

19
THE NEW SCIENCE.

A SERIES OF INSPIRATIONAL DISCOURSES

BY MRS. CORA L. V. TAPPAN. *Richmond*

James T. James, Halsey, Ms

No. 1.

SPIRITUALISM AS A SCIENCE,

AND

SPIRITUALISM AS A RELIGION.

AN ORATION

DELIVERED UNDER SPIRIT-INFLUENCE.

At St. George's Hall, London, Sunday Evening, Sept. 21st, 1873

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SPIRITUALISM AS A SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALISM AS A RELIGION.

An Inspirational Oration given under spirit influence by Mrs. CORA L. V. TAPPAN, in St. George's Hall, Langham Place, Regent Street, London, on Sunday Evening, September 21st, 1873. While Mrs. TAPPAN spoke this Oration (her first in London) she was almost totally unconscious of physical existence, and the matter was unpremeditated.

INVOCATION.

Our Father, infinite Spirit of light and of love, whose name we call God, but whose wondrous power, whose ineffable spirit, filleth every atom of the universe: thou wonderful, thou immortal source of light and love, we praise Thee! No other purpose hath our utterance than to give songs of praise to Thee for life. We praise Thee, O Spirit of Life, for every form of being: for the light and for the darkness; for the morning and for the evening; for the spring's refreshing shower and the winter's icy snow; for the harvest with its rich sheaves and the glory of the earth abounding with plenty. We praise Thee for all gifts of nature: for the rapt voices of solitude that give forth songs unto Thee; for the wilderness teeming with life that praises Thee with its myriad voices; for the songs of wild birds that go up to Thee in rejoicing; for the streamlets that dance and babble in bright sunlight; for the everlasting mountains which reach their hoary heads to the skies in praise of Thee; for the ocean—broad and boundless—which is ever bearing us over its mighty bosom to the infinite; for all the sights and sounds of nature, and for the

immortal voices of the lone stars. We praise Thee for the living soul of man, filling earth with the influence of intelligence and art—the products of that thought with which Thou hast endowed him; for science with her rich treasures of knowledge; for art with her manifold industries; for the institutions and governments of men, that, when war is not, bring happiness and peace to the earth—for the governments, reared upon the principles of truth and justice, which Thou hast caused thy children to form, are true forerunners of those diviner governments which are to come. We praise Thee for the thoughts of the living that vivify all time and space, and for those who, living above all worldly motives, seek only Thee and thy loving spirit; for that breathing presence which fills every atom in this room, and far and wide in space fills every living soul with the divine spark of life; for all these do we praise Thee. We praise Thee that this inextinguishable fire, this living spark, can never die, but mounts upwards and onwards through worlds and systems living and developing for ever, instinct with immortality. If loved ones are here whose friends have been snatched away, and whom they have buried as with loving faith, may they here understand those truths that shall bring them the dear ones that are not lost; may they listen until the clouds of despair and the grave are rent in twain, and the life that is immortal opens to their glad vision. O blessed immortals thronging around us here, receive our praises, and let them ascend through circle upon circle of angel ones until, vibrated to the distant orbs, the whole of the glad world of angels join in the praise of our Father.

DISCOURSE.

In the light of modern science all thought, whether that which relates to the philosophy of spirit or mind, or whether that which belongs to mundane or material science, is attributed as the result of organisation,—organisation alone being held responsible for, and organisation alone producing, the wonderful results of human thought, human philosophy, and human religion. For many years science has been at war with religion, and there has been discovered no general solvent that will bring them together. Chemists have found solvents to bring together antagonistic principles of the material world, and through that wonderful system of material science already mentioned the first agents or what we may be allowed to call the spirit of matter have been arrived at; but between mind and matter no one has been able to find a solvent which shall blend the two. Hitherto there has been no super-science—no science beyond matter. It is true that Baron Reichenbach carried on a series of experiments in this sphere of inquiry; and in America Hare and others have investigated the secrets of mind and matter; Professor Faraday investigated Spiritualism until he found it was the result of a nervous force, or force, as it was called, a force similiar to what one of your chemists has found to be odyllic force. But we must bear in mind that the scientist is under a disadvantage in the investigation of Spiritualism. The formulæ of science are learned in the schools of direct experiment, and if any one wishes to investigate he must first learn the established formula. But in this science of Spiritualism there is no formula; it has no alphabet: how therefore is the scientist to proceed to investigate it? Spiritualists must not be too hasty in blaming scientific men. What is needed is that some scientific man should establish a formula; some one learned in modern thought must take upon himself its investigation. We will give him the first lesson, and that is that for every material substance there is a super-material: you are accustomed to call it supernatural; but everything is natural—even to Deity. But super-material and super-mundane substances are governed by their own laws.

Now, some of the laws which control material substances are known; whereas the laws which control the super-material and super-mundane are not known. To find out these laws, to investigate these and establish a formula, will give a key whereby every manifestation that is known and the form and material of spiritual manifestations can be found out. Everything in nature—wood, metal, &c.—has an aura surrounding it. Clairvoyants have discovered this fact, and if scientists would acknowledge it they would have the key to this phenomenon. When clairvoyance first came into notice it was scouted by all; and when mesmerism came

up clairvoyance was used to explain it; then in its turn psychology was attempted to be explained by mesmerism, and now scientists would fain explain Spiritualism by psychology. But the super-atmosphere they attempted to explain Spiritualism by did not reach far enough; it only went so far as the laws of mind, that is, embodied mind, were known. There are two sources of human thought; one is mind embodied in material form, and the other is disembodied mind. Now, whenever a mind embodied in human form acts upon organism it is through volition, or through involuntary action. Thus it is that the mesmeriser or the spirits control another mind. Psychology reveals the involuntary action of mind on mind. Thus you are involuntarily acted upon by thought; but there is always an embodied source for such a thought. Now it only needs that you take one step farther, that disembodied mind acts upon embodied mind, and even in the light of modern science you will see that the spiritual manifestations have only to be called super-mundane, and the science super-science, to make out a formula in the phraseology of the schools, and establish a general term—and by general term we mean something all scientists will understand—whereby any person wishing to investigate will have the key in his possession. Now this super-science seems to have laws antagonistic to mundane laws. There is said to be a law of gravitation, discovered by Newton, whereby things tend to the centre of the earth; and according to the scientists things cannot be raised from the earth without some mechanical force adequate to counterbalance this physical law. But Spiritualism shows that without any known mechanical force materials are lifted some distance from the surface of the earth. "But that cannot be," says the scientific man; "for it is in opposition to the law of gravitation." But did it never occur to you that there might be some law in opposition to this law, just as the centripital acts in opposition to the centrifugal force? And did it never occur to you that by ascertaining what this other law is, or by attempting to find out whether there is another law, the first step is taken in the investigation of the science of Spiritualism? Then again; things are lifted and floated in the atmosphere without any apparent mechanical maintaining cause. "That cannot be," says the scientist; "even if I saw it I should know it to be a delusion, because I know there can be no movement of objects without cause." But the super-mundane cause steps in. Don't you know that electricity, the finest of your material substances, often controverts and contradicts your established science? and did it never occur to you that in the realms of space there may be another and more subtle element than electricity, whereon mind may act and produce mechanical results? Here super-science steps in and explains that there is another agency which produces the transportation of bodies through the atmosphere. By its influence persons are moved to write and

speaking, the organs of the body are controlled and swayed without the agency of individual volition. "But all this is biology," says the scientist. But does biology act involuntarily? and if not, has it been taught in the schools how the subject can transcend the thought of the biologist, giving the thought of the presence of departed friends when he, the biologist, has no such thought? If so, would it not be well for scientists to learn a few things they never learned in their schools, and, by means of these experiments, transcend the schools in which they have been instructed?

We have sometimes gone back to the German school of metaphysicians, in which Kant and others tried to disprove the immortality of the soul from a materialistic stand-point, and their philosophy had just the opposite effect to what was intended. Then we were indebted to Gall and Spurzheim for showing by the organisation of the brain the development of individual mind. By these labours they took us too much into materialism. But we note another reaction has now begun. Whatever services these men did to science they failed to account for all the manifestations of mind. But for all effects there must be a cause; and presuming there is a cause other than that taught, and by so presuming—because there can be no expression of thought or manifestation of matter without a sustaining mind—we are insensibly led towards the operating cause. By presuming such a cause the scientist will have arrived at the solid and sure process of spiritual science. But if material science is inadequate to solve this problem, then it must be presumed there are other means whereby it can be solved. Twenty-five years ago, Robert Hare, of Philadelphia, assumed that he could explain Spiritualism by natural causes, and so set to work with all the intelligence of the school of which he was a member, determined to find out in what this mystery lay concealed. And in order that no deception or trickery could be practised, he constructed a piece of mechanism whereby it would be utterly impossible for the medium to deceive him in any way. He persisted in his object with all the nonchalance of a man of science, determined to overturn this strange delusion. The result was that instead of finding anything in his own science to explain it, he was forced to adopt the super-science to explain these manifestations. They purported—and that was maintained—that they came from departed friends: names were given, writings were created, all forms of tests were tried, and Professor Hare became a Spiritualist. When, some years ago, William Howitt became a Spiritualist, it was said: "Oh, he is becoming old, and has no longer the brightness of intellect he once possessed." And when Robert Owen, in his old age, became convinced of its truth, men said: "Oh, he was always taking up with some new-fangled and absurd notion." And again, when Robert Dale Owen announced his belief in it, it was said he was doubtless insane. So also, when Judge Edmonds, one of the brightest ornaments of the American bar, said he found nothing in physical science to ex-

plain it, he was said to be in his dotage. But all this does not affect the one basis to which we wish to call your attention. Before you can wish to investigate any science, you must know there is a scientific basis. You have only then to consider that besides the elements already named in science, and the laws and forces of material matter, there are many thousands of forces which scientists do not claim to have discovered, and which they are still seeking to understand. Chemistry has discovered some sixty odd primates in nature; yet the science of chemistry is still in its infancy, and we may expect it to go on until it solves the mystery of the atomic world, and thus through its instrumentality lead to this super-science, and discover the one general solvent of nature which we have been seeking. But until that day has arrived scientists must be patient, and the world must be patient, and Spiritualists must be patient. Where there is no scientific basis there can be no continuance of investigation until it is so established. It is only an alphabet with Spiritualists. You ask them how these manifestations are produced, and they will say, "I do not know; I only know it requires some particular conditions, and when these conditions are not favourable, no manifestations can take place; but when they are favourable, the manifestations occur." "What are these conditions?" asks the scientific man, "and then I will sit in my laboratory and produce the manifestations." If a man in America makes a discovery in chemistry, he at once transmits it to London and Paris, and his formula gives the scientists there the key to his discovery. Or if a new star is seen in the heavens, the astronomers of Washington and Greenwich, from the formula given, are able to turn their telescopes to the constellation in which it is to be found. But here is a science which defies the schools: tables are moved, forms are raised in the air, people are made to write and act, and there is no science for it. Yet a man sits down in his laboratory, sits down without any preparation, and says, "I can find no spirits." Remember, that the mechanism of the spirit is far more delicate than the rays of light transmitted through the atmosphere, and upon this delicate fabric mind must act. This subtle element cannot be discovered by the chemist; it cannot be analysed in his laboratory; there is no *experimentum crucis* which can tell him the nature of thought or its power in the human mind. He has tried in vain; and though he may discover the formation of the brain and the forces brought to bear upon it, he cannot tell you the substance of which thought is formed, for it is through its subtle power that these words are at this moment proclaimed to your mind. But no chemist, however subtle his skill, can explain it, much less the laws which govern this mysterious principle.

But as we have already stated, patience, a distinct desire to ascertain these truths, and to establish a formula which shall answer all inquiring minds and all longings—such are the first

conditions for the investigation of spiritual science. In this light it will bear every test; under these conditions there are all forms of manifestation to satisfy the inquiring mind; and if one form fails there is always another at hand; for mind is always active, and the forms of its manifestation are infinite. Thus a new era is being inaugurated in the world of thought, and subtle forms of investigation are being made known. And though Herbert Spencer says that these inquiries will always lie in the region of the unknowable, we would like to ask him if he knows what the unknowable region is, and whether the line has been drawn for him between the known and the unknown. The causes of the formation of the rainbow were once said to be unknowable, and it was whispered that anyone who had anything to do with these forces was in league with his Satanic majesty. The same was said with reference to those who dug into the ground for fossils, or who delved the earth to find out its geological formation. But the region of the knowable continues to expand, and as we go on step by step it grows more and more remote, and it may possibly one day be revealed to the men of science and philosophy that there is no limit to the power of the human mind when properly guided and honestly seeking for the truth. It may probably occur that this region beyond matter and above mundane influences is just as tangible a realm, governed by laws capable of being known and understood, and that for every thought of the human mind there is an adequate cause, and that for every inspiration there is an adequate law and source of law; and it may possibly dawn upon scientific men that to limit the powers of the human mind is to limit Deity; that God Himself, the Infinite Spirit of boundless Nature, devised the universe, and that, if there is a law hidden, it is only hidden by our ignorance and prejudice. But we build around us little fortresses, and construct little grooves of philosophy in which we are willing to run without seeing great cycles which are rolling on beyond us. Professor Huxley thinks it is not worth while to listen to the spirit-world. One would not like to live in the post-office and listen to the subjects of all the letters that pass through it, though each has no doubt an interest to someone. But did it never occur to him that any truth that has for its foundation the greatest question that can affect humanity is not too insignificant for the consideration of so accomplished a scholar? He may not wish to read your letters, and he might not like to listen to all communications from the spirit-world, but letters can be written, and human beings can exchange thoughts and loving intercourse with one another when distant; and it would doubtless be a great deprivation to the distinguished gentleman himself if he were prohibited from writing; and if he were dead, would it not be gratifying to have a telegraph wire that this world might be favoured with communications from so shining a light? and does he not know that the question which affects the heart

and soul of humanity the most of all is, Do my friends live, and can they speak to me? and that upon the answer to this question is hinged the happiness now and hereafter of the human family. Say what you will of science, it affords means for material life and usefulness; but when death comes—the great living terror of the world, before which even sages pale, and before which science has no answer to give—when death comes knocking, then professor and sage ask themselves the question, Do the dead live? is there any proof that beyond this change there is another life, and that sentient immortal souls will meet me and commune with me there? And if there is an answer to this question brought to the world, is it not indeed worth all the deductions of science to know it? He would like a letter from his daughter or son in Italy or America. But if gone farther, and hidden out of sight beyond the veil, does he have no longing to know whither they are gone, and if in that unseen but near world they still live and love? Oh, death no longer is a mystery. It is a sweet and silent messenger of change—the putting off of the outer and the recreation of the inner soul! No longer a terror, but evident to the senses, made tangible to the human ear and sight and understanding, there comes the proof that another, an outside intelligence, known by name and calling those they loved, can come and speak to us. Is not this of more value to us than all science? And if it is not worth anything to the scientist, and if he has not time to listen to it, let him not scoff at those who think it worth their while to know of the other life. If he has not time to leave his fossils and insects, to cease his delving in the earth for dead stones, or to relinquish his fine-spun theories of philosophy, let him not carp at those who have had time to listen to the intelligences who come with word of mouth and can give positive testimony to the world—who can prove as the result of their investigations that it is true our friends live—that there is a science and philosophy born of their investigations and earnest thoughts, which has made death a myth and deprived it of its sting, by pointing out another life, the continuance of this, where all thought and feeling and humanity still abides. This is the super-science.

Is Spiritualism a religion? says one. It is not a theology. If religion has to do with the human soul; if religion has to do with the spiritual of man's nature; if, indeed, it lifts, elevates, and strengthens, then it has to do with religion; but it has no creed. It has no institution where theology is taught. It has no altars, no shrines, no priests—save the altar of the fireside, the shrine of the human heart, the priest that prattles through the lips of the young babe on its mother's knee, or the grey-haired man moved to utterance, or the young man and maiden made to prophesy. It has not institutions, but it enters all institutions. It walks up to the priest in his stole, and in the voice of a child

makes him tell his astonished hearers that the lost are not dead, but living, and can participate in our good words and works. But, says he to his auditors, this is not Modern Spiritualism I am telling you. It goes to the laboratory of the scientist, and it makes him move to its wonderful voice; it says, There is another life and a higher; this is but a stepping-stone to another sphere, but the entrance to the temple of life. He pauses, and says it is wondrous strange. Is it a religion? It inspires the pure and holy, no matter what creed he belongs to, so that the worshipper may bow under any form of service, it matters not so long as the conscience is satisfied. Seers have seen through its living light; poets have seen and have described in living rhythm the beauties of the spirit-land. Is it a religion? It makes known its voice whenever death comes; and those long schooled in the darkness of the past, when they thought there was no hope and no life, now lift up their voices and see there is life and there is hope. Is it a religion? The All-Father, whose ways we are now somewhat finding out, bendeth in loving care over his children, and by these various means, and through these various forms of inspiration, He speaks to the nations of the earth, and what does He say? That no age is without its revelation, and no nation without its divine and distinct inspiration; that all ages and nations have had prophets, and seers, and saviours, reared by the divine mind, the instruments of his divine messengers. Does it speak to-day in the churches? Yes; wherever its voice may be heard; but if forms instead of life be there, then it does not speak; it speaks to the devout in their homes, and reveals to them the wonders of the other life. Has it ever been heard before, and why does it not come to us? Oh, ask you why? Sepulchres and tombs do not possess the living spirit; outward forms and ceremonies do not invite the divine; but wheresoever the true spirit is found, wheresoever the honest worshipper bends the knee, there is the light and life of the spirit-world. Will it then overturn our sacred and revered institutions? Sacred and revered institutions cannot be overturned. God Himself hath fashioned them; they are his. Destructive changes may come by the hand of man. Truth alone is eternal. God's hand hath planted the true living life. The things of man may pass away, and be abolished, but the truth remains the same in all ages, and in all climes, and the voice of its awakening is near. It is the fatherhood of God over all the nations of the earth; the brotherhood of man beneath every clime and sky, and of every tongue and colour; it is the immortality of the soul. The religion of Spiritualism has for its assistants bards and seers, prophets and sages. It has for its mouthpiece those who are the humblest in their labours, and those who are the most exalted: the king may be inspired; the cottager may hear voices; the babe on its mother's knee may see the spirit and give utterance to its voice; the man in

priestly raiment, if his soul be humble, may see and behold and question. It is indeed the solvent of all religions. It unites the past and the present. What before was in the dark is explained now. The long warfare between religion and science is at an end; for where science leaves us and merges into this spiritual life, there does Spiritualism begin! It unites as with the key-stone of the arch the two conditions of mankind; on one side is materialism, bound and shackled to the senses, receiving only that which sense can give; on the other side is religion or theology, receiving only that which comes alone from divine revelation and divine prophecy.

You remember the French Academy three or four years ago proclaimed the discovery of a new sense. There were five, and now there is a sixth—that sixth is intuition. It needed another sense to account for many of the phenomena in the world; and if you leave the French Academy and the scientists alone they will doubtless find another. We hope so. This sixth sense comes nearly to the centre of the arch. The broad base rests on the material sciences; then come mesmerism, psychology, and clairvoyance; and finally intuition, with its fine spiritual light and unaccountable laws, steps in to aid the French Academy to solve the problem of the nineteenth century. On the other side is theology. It has age and all the respectability that antiquity can give. It has existed throughout all ages. In some instances, the spirit has been crushed out for the letter; but the spirit still lives and is abroad in the world. We know there are no end of sects; but they are every one of them true, because each one answers the purpose of some hungry soul. They are only barges to take spirits to the other world, and it does not matter much in which you embark, so long as you have the harbour in view. You know the Church of Rome claims pre-eminence, by reason of its power and antiquity; but then the Jews were before it, and before the Jews had produced their holy books, other inspired peoples had brought forth their Zend-Avesta, their Shasters, the Vedas of the Indians, and the sacred books of the Chinese. Every nation has had its holy book, and every one was inspired; for God has left no age uninspired, and those theologies which were before the Jewish and before the Christian era, even those possessed a kernel of truth. The Koran of the Mohammedans was an inspired work, and Protestantism was in itself a divine inspiration. Well, it is upon this basis that the theology of the day has been reared. The Christian Church answers the purpose of disseminating far and wide its truths and inspirations. One simple truth it teaches, and so long as it inculcates that it does not matter under what name it is given, and under what church spire it is delivered: it is the truth of God's love to man; it is the truth of the brotherhood of man; it is that mankind shall love one another. This is the lesson of Jesus in his lowly

life, and his wonderful words of inspired love. He lived the spiritual life. When this life is attained, when the other side of the arch is reached, where sense leaves off, and the life of the spirit begins, there the eyes are opened, and we have the sight of the spirit, and we can see with it. And we can behold that broadcast and as with a flame of fire angels are lighting the torches on many an ancient altar, and the Promethean fire kindles and burns again as of old in the hearts of men; it is no longer a myth and a fable. Sinai is repeated, and the Sermon on the Mount is brought home to many hearts by angel-messengers. It is no longer merely a hope, for we leave the grave behind, and the mount of transfiguration is before; the glorious light of immortality is spread out above us as with a flame, the truth is revealed to man by ministering spirits, the angels ascend and descend as of old, and once more the teacher is in your midst, and blesses you through the mouths of little children.

After the oration Mrs. Tappan again rose and recited the following impromptu poem:—

The old world was dead, with his face
Lying downward and silent, a space,
Bound in error's dark night;
Swathed and bound in the irons of wrong,
That the ages have forged and made strong,
Moaning, fainting for one ray of light.

Hungry world, that has famish'd for bread,
Ye have given them stones, husks instead;
No radiance pierced the deep gloom,
Save where, lighting history's page,
Immortal sang poet and sage
Of the life that surviveth the tomb.

One famine hung o'er the fair earth,
Like a wolf that devoureth ere birth,
Grim and gory with direful despair;
One wild longing—a pent-up, sad strain
That came forth with a sobbing refrain,
Like the pitiful patience of prayer.

Do they live? Do the dead live when wound
In their shrouds, when the cold clammy ground
Doth conceal and engulph those we love?
Does the soul, the immortal glad soul,
Spring to new life and mount to its goal,
Like a wandering, homeward-bound dove?

It will come, the bright day of the world,
Like a beautiful banner unfurl'd,
By seer and prophet foretold:
They saw, and their fetters were riven,
And martyrs sprang, heavenward driven
By flames, chang'd to chariots of gold!

It will come : for the ages have wrung
From the earth bitter tears ; they are strung
Round the brow of old Time, and he wears
Them for gems : they will evermore live ;
All things else being dead they survive,
And the angels account them as prayers.

It will come ; for the prophecy woke
The past ages ; they, echoing, spoke
Of the mystical, wonderful plan
That hath given the truth from God's home—
For Jesus hath said, " It shall come "—
The *Elder Best Brother* of man !

It is here. Even now doth its voice
Bid the sorrowing earth to rejoice.
For the lone weeping mother hath heard
How her babe, her beloved is near—
Is not dead, but doth speak ; she can hear
Each glad murmur, each low-spoken word.

Yes 'tis here ; o'er the mountains of time
Dawns the day, wakes the anthem sublime,
Reaching even the lowliest home ;
Not with trumpets nor splendour of gold,
But hushed voices, the story is told,
The bright day-dawn of Truth. *It has come !*

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