

The Two Worlds.

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BIBLICAL SPIRITUALISM.

A certain king with a reputation for wisdom is reported to have said: "There is no new thing under the sun." Whether this rather melancholy assertion be true or not, certainly Spiritualism is old enough, old as the hills, despite the fact that its modern phase is the child of the century now drawing to a close. Forty-four years ago in Rochester, United States, Modern Spiritualism announced its presence by the persistent knockings which refused to be silenced or explained away by any other theory than that of unseen intelligences who took this means of convincing a sceptical world that spirit and matter are closely allied, that death does not end all, nor impose an impassable barrier between those "gone before" and they who were left to mourn their loss.

But the inquirer may ask: "You say Spiritualism is old. I never heard of it before, never came across it in history. Where do you find any record of mediums and spirit communications, of inspirations and impressions, and all the other jargon which Spiritualists talk so glibly?" It is not necessary to go far to find records of such phenomena. We are all more or less familiar with Bible history, and it is curious how blandly and with what unquestioning faith the instances of so-called supernatural interferences have been accepted which, if labelled Spiritualistic and of modern occurrence, would have been dismissed with a contemptuous shrug, or denounced as the stock in trade of the evil one. It is impossible to deny that the Bible draws upon our credulity to an almost unlimited extent. It is full of the miraculous, the supernatural, the varied abnormal phenomena which Spiritualism distinguishes as clairvoyance, trance, inspiration, and other phases of mediumship.

To the ancient Jewish race communications with the unseen world were matter of fact occurrences. Patriarchs and prophets, priests and kings, were alike recipients in some form or other of Spiritualistic phenomena. We read of Balaam "falling into a trance, but having his eyes open," compelled to bless when he was expected to curse; of Elijah and Elisha, rugged figures surrounded with a halo of supernaturalism, in touch with the unseen at many points, possessed of healing powers, and acting as mediators between the countrymen and the Deity whose servants they professed to be; of Samuel, prophet and seer, able to direct Saul when in search of his father's asses, and obedient to the call of the woman of Endor, when he too, had joined the shades; of Daniel, his prophecies, dream interpretations, and his invisible protector in the lions' den; of the mysterious handwriting on the wall at the feast of Belshazzar; of the three Hebrews and their visible companion in the furnace, their immunity from the touch of fire; of Ezekiel and his visions; of Isaiah, whose inspired utterances clothed in poetic imagery and majestic in their denunciations of wrong, may be as applicable to the sins of to-day as to those of his contemporaries.

This belief in inspiration, a doctrine peculiarly Spiritualistic, is one we find demonstrated again and again in the Biblical records. But the orthodox churches have limited its meaning, confining it exclusively to Divine inspiration, whereas to Spiritualists it is fallible, subject to conditions, dependent upon them, and influenced largely by the media through which it flows, as water is affected by the soil

through which it filters. If we could interview some of those old prophets, whose clarion voices roused their countrymen to patriotism and stimulated them to religious fervour, we should find their utterances were coloured largely by the temperament and mental endowments of the individual. Jeremiah would be found incapable of the sublime enthusiasm, the lovely imagery, the exultant song of Isaiah, as the latter would be of the minor strains and melancholy bewailings of the weeping prophet. Their inspiration was coloured by their humanity and tinged by their environment. And thus it is to-day. The unseen operators can but use the instrument as they find it, they cannot evoke harmony from a broken string, nor pour forth the pure stream of inspired wisdom through a turbid and polluted channel.

Coming to the New Testament we are confronted again by the supernaturalism which pervades its pages. Apart from the miraculous element dominating the life of Jesus Christ as told by the four evangelists, and commenting only upon two items therein, viz., the fact that Jesus himself by his interview with Moses and Elias on the Mount of Transfiguration and by his manifestation to Saul on his way to Damascus, sanctioned spirit communion, we find incidents recorded in the history of the apostles which have been paralleled by the Spiritualism of to-day. In reading of that wonderful séance in the upper room at Jerusalem, when the spirit was outpoured and took visible form as of tongues of fire, and the disciples spake with other tongues "as the spirit gave them utterance," we are reminded of similar outpourings, differing only in degree, in this nineteenth century. Incidents such as the above, and many others left untouched, lose much of their mystery when read in the light of Modern Spiritualism. No longer regarded as miracles, in the sense of temporary suspensions of natural laws, but as events worked out in harmony with laws of which we have little or no knowledge, they assume different proportions, and instead of uprearing a barrier between the past and the present, they point to the fact that the laws which govern the spiritual world are the same to-day as in the earlier pages of the world's history, and that order and continuity remain unbroken in the chain which binds one age to another. There may seem to be many gaps, and but little coherence, and we may be forced to admit, in the words of the late Poet-Laureate, "The old order changeth yielding place to the new." What of that? "God fulfils himself in many ways." An infinite spirit must possess infinite resources. Enough for us to know the world is still growing, the horizon widening with every succeeding century, ignorance and superstition giving place to knowledge and enlightenment, and as one agent in the overthrow of materialism, in convincing those who, like the doubting Thomas, must see and touch ere they can believe, and in riveting the bonds which unite the material to the unseen and the spiritual, Modern Spiritualism claims our attention and demands a hearing.

It has a message to deliver, a mission to perform. It has survived opposition, contempt, and indifference, has thrown light upon many a dark problem, soothed many a bereaved heart, convinced many of a glorious immortality, and been to many an educator and uplifter. A. E. FITTON.

WHAT IS THE USE OF IT?—A clergyman, a friend of mine, who had witnessed the spiritual phenomena, and who before was in a state of the greatest depression caused by the death of his son, said to me, "I am now full of confidence and cheerfulness; I am a changed man." This is the effect of Modern Spiritualism on a man who had before that rested his belief in Christianity. And this is the best answer to those who ask, "What is the use of it?"—A. R. Wallace.

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED OF THE SPIRIT WORLD.

By J. J. MORSE.

OF the many deeply interesting subjects pertaining to this many-sided Spiritualism of ours the nature of the spirit world has, for most of us, a peculiar and perennial fascination. Where is it? what is it like? are among the ever pressing questions that crop up, and the answers thereto are of absorbing interest. Nor is interest in this matter confined to Spiritualists. The Buddhist has his Nirvana, the Mohammedan his paradise, the Christian his heaven; indeed, a belief in some sort of a hereafter, actual and real, is more than widespread among mankind, and, doubtless, each belief has its own essential truths and facts embedded in its parts. But the Neo-Spiritualism of the nineteenth century has something more than belief to offer an anxious world. Something more than speculations, mostly *a priori* in character, and, if the word may be permitted, miraculous in constitution and continuance.

The first point that Spiritualists can pride themselves upon is, that now they realise that it is just as natural that there should be a spiritual world, as that there should be a material world. Also that natural law exists in the spirit world, as, when one thinks of it, there is also spiritual law in the natural world. In modern times it is fair to say that Emanuel Swedenborg was among the first to give a more rational and natural idea of the spirit world than existed prior to these experiences and investigations. His "Heaven and Hell" and the many "Memorable Relations" of his experiences in the spirit world will still repay perusal, and all tend to show that he anticipated, in statement, many of the things Spiritualists have verified in later times. Our own seers, however, have done more than all to give us clear ideas of the naturalness of the spirit world, and any one perusing the works of Andrew Jackson Davis, Hudson Tuttle, Maria M. King, Mrs. Sweet, Susan G. Horn, Mrs. E. B. Duffy, W. Stainton Moses, and others, who have recorded the results of their clairvoyant visions and communications, will find that the spirit world, as known to-day, is as different as possible from that known to us before the advent of Modern Spiritualism.

We learn now of interstellar zones, of sublimated substance, that roll majestically around centres in the profound deeps of space; of similar zones pertaining to earths and suns, and of an inner or, as it is usually described, a spiritual side of this earth life. We are told that these zones of substance have all the characteristics of phenomena and form, that they are real worlds of hills, plains, valleys, seas, and streams. That trees, flowers, fruits, and grasses abound; that there is light and shade, a celestial firmament sparkling with unnumbered suns, and that all these exist as a result of that divine law of evolution over which the religious world has been so wont to quarrel, and upon which Spiritualists can stand with firmest confidence, since it shows that, from the simple to the complex, from the nebulous inorganic to the highly-organised spiritual, is the process of natural unfoldment in the universe. Thus our first point is, that we have learned that the "spirit world" is but a continuance of the evolutions already in progress, and is a natural and not a *supernatural* thing, place, or state, as so often is ignorantly supposed.

Another thing we have learned is that it is a world of action; that it has its cities, communities, hamlets, and homes. That there are houses, temples, institutions, and learning, art, amusement, palaces even. That these edifices are real things, builded of substance, erected by the powers of mind and will, and governed by the spiritual part of the constructive laws that men utilise in this world. Then, too, we have learned that art and science, mathematics and mechanics have all appropriate instruments for the work and pleasure involved in each. That apart from things created by the will—and possible only to advanced students of spiritual laws—there are means of locomotion, instruments of music, scenic accessories, and all things needful, actually made by those skilled in such matters; made, be it understood, not as work or labour, but as a pleasure, and because mind and feelings find gratification and happiness in so creating. Thus we learn that this spirit world is not so vastly different in appearance to this world; that the difference lies in the main in its character and methods.

Further, we have learned that the people of the spirit world are in form, appearance, characteristics, and inclinations, much like ourselves, at least in their earlier stages of spiritual existence. That they are subject to growth,

education, and development. That they have their peculiarities, their preferences, and their prejudices. That in many cases they retain their national relationship, their religious opinions, and their political and social ideals. That mere entrance into the spirit world is no passport to wisdom, or assurance of immediate knowledge or expansion of mind or sympathies.

And, finally, for the purposes of this necessarily brief article, we have learned that the people of the spirit world suffer individually for their own sins and evil doings, and find no escape from the consequence of any act, good or bad. Yet, ultimately, the divine power in every soul manifests itself, and, in the end, the law of progression triumphs when the individual has created the needful conditions in himself, whereby happiness is reached by the path of abnegation.

How have we Spiritualists learned these things? In part from the labours and investigations of the seers enumerated; in part from the statements made by the spirits who have communicated with us; in part because some of us, who are "mediums" and clairvoyants, have seen these things ourselves. And unless all the experiences of mediumship, clairvoyance, trance, and vision pertaining to our Spiritualism is a hideous delusion, or a horrible lie, we have fact and evidence upon our side to support the statements herein contained.

To sum up: We have learned that the spirit world is a real place, an actual existence; that the life there lived is an active, rational, and progressive one; that natural law therein prevails; and that life and place in the great beyond are rooted in the principle of being, and are the outgrowth of the laws of Nature and the manifestation of the power, wisdom, and love of God.

THE MORAL VALUE OF SPIRITUALISM.

By ALFRED KITSON.

To many people the above heading will appear ridiculous, as it is a foregone conclusion with them that Spiritualism has no moral value whatever; that it is decidedly Satanic in its teachings, because it denies the teachings of theology, viz., the fall of man, the consequent moral corruption, and the vicarious atonement, all of which are dear to the hearts of theologians. Now, I purpose showing, in this brief article, the moral value of Spiritualism in denying these theological doctrines.

In the first place, Spiritualism teaches that the attributes of God are Infinite Wisdom, Love, and Power. A number of Christian divines, to their honour be it said, assert the same. Let us analyse the doctrine of the fall of man in the light of God's attributes, which both Spiritualism and Christians agree in claiming for God.

If God is Infinite in Wisdom He would know when He forbade Adam and Eve to eat of the fruit of one particular tree that they would be tempted to disobey Him. If He did not know it, His attribute of infinite wisdom falls to the ground, and leaves us a God only finite in wisdom, liable to err in His laws, works, and judgments. If He knew it, and still forbade them to partake of it, and then cursed them, and all their posterity of untold millions of children, *His* children, then He is *not* Infinite Love, and becomes a cruel, harsh, vindictive God, full of partiality and wrath; more so than man, for if any man were to torment *one* child for an hour, as God is reported to torment his children for endless ages, the world would call him a monster. But if God knew it, and in His Infinite Love would have saved them, and could not, then He is not Infinite in Power. And thus God would become, through want of power, a cruel instrument of endless torments, and not worthy of that love, homage, and praise His children accord Him.

So that when we honestly analyse this story of the garden of Eden, we find we must either sacrifice the story or the attributes of God. Spiritualists prefer to sacrifice the former. And if Christians think more of God's character and divine attributes, and all that makes Him adorable, than they do of the doctrine of the fall and consequent total depravity of the whole human race, they, too, will join us, and henceforth treat such teachings as these as a gross libel on our Heavenly Father's character, and as being highly blasphemous.

On this point reason, love of God, honour of man, and Spiritualism agree.

Let us further apply the result of our analysis to the doctrine of the vicarious atonement.

If the fall is incompatible with God's infinite attributes; if to assert it is a wicked libel on His divine character, and a gross outrage on reason and common sense, there is no need of such a scheme of salvation as that of a vicarious atonement—a doctrine which makes belief of primary importance, and righteousness and good works of little or no account. Spiritualism teaches that there is no vicarious atonement. That the happiness or misery of the departed depends on the works and actions of the individual's earthly life; and so vindicates the wisdom and justice of God in ordaining that each and all must reap that which they have sown.

Here again love of God, reason, and Spiritualism agree.

The wisdom and justice of God is further vindicated by the teaching of eternal progression. There can be no justice in making man suffer eternally for sinning during the short period of time he is on the earth. And the impulse to do wrong, act unjustly, and cruelly, simply because there is a law of progression, is held in check by the fact that the wrong-doer will not be allowed to come out of the prison-house of darkness, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, caused by the agonies of the consciousness of guilt, until the uttermost farthing of atonement has been paid.

Thus the moral power of Spiritualism is a daily—nay, an hourly—incentive to the highest moral rectitude, and to practise all the virtues. It urges people to do right, because it is right; and shun the wrong, because it is wrong.

The moral value of Spiritualism is such as will free mankind from the priest-made creeds and doctrines that have warped the minds of mankind, and kept their souls in bondage and slavery for thousands of years; robbed humanity of the love of God, and the guiding power of ministering angels. Its moral value, when applied to the training and instruction of the rising generations, is incalculable.

When children are taught from infancy that whatever wrong, injustice, or crime they commit, they, and they alone, will have to bear the consequences thereof, as surely and certainly as, if they put their hand into the fire, they will have to endure the burning; the smarting pain will act as a monitor to cease to do evil, and do that which is right. And living under the consciousness of this righteous law, humanity will gradually rise to a higher plane of virtue and morality than the world has hitherto seen. And the will of God will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. And His divine Wisdom, Love, and Power will be universally recognised, and He, Himself, worshipped in spirit and in truth.

SPIRITUALISM IN RELATION TO MODERN THOUGHT AND PROGRESS.

THAT a change is rapidly taking place in public opinion upon all subjects touching humanity's welfare few will have the temerity to deny. That society is in a transitory condition, undergoing a slow but sure revolution in relation to man's social, spiritual, and material environments is obvious to the most casual observer. These changes are the "Signs of the Times." Born of much tribulation, they are the children of modern thought, whose future seems pregnant with untold blessings for humanity.

Modern thought may be truly described as a ruler—a ruler who gives progress to the nation, and very soon we shall be governed by its decisions for good or ill. If wisely and judiciously directed it may become an angel of mercy, bequeathing peace, plenty, and contentment where now ignorance, superstition, and poverty find an unhallowed resting-place. But to achieve this desirable end, a race of vigilant, manly thinkers is an absolute necessity. For experience proves it is the thinkers who lead the world to its higher and nobler unfoldment, and it is the idle believers who furnish materials for slavery and stagnation.

We claim that modern thought is fast permeating, and thus becoming the controlling element in all our institutions. If this be so, then the opinions of historical times, however valuable, will play but a secondary part in fashioning the destinies of men and nations. Just as modern investigations and facts are the controlling agency in fashioning modern science, so will modern spiritual and psychical facts and experiences become living factors in forming and controlling the religious life of our immediate future. The time has come when old-time institutions must go. Party names belong to the dead past. The present commercialism is fast falling into disrepute, with its cold-blooded "political economies," its "labour markets"; whilst giving untold wealth and privilege to the few, it gives to the many bitter suffering, poverty, and old-aged pauperism. So also the old

dogmatic theology is out of harmony with the aspirations of a progressive people. Heaven has been too frequently described as "far, far away" to be of any practical utility to the toiling millions of the nineteenth century. The old devil and hell of theology have long ago lost their terrors. What man desires and what modern thought must give is an every-day religion, which will practically assist men to drive away, and for ever, the devil of hunger from their homes, the hell of modern slumdom from their streets.

We may be asked, "But what has Spiritualism to do with these demands, these desires?" We answer, much. The gospel of Spiritualism is a progressive gospel. It derives its revelations, its inspirations from the living present. It has always consistently taught that man must be his own redeemer. This gospel applies to every condition of environment which infringes upon man's spiritual or physical requirements. Then again, the teaching of "personal responsibility" applies not to the few but to all. In this respect at least Spiritualism has been a modern Prometheus, an emancipator from false creeds and ignoble beliefs which enslaved the mind of our fathers. It thus gives mental freedom and physical liberty. Spiritualism does not take man outside of himself to find a "crucified redeemer," but to the good, the noble within himself to find there a veritable living Christ. Voicing the thoughts of our so-called dead, Spiritualism proclaims, "Be men, be brave, be Christs, for herein alone lies the genesis of all true salvation." And as these high moral teachings control the individual, purifying and ennobling his character, so must they re-act upon national life for the common weal of all. Thus is Spiritualism becoming a moulder of modern thought, and a veritable redeemer of the people.

Pervading contemporary thought runs a rich vein of a progressive Spiritualistic lore, for where the Christian church has undoubtedly failed, Spiritualism has won its most glorious triumphs. When modern materialism confronts the Church, asking for tangible evidence in support of its creeds, and desiring proof that man survives physical death, it stands as one paralysed, impotent to meet the case, having no evidence to vouchsafe. Answering the versatile and eloquent attacks made by Robt. G. Ingersoll upon Christianity, Archdeacon Farrar said in the *North American Review*, for May, 1890:—

We cannot advance far in any direction, whether in religion or in science, without finding ourselves face to face with an adamant wall of impenetrable contradictions. . . . Our beliefs are surrounded by immense and innumerable perplexities, but these perplexities do not distress us.

And again he says:—

The infidel entangles himself in difficulties incomparably more insoluble than the believer. He is utterly unable to account for the existence of matter or of force. He can give no explanation of the origin of motion, or of the source of life, or of the obvious design which runs through the whole of nature, or of the dawn of consciousness and rational thought, or of the freedom of the will.

Thus speaks modern Christianity, through one of its noblest sons. Much as we admire this brilliant retort, we feel constrained to say it is no answer to the call for tangible evidence, but a deplorable confession of the Church's weakness.

It is here that Spiritualism transcends all other religions by taking materialistic thought on its own ground; it has no such abject confession of impotency to make. By organising their power and federating their forces the spirits have demonstrated that they do survive physical death. Modern materialism says, and says truly, the foundation of all science is facts. These facts become known through investigation. We answer, the facts of Spiritualism are its foundation. These facts can be known to investigators. Many of our facts are of a physical nature. The deductions based upon such observed facts are truly scientific. What more can science do? What more does modern materialism desire? It is the scientific Spiritualism which is rapidly breaking the backbone of materialism, and is fast permeating all branches of scientific thought. Christianity offers nothing for investigation, whilst Spiritualism offers its very foundations with telling effect.

Again, take the gospel of Spiritualism with regard to the universality of inspiration, and the progressive character of revelation. With what bitter scorn and hostile invectives were these teachings first assailed? Yet see how these very teachings are now to be found in Christian utterances, "Progressive inspiration," the theme of an arch-deacon (Farrar). Behold, in this, once more an evidence of Spiritualism as a moulder of modern thought, and a con-

troller of public opinion. Speaking at Bacup, the present Bishop of Manchester said some time ago, in answer to the critics of the Bible—

If the Bible had taught the science of the nineteenth century, it would not have been understood by the people for whom it was written. And if the morality of the earlier parts of the Old Testament were not what they could call a perfect morality, what then? He made bold to say, without the slightest hesitation, that, if it had been, it would have been unfit for the purpose for which it was given. The revelation in the Bible was gradually developing revelation, suited to the conditions of the people to whom it was given.

The Rev. Canon Cheyne, writing with regard to "Reform in the Teaching of the Old Testament," said in the *Contemporary Review*, August, 1889—

With regard next to secondary schools. I venture to ask whether a teacher who admits the principle of criticism can consistently treat the narratives of the Old Testament, as if they were all, I do not say equally, true, for they may all contain truth, but equally historical in the sense in which every historical expert uses that word.

And again—

At the very least I appeal to the clergy of the national church not to assert the very opposite of critical truth, not to treat Genesis as a collection of immensely ancient family records, when it is nothing of the kind; not to tell people of the prophet Isaiah predicting this or that event, or announcing this or that Christian doctrine in far off ages, when he did nothing of the kind.

Here we find a fair and candid expression of modern Christian thought with regard to the inspiration and revelation of the Bible. The Bishop speaks of a "developing revelation." Just so. Developing according to the capacity of the individual to receive and understand, without which there can be no true revelation. Every word of the divines, and much more could be quoted, justifies and verifies the position taken up by Spiritualism from the very first. It speaks volumes for the intelligence and sagacity of the controlling spirits. The intrinsic merits of a progressive revelation is that there can be no fixity, no finality, to the developing knowledge (revelation) of beings who are destined to continue progress.

Viewing Spiritualism from this standpoint, we discover the practicability and usefulness of its mission. Spiritualism becomes a Nazareth, out of which has arisen a modern redeemer. A redeemer who breathes the life of the living present, yet marching on with confidence to the near future. A redeemer with the world for his country, the doing of good for his religion, and the facts of every-day life for his revelation. He belongs to the deep pulsating present. He dwells in our towns; walks in our streets—nay, is found in our own homes. He is touched with "our infirmities," he lives our sorrow, and partakes of our poverty. Our children climb his knee; they plead for a new earth and heaven at his hands. Christianity lost the true Christ in the midst of wealth, of power, of tithes, and luxury. The new Christ is within. Spiritualism has found him—found him in poverty and want, and given him back to the people. A Prometheus unbound he marches on; for the future belongs to Labour. The churches are fast recognising this fact. From the theological slumbers they are awakening. But they will find—

"Too late, too late, will be the cry,
The labour Christ has passed them by."

We find the spiritual gospel of personal responsibility, and of "personal atonement," is being firmly gripped by the modern political thought. Truly, the spirits have not spoken in vain. Joseph Chamberlain, writing to the aged toilers, says:—

Taking then the facts as we find them, we see that under present conditions one half, at least, of the working class are condemned to end their days as paupers, and of these a large proportion, at any rate, are not strictly accountable for the fate which is in store for them. Mr. John Morley speaks of "the hardships of the host of manual toilers who do so much for the service of the world, and who, as yet, have so scanty a share of the world's heritage."

What a confession! What a condemnation of the present systems! "So scanty a share of the world's heritage," for they who by their industry create all the world's wealth. But the sweater has had his day. The politico commercialism of the present is beginning to realise its true position. Personal responsibility has not been taught in vain. And the most glorious sign of the times is this: That the industrial class is fast recognising the fact that sacrifice must be personal, responsibility must be mutual, before the day of social salvation will ever dawn.

Keir Hardie, M.P., an apostle of the new democracy, seems to have firmly mastered this idea. Writing in the *Labour Prophet*, he says:—

The unseen forces which make for progress, act, it is true, with or without our co-operation, but they act all the more effectually and speedily when we put ourselves into harmony with them, and become, as it were, the channel or media through which they communicate themselves to our fellows.

How significantly true are the words. How well do they represent Spiritualism in relation to modern thought. Yes, "the unseen forces" of the angel world are steadily working "with or without our co-operation," to concentrate the thought of the times on the world's sorrows; to strengthen the hands of all true reformers; to purify and ennoble religion; and to ameliorate the sad and weary lot of manual toilers "who have, as yet, so scanty a share of the world's heritage," of the world's blessings. JAMES SWINDLEHURST.

ON THE PEDESTAL OF PIETY.

BY PETER LEE.

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."
"If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

AMID all the professions of godliness, or unworldliness; of unselfishness, of piety, of virtue; if we candidly express the ideas derived through the senses from careful observations, we shall be bound to declare that there is a general tendency, among all classes of men, to possess themselves of as much of this world's goods as will enable them to gratify every sensuous desire; eating, drinking, seeing, and, in fact, enjoying all that may be prompted by the instincts of a luxurious or voluptuous nature. Hence the estimation which mankind in general sets upon wealth, and the influence which it can be made to exert in a selfish direction. It has been said by one, who is accepted by many as a competent authority, "Money is the root of all evil;" and its antithesis says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," with the added promise, that all we require as material necessities shall be supplied to us. Here we have an implied condemnation of wealth, because it is associated with evil, and an implied act of piety, because a renunciation of worldly care is *a priori* associated with the righteousness of God. According to these conditions we have the sphere of evil, and the sphere of good set before us, and we may elect to live according to the circumstances of either the one or the other. In other words, we have the choice, so to speak, of two worlds, in either of which we may live—the world of natural selfish gratification, or the world in which selfishness is supposed not to prevail. Now, if we could by an effort of the will dissociate ourselves from both these worlds, we should doubtless discover that they existed only in name; and that there was really only one world, in which good and evil exist, and that both are one; manifestations of an evolutionary principle, whose natural tendency is from evil to good through the schoolhouse of suffering and experience. But in point of fact, we have two great general and distinct classes of mankind, one which makes no profession of goodness in particular, and another which makes it its business to bewail evil in whatever form it may be found; and yet it requires not a microscopical eye to discover that these people adopt the name of good in a pharisaical sense, while they are themselves often found to be inconsistent with the professions of piety which they proclaim. The explanation of this hypocrisy is no doubt to be found in the realm of causes. Men's actions are, generally speaking, the results of natural impulses, and by this is to be understood the motives or promptings of their own sensuous nature on the mind, even when the dictates of precept are acting as a mental force in an opposite direction. Our judgments, therefore, of men must be according to evidence, whether that evidence be actions performed, or what *must be* according to natural principles and laws which tend in the same direction throughout the realm of sensuous existence. For instance, we know that sexual crime has its inception in a principle of Nature, whose impulses proceed as much from what is involuntary as what is voluntary; in other words, this class of criminality may be ascribed in many cases to an overpowering impulse on the plane of Nature, which the moral force of the individual is not strong enough to overcome. To rightly understand why one man obeys the moral and the spiritual law, and why another man breaks them, it is necessary to inquire how far each have a natural tendency in either direction, or which had been implanted consciously or unconsciously by the force of association. No one who has carefully studied the law of heredity will deny that physical, as well as mental characteristics, are transmitted from parent to child from one generation to another; the

great grandchild repeating some of the physical and mental peculiarities of the great grandparent in its own nature.

Here then we stand as between the ethical, which deals with ideal perfection on the side of human morality, and the natural tendency to immorality in one way or another, according to our peculiarities, which a law, or laws, of Nature has given to us. If this be admitted we see very clearly that he who is born with virtuous tendencies is no more entitled to the merit of virtue than the man born with a tendency to vice should receive social condemnation; the merit in either case could only spring from an aspiration and a real effort to rise higher in the plane of social, moral, and intellectual development. But in a world of sense its inhabitants seldom care to go beyond its phenomenal aspects, and knowing but little of the causes which underlie them, the actions of men are determined by the laws of men, instead of by the laws of Nature. Hence men's actions are divided into the good and the bad, and two great classes of mankind have been originated, good and bad, the good assuming a sort of superiority in either minor or major matters, and as a consequence, all else to them is inferior.

It is curious to notice what shallow pretences are made for men ranking in good—pious—society for assuming that they are entitled to more of God's favour than those who don't do as they do, or do something which they think they ought not to do. One man prays night and morning, and he suspects another who says he doesn't pray is not as good as he. Another worships, in his view, in church or chapel every Sunday, and he regards with a suspicious eye the man who betakes himself to the fields and worships God in Nature. These self-righteous men are heard at street corners denouncing vice in every form; they assume a pious look, and speak in sonorous tones. They decry the man who drinks moderately, and they smoke like a mill chimney. They cheat in business, and bewail the wickedness of the honest man who swears. The pious money-bag rails against pride, and thinks it beneath his dignity to sit in the same pew as the mill girl. His heart yearns to save the soul of a Hottentot, and he gives a sovereign to a missionary society, when he would refer a poor neighbour to the workhouse, with such spiritual and other comfort as he would get there. He would persuade himself that he had done a religious duty in voting for a fit and proper person to go to Parliament and make laws under which the poor and destitute might be prevented from offending his fastidious eyes. A man like this regards a man as a rogue who gets a good profit on a business transaction, while he boasts of being honest if he keeps to his bargain when disposing of some shares of his own in a concern that he knows to be rotten. Aye, these good people mount the pedestal of piety; they look down with the eye of scorn on the wicked world beneath them; they prate and they pray, and the ignorance of their dupes gives them credit for sincerity, but when taken down and stripped of their pious mantle, deceit and inconsistency are often found beneath. It is this class of people who make religion a trade. Ambition seizes them; they lose their reason, conscience becomes deadened, and no petty meanness or chicanery is allowed to stand in the way of attaining the realisation of any position of honour which their vain minds crave after.

Imperfection is indelibly stamped on every child born into the world; a complex frame of mechanism is given into its charge by the hand of Nature at its birth, and it is destined to find its way as best it can from the beginning of life to the end in a world full of pathways of error and truth. Whether it enjoy superior advantages bodily and mental, whether in affluence or want, it matters not, ignorance is its earthly heritage, and the knowledge of truth must be acquired in Time's laboratory or the school of experience. The realities of life must be faced, and by one only way, that of consistency in the pathway of right. Craft and cunning may serve for a while, but sooner or later time and circumstances will tear away the mask, when the reflex of ourselves in the mirror or conscience will show our own falseness, whether we are successful in hiding it from others or not. It is not enough that we enjoy the applause of others, that may be easily obtained; but the satisfaction of a good conscience can only be obtained by our secret efforts to succeed in realising such standards of goodness as mankind has set up, or such ideals of goodness as our own minds have conceived. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" is a wise admonition to all who imagine they have attained the altitude of perfection. "When I would do good evil is present with me," said St. Paul, and that is the experience of every soul in search of God.

The never-ending pathway of human progression, which Spiritualism has opened up beyond the grave, the laws of suffering and compensation, of restitution and atonement, which prevail in that real state of existence in the spirit world, should teach us lessons of humility and charity, and to trample underfoot all pious assumption, for perfection can only come by failure in this or any other world. If we have been endowed by Nature with a will strong enough to resist evil we are fortunate, to say the least of it; but that only becomes the greater reason why we should pity and help those who are deficient in that respect. It may be our privilege, it may be our pleasure, it may even become our duty to counsel, advise and instruct those who have received fewer of Nature's spiritual blessings than we, or who have yet to pass through those purifying fires of bitter experience with which we have been personally familiar, but we must avoid the presumption of parading perfection.

We have too much of cant, too little of sincerity; we have too much presumption, too little modesty, too much desire for the applause of others, too little self respect, too little knowledge and too much pride, too much self-conceit and too little regard for the feelings of others, too sure of our own goodness, too doubtful of our neighbour's, too greedy, and so ignorant of the blessings that are derived from mutual sympathy and unselfishness that we have not yet learned to live.

Planted like seeds in the darkness of earth,
Springing like trees at the time of our birth,
Tossed by the tempests in childhood's dark night,
Ever we crave for the dawn of light.
Light in our morning at length hath come,
Our pathway adorning and leading us home
By ways that are rugged and drear.

Up the hill sides by the precipice deep,
Now through the jungle where serpents creep
Here and there through a zigzag way,
Upward and onward day by day
The end of our journey draws near.

The top of the hill is reached at last,
O'er the valley below our eyes are cast,
The ways that we knew not, now we know,
The perilous ways from the plain below
To the top of the mountain of life.

In this region of light the soul expands,
And yearning with sympathy there it stands;
It sends down its voice to warn Earth's child
Of the quagmires, ravines, and deserts wild,
And the pathways of error and strife.

Only those who have passed through the varied experiences of a soul struggling along the way of life back to the Divine source from which it came can know the realities of experience. These, and these alone know how to sympathise with, to pity and help back into the paths of virtue and goodness, all who have stumbled and fallen in the way that leads from a life of sensuous darkness into the light of true spiritual intelligence; where pride of wealth, pride of learning, pride of family distinction, pride of natural gifts, fade away, and each stands in the same relationship one to the other, where the Divine Father of all is proved to be no respecter of persons, but where it is known that none shall reap where they have not sown, where suffering is proportioned to the broken law, and where happiness or misery exist accordingly as we obey or disregard the laws of eternal justice which Omniscient Wisdom has written on the tablets of every human heart.

AFTER DEATH individuality is preserved intact. You are the same person exactly, with precisely the same characteristics and the same disposition—the passing from the body makes no change whatever in this respect. This is a solemn thought, because here the body is often a mask concealing the real person. There is often a smile on the face when there is no good-will in the heart; persons often shake hands with one another, when they really have no friendly feeling. But there we appear exactly as we are; in this sense it is strictly true that "as the tree falls so it lies." Here, as you know, people try to hide their real character and disposition under a certain profession or pretension, and nowhere is this more common than amongst members of Christian churches; thousands of ignorant, bigoted, selfish Christians imagine that on leaving the body they are going to be transformed into something like angels; but there is no sudden metamorphosis of that kind—the angelic state is attained only by personal growth and spiritual unfoldment. Nay, whatever they may profess or pretend, they will on leaving the body find themselves exactly what they are. Concerning this I have but one word to say, viz., let us take care that we do not follow their example?—Rev. C. Ware.

THE TWO WORLDS.

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IMMORTALITY.

"Great hopes are for great souls."

"Man gains his first and deepest truths by intuition; his secondary and local knowledge by reason." "Shall matter and force be eternal, and the spirit of man, who alone has discovered this deathless substance and power, go down into the tongueless silence of the dreamless dust? Must worlds be eternal in their substance and power, and the mind, which can measure and analyse them, go out in darkness?"

THE idea of immortality was born in the human heart; it is the intuitive affirmation of the human spirit, and is confirmed by the ministry of the departed. Death is gloomy, forbidding, and terrible only when we regard it as the last thing—the end of consciousness—the destruction of life. It is a beautiful thing to pass away like Tennyson, quietly and gladly, at a ripe old age, ready for the change in response to the summons of the angels to "come up higher." Science assures us that matter and force are eternal and indestructible, they change their forms and modes of manifestation, but are not annihilated. Why then should we dream it possible that the understanding mind, which interprets the phenomena of matter and gives direction to force and is itself the master force of Nature, should cease to exist? The spirit listens to the universal anthem of life, and rejoices in its beauty. Why then should we be misled by appearances, and regard death as a destroyer who sweeps into oblivion the conscious being?

We know more of spirit than we know of matter and force, for is not knowledge of Nature but "a state of consciousness" in the percipient? We recognise force by its manifestations. What electricity and ether are *per se* we do not know. We know *spirit* by its manifestations, and are certain of self-existence, conscious of our own ability to think and perform, and are able to recognise the displays of intelligence, of purpose, and of love by other spirits.

Materialism is discredited to-day as a philosophic interpretation of the facts of existence, because it does not cover the ground of, or explain, the phenomena of consciousness. It fails to bridge the chasm between molecular activity and sensation; between physical conditions and psychical phenomena.

Mind is the interpreter of Nature. The eye which observes, the ear which vibrates, the hand which labours—indeed, the whole of the senses depend upon *the thinker* behind them. Culture and excellence are due to the activity of the directing intelligence which comprehends and utilises knowledge and power.

It is the spirit-man who sees, hears, and understands. All the senses are resolvable into the one grand fact of "perception." It is by the "image-making" faculty (imagination) that we rise above the "appearance" and sense the soul of beauty behind or within. Science is but the cultured eye of the soul gaining the ability to measure and catch the meaning of the eternal principles of the universe; to re-think the thoughts of the supreme intelligence. The material universe disappears as the mind, by intuition, breathes the air of the realm of thought, and comes into touch with the ever present informing life, and grows into conscious unison with the divine soul of things.

Spiritualism affirms the deific centre and immanent life. Phenomena are illusions, appearances are misleading until they are recognised as the drapery of fact, the symbols of Truth, the imperfect presentations of principle. Thus the phenomena, so often despised, of table moving, rapping, trances, and the various phases of mediumship, in and of themselves contribute little to our knowledge, but when we recognise that they are results of the operations of force directed by intelligence, that they are the humble means employed to body forth to a materialistic world the grand

revelation that behind these ignoble appearances are hosts of intelligent men and women, who seek by these phenomenal activities and manifestations to attract attention and demonstrate their presence, then we shall re-think the thoughts of the spirits, become aware of their purposes, and recognise the beauty and meaning of what otherwise would appear to be foolish and undignified.

We look upon Nature in her beauty, and, as the soul responds to the spirit of grace, we delight in her glory. We see *more* than is apparent to the casual beholder. We look upon the form and features of our beloved, and they are beautiful to us. We idealise our darlings, and clothe them in the robes of perfection. Love ennobles, and faith adorns. Aye, and we are not cheating ourselves. The spirit sees beneath the mould of matter, looks within and recognises inherent divinity, and affirms the higher graces and virtues of the *real* humanity.

"The hope of immortality like a great sea ebbs and flows upon the sands and rocks of time and fate beneath the clouds of doubt and darkness, and will continue to ebb and flow so long as the lips of love shall kiss the lips of death." So says the eloquent Ingersoll, paying tribute to the natural intuitive affirmation of the human heart. But still the old questions rise to the lips from the full heart, overcharged with sorrow and grief at its bereavement—If a man die, *shall* he live again? Where are the dead? No satisfactory response to these appeals for "Light, more light" can be made *apart* from some form of spirit manifestation. The so-called dead answer for themselves. They work the spiritual telegraph, they "rap" out their messages, they transfer their thoughts to sensitive subjects, they speak to the inner hearing, or present themselves to the gaze of the seers of the age. In various and manifold ways they report themselves to us in this valley of time, and give us sensible and sensuous proofs of their undying identity, the continuity of their affection, and their abiding interest in their loved ones left behind.

Immortality is the birthright of the race. The spirit-world is a fact in Nature. Man's being demands satisfaction and perfect expression. The future life is a necessity. Satisfaction and perfection are denied to the spirit *this* side the grave, hence, unless life is a failure, hope a mockery, progress a snare, and aspiration an idle dream, a sequential life is indispensable. *Death is a tragedy or a transition.* Spiritualism demonstrates that thought, feeling, memory, power, love, and worth survive, and man *goes on* unchanged by the fact of death, but, under his new environment, more happily circumstanced to realise his ideals, to outgrow the limitations consequent upon his ignorance, folly, and wrong-doing, and attain the heights of atone-ment with the Supreme Spirit, and in conscious co-operation delight in the exercise and expression of divine Wisdom, Power, and Love.

E. W. WALLIS.

A VISION.

It was night. The sable drapery of heaven was drawn around. Winter's winds were whistling their loud notes in the chimney. Nature was trying her best to make matters generally uncomfortable for man and beast, and whilst I was cosy, comfortable, and contented in my easy chair by the fireside, listening to the storm's wild cry, I do not know whether the warm fire or the sounds within and without acted as a charm upon my spirits to soothe them into slumber, but certainly all things about me seemed to wear a new appearance and fade away into a thin mist, and my senses were gradually overpowered by a somnambule influence. How long I slept I do not know, but when I again became conscious of my surroundings the fire had burned low, and the wild whistle of the wind had faded away into an occasional muffled sound of disappointment. Have you ever noticed how when a winter's storm has spent its strength, and before peace is fully made with the elements, the wind has again and again striven to impress you with its offended dignity by rushing at your house and making a long, low, moaning sound like a man whose breath is spent in a fierce physical struggle, and has no power of utterance beyond a long sigh and moan? Well, so it was. I heard the sounds and listened until my flesh seemed to creep on my bones, and I grew nervously miserable. The moaning wind was too human in its agony; I felt as if hundreds of beings were around me in the last throes of life, that death had gained the mastery over Nature, and had brought all his victims to my homestead that I might be harrowed by their final efforts to live. My former contentment was gone,

and dire misery had fallen upon me. I tried to shake myself loose from these terrible feelings, but I could not. The wind moaned and sobbed, and I grew more and more restless, until my senses appeared to be leaving me altogether, when, as if something had broken in my head, I was free.

Once more the furniture of my room had faded, the walls also had disappeared, and in their place, but of wider extent, was a country scene. The moon was breaking from behind a bank of black scudding clouds, shedding a faint light around, and giving to everything a strange and grotesque appearance. From the place where I stood I could dimly discern the landscape, and over all things was stretched the drapery of innocence and death. Snow had fallen, and the wind whistled and shrieked, moaned and sobbed, and strove to make everybody and everything as cold and bleak as itself. The trees, in the dim light, impressed one with strange feelings. Their arms were outstretched in pleading attitudes as if desirous that the burden of death with which they were loaded should be removed. His chilly grip was too firm for their freedom, and with earnest look they pleaded for liberty that they might toss and play again in the Elysian fields of summer. The church, the farmsteads, the hall, and the scattered cottages presented gruesome figures. I surveyed the scene in wonder, and was astonished to find the churchyard illuminated, and on approaching thereto was astounded to discover it was filled by a large multitude. It was a never to be forgotten sight. From new-born babes to grey haired helplessness, all were there, the innocent and the lewd, the vicious and the forgiving, the frivolous and gay, the sensual and sober—in fact, all sorts and conditions of men and women. I saw the man who was once the vicar of the church, the same look, dress, and habit. He was anxious for his congregation that their souls should be saved. Studiously he poured over his Bible and prayer book. To him the thirty-nine articles had been the bread of life, and were so yet, for even now he began holding forth to the people, and urging them to be in readiness for the coming of the Lord. "For though the worms eat their body yet in their flesh should they see God." That body wherewith they had been clothed should again be worn, but that which was now corrupt should put on incorruption. Thus he pleaded, and with ignorant trustfulness the people believed him and lay down upon and about their graves.

I went closer and obtained a clearer view of the crowd. Close to the wall was a tall woman. She seemed to be wasted away to skin and bone; she tried to speak but only whispered. By her appearance she would readily be taken for an elderly lady of some sixty years or more. Beside her sat another poor old woman, feeble, wan, and grey. The general appearance of the two would lead one to think they were sisters; but no, on inquiry I found they were mother and daughter. Age had captured one, consumption the other. I went over the graveyard wall, and though I was conscious they could not be other than spirits I did not feel timorous, simply because I had seen ghostly beings before, though never such a crowd as the one amongst which I was moving. Near the entrance of the yard a number of aged parishioners had assembled. They were telling the tales of other years. Once again they lived the battle of life. Again youth, manhood, and age stream before them, with all their passions, griefs, follies, disappointments, bitternesses, and here and there luminous gleams of the light of true life. Passing beyond them I saw a fair young lady of about twenty-one years. She was slim, erect, of medium height, and neatly formed, head well balanced, hair dark brown, forehead full, round, and high, eyes blue with long dark eyelashes. But oh! those eyes, so full of love, tenderness, sunshine and tears, trustfulness, honesty, and without guile. Her cheeks were full, face oval, chin round, and slightly prominent. Mouth small with soft, tender, strong lips, nose straight with gracefully formed nostrils, indicating a subdued strength of character that needed trouble and difficulties to bring it into full play.

Again, oh those eyes! such eyes rarely ever seen, they speak of such depths of tenderness and force. I soon learned her story. The heart had played its own part in her history, but that history was short, and she had found her way into the world of spirit, and the same qualities that were active in the body were clearly visible in spirit. Amongst the vast crowd round about her she moved with kindly look and tender voice. She soothed the sorrows of hundreds, and, though trusting in the faith of her fathers,

she yet had deeper trust in practical work for others. By her tenderness many sorrowful spirits had begun to look with greater cheerfulness upon their surroundings, and acquired a spirit of hopefulness that made them comparatively happy. Thus through her labours many were enabled to break away from their past, and wander from the narrow limits of the graveyard, never to return, finding new influences and fresh surroundings, creating new thoughts and fresh ideas, by which means their spiritual redemption was secured, and they were thus enabled to help others from going to or remaining in the graveyard.

Whilst wandering among the people, I saw a number of persons of dignified appearance moving amid the crowd. I made my way to one and inquired of him about the life of the mass of people there congregated, and how it was that they thus clung to their graves, and by what means, if any, they could be persuaded to leave those uncomfortable surroundings. I was informed that their belief in the theological teachings they had received during their earth life had the effect upon them of causing them to haunt the spot, because they expected the grave would yield its prey on the resurrection morning, and they would be ready to take on the reconstructed physical body, but as there seemed to be no likelihood of this expectation being realised they became restless after long years of waiting, and with anxious hearts would go to the various preachers who were to be seen, but as those teachers could offer no better information than the one I had already heard delivering himself, they became disconsolate and dejected. Their sad and hopeless condition made them always the readier to listen to anything that might tend to help them out of their miserable state, and then the persons whom I had noticed applied themselves to point out to the desponding ones the way to the homes beyond in the happier realms of spirit existence, and thus the crowds were constantly being thinned, but while some were going, others were coming, and thus a large multitude were always present. I was deeply interested, and inquired by what means they became freed from the past. I was told that it was only by the mind recognising the falsity of past doctrine, and entering into active self-possession; by outgrowing old prejudices and narrow intolerant ideas; by repenting of past follies and recognising the true links of humanity; by labours of love for the benefit of others, and by the development of mind and spirit in every direction. I thanked my informant, and turned around to survey the strange scene once more, when, lo! it had disappeared, and I found myself in my armchair, with home and all its comforts around me. My readers must judge as to the meaning and merits of this story of a vision.

JAMES B. TETLOW.

A VOICE FROM THE SPIRIT WORLD.

[A dear friend in spirit life desires to record through me some of his experiences.—M. H. WALLIS.]

In the year 1871, I was standing on the high road of life with my face turned to descend—aye, in danger of going down to the depths, reckless, almost despairing, ready to deny God. What of good had he shown to me? was my question then. I can answer it now. Feeling life was scarce worth living, what did it matter? It would soon be over.

I should like to tell you what changed my thoughts, the course of my life; it seemed, my whole nature.

I was not homeless, or friendless, I had children, and—a wife. Ah, that was it—a wife and no wife. For my home's sake, for my children's sake, for my own I had had to put her from me. I loved her and love her still, but there was no hope of change, and the only course was to restrain her from further ill, but it was like tearing out a part of myself; even now the pang is keen, *what* it was *then* words fail me to describe.

One evening I had been taking a long walk after the wharf closed, and, as I then thought, had unfortunately left my "pouch" at home—I was an inveterate smoker—so turned into a little shop in a narrow street to obtain a small quantity of tobacco, though I was doubtful of the quality. The woman who served me gave it me wrapped in a piece of yellowish paper. I little thought as I left the shop that I held in my hand what would constitute the turning point of my life. Upon what slight hinges do great events turn! After using the tobacco I was about to throw the screw of paper away, when a word caught my eye, "Spiritualism!" Why, what was that? Looking closer I read on the fragment an announcement of a meeting to be held on Sunday. I was just in the mood for something fresh. I did not know

when or where the paper was printed, a portion of which I had inadvertently become possessed of. It might be years old. I felt I *must* ascertain if the meetings were still being held. Visiting the hall at the address given, I found a company of intellectual looking people assembled, and became so much interested in what I heard that Sunday after Sunday found me wending my way to the meetings, determined to discover the real facts, and if I discovered that Spiritualism was false, to "show it up." But if it were true? Well, I would satisfy myself. I attended the séances wherever there was opportunity, and one by one my questions were answered and my doubts removed. Before the year was out I was invited to attend a home circle held by some friends, where I made the acquaintance of a Miss E——, a young medium, who was frequently controlled by friends of the sitters. Her mediumship interested me deeply; she was but a little older than my own eldest daughter, and soon became almost like one of my own children. Though she did not know them, through her mediumship there came to me my father, a dearly loved brother and sister, and most welcome of all, my darling little son, who, only a few months before had gone from me, as I then thought, into that voiceless silence of eternity. Oh, what a weight of woe and gloom fell from me when I realised that he was in very truth speaking to me through the medium's lips. So *real* and actual did his presence become to me at last, that I almost lost sight of the fact that he was only manifesting that presence to me through a third party.

At first, when a fresh control came and turned to and addressed me I anxiously put questions, the answers to which I thought would establish the identity of the spirit seeking to communicate, but these to my surprise were often met with "I don't know," or "I forget," or perhaps the influence would be withdrawn and the medium would regain her normal condition and consciousness, leaving me with a chill sense of disappointment and fear lest it was trickery—a mere attempt to cheat me with false statements—for surely my friends would know their names, businesses, when and where they died, and other details of their past earth-lives!

On questioning one who claimed to be a spirit controlling Miss E——, she said, "You do not understand how difficult it is to control my medium; she is conscious of what you say, and what we say or do, and is intensely afraid lest something wrong or untrue shall be given, therefore when questions are asked about identity her fears are aroused, she becomes nervous and disturbed, and a barrier is thus presented which shuts off or deadens the influence, or the power of the one who would use her as an instrument to speak with you. Besides this, the mere fact of coming back into the earth-sphere often affects the returning spirit with a dazed sensation. When they are away in their spirit-home they know all about themselves, but to transmit that knowledge through a different person is often, under certain circumstances well nigh impossible." "What shall I do then?" I questioned. "How can I obtain proof that those I love are here?" "Have patience," she would answer; "all in good time my friend, try and welcome those who come to you, talk to them in a friendly fashion, and you will the more readily receive the evidences you desire. Would you ask an earthly friend 'where he was born?' or 'who was his mother?' directly he came to you? Your pleasure at knowing he had come would be first expressed if you loved him."

"But that is the difficulty with me, my friend," I replied. "I do not know. If I *was* sure, what a warm welcome they would receive." "They know," she answered simply, and it came to me with sudden force, if these are my friends how much must my doubts wound them. I determined to follow the advice I had received, and soon found when friendly relations were established, and no tests were asked for, that they came in abundance. Names, references to people I and they knew, and to old-time incidents only known to myself of all men living, and the one who was speaking to me from the spirit side of life. Knowledge was manifested of my life, past and present; all this and much more, piece by piece was given me through Miss E—— and other mediums until the proof was overwhelming, and I was convinced of the reality of spirit return. After some little time I too became mediumistic, and frequently received impressions from one who I was informed was my "guide." He was almost constantly with me, his presence gave me strength to resist temptation and grow, thank God, a better man. He it was who helped me to break my 25 years' slavery to tobacco, and to abstain from "the glass" in which I used to hope to drown my cares. And after a while my little lad, "my

Arthur," came to me in palpable form and with gentle hands caressed me. I could feel his soft lips pressed against mine, his dear form resting in my arms, as it had rested many a time before he left me, when he grew "so tired" and fell asleep in the arms of death. Oh, what unspeakable joy it was to me to know that he was awake, full of life and love for his dear old dad.

(To be continued.)

THE SPIRIT-WORLD.

BY RICHARD PHILLIPS.

IN the whole history of the world there never was such an intermingling of nations and races as at the present time. In a little Australian town, 11,246 miles away, I have seen natives of almost every country in Europe, from Russian Finns to Greeks, and almost every region in Asia, from Syrians to South Sea Islanders. But there is another intermingling of nations and tongues, and kindreds and peoples, the existence of which the majority of men hardly suspect—the intermingling of the spirit-world with the world of flesh and blood.

It was once thought that the spirit-world lay far away in the deeps of space, separated by almost infinite distances from "this dim spot which mortals call the earth." We have found that however far it may extend outwards, it *begins here*—on this earth, amongst ourselves; that it is in our midst, and all around us, an ever present actuality. And this fact, backed up as it is by abundant proof, is beginning to force itself upon the thinking world with a steadiness and pertinacity which it will not much longer be able to resist.

It was also long thought that not only was there a great gulf fixed between good spirits and bad, but that a chasm, almost equally deep and wide, divided both these from the world of flesh and blood humanity. This was held to be a divine arrangement, and the few exceptions allowed only seemed to emphasise and confirm the rule of their eternal separateness. Not only were we taught *not* to complain of this, we were also bidden to admire the wisdom and justice of the arrangement, the necessity of which seemed to lie in the nature of things. But, wonderful to relate, no such arrangement exists at all, or ever did exist. Lazarus may leave Abraham's bosom and visit Dives, if he wishes, and carry him something more than a drop of water on the tip of his finger; and Dives may join Lazarus in Abraham's bosom—when he becomes fit and is invited, and hears the welcome invitation "*Come up higher*," and both may visit us, if they like, the one to confess and lament his folly, and the other to acquaint us with the happy change in his fortunes.

This revelation has fallen like a thunderbolt upon the religious world—and no marvel. It was a great surprise to the spirit-world itself; for the units that compose this passed over into it with the same misconceptions in regard to it that they entertained here. A feeling of something akin to consternation prevails in some quarters. The doctrinaires have been going on for nearly 2,000 years writing books, drawing up creeds and confessions of faith, and elaborating systems of theology—all on the basis of the aforesaid gulfs and chasms existing; and if they do not exist, what is to become of their books and creeds and systems, and, more important question still, what is to become of themselves?

That both good and bad spirits return, and are able to acquaint us with their condition, is one of the things most surely believed amongst us; with most of us it is a matter of absolute knowledge. Modern Spiritualism is now about fifty years old, and during the last half century there have been hundreds of thousands of well-attested cases of spirit return. Those who want further proof of the simple fact can hardly understand what proof means. The reason why men do not receive the truth is, that they will not take the trouble to look over the evidence, or experiment for themselves.

We know that the spirit-world exists and has access to us, because we have seen and heard and conversed with hundreds of thousands of its inhabitants; but what proof have we, it may be asked, that Lazarus may visit Dives, or Dives ever hope to join Lazarus? *The united testimony of all spirits.*

What all men, everywhere, and at all times, affirm to be true—when this is a matter that comes under their own observation, and is one they are competent to judge of—that we may accept without hesitation; and anything of this character that all spirits are agreed upon we may regard as equally certain.

The spirit-world is divided from us by a fine curtain—a veil so thin that some people can see through it. We stand even now upon the very threshold of it, and don't need to go anywhere to get into it. *Locally*, we are already in it, and if our eyes were opened we should, without stirring an inch, find ourselves visibly in it.

Our visitors from the other world have broken the seal of silence which death laid for awhile upon their lips. The information they have given us of their state has wholly changed our ideas concerning death, and revolutionised our conceptions of the unseen world. This change in our attitude towards these problems has brought us into contact with the recognised exponents of what are called the Divine mysteries. But can you wonder that we prefer the testimony of eye-witnesses and experts in these matters, which we consider disembodied spirits to be, to that of tradition and hearsay?

The thought of an ever present all-encompassing world of spirits is not a pleasant one to some. Those whose lives will not bear even human scrutiny, may think that the presence of invisible witnesses is an unfair intrusion upon their secrecy. But on the other hand, those who wish to follow the fortunes of their departed, and to hold communication and communion with the wiser dead, will hail the fact of its possibility with delight. To the pure in heart the thought that they are constantly visited by bright and kindly intelligences will be a source of strength and inspiration. It will lessen the loneliness of life, and supply them with one of the most powerful motives to well-doing.

At first, however, even to those who may have nothing to fear, the thought of spirit-presence may bring a distinct feeling of uneasiness, and even of terror. But why it should, seems difficult to say. Even some mature Spiritualists have not yet been able to shake off what they have yet rightly come to regard as an unreasonable dread in regard to

the return of the departed. They know and feel that it is ridiculous, but they cannot help it. Like the feeling of bashfulness or nervousness, you may blame yourself for it and be unable to justify it; still, the thing remains. I believe this almost instinctive feeling arises from a very natural, but not very justifiable, association of ideas. The very thought of a spirit conjures up before us visions of corpses, and shrouds, and coffins, and graves, and all the ghastly phenomena of death and burial. We think too much of our dead as we last saw them, which is a mistake. It is not fair to them. They have done with death and dying. There is no gloom of the grave about them, nor any taint of death in their garments. Death has made no ghastly change in their forms, nor have they developed anything devilish in their disposition that we should fear them.

There is an intense and pathetic desire on the part of the spirit world to reveal itself. It wishes to break down the barriers, and bridge over the gulf of ignorance and prejudice which at present separates us, but it cannot do this without our desire and co-operation. We must meet it half way.

It is not likely that the curtain which divides the spirit world from our own will be entirely removed. "The covering that is cast over all peoples, and the veil that is spread over all nations," must remain, as their complete withdrawal would only produce a paralysing confusion in human affairs. But that the larger portion of the human race should live and die in almost entire ignorance of that other world which is so closely associated with their own, is nothing less than a great misfortune, and the responsibility for its continuance now rests clearly with ourselves, inasmuch as we have now been furnished with the means for its removal.

A PERFECT DAY.

Delivered in Chicago, Ill., by the guides of Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond.

OUT of a heaven of perfect calm, whose undisturbed and divine atmosphere was girded round with the light of angels, in whose presence and abiding light was the Infinite Love, pulsating without vibration through all the wondrous spaces, God said, We will make unto the earth a perfect day.

All night the stars had hung quivering like pearl-drops in all the azure sky, tremulously giving forth their melody of light. There was naught to disturb the serene and perfect beauty, as no cloud, save, it might be a transparent veil of silvery light, that for a moment eclipsed the wonderful beauty of the starlit sky only to reveal it more perfectly. There was no darkness; there was such a palpable glory that even the night was wonderful; and as if passing from glory to glory there was no shadow preceding the day.

The earth hung most beautiful and fair like a sleeping flower upon the breast of night. Along the sky, when the earth turned that way, the first streak of day revealed a peacefulness as of paradise; no sound, no sob of sorrow, nothing but the rest that had given to the blossoms their sweet fragrance, and touched the leaves with diviner glory; nothing was heard save the piping and warbling of the birds, like a prelude that precedes a wonderful symphony.

Along the eastern sky there was preparation for wonderful glory; the marshalling of hosts of light; soft-winged clouds appeared clustering around the east as if to enshrine and enthrone the morning star, that glistened as a herald to the day. The clouds hung around like accompanying angels, and awaited a little way off for the greater glory to appear.

Then rays of light shot up one after another, like wondrous flames pointing to the zenith, iridescent at first, then clear crimson and golden; then the full mellow songs burst forth from the groves that seemed to be alive and populous with the messengers of divine joy and love; and then at last, as the clouds rolled up in splendour, fold on fold, the wonderful golden glory of a perfect throne was fashioned, upon which suddenly, with bright and conquering joy, the sun mounted in triumph. The day had dawned.

Like wonderful relays of celestial hosts and battalions the clouds went marching and wheeling away from the sun, mighty hosts of peace and tranquillity.

Noiselessly, with many a wonderful and mighty import, the messengers of earth went forth. There were engines, glorious with strength and fleetness; they were of finest mechanism, so fine that not one jarring sound was heard; there were argosies on all the waters of the earth, laden with the fruitage and products of many climes. There were ships that, moving noiselessly by some unseen motor, were borne to different portions of the earth. There were air-ships, silently performing their flight without resistance, without vibration, not even having motion like winnowing wings, but steadily, calmly, sailing in the upper air. There were long, wonderful trains, noiselessly speeding through valleys and over hills; no snorting, shrieking of fiery horses, no smoke nor dust, but all was silent, peaceful, full of harmony.

Softly and full of sweetness the earth had prepared to receive the day. Thus, at first, the twilight opened. There was the song of the morning breeze, not only from hills and valleys, those hills upon which clustering trees hung, and the pines made a wonderful background for the glory of the morning, but those valleys teeming with verdure, in which was the evidence of all the peaceful vocations of man; simple cottages and grand palaces, beautiful homes, places adorned with every loveliness.

Thus the earth and all these physical scenes were prepared to receive the wonderful power, the wonderful life that held dominion over them; even the birds attuned their songs to that other being who would awaken to listen when the full day appeared. Forth from many habitations issued the sound of music, like a morning anthem of praise. Then came the people, clothed in light and useful garments, and moving noiselessly, yet with wonderful grace, among the scenes that surrounded them.

Large warehouses, teeming with all that the many lands produced, yielded readily into the hand that sought whatever product had been stored away. Cities were dispersed. Only such convenient places of storage as were required gave unto the people the exchange which they sought for their commodities. There was no sound of barter, there was no crunching and clashing of wheels nor clattering of hoofs that beat upon the sensitive ears of those who required to rest.

There were no polluted places; no dust or darkness into which human lives had to creep to hide away from the starlight or from the glare of the sun's rays; all was clean swept and garnished. No weary feet wandered houseless and homeless along desolated streets, or where the midnight glare or glamour had lured them on to fall wearily by the wayside. All was hushed until the needs of the day required a quiet motion, activity but not confusion.

The daily wants and needs were simple and easily prepared. As soon as the morning repast was finished, into the fields and places of labour all emerged with songs upon their lips, carolling as birds, going freely with hands made strong by refreshing slumber to their fields of labour to perform that which needed to be done in the morning hours. But few hours were required for labour.

As the sun sped high up in the sky of golden glory there were sights denoting that there was a period of rest; there was a hush in the groves, the birds had sung their early songs, there was a peaceful hush, and man retired to the shelter of groves or gardens to rest also from his labour. Children gathered around in the coolness of the shade to receive their calm instruction and such teaching as comes from the parents' lips when there is leisure; all was given in love.

Toward evening there was another brief period of toil; after the labour there was rest and social converse; there were songs of praise during the evening for the beauty of that day.

O'er all the earth there was a reign of peace; there were no armaments of war, no bristling bayonets, no forts that shut out the light and the enemy's attacks at the same time, no ships of war with which to fight the enemies of the nations, for none were foes. Kings forgot their ambition, priests their rule, all were merged in one fraternity; nations did not oppress others, and none were doomed to toils, but all went freely to their vocations, and when their work was done all had homes, but there were no places of poverty, and none of regal splendour.

There was loving kindness and ministration one to the other, each seemed to forget his own thought or selfish wish in the thought of his neighbour. If there was a need each turned away from his own wishes to aid his fellow man. If there was want he turned away from his own dwelling to assist another. The helpfulness of each for another made the earth as a dream of that lovely time when God's love shall abide with men.

There were over all the lands that were arable waving fields. The products were so abundant that not one human being seemed to be destitute. There were none in rags and none in royal robes, but all attired in a manner befitting their labour and befitting their states of mind went forth in their tasks or ministrations unto others.

There were no places of learning, for learning seemed to flow from the lips of those inspired with the truth, whether in groves or chosen places, where they erected pavilions among the trees in which the inspired ones were appointed to teach the people and give them knowledge of the nature around, or sometimes in still more secluded places where the young were instructed for the few brief moments necessary for them to understand. There seemed to be no labour in climbing up the steps of learning.

There were no vassals chained to the ear of Mammon, but human beings seemed to be equal with one another, and freely passed to and fro from country to country, from place to place, without the obstructing statutes and without the kind of locomotion that abides upon the earth to-day. Thousands were rapidly passing over valleys and oceans. In a few moments one could go to the most remote lands, for all fairest and farthest lands were freighted with nations populous and full of peace.

Each individual was attending to such necessary duties as were required in the performance of physical tasks for existence, while the larger and diviner duty was toward the fulfilment of the highest aims in human life. Subjects and themes that come now only by giant labour, by the greatest toil, were borne in upon the minds like sweet dreams or songs of praise. The vast topics suggested by Nature seemed as easily understood as the simplest leaf or flower. There were no longer discontent and dissension among the schools, no longer need of a forced education, as information on the subjects of life and the methods of existence and all the laws of nature were clear and plain, and simply revealed, as it must be when the truth is realised and understood by man that God is spirit, and that spirit must be the monarch over all.

There were no children with weariness crying for bread in the street, and none who sought for knowledge with weary brows and bent forms, but everywhere were those of matchless countenance who were ready to give to the young the knowledge that they sought. Each question could be clearly answered. For everything that children wished to know there was a ready response. It seemed as though knowledge, like the growth of the form, was innate; that it came as the spontaneous outgrowth of the seeking spirit.

Then o'er all the broad lands beneath the heavens there was no storm, wind, or snow, or rain, but such sweet showers as were invited from the clouds. There were no destructive elements, but the soft-winged zephyrs distributed the drops that would refresh and cool the flowers whenever needed. No forked lightning, no crashing thunder, nothing save the music of winds and waves undisturbed, and of the spheres of worlds moving in solemn grandeur. Fair oceans in peaceful monody told of such life as seemed to be born of the buoyancy of the sea, the sound of waves made music on the shore, the waters bore their treasures without the deep sea tempest. No dark-winged storm hovered over town and over the verdure, destroying the products of the labour of man's hands; dwellings were not demolished.

There were no human battles, no tempests of the shedding of blood; nothing save the sweetness of peace like that soft stillness that comes upon the spirit in the consciousness of perfect rest.

There were no roses that had thorns, none, indeed, of those destroying and poisonous weeds that seem to desolate the earth. No noxious vapours rose from marshy pools, but the fragrance and freshness of the bloom of wonderful and rare flowers filled the air with praise for this perfect day.

The labours of the day ended, all people clothed themselves in restful raiment. All were peaceful because their labour was well done; and full of life and strength because there had been no exhausting nor degrading care. Clothed in the lightness of freedom born of the upper sky, all saw the glory of surrounding Nature, and gave praise unto the Infinite who had given all these blessings.

There came a more perfect wonder ; for out of all the hearts there flowed a song of peace that blended with the songs of birds and with the music of the waters until the whole was a perfect and divine symphony in which there was no sound of sorrow. Over the broad spaces appeared a vision that was a portion of this scene, one that was a customary occurrence ; beings appeared who had passed from earthly life into the spirit state, distinguished only in slight degree in their glory from the others who dwelt upon the earth. They mingled freely with those who were resident on earth, conversed with them, gave to them messages of love and wisdom—more perfectly seen in their more transcendent state—and taught them ever that souls were not divided by the simple changes called birth and death.

There was perfect communion ; the knowledge of spiritual things flowing freely to all in earth-life. Infant lips were made to speak ; young maidens were made to see. The presences that were not visible to the human eye were more palpable because perceived by the human heart, and understood by the human spirit. Both worlds mingled in the songs of evening praise, glad for the blessings of earth and of the spirit, glad for the abundant and Divine Baptism of love.

As the birds ceased their songs, as the great glory of the sun, round, and full, and clear, was again enthroned upon the attendant clouds, which beneath, round, above, encircled with glory the retiring monarch, people arrayed in the splendour of all their simplicity came forth from the abodes and dwellings, and in the sight of the Infinite Presence and the glory of the perfect day, praised God.

The hymn ; the blending of the voices ; the nearness of the world's visible and invisible ; the hearts that were joined in perfect praise and the loving accord that dwelt upon the earth, and filled all scenes with harmony ; the sympathy of endeavour made the duties in human life a perfect praise.

Sweet rest followed the labour. There was gentle and cheerful preparation for slumber ; the soft folded pinions of night brooded like a wonderful mother-bird above the earth, and as the messages of spirits and angels ceased, there was a gradual sinking to rest of those who had toiled and fulfilled their duties during the day without great care or pain or labour. The silence that had first brooded o'er the earth again was felt, and the gladness and the thrill that awakened the early morning came again in soft unfolding slumber, and the retiring hosts of spirits and angels waited just beside the gateway of mortal sleep, until with closed lids and restful forms the spirits of those dwelling on earth were set free by the angel of slumber, to dwell awhile in the inner realm ; and then in the rapture of that Divine Communion the sleeping passed the hours needed for the rest of the body, and awoke again unto the morning of a perfect day.

Such shall be earth's PERFECT DAY ; when in all the world there shall be borne into the hearts and lives of an uplifted humanity a full knowledge of the presence of the angel of perfect love.

May such glimmerings of that perfect day be yours, that though it seem afar off, still shall the songs and prophecies declare it, and your souls with uplifted voices seek for that angel to abide within your souls. Amen.—*The Banner of Light*.

MY SONG OF HEAVEN.

I WOULD sing you a song of "heaven," if my soul could chant the hymn ;

I would sing of skies whose gorgeous dyes would make our own grow dim. I would sing of mountains bathed in light that never will fade away, Of the murmuring breeze, through whispering trees, that never will know decay ;

Of glorious birds that trill strange words, with a mystery in the flow, Till the scented airs grow holy with prayers that only they can know. I would sing of its lakes for the lilies' sakes, the purest God has given, Of all the flowers that we call ours—how white they must be in heaven !

I would sing to you of the violet blue that watches the lovely sky, But droops its head when it hears the tread of an angel's footsteps nigh.

I would sing of love in that land above, till I could not hush the strain Of its perfect bliss, the joys of this would shrink to immortal pain. But my soul is mute, like a tuneless lute that has been forsaken long ; Its pulses thrill, but its voice is still, and I cannot sing the song.

Sweet land ! I have dreamed of thee when the summer moonlight fell In silvery showers on nestling flowers asleep in the greenwood dell. And I awoke, when the vision broke, with a pang in heart and brain That I should stray from that shining way back to this world again. But I know I shall see thee again, sweet land, when earth's dark hours have fled ;

When the flowers are low where they used to blow, and the sky in the west grows red.

I shall steer my bark where the waves roll dark ; I shall cross a stranger sea ;

But I know I shall land on the beautiful strand, where the loved ones wait for me.

There are faces there divinely fair that the earth lost long ago, And foreheads white where curls lay bright, like sunbeams over snow. And there are eyes, like their own blue skies—eyes I have seen before—Will grow as bright as the stars of night when I near the welcome shore.

And those little feet I loved to meet, when the world was sweet to me, I know will bound when the rippling sound of my boat comes over the sea.

I shall see them stand on the gleaming sand with white arms o'er the tide,

Waiting to twine their hands in mine when I reach the other side.

I have seen them here, you may call me seer, since they left their mortal forms ;

I shall see them once more on the golden shore, when I've passed all earthly storms,

Then why should I grieve like those who believe their loved in death are "lost,"

But rather rejoice with a joyful voice that they're no more tempest tossed.

—H. J. Browne.

PROOF OF SPIRIT IDENTITY.

By JOHN W. HAXBY.

"How pure at heart and sound in head,
With what divine affections bold,
Should be the man whose thoughts would hold
An hour's communion with the dead !"

—Tennyson.

"The spirit world around this world of sense
Floats like an atmosphere ; and everywhere
Wafts through these earthly mists and vapours dense
A vital breath of more ethereal air."

—Longfellow.

THE facts of spiritual communion—the identity of the spirit, the full preservation of that identity, continued progress in sphere or spirit life, and all the tokens of individuality that made the man, woman, or child of earth, are testified to and corroborated by tens of thousands of independent and reliable communications, given and to be found in every country of extent and civilisation.

Dr. Ashburner says : "I have myself so often witnessed spiritual manifestations that I could not, if I were inclined, put aside the evidences which have come before me." I am happy to say that to-day there are in our world thousands of well informed persons in exactly the same predicament ; they can't disbelieve their own eyes.

Mr. Livermore, a well known and wealthy New York banker, after witnessing extraordinary manifestations, whereat the spirit form of his wife and of the celebrated Benjamin Franklin appeared, and were fully recognised by the sitters, says : "I now aver that no doubt of the identity of this spirit longer remains upon my mind. His presence was a wonderful and startling reality—seated in a chair opposite me at the table, vividly visible ; and even to each article of dress, there could be no mistake."

Cromwell F. Varley, the celebrated electrician, in a letter to Professor Wm. Crookes says : "I know of no instance either in the new or old world in which any clear-headed man, who has carefully examined the phenomena, has failed to become a convert to the spiritual hypothesis."

Dr. Campbell says in the *British Standard* : "We believe, on the authority of Scripture, that spirits are capable of entering human bodies, of speaking through them, and acting in them ; and hence we believe in the possibility of spirits operating on matter in the way of rapping out letters of the alphabet, or in the way of writing with the pencil." This gentleman, I may add, was at one time a noted opponent of Spiritualism, but like Dr. Elliotson, of London, became, after a thorough investigation of its facts, a firm believer in it.

Judge Edmonds says : "To convince my daughter that it was not her own mind, they (the spirits) told her of the loss of the steamer which had left this port for California a few days before, laden with soldiers. They (the spirits) said the vessel had foundered at sea ; that over one hundred passengers had been swept overboard, and that the residue had been taken off by three vessels, bound for different ports. In the course of a few days after that news came of the wreck, confirming in every respect the statement made."

Surely, if human testimony is to be received as evidence at all, it must be accepted in such cases as these, so well attested and so numerous, as if to convince us that we are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses of "the redeemed and exalted spirits of our race."

"M.A. (Oxon)" says : "For a long time I failed in getting the evidence I wanted, and if I had done as most investigators do, I should have abandoned the quest in despair. My state of mind was too positive, and I was forced to take some personal pains before I obtained what I desired. Bit by bit, little by little, that evidence came ; and as my mind opened to receive it, six months were spent in persistent daily effort to bring home to me proof of the perpetuated existence of human spirits, and of their power to communicate and give evidence of their unimpaired individuality, and of the unbroken continuity of their existence. Some of those who came I had known during their life on earth, and was able not only to verify their statements but also to note the little traits of manner, peculiarities of diction, or characteristics of mind that I remembered in them while in the body. Most were unknown to me, and came always in obedience to the controlling spirit (who arranged everything) to give their evidence and go their way when the task assigned them was done. Some came at the time of death. At that time it would seem the spirit finds it easy to manifest its presence, and the facts that it can give are readily capable of verification. Some had been long dead, as men count time, and came back in a dazed and awkward fashion to revisit the scenes of earth, cramped and straitened, as it were, by taking on again the old conditions. But wherever they came from, and however they communicated, one and all bore with them an air of sincerity and earnestness as of those who were themselves impressed with the deep significance of the work they had in hand. And all without a lonely exception told the story about themselves, so far as we could verify their story. Many statements were from their nature not capable of proof ; a vastly greater number were minutely accurate, and none suggested any attempt at deception. I cross-examined these invisible witnesses in every conceivable way, and with a pertinacity that left nothing untried, to elicit facts. The evidence was given in various ways, principally through raps on the table, many of these raps produced entirely without contact of the hands of any persons present. Some facts were given by direct writing on previously marked papers, some by automatic writing, some through clairvoyance or clairaudience. In a few cases corroborative evidence was drawn from all these sources. During twelve days, eleven different cases of identity were made out by facts and dates. Three of them were entirely unconnected with any of us ; and of one of them none of us had ever heard the name or any particular, yet his full name, his place of residence, and the very name of his house, dates of his birth and day of his death ; were given with perfect accuracy. One was connected with Dr. Speer, five with Mrs. Speer, and two were friends of my own."—*The Harbinger of Light*.

DEATH. GOD'S GREATEST GIFT.

THE shape of the thoughts of the human heart as to death and after, has varied with varying civilisation, but it has been held everywhere. Curiously enough, some of the most gloomy figures associated with death have come from Christianity, and yet Christianity started in its career by virtue of this greatest of all beliefs—victory over death. Here, in the chapter I read you this morning you hear Paul cry: "Oh death, where is thy sting; oh grave, where is thy victory?" And yet, to judge from the blackness of the observance of death, mourning weeds and hearses, you would think that death meant not the rebirth into a new life, but utter extinction.

Death, it has been commonly taught us, was an after-thought; God made this fair earth and created man perfect, and intended that he should live here immortal and painless. But man sinned, and as a punishment sent by divine anger, death and evil came into the world.

I wish to deny all that class of conceptions: let us face the fact that

DEATH IS AS NATURAL AS BIRTH,

a part of the divine order. I believe, therefore, that death is a token of the divine wisdom and of the divine love. We confuse death with a thousand things that are no part of it at all. Death need be nothing but a going to sleep. We have no right to confuse death with the breaking of the laws of our health, and adding these sufferings to our charge against death.

We add another horror to death in the thought of what is to come after. People shrink at the thought of the grave—as though there were something terrible about it. The body is only a worn out suit of clothes; revere its resting place, but do not add an agony to death by fancying that any one is ever buried.

Do not, also, add a horror to death in the thought of "that something after death." The wild imagination of a barbaric world has created pictures of fire and chaos which we have inherited. Do not charge death with these things.

What, then, is death? Death is only the transition from this present mode of life to another: as natural as birth, as sweet and full of hope as is birth.

Where is this other world we talk about? Where are those we call the dead? I believe that this world of those we call dead is close by us, and all around us, and there is a difficulty about it only because we are the fools of our eyes and ears. It is only the tiniest part of the physical universe that we either see or hear. Science has taught us that the mightiest forces of the world are the invisible, the intangible forces. The things we cannot see and cannot touch are the mightiest physical things.

Those we call dead, then, may be very close about us; and this, friends, I believe.

What sort of people are they? We have dreamed of ghosts and spirits, and our imaginations have filled the past with spectres, and men have feared them. Why should the thought of the sight of one who has gone be in any way terrible to us?

DEATH DOES NOT CHANGE US

in one essential character.

There are thousands of people to whom there are two bitter things about dying; one is the leaving of friends, the other is that they are going out all alone. But the separation is only temporary, and I believe that just as we came into this world in a place prepared for us, so I believe that over there we shall be received into arms of love, and not for one moment feel ourselves strange or alone.

And so I dream that death is God's greatest, best gift to man, because it unfetters us after we finish here, frees us to the universe, and enables us to take the next step up and on.

REV. MINOT J. SAVAGE

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

BY EDWARD WALTER WALLIS.

STEPHEN GRANT was an intelligent and earnest young man, a member of the Church of England, and devotedly attached to his beautiful wife who, alas, lay dying. In response to his agonised appeal the doctor sorrowfully assured him that her hours were numbered. He mastered his emotion as best he could, and, returning to the bedside of his beloved companion, informed her that there was no hope of recovery. She bravely smiled through her tears to reassure him, and said she knew that it was so already.

"Annie," said he, "we have heard a lot about Spiritualism, and, if it is true, and you are permitted to return, would you come back to comfort me?" "Mind, he continued, "I do not wish it if it will make you unhappy, or injure you in any way." "Yes, dear," she replied, "if God grants it I will return." "I should like some sign, as a test, that I may know it is you." Bending down, he kissed her, and then with his finger made the sign of the cross upon her forehead, and said, "Let that be the sign." Annie assented, and ere many hours had passed she quietly slipped away into the "land of light and beauty."

Time passed on, and Stephen Grant attended several sésances but, although the mediums declared they saw a lady near him, and described her appearance, he did not feel satisfied, and returned home disappointed and sad. The lady described to him by the mediums bore certain characteristics which were peculiar to his lamented wife, but because he did not receive the "sign" he would not believe.

One medium declared that the spirit-lady bent over him and kissed him. Another, when under control of what purported to be his wife's influence, laid her hand upon his forehead but failed to make the sign expected.

He was informed that his intense anxiety was a disturbing element; that his strong affection and concentrated thought affected both the spirit and the sensitive medium, and destroyed the conditions of harmony which were requisite for successful control. Like many others he failed to understand this, and "could not see why, if spirits are around us, they do not make themselves known without all this trouble." The majority of people are too thoughtless or too ignorant of spiritual matters, or too selfish in their demands, to readily recognise

that there are laws which govern the intercourse between the two worlds just as certainly as "conditions" are requisite to telegraph to New York. Owing to erroneous training most of us are inclined to the opinion that a spirit, because it is a spirit should be, and is, able to do just what it wants to do, without let or hindrance. Experienced inquirers into the phenomena called spiritual, know that spirits are often hampered by the conceit of those who would consult them; that anxiety, or a demanding, positive, and self-assertive frame of mind affect the subtle conditions, create discord, and therefore prevent manifestations rather than facilitate them. It often happens (contrary to the assertions of opponents) that the one thing most desired is not given, while many other proofs are forthcoming; the spirit most anxiously looked for does not manifest; some one else, not thought of, and, perhaps not particularly welcome, puts in an appearance. These facts controvert the theorists who wish to set it all down to "thought transference from the sitter to the sensitive," and demonstrate that any so-called explanation which excludes the "intelligent operator at the other end of the line" as the cause of the phenomena is inadequate and untrue.

Stephen Grant, however, was not inclined to be patient or philosophical, and well nigh abandoned hope.

About this time a certain medium visited the town to lecture, and Mr. Grant entertained him during his stay, in the hope that he might hear something that would assist him to discover the truth. He expressed a desire for a séance, and explained that he was anxious to get into communication with a certain spirit; but the lecturer assured him that as he "was not a test medium," he need not anticipate any personal manifestations, hence our poor friend abandoned all hope or expectation of receiving satisfaction.

One evening Mr. Grant and the lecturer retired to rest; they shared the same room, and the latter had already entered his bed when Mr. Grant knelt down to say his prayers. While thus engaged the medium mentally asked, "If there is any spirit here who can give me anything for this man, will they please do so?" A sudden thrill shot through his frame, and his eyes were attracted to a corner of the room, which was illuminated by a small gas-light, where he beheld a small luminous star, which slowly and gracefully descended from near the ceiling, and sailed through the air until it settled upon the forehead of the man at the bedside, and remained there until he arose from his knees. The medium then said, "Perhaps you can explain it, Mr. Grant. I do not know what it means, but while you were praying I saw a luminous star float down from the corner of the room and settle on your forehead—it was in the shape of a cross."

Mr. Grant started, as if he had been struck. This was altogether unexpected, he had abandoned hope. He flung his hands to his head; the tears started to his eyes, he breathed rapidly, and, with difficulty, he panted as one exhausted, and as soon as he could sufficiently command himself, he exclaimed excitedly, sobbing as he did so, "My God, my God—come at last—come at last."

When his agitation had sufficiently subsided, he explained to the wondering medium the cause and meaning of his excitement and joy, for tears of gladness flowed down his cheeks before he became calm enough to speak. He then related the circumstances already narrated here, and they both rejoiced that, by the sign of the cross, a sad heart was made glad, immortality brought to light, life made more joyous and bright, conviction that there is no death brought home to a doubting soul, and two loving hearts consciously reunited.

MODERN ANGEL MINISTRY.

BY S. C. HALL, F.S.A.

[Editor of the *Art Journal* during forty-two years.]

SINCE my wife was removed from earth on the 30th January, 1881, I have frequently received messages from her. They are in number about 160, delivered to me through five or six mediums, with one exception, not professional medium, but some thirty-five of these 160 are by "direct writing"—written, that is to say, not by a medium, but by herself, under circumstances when delusion or deception was a sheer impossibility; generally they are brief, but some consist of over 150 words.

I recognise the handwriting of my wife. I cannot be mistaken. They are conclusively convincing to any person who will examine these "direct messages" side by side with letters written by her while she was in "life." They contain frequent references to persons and incidents that could have been by no possibility known to any one present except myself; and there are other but less obvious means of identification. In short, I am as sure as I can be of any simple act under the guidance of will that these messages "direct" and those dictated to a medium are what they profess to be—communications from my wife, intended and calculated to be for my instruction as to what I should think and do. My comfort in sorrow, my consolation in trouble, and especially designed to stimulate and encourage faith and trust in Providence, and submission with confiding hope to the Divine will.

But that is not all. Several times my wife has been permitted to prescribe medicine for me in illness, and to relieve me when suffering from accidental ailments, to strengthen failing eyesight by applying moisture of some kind to my eyelids, and in other ways making it manifest that she is, by Divine permission or appointment, the minister to my natural requirements and needs.

But she has a far higher and holier mission, its nature, purpose, and end will be better understood and appreciated by those who read the "messages," than they could be by any explanation I might give.

I express my firm conviction that communications similar to those I so frequently obtain would be given to a vast number of persons, if there existed power to give them, and that as a consequence many who desire counsel and comfort from beloved friends, in the higher sphere we call heaven, may feel assured that such messages are sent, although they are unable to hear or read them. To bear such comfort and consolation into the homes of those who are bereaved, and so to make them by comparison happy, is, indeed, my main purpose now. Let them believe that beloved friends "gone before" are giving them messages such as I receive from my beloved friend gone before.

A RATIONAL VIEW OF MAN'S DESTINY IN A FUTURE LIFE.

REGARDING man's destiny in the life beyond the grave, we have had too much that is unnatural, arbitrary, and unreasonable. We need to be brought back to sober inference, to homely sense, to rational faith. Men have drawn too sharp a line between that life and this, and have too readily assumed that this was man's only time of trial, and that at death the angels took him to a place called heaven, or demons dragged him down to a place called hell. These gross, vulgar, earthly conceptions of the spirit world must all be outgrown, and men will come to see that after death the life of the soul is continued with no very violent changes, and the shuffling off of this mortal coil produces no miraculous, much less final, change in our condition. A spirit is a man out of the body, that is all. I can quite understand a man denying that who denies a future life altogether, but I cannot understand the denial of that on the part of any one who believes in immortality at all. A spirit is simply a human being under spiritual conditions in the spirit world. All the inner faculties are spirit; all the inner and vital forces of our being are spirit. The will, the conscience, the sense of personal identity, the memory, affection, all are spirit; and these will be possessions or parts of self-hood in the spirit world. The probability is that they who leave the body and enter into vital relationship with spiritual things and spiritual beings are very little altered. They have lost the use of the physical body, but they have gained the use of far finer powers, suited to a far finer world. They have done with the dust, but have begun with the essences. They will find a few dear old friends again. They will be welcomed as new comers into some congenial society. They may find they have contracted some spiritual wounds or blemishes that sadly need attention, but surely they are the same. What need to imagine that they will at once mount up or be carried up to a place called heaven, or sink down or be flung down to a place called hell? I think they will do neither. I think they will stay here for awhile, till they comprehend the change that has come over them, and then will probably find that they are as much the creatures of choice and will as ever; and that the great white throne and a God whom the eyes could see are as far off as ever. In a word, reason and common sense, and God's beautiful steady laws, all conspire to teach us that the other world is a world of law and order as this is, and that people who go there are as much and as truly human beings and free agents as they are here.

One of the first effects of this idea will be the discarding of the idea of punishment altogether. I do not mean the discarding of suffering and sorrow and retribution, and the need of hard toil to recover lost ground, but that we shall discard the idea of direct outward and forced punishment involved in the idea of a hell filled with fiends and with instruments of torture. In the place of it we shall put nature and the God of nature, with the eternal law that "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." The suffering of consequences we shall not discard; but we shall rather affirm and enforce it.

All moral distinctions will exist in their almost infinite variety, and all will be justly and naturally dealt with. The "orthodox" doctrine confounds all these distinctions. It divides the eternal world into two places, into one or other of which all must go. The consequence of this is that, with an amazing disregard of sense and right, the serious distinctions of character and the equally serious distinctions of desert are altogether disregarded. But, with the idea of the future life I am suggesting, all these distinctions will be as much recognised and as much provided for as they are here. There will be no hasty, harsh, and final lines of demarcation drawn. The same variety will be observable in temperament and character, and the same varied and blessed forces will be at work to lead all men upwards, or to give them the opportunity to rise.—REV. J. P. HOPPS in *The Future Life*.

(To be concluded.)

PROSPECTIVE ARRANGEMENTS.

SHORT REPORTS next week will oblige to make room for PLANS.

IF YOU LIKE THIS *Missionary Number* will you order a dozen and send them to your friends?

IMPORTANT TO LYCEUMS.—For immediate disposal, the dresses, property, and music, for two juvenile cantatas (as given at Lancaster Lyceum); also one or two music books, &c. Cheap bargain for first offer.—A. Bleasdale, 18, Primrose Street, Lancaster. [Advt.]

ANTICIPATING A LARGE DEMAND for this issue of *The Two Worlds* from our readers, we have had a considerable number of extra copies printed. Last time we sold out and could not supply all the orders, but this time we are prepared for a rush and shall be happy to be kept busy.

OUR FIFTH MISSIONARY NUMBER.—We give full value for your money, and seek your friendly support. 12 copies, post free, 1s., 20 for 1s. 6d., 25 for 1s. 9d., 50 for 3s., 100 for 5s. 6d., 200 for 10s. 6d., 250 for 13s., 300 for 15s. Who will send the LARGEST order?

BRADFORD. Walton Street.—Harvest Festival Oct. 30, and fruit banquet on Monday at 7-30.

BRADFORD. Central Association of Spiritualists, Milton Rooms, Westgate.—The committee announce a ham tea at 4-30 on Saturday, Oct. 22. Entertainment at 7 of songs, concertina solos, stump speeches, and readings. Tickets, adults, 9d.; children, 6d.; lyceum scholars, 4d.; entertainment, 4d. Everybody invited.

BRADFORD. West Bowling, Boynton Street.—October 23: Harvest festival, at 2-30 and 6 p.m. Entertainment and fruit banquet at 7-30. Mr. Wilkinson.—M. C.

BRIGHOUSE Society will open new rooms in Martin Street, Saturday, October 22, with a meat tea and entertainment. Tickets, 9d.; children 6d.; entertainment, 8d. Mrs. Green, of Heywood, will open the rooms, and give trance addresses, Sunday, Oct. 23. 24, Mrs. Summersgill; 26, Mrs. France; 27, Miss Patefield; 28, Mr. Wainwright; 29, Mrs. Berry. A hearty invitation to old friends and new. Come and help us.—J. Shaw, Secretary, Woodland Place, Birds Royd, Rastrick.

BURNLEY, Guy Street.—Oct. 22: Knife and fork tea at 4-30. Tickets, 1s.; children, 6d.; entertainment, 8d.

BURNLEY. Hammerton Street.—Oct. 23: Harvest festival. Our old friend, Mr. Morse, speaker. 2-30, "The impregnable rock of Spiritualism." 6, "Views of our heavenly home." Monday: Fruit banquet. At 8, "A man's value to the world." Friends, help us with corn or wheat or anything else as soon as possible. Will Burnley friends, willing to help, bring their lot on Saturday night to the room, or to the Lyceum sec., Mr. J. Richmond, 32, Crowther Street?

ELLAND. Central Hall.—Oct. 31 to Nov. 5: Mr. G. A. Wright lectures.

ENQUIRERS will find the following "code of signals" eminently useful when they desire to establish communion with spirit people. One rap or tilt of the table signifies "no"; two signify "doubtful" or "please yourselves"; three, "yes"; four, "ask questions"; five, "alphabet required"; six, "join hands"; seven, "the communication is complete"; eight, "light out if there be one, or get a light if dark"; nine, "sing"; ten, "close the circle." Inform the spirit that the above is your "code" for investigating Spiritualism, and may the same or a better become universal.—E. Foster, 50, Friargate, Preston, May 7, 1892.

HUDDERSFIELD. Brook Street.—Oct. 23, Mr. E. W. Wallis, at 2-30 "The Theosophic View of Man;" 6-30, "Theosophy from a Spiritualist's standpoint." Entertainment and fruit banquet, Monday, Oct. 24, at 7-30. Tickets 6d., children 4d. A lengthy programme of solos, duets, character songs, dialogue in costume by little girls, dramatic sketch, etc. Friends of the children's Lyceum come in great numbers. Proceeds for new books, etc.

LIVERPOOL.—Quarterly tea party and concert, Monday, Oct. 24, at 7 p.m. Tickets 6d. We hope to see many members and friends.

LONDON. Eastbourne Terrace, Town Road, Lower Edmonton.—Mrs. Mason will hold a meeting on Sunday, October 23, at 7. Friends, welcome.

LONDON. Marylebone.—Mrs. Green, the distinguished clairvoyant, from North of England, Sunday, 30th, at 7 p.m.—C. H. [Mrs. Green is also announced for Nottingham Masonic Hall, Oct. 30.]

LONDON SPIRITUALIST FEDERATION.—Oct. 23: Mr. T. Emms, at Penton Hall, 81, Pentonville Road, N., before the Progressive Association, at 7 p.m., upon "Hypnotism v. Spiritualism" (thirty years' experience). Discussion allowed. Spiritualists are asked to attend.—Percy Smyth (for the Council), 359, Edgware Road, W.

LONDON. Stratford, Workmans' Hall, West Ham Lane.—The committee tender their hearty thanks to those friends who came forward with the munificent sum of £1 1s., the collection taken at our service on Oct. 16, which was devoted to the assistance of a member who has passed through a very severe trial and the loss of a child; also to the two ladies who so generously forwarded us per Dr. Reynolds the sum of £2 for our library fund, which is gratefully acknowledged by the committee, and shall be duly accounted for.—J. Rainbow, sec.

LONDON. Spiritualist Federation Hall, 359, Edgware Road.—Oct. 23: Mrs. Ashton Bingham on "Spiritual Gifts." Several séance committees are now sitting. Persons wishing to join must first become members. Write to me at the hall. Every Tuesday, at 8 p.m., the hall is open to inquirers.—A. F. Tindall, A.T.C.L., hon sec.

MRS. HYDE desires to thank her many friends for their kind expressions of sympathy, and is pleased to announce that she is improving in health very nicely.

MRS. WALLIS has Dec. 11 this year unexpectedly vacant, and will be pleased to hear from societies desiring her services.

MRS. J. M. SMITH'S VISIT TO LONDON.—Sunday, Oct. 23: Winchester Hall, at 11 and 7, address and clairvoyance. Friends requiring the services of our esteemed visitor during the week ending 31st, please write to J. T. Audy, Duncannon Street, London, W.C.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—The ladies in connection with the society intend holding their first social meeting, Monday, Oct. 31, in the Cordwainers' Hall, 21, Nelson Street. Tea at 6 p.m., when Mrs. Sedgley, who is giving the tea, hopes to meet as many friends as possible. Miss E. E. Wheeldon, Oct. 23, at 10-45 and 6-30. Inspirational addresses. Oct. 30: Mr. J. Armitage.

NOTTINGHAM. Masonic Hall.—Oct. 23 and 24: Mrs. Wallis, at 11, "Spiritual Spiritualism"; at 6-30, "Man's Place in Nature." Clairvoyance. Oct. 30 and 31: Flower service. Mrs. Green. Clairvoyance.

OLDHAM. Bartlam Place.—Oct. 29, tea party. Tickets, 6d. and 4d.

OLDHAM TEMPLE.—A tea party on Nov. 5. Gifts of provisions or cash towards a sandwich tea will be thankfully received. A hearty welcome to all our old friends and new ones too.—J. P.

PENDLETON. Cobden Street.—A tea party, at 5 p.m., and concert in aid of the Lyceum, Saturday, October 22. Tickets, 6d. A public circle every Thursday, at 8 prompt. Conductors for the next three months, Mr. and Mrs. Wallis.—J. M.

RAWTENSTALL.—Saturday, October 22, opening of new buildings. Tea at 4 p.m. Tickets, 8d. and 4d. At 7, entertainment of songs, recitations, dialogues, &c. Addresses by Mr. J. B. Tetlow, secretary of the National Federation, Mr. Wheeler, of Oldham, Mrs. Stansfield, Miss Walker, and others. Sunday, Oct. 23, addresses at 2-30 and 6 p.m. Chairman, Mr. J. Cunliffe. Silver collection at the door. Tea provided.—J. S.

ROCHDALE. Regent Hall.—Oct. 22: Social gathering; 23: Mrs. J. A. Stansfield; 30, Miss Patefield.—G. T. Dearden, sec. 1, Dex St.

SEVERAL ARTICLES which it was intended should be used in this issue have been crowded out, but will appear as early as possible.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—H. W., Lancaster: Next week. C. H. Keats: We cannot expect that everyone will agree, but surely we can all grant to others the right to express their views even though they differ from our own? Enough has been said on both sides, our readers can be trusted to draw their own conclusions. O. R.: We regret the article in question did not please you. We cannot expect to please everybody. Are you afraid the ideas might be true? Is your foundation so sandy? We shall try to survive, and trust that for one reader we lose we shall gain two others by our breadth and fair play to all sides. Where is your boasted Christian charity and toleration? You have our best wishes anyway. W. D. Brooks: We could not print yours in the *Missionary Number*. It is not worth while taking any notice of the amiable cranks you refer to. They are happy, and are not ready for Spiritualism. When they want it they will come. We are very full just now. *Short reports and letters*, &c. for a few weeks will oblige. Prospectives for November held over till next week.