

Pamph. Spiritualistic - Vol.

SIX LECTURES,

INCLUDING INVOCATIONS AND POEMS,

DELIVERED BY

MRS. CORA L. V. RICHMOND,

AT GROW'S HALL, CHICAGO, ILL.,

Under the Auspices of the First Society of Spiritualists,

During February and March, 1877.

*resented by
James Shaw
Esq. July 19 1878*

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Freemasonry and Other Kindred Orders;

CHIEFLY

THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF FREEMASONRY,

AS

ANALYSED BY SPIRITUALISM.

AN INSPIRATIONAL DISCOURSE DELIVERED BY MRS. CORA L.
V. RICHMOND, AT CHICAGO, ILL., FEBRUARY 11, 1877.

PUBLISHED BY

GILBERT & GRIFFEN,

196 S. Clark St., Chicago.

THE INVOCATION.

OH, THOU most Ancient Soul; Thou Builder of the Temple of the Universe, who hast fashioned the firmament and the earth, laying the foundations in space; Thou who makest the earth pillared with clouds and clothed with lightnings and with thunder, and encompassed by the voice of Thy Spirit, and made glorious with its power; Thou that hast seen the rising and the setting of the suns of nations, hast builded the firmament of all kingdoms beneath the stars, hast reared up Thine instruments as prophets, and seers, and kings, placing the royal crown upon whomsoever Thou wouldst; Thou who hast seen the paltry nations go down in decay, while the thoughts of man, ever rising and rising, have brought him nearer and nearer unto Thee; Thou that hast kindled the flame of inspiration and prophecy, tracing upon pillared cloud the evidence of Thy law, and upon tablets of stone the records of Thy testimony; Thou that hast shaped the course of all living things, and o'er Egypt's wide domain, and in ancient Palestine, carved out the wonders of the new-born nations of the earth, and bade them speak the prophecies of all time; Thou who hast witnessed when Hermes rose in the East, the wondrous power of heathen deities all stricken from their places and bowed before the shrine of Jehovah; Thou who hast

seen all emblems of human skill and art fall and crumble, because men would not turn to Thee, while the soul of man, uplifted from the dust and girded round with the power of the spirit, has mounted upon the pinions of immortality; Thou who hast sent through the gentle Nazarene the words of love and kindness, greater than the written tablets of the law, greater than the wisdom of past kings and prophets, and by the one sign of love hast builded the token of Thy kingdom upon earth, making of the dove the covenant between heaven and Thee, and of the ark of that covenant the celestial bond of brotherhood among the nations of the earth; Thou who seest the souls of men; Thou who dost fashion their pathway in accordance with their needs, shaping the lights and shadows of joy and sorrow until out of the one shall come patience, and out of the other trust in Thee, until at last all kingdoms and nations, melted and merged, in Thy sight shall behold but the one temple of Thy truth, but one abiding law of Thy love, one sign and token in the sky, resplendent with glory, and animated with flame, even the light of Thy love, even the penetrating power of Thy truth, even the encircling bond of Thy wisdom—to Thee, O Living Spirit, Our Father God, shall be all praises, now and evermore.

THE LECTURE.

The subject to-night is "Freemasonry and other kindred orders, chiefly the rise and progress of Freemasonry as analyzed by Spiritualism."

Undoubtedly those who come here expecting the unveiling of any mystery, will be disappointed. Spiritualism deals with the spirit of things, and not with their simple externalities. Any order of human beings, or any class, that have mere technical mysteries for the protection of that order, are not generally revealed to the curious by any spirit, whatever the knowledge of that spirit.

The Order which forms the subject of this discourse is generally supposed to have had its origin at the building of Solomon's Temple, about 1150 B. C. Those who speak to you to-night believe the origin of the Order to have been more ancient; believe it to have had its source in Egypt, the center of learning and civilization, from whence it was doubtless derived even from the remotest Orient; believe that the foundation of this Order was one of those ancient devices for the protection of science and learning in an age when barbarism destroyed, so far as possible, every evidence of human culture, and when science was obliged to employ various subtrefuges for the protection of her simplest symbols. In Egypt especially, until Egypt became more advanced and

civilized, these secret orders were accustomed to convene, and it was the ancient scholar who was obliged to seek refuge in mountain caves, to pursue his studies in the lonely watches of the night, less some ignorant king, or semi-barbarian prince should overthrow the secret pursuits of his mind.

Tablets of stone discovered among the Mithraic caves prove a science of Astrology that almost compares with the science of Astronomy of to-day, and prove that, accompanied with the study of the stars, was a loftier purpose than that which seems to be unfolded in the mere province of the conjurer or teacher of witchcraft and magic. These ancient caves were secret and silent. Those who belonged to the orders searching for knowledge, were obliged to do so even in defiance of the ruling powers of the land, and hence it was necessary to gird around their pursuits with all possible secrecy, in order to make their movements as little conspicuous as possible, and to fashion tokens and signs by which they might understand one another.

The first that we hear of these mysterious things in Biblical record, is the wonderful man Melchizedek, who met Abraham, and who, commanding such power and possessing such wisdom, was enabled to get from Abraham that great-

est of all evidence of power, the tithe or tenth part of his possessions.

These orders unquestionably existed first in Egypt, in Persia, and in the more ancient India, where, coupled with ignorance, with tyranny, and semi-barbarism, those who sought learning were obliged to seek it under the difficulties we have named. Hence, secret orders was the usual method of preserving the evidences of learning. The origin of learning itself became the subject of deification among the Egyptians, and Memnon was no less a man than a god. The inventor of letters, Cadmus, is variously interpreted by the ancient historians as being also a semi-deific being who carried learning into Phœnicia, and introduced there those systems that were prevalent in Egypt, besides inventing additional letters of the alphabet.

All these evidences are accompanied with proofs. The historian is able to discover that ancient Egypt is full of hieroglyphs, containing not only the symbols that are adopted as the sign of these ancient orders, but many other symbols that, until late days have not been understood, nor even known to modern thought. Owing to the unequalled perseverance of Mr. Smythe, of the British Museum, many of these cuneiform inscriptions have become legible, and portions of them are found to contain the most ancient writings that the earth could have witnessed — more ancient than any record or Biblical account; more ancient than any tradition of Egypt, Assyria, or even the East.

We have in the Egyptian symbols the complete sphere or circle, which represents the idea of the infinite. We have in the Egyptian symbols the triangle,

the pyramidal shape representing the triangle, being the first evidence of the power of building, and the most wonderful evidence which the earth contains. We have the winged globe or sphere, representing immortality and its wonderful powers; and we have various other signs, all of which may be interpreted to mean the foundation of art and science in that remote age and period.

Aside from this, the culture of Egypt under her highest prosperity was such as to warrant the conclusion that to her not only Palestine and Asia Minor were indebted for their learning, but that Greece herself was builded up upon the evidences of learning that Egypt afforded, and that Rome was indebted to her for the marvelous powers which afterwards blossomed out into human speech, into human poesy, into human art.

Undoubtedly, therefore, Hiram Abif, who was called upon to aid in the building of the Temple, must have come into Asia Minor with Dionysius during the Ionian immigration to that country, and must have brought with him the evidences and foundation of this Order, and must have laid the plan of the Temple upon knowledge he had before obtained, and instructed a sufficient number in the Order to cause it to form a secret protection in carrying forward this building. For you must be aware that the Jews were at that time comparatively a semi-barbarous people, had little knowledge of learning and science, and were only held in their places by the austerity of their rulers, and the fear of the invisible Lord whom they worshiped. You must remember that learning and science had no place for advancement

among them, and that all which could command their reverence or worship was the splendor of their material surroundings, the gorgeoussness of their accredited kings, and the inspirations of their prophets. Not so with Egypt and the other countries. Not so with the wonderful Ionian kingdom, from whence the immigration came. Not so with the power of those nations that were already old in culture, in art, and civilization. These had formed themselves into appropriate brotherhoods and had sent forth messengers to the new nations, had formed gradually the approach of that civilization which never achieved a very high triumph among the children of Israel. Jerusalem never was the seat of great learning; once the seat of great splendor, once the seat of great power, once the seat of great prophecy. The Hebraic nation were not distinguished for their letters, and the songs they sang, and the prophecies they uttered, were rather the result of inspiration than of culture. That existed in the outside and more remote nations of the earth.

With this understanding, a new interpretation is put upon Freemasonry, and we must say that, although gorgeous in its beginning, in connection with the Hebraic nation, undoubtedly if the Christians had had other sources of historical information, the present Order of Freemasonry would have been much more enlightened as to its origin than it now is; but deriving its inspiration chiefly from the Christian Church and from those historians who were tinctured with the Christian religion, it was robbed of much of its ancient prestige, and the question of its origin has been con-

finied to the limit of the Empire of Solomon, instead of being traced to more remote nations, because it is evident that it is not the policy of Christianity to consider that there was any more ancient civilization than that of the children of Israel, in the height of their prosperity, previous to the foundation of Jerusalem; that it is not the policy of Christianity to suppose that any nation had achieved grandeur and more magnificent learning and art prior to the fulfillment of the prophecy of the children of Israel.

With this prelude, therefore, we will say that Freemasonry at one time formed almost the only protection of science or art in the world, formed almost the only protection for the safety of the individual, since by this bond of brotherhood the hands of kings have been stayed in their attempted execution, and slaughter upon an unjust basis or cause has been stopped; since by its hand, in the wilderness, or in strange lands, the traveler's life has been spared. Scientific tablets have doubtless been handed down to posterity that otherwise would have been destroyed by the savage hand of barbarous nations. Having no library, having no written records, having nothing, so far as the Order itself is concerned, that has ever been transmitted by parchment, but passing from mouth to mouth, from person to person, there has been nothing to destroy or erase it from the earth. The Alexandrian Library might have thrown some information upon its origin, but nothing upon Freemasonry itself. Having no written evidences; therefore, there was nothing that the barbaric hand of invasion could ever destroy, and the down-

fall of Greece and Rome, the downfall of Jerusalem, the decay of Egypt and her civilization, have been futile to uproot from the hand and heart and mind of man this wonderful system of antiquity.

It is the only secret Order of which the Church of Rome is jealous. Ever jealous of all outside of her pale, possessing as well the secrets of the Order as the power of the Church itself, she forbids the communion in the Master Masonship and in Freemasonry, because it is the only power that has successfully baffled her in any personal or national conflict in the world. We say this without fear of contradiction, since it is a fact known to all Masons.

What are the mysteries of this Order? What is the secret and foundation of its power? First, its simplicity; secondly, its appeal to the noblest sentiments of humanity in an age when selfishness and physical power were chiefly the appeals; thirdly, the fact that, eschewing all rank, all place, all position and power, it reduces the prince to the level of the plebeian, and makes of every individual connected with it an equal brother. The essential principles of Freemasonry, aside from those secrets that are purely technical, and belong to the Order, are contained in what is termed Lodges, Chapters, and Encampments. The Blue Lodge contains all the essential principles of Freemasonry. The Chapters and Encampments have been added rather as ornamental, and some of them as Christian branches of the Order. Those ornamental branches that have been introduced lately, and since the advent of Christianity, form no essential part of the ancient Order of Free-

masonry, and have rather been introduced to augment the power of the Church and to induce persons belonging to Freemasonry to also become devotees and forwarders of the Christian religion through their interest in this secret Order. The Blue Lodge contains three degrees, which the individual must pass to become a Mason—the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, and Master Mason. Having attained these three degrees he is a Mason the world over he can pass into or out of any Court any Lodge, any Order, that has knowledge of Freemasonry; can go, unquestioned and unchallenged, through every country of the civilized, and some portions of the semi-civilized and barbarous globe. With this, he is Master, having the key to that which will unlock the sympathies even of the savage breast.

Undoubtedly Freemasonry was introduced into Mexico and Central America by the Spaniards and Roman Catholic priests, but there is evidence that it was introduced even before this among the Aztecs. The inscriptions upon the marble and stones found in Central America, prove the existence of the Ancient Order of Freemasonry before any Christian civilization had penetrated there, prove that some time, out of Asia crossing either the narrow strip that divides the two continents or the land that once connected them, those ancient peoples were familiar with that which baffles learning and art and science to unravel; that they had cities and temples builded after the manner of ancient Egypt and ancient Asia, and were possessed of more culture than the Spaniards introduced in their invasion.

This, of course, forms one of the most

interesting studies of human history, admits one into those broad temples of human research which, if there were time, might afford the key to unravel many of the mysteries of ancient civilization. As it is, we have only to deal with a few other Orders that have been off-shoots from this, of which many suppose the Odd Fellows to be one, while the Odd Fellows themselves claim to have equal antiquity and that they had their origin in the Orient, and were among the first of the secret orders of the earth. We will not question this. Let it suffice to know that the same thought of brotherhood, fraternity, of protection, of symbolism, that represents the simplicity of the love of man, is also preserved among them.

Among other secret orders that have sprung up in the Middle Ages and first centuries of civilization, were Rosicrucians, an order for the advancement of secret and occult learning, who discovered almost the very miracle and mystery of life, and whose secret records have never yet been published to the world, save in detached fragments which have been handed down by students, but nevertheless who undoubtedly possessed many of those mysterious problems, the analysis of which has baffled the skill of science and art in all ages.

Modern civilization eschews secret societies, save as ornamental and social, on two grounds: first, Christianity is a brotherhood that makes all men equal, is open in its expressions and dealings, and charges you to do to every man as you would be done by. The golden rule supplanting any secret order of brotherhood, makes all humanity your brethren. If you are truly a Christian, in

the real sense, you cannot especially be a Freemason, because you cannot refuse to any man that which you would bestow upon a brother as a Mason.

Modern society eschews secret societies for another reason. Into every form of modern civilization women have steadily, constantly, and encroachingly entered—into the church, into the school-room, into literature, into art, into science, into all forms of social life, and whatever separates man from woman in his pursuits, intellectually or socially, degrades him and her. Society has declared, in its highest fruition and blossoming, that there shall be no civilization fitting for man to partake in that is not also appropriate for his wife and mother.

The civilization of Greece and Rome forbade women to enter the forum, to witness the Olympian games. A civilization which gave to the world its loftiest intellect, gave also its corruptest morals; and out of the forum, and out of the senate chamber, men flew, not to their wives and daughters, but to the courtesans, who ruled Greece in the brightest days of her intellectual prosperity. This is why the rapid decline; this is whence comes the secret power of the downfall of nations. No civilization is complete that excludes the gentler and loftier impulses of social life—those amenities that make of the highest Christian society to-day the flowering-out of the highest civilization of the world.

No woman can become a Freemason; the ceremonial is such that it would be impossible, and therefore, either Freemasonry must be dropped, or woman must enter those ornamental degrees

that have been added for her benefit — not that the ceremony is in itself impure, but being fashioned for men and by men it contains portions not adapted to both. No one could give the essential points that constitute this. The five points of fellowship are the highest points of recognition in Freemasonry, and these, of course, are only understood by a man, and pass between man and man. With this consciousness — not but what, in its simplicity, in its sublimity, in the leading of human passion and ambition, in the lesson of life, from the cradle to the grave, it gives the noblest impulse to man's nature — we say it shuts out that other portion of the universe that elsewhere is benefited like himself by the lofty sentiment and by which he is made nobler in sharing with her.

The chief reason, however, that this Order is not needed to-day is, that science, art, religion, are all unvailed. Every human being, if he has the power, has the right to investigate everything. There is no mandate of priest or king, no ruler beneath the sun, that can forbid the study, analysis, investigation, or discussion of any subject beneath the sun. Therefore, your life, your property, your ambition, all thoughts of learning, education, self-improvement, social amenity, brotherly love, are outside of the pale of any secrecy. Man is man the whole world over, and the bond that links you to a brother Mason is the bond that binds you to one another everywhere. Science is no longer in jeopardy. The nations of the world boast of their scientific attainments now, and the master or professor in the university holds a greater scepter than a crowned king. The pen, the printing press, have done

away with the necessity of the secret words spoken from mouth to mouth and you have no longer to whisper in the ear the words that will guarantee your safety among a strange people but if you can read, if you can speak if you are master of your own tongue or of any language beneath the sun you can claim the hospitality of all people. If you are not able to speak your gestures as a human being claim it, and therefore the secrecy is needed.

Those who seek Freemasonry as a means of selfish protection for themselves and their families, seek it not the spirit of the Order, but rather the sense of trafficking upon that which has once been a noble and benign institution. There are only two possible motives which can cause a man to be a Freemason to-day; one is the protection of himself in hour of sickness, or family, and the other is that kind of avarice, which may not be of the low kind, but which coupled with the ambition, makes him desirous of knowledge what it is. For the rest, he will remain an active Freemason only just as long as his selfishness, or his ambition, his personal power leads him to imagine that he does some little good by it. If he have loftier thoughts, if he be a Christian, if he love his nation, if he love humanity, he extends his brotherhood to the whole race, makes of all human beings either Apprentices, Fellow Crafts, Master Masons; he clasps hands across the simple ignorance of the technicalities of the Order, which divide the world from them, and outgrows the shackles of the Order, as many a mind has

own the shackles and creeds of theology.

The broad region of modern thought, therefore, cannot be limited by an Order which must have had its foundation the days of ignorance and persecution, when no truth was safe, and no man life had security, if pursuing an unpopular theme.

As for Spiritualism, it recognizes the good that is in every order, every church, every religion. It believes that many rites have been made broader and nobler, and many loftier impulses have been kindled by the existence of this Order; but it believes also that out of this there has sprung a loftier type and crowning glory of civilization, which exalts humanity, and that every mind, having comprehension enough to understand the ritual of initiation into Freemasonry, has comprehension enough to know that it applies to the whole human race as well; and he who reads it thus becomes readily an inactive member of the Order, but a most potent citizen of the world and member of the human family. Spiritualism enjoins so a loftier brotherhood upon a stronger claim, the claim not only of human existence here but of kindred souls hereafter. There are no secrets in the spirit World. The eye of the soul penetrates beyond the mask of outward forms and ceremonials, and unto the spirit of man, whatever be his profession, whatever his creed, whatever his standing, whatever the order to which he belongs, the spirit gives recognition, and tears away the mask of that profession. You enter the spiritual state clothed upon with your spirit and your soul, and no regalia of office, no outward insignia or title, no grip of hand,

or sign, or token can pass you through the royal arches of the skies. There is only one pass-word in Heaven, and that is, Love; only one token that admits you to the higher kingdoms of eternity, and that is, Truth; only one shield that, brighter, more gorgeous than the shield of Solomon, is studded round with the gems of wisdom and adorned with the brightness of the soul from within. There is no power that can admit you to the lofty regions of thought, in this or in the higher world, save that which is the outgrowth from within.

How futile, then, these forms and ceremonies! How worse than useless the imposing spectacle and the lofty speech! If the soul be not awakened, it falls like a dead letter. If the soul be enkindled it rises beyond the word, even into the kingdom of the spirit, and all sensations and all external splendor sink into insignificance. Solomon becomes the semi-barbarous king of a semi-barbarous people, and the glory of his reign sinks beneath the splendor of that spirit, which, calm and peaceful, and bidding men to love one another, rose above the kingdom of the Hebrew race even as God rises above the world. What had Christ to do with secret orders or ceremonies? What had he to do with pagan churches or the glittering splendors of the earth? What had he to do with the mysterious rites and ceremonials borrowed from the East, but lacking their original significance? The one all-seeing eye of the soul was his symbol; the power of the spirit to penetrate man's innermost thoughts was his sign and token; the writing upon the sand was the only symbol that he gave, and he wrote man's faults there.

They who question of the spirit must

be prepared for searching answers, and they who seek simply by external symbols that which only belongs to the soul must be prepared to have the mask torn away and the sight revealed. What Christianity has done is, to reveal to man this inner sense and consciousness, and the teaching of the Revivalists of to-day is far higher than that of the Puritan who revile them; they teach the religion of Love, and of love of Truth for its own sake, not as a question of obligation or duty. He who loves his fellow man is not bound by the duty imposed by any creed, nor bound by the oath of any order; he cannot perjure himself, for he cannot be untrue to humanity.

He who seeks the loftier evidence of brotherhood must find it in the skies and in the starry firmament, in the angels that bend above you, and in their lofty inspirations. Probing through the outward selfishness, tearing away the mask of orders and of symbolism, the spirit finds the inner voice of the soul and recognizes its power, while all else sinks into dust and ashes, and the soul mounts in triumphant expectation over all.

Gradually this Order will decline. Gradually it has become merely a refuge for curiosity hunters and a portion of the insurance policy of the nineteenth century. Gradually it will wear away, leaving the broad republic of the globe, the broad religion of humanity, the broad foundation of man, as the basis of the order to which every man shall belong. The helplessness of infancy, the aspiration and ambition of youth, the little wisdom that man has, even in his manhood, and again the helplessness

of old age, will all be supplemented by the power of the spirit, and the obli- into which the soul was once supp- to sink will be substituted by the sciousness of that life that lies be- the body and forms the greater and tier fraternity of the kingdom of s

Oh, could you see the ancients, whence this Order has been borro- not in the sphere of line and mea- not using the symbol of the squar- the circle, of the arc of the circle, more, not even the key-stone of arch; but all merged into the sub- circle of existence, all squared by sublime wisdom of the Infinite, through its interpretation, make things clear, all brought to the lev- human understanding by consciou- of the sublime truth that lies beyo- angels, archangels, disembodied sp- ministering friends, bound in the - en links of that fraternal life, and c- ing hands across the abyss of time death and sense. Is not this a n- office? Is not this a higher inspira- Does not this form a loftier theme is not the Temple of the Uni- prouder than that which Solomon ed, or prouder than the ancient Te- of the Sun, in the city of Egypt, troyed long ages ago, whose powers fled description, and whose walls streets and approaches were paven- burnished gold?

What have we to do with gems gold, when the stars shine out i- firmament, and the glorious armi- the sky are marching on? What we to do with the power of ea- things, when the glorious firma- teems with life and the banners o- heavens are unfurled before our vi-

at have you to do with all this exter-
 building, when the earth, little by
 e, rears its silent foundations beneath
 r feet, and God speaks to the atoms,
 out of chaos worlds are born? What
 e you to do when the spirit, quick-
 d by the inspiration of its prophecy,
 sts asunder all external chains and
 s kinship to angels and to the Soul
 God?

Oh! the sublimest kingdom is the
 gdom of the soul; the sublimest

order is the Order of the Heavenly Uni-
 verse, that recognizes all souls as alike,
 and that, before the Past Grand Master
 of the Universe, arraigns each soul in
 the order of its existence and pronoun-
 ces its fitness. Behold the new sign
 and token, the Spirit of Man, clad in
 the living image of his thought, and
 ranged before your vision, while the
 temple inscribed upon our emblems is
 the Temple of the Universe, and no
 man is Master, but God alone.

The Building of Life's Temple.

Out of chaos, in the beginning of things,
 God laid the corner-stone of the world;
 The level He fashioned with life's wondrous wings,
 And the banner of stars unfurled.
 And pillar on pillar of cloud and flame
 Went up, as the Logos came
 From the mouth of the Soul invisible,
 That dwelt where no tongue can tell.

Oh, wonderful Builder! To carve in the sphere
 Of immensity, perfect and clear
 The square of the walls that round about
 Have builded the Temple, within and without,
 From which are fashioned the worlds as they move,
 From which are shaped all the orbs of love.

Oh, wonderful trees that lean 'gainst the sky,
 Floating your banners so bright and so high!
 Oh, wonderful birds that sing in the air
 Thoughts and music surpassingly fair!

Oh, wonderful world, o'erarched by the sky,
 And pillared with space and ether so high,
 And carpeted o'er with velvet so green,
 And spangled with flowers like stars in their sheen.
 Oh, Temple of Life! fashioned here below,
 What beauty from thee must ever flow!

But more wonderful still! Out of God's space,
 Pushed out from His presence, the brightness of His face,
 Is the soul of man, banished, dark and alone,
 And helpless, on earth; no sound and no tone
 Answering back to his infantile cry of despair.
 What wonderful power and grandeur is there!

An Entered Apprentice each soul must become,
 Must work his way up to the far higher home;
 A Fellow Craftsman in all life he must be,
 E'er he enter the Arch of Eternity.
 Oh, God! how the worlds flash as onward they move!
 How they glimmer and shine in their wonderful march!
 And God, holding still by the power of His love,
 Clasps in His hand the key-stone of the arch.

No man can unveil Him, no thought can reveal,
 But out of the heights a new thought must steal,
 And man, ere he pass to the third high degree,
 Must pass through the gateways of Eternity.
 Oh, Angels, bending down from the dome of the sky,
 See the mortals ascending; their voices are nigh.
 Behold! when the Past Grand Master shall call,
 He shall open Life's gateway, and you, one and all,
 Shall enter the path of Eternity.
 And a Royal Arch Mason each spirit shall be.

Price, Ten Cents.

**THE CONDITIONS NECESSARY TO SECURE THE
FULLEST AND FREEST COMMUNICATION
WITH THE SPIRIT WORLD;
AND
OTHER SUBJECTS.**

AN INSPIRATIONAL DISCOURSE DELIVERED BY MRS. CORA L.
V. RICHMOND, AT CHICAGO, ILL., SUNDAY FORENOON,
FEBRUARY 18, 1877.

PUBLISHED BY
GILBERT & GRIFFEN
196 S. Clark St., Chicago.

THE INVOCATION.

INFINITE SPIRIT! Thou divine Parent! Thou Source of every good and perfect gift; we approach Thee with thanksgiving and praise. Upon the altar of Thy love, even as upon life's altar the sunlight pours its offering of glory, so would we lay our offerings of praise and devotion, of that love which Thou hast implanted within the soul, of that devotion which is the expression of that love; even as these flowers laid upon the shrine of external love, are the offerings of the praise that their sweet fragrance gives, so does the soul lay its tributes upon the shrine of Thine Infinite Spirit, bringing there whatever of loveliness has escaped the turmoil and tempest of life.

Some there may be who bring only withered blossoms, the memories of past hopes, the tears shed over the grave of loved ones. Oh, may these withered blossoms brighten again to immortal beauty, and above the life that was departed the glory of immortal life appear. Some there may be, among whom the thorns and briars of life have grown too swiftly, surrounding the spirit with the tares that we find in the wilderness. Oh, let the Gardener of Life, Thy great Messenger of Power and Truth, cut away these briars, that the flowers of

loveliness may grow. Some there may be, upon whom the outward senses press so heavily that even the life beyond death is unknown. Oh, let the hand of Thy love strike the rude rock of external existence until the fountain of beauty shall gush forth, and the immortal anthem of the soul be heard.

Oh, Thou that abidest in the flower and tree, in song of bird and in rustling wind, in the deep anthem of the sea and the ever-living voices of the stars, speak Thou from within the spirit that the voice of Thy silence and power may be known; that the enkindling fervor of Thy love may abide; that truth and kindness may strew the pathway of men upon earth, and form a brighter chain to the immortal world; that the gateways of heaven may be open, and the messengers of Thy divine love be seen passing to and fro, bearing flowers or their immortal home, flowers of love and peace and purity, and the sublime ardors of the spirit that are enkindled in that lofty abode; and even as angels that sing their songs evermore, in deeds of kindness, in ministering mercy, so may Thy children praise thee evermore, in song, in prayer, in thought, in loving deed. Amen.

THE LECTURE.

The Conditions Necessary to Secure the Fullest and Freest Communication With the Spirit World.

[This and the following subjects in this Lecture were handed up to the platform by members of the audience.]

Communication with the Spirit World is by no means new, nor are its methods recently discovered; but so far as any general knowledge of the laws concerning that communication is concerned, the world is, perhaps, as much in ignorance to-day as it ever has been. Manifestations between the two worlds have increased within the last half century, for the reason that the approximate condition of mankind is greater in the direction of spiritual life, and that necessarily a better atmosphere exists. We say it is greater in the direction of spiritual life, because the tendency of the world is to advance; because the dissemination of ideas upon all subjects is more universal, and because the average condition of mankind to-day is in a better state morally and spiritually than at any antecedent period of time.

But communion with the Spirit Life can be only facilitated by spiritual growth. Whatever be the scientific methods of that communion, they will not reach beyond a certain level unless the spiritual condition also reaches beyond that; and for the benefit of mankind certainly it is desirable, not that the manifestations shall become general, as such, but that a knowledge of spiritual laws shall become general, to accompany the manifestations and give evidence of their meaning.

Phenominally speaking, spiritual manifestations have existed in the last thirty years, in an hundred-fold greater degree than in any ancient period or time of spiritual power. Phenominally speaking, the wonders that have been manifested are such as, not only to defy scientific analysis in the usual interpretations of science, but to present for the present an almost utter barrier to any investigation through usual scientific methods, since science has neither the implements, the appropriate terms, nor the requisite *formulae* for successfully investigating a class of phenomena that depends upon forces entirely unknown to science. Therefore, those who seek for greater facility of investigation through anything that the scientific world may develop in its present state of inquiry, will be disappointed. What the scientific man does is to generally learn the alphabet of spiritual communication, when he witnesses the manifestations that exist to-day, and so far as giving any additional power to investigators, or any additional methods, he is generally baffled by having no suitable comprehension of the powers that are employed by spirits.

The present facility of investigation grows out of the conditions named just before this, and the greater activity in Spirit Life, in coming in contact with

those occult forces, and the added investigation of spiritual minds themselves; and while the rappings and various other forms of manifestations were known, nothing like an accurate system of investigation was established in the Spirit World until within the last century, and even as electricity has become here the principal method of communication between man and man, so in Spirit Life these spiritual forces have become the principal method of communication between spirit and spirit, and through that have become the principal means of communication between spirits and human beings.

As the magnetic telegraph astonished the world a half century ago, with even the glimmerings of its possibility; and as the steam power was scarcely believed when the very experiments of its force were being tried; so in the spheres of Spirit Life, the powers that are now manifesting for communication with earthly minds have been under experiment and trial, and the interpretation has become so general, and the methods of spiritual communion in Spirit Life have become so universally adopted, that the manifestations here are the results of those greater facilities there. What we mean by methods of communication is not the external evidences that you have here of sounds and of movements of external objects. Those are but the latest expression, or rather the most external expression, of Spirit power; but the influence of mind upon mind, as taught by Anton Mesmer; the power of mind-reading, as revealed in clairvoyance and psychometry; the interpretation of all thought, as manifested by those who are readers of the soul; the influence that

one mind has upon another that is direct sympathy with that mind—all these subjects have been the theme of investigation of mental philosopher who have lately departed into spirit life, and the next subject was to discover the occult force nearest connected with human life, that would make those manifestations as available here as in spiritual existence. That occult force is the power that surrounds medium and which enables the spirits, having knowledge previously of mental conditions, to adapt themselves to this occult state. But so subtle is this element, so different even from electricity, or the most subtle elements that you employ that it is affected by things that electricity is not affected by; for instance, an electric current is interrupted by the proximity of a magnet, and a magnet needle deviates from its course by the presence of any steel, iron, or other bodies possessing power of magnetic attraction. A ship has been sent out of its course many miles because of this sometimes; and the analysis of the heavenly bodies is frequently interrupted by optical illusions, that are the result of refracted rays of light. These subtle experiments are familiar to science. Then, when you consider that there is another force, still more subtle than electricity, that electricity is neither sufficiently abundant nor sufficiently subtle to answer the purposes of spiritual manifestations, but is one of the most external of the forces employed but rarely, if ever, constitutes the force that is employed by spirits; when you consider that the force which is employed must be more subtle still, and that an electric current can be interrupted

y a storm in the atmosphere; if the magnetic needle can deviate from its course by the presence of other magnetic bodies, this subtle force that is employed can be changed, altered, or in many ways disturbed by the very power of thought itself; you will consider how subtle the force is that is employed by spirits to communicate with mortals. Anger, fear, hatred, any sort of animosity, suspicion, diverts this occult force from its legitimate and useful channels.

The spiritual forces that pervade the human body are so many points of spiritual life, and anything that interferes with their harmonious and correct circulation is like the sudden interruption of the circulation of the blood. This spiritual force when flowing harmoniously constitutes the avenue of spiritual manifestations, and whether it be through physical manifestations—like the moving of tangible bodies, when the force is thus diverted from the medium's body, and thrown around the object that is desired to be moved; or whether it be mechanical writing, when the force is changed from the usual current and sent whirling through the arm, which vibrates rapidly; or whether it be inspiration, when the force is turned from its usual channels to feed the body generally, and an additional power is brought to bear upon the brain, it matters not so far as the force itself is concerned. It is the same power, and the operation of it depends upon the knowledge and will-power of the spirit employing it, and upon the condition, organization, temperament, and development of the medium.

All human beings are mediums; that is, all have spirits, all have these subtle

elements that connect the spirit with the body; and as the body is sustained and fed by the external atmosphere, so the spiritual connection between the spirit and the body is kept alive by the spiritual atmosphere. Every person is more or less inspired, moved, acted upon, swayed, governed, by the spirits in the body and by spirits out of the body. You little comprehend how much you are swayed by one another, what subtle currents of life interblend with your own, and change the actions or the thought of a day. Sometimes a poor person passing upon the street will set the mind in a certain channel of thought for the whole day; you will be wondering how to solve the problems of poverty and riches. Sometimes a person who is depressed will cross your pathway, and you will read upon the countenance the expression of sorrow, and for the whole day you are depressed by that consciousness. Sometimes a friend meets you and a word passes—it is scarcely a word—and you are unconsciously irritated by it, and for the whole day you are disturbed, or until some more congenial atmosphere approaches you and sets the magnetic nerves in their proper order again. Sometimes a thought unawares, without a word, without expression, reaches your mind—you seem overshadowed by it as by overbrooding wings. These all seem very subtle, and yet they form just as much a portion of your daily mental life as the sunlight and the air do of your physical life, which you do not see, but which you certainly feel the absence of if you are deprived of them.

In this manner the Spirit World approaches you; not far away, but inter-

blent with your life. Spirits lately disembodied, or to whom you have very strong ties of attraction, sway unconsciously and move you to some point which they may have in view; strive to aid you, perhaps, in external ways, or in some mental problem, and even guide you by unmistakable signs and tokens. Formerly these signs and tokens came in dreams, in what your ancestors called premonitions, and sometimes in audible signals, as of three loud knockings, which in some families indicate a sure premonition of approaching dissolution of some member of the family. Lately this form of manifestation has taken the shape of intuition or impression, and although many people suppose themselves to be impressed, who are not guided aright, it makes no difference about the value of the impression. You are impressed by external beings who do not impress you correctly, and spirits are no more all-wise nor infinite in knowledge than human beings, yet the fact of the impression remains the same, and the methods of that impression are the sympathy between your mind and the spirit impressing you, or some condition of mind or body by which they are brought *en rapport* with you.

To facilitate the influence of the highest spirits upon mortals, to facilitate the expansion of powers of mediumship, that shall be for the best advantage of mankind, to make certain that the impressions you receive are not only from Spirit Life, but are measurably correct, depends entirely upon the spiritual growth, upon the average standard of the individual mind, and upon the fineness, the quality, and intonation (if we may use that term) of the brain itself.

There is just as much difference in the texture of human brains as there is between the different qualities of instruments of music, and while the trumpet may sound a blast, the harp and the lute are required for the finer and more exquisite melodies, and while the organ which is like a composition of men and angels, can sound also the loudest note it is capable of imitating the soft warble of the bird.

Such is the infinite variety of human minds, and such the varying texture of the faculties employed and the organ upon which the mind itself must work that a master hand in Spirit Life will even govern the brain better than the individual occupying that brain. This is always the case with inspired, music speaking, or other mediums, who manifest such powers of eloquence when under Spirit influence, but who have not nearly so good control of their external brain as the Spirit in Spirit Life. The reason of this is, that there is a fine instrument there, ready to be played upon but that the person possessing it does not understand all of the stops, all the keys, all of the wonderful possibilities that are hidden there. The Spirit in Spirit Life, having larger knowledge and more accurate scope and power of will, can touch the keys that have been silent, can develop all the hidden resources of that organization, and make a sound of melody or a power of thought that transcends by many years of development the normal state of the medium. Gradually the normal state rises with this action of the master Spirit's hand and the true medium is truly taught by the Spirit controlling him.

Sometimes mediums possess wondrous

al powers in the way of being affected by every influence. This is generally supposed to be a deplorable condition; but, the more easily affected, the more it proves that there is a sensitive organization, capable, if well managed and guarded, of presenting the loftiest roofs of spiritual life. When you find such a medium, and deprecatingly say: "Oh, any influence can approach that medium!" it sounds like reproach; but you do not complain if your watch keeps accurate time, or if an electric battery is sensitive to the electric current, or if, carefully adjusted, the magnetic needle does sway one side and another; you keep away the diverting objects, but you do not complain at the sensitiveness which makes it easily diverted. Now, a medium controlled by almost any class of spirits, is the most valuable medium for direct spiritual communication, for the reason that the mediumship reaches the need of every class of human beings. Properly surrounded and sheltered, with suitable circles and harmonious influences, such a medium becomes the mouth-piece of the highest Spirits. Surrounded by discord, by antagonism, by suspicion, by remarks that are uncharitable the medium becomes the subject of influences like those which are attracted by these surroundings, and straightway gives evidence of it in some rough, undeveloped, or unspiritual communication. This disgusts the investigator; but he forgets that the Spirit World is not peopled with angels altogether, but with just such Spirits as are daily going out of your midst; that if his thoughts as an investigator are unworthy, he is most likely to be attended by a Spirit of the same order; if his thoughts are

those of suspicion, and are on the level of the lowest human thought, he is most likely to be accompanied by Spirits who will reflect his own thought in the medium.

So, the necessity for carefully guarding mediums is the one point which we wish to impress upon you. With a sensitive organization, one manifesting powers of mediumship, or if in your own person you discover that there are powers and impressions that you cannot account for, it is time then for you to study to be careful of your surroundings, to watch the unfoldment of these powers and to see to it that they are not diverted from the aim of spiritual life by any selfish or personal motives.

The chief barrier between the Spirit World and yours is the selfhood of mankind, the individual materiality, the outward body which you value so much and which amounts to so little, the substance of the external *me*, that all the time raises itself between you and the subject of spiritual investigation, the same kind of self that forever stands between man and man, between man and the loftiest achievements of human life, between man and his noblest work here. So, in a subtle sense and in a more usual manner, the selfhood of the individual always stands between you and the investigation of Spirit Life.

You have heard of Christians who say that, when called to Christ, they gave themselves away. Now, that is the feeling which every one should have when in the pursuit of truth. You do not propose to stand as a barrier between the sunlight and the flowers at your feet; you cannot stand as a decider between the world and any great spiritual prob-

lem. If you interrupt the current in one direction it will find out another. It is no credit to a man to lay a rail upon the railroad track and stop a train, or to break a telegraph wire and interrupt a message. Undoubtedly he can do it; but will he, if he be not criminal?

Now, there are many persons who approach Spiritualism as a warrior goes to battle, clad in full intellectual armor, prepared to detect deception, fraud, feint, or whatever it may be, aside from truth; prepared and girded round with any amount of theories; if one theory will not suffice here is another ready at hand; and this man or woman has the audacity to claim to be an investigator. You might as well call a man a friend who should come into the house on purpose to shoot you. You might as well suppose a man was in a harmonious condition of mind who was ranting and raving in the highest state of anger. He arms himself against the truth, and then says: "Now if this be true I should like to have it proven to me." Who is the "Me," that Truth shall hunt around to find an advocate, when thousands of people in the world are yearning for it? Who is the "Me," that the Spirit World shall fight a mimic battle, and engage in intellectual gymnastics with, for the mere sake of vanquishing a moiety of minds and of external arguments that are not worth the trouble? When the *spirit* needs the truth it will seek it; and though the Spirit World even approaches such minds, they are not the ones who are gathered first into the garden of truth. They must long, must aspire, must wait, must grow; and though they receive intellectual evidence of Spirit Life, they do not become its val-

uable and spiritual exponents; they are in that chronic stage of phenomena: begin to investigate, and leave off after twenty years just where they commenced, with the most external forms of manifestations.

All these things prove simply that the reception of the truth does not depend upon the existence of truth itself but upon the condition of the mind that is to receive it; and that a certain state of growth and fairness, which does not mean credulity, which does not mean blind faith; but a receptivity that responds to any power of proof, is the highest state of human investigation.

Some one has said in connection with spiritual manifestations, that there is a credulity of unbelief abroad in the world, which is far more startling than anything which the credulous who believe in immortality have adopted, a credulity of believing every theory which professes to explain spiritual manifestations, excepting the one hypothesis which does not require so great credulity; and this is the mania that is abroad in the world to-day. Anything but truth; anything but that which, according to the plainest evidences of logic is the easiest to account for the manifestations; any other solution of it, warring the world over, go out of all range of logic and philosophy. They will perform intellectual gymnastics and submit to any required extent, to explain that which has a simple line of sequence of cause and effect, and which any one not so predisposed, would accept upon the evidence offered.

Besides this, those who are meditative and those who investigate spirit manifestations approach it with

question or with the thought uppermost in the mind: "What is this to do with me individually? What is it to do with my preconceived ideas, my opinions, my theology, my religion, my social thought, my philosophy?" The subject itself has nothing to do with your philosophies; you are not responsible for them, is not obliged to be reconciled to them. That is your business. You will readily understand that if the sunlight penetrates for the first time into a darkened crevice of the earth, it is not responsible for what may be revealed there. You will understand that if the atmosphere is introduced into a room where there have been vapors and dampness, the atmosphere itself is not responsible for the emotion that may be created in the store-house of *debris*, cobwebs, must, and darkness, that abide there; and when at the light of spiritual truth illuminating all the chambers of the mind, that is more or less darkened, is likely to reveal things that are not agreeable. What if it suppose it does? Shall we exclude the sunlight because of this? Shall there be no investigation because human senses cannot bear the light of investigation? Certainly not.

Growth must come after decay, and the old shell that has surrounded your mind, in philosophy, in religion, in theology, must, perhaps, be overcome and broken, and the germ must burst forth to another life, and if there be struggles in this process it shall not be the fault, therefore, of the philosophy itself of the truth itself.

"Harmonious conditions" is always an injunction in circles. The first word from the Spirit World, if they have an avenue of communication, is "Sing; be

harmonious." The reason of this is that music, even indifferent music, acts upon all nerves as a kind of equalizer, through the harmonious sounds producing the requisite currents that flow in the occult regions of the life that belongs to the Spirit, and singing, or other means of producing harmony, is the one direct means of inviting or invoking the influence of the Spirit World. The minds should be kept in a harmonious state; excitement of all kinds, previous to the stated periods at which you invoke the presence of the Spirits, should be avoided — excess of mind and body in every direction. Otherwise you invite extreme influences. All the approaches to the human spirit should be guarded by the vigilant watchfulness of the mind, that the one avenue may be open to the Spirit World.

Seeking these things in the highest frame of mind, the Spirit World more than half way do their portion of the work, approaching you when you are unconscious of it, guarding you when you are not aware, and by admonition of dream and loving impression seeking to ward off danger, while the great growth of the world, with solemn tread marches on, far behind the growth of that Spirit Life that, like another atmosphere over-arching your world, has found the truth and is waiting for the means of its expression here.

Do well your part, so far as the knowledge is possessed by you, and the avenues to spiritual communication will not only be rapidly increased, but the communication itself will be broader and higher, and the truth received will be such as shall lead men nearer to the kingdom of heaven upon earth.

Will the Controlling Spirit Explain how it is Possible for Spirits to Penetrate or Pass Through Ponderable Masses of Matter, Like the Walls of a Room?

The secret to this explanation lies in the fact that the terms employed by science are only relative terms. Ponderable substances are not solid substances; imponderable substances are not immaterial, but at the same time a substance less dense than the one which forms the walls of a room can easily penetrate that substance which is porous. Even the rocks are porous, and spirit power or substance is so subtle that it does not disintegrate the particles to pass through the porous walls of a room; on the contrary like smoke, which adapts itself to any aperture of escape, the spiritual body may be elongated, divided and subdivided without in the least being disintegrated; and therefore this will explain the passage through seemingly solid substances of the elements that make up the spirit body.

The spirit body is material, but is, of course of finer substance than any which you have upon earth, is governed by laws of attraction and has an organization that may be disintegrated at will and drawn together again without destroying the fiber. The substances of your material garments or material bodies are so gross that if thus divided they would of course be dissevered forever. But not so with the spirit that absorbs its body from the elements of the at-

mosphere, throws off, changes, adapts itself to the conditions in which it is found, and can enter or leave an apartment without any aperture that is visible to the senses of man.

Then again spirits may be present and still be a thousand miles away. What we mean by this is that there is no space in spirit life; and when you speak of a person being in a room you of course refer to their physical body, their mind may be elsewhere. The spirit is always present where thought is engaged, and the intervening atmosphere offers no barrier to their presence, even though there be the distance referred to. You can readily comprehend this by remaining in your seat and thinking of your homes. The thought can traverse not only instantaneously the space, but you can in retrospect pass along the street, go through all the changes necessary to get to your home in your mind without once crossing the threshold of this room.

Therefore, the mind and spirit act together, the simultaneous action of spirit upon the spiritual body can effect that presence into your mind, remaining in spirit life, can influence you from that height as the sun's rays through millions of miles of distance affect the flowers at your feet.



Nature in the Spirit World, and the Laws of its Operation.

By "nature" we suppose the inquirer means that which you are accustomed to call external or material nature here. There is no nature in the Spirit World separate from spirit life. Unlike the earth and other material bodies, the substances of spiritual existence are all employed, are all governed by thought, are all swayed by the influence and power of the mind possessing them.

Therefore, a home, external surroundings, landscapes, things that correspond to the external life of earth must be taken in the inverse order of existence here. You call them here objective; when if they are objective here, in Spirit life they are subjective. If they are subjective here, which we contend, then in Spirit Life they are objective.

The spirit sways the substances by which it is surrounded. Here man is swayed by the substances. The spirit moves upon, creates, destroys, produces effects, all in response to the mental or spiritual state: Here it takes centuries to produce an impression upon matter, and then for the most part the impression is swept away by the first tempest that passes by. Those old time elements, the earth, the air, and the sky, the various deities that seemed to preside over the external universe, seemed to move man to their bidding, though vanquished by man in detail, as a general result he has produced but very little effect upon them.

All this is reversed in spiritual life.

The most material mind is the one having the least power in spiritual life. The one swayed most on earth by material influences is the one that, entering Spirit Life, is least conscious of what to do. He has no power to shape the images, the thoughts, the elements surrounding him; he is bowed down and chained by the recollection of his earthly senses and the methods of earthly life, and if he proceed in spirit life after the manner of earthly life he fails in everything; everything vanishes and evades his touch; the rocks will make no houses, the trees will yield no fruit, the garden has no flowers. If he reverse the method, if he begin within, if the life motor and life principle be there, if he seeks no external surroundings but works away at his thought and mind he will find his surroundings will follow him; they will grow under his hand; he will appear just what he is. He fashions himself and shapes his abode without collecting together a mass of *debris* and chiseling out stone walls to rear a temple. But if he think good thoughts and steadily is employed in the direction of spiritual gifts and spiritual life his temple rises around him and the atoms in which he moves and upon which he works become transformed and transformed and he is in embryo a creator.

This is in brief the answer. Of course it would require a full discourse to answer the question properly.

Is the Individual Existence of Animals Continued Beyond the Earth Life?

Everything in the universe has a double existence, that which is visible and that which is invisible. Every atom, every flower, every tree has an individuality, so to speak, which is never lost, but it always remains an individual in the direction of its existence. For instance, it is believed by the Swedenborgians that every flower and every bird and every animal has a spiritual prototype in spirit life. Approximately this is true; but there is a spirit life for them. We mean to say that the atmosphere surrounding the earth and the flowers of the earth is peopled with the spirit of the flowers; that the animals abiding upon the earth exist in a spiritual state around the animal kingdom, and that there is a perpetuation, not of the individual immortality, for that belongs to a volition and consciousness that is complete in its nature and forms the circle of existence, but a spirit life that is just

as well adapted to dogs and horses as the spirit life of human beings is adapted to them, and where the lines merge much together upon earth they generally merge together in spirit life, as the man who is devoted to dogs and horses does not generally pass very much beyond the earth's atmosphere when he passes away from earth—at least not immediately. So that it is quite true that they may see dogs and horses in spirit life as here—because they do rise above the atmosphere that contains them; and this life is never lost, is not merged in another life, but constitutes forever the subtle chain of life in similar creations on this or other planets, as the substances of the body constitute the subtle links forming the external creations of man and woman.

This, as the other question, however, would require a more lengthened elaboration.

The Evils and the Remedy of Our Present Social System.

The social state of the world far more than the theological or political is the immediate response to the social condition of mankind, and that is a matter of growth.

Tell me what is in society and I will tell you the spiritual state of society. Show me the results of any social exist-

tence and I will tell you the spiritual growth of the individuals forming it.

The evils of social life, if they crop out in extremes, prove an extreme somewhere else; if they crop out in a general inertia or indifference it shows a station of the social and higher improvement of mankind.

Every social state is the flowering-out of the civilization which it represents, and as in the intellectual period of Greece and Rome the social condition was the most corrupt so it proved that to the heart, the social and spiritual life were impoverished to sustain the splendors of the mind; as in earlier and later periods the social state has been sacrificial to political conditions it proves that the power of ambition had greater sway than the power of love.

Whatever may be the apparent disturbances, the apparent difficulties upon the surface of society to-day, the average social state of Christendom is the highest expression of the civilizations of the past. There never has been a period of time when men and women together in art, in science, in literature, in music, in religion, in philosophy could sit down or walk and talk and speak together as they do in the nineteenth century. Brokers may say what they will of the moral state of society, the state of society is better than their eyes can see and the average condition of the world is far higher than such men and women can possibly perceive.

But the evils that are handed down from generation to generation, the chronic evils of the world, such as are visible in

the criminal classes, in the classes that are generally immoral in society, must be traced to ancient customs. First, the prevalence of force; next, the adjustment of human laws for the government of man that made woman unlawfully his adjunct in many ways; the association together of human beings on an inequality owing to physical strength and therefore to physical wealth which became finally the augmented power of the world; hereditary title, the transmission of hereditary estates, caste—all these things you are suffering from, and the criminal classes have grown up in the old world as the direct consequence of this favoritism and class distinction. The criminal classes in this world are becoming less and less tenacious, because of the publicity of crime and because of the general opportunity given to every one who desires it for a higher and an equal life with the rest.

You must not expect wonders to be wrought in one century. A world which has had many thousand years of alternate corruption and attempts at human justice cannot expect to be renovated in a day. It takes millions of years to make a world—why not millions of years to make angels of human beings?

Price, Ten Cents.

THE RELIGION OF SPIRITUALISM AS COM-
PARED WITH THE ANCIENT RELIGIONS.

BY THE SPIRIT OF

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING.

AN INSPIRATIONAL DISCOURSE DELIVERED BY MRS. CORA L.
V. RICHMOND, AT CHICAGO, ILL., SUNDAY EVENING,
FEBRUARY 25, 1877.

PUBLISHED BY

GILBERT & GRIFFEN

196 S. Clark St., Chicago.

THE INVOCATION.

OH, HEAVENLY FATHER! Thou Infinite Spirit! Thou Beneficent Guide! Thou Counsellor and Friend! To Thee we turn in aspiration and praise, giving o Thee the tribute of the offering of our lives, of the loftiest hopes of the mind, of the divinest contemplation of the spirit. Thou who art enshrined within every living soul, who art the life of every moving thing, whose spirit pulsates alike in the atom and in the star, who art the life of the burnished wing of the butterfly and the aspiration of the soul of man; Thou who hast builded from eternity the Temple of Infinite Life; Thou who hast from eternity endowed the spirit of man with understanding and immortality, framing within the soul the lofty edifice of life, and fashioning there the sanctuary of worship—unto that sanctuary, even the House of God, fashioned by Thy hand, we would repair; we would keep it free from all that contaminates or makes unholy—pure and burnished, like the shining light of the vestal altar, free from all earthly stain, even like the whiteness of the orb of day, burnished like the countless stars that fill the firmament, adorning and beautifying and giving home to immortal souls; the temple of the spirit, the shrine of all holiness, the altar of immortal worship—there we would bend to praise Thee.

Not the burnished incense of outward shrine, not the gilded altar, not the everlasting token of man's adoration, but

the spirit, meek and lowly, the low thought, the kindly deed, the purified life, all these shall be the offerings that we bring unto Thee; and if there be some that bring the offering of sorrow if death, white-winged and with no less step, has silently touched the brow of dearly loved ones, and there be thou that bend in the altar of the spirit tonight with tears and despondency, let them find that life immortal sprang eth from death, and beyond the clock of time and sense the glorified soul free and untrammelled. If there be thou that bend in the soul's altar tonight upon whom material life weighs heavily who know not the voice of the Spirit and hear not Thy divine, parental, loving soul, oh, let them know that, even as in the dark the hand of life is extended, even as upon the storm-tossed wave the voice of peace was heard, even the mother bird, who presses forth young that they may learn to fly alone so is Thy hand extended amid the storm of outward life, and though clouds intervene Thy spirit reveals itself in nature a sign and token, that if they will listen they may hear.

Let Thy power be felt and known in the quickening of Thy Spirit, in the flame of holy light, burn within, and its fruition of praise be the loftiest thought, the excellence of life, the reality, the divine goodness that encompasses the souls of those who see Thee and know Thee, in spirit and in truth.

THE LECTURE.

Some twenty years ago, from his pulpit in Music Hall, Boston, my friend, Mr. Parker, said this of Spiritualism, or Spiritism," as he termed it: "This belief, without priests, without creeds, without churches, without any established form of worship or teachers, entering silently every pathway of life, piercing every department of science, of literature, of religion, is destined to be the religion of the future."

Mr. Parker was not a Spiritualist; he had never investigated the phenomena of Modern Spiritualism; he had no time to do so; but he was perfectly aware of the influence it was destined to exert upon the minds of the people, being predicted, as he saw, upon undeniable proofs, and having for its foundation the broadest scope of human philosophy and reason.

It is not my purpose to measure the ligions of the past in the light of modern thought. That has already been done far more ably than I can do to-night, and, perhaps, in some instances unjustly. The past religions of the earth have fulfilled measurably their purposes. For the age in which they were given they were undoubtedly the religions, and we often misinterpret them in the light of modern thought and science, by not being able to place ourselves *en rapport* with the circumstances, surroundings, times, and inspirations of the period in which they were given. To the Buddhist belongs his worship, to the Brahmin, his, to the Hindoo, his, to the Hebraic worshiper,

his, to the Mahometan, his, to the Christian of every denomination, his own especial form of praise. It is not my province to find fault with this or that form, to criticise or call in question the methods by which the different devotees approach the Infinite Mind. I only claim the privilege of approaching God in my own way, and after the manner in which my mind and my spirit shall see to be the best method of approaching Him.

It is the claim of the Protestant Church that man has the right to interpret the Scriptures according to his own understanding. There is no Church in the world that has given fewer privileges of interpretation. It is the boast of the Protestant Church that to man's conscience there comes a quickening voice which shall act as an interpreter. There is no Church in the world that listens less to that quickening voice, I am sorry to say, than the Church of our ancestors. Girded round by the narrow limits of creed, established in fixed forms of thought, limited in the range of intellectual observation, the Protestant Church is made a prison-house from which, as rapidly as the mind of the nineteenth century has developed, the young fledgelings have flown away. Like the home circle that is too greatly restricted in its amusements and pleasures, like the cruel parent that enjoins obedience because of duty, from which the offspring take their departure as soon as strength of limb and mind will permit, so from out the nest of the Protestant

faith, one fledgeling after another has flown, leaving the Mother Church almost bare of offspring, and the parent nest like a deserted rookery, filled, it is true, with those that cling there for the mere support of the external edifice, but much devoid of the life and inspiration which the younger elements of modern thought would have given it.

Incorporated into the Church, however, is the thought of modern intelligence and this gradually, notwithstanding the force of education and creed, is making its presence felt. But intellect is harsh in her methods, science is didactic in her measures, and with external proof and the sledge-hammer of strong logic and intellect, the Church has been battered away from the outside, instead of renovated from within.

The Materialist has made the mistake of supposing that the Church is not maintained by human beings, has made the mistake of supposing that the Church is an edifice, a something that can be torn away by the mere proclamation of scientific truth and the errors that are in the Church itself. But not so. The perception of knowledge is a matter of growth, and those within and without the Church must have a consciousness of error before they can admit or even adopt new forms of belief.

Unfortunately, however, the religious mind of the nineteenth century has not been strengthened in its proper strongholds. The faith which was the strong groundwork of the early Christians, has steadily departed before the light and the encroachments of science, and the spiritual fervor which kept alive the early faith was quenched just so soon as political ambition and external power

became the chief instruments for forwarding of the Church itself. Under these circumstances, it is most wonderful that there is as much religious faith in the Church as there is to-day. Under these circumstances it is most wonderful that the human mind clings even any thought of worship, when we consider the external ambition, the history of bloodshed and rapin adoption and support of every form of human oppression that has had its foundation in the established church of the world. The centers of power have been sustained and supported by religious bodies, and these centers of power have frequently been associated with tyranny, with ambition, with all that degraded humanity.

Briefly, then, the religions of the world seem to have passed through successive stages: the religion of material power or force, which was illustrated in the early Mosaic Dispensation, the earlier religions of the world, temporal power, external splendor, display of adornment, outward display of offerings, the sacrificial rituals held as necessities for human development. Under this light of prevailing force became cruel; his methods of development became methods of torture, and the ornaments of the world were used employed to enforce a religion of and a tyranny over the conscience of mankind. No soul was free, but soul but what was environed by the same power of material force. I could think of worshipping according to its own dictates, because every permission, chiefly from those with power, to worship only after a method, and all forms of external

ce must be employed to propitiate the divinities which seemed to hedge man round with physical power and destruction. To such divinities belonged one of the three divinities of the Brahminal worship, and to the divinity of destruction more than of creation these Brahmins gave their adoration; and the children of Israel, borrowing from the ancient methods, gave to the god of power their offerings, their sacrifices, their external tokens of reverence and praise, forgetting that the chief life must come from within, though often minded of this by prophet, seer, and sage.

The next dispensation of religion seemed a modification of the law of force, and was one of moral power and favor; but just so soon as man externally became the representative of that religion it was again merged into the law of force, and from the doctrines and teachings of Christ, who came to the spirit of man, the Church gradually degenerated again into the external form of worship and to the enforcement of external discipline. These methods were also adopted in the Protestant Church, and though the first outcoming of the Protestant religion promised a greater harvest to the spiritual kingdom, was not long before the Church and State again united in the unhallowed compact of compelling people to worship, not according to the dictates of their conscience, but according to the dictates of priest, king, or ruler; and as it came to pass that out of the Protestant Church and out of the dynasties of ancient governments sprung the new kingdoms of thought and the republic of the world. Thus it came to pass

that, accompanying greater religious and spiritual freedom, came also longing for greater political freedom, and the power of the tyrant and king, of priest or creed, were alike powerless to bind the bodies and minds of men, as was the power of the Church entirely void in binding the soul and spirit of human worshippers.

But a milder thought of religion came into the world. Overspreading all, even as, after a storm, the bright evening glow overspreads the sky, there came into the thought of the nineteenth century — there came even as early as the eighteenth century, the dawning of the peaceful religion, the method of Christ as belonging to that of love, the teaching of the life of Christ as the example of humanity; and this gradually spreading itself in the time of John Wesley was caught up by the early Unitarians, advocated by Dr. Priestly and others, until at last, from the Unitarians and Universalists, and other forms of worship, there came to be a belief in the world in the love instead of the fear of God, in the power of love instead of the power of anger and hatred, in the overspreading mercy of the religion of Christ instead of the condemnation of that religion; and in contradistinction to the extreme doctrines of Calvin and of some of the followers of Luther, there came into being the milder form that adopts the thought of the salvation of the whole human family; but accompanying this milder form came also the disruption of creeds, the doubt as to religion itself, the doubt and cloud thrown upon inspiration, the Bible under critical examination, creeds under the disintegrating touch of infidelity and the ma-

terialistic tendencies of the past century, the line of thought in the schools of modern philosophy, which seemed destined to overthrow not only all religious thought but the very foundations of that religion. Under these circumstances, Universalism and Unitarianism, though spreading rapidly and gaining adherents gained them frequently at the expense of spiritual power, and it became no longer a question of teaching religion, but rather of teaching in some new form of literary novelty the most modern thought in philosophy and science, and the churches now that express the greatest intelligence and to which are drawn the largest number of worshipers continually, are those that say the least about religion. To hear some novelty of intellectual thought, some new opinion concerning some science or art, offered in a form of rhetoric pleasing to the modern ear, the majority of worshipers congregate at most of our Unitarian churches. Educated in the same school of thought, I can say this safely; I can judge somewhat, even since my departure from earthly life, for then, upon the sole basis of human slavery, I separated myself from the religion of my ancestors, to follow the broader and higher paths of human freedom physically, of human freedom in the direction of conscience; and therefore I can say truly that I have seen steadily that this accompanying freedom of thought has gradually been at the expense of the religious and spiritual element in man.

If we become followers of a school of thought which admits the freedom of human conscience, but at the same time refuses to admit the increase and continued flow of spiritual power in the

universe, we are liable to become impoverished spiritually. Such a school sprung up among the liberal, free-thinking religionists of this age; and we are therefore, in the midst, not of a revival of free religion, but rather of an attenuated form of metaphysical philosophy borrowed somewhat from the school of Germany, borrowed somewhat from the school of Bentham and Mill, but be still more strongly tinged with the school of Huxley, Tyndall, and Carpenter, in England. Under this regime the Unitarian Church is drifting into the school of unbelief. Under this regime the Church of England, with the broad church interpretation, is drifting into the school of unbelief; and under this regime those who seek for a strong foundation of faith are flying to the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church while out of the Protestant Church are fleeing those who seek for freedom of thought under the pale of modern philosophy.

It has been claimed that Spiritualism as was claimed by my friend, Mr. Laker, supplies the need of the philosophy of the nineteenth century, while it maintains also the answering need to the religious nature of man. There are some Spiritualists who say that Spiritualism is not a religion; that it is a system of philosophy merely; that it is a science merely. I will define what I understand science to mean. Science is the external expression of a system of laws connected with the movement of external bodies, and the contact of those bodies would make that science belong to the nature of man; all external science treats of either statics or dynamics in connection with

ernal objects. The philosophy of that science is the law underlying the manifestation; the science itself states the manifestation.

Now, Spiritualism is a science; that is, it includes a science, for the reason that it has statical and dynamical relations pertaining to matter; that there are manifestations pertaining to matter connected with it, and that everything related to the human spirit in its contact with matter is, of course, included in this science. The disembodied spirit coming in contact with matter and doing anything in relation to material substances makes of that a science. The philosophy underlying this is, of course, the spiritual philosophy, and it must include not only all that class of external manifestations that appeal to the senses of the scientific observer, but also all that class of mental manifestations that do not appeal to the external senses, but belong to the sphere of metaphysical and psychological research. This branch of investigation has often been reached, at least by some scientific minds, while external manifestations, called physical manifestations of Spiritualism, have undergone the various stages of being pronounced humbuggery and trickery, and finally of being set down to some occult, unknown force, such as od force, unconscious cerebration, and the like.

However, behind all this and beyond it, I claim that Spiritualism is the religion of the world. Take away from the Inspired Word the contact of angelic ministrations, of messengers, of spirits, of angels and their doings with mankind, and you take away all there is of it. Take away from the record of Christ and his teachings that which pertains

to the spiritual nature of man, and you take away the life of that record. So with the history of the Church, and so with the history of man. Take from Plato, from Socrates, from Galileo, from any teacher of philosophy, poet, or artist, the spirit that is unexpressed, and you take the vitality of their philosophy, of their poesy, and of their art from them. The image which they give is only the suggestion of what lies beyond it, is only something to lead the mind to the contemplation of the spiritual proposition which was really the animating principle. All the prophets of science have been led step by step, not so much by the outward observation as by what the outward observation suggested of that which the senses could not reach. Herschel, Kepler, all who have led in advance of their time in science have led by this subtle prophecy and sublime comprehension of the spirit.

For my own part, had I ever experienced for one moment a doubt concerning the spiritual nature of man, or the ultimate power of the Infinite Spirit, I should have considered myself a beggar upon the earth. Despite of the poverty of human theology, despite of the husks and stones upon which they sought to feed me when a child, despite of the revelations that came to me through study afterward, the belief and consciousness in a super-atmosphere of spiritual power never deserted my mind for one moment. Calmly as an infant upon its mother's bosom, I trusted in that Infinite Power that I knew girded the universe round about, and as calmly I allowed my mind to understand that the spiritual, though uncomprehended,

formed the chief portion of the life which I lived.

The questions, then, which are most frequently asked of Spiritualists to-day are: Is Spiritualism a religion? Does it intend to usurp or supplant the religions of the past? Is it at war with, and in conflict with Christianity? Does it usurp and supplant the foundations of past beliefs? It is not my province to answer these questions, but simply to say that they suggest that which I wish to say to-night.

Christianity is in more danger of foes from within than from without. The established forms of Christian belief are rapidly melting away under a broader comprehension of the world, and if you mean by Christianity either the Roman Catholic Church or the various Evangelical bodies of the Protestant Church then they are being usurped by themselves; that is, containing the power of self-destruction, the external structure of every human theology will perish with the material surroundings under which that structure was framed, but out of these spring new expressions of Christian belief, and the ultimate Christianity is, of course, the ultimate church of the world. But Spiritualism has not only been a great disintegrator, but a revelator as well, entering the Church, laying hold of the most cherished creeds, fastening its truth upon the mind in contravention of some of the established beliefs of the Church itself, it has steadily encroached until theology melts even as rocks before the encroaching power of the avalanche which, in spring time melts and carries away rock, tree, debris, all, with it.

Now, some of the principal points of

belief in the Christian theology must of necessity pass away with the knowledge that Spiritualism brings. I will name a few of these points: The belief which is entertained by some classes of Christians that the body sleeps until the resurrection, and that the soul is in a state of probation or sleep during that time. If a spirit can live one instant, one hour one day, without its material body, it will probably never require that material body to live afterwards, and the presence of one disembodied spirit who attests that he or she lives in Spirit Life without the physical body, certainly does away with all belief in the resurrection of the physical body of man. This, of course, has been done away with in many minds long ago, but there are those who still cling to it, and to such the answer is: "I live in Spirit Life; I have a spiritual body; I am conscious and my surroundings are those of spiritual existence."

Another belief is, that there is an absolute place of torture and an absolute place of happiness. Every spirit passing into Spirit Life, who can find means of communication and speaking to his friends, says: "I am not in hell; I am not in heaven; that is, I am not in either place, according to the interpretation of theology; I am in the Spirit World; I am in a sphere adapted to my state and condition. There are stages of growth and conditions of life adapted to every stage of human thought." At one sweep of an angelic messenger or guardian spirit the whole superstructure of the heaven and hell of theology sinks away. Why? Because the Spirit World and sphere of actual existence is of more power than the belief in an imaginary or theological

place of torture or happiness. The ancients believed that beyond the Pillars of Hercules, which guarded the Mediterranean and held it at its westernmost shore, there lay a wild region of sea, of waste, wherein there were monsters, gorgon-headed evils, powers that would devour any untoward mariner who would venture thither, and it was not until some inspired mariner ventured beyond, discovering the shores of Britain, that it was believed that the western portion was at all habitable, or that there was any region there that was not given over to the powers of darkness. So, when Columbus set sail to find the New World it was the belief among the superstitious of his own land, who threw every obstacle in his way, that he was venturing out upon a sea inhabited by demons, and that, for his temerity in doubting that the earth was flat, he would certainly be devoured by monsters. Science, with her gradually encroaching revelations, has revealed the wonderful structure of the earth, and this vast, peopled continent is an answer to all such fears.

So, when out of the darkness of the past, penetrating the unknown regions that lie beyond death, theology fashioned a hell and a heaven which were but figurative and allegorical illustrations in the time of the prophets and of Christ; when out of the fears of death and out of the conscience-stricken fear of punishment, these two regions were peopled with the two classes of human souls that Evangelical theology divided mankind into, then there came a bold mariner, like Swedenborg, from that region, saying: "There are various stages of human life;" or, when into the milder light of the Wesleyan theology, there enters the

thought of the possibility of progression beyond death, and, when, confirming that, the seers of Modern Spiritualism declare that there are degrees of human life adapted to each human spirit; and, when, coupled with the vision of the seer and prophecy, was the thought and communication from the departed soul: "I am not in hell; I am not in absolute heaven; but I am in a sphere adapted to my condition," the whole region of fear and of unduly exaggerated hope passed away, and the soul is admitted into the natural kingdom of life beyond the gateway called death.

So, this voyage successfully performed and the answer to the question being successfully given, no belief, however strongly grounded, can possibly withstand the constant encroachments of actual revelation, of actual knowledge. One messenger from the World of Spirits is worth one hundred thousand beliefs. One absolute voice from beyond the grave is worth a million tones of power or fear, such as are given to the unconverted by the Evangelical Christians.

We must confine ourselves to the religion of facts, for those facts may include all possibilities in the universe, and when the fact is there we shall not be obliged to answer a creed, for the truth speaks for itself.

Does Spiritualism teach any creed? No. Has Spiritualism any especial form of belief? No. Is there in Spiritualism any established method of religion? No. Are there any particular teachings requisite to become a Spiritualist? No. What then is the religion? The consciousness of a spiritual nature in man which recognizes a spiritual nature in the universe; the proof of God lying

within man himself and not without him; the consciousness of an Infinite Spirit, Power, Principle, Mind, moving the universe, whose personality it is not important for men to know, inasmuch as the finite cannot grasp the infinite; the consciousness of an unending state of spiritual life, which begins with the growth of the spirit here; and never ends; the consciousness that the future life for the first stages is adapted precisely to the conditions of mortal life here, but the infinite stages that lie beyond are adapted to man's eternal growth. The religion of Spiritualism includes everything that pertains to the spiritual nature of man, here and hereafter; includes everything that can promote the growth of that spiritual nature, here and hereafter, and lays the foundation of that growth, not upon external belief, speculation, creed, or aught that the outward man can do, but upon the growth of the spirit itself, upon the claim that the spirit has to a place in the infinite universe. Small though it be, minute in comparison to the Infinite Soul, a place in the spiritual universe every soul must claim, and having a place, has all the rights, all the privileges, all the possibilities of any other soul whatsoever.

With this basis, the religion of Spiritualism includes all religions, admits all, questions all, and leaves all stripped of their mere externalities, laying bare the soul of human worship for the contemplation of the soul of man. With this interpretation, the religion of Spiritualism becomes the over-arching, controlling, all-absorbing power of the spiritual nature which abides in the soul of man. A Brahmin or Hebrew, Egyptian or

Christian, alike can worship at its shrine because it includes the whole. Just as much of the sunlight as you behold, the more will you recognize and absorb. As the powers of the spirit expand, the powers for the recognition of truth increase, and so the spirit by gradual stages of unfoldment recognizes the ultimate Power of the universe.

The creeds of men seem to have been convenient walls, barring the soul from too much light lest its dazzling splendor should overcome them. We treat young and tender plants carefully; if they have been in darkness, we remove them gradually to the light; we guard them by climbing trellis and by sheltered walls until they have grown strong enough to bear the full rays of the sun. After this manner the creeds of men have been convenient walls upon which they should climb, but when at last the tree is formed and the trunk is strong, and the limbs stretch themselves out gradually the wall must be taken away or the tree will be cramped and dwarfed and upon one side only will yield fruition and life. So the spirit must not too long remain by sheltered walls and barriers of tradition and sense. There is a time when the child must learn to walk alone. There is a time when the spirit must learn to know that leaning steadfastly upon the life above is a great deal safer than leaning on the earth beneath. That which only creeps upon the ground never becomes strong in its power, and the soul knows that the rays of the Infinite Light penetrate through matter at all times and senses for the uplifting of the soul beyond the matter, and not for the building up of the external to wall in the soul.

The God whom I worship, the God that Spiritualism recognizes and believes in, is the Infinite Spirit of life everywhere, all-pervading, active, in the glow-worm and in the star. The Spirit whom I adore is the Spirit that is as near to every soul as to the highest archangel in heaven, to whom every soul, whether on earth or in obscurest planet, is just as dear. The Spirit whom I adore is not the one of partisan strife nor petty squalls, is not the one that enters into the imperfections of time or takes cognizance in any degree of personalities, of the strivings and contentions here; but implanting within the human breast a consciousness of what is due to itself, makes man the arbiter of his own destiny by taking him into an eternal co-partnership of responsibility, that responsibility being the consciousness of man himself; and therefore, as a king and ruler will not enter into the petty disputes of his subjects, but leaves arbiters to do this for him, so man himself is the arbiter between God and his own spirit, and dwelling in the light that you either eclipse the brightness of or make visible to your understanding, you are at peace with God when you are at peace with the spirit that is within you.

There is no pathway that is marked out. There is no creed whereby the Spiritualist hopes to gain heaven. There is no external offering of praise; there is no formula of devotion. The only creed which the true Spiritualist recognizes is that of truth, wherever it shall lead. The Infinite being everywhere, the truth being its brightness, I cannot distrust it though it lead me through every pathway of human doubt. The doubt is the material wall which man has

built round the soul. I will undermine that wall and it shall not crush me, for I shall find my way on the other side and find the truth that is there.

The only formula which true Spiritualism enjoins is the daily and hourly worship of God by the daily and hourly fulfillment of the highest duty that is before you. He who denies this as being the religion of Spiritualism is an external Spiritualist and not a Spiritualist. He who denies that the spirit of man must be quickened by a consciousness of immortal life is a phenomenalist and not a Spiritualist. He who denies that Spiritualism appeals to the religion of man's nature in the worship of God through the highest manifestation of the spirit of man in the form, is an externalist and not a Spiritualist.

The true form of worship is the expression of praise in the highest life that man can lead. The lilies blooming by the feet of the Master in Gallilee were the type of a sermon; the flower growing by the wayside is the fulfillment of praise; it perfects itself so far as is possible, becoming the highest type of its kind. The forest tree, bird, star, and sun proclaim their praise by being the highest of their kind. Shall man, endowed with spirit, with immortal possibilities, with unquenched imagination, with lofty flight and tongue—shall he be less a symbol of praise? The praise which I demand from my kind unto the God whom I worship is that they be as perfect as possible. The commandment of Christ: "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect," is not that you shall be like God, infinite, but that as human beings you shall be perfect, as immortal spirits you shall be perfect, as

souls with immortal powers you shall express those souls in the loftiest thought and aspiration of life.

He whose actions are the noblest, he whose life is the best, he who drowns the body in the soul's living waters, he who makes manifest the noblest charity, the widest range of intelligence, the loftiest expression of the spirit—he is the worshiper at the shrine of the Spirit's temple. I care not whether he bend on knee before the shrine of the Roman Catholic Church, or whether he worship at the setting of the sun with the Mussulman, bowing as the bells chime over mosque and tower; I care not whether he repeats sermon or song of praise or anthem, or whether there be words in his prayer or only deeds; if his life be the expression of the spirit, as far as he knows, he is the worshiper, and he sings the praises of God after the manner of the infinite intention.

This is the ultimate of the creed of Spiritualism. This is all there is of it. There are no ritualistic offerings, no hymns nor praises. If we sing it is because we must; if we pray it is because our aspiration leads us to prayer. We ask no man to pray. If we give forth our expression in deed of kindness and word of love, it is because the kindness and the love are there, not because we imitate them for duty's sake. If we would speak gently, it is because gentleness is within; if we would instruct, it is because there is a lesson to be taught, not because there are words and nothing but words.

Those who teach that the Spirit Life is for the most part like the earthly life, and are contented with a mere knowledge of existence beyond death, defraud

the soul of its loftiest aspiration. The external consciousness of spiritual existence is not enough, but it is that that consciousness shall inter-penetrate the mind, shall quicken the power, shall make lofty the aspiration, shall lay the foundation for the soul's temple beyond the grave. Is it enough that you know when you are a child that you are to be a man? Are you satisfied and contented with this? Do you not daily strive to become a man faster than you can, and is not the child constantly mimicking, in its small way, the actions of the children of larger growth, and are not the children of mortal life as imitative as these? Shall we not always hold to that which lies beyond, laying the foundation of existence as we pass on, and striving for the angelhood that lies veiled and hidden from the sight?

Oh, it is not simply the existence beyond death that is great, that is wonderful, that is the miracle of the modern science of Spiritualism—the proof that has come to this materialistic age of existence beyond death; but it is that that existence is fraught also with infinite possibilities, and that beyond the Spirit Life, which is the mere reflex and addition to earthly life, is the great eternity of life piled mountains high with its possibilities before the immortal soul. If it were only a Spirit World, with repetition of the passions, the hopes, the ambitions, and the manners of earthly life, it might well be blotted out; but it is a Spirit World that is one step nearer the altitude of angel life; it is a Spirit World that is the next grade in existence, that, beyond the manhood and the womanhood of earthly existence, takes you nearer to becoming a

angel; it is the Spirit Life that is the next round in the ladder of infinite progression; it is the Spirit World that is the intermediate stage, quickening and teaching for the stage that is to come; it is the school, the next gradation, which leads you one degree higher toward that infinite possibility that is opened to your contemplation. Do not be content merely with life beyond death, but be contented to know that that life implies all the veiled possibilities within the immortal soul, all the inherent possibilities that lie in the various stages of life.

When John, upon the isle of revelation, called Patmos, received the angelic messenger and beheld his glory he would fain have worshiped him; he forbade him, saying: "See that thou do it not; I am of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus." Not the revelations of life beyond death, but the consciousness of the continued existence of father, mother, husband, wife, and friend, their ministrations and presence, bring comfort, bring aid, bring elevation to thought and aspiration to mind.

If the message of life beyond death means anything, if it means the commingling of kindred souls, if it means the continuation of the gaining of knowledge, if it means the aspiration, the prayer, that also lies beyond, then it means that for every loftiest dream, not only of re-united love, of companionship, of association with the dear ones that are gone, there is a realization, but that there is a fulfillment of those wonderful possibilities, the solving of mighty problems that have been veiled in material obscurity, the awakening of avenues of thought that are hidden by the bar-

riers of time, the revealing of the consciousness of the spirit in paths unknown to time and sense, the fulfillment of the poet's song, the recognition of the prophecy of the soul, the picture of the artist realized, the dream of the dreamer fulfilled. It means that also beyond the Spirit Land and beyond the various degrees and stages that lie in the immediate Spirit World, there is another and a vaster land, a land of celestial power and beauty, whose glory only the inspired vision can behold, whose contemplation can only come to loftiest thought and poesy, and like Dante's loftiest vision, or like the dream of Raphael, revealing images of the heavenly throng, unpictured to mortal vision, unspoken in mortal word. It means solution of all those problems that lie within the spirit, veiled and half ready for expression, the relation of man to the Infinite, the relation of man to the angelic hosts that have already soared beyond time and space, and are making new pathways to eternity, paving those pathways with the glory of their own thoughts, even as they have paved the pathway of time with the splendor of their existence here.

Oh, Mighty Hosts! Oh, Attendant Throng! Oh, Glorified Souls, having knowledge where mortals grope in darkness, having wisdom where they are blind, having sight where they cannot see, encompass the world with somewhat of this power, and make the religion of mankind the aspiration of the soul to fulfill its loftiest life; and in that life, and in that soul, and in that divine expression, may the Infinite Spirit, shining through all, glorified in grandeur, adorn each mind with something of its splendor, and make of each spirit a worshiper at the Temple of Truth.

JUBILATE.

We have need of a song of great joy;
 We have need for a hymn of great joy,
 An anthem of praise that shall ring
 As high as the fair angels sing—
 And this is the story they bring:
 That after night cometh dawn,
 Always after the night is the dawn.

We have need of a hymn of great praise,
 To show that in Time's darkened ways,
 And the dark, devious, sinful ways,
 'There's a light that shines out in the sky,
 'There's morning dawn sure that is nigh;

And we need to the soul thus to sing,
 That the bright morn with dew on its wing,
 Waits at Life's outer gate, thus to fling
 Its light o'er Earth's darkened sting.

We have need of the praise for the Spring,
 That beauty and glory doth fling,
 From her footsteps, unseen as they press
 Through the grass and the deep wilderness.

Hear you now that the pulse of the flowers
 Is quickening, and that the swift hours
 Are melting away, and the light
 Of her dawn, with glory and might,

Will waken from out of their tomb,
 From the winter of night and their gloom,
 Every germ of the long sleeping flowers;
 All the beauty of this world of ours?

Its glory, its splendor, is dead,
 And yet, with one touch and one tread
 Of the glorious life of the Spring,
 They will burst all anew, and the wing
 Of each flower will find a new life,
 And the glory will banish the strife.

We have need of a song, for to sing
 Of the beauty and life of the Spring;
 Oh! we have need of a song for the soul,
 To chant of its magic control.

Did you hear the bright stars,
 Far across the great bars
 That divide you this night? How they sing
 How they flash and shine as they sing,
 As each to its orbit doth spring,
 Mounting there on his fiery steed,
 To answer great life at its need.

Oh! we have need of a song for the soul,
 To show that with matchless control,
 Out of death, out of winter's dark night,
 Out of space that divides from the light

Of the Infinite Soul far above,
 There's a whisper, as soft as the love
 Of the hidden and sweet turtle dove,
 Speaking unto each soul here to-night,
 Speaking 'cross the great gulf of the night,
 With its flashing of tremulous light.

Oh, Soul! Thou art greater than Time,
 Thou art greater than night and than day,
 Thou art greater than all songs sublime,
 With which stars pave their great crystal way

Then out of the death and the gloom,
 And out of the dark and the tomb,
 The soul shall arise with great joy and sur-
 prise,
 Like a flower it shall spring, like a bird on its
 wing,
 Like a star it shall mount and shall soar,
 And its song of blessed gladness shall pour.

And this is the song we shall sing,
 And this is the power we shall bring,
 And this is the fluttering wing,
 That comes down to each soul here to-night

They have need of a song of great joy,
 Of a hymn of an anthem of joy,
 To show that the soul it shall tread,
 Out of darkness, the place of the dead,
 Into light, into joy, overhead.

The Spiritual Significance of "Blessed are the Pure in Heart, for They Shall See God."

[Subject chosen by the audience, Sunday morning, Feb. 18, 1877.]

"Blessed are the pure in heart,
For they shall see God."

Behold, not to those who seek by outward token,
The God or Christ whom they adore,
Were these words of sweet promise ever spoken;
But unto those whose soul doth pour
Its melody through unseen springs,
Ever responsive to the angels' wings.

Not by those, who through ambition's sword,
Or through the outward praise of Lord, Lord,
Will Thy blest name be heard — of praise;
Not these shall see His face nor know His ways,
Nor understand the meaning of His word;
But those to whom the crystal light has come
From some source all unseen, from Heaven's home.

What is it thus to see? Are these blind eyes
The avenues alone of the soul's sight?
Must you grope on with dark and mad surprise,
Expecting God in this your outward night?
And shall you see Him with chariot of gold,
And all the heavenly host of power untold —
See with blind senses that cannot behold
Even the air that makes your life below?
See Him with outward expectation here, as though
To gird you from above and from below,
You all of God might with your body know?

No, the soul's vision is, what e'er by the truth of God,
Revealed through atmospheres so clear and sparkling,
Where those souls have trod,
That not a thought is by earth-mist concealed;
The sheen of that transparency that lies
Around the soul, waking with glad surprise
To know that all the dark of earth below
Was but a shadow, and that your sight here
Was the veiled darkness of Heaven's atmosphere.

Shall see God? Yes. Not love nor truth alone,
Nor all the power that circles 'round the soul,
But its transparency, by which 't is known
That Heaven sways with its sublime control.
These are the pure in heart, and these shall see
With the soul's vision, God eternally.

Price, Ten Cents.

FURTHER EVIDENCES OF THE LOVE OF GOD.

BY THE SPIRIT OF

GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

*Being a Summary, in Part, of the Prior Lecture, "Come to Jesus,"
and Delivered by Request.*

AN INSPIRATIONAL DISCOURSE DELIVERED BY MRS. CORA L
V. RICHMOND, AT CHICAGO, ILL., SUNDAY EVENING,
FEBRUARY 18, 1877.

PUBLISHED BY

GILBERT & GRIFFEN

196 S. Clark St., Chicago.

THE INVOCATION.

OUR FATHER, Thou Divine Parent, Thou to whom we must ever turn for light and love, Thou whose Infinite Spirit pervading all space abides in time and in eternity, but whose person no man can behold; Thou light of the stars, Thou resplendent flame of immortality, to Thee we turn evermore. Guide us with Thy love, uplift us with Thy voice, make clear the pathway of Thy truth before us. In time past Thou hast reared up the prophets of Thy word; Thou hast given the evidence of Thy power; Thou hast spoken the word of salvation. Man, wandering from that path, has striven by perversion to lead mankind afar from Thee. Oh, let us come near to Thee, even to that shrine and altar of love that is in the spirit, even to that truth and life that is the salvation of the soul. Let men no longer fear death; rather let them fear that death which is upon their spirits in the turbid stream of outward life; rather let them fear the morbid ambition, the deadly shaft of envy and hatred, of pride and scorn; rather let them fear the death in life which knows no wakening of the soul, but believes that the immortal spirit lies slumbering forever beneath the sod.

Oh, Thou quickener of the vital flame;

Oh, Thou immortal awakener of the soul, clothe us with the immortal pinions of Thy thought; gird round with lightning flame the souls of those that are incarcerated in the dust, and let them be conscious of that eternal life that beyond fear and above terror and above the dross of earth, is kindled with immortality. Oh, let the ministering spirit of Thy grace descend, stirring the turbid waters of material life, and quenching the unwholesome flame of fear. Let no one dream of immortality because of terror, but let them know that above and beyond, the glorious life of the spirit unfurls its pinions through the awakening power of love alone, and that the majesty of truth survives even above human discord, turmoil, and tempest.

Oh, Thou Life, Thou Light, to whom even Jesus turned for guidance, and who gave him word of inspiration and of man love; our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as done in heaven; give us each day daily bread, and forgive us our debt, we forgive our debtors; lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

THE LECTURE.

To-night my theme is "Further Evidences of the Love of God." A few weeks ago I spoke in this place on the words, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." To-night my text is: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another."

For the benefit of those who were not present two weeks ago, I will recapitulate in a few moments the substance of what I said at that time.

I said that the plan of Christian salvation was either true or false; that if true — if man was created in the image of God in the beginning, if from that image and perfection he fell, and through that fall salvation was denied him, if God, seeing the need of His fallen children, sent His only begotten son, the Redeemer, Lord Jesus Christ, to save mankind, and that upon Calvary this son was slain, by the shedding of whose blood mankind are to be saved; and if a knowledge of salvation depends upon the knowledge of Christ and a belief that in his atoning blood is the way of grace; if, without that knowledge and without that belief, the soul is destined to an immortal terror and punishment, and the sinful and the heathen, those that believe not in Christ, are to be consumed forever in burning fire — I said then, and I say now, and I believed in my earthly life, that no human tongue,

no thousand voices, no millions of lives were adequate to express sufficiently to humanity the importance of that truth. I said then, and I say now, that I believed this in my earthly life, that my whole existence was centered in the truth of this proposition. That I believed intrinsically in the merits of the theology of the Christian Church, and that I undertook not to explain it, but to expound it, not to satisfy reason but to express my convictions, not to accept any diluted form of faith, as my friend Mr. Wesley did, but to believe in the entirety of the Christian problem, and enforce that problem upon humanity.

I believe that I fulfilled my effort in that direction. My convictions were strong and my sympathies were stronger. To my mind every human being was an immortal spirit, upon the verge of hell. To my imagination every unbeliever had one foot in the burning fire; to my mind every unconverted Christian was food for the immortal flame and for the tempting wiles of Satan. Could I refrain? Could I withhold my voice? Could I be expected to be silent, with the consciousness of this upon my mind?

I entered Spirit Life after a ministration which some of you may know of. I expected to see my Savior. I believed that I should be admitted to heaven. I realized that I was, perhaps, worthy by my ministrations for others. I did not find Christ; I did not enter the heaven which I had pictured. I saw no pictured

city, and no central throne of power too dazzling for eyes to behold. I beheld none of the things which, to my mind, constituted the image of that heavenly sanctuary. The New Jerusalem has not come to me, I said. Was I then in hell? No. I was possessed of every faculty of mind. I was endowed with as much sympathy and understanding, I believed myself as devout a Christian as before; but I was dead to the earth, and I had not awakened in heaven. Where was I?

Moving masses of spirits were around me, like myself unknowing where they were, wondering, calling for their Shepherd. I said, "The Shepherd will surely come; we shall not remain long waiting; perhaps this is only a temporary testing of our faith; we shall see him and hear his voice, and be admitted to the glory that we certainly have believed in." It was not so. He did not come. The Savior appeared not in person, as we had been taught to believe, and these who were around me asked me to minister to their spiritual wants. How could I minister who had not the fulfillment of my faith? How could I teach them, who did not know what to say, here on the borders of eternity, having passed beyond the grave? What new light could I give who had not seen the light of my immortal inheritance?

In this doubt I was waited upon by a shining spirit, evidently one in advance of my state. I asked almost immediately where was heaven, where was Christ, where were the redeemed. He said: "Heaven is within you; Christ is the truth made manifest in you; the redeemed are those who are saved by that truth." Then I said: "Is the plan of salvation untrue?" He wished me to

wait, and said that he would reveal it by and by; that I should know more after I had been in Spirit Life longer. I could not wait. The one burning desire of my soul was to know if the world was saved by the shedding of Christ's blood and if we were to be redeemed and received into the kingdom of heaven by our faith in that. Then the monitor who had come to me said: "You are not saved by the sacrificial shedding of blood. There is no virtue in the Calvary of theology. The salvation of the spirit does not depend upon the creed, the catechism, the articles of faith, or any method which has been externally adopted for human salvation."

Bewildered, stunned, stricken, as it seemed to me, and for the moment I thought I had been deceived, robbed of the rightful inheritance of my years upon earth, robbed of the time, the effort, the power expended in teaching that which this spirit — and he appeared to my eyes an angel of light, though I saw in his stern visage one whom I had known and refused to associate with theologically upon earth — now told me was false. This spirit was seemingly truthful; he seemingly revealed to me that which he knew.

I waited in a state of darkness. I asked for no greater hell than that which I experienced for a period of time which I cannot measure by years, but which was told afterward by my friends only lasted for a few moments; a hell of doubt and uncertainty, a turmoil of unbelief swept over me, piercing all the sacred memories and images, tearing away the shrine of religion and leaving me in the utter sea of oblivion. "Tell me, then, what is truth?"

"Truth," said my friend, "is of gradual growth. The dawning of it in the mind depends upon the condition of the mind to receive it. You are now in despair; the light of truth will come to you when you recover your self-possession." How was I to recover? I saw persons around me seemingly as much in darkness as myself concerning the true meaning of salvation. They had not found that heaven they had expected to be there. Many of them had been those whom I had led to the way of salvation. Many were searching for the Redeemer; many were praying that their souls might not be lost by any effort or any deed of outward life.

I commenced to unteach them. I commenced to tell them that the blood of Christ was not the redeeming grace; I commenced to tell them that the power of the atoning virtues of Calvary was not true. Then they said: "What is true?" and the darkness that settled upon my mind was deeper and deeper, until I felt myself inadequate to cope with any communion of any living being. Exiled, self-banished, I seemed to wander for a time in a dreary waste that was made of my own doubt and disappointment, and then at last there came the consciousness of the words that I have just uttered: "A new commandment I give unto you: that ye love one another." The life of Christ came up before me in magnified beauty. The death of Christ sank away into obscurity, as one of those sacrifices upon the altar of truth. The life of Christ in the three years of his ministration seemed to me like a shining scroll handed down from heaven, wherein I traced the very recorded words spoken by him, with a

new and interpreted meaning, with a meaning born seemingly of the spirit. With the power and fervor of an added devotion I clung to each word in memory until I seemed to unravel its hidden mystery.

Then it was not the death, it was not the power of sacrifice, it was not the redeeming grace of the atonement; but the life of Christ that was to teach the truth to mankind. No sooner had this thought dawned upon my mind than I became again aware of the presence of my benign friend and teacher. His message to me this time was: "The new life which your soul has found is the new gospel. Preach this to the spirits in prison."

I needed no admonition. Straightway to all the souls that I saw around me, hesitating, praying, some of them in despair, some in doubt, some searching in vain for the Christ which they had followed, I spoke the words which would unlock the prison doors of their understanding. What were those words? So simple that I wondered that, even in my earthly life, there was no angel hand to write them upon the tablets of my understanding; so simple that I wonder now, hedged round by theological creeds, that ministers of the gospel do not read. It was this: "The redemption which Christ brought was the redemption of each individual soul through the awakening of that soul to the spirit of truth, and that spirit of truth constituted the salvation that he brought. In contradistinction to the law of Moses, it was the law of love; in contradistinction to the law of hate and justice, it was the law of mercy and of power; and so searching was his ministration upon this

subject that it was not simply the fulfillment of the law, but that the mind and thought should be accurate, the spirit itself alive and aware, and that no repentance would suffice unless that repentance were accompanied by good works. So distinct was the teaching of Christ from that which had preceded him, that which had been the doctrine of the sacrifice, of the shedding of the innocent blood of doves and lambs, of the sacrificial ritual among the Hebrews, that he gave the life of man, the *ego*, the individual spirit, the power of salvation by its own comprehension of truth. Oh, then there came with ever-quickenng speed, thought after thought of the searching sentences which he hurled forth among Jew and Gentile, Scribe and Pharisee and Apostle, showing that their hearts must be changed ere the light of truth or of salvation could permeate, showing that, not only the fulfillment of the literal law was necessary, but that "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods; thou shalt not desire the wrong to be done to thy neighbor; thou shalt not even *think* wrongfully." These were the meanings of Christ's words; and when the new life and Christian thought pervaded me, I then asked for an analysis of the error into which theology had fallen in adopting the external plan of salvation instead of the spiritual.

And was Christ the son of God? Christ was the son of God, the elder brother of mankind. In external form, he was man; in spirit, he was the expression of the Spirit of Truth through the form of man. How simple, then, and how strange and amazing the wonderful *sophism* of theology, which wove

around the form of this simple Nazarene the wonderful mystery of salvation, the miracle of Christ's words telling a simple truth which constitutes the whole life of salvation.

Then a consciousness that the epochs of 'spiritual growth' have something to do with the appearance of these teachers and messiahs, dawned upon me; for my life work seemed to me a failure that which I had taught to the people; the earth seemed to me an error. I said, "Is there no way that I can undo this teaching? All, or nearly all that believe under my ministrations were before me. I could teach them at least of this era. Is there no voice that can reach humanity?" "Wait," said my monitor, "until the appointed time. Fulfill the work that is here before you." By hundreds by thousands, by hundreds of thousands, I taught. My voice or thought had power to penetrate all surrounding spheres of those that were held in their theological bondage, the bondage of the outward salvation of man's soul through fear. I taught them of the love of God; I taught them of the love of truth; I taught them of redemption through the individual growth of the spirit; I taught them that the power of salvation was within themselves and rested between them and God; that that salvation meant the outgrowing of all that is narrow and selfish and worldly and material and the comprehension of all that is lovely, good, and beautiful. I beheld as my mind became more and more illumined, that the sunlight of truth is like an everlasting central flame, round which souls move, drawn near and nearer; they become more and more awake to its brightness, and that no conscious

ness of fear or terror, no appeal to the paltry love of individual salvation, will make the slightest impression upon the immortal soul. I taught them to cease thinking of themselves, to cease to care whether they were individually saved or not, to do that which was highest and best, to consider the right regardless of consequences, and accept truth, whatever it might be.

Out of the mists of their state and out of the previous darkness of my own I could see gradually a brighter dawn awakening. As even in the mountains, when the morning sun shines with splendor and the glorious curtains of the day seem to drape themselves around the mountain and in beautiful folds shape themselves to the dawning of the light, so the mists of darkness, the fears, the thralldom, the terror, rose from the minds of those whom I had bound by theological dogma, and shaped themselves into pillared clouds, into arches of beauty above us, and instead of the darkened atmosphere of doubt, they began to feel more and more the light of truth.

The awakening of the soul from the fear of death is something. It is this that Spiritualism is working in the world to-day; but the awakening of the soul from the fear of hell is a thousand times more a morning of creation. Oh, I could say, so that the voice of my spirit might be heard through millions of stars if need be, that there is no hell greater than that which men have within their own souls; I could shout, so that all churches might tremble in their foundations and the steeples might give forth clamor greater than the ringing of bells, that there is no condemnation in

the world of infinite spirits greater than that which comes to the conscience of man when he is aware of his own shortcomings. Could you have seen me in the little time that I was in hell, in the hell of doubt, in the hell of trouble, and in the hell of darkness, concerning my theological belief, ah, you would have coveted no place of endless torment for your enemy, but would have said: "Let him be as that man is."

External fire? Why, the martyrs have endured external flame. It would consume but the dross. But what is that flame that the awakened spirit feels when aware of each one of the imperfections of the mind, that stand out, to the consciousness, in glaring colors of relief until they seem to fill the universe, and until the eyes of God and the angels seem all intent with gazing upon them; yet they do not gaze; only the soul of the individual spirit gazes, until by that sight and vision, the event, the imperfection, is scourged away; until by the lash of that flame of consciousness the imperfection is worn and worn out, and the soul resumes its former place and the functions of the spirit again flow on.

Oh, I have seen hell. It is not the Gehenna, the hell-fire that was outside the gates of Jerusalem, into which malefactors were plunged, and which our Teacher and Master referred to as a spiritual symbol; it is not the perpetual lake of fire that it was supposed was kindled for those who are to be eternally consumed; but it is a perpetual law of right and wrong, into which, as into the gateway or pathway of the unerring Nemesis, the soul must enter some time on its eternal journey. I may be there

to-day; you may be there to-morrow; our friend may be there some other day. The fires of that consuming law burn and burn forever, until imperfection is scorched away. No soul remains in it forever, but the light of that unquenchable flame remains; no literal flame, but the flame of the spirit, which is more subtle than the lightning shaft, and which itself feeds its own fires until the dross of the spirit is consumed.

I have seen heaven; but it is not the pictured image that rose before my mind when I taught the salvation of the redeemed; it is not the walled and girdled city, set round with glowing gems, and set apart for those who were saved—for the few that were heirs to the salvation of Christ. I have seen heaven; but it was not the shining throne of dazzling light, nor the splendor of cherubim and seraphim, nor the glory of the harps, nor the shining raiment of the redeemed; but it was the blessed, the beatified, the glorified state of the spirit and angelic soul, freed from all selfishness and all earthly stain, presiding and abiding in the midst of other kindred souls and moving through the starry firmament, with words of truth and thoughts of mercy.

Oh, take away the walls of your fabled city, and take the kingdom of heaven that Christ taught. Take away the New Jerusalem as a literal thing, and supplant it with the spiritual kingdom that is the abiding light of the soul. I have seen that kingdom upon earth; I have bended over the minds of those upon earth, in whom there was no fear of death, no terror of immortal punishment, no selfishness nor pride, no earthly allurements of ambition nor stain of

materiality, and I have seen that, like a steadfast flame or a shining star, these souls have burned in the night of time though they spoke no word and gave no token, the angels in heaven above knew that they were there and that their light upon earth was a blessing and a benediction.

Oh, I was ashamed at the words I had spoken, of the voice that I had given to my thought, when I saw how silent the stars of heaven do perform their work, and how majestically the sun shines upon the earth, without sound without other sign or token than its own resplendent rays; and I thought if I were again upon earth I would find the truth, and my voice would be the living of that truth. I thought if I were again upon earth that I would express in my own proper person and form the highest light that I knew; and if then I should give voice to my thought it would be voice of potency and power, greater than that which stirs the human heart through fear and paltry terror, greater than that which awakens, through sympathy and the emotions, the love of truth that is only partial; greater than that which was wont to sway the mass beneath the ministration of my power between sighs and groans and sobs and tears and laughter, dragging them by force into the kingdom of heaven which had not been planted in their souls.

Oh, no; the love which has come to my spirit is as matchless, as surpassingly fair, compared to that which I supposed to be the love of Christ, as the sun's splendor is gorgeous compared to the pale moon, that not one half unveils its light to the earth this night, or

the glory of the firmament of the heavens surpasses that of the glow-worm beneath your feet. I would preach the love of God; I would say that that love shines down and through to every living creature; I would say that the worm beneath the sod in the fulfillment of its life is blent with the Infinite, and that every soul struggling upon the fastnesses of time and materiality, is moved unconsciously by that love, and swayed at last into the starry sphere that is its home, by what paths of suffering, through what pain and torture, through what experiences of earthly life, you each may know; but it has come to me in the individual capacity of undoing that which I had done wrongfully, to test the power of every spirit for somewhat of good, and I know that no salvation were complete that did not include a way for every soul.

I am told by the savants of science that if, out of the starry firmament, one star were lost there would be a void in the whole solar heavens. I am told that if an atom be annihilated, if the substance out of which a single molecule is formed could be obliterated from the universe, that one disappearance would leave a void in all created substances, and the sister atoms of the universe would moan because their destiny would be written there. If a soul were lost from the great love of the Infinite, I can see now — oh, why could I not see when I was upon the earth? — I can see now, that if one soul can escape from the Infinite love, no soul is sure of salvation; that if there be a pathway out of the kingdom of God into the kingdom of darkness that closes when the soul goes down that pathway, it is the pathway

that it is possible for every soul to follow, and no angel in heaven is sure of eternal life. But if, as I now see, the paths of darkness, devious, strange, winding, subterranean, as they may appear, of crime, of sin, of wretchedness, of imperfection, of sensuality, of all that is low and degrading, are but transient and temporary, that they must terminate, that there is an end, and that the other end leads to the light, then the hope for every living creature that trembles upon that consciousness, awakens a new life and a new dawn, more joyous than that of creation's morning. You could imagine if, out of space peopled with stars, there sprang into birth, suddenly, another star, of perfect grace and power, awakening in response to the light, and giving forth its fructification and its bloom, its living beings and its crown of human life, how the angels would rejoice over this birth and awakening planet. You can imagine if, out of dust, of time and sense, the souls of men were disenthralled and redeemed, if, above the cloud which now divides them and separates them from the Infinite love, there was a morning dawn, like that which would burst upon the awakened star, how beautiful, how perfect, how glad the universe would be. And so I saw through the ages that may intervene, and the thousands of years that may roll away, each separate individual soul, by some subtle pathway of love, and some chain of life, drawn to that Infinite Spirit, and held forever by the shining link, until at last it mounts to the morning light and is conscious of the new and awakened birth of the spirit. And with this I say that the world may be made to rejoice, may no longer be in

sorrow and fear, but may be aware that every spirit here incarcerated in the dust is as valuable in the sight of heaven as the seraphim and cherubim, or glorified angels that are glad and free and dithralled from time — and this is the truth that I would speak to you; this is the voice that I would bring; this is the love of God that I would enkindle in your spirits. Instead of fear, instead of terror, instead of any false sympathy or artificial power, I would say: Your spirit, yours, is the individual soul that God loves as well as any other soul, and that no condition of time and sense can do other than keep you from a consciousness of it; so long as the blindness lasts, the blindness that is willful, the blindness that is the result of circumstances, the blindness that is the result of the organic condition of earthly life — this will endure for a space; the blindness of materialism, that sees the creation but not the creator; the blindness, the terror, which sees salvation but not the way of it; the blindness of death, which sees the gateway of outward life barred but does not see the immortality that lies beyond it; the blindness of envy, which sees the external wealth of the earth but does not see the wealth of the spirit; the blindness of pride, which sees the outward man and is fond of external display but does not know that it is a shadow and that the real man is a dwarf; the blindness of sensualism, which sees material life and covets its pleasures but does not know that each one of these pleasures is a mist woven around the spirit, a chain keeping it in bondage, a thralldom and a shackle from which it must arise and awaken.

Oh! souls, come out of your prisons.

There is no narrow pathway of cre that you must tread; there is no terrible gulf dividing you from the Infinite love and the Infinite mercy. Come out of your prison; have no fear. It is not this or that pathway that you are to saved, but only to open your eyes and see where the sunlight of God has been shining upon you all the while, even while you were in the midst of darkness and in the prison of doubt and terror; I would go to the jails, the penitentiaries, the dark places of the earth, and I would say, It is not the fear of God it is not the place where your soul w enter when you pass through the chan called death, it is not because you have sinned, it is not because you differ from any human being; but if there be a prison within the soul, let us burst the prison wall by the power of love; and you will find that love. It will not be pointing to the terrors that lie beyond it will not be by saying, In another instant you will be in hell; but I will say, You have a mother; she is in heaven the light of her eyes now beam upon you, the love that was in her soul is yours; that love is but a flickering, feeble flame — enduring always — compared to the love of the angels, and the Infinite Spirit that holds you forever in charge. Enter fearlessly the gateway of death; it takes nothing from you that life can give. Enter fearlessly the pathway of the tomb, for it restores more than that life may have robbed you of. I would say this to the convict, the murderer, the condemned, the outcast souls. To the respected and respectable Christian man I would say, Not the hope of heaven that you are sure to have; not freedom from the tortures

ou believe is yours; not immunity from that hell-fire which you found your creed, your faith, has saved you from; but consider that the selfishness of individual salvation leaves all others who are not saved, your victims. Remember that if you have found the way of salvation which they may not find, your heaven is a wall of selfishness and a prison-vault for the soul. Do not fear the hell which our religion teaches you, and which I ought not to. Do not covet the heaven that you feel sure is yours; but rather forget yourself, and remember that time and eternity are a great sea of life, and all who are afloat upon that sea are within the region of God's eternal love; and hence, how narrow, how small and deformed is that way of salvation that is only for the individual *me*.

Oh, let us have none of it; but rather through the love of that God that abides ever all, let us find, by loving one another, the kingdom of heaven which Christ taught, who gave to his disciples no other treasure to keep, no other memory to hoard, no other gem of life to maintain, than this one commandment and the golden rule that forms the golden circle of his memory; who gave them no other creed, no law, no catechism, no church, no organization, no priesthood, but only the binding circle of that perfect life that was to enter their lives, and the promise of that perfect truth which was to come when the Comforter should appear. Oh, let us hear the footsteps of the Comforter outside the prison-doors of life, outside the narrow gateway of salvation, outside the selfishness and self-interest of mankind—the words of that Truth-Teller that probes every heart, finds out its se-

cret springs, points out the way of its growth, reveals all things, and sets mankind before their Creator in the proper order of their spiritual existence. Not Christ the finality; but Christ the Truth-Teller, who came to promise a greater than he; who came to reveal to man the way of individual growth, and the Comforter who should adjust them to the harmony of that growth.

And now from the position which I occupy, even dimly as my eyes yet behold, I see the glory of that light that is dawning upon the world; I see the setting sun of those despotisms of faith that have bound in darkness the souls of men; I see the advent of another morning dawn; I hear the footsteps, I behold upon the mountain-tops of life the rising rays; I see the messengers, like clouds of glory and beauty, hovering the eastern sky; I behold the light of that truth that is to come to every heart. It finds out your sorrow, it seeks out your need, it gives to you the interpretation of truth, it makes itself, like air and sunshine, the property of all; and with speed of swift-winged thought, with knowledge, aspiration, and prayer, we will all work for the day of that salvation, the salvation that shall make human beings forget themselves and only remember the anguish, the sorrow, the misery of their fellow-beings. We will pray for that salvation that shall seek no longer the kingdom of heaven for the *me*, but shall let that kingdom grow by the word, the thought, the deed, that fills the life and paves the pathway to eternity; and I would follow along the trail of fear which awakens in any mind a thought of religion, with the bright banner of love, and say: It is false; you

are not saved by any ministration of terror, and no sacrifice of a benighted age makes men heirs to salvation; but that which is to be crucified is the outward man or woman within you, and that which is to be saved is the spirit of life that shall grow, and with this light we shall know that, enfolding all with a blessed mantle of love, the love of God

is the redeeming power of the world; the sun is the redeeming power of nature, and Christ is the voice of truth that heralds in the advent of the new Messiah, when there shall be no more fear and no more death, but when we shall wipe all tears from your eyes. Under this love we will work and wait forever.

THE GROWTH OF THE FLOWERS.

When the earth was yet silent and cold,
 And snow-covered were all the bowers,
 There went forth a spirit from heaven,
 Holding the souls of the flowers;
 Flowers that had grown in the heavens,
 In the far and immortal bowers.

Oh, the air was alive with their winging,
 And the flowers made faint with perfume,
 All the breath of the young Spring yet flinging
 These flowers to the earth.
 There came as yet no response and no birth,
 For the snow still lay silent and whitely,
 And covered the earth o'er below.
 The angels flew past all the white fields,
 Flew past all the gardens so low,
 And said: "The earth surely ne'er yields flowers,
 There is darkness and mold,
 And silence and whiteness and cold."

At the last they came where a mother
 Was weeping her dead child above,
 Was weeping as though her fond love
 Could ne'er find for its place here another;
 A mother whose bright child was dead;

And the flowers without, they were dead;
 And her heart was as cold as the ground,
 Where no flowers of beauty were found,
 And the angels said: "Cold is the earth,
 But sorrow is colder below;
 We will sow there a seed, and its birth
 May awaken some spring-time, some glow
 Of the hope and the life that is lost,
 Which the mother in sorrow can't know."

So, when she was weeping above
 The fair child that her mind had named dead,
 They dropped there a flower of love;
 And out of the cold winter bed
 They laid his young form there asleep,
 And the mother her vigils did keep;

But, lo! when the spring-time had burst,
 And the flowers came forth in the sod,
 A love, new and rare as the first,
 Came out of her heart unto God.

A thought that her child was not dead,
 That out of the Spring and the bloom,
 That richness of life had not fled,
 That he wakened and lived o'er the tomb.

Oh, flower of love, planted here,
 In the midst of this darkness and strife,
 And watered with many a tear,
 Blossom out to the glory of life.

Then they sped far away, where the soul,
 In deep sorrow and darkness, had led
 Paths of crime, and with inconstant control
 All the light of the soul thence had sped,
 And the beauty had gone, and no light
 Beamed forth, for the joy was all dead,
 And crime after crime stained the hand,
 And sin after sin stained the soul,
 Until girded with a fiery band
 Seemed the spirit in its dark control.

"Oh, no flowers will grow here," they said;
 But they planted a seed all the same,
 And they left it there, seemingly dead,
 Consumed by dull passion's flame;
 When at last, stung by madness, despair,
 Driven to darkness, there came a bright word,
 As though from the clear morning air
 The sound of a sky-lark were heard,
 The tone of the mother's fond voice,
 As heard in *the days long gone by*,
 Calling dimly for the spirit's young joys,
 And asking the life of her boy.

Oh, up from *the ashes and dust*,
 From the bitterness and the dull flame,
 There came up the flower of pure Trust,
 And its whiteness was like a sweet name
 Of prayer, heard in heaven above,
 Even like *the white lily of love*.

And thus, and thus, ever they bring
 Angels' bright flowers to sow in your way;
 Not those of earth's garlands they fling,
 But flowers of hope, while you pray.

While you wander here in the dark night,
 They silently drop down a seed,
 And at last it springs forth to the light,
 And awakens in beauty and deed;
 And lo, the bright flowers of love
 Are kindled in heaven above.
 Fair lilies of light, bend your bells,
 Chime over the hearts here to-night,
 Plant seeds in the dews of your souls,
 Until all spirits, spotless and white,
 Shall blossom beneath heaven's controls.

Price, Ten Cents.

The Transition of Souls;

INCLUDING

THE THEORY OF METEMPSYCHOSIS,

THE THEORY OF THE TRANSMIGRATION OF SOULS AS
TAUGHT BY PYTHAGORAS, PLATO, AND OTHERS;

TOGETHER WITH

A HINT AT THE TRUE THEORY CONCERNING THE
PROGRESS OF THE SOUL FROM ONE STATE
OF BEING TO ANOTHER.

AN INSPIRATIONAL DISCOURSE DELIVERED BY MRS. CORA L.
V. RICHMOND, AT CHICAGO, ILL., SUNDAY EVENING,
MARCH 11, 1877.

PUBLISHED BY
GILBERT & GRIFFEN
196 S. Clark St., Chicago.

THE INVOCATION.

SUPREMEST SOURCE of life and light, our Father and our Mother God, Thou Divine Parent, Thou Perfect Soul; even as to a central sun of light, even as to a splendor set in the midst of life eternally, do we turn to Thee, as souls, like smallest satellites, revolving round Thy being unknowing Thee, yet conscious of Thine all-pervading power. Oh, Thou Light within all light, Thou Sphere encompassed in all of beauty and loveliness, Thou Divine Beatitude, Thou Perfect Life, whatsoever we adore, that is Thine; whatsoever truth we know, that is from Thee; whatever of wisdom or knowledge or excellence is ours, Thy spirit, shining in and through us, is its source of being. Is there an angel in the upper heaven, Thy light illumines that angel. Is there a spirit of joy, transformed and transfigured, beyond death and time, Thy life pervades that spirit and Thy soul is the unspeakable source of that joy. Is there in human breast thought of immortality, of goodness, of loving kindness or charity, Thy light transfigures the dust, Thy life penetrates the darkness of outward being, and shines through the senses, illumining the bare and void of time.

Oh, Thou Supernal Flame, kindle, as on the sacred shrine of old, the light of

Thy surpassing glory, and even as the master minds, prophets, seers, and saviors, have risen by Thy power to testify Thy truth to man, so be there in present the signs and tokens of surging souls who have vanquished time who live above the outward senses, who know Thy life because they feel pulsation within; and even those in uttermost darkness, even those that in despair and sorrow, even those who fear death and who see not the life beyond — may these be penetrated with lofty flame, until their minds shall be kindled with immortal hopes and prophecies, until they shall know the life survives all death; and those who are on the verge of time lest eternity shall engulf them in oblivion — let them remember that whatsoever is fitted to the universe survives, and that the shadows of the soul cannot be extinguished; 'tis only night that perishes, only weakness and sin and infirmity that pass, but the knowledge of Thy spirit and Thy love remains forever, and the truth forever the same. And thus we turn to Thee, through hope and faith and immortality, conscious of our dependence on Thee, and that Thou art our God.

THE LECTURE.

The subject to-night, as announced, is The Transition of Souls, including the theory of Metempsychosis, the Theory of Transmigration of Souls as Taught by Pythagoras, Plato, and others; together with a Hint at the True Theory concerning the Progress of the Soul from one State of Being to Another."

In explaining the subject, or even approaching it, the human mind must take into consideration two things: first, that the soul itself, as an essence, possesses powers, abilities, and destinies that are beyond matter; secondly, that in every true theory concerning the immortality of the soul there must be an essential basis for that theory, as there is for the present system of astronomy, as there is for geology, as there is for any of the known sciences.

The theory of Metempsychosis, briefly stated, as entertained by the ancients, and as even now believed in by a large body of the religious devotees in the Orient, is that the soul passes from human life, if perfect, into the region of deity; if imperfect, that the soul returns again, taking on outward form, whether of lower animals, as a form of punishment, or of human beings, as a form of further experience and work on earth.

You will remember that this theory is perfectly stated in all the records that are handed down to you from the religions of the East, but it is believed in by the Brahmins, who entertain various

ideas concerning the re-appearance of man upon earth, though chiefly they believe in it as a matter of punishment. It was believed in by the Brahmins concerning their deities, for when Buddha came among them it was not only believed that he had appeared before in the form of a deific messenger, but that he would again appear as the same spirit in different forms. It was believed in by those who taught religion at the time of Zoroaster, and by Zoroaster himself, who considered the recurrence of the soul's existence upon earth as incidental to its advancement, and that it was rather a form of punishment than any promotion of the spirit in its outward growth; while Pythagoras distinctly taught the re-incarnation of the same spirit in many different forms, and affirmed that he himself had lived previously and taught, mentioning the philosopher whom he supposed himself to have been.

Now, the theories of Pythagoras upon most matters of science were, for his day and time, correct. His mathematical propositions are not controvertible to-day, and in the light of that scientific period he must have had some strong basis for this philosophy, other than that which is apparent in the records of superstition of a traditional period.

Socrates taught the immortality of the soul, but he not only taught a future but a past immortality, the reminiscences of

which but vaguely were shadowed in the outward life, but which he contended the spirit could comprehend when freed from the outward surroundings; while Plato, in his sublime *Cosmos*, relates the soul in its advancement as bearing some resemblance to the heavenly bodies, passing through one order of being after another, but never losing its divine essence, and never losing its duality, or the consciousness of that duality within itself.

That this was believed proportionately among the Hebrews is recognizable from the fact that they expected Elias to appear again, and that when their prophets came they were uncertain whether they were new messengers or a re-appearance of preceding messengers, showing that even the Children of Israel, whether they borrowed it from the Orient or whether it was inherent in their religion, believed something of this kind; while you all distinctly remember that when John appeared, announcing the coming of Christ, they asked Christ whether this was the one that was to appear — Elias, or whether it was a new prophet, and that he answered somewhat vaguely; but finally said, "Elias has already come;" meaning John. The word "Elias" of course would be construed to mean a prophet, or seer, or man of the Lord; but under the circumstances the indication is that it shows a prevailing belief in the recurrence, at least, of prophets after they had once appeared upon earth.

Handed down through various interpolations, it was left, however, for the Christians, and indeed for the Hebraic religion, in some measure to blot out the evidences that had existed in the Orient

concerning this singular theory, even among the Grecians and the appearance of gods or dem upon earth, in the form of men, & unusual; these appeared many while many of their teachers res lived in the recurrent periods man life.

Christ coming again as the M his revelations of the soul, conc its previous and its future existenc his thought concerning the exist his own spirit with Deity forev fact that angelic beings are supp be persons or beings that have inhabited human bodies, the fa orders of spiritual intelligences a posed to exist that have not ta human form — all these point t existence of soul outside of and matter, which the present tho this age has not reached.

In Europe there is a prevail nomination or sect, called "Spi as distinguished from Spiritualis under the teaching of Allan have revived the old idea of me chosis, or transmigration of so given, in elaborate forms of and instruction, purporting to e proportionately from departed spi partially from the records of giving an exact account of the li soul, its antecedent immortalit; istence here, and its existenc death; while poets in every d dreamed, over and over again, existent life on some distant p some other world, and with rei ces as vague and dim as poeti may be, but still with the ovel ing and over-brooding conscio somewhat of a spirit of truth;

ver has aspired to an immortality beyond death has been at the same time confronted with the proposition: Where did the soul exist before this life? If there is a beginning of spiritual existence, may there not be an ending of it, so, and have we any right to predicate immortality upon the mere beginning of eternal existence in this planet?

These propositions are not ours; we have not created them nor the history which contains them. They bear the same relationship to modern thought as ancient astrology did to astronomy, which, so far as the points of observation would allow, was correct. They bear the same relation to modern thought that ancient alchemy did to chemistry, the chemistry solving many of the problems that alchemy has failed to solve. They bear the same relationship to modern thought as the ancient systems of medicine bear, all the time being subjected to the criticism and light of modern science, yet all the time remaining unanswered, as problems that meet every human spirit in its pathway to a correct knowledge of that which lies behind.

It is not our purpose to determine this problem for any human being. It is simply our purpose to state, as fairly and conscientiously as possible, the theory as believed in by such minds as Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Confucius, and others, and as now believed in by many thousands of persons who are further enlightened concerning the subject of future existence. This statement will be in our own language, but it will also bear the scrutiny and close examination being compiled from these ancient sources.

The theory is, that the human soul here in its external form is not the center of being. If you were to measure the heavenly bodies with reference to the earth being the center, you would fall into the same error that the ancients did, supposing the sun to be one of the planets revolving around the earth, instead of being the center.

Now, to suppose that human life, so far as it exists upon the earth's surface, is the beginning of all life is as erroneous as to suppose that the forest tree, which you discover for the first time, has had no previous existence, or that the planet, which astronomy has for the first time discovered by the telescope, did not exist there until the telescope was made. The child is prone to believe that the world could not have existed before he or she was born; since everything appears so strange and new to the child, it could not have existed before. You have all heard the instance of the little child gazing out at the window of an evening, having been told that God had made the stars; and just above the horizon, after the sun had set, the child seeing the luminous star of evening, exclaimed: "Mama, oh, mama, God has made a star!" To the mind of the child this was a creation, and there was no contemplation or comprehension of the fact that thousands of millions of ages ago that star was a planet and moved in its place around the sun, even as then.

So, from the infancy of external life human beings judge that, not only the earth but the heavenly bodies and all future existence and all means of salvation must have been made expressly for them. If there be a God in heaven He was made expressly for this earth. If

there be a Christ, the Savior of mankind, he was a Christ created especially for this earth. If there be heavenly messengers, angelic beings, and ministering spirits, they are all regulated with reference to this planet; and everything centers around this one speck of dust, which, compared to the infinite number of worlds, is as an atom.

The science of astronomy alone would lead a man to more humility concerning the arrangement of the spiritual kingdom, since the arrangement of the temporal kingdom seems to leave the earth only its appointed place, and to say that it shall constitute only a portion of the heavenly bodies, many of which outnumber in size the earth by the magnitude of thousands and hundreds of thousands. Shall we, then, in treating of the spiritual kingdom, suppose that the mere point of time which any human being chances to live upon the earth, or by the order of existence is born here, constitutes the beginning of that vital spark that must have been infinite?

The atoms tell their own story. They say to the man of science: "We have not been created; from the infinite past we have been molded and shaped; even when chaos seemed to abide we were there in element, waiting for the great edict of creative life that was to shape us into form." The rocks and trees tell their own story. As mutable as the things of earth seem, the substances out of which they have been fashioned are known to have existed ages ago, and even the rock itself might abide a thousand years and the tree as many years. You make no account of the existence prior to the time that you observe the forms of life upon the earth's surface.

If you see a grain of wheat spring up a single season, and gather the harvest you think all of its growth has been within that given time; you forget the countless thousands of years, where the atoms of the earth have been molded and trituated, organized and reorganized, again and again, to prepare soil for that grain of wheat, and in every atom contained within that grain has existed in some form of life from time immemorial, and that all forms of life, changeful as they are in outward expression, contain the element of essence that is in itself eternal.

Now, spirit is either an element that is uncreated, or it is less than the dust beneath your feet. The thought of man which contemplates immortality, measures the stars, calls them by their names, analyzes the dust and discovers the elements of which it is fashioned, that thought is either uncreated in its original powers, or it is less than the substances which it analyzes and investigates. God, you say, is eternal; from past eternity He has abode in the innermost life of the spirit, working in and through all substances. The soul of man, like unto God — has that been fashioned, has that been created, is that made of dust? Then shall it not go back to dust, and if it be not made of dust, if the inevitable essence which constitutes the *you* and the *me*, has always existed, must it not have existed *somewhere*, and is not this life, this life, as great and wonderful and powerful a mystery as any future life can be? The astronomer, through the aid of mathematics, can, if you give him an arc of the circle described by a planet or comet in its revolution, tell you

whole orbit of that revolution. Now, the ancients believed that souls move in cycles, and that the orbit of their revolution is as readily determined by one skilled in the knowledge of spiritual science as the orbit of a planet is determined by one skilled in astronomical science. The ancients believed that the Deity was the innermost or central power, that around the Deity lesser lights, possessing the same attributes, the same powers and properties in degree, revolve or move, like lesser planets; that even more remote than these smaller planets were satellites, like most distant moons, revolving sometimes around these other planets as their light centers, and sometimes as around their central sun, moving on through space; and it was the theory of Plato that always groups of souls in the gradation of their spiritual growth moved on harmoniously through the heavens, and if there were a world in their pathway, or a planet, that it became the momentary resting place for the soul in its immortal pilgrimage.

If you will contemplate the magnitude of life, you will certainly be astonished should you suppose that the earth with its small preparation can fit any one of you for an eternity that is simply spiritual; and you all remember that you have thought, if you have passed beyond the middle years of life, "Oh, if I had but another chance; if I could live my life over again; if I could grapple with life another time, I am sure that I would win the victory, and that my soul would be triumphant." Is there, in the economy of nature, no other chance? Is this second time denied to the soul, merely because it is the edict of modern thought that you do not live again in the dust?

Is there any power to determine why you may not as well live here as hereafter, and if the spiritual life shall be the stepping-stone to that still more internal life beyond, may it not be necessary before that spiritual life is fully obtained that you shall, in some other world, if not in this, understand its methods, comprehend its laws, grapple its possibilities, and solve its problems?

It is a theory of religious and moral life that man's experience here is to determine his future state of happiness or misery. Then, does every soul begin the race evenly? Does the one that is in poverty, in beggary, in misery, have an equal chance with him who is surrounded by every luxury; and are there those in obscurity who have had equal opportunities with those who are in eminence, and *vice versa*? Is not the record of crime to be traced from some beginning that is inadequate; and is not the record of goodness to be likewise traced; and shall we judge men by their lives here, when their average beginnings are not equal? Who determines the standard of the soul, when it starts out on its career of human life? Who is to judge of the qualities inherent within the infantile spirit, before the body is yet the fitting expression of that soul? And if, as theologians contend, man is prone to wickedness and is innately sinful, and must experience regeneration before he can be saved, how worse than partial is the commencement of human life, and how infinite must be the struggle in some cases to even reach a conception of the salvation which is promised!

If human life, as averaged by the comprehension of human beings, be the

only opportunity for preparation for the future life, then human life itself is a failure. The oblivion of the one who believes in annihilation might better be substituted, since that leaves all men equal.

The Spiritualist believes that in the future state, that lies beyond death, there is an opportunity for advancement and improvement. So far so good; but in that future state as here, the commencement is very varied, and some souls must far outstrip others in the infinite race, and the eternal heights must be scaled by some of those that have so far the advance here.

The beginnings of human existence on earth are the test of this theory. Mozart, when a child, understood the thirds and fifths of music; a gray-haired sire within this audience may not know a single sound. Where did his spirit or mind learn this? Oh, it was hereditary. No such thing. There was no especial transmission of musical talent there; and the geniuses of the world, including the great thinkers, have sprung from conditions where it was not possible that their talents should have been transmitted. Then the spirit of that child was taught before. Who can presume to suppose that some children do not know with the first glimmering of expression of intelligence more than others after ten or fifteen years? The little child who said that she remembered that she was in heaven and was playing with the angels there, and wished to return, is but one of many instances that, if recorded, would confirm the idea that children recognize some existence outside of and prior to this life.

The dullness of external substance,

the matter which surrounds you, the external senses which enclose you, prohibit what is termed memory. But if memory were essential, then very few human beings would attain any great degree of knowledge or immortality, for out of all the things that you experience in your whole life you could not recall, upon an effort, more than one hundred things, and perhaps even fewer. The events that take a strong hold upon the mind at the time, are sometimes remembered many years after; but in the majority of instances the wheel of thought passes around, leaving the greater portion of your lives in obscurity, and only leaving the gathered results to the mind.

One argument against the theory of Pythagoras and Plato is, that the mind has no recollection of a pre-existence. What is the standard of recollection? Some of the most distinguished minds of history have said they do remember poets say they have glimpses of this recollection, and prophets distinctly declare it. The average human being are not musicians; the average human beings are not geniuses of any kind, and if you would have as a standard for the existence of geniuses of music, the fact that all the world must be musicians then there never have been any musicians, for all the world are not musicians. If you would prove the existence of poets by the fact that all human beings must be poets, then you would have no poets in times past; and the great men in every age could be wiped out by the same standard of reasoning.

A sufficient number of human beings have declared that they did remember or had glimpses of remembrance. I prove this subject worthy of consideration.

tion; and those persons were neither monomaniacs, lunatics, nor addicted to any especial form of superstition, but stated their convictions as intelligently and clearly upon this subject as upon any other; while all persons of every class of existence have a vague consciousness, some time during their lives, of having visited a place previously, which they for the first time visit; of seeing a face which they are sure they must have seen before, yet which they have no recollection of ever having seen in the mortal body. And so through all your lives, if you count the events of those periods wherein some strange occurrence or recollection recalls some dim reminiscence, you will find that, if encouraged, this thought will gradually increase and, like intuition of the future, will at last force upon you a vision of the past.

Mathematically, the thought of pre-existence must go hand in hand with the thought of existence hereafter. A circle is not complete without the whole, and a line that is infinite in duration must be infinite in the past as in the future. Whosoever hopes for immortality, whether he remembers the past or not, whether his life is as a dream or otherwise, must consider that, in some form of existence, spirit or angel, demigod or God himself, the germ of the soul of man must have lived, must have thought, must have moved through some intermediate order of substance before reaching this earth; and that this is but a small portion of the great arc of that eternal circle that determines the life of the spirit.

It matters not, so far as the truth is concerned, whether this theory is agree-

able or otherwise. You will recollect, perhaps, the expression of some persons concerning the communication with the dead: "Oh, I could not possibly believe in it—that the dead could come back and talk to us." The idea fills them with horror, and yet, gradually as the message comes from the departed one across the supposed chasm of death, the eyes brighten and the heart grows lighter with the consciousness of that future state; and shall not man, who is prone to judge merely from the outward senses, become brighter and more self-luminous if he considers that he is not born from the clod but really emanated from that same immortality whence he is going? And does it not confirm all the sacred traditions and thoughts of religion, which say that the soul goes on to God from whence it came, and boldly declare that the spirit of man comes from God, and must return to Him? What is this returning, if it be not a baptism into the inner spirit?

If you pass around the brow of a mountain, there will be a portion of the time when your preceding pathway will be obscured, but when you come to another part, where there is a similar view although it is a higher range, you will observe the same scene that you beheld before, only with an added range of vision. May you not now be on that portion of the mountain where you cannot see the best pathway? May your memories not be clouded by external surroundings instead of by the spirit; and will there not come a time in passing round the cycle of existence when you shall again revert to those scenes, and understand the pathway through which you have passed in soul, that is now

dim to the outward understanding? The memory of human life is but a memory of outward events, caused by a recurrence of similar events; and many persons forget altogether things that happen in life, until reminded of them by something similar. So it is with the retrospect of the soul. If you experience nothing here similar to your previous experience, you will not remember it; but if you experience something that reminds you of the past experience, there will be a vague haunting memory that you cannot drive away from you, of some previous experience, similar in kind. This chiefly comes in exalted states of religion, of love, of poetic ecstasy, of inspiration, of music, or some fervor that removes mankind above and beyond the mere temporal life. But that it does come and that these periods of ecstasy are alike a visitation from the past and a prophecy of the future, all who understand the experiences of the soul will understand and comprehend; but those who do not, will consider, of course, that it is a mere chimera of the past, and that those who believed in the theory were addicted to superstition, reverting simply to the external traditions instead of the spiritual for their support and sustenance; while, of course science herself will declare that it is preposterous, and that for a man to occupy again a physical form is undoubtedly impossible, while with the same inconsistency that science ever treats subjects of this kind, she declares that again and again the same molecule and atom, the same substances of outward life, can be molded and shaped into form and retain the properties which they previously took on in the configuration of

other forms; but for man there is not even this immortality in science, so determined is she that the spirit shall be annihilated.

The objections to this theory are briefly stated. First, to the external mind merely, it seems as though one lost his identity. What is your identity? If it consists of the clothing that you wear, you lose that when the clothing is worn out. If it consists of the house in which you dwell, you lose that if you move to another edifice. If it consists of the body which you wear, you lose that at death. If it consists of any especial technical order of mind, that is liable to change, for men change their opinions every day, and you are not the same Smith that you were twenty years ago, for you may have experienced an entire change in politics, in religion and morals. If you were a young man of the world, addicted to external proclivities, and have since become sober, serious, and prone to morality; if you believed in no religion and since that time have experienced religion, and if you were intellectually imperfect, and have since that time summoned study to your aid, your former friends would scarcely recognize you and yet, there is inside of you the same spirit. The bodies which you have that you so tenaciously cling to, are not the same bodies; every seven years they undergo an entire transformation, as science declares that there is not an atom that composes the present structure which was there seven years ago. What is it, then, that constitutes identity? Evidently not the atoms of matter; evidently not the opinions, for those undergo a change; and rarely a

human being in passing through life retains the same impressions concerning any external subject, or concerning any proposition of philosophy or theology. He who declares that he has lived fifty years and has not changed his mind on any subject is certainly considered a fossil. If the identity, then, consists of mere opinions which are liable to change, of course you will lose your identity every time you change your opinion; but if, behind those opinions, which are comparatively external, there is a spiritual essence that uses the brain merely as an outlook, and that upon further evidence or conviction takes a new truth as you would receive a new landscape into your vision, or a new picture into your gallery, then the expansive powers of the soul are unlimited, and the range of vision that may extend to you when finally you are freed from this external barrier, will become eternal and will open the vista of immortality.

We ask none of you to believe; it is not a matter of belief. A conviction of yours, whether it be true or false, affects nothing. Whoever studies the subject with the same view to understanding it that the astronomer has when he studies the heavenly bodies; will comprehend the meaning of what we say. There is no choice as to where the planets shall be located; there is no choice as to the orbits of their revolution in the mind of the astronomer; he discovers what is there. He places his lens fearlessly toward the heavens to see what the heavens contain. Whether you have lived before this or not is not a matter of choice. If it is so it is only half of the whole truth, for there can only be a half of the eternity before any spirit that is

passing through eternity; the rest must be behind. Whether that half of the truth forms any guidance; whether at any period of human life it dawns upon the spirit, and constitutes just so much greater source of enjoyment, we leave for the poet to determine.

In his "Mystery of Reminiscence," Schiller refers to the existence of life heretofore, and he says:

"Weep! for the godlike life that lost afar,
That Thou and I its scattered fragments are;
And ever the unconquered yearning we retain—
Sigh to renew the long and vanished reign
And grow divine again."

Is it not true that every human being holds sacredly within their innermost spirit a consciousness of being something better than the dust which contains them? Is it not true that glimpses of this immortal inheritance rise prophetically to the soul? And prophetically means also retrospectively. Is it not true that if that inheritance be yours in the hereafter, some time in the long vanished past, out of a spiritual life you may have entered into this life; and is it not true that this is also consistent with human history and human philosophy?

It was said, and is the record of religion, that there was war in heaven; that the archangel of the Lord rebelled against the highest edict and was expelled from heaven; that to earth he descended, and dwelt here upon the earth in punishment for this rebellion, finally descending into hades, and under the various names of Lucifer; Pluto, and other names of ignominy, he has been cast into unutterable darkness. It was said that a star fell out of heaven and descended to earth, took upon itself the power of mortal life, forgot its im-

mortality, until by some divine transfiguration the star was again restored to its appointed place. Is there not some part of this that appeals to the heart of man? Is not the rebellion in heaven the condition of happiness which every soul would scorn if accompanied by a lack of knowledge; and is it not repeated in the history of the fall of Adam, that really represented the spiritual growth of the race, and not the external — that out of paradise any human being falls for the sake of that knowledge that finally becomes his resurrection? And is it not true that if you were angels in heaven, condemned to a limited range of vision and to limited possibilities, you would voluntarily take upon yourselves the external garb of outward life for the purpose of more knowledge and more enlightenment? Do you not send expeditions to remote northern seas and strive to find what lies in those dreary regions? Does not Dr. Livingstone banish himself from home, from civilization, and enlightenment, to the interior of Africa, periling life for the sake of the knowledge which it gives? Do not men undergo perils, hardships, all kinds of deprivations, that the soul may be feasted upon knowledge, and that the mind may be fed with added power?

If men do this in mortal life, is there any reason to suppose that the soul will not do it; and if freed from outward existence and compelled to abide in a limited paradise, would you not covet that temporary misery which would also bring with it some added gift or boon of knowledge?

We say to you that, out of the paradise of the soul which is unacquainted with matter and dust, man expels him-

self, or is expelled by the law of spiritual succession, and accompanies planets in their revolution for the purpose of gaining the very victory which must be won over the outward nature here. We say that the mission of the soul here implanted is not simply to grow up from the dust, but with the surpassing powers of the spirit to vanquish that dust, and then, even like Alexander, but in another and higher sense, to sigh for more worlds to conquer — and there are more worlds. This one little spot, with its few experiences and its limited visions, constitutes only a moiety of the infinite life that lies before the spirit; and we and you shall pass on from this earth, from its atmosphere of spiritual existence, to those other stars next best fitted for our condition, and there learn whatever is to be learned; shall take up our sojourn in the eternal progression, even as here with the consciousness that God is behind and before us, and the Infinite Life is above us; shall go on and on, never forgetting, only remembering that which is valuable for the spirit to remember; while the outward clay and all its belongings will gradually sink into insignificance, leaving only souls that are allied to one another, only spirits that are bound by the innermost ties of the soul.

Shall we not, then, lose our friends? Shall we not, then, forget those who are near and dear? By no means. It is external life which leads to forgetfulness. Wealth, splendor, outward ambition, often lead men to forget their friends. In poverty and humility people are nearer in soul and drawn together in spirit; but great aggrandizement or worldly power and riches brings with it

oblivion of the past. The spirit in affliction goes nearer to its friends. Death is one of the stepping-stones that brings the loved ones nearer to you than they were before, because there is one mask less to divide you. The outward form is the mask; death is that which removes it from one of you, and brings the soul nearer to you, and when you, too, shall have thrown off the mask, the spirit will be drawn nearer to its kindred, and those who are one in spirit will mount like kindred flames to the star of their appointed destiny, and abide in spirit, as they are not able to dwell upon earth, near each other perpetually, while groups of kindred souls, severed afar by time and space upon earth, in Spirit Life and in that wonderful consciousness of existence beyond, traverse together the heights and depths of that immortality, and remember that once they were joined, but severed upon earth by the cruel ties of outward life.

You are accustomed here to speak of the severance which death occasions. You think here that death is the cruel divider. In the life of the innermost spirit they know that the outward life is the one thing that divides them from those they love. The divine dreamings of Plato, the knowledge of Dante whose Beatrice shone in splendid vision above him, were but the glimpses of that immortal recognition that comes to the soul when all kindred spirits shall recognize each other, and know that through countless myriads of years they have traversed the heights and depths of eternity, and still are not lost to one another.

When this recognition comes; when the spirit in its gladness becomes aware

of its possessions, time, the dust of earth, the outward senses, all that divided you here will sink into insignificance, and you will wonder into what night of external life you entered to bar the door to that divine gateway of infinite day.

Such is the theory of the transmigration of souls.

Where the soul enters into a lower animal, as was believed by Pythagoras and some of his followers, it is supposed to be in punishment for sin; but as we consider that no human being can occupy a less order of existence than itself, we do not presume that this portion of the theory has any foundation in truth. It were a part of the justice, however, of the seeming divine economy if some human beings whom we have seen castigate dumb brutes were in their turn to receive a similar castigation; and it might possibly enter into the divine economy that some punishment of a similar kind awaits them, although it may not be in the form of a dumb brute; and sometimes it has been intimated that to suppose human beings would enter a horse, a dog, or other favorite animal would be a libel upon the brute creation; but as this has only reference to a class of human beings that are very rare, and as, of course, these exceptions do not in any way affect the rule, we only give it as a suggestion.

But for the most part the idea of souls and their existence upon earth, so far as the outward aspect is concerned, must present a very fragmentary life; and no one of you or of any human being hearing this theory but what will say: "If I, too, might have another chance my life might be redeemed from many of its imperfections."

That other chance, that life, that infinite possibility, is before you, whether it lie veiled in this world or whether it be in a starry pathway of worlds as yet

unmarked and unknown to human comprehension; but for the life of the spirit it is infinite and eternal, and God is the God of the Past as of the Future.

Within the innermost of heaven,
Where angels press around the throne,
And seraphim and cherubim,
Each facing the Holy One,
Keep silence in that sacred place
Because of its perfected grace,
An angel came with pleading voice
Asking of the Most High above,
One favor — 't was the angel's choice —
And asked it as the gift of love.

"What wouldst thou?" said the Silence
there,

Made audible by perfect prayer.
"One favor," said the angel, "still;

If all Thy purpose to fulfill
Thou mayst grant but this one boon
'T will follow fast; 't is that soon

Out of this paradise of light,
I into dark and earthly night
May enter, for I fain would go
And toil upon the earth below."

Then in the majesty of space
The Silence grew, the angel's face —

Each one were saddened as though
sound

Of sorrow girded them around,
And from the silence of that sphere
Betokening God's omnipotence

He spake; the angels paused to hear:

"I give consent that you go thence,
But one condition must attend
All angels that to earth descend."

"Name it," the angel said, aglow
With all that he might learn below.

"It is that if you seek the pain,
The toil on earth, you go as twain
Divided, and not till again
You mount unto this height, shall ye
One perfect angel seem to be."

Straightway the angel, full of joy,
Yet awed by what the Lord had said
Came down to earth,
And then a space was silent
In the outward birth.

Far where the islands of the sea
Washed the bright shores eternally
A poet dreamed his life away.
Oh! fierce and fearful was the day,
The struggling factions of his life,
The outward turmoil and the strife,

The grappling here for wealth of k
The sword, the scepter, all those things
That win mankind to their display
These he saw, but he dreamed away,
His life, even all the angel-soul
That passed through birth from his
trot;

He dreamed that once, an angel born
He lived in that fair realm of light
And then he plunged in warfare here
He sought to borrow by all sound
Of allurements, far and near,

he tokens which would e'er resound
Through his spirit's atmosphere.

ne time he led the armies on;
nother, with the courtier's band beside
the seat of power
nd praise, he leaned unto ambition's
futile tower;

nd once, before a sacred shrine
e saw the dear Madonna's face,
ighted with a familiar grace,
nd thought he knew that smile divine.

Far in another land, there dwelt
maiden, fair and pure as day;
Beside a vestal shrine she knelt
nd moaned and pined her life away.

Beauteous and fair she seemed to be,
nd suitors gathered round, the heritage
To claim; but, ah, not she;
here seemed within her heart a page
nwritten, as though sealed in heaven;
o outward token should be given.

er sire was angered, and his frown
ent angry arrows through her soul;

The darts piercing were made to slay,
And thus she passed from life's control.

Then in that far and distant clime,
The poet, dreaming, saw the soul
That upward went with song sublime
And decked all heaven with blessed con-
trol;

But not yet finished was his task;
He toiled and labored still below,
But ever on his vision shone
The brightness of that heavenly glow,
Until at last he, too, arose;
And at the even-tide they bend above
the earth,
And still disclose the wonders of their
outward birth.

Oh, up in heaven again they turn
To where the angels with bright face,
Each in their orbs of beauty burn,
And take their own appointed place.

Oh, souls, dissevered far and wide,
By ocean or by inland sea,
Whatever sorrow may betide,
A kindred spirit waits for thee.

Price, Ten Cents.

THE SPHERE OF WISDOM,

AS DESCRIBED BY THE SPIRIT OF

JUDGE J. W. EDMONDS.

AN INSPIRATIONAL DISCOURSE DELIVERED BY MRS. CORA L.
V. RICHMOND, AT CHICAGO, ILL., SUNDAY EVENING,
MARCH 18, 1877.

PUBLISHED BY
GILBERT & GRIFFEN
196 S. Clark St., Chicago.

THE INVOCATION.

OH, THOU Divine and Perfect Soul, Infinite Parent, our Father and our Mother God; to Thee we turn for the voice of the spirit; to Thy Soul for the majesty of truth, of love, of knowledge; to Thee, the source of all being, we render praise and thanksgiving, for that life which is eternal; for the life that is in the rose, expressing itself in the silent voice of fragrance; for the life that is in the song of bird, giving praise for existence; for the life that is in nature everywhere, the tempest and the calm, the beauty of summer, the glory of the harvest, the quietude of winter; for the life that is in the ocean, deep buried wherein, through ages of change and transmutation, the forms of being at last come forth to light; for the life that pulsates within the earth, ancient and weary with the weight of years, yet ever throbbing toward perfection, seeking to become more and more perfect in its form; for the life that is in the stars, and in the sun, radiant and unspeakable, full of glory and majesty, keeping time to the great beatings of Thy heart, moving in harmony to the voice of Thine infinite spirit. Oh, Ineffable Life! for that which throbs within the human spirit, greater than the earth and the stars, greater than the voices of the heavens, greater than the silence of space—the spirit, responding unto Thee, though unseen, freighted with imagination and lofty thought, bowed down with

sorrow or uplifted with joy, still a portion of Thy divine life; the spirit man, clouded round with dust and chained with outward senses and appetites, fastened to the clay by the ties of outward nature, yet bursting asunder these ties, and on wings of aspiration and prayer soaring toward the Infinite for that life which is born of death, immortality of the spirit, the glorious inheritance that lies beyond time and change—for this do we praise Thee more,—more than for the majestic moving spheres, more than for the music of worlds in their onward march, more than the glory of the earth and sky—the thought of man undying

Oh, may the flame of that immortal life and the consciousness of the presence of Thy praise that attends it, come to the spirit, making a shrine and altar even like those shrines of ancient times wherein Thy spirit spake the words of prophecy, and Thy voice was heard among men. Be Thou a living presence; be Thy power a palpable presence; let the spirit of men judge not from the clay, but from the soul of life that is beyond; and more and more, as the descending spirits descend, as angels on wings of mercy, uplifting the darkness from their low places, so may the light of Thy soul shine in upon the world, and man praise Thee ever, more and more. Amen.

THE LECTURE.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS: In the discourses that I have previously given through this organism, I have treated of the entrance into Spirit Life, the sensations and experiences accompanying that entrance, and of three distinct states of spiritual existence into which I have passed, sometimes as a visitant and sometimes as a portion of my existence.

Those three stages have been the spheres immediately surrounding the earth, which includes that of Darkness, the condition of those who suffer for the wrongs or crimes committed when in the body; the sphere of Beneficence or Healing, wherein souls are treated with reference to their moral imperfections, and wherein the subject of healing receives the attention of the moral physician. The third sphere which I have described has been the Council of the Nations, in which I have visited various portions of those groups connected with the welfare and interests of the governments of earth.

I have described these spheres variously heretofore, and have attempted to give the personal impression which was made upon me by contact with these spiritual associations.

To-night I advance to another degree and give you the results of a visit to a sphere that seems to me to be the sphere of Wisdom. It certainly is beyond that technical knowledge, although it embodies much of scientific learning and

truth. It certainly is beyond that of the mere external welfare of national governments in their present aspect upon the earth; it seems to merge the spiritual with the outward law and to be the point within the present radius of the spiritual atmospheres connected with the earth, where wisdom unites with mercy and where beneficence and justice combine in rendering to others and to those that are beneath the proper combination of spiritual laws.

I am pained to notice, however, that those who believe in spiritual philosophy are too prone to judge of Spirit Life by the earthly life; I mean the external earthly life. I was myself mistaken in this regard somewhat, when in your midst. Having become convinced of spiritual truth at an advanced age of my life, or certainly at the years which would be considered as beyond maturity, the habit of my mind was fixed and I interpreted, with reference to external judgment and external consciousness, many things that must be interpreted only with reference to the spirit.

You would be offended and affronted if, at the period of manhood, any one should present to you the toys used when a child, and tell you that those were adequate to sustain, enlighten, and edify you through the remainder of your existence. Whoever expects to carry with him into or through eternity the frivolities, the personalities, the external

tastes and appetites that surround him here, will be mistaken.

It is true that in the first stages of spiritual existence these frivolities, appetites, passions, and ambitions have much to do with deciding the immediate condition of the spirit after death; and it is true that there are instances, which might be considered the spirits in prison, where those chains of outward appetite cling to the spirit for many years, and possibly for generations. But it is not true in any general sense that the spirit retains the outward needs of the body, the temporal wishes that surround the body here, nor the aspirations that belong exclusively to earthly life.

So that, in measuring the knowledge of the spheres and the consciousness that a spirit must experience on passing through the various spheres of Spirit Life, you are to put aside the outward judgment, and consider that when you come to Spirit Life you are, in a measure, behind the scenes of external existence, that are mostly mockery and seeming.

I say this as a word of warning, that you may not gild with external imagination that which I shall say; but that it may enter your spirits and form there a conviction of its truthfulness.

In all that I relate, the experiences are actual; but they are actual with reference to the spirit itself and its surroundings. These surroundings partake of the nature of spiritual existences and substances, and in no instance being material in their combinations.

I feel it necessary to make these explanations because I think there are some minds here who, perhaps, know little of this subject; and there are oth-

ers who, knowing a great deal, still know little in the genuine sense of spirit comprehension.

I mentioned in a preceding discourse that the outward knowledge of the human mind, called intellectual cultivation does not of necessity elevate the spiritual nature, and that many scientific minds are not, therefore, spiritually lightened; that the regions border between those of darkness and light filled with intellectual infants, those upon earth were scientific in their nature, but had not the cultivation of genuine spiritual aspiration. After manner many scientific minds upon earth may be reckoned as not among the highest of the spirits in Spirit Life but as existing in an intellectual state of existence, beyond which they cannot pass by the spirit of life which emanates from a spiritual, intuitive aspiration.

But the sphere of Wisdom, of which I am to speak and where I sat, not within, but only looking within, is composed of those persons that seem to have passed beyond the stage of mere philanthropy, in the external significance of that term; beyond the stage of mere compassion for suffering, in the true definition of compassion and sympathy beyond the stage of a mere intellectual pursuit of knowledge in the manner of science; beyond the degree of student nature's laws for the mere purpose of knowing their technicalities, and beyond the aspiration of discovering worlds for the mere sake of adding to their knowledge of the planetary system. The sphere of Wisdom comprises those persons of earth whose powers were dedicated to the uplifting of their kind, and in connection with those powers, it

vored to present that which would elevate the thought of man spiritually, as well as his knowledge externally.

The alphabet is the mere method for the acquisition of knowledge, and is not a finality in itself. Language is the method for describing the thought, and it is the thought that lies beyond the word that humanity is in pursuit of. So, in the life beyond death, the technical knowledge of spirit and its existence is not adequate. It requires the wisdom to perceive that that existence means something, that it is ennobling, uplifting, vivifying; that it carries the soul into an atmosphere where not only language, alphabetical usages, external forms of learning, mathematics, human governments, human theologies, are without use, but where they would be utterly void and meaningless, the spirit being on a higher stage of perception, and knowing the truth without these agencies of external life, which are but stepping-stones. I hope I make myself clear, or upon this point hinges that which I wish to say concerning this sphere of the purest wisdom.

I had been in pursuit of a state of spiritual existence where I could understand the means by which spiritual intelligences influence human life and actions, and effect the reconciliation of spiritual laws with those that seem to control the external nature and the orders of nations and men. I found that here, but I did not find its guiding and controlling power until finally I entered or verged into the sphere of wisdom, where I already discovered that my guide and teacher belonged; he who led me in my feeble earthly attempts at understanding of the spiritual nature;

he who had borne patiently with my stumbling and misconception of spiritual truth; he who had, step by step, initiated me into the stages of spiritual life, and who now led me seemingly as far as I could go, to the borders of that sphere of Wisdom where he seemed free to enter and pass, but where I had not the power to go. You may know that he was my guide in the communications that I received on earth, by my published works. I refer to Lord Bacon.

"Into this sphere of Wisdom," he said, "I was admitted by no outward wisdom or knowledge that I possessed; not by my discernment of external thought, of the affairs of men, of the connection of governments, or of the philosophies that blend the outward world; but by that willingness to understand the truth, which made my spirit humble and simple as the mind of a child."

I did not quite understand. I said: "What do you mean by this?"

He said further: "Wisdom in its perfect state is born of the perfect love of the Infinite, and that love and that wisdom, exercised through all stages of spiritual existence, constitutes the government of Spirit Life. The outward forms of government, as expressed upon earth, are the mere imperfections of human thought, broken fragments of laws which are dimly perceived; while behind those external laws that are disorderly, the ultimate laws of the universe abide, and men are governed in nations, societies, and individuals, by this chain of silent and immutable spiritual laws, that moves them whether they will or no, and guides them finally to the point of progress and spiritual advancement. Therefore, in the sphere which I inhabit, we have

no need of compassion and no need of philanthropy, no need of the charity which is exercised upon earth."

At first this sounded cold. According to the highest comprehension of intelligence and spiritual teaching of religion, charity, benevolence, philanthropy, were the loftiest aspirations of the human mind. I remembered well my endeavors to ameliorate the conditions of suffering ones upon earth. I remembered well my interest in certain philanthropies that it seemed to me the welfare of the nation and of human society depended upon. I remembered well the sphere of Beneficence, where Wilberforce and certain eminent physicians of earth, and distinguished philanthropists were found. I said:

"Do you mean to say that these are not the highest aspirations of the mind?"

With calmness and clearness, the light of his golden sphere vibrated toward me with a clear answer that was like the sounding of a bell. He said:

"Do you not know that there is a love that is even beyond sympathy, that is so all-potent and all-pervading that it does not need to express itself in sympathy, but holds supreme control by the very power of its omnipotent force? Do you not know that there is a wisdom that is beyond any amelioration of the condition of suffering that, in the suffering and through the suffering of humanity, leads them to knowledge, to higher thought?"

Even then this thought did not fully enter my mind until he bade me look to the earth. I saw myriads of human beings struggling with outward circumstances and with varied and diversified objects. Here was a pauper and there was a successful millionaire.

"Now," he said, "from the earth standpoint the one who ministers to the pauper is a philanthropist; the one who condemns, or at least does not sympathize with, the millionaire is considered just; and the highest state of human society is that which attempts to reconcile these two. From the sphere of Wisdom the pauper is to be envied, the man of wealth is to be commiserated because the one has external poverty the other is impoverished in soul; but not even this, in the sphere of Wisdom is felt, for the great compensation of nature is, that he who possesses a kind of wealth, and that only at the expense of another and better treasure learns his poverty by the very augmentation of the external tinsel and gold. Take away the outward treasure, and the millionaire feels the paucity of his gifts; remove the outward ban of poverty, the soul released feels himself in the presence of his equals. Therefore in the sphere of Wisdom, he who learns to value spiritual gifts by possession of material wealth, and he who learns patience and resignation by external suffering, only take different paths to the same goal."

He then showed me a criminal, condemned on earth for a stated crime, perhaps of murder, and guilty of crime. He also showed me a man of untainted reputation, without blame before the world, a godly man, a righteous man, a philanthropic man, a man of intent, so far as the world could see so far as he himself believed, upon whose soul I was sure that which was right and true was conscious of his own rectitude.

The criminal is the one for whom I would labor. The criminal is the one for whom I would have expended my gifts, whatever they might have

men upon earth. The extenuating circumstances of the case would have all been brought to bear. I would have sought his release, or the amelioration of his condition, in person, and would have expended every energy of my mind to reach his spirit. While the man who walked upright before the world I could have considered as a pattern for emulation.

From the sphere of Wisdom, which my guide inhabited, he showed me, as with a lens of the spirit, that the criminal had compensations which the godly man had not; he knew his imperfections, while the self-righteous man is, by that consciousness, debarred from the kingdom of heaven. He who is virtuous, riding himself upon his virtue, erects a greater barrier between himself and the kingdom of heaven than he who, conscious of his faults, has the one power of repentance, whereby to arise.

And then I saw that the whole moral problem of the world was reversed; that hat which men strive for and covet, by external means of kindness and mistaken charity, is often not the thing to be gained. The only point attained is that the exercise of these qualities benefits the soul that exercises them, and the ones upon whom they are exercised usually; and that from the sphere of Wisdom, which my friend inhabited, there seemed a perfect radiance extending toward the earth, a level line of light that blessed the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the godly and the ungodly, in their exact position spiritually; and I could see that, do what men will, these lines of light by gradual and winding paths converge toward the point of the heavens where this sphere of Wisdom is found.

Benevolence is well, Charity is beautiful, if unconscious; the bloom of a life of purity is fragrant to the thought of the angels, and that goodness which sheds its sweet light upon the earth by gentle ministrations unconsciously becomes the open gateway of angelic ministration. But all these efforts from the external to do the seeming duties of life fall and pale before the searching glance of the spirit that will find out for the most part what the spirit itself is worth, and weigh it in the equitable balance of the sphere of Love and Wisdom.

You cannot wonder, then, if from this height and from the contemplation of these themes, all petty schemes for human reform and human philanthropy, for the liberalization of human governments, seemed to me like the toys in the hands of a child. You will not wonder, then, if I came to understand why the Angel World does not forward this mission, or that reform, or some particular need which humanity thinks it has.

It was often asked me, while still a denizen of the outward world, known to be in communication with Spirit Life, if spirits were so interested in human welfare and in the moral improvement of the world, why they did not interest themselves in some special reforms going on in the world, and thereby prove their interest in the advancement of humanity? Spirits do interest themselves in special reforms, but they are special spirits; they are the ones who would be likely to be interested in those same reforms if here among you, and who have not yet gone beyond the influence of the external sympathy which would induce them to favor this or that particular philanthropy. There are spirits also interested in external speculations, and

these profess to give advice concerning business matters, and in some instances succeed; but you will readily comprehend that such a spirit cannot have entered far into the region of spiritual causes to be still able to deal with the mere externalities of outward life and dabble in the things that belong externally to the senses of man.

Therefore, when going still further, I found that the sphere of Beneficence, or Healing, treated of crime as a moral disease, you could readily understand that spirits would not be intent upon any codification of laws that would make more strenuous the rules of human justice, nor could they, in any seeming way reach the governments of the earth until humanity itself had been raised to a higher standard of recognized legislation. People are prone to suppose that governments and social law are in themselves a cause of human goodness. The reverse is the case. Laws are the results of the average condition of the human mind, and the government having the best laws must be the government having the best state and condition of laws. Therefore, the Spirit World must be intent more upon reaching the condition of individual minds, instructing them and merging its life into theirs, than upon teaching the details of external government or forms and methods of reform.

Another point is that of religion—why the Spirit World does not in some tangible manner reveal the true religion of humanity, and thereby save all this wandering, deviating course which the different religions of the world lead men into.

From the sphere of Wisdom I then

perceived that which I never had a doubt of while upon earth, that the Christian religion was the highest in its form of moral and spiritual aspiration that ever was given to man; but that, owing to the imperfect perceptions of humanity the interpretation of that religion must remain imperfect, and that no amount of spiritual teaching can alter, except gradually, the state of theological thought in the world; that this must come as a matter of growth, which comes by the spontaneous inspiration from the spheres of Spirit Life that lie the next step beyond you, whatever that sphere may be.

“How useless, then,” said my wonderful teacher, “for us to give any guidance to a state of mind that is not prepared to see that guidance. The blind can only be led by gradual processes of learning; the young can only be instructed by gradual methods of advancement there is no arbitrary, absolute, and unqualified truth that can come to any human mind. The angels in the farthest heaven have only that degree of truth to which they have aspired and grown.”

Then I saw from the burnished light above that the central light of this sphere of Love and Wisdom seemed formed to the religion best fitted for mankind. There was no ceremonial visible; there was no external sign or token perceived. There was nothing by which could measure the outward conformation or law of the Church, but I felt that it was permeating, like the sunlight, the various religions of intermediate spheres and the earth itself; and I saw the rays of light from this central whiteness beaming down through the sphere of Beneficence, shedding light and beam

to those who were healing the morally sick. I saw the light streaming down to the spirits that were in prison, those who were still wrapped in their pride, their passions, their personality, their external thought; dead kings, that go out through death with unrequited wrongs, and walk up and down the earth waiting the hour of their restitution; dead millionaires, that go out with the weight of great gold upon their spirits, and wait in the prison of poverty and spiritual imperfection; souls laden with external pride and passion -- I saw these rays even penetrating there, and that the divine completeness of the life above was, that it had something for every condition of life beneath it; that the Christ principle expressed in Christianity means that which is capable of being understood according to the condition of every soul, having something for each; and that here upon earth the different orders of religion are just as essential for the different stages of human thought, as the different gradations in a school of learning, or the different steps before you reach the higher degrees of mathematics. Therefore, that religion itself is the pure whiteness of the sphere of Love and Wisdom, complete in itself and perfect, but being broken according to the understanding of man; that Christ himself broke this bread of life through the gentle ministration of his spirit, according to the understanding of those who followed him, and that various teachers of various religions have each broken the bread of life and given the different rays of spiritual truth according as the earth was prepared to receive; but that the light itself is one, and is pure and shining itself true, the external

form making no difference with the brightness of the Spirit of Truth.

Anxious to know more and more, I said: "Who are the minds best known upon earth that have risen to the height which I now perceive?"

My guide and teacher answered: "Very few of those whose names are known among men, but chiefly those who have learned wisdom in the humbler walks of life, by knowing that God is wise, trusting in the laws of the Infinite, and doing each duty as it came before them every day. The whiteness of these lives have not been seen of men, have not been conspicuous in history, -- a few shining names, like those who gave great laws to the people for the love of the people; a few illustrious examples, like those who, through martyrdom for principle, have gone out into the world of souls; but for the most part those unwritten and unrecorded lives that quietly go into the sphere of Wisdom, and at last, through various changes, reach that height and become the guardians of men. These souls, looking from their abodes, do not participate in the legislations of human governments, in the ministration and affairs of Church or State, in the external philanthropies that constitute some of the stages of human growth, but rather with mild light beam upon the spheres beneath them, and by their very brightness win men to the paths of truth."

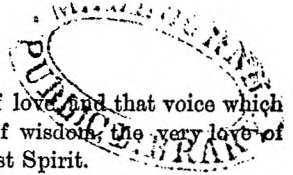
I would enjoin distinctly upon you the difference between the sphere of active knowledge, active participation in benevolence, active philanthropy, and that of actual wisdom and truth, as I saw it. There is this difference. The man who

bears a torch, who carries a light into this building, who illuminates your cities, who lends to commerce power, who gives enlightenment to the world, turns to every portion of the earth his brightness as an active flame. The stars do not come out of their places to meet you; the sun does not move from his place to the earth, but emits light; it is the light that traverses the space by vibration; it is the earth's atmosphere that receives or rejects it. The active knowledge of the earth is the small candle set in your midst to light you in your daily duties; the great Divine Wisdom ensphered beyond, which I could not behold for its very whiteness, is the sun, that illuminates and sheds brightness through the spheres beneath, but deviates not from its position, for by its very center it holds the moral universe in its control, and is the sun and shield and strength of that universe.

Christ coming down to earth was one ray of this light; but the Christ that is set above mankind as the highest example for human beings to follow is the Spirit of Truth that reaches the comprehension only as you perceive it, and is always there, waiting for you to grow.

I gazed and gazed, still looking upon my teacher, who seemed removed a little from me, when at last, by that process which is unspeakable to the external senses, but is the moving of the spirit through space, I came nearer to the abode where my companion on earth had received me, as given before, in my experience on first entering Spirit Life. I had once felt myself almost unworthy to enter there. I had felt that her qualities, her spiritual state, and her divine guardianship, were too lofty and angelic

for me to enter her presence. I had felt the imperfections of my earthly life closing round me too much; and I had described before the process where she received me into the outer portion the home which seemed to be prepared for me. I now felt, to my surprise, that this home was in the sphere where I now was entering; that I had approached it by another pathway, and by the experience of the various spheres that I had visited. I seemed to have become more worthy to enter the inner temple prepared for her; and my guide and teacher had shown me the wisdom and the laws controlling that sphere of Wisdom, in the divine order of the heavenly bodies, spiritually. He had shown me how that wisdom, moving upon human companionship, wrought out great results upon earth. It remained for her to show me now the great miracle of love. I saw you, conscious as I was of her presence upon earth, that she had still led me through those inevitable and infinite ties that belong to the very spirit of man; and no wisdom, however vast, no knowledge however supreme, could begin to compare with the light that shone upon me now when I again was in her presence. All of embarrassment which I felt when first entering Spirit Life had passed away. All the thoughts of tenderness which rose up within me was as though in a mirror; I felt that which was best and highest and noblest in myself. Magnified in her countenance I saw the reflected light of all lofty aspirations, youthful hopes, the ambitions for the love of mankind, the fulfillment of that which is only known in early years, and which later manhood robs the thought of but not the spirit. I beheld



countenance as the other portion of myself; I beheld her spirit as the complement of my life; I saw now that no life is complete without that love which is the center of the soul of wisdom, and that human life with its great imperfections, with its shadows and sorrows, its adversities and imperfect laws, is imperfect because of the inadequate blending of these two elements of life.

Oh, that the wisdom of man, summoning to the councils of earth intellect, history, genius, science, and art, would summon also the innermost spirit of the universe, the veiled form of the soul of truth, the Isis shadowed in the Egyptian religion, the heart of Jove breathing out in the gentle spirit that was his life, the Mary who was the mother of Christ, the love that is the spirit and soul of the universe.

And then my mind became illumined. I saw, through the orbéd sphere into which I was admitted as one of the outermost satellites, angels completed in their lives and perfect in their souls, who had dreamed of the life beyond in the beatitude of such infinite tenderness as this; mothers, whose souls had grown white through suffering; wives and daughters, unstained upon earth, whose spirits had given, through lives of devotion, the offerings of unrecognized love — all who, through sanctification of this blessed ministering power, outwrought the wonders of life, unseen upon earth. I beheld now, that, risen, transfigured, and glorified, these became the co-equal interpreters of the word of God to man; and that spirits, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, in Spirit Life, in the angel spheres, are made complete only by the triumph of that intuition which

is the soul of love and that voice which is the soul of wisdom, the very love of the innermost Spirit.

To this blessed companion of my life, to this spirit, more than to the teacher and friend to whom I have referred, I am indebted for this experience. And standing now upon the verge of that sphere that stretches far away, I see the form of Christ Jesus, the Nazarene, the Man of God, the Truth Teller, with those who were attendants bending around; and I see that no life is made complete without this gentleness, without this sphere of love, and that even the Magdalene who fell at his feet, forgiven because she loved much, rises to the height of that sphere sooner than he who turns his face away, and is conscious of his righteousness and rectitude here.

The voice of this wisdom, penetrating still deeper, sounded even like the songs of children, who have no consciousness of shame, no knowledge of outward intellect, no dross of external ambition, but who are white and clean as the flowers are, and grow sublimely fair.

And thus I beheld the temple of Human Worship. It seemed fashioned of love and wisdom — equal portions of the life of man on earth; and all who entered there, all who laid their offerings at this shrine, must have equally a balance of love and wisdom in their souls. This temple was girded round with children, and the light of their countenances made joyous the place. Flowers that were the offerings of their lives, shone out in that blessed abode, and within were the worshipers. They were those made glad and free and strong by suffering, self-sacrifice, the lack of pride,

the abnegation of self, the fulfillment of the sphere of Love and Wisdom, whereunto all souls are invited to attend.

And there I saw the prophecy traced in golden light upon the sky: That every soul upon earth, every heart pining in sorrow, every desolate place, and every wilderness of human wrong, every depth of human suffering, and the spirits who are in prison, those who are girded round with ambition and pride, and those who are still revengeful, shall waken one day; and by the voice of just such love as I have found in the one who preceded me to Spirit Life, and who waited for me in this angel sphere, shall be resurrected and stand free and una-

shamed, because forgiven, in the light of love and wisdom.

I called myself a righteous man on earth. I did my duty and prided myself upon my virtue; but I passed through, in Spirit Life in the first few months of my entrance there, the scourge of that self-consciousness. I was debarred measurably from that benign presence to which I at last have been restored; and now, with this blessing and the amenity which it brings, I hope more fully to fulfill the life of the spirit by the humility which the consciousness of it brings, this being the sphere of Love and Wisdom.

INSPIRATIONAL POEM.

Along the corridors of heaven, where stars
Keep watch like lamps of night,
The angels listened audibly,
As though for something out of sight,
Yet heard a voice of song and prayer
Still echoing through the spaces there.

Was it an angel that had found
A new song in that highest heaven,
And gave it forth that all might hear,
Until the space with joy was riven?

Was it because, around the space
Of utter whiteness that shone there,
Some newer glory or added grace
Made audible the voice of prayer?

Was it because the lilies white that angels wear,
Their thoughts, their deeds,
Were grown more beauteous and fair,
By answering to some spirit's needs?

Was it that God had spoken still,
Within the silence of that place,
A newer mandate of His will,
An added power of wonted grace?

Oh, no; they listened earthward here,
And tremblings of brightness came
Along the lower atmosphere,
Like the pulsating lines of flame
That seem to come when morn is near.

They listened earthward, and the song, as if in prayer,
Grew more and more
Like songs of angels mirrored there,
And heard within that height before.

What was it? Was it saint on earth
 That sent this proud song up to heaven?
 Was it the joy of outward birth,
 The message that to you was given
 From Christ above, that coming back,
 Made such bright echo on heaven's track?

Was it the loud acclaim of praise,
 That came up from the organ vast
 Of many consecrated days,
 Wherein each Sabbath seems to last,
 In the prolonged strains that rise
 Of anthems to the upper skies?

Oh, no; but down upon the earth
 There seemed a treasure, born of light;
 There entered into outward birth
 A thought, surpassing pure and white.

It was not voice of hymn or prayer;
 It was not sermon, loud and long;
 It was no anthem mirrored there,
 And sent forth on the wings of song;

But something that was like to heaven,
 And found an echo there above—
 It was the trembling on earth
 Of the first glimpse of perfect love.