









E. W. Sprague, formerly of Collins, N. Y., is now stopping rarely with friends in Dowagiac. Mr. Sprague is a most estimable man, and an excellent medium. He intends to settle in some place where he can carry on the jewelry business the same time work for the Friends can address him at Detroit. The town in which Mr. Sprague will have a valuable access to the cause of Spiritualism.



## OVER THE GRAVE.

## A Touching Funeral Discourse.

(NOTE.—The following address was delivered at the time of a funeral, and, under the circumstances, shows most conclusively the abiding certainty with which the father who delivered the address recorded, most young daughter's continuing presence in the land of the immortal, and the consoling assurance that she who had departed would soon be reunited by those left behind. The noble and inspired gentleman, who, at the close of his funeral oration over the beloved and beautiful blossom of his home and heart, desired that for the present and for special reasons of concern for others, his own name and that of the girl who has arisen shall be withheld. We, who knew and loved her, can with truth say, "Earth has no angel less, heaven one angel more."—Ed. T. W.)

Address delivered over the grave of a beautiful girl of sixteen years of age, by her father, at Highgate cemetery, London, on Wednesday, September 24th, 1891.

Dear friends, we are met together here to pay the last tribute of respect to the mortal remains of my youngest daughter, who, for some wise cause, has, in the bloom of youth and beauty, been called away from earth, and has entered into that higher existence to which we all are hastening. Our dear child was evidently too pure a bud to bloom on earth. Of her it may be truly said—

Pure as the snow-flake ere it falls  
And takes the stain of earth,  
Without a taint of mortal life  
Except its mortal birth.

Even to those who, like myself, have had incontrovertible evidence of the continuity of life after the change called "death," it is hard to part with the physical presence of those we love, but in this our hour of trial we possess that which no religion resting on mere faith can supply, namely, an actual knowledge that our dear child still lives and loves us; that although she is invisible to our physical vision, yet she can see us and be cognizant of all our loving thoughts towards her. Of this fact our dear daughter was aware, for she had many and conclusive evidences of its truth during her life on earth. She was well aware that what is termed "death" is not the end of existence, and that though lost to our physical eyesight, she was, one as still, and had the opportunity afforded them, communicate with us, and thereby assure us of their undying love and deathless affection.

Oh, joy unspeakable to know  
This truth divine made manifest  
To weary, wailing souls below,  
Through those who have entered into rest;  
To know that for the ill we bear,  
The weariness of heart and brain,  
A balm there is awaiting there;  
Thank God, that we shall live again.

Owing to the false teachings of the past, which unfortunately still prevail, a great majority of the people have a little of the philosophy of death. It is only when they are laid low on a bed of sickness, or when some loved friend is called away by the hand of death, that they give this all-important subject the slightest consideration; consequently they are not familiar with it as those who have made it their earnest study, and who therefore know that—

Who are lost to outward sense,  
Have but found their robes of clay,  
And, clothed in heavenly radiance,  
Attend us on our earthly way.

For the benefit of those who are unacquainted with this subject, I may state that death is not, as has been falsely taught, a penalty of sin—original or otherwise—but a natural and inevitable transition to a new and higher stage of existence, and into clearer light, fuller knowledge, more harmonious surroundings, richer revelations of love, and larger possibilities of progress and happiness.

When the lamp of life is wearing low, the clouds that separate the seen from the unseen fade away, and as the physical matter dies off from that which has been fettered and imprisoned by its earthly scaffolding, we see with clearer and more extended eyesight. Things that were previously strange to most of us, and thoughts that could not be followed in their upward flight to the heights to which they pointed, become then quite clear. The mental sight of the past appears as that of one who can see, not as before through a glass darkly, but as clear as the noonday sun. To this is superadded a heart-sight—more penetrating than any intellectual insight—which makes all plain, and to this enlarged horizon there appears no limit.

Thus we shall shortly know that length of breath  
Is not the sweetest gift God sends His friend,  
And that sometimes the table pal of death  
Conceals the fairest boon His love can send.

People talk of spectres, or ghosts. 'Tis we in the fleshly body who are shadows passing on to join the innumerable crowd gone before to the land of the living, to the land of the great departed, for as was truly said, "The things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are unseen are eternal."

Victor Hugo, treating of the subject of death, wrote—  
The tomb is not an endless night;  
It is a thoroughfare—a way  
That closes in soft twilight,  
And opens in clear morning light.

When unto that we turn once more,  
We can say a day's work done;  
We may not say our work is o'er,  
For life will scarcely have begun.

Writing on the same subject another poet observed—  
The eye that is closed in the dying hour  
Doth open the next in bliss;  
The welcome is heard in another world  
Ere the farewell is hushed in this.

For we pass from the clasp of mourning friends  
To the arms of the loved and lost,  
And the faces of those we greet us then  
Whom on earth we valued most.

The death of man's physical body is one of the natural and necessary changes in the spirit's journey through its deathly journey through eternity. As the sun at even sets to rise in radiance on another shore, so, at the change called death, does the spirit quit its mortal frame to rise in newness of life in the glorious world of the hereafter, not, as has been falsely taught, a far-off region, but lies close around us; for, as man's spirit interblends with his body, so does the Spirit-world interblend with the physical universe. Truly, as the poet writes—

It lies around us like a cloud,  
A world we cannot see,  
Yet the sweet closing of an eye  
May bring us close to be.

Its gentle breeze fans our cheek,  
And our worldly cares,  
Its gentle voice whispers love,  
And mingle with our prayers.

Sweet helpings around us throng and beat,  
Sweet helpings around us throng and beat,  
And palpitate the veil between  
With breathings almost heard.

So, then, as soft, so sweet, so gentle,  
So near to press their guide,  
They tell us gently to our rest,  
They tell us gently to our rest.

And in the hush of rest they bring,  
How lovely and how sweet a pass  
The hour of death may be,  
Scarce knowing if we wake or sleep,  
To feel all trouble sink away,  
All sorrow and all care.

Sweet friends around us throng and beat,  
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John Calvin was intensely "spiritual" when he warmed his fleshless hands at the flames that consumed Servetus. John Knox was constrained by his "spirituality" to utter low and leathome calumnies against all women. All the witch-burners and Quaker-maimers and mutilators were so "spiritual" that they asked alms of the rich and the poor, and longed for the sick. The lovers of God—these haters of man—looked upon the Greek marbles as unclean, and denounced the glories of art as the snares and pitfalls of perdition. These "spiritual" mendicants hated laughter and smiles, and dimples, and exhausted their diseased and polluted imaginations in the effort to make love loathsome. From almost every pulpit was heard the denunciation of all that adds to the wealth, the joy, and glory of life. It became the fashion for the "spiritual" to malign every hope and passion that tends to humanize and refine the heart. Man was denounced as totally depraved. Woman was declared to be a perpetual temptation—her beauty a snare, and her touch pollution. Even in our own time and country some of the ministers, no matter how rational, have refused to retain the aroma, the odor, or the smell of the "spiritual." They denounce some of the best and greatest—some of the benefactors of the race—for having lived on a low plane of usefulness, and for having had the pitiful ambition to make their fellows happy in this world.

Thomas Paine was a groveling wretch because he devoted his life to the preservation of the rights of man; and Voltaire lacked the "spiritual" because he abolished torture in France, and attacked with the enthusiasm of a divine madness the monster that was endeavoring to drive the hope of liberty from the heart of man. Humboldt was not "spiritual" enough to repeat with closed eyes the absurdities of superstition, but was so lost to all the "skye" influences that he was willing to add to the intellectual wealth of the world. Darwin lacked "spirituality," and in its place had nothing but sincerity, patience, intelligence, the spirit of investigation, and the courage to give his honest conclusions to the world. He contented himself with giving to his fellow-men the greatest and the sublime truths that man has spoken since the dawn of time.

Now told that these soldiers of science, these heroes of liberty, these sculptors and painters, these singers of songs, these compositors of music, lacked "spirituality," and after all, were only common clay.

This word "spirituality" is the fortress, the breastwork, the rifle-pit of the Church. It is the only halation to sincerity that Dutch metal does to pure gold. There seems to be something about a pulpit that poisons the occupant—that changes his nature—that causes him to denounce what he really loves, and to laud with the fervor of insanity a joy that he never felt—a man's own soul.

Hypnotized by his surroundings, he unconsciously brings to market that which he supposes the purchasers desire. In every church, whether orthodox or radical, there are two parties—one conservative, looking backward; one radical, looking forward; and, generally, the latter is the party of the future.

A minister who seems to be a philosopher on the street, or in the home of a sensible man, cannot withstand the atmosphere of the pulpit. The moment he stands behind a Bible cushion, like Bottom, he becomes "trailing" and "fair ears."

Nothing is more amusing than to hear a clergyman denounce worldliness—ask his hearers what it will profit them to build railways and palaces and lose their own souls—inquire of the common folk why they do this and that, and then, in the next breath, to see him himself, in the pulpit, surrounded by the paraphernalia of the church, and with his hands raised in prayer, and his eyes closed, and his mouth open, and his heart full of the same worldliness that he has just denounced, and with any possibility of a dollar.

"Spirituality," for the most part, is a mask worn by idleness, arrogance and greed. Some people imagine they are "spiritual" and that they are "above" the world. They search for the deeper meanings. He appreciates the harmonies of conduct, the melody of a perfect life. He loves his wife and children better than his own life. He cares more for the world he lives in than for his own. He tries to discharge the duties

of this life, to help those that he can reach. He believes in being useful—in making money to feed and clothe and educate the ones he loves—to assist the deserving and to support himself. He does not want to be a burden on others. He is just, generous and sincere.

Spirituality is all of this world. It is a child of this earth, born and cradled here. It comes from no heaven, but it makes a heaven where it is. There is no possible connection between superstition and the spiritual, or between the "spiritual" and the "material."

The "spiritually-minded" man is a poet. If he does not write poetry, he lives it. He is an artist. If he does not paint pictures or chisel statues, he feels them, and their beauty softens his heart. He fills the temple of his soul with all that is beautiful, and he worships at the shrine of the ideal.

In all the relations of life he is faithful and true. He asks for nothing that he does not earn. He does not wish to be happy in heaven if he must receive happiness as alms. He does not rely on the goodness of another. He is not ambitious to become a winged pauper.

The perfect health of the soul is its nobility, its generosity, its free-spoken, natural, superb. Nothing is more sickening than the "spiritual" whine—the pretense that crawls at first and talks about humility, and then suddenly becomes arrogant, and says: "I am 'spiritual'—I hold in contempt the vulgar joys of this life. You work and toil and build homes and sing songs, and weave your delicate robes. You love women and children, and adorn yourselves. You subdue the earth and dig for gold. You have your theaters, your operas, and all the luxuries of life; but I, beggar that I am, Pharisee that I am, am your superior, because I am 'spiritual'."

Above all things, let us be sincere.—Robert G. Ingersoll in *Agnostic Journal*.

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## SPIRITUALITY.

(A correspondent of the *Boston Investigator* says that Mr. Chadwick, the Brooklyn Unitarian minister, stated some time ago that Thomas Paine had some good qualities, but "lacked spirituality." That is, he was not a "