed the teachings, the light that he had. And why didn't these men know that he was going to annihilation after all? He wished he had read the books of the infidels that he wanted to here. He wished then that he had investigated subjects that he had been forbidden to. He wished that he had enlightened his mind upon science, upon art, upon philosophy, and many things that were forbidden. He wished that he had entered into the pleasures of physical life. He wished that he had been worldly, and grasped the wealth that was near and at his command. Oh, how he wished that he had investigated the subjects that were forbidden, for there were those who had said that he perdition came to testify against him or to make him feel more humiliated at the state of darkness in which he had found himself. Then he had time to inquire and find out if people here. Where were the demons? Why Satan had not come to claim him? Why there was not all about him a walling and gnashing? Why the floods did not mock him? Why they did not pronounce him, and glorify over his condition? Those who undoubtedly deserved their fate through crime and sin and worldliness, why were they not there to say, "Ah, your pity amounted to nothing after all?" You flattered it in our faces, but still you are one of us." But none came, not even of all those whom in his mind he had imagined to perdition came to testify against him or to make him feel more humiliated at the state of darkness in which he had found himself. Then he had time to inquire and find out if people here. Where were the demons? Why Satan had not come to claim him? Why there was not all about him a walling and gnashing? Why the floods did not mock him? Why they did not pronounce him, and glorify over his condition? Those who undoubtedly deserved their fate through crime and sin and worldliness, why were they not there to say, "Ah, your pity amounted to nothing after all?" You flattered it in our faces, but still you are one of us."

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Then there came a tranquillity. It was not sleep, it was not lack of consciousness, but it seemed to be a kind of recognition, producing excitement and terror, and reviving a madness that had surged through his brain because he did not know where he was, and he thought that those whom he had left behind. What were they doing? Were they still on earth? It was many ages since Where were they? He went, as this thought came to him, and was near his home. It had been scarcely a week since his body was laid to rest. There was the widow still in her mourning tears. There were the withered flowers that had adorned the casket, and there was the household mourning his vacant place, and wondering in what far-off heaven he could be found. He tried to speak to his wife; he thought he would make her know where he was, and how he felt; but there was naught in her mind save the thought that he was safe in heaven, and with the Jesus that he loved. Still she was sorrowful, and he wondered at that. Since she believed he was so happy, why should she be mourning? True, his place was not filled, and he was of some help to the household, but after all, the great joy that she believed had come to him should have drowned her mourning. Then there came a tranquillity. It was not sleep, it was not lack of consciousness, but it seemed to be a kind of recognition, producing excitement and terror, and reviving a madness that had surged through his brain because he did not know where he was, and he thought that those whom he had left behind. What were they doing? Were they still on earth? It was many ages since Where were they? He went, as this thought came to him, and was near his home. It had been scarcely a week since his body was laid to rest. There was the widow still in her mourning tears. There were the withered flowers that had adorned the casket, and there was the household mourning his vacant place, and wondering in what far-off heaven he could be found. He tried to speak to his wife; he thought he would make her know where he was, and how he felt; but there was naught in her mind save the thought that he was safe in heaven, and with the Jesus that he loved. Still she was sorrowful, and he wondered at that. Since she believed he was so happy, why should she be mourning? True, his place was not filled, and he was of some help to the household, but after all, the great joy that she believed had come to him should have drowned her mourning.

Then there came another change. These reactions came as the result of past teachings, again a longing to find out the length and depth and breadth and height of this faith that had been the guiding light through life. Was it a fault? Was there nothing in it? Was there no heaven? And when it had been many weeks and many months that no answer came from the realm into which he had entered, at last there came the voices and presence of loved friends, of those of the household whom he had known and whom he thought were safe in paradise. He said, "You have come to me at last, and I have been kept here in doubt, possibly a season of testing. I have had many rebellious thoughts, but now you have come to take me to Jesus and to heaven!" And then they smiled, and shook their heads, and answered, "No, we have come to recognize you. Your season of trial is past. You are in the kingdom of the spirit." "But where is heaven?" "Wherever you make it."

"Where is Jesus?" "In the hearts of those who love him."

"And are we not, then—are you not, in heaven?" Are you dwelling in this same shadowy existence? Don't you know where you are?"

"Oh, yes, we know where we are, and it does not matter where. We have made ourselves, our condition, our growth. We are your friends; we love you. We are like you, spirits in the great kingdom of eternal life, but we have found that there is no narrow heaven; that there is no limited abode, no place set apart for those who have no consciousness on earth."

"And you have not found Jesus, and he does not sit at the right hand of God, and the saints and angels do not gather around playing upon golden harps, and singing, and you have not found the throne, and you have not seen the kingdom of heaven, with its walls of brass and its gates of pearl, and its streets paved with gold?" You do not mean that you have not been in heaven?"

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SATURDAY, JULY 5, 1891.

SOMETHING SUGGESTIVE

Why The Progressive Thinker Has Moved to 40 Loomis St.

(CONTINUED)

Accepting as the true reasons and assertions made in my last, that the peculiar composition of the soil of certain localities made the centering "spiritually" possible of such life forces as could influence the psychic plane and could also be transferred back from the psyche to the physical plane, let us develop the subject yet a little further.

Since action and reaction are equal, then there must be a centering of this force in some localities in this general district, where the potency will be more apparent than in other parts of the same community. This is true of the limestone. In that are points of polarity of the general force, where the attraction is intensified, either temporarily or permanently. So in Chicago, itself a center of the manifestation of the electric force, attracting to itself both the forces above and below it, seeming to stand on the medial line between the forces of the upper and lower planes, must be developed centers of quickened activity.

It becomes, then, a question of interest, as to the location of such centers of psychic manifestation. They who are keen-witted, logical in deduction, and quick to perceive, who are acquainted with the arrangement of the different psychic conditions, conclude that the West Side ought to contain the center of polarity. To support this conclusion, it is admitted that those who are psychically inclined to unseen influences are largely congregated on the West Side; that they do their best work here, and if they change their location, in a measure they lose their power. Research in this direction will prove this centering of power.

The unseen are cognizant of this fact, and when they desire to do their best work, with those they have inspired or expect to inspire, the first effort is to locate them within this radius. If there were a line three-fourths of a mile in length, fixed at one end near the place where you are seated (Jackson Boulevard, corner of Franklin), used as a radius, it would include within its circumference the points of the highest polar influence. This comes not so much from the immediate surface, as from the soil underneath, which has been depressed and covered up by the accumulations above.

This *force*, in which electricity is generated, is of the same character as that which lies nearer the water, but there is this peculiarity, the generator is uncentered to the upper air, and does not manifest such intensity of psychic force as that which is covered by a so-called non-conducting surface or element.

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The complexity is here increased by the action of the laws governing the "Finer Forces" of Nature. If this section had been covered with business houses, and had thus become a business center, then the forces conditions of mental polarity combined with the dwarfing conditions of competitive selfishness, would have so covered up and overcome that which was freely offered from mother earth, for the assistance and development of these forces, that their power would, in this direction, have been wasted or destroyed. But they would have given out an immense stimulation to whatever was done on the material plane in this center.

It is a well-known fact in that no other city in the world do men iniquicker, talk more rapidly, or talk faster than in the business parts of Chicago, where they are stimulated by the unexhausted life of the atoms of their environment, and the developed psychic force emanating from the same conditions. Acting first upon the psychic plane of their souls, and then flashed forth through their mentality, it irradiates and quickens all with which it comes in contact. But in the permanent arrangement, the crystallization, as it were, of the propulsion set forth, when the builders guide, and direct, is man and man is doing it himself; for himself he makes one of the worst mistakes that a man can make, a lordly and the appropriate as do flies, when they find honey spread upon a paper; attracted thither by their appetites and chained by circumstances, they cannot escape during the present life.

The Views of an Excellent Medium and Speaker.

To THE EDITOR.—I see by the late issue of your paper that THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER is now located in a new home. It was with interest that I read the item in regard to the same. It seems to me that there is a stirring, quickening, life-giving emanation that comes from the general make-up of your paper, that can but be conducive to the moral and spiritual healthiness of communities that are so easily disengaged by the effects dogmatical theological of the past.

Thinking thus of the PROGRESSIVE THINKER, I can but believe that home will be as the mythical rock said to have been smote by Moses in the wilderness. Smote by the hand of your higher intuition, from this home rock upon which you have founded THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER, there shall gush the living, enduring, waters of spiritual inspirations, and resolving the channel way of the unrivaled circulation of your paper, will, indeed, help to satiate the thirst of those who have so long craved out, amid the deserts of ignorance, for those same waters of truth.

That the spirit-world may bless and prosper you in your new home is the sincere wish of an ardent admirer of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER.

Albion, N. Y. OSCAR A. EDGERLY.

tions would be of keener perception and finer grain, and necessarily must be more serviceable to those who have work to do, and more capable of communication between the two planes. It is exactly the case of the skilled artisan, who shaping cunningly his steel tool to his knowledge, then hones it until it comes to the point where shade which experience has taught him, then suddenly cooling it he has the best instrument possible. Thus, those who respond to psychic forces can be better trained under these conditions than any other.

Because of this centering of currents in and about your city, there has gone forth more force and power, for advancement on that line of search, more knowledge and unfolding thought of advantage to humanity, than from any other city in your country, in proportion to its size, population, and the time spent in investigation.

Those who are on kindred lines, who also have the keys of the ancient knowledge, come to Chicago to visit, and they stay because they find here means to facilitate their work and growth. If they were orthodox people, they would undoubtedly say they were nearer heaven than any where else.

Never mind the name, the condition is true. YOU are nearer and in more direct communication with the astral forces, because the vibrations from the peculiar conditions align themselves and are in harmony with the higher vibrations, and thus those who dwell here, really live in easy reach of those unseen libraries, which contain all the knowledge which has accumulated from the foundation of the world, the ushering in of the great day. But that which is been, is as nothing to that which is to come. Some day, in the City of the Lakes, there will be a building which will reflect the knowledge gained, the forces inspiring, and the wisdom which planned. THIS, not so much because it shall be won by a desperate struggle to overcome obstructing influences, but because Chicago was the favored one by spirit forces, above others, for so great a gift.

I, standing simply as a representative of those who are watching, waiting and working for the highest unfoldment and manifestation of that which is already in the unseen, beseech you, that you shall hold yourselves firm, steadfast in all the highest ideals and the most noble conceptions of the present and the past; so shall your spirits of themselves regenerate your bodies. Then will the resurrection of the new from the old be accomplished. Hold fast that which you know to be true.

FORTY, Loomis street, is within the circle and near the circle spoken of above. It is also an occult number of doubled perfection and strength. The new home of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER is a wonderful example of spirit leading and promise, as in fact, has been its whole career. W. P. PHILSON, M. D.

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Chicago is blessed with many rare and superior mediums, but Winona possesses many in one, and it is not too much to say that with the growth of added unfoldment, this rare medium will be sought after, star and near.

Trance-Vocal Mediumship.

Mrs. Cassie McFarlin, of Winona, Minn., paid our city a three weeks' visit recently, and won for herself such hosts of admiring friends that good Mr. and Mrs. Jones, with whom she visited, could hardly keep her long enough to obtain a "private sitting." Everybody wanted her, and those fortunate ones who obtained her presence but for an hour will never forget that hour, long time runs on infinity. Rarely has a medium so taken hearts by storm as has this little woman, and rarely has mediumship attained so complete a development that self, the personality, is swallowed up in the truthful expression of the controlling spirit. Mrs. McFarlin's mediumship is known by what is termed trance-vocal, a phase but seldom met with, and may be described as semi-conscious character impersonation. In and about your city, there has gone forth more force and power, for advancement on that line of search, more knowledge and unfolding thought of advantage to humanity, than from any other city in your country, in proportion to its size, population, and the time spent in investigation.

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GEO. P. MCINTYRE.

WE HAVE RECEIVED A CERTIFICATE FROM THE CHICAGO BOARD OF TRADE, WHICH READS AS FOLLOWS:

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SYBILLA;

A True and Thrilling Narrative of "One Alone."

It Abounds in Startling Situations.

By that Peerless Woman,

MRS. EMMA HARDINGE BRITTON.

(The numerous admirers of Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britton in this country will be gratified to know that we have concluded to present them with an interesting narrative, which abounds in startling situations, and most exalted spirit power. Mrs. Britton still pleases to know, also, that her publication is to appear in *The Progressive Thinker*, which now has the largest circulation of any Spiritualist paper in the world, one special advantage being that it is the only paper to make our paper a complete system of education, and it would be, without this sketch from the pen of Emma Hardinge Britton. Our readers, we assure you, will thank us for presenting it.—Editor PROGRESSIVE THINKER.)

CHAPTER XI. (Conclusion).

As stated in the last chapter of my life and retrospect, after having spread over my hapless guest my only shawl, in the endeavor to warm her frozen limbs, I went forth with her poor gauze bonnet, hoping to realize by it a few moments; and, utterly desolate of any covering myself from the fierce winter winds that blew around me, save my one thin merino dress, but still without a sense either of shame, despair, or embarrassment. A strange sentiment of high resolve filled my mind and braced up every nerve. I felt as if I was neither standing alone or hopeless. On the contrary, a wonderful sense of superhuman courage was upon me, which sped me on my way with feelings little short of triumph. Perhaps the reader may find some clue to this singular condition of mind amidst scenes of such unmitigated embarrassment and distress as surrounded me in the following incident.

I had brought home a little work to do that morning, but I had neither cotton to go on with, nor could I hope to realize a penny by the work, till by the while night's toll I had accomplished it, after my return from the theatre. In looking for some paper to wrap the bonnet in, I observed this work, hastily tore the paper in which it was folded away, and was pinning up the bundle as careful as I could, when my eye was attracted to the paper. It was a yesterday's journal, and on the very spot where my eyes lighted, were the names of Mr. and Miss Augusta Masters. Yes, it was actually there, before my very eyes! amongst the arrivals at a fashionable hotel in this city, where his child and her mate was then dying—famishing with hunger.

I saw the announcement that they were at that moment within one mile from our garret, and in one short half hour from the time when I read their names, I entered, unannounced, their presence, standing in my thin and faded garments, my intense shabbiness and cold, and the hungry aspect of a very ill-fed, hard-worked actress.

At first they did not know me; well, they might be excused for that, and when the thunderbolt of my name fell on their stricken ears, I think Mr. Masters was about to rise and turn me my force out of the room, where his pale and ghastly daughter sat staring at me; but I neither noticed his harsh gestures, nor yet the half-choking sob of the lady as she faintly re-echoed my hated name. Mine was no selfish errand, and caught could or should stay its fulfillment.

For myself, I would cheerfully have swallowed the blazing fire that sent its delicious warmth from their hearts to my frozen limbs, in preference to the richest dainty that loaded their table, though I had been yet more hungry than I was; but for Flora and her weeping babe I came to demand, first from the world, next from the father, and lastly from the fraud who had sold her young life to the dismal shipwreck, bread at least, if not justice, and yet I clothed my demand, for her sake, in the most humble and reverent form of speech I could command. I told them of her intense loathing for her cruel, uncompassionate husband, the seducer's wife and destruction, her street-born babe, her hunger, penance, in suffering and shame; her exploitation from decent homes, where by heavy labor she had faithfully striven to earn her crust and food for her babe. I told them all—the bridge, the rescue, the bed of straw in poor Sybilla's garret, and now the wall for bread. At many points they strove to interrupt me in vain; the tale of wrong poured from my lips in such a mighty tide that it overwhelmed the floodgates of restraint, and would exhaust itself before I even paused to breathe; and then—yes, then my guadian spoke.

"*Begone!*" he cried, in those hissing tones whose utterance seemed dragged up from the depths of his hard inner nature; "*Begone!* polluted, loathsome thing, and take for thy brazen impudence in daring to approach me, the basest curse these lips can utter on the shameless wanton who causes you dare to plead, and tell her this from me! tell her to die, that I may once more feel what it is to breathe freely, a boor I've never known since her vile hand imprinted shame on her father's forehead. Tell her, too, that I to save her shameful life I need but move this finger, I'd cut both my hands off, hoping thereby to hasten the hour that sees her buried beneath the earth. *Begone!* I say, another moment and thy own life is not safe! I hate ye, hate ye both."

And this was all; slowly, sadly, mourning for him, not for myself, shックed that one so lost as Mr. Masters should live in human form, I turned, and was about to quit the room when a strong hand held me. It was not Mr. Masters, but a stranger. In his haste, and Mr. Masters' rage, we had both forgot that I stood in the parlor of a hotel. The room was empty when I entered, but from an open door at the further end one entered who had clearly been an auditor of the whole scene. I saw this at a glance, and oh, how unutterable the brightest moment that had ever cheered my sorrowful life was in that glance—a glances of recognition, by which I found in the new comer the kind acquaintance of the callow care, and the greenhorn. Count Reinhold!

The courage that had sustained me, however, in the wild excitement of despair, utterly failed me on the threshold of new-born hope, and faintly murmuring, "*Take me away!*" I leaned upon the blind arms that were widely extended to support me, and for the rest of the scene I scarcely retained even passing consciousness. Its details I have learned subsequently from the Count's own lips. These are they:

"For the last ten years, Thomas Masters," said my protestor, "you and I have dealt in merchandise, politics, and the closest intimacy. Last night you told me the history of a young French girl you had seduced, and whom I clearly gathered you had deserted; you told me you had educated her child, your child, in ignorance of her relationship to yourself, to save yourself. The pain of losing degraded in your own child's eyes. Thomas Masters is dead. In the rightest cause of woe which this heart has discerned, eating and early worms have eaten the heart of your social relation, I read the history, consequences, and losses of invincible act, one false step, one dash,

stain on the escutcheon of strong manhood, in the ruin of weak womanhood. Thomas Masters, if I can help it, neither this girl, nor still more unfortunately dying sister, nor yet myself, shall ever again be numbered by the sight of the adored and child-like qualities in herself a man had in every relation of life, false to his God, his love, his species, and himself. Come, my Sybilla, come!"

And as we left the room, the honest pang that had ever shot across my mind was awakened by the consciousness that him I quitted, the basest, worst of men I had ever known, was in reality my death.

Two later—ten o'clock! The bright, warm fire, the gentle shaded lamp, the soft luxuriant couch, and all the precious dainties through all the livelong day that the noble Count Reinhold kept heapings up in my little garret, until the fading flora lay in their midst like a dying camelia on the bosom of luxurious beauty. All was calm—too late too late! The waxen hand of death had flushed the pale cheek, and the bright eyes of the cradle of eternity, that little form lay fast in its dreamless sleep—the manly monument on which was carved the shameful record of the world's cold humanity.

Late in the night I sat with the Count alternately conversing in low whispers and stealing to the sick girl's bed to catch the feeble words as they fell from her whitening lips.

Instinctively I kept presenting to her some little delicate morsel, or cooling drink, which the poor child was unable to partake of—the sting of hunger appearing to me so far triumphant above all other pains that I almost hoped to see life return with means to sustain it.

"Sybilla, love," she murmured, "I am not hungry now, nor cold, nor lonely. Surely this must be a foretaste of heaven, where no sorrow there." There sits my little babe cradled in roses. Oh, Sybilla! what a fairy you are to build such a lovely couch for my poor innocent—how glad the darling seems! Why, I have mourned in the fear that none would care for her when I was gone, and now she looks so happy and so lovely that I will not for the world remove her."

She looked on vacantly; no love cradled that babe who lay a quiet corpse in a distant corner.

What did she see? Was it the newborn spirit in its blooming Eden—or only fancy?

"No more, Sybilla—I cannot swallow now; and oh, my friend, as you would save the human soul from the wreck and ruin which has lain me here to die, save those scraps! keep every crumb, waste not a single one, and give them to the hungry girls who walk the streets by night. Look in the door steps and under butcher's sheds, and in foul corners, where none but dogs and street-walking girls would live, *there* are the hungry ones. And, oh, Sybilla! hunger is so hard to bear—and cold makes one cruel, reckless and wicked. Why, Sybilla, I have often, in my bitter sufferings, hated and cursed God! I have said: *Him do we—why, oh, why cannot He, or will not He, save me?* Shall I for this go to hell, think you, Sybilla? Tell me—I have so long carried my own hell about with me that I don't fear the Christians' hell; And then—my father! Think of it, Sybilla! My father to tell me to that man the law calls my husband!"

"Sybilla, I have sometimes thought I could not have had a real or fate would now, now, dear, I think differently. It seems to me that the night is almost passed, and the morning is breaking. Sybilla, love, what makes this place so bright, and who are those fair forms bending over me? Come to take me, when they say: *Thank God! Home, sweet home!* Hear them sing, dear. Farewell! I'm going home."

EPHODUE.

Reader! you may have traced up thus far some passages in the life of a poor human wretch—would you know the rest? Little remains to be told. *It's original sin* in poor human nature, that is also *original good*, and of this my sweet mother, the poor old prompter—my first friend—and Rudolph Reinhold, my beloved, my pure, noble, and ever good guardian angel, and now my husband, are my life's evidences.

In a grand grey old Bohemian castle, amidst high cathedral rocks, embowering woods, and with pleasant villages, deep forests, and lovely valleys spread out in picture-like beauty, far, far beneath and around, is the home of Sybilla—now Countess Reinhold—the wife of the best, truest, and noblest man it has ever been my happy lot to meet on earth.

This living, whole-souled being laid one poor sister's form in the quiet grave, and after speeding her parting soul to the better land, he placed the sacred marriage ring on the hand of the sister left behind. The week that saw my hapless Flora's spirit safe in paradise, saw me, poor Sybilla Morand, as the bride of Rudolph Reinhold. So many years have passed away since then that the entire dark panorama of my young days seems to me, in my happy home, more like an unquiet dream than the bitter experiences in which I have played so sad a part. And yet as I recall each scene, I am glad that I have passed through it; glad for the sake of the knowledge it has given me; for the pity it has instilled into me for the tempted ones that fall, sympathy for the miserable who fall, and suffer, but above all, warning for me who am the happy mother of two noble sons, and two sweethearts, to make them all useful and working members of the great body politic of humanity.

Their father's wealth and the warm sympathies of his tender heart would have spared these tenderly-loved ones all toil, all labor, all effort, but in my second life's councils and experience I have learned myself and persuaded my precious companion to agree with me in the view that it is equally a shame and a sin to live in poverty and be a mere vegetable non-producer.

Both our girls are by their own choice, well-instructed and skilful physicians. One of our boys is a preacher, a missionary of no sect, but that of spirits—a soul physician, whose burning words inspired by the priests of heaven, have pointed many a strayed soul into the path that leads to paradise. The fourth and last of our most blessed family is a student in the school of engineering, and promises by far-reaching ideas and mastery of the stupendous forces of nature to become an inventor as well as a worker.

All four are ministering angels upon earth, whilst I and my beloved husband, though waiting reunion with the dear ones gone before, are still graduates from the school of sorrow and suffering, into the paradise of love and duty, the elements which alone can build up a kingdom of heaven upon earth. Farewell!

An account of the remarkable trance or ecstasy which beset William will be found in a work written by Judge Elias Boudinot, of New Jersey. When Tenant had nearly completed his theological course, he became seriously ill, fell into a cataleptic trance, and remained for several days in a condition of apparent death. His physician, perceiving slight tremors under his leaden face, and fearing for his life, had him removed, and though his friends were satisfied that he was dead, his burial was postponed for three days, and subsequently for several hours, owing to being made for his resurrection, which finally occurred just as

the *Progressive Thinker*.

LIFE AND DEATH.

Suspended Between The Two.

The Mystery of the Human Organization.

To THE EDITOR:—Life is one thing and death another; the former is looked upon as a blessing, while the latter is regarded by many as a curse, brought into the world by the sin of Adam. But will always be an interesting subject for consideration, and anything bearing upon their elucidation will be carefully considered. The following facts gleaned from the *New York Tribune* will be of interest. They refer principally to that midway station between the two conditions—life and death:

Several instances of suspended animation have occurred in history, in which the subjects have related their experiences, or have given hints of the same.

Hamlet's reply indicates that the catalepsy of to-day has precisely the same features as that of Shakespeare's time. He says:

"Ecstasy! My pulse as yours, doth temporarily keep time And makes as beautiful music."

In the Scriptures we have numerous instances of suspended animation or catalepsy, such as the raising of the daughter of the widow of Nain by the prophet of the Lord, the raising of the spirit of Samuel by the witch of Endor, the translation of Paul to the "Third Heaven," the raising of Lazarus by the Savior, the visions or ecstasies of St. John the revelator, the appearance of the Savior to his apostles and disciples after his crucifixion and death.

In modern times there have also been instances, more or less well-authenticated, of these singular occurrences, and, from time to time, have attracted attention and elicited discussion.

Two cases which have just occurred in this country have been widely circulated by the press. One is that of a Swede, named Joseph Henry Schrack, of Philadelphia, who is said to have died and come to life.

Dr. Cantroll, says that Schrack undoubtedly had nervous spasms of the heart, but the physician believes that they were produced by an effort of his powerful will.

It is a startling statement, and yet it is the truth in its every part. The Roman Catholic hierarchy, vigilant ever, is not slow to recognize in Spiritualism a power that bodes ill to her mythical infallibility.

With beating brow does she behold the marvelous rapidity of his growth, as year by year, one by one. It embraces in its swelling ranks hundreds and thousands from every walk of life, from highest to lowest, from crowned king to humble peasant, master and servant, the learned and the unlearned, of every race and in every clime. She is not unmindful that this wondrous tide, with its ever onward sweeping waves, lashing, writhing with the accrued force of two thousand years of bondage, is gradually, surely undermining her very bulwarks of power.

She feels its silent undercutting as it beats stronger and stronger still against her tottering walls, rotten with infamy and redened by the blood of thousands of martyrs.

She feels, she knows, her vast interests are endangered thereby, and that she dare not, cannot brook the rising flood that threatens to overwhelm and engulf her forever. No, she does not bravely meet the full tide. She is too strategic for that. But, Spiritualists, *arm!* She seeks to dam the fountain source, to stifle the voice of Inspiration that bids all mankind lift his soul to angel voices from spheres above, that tell of a life of endless progress. The Roman honest is crouching. Our mediums are in danger, and even now many are almost inextricably entangled in her toils.

Over on the southern edge of Montgomery county lives a highly-respected, well-to-do Catholic family that numbers as one of its members a more or less nearly prepossessing and accomplished young lady, gifted with a high order of intellectual power.

An observing person has only to gaze into the weird depths of her soulful eyes to see that she is different from most other persons in the pose of head, the intonation, and the pure, true, unwavering gaze there is revealed a spirituality that is most remarkable. Some three years ago Miss L.—became suddenly developed as a rapping and tipping medium of great power.

It is a startling statement, and yet it is the truth in its every part. The priest, whether through his own alleged experience while in the trance or ecstasy state, in which he says he stood, as it were, with one foot on earth and the other in heaven, and saw relatives and friends long since dead. But the fact that he could by his will stop the action of the lungs has nothing to do with his character.

This was a fact known to all who had to do with him while in his cataleptic state.

It may be well to state here that this will was allowed to stand, and that finally he was enabled at any time, by a mere effort of his will, to throw himself into a state of ecstasy, catalepsy or trance.

The second of these more modern cases of catalepsy in this country is that of Miss Amelia Groth, at Mauch Chunk, Pa.

She is represented as having been ill of consumption for years, as a very religious woman, and had previously been the subject of clairvoyant manifestations, in which she told some wonderful things.

She professes to have with her always a guardian angel, whom she sees in the form of a child, always on her right hand. This being informed she says, that Father Helman, her spiritual adviser, could cure her of consumption, but during the process her soul would for a time leave her body.

Subsequently, the woman was thrown into a trance, to all appearance like death, and after some hours was recalled to life by Father Helman. She also, like Schrack, saw some wonderful things while in her trance state.

She is a perfectly healthy man, and it is believed to be an impostor, a scoundrel, and a dangerous man to the community.

Concerning his trance, I really believe that he is the victim of a delusion, or a self-induced fit.

He is a man of great physical strength, and is said to be a rapping and tipping medium of great power.

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