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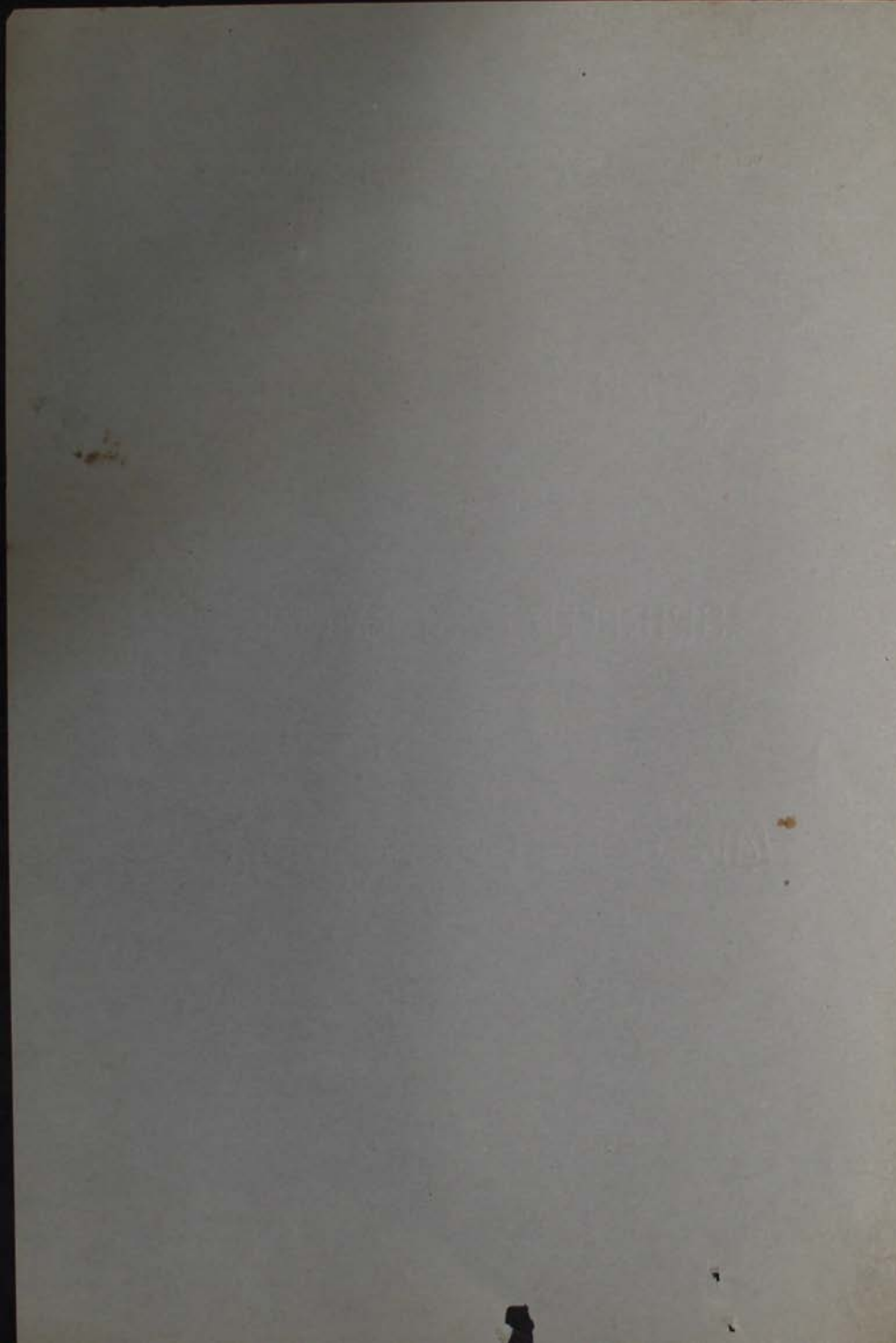
SPIRITUAL SERMONS

BY THE GUIDES OF

Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond.



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THE HAND WRITING ON THE WALL.

DELIVERED AT CHICAGO, SUNDAY, OCT. 17, 1886.

INVOCATION.

Infinite God, Eternal Source of life and light; Thou Whom men name Jehovah, Allah, Lord, yet Whose divine and perfect light, nameless forevermore, is manifest in every form of being; Who art revealed in earth and sky; in the many forms of beauty and loveliness that fill all space, alike in the blade of grass and blooming flower, in the worlds that move responsive to Thy law, and in the glittering sun; Thou Who art ensphered in light, Who ensphere all things in the light of Thy Love. We praise Thee forevermore, not only for the manifold blessings of the visible universe, not only for all the beauty and fruition of earthly life, but for that which is more divine, the fruition of the spiritual, the loveliness of the life divine. While men wage war with one another, while selfishness and crime are abroad in the world, while human habitations are shrouded, sometimes, in darkness and fear, and human hearts are bowed down in anguish unto the dust, still from out the shadow the light appears, and from the darkness of human misery the promise of life eternal is made manifest. O may every heart learn the lesson of Thy Love, every human spirit know the majesty of Thy Wisdom and Thy Knowledge, and turn, not only with abiding trust, but with dutiful and reverential feet, unto these paths of light wherein the ways of truth and love are made manifest, and Thy power revealed unto man. Not among the great, not among the exalted in the earthly estate, but in lowly ways, in paths of humility, in the ways appointed by prophets and seers, where the light of revelation shows the truth divine, and where the meek and lowly Jesus led unto the altar of perfect sacrifice. O may Thy children behold how, traced in every burning orb that moves in space, and revealed in every living thing, the manifestations of Thy power and truth are found. O may all turn unto that perfect light beyond the storms, beyond the clouds, wherein the sun of Thy truth is forever manifest, and Thy law and love are eternal. Amen.

DISCOURSE.

Doubtless most, if not all, of you are familiar with the graphic portrayal of Belshazzar's feast in the Book of Daniel. Doubtless you are aware that in the

reign of his father, Nebuchadnezzar, the vessels of gold and secret treasures were brought from Jerusalem. That after a time Nebuchadnezzar turned to the true light: but Belshazzar, his son, was a follower of worldliness and pride, was a worshiper of the senses, was fond of feasting and revelry, of giving splendid feasts to the lords and nobles of the land. A thousand Satraps thronged the hall; and then the thousand lights that gleamed therefrom revealed the gorgeousness, almost barbaric splendor, of this reigning king.

It was under the excitement of this festival that Belshazzar ordered his slaves to bring forth the vessels of gold and silver that had been taken from the Temple, sacred only to the innermost rites and secret worship of the Temple; and wine was poured into these vessels and goblets and all the guests and household drank in this profane revelry from the sacred vessels of Jehovah. You will remember that as the revelry ran high, as the wine flowed fast and freely, that suddenly there came forth against the wall, beyond the lamp that was upon the wall, upon the plaster the fingers of a man's hand, writing upon the wall, and the writing was visible to all and to the king, and the circumstance of its being produced then and there, struck terror to the king, and to all his household and guests. Not one of all his wise men, not one of his sages or seers, could interpret the message that came upon the wall; the queen knowing some of the captives of Judea who were seers, begged the king to send for one whose name was Daniel, a great seer endowed with gifts by the gods, who could interpret visions and dreams and such things. And it was Daniel who came into the hall of revelry, unto the king, and interpreted the message which had been given. You will remember that was the time when Jerusalem had fallen under the ban of the Most High, when corruption had caused her downfall, when her prophets had been scattered, imprisoned, and put to death, when her sacred vessels torn from the Temple, had been put aside, first by ambition, then by the reverence of Nebuchadnezzar. You will also remember that Daniel, without fear, gave unto the wicked king a correct interpretation of this inscription, declaring to him the downfall of his kingdom, declaring to him that he had been weighed in the balance and found wanting, declaring to him the destruction of his material power, and yet he was clothed in scarlet and the chain of gold was placed about his neck, because the king had promised that whomsoever should correctly interpret the writing should be thus favored.

All this is in the past, and whether an allegorical or correct history of God's dealings with a king who cared more for gold than for people, more for revelry than for sacred things, one little sentence shows that in this symbol, or in this narrative there is an illustration of the most occult forces and powers of earth; for in their drinking in the goblets and from the vessels of gold they praised the gods of gold, of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone; each of these words enumerated some of the most sacred symbols of the Orient. And they had stolen from these vessels from the innermost Temple, the secrets of the Temple of Jehovah; for these words the gods of gold, of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone, symbolized the different periods of spiritual life and light upon the earth, of which the gold was first and foremost, and was illustrated in these sacred vessels that were preserved only by the priests, understood only by the initiated; but when thus profaned, only these various deities were praised; their symbols were made the laughing stock of all the company assembled, or the irreverent worship of any and all gods that would bring them the gratification of their appetites and senses on this night of their feasting.

In the secret Cabalistic meaning, the age of gold, the age of silver, the age of brass and iron and wood and stone are successively performed with the history of every nation; beginning with the lowest, the stone, and carving out from the earth and the rock beneath the earth the habitations of man, then levelling the forest trees, and, finally, becoming sufficiently masters of the earth itself to produce, from the various metals and minerals, the things that shall serve his purpose. That these were symbols of the ancient Masonic craft, and were sacredly stored

away in temples and were a portion of the worship in the temples, were understood by the Rabbis alone, they alone who were initiated in the Cabalistic, or innermost, meaning of these words could handle these sacred goblets, they alone could interpret the meaning of these precious symbols; yet it was well known to Belshazzar that he was, not only violating the sanctity of the Temple and profaning the sacred name of the three-fold God of Egypt, but he was also, in all his life, a follower after Mammon, and Moloch, the gods and deities that had been condemned by prophets, censured by seer and sage, from whom his father had turned unto the Most High; yet, notwithstanding this profanation occurred, it was not so much that these vessels of gold and silver were brought forth, but that the spirit of the whole occasion was one of blasphemy and revelry, the culmination of a kind of profanity that, even then and there, the spiritual powers of the Divine Love beyond must check.

The warning upon the wall, the banqueting hall, Belshazzar, the whole history of the feast, and the symbols referred to in the worship of the different gods, are a portion of that sublime symbolism, which had its origin in the first inspiration of earth, to show that when man departs from his highest knowledge, when he leaves the altitude of his spiritual teaching, when he descends to contact with the earth and earthliness, when the Deity he worships is profanely assaulted, then all the sacred symbols of his life are turned into perjury and forgetfulness; are drowned in intoxication and revelry; it is a warning that then and there the Hand Writing appears upon the wall of whatsoever temple hall, or place of festival, human beings meet in. Whether it be upon the walls of your own heart or mind, or whether it be upon the palace walls of kings, or whether it be on the walls of the legislative halls of the nation; whenever and wherever the sacred name of the Most High is violated, is profaned, and man converts his physical body into a charnal house of revelry, then and there the hand writing appears. In ancient Egypt it appeared, and whether it was on the stones of the pyramids, piled one above the other, or whether it was in those cities submerged by yawning earthquakes, still the power of corruption dwelling in the midst of Egypt's kings brought about their downfall. And when the most sacred name, the three-fold name, of which the three-fold stone is the symbol, had ceased to have a sacred meaning, and all Egypt worshiped many gods and were following after the deities of the senses, were bowing down before the images of lesser divinities, then and there, upon all those buildings, upon the temple of Ion, of the City of the Sun, upon those mystical, mythical walls of Hermes, upon the wonderful tablets, where even now are traced the learning of centuries, was written in the mystical hand writing, the fingers of a man's hand writing, the warning: "MENE MENE TEKEL UPHARSIN." This, also, was the voice that spoke the warning of the downfall of Jerusalem; this, also was the manifestation that came to Belshazzar as a symbol of his downfall in the worldliness and corruption in which he lived.

We do not care to enter further into this mystical symbolism, but to declare the moral lesson which is apparent in that sentence upon the wall, to prove that every wall of every dwelling that is erected in pride, bears within itself its downfall to show that the Hand Writing is all over the temple, whenever a temple is dedicated to Mammon instead of God. You have only to go to Rome—the city of ancient splendor—to find how, even the enlightened kings and rulers of the Romish Empire were obliged to yield, before the onslaught of the northern hordes that came marching down, because of the corruption and pride. You have only to visit modern Rome to find that there, stamped upon the Eternal City, is the eternal stillness of that death that came in fulfillment of the warning, when pride and ambition usurped the place of the love of man. You have only to visit the kingdoms of Modern Europe to see, that wherever in the name of God, the drunkenness of worldliness is brought; wherever, in the name of the Christian Religion, man is made subservient to the purposes of war, is sent forth from home and family to fight the battles of despotism, and is made the victim of the

powers that usurp his manhood, there upon the walls of this very temple of vast worldliness, the Hand Writing already appears.

In Russia, eager as she is for still greater empire, for an outlet into India, this Hand Writing is already traced upon her walls, and the voice of this Nemesis is heard in the sound of her prophets, who do not hesitate to tell the imperial power, under whatever form, that there is destruction and downfall in exact proportion to the despotism. It appears in France, and alternately holds sway with that love of liberty that fires the heart. In Germany, under the ban of military despotism that strikes at the life of her people, the Hand Writing is seen on the wall. In England, Christian, enlightened, liberal, and almost free England, upon her wall of imperial pride, upon the monarchy that sustains itself sometimes by freedom, and sometimes by injustice, the fingers of a man's hand writing on the wall is seen. No one can doubt its import; no one can deny or set it aside; it has been interpreted to her understanding, in her halls of legislation, in her imperial and monarchical palace, this voice of warning has been heard again and again.

The Hand Writing appears in all places where men serve Mammon under the name of God, where they drink in the golden goblets, that are the symbols of purity and perfection, profaning the name of purity with the worship of Mammon, and with the wine of worldliness. Take not this too literally, it does not mean the gold which will tarnish, nor the silver which will perish, but it means that the golden goblets of life can be ruthlessly stained with the wine of worldliness; it means that the golden goblets of true religion cannot be made to serve the purposes of Mammon; it means in all temples of human praise where selfishness is advocated, by those who bend before the altars, that they are drinking in the sacred vessels of the Lord; it means throughout the length and breadth of Christendom, from imperial Rome down to the lowliest chapel where the sound of praise comes forth, that the Hand Writing is upon the wall wherever creed takes the place of worship; wherever the letter takes the place of the spirit; wherever worldliness takes the place of the humility of Christ; wherever the voice of truth is drowned in the policy of the world.

This golden goblet is the soul of man, into which Jehovah pours the wine of the spirit, and it was the symbol, at the ancient altar of the Initiate, of a pure life of exalted purposes, that neither falsehood, nor corruption, nor worldliness, could cause the worshiper who tasted of the wine from the golden goblet to deviate from its purity. Aye! It means more than that the vessels of gold, silver, brass, iron, wood, and stone, are carved out of these substances, it means that when men or nations hold up the golden goblets of life and drink therefrom unto the name of Jehovah, that unless their lives are pure, unless the nation is exalted, who claims it, unless the religion is free which declares it, unless the conscience is kind and just which professes it, that then and there upon the walls of their dwellings, upon their palaces of pride, upon their public places of magnificence, the fingers of the hand appear, Writing her sentence and her doom.

We have not fashioned this, it is the law of the God of Eternal Life, it is that which unto you comes when, serving Mammon, you profess to serve humanity; it is that which comes to every human life when you profess to serve the truth and selfishness alone is served; it is that which comes to every individual, when the sacred goblet of religion is held simply as a cloak for blasphemy and human selfishness. Whatever corruption there is in individual life that takes the garb of saintliness; whatever falsehood and fiction there is in the individual claim; whatever there is of hypocrisy in the one who bends before the shrine of Christian worship, still does not even profess to follow the Golden Rule;—it comes certainly and surely when held up before all men's eyes the Golden Rule and the Sermon on the Mount are made the golden goblets of human lives, and every man's hand is against his brother and nations wage war with one another; it comes when under the name of law, man seeks to evade and avoid his responsibility to his fellow man; it comes when if the laws are formed in justice men

violate them for selfish purposes, when the power and the protection of the law allows him to do an injustice to his fellow man: it comes in response to all these, and the lesson is one of all history. First labor, thrift, and then prosperity as the result of that labor, then an abundance, then the revelry, then the corruption.

It comes under the name of human selfishness, that takes away from human life all its sweetness, and declares, that in all the universe, it is best to protect self first. Against this law and edict, not only of all Christian lands, but of all corrupt lands of the world, the voice of the Infinite has ever been sent forth; and the Sermon on the Mount is the wine poured into the golden goblets of life, which men even now refuse to drink in the temple and altar of pure hearts, but climb into corrupt places and highways for the worship of Mammon.

We are not blaming individuals, each life must fulfill according to its light. We are not blaming nations, we are only stating that we know it is true, that human propensities, appetites, and selfishness, than which the life of man has no greater tempter, prevail, that then and there the golden goblets of life are violated, the sacred shrines of the temple are defiled, and the Writing comes upon the walls.

Whatsoever material powers or power stand between man and the knowledge of that which is true the Hand Writing on the various walls—sometimes without violence—comes. It is not always needful—as under the Hebraic kings—that the temple shall fall with bloodshed; it is not always that pride, envy, and malice disappear in physical violence; the violence that sometimes comes within, when the struggle is in the individual, between the two natures of worldliness and sanctity, is in itself a battle, than which you could have no more fierce struggle, if ten thousand thousand foes were at war against one another. Watch the battle in your own life when the moral nature is striving for the ascendancy, and the selfish nature is likewise striving, is there not a conflict? And finally, when the moral nature is fully aroused, does not the rebellious king, which represents the temporal power of your own nature, give way before the light and splendor of that which came in response to the Hand Writing on the wall?

Does it not come even to the churches, when under the power of prosperity they arrogate to themselves the right to stand between God and the conscience of man, to make creed take the place of the spirit, and the written letter to take the place of inspiration, and the external formulas of the church to take the place of the true life and light within? Then comes the breaking up of the walls of the material church, and all the reformation that the church has known has been because of the defiling of the sacred goblets of Jehovah, the goblets of the spirit, the sacred wine of the kingdom of the soul. Out from the ancient church this voice brought the people, when under the inspiration of Jesus the true spirit was revealed to take the place of the letter of the Hebrews; it came again, when under the dominion of the State Church combination, the whole authority of Christendom was exhausted and expended in forcing man to obey the mandates of the power of Rome; then under the impetus of the Reformation the Hand Writing came upon the wall, and the temple was rent in twain. It came again and again under the various reforms that have brought forth the different types of believers in the world; it comes again when the whole church is to give place to the spirit and the golden goblets of life are to be restored to the innermost chambers of the temple where Jehovah, the God of the future the present, and past prevails.

It has come now in the halls of Mammon, where the high and the low, the exalted and the humble; where the king and the peasant; where the merchant and the laborer alike bend in worship to the one God Mammon; the golden goblets are brought forth at the voice of this king of the world, and the wine is drunk to the gods of gold, silver, brass, iron, wood, and stone. In other words, man bends in homage to the material powers of the universe, and worships

whatever god will bring him prosperity, turns aside from his convictions, drinking in the golden goblet of life of his manhood whatever wine is offered from the festive board of this kingdom of imperial Mammon. You cannot deny it, the world bows before it, it is the one offering, the one homage that, day and night rises from the incense shrines of man's devotion. Your crowded cities teem with it, your harvest fields are invaded by it, your mechanism is run in its interest, and the gods that are enumerated in this book are the gods that govern the world. The sacred vessels of Jehovah, which are the vessels of pure love, of true principles, of exalted freedom, of the honor, integrity, and honesty among men, these are made to serve the purposes of Mammon; and men drink to freedom when they mean freedom for themselves alone; they drink to liberty when they mean liberty to pursue their selfish aims; they drink to prosperity of humanity, when they mean it and their own are one; and they drink to the various gods of the world that will bring them the chosen standards of greatness and exaltation regardless of their fellow man.

Was it not in these sacred vessels of Jehovah that your fore-fathers drank, when they incorporated into the Constitution for freedom the clause concerning human slavery? Was there not one of the goblets of gold defaced and defiled by the wine of worldliness? Are there not in all the various legislatures of your land—if politicians tell the truth—such wine drinking unto the gods of earth as would cause on the halls of legislation the fingers to come forth writing, "*Mene mene tekel upharsin.*"

What does the press teem with but corruption, accusation, and violence, and warfare in worldly ways; and what is it that in every political contest, in your own free country, you are striving for, if there is justice, liberty, and equality among men, why are these partisans striving for spoils? If you believed one tenth part of what one political party says of another, the bandit of Italy, the highway robber of any country, the red indian of North America, is more honest, honorable, kind, and just. If you do not believe, where are the men who perpetrate these falsehoods, and why are they tolerated in places of public trust?

If you accept that which is alone the result of the reign of Belshazzar in your midst, then you have found that that which was intended as a benefit to the community becomes at last the means of oppression. The Hand Writing, it seems to us, has appeared upon the walls that regulate the powers of Mammon, under the names of corporations, monopolies and other bodies, when a governor, like the Governor of Pennsylvania, can find one of the most gigantic monopolies in your land, guilty of that which is unlawful; and when in accordance with the ruling of the court of the State of Pennsylvania in the year 1872, it was found that similar combinations were depriving men and women of warmth and subsistence, this was pronounced criminal; and that was verified in the year 1882, under the laws of Pennsylvania and further confirmed by this language, "Any combination for the purpose of raising the price of anything bought and sold is a criminal conspiracy;" and under the law of Pennsylvania, and the enactments of the two courts in the years named, the present Governor of Pennsylvania, finds it convenient to point to the Hand Writing on the wall.

It is a part of the Hand Writing on the wall of the present day, that to day and at this hour, there are those in your midst who perceive that this reign of Belshazzar is nearly at an end. Whomsoever the Daniel may be that interprets the Hand Writing, whether through the lips of a little child, or a woman, or the voice of a statesman, or the voice of a speaker like Wendell Phillips, who at the close of your war, entered upon the organization of a labor party to point out the Hand Writing upon the wall. Whether he was the Daniel or another, this Daniel is in your midst, the interpretation has been given, the powers of Mammon, of human selfishness are doomed, whether in the individual or in society, or in states, or in corporations, or in governments, or in crowns, or in kingdoms, that which surely will come is that voice of purity and unselfishness, long pre-

dicted by poets, seers, and sages, and it will at last have a hearing. As patiently as the black man waited for the dawn of the day of freedom, never taking the power into his own hands when he had it, never raising the hand of the midnight assassin, but only praying that the God of Israel would also hear his prayer: so the earth has waited for this sign that now appears. Make no mistake, Daniel did not say to the servitors and slaves surrounding Belshazzar, rise up and slay this man, it was the Hand Writing on the wall that said he was doomed, and down went his temple, and down went his empire, and down went all that power that was the result of the ill-gotten and ill-used riches intrusted to this faithless king. Those who are intrusted with the riches of the earth, if they prove faithful stewards, if they consider that these gifts are given them for their kind, they do no moral wrong. There is no moral wrong in the mind that conscientiously fulfills its duty, it is worldliness that wears the garb of this king; it is not the Belshazzar that is in the individual alone, but it is the Belshazzar in the prevailing spirit of the Nineteenth century that makes of Mammon a god and uses the golden goblets to drink wine in the festival of materialism that is in the world to day.

The Church, the State, society, business, are all partaking equally of this feast, and even those who see better things, do not exactly know how they are to come or in what way; they are waiting for the Hand Writing that is to come on the wall. It has not bade any one to do any thing, but if the interpretation is given, they shall speak the word of interpretation, and it shall have its effect in the hearts of their hearers, and the voice of unselfishness shall come forth from the places where it has been long buried, and the world shall witness it.

We are not of those who consider that all the changes that shall come in the world, must needs be accompanied by bloodshed; we believe that a revolution has been wrought in the direction of spiritual truth, greater than the world has ever seen and not one drop of blood has been shed; tears there have been many, persecutions many, social ostracism abundant, and the crucifixion that all have suffered who have dared to perceive the light of spiritual truth; yet within thirty seven years there has been wrought a revolution in man's religious nature, in his spiritual perception, in man's fear of death, the grave and its terrors have been swallowed up under the light of this truth; a bloodless revolution, that makes every material temple of worship, even now, crumble and fall away under its power, and leads man and woman to the altar of the spirit for worship. What has been wrought in this way can be wrought in other ways and forms.

In New York the very feast of Belshazzar has been witnessed. No other city in all this land—we doubt if any in the world—has suffered such municipal corruption as New York; you know it, you acknowledge it, every body believes it; somebody has seen the Hand Writing upon the wall. It may mean but very little to politicians, but it means a great deal more than they will confess, that such a man as Henry George has an unsought constituency of over fifty thousand men in New York City; it may mean but very little that this man who has never been a politician, who has studied statesmanship, political economy, capital and labor, who has been called dreamer, Utopian, lunatic, is followed by the clergy, the doctors the lawyers, and men of all professions to the acclamation of his name as the mayor of Gotham. It may not mean anything but it is an indication of the Hand Writing on the wall, which politicians would do well to heed; for in the midst of political corruption cities sometimes rise with new life, and the best men of all the land have said, let us have something that will represent the people.

You are not yet ready for an ideal republic: no city in this land is yet ready for an ideal municipal government, but when Roman Catholic priest and liberal Unitarian, with all the denominations in between, meet on the same platform, it proves that the Hand Writing has been interpreted, and that, somewhere the voice of the new life has been heard in the world.

It is said in Europe, that Chicago is next to New York in corruption; this may be a slander, but if it is true you may be nearer an ideal government than you know. From the very force of reaction, cities, sometimes, rebound into a knowledge of what virtue is; and if the long line of abuses in the government of New York has served to bring about a reaction there, you may hope for the dawn here soon of something that will bring to your knowledge the idea that statesmanship and politics should go hand in hand, that the true lover of his country is the one who should serve it, that he who represents the honesty, integrity, and moral excellence of the community is the best qualified to be its municipal head; instead of fleeing away from politics, as the best men of your country have done heretofore, would it not be well for them to turn around and make of politics what they would like to have it, what they declare it should be, heed the Hand Writing on the wall, and serve humanity more and themselves less?

The homes that you strive to build up, the beautiful places that are all over the land, all the art, literature, and learning will not suffice, if in the midst of these there is a body politic that is either indifferent or corrupt. Surely the day of deliverance will at length come, such time as every man, with true integrity and honest purpose, serves his country in the ballot box as he should serve God in the church, his family at home, and his soul in the golden goblets that Jehovah has given.

THE ROSETTA STONE.

{ Impromptu poem given at the close of the morning dis- }
 { course. On the platform being an image of the Rosetta }
 { Stone adorned with moss and autumn leaves. }

We bring to Egypt's ancient stone
 Our offering of autumn leaves,
 Whose splendor is a crown alone
 Greater than the Pharaohs' golden sheaves;
 Greater than the highest crown of light
 Revealed in Egypt's ancient night.

Are not the splendors of the day
 Poured out upon these leaves of gold,
 And gold and crimson every ray?
 The ancient story that has been told
 In the pavilions of the sky
 Where truth and love can never die!

Before Egypt's power was known
 The light of the sun came forth to bless,
 To prepare on earth the perfect throne
 That at the last in perfectness
 Gleams out in praise at autumn time,
 The symbol of the life Divine.

But the Rosetta Stone is here,
 That sacred threefold stone, whose light
 Alone could pierce the charmed sphere
 Of the Infinite's blessed power and might.

By whose inscription learned men
 Could find the key of wisdom old,
 Trace back unto Osiris' days,
 Prove how the pure sunshine, with its gold,
 Has lighted up the rays of light
 In Egypt's ancient night.

Yes; a sacred stone because its power
 Was typical of Jehovah's name,
 Because inscribed thereon the power
 Of Truth, whose sacred flame
 Illumined the far Orient,
 When the sun's rays were sent.

But still we have our autumn leaves.
 Sixfold the prism of God's Love
 Is given to us, the garnered sheaves
 Of Egypt's wisdom from above,
 That is poured on the world to day
 In the six pointed star, whose ray
 Is double that of the Rosetta Stone,
 The symbol of the Holy One.

BANNER x OF x LIGHT.

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PRESENTATION OF SPIRITUALISM.

A PAPER ARRANGED BY THE GUIDES OF

MRS. CORA L. V. RICHMOND,

FOR THE

WORLD'S PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS,

AT

CHICAGO, OCTOBER, 1893.

ISSUED BY

NATIONAL SPIRITUALISTS ASSOCIATION,

600 Pennsylvania Avenue S. E.,

Washington, D. C.

READ AND PRESENT TO YOUR NEIGHBOR.

"God is spirit, and they who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth."—Jesus.

"Now, brethren, concerning Spiritual gifts, I would not have you ignorant."—St. Paul.

"Millions of Spiritual beings walk the earth both when we wake and when we sleep."—Milton, *Hesiod*.

"A little cloud is rising in the west not larger than a man's hand, which will one day overspread the earth; that cloud is Spiritualism."—Lord Brougham.

"I have not had time in the midst of a busy life, while solving the problem of human freedom, to investigate the phenomena of Spiritualism, nevertheless, I believe its philosophy and phenomena are true, and that Spiritualism will be the religion of the future."—Theodore Parker.

"Sooner than we imagine the day will dawn when a godless science will be an unscientific absurdity."—Giles B. Stebbins.

GENERAL STATEMENTS.

Spiritualism, as a name, is synonymous with all that relates to the spirit:

1. The universal spirit pervading and governing the universe as Universal Intelligence;
2. The individual spirit whether expressed in the earthly environment or in the larger freedom of the higher realm.

Specifically, the name applies to the religious, philosophical and phenomenal aspects of a movement that had its modern beginnings in a series of manifestations spiritual, mental and physical, forty-five years ago.

This movement and these manifestations came unsought by those in mortal life; they

appeared almost simultaneously in the different portions of this country, and very soon after in different parts of the world.

The manifestations and the name Spiritualism, in fact, the movement as a whole and in its several parts, were the result of impelling intelligences outside of and manifestly beyond human beings in the earthly state.

For convenience only, and without any intention of dividing any portion of the subject from the whole, and without forgetting that the name in its entirety signifies all that has ever been expressed from the realm of spirits to those in mortal life, and all that has been unfolded by aspiration and inspiration from within the human spirit, the writer will divide the subject into three general headings, viz:

1. The Phenomenal Aspect.
2. The Philosophical Aspect.
3. The Religious Aspect.

The writer is convinced that this method of presentation will better represent all classes of minds who are interested in this stupendous movement either as a whole or through any one of these especial departments.

PART I.

In the presentation the writer will reverse the order by considering first

THE RELIGIOUS ASPECT.

If, as Saint Paul declares, "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," the most exalted faith must be synonymous with the most positive knowledge, and the word "faith" must have been misinterpreted in its essential meaning by most denominational religionists.

Those who accept Spiritualism as a new manifestation of, or a new religion (always using the word "religion" in the largest interpretation) do so upon the following basis:

1. The supreme Intelligence; the Mother-Father, God; the Over-Soul; the Divine Parent, or any other name or term that the individual may choose as synonymous with Infinite Good, the Love, and Wisdom.

2. The soul (or spirit) as an immortal entity, forever *en rapport* with the Eternal, Infinite Good, continuously seeking and receiving evidences of the loving All-Presence; as the sun is the light of the visible universe, so this Infinite Love and Wisdom is the light of all souls.

3. The recognition of the divine message from God to Man, either by direct perception awakened in Man or by inspiration from higher realms of spirits and angelic beings.

4. The recognition of the *Great Messianic Teacher* or *Teachers* as the voice of truth to the world.

Those who receive Spiritualism in its religious aspect are:

1. Christian Spiritualists, who accept the Christ life as impersonated in Jesus of Nazareth as the highest expression of religious revelation of truth, and who consider that, without denominational or sectarian definitions, the life and works of Jesus are the highest guidance, but who also recognize that every age has been blessed with spiritual teachers chosen to bear to earth the message of immortality and the love of God to man.

Most of these Christian Spiritualists are members of different Christian churches. There are to be found in every denominational church in Christendom those who accept spirit communion as taught by Spiritualists as a part of their religion.

2. Spiritualists who accept the word "religion" in the broadest possible interpretation of its meaning; who recognize the religions of every age as having their primal basis in inspiration, and who are willing and ready to accept the truths received in any and every form of faith; who consider that Zoroaster or Zardihust, Moses, Buddha, and Jesus were the interpreters of truth to the ages in which they lived; that the prophets, seers, and others endowed with spiritual gifts in every age have been the means of presenting spiritual truths to man; that spiritual gifts as witnessed to-day among the

media for spiritual manifestations are similar (making due allowance for the difference in the general state of humanity) to those that have occurred in past times, especially those accompanying every new dispensation or manifestation of religious truth, and are particularly similar to those mentioned in Paul's epistle on spiritual gifts.

3. There are still others who believe Spiritualism to be a new dispensation of religion; not only as a new statement of old revelations perpetuating the good in all past religions, but a new and living inspiration from the Infinite as the light of this day, and they believe that Spiritualism, in its entirety of phenomena, philosophy and revelation, forms the basis of the new religion.

Spiritualists have no sectarian creed, articles of faith, or statement of belief excepting the truth as perceived by the individual, each according to others the privilege of worshipping God according to the dictates of conscience.

There is a feeling of fellowship with all and they meet on the common ground of universal Spiritual truth.

God as manifest in Infinite Love. Universal Fraternity of Souls.

PART II.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECT.

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."—Shakespeare, in Hamlet.

"We all are parts of one stupendous whole, Whose body Nature is and God the soul."—Pope.

As religion is love (love to God, human brotherhood);

As science is demonstrated truth or knowledge, so philosophy is wisdom.

The philosophy of Spiritualism is the blending into the one perfect whole of all its parts; the union of its phenomena, and spirit, the meeting and merging of its body and soul.

To many, perhaps a greater number of thoughtful minds than most people are aware, the philosophical aspect of Spiritualism is its most enchanting, and, as it seems to them, its most comprehensive side. To the writer it is one side of the equilateral triangle of which the phenomenal portion is the base and religion the other side, which triangle solves the circle of immortality.

The logical perfection of the philosophy of Spiritualism is the primal statement.

Its harmony with the highest ethics in the undoubted elevation of purpose of the individual, and the whole human race by the substitution of individual growth and unfoldment into Spiritual perfection for any other method of attaining the highest good here and hereafter. Its propositions are:

1. That the present and continued exist-

ence of the conscious Spirit, the *ego*, inheres in the soul, and is not an especial bestowment of the Infinite or the result of contact with the human organism.

2. That whatever may be the ideas of individuals or classes concerning a conscious, *a priori* existence, or previous state of the individual intelligence embodied in each human life, there is but one philosophical conclusion, based on the phenomenal and intuitional evidences of Spiritualism, *i. e.*, that the change called death (or separation from the body) is not only a natural change (inherent in all organisms), but that it is the next step in the existence of the spirit, releasing or setting free its activities in the next state or realm, and as perfectly in accordance with the Divine plan as is the birth into the human form.

In fact that the next step or state is the legitimate sequence of existence here, and that each human spirit takes up its line of active individual life in spirit existence, just where, as an individual spirit, the thread seems broken or disturbed at death.

3. That the spirit realm includes whatever spirits are, or need, in that state of existence, as the earth state includes whatever is needed for earthly expression.

4. That the fixed states of happiness or misery are not possible in any state of the spirit expression, but that each spirit, according to growth, continues the individual activities and unfoldments, and all advance from lower to higher conditions by gradual states of progression through unending cycles.

5. That no Spirit or Angel is too exalted or holy to reach and assist those who are beneath, and none too low to be aided by those above.

Cycle on cycle must the ages move,
Onward and upward must all spirits tend,
Seen in the perfect light of perfect love,
All in one supreme purpose ever blend.

6. That the various states in which spirits find themselves after their release from the environment of the sensuous organism, the relative and absolute principles governing those states, the interblending of spirits in more perfect, with those in less perfect conditions of unfoldment; the communion with and ministrations to those in earthly existence; in fact, that the principles governing the spiritual realm and the wisdom by which that realm pervades, encircles and governs the whole of life are made known.

The *Philosophy of Spiritualism* is the *Philosophy of Life*.

Material science has claimed to prove the indestructibility of the primal atom, or whatever is the ultimate term for matter.

Spiritualism does prove the immortality of individual soul by bases, deductions and

proofs as undeniable as the principles of mathematics.

In its final definition, it is the Philosophy of Philosophies, as it is the Religion of Religions, and (if need be) the Science of Sciences.

It includes the primal and final statements of matter, the primal and final terms for mind, the primal and final principles of spirit in the eternal entity, the soul and all that relates to states and conditions, degrees, and stages of expression, all that relates to being, and includes every portion and factor in its statement of the whole.

PART III.

THE PHENOMENAL ASPECT.

This phase of the subject is sometimes designated scientific, although the writer does not think, individually, that the words *science* and *scientific*, as usually understood, can be applied to the investigation of even the phenomenal phases of Spiritualism.

Forty-five years ago, scientific men like Professor Robert Hare, of Philadelphia; James J. Mapes, of New York; and, later, Alfred R. Wallace, Professor Crooks and Mr Varley, of England; Camille Flammarion, of France; Professor Zollner, of Germany, and scores of other scientists of note, investigated the physical phenomena of Spiritualism and have uniformly declared that there is no law of material science with which they are familiar that can explain these phenomena; and that they have recourse only to the solution always claimed by the manifesting intelligence, *viz.* That the source of the phenomena is disembodied spirits working through means and methods entirely unknown in any human science.

As the result of the experiments in investigating the phenomena of Spiritualism, made by so many eminent scientific men in all parts of the world, extending over the entire period of forty-five years in which Spiritualism as a name and manifestation has been in the world, from the small rappings near Rochester, N. Y., to the various and multitudinous phenomena of to-day, there has been but one conclusion among scientific men, *viz.* That the cause of the phenomena is immanent in the phenomena, that both are demonstrated beyond the possibility of a cavil or a doubt; and that to investigate the physical, mental or intuitional phenomena of Spiritualism separately from the whole subject with a view of ascertaining another cause than that of the action of spirits, is as much a work of supererogation as to investigate the phenomena of the light of day with a view to finding another source of light than the sun.

The phenomena, philosophy and inspira-

tion focalize around persons who are called "Mediums," that being the name bestowed upon them by the manifesting intelligences, the spirits who act upon and through them. At the present writing there is no knowledge among Spiritualists as a body, or investigators within or outside of the ranks of Spiritualism as to what constitutes mediumship.

Mediums are chosen by the spirit intelligences desiring to manifest, from among all nationalities, races, classes and conditions of people. Although the particular gift or phase of mediumship may seem to depend upon, or be modified by the mental and physical or other states of the individual, the mediumship *per se* seems to be determined by the choice or action of the spirit intelligences governing the manifestations.

The difficulties to be met in approaching this investigation from a purely scientific standpoint are very clear, even if the word "scientific" shall be made to mean every kind of investigation.

These difficulties we briefly state. Physical phenomena are usually the basis of scientific investigation, and, naturally, along that line the investigation must be from effect to cause; therefore, from the first the investigation must be confined to results merely. Sometimes science arrives at a perfect knowledge of results, usually only approximately at causes. With the phenomenal as well as all other phases of Spiritualism the cause is immanent from the first, and science has nothing to do but to make a statement.

This may be illustrated thus: if one hears a rap at the door of his room or dwelling, and on opening the door he finds a friend, or any person or thing whatsoever, as the cause of the sounds, he at once loses interest in the phenomena of the sounds, and is occupied by the larger interest of receiving his friend. There is nothing to be solved. If, however, he repeatedly hears the sounds, and on going to the door, discovers no person or thing that could have produced them, he commences his investigation to discover the cause.

From the very first manifestation of the phenomena of Spiritualism to the last, the cause or source of the phenomena has been as manifest as the phenomena.

By as intelligent methods as language, signals, or any established system of communication between mind and mind in human states, these spiritual intelligences have been recognized. Invariably they have declared themselves to be individual spirits who once lived in earth forms, accompanying the declaration by evidences of personal identity entirely separated from and independent of any individual in the earth form at the time of the manifestation.

The cause of the phenomena is, therefore, so clearly identical with the results as to

make a scientific investigation, on the basis of discovering a new cause, entirely impertinent. To ignore the knowledge already gained is totally unscientific as well as illogical. Therefore, all investigations of Spiritualism *de novo*, claiming, *a priori*, that the source of the manifestations is still unknown, is equivalent to ignoring the whole subject.

Doubtless the methods of communion between the two states of conscious existence, the one preceding and the other following the change called death, will be formed into an interesting branch in the future study of Spiritualism, or will be revealed from the same realm by the same intelligences from whence the movement as a whole has been impelled into mortal life. Possibly that study may lead to scientific data upon which to predicate knowledge of the methods by which disembodied spirits communicate with those in the human environment.

Thus far there has been no formulation of facts, because none was needed, each particular manifestation being given for the specific purpose of conveying the intelligence desired from disembodied spirits to those in human life; and since the philosophy, or *rationale*, of the whole subject includes both cause and result, and since these resolve themselves into the one word Spiritualism, the subject in its entirety is before the world, and the subdivisions may be open to study.

The conclusions are invariably the same, whether arrived at from the supposed scientific method or the result of philosophical deductions, or revealed by distinct inspiration, viz: individual human intelligences existing beyond human states, (and presumably immortal) do manifest under conditions not known by those existing in human life. The demonstration of this and what it naturally leads to in all that pertains to the relation of spirits, embodied and disembodied, to each other and to the whole universe, constitutes the realm of Spiritualism.

That there is no solution for the phenomena, physical, mental or spiritual, in the known realm of science; and that, while the methods of communion between the two states are still unknown, the evidence of the existence of disembodied spirits, and of their communion with this world, is demonstrated.

Spiritualists are by no means tenacious as to terms, and the writer is perfectly willing to state that to those who pursue the investigation along the lines of exact science there is the fullest appreciation of their work: but the majority of Spiritualists, in viewing the whole subject, consider that the whole subject is beyond the realm of exact science and within the realm of revealed or intuitional knowledge.

Whatever view may be taken of scientific investigation, of the whole subject or of its physical phenomena only, it is the proper place here to state that all scientific minds who have investigated the phenomenal phases of this movement readily admit, and many of them openly declare, that Spiritualism will compel a restatement of science, either by the readjustment or the re-creation of scientific bases and terms: in the recognition of a vast unexplored realm between the realm of spirit and the heretofore recognized domain of science, whether that realm shall include a "fourth dimension of space," as suggested by Professor Zöllner, or whether it will be found to be a realm of occult forces impinging on the material and spiritual states, and interblending with each, or whether the results will prove the methods of communion to be simply the setting free of individual volition. The final adoption of either of these methods, or of any other not named, must be determined by future revelations, and in any case the new statement will be incorporated into Spiritualism as a portion of its entire statement.

Scientific minds in Spiritualism epitomize the whole subject as follows: 1st, the existence of the individual human spirit; the continued conscious existence of the individual spirit after the change called death; the intercommunion of the two states by the voluntary action of individual disembodied spirits to and through those existing in human form; by automatic action upon the brain or any part of the human organism without the conscious concurrence of the individual acted upon; 2d, by action upon sentient or non-sentient objects without the intervention of any human being, excepting that these manifestations usually occur in the presence of a medium who does not voluntarily aid in their production; 3d, by action upon all bodies and substances upon the earth or in its atmosphere, without the intervention of any human agency, and by methods not known in any existing science.

The scientific statement is the *knowledge* of a future life, *demonstrated* truth of immortality.

PART IV.

A RÉSUMÉ OF ITS WORK AND INFLUENCE.

In a movement wholly impelled from the realm of spirit and borne forward on the wave of inspiration, although intelligently met and aided from the first by many among the ablest minds of the earth, it is utterly impossible to name or number all those whom it has reached.

Societies have been organized in every State in the Union, and in all parts of the world as centers for those who have had in-

dividual experiences, and to receive the manifestations and ministrations from the spirit world; but Spiritualism has spread rather by individual experiences than by organized efforts.

As early as 1860, the late Archbishop Hughes, of New York, estimated that there were ten millions of Spiritualists in the United States alone; *pro rata* there should now be thirty millions. Spiritualists claim no definite number, and numbers are unimportant in a statement of truth. If its principles and its manifestations be perceived by but one, all the world must follow.

The organization of Spiritualists into local societies and now into a National Association is rather for the purpose of fellowship and mutual protection than for any sectarian purpose, and also for the purpose of making available the manifestations and ministrations, as well as the Spiritual teachings given through the media.

As a whole movement, the scope of its influence is measureless. Its manifestations extend into every department of human thought; its presence in the world has changed the entire attitude of thoughtful minds concerning the problems of death and the after life, and their relation to human states, at the same time opening up for investigation a vast inter-realm, including the latent possibilities of the human spirit while in the earthly environment.

It has reached the man of science in his laboratory, or study, and within its rare Alembic, has rewrought the demonstration of immortality.

It has walked into the churches of all denominations, religions and tongues; has stood beside the clergyman or priest or ministrant, and has whispered the message of immortal life, saying: "Are they not all ministering spirits?"

It has proved itself a solvent of all religions and philosophies by correcting erroneous ideas born of imperfect, human interpretations concerning a future life, and substituting knowledge.

It has restored spiritual gifts and made them a portion of the recognized opinions of the human race.

It has made thousands and hundreds of thousands to acknowledge by name within and without the churches; within and without established schools of philosophy; within and without the walks of science, by knowledge alone; and thousands of others to accept its evidence in the form of belief based upon testimony of others.

Its sources of inspiration are the invisible hosts.

Its teachers and messengers are the great, the wise, and the loved ones who have passed on.

It has opened a royal or inner way to knowledge for many who are its chosen instruments, by touching child minds with facts and data, with scientific and philosophical knowledge, with wisdom far beyond their years, and with eloquence unknown to mortal art.

It not only has created a literature of its own, in hundreds of volumes of experience and philosophy, and scores of periodicals publishing its demonstrations and advocating its propositions, but it has pervaded the best literature of the age, touching and illuminating the minds of such writers as Dickens, Thackeray, Longfellow, Phelps and scores of others with its living presence.

Its uplifting influence is felt in every life that accepts its truths, and in the whole world by making the aims of life here consistent with a continued existence, primary steps in the external pathway, and by making the basis of life *Spiritual*, not material.

To a materialistic and unbelieving age, it has demonstrated the existence of the human spirit beyond the change called death.

To those who had "hope" and "faith" through any form of religious belief in a future life, it has added knowledge, and to both has opened the gateways that had not even been left "ajar" between the spiritual and material realms.

It has removed the fear of death, and of what might come to the spirit after dissolution of the body by a knowledge of the states and conditions of those who have passed beyond that change as declared by the testimony of disembodied spirits, who must be in the very nature of the case the only authentic sources of information upon subjects pertaining to that future existence.

It has bridged the chasm, spanned the gulf between the two states of existence by the Iris archway of love.

Immortal messengers have brought the knowledge of their state of existence and have announced in unmistakable ways the nearness of that so-called "undiscovered country."

Invisible hands have rekindled the fires upon the altars of inspiration that had long been desolate.

Angels and ministering spirits have anew attuned the voices of mortals to immortal songs.

And they have "rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulcher" of thousands of human hearts who thought their dead lived not.

Its authority is truth wherever found;
Its sacred books the inspirations of every age;

Its Oracles and Priests, those whom truth anoints and inspiration calls; its creed the unwritten law of knowledge, wisdom, truth and love;

Its ceremonials the service of a noble life; Its communion is with kindred spirits and its fellowship with all;

Its altars, the human spirit, its temples, living souls;

It is the open door, the present light, the demonstration, philosophy and religion of the immortal soul.

Calm-browed and unafraid this mild-eyed, open-visioned Presence views the heretofore and the hereafter, the present and the future, with equal interest and courage born of perfect truth.

The "well-springs of eternal life" are hers, and she bids mortals drink fearlessly at their living fountains.

The "bread of life" is hers, and she bids all spirits partake freely from the all-bounteous store.

From the vintage of the spirit the wine of her everlasting kingdom is distilled in streams of living inspiration.

Poets quaff as this golden goblet is pressed to their lips and sing the songs of the spheres.

Sages gather from its open treasure house the wisdom of the skies.

Seers and prophets, inspired anew, reveal again the forever old, forever new, immortal theme.

The mourner forgets her grief and dries her tears while listening to the messages of love.

The weary find rest in its all-reposeful and eternal ways.

The weak find strength in its unhindered helpfulness.

Crime, sin and all human imperfections and shadows fade gradually, yet surely, before its all-potent light.

The whole world touched, awakened, thrilled, aroused from the lethargy of material propositions and dogmatic assertions, from charnel houses of the senses, the tombs of death and despair, from sepulchers wherein their hope and faith and highest love were well-nigh buried, turns toward this new day-dawn saying, "Is not this the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world?"

